

Can young people develop and deliver effective  
creative anti-bullying strategies?

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Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Andy Hickson)

## Abstract

Using action research within a critical paradigm framework the author investigated young people's ability to develop a programme of work that raises awareness of bullying in schools. The research group was made up of six young people, to whom the author and other specialists offered anti-bullying and participatory training techniques. The group eventually designed their own anti-bullying activity programme, which they delivered in creative workshop style sessions to other young people in schools. The author located this research in critical enquiry, engaging the group in a self-reflective process that aimed to be democratic, equitable, liberating and life enhancing.

This report is written in the form of a narrative and evaluates the author's practice as an educative theatre practitioner. Central themes to this research are bullying, power, creative activity and youth participation.

Schools, teachers and adults are often described as *sucking* out the creativity of young people and thus not allowing many of them achieve their full potential. In this context young people are often powerless to deal with some of the difficult issues in their lives such as bullying. The author suggests that peer support is a key strategy to deal with bullying in schools. The author introduces a new concept of peer support called external peer support, which he has evaluated against the current literature.

The definition of bullying is explored in depth, as is its relationship to power. The author suggests peer support to be a key strategy in youth participation and ultimately helping youth empowerment.

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### Abbreviations and key terms.

Core Group	The Core Group refers to the small group of young people who worked and trained with me during the course of this project. The ‘Core Group’ should not be confused with the ‘Users’ who were the young people whom the Core Group delivered their creative anti-bullying sessions to.
Users	The Users refers to the young people who the Core Group delivered their creative anti-bullying sessions to.
ZPD	Zone of proximal development. Theory of Lev Vygotsky who defined ZPD as the distance between the most difficult task a child can do and the most difficult task a child can do with help (Mooney, 2000).
EPR	Embodiment – projection – role. A child developmental theory developed by Sue Jennings (1999, 2009).
TIE	Theatre-in-education.
EPS	External peer support.
NGO	Non governmental organisation.
NPO	Non profit organisation.
SNS	Second night syndrome.



## Chapter 1. Introduction.

I am a theatre practitioner and this is my first academic research project. As a practitioner I have used this research project to try to evaluate and improve my practice. In this sense the research project is a lived experience rather than an academic exercise. I have found theory to fit my practice rather than attempting to fit practice into theory.

This research project was a huge undertaking for me. I was exploring and evaluating a programme of work that I ran with a small group of young people over the course of a year (the core group). The aim was to help them acquire the skills in various creative techniques so that they felt empowered enough to design their own anti-bullying strategy sessions, which they could then deliver to other young people (the users). In a sense I am evaluating creative empowerment.

During the course of this year I ran 28 sessions with members of the core group. These training sessions included learning about anti-bullying, team building and bonding, cross-cultural awareness, workshop facilitation and design skills, and culminating in the delivery of creative anti-bullying awareness workshop sessions by the core group to the users. This is explained in far greater detail in subsequent chapters.

In asking whether young people can deliver *effective* creative anti-bullying strategies, I am relating this to the impact on the core group itself and to the users' immediate reactions to the interventions provided by the core group. The focus of this thesis then is predominantly on the actions taken with, and the learning achieved by, the core group. There were no follow-up sessions with the users and no exploration of changes in users' behaviour as they might have subsequently encountered bullying, however worthy, this would have been the focus of a completely different research project. All follow-up reflective sessions were held with members of the core group.

I have found myself taking on many roles during this research process including those of facilitator, guide, student, mentor, counsellor, organiser, taxi driver, cameraman and writer, while always trying to remember that I am a researcher too. Although this report is not a story in the traditional sense, it is narrative in nature, as was the research process itself. My writing reflects a narrative style and my aim is to make this report as accessible as possible in terms of its language, techniques and themes, while still

keeping an academic style and a rigorous methodology. The reality of this project is not only represented through narrative it is constituted through the narrative nature of this thesis (Bruner, 1991). This thesis tells the story of my research how it happens, as it happens.

This is not just my story; it is a group narrative, a narrative that has been co-constructed by my core group participants and myself. I am not simply telling how it is, I am reporting the construction of a group account, a collaborative project.

I will introduce this thesis by taking the reader on a journey of how I came to this research and why I as a man in his late forties felt it important to focus my research on bullying and young people. I will talk about myself and I will talk about the project participants. Alongside this I will introduce some of the main themes of this research and add a few signposts to help the reader make sense of what I have written. I will also give a brief outline of some of my research findings and analysis.

I had a somewhat troubled schooling as a child. Due to my parents' constant house moving and their early separation, I was sent to boarding school at the age of 8. This school was fee paying and set in the Hertfordshire countryside. I underachieved academically but this school and some of its values concerning a lack of corporal punishment (unusual in the late 1960s), enlightened me to alternative approaches to punishment and, ultimately, to violence. Despite the excellent facilities and relatively peaceful atmosphere of the school I was not happy and was a somewhat disruptive student, due in part to the constant bullying I received from the headmaster's son. My mother decided to take me out of boarding school when I was 11 years old, and I moved to London. The transition from the peaceful countryside was huge, not least because we moved house over 7 times during the 18 months we lived in London, but also because of the varying levels of bullying I experienced at each different school I attended during this time.

At the age of 13, I moved with my mother, younger brother and sister to Malaysia. My mother was a social anthropologist and had made the decision to take her children on an 18-month research trip to live with the Temiar aborigines deep in the Malaysian jungle. This was a life changing experience for me. During this time I learnt about the Temiar culture and language. We lived in a Temiar house with a Temiar family and adopted a

Temiar lifestyle for 18-months. I was used constantly as an assistant researcher by my mother during this time; sent out on excursions to other Temiar villages, interviewing people that she had more difficulty in approaching, such as those within certain male orientated rituals, and other activities.

The Temiar have a reputation for being the most peaceful people in the world. During my time with them I never witnessed an act of physical violence amongst the Temiar, whether it was between adults, young people, friends, family or strangers. This is not to say that the Temiar never argued or disagreed, they found ways alternative to violence, including, interestingly, the occasional threat of violence to deal with their disagreements.

I grew up very fast in the jungle. The Temiar treated me like an adult; my views were important, just as were the views of other young Temiar people. By the age of 14 years I was participating in all aspects of Temiar adult life and affairs. I learnt how to build a bamboo house without a single nail, I could hunt in the jungle with a blowpipe and make my own dug out canoe. One of my favourite activities in the jungle was learning about Temiar dance and shamanic practice.

Returning to England at aged 15 years was an extremely difficult transition for me. As a family we moved to Warwickshire where I re-entered the British schooling system. I went from being a respected adult to a schoolboy. This was a miserable year for me; I felt powerless and insignificant. I left school with no qualifications to speak of at age 16-years and went to college, where I took some basic O-levels (GCSE equivalent). During the next 4 years I worked in a variety of jobs in such places as mailing houses, the Post Office, bars, restaurants and pubs in between travelling much of the world. I ran my own pub and then started writing and performing some of my own theatre work before deciding to apply for Drama College.

I was accepted into Drama College in my late 20s and enjoyed my first year there. At college I became President of the Student Union. I was an active President, pushing for many student rights and this affected my studies and my relationship with the governing body of the College. Half way through my course I was given the opportunity to work with theatre director, Prof. Max Stafford-Clark. This was a fabulous opportunity for me

and after leaving my university course without a qualification, I set up my own theatre company, which toured successfully for 3 years around the UK.

During this time my ideas on the arts as an educative and empowering tool started to develop. In the 1990s I worked on two occasions with theatre director Augusto Boal. He introduced me to his ideas of the Theatre of the Oppressed and I incorporated these ideas into my work as a theatre practitioner. I started using drama as a tool to challenge oppression and violence in a variety of arenas including theatres, schools and in everyday life venues such as parks and supermarkets in the form of 'invisible theatre'. Despite this excellent and fulfilling work that I was doing, I found myself at age 31 with no formal qualifications apart from my O-levels. This played on my mind and prompted me to enrol in a 6-month residential Diploma programme. I suddenly found myself liking academic work and had no problem in passing my diploma. The diploma gave me access to university and I went on to the University of London and took a Masters degree.

My MA dissertation explored a Temiar concept, which demonstrated how certain food ritual practices helped develop a community of non-violence.

During my MA I was still working as a theatre practitioner. My theatre work started to take on a more educational aspect, and I formed a new theatre-in-education (TIE) company that worked in schools up and down the UK and abroad. In the early years of my new TIE Company I further developed my anti-violence ideas into ways of dealing with bullying in school. I drew upon my experiences with the Temiar, their rituals and practice, and upon the ideas of other people I worked with, particularly those of Augusto Boal, and a new author to me at the time, Michel Foucault, and his ideas on power, particularly the positive uses of power.

My own experiences as a confused child at boarding school, the 'adult' jungle experience, and then becoming a child again back in England and feeling that I lost many of my rights, fuelled my sense of wanting justice, equality and respect for all. My own experiences taught me that many young people were suffering bullying, but many had no voice in how the bullying was handled in school. I promoted, through my work, the idea that young people had the capabilities to deal with issues of bullying if given

the right guidance and training and that they should be consulted on aspects of life that affected them. I found the creative arts to be a very useful tool to help me achieve this.

Over the ensuing years, in addition to the work I carried out in schools, I also worked with a variety of researchers involved in exploring bullying in schools. Although my work appeared to be respected, valued and discussed positively, I was asked repeatedly where the evidence was, apart from anecdotal, that my methods worked, that theatre-in-education was useful, that young people had the capabilities to deal with bullying effectively, and that the creative based anti-bullying activities I utilised, worked in schools. This prompted me at age 43 to undertake a PhD at Exeter University, where I could examine in detail my own practice and some of my ideas concerning bullying and youth participation.

My reasons for doing this research are multi-layered. I wanted to achieve a PhD academic qualification for myself; I also wanted to validate my work as a theatre practitioner. On another level I wanted myself and my participants to feel empowered through this work, I did not want it to be research for research's sake. Another important reason concerns creating a model of good working practice. I wanted, from my experience on this project, to create a recommended outline for similar future projects. Finally, I wanted this research to contribute to the literature on challenging oppression, particularly in solving conflicts such as bullying and exploring ways that young people can become less marginalised from issues that affect them.

It was a slow process that brought me to this research. Now that it is finished I do not see myself leaving it alone. I will incorporate the findings into my own work and use it to help promote future good working creative practice in dealing with bullying and youth participation.

Arriving at a place to undertake a PhD research project was one thing, doing it was another thing altogether. I am generally quite happy to multi-task but I found the process of doing this research to be all consuming. In addition, as a collaborative project I could not just rely on myself, I had to rely on others. Essentially, for this project I got a small group young people together, aged between 14 and 16 years of age. I guided them through a training process, helping them build skills around facilitation leadership, group work and anti-bullying strategies. Halfway during the training I took the group to

Japan so that they could test out their anti-bullying workshop skills and then go on to complete the training programme in the UK. My extensive contacts in Japan and some Japan project specific funding helped me in this respect. At the end of training the group delivered creative workshop sessions, that they themselves had created, to young people in schools and community groups in the UK. This research project was not as simple as I had anticipated. I had to deal with participant dropout, teachers changing their minds, lack of funding and academic procedure that made the process far from easy.

This was a collaborative project. I worked with six young people over the course of 12 months. One of the young people stayed the whole course and the others did not. As a collaborative project I wanted it to empower the young people I worked with. I did not create any joining criteria or go through an auditioning process; it was open to anyone under the age of 18 to participate. I did not have to turn anyone away and I did not ask anyone to leave. It was a huge commitment for the young people involved; the project was to run over the course of a year; there would be lots of training sessions; time off school; paying their own expenses; they would look at their own issues and would be spending time away from home for the first time in their lives.

I wanted the young people involved to experience and be involved in a project as if they were adults. I applied the same conditions for the young people as if I had been working with an adult group. This included, when possible, good facilities, appropriate resources, and purpose-built training rooms. In addition I had expectations that they would use their own initiative and energies in a positive way directed towards the benefit of the group and the project as a whole. I also treated the young participants with the same *respect* as I would have treated a group of adults. This was a deliberate strategy based upon my own experience of feeling like a disempowered teenager. My experiences, anecdotal evidence and the literature showed me that adults, particularly researchers, parents and teachers often marginalise and disempower young people. They can be disempowered through educational policy, through the media and through institutional practice. I am not suggesting that there is a major conspiracy against young people but I am suggesting that through conscious and unconscious ways young people can be disempowered very often by those that are set up to empower them. I am reminded here of the words of Ken Robinson (Robinson and Aronica, 2009) who suggests that we are all born with a tremendous amount of natural capabilities that we lose due to the way we are educated. He suggests that, ironically, schools are not

helping young people to connect to their true talents and therefore students do not know what they are capable of achieving.

Knowing that there can be a fine line between empowerment and disempowerment led me to incorporate some essential elements regarding the core group of young people that I worked with on this project. The essential elements were:

- Everyone had a voice. Core group participants were encouraged at all stages of the project to make their voices heard, to put across their thoughts, feelings and ideas, and make contributions from their point of view. For example, in the final write up phase of this project I sent all the core participants copies of what I had written about them and asked them to comment. I asked them for alternative interpretations, to suggest where I may have made mistakes and for them to tell me what I could have included that was missing. Only one of the core participants did not respond with any comments. One of the participants who did respond was not happy with how I had introduced them and asked me to make some changes, which I did, and these changes were subsequently agreed by them. I have incorporated all of the feedback and comments made by the participants, the overriding comments indicating that they are happy with the results and with how they have been portrayed.
- Everyone had the right to leave the project at any time for any reason. This was one of the more controversial elements, and this right to leave was taken up by several of the core group participants. It could (and did) cause me a lot of problems, but I wanted the participants to be involved for the right reasons; because they wanted to be and not because I was putting pressure on them to stay. Not all the core group participants agreed with this element and some felt it gave people rights but not responsibilities.
- The project was creatively based. My professional experience showed me that creative activities could lead to empowerment. Central to the project was the use of techniques from the theatre and the arts.

The young people I worked with on this project came from varying backgrounds and from various locations around the UK. The common factors between them were that they were all born in the UK and they were all at school during their involvement with the project. I am using pseudonyms for ethical reasons.

### Terry.

Terry, a British male of Bangladeshi descent, was aged 16 when he joined the research project. He was a high achiever at school. He left school with the highest grades of his year. Terry lived in North London with his parents, brothers and sisters. He attended a large comprehensive school in North London and had aspirations of becoming a doctor. Terry was enthusiastically involved in this project and was the only core participant to stay involved continuously from the beginning to the end. He saw many changes happening, most noticeably the change in core members, as people left, others joined, left and then returned.

Although I feel that Terry probably gained more from this project in ways that will be exemplified later in the thesis, than any other core group member, I believe that some of the changes affected him in a negative way, particularly when he felt he was repeating sections of work to allow others to catch up to him. In addition, I feel that towards the end of the project there were a lot more concentrated discussion based sessions rather than creative action based sessions, which I feel he enjoyed less. Terry delivered ten workshops with the core group to a variety of schools and youth groups.

### Chantelle.

Chantelle, a British female of white Anglo Saxon descent, was aged 15 when she joined the research project. She was a high achiever at a large comprehensive school in North Somerset. Chantelle was a highly motivated girl and was driven academically towards her schoolwork. This devotion to her schoolwork may have affected group dynamics and her attendance. Chantelle regarded this project as an 'optional extra' which was not going to jeopardise her goals and achievements at school.

Early on in the project Chantelle realised that her biggest fear was presenting in front of others, a fear she was able to overcome by presenting the workshops in schools, despite missing several sessions and interview slots during the project. Chantelle was a best friend to Tanya, one of the other core participants. The project uncovered problems that existed within their relationship and they ceased to be such close friends once the project finished. Chantelle participated for three months, which included the trip to



Japan. She delivered six workshops with the core group to five schools and one youth group.

#### Tanya.

Tanya, a British female of Chinese descent, was aged 15 when she joined the research project. She was a high achiever at a large comprehensive school in North Somerset. Tanya was a very enthusiastic participant and was the most vocal of the three students who wanted to continue with the project when problems of participation arose. Tanya was initially a good friend of Chantelle, one of the other core participants, but the project uncovered problems that existed within their relationship and they ceased to be such close friends once the project finished. Tanya participated for three months, including the trip to Japan. She delivered six workshops with the core group to five schools and one youth group.

#### Robin.

Robin, a British male of white Anglo Saxon descent, was aged 14 when he joined the research project. He was the youngest of the core group members and attended a large comprehensive school in North Somerset. Robin was doing reasonably well at school but was behind in a few of his subjects. This was one of the reasons cited by the school as to why they did not want him to participate in the final sessions of the project – he had to catch up on schoolwork. Robin was often enthusiastic during the project but I think he found some of the other members slightly overpowering during certain phases of the project. Robin participated for three months, including the trip to Japan. He delivered six workshops with the core group to five schools and one youth group.

#### Michelle.

Michelle, a British female of Anglo-Indian descent was aged 15 when she joined the research project. She was a high achiever at school with an interest in media and film. Michelle lived in Cardiff, Wales with her mother where she attended a Welsh speaking maintained school. Michelle was one of the original core group members, but after two sessions she realised that she could not cope with the amount of work in her new school year and the project, so she left the project. Michelle met the new core group briefly at a

meeting in London during March 2007. She rejoined as a core group member in the final phase, July 2007. Michelle was very serious in her involvement and contributed considerably to the process. Michelle had an assertive style of interaction which sometimes overpowered the voices of her fellow group members. Michelle delivered four workshops with the core group; two primary schools, one youth group and one mixed group at a college.

#### Lorna.

Lorna, a British female of Afro-Caribbean descent was aged 15 when she joined the research project She went to school in Richmond upon Thames. Lorna only participated for the first two sessions on the project and was an enthusiastic participant during these two days. However she left citing pressures from school and did not deliver any workshops.

For details about the schools and other organisations involved in this project please see appendix 1.

#### The Temiars.

Although not directly involved in this project, the Temiar people have been a great source of inspiration for this project and so deserve a mention. The Temiars are one of 18 indigenous aboriginal groups (Orang Asli) in Malaysia and number less than 100,000 people. The Temiars are one of several cultures in the world that appear to deal with the problem of violence among its members by structuring feelings that often appear suppressed by other cultures. Traditionally Temiar children see no forms of violence except the overwhelming violence of thunder storms and floods (Dentan, 1999 and Jennings, 1995). Temiar and other Orang Asli groups do not deliberately punish aggression in children and this absence of punishment appears to suggest that the would-be aggressive child has no model to imitate (Dentan, 1968 and Jennings, 1995). Temiar children learn that fear and flight are valued, not hostility and aggression, and are taught that illness comes from harsh words (Roseman, 1991).

The main themes for this research project are:

- Bullying
- Power and empowerment
- Theatre and creativity
- Youth participation
- Co-construction of learning

I have designed the thesis so that each chapter builds on those that preceded it. One of the most difficult aspects of producing the thesis was in drawing together the multiple voices and complex ideas of the project into a rational framework. I have decided therefore to begin with a methodology chapter in which to explore aspects of critical inquiry, action research and other theories that have informed the development of my research. This is followed by a discussion on bullying, which leads into ideas about power, which in turn is built upon in the theatre sections through the Theatre of the Oppressed. Following a chapter about the project activities, I consolidate ideas of power, empowerment and creativity in the chapter on youth participation. Following this I have presented a chapter on learning which looks at the learning of myself, the core group and ideas about the success or failure of the project. Chapters 1 to 3 focus primarily on theory. The chapters that follow these focus primarily on practice.

As already stated the themes and ideas contained within this thesis come from multiple viewpoints. Although I wrote the final report I was very careful to give all the core group participants chances to comment, delete and add their points of view. I ensured this process by giving all the core participants copies of what I had written about them. I followed this up with e-mails and phone calls urging them to comment. I also gave them a deadline by which to send their comments to me.

I have made use of a variety of methods to analyse the data including interpretation and attributional analysis and have presented them in a variety of ways. I have found the process of data analysis new and refreshing; it has given me a fresh pair of eyes to look at the evidence and has helped me look at this information from varying angles. The research speaks for itself, the young peoples' voices remain central to the research, as does my own voice. I have not hidden any aspects of the research process and have remained as transparent as possible. I have not looked for ultimate truths or broad generalisations. I have also not sought to present a report demonstrating the perfect

creative project. My research and the process I undertook has had many faults and has shown me that my practice needs a continuous reflective approach. I tentatively suggest that the process of this research has been empowering for myself, my core group participants and the users of the core group's workshop sessions. All of the participants have gained something from this research project and I do not believe that anyone was damaged by it.

I do not suggest that the findings contained within this thesis contain ultimate truths. I accept that there may be further possible interpretations of the data available. As part of my effort to be transparent I have included a selection of original data in the appendices in case readers wish to check or offer up alternative possibilities.

I wanted to provide video recording examples of the core group's workshops and sessions as an additional appendix to this thesis. As I had undertaken to protect the anonymity of my participants, keeping the tapes went against my research ethics policy, so I have been obliged to destroy all original video tapes pertaining to this research. My Supervisors have been given a chance to view the tapes. Now only the transcripts remain.

## Chapter 2. Research methodology.

Within this chapter I describe the methodology of my research and some of the theories and practices that have informed its development and design. The methodology chapter, contrary to tradition, has been placed before the literature review to help contextualise the research for the reader.

My methodology for this research essentially draws upon an Action Research model. The overriding concern was the empowerment of the participants involved, particularly the empowerment of the core group members.

I needed a methodology that could provide a framework for collective empowerment and emancipation, which Action Research offers; this rather than its suitability as a means to answer specific questions, arising from the relevant literature, was the main motivation for choosing action research as the methodology.

In this context I explored the journeys lived and created by myself and the young people who participated. Since I did not know the destinations of these journeys, I needed a theoretical perspective that would allow the group and myself a free exploration of ideas and practice, allow for a critical ontology and the use of practical interpretative methods of analysis.

*User involvement means people being confident to speak on their own terms, being respected as subjects in their own right (Everitt and Hardiker, 1996. p 178).*

The notion that children's voices should be heard on matters that affect them is a relatively new development for researchers (Morrow, 1999), although research suggests that students have well-formulated opinions about their learning, and what they want teachers to do to help them learn (Postlethwaite and Haggarty, 2002).

In analysing my findings I focused mainly on the reactions of the research group participants to the process as a whole and their perceptions of its outcomes. In this endeavor I explored with them:

- their own criteria for success;
- their reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of the process we have undertaken together;
- their reflections on their perceived outcomes, including reasons for success or otherwise;
- their suggestions on how future programmes could be improved.

I also focused upon the immediate reactions to the presented workshop programme of the recipient pupils and adult observers (users). To gauge effectiveness and success I asked the research group, the participants and adult observers their ideas on the effectiveness of this project. I compared the young people's ideas for success against my own, which are expressed in the following questions:

- Was the anti-bullying programme effective?
- Have the research group participants felt empowered through participation in the research?
- Have the research group participants learned new skills that can be used in their everyday life?
- Have the young people become more aware of things they have the power to change in their own life?
- Do the young people feel the anti-bullying programme was a success?

One way to involve the young researchers is to ask them to read and comment on the adult researchers' analysis of the data (Kirby, 1999). I discussed findings and ideas with the core research group and went back to them after periods of reflection for more discussion. Through interpretation of the data I wrote up my thesis, which the research group had the opportunity to comment on. Any comments were then woven into the final thesis. All but one of the core group participants returned feedback and comments to me, all of which were utilised.

As a group we were interacting and collaborating together towards one common goal, constructing the project and making meaning of it as we went along. Although there were some fixed goals, such as producing a set of creative anti-bullying workshops and delivering them to schools, how we arrived at our destination was of a collaborative nature. While we were, in effect, co-constructing meaning as a group, we all had our

own interpretations of what we eventually constructed together as well as interpretations as to how the project went. I was not looking for ultimate truths or to create broad generalisations about particular behaviour patterns, but exploring useful or liberating ideas.

This lends itself to a form of theoretical analysis; constructionism. Constructionism does not allow for true or valid interpretations, only useful, rewarding, oppressive, contradictory or liberating interpretations (Crotty, 2005). The constructionist approach suggests that all knowledge is socially constructed, which is in direct opposition to a positivist stance that tells us that meaning already exists in objects or ideas. There is not an unlimited supply of constructions; they are limited. For example ostriches cannot fly. Within constructionism we are able to bring subjectivity and objectivity together; their meanings are bound up with each other (Crotty, 2005). Constructionism allows for the co-construction of knowledge, rather than instructionist modes of learning that are more in keeping with a positivist stance (Papert, 1993). Constructionism gives the learner an active position of teacher/learner rather than the passive recipient of knowledge (Harel and Papert, 1993). Construction in this way gives us an idea of building or creating things, of learning while we are doing. *By thinking and talking about what we do, without denying the importance of teaching, it locates important directions of educational innovation in developing better things to do and more powerful ways to think about what we are doing* (Harel and Papert, 1993. p. 42).

Unless we live as isolated beings our constructions will be of a social nature, and we construct meanings through a historical lens. Geertz calls meaningful symbols indispensable in constituting culture. Social constructionism and social constructivism deal with ways, in which social phenomena develop, they are distinct. Social constructionism is typically described as a sociological construct whereas social constructivism is typically described as a psychological construct. Social constructionism refers to the development of phenomena relative to social contexts while social constructivism refers to an individual's making meaning of knowledge within a social context (Vygotsky, 1978). Social constructivist approaches acknowledge a need for pupil-to-pupil interaction to enable them not only to take more control of their learning but are helpful in creating common knowledge (Adams, 2006).

## 2.1. Action Research

Action research has been and is known by many names, including emancipatory or empowerment research, action learning, participatory action research, reflective research, collaborative or co-operative inquiry, action science, developmental action inquiry, contextual action research and living theory approach. These are all variations on a theme but essentially are about 'learning by doing'. It is about *action*, rather than sitting around and just talking about an idea or set of ideas.

Action research is located within critical enquiry, using reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it (Freire, 1972), because when action and reflection are united they become creative and they illuminate each other (Freire, 1976). In other words, practical critical activity is the methodology of understanding human activity and the activity by which we develop understanding. *This for Vygotsky meant a tool for understanding learning and development, and a tool to produce learning and development in others, the development of higher modes of thought.* (Lisle, 2006. p. 121).

Action Research can help challenge stereotypes, question oppressive ideology and confront our existing cultural interpretations. *When people confront their situation, they discover in it the obstacles to their humanisation and a call to struggle against them* (Freire, 1972). The first stage to successfully challenge bullying is to recognise that we are being bullied. The issues of definition and interpretation of experience can be tackled through group dialogue. This is not a process that the individual takes. I have been working from within a group. As Freire states, *only dialogue is capable of critical thinking and the researcher is the students' partner as they engage together in critical thinking and a quest for mutual humanisation* (quoted in Crotty, 2005). It is important therefore that I have a methodology that is dialogical, problem-posing and conscientising (Freire, 1976). Critical forms of research call current ideology into question, and initiate action, in the cause of social justice (Crotty, 2005).

Action research provides a research framework that fits in to the critical paradigm and the constructionist approach. *Action research is designed to improve the researched subjects' capacities to solve problems, develop skills, and increase their chances of self-determination* (Boog, 2003. p. 426). Although action research is practised in many



different forms and run in a wide variety of ways (Kusch et al, 2005; Lewin, 1948; Boog, 2003), action research has always been emancipatory and participatory research.

Action research models are all supported by a participatory worldview and are meant to be a double-sided process of research, self-research and education directed at individual empowerment and collective empowerment and/or emancipation ... To emancipate means to free oneself from restraint, control or the power of someone else (Boog, 2003).

*Action research democratizes research processes through the inclusion of the local stakeholders as co-researchers ... [and] uses a professional researcher and stakeholders to help define the problems to be examined, cogenerate relevant knowledge about them, learn and execute social research techniques, take actions and interpret the results of actions based upon what they have learned (Greenwood, 1998. p.p. 3-4).*

Lewin coined the phrase 'action research' (Lewin, 1948; Warrican, 2006; Boog, 2003; Evans, 1995), but the term 'action research' itself can mean different things to different people. When Kusch et al were implementing a cross-cultural action research project the experienced action research researchers found it difficult to agree on a single definition of action research (2005). Lewin understood action research to be comparative research on the conditions and effects of various forms of social action, and research leading to social action (Lewin, 1948; Boog, 2003). For Callewaert action research is a form of critical pedagogy in which theory and practice are conflated (quoted in Kusch et al, 2005). Kemmis and Carr suggest the use of a self-reflective cycle to describe action research and emphasised the practitioner-research aspect. The action researcher would be investigating his or her own practice, not commissioning someone else to do so, and would also make the action both participatory and collaborative (Evans, 1995).

Elliott's model of action research could be accomplished without the support of colleagues, whereas for Lewin, action research was a group commitment (Adelman, 1993). Both models, however, are based on a cyclical process, and include reconnaissance, planning, acting, observing, reflecting and re-planning as a result of reflection (Kemmis and McTaggart quoted in Evans, 1995), and sometimes as a flow chart (Elliott quoted in Evans, 1995). Jeremy adds that action research means inquiry that is systematic, intentional, collaborative, and democratic in intent and process (2001). Integral to an action-research process are the goals of social justice, equality and

equity as existing teaching, training and education practices are examined critically and transformed (Carr and Kemmis, 1986; Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1993; Noffke and Stevenson, 1995; Zeichner and Gore, 1995).

Freire's experiences and perceptions have probably had the most profound influence in recent years on action research. According to Keune and Boog, Freire's ideas influenced participatory and educational action research all over the world (Boog, 2003).

Thus, the heart of action research is the promotion of collaboration between a researcher-innovator and his or her clients. This drive for collaboration is grounded in the epistemological assumptions that knowledge does not only exist objectively outside the 'knower', but that it is also subjectively created by experiences; that knowledge is generated and formalised through the sharing of different perspectives about experiences. (Warrican, 2006). In this sense, action research is rationalistic, it operates on the assumption that human life may be made intelligible, accessible to human logos or reason, in a broad or full embodied sense. To be rationalistic is to believe in the power of thinking, insight and dialogue ... Rationality expresses a faith that we can share this world, that we can make things understandable to each other, that experience can be made intelligible (Van Manen, 1997). This is in slight contrast to Coles, who suggests that action research participants do not always possess the necessary evidence to make a completely rational choice (Kusch et al, 2005). Van Manen suggests that it is only *naive rationalism that believes that the phenomena of life can be made intellectually crystal clear or theoretically perfectly transparent* (Van Manen, 1997. p. 17).

Action research can be considered to be part of a constructivist approach, whereby knowledge is co-constructed between the researcher and the researched. In action research projects we see not only interactions and collaborations between the researcher and participants or co-researchers, we should also see some kind of joint ownership. After all, emancipation implies that the generated results of action research are two-sided (Boog, 2003). I contest that while many action research projects talk about the collaborative nature of the research process and that it engenders social justice, equality and positive change, much of the direct positive outcomes are not predominantly for the participant collaborators (such as the students and young people engaged in the research process). Rather the positive outcomes are for the teacher/researcher on a personal,

professional and political level and how they come to 'own' and produce knowledge for their own purposes (Jeremy, 2001). By contrast, most participant collaborators in action research projects have to make do with being a part of 'grand' outcomes such as enhancing the educational experiences of all students in all schools (Jeremy, 2001), while the researcher/teacher usually owns the 'data' and controls the interpretation of it as well as the way it is used to answer the research question (Boog, 2003).

It can be very difficult for teacher/researchers to accept joint ownership of the research with their student collaborators, which can be born out with comments such as; 'when I speak about 'my' research, I mention 'my' creation ..., of a respectful atmosphere in the classroom ..., 'I' started adding in elements of and I had realised 'I' had come full circle ...,' (Jeremy, 2001 my emphasis). In addition, some action research projects are used with a focus of allowing teacher/researchers to *experiment* on students; for example, action research allowed one of Jeremy's subjects to pursue her goals of experimenting with constructivism in her mathematics classroom (Jeremy, 2001). Griffiths criticises action research when used as a management tool for failing to acknowledge the manipulations of staff involved in the studies (1990). So, emancipation and empowerment cannot be guaranteed by the wide range of action research theories available (Boog, 2003).

We need to recognise the imbalance of power between the researcher and the co-researchers in action research and bring together all the stakeholders on a regular basis to allow for collaborative planning and designing of actions aimed at solving their problems. (Warrican, 2006). There should also be a framework for the co-researchers to get something *directly* out of the research process, whether it be rewards, treats, trips and more importantly chances to improve capacities to solve problems, develop skills (including professional skills), increase their chances of self-determination, and to have more influence on the functioning and decision-making processes of organisations and institutions from the context in which they act (Boog, 2003).

The researcher has usually put a lot of time, effort and funds into starting and running an action research project. Having invested so much, s/he may want to try to force (openly or subtly, consciously or unconsciously) the research process to go in certain directions. Chin and Benne (1976) emphasise that any attempts to influence individuals must be within collaborative relationships. Collaboration not only provides the

innovator with an opportunity to make suggestions but also gives the 'clients' an equal voice in the innovative process, as well as a chance to influence themselves. Thus, this approach seeks to avoid manipulation and indoctrination, and encourages a relationship in which both the innovator and the 'clients' can try to persuade each other of the direction that the innovation should go.

Chin and Benne (1976) see action research as the one strategy that exemplifies the normative-re-educative approach. Similarly, Freire (1976) points out that through dialogue the teacher is no longer one who teaches, but one who is also taught through dialogue with students. Greenwood and Levin (1998) suggest that when participants are taken on as 'partners' in a research project they are likely to develop commitment to it, and a sense of ownership. It is this sense of commitment and ownership that contributes to successful implementation and sustaining of educational innovations.

Those involved in action research need to remember that learning about action research involves the active participation of the learner in constructing and controlling the language and activities of their learning about action research (Kusch et al, 2005). For collaboration and ownership of an action research project not to be purely superficial or false, one needs to use the students' cultural universe as a point of departure because language projects different world-views. Following Freire's conception of, conscientisation; conscious creative reflection on learning. *The participants' cultural universe was more than a point of departure; it was also a modus operandi for the event* (Kusch et al, 2005. p. 472).

It is suggested that those undertaking action research projects should engage themselves in interpretive research (Van Manen, 1997; Jeremy, 2001; Kusch et al, 2005), because such approaches are suited to the goals of reflection (Jeremy, 2001) and the preferred method for human sciences involves description, interpretation, and self-reflective or critical analysis (Van Manen, 1997). The whole process and findings of this research are open to interpretation, indeed praxis is itself a moment of interpretation (Bourdieu quoted in Moore, 1994). All interpretations carry with them the voice of an inherited tradition and prevailing culture and are overlaid with reflections from past generations (Crotty, 2005). Authentic, lived experience therefore needs to be questioned and critically interpreted. I suggest that to interpret critically could be likened to what a critic does to illumine a poem (Geertz, 1983). Somebody once said that if tigers could

talk, we would not be able to understand them. Their formation of the world would be so different from our own that true translation or interpretation would be impossible. (Hickson, 1997a) There is no reason why interpretation should be an all-or-nothing business. Why cannot there be degrees of understanding and misunderstanding (Hobart, 1982)?

This reflection should be a process undertaken by both the researcher and the research participants and not, as Jeremy points out, just be the teacher/researcher critically analysing their students' and their own actions (Jeremy, 2001). It is also worth remembering that a person cannot reflect on lived experience while living through the experience. *For example, if one tries to reflect on one's anger while being angry one finds that that anger has already changed or dissipated ... Reflection on lived experience is always recollective: it is reflection on experience that has already passed or lived through* (Van Manen, 1997. p. 10).

Finally, the success of an action research project in school is likely to be limited if a project is not supported by those in management positions in a school. As Fullan (2001) observed, bottom-up approaches to innovation are unlikely to be successful as those at the bottom often lack the authority to change policies or gain financial and other support for an innovation.

The action research that I was involved in for this project was based around six young people and myself exploring how we they could best learn to design and deliver an effective anti-bullying workshop to other young people. As a group we went through several Action Research cycles. The group was not static. Changes in group membership and group dynamics happened during each cycle. *In describing this project in terms of a series of Action Research Cycles, the following emerged:*

#### Initial Plan.

Get a small group of (about 4) young people together, train them up in creative anti-bullying strategies and help them design and deliver their own creative anti-bullying workshop programme to other young people.

### Action.

- Bring together interested young people to form a group.
- Run arts and drama based creative sessions with the group exploring the topics of power, empowerment, bullying and participation.
- Get the participants to share their ideas with each other through creative workshop activities.
- Provide the participants with anti-bullying skills training.
- Collect data by recording sessions, group discussions and interviews with the participants.

### Reflection.

- At the end of sessions get participants to reflect on what they have learned and what they have done, employing a semi-structured interview schedule.
- Researcher reflects on what went well and what did not go quite so well.

### Action.

- Two members leave the project.

### Reflection.

- Why did members leave the project?
- How can I replace members?
- How can I improve the chances that members will stay?

### Revised Plan.

- New strategy for replacing members.
- Invite new members.

### Action.

- Three new members from a local school plus one original member.
- Run arts and drama based creative sessions with the group exploring the topics of power, empowerment, bullying and participation.
- Group will design and deliver sessions to other young people.
- Get the participants to share their ideas with each other through creative workshop activities.
- Include a foreign trip as a motivational tool.

- Provide the participants with anti-bullying skills training.
- Collect data by recording sessions, group discussions and interviews with the participants.

#### Observe.

- The researcher observes the group in action, how they interact, what they share and what they produce.

#### Reflection.

- The researcher reflects on group dynamics and what the participants share and discuss.

#### Evaluate.

- The researcher records the feelings of the participants at key moments, before delivering workshops and after foreign trip.

#### Reflection.

- The researcher reflects on the ideas and suggestions of the participants. In addition the researcher uses his own expertise in making decisions about the incorporation of new ideas and processes.

#### Action.

- The three new participants leave the project.
- Discuss issues with remaining participant.

#### Reflection.

- Why did members leave the project?
- How can we replace members?
- How can we improve the chances that members will stay?

#### Revised Plan.

- Based upon the experiences, ideas and learning of the researcher and the remaining participant a revised plan is drawn up. This revised plan is implemented with the existing participant and a new participant.

#### Action.

- Bring together interested or existing young people to form a group.

- Run arts and drama based creative sessions with the group exploring the topics of power, empowerment, bullying and participation. Include other topics if called upon.
- Encourage the participants to share their ideas with each other through creative workshop activities.
- Provide the participants with anti-bullying skills training directly or through the use of outside professionals or other young people.
- Include the backing of schools, with sessions possibly taking place within schools
- Concentrate participation in to a two-week period.
- Organise the group members to deliver sessions to other young people in schools and community group settings.
- Collect data by recording sessions, group discussions, interviews with the participants, interviews/questionnaires with the recipients and other methods suggested by the participants.
- Transcribe data.

#### Evaluate.

- Evaluate the feedback from the recipients of the sessions run by the young participants.
- In addition to evaluating the feelings and ideas of the participants the researcher, after transcribing the recorded data, interpreted the data. Initially the researcher categorised and codified the data, and after much cross-referencing suggested some tentative outcomes. Although this is not hermeneutical research, there are large amounts of interpretation involved. In this sense the researcher looked for rich descriptions; not only in what is said but how things are said, along with where they are said. Sometimes what is not said will be important, just as silences and pauses can say many things. Interpretation will be holistic and not isolated or out of context.
- Use of attributional theories of analysis.

#### Reflection.

- The initial results and the researcher's interpretations are shared with all the participants for their input, suggestions and modifications.
- The researcher reflected upon all these new ideas.
- Share ideas with supervisors.



Action.

- The researcher rewrites the results along with other parts of the thesis.

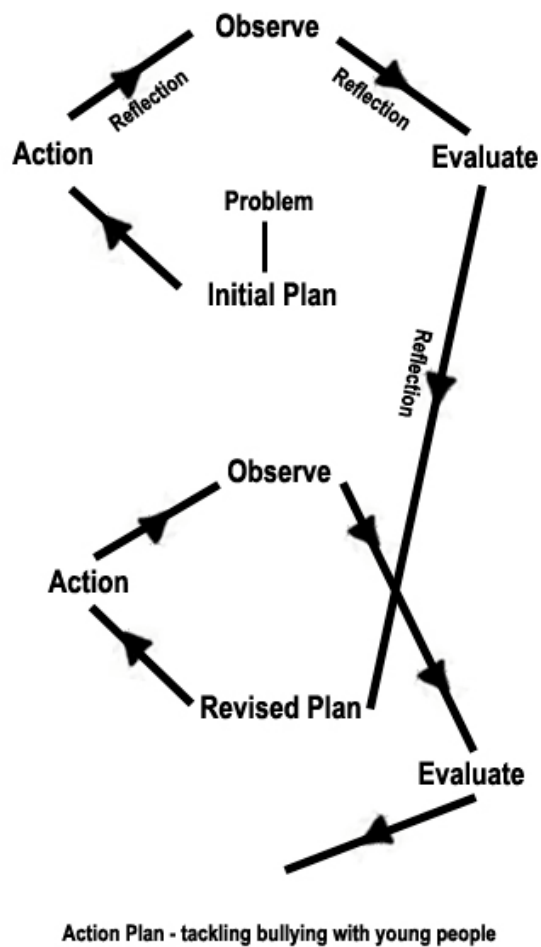
Reflection.

- The researcher reflected on the feedback from participants and others.
- The researcher reflected upon his ideas and actions.
- Share ideas with supervisors.

Action.

The researcher completes the final version of the thesis.

Figure 1. The action research cycle.



## 2.2. Participant and filmed observation of elements of the process.

*One way of conducting action research is to engage in participant observation, which may be seen as a systematic attempt to discover knowledge that a group of people has learned (Searle, 1993. p.1).*

I chose this method as it can become a liberating dialogue, *which provides a possibility for the transformation of action (John, 2003. p. 56) and empowerment, as some researchers are often seen as predators ... their research serving as a vehicle for status, income or professional advancement which is denied those studied (Lee, 1993. p. 157).*

*Participant observation allows data to be co-produced in the relationship between researcher and researched ... and will allow a relationship to develop between the researcher and researched ... using a variety of creative methods (John, 2003. p. 70).*

Some of the strengths or positive aspects of participant observation include:

- helps the researcher see the reality from the point of view of the participants;
- allows the researcher to record experiences and convey these back to the participants for reflection and critical inquiry (constructive critical feedback);
- seeks to understand how relationships and practices change (action);
- helps create a space where participants can share their own experiences in a respectful and safe way;
- it does not try to hide the researcher;
- it can be multidimensional and has a concern for people;
- it can be empowering for participants, is flexible and open to criticism and allows time for reflection.

Some of the weaknesses of participant observation include:

- generalisation is not possible;
- a wide range of interpretations are possible;
- there are issues of validity and reliability;
- it is very time consuming;
- it could be open to abuse, particularly if strong and rigorous ethics code of conduct is not in place.

Some of the ways I tried to tackle these weaknesses were:

- 1) I did not seek ultimate truths or broad generalisations but aimed to discover theories of participation and empowerment that may be transferable to other groups in a variety of settings.
- 2) I checked my interpretations with my group participants, my supervisor and other interested parties.
- 3) To help overcome issues of validity and reliability, I triangulated by using additional methods and I took care to reflect on the work.
- 4) It is difficult to save time so I ensured that I allowed adequate time for the job in hand.
- 5) I had a rigorous ethics code in place.

The instruments I used to observe included the use of a video camera, photographs, and field notes, taking into account ethical considerations. I chose two key areas of participant observation;

- a) observation of the group in workshop activities;
- b) observation of the group when they delivered their workshops to other schools.

a) Although attempting to get totally involved in the research collaboration, I was also aware of the dangers of 'going native' (Gold, 1958). I provided the original structure for these workshop sessions, but they were interpreted and modified by the participants as it is was a collaborative inquiry utilising collaborative methodology. Research subjects are not objects, they are co-researchers.

During these sessions the participants were involved in a variety of creative games, improvisation and role-play. I observed and questioned their thoughts and feelings concerning participation in the activities. The participants were also observed and they questioned each other.

b) The core group designed an interactive creative workshop session that they delivered to other young people. I observed and questioned this process. I also observed the sessions that they ran with the young people. Although no participants were forced to engage in any of the activities, they were encouraged to participate.

### 2.3. Focused interviews and questionnaires geared to find out what all the participants have gained from the exercise, helping them to focus on key issues.

I undertook individual interviews and small group discussions in an effort to overcome shortcomings that either of them can hold. For example, individual interviews might allow young people to express views, which they saw as unpopular among their peers, while the group interviews might give young people the confidence to say critical things, which they may have been too anxious to say in the one-to-one interview situation (Postlethwaite and Haggarty, 2002).

At this point a distinction needs to be made between the primary research participants and the recipients of the work they produced (who are, in a sense, also participants). Therefore the group of young people with whom I worked directly, I have termed 'the core group'; 'recipients' were the young people to whom the participants delivered their workshops and who I have termed 'the users'. I assessed the recipients' reactions by means of structured questionnaires and held ongoing, intensive, semi-structured interviews with the participants.

These interviews had a fairly open framework, which allowed for focused, conversational, two-way communication. Not all questions were designed and phrased ahead of time. The majority of questions were created during the interview, allowing both the interviewer and the person being interviewed the flexibility to probe for details or discuss issues.

*The question being researched must be of major importance to the participants (Greenwood, 1998. p. 116) and when participants are asked to fill out questionnaires on something they feel is important there is the satisfaction of being asked your opinion in a matter which is of great personal concern (Wilson and Sapsford, 1996. p. 118).*

Participant observation (discussed earlier) involved asking questions. In addition to this, to assist me in the reflective and critical process, I regard questionnaires as a valuable tool to use with the participants. They are a structured method of data collection that allows participants to think freely about a particular topic. When the same questionnaire is repeated with a considerable time gap between them it can also help show the researcher how thoughts and ideas of the participants have changed over time.

In addition I believe a short, salient questionnaire helps focus participants on the topic being discussed with minimum input from outside influence, whether from the researcher or other participants.

Questions that I asked included the following:

- What does the word ‘bullying’ mean to you?
- What does the word empowerment mean to you?
- How do you think you might benefit from personal involvement in this project?
- What personal qualities, ideas and skills do you think you can offer this project?
- What ideas do you have for stopping bullying?

*If you keep in mind that your interviews are a negotiation process in which your goal is to share another’s understanding of their world, you should not find it difficult to incorporate the attitudes that encourage responsiveness in your informant. (Michrina and Richards, 1996. p. 55).*

#### 2.4. Data

Upon reflection, if I was able to restart this project, knowing what I now know, I would collect data in different ways and would ask different questions of the core group participants. During the project I had not looked far enough ahead to see that regular snap shots on key themes in the form of brief questionnaires could have been extremely good indicators. In addition, some attributional analysis during the project might have helped me and the core group to better understand and appreciate motivational issues of project members and how group members perspectives on sessions could be different. Nor had I thought deeply enough about simple key regular questions to ask such as; “Why did x activity work?” or “Why was your workshop a success/failure?” I would also be much more aware of when participants dodged or deflected questions or when to press them for deeper answers. Much of my data is in the form of filmed interviews, discussions and activities. Once all the data had been collated I had 25 hours of recorded video footage, which translates into about 125,000 words. Moreover I had 12 x 8-page questionnaires, 70 evaluation sheets, 5 reflective diaries, and 150 e-mails to analyse. I draw on data from all my sources to analyse, the most useful of which I found was the filmed data. One of the problems with the filmed data is its lack of answers to specific

questions from all the core group members. Therefore in my hunt for useable data I have found it useful to explore how core group members felt regarding certain themes, and how they answered certain things in addition to what they actually said.

I found that once I was immersed in my data that my notions of success changed from wanting the core group members to have learned many things and becoming more empowered to finding enough data that would be useful in demonstrating how core group members felt about participation in the project and what they felt about their own contributions towards it. The action research model and Weiner's (1986) theory of attribution (see section 2.2) were key in allowing me to produce and make sense of the data.)

There are many difficulties associated with research in schools, not least of which are the practical matters of access. During this research, I had some access to schools but only for the work I was doing with the 'core group', which was the main focus of this research... Although the 'user' input was an important part of the research process, it was mainly useful in so far as it provided data to help me analyse outcomes for the core group. The findings and interventions with the 'users' although interesting, were not my main focus, so they were not followed-up or verified by me on this project.

There are many other theories and methodologies that contributed towards my work. The two that I will mention here are Attribution Theory and Grounded Theory. Brief notes can be found in the appendices on the related background theories of Transformative Theory, performance and other forms of constructed activity, other relevant psychological perspectives and Group Dynamic Theory. Not all of the theories complimented each other. There were some conflicts. For example; Group Dynamic Theory suggests that we should concentrate on Group Dynamics but this can sometimes make us lose sight of the subject matter we are exploring (see section 3.6 Social Theatre) for more details.

### 2.5. Attribution theory.

Exploring what students have learned, the effectiveness of learning, how messages are transmitted, and how they perceive their own capabilities (Williams et al, 2004), has prompted researchers to consider why some students are more effective than others.

Weiner's (1986) attribution theory has produced some interesting results in this area (Williams et al, 2004). Not only is attribution theory a useful research tool, it can be used to help young people understand intentions behind their and their teachers actions; it can help with personal motivation; and it can help students recognise that people may have different perceptions of situations than others (Postlethwaite and Haggarty, 2002).

Attribution theory suggests that people attribute different causes to areas of their life where they feel they have failed or succeeded. Internal attributions (I tried hard, I was confident, I was too ill to work etc) suggest that the person feels he or she has some control over their learning, whereas external attributions (They would not listen, the room was too small, I was not taught properly) suggest that people see success or failure as a result of outside causes. It is not only the reasons that people constructed for their success or failure that was important, but whether they saw these as due to internal or external factors and were controllable or uncontrollable (Williams et al, 2004). It is too simplistic to suggest that internal attributions are controllable and external ones uncontrollable; Weiner (2006) suggests, for example, that causes may be internal and uncontrollable, such as examining a person's aptitude, which is construed as internal and yet uncontrollable. Essentially, ability is uncontrollable and effort is controllable. In general people tend to take credit for success internally but blame failure on external factors (Weiner, 2006).

Attribution theory asserts that our causal attributions influence our emotional responses to our own behaviour and to the behaviour of others. For example our optimism as to whether or not a particular behaviour can change influences our helping behaviour towards others (Wilner and Smith, 2007) and our motivation towards tasks in which we are involved.

For example, if a pupil attributes academic success to their own ability (an internal, stable factor) and failure to a factor such as bad luck, task difficulty or poor teaching (an external, unstable one), they will increasingly have an expectation of successful outcomes and be motivated to continue learning. If they attribute success externally (e.g. to luck) and failure to lack of ability they are likely to have a pattern of expectation of failure and task avoidance (Toland and Boyle, 2008. p. 287).

Attribution theory may be used to explore how learners feel about their learning, how learners are motivated, and how people feel about the contribution of co-workers or group members involvement. Toland and Boyle (2008) suggest that retraining people's attributions may lead to positive changes in motivation, self-esteem and achievement. An important issue underlying all attributional studies is that attributions do not necessarily represent the 'true' reasons why an individual may succeed or fail on an activity. Rather it is the perceived (interpreted) explanations that people construct for why they do or do not perform well that are considered by attributional theorists to be even more powerful than the actual reasons (Williams et al, 2004).

Weiner (2006) argues further that when using attribution theory we must be sure that we are using causes rather than reasons. Reasons are linked to free will and intentional actions, whereas causes relate to intentional or unintentional end states (Weiner, 2006).

The statements "I could have worked harder to make the workshop more successful", and "I am going to work harder to make the workshop more successful", are examples of causes and reasons. The first statement has an end state, that of an unsuccessful workshop and a cause of that failure is suggested as working harder. We cannot attribute the lack of 'working harder' as a reason as there is an end state. In the second example we cannot attribute causation, as there is no end state; the workshop is in the future. 'Working harder' now becomes a reason as it is of free will, and intentional.

Intention here includes beliefs as well as desires, and the conditions for acting intentionally include awareness of purpose (Malle and Knobe quoted in Weiner, 2006). In using attribution theory, a requirement is that an action has occurred (a completed deed or state), and a realisation that the causes (determinants of action) can be classified into three characteristics (locus, controllability and stability), both of which can give rise to responsibility inferences about a person (Weiner, 2006).

Attribution theory cannot capture the thought behind reason (Weiner, 2006). Davidson famously argued that the only clear way to understand action explanation is to hold that reasons are causes (Risjord, 2005). Weiner (2006) argues that as reasons are linked to intentional actions and what appears to be free will, that explanations or justifications that make a choice understandable will not be useful in attributional analysis, intentional action explanations cannot be causal explanations. Risjord (2005) argues that beliefs



and pro-attitudes may be cause of action, but contra Davidson, a causal relationship between the action and the reason is not sufficient for explanation. Strauss and Corbin (1990) argued that the qualitative methodology of grounded theory provides opportunities for the exploration of the constructs of people's experiences in terms of their thoughts, feelings and actions.

I analysed the core groups' attributions in the general style of a grounded theory approach (Robson, 2006). I tried to interpret the attributions as the core group would have intended and to allow the categories to emerge from the data (Williams et al, 2004). I had one other researcher look over and check the categories and the comments within them. The constructivist slant on grounded theory recognises the mutual creation of knowledge by the viewer and the viewed and aims toward interpretive understanding of subjects' meanings (Charmaz, 2000). Analysis was achieved through the constant comparative analysis of grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

I organised the text into short extracts in line with Ely's (1991) recommendation to select the smallest meaningful chunks of text or categories.

Categories were derived from:

- (1) what the participants said;
- (2) feelings the researcher thought were implicit in the speech;
- (3) the way questions were structured;
- (4) the context in which the answers were given.

I tried to interpret the attributions as the core group would have intended and to allow the categories to emerge from the data (Williams et al, 2004). Each of my attributional analyses took different courses and worked with varying amounts of data.

## 2.6. Grounded Theory

Grounded theory, developed by Glaser and Strauss (1999), can be particularly helpful when pre-existing theories appear to be inadequate in dealing with the issues arising in any research project. It seeks to progressively generate theory from rich data (Strauss and Corbin, 1990), and encourages researchers to avoid concepts, theories and preconceived ideas at an early stage, allowing subjects' and practitioners' own voices to

be heard (Karkou and Sanderson, 2006). Grounded theory is used to develop theory much like hermeneutics is used to discover meaning and provide some understanding of everyday lived experiences. Both methodologies are of an interpretative and collaborative nature and both seek to answer questions that inform practice. Bennetts (2004) talks about the hermeneutic process being a negotiated and jointly constructed interpretation, encompassing a hermeneutical circle. This is similar to the Action Research cycle. Strauss and Corbin argue that the qualitative methodology of Grounded Theory provides opportunities for the exploration of constructs of people's experiences in terms of their thoughts, feelings, ideas and actions (Crantham and Carroll, 2003).

Grounded theory offers both a strategy for doing research and a means of analysing data arising from the research (Robson, 2002). Grounded theory does not prescribe techniques or approaches to collecting data but is used almost exclusively with qualitative data (Boychuk and Morgan, 2004). Some aspects of Grounded Theory, such as 'constant comparative analysis', were used to shape my data, help me interpret attributions as the core group would have intended and helped me to allow categories to emerge from the data. Constant comparative analysis is a technique of constantly contrasting data against itself, then against evolving original data, and finally against theoretical and conceptual claims still in existence (Boychuk and Morgan, 2004). I kept on gathering and analysing data until the categories that emerged were saturated and I ceased to add anything new to what I already had. I did not use all aspects of grounded theory. I did not for example make repeated visits to the field to collect more data, as it is possible to *design a study which incorporates some aspects of grounded theory while ignoring others* (Robson, 2002 p. 193).

## 2.7. Ethics.

Exeter University ethics approval was given for this project in August 2006 and is current. Given the context of my research I was particularly concerned that ethical concerns were at the forefront of my research project (Wellington, 2000). Essentially, I was going to treat participants with dignity and respect and allow them to give informed consent before participating. There would be no attempt to deceive, and the participants had a right to remain anonymous. On another level we also need to think about the researcher's power, the vulnerability of the participants and the potential harm that a piece of research can do to an individual or a group. All questionnaires, notes, drawings

and recorded clips of participants were kept confidential and in a locked filing cabinet. Before the start of the research I gave the young people a verbal explanation of the purpose of the study and offered them a chance to ask questions about it. In addition I asked each participant and their parents to sign a research approval document which outlined their and my contributions and roles so that they understood the nature of the research and that they were free to withdraw at any time. I also secured an up-to-date enhanced criminal records bureau (CRB) check for myself which is still current.

The ethical considerations outlined this far are standard practice in most research projects where young people are participating. What must remain central is the willing participation of children and young people, their safety and comfort in their participation, respect and recognition of their value to the research. We need to ensure that there is no harm caused but that there is positive benefit wherever possible throughout the process (Skelton, 2008). I kept, rigidly to these ethical guidelines despite feeling a sense that everything was not as it should be as the project unfolded. I noticed that some core group members did not agree with all aspects of my ethics procedure. I also noted that the ethical procedure could be at odds with conventions on the rights of the child.

Article 12.

*States that parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.* (United Nations, 1990).

Article 13.

*States that the child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.* (United Nations, 1990).

Both these articles place an emphasis on the child's right to express their opinions and impart information but do not state 'subject to parental or guardian permission'. University ethical guidelines insist on adult permission and consent before a person under 18 years of age can participate in research. This, it could be argued, goes against the conventions on the rights of the child.

Another of my ethical dilemmas was in allowing one of the participating schools to choose the volunteers who would be working with me. Only chosen volunteers from this school were allowed to participate, which gave the school rights to withdraw their support at any time for any reason. Children and young people must have exactly the same rights of withdrawal from the project and rights over the research material they provide that are accorded adult participants (Skelton, 2008).

The ease with which some of my participants were 'allowed' to leave may have been due to a lack of expectation. Would I have expected more of adult participants? One of the ethical questions already mentioned is that of the right of participants to leave the project at any time for any reason. This became one of the most controversial aspects of my research. My reasoning behind this was due to my anxiety not to put any undue pressure on the participants of this research, taking in to account their ages, the imbalance of power relations, and the ethical dilemma of not wanting to put undue pressure on the participants to stay. One of the core participants felt that I allowed some of the other participants to leave too easily; giving them rights without any responsibility:

*Obviously you have respected the fact that people have the right to pull out at anytime but then some sort of thing should have been placed there to keep them into it, rather than freely just bomb off after the trip [Japan] or whatever you know (Terry's feedback from July 2009).*

Conversly another of the core participants felt that I had not given enough detail to them at the beginning of the project:

*More detail should have been given at the beginning as to the type of work you were considering for us to do, then maybe our decision to agree [to participate] may have altered somewhat (Chantelle's feedback from August 2009).*

In this way ethical research practice can actually close down participation for children and young people and also fail to accord them the same rights as adults in terms of what their consent means. This means that institutional ethical guidelines can deny children's and young people's competence and ability to make decisions about their own lives

(Skelton, 2008). Skelton goes on to ask whether ethical practice in research (particularly that demanded by ethics committees) is to a large extent an adultist construction? Would young people and children write different guidelines about their participation and involvement in research processes?

Bennetts (2004) questions another issue regarding ethics; that of the responsibility of researchers into the lives of others. What was my responsibility for the actions of the participants as a direct result of how I structured the project? How could I be responsible? If the project resulted in reassessment of their lives, and then changes (such as broken friendships), then how could I not be responsible? Were the changes a positive benefit to their lives? Were the changes detrimental to their lives? Two of the core participants were best friends at the start of research. They both left before the research project ended citing their friendship breakdown as one of the reasons. It has been suggested that aspects of the research process had them looking within themselves and at each other with new insights, seeing each other in different ways that contributed to their relationship breakdown. Would this have happened if they had not participated? Did I, in effect, contribute to their relationship breakdown? The participants have not held me responsible for their relationship breakdown. One argument has been that the experience has made them stronger.

Researcher *Is that a permanent change, your friendship with Tanya?*

Chantelle *Yeah. It was a permanent change.*

Researcher *How did that affect you as a person?*

Chantelle *A lot. I think it was a bit of a critical time for things to change and I didn't take it too well to start with. I thought, 'oh great' because a lot of other things happened at the same time and ... em ..., I don't know ..., It was a change. It was not nice but I think I've stayed myself. I've had to be strong about things. If you start crying about things all the time it's not going to get you anywhere*

Researcher *You mentioned strength. Do you think going through it has made you stronger?*

Chantelle *Yes (May 2008).*

Another ethical consideration can be seen as the relationship of the researcher to the research itself, particularly that of practising and presenting good practice to the

consumers of the research, ie the readers. Triangulation, although not often discussed in relation to ethics, can offer us insight into good working practice, as *reliance on one method may bias or distort the researcher's picture of a particular slice of reality she is investigating* (Cohen and Manion, 1994. p. 233). For example by adding a simple questionnaire to the study it could also *overcome the problem of 'method-boundedness'* (Cohen and Manion, 1994. p. 234). Triangulation is good working practice and thus helps to portray educational research as an ethical process.

I was also careful to ensure that this programme promoted equality and respect for human rights and that full ethical and child protection considerations were considered and implemented and that the participants had the right to remain anonymous. I was not completely successful in this as one of the core participants felt that I was placing participants in competition with each other:

*I felt at times as though you were trying to place members of the group in competition with each other, which made it feel uncomfortable and pressured at times* (Chantelle's feedback from August 2009).

I feel it is worth noting that I recognised that 'role' conflicts may have occurred in the process of the research. Diane Fraser, quoting Burgess, explains this well when she tells us "*I assumed that it would be relatively easy to keep the research separate from my role within the organisation ... this was a somewhat naïve view as it was soon found that ethical dilemmas and their solutions were problematic*" (1997. p. 167). To minimise role conflicts, it was important to remind the participants of my potentially biased suggestions, to ensure clear guidelines were produced and given to all research participants, and within myself to regularly reflect on my role and to discuss my role outside of the research with my supervisors and others. The following dialogue was typical of questions I repeatedly asked my core group participants:

Researcher *Do you think I've in any way manipulated your thought processes or the way you've approached this, your workshop strategy or your ideas in any way or forced you to do something that you ...*

Terry *No ... you haven't forced us to say something or do something like that but you've given us situations or suggestions that we can think which one is better for us, and at least we've got that situation presented to us, if we*

*had done it straight from scratch then it would have taken longer, then we can pick the best one ... (July, 2007).*

One ethical consideration not discussed very much in the literature about research with young people is the notion of reciprocity or generosity. Children often have few formal opportunities to give something back to adults, to people they respect and care about who are not related to them (Skelton, 2008). I received various indications from Terry on several occasions that one of his motivations for continuing in this research project was his desire to complete it for me. It could have been a way of him being able to say thank you to me for giving him a chance to be involved in the project in the first place. Terry made the following comments after his final workshop, a workshop that he delivered and where he felt it had not gone as well as it could:

*Today's session we just got on with what we had to do really and finish off the workshop to an end, something I've wanted to do for Andy for quite some time. The past few weeks, I have been trying to learn and do things at the best of my ability, normally I don't portray energy in the way I do things but if I haven't done as well as I could I am sorry for that. But I am glad that now we have successfully put it to rest and I hope I have been useful (Terry's feedback from July 2007).*

Ethics are an important issue to discuss, explore and instigate in research, particularly in research with young people. Although I feel that my ethical considerations were rigorous, I feel that I could have involved the core group participants more in the development of my ethical code for this project.

## 2.8. Validity and reliability.

*If validity is some type of assessment of how well measurements correspond to what is being measured, then there are at least two reasons why qualitative researchers reject the use of the term. The first is obvious—qualitative studies do not measure anything per se. Rather, they seek to describe, interpret and understand. The second is that in taking an interpretive perspective, many if not most qualitative researchers reject the realist epistemology upon which the definition of validity appears to be based (Feldman, 2007. p. 22).*

This research explores multiple narratives; the thesis as a narrative and the stories and processes of those involved as narratives. It does not search for broad generalisations or ultimate truths which are tied up with rationality and positivism (Grundy, 1996). There have been arguments in narrative action research about trying to incorporate truth and validity by suggesting that the authenticity of a research report will demonstrate its validity (e.g. see Winter, 2002). Another example of how the researchers wanted to link validity to action research was by using the concept of *vivencia* or empathetic involvement in processes (Kusch, Geisha, Rebolledo et al, 2005). They claimed that this approach to validity lends support to their idea that learning about action research involves the active participation of the learner in constructing and controlling the language and activities of their learning about action research. I do not feel it is possible to entertain ideas of validity when I am keen to search for the possibility of multiple truths and co-constructions of knowledge. I am also keen for this research to be as rigorous and honest as possible. The question of quality is important to me (Hannu et al, 2007) and I therefore needed to think of validity and reliability from different angles. When we, as action researchers, pay attention to validity then our action research can become good (Feldman, 2007). I cannot claim validity but I want my research to be good so I will therefore discuss other ways to assess the quality of the research. I want this research to result in the improvement of my practice and to help others improve their practice.

Many authors, including Heikkinen, Feldman (Feldman, 2007) Hatch, Wisniewski, Ellis, Bochner, and Hannu (2007), have suggested a variety of ways for evaluating action research. Their suggestions have included: credibility, persuasiveness, verisimilitude, compellingness, explanatory power, moral persuasiveness, interactivity, vulnerability, therapeutic value, truthfulness, historical continuity, reflexivity, dialectics, evocativeness, honesty, ethics, empowerment, transparency and workability. If knowledge is to be trusted and put to use in these larger contexts, then there must be reason for other teachers, students, administrators, policy-makers and parents to believe and trust that knowledge (Feldman, 2007). To demonstrate the quality I have chosen the following constructs as suggested by Hannu, Heikkinen, Huttunen and Syrjälä (2007):

- Historical continuity.
- Principle of reflexivity.
- Principle of dialectics.



- Principle of workability.
- Principle of evocativeness.

### Historical continuity.

Historical continuity has to do with the context and the awareness of the socio-historical frame of an action research project (Hannu et al, 2007). The historical continuity of this project can be demonstrated in several ways:

I have provided clear examples and timelines of key project themes such as:

- Action research cycle (see section 2.1)
- Drop out analysis timeline (see table 7)
- Development of empowerment (see section 5.1)
- Research project process (see chapter 4)

The context of this research; setting the scene and introducing the main protagonists in this research project was initially covered in the introduction. I have attempted to guide the reader through a logical series of events, introducing themes as we go along. The main themes are then explored before the bulk of the analysis is shared with the reader. I have tried not to introduce themes too early or too late and to keep a consistency in writing throughout. The thesis has been checked for historical continuity by two other researchers, my two supervisors and myself several times. Although I gave the core group participants sections to read and comment on, they did not have a copy of the full final thesis before it was completed.

### Reflexivity.

The principal of reflexivity has three parts; the relationship of the researcher to their subject of research; the researchers ontological and epistemological assumptions and; transparency in terms of how well the researcher describes their material and methods.

As outlined in the introduction, I have had a very close relationship to my research subjects of bullying and youth participation. I have experienced bullying, been a bully, seen bullying happen and know close friends and family members who have been

bullied. As a young person I felt disempowered to deal with bullying and isolated from the British education system. I have worked in the field of bullying for over 18 years. The emphasis of my anti-bullying work has been geared towards the empowerment of young people to deal with bullying on their own terms. I have written about bullying, created shows and films about bullying, designed and delivered workshops and seminars about bullying and produced national conferences and international festivals to explore issues of bullying.

My ontological and epistemological presumptions were outlined at the beginning of this chapter. Essentially I come from a constructionist epistemology which rejects the possibility of objectivism; there is no objective truth waiting to be discovered; we construct or co-construct meaning in potentially different ways. Ontological and epistemological issues often merge together, with ontology often being referred to as 'theoretical perspective' (Crotty, 2005), or what the nature of existence, reality, or being is. Ontologically speaking my perspective is from an interpretive and critical position; I critically explore constructions and interpretations of social actors and institutions in order to bring about change, which may lead to empowerment and improved practice.

In terms of transparency I have clearly outlined my methods of data collection and analysis in this chapter and the following theoretical chapters. The study and analysis is clearly outlined in chapter 6 and additional material including some of the original transcripts has been put in the appendices. My descriptions have come from the perspective of practice; joining theory with practice. My style is of a narrative nature and, although this is a piece of academic research, I have wanted to make the majority of it accessible to people outside of the domain, including the young people I worked with.

### Dialectics.

Heikkinen and Winter suggest that a report should show how the research developed insight in dialogue with others, how the report presents different voices and interpretations, and how authentically and genuinely protagonists are represented (Feldman, 2007).

This research demonstrates how insight was developed through co-construction of knowledge and reflective practice. I was engaged in multiple dialogues with the core group participants. I questioned assumptions and promoted a constructive dialogue between participants and a constructive dialogue between participants and myself. The action research cycle helped me to engage with participants in exploring how to make improvements and in negotiating understanding of each other's perspectives.

I have authored this final thesis but I have offered all the core participants chances to comment and make additions. Indeed, post-project I have gone further than this and spent time on the telephone and e-mail speaking with the core group participants and encouraging them to make additional comments and interpretations. All but one of the core group participants made comments. My voice and the voices of the young people I worked with can be found throughout the thesis, and particularly in chapter 7 (analysis of findings). I have attempted to offer authentic voices throughout the thesis. There are times when I offer several interpretations of events (e.g. see chapter 7) or parallel voices that are sometimes in disagreement. During the research process I was conscious of my presence and the influence that I may have had on events and I always made the issues of project direction a transparent one with the participants. The results of this research have been produced by the joint efforts of the core group participants and myself. Both the researched and the researcher are indispensable to the learning process that takes place during research, both play a mutually independent role in that process (Coenen & Khonraad, 2003).

### Workability.

The principle of workability should demonstrate how well the research succeeded in creating workable practices; the discussion the research provokes; how ethical problems were dealt with; whether participants were empowered on the project; and the possibility of encouraging new practices and actions.

My background is one of practice as opposed to academia. The design and practices of this research have been described and explored throughout the thesis. The practice of group formation, project design and workshop delivery has been well documented (see chapters 4 and 5). A variety of critical discussions have been provoked in this research particularly in the area of youth participation and empowerment (see chapter 5 and

section 3.8 respectively). As described earlier in this chapter, a rigorous ethics policy has been put in place and a discussion of some of the difficulties faced and overcome are clearly outlined. I also demonstrate the empowerment of core group participants and myself (see chapter 5). I have outlined how I might have done things differently in sections 4.3 and 4.4, what I have learned in chapter 6, and have offered a template suggesting alternative ways that this research could have been undertaken and how my practice has been improved. I have outlined problems encountered, lessons learned and suggested changes in chapter 4.

### Evocativeness.

I have aimed to evoke feelings and emotions throughout this research thesis. Dealing with the subject of bullying can often be a highly charged and emotional journey. My journey on this research project has certainly had its ups and downs as have those of the participants. I hope that I have been able to bring to life some of the images, moods and memories of the research and have related them to the themes throughout this thesis.

### 2.91. Contribution to area of study.

In the fields of bullying and youth participation I have identified a form of peer support that, to my knowledge, has not yet been researched. I have called this form External Peer Support (EPS). External peer support has many of the characteristics of traditional peer support with one major difference: External peer supporters are made up of young people who attend schools or other institutions separate from where they deliver their peer support activities.

This research demonstrates that the focus of most anti-bullying initiatives in schools is from academic and behaviour models that often do not lead to a better understanding of or prevention of bullying on behalf of the students. Usually, unless an external activity is seen to benefit the whole school, teachers will often put blocks on children's personal, social and health education. The curriculum appears not to offer enough time for all aspects of child development in a social, academic, spiritual, personal and creative sense. Most schools appear to have anti-bullying policies in place but most students are not aware of or have no access to these policies and most teachers appear to have a lack of anti-bullying training.

I have demonstrated in this research project that the use of creative activities with groups of young people to deal with issues of bullying can lead to empowerment of both the young users and the young deliverers.

This research consolidates many of the issues surrounding the problems of the definition of bullying and the relationship between bullying and power.

I have provided an outline of good practice for future research projects involving young people based upon my experiences of running this one.

### Chapter 3. Literature review.

As described in the introduction I come from a background of practice, a practice of theatre, a practice of youth participation and a practice of bullying prevention. Within this thesis there are sections concerning bullying, power, theatre and learning. These chapters contain broad explorations of the literature on each of these topics. This introduction to the literature review provides an overview of this literature, where and how I explored the literature as well as an exploration of the literature not contained in other chapters. It is then followed by a more in-depth analysis of previous research and writings on each of the key topics. Where appropriate I shall also blend in my core group's reflections on these topics as they arise naturally.

#### 3.1. Bullying

In chapter six I explore the concept of bullying and what it means in great depth with the core group. The issue of bullying was written about in Psalms, more than 2000 years ago (Rigby, 2002). Why children bully was first explored by Professor Dan Olweus in Scandinavia during the late 1970's (Smith, 2000), and in the UK in the 1980's (Rigby, 2002). Besag suggests that if we use data from other countries, due to major differences, we must use them with care. Bullying has gone on in schools for as long as schools existed and in Britain bullying exists within all schools (Smith and Sharp, 1994). Until recently bullying was regarded as a natural part of growing up. The common perception was that by enduring it and fighting back it toughens you up and prepares you for life (O'Moore, 1989).

School bullying is now recognised as being a very serious issue for schools and is happening everywhere (Sullivan, 2006). Researchers have suggested that the single most important thing a school can do to prevent bullying is to have a clear policy to which staff, pupils and parents are committed (Smith and Sharp, 1994). The British government states now that all UK state schools need to have bullying policies by law (Bullying Online, 2008). We can see helplines, national and school wide initiatives adopting a zero tolerance approach to the problem, and many schools are taking it upon themselves to teach the message of respect, tolerance, understanding and fair play (Sullivan, 2006), along with an inclusive atmosphere which encourages pupil involvement (Furniss, 2000). And yet many children indicate quite clearly that they feel

oppressed, they are ignored and are not recognised as a person, not counted, being meaningless and overlooked (John, 2003).

Franklin suggests that children are denied rights because they are seen to be incapable of making informed decisions, lack the wisdom of experience and are prone to make mistakes (in Wyse, 2001). This may be one of the reasons that many peer mediation schemes in schools seem to fold within the first couple of years (Cremin, 2002). One of the difficulties with research on bullying is that there is no consensus as to what the word bullying actually means (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008; Rigby, 2002; Randall, 1996). Example definitions include (see appendix two for a list of 25 definitions of bullying):

*Cruel, abusive behaviour which is persistent and pervasive and causes suffering to individuals which is severe and sustained (Rigby, 2001).*

*Being exposed repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other [people] (Olweus, 1993).*

*A systematic abuse of power (Smith and Sharp, 1994).*

*Repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others (Primary school guidelines in Randall, 1996).*

*Aggressive behaviour arising from the deliberate intent to cause physical or psychological distress to others (Randall, 1996).*

*Anything which one or more people do to another person to hurt or upset them. Also, bullying does not happen once – it happens again and again (Hunter and Boyle, 2002)*

*A continuum of behaviour that involves the attempt to gain power and dominance over another (Askew, 1988).*

These definitions hold many similarities but can also be seen as quite different. For example, Askew (1998), Smith and Sharp (1994) talk about the power relationships underlying bullying, whereas Hunter and Boyle (2002) exclude it from their definition. Randall (1996) is the only one of the above who talks about the intentionality of bullying behaviour.

Bullying is not solely a UK based issue. Bully/victim problems were first explored in Sweden in the 1960s under the title of mobbning or mobbing (Smith, 1999), the idea

being of a group ganging up against a deviant individual (Olweus, 1999a). The concept of bullying internationally is understood and described from differing vantage points. The French for example talk about the incivilities which disturb school life (including impoliteness, noise, disorder, etc) (Dominique Fabre-Cornali et al, 1999). In Japan it has been argued that bullying has less to do with violence and more to do with humiliation and embarrassment (Taki, 2006). In South Africa, a typical component of bullying involves at the level of character assassination via cell phones through to older schoolchildren pointing guns at younger ones in the playground, issuing such threats as 'your life or your food' (Southern Cross, 2006).

It is generally accepted amongst most researchers that bullying is deliberate, premeditated and intentional (Tattum and Tattum, 1992; Randall, 1996; Collins, 2004; Stephenson and Smith, 1988; Besag, 1991; Mellor, 1999; Janowski, 1999; Stones, 1998; Baldry & Farrington, 2000 and Baker and Smith, 2005; Mellor, 1999; Smith and Sharp, 1994), there is a desire to hurt (Tattum and Tattum, 1992; Mellor, 1999; Rigby, 2002; Stones, 1998) and it is often done for gain or gratification (Besag, 1991; Rigby, 2002).

If bullying is a deliberate hurtful act, a child needs to have reached an appropriate level of cognitive development (Chazan, 1988). To carry out deliberate hurtful acts would involve the child having an understanding of the self and the feelings of others (identity and empathy). See chapter six for an exploration of empathy with the core group.

According to Piaget (Mooney, 2000), the second stage of cognitive development in children is the preoperational stage; from age 18 months – 6 years. During this stage Piaget argues that children are egocentric, meaning that they can only see the world from their own point of view. Slade suggests that dramatic play, where children take on roles and characters, happens from about the age of 5 years of age (Jennings, 1999). Freud suggests that the child cannot step outside the ego (the self) until they have moved through the Locomotor-genital stage, which happens after 5 years of age (Jennings, 1992). Jennings' concept of embodiment-projection-role (EPR) suggests that children from about the age of four plus years old are able to take on roles of others through dramatic play and thus start learning how others feel (Seymour, 2009).

The literature would then suggest that the earliest signs of empathy in children could start from about 5 years of age. Therefore, according to the literature, children cannot



and do not bully until they have reached an age of at least 5 years and over. Toddlers repeatedly hitting other children at playgroup or pre-school could therefore not be regarded as engaging in bullying activity. Hay, Payne, and Chadwick (2004) suggest that aggressive behaviour in toddlers regularly occurs and can be a sign of at risk aggressive behaviour in later life. Aggressive behaviour is one of the defining characteristics of bullying.

Smith suggested that despite cultural differences in the definitions of bullying, many of the broad features are similar across different countries (1999), although he does not say what these broad features are. This assumption of definitional agreement appears strange, given the amount of definitions currently available, and as 4 years later, when editing a book on violence in schools in Europe, he said that the contributors were unable to agree on a definition of violence (Smith, 2003).

The media is often blamed as the cause of bullying in our society; over 1,000 studies confirm the link between media violence and aggressive behaviour in children (Roberts, 2006). People who suffer bullying are sometimes blamed as being the cause of the bullying in the first place (Zins et al, 2007). There is no one cause for bullying; bullying happens for many reasons. There is currently no systematic collection of bullying statistics but bullying is a reality for many young people (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008). Some people suffer bullying so badly that they commit suicide. Every year several people commit suicide due to bullying (Smith, 1999). Bullying in school causes widespread fear, misery, distress, trauma, anger and helplessness (Furniss, 2000), and victims of bullying suffer more often from health complaints (Fekkes et al, 2005). Bullying is also likened to more general violent behaviour including weapon carrying on the streets and gang membership (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008). As bullying can contribute to long term problems as well as immediate unhappiness (Smith and Sharp, 1994) it is important to find ways of dealing with it. For me the first step should be in exploring what the word bullying means.

The definition of bullying is highly contested and one which I explore with the core group in chapter six. The problem highlighted by many researchers and interventionists is that bullying can mean so many different things to different people. Research on bullying needs to adopt a clearer and more specific definition of bullying (Sveinsson and Morris, 2007), as my overview of the review process also suggests. Amongst

academics and others that work in the field of bullying there is no consensus as to what the word bullying actually means (Randall, 1996 and Cowie and Jennifer, 2008). Most authors and researchers create their own definition linked in part to other recognised definitions and current research. One result is that ‘all definitions are fuzzy’ (Smith, 2004).

The main ideas amongst academics suggest that bullying includes:

The deliberate intention or desire to hurt or harm people (Rigby, 2002; Cowie and Jennifer, 2008; Randall, 1996; Olweus in Smith et al (eds), 1999), the repetition of the hurtful behaviour (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008; Olweus, 1993; Randall, 1996; Hunter and Boyle, 2002; Askew, 1988; Rigby, 2002) and an imbalance of power between the bullied and the bullies (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008; Smith and Sharp, 1994; Askew, 1988; Tattum and Herbert, 1997; Rigby, 2002). It is also suggested by many that bullying and the results of bullying can be both physical and/or psychological (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008; Randall, 1996; Ortega et al in Smith et al (eds), 1999).

See [Table 1](#) for a table outlining some of the defining terms in the definition of bullying.

See [Appendix 2](#) for a list of 25 definitions of bullying.

With so many definitions, so many conflicting terms and ideas it is easy to see how so much confusion surrounds the definition of bullying.

How does this compare to how young people see bullying? Levan suggests that many six year olds over-interpret the term bullying to include nasty acts generally (Smith et al (eds), 1999), and Cowie and Jennifer’s review of the literature suggests that *teachers and pupils hold much broader definitions of the word bullying than those used by researchers, particularly younger children* (2008, p. 2).

Table 1. Defining terms in definitions of bullying.

<b>Defining term</b>	<b>References</b>
<i>Repeated, continuous, persistent, longstanding, sustained.</i>	Olweus, 1993; Hunter and Boyle, 2002; Collins, 2004; Askew, 1988; Baker and Smith, 2005; Roland, 1988; Besag, 1991; Smith and Morita, 1999; Byrne, 1999; Ortega & Mora-Merchan, 1999; Farrington in Junger-Tas, 1999; Rigby, 1996; Rigby, 2002; Hoel, Faragher & Cooper, 2004; Robinson and Maines, 2000.
<i>Wilful, deliberate, meant, intentional, premeditated, conscious, systematic.</i>	Tattum and Tattum, 1992; Randall, 1996; Collins, 2004; Stephenson and Smith, 1988; Besag, 1991; Mellor, 1999; Janowski, 1999; Stones, 1998; Baldry & Farrington, 2000 and Baker and Smith, 2005; Mellor, 1999; Smith and Sharp, 1994.
<i>Pervasive.</i>	Rigby, 1996.
<i>Desire to hurt.</i>	Tattum and Tattum, 1992; Mellor, 1999; Rigby, 2002; Stones, 1998.
<i>For gain or gratification, enjoyment.</i>	Besag, 1991; Rigby, 2002.
<i>Abuse of power, unjust use of power.</i>	Smith and Sharp, 1994; Baker and Smith, 2005; Rigby, 2002.
<i>Gain power.</i>	Askew, 1988.
<i>By those in power.</i>	Besag, 1991; Farrington in Junger-Tas, 1999; Robinson and Maines, 2000.
<i>Imbalance of power.</i>	Robinson and Maines, 2000; Stones, 1998; Slee, 2003; Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Rigby, 2002.
<i>Directed at those that are unable to defend.</i>	Roland, 1988; Hoel, Faragher & Cooper, 2004.
<i>Causes hurt, pain, harm, suffering, upset.</i>	Hunter and Boyle, 2002; Baker and Smith, 2005; Janowski, 1999; Rigby, 2002; Robinson and Maines, 2000; Rigby, 1996; Slee, 2003; Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Hunter and Boyle, 2002.
<i>Causes fear.</i>	Slee, 2003; Baldry & Farrington, 2000.

Table 1. Defining terms in definitions of bullying continued..,

<b>Defining term</b>	<b>References</b>
<i>Causes stress, distress.</i>	Tattum and Tattum, 1992; Randall, 1996; Baker and Smith, 2005; Stephenson and Smith, 1988; Besag, 1991; Stones, 1998; Slee, 2003; Baldry & Farrington, 2000.
<i>Aggressive behaviour, aggression.</i>	Randall, 1996; Stephenson and Smith, 1988; Smith and Morita, 1999; Byrne, 1999; Stones, 1988; Janowski, 1999.
<i>Violence.</i>	Roland, 1988.
<i>Abusive behaviour.</i>	Ortega & Mora-Merchan, 1999; Rigby, 1996.
<i>Exposure to negative actions by others.</i>	Olweus, 1993; Hoel, Faragher & Cooper, 2004.
<i>Oppression, dominance, intimidation.</i>	Farrington in Junger-Tas, 1999; Rigby, 2002; Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Askew, 1988; Stephenson and Smith, 1988; Stones, 1998; Slee, 2003.
<i>Physical and psychological.</i>	Roland, 1988; Randall, 1996; Besag, 1991; Byrne, 1999; Ortega & Mora-Merchan, 1999; Farrington in Junger-Tas, 1999; Janowski, 1999; Robinson and Maines, 2000; Stones, 1998; Slee, 2003; Baldry & Farrington, 2000.
<i>Verbal.</i>	Byrne, 1999; Besag, 1991; Robinson and Maines, 2000; Slee, 2003; Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Janowski, 1999.
<i>Social, social interaction.</i>	Besag, 1991; Robinson and Maines, 2000; Stephenson and Smith, 1988.
<i>Ridiculing, humiliating, thoughtless.</i>	Janowski, 1999.
<i>Cruel, severe.</i>	Rigby, 1996.
<i>Vicious.</i>	Smith and Morita, 1999.
<i>Incivilities which disturb school life.</i>	Fabre-Cornali et al, 1999.

Randall suggests that children and adults tend to label certain behaviours as bullying but these descriptions tell us nothing about what bullying is – only how it is demonstrated (1996). Despite researchers wanting a tight description of bullying they have been unable to deliver one, at least a unified one. Arguments still include whether or not to

*differentiate bullying from aggression* (Rigby, 2002. p. 30), whether to substitute the word aggression for bullying (Rigby, 2002. p. 30), or indeed whether bullying is a subcategory of aggression (Olweus, 1999a. p. 12). It can get even more confusing when we see Olweus also suggesting that violence is a subcategory of aggressive behaviour (1999a) as well. Ironically the Home Office suggest that a 'wider definition of *violence* would include *bullying*' (Mirrlees-Black, 1999. p. 2. My emphasis). Randall may complain that children and adults are unable to define bullying effectively, but so too are researchers. This is clearly shown when trying to differentiate what we mean between the words violence, aggression and bullying. In one book on school bullying I found over 18 definitions of the word bullying by different authors (Smith et al (eds), 1999).

Bullying is now a multi-million pound industry in Britain. thousands of people are employed in this industry including researchers, teachers, charity employees and organisations. People and groups profit from bullying. As discussed in chapter 5 the participation of young people in this industry is minimal. Rowe suggests that power is the right to define how others should define (quoted in John, 2003). By researchers and adults defining bullying a particular way we are also starting to define modes of unacceptable behaviour for young people. So we find that adults believe they must set all the rules which the children must obey (Alderson, 2000) or adhere to. It is ironic that one of the frequently quoted definitions of bullying found in the literature is a systematic abuse of power (Smith and Sharp, 1994). I am not suggesting that adults are systematically abusing their power over young people but I am suggesting that adults, whether consciously or unconsciously, will find reasons why their academic definitions of bullying should prevail over the definitions created by young people.

Recent research has suggested that children are more competent than previously thought (Davies and Thirston, 2006), which implies that far more researchers could collaborate with teachers and young people in reaching a definition that is agreeable and workable for all concerned. Although I had my own initial working definition of bullying for research purposes, I did not impose any definition on the core group that I worked with. The core group created their own definition of bullying for the work that they were doing. See section 6.1 for a deeper exploration of this.

It is important to be clear in our descriptions but it is also important to be inclusive. One of the difficulties of using a definition of bullying that has been developed by academics is that it may not be understood by the young people and teachers who have to deal with bullying in the front line. Core group members on this project felt that it was important to have a definition of bullying that could be relevant to the young people they would be working with. Rigby suggests that one approach to defining bullying in schools is through discovering what students understood by the term (Rigby, 2002).

I gave the core group members examples of the many definitions of bullying available in the literature to read and discuss (see appendix one). We explored personal experiences of bullying and experiences from people we knew. As a group we also participated in a variety of creative activities that gave us access to thoughts that a bully and bullied people might feel when involved in situations of bullying. Towards the end of the core group's training on this project they suggested that bullying meant '*to isolate, cause physical, verbal or emotional stress to one or more persons usually again and again*' (this is explored in more depth in section 6.1). This definition took account of current literature and, in the eyes of the core group, made it accessible to non-researchers. The core group members wanted a definition that was simple, precise and memorable. Michelle was quite graphic about the mixture of current academic definitions of bullying:

Researcher *Do you think they would be useful or understandable to students of primary schools, in year seven or year eight, secondary school or in any school?*

Michelle *They might be understandable but they wouldn't be able to relate to it. It's not something they can relate to. It's like, cold hard facts and it's very negative language and long words that academics use. To a young person it's like, obviously that's not happening to me because this sounds really bad, even though what's happening to themselves is really bad as well, it's just on paper it looks worse because of the language used (July, 2007).*

Neither the core group members nor I suggest that their definition is any better or worse than those created by researchers, or that it should replace any of those definitions. Indeed with the confusion surrounding the definition of bullying I see no useful

outcome in throwing another definition in to the mix. The core group used this definition purely for their work on this project.

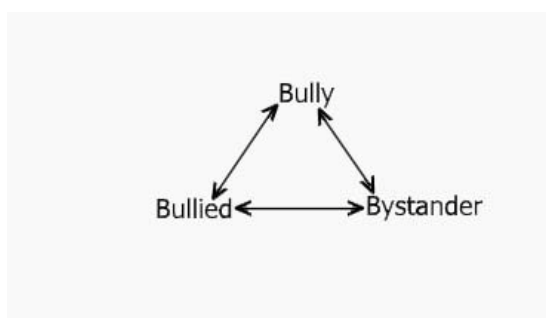
What is the difference between an intellectual argument and someone pushing their views on to another person? What is the difference between banter and bullying? The difference between banter and bullying could be the difference between *rough and tumble play and serious fighting* (Nabuzoka and Smith, 1999). *Rough and tumble play or banter can be classed as playful physical or verbal battles respectively* (Roberts, 2006). Although difficulties arise when remembering that one person's rough and tumble is another person's fight. Banter is teasing in the form of a dual, a dialogue where both parties agree and allow the banter to continue. Bullying on the other hand is more of a monologue; teasing without agreement.

In trying to define bullying we can also come across different types of bullying including; relational (e.g. spreading rumours, excluding), verbal (e.g. name calling), physical (e.g. kicking, spitting) (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008), and hazing (e.g. group initiation rites) (Roberts, 2006). New technologies can introduce new forms of bullying such as cyberbullying (e.g. malicious mobile phone or internet text messages) (Lee, 2004). Lee also discusses *educational bullying in which adults, such as teachers, cause hurt, yet their motive was to do little more than correct errors in work* (2004. p. 10). While looking at types of bullying we also come across categories of students that are more likely to experience bullying than mainstream students, or experience bullying in a different way. These categories include; disablist bullying, homophobic bullying, gender bullying (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008) and racist bullying (German and Kumari, 1997). Should all forms of abuse and discrimination in school be classed as bullying? It has, for example, been suggested that the term 'racist bullying' should exist in all school's anti-bullying policies. Loach and Bloor (1995), in a similar vein, suggest that bullying can function as a 'cover' for racism, whereas others suggest that schools failing to include racism as bullying appear uncaring and not supportive of those that have been discriminated against (O'Brien, 2007). We can see from these discussions about bullying, that it can mean different things to different people. What is bullying to one is not necessarily bullying to another. It is therefore important when working with groups that a common understanding of what bullying means is explored before any work is done to deal with it. With so many ideas about bullying; what it is, why it happens, what it means, finding ways to deal with it can be problematic.

We all have the potential to be involved in bullying either as a bully or someone who is bullied. Many people who explore issues of bullying think only in terms of this dyad: the bully and the bullied. Deeper exploration of the literature reveals another who is involved: the bystander. Bystanders are usually present when bullying takes place (Rigby, 2002). Bystanders often play a critical role in whether the bullying continues or not. Bystanders can typically be categorised into two camps; those that watch and do nothing (indirectly supporting the bully); and those that act as witnesses and do something to help those that are bullied. There is a third category of bystanders that act as rescuers by overprotecting the bullied and thus inadvertently disempowering the very people they are trying to help (Lee, 2004).

With the inclusion of the bystander we move away from the idea of bullying as a dyad into becoming a triad; involving the bully, the bullied and the bystander (see figure 2). When finding strategies to deal with bullying we need to bear in mind this triad, as different strategies and solutions could be explored for each member of the triad. Indeed, different solutions and strategies should be available for each individual student as part of a whole school policy (see next section).

Figure 2. The bully, the bullied and the bystander.



It can be argued that each of these categories (the bully, the bullied or the bystander) of people could have particular defining characteristics. For example bullies have been described as being strong, assertive, easily provoked, enjoy aggression and have average popularity (although weaker bullies have poor school attainment and are less popular) (Smith and Thompson, 1991). Bullies are aggressive with peers and adults, are likely to break school rules, and tend to come from homes where physical punishment is used (Diamanduros et al, 2008). Bullies also lack empathy for their victims and have a strong need to dominate them (Randall, 1996), and have a relatively positive view of themselves (Olweus, 1993). Olweus also suggests that there are students who participate in bullying but who do not usually take the initiative. *These may be labelled passive*



*bullies, followers or henchmen* (1993. p. 34). Bullies have been found to be less intelligent and less able to process social information than others (Sutton, 2001). Bullied pupils are more anxious and insecure, often cautious, sensitive and quiet. They suffer from low self-esteem and have a negative view of themselves and their situation (Olweus, 1993). On the other hand bullies have also been described as quick witted, having a sense of fun, confident, good communicators with good coping skills (Besag, 1991). So perhaps not all bullies should be considered social inadequates or incompetents (Sutton, 2001).

The victim group is characterised by low self-esteem and insecurity. They tend to be socially isolated, passive, physically weaker than the bully, and/or unpopular, and they might exhibit depressive symptoms. *They often have overly protective parents whose interference has prevented the child from developing his or her own coping skills* (Diamanduros et al, 2008. p. 694). Victims do not show or provoke aggression and when confronted by bullies they often cry (Randall, 1996). Victims of bullying are often shorter than their counterparts, spend a lot of time alone and look or sound different from others around them (Rigby, 2002).

Bystanders make up over three-quarters of the people who are involved in bullying and are only more likely to intervene than others if they had been bullied themselves in the past (Ortega and Mora-Merchan, 1999). Bystanders are often afraid of becoming victims themselves and will therefore only help victims who are their friends (Vettenberg, 1999).

*Bystanders are those people who slow down to look at a traffic accident, but don't stop to offer assistance, the people who watch an argument on the street, and the crowd that gathers to watch a playground fight. They are the audience that engages in the spectacle, and watches as a drama unfolds. Though they don't actively participate, they encourage the perpetrators, who will feel driven on by the audience* (Ball, 2006. p. 1).

The categories of bullied, bully and bystander can be broken down even more into types of victims or types of bullies etc. For example categories of victim include; passive victims; provocative victims; colluding victims; false victims and bully victims (Besag, 1991). Whether or not it is useful to explore personality characteristics is arguable. Exploring and challenging bullying based on stereotypes ignores the potential in all of us to bully or be bullied. Soutter and McKenzie emphatically maintain that the bully and

the victim are not types of person but are a consequence of the social ethos they find themselves in (Rigby, 2002). Labelling students as bullies or victims can leave them branded for their entire school life. Categorising people, demonising them or labelling them is not reasonable and is not acceptable (Rigby, 2002). Strategies and interventions need to take into account the varied personalities involved as well as the various ideas of what bullying actually is. It is not possible to say what a bully looks like or what type of personality they might have, the same is true of people who have been bullied or who have witnessed bullying happen.

For schools to efficiently and sensitively challenge and deal with bullying they need to develop a whole school approach. Schools are required to have anti-bullying policies by law (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008), although a policy is not enough. The policy needs input from all school members including; teachers, students, admin staff, caretakers, kitchen staff, governors and parents. The policy also needs to be accessible. A whole school anti-bullying policy should contain an agreed definition of bullying, a range of available strategies to use, visible support and participation from a senior management team, advice, complaints procedures, expectations of staff and students, responsibilities, rights, details of the anti-bullying working group, names of anti-bullying officers and where/how/when they can be found. There should also be sufficient time set aside for key personnel to devote to the programme, training opportunities, monitoring and evaluation sheets, have sufficient funding and resources available, flexibility and commitment from all staff, students, parents and the local community (Randall, 1996).

Although there now appears to be a vast range of interventions and resources to help schools deal with issues of bullying, a persistent difficulty appears to be that anti-bullying training is not a core part of teacher training in the UK. A majority of teachers state that they want additional anti-bullying training (Actionwork, 2006), and there is continued political pressure on the government to provide this (ipoweri, 2006). Despite these requests and a general agreement that those who make decisions about what is to be done about bullying should be educated about bullying (Rigby, 2002), the government in the UK, will not sanction anti-bullying training as a core part of teacher training due to the limited training hours available for new teachers (ipoweri, 2006). Research by Boulton has found that in general trainee teachers express a lack of confidence in dealing with bullying and 87 per cent said they wanted more training (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008).

Strategies for dealing with bullying are often separated into different categories including those that look at managing the bully (Train, 1995) and their behaviour, holistic methods that deal with the symptoms as they occur using methods such as conflict resolution and peer mediation (Stacey et al, 1997), or methods like the No Blame Approach (Robinson and Maines, 2000), or other intervention programmes that focus on individual pupils (Smith (ed), 2003). Other categories include what parents can do (Lawson, 1994), what teachers can do (Byrne in Smith et al (eds), 1999) how bullying is investigated (Roland and Munthe, 1989), involving the local community (Glover et al, 1998), and finding ways for so called victims to learn about personal safety (Evans, 2008). In addition to this there are special strategies for racist bullying, disablist bullying, homophobic bullying and gender bullying (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008). In this era of new technologies we can also find strategies for dealing with cyberbullying including cyber peer support such as the use of internet and email support (Cartwright 2005; Cowie and Hutson 2005; Hutson and Cowie quoted in Cowie and Jennifer, 2008).

During the course of this project the core members suggested a variety of strategies to deal with bullying including role-plays, talking, listening, building confidence and *telling people about it, actually experiencing bullying yourself* (core group member Robin), through to *creating a buddy system and having school councillors* (core group member Chantelle). Chantelle also suggested that *you can get over it by being yourself and telling people without making a fuss. You don't have to make it everybody's business. You can just be simple and keep it quiet.* Suggestions from Tanya, other than those already mentioned, included *psychoanalysis, a cup of tea and a cup of hot chocolate.* Michelle suggests *a bullybox, peer mentoring and the no blame approach.* Terry suggested *joining a youth club, avoiding the bully, sticking up for yourself, thinking positively and believing in yourself and by getting people to realise what bullying is because there are many people who bully without knowing they are doing it.* This point made by Terry, that everyone who bullies does not necessarily know that they are bullying, suggests that everyone who is bullied does not necessarily know that they are being bullied either. I have anecdotal evidence from past creative anti-bullying sessions I have run in schools, where some young people afterwards have come up to me and said *I did not know that what I was doing was bullying and I am now going to stop what I was doing.*

In the context of this research project it was generally agreed that there *weren't any best ways* (core group member Michelle) to deal with bullying, which was backed up by Chantelle who said that resolving bullying is different for everyone: *One person might tell a teacher and for another that might not resolve it for their situation. You have to keep trying different things to get you back into the real world where people can take you as you.* It is outside the scope of this thesis to examine in detail the range and effectiveness of all anti-bullying strategies that are available. I do, though, want to explore one set of strategies, those of peer support, as this research project utilised many techniques from this field of study.

### 3.2. Youth participation

Youth participation in the context of the core group is explored further in chapter five. Young people want to play an active role in creating change (Cairns, 2001) and many adults voice a similar message. For example Annan (2003) states that it is crucial that we ensure that children's voices are heard loud and clear. In 2002 the Commonwealth's Heads of Government identified 'youth participation' as critical to democratic nation building (CHOGM, 2002). In the same year the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, stated that young people were our future and that cross-Commonwealth initiatives would allow us all to learn from each other. The Government Green Paper 'Every Child Matters', published in 2003, shows a commitment to find out what works best for children and young people ..., to involve children and young people in this process ..., [and] listen especially to the views of children and young people themselves. In March 2005, the first Children's Commissioner for England was appointed, to give children and young people a voice in government and in public life (Children's Commissioner, 2005).

Despite these calls for young people to participate in issues that affect them, governments around the world are often criticised as paying no more than lip service to this notion. They fail to recognise the significant obstacles that young people currently experience (Bessant, 2004). Not only are young people's voices often not heard, when the opportunity is provided, the mechanisms for promoting these voices are often themselves unsuitable. Matthews suggests that many youth forums are flawed and that inappropriate participatory devices are often obfuscating the voices of many young people in local decision-making (2001). Boylan and Ing (2000) suggest that children

over and over again report that they have no say or control over what is happening to them or have any affect on the decision-making processes.

Almost all anti-bullying programmes in the UK are run by adults for young people rather than by young people for young people. Julia Collar, former National Co-ordinator for the Anti-Bullying Alliance stated that there were very few Alliance led anti-bullying programmes run by young people (personal communication, March 2007).

Current writings suggest that the terms empowerment and participation can be interchangeable (Boylan et al, 2000). Concepts of empowerment embrace not only acquiring and having access to skills and knowledge (Hatcher, 2000), but also refer to encouraging people to participate as equal partners in issues that affect them (Paterson, 2001). Wyness suggests that children's views are deliberately not listened to on issues that affect them, the implication being that they do not have any significant or relevant views to be of any value (1999). The literature suggests that 40 per cent of children criticized the lack of power that they have in having their views taken into account in their everyday experience of schools (Schubotz and Sinclair, 2006). Cairns goes on to say that 10 years after the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child was ratified in Britain it would be difficult to find many children and young people who could describe how things had changed for them (2000). However; advocates of youth participation would challenge this view and suggest that it is possible to find programmes that involve and empower young people in dealing with issues of bullying. In the UK these include the Peer Support Forum, Childline, Mental Health Foundation, Actionwork, Peer Mediation Network, UK Observatory, Young Voice, and a number of Local Authority schemes.

When students feel that their lives, experiences, cultures, and aspirations are ignored, trivialised, or denigrated, they develop hostility to the institution of schooling. They feel that schooling is simply not worth the emotional and psychological investment necessary to warrant their serious involvement (Smyth, 2006). Young people want to play an active role in creating change (Cairns, 2001), a voice echoed by adults. Annan (2003) states that it is crucial we ensure that children's voices are heard loud and clear.

Despite these calls for young people to participate in issues that affect them, governments around the world are often criticised as paying no more than lip service to

this notion. They fail to recognise the significant obstacles that young people currently experience when trying to participate socially, economically and politically, and both the conceptualisation and operationalisation of official youth participation policies reveal an agenda that is seriously at odds with the rhetoric of democratic participation. This raises questions about whose voice is actually being heard and to what effect. (Bessant, 2004. p. 387).

Not only are young people's voices often not heard, when the opportunity is provided, the mechanisms for promoting these voices are often themselves unsuitable. Matthews suggests that many youth forums are flawed and that they are inappropriate participatory devices, often obfuscating the voices of many young people in local decision-making (2001). Boylan and Ing (2000) suggest that children over and over again report that they have no say or control over what is happening to them or have any affect on the decision-making processes that affect their lives.

Educational programmes are usually designed and delivered by adults. Although there are a few anti-bullying programmes facilitated by young people, such as peer support projects and those provided by youth councils, almost all of these are controlled by adults. Funding of youth programmes is usually limited to specific adult agendas or adult approved initiatives.

Ed Balls, Secretary of State for Education (25 July 2007), commented in a speech to the National Children's Bureau that childhood is a time for learning and exploring. Through playing and doing positive activities, children and young people can learn to better understand the opportunities and challenges in the world around them, and how to be safe (Peacock, 2008). Despite these statements, there is evidence to suggest that creativity has a very low status and that schools educate children out of creativity (Robinson, 2006).

Allender (in Rogers and Freiberg, 1994) suggests that when they look back on their own schooling the majority of teachers feel negative towards it. Their experience has been composed of fear, failure, humiliation, resentment, constriction and even their positive feelings have to do with escaping from school. Bland and Atweh (2006) suggest that traditional school cultures can deny many students a fair hearing on issues that are of

immediate concern to them, reducing their opportunities to obtain their 'fair share' of the benefits of education.

*So much of school involves simply sitting and listening and watching and reading. Young people get fed up. They fidget. "Miss, when are we going to do something?" They talk, tip back on their chairs. "Can we do something?" Someone tips too far, falls, there's a crash, laughter and, at long last, action as the teacher moves to confront a spread-eagled, smirking student (Bannister & Huntington, 2002. p. 86).*

The evidence suggests that changes must take place to give students and young people a sense of ownership of their schools and schooling, which can be obtained through participation in the design and implementation of classroom activities, school policies, and school layout and decor (Leren, 2006; Smyth, 2006; Bland and Atweh, 2006 and John, 2003). With children and young people often marginalised in the processes of educational decision making, student voice and the active engagement of students is key in shaping their own educational experience (Hopkins, 2008). Students find it motivating to be consulted and to be treated as active responsible members (Rudduck and Flutter, 2004). Similarly in research, students' voices are rarely heard at all, but where they are included, although they have much to say about their experiences, there were limitations on the extent to which the teachers subsequently used this evidence to inform school improvement (Wood, 2003).

### 3.3. Power

*Fearful visions of powerless but responsible adults, and irresponsible but powerful children (Alderson, 2000. p. 110).*

The concept of power is central to a discussion on bullying and is discussed at length in the context of the core group in chapter 5. Bullying can be seen to be an abuse of power (Smith and Sharp, 1994), and a lack of power can lead to high risks of bullying (Randall, 1996). It therefore follows that young people having a degree of power or empowerment is central to any community anti-bullying project (Randall, 1996).

Hazler suggests that children begin learning about power struggles at an early age (Sullivan, 2006), whereas John suggests that in society they rarely have any power (2003). In reality all children have power at certain times and within certain

relationships. We cannot see this power; we can only see things or people invested with power. This power can be used as a force for or against us.

Rowe suggests that power is the right to define how others should define (John, 2003) and links this to relationships between adults and children, which are to do with coercion and control. Foucault tells us that power can be more than a repressive concept (such as that exercised by the state or the sovereign). *What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse* (Foucault, 1984c. p. 61).

Indeed Foucault goes further by saying that power is a positive, productive phenomenon which produces and incites effects in the social realm rather than simply repressing and denying (McNay, 1992). It is the abuse of power, which is the negative aspect such as in bullying and oppression, whereas the use of power can be empowering, motivating and positive. Power relations are extremely widespread in human relationships. Now this does not mean that political power is everywhere, but that there is in human relationships a whole range of power relations that may come in to play among individuals, within families, in pedagogical relationships, political life etc. Liberation is sometimes the political or historical condition for a practice of freedom (Foucault, 1984a).

Power also traverses and drives other powers (Foucault, 2000b), power moves between us like smoke in the wind, dancing between people, objects, ideas and knowledge in visible and invisible ways. Power can be invested in symbols such as a national flag, the police, the constitution or churches. Power also flows between people through their relationships to one another and the various perceived positions of power each person has within their situational contexts. The polymorphous techniques of power have been well discussed by Foucault (Foucault, 1990), with power having, taking or passing through many different forms or stages.

Foucault would include 'discourse and knowledge' as descriptions of power, and he cites that the state is superstructural in a whole series of power networks that invest the body, sexuality, the family, kinship, knowledge, technology and so forth (1984c). Boal



(1995) tells us that even the smallest cells of social organisation (the school, the family etc) contain all the structures of domination, power and oppression found in the state.

How we locate this power and harness it for ourselves can be problematic. Morrow and Richards advocate using creative methods in exploring power with children (John, 2003). Boal would agree and suggests that the Theatre of the Oppressed creates a dialogue between the audience and the actors so that the actors through the performance can try to change the audience's thoughts and feelings and the audience can try to change the action and direction of the show (Boal, 1995).

Using creative techniques can lead to the research itself becoming a source of empowerment (John, 2003) for the participants of the research, as was found for the core group (see section 5.1). This process then is not just simply a way of 'becoming powerful' but could be a means of social intervention in any community where there is continuing, pervasive and systematic discrimination. *In this context empowerment as a process refers to the design and growth of an effective support system for those members of the community who have been blocked from attaining a balance of power within the major social environments of their daily lives* (Randall, 1996. p.p. 105 - 109). Structured approaches to redressing the power imbalances faced by young people have built upon naturalistic peer relationships through systems of peer support.

Mills (2003) suggests that power is mistakenly often conceptualised as the capacity of powerful agents to realise their will over the will of powerless people, and the ability to force them to do things, which they do not wish to do. This view of power was held by one of the core group members, Robin, as can be seen in section 5.1. It can be wrong to see power as just a negative force hanging over us. For Foucault power can be a positive phenomenon traversing and producing things, it incites pleasure, forms knowledge and produces ideas and discourses rather than simply repressing or denying (Foucault, 1984c; McNay, 1992). Foucault is suggesting that power is not just a negative force, trapping us or weighing us down, otherwise people would not accept it, people would not want it, and people would not propagate it.

Neither is power something that can be held on to. Power expresses the existence, action, state, and an occurrence of something or the relation between things. Power is something that does something. It flows, it circulates and it is spread by people

throughout society. One can argue that people can simply subjugate to oppression or they can actively play a role in the form of their relations to others and with institutions (Mills, 2003). Power does not have one source, such as the state, or the King, or the headmaster. Power is dispersed in a variety of institutions, in a variety of titles and in a variety of forms. Power is found in all cells of social organisation (the couple, the family, the neighbourhood, the school, the office, the factory etc) and in every interaction we have in our social life (crossing the road, buying some food, riding the bus, attending a meeting etc). The smallest cells of social organisation contain all the moral and political values of society, all its structures of domination and power and all its mechanisms of oppression (Boal, 1995) and pleasure. The state is superstructural in these structures of power linked in a whole series of power networks that invest the body, sexuality, the family, kinship, knowledge, technology and so forth (Foucault, 1984c).

A Marxist model of power (quoted earlier) sees power simply as a form of oppression by the elite or bourgeoisie over the masses. Foucault sees power as also producing something, something that affects behaviour and brings about events. He does not deny the 'disciplinary power' of the state, controlling citizens through the law, police, education and the social sciences. Equally we find people in a variety of ways resisting disciplinary power and oppression. The balance of power is difficult to measure, and where power resides is difficult to find. Allen suggests that disciplinary power creates subjects who are thoroughly subjected; both from without by the normalising force of humanistic discourses and practices and from within by the self-disciplining impulses that humanism has taught them to internalise (Allen, 2000). Boal's concept of *cops in the head* suggests that these self-disciplining impulses can be internally characterised into objects of constraint (the police, parents, friends etc). In this way we do not need to be told what to do by someone as that someone and his or her orders already reside in our head (Boal, 1995).

The evidence so far suggests that power is polymorphous and can be used to oppress or emancipate. Power can produce things but we cannot touch it, see it, touch it, smell it, hear it or feel it or taste it. Power is difficult to detect and we are not always aware of its affect on us or the affect our power has on others. It has not been described as having any particular shape, nor being any particular size, we are not told what colour it is or how much of it there is.

Much like Michelle and Terry argue in section 5.2, Rowe states that power is the right to define how others should define and links this to relationships between adults and children, which are to do with coercion and control (John, 2003. p. 47). Lukes distinguishes the ‘invested’ power of the police, the hospital or the school, which is hierarchical and competitive, to the ‘divested’ power of collaborative and cooperative communities (John, 2003). The invested powers of the school or education authorities with their policies, rituals and ceremonies which are based on hierarchy and competition give young people very few opportunities to learn about power or exercise it. Adults prefer to talk about their care and authority or the need for firm control, rather than their power over children (Alderson, 2000). Schools constitute the most traditional, conservative, rigid, bureaucratic institutions of our time. It is the institution most resistant to change (Rogers and Freiberg, 1994).

Rather than attempting to rank the importance that power, agency, autonomy or locus of control have in achieving self-determination for young people, I suggest an exploration of how young people feel about being in control of their own lives would be more productive (see chapter five). Allen wants to assign *responsibility* for the abuse of powers that exist (2000), but evidence suggests that it will not help our investigation by blaming a particular set of persons, or a particular government department, for the way things are. Therefore accepting a co-construction model of development suggests a multiple responsibility of people, groups and institutions involved.

Accepting that people, their relationships, their thoughts and their actions are defined through discourse, a discourse created generally by adults, groups and institutions in positions of power, for young people to feel powerful they need access to the relevant information and the relevant training. Young people are often tricked into believing that they have no choice (John, 2003) and that they must accept the adults’ reality.

As educators, as adults, as researchers we are often evaluating the work of young people. If we switch it the other way round so that young people are given the opportunity to evaluate the work of adults, there are often calls for concern. Teachers, for example, frequently feel uncomfortable about this. Haggarty and Postlethwaite (2003) received feedback from some teachers who said that *you need to be really careful when you start asking children what they think about their teacher because some children are not really objective sometimes*. Comments such as these often came

from teachers who had not engaged themselves in the research process; *they did not value evidence from pupils that contradicted their own perception of situations in school* (Haggarty and Postlethwaite, 2003). *More recently, researchers have seen the need to record children's own perspectives on the grounds that children are the most important source of evidence on how they experience their lives* (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008. p. 95).

One of the main contentions of this study is that exploring ways for adults not to fear power sharing with children (see section 5.5), educating children in assertiveness skills and ensuring that children are aware of the rights they have that are enshrined in law will help transform human society. There is no more powerful way in facilitating this change than changing how the adults of today relate to children, who will become the adults of tomorrow (Johnson quoted in John, 2003).

Children and theories of childhood (see section 2.6) have been constituted historically through discourse. Finding ways to pay attention to children's narratives of their lived experiences is a way of giving voice to children who have been silenced for far too long (Graham, 2006). But we find a power-struggle going on. Governments, families, and caregivers feel threatened if the child has a voice (Pinheiro, 2009), and in any case traditional school cultures have not found effective ways of engaging with students' voices (Bland and Atweh, 2007). Moreover, where students are not engaged or have not been provided with ways to ground new learning in their own experiences and cultures, they may become further alienated from education and made to feel mistrustful of their own voices, their own ways of making sense (Greene, 1995).

Current theories of childhood from Dewey, Piaget, Montessori, Erikson and Vygotsky suggest that children learn best through interaction with other people allowing for a co-construction of knowledge. It is proposed that children learn most effectively when they are provided with real tools for real work, are allowed to experience conflicts while being encouraged to resolve them without being given all the explanations by adults. Children learn and grasp new concepts by working, talking and listening to each other and most learning takes place when children are allowed to play (Mooney, 2000). Not everyone can make the leap of joining theory to practice. She describes how some directors of education stated that:

*they didn't care if teachers knew who Vygotsky or Erikson were, but they wanted them to know what to do when children were hitting or biting each other. The point these directors missed is that teachers who know what to do when children are hitting or biting are teachers who understand child development (Mooney, 2000. p. xiv).*

Young people need to feel in control of their own lives. For this to happen they need to feel like they have a powerful voice, be able to take action on the things that matter to them, take time to reflect on their own lives and undertake the self-discipline that Foucault suggests. In this way young people may find ways of shaping, having input into and working round the apparatuses that prevent them from feeling in control of their own lives or feeling a sense of empowerment. There is considerable evidence that it is possible for children and young people to have agency or feel empowered if they receive relevant information and training, learn about and exercise 'real' power, in addition to being reflective and self-disciplined. Additionally, in law children have the right to express their views on matters affecting them, have freedom of expression, freedom of thought and freedom of assembly (Articles 12-15 of the Convention on the rights of the child, 1989). Despite these rights enshrined in international law many children still feel ignored, not counted, overlooked and not recognised as a person (John, 2003). Despite new paradigms of empowerment for young people, children must still operate within the discourses of law, policy, morality and knowledge. On top of this *a hardening of educational policy regimes has made many schools less hospitable places for students and the evidence suggests that conditions conducive of learning in schools deteriorate through emphasis on accountability, standards, measurement and high stakes testing (Smyth, 2006. p. 285).*

Self-reflectivity and self-discipline will not work in isolation. A powerful voice on its own is not enough. Voices need to be not only heard, but also engaged, reconciled and argued with (Hargreaves, 1994). Delpit (1988) argues that rules of power are being played out in classrooms all the time:

*The power of the teacher over the students; the power of the publishers of textbooks and of the developer of the curriculum to determine the view of the world presented; the power of the state in enforcing compulsory schooling; and the power of an individual or group to determine another's intelligence or 'normalcy'. Finally, if schooling prepares people for jobs, and the kind of job a person has determines her or his economic*

*status and therefore power, then schooling is intimately related to that power (p. 283).*

This demonstrates that the biggest issue in practice is not necessarily the lack of expertise of young people but the unwillingness of professionals to listen to them, particularly when they are being critical. (Hadfield and Haw, 2001). Delpit suggests that many teachers in the liberal or democratic camps acknowledge this power differential and admit participating in this culture of power as distinctly uncomfortable. Their often, well intentioned, efforts to equalise this power gap results in teachers giving mixed messages to the students, particularly those who have been brought up outside the dominant culture of power (1988). Furthermore, there is likely to be an understandable reluctance among teachers to place themselves in a position of openness to personal criticism and challenges from students to the traditional, and comfortable, hierarchies of educational structure (Rudduck & Flutter, 2004). This can result in students becoming passive recipients of the activities that tend to reinforce their alienation and lack of agency, and reinforce the very regimes that alienate them in the first place (Smyth, 2006). An important conclusion to be drawn from this is that child centred whole language and process approaches are needed in order to foster a democratic state of free, autonomous, empowered adults, because research has shown that children learn best through these methods (Delpit, 1988).

The answer is not to move towards a 'child power' model, where power is seen as something to be divided up rather than something that can be shared (John, 2003). Rather we need to move outside of traditional school cultures which often deny students a fair hearing on issues that are of immediate concern to them, reducing their opportunities to obtain their 'fair share' of the benefits of education (Johnson & O'Brien, 2002). Levin (2000) has argued that education reform cannot succeed and should not proceed without much more direct involvement of students in all its aspects. Teachers and educational policy makers may therefore need to change the ways in which they listen to students and the role they can play in relation to improving their own educational opportunities (Rudduck & Flutter, 2004). Involving students more closely in educational decision-making and listening seriously to their stories of experiences as learners are essential first steps which, in turn, will reinforce students' commitment and academic progress (Bland and Atweh, 2007).

Consultation of students at all levels of schooling is now becoming a more normalised aspect of decision-making, through, for instance, representative student councils and the inclusion of student representatives on some school governing bodies (Bland and Atweh, 2007). Evidence suggests that increasing youths' participation leads to higher levels of youth development (Kilroy, 2007).

The United Nations suggests that participation is where the child who is capable of forming his or her own views has the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child (Shier, 2001). The evidence demonstrates that the terms 'empowerment' and 'participation' can be interchangeable (Boylan et al, 2000). Participation can involve investing students with relational power. Relational power draws upon trust and cooperation between and amongst young people in ways that enables the development and pursuit of a common vision about how schooling can work for all, including those most marginalised and excluded. Relational power acknowledges that learning involves 'the power to get things done collectively' by confronting rather than denying power inequalities (Smyth, 2006). It is not they the children, who must change, but the schools. To push children to do anything else is repressive and reactionary (Delpit, 1988). Garlick (2008) suggests that methods of encouraging students to become actively involved in their own learning and empowering them with appropriate ways to do so might include; ensuring the involvement of students by being involved in school improvement strategies and the co-construction of policy-making with teachers. Leren (2006) states that involving students as co-determinants will give them a feeling of ownership.

It could be argued that in everyday life children and young people are potentially disempowered by many groups and individuals including parents, adults, peers, the media, and even themselves (described earlier). In reference to this research we could look to the disempowering mechanisms of educational policy, teacher training, school architecture, schools, teachers, parents, and peers. The evidence also suggests that researchers can also disempower young people. Prout and Mayall (quoted in John, 2003. p. 67) suggest that the role of young people is to be merely objects of study. Young people participating in research have said they had no control over, or say in, what was happening to them; nor did they feel comfortable to say what they wanted to happen during the decision-making processes affecting their lives (Boylan et al, 2000).

Cook-Sather (2002) called students 'the missing voice' in educational research. If we really want to understand phenomena like empowerment and youth participation we need to access the meanings of these concepts and excavate them from the inside outwards. In other words, we need to explore them from the standpoint or positional lenses of the existential experiences of young people (Glazier quoted in Smyth 2006). Nixon and Givens (2004) draw upon recent research and state that there can be a moral dilemma concerning the balance of responsibilities; to those who the research is on, against the need to present the findings in an uncompromising way to a wider audience. Nixon and Givens (2004) also highlight Richardson's suggestion that we can choose to write so that the voice of those we write about is respected, strong and true. Boog (2003) suggests that all action research methods be directed at individual empowerment and collective empowerment and/or emancipation.

Children are increasingly recognised as entitled to participate in decisions that affect them and need to be enabled to achieve justice, influence outcomes and expose abuses of power. Using creative techniques and activities can lead to the research itself becoming a source of empowerment (John, 2003), and encourages them to participate as equal partners (Paterson, 2001).

Boal (1992), drawing on Freire (1970), explains that people who feel oppressed or marginalised should actively reflect (paralleling Foucault's ideas of reflection and self-discipline) on their situation and enter into a collective liberating dialogue. This dialogue provides a possibility for the transformation of action and in so doing transforms the nature of power itself. In Boal's case this dialogue is achieved through artistic cooperation. It has been suggested that traditional teaching methods utilise orderly cognitive, left-brain activity. To involve the whole person in learning means to set the right brain free as well. The right hemisphere functions in quite a different way. It is intuitive. It grasps the essence before it understands the details. It takes in a whole gestalt, the total configuration. It operates in metaphors. It is aesthetic rather than logical. It makes creative leaps. It is the way of the artist (Rogers and Freiberg, 1994). John (2003) suggests that the challenge for educators, psychologists and researchers is to find ways of incorporating children's experiences in studies, engage them as co-researchers and to enter their worlds, which means rethinking our disciplines. John goes on to say that she hopes to find ways of working with young people where the research itself becomes a source of empowerment.



My own assumptions about power and empowerment have changed over time, particularly in relation to the power of the researcher. There is no denying the power of the researcher to help construct how people see themselves and to construct how people see others. Said (1995) talks about researchers making statements about those being researched or writing about them and therefore authorising views about them, describing them, teaching them, and ruling over them to dominate, restructure and have authority over them. This has implications for the research process and was in itself a powerful reason for my choosing to draw upon the critical research paradigm as exemplified by action research.

*Action research is designed to improve the researched subjects' capacities to solve problems, develop skills (including professional skills), increase their chances of self-determination, and to have more influence on the functioning and decision-making processes of organisations and institutions from the context in which they act (Boog, 2003. p. 426).*

Action research lessens the possibilities for researchers, consciously or unconsciously, to abuse their power, rather it examines new directions and guidelines for emancipation and empowerment. Action research is based on a joint learning process of researchers and researched (Coenen and Khonraad, 2003).

There are many ways in which it may be possible to argue that participation leads to empowerment. For example, one of the core group participants, Terry, suggests that empowerment is *giving someone the platform to achieve what they can really achieve* (see section 5.1). Giving and being in a position to give can be very powerful notions. One might argue that Terry feels powerful and wants to share some of this power freely with other people, it could be equally valid to suggest that Terry is using his notions of *giver* to enhance his already powerful position. Khalil (Ronel, 2006) suggests that altruism usually falls in between an everlasting conflict between those who perceive it to be an authentic experience and those who perceive it as rooted in selfishness.

*Peer support fosters children's innate potential to be helpful and kind to one another, and has been widely adopted by educators throughout the world in a variety of forms. It enriches school life at a number of levels, enhances feelings of safety and security and empowers young people to address the issues that concern them (Hutson and Cowie, 2007. p. 12).*

Helping other people to achieve by ‘altruistically’ giving them something, whether it be monetary, through the sharing of a skill or providing them a safe space in which to work in, holds the suggestion that they have the *possibility* to become empowered, to achieve what we have helped them achieve. In a strange kind of irony, the giver in this respect becomes redundant once they have empowered the people they are working with. The altruist, through their acts provide the possibility that they will not be needed, which could be argued does not promote the well being of the giver. The altruist in this case has the potential to benefit but also has the danger of not behaving in their own interest. I argue that this is the essence of empowerment in Terry’s case: Terry feels he has become empowered enough himself to allow himself the possibility of becoming redundant by helping others to become empowered. Michelle encapsulates this idea by saying: *isn’t feeling empowerment in yourself, feeling confidence in yourself to help others or to help yourself!*

In chapter 6 I argue that the Core group members were empowered through participation in this research project. I also discuss areas where they were not empowered and even disempowered, such as my position as an adult and as a researcher meant there would always be the potential for unequal power relations within the group, and that there would always be tensions arising from conflicting sources of power.

What has been established in this section is that to define power is not only problematic, there is confusion between the concepts and terms involved. The evidence suggests that power can be a positive and negative phenomenon, a force that can repress but that can also incite. Power is not easy to detect and is of a polymorphous nature found in all human interactions. When discussing power we must take into account ideas on agency and self-determination and how young people feel about being in control of their own lives. The evidence points towards adults, institutions and society as controlling young people in a variety of overt and subtle ways.

In chapter 5 I utilise Weiner’s (1986) attribution theory to demonstrated how young people feel about empowerment and demonstrated the flow of power. I also use this theory to demonstrate some of the empowering process that the core group went through and how their feelings towards empowerment changed while participating. I suggest that the process undertaken by the core participants helped them facilitate their own confidence and determination, which was shown with all the core participants

finding congruence with their ideas on empowerment. Without exception all the core participants, in the middle of the project, suggested that empowerment was an internal and enabling phenomenon, suggesting that they all felt some degree of control over their own empowerment and were potentially open to becoming more empowered.

#### 3.4. Peer support

Peer support, explored further in the context of the core group and the users in chapter five, is embedded in naturalistic relationships and is arguably a natural part of everyday life in a 'civilised' society because it is based on interaction with others and sharing ideas of identity. Young people involved in peer support learn by 'doing and action'. They 'do' things rather than just talk or be talked to about them. Peer support involves learning about identity, relationships and safety through an interactive process. The process of peer support also enables young people to take action on issues that they feel strongly about. It is a living process, as Dewey might talk about education as a process of living and that education is part of life. He also indicated that children learn from 'doing' and that education should involve real life material and experiences should encourage experimentation and independent thinking (Dewey, 1966 and 1969).

Peer support was first formally recognised in the UK over 20 years ago (Tyrrell, 2002). It is made up of a variety of approaches that allow, amongst other things, young people to help other young people. These include peer mentoring, peer advocacy, circle time, peer tutoring, peer listening, circle of friends, peer befriending, buddies, mini-buds, and peer counselling. Peer support also includes certain conflict resolution practices such as peer restorative justice, peer anti-bullying workshops, peer leadership training, and peer counselling. Some of the key peer led anti-bullying programmes are: The Olweus bullying prevention programme, the No-blame approach, Shared concern, R-time, Bully Courts, peer support schemes and Circle time (Sullivan, 2006).

Cowie suggests that the main features of peer support are that young people are trained to work together, are given opportunities to learn good communication skills, share ideas and reflect on their own feelings. In addition young people should be trained to deal with conflict and help other young people relate to each other in a non-violent and constructive way (Cowie and Hutson, 2005. p. 40). *Peer support gives young people an opportunity to experience different roles and responsibilities* (Cowie et al, 2002). It is a

well-managed strategy for enabling young people to take a greater degree of responsibility over their own lives and relationships, with the full support of a dedicated staff team (Cremin, 2002), and can be used with young people of all abilities. Pupils with Moderate Learning Difficulties have the ability to mediate successfully (Warne, 2003). Kaufman and Burden, using peer learning techniques with young adults who had serious learning disabilities, found that after one year the participants' learning self-concept was well above average. *Moreover, their reflections about how they had changed as a result of their involvement in the programme and their descriptions of what was required to provide effective mediation demonstrated deep levels of cognitive, emotional and social development* (2004. p. 107). Peer support, theatre and creativity are action techniques useful for people with a range of abilities and are important in dealing with situations of bullying and other issues.

The majority of peer support programmes are run within schools or other institutions and harness young people's potential to assume a helpful role in tackling interpersonal problems in the peer group (Cowie et al, 2004). In this way students are trained to offer emotional and social support to fellow pupils in distress (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008). One example of such a programme is those organised by CHIPS (Childline in Partnership with Schools).

*CHIPS was introduced in 1997. Its aim is to raise awareness about Childline and to encourage schools to support their pupils in setting up projects run by and for pupils in tackling issues that affect their lives, such as bullying and violence. CHIPS endorses the view that young people can help one another, that they have a right to be heard and that they can play a key part in making changes to improve the quality of their own lives ... Pupil training is for a minimum of 6 hours (often more); with groups of around 20 (normal maximum 25) (Smith and Watson, 2004. p. 8 and 9).*

In this way peer support schemes provide a service available to deal with conflict as it happens, and run by students for students (Price and Jones, 2001). Most advocates of peer support suggest that through peer support young people can be empowered to take ownership of their own wellbeing and to take initiative to address some of the problems they experience (Visser, 2004).

Cowie suggests that the main features of peer support are that young people are trained to work together, are given opportunities to learn good communication skills, share

ideas and reflect on their own feelings. In addition young people should be trained to deal with conflict and help other young people relate to each other in a non-violent and constructive way (Cowie and Hutson, 2005). Research also shows that peers are able to detect bullying at a far earlier stage than adults can (Naylor et al, 1999).

Peer support gives young people an opportunity to experience different roles and responsibilities (Cowie et al, 2002). It is a well-managed strategy for enabling young people to take a greater degree of responsibility over their own lives and relationships, with the full support of a dedicated staff team (Cremin, 2002), and can be used with young people of all abilities. Pupils with Moderate Learning Difficulties have the ability to mediate successfully (Warne, 2003). Kaufman and Burden, using peer learning techniques with young adults who had serious learning disabilities found that

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Traditionally peer support schemes are run in school, over a long period of time with the support of the staff and student body, ideally, as part of a whole school approach (Peterson and Rigby, 1999; Cowie and Jennifer, 2008; Rigby, 2002). It is important in terms of effectiveness that peer support does not stand-alone but be part of a whole-school policy (Lines, 2005) where young people's potential to be helpful is fostered through appropriate training and through regular debriefing sessions (Cowie et al, 2004). Indeed, almost all the literature on peer support and peer counseling discuss this 'in-house' model of peer support. Table 2 shows an overview of some of the more common approaches to peer support, others not included, although peer led, could be argued as not being supportive, but rather as passing judgements or a punitive model. One example of this is the Bully Court (Rigby, 2002). The bully court consists of a panel of students, supported by teachers. Complaints of bullying come before the court, evidence is shown and witnesses are heard and the court passes judgement. Unhappy students can usually appeal to the headmaster (Lawson, 1994). The aim of a bully court is to establish whether an alleged incident has happened, whether or not it should be classed as bullying and what punishment (if any) is suitable to impose (Mahdavi and

Smith, 2002). In the following section I discuss a different form of peer support; external peer support.

Table 2. Forms of peer support.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>References</b>
<i>Buddying.</i>	Also known as befriending where pupils are trained to listen and befriend younger or same age pupils.	Cowie and Jennifer, 2008; Thompson et al, 1994; Mellor, 1999.
<i>Mentors.</i>	Students are trained to help primary school students in transition to secondary school, do groupwork, run a lunchtime club, and skills training.	Cowie and Jennifer, 2008.
<i>Counselors.</i>	Students trained (usually by a qualified psychologist) to use active listening skills, to support distressed pupils and to challenge bullying	Cowie and Jennifer, 2008; Glover et al, 1988; Stacey et al, 1997; Boddington and Wetton, 1998; Sharp and Cowie, 1994.
<i>Cyber Support.</i>	Small groups of students work in rota to answer e-mails from distressed students. Using internet to search for resources.	Cowie and Jennifer, 2008; Diamanduros et al 2008.
<i>Mediation and conflict resolution.</i>	Training young people to act as mediators in disputes. Training is intensive and allows time for team building. Mediators are trained to use empathy.	Cowie and Jennifer, 2008; Stacey et al, 1997; Warne, 2003; Cremin, 2002; Smith, 1999; Rigby 2002; Sharp and Cowie, 1994.
<i>Community action.</i>	Student councils, assembly presentations, student decision making process.	Cowie and Jennifer, 2008; Tattum and Herbert, 1993; Fitzgerald, 1999.
<i>Quality circles.</i>	A group of 5 – 12 students who meet together on a regular basis, to try to identify ways of improving their school. Quality circles evolved in to circle time or circle of friends.	Cowie and Sharp, 1994; Mellor, 1999.

Table 2. Forms of peer support continued...

<b>Name</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>References</b>
<i>Circle of friends.</i>	Also called circle time. Artificially constructed peer group, friendship and discussion.	Sharp, 2001; Boddington and Wetton, 1998.
<i>Cooperative learning.</i>	Students work in small groups on a common task.	Olweus, 1993; Rigby, 2002.
<i>No Blame Method.</i>	Also called the Method of Shared Concern. Pupils, through a carefully constructed intensive programme, establish ground rules to enable them to coexist in the same school.	Robinson and Maines, 1997; Cowie and Sharp, 1994; Rigby, 2002; Cowie and Jennifer, 2008.
<i>Bully line.</i>	Students provide a telephone counseling service to other students in the school. Extensive training and supervision provided.	Cowie and Sharp, 1994.

Peer support is used in many ways. There are many forms but they all share one common element; peer supporters help, guide, assist, train and share with their peers. The peer support discussed so far usually takes place ‘in-house’; i.e. students are trained to work with other students within their own school. This is the traditional way of implementing peer support systems. However, alternative forms of peer support do exist that follow similar guidelines to traditional in-house peer support systems, one of which is external peer support. External peer support, as practised by my core group (see chapter four), is very similar to in-house systems of peer support, the main difference being that the peer supporters do not attend the schools that they assist and they do not know the students with whom they will be working. Essentially, external peer support is very similar to internal peer support, the main difference being that external peer supporters come from a different school or group. See table 3 for a comparison of internal and external peer support.

Teachers often invite outside specialists into their schools to run sessions with their students. There are many groups that are happy to provide this kind of service such as theatre-in-education companies, local employers and other training providers. A few of these visiting companies are made up of young people, which provide a possible

situation of peer-to-peer education or external peer support. For example, in my own work, I have trained secondary school students to work with year six primary school pupils, where the secondary school students delivered workshop sessions to help the primary school pupils in their transition from primary to secondary school. I have also produced national conferences where delegates, facilitators and speakers have been young people (ipoweri, 2006), all of which have anecdotal positive outcomes for participants. I label this type of peer-to-peer education 'external peer support'. External peer support is often provided by charitable and community orientated organisations utilising youth work or drama clubs to provide this kind of work. One example of external peer support happening on a national level is Actionwork's national anti-bullying conferences for young people (ipoweri, 2006), the first of which took place in 2003. At these events hundreds of young people from around the UK share their knowledge, ideas and strategies with other young people.

There is no set format, no agreed set of guidelines and no ideal working practice for external peer support. External peer support must make use of in-house peer support systems as their reference point for good working practice and guidelines. Peer support styles and guidelines currently regarded as good working practice, include facilitating workshops (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008) and creating forums where young people can help and support each other, share ideas and impart skills and information. I can find no research that details outcomes for external peer support. I have anecdotal evidence from my own practice, from one or two youth based theatre companies and from two schools that I am aware of that have exported their examples of peer support to other schools.

The peer support process adopted for this research project was not an in-house peer support scheme or system, like the majority of those run in schools, nor was it part of a whole school approach as recommended by Peterson and Rigby (1999) for most in-house school anti-bullying peer support projects. This was an external short-term peer support project. By short-term I mean that the peer supporters (the core group) I worked with visited each school just once and ran a one-hour creative workshop session with a group of students in each school, or educational setting. The peer supporters did not know the students they were going to work with and they would not be available for 'follow-up' support as in-house schemes are.



Table 3. Two models of peer support.

<b>In House Peer Support</b>	<b>External Peer Support</b>
Peer supporters are based within the school where they operate (Cowie and Sharp (eds), 1996).	Peer supporters are based outside the school where they operate.
Peer supporters receive a minimum of 30-hours training (Cowie and Sharp (eds), 1996).	Peer supporters receive a minimum of 30 hours training.
Training of peer supporters includes learning assertiveness skills, good communication and listening skills, sharing ideas and reflecting on one's own feelings. Skills around the subject of empathy are usually included (Cowie and Sharp (eds), 1996).	Training of peer supporters includes defining key terms, learning assertiveness skills, good communication and listening skills, sharing ideas and reflecting on one's own feelings. Issues of empathy and power are explored in depth and applied to one's own life.
Peer supporters are trained to deal with conflict and help other young people to relate in non-violent and constructive ways (Cowie and Sharp (eds), 1996).	Peer supporters are trained in group facilitation skills and creative practice including role-play, games and imagery.
Peer supporters receive regular supervision and debriefing sessions (Cowie and Sharp (eds), 1996).	Peer supporters receive regular supervision and debriefing sessions.
Peer supporters keep a strict confidentiality code (Cowie and Sharp (eds), 1996).	Peer supporters keep a strict confidentiality code.
Schemes are a permanent fixture in the school (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008).	Peer supporters visit educational settings that are not their own for short one-off sessions.
Peer supporters can deal with conflict as it happens within the school (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008).	Peer supporters do not look for solutions to specific problems of bullying within a particular school, rather they are looking to raise awareness and share strategies of bullying in general.

Table 3. Two models of peer support continued...,

<b>In House Peer Support</b>	<b>External Peer Support</b>
The scheme is delivered by students for other students within the same educational setting, with adult guidance (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008).	The scheme is designed and delivered by young people from outside the school/college that they visit to other young people, with adult guidance.
Peer supporters act as role models for other students (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008).	Peer supporters act as role models for other students.
Peer supporters emotionally support bullied pupils and provide resources (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008).	Peer supporters provide resources to workshop participants.
Peer supporters can create systems that help challenge bullying in the school, such as developing or updating a school anti-bullying policy (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008).	Peer supporters can help create systems that challenge bullying in the school, such as developing or updating a school anti-bullying policy.
Peer supporters can run lunch time clubs and drop-in rooms, set up mentoring schemes, buddying and internet based support programmes such as Cyberpeers and student council schemes (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008).	Peer supporters can suggest a variety of strategies, schemes or support services that can be set up or used within the school.
Peer supporters can facilitate workshops in tutor groups and give presentations in assemblies (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008).	Peer supporters deliver creative workshops to young people in educational settings that are awareness raising, provide basic skills training, and are information giving. Peer supporters teach through role-play and improvisation various techniques of conflict resolution.
Peer support scheme run with the support of all staff and as a whole school approach (Cowie and Sharp (eds), 1996).	Peer supporters deliver a one-off session, often without the knowledge of the majority of school staff.

In-house peer support and external peer support each have their own advantages and disadvantages. The effectiveness and outcomes of peer support and external peer support are discussed in sections 5.3 and 5.4. Research indicates that trained peer supporters become more confident and happy students and the users of their systems find them useful (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008).

The core group I worked with on this research project received extensive training (described in chapter 4) over the course of a year. During this year I trained and guided the core group members through various peer support methods, and they in turn created their own anti-bullying peer support workshops and delivered them to various groups of young people in educational settings. As there is no research detailing outcomes for users or external peer support or outcomes of the external peer supporters themselves, I have had to use comparative data from peer support in general.

These two systems of peer support are very similar, as was shown in Table 3, and have very similar outcome for users and peer supporters themselves. The training for external peer supporters on this project took place predominantly outside the school setting and so was essentially outside of school rules and regulations. The peer supporters on this project thus had more autonomy to choose the direction of their training and had chances to incorporate their own ideas into the training process. The programme of work that the external peer supporters created was born out of ideas that came from within themselves.

The creative journey that I took with the core group allowed me to incorporate what I felt were essential elements in the training process including skills training such as listening, facilitation and reflection skills whilst they were engaged in exploring their own ideas (see section 6.6). This process helped them feel that what they had learned had come from within rather than what they had been told and I believe that this helped them feel they had ownership of their programme. I suggest that the use of creative activities including the specially designed games, role-plays and performances and the use of external facilitators enhanced engagement in the programme and helped tease out skills that core group members had not recognised they already possessed.

I propose it is quite possible that external peer supporters who have received a high degree of training would be able to assist in the training of in-house peer support

systems. I also see possibilities for established in-house peer supporters to act as external peer supporters in other schools and with other community groups. This would not only help in the sharing of good working practice within the field of peer support it could assist in the proliferation of peer support systems throughout communities.

Peer support and external peer support are discussed further in sections 5.3 and 5.4. The outcomes of peer support in all its forms, especially for the peer supporters themselves, appear to be very positive. Research shows that most users also found peer support useful, although why they find it useful is less clear than for the peer supporters. Thus, my second assumption was that peer support needs to be used as part of a whole school approach. Young people involved in peer support need to be motivated, have adequate training, and receive on-going supervision.

The evidence suggests that some of the most effective programmes to deal with bullying are led by students or young people. Peer support can be seen as a form of youth participation, which has been suggested, can lead to empowerment. Discussions on power are central to any research project that explores bullying particularly as the abuse of power is often the defining point of bullying and those that are bullied need to find ways of becoming empowered out of their bullying cycles.

### 3.5. Theatre and creativity

Techniques and ideas from the theatre were used extensively in this research (see chapter four). There are many writers who help us to understand learning through creative action, performance and role. I drew upon Boal's ideas that we can observe ourselves in action and study alternatives (1995) to explore how we can transform the power that prevents us from achieving our goals into power that can help empower us to achieve them. Theatre techniques are also very useful tools in helping us to take away people's inhibitors and leave them with creative liberation (Kumiega, 1987).

To deal with difficult issues such as bullying I believe that we need a device that is dynamic and that can help evoke change in people's interactions with each other. Schechner suggests that theatre controls and transforms problematic human interactions (1988) and therefore is very useful to us in using education as social action (Torres on Freire in McLaren and Leonard, 1993). *Theatre is physical, it engages the body and the*

*voice; it returns the energy to the world in the form of a performance, as a creative, interactive force, rather than in the form of disconnected destructive discharge* (Reisner, 2002. p. 16).

Boal (1995) and John (2003) have described the empowering nature of theatre and creative action. The following section explores these ideas in more depth and demonstrates how theatre can be a tool for us to empower others and become empowered. Smyth (2006) suggests the need for more inclusivity in education and research, allowing for the lives, experiences, cultures, family backgrounds, aspiration and hopes of young people to become included. Creative groupwork with students and teachers give unique opportunities for experiencing issues, raising awareness about ourselves, breaking down barriers and responding to each other in more open and spontaneous ways (Stephenson, 1993).

The concept of play was fundamental to the work I did with the core group during this project. Play was an important part of the process of how I engaged with the core group and it was an important part of the process of the groups of people the core group worked with. *While teachers value children's play, they often do not know how to guide that play to make it more educational* (Saracho & Spodek (eds), 1998 p. x). Play is essential for childrens' cognitive development and helps the development of social competence (Saracho & Spodek (eds), 1998). Social and creative play demands cooperation, helps create order out of disorder, prepares people for real life experiences, and helps test out boundaries. Everyone agrees that play is often fun but play is always linked to serious issues (Schechner, 1988). Games help us practice strategies to overcome difficulties we might have in life (Boal, 1992). The use of narratives and symbolic play can help young people to understand their own experiences, to communicate these experiences to other people (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008) and to gain insight into the experiences of others.

When dealing with issues of bullying; teachers and other school personnel are key to providing the leadership necessary to bring educators, parents, students, and community members together and are encouraged to focus on empowering young people (Mason, 2008). Creative approaches, particularly those that encourage interaction with characters, participation in plot development and reflection on outcomes, such as symbolic play, narratives, role-play, drama and virtual reality, have direct application to

the issue of bullying (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008). Creative methods are also ways of counteracting bias and further exacerbating the powerlessness of the child subject. The creative arts can help express what often cannot be conveyed in conventional language. Arts based research activity in the classroom furthers the effectiveness of teaching and furthers research (McNiff, 1998). Theatre and the creative arts can help frame, control, transform and stimulate human action and interaction. Through techniques of the theatre we can explore the underlying processes of power and empowerment, sometimes effecting changes in perception, viewpoint and attitude. The politician, the activist and the militant all use techniques of the theatre to support social actions (Schechner, 1988). Given a safe space, guidance and training students can do more than give information: they can also be active agents for change (Fielding and Bragg, 2003).

Creativity is found in all domains from business to teaching. Creativity is a process by which a symbolic domain in a culture is changed: new songs, new ideas and new machines; it is the interaction between a person's thoughts and a sociocultural context (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). We all have the capacity to be creative but not all of us have been able to exploit this capacity. We are all born with a natural amount of creativity but it is education that helps us lose touch with much of it (Robinson and Aronica, 2009). Creativity is now often just associated with the arts and separated from scientific academia.

*The rationalist tradition has driven a wedge between intellect and emotion in human psychology; and between the arts and sciences in society at large. It has distorted the idea of creativity in education and unbalanced the development of millions of people. This results in people passing through the whole of their education never knowing what their real abilities are. They can become disaffected, resentful of their 'failure' and conclude that they are simply not very bright (Robinson, 2001. p. 8).*

Creative activity with a small 'c' forms an integral part of the process of personal growth, and is an expression of that process. It has to do with whether what one creates truly reflects one's own inner experience and resources. For the creative artist the process of creativity is important and has to do with introspection, making, forming, inventing, discovering, meaning making and many others (Gordon, 1983).

Vygotsky (2004) argued that any human action that gives rise to something new should be referred to as a creative act, regardless of whether what is created is a physical object

or a mental or emotional construct that lives within the person who created it and is known only to him (p. 7).

As I found on this project (see chapter four), the evidence suggests that allowing, developing and nurturing personal creativity in one field can improve how we approach other subjects. Robinson (Robinson and Aronica, 2009) tells us the story of Gillian Lynne who told him that she did better in all her subjects at school once she had discovered dance. Creativity is the process of taking our imagination to a new level or applying our imagination to explore problems or difficulties (Robinson and Aronica, 2009).

### 3.6. Social theatre and theatre in education

*Theatre is the capacity possessed by humans to observe themselves in action, of seeing themselves in the act of seeing, of thinking their emotions and of being moved by their thoughts. They can see themselves here and imagine themselves there; they can see themselves today and imagine themselves tomorrow (Boal, 1992. p. xxvi).*

The phenomena of theatre (also known as drama and/or performance) occur among all the world's peoples and date back as far as historians, archaeologists and anthropologists can go (Schechner, 1988). Theatre is not and has not ever only been about entertainment; the dialectics of theatre help us to understand the world and our relationship with it. For example in ancient Greece the idea of theatre was that we witness or participate in dramatic performance in order to understand (Hickson, 1995).

Theatre is a transformative medium for people both as individuals and groups to maintain optimism, higher awareness and find resolutions (Jennings, 1998). In the final analysis of life there are no prescriptions; for every individual one must discover the cause, which impedes him, hampers him, and then, using theatre, create the situation in which this cause can be eliminated and the process be liberated (Growtowski quoted in Kumiega, 1987).

Social theatre was born from the theatre or from aspects of theatre that have been used to explore and educate people about a whole variety of issues. The foundations for this research project were based around principals of creativity and theatre (see chapter four). Since the 1960s many theatre practitioners have accepted that theatre can explore

issues and be put to use in many different ways. Communities and individuals have always found ways of ‘theatricalising’ life experiences, to celebrate, to mourn or mark life events, to work things out or simply pass the time (Seymour, 2009). Social theatre may be defined as theatre with specific social agendas; theatre where aesthetics is not the ruling objective; theatre outside the realm of commerce, which drives Broadway/the West End, and the cult of the new, which dominates the avant-garde (Thompson and Schechner, 2004).

Social theatre is similar in ethos to aspects of theatre-in-education and some might say has taken the place of theatre-in-education. In 1988, the government brought in the Education Reform Act (ERA) which established a national curriculum and devolved budgets to schools. This measure prompted many theatre-in-education companies to struggle and go out of business due to lack of funding. Those that survived into the 1990’s geared their work more away from social issues and more towards the national curriculum. Since 1999 there was a move back to the ‘social’ through citizenship education. Citizenship education can be ‘socially based’ and gives pupils learning opportunities to develop key skills of problem solving (Sextou, 2003). The relationship between social theatre and theatre-in-education is now much closer in ethos and delivery, where both use techniques of the other. Section 4.1 of Chapter four of this thesis outlines a variety of techniques utilised from both disciplines.

*Actions – doing – are what make up theatre and what make up the social. Actions change the world, as Berchtolt Brecht would put it, are the stuff out of which social theatre is made (Tselikas, 2009. p. 25).*

Social theatre and theatre-in-education not only make use of theatre and drama but also a wide range of other disciplines including dance, ritual, games, play, storytelling and fine art. There is now a widespread use of these creative arts in therapies in clinical settings (Burleigh and Butler, 1996). Psychodrama is one such example. In psychodramatic clinical settings the following and other creative arts techniques are critical in developing successful sessions: physical and vocal warm ups, role-playing, rituals, performance, doubling, mirroring, music and dance (Moreno, 1999). Creative arts are also used in play therapy (Jennings, 1993 and 1999), art therapy (Jennings & Minde, 1993) and dramatherapy (Jennings, 2009 and Jennings et al, 1994).



As a theatre practitioner I value the role that social theatre and theatre-in-education have in helping groups deal with issues and explore difficulties. The creative workshop, structured to explore specific issues or build skills can be an invaluable tool for researchers and educators to use.

*The workshop is a way of playing around with reality, a means of examining behaviour by recording, exaggerating, fragmenting, recombining and adumbrating it. The workshop is a protected time/space where intragroup relationships may thrive without being threatened by intergroup aggression (Schechner, 1988. p. 110).*

Within the workshop, participants are able to suspend reality and enter in to a process of exploration, through this process of drama and the product of theatre we can practice critical thinking, problem solving, conflict resolution, and skill building to resolve conflicts creatively without resorting to violence (Sternberg, 1998). Thus transforming any space into a place where equal rights for all participants prevail (Hickson, 1995). Creative workshops have the ability to engage on many levels and encourages experimentation, exploration and co-operation (Johnstone, 1999).

Social theatre and theatre-in-education are professional disciplines but many of the techniques employed by practitioners can be used by anyone. We do not need to be a trained artist to paint a picture just as we do not need to be a trained actor to perform a play. In clinical, therapeutic or issue-based exploratory settings we need a degree of training to guide and facilitate groupwork sessions; if we are not a trained actor then we need to be trained as something else such as a dramatherapist or play therapist. The spaces we work in do not need to be theatres but they do need to be demarcated as special; we need to have formulated the 'special' boundaries in our minds and within the group.

I ran this research project in schools and other educational settings. My rationale was that social theatre and theatre-in-education techniques could help peel away some of the institutionalised power relationships (see section 5.2) that one might find in a school. This in turn could lead to the possibility for critical creative thinking (that sometimes may be constrained by school policy or school classroom layout) by the core group members. In terms of power relationships this could create a possibility of moving outside the notions that; power is something which a group of people or an institution possess or that power is only concerned with oppressing and constraining (Mills, 2003).

Foucault (1977) suggests that experiencing oppression can give rise to new forms of behaviour. Social theatre techniques enabled the core group members to explore oppression and try out alternative behaviour, exploring new avenues of thought and action (see chapter four). There are times in life when the question of knowing if one can think differently than one thinks, and perceive differently than one sees, is absolutely necessary if one is to go on looking and reflecting at all (Foucault, 1984b).

Social theatre is taking a step beyond imagination because it requires that you actually do something rather than lie around thinking about it. Like creativity, it's a practical process of trying to make something original (Robinson and Aronica, 2009). Social theatre offers us a possibility of exploration, reflection, creation and action.

Drama educators and theatre practitioners know about reaching young people through the theatre (Sternberg, 1998) in ways for example that television or film cannot. Social theatre and theatre-in-education, like theatre in general are forms of interaction, it is live, a lived performance that should be fresh every time a piece (even the same piece) is performed. Social theatre techniques make use of the dramatic imagination the *as if* and the *make believe* (Jennings, 2002). The 'as if' in social theatre helps us create a distance from the difficulty we are exploring, so everyone's story is contained within the group's story. The paradox of theatre is that by distancing we come closer (Jennings, 2002).

Jennings gives examples of using theatre in an infertility clinic with women who were having difficulties having children:

*Very frustrated and aggressive conversations would start. For example one woman used to actually beat herself up every time she had a menstruation. She starts to bleed, so she used her fists to beat her abdomen and there was bruising right across her stomach, in sheer frustration of not being able to conceive. What we did in the drama workshop, was to take various myths and stories that contained lots of anger; by taking on these angry roles, that were not her actual story, she actually conceived and became pregnant. She was "distanced" from her own experience through myth and fairy stories (Jennings, 2002. p. 123).*

Social theatre techniques allow us and indeed help us to explore with different eyes the things we do (or don't do) when we react to tensions and conflicts (Sclavi, 2002), remembering that it is not conflict that presents problems, but how we deal with

conflicts that is important (Sternberg, 1998). *Theatre is physical, it engages the body and the voice; it returns the energy to the world in the form of a performance, as a creative, interactive force, rather than in the form of disconnected destructive discharge* (Reisner, 2002. p. 16).

Reisner demonstrates how theatre may help create positive and creative experiences in the process of research. Importantly, in the context of this research, is that social theatre can be done anywhere by anyone. We do not need to be trained actors to use theatrical techniques, just as we do not have to be inside a theatre, although any space we use should be made special. We can use a school classroom, a dinner hall, a youth club hall or even a school playground.

*The practical use of theatre is recognised in the field of bullying prevention.*

*Approaches that encourage interaction with characters, participation in the plot development and reflection upon outcomes, have direct application to the issue of bullying* (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008. p.105).

To deal with difficult issues such as bullying I needed a device that was dynamic and that could help evoke change in people's interactions with each other. Schechner (1988) suggests that [social] theatre controls and transforms problematic human interactions. The tools of theatre should therefore become useful to us in using education as social action (Torres on Freire in McLaren and Leonard, 1993).

*If war is the destruction of an enemy, peace is the making of a friend. Theatre has exposed the horrors of war and violence from its earliest days, thanks to Greek tragedy, and it has always been in the front line trying to make peace prevail. In no other place – if we consider Shakespeare's plays, for instance – have the causes of hate and rivalry between individuals, communities and nations have been so deeply explored* (Bernardi, Dragone & Schininà, 2002. p. 15).

In chapter two I touched briefly on a possible conflict between social theatre and group dynamic theory (see appendix 11). In psychology circles, group *relationships* are of utmost importance. Within social theatre, we are invited to place tasks before relationships. One of the difficulties of focussing on relationships is that groups often get addicted to relationship discussions, spending lots of time on them and avoiding confronting the tasks to be tackled (Tselikas, 2009). Group facilitators often find

themselves with the dilemma of creating a good group atmosphere and then lose site of the task to be explored. Allowing ourselves to concentrate on the task defines a point of concentration and creates a different dynamic allowing relationships to emerge and evolve, connected with the subject matter in question and task to be solved (Tselikas, 2009). This helps us to integrate constructivist and narrative approaches suggesting the possibility that social reality is not just constructed but is also just allowed to happen.

In the UK in the 1980s funding for arts projects disappeared and the focus was placed on particular contexts or specific goals, theatre in these settings took on more of a service orientation and the role of practitioners changed (Seymour, 2009). Social theatre now started to take place in diverse locations—from prisons, refugee camps, and hospitals to schools, orphanages, and homes for the elderly. In these contexts social theatre projects are replacing some aspects of theatre-in-education. Participants have been local residents, disabled people, young prisoners, and many other groups often from vulnerable, disadvantaged, and marginalised communities (Thompson and Schechner, 2004). Schininà (2009) suggests that social theatre is theatre for change. One of the objectives of social theatre is to question society (Schininà, 2009) while working within defined boundaries. Artistic practice celebrates imagination and the freedom to break boundaries; creating boundaries in order to break others (Seymour, 2009).

Jennings (2009) suggests that social theatre helps individual transformation and integration. It has been accepted among practitioners that theatre can be put to use in many ways, including giving voice to discontent and is fundamental to healthy human development (Seymour, 2009).

Social theatre projects are happening in a variety of forms throughout the world and are a part of many people's lives. Social theatre can be seen as creating a community to help explore issues that affect us (Hickson, 2009). Social theatre can help create a theatre of resistance, create awareness of oppression and help develop positive cultures (Barham, 2009). Social theatre is a reaction to social needs in the here and now. Not only does social theatre offer incentives for development it also gives us opportunities for self reflection to future action (Vidrih, 2009). Social theatre is tried and tested; it can effectively work through many issues and it can breath new life into the quality of a person's life (Vidrih, 2009).

Social theatre [and theatre-in-education] is a way to include the community in a dynamic and participatory way in its growth and emancipation (Vidrin, 2009). Of particular interest to me is the use of social theatre with peer educators. Peer educators, like actors, are not only playing a role; they are also struggling with many of the themes that they are educating about. It is precisely because the peer educators are like the learners and continue to struggle with similar issues that learners are prepared to listen to them and learn with them (Evans, Akerman and Tripp, 2009).

*Social theatre utilises a variety of creative tools, communication techniques, and artistic ethics that used in combination can bring people to express themselves freely, communicate better than before, redefine safely their own roles, discuss peacefully possible changes and enact socially these personal and collective changes (Schininà, 2009. p. 37).*

### Summary.

Theatre and the creative arts in general have been used extensively throughout this research project. Performance, games, role-play, ritual and other creative practices and techniques provide us with doorways to explore ideas from fresh angles and new pathways. Through action our ideas are transported in safe and structured ways allowing for the possibility of change, learning and empowerment. Creative activity promotes reflection and assists in the development of empathy: empathy between group members and empathy with participants.

Creative practice ensures co-operative and productive groupwork and allows closed minds to open up and explore in safety. The techniques discussed in this chapter help us see things in ways they were meant to be seen, how they might be seen, how they can change and how we want them to change. These techniques and ideas can open up doors of perception, help maximise experiences, enrich education and allow us to explore difficult topics, such as bullying, in safe and collaborative ways. When we are playing a game, involved in a ritual or a performance, we learn, share and gain insights without having to look for them or analyse them. In effect we learn without realising that we are learning. Using these techniques we look at ourselves without looking, explore ideas without exploring and achieve understanding without force.

The creative techniques outlined in this chapter could be described as creative action methods (Hickson, 1995). Action methods are about doing as opposed to thinking about, listening to or being told to do something and they allow us to see ideas in action, perform a topic from many different angles and express them in many different ways. We can share, we can guide, and we can experience in real time and unreal time, in safety and in partnership. We can see ourselves here and imagine ourselves there; we can see ourselves in others and imagine how they see us. Action methods are flexible and can be used with all kinds of groups and with all kinds of abilities including different age groups and mixed ability groups. Every creative act involves a new innocence of perception liberated from the cataract of accepted belief (Koestler, 1990).

Research located within the creative arts tradition grows from trust; a trust in the intelligence of the creative process. As a result, the outcomes tend to be more creative, less mediocre and more conducive to the to advancing the sophistication of practice (Mcniff, 1998).

The following chapter explores the research project process in detail. In the context of theatre and creativity I describe how theatre and creativity were used with the core group and their feelings towards it. I also examine how some of their thoughts and notions concerning the subject matter explored may have changed or evolved as a result of the activity.

## Chapter 4. The research project process.

This chapter describes some of the activities used in the project and some of the reasoning behind choosing certain activities. Following this chapter is an analysis of some of the project's creative processes where I also gauged the extent to which this project had successful outcomes and what the core group participants felt about their participation in it.

The creative workshop style worked on two levels within the project. Initially I trained and explored ideas with the core group using a variety of games and creative activities. Consequently the core group used the style of the creative workshop to facilitate their anti-bullying sessions in schools and other venues.

### 4.1. The training period.

The training period was made up of five distinct stages:

- Stage 1:       Introductory residential training days.
- Stage 2:       Cross-cultural training project.
- Stage 3:       Delivery and feedback of cross-cultural creative workshops.
- Stage 4:       Intensive residential training programme.
- Stage 5:       Delivery of final creative workshops in schools and other venues.

#### Stage 1. Introductory residential training day.

In August 2006 I held a residential training workshop in Somerset, UK for three teenagers. I treated it as I would treat any professional adult residential training workshop. The initial core group members Terry, Michelle, Lorna and I stayed in a hotel that had training rooms attached. I had no funding and so paid all the travel and accommodation expenses myself. We spent one day in the training room and one day on outside activities.

## Session 1.

9am – 5pm.

The day started with some introductory, physical, mental and vocal warm-up games. Each of the participants then filled in their initial questionnaires. Following a short break the participants played games that initiated storytelling, explored power relationships, bullying and oppression, and helped warm-up the group to work together creatively.

I wanted the core group to be aware of some of the key concepts of some key childhood theorists to help give them a basic grounding for when they would eventually design their own creative workshop. Later in the morning I handed out summaries of some key childhood theorists including; Dewey, Montessori, Erikson, Piaget and Vygotsky, with the help of Mooney's book 'Theories of Childhood' (Mooney, 2000). I asked the participants to discuss these theories with one another. Each participant then chose one theorist each and created a presentation about that theorist that would later be delivered to the rest of us. Following 20 minutes preparation and rehearsal the presentations were delivered and discussed. All participants, along with myself gave feedback on style, creative content and delivery of the presentations.

On reflection it may have been useful to have devoted more time to this activity as the presentations were somewhat rushed. I felt that it was important for the young group members to explore the theories together rather than me lecturing about them. Unlike Terry neither Lorna or Michelle enjoyed presenting their ideas about the theorists, in fact Lorna was so shy that she had to present from behind a curtain so that I and the others could not see her. Some of the activities during the course of the rest of the day utilised ideas from Montessori, Vygotsky and Piaget such as utilising real tools for real work (Montessori), during on-going 'real' work projects (Piaget), while learning from the interaction with peers (Vygotsky). I did not explain this to the participants and none of them picked up on it or commented on it during our final reflective session at the end of the day.

After lunch we played a game to warm everyone up again and got involved in activities that explored how we saw others and ourselves through art. In one exercise participants were blindfolded and were asked to draw themselves on a piece of paper, in another



participants drew their representations of bullies, people who are bullied and empowered people. All these pictures were discussed and displayed around the room. Not only were these pictures a way of sharing and exploring ideas, they were also a way for the participants to decorate the space and make it their own (See figure 3).

Another activity saw the participants create their own personal ritual. The aim was to create a ritual that contained repetitive sounds and movements and that in some way gave them a sense of feeling powerful, strong or happy. Each ritual was to be no more than a minute. After creating, practising and showing the rituals I asked the group to work together and create a joint ritual that contained elements of their personal rituals. Once created they performed the ritual several times to me. Turner (1974) suggests that rituals are able to achieve genuine cathartic effects, causing transformations of character and social relationships. Please also see Session 13, later in this chapter for more information regarding rituals.

Storr (1972) suggests that *rituals have a positive effect on young people, offering the beginning of autonomy and a breaking away from the dependence of adults* (p. 97). Rituals offer us liberation from oppression while the ceremony helps change people (Schechner 1988).

Figure 3. Pictures drawn in collaboration.



Later in the day I utilised arts and crafts techniques by asking the participants to create two masks (see figure 4) each, from a variety of resources I had provided, including; paper plates, pens, crayons, paint, string, tape, glue, glitter, scissors and staplers. One mask was to be of a bully and one of a person who had overcome bullying. Once the masks were created, each participant introduced their masks and provided a short history on the background of each character that each mask represented. Group members were encouraged to wear the masks and develop a character for them. Each participant, in turn, put on one of their masks and adopted the character of the mask themselves. I interviewed each character in turn. Then interviews focused on personal aspects of each 'masks' life, and on the subject of bullying and violence in general.

The participants, through a fusion of creative activity, were able to safely explore ideas that they may otherwise have been too inhibited to do, in addition to practising empathy. I would like to examine part of this process by utilising one of Terry's masks. Terry (one of the core group members) created a mask of a bully called Jim. Jim was from north-east London. Jim is 15 years old, drinks beer and lives with his mum. He comes from a working class family. Jim's parents do not care about him (See appendix 7 for the complete transcript of this interview).

Researcher	<i>Yeah? Do you see your dad?</i>
Mask of Jim	<i>No, he don't care about me.</i>
Researcher	<i>He doesn't care about you?</i>
Mask of Jim	<i>No.</i>
Researcher	<i>You got any brothers or sisters?</i>
Mask of Jim	<i>No.</i>
Researcher	<i>Just you and your mum on your own?</i>
Mask of Jim	<i>Yeah.</i>
Researcher	<i>Yeah? Is that all right?</i>
Mask of Jim	<i>Well she don't care about me.</i>
Researcher	<i>She don't care about you either?</i>
Mask of Jim	<i>I can come home any time I want.</i>
Researcher	<i>Can you?</i>
Mask of Jim	<i>Yeah!</i>
Researcher	<i>Is that fun?</i>
Mask of Jim	<i>Yeah ... That's a man's dream.</i>

Researcher *Are you a man?*  
 Mask of Jim *Yeah, I like to call myself a man.*  
 Researcher *Yeah?*  
 Mask of Jim *Yeah.*

We see from the above that Jim has turned his mum's 'not caring' attitude in to a positive thought of being a man's dream to do whatever he wants. Although only 15 years old, Jim sees himself as an adult. Terry presents Jim as being very tough, not being afraid to resort to violence when provoked. Jim even shows violent protectiveness towards his mother, almost as if he is protecting his personal property, despite saying that his mother does not care about him.

Researcher *What if somebody said something to your mum?*  
 Mask of Jim *Then they getting it ... bad.*  
 Researcher *But I thought your mother didn't care about you?*  
 Mask of Jim *Yeah but my mum is my mum.*  
 Researcher *So you gonna do them in are you?*  
 Mask of Jim *Yeah ... they don't have no right to say anything to my mum.*

The driving force or focus of Jim's life is money and he does not care who he treads on to get it.

Researcher *What's the most important thing in your life?*  
 Mask *My money.*  
 Researcher *How do you get your money?*  
 Mask *I beat kids up for it.*  
 Researcher *Okay. What do you think about middle class kids?*  
 Mask of Jim *They're the easy ones, they have the most money too. Just punch them in their face, take their money off them and walk away, don't have to do no ruck.*

The group had a lot of fun during this mask making process. The interviews were taken seriously with all the participants managing to stay in role for some considerable time. This activity was part of a process of layering. Layers that I wanted exploring in this activity were layers of empathy and interpretations of bullying. All the creative

activities had different intensities and varying levels of difficulty. This activity was quite advanced and combined art, craft, characterisation, role, and performance. Jennings and Minde (1993) suggest that the mask is where art and drama meet, that masks can help people 'move on' when they are stuck. They also suggest that masks are often thought of as the wicked self, the self that can go out of control, evoke demons and generally stir up trouble on the one hand and the mask can also help a process of therapeutic transformation on the other.

Terry stated that he enjoyed this activity and said he got a lot out of it, particularly, he said, in seeing things from another person's point of view:

*I've learned that if I do place myself in other people's perspectives, or you know other people's views and how they see everything, you can learn, you can learn more about how they feel and how you see it and how you see them as in a person. Yeah it's good* (Feedback from core group member Terry in 2006).

I found it interesting to note the similarities between Terry and Jim. They are both in year 11 at secondary school, male, from a working class family and they are from north-east London. The differences concern family background and how they feel about life. I believe that Terry is unconsciously suggesting that bad parenting results in violent and bullying behaviour. This is particularly poignant when we learn in chapter 5 that one of the most important aspects of Terry's life is about having respect between parents and children.

After the mask activity I asked the participants to share personal stories of bullying, that they had experienced in their lives, whether it was as a bully, a person who was bullied or a person that had witnessed bullying. Once they had told their stories to each other I asked them to create a play that contained elements of all their stories. They were allowed to use some of the masks they had created if they wished. Once created and rehearsed the participants performed their play to me. After the performance we engaged in a collective feedback and reflective discussion. Cowie and Jennifer (2008) discuss the safety of role-play, its experimental capabilities and the ability it has in accessing difficult emotions, particularly those surrounding the topic of bullying. Our feedback session centred on Terry, Michelle and Lorna saying what they liked/disliked

and what they felt they had learned. I did not direct my questions to asking them if they, for example, found any similarities between them and the characters they played, or what it felt like to access difficult emotions. Upon reflection I would have liked to have asked those questions at the time rather than purely hoping that the answers might appear without direction.

Following the role-plays we went back to the masks and I asked the participants to create a collage of the masks on the floor (See figure 5). Each participant was responsible for placing their masks and their masks only, and was able to keep on moving them until they were happy with the position of the mask in relation to all the other masks. This activity stimulates the imagination, can help to discover relationships and assist in using projective techniques (Hickson, 1995).

Figure 4. Photographs of masks created by the core group.

Masks created by the core participants in August 2006



Nearing the end of the day I asked the participants to find a place on their own where they could reflect on what they had learned during the day. I then brought them back together and asked them to create a presentation of what they thought they had learned, which was performed to me at the end of the day.

Just as it is important to ‘warm-up’ (see session 19) the voice, the body and the mind before working, it is important to ‘cool-down’ the body and mind at the end of the day. ‘Cool-downs’ often involve meditative and reflective activities. I ended the session with games to ‘cool down’ the participants and a final question and answer session.

Each participant had different needs and had different levels of understanding on a variety of subjects. The creative workshop techniques allowed for these different levels and needs. Each participant felt they gained skills and insights about similar ideas but in different ways.

Both Terry and Lorna said they found the mask activity the most thought provoking.

*The mask exercise that we did at the end was an exceptionally riveting and enlightening experience for me. For me, the mask symbolised the front that people often put on and as we were being hot-seated [interviewed], the voice within gradually started to emerge more (core group member Lorna).*

*The part I enjoyed most was the hot-seat [interview]. It gave me the power to view life from a different character’s perspective (core group member Terry).*

Lorna used the mask as a metaphor for the way people alter their character in different situations, by for example putting on a ‘front’ to try and look more confident than one is feeling. As Lorna’s characters’ voice started to emerge, it opened up a possibility of portraying a whole range of feelings which meant ‘*I have learnt a lot about myself and about how better to understand people*’ (core group member Lorna). Although Michelle said she enjoyed being able to discuss and challenge each others views, she found the mask activity more challenging and said she did not like the hot-seating because she felt she wasn’t ready and it was difficult. Michelle did mention later on in the session that

she realised the mask activity had made her more confident. *'I thought that if you had asked me to do a hot-seat, a while ago I wouldn't have even considered being able to do it'* (core group member Michelle).

*Today has been a fantastic day. Although learning about new things we also at the same time had fun and I'm sure the others would agree! The part I enjoyed most was the hot-seat. It gave me the power to view life from a different character's perspective. Also having others talk was good because you experience another person's inner thoughts. The games in between were an excellent idea. They gave us time to refresh ourselves and most importantly our brains and memory. The venue was ideal and a comfortable space. One improvement would be to have music during the times when we were working silently, it would have been a bonus but apart from that everything was great and enjoyable!* (core group member Terry).

## Session 2.

Each participant was interviewed on camera about the project, and their thoughts on bullying, empowerment, power, youth participation and why they wanted to be involved in the project. To end our time together we walked and talked in the Somerset hills and went bowling. This relaxed day I believe helped solidify learning, while certain activities were remembered and discussed. I had hoped that it would also help create a positive bond between the participants for future work.

Despite the positive bond Michelle and Lorna pulled out of the project due to school commitments. Michelle rejoined for the final two weeks of training the following year (see later in this chapter for more details).

## Stage 2. Cross-cultural peer support training.

Two of my original peer supporters were unable to participate in this next stage of training due to school commitments. As outlined later in this chapter I enlisted three new teenagers to join Terry on this peer support training programme. I had been granted a small amount of funding from the Sasa Kawa Foundation to create a cross-cultural peer supporter programme with young people from England delivered to young people

in Japan. This funding would pay for airfares to Japan and accommodation while in Japan for four peer supporters and myself. To help keep costs down, during this training period I occasionally used a student common room in a school as a training room. From my point of view this was far from ideal and somewhat restrictive. Other sessions were run in a local community hall.

Terry was a year older than Robin, Chantelle and Tanya, the three new core group members. Terry had also already completed the summer training day with me. His thinking on subjects such as bullying and empowerment was somewhat more advanced to the new participants. During this period the others would often look to Terry to take the lead in some of the training and presentation situations.

I was due to run six training sessions with the core group to enable them to design and deliver creative anti bullying workshops to other young people. They would deliver one session to a group of 30 students in a school in England and then accompany me to Japan for one week where they would deliver the workshop to five different groups of young people. They would be filmed, monitored and interviewed during the process. Terry already had some experience with me but Robin, Chantelle had Tanya had no experience of running workshops, giving presentations or dealing with issues of bullying.

I was going to be working within multiple cultures, multiple educational systems, multiple bureaucracies and multiple power relations to help bring some light on the effectiveness of negotiating and delivering a peer support project. I was confident with my experience of using theatre techniques in cross-cultural learning that the core group would grasp enough in that short period of time to be able to do this. In addition the evidence is very clear that theatre, creative activity and performance has always mixed traditions and diverse styles – it has the ability to translate from one language or discourse into another (Pavis, 1992). Theatre, ritual and creative activity allows one to set aside one's own cultural position and consider alternatives (Turner, 1974).

The following sessions were aimed at bonding the group together, and giving them an opportunity to witness how professional performers might work in educational settings. In addition the core group participated in creative activities exploring power, bullying,



strategies, building trust and getting a 'feel' for how certain techniques might work or not.

### Session 3.

18th January 2007. 1.45 – 3.10pm.

We were due to have a session in a secondary school but as we were going to start everyone was evacuated off school grounds due to severe weather conditions. The session was cancelled today.

### Session 4.

19th January 2007. 1.45 – 3.10pm.

This was the third session for Terry and the first for Tanya, Chantelle and Robin and was held in a sixth form common room at a secondary school. I treated this session as an introductory session to help bond the group, explore what bullying meant to everyone and to start the group thinking about the strategies that are currently available to us to deal with bullying. All the new participants filled out their questionnaires. We played games that built trust, awareness and that explored power relations and creative activity. I did not film this session and had no time to discuss feedback on the session, as we had to move out of the room early for another class. The next seven sessions were not filmed. I asked all the core group participants to keep work diaries which should include a record of activities, what they learned, how they felt about the session and any other comments they wanted to make. Although I reminded them each day, only Tanya and Chantelle kept work diaries. Terry and Robin started their work diaries once we arrived in Japan. The only other data I have on these initial sessions are my own diary, notes made in sessions by the core participants, my own notes and a selection of photographs.

The only data I have regarding this particular session is two comments made by Chantelle and Tanya saying that the questionnaire was very long and quite difficult to fill in.

### Session 5.

20th January 2007. 10 – 12pm.

Session four for Terry and session two for Tanya, Chantelle and Robin. This session was again held in the student common room. I introduced the core participants to a co-

worker of mine who was a specialist storyteller and singer. We played more energising trust games, shared stories of bullying and explored what bullying actually meant to us. The group members feel they are getting to know and trust each other and some already feel they are a family. This is a *'firm foundation for our group's friendship and got off to a great start so we could share all of our experience as sort of a family'* (core group member Chantelle).

#### Session 6.

21st January 2007. 10am – 4pm.

Session five for Terry and session three for Robin, Tanya and Chantelle. This was our first session outside of the school compound. I hired a local community hall with two wide-open spaces for us to use.

The core group spent the morning watching me rehearse two actors in a show and creative workshop they were going to perform in secondary schools around the country. I wanted the core group to witness how difficult and intense it can be in trying to design and practice a creative awareness programme. It was also important for them to witness how other people responded to similar games, theatre techniques and creative activity. This initial experience helped open their ideas to the possibilities that creative activity can have. Or, as Sternberg (1998) might say, to let them see that theatre can take place anywhere and offer a safe, non-judgemental space to explore any of life's problems or conflicts.

In the afternoon we played some energising and awareness raising games and I left the core group to work amongst themselves so that they could start discussions of what their creative workshop might consist of. During the session each of the participants had to facilitate a game for the rest of the group, which helped in raising confidence levels and getting a 'feel' for how certain activities work. *'This was a big turning point for me as I'm not a very confident speaker ... I managed to keep calm and get the activity over with'* (core group member Chantelle).

#### Session 7.

22nd January 2007. 9 – 11am.

Session six for Terry and session four for Robin, Tanya and Chantelle. Today the core group observed a two-hour anti-bullying show and workshop delivered by a theatre-in-

education company in a secondary school to a group of 250 students. *'It gave a real insight into bullying'* (core group member Chantelle). There were no teachers present during the show or workshop, and some of the students were difficult to work with. This gave the core group an insight into school policy/teacher non-involvement or support on the one hand, and how difficult it can be to work with large groups on the other. There were a few *'mishaps with a fight nearly going to happen'* (core group member Chantelle). The theatre-in-education company staff and the core group all felt that *'it would have been better if there were teachers present'* (core group member Tanya).

#### Session 8.

25th January 2007. 9 – 11am.

Session seven for Terry and session five for Robin, Tanya and Chantelle. The group observed the same show and workshop presented by the theatre-in-education company in a different school. This was a primary school and the audience was slightly smaller at 80 pupils. There were teachers present who supported the theatre-in-education group and the students. The session went much more smoothly than the previous one the core group had observed, which was remarked on by them. *'It was more controlled; the teachers were there. Very enthusiastic children'* (core group member Tanya).

#### Session 9.

3rd February 2007. 10 – 12am.

Session eight for Terry and session six for Robin, Tanya and Chantelle. Today we were back in the student common room. I should just explain a little bit about this space. It is a small room filled with chairs, tables and a bank of computers. We try to clear away as many of the chairs and tables as possible and make do with what space we have.

Occasionally we have had other students in the room working away on the computers. I personally find the room stuffy and uncreative, but it has been freely given for us to use. To date the core members have got to know each other; they have researched, discussed and shared ideas and personal stories about bullying. They have worked with and observed several professional creative artists in rehearsal, in performance and on a one-to-one basis. The core group have also participated in and practised using a variety of creative activities and seen possibilities of what they can achieve.

I started off this session, as usual, with some warm-up games and a game to get them telling stories about bullying without initially knowing they were telling stories. We

then explored status and body language through imagery and discussion. We looked at power relationships through imagery and role-play. I also got the core group members to work on voice projection and breath control. All of the participants expressed pleasure about this session and the project to date. *'We used imagery with chairs, it was a great way of thinking abstractly, and I really enjoyed that. Also seeing others' point of view was interesting. That has been the best activity we have done so far'* (core group member Tanya). *'We played a game called "prisoner" which I found really difficult to improvise a story out of nothing! But I eventually found out that this was the aim of the exercise, to get me confident in speaking about literally a load of rubbish!'* (core group member Chantelle). I gave the participants homework today. I asked each person to invent a game that could in some way explore the concept of power, practice it and deliver it tomorrow to the other core participants. I used this activity to get them used to being in control and what is needed to direct situations.

#### Session 10.

4th February 2007. 10am – 4pm.

Session nine for Terry and session seven for Robin, Tanya and Chantelle. We again spent the day in the student common room. The session was warmed up with us all playing the invented games created for homework. This homework had brought the reality of the task that was in front of them; just presenting one game to 'friends' had been difficult. What was it going to be like when they presented to groups of students they did not know? I sensed a lot of fear amongst the core participants, a fear of the unknown, of not knowing what to expect and not knowing whether they felt they were going to succeed in their workshop creation. I played several games that helped them to express themselves and to lose their fear. We then created a safe space for them, together, to *'get down to some serious work'* (core group member Tanya) and actually create a structure for their session, the session they were going to deliver in schools (see table 5). The rest of the day was spent on designing, practising, rehearsing, refining, and more rehearsing. *'We got so much done today, we wrote our script for our scene, outlined our plan for our workshop session, bonded more as a group, rehearsed, rehearsed and rehearsed some more'* (core group member Chantelle). Their session started with a performance on the subject of bullying, where each of the core participants acted. After this mini play the core participants would engage their users in a series of games and activities to help raise awareness on the subject of bullying.

See tables 4 and 5 for workshop evolution details. I want to emphasise that the core group members created this workshop plan. My role had been to offer them alternative options, guidance and helping them to find ways of presenting their ideas in a creative way.

Table 4. Evolution of the core group's creative workshop plan.

<u>First mind map.</u>		
<i>Role-plays, get everyone's names, open windows – let light in, question and answers, demonstrations, exploring inner thoughts, power point presentation, trust, dance, music, kinetic learning, feedback, display boards, flipchart, acting, let them have fun, understanding, exploring and show different types of bullying.</i>		
<u>First draft workshop plan.</u>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Notes</b>
10:00	<i>Start</i>	Students enter
10:05	<i>Introductions and an icebreaker/trust game</i>	
10:10	<i>Gather ideas about bullying</i>	Use flip chart
10:25	<i>Images of bullying in groups</i>	Create, show, discuss
10:30	<i>Perform play with bad ending</i>	
10:35	<i>Show that power can be changed</i>	Use flip chart
10:40	<i>Perform play with good ending</i>	
10:45	<i>Game?</i>	
10:55	<i>Questions and answers</i>	
11:00	<i>End</i>	

Session 11.

8th February 2007. 1.10 – 3.10pm.

This was the final session for the core group members before going out to Japan to run their sessions. Session ten for Terry and session eight for Robin, Tanya and Chantelle. We again started this session in the school common room. The first hour was spent rehearsing their mini play and workshop plan. The core group then ran a one hour creative anti-bullying workshop with 30 students, aged 13 years at a secondary school. There was a mixture of boys and girls. This was a real test for the core participants,

Table 5. The core group's final creative workshop plan.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Notes</b>
10:00	<i>Introductions.</i>	Terry to introduce the group and group members introduce themselves.
10:05	<i>Game of back-to-back. (see Hickson, 1995) This game demonstrates that people need to balance each other's power to succeed.</i>	Terry introduces the game. Tanya and Chantelle demonstrate the game.
10:10	<i>Write down on a flip chart what does the word bullying mean to everyone in the room.</i>	Ask the participants to make suggestions as to what the word bullying means to them.
10:15	<i>Perform show. The show is the story of a boy who has just started school and gets pushed around and verbally abused by another boy.</i>	Illustrates the bullied, the bully, and the bystander. All core group perform.
10:25	<i>Audience discusses and shares ideas about the show.</i>	Robin gets the audience into pairs and encourages the discussion.
10:30	<i>Forum theatre (see Hickson, 1995). The audience is encouraged to take the place of the bullied and offer alternative courses of action.</i>	Terry facilitates.
10:50	<i>Game of 'Seven-Up' (see Hickson, 1995) This game is used to help cool the group down and aids reflective concentration.</i>	Group demonstrates the game.
10:55	<i>Recap the session.</i>	Chantelle recaps on the session
10:58	<i>Question and answers.</i>	The participants are given the chance to ask questions.
11:00	<i>Close.</i>	Workshop ends.

it was the first time they would be delivering a creative session. I observed the workshop, no teachers were present. The users appeared to enjoy the session, as did the core group members in running it. Unfortunately no data is available on the feelings of the users towards the session. After the workshop, for 15 minutes, I captured comments

from the core group members regarding how they felt about running their first workshop, what they learned from the experience, and how they could improve future workshops. I also asked them who had been responsible for timings in their workshop (See chapter 6 section 3 for a detailed analysis of this).

### Stage 3. Delivery and feedback of cross-cultural creative workshops.

As a group we travelled to Japan on the 9th February. Our Japanese hosts had arranged a welcome party for us consisting of Japanese teachers and some of their children.

#### Session 12.

11th February 2007. 10am – 1pm.

Session 11 for Terry and session nine for Robin, Tanya and Chantelle. Our Japanese hosts gave us a community hall to work in. This session was a rehearsal session. I wanted the core group to practice their creative workshop. All of the core group members were very excited about being in Japan and I had to keep finding ways to refocus them. I used some of the session to work with imagery and slow motion. These activities helped contain their energy and excitement. Tanya lost her voice today, which meant that rehearsing was quite difficult and she had to whisper all of her dialogue during the session. As a director I found myself giving them very basic notes to help improve their session, such as not to stand with one's backs to the audience and to keep holding regular eye contact. The 12th of February was a national holiday in Japan and we all had a day off to rest and do some sightseeing.

#### Session 13.

13th February 2007. 08.45am – 10.45am.

Session 12 for Terry and session ten for Robin, Tanya and Chantelle. This was the core group's first workshop in Japan. They ran their session with a group of students from a junior high school in Osaka. Just before the workshop I captured some of their thoughts:

Researcher     *Okay you are about to run your first workshop in Japan. How are you feeling?*

Terry            *We are feeling prepared um ... prepared, strong, powered, empowered, um fabulous*

Robin            *Very good, confident ...*

Terry            *Confident, prepared and motivated, empowered ...*

Robin            *... but most importantly relaxed ...*

(core group members Tanya and Chantelle come in to shot)

Terry            *It's a new environment for us but we as a group are strong enough and  
powered enough to handle the situation like this, aren't we fellow ...*

Chantelle       *Yeah (nervous laugh)*

Robin            *So Konichiwa ...*

Chantelle       *It's not afternoon yet ...*

Tanya/Chantelle... *Ohayo gozimus ...*

Terry            *I think my last words should be um ... wish us luck ... woooo*

This session was unlike any session they had previously run before. They were in full control and had no input from myself at all. I observed the session and occasionally captured sections on film. They were working with 40 14-15 year old Japanese students, boys and girls. In addition to the students there were members of the local press taking photos, teachers, including the Headteacher (Principal) observing as well as some of the participants parents. None of the Japanese participants spoke English and the session was interpreted/translated by a Japanese teacher. After the initial introductions and nervousness it did not take long for the core group members to get in to their stride of running the session. The core group used some games to encourage participation and breaking down of barriers followed by a performance. The core group found it difficult to get the young participants discussing and sharing ideas, particularly as there were so many adults watching and monitoring. The Japanese young participants were shy but some of them volunteered and the core group were able to elicit ideas from them in the form of a forum theatre session (see Boal, 1992; Hickson, 1995). The session contained lots of laughter and energy and the core group members were very supportive and encouraging of their participants.

Terry summed up the first session as follows:

*First workshop! Immediate thoughts after it were; we did really well seeing as it was our first workshop; the audience were really active and energetic; we worked fantastic as a team, supported each other when help was needed; but I personally feel there is a lot of room for improvement. The children in the UK seem much more energetic and seem to have much more*



*freedom. The Japanese children seem to be really shy, they seem to be aware of what impression they are giving their classmates. They need to be given a lot of effort to get answers out of them; they are bright children. With them they have a very strong barrier to break before they open up to you ..., once that barrier is broken they open up so much more and you get to hear the real story. We managed to do this at the workshop. The first workshops I really enjoyed, it gave me confidence and power in working with students and in a team (core group member Terry).*

The entire core group said they were happy with their session and the basic feedback from the participants was that they enjoyed the session too. Although one of the teachers felt that the Japanese participants had learned something about bullying and peer intervention, I was unable to find out how much they had learned or how useful it would be to them in their lives. The teacher went on to say that they (the students and all of the observers) had never experienced anything like this before and had never before been taught by young people. The core group felt that despite having so many observers and the cultural and language barriers that they were able to teach their group about dealing with bullying. They were also able to experience that their session worked and that they were able to work together as a team.

#### Session 14.

13th February 2007. 16:00pm – 18:00pm.

Session 13 for Terry and session 11 for Robin, Tanya and Chantelle. This was the core group's second workshop in Japan. They ran their session with a group of 40 (approx.) 14-15 year old students from a junior high school in Osaka. The format was very similar to their first session in the morning, although there were fewer adult observers and no press present. The core group prepared themselves more effectively and efficiently and were full of confidence from their successful morning's session. Although from the perspective of the participants this session appeared to be successful, I was not happy with how the core group had delivered the session. In my opinion they were over confident and they took the session for granted, almost as if it would run itself. The energy was low but luckily they had a very responsive group of participants to work with. The session had a format much like the morning's session. Three of the core group members described similar feelings to the session (I have no data for Chantelle on these sessions):

*The second workshop went sooo bad! I had a major energy slump, and when I got my buzz I couldn't feel it from the others so I lost it. I felt so low and so tired and it spoilt the good start to the day (core group member Tanya).*

*After a great workshop this morning it was going to be hard to do the same. We didn't and it was rubbish (core group member Robin).*

*Workshop number two was in the afternoon, in a different secondary school. The audience was very lively, but we were not. The workshop was not very good, the first one being good, we took the second one for granted and we did not display ourselves very well. We were tired and took it for granted and it wasn't the best of our workshops (core group member Terry).*

I explained to the core group members that I had not been surprised, as this feeling is quite common in the theatre. Many actors and directors talk about second show syndrome (also known as second night syndrome). The second show of a run is often the worst, low in energy and taken for granted as the actors unconsciously relax feeling that after a long rehearsal and a successful first show that all shows will now be of that standard. I have experienced this in many of the shows that I have been involved in. The Urban Dictionary writes the following about second night syndrome:

*Sometimes known as SNS. It occurs when actors or tech crew in a play get cocky over their opening night performances and slack off on the second night, resulting in a horrible show (Urban Dictionary, 2009).*

### Session 15.

14th February 2007. 19:00pm – 21:00pm.

Session 14 for Terry and session 12 for Robin, Tanya and Chantelle. This was the core group's third workshop in Japan. They ran their session with a group of 30 (approx.) adults at a Woman's empowerment centre in Osaka. The participants in this group were supportive and open to being taught by a group of young people. This was reflected in the feedback of the participants, which was very positive towards the session. The core group were much more focused, energised and ready to work. This was reflected in their

style and delivery. I also informed them that I would not give them any feedback on this session as I felt that they needed to find a way to own it fully for themselves and that they should feedback with each other. We can see how important feedback can be if we look at Robin's thoughts (below); without feedback from the core group members Robin would have gone away thinking he had run a bad workshop.

*It was the absolute best ever we did. We did great and we had a fantastic, superb, energetic, lively audience. We really enjoyed it and we thought we recovered well from our previous [workshop]. The crowd was really inquisitive, we helped and supported each other in delivering the ultimate unique, ABC [anti bullying crew – core group] experience (core group member Terry).*

*The workshop went well and I was nervous as we did our workshop in front of older people. After the workshop I thought I was rubbish now I know I wasn't and we bounced off each other this was our best workshop we have done so far (core group member Robin).*

*After that crushing blow that was yesterday's second workshop, I was dreading this workshop, especially as there were going to be adults there. It was obvious that the ABC [anti bullying crew – core group] felt the same, as everyone was snapping at everyone else, and it was hard to try and get everyone together working as a team. In the end I think we managed to pull ourselves together, and it was the best ever!! I felt so good and happy and proud of myself, and everyone else was positive too. That was definitely the best workshop that we have done. All of us were on the highest high possible! (core group member Tanya).*

#### Session 16.

15th February 2007. 13:25pm – 15:25pm.

Session 15 for Terry and session 13 for Robin, Tanya and Chantelle. This was the core group's fourth workshop in Japan. They ran their session with a group of 40 (approx.) 14-15 year old students from a junior high school in Osaka. This was the second workshop at this school and was with a different group of students. The core group asked if I would start giving them feedback again on their sessions but I declined as I

was trying, as yesterday, to get them feeling that they owned the workshop and they should be able to give feedback to each other. The feedback from core group members was positive and I felt that they were getting into the position of being able to effectively gauge how well they had or had not performed. I have noticed that most of Robin's feedback is about himself, whereas both Terry and Tanya talk from the perspective of the group. A note in my diary reminded me that I had to spend a few times with Robin, during this time to help build his confidence as he felt sidelined by the other group members.

*The fourth workshop was not as good as yesterday's workshop, but the children seemed very active and listened a lot with insight. There was a small minority who were disruptive but we as a group worked extremely well in controlling it ..., the barrier of adult hood wasn't there and they actually saw us as one of them (core group member Terry).*

*The fourth workshop went well; the ABC got their confidence back! :D! [sic] The thing about doing a workshop is that it is so tiring, physically and mentally. I feel drained after each workshop, I think it is because I have to work hard to get into the right frame of mind and get my workshop front up and also maintain it. I also felt annoyed that Andy didn't tell us he wasn't going to take notes in this session, but we got feedback from each other so everything was good (core group member Tanya).*

*This time the workshop went well I was not nervous at all but it was not as good as last night but it was satisfactory (core group member Robin).*

### Session 17.

16th February 2007. 14:35pm – 16:35pm.

Session 16 for Terry and session 14 for Robin, Tanya and Chantelle. This was the core group's fifth workshop in Japan. They ran their session with a group of 40 (approx.) 14-15 year old students from a junior high school in Osaka. This was the third workshop at this school and was again with a different group of students. The core group had mixed emotions during this session, knowing that it was the last one before returning to England. As Terry and Michelle had done in their final session in July (see later in this chapter), I think that the core group were under the impression that the last one

would be the best one. In my experience running and producing creative workshop tours, this is rarely the case. One tends to find a few sessions that will stick out, for many different reasons, as being special or memorable. I thought that Robin's feedback regarding the teacher butting in on the workshop could relate to a feeling of ownership, that they or Robin at least, had come to feel that he/they now owned their sessions.

*Our last workshop in Japan! \*\*sob\*\* [sic] I think we all knew this was important as it was our last chance to teach these people that there is help out there , and it's our last chance to leave our mark and let them take something away from the workshop. We all tried hard again to make sure we don't have a repeat of Tuesday's second workshop (core group member Tanya).*

*We did our final workshop on day seven ..., the crowd was not lively at all. They did not seem to have any response reaction, but we weren't at our best, well I wasn't, the thought of coming back to England ..., a chill of sadness is lingering in the atmosphere (core group member Terry).*

*Last workshop today I have loved my stay in Japan so far. The workshop went well; the crowd was very hard to win over. But we did despite the teacher at the school who kept butting in on our workshop I told her to sit down seven times. I think she got the message (core group member Robin).*

#### 4.2. The Japanese experience.

I now have mixed feelings about the Japanese experience. This part of the research process was supposed to be a stepping stone for the core participants but almost ended up being a separate module. Of the core group members only Terry was able to utilise this experience further in the project. He later expressed that this experience should have been at the end of the project, in that it could have acted as a kind of carrot or incentive for the core group participants to stay on the project. Upon reflection I feel that this experience, as valuable as it was, ended up being more of a distraction than a help.

If people want to be involved in a peer support project they need to be doing it for the right reasons. To go on a foreign trip, in my opinion, is not the right reason. Although the participants had a positive experience in Japan, it did not reflect positively on the core group as three-quarters of them left after the Japan module. In this case one needs to question whether group members had a passion for the activity of dealing with bullying or whether it was a stepping stone for them to go abroad.

I have over seven years experience of working in Japan, where there have been many similarities to the UK in dealing with bullying. Firstly they are both islands adjacent to strong mainlands (Europe and Asia respectively). Bullying has held historical similarities of acceptance and disapproval in both countries and is currently high on the political agenda of both countries. Japan has developed a variety of peace programmes through networks of peace organisations, ijime peer support programmes and theatre based research projects to tackle bullying. Many Japanese peace groups work with NGOs (and NPOs) in Brazil, Philippines and Korea, offering us some interesting cross-cultural perspectives and traditions to draw upon. In Japan it has been argued that bullying has less to do with violence and more to do with humiliation and embarrassment (Taki, 2006).

Running anti-bullying workshops in many schools in England can be a very difficult task for many reasons. The students might be difficult, the teachers might not care or the spaces may not be adequate to work in. Japan in my experience is very different, particularly for foreign visitors. My contacts in Japan were thrilled to have a group from England to visit them and they went out of their way to make them feel accepted, valued and supported. I wanted my core group to feel that positivity, to experience what it is like to be fully supported in the work that they were doing and to recognise that despite cultural differences, people around the world suffer similar difficulties and seek solutions.

In all of the schools we visited in Japan, this was the Japanese students' first experience of peer support. In one session the idea was so novel that in addition to teachers and the school principal watching we had members of local and national press, photographers and parents watching, which is unheard of in the UK. My experience in the UK is that one is often lucky to get teachers watching and supporting.

The main difficulty for the core group and the users was the language barrier. The core group did not speak Japanese and the Japanese students did not speak English. I therefore arranged for the sessions to be simultaneously interpreted. This worked very well but slowed the sessions down somewhat.

For core group member, Terry, the aim of the Japanese experience was:

*That you get some different kinds of audience so you have to be really good at adapting to different types of people and find ways of working together to achieve success.*

My feeling about the other core group participants is that they were not looking beyond the trip to Japan. The experience for them was about the present.

For myself, in addition to having an experience under the gaze of supportive adults and 'fresh' peers, as mentioned above, I wanted them to see that their sessions could work in all kinds of environments with all kinds of people and that they were able to work together as a team in a variety of conditions.

*I've learned that people from around the world are different. When we've run workshops in England the crowd is completely utterly different to the crowd in Japan so this can't be influenced in England 'cause England is a community and our speaking is different, the community, the atmosphere, the environment is completely different so you don't experience this kind of thing and this was a really interesting experience for us which we couldn't have got in England (feedback from core group member Terry in March 2007).*

For Chantelle on the other hand I have learned post-project that she felt a lot of negativity, particularly from me, during this period in Japan:

*There was hardly any positive feedback for sessions we conducted well; you always seemed to focus on the sessions we presented badly or errors which we made. I don't think that this helped us move forward to try and*

*correct them as we were always dwelling on the negative* (feedback from core group member Chantelle in August 2009).

I was rather surprised at these comments as she gave no indication to me that this was how she was feeling at the time or in any of her post project reflective interviews. Indeed Chantelle had said in one of her diary entries at the time that the experience in Japan was one of the best times of her life:

*We have done ourselves proud ..., it has been a life changing experience for me ..., I have found new confidence ..., Japan was the best time of my life* (feedback from core group member Chantelle in February 2007).

Teachers from the Japanese schools said that their students were very happy to be involved and that for some of them it was their first time to talk to foreigners. The students found the role-play activities of most benefit and had a huge impact on them; both those that were bullied and those that were bullies. The sessions with the core group let them feel that it was okay to express one's feelings about bullying and that people should talk more about it. The Japanese students were shocked to find out that bullying in the UK can be very similar to bullying in Japan.

#### Session 18.

11th March 2007. 2:00 – 5:00pm.

Session 17 for Terry and session 15 for Chantelle, Robin and Tanya. This was the first session after the core group had returned from Japan. In Japan they delivered five creative workshops to various groups of students and young people. After most workshops I gave them notes, much like a Director might give notes to a group of actors after a show. My notes consisted of constructive criticism relating to preparation and delivery of their sessions. I classed these five creative workshops as part of their training process and expected them to learn and build from each one they delivered. I have little data for these sessions and have therefore not attempted an in-depth analysis of them.

Chantelle, Tanya and Robin travelled with me by train from Somerset to London. In London we met up with Terry. As a group we went to Regents Park and used a bandstand as a space to work in. We started this session off with a warm-up game and



then discussed the experience of running sessions in Japan. We made use of the park's open space to play a series of 'blind walks' followed by a discussion on how their creative workshops could be improved. Each of the core group members then gave a presentation on a topic that interested them. Robin presented ideas about John Motson the sports presenter, Tanya talked about ballet, Chantelle talked about cheerleading and Terry talked about beans. Chantelle found this activity very difficult and was almost unable to complete it, stating that she felt shy, scared and unprepared. I was left feeling a little frustrated that none of them had chosen a subject related to any of our topics under research.

### Session 19.

18th March 2007. 9:00 – 3:00pm.

Session 18 for Terry and session 16 for Robin and Tanya. For this session I hired a theatre space. Chantelle did not turn up today, it was Mother's Day and she chose to go on a family outing. This decision upset other group members who had not attended their own Mother's Day celebrations for the session. My aims for this session were to get the group exploring bullying on a deeper level and to find out what bullying meant to them in relation to their own lives. In addition we were to explore characterisation and the development of a role.

I felt that it was important in all sessions, before any exploration or discussion occurred, that body and mind were warmed up. Just as athletes or actors warm up before a race or performance, so too should all people involved in creative learning. Cattanach (1992) states that the warm-up is preparation time and sets the mood, themes and focus for the rest of the session. Time spent on warming up will help enable a group to work with dynamism, energy and passion (Hickson, 1995).

At the beginning of session 13 we warmed-up our voices and our bodies and played a game of balloon volleyball. We then explored the meaning of the word ritual in the context of a celebration, an initiation or an event out of everyday life. Rituals can be described as collective manifestations in which the movements are patterned in sequences characterised by a high theatrical level, usually involving gestures, songs or sounds, colours or lights, and voices, all co-ordinated and orchestrated around a common theme (Cabral, 2001). Jennings (1994) suggests that western culture has

moved away from ritual to an emphasis on technology, which leads to confusion about birth, death and age-stages, which in turn contributes to identity and role chaos.

Creating group rituals can assist in building group identity, resolve or alter situations and constitute experience. Ritual and play are alike in many ways – periods of playful license are often followed by or interdigitated with periods of ritual control (Schechner, 2002). Rituals can be used to manage potential conflict regarding power created to assist people with difficulties in transition, ambivalent relationships and troubles that exceed or violate the norms of daily life (Schechner, 2002). Creating our own rituals using theatre and creative techniques can help in healing processes and solving problems (Jennings, 1994).

Once each of the core group had created a personal ritual they shared them with the rest of the group. Following this they combined elements of each ritual to create one group ritual. This ritual was called the ritual of empowerment. Terry had previous experience of creating rituals and has an excellent understanding of what a ritual can be, citing saying a prayer as an example. Terry, unlike the other two, felt that sharing rituals helped him understand the people he was working with and he cited it as one of his favourite activities of the day. Robin did not comment on his ritual experience but Tanya felt that it was all a bit weird, although she found it spiritual and it made her laugh.

The core group then played a game called ‘paper cricket’ (see Hickson, 1995), where players took turns in throwing their decorated paper balls past another player who was trying to bat their paper balls away. This game, in addition to raising group energy levels, provided a safe environment to explore power in violence. Following a break and some space for reflection, the core group, individually, created characters that had a story to tell about bullying. This initial activity, along with the rituals, were a preliminary to the creation of a performance.

This activity had ten stages:

- 1) Individually, they thought about a time they were bullied and what they did about it.
- 2) They created a character, gave it a name, an age and a history, including family life situation, hobbies, likes and dislikes etc.

- 3) Using their first thoughts about themselves being bullied, they built a situation up for their character. Created in such a way so that it could be told as a story.
- 4) Each core member told his or her stories. Peer feedback was given on the stories.
- 5) Each core member then told each other's story.
- 6) They then played with the stories including telling the stories at high speed; telling the stories in gobbledegook; telling them in a different accent.
- 7) We all hot-seated the characters.
- 8) Using all the stories from earlier, core group members joined together to create one story that contained elements of each of their stories.
- 9) They now created a short play based on the story and the characters.
- 10) Finally they added the ritual, that they created that morning, to the beginning of the play, which created a fused performance piece.

The performance piece was rehearsed and then performed at the end of the day to me. Unbeknown to me at the time this turned out to be the group's last performance. Following protracted negotiations with Chantelle, Tanya, Robin and the school staff at the school they attended, the school staff refused to allow them further time off (see later in this chapter for an analysis of the break up of this group).

As mentioned earlier, Robin, Chantelle and Tanya dropped out of the project. I had negotiated a set of working dates with the core group members for the next project training stage to occur towards the end of term. However, Chantelle, Tanya and Robin appeared to lose motivation to stay involved in the project; in addition school staff blocked their participation on the agreed dates. Chantelle suggested two years after the end of the project that she had not realised the extent to which she was expected to be involved and that she decided that '*an optional extra [such as this project] was not going to jeopardise my goals and achievements at school*' (feedback from core group member Chantelle in August 2009). All three accepted the school decision and decided to formally pull out of the project. During this period, Terry was communicating via telephone and e-mail with the other three core group members in an effort to persuade them to continue.

As a result of the decision by the school staff not to allow the three young people to continue with the project, as originally agreed, I had some key decisions to make. In preparation of their final training period and the delivery of their workshops to schools I

had already booked and paid for a training space and had booked up schools and other venues for the core group to deliver their final set of workshops. I therefore made the decision to invite back the original members, who had participated in August 2006. One of these members, Michelle, took up the offer and rejoined the group. I now had a group of two.

#### Stage 4. Intensive residential training programme.

##### Session 20.

16th July 2007. 10am – 5pm.

Session 19 for Terry and session 3 for Michelle. This was an intensive training week. Terry, Michelle and I were to be working full-time on this project in preparation of the delivery of their creative workshop sessions the following week. My aims this week were to re-gel them as a group, add to their knowledge base, build their confidence as facilitators and guide them through a series of creative activities that would help them design their own workshop. For this week's training venue I chose the same hall that had been used in Session 13.

The day started with a recap of events and physical and vocal warm-up and a detailed look at what the rest of the project entailed. I then asked Terry to tell Michelle what had happened on the project since she had left and prompted Michelle to ask questions about everything Terry was telling her. After playing a game of 'push and pull' (see Hickson, 1995) we discussed expectations and practicalities of delivering creative anti-bullying workshops to young people in schools. I explained to them that they could have any resources or equipment that they felt was needed for their workshops, and that they should not try to limit their workshops in any way.

I used the next activity; 'turning negatives into positives', to test how much time I should spend on group bonding. I asked Terry and Michelle to think of something that they did not like about themselves and to share it with each other. In turn they helped each other to turn their negative ideas in to positive ideas.

Following a break for lunch I took Terry and Michelle through the creation of a ritual process (as described in Session 1 and Session 13). Then we explored at length what the word bullying meant to them and looked at current academic definitions of bullying (see

appendix 2). Terry and Michelle spent time creating their own working definition of bullying. We then spent time exploring bullying through imagery and of personal bullying stories. Terry and Michelle shared and explored their stories.

Terry and Michelle then completed a project questionnaire, similar to the one they had both written in August 2006. We then played a series of advanced trust games in the blind series; Blind car; Blind Walks and Blind Running (see Hickson, 1995). I had discovered in previous training sessions that it was difficult to get participants to write their reflective diaries at home, therefore towards the end of the day I provided them time, in the session, to reflect on the day and to write their thoughts on paper that I provided. I ended the day with a cool-down game and a relaxation exercise.

### Session 21.

17th July 2007. 10am – 5pm.

Session 20 for Terry and session 4 for Michelle. The session started with a physical and voice warm-up. As part of the voice warm-up we played with tongue twisters (see Hickson, 1995). Terry and Michelle practised and performed their ritual and imagery from yesterday. Following this they worked together to create an anti-bullying song/poem and then perform it and then they refined their bullying definition. Terry and Michelle shared personal stories of oppression and then Terry told me Michelle's story and Michelle told me Terry's. We explored how it felt to have their story told by someone else. The morning finished with an advanced trust game called; 'Blind car with a Twist' (see Hickson, 1995). After lunch we continued the 'Blind Series' with a game of 'Blind Hide and seek' (see Hickson, 1995). Terry and Michelle then again performed their ritual and imagery, and also their new poem. We then had extended discussions about power and empowerment and explored who was involved in situations of bullying. They spent some time thinking about something they felt strongly about, created a short presentation about the subject and then presented them to the group. We discussed the presentations and I gave them feedback on their body language, eye contact, tone of voice, articulation, colour of voice, presence, belief and creativity. Following an exploration of the differences in adult-led and youth-led anti-bullying programmes, we spent some time trying to create the simplest of creative activities to explore bullying.

Following an advanced game of 'Blind Running' (see Hickson, 1995) they found a space on their own to reflect on the day and write down their thoughts. Terry and Michelle felt it important that any activities they chose for their sessions would not make either them or their participants feel silly in any way. They also felt that it was important that as they would be asking participants to share their thoughts that they should also be prepared to share their own thoughts with the participants through some of their activities. We ended the day with a relaxation exercise.

### Session 22.

18th July 2007. 10am – 5pm.

Session 21 for Terry and session 5 for Michelle. The session started with a physical and voice warm-up. The ritual, the images and the poem were again rehearsed and performed. They further refined and agreed their definition of bullying. I then led them through a series of improvisations, exploring how they felt a bully and a bullied person might behave in different situations, followed by a series of slow motion races. Terry and Michelle then discussed options of what their workshop might contain. We continued with the blind series of games with the 'Blind Finger Dance' (see Hickson, 1995) and then they spent time refining their workshop plan ideas. I wanted the core group members to have an idea of the kind of questions their participants might ask them and so we played a game of answering each other's questions. Then to help with their presentation techniques both Terry and Michelle performed presentations using gibberish. After a break they further refined ideas for the workshop structure before reflecting, on their own, about the day, and writing down their thoughts. We ended with a relaxation game.

### Session 23.

19th July 2007. 10am – 5pm.

Session 22 for Terry and session 6 for Michelle. The session started with a physical and voice warm-up. The ritual, the images and the poem were again rehearsed and performed. Both Terry and Michelle played around with ways of saying and presenting their definition of bullying. As a group we then went through and discussed their draft workshop structure. After lunch this structure was refined and they rehearsed delivery techniques. The rest of the day was spent practising and refining their workshop plan. Towards the end of the day, Terry and Michelle, as usual, reflected on the day and wrote down their thoughts. We ended the day with a relaxation exercise.

#### Session 24.

20th July 2007. 10am – 5pm.

Session 23 for Terry and session 7 for Michelle. The session started with a physical and voice warm-up. For the morning, I brought in an outside creative specialist called Sandy to run a session with Terry and Michelle. Initially Sandy had Terry and Michelle wear blindfolds and discussed with them what is okay and what is not okay to do in a workshop. They explored the idea of being ‘present’ in the workshop, how facilitators need to make their own decisions about what distracts them and different techniques for helping participants feel safe, welcomed and comfortable in a workshop session. Following this Terry and Michelle were asked to write down ‘who they are’ such as; a brother, a friend, a student, a passenger and so on (see appendix 12). They then discussed how it felt to be all those things and what qualities they could use to help them in the delivery of their workshop sessions. They played a game of ‘The Diminishing Paper’ (see Hickson, 1995) and then they practised, with Sandy’s guidance how to introduce a workshop session. Sandy and I pretended to be uninterested facilitators while Michelle and Terry were participants, then we were difficult and then nervous participants as Terry and Michelle tried to cope with us as they played the roles of facilitators. They explored how it made them feel. Sandy then facilitated an exercise with Terry and Michelle and then explained to them what she was doing:

*Sandy is speaking while the exercise is going on – what am I doing ..., listening, provoking, repeating, abbreviating, observing ... people are involved even if they not doing anything ... projecting (your voice) is not dominating, it’s not shouting, it’s being heard ... being in control is a positive thing for facilitating ... if people ask you something and you don’t know the answer then don’t worry, turn the question around, say you will find out or say you don’t know.*

Sandy then explored with them what they thought their participants would want out of a session and what they would not want. Terry and Michelle then showed Sandy what they had created for their workshop. She gave them some feedback on delivery and helped with pace and voice projection. After Sandy had left we explored their reflective thoughts on the session. We then had to deal with a crisis that Terry found himself involved in (see chapter 5). Following a resolution of the crisis, we discussed ideas about the process they had undertaken and their final ideas on the workshops they had

developed. They both rehearsed and performed their workshop plan several times, we discussed ethics, pressure and responsibility and they reflected on the day and on the project to date before writing down some of their ideas. Table 6 shows the final workshop plan that they created.

Table 6. Terry and Michelle's 1-hour anti-bullying workshop plan.

<i>Resources needed: backdrop, flip chart, paper, marker pens, laminated statistics on bullying and laminated group keywords.</i>		
<b>Timings</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Notes</b>
09:00	<i>Teacher introduction.</i>	Teacher introduces them from a laminated sheet written by Terry and Michelle.
09:01	<i>Creative imagery.</i>	Terry and Michelle perform a series of still images that represent bullying.
09:03	<i>Poem.</i>	Terry and Michelle perform a poem (see appendix 4) they have written about bullying.
09:05	<i>Ritual.</i>	Terry and Michelle perform their ritual to help energise the participants.
09:06	<i>Facilitators introduction.</i>	Terry and Michelle introduce themselves.
09:07	<i>Statistics.</i>	Terry and Michelle share and read out statistics about bullying that they have written on laminated sheets.
09:08	<i>Pass the power.</i>	Terry and Michelle facilitate this game to help focus the participants.
09:12	<i>Spider diagram mind map.</i>	Terry encourages the participants to say what bullying means to them and Michelle writes ideas down on a flip chart.
09:20	<i>Lava trek game.</i>	Terry facilitates this game that encourages co-operation and groupwork.
09:20	<i>Creative exploration.</i>	Terry and Michelle get participants to work in small groups with laminated statistic sheets. Each group creates a drama, poem or song to do with their statistic.
09:35	<i>Creative presentation.</i>	Each group performs to the rest of the group.
09:45	<i>Discuss presentations.</i>	As a group the performances are explored.



Table 6. Terry and Michelle's 1-hour anti-bullying workshop plan continued...

<b>Timings</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Notes</b>
09:50	<i>Walks of power.</i>	Terry and Michelle discuss confidence and how we can improve our confidence. Each participant is encouraged to walk in a powerful way.
09:55	<i>Question and answers.</i>	Terry and Michelle answer questions about their session and bullying.
10:00	<i>Evaluation.</i>	Participants fill in evaluation sheets.
10:30	<i>Finish.</i>	

Stage 5. Delivery of final creative workshops in schools and other venues.

Stage 5 was the final stage of the projects for the core group participants. During this final week they would run their sessions with a variety of groups including those at primary schools and secondary schools and with a mixed adult group. See chapter 5 for an analysis of outputs. Following the style of the rest of the chapter, this section will contain little theory or analysis. This section is an overview of the sessions with a few reflective comments made by the core group and other participants.

Session 25.

23<sup>rd</sup> July 2007. 9:30am-11:00am.

Session 24 for Terry and session 8 for Michelle. This was Terry and Michelle's first workshop. They ran this session for a group of 25 pupils aged 9-11 years old. The feedback to this session was positive with 22 pupils describing the session as fantastic, and 3 as good.

Terry *I think that it was good. I really enjoyed it. I thought that the kids liked it as well by the way they were acting. I thought that they learned something as well because afterwards they seemed to be talking about certain things that were related to things that we were talking about, so obviously it had sunk in. They were really up for it and enthusiastic and they made us look good. I enjoyed it as far as it went and I thought that if I enjoyed it they probably enjoyed it as well.*

Michelle *I feel that it went well, especially for our first workshop. I thought that we couldn't have probably asked for anything a lot better but it could have been a lot worse. It was a bit difficult to control the noise levels at some points but it wasn't too bad. I think they enjoyed it and got something out of it.*

Terry and Michelle both appear to feel similarly towards how the workshop went. Terry is a lot more positive and upbeat about the session and their performance in it.

Researcher *What about you guys? What do you think you've learnt about today?*

Michelle *That our workshop works.*

Terry *Yeah, first of all.*

Michelle *It was shorter than I thought it would be. We got to do some of the stuff twice which I think was a good thing. I think it kind of sunk in more.*

Terry *I learnt that young people deserve respect, as always. I learnt, well I didn't learn I sort of put it to the test that if you respect young people you get the respect back. So obviously teachers have some learning to do. Secondly I think the young people and the way they conducted themselves was really good. If you work as a team it's easier to keep them in focus and attending all the time. Rather than just one person shouting, today both me and Michelle worked together to keep them quiet and it did work. It was really good.*

It was my intention that the core group's training on this project continued throughout the delivery of their sessions. Indeed, I regarded these sessions as training and continued to get the core group thinking about what they had learned and how sessions could be improved. Supervision and mutual constructive criticism between the core group members was an important part of this process.

Researcher *Do you think that from your experience of today's session, do you think your training has lacked anything?*

Michelle *Probably a lot of things but nothing major, I don't think. Maybe different ways of getting people to be quiet or something but that wasn't a major thing. I think the major things were basically being able to relate to people, which I think we managed and being able to get our*

*point across, which I also think we managed and also for them to have fun, which I think did happen. I think the major things that we wanted to do we got done.*

Researcher *The teacher at the school today said to me that you'd been given the most difficult class in to work with in the school. How do you feel about that?*

Michelle *It kind of almost makes me feel proud of them in a sense because they didn't mess about and try to undermine us. None of them tried to undermine us at all and even when they were doing walks they thought we'd go, oh no you cant do that and we were saying, that's great, that's great and I think that kind of also gave them the trust.*

Terry *I think the same too.*

Researcher *The teacher went on to say that the thing that is most difficult about them is that they don't listen and so she has to carry a whistle around with her to get their attention and get them quiet to listen to her instructions.*

Michelle *Although I felt a little bit lost sometimes, I always felt that she [the teacher] was judging us going, you're crap, you can't make these children quiet. I was kind of feeling, oh gosh but hearing that makes me feel a lot better because we did manage to get them quiet most of the time and even when they weren't, it wasn't too bad.*

### Session 26.

24<sup>th</sup> July 2007. 9:30am-11:00am.

Session 25 for Terry and session 9 for Michelle. This was Terry and Michelle's second workshop. They ran this session for a group of 40 pupils aged 9-12 years old. The feedback to this session was positive, with 22 pupils describing the session as fantastic, and 17 as good (one pupil did not answer this question in the questionnaire).

Both Terry and Michelle had not expected so many participants as the school had booked for a group of 25 pupils. They found 40 pupils a lot to handle, as can be seen in the following feedback.

Researcher *Ok, the end of the second session that you've done – How are you feeling?*

Michelle *Not too bad.*

- Terry *I'm feeling disappointed in one sense and fabulous in another sense.*
- Researcher *Why are you feeling disappointed?*
- Terry *First of all I feel disappointed because to them there were two of us and about 40 of them that came into our group. We weren't expecting it and we didn't actually plan anything for it so in myself I feel disappointed. They might not feel disappointed but within me I feel disappointed for not being fully prepared but then again I didn't really have that chance to because we only found out this morning [that it was going to be such a large group]. Secondly, I feel really good about today's workshop because even though we weren't given enough time to prepare and cater for 40 children, we still managed to take on the initiative and get in there and do our best ... We did a lot of partnership work there, for example, when she [Michelle] was standing I would go around and say listen to Michelle now and when I was talking she probably would go around and say Terry's talking. In that sense I felt supported.*
- Michelle *It was team building. It was almost like a two-hour long team building exercise.*
- Terry *Absolutely, absolutely. It was good though, the experience.*
- Researcher *Would that be something useful in the pre-training to have learnt a variety of techniques to get people attention and get quiet do you think?*
- Michelle *Yeah, it probably would have.*
- Terry *Yeah.*

Terry and Michelle demonstrate how they learned to adapt to new and changing circumstances and how adversity can help bring people together. They both felt supported by each other. A session on techniques to get people's attention might have been useful, although I feel that one needs to experience this first hand before fully appreciating how difficult it can be to get a class of students to focus and listen to you. The experience of this session gave them the confidence to work with large groups of students.

*After today's session if tomorrow me and Michelle want to run a session for fifty people then bring it on because now I know the techniques and at least I've put it into action once so next time (feedback from core group member Terry).*

In a later reflective interview Terry said the following about today's session:

*I thought to myself that I'm faced with a challenge and I'm going to take that challenge. I'm going to prove to Andy, listen. You've brought us here and I'm going to do it for you mate. There's no way out. There's no way I'm leaving. I'm going to be here even if you left I'd still have been here and done the ritual myself and then.... It's a challenge. In life there are challenges (feedback from core group member Terry).*

Session 27.

26<sup>th</sup> July 2007. 19:00 – 20:30.

Session 26 for Terry and session 10 for Michelle. This was Terry and Michelle's third workshop. They ran this session for a group of 2 young people aged 15 years old. The feedback to this session was positive with both participants describing the session as fantastic. It was ironic that after having felt they had learned techniques to work with large groups that they are given a tiny group to work with in their following session. They both adapted to the new conditions well, altering the workshop to allow for the new conditions. I took some time before the session to give them a little pep talk and focus them in on the idea that just because there were less participants did not mean that the session was less important.

Terry *It felt much more informal.*

Michelle *Definitely. They were much more comfortable with talking about themselves rather than in general or being jokey about it. They were more interested.*

Terry *I think because we're younger it gave them that comfort to actually speak. I think that's a key point that we should mention that if we were adults and we were all strict with policy and this and that, I don't think we would have got as much information out of them as we did today.*

Researcher *I felt apprehension about doing today's session from both of you.*

Michelle *I didn't want to do it. I didn't want to do it.*

Researcher *Did that ever change and if it did at what point did it change?*

Michelle *It came after you had that discussion with us. It kind of put things into perspective – we're here to run a workshop and basically you've got to*

*be positive about it because if you're negative then it's going to be rubbish and it's not going to work.*

Researcher *How did it feel doing a session outside of a school setting?*

Terry *I think it felt a lot more informal and it got the people who were participating, because this surrounding is an informal surrounding, they could express their feelings a lot more. In a school you always have that feeling the teachers listening, it's still school. You automatically label that space as being formal, being tight, being disciplined, being this and that. Here is a nice environment.*

### Session 28.

27<sup>th</sup> July 2007. 10:00am-11:30am.

Session 27 for Terry and session 10 for Michelle. This was Terry and Michelle's fourth and final workshop. They ran this session for a group of 8 mixed young people and adults. The feedback to this session was positive with all participants describing this session as good. See chapter 6 for an analysis of outputs.

Similar in some respects to how the core group felt after their final workshop in Japan, Terry and Michelle were not happy with their final workshop. They were very upset with how it went and how they related to each other before and during the session. I personally believe there were two main reasons for the negative energy and negative feelings. Firstly, I believe that the core group members were already starting to mourn the end of the project, and secondly, they had assumed the final session would be the best, which was not the case and is never usually the case in a series of sessions or tours. In my experience only one or two sessions during a tour stand out as being something special. Michelle was a lot more negative than Terry about their final session, and, after they heard positive comments from some of their participants, their views softened a little. I also see elements of a power struggle going on between Terry and Michelle, with both of them wanting to take the lead. This was most prominent when they had to make a choice between two excellent spaces and were unable to agree or see each other's point of view.

Michelle *It was a complete and utter shambles.*

Researcher *Did you feel like you were panicking?*

Michelle *Yes.*  
Terry *I didn't feel like that.*  
Michelle *You were acting like you were panicking.*  
Terry *That was only with you. What I thought was.... I agree with you that the session lost its structure but then again it was done in a professional way.*

Later on in the discussion after feedback from their workshop participants.

Michelle *It wasn't positive, it was neutral feedback.*  
Researcher *Let's go back a step ....*  
Terry *It was positive. The guy said we had a lot of energy and this and that so it was pretty good. I disagree with you Michelle.*

Later still.

Researcher *Let's go back an hour or two to the beginning of the workshop. What was happening between you two? There was a little bit of angst I noticed at the beginning. What was that all about?*  
(silence).  
Researcher *Was it something personal? Was it to do with being tired? Was it nerves about it being the last workshop? Would you prefer if I hadn't mentioned it? What happened? How come there was a little bit of frostiness between the two of you?*  
(silence).  
Researcher *Is it private? Would you disagree, would you say there wasn't any frostiness?*  
Michelle *No. We had a disagreement about the space and from then on it went down hill until we were actually in the middle of a workshop and then it was fine. (silence).*  
Researcher *Is that how you would summarise it as well Terry?*  
Terry *(nods his head).*  
Researcher *Why do you think if you both felt that before hand, before the workshop, you were unable to clear that negative energy and come together as ....*  
Michelle *I said to Terry, don't go and get them yet, look at our energy it's really negative and he said no it's fine. So we just started.*  
Terry *I wasn't feeling negative energy.*  
Researcher *It's the last day, the last workshop, what do you put it down to?*  
(silence).

- Researcher *Even now Michelle you can't look at the camera, you're playing with your scarf and you're not feeling very good – Why do you think that is? Why do you think you can't come together and feel good about what you've done?*
- Michelle *Because I thought it went really badly.*
- Researcher *But how you feel now, moping about it – is that going to make it feel all right? What do you think you can learn from that? What can you take from that for yourselves?*
- Michelle *Plan better.*
- Terry *I think we shouldn't have too many options.*
- Researcher *In what way?*
- Terry *Like equipment or facilities and stuff like that.*
- Researcher *So what were the too many options today?*
- Terry *For example the spaces because when we were playing games I personally thought it was really compact. I even tried to move the chairs back just to get a bit more room. Then again, obviously we had to work with this space.*
- Researcher *I understand the words you're saying, I don't quite understand why that would be a negative. I would kill to have those options when I go to a school. - 'Would you like this fantastic space or this fantastic space' as opposed to 'do you want this crummy school hall or this gym that has terrible acoustics'? Having those kind of options. I'm not saying that I'm disagreeing with you, I'm wondering why that's a negative thing.*
- Michelle *Because it made us have a disagreement.*
- Terry *We can't decide on what one [which hall] to use we had to go one way. So I think that's.... in a sense...we can't decide on it then .... I don't like this space. It was really compact but I thought I might as well get on with it - Last workshop so just deliver it.*

To end the project on such a negative note was a little depressing, although I do feel that there was more to it than the core participants were able to acknowledge. Terry, in my opinion, was already feeling marginalised by Michelle and felt that she was not giving him the credit he felt he deserved for being the only participant to stay with the project throughout. Michelle was continually pushing herself and her ideas forward in an effort to demonstrate that she was just as important a member as Terry and was not just



making up the numbers. Sixteen months after this final session I asked Terry and Michelle for their reflective thoughts on this session:

Terry says: *At that moment it was just one of those bad days, and as part of working in a group there's always the positives and negatives. I think with me and Michelle, when we have our positives, it's really positive. But when we have our negatives it can be bad. But I guess that was an opportunity for Michelle to know where my boundaries are and vice versa. The positives included that it allowed us [Terry and Michelle] to get know each other better and it enabled Andy to bring us back down into our shoes and realise what was happening around us. In terms of negatives I felt that Michelle was covering my thoughts and just expressing her own. Both of us displayed a lot of negative energy in the [final] workshop and I remember we were not co-operating as a team. After the final workshop, the anti-climax feeling was around as we had spent two weeks together, got to know each other much better and came to the realisation of each other's feelings at moments of highs and moments of lows. It is also the fact that Michelle and I became good friends and the thought of leaving and going away after practically living together for two weeks, felt quite bad.*

Michelle says: *Terry and I had a disagreement about the choice of room we would hold our final workshop in. Terry wanted the large room, I think because he was a lot more confident and wanted a big space. Whereas I wanted the smaller room because I was nervous and didn't want the extra space as it daunted me. I pushed harder than he did to get the room. I was so scared of performing in the big room that I felt like I had to push strong. This had a negative effect, because it seemed as though I was being selfish. Which I was, but I didn't want to mess up our workshop because I was too nervous. The bad feelings were so strong between us because we'd been working under high pressure for so long and we are friends. It was resolved in the end and we're good friends again now. I think everything just got a bit much and emotions ran high.*

### 4.3. Project Difficulties – participant drop out.

One of the biggest difficulties that I had to contend with was the drop out of participants during the course of the project. When participants left, it presented me with a variety of immediate problems in addition to knock on problems that affected the whole group and ultimately the whole project.

I am going to split this section into three parts. The first part will be an outline of events as they happened. In part two I will explore reasons for the drop out from my perspective and the perspective of the participants. Part three will explore how things could have been done differently to either help prevent drop out or to have been forewarned of its immanence.

#### Part 1. Outline of events.

Table 7. Outline of project events.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1/8/06	I sent out a general call for young participants amongst my network of contacts to become involved.	Four young people expressed interest in participating.
29/8/06	Three out of four of the young people (Michelle, Terry and Lorna) who expressed interest in the project turned up for the first two sessions. The extent of participation and my expectations were discussed. The participants signed a contract and their parents signed consent forms. The participants filled in questionnaires.	The contract included the following clauses: the right to remain anonymous and the right to withdraw at any time.
30/8/06	The three participants and I agreed dates of sessions for the rest of the year.	
6/9/06	Two (Michelle and Lorna) of the three participants drop out citing school pressures.	
27/11/06	I sent out a general call to schools in my local area to see if any young people would like to become involved in the project.	

Table 7. Outline of project events continued...,

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Notes</b>
10/1/07	I met with administrators and teachers at a local school who wanted to become involved.	They identified three students from the school to become involved.
12/1/07	I again met with the school administrators and explained the level of involvement that would be expected of their students.	We agreed dates of sessions but nothing was put in writing.
14/1/07	I met with the three students (Robin, Chantelle and Tanya), explained the project and commitment expected of them. Later on that day I met with their parents. The participants signed a contract and their parents signed consent forms.	The contract included the following clauses: the right to remain anonymous and the right to withdraw at any time.
18/1/07– 18/3/07	I ran training sessions with the core group and we visited Japan with our creative sessions.	
21/4/07	The core group members asked if they could have a break from training as they had a lot of school pressures. We agreed to our next concentrated sessions to start on the 6 <sup>th</sup> July, which was changed at the request of Tanya and Terry to the 16 <sup>th</sup> July due to school commitments.	
17/6/07	I again confirmed dates for the final sessions with all the core group participants and the teachers at the school.	
18/6/07– 22/6/07	I book up rehearsal space for the core group work in and book schools/venues for them to deliver their final workshops.	
26/6/07	Robin informs me that his teachers will now not let him have the time off school to complete the project.	Robin officially drops out of the project.

Table 7. Outline of project events continued...,

Date	Action	Notes
27/6/07	The school of the three new core participants ask if they can write about their students going to Japan in the school prospectus.	I agree to them writing about their students going to Japan in their prospectus.
28/6/06-9/7/07	I liase with teachers and the core group participants, reminding them of previously agreed commitments and changes in the organisation and dates of the project that were put in place at their requests.	The teachers deny agreeing to these final set of dates.
10/7/07	Deputy Headteacher of the school would let the students have than two and a half days off for the project and no more.	Tanya officially confirmed her drop out of the project. <u>Note:</u> Chantelle never officially dropped out she just stopped turning up to sessions.
11/7/07	I sent out an emergency call to all ex-project participants inviting them to rejoin the project.	Another option available to me was that I could have cancelled the booked venues but felt this not viable financially. Plus it may have sent out the wrong negative messages.
12/7/07	Michelle agrees to rejoin the project.	
16/7/07-27/7/07	Project continues uninterrupted until completion.	

## Part 2. Reasons for the drop out.

### Participants perspective.

#### Terry.

Terry had a unique view on the project dropout. He was the only participant who stayed the full course of the project and the only participant to witness both sets of dropouts. The first dropout happened very early on and was not commented on very much. In addition one of the original dropouts came back on board.

Terry cited peer pressure and pressure from families as one of the biggest barriers to participation. *Some people are involved because it's [anti-bullying] their passion and they see it making a difference people and others are involved for their own benefits.* Therefore motivation comes from different places; within and without. From Terry's perspective the foreign trip should have been at the end of the project. This would have helped with motivation and helped *keep the correct attitude*. He thought that participants enjoyed the foreign trip more than the actual project itself.

Terry talked about making decisions for the right reasons. Self interest is important but we also need to look at the impact your decision will have on others. Terry believed that the participants who left after the Japan part of the project hid behind the school's decision not to give them the time off rather as the final dates for those participants would have only affected an enrichment week and not exams or the curriculum. Participants should have taken personal responsibility in sorting out and agreeing dates with teachers etc and not leave it to others. Terry felt that I did too much to help the students' dialogue with their teachers and that they should have been more proactive in this respect, as he was. *If the participants who dropped out were really into the project then they would have asked you [the researcher] for more help in approaching teachers and exploring how to work round the school timetable* (feedback from core group member Terry).

I could have included more teenage group bonding activities such as going out to the cinema or bowling etc and have fixed project dates that are agreed at the beginning of

the project. Terry suggested keeping the project to a three-month maximum time limit. If longer time was needed, to increase it at three-monthly intervals.

Terry stated that finding the right teacher to approach in the school was important. Not all teachers will be supportive.

He also suggested to increase the size of the group to eight people. This way you have reserves if people drop out and over time it is possible to weed out participants who lack motivation or do not have the correct attitude.

At the end of the final day's training in his final reflective feedback sheet, Terry described this project as being fantastic for him. Despite there being ups and downs, Terry felt that people should complete a project to the best of their ability. He felt the three participants who dropped out after Japan used the project for their own interests, which included having a free holiday in Japan. In this way Terry felt used and abused by these participants and felt that there were other people who would have made much better use of being involved in the project.

#### Tanya.

Tanya stated clearly, when leaving the project that she was not involved in the project just to be able to visit Japan but felt it a good opportunity to be involved in an anti-bullying project. Tanya explained that she felt she had put in a lot of effort into the project; she missed 34 hours of school while in Japan and additional times when training sessions were run in school times, in addition to having to find additional study time at home to do homework. Tanya felt that it was hard to catch up on the schoolwork that she missed. Education and exam results were her number one priority and she was not prepared to take any more time off school for the project and in any case her parents would not let her take any more time off. Tanya stated that she felt the greatest improvement could have been if all the timings, once agreed, had been written down in a contract and all parties (researcher, participants, school and parents) had signed said contract. Tanya also says that she did realise how much school coursework was expected of her during the course of the project.

### Chantelle.

I had very little communication from Chantelle after our return back to England from Japan. She attended one more session and sent me three e-mails. The following year in her final reflective interview she talked briefly about why she found it difficult to continue with the project. Although Chantelle said that going to Japan was her favourite part of the project she also explained that it led to a relationship breakdown with one of the other core group members, which she felt made it difficult for her to continue with the project. In addition, Chantelle did not find it easy fitting this project in with a busy school life and a busy social life. Two years later, after she had read the first draft thesis excerpts, Chantelle offered more reasoning for her dropout, including that the project was jeopardising her goals in school, that I had not given her enough understanding, that she felt I had placed her in competition with other group members, that she felt I had expected too much of her and that I should have chosen a group with personalities that matched.

### Robin.

Robin attended two sessions after the trip to Japan. After this I received two e-mails from him saying that he could not attend any more sessions due to work commitments. In his reflective interview the following year he said that he felt there was a divide in the group. Two of the core group members were already friends before joining the project, which Robin felt marginalised by. Robin felt that they did not appreciate the project and took it for granted, which in turn prompted the break up of the group after the work in Japan. He suggested that if we had had more training and time to gel as a group that group dynamics could have improved.

### Michelle.

Michelle dropped out of the project after the first two sessions citing pressures of school. She then returned to the project for the final two weeks of training and delivery. Michelle believed that you need participants who are passionate about the issue and have positive energy towards the project and the participants. Michelle knew that she would miss out on the Japan experience by leaving the project when she did; but

visiting Japan was not her reason for participating. She also felt that the project ran over too long a period of time.

### Researcher's perspective.

I think I made a lot of mistakes in this research project and I feel I have learned from many of them. There are different ways that this project and projects like it could have been run. There is no one best way, but there are a few basic underlying foundations, that if in place, can improve immeasurably the smooth running of a project like this. This exploration is not about apportioning blame. This exploration also recognises that all of the participants, even those who left early put in a lot of work and effort into the project. I have identified from my own reflections and those of the participants the following mistakes that, if rectified, might have prevented the high drop out:

a) Commitment was too long.

I asked and expected my first set of participants to work with me on this project for a year, unpaid. We were due to have ten long weekends together (Friday – Sunday), a one-week training residency, a foreign trip (Japan) to deliver workshops and a week in the UK delivering workshops. I expected the same of my second set of participants, but over a shorter time period; six-months. Terry was the only participant who completed the training. Michelle missed out on the Japan visit and the middle training sessions but completed the rest of the training. Lorna only completed the first training weekend and Tanya, Chantelle and Robin only completed the Japan training module and visit.

b) Not agreeing dates in writing with the schools.

Although verbal agreements are important, I have found it important to verify all agreements in writing. This way everyone knows where they stand and therefore make less mistakes and have fewer disagreements.

c) Issue of funding.

I ran this project with very little funding. I had funds for flights and accommodation to Japan but the rest of the project was funded out of my own pocket. With more funding I could have been more flexible as could the participants particularly in



terms of where and when we could meet. Meetings and training sessions were reliant on what I could pay for.

d) Big Ask.

Similar to a) above, I was asking too much of the young people involved. See table 8 for an outline of the Big Ask.

Table 8. The Big Ask.

<b>My Expectation</b>	<b>Realisation for the participants if the project had run as I had originally envisaged</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10-weekend training sessions (120 hours).</li> <li>• 1-week foreign visit (40 hours).</li> <li>• 1-week training residency (40 hours).</li> <li>• 1-week workshop delivery (20 hours).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 240 hours working directly on the project.</li> <li>• Additional time for travel to and from training venues.</li> <li>• Additional time for homework.</li> <li>• Taking 2-weeks off school plus 1-weeks holiday.</li> <li>• Travel expenses. For example, Terry travelling to and from London to my local training venue could have cost him a total of £500 (approx.) over the year.</li> <li>• Being away from home for long periods of time.</li> <li>• Travelling abroad for the first time.</li> <li>• Pressures from families and friends.</li> <li>• Pressures from school, teachers and exam results.</li> </ul>

e) Making it too easy for people to leave.

For ethical reasons I wrote a clause in the contracts that people could leave for any reason at any time. I felt that putting any kind of pressure on the participants to stay

if they did not want to would be unethical. I still believe in the right of participants to leave a project if they want for any reason but I now think that participants should have also been made aware of their responsibilities towards the project, the group and to myself. With rights come responsibilities. Participants leaving did not only affect me but it affected others, particularly Terry, who had a lot to say on the matter (see appendix 10).

f) Timings of sessions.

Upon reflection I would try to organise a similar project as follows:

- 5-weekends (Saturday and Sunday). Up to 60 hours.
- 1-week residency (in holiday time). Up to 40 hours.
- 1-week plus delivery of creative workshop programme to schools (20 hours).

I would aim to run the project over a shorter time period, such as over a single school term and hold the residency during a half-term break. This would mean that participants only lost 1-week of school lessons as they delivered their workshops to student groups in schools.

g) The foreign visit.

Although successful in itself, the foreign visit was not needed. If incentives such as foreign trips were to happen then these should be at the end of a project and not during or in the middle.

h) Commitment of participants.

Gauging why participants want to be involved is an important part of the process. I held no auditions for this project and it was open to anyone who wanted to join. We talked through what my expectations were and what the timings of the project were. It may have been useful to have gone through a more in depth interview process, and to have explained in more detail my expectations, although I still feel I would not have liked to have turned people away that were interested in participating.

i) Early data analysis.

If I had carried out interim analysis of the data and had interviews and discussions with the participants during the project specifically about commitment then the potential for dropout may have been forewarned.

j) Where training takes place.

It is arguable that if my participants had all come from one place or one region then costs could have been reduced as could travel times. It would also have reduced accommodation and subsistence costs. The irony here is that the participant (Terry) who stayed the longest and completed the project lived further away than any of the others, and therefore had further to travel. The knock on effect was that Terry invested much more time, energy and had a large financial burden to carry during the course of the project.

#### 4.4. Recommended outline

Based on my reflections and experiences of organising and running this research project, the following is a basic outline that I feel reflects good practice and feasibility for future projects, whether the project is of a research or practical nature. I have not included a list of activities as this would depend on the group leader's preferences and skills (see appendix 8 for a suggested list of activities for each session 1 – 13). Please note that this is not a definitive outline. I wish to emphasise that peer support training is and can be run in many different ways.

Table 9. Recommended outline.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Personal questions for the project organiser.	Why do you want to run this project? Who are you running this project for? Do you have the required funding and resources to run the project? Do you have adequate training to run the project? Who do you need to help you complete the project?
Project outline.	Clear aims and objectives that need to be agreed with all interested parties.
Ethics.	Ethics policy should be in place. It is important at some stage for participants to have input into the ethics policy.
Call for participants.	Who do you want to include? What are the criteria for inclusion? Who do you want to exclude?
Interviews and auditions.	How are you going to choose your participants? Ensure that participants realise what their commitment entails.

Table 9. Recommended outline continued...

Activity	Notes
Contracts and agreements.	Researcher, participants, parents of participants and a staff member in the school of the participants should all sign contracts that agrees to what extent participation takes place, expectations, roles and responsibilities. It is important at this stage to have agreed a set of dates.
Logistics.	Book up venues, specialist helpers and supporters and collect resources needed.
Backup.	What is your backup plan if things do not go according to plan? Participants can drop out, parents and schools can withdraw permission, funding can be removed, personal circumstances can change and people can get ill.
Supervision.	Who can you go to for support if things go wrong? Who can you share your ideas with? Who can help you see your project from another perspective?
Diaries.	It is important that all participants and the researcher write diaries after every session. Time should be put aside within the session for this to happen.
Project.	This is a suggested outline for an external anti-bullying peer support project: 1) Introductory session (5-hours).
Collaboration.	Is everyone happy with all the aims and objectives? Should any changes be made? If changes are made then ensure all agreements are in writing.
Project.	2) What is bullying session (4- hours). 3) Use and abuse of power session (4-hours). 4) Self-confidence, empowerment and active listening session (4-hours). 5) Role-play, identity and empathy session (4-hours).
Evaluation.	Evaluate how project participants are feeling, make any changes as appropriate.

Table 9. Recommended outline continued...

Activity	Notes
Project.	6) Experiencing other people's techniques session (could involve outside facilitators or participating in other people's workshops) (4-6 hours). 7) Recap session and alternative strategies (4-hours). 8) Developing own workshop 1 (4-hours). 9) Developing own workshop 2 (4-hours). 10) Testing out own workshop (2-hours). 11) Reassess and redesign own workshop (4-hours). 12) Test out own workshop (2-hours). 13) Final workshop tinkering and group focus session (4-hours). 14) Workshop deliveries.
Project.	Special end of project group activity.
Workshop and project evaluation.	Evaluate project as seen fit.
Parameters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training is over a 3-month period.</li> <li>- Training consists of 13 sessions plus the delivery of the sessions.</li> <li>- Training hours should be in the region of 50 hours.</li> <li>- Training should take place outside of school premises.</li> <li>- Training is collaborative and is based on the co-construction of knowledge.</li> </ul>

Summary.

This chapter gives descriptions of many of the activities undertaken by the core group and contains very little analysis or theory. Further analysis of the data will be included in the following chapters, where I will attempt to link back to many of the theoretical approaches described earlier.

The training undertaken by the core group members went through several specific stages. Due to membership drop out I had to repeat certain stages and certain activities. I also relied too heavily on information or data that I was hoping to gather at later stages, rather than collecting and recording it at the time. In addition during sessions 2 – 6 I relied on the core group members to write their project diaries, which I mistakenly did not check until the end of the project. Had I checked at the time, I would have seen that the core group participants were either not recording data at all or not recording data that I found particularly useful. On reflection, I would have liked to have recorded more of the activities and participant thoughts on film during these sessions, although this may have presented me with a different set of problems including that of data saturation. In other words, you keep on gathering information until you reach diminishing returns and you are not adding to what you already have (Robson, 2006).

The sessions, as described, were creatively based with an emphasis on team building, sharing of ideas, and increasing skills and empowerment. The data suggests (see chapter 5) that many participants in this research project increased their feelings of empowerment, increased their knowledge (see chapter 6) and worked together well as a team.

Due to group membership changing, the training period spread over such a long time (one-year), and the often long periods of time when the group was unable to meet, the project did not run as I would have liked. Reflecting on how I felt during this training period, I was particularly pleased with the first two sessions. The young people and I put in a lot of work during these two days and I felt that it was probably the most productive two days during the whole project. I felt happier with the concentrated training periods, where the group were able to stay in contact everyday. During these time periods distractions were limited, we generally worked in well equipped training rooms and the learning potential was at its best. In this chapter and in sections 3.9 – 3.96 I have tried to demonstrate how theatre and creative activity was used in the training sessions and to show what the young people thought of the creative activity (e.g. when there was less creative activity Terry said it was boring). I have demonstrated how to use role-play to separate role and self. I have also shown that theatre and creative activities can break down barriers and brush away cobwebs within a group so exploration of difficult issues is made easier. In addition, I have demonstrated how theatre helped engage the young people I worked with and encouraged some

fundamental changes within the core group participants (e.g. empathy). Creative activity allows participants to try out possibilities in a safe space before utilising them in real life.

*Adolescents play many roles in life, and often the part they play is not one they choose or even like. It is thrust upon them by their peers, their parents, or their own imagined inadequacies coupled with low self-esteem. The creative arts help young people understand others when they try on the role of someone different from themselves (Sternberg, 1998. p.p. xiii and xv).*

## Chapter 5. Youth participation.

Youth participation in various forms and from various angles have been discussed in the preceding chapters. In this chapter I will summarise theoretical perspectives on youth participation and explore some of the core group's ideas regarding youth participation and empowerment. Peer support and its relationship to empowerment will be analysed, particularly in terms of users and the core group participants and their users.

As previously discussed, many adults and heads of state say how important youth participation is. Despite these positive words Governments from around the world appear not to promote the idea of youth participation any further. They fail to recognise the economic, social and political obstacles that young people face when trying to participate in issues that affect them. Both the conceptualisation and operationalisation of official youth participation policies reveal an agenda that is seriously at odds with the rhetoric of democratic participation. This raises questions about whose voice is actually being heard and to what effect (Bessant, 2004). Matthews suggests many youth forums are flawed and that they are inappropriate participatory devices often *obfuscating* the voices of many young people in local decision-making (2001). Boylan and Ing (2000) suggest that children over and over again say that they have no say or control over what is happening to them or have any affect on the decision making process that affect their lives.

Youth participation is voiced as being important but measures, systems, policies and practice fail to recognise the obstacles that young people experience, do not think through the appropriate practices required and have agendas that are against democratic participation (Bessant, 2004). It has been argued that the terms empowerment and participation can be interchangeable (Boylan et al, 2000). In view of this study's particular focus on power and empowerment, I was interested to explore the core group members' ideas about power and to explore empowerment within the project. In addition to their ideas I also consider the movement of power within the group and what effect this may have had on the project and its members.

The core participants expressed varying opinions regarding power and empowerment, including; feeling confident in oneself; providing possibilities for others; and about



getting more power than others. It became clear that within a short training programme the concept of empowerment could be a difficult one to grasp. For example, eight months after her participation in this research project Tanya said that she felt she still did not understand what the word empowerment meant but that she had her own interpretation, which is all that mattered to her:

*It's sort of unconscious power. You don't really realise it's going on; it's just there. I'm still confused about what it means to this day but now I have my own sort of personal interpretation of it. So even if it's not dictionary standard, I know what it means to me and that's all that really matters* (feedback from core group member Tanya in 2008).

Although Tanya does give a definition of empowerment, she does not appear confident that this definition would be recognised by others. She highlights the intangible sense of the word, while suggesting that interpretations could be different for everybody.

Terry describes empowerment as:

*Giving someone the platform to achieve what they can really achieve ... I see myself as a stepping stone for other people because once someone sees me doing something they think, 'hey he's doing it like this and he's talking about it and he's having a good time and he's also helping people at the same time'. It motivates other people and that's why I feel that I'm here* (feedback from core group member Terry in 2007).

There are several levels to Terry's interpretation of empowerment. Giving and being in a position to give can be very powerful notions, as is embodying oneself as a stone, strong enough for people to walk on, in addition to being a powerful role model to help motivate people into action. Terry suggests that people need to be given a safe space in which to flourish and he places himself in the role of being the one able to provide that safe space.

One might argue that although Terry feels powerful and wants to share some of this power freely with other people, it could be equally valid to suggest that he is using his notion of *giver* to enhance his already powerful position. Khalil (2004) suggests that altruism usually falls in between an everlasting conflict between those who perceive it to be an authentic experience and those who perceive it as rooted in selfishness.

John (2003) suggests that in order to learn about power and empowerment, children need to be given the opportunity to exercise it. I suggest that Terry and other core group members felt they had the opportunity to learn about empowerment and the opportunity to exercise it. Towards the end of the project, after facilitating the final set of creative workshops, Terry suggested that they had successfully helped to empower the users of their sessions: *We succeeded in getting in to their inner being ..., they did learn ..., We gave them the courage to overcome bullying.* Robin similarly states that *as a group I think we helped all the people we taught.* Four of the five of the core participants talked about empowerment as a positive phenomena that could help themselves and those around them, not unlike how Foucault might discuss power as being a positive, productive phenomenon which produces and incites (McNay, 1998). Tanya described empowerment as *gaining power in self-belief, self-confidence and gaining power in yourself.* Chantelle described empowerment as people having *the courage to overcome whatever situation you're in. Just to believe what you're doing is right and that even if people persuade you in different directions, just stand strong in what you believe in.* Robin's view of empowerment was less emancipatory and directed towards negative phenomena being used against people. Robin suggested that empowerment was *when someone has got more power over you but when you can't put an equal force up and they, like, got a bit more power than you.*

As a researcher, one of my empowerment aims was that all the participants in this project were treated equally. The notion of equality is important to me. Nevertheless, despite my best efforts, it was not possible for us to all work in an equal way (see table 10 Group equality and inequality).

*My role – and that is too emphatic a word – is to show people that they are much freer than they feel, that people accept as truth, as evidence, some themes which have been built up at a certain moment during history, and that this so-called*

*evidence can be criticised and destroyed* (Foucault, 1988b. p. 10).

It has been argued that bullying can be seen as an abuse of power (Smith and Sharp, 1994), and a lack of power can lead to high risks of bullying (Randall, 1996). It therefore follows that young people having a degree of power or empowerment is central to any community anti-bullying project (Randall, 1996), and that notions of empowerment and participation can be interchangeable (Boylan et al, 2000). Hazler suggests that children begin learning about power struggles at an early age (Sullivan, 2006), whereas John suggests that in society they rarely have any power (2003). In reality all children have power at certain times and within certain relationships. We cannot see this power; we can only see things or people invested with power and that this power can be used as a force for or against us. The following table illustrates the tension within the project between conflicting sources of power.

One of the core project participants, Michelle, felt that power came down to two things; *confidence and determination - you can route all different kinds of power back to that.* When pressed on the point that people born into power were not necessarily ‘determined’ she responded with the following: *their parents have chased it so they’ve got their power through the determination of others like their family. If it wasn’t for them they wouldn’t be in power and they wouldn’t know different but because they are in power, it’s like a chain reaction kind of thing .*

Table 10. Group equality and inequality.

<b>Equality</b>	<b>Inequality</b>
All participants were able to say ‘yes or no’ in whether to participate in the project and were able to withdraw from the project without penalty at any time for any reason.	My position as an adult and as a researcher meant there would always be the potential for unequal power relations within the group.
Everyone was encouraged to get something out of the project for himself or herself, whether it be skills, enjoyment, companionship, acknowledgement, or status.	The whole project was based around an idea or ideas that I formulated and thus I pushed the group into a particular direction of work.

Table 10. Group equality and inequality continued...

Equality	Inequality
Creative activities such as games and role-plays were geared towards exploring our thoughts feelings and ideas in a cooperative way.	I hope to obtain a qualification by participating in this project, whereas the young people will not get a qualification by participating.
Participants were encouraged to express their views and involve themselves in the group activities.	As a researcher I will be choosing which pieces of data to analyse and how to analyse them.
As group members we were all able to direct and suggest activities the group involved themselves in.	While we were all able to suggest ideas and activities I tended to be the motivator and the organiser and could have led in a particular direction.
We were all going through a process of change and we all had chances to reflect on these changes.	I had the final decision after agreement whether a date could be changed or not.
All group members were given chances to read, comment, delete and or add to the transcripts and the final thesis.	Adults such as teachers that we dealt with usually looked to me first when we worked with them.
The group agreed dates and times of sessions.	As fundraiser this project had to fit in with my budgetary requirements.
	I made most of the final decisions on the project. For example when there was no agreement between participants on certain matters or when participants wanted to change agreed working dates.
	I chose who was involved in the project.
	I authored the final thesis.
	I was responsible for the whole project.

The following piece of dialogue is in itself a discussion exploring power as a subject, but we also see power shift consistently between the three participants involved. I spent a lot of time reading and re-reading the dialogue expecting it to tell me something about

the empowerment of the core group members involved in the research. Eventually (see table 11) I came to the conclusion that this was more an example of shifting power relations than about what power meant to people.

Table 11 provides details of some of the unequal power relationship between the researcher and the researched. Despite my attempts to lessen the effects of the researcher's power, I am certain that unequal power relations continued throughout the project. I chose this short dialogue about power to highlight how power moves between us like smoke in the wind, dancing between people, objects, ideas and knowledge in visible and invisible ways. I do not propose a definitive interpretation of this dialogue, but I do want to demonstrate the polymorphous power that Foucault discusses and to explore the suggestion that power traverses and drives other powers (Foucault, 2000b). I must reiterate that this dialogue is not an attempt to explore whether the core participants became empowered on this research project or whether they learnt about empowerment.

I begin this exploration of the flow of power with a review of the dialogue as it was written in the transcript. The following two tables (table 11 and table 12) then go on to offer interpretations of how power may flow between people.

Researcher *Is power a negative thing, a force?*

Michelle *It's a state of mind.*

Terry *It can be negative. It can be positive.*

Researcher *Give me an example of negative power and positive power in your opinion?*

Terry *Negative power is, for example, Hitler. He had negative power. He led so many people into thinking that other different kinds of people were bad and that is ...*

Researcher *... is that negative power or is that using power negatively?*

Michelle *That's using power negatively.*

Terry *Yea.*

Researcher *Is there a difference?*

Michelle *Yea .*

Terry *Negative power? What's negative power? There is no such thing as negative power. You either have power or you don't.*

- Researcher *So power is power?*
- Terry *Power is just power.*
- Researcher *Does it depend on how power is used as to whether it's positive or negative?*
- Terry *Tell me a question about negative power. I don't think there is such a thing as negative power. Power can be used in a negative way or in a positive way and that was my example of negative way of using power.*
- Researcher *What's a positive way of using power?*
- Terry *Em.....,Do you have an answer to that Michelle?*
- Michelle *No. I'll give my examples afterwards.*
- Terry *Oh, you have your own examples. I thought we were working together on this.*
- Michelle *Just because you can't answer a question doesn't mean you can get me to answer it.*
- Terry *Yes I can. Positive power? Positive power by the Prime Minister. He has power and he can get his fellow people to work with him and then he can share that power between certain people in a positive way and apply that power in a positive attitude to benefit the country.*
- Michelle *Ok. My example is a really simple situation. In a school yard you have one person or you have people who are isolating another person – that's a use of negative power. Then you've got other people who won't put up with the isolation, who join this other person – that's use of positive power. You're using your own confidence and determination to make sure that this person isn't being isolated. Both positive and negative are using their determination and confidence to try and either isolate or unisolate the person.*

We see Michelle in the above discussion justifying and giving examples for her definition of power; '*confidence and determination*'. Both Michelle and Terry suggest Foucaultian ideas of power, that it can be both negative and positive.

Table 11 demonstrates how power appeared to flow, consciously and unconsciously, between the three people involved; the researcher, Terry and Michelle. The researcher initially directs the discussion on a particular path, and when Terry begins to formulate his initial ideas, the researcher questions Terry's analysis.

Tables 11 and table 12 demonstrate movement of power, they do not demonstrate whether or not people were empowered on this research project. I do not have sufficient reliable data or the instruments to examine the rate of empowerment or how much empowerment participants gained, lost or provided.

Table 11. First demonstration of the movement of power.

<b>Line</b>	<b>Dialogue</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Line 1. Researcher.	<i>Is power a negative thing a force?</i>	Interviewer holds the power and directs the topic to be discussed.
Line 2. Michelle.	<i>It's a state of mind.</i>	Michelle accepts the researchers power by answering the question but denies any status to the question with an indirect answer.
Line 2. Terry.	<i>It can be negative. It can be positive.</i>	Terry returns to the interviewer's question and restores the balance of power.
Line 3. Researcher.	<i>Give me an example of negative power and positive power in your opinion?</i>	Researcher challenges Terry's answer, holding on to his power.
Line 4. Terry.	<i>Negative power is, for example, Hitler. He had negative power. He led so many people into thinking that other different kinds of people were bad and that is ...</i>	Terry is confident in his own power as he answers the question.
Line 5. Researcher.	<i>... is that negative power or is that using power negatively?</i>	Researcher interrupts and not only rewords the question but suggests that Terry had not followed protocol by answering the question properly, thus reinforcing the power of the researcher and lowering Terry's.

Table 11. First demonstration of the movement of power continue...,

<b>Line</b>	<b>Dialogue</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Line 6. Michelle.	<i>That's using power negatively.</i>	Michelle accepts the researcher's power and the status of the question but this time raises her own power by answering the question first, in a definite and succinct way.
Line 7. Terry.	<i>Yea.</i>	Terry gains some power and increases Michelle's by allying himself with her.
Line 8. Researcher.	<i>Is there a difference?</i>	Researcher now questions the status of both their answers, raising his power and lowering theirs.
Line 9. Michelle.	<i>Yes.</i>	Michelle holds on to some power by continuing with short succinct answers but holds herself back from putting herself on the frontline.
Line 10. Terry.	<i>Negative power? What's negative power? There is no such thing as negative power. You either have power or you don't.</i>	Terry contradicts his previous answer (line 5) and is able to restore his own sense of power by drawing the question towards his own ideas.
Line 11. Researcher.	<i>So power is power?</i>	Researcher questions Terry's status of being able to make such a bold statement.
Line 12. Terry.	<i>Power is just power.</i>	Terry holds on to his power and his ideas.
Line 13. Researcher.	<i>Does it depend on how power is used as to whether it's positive or negative?</i>	Researcher tries to reinstate his power by refocusing the question.



Table 11. First demonstration of the movement of power continued...,

Line	Dialogue	Commentary
Line 14. Terry.	<i>Tell me a question about negative power. I don't think there is such a thing as negative power. Power can be used in a negative way or in a positive way and that was my example of negative way of using power.</i>	Terry justifies his contradiction from Line 4, slightly reinterpreting his initial answer of negative power into using power negatively and thus holds on to what power he has and starts to hold on to his ideas.
Line 15. Researcher.	<i>What's a positive way of using power?</i>	Researcher partially accepts Terry's power and gives him a chance to cement it.
Line 16. Terry.	<i>Em ..., Do you have an answer to that Michelle?</i>	Terry loses power by not answering the question and attempts a power-share with Michelle.
Line 17. Michelle.	<i>No. I'll give my examples afterwards.</i>	Michelle does not accept Terry's offer, further lowering Terry's power. She also raises her own power by suggesting that she has the answers that Terry doesn't.
Line 18. Terry.	<i>Oh, you have your own examples. I thought we were working together on this.</i>	Terry attempts to increase his power by taking the moral high ground and appeals to Michelle's sense of partnership and equality.
Line 19. Michelle.	<i>Just because you can't answer a question doesn't mean you can get me to answer it.</i>	Michelle raises her own power status by lowering Terry's.

Table 11. First demonstration of the movement of power continued...,

Line	Dialogue	Commentary
Line 20. Terry.	<i>Yes I can. Positive power? Positive power by the Prime Minister. He has power and he can get his fellow people to work with him and then he can share that power between certain people in a positive way and apply that power in a positive attitude to benefit the country.</i>	Terry deflects Michelle's attempt to lower his power. Terry raises his power by answering the question.
Line 21. Michelle.	<i>Ok. My example is a really simple situation. In a schoolyard you have one person or you have people who are isolating another person – that's a use of negative power. Then you've got other people who won't put up with the isolation, who join this other person – that's use of positive power. You're using your own confidence and determination to make sure that this person isn't being isolated. Both positive and negative are using their determination and confidence to try and either isolate or un-isolate the person.</i>	Michelle again lowers Terry's power by suggesting that his answers have been complicated. Michelle keeps her strong power position by answering the question and at the same time reinforcing her own, previously mentioned definition of what power means to her: confidence and determination.

I accept that there are many possible interpretations of the dialogue in table 11. For example, in Line 16 I suggested that Terry lost power by not answering the question and attempted a power-share with Michelle. I could have suggested equally that Terry attempted to lower Michelle's power by suddenly placing her on the spot. I could also

have suggested that Terry held back from increasing his own power by offering Michelle a chance to increase her own power and therefore increase the power of the group. Finally, to underline how interpretations can differ, depending on the perspective, I shall attempt a complete alternative interpretation of the full dialogue.

For this second interpretation I am going to draw upon the ideas of Holt (1995) who suggested that schools promote an atmosphere of fear; fear of failure, fear of humiliation and fear of disapproval which severely affects children's capacity for intellectual growth. Rather than learning the actual content of the lessons, children learn how to avoid embarrassment. Within this dialogue we have a discussion about power which, as mentioned earlier, I am also using as an example of the movement of power.

In this new interpretation one could suggest that I as a researcher am just trying to have a conversation with the two core group members, sharing and exploring ideas, but the two core group members are just trying their hardest not to fail. It is as if we are in school and that I am the teacher and they are the students. They are trying to find out the right answer from me and do not want to get it wrong. I am possibly confusing them, as I do not respond as a traditional teacher might respond and do not give them clues as to whether an answer is right or wrong. Although I am seeking a conversation and am not looking for right or wrong answers, they appear to find this difficult. The rules of the school are still in their heads, or as Boal (1995) might put it, the cops are in their heads.

I acknowledge that, as in the previous example, this interpretation is just an interpretation and I accept that many other interpretations are possible.

Table 12. Second demonstration of the movement of power.

<b>Line</b>	<b>Dialogue</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Line 1. Researcher.	<i>Is power a negative thing, a force?</i>	Researcher holds the power and directs the topic to be discussed.
Line 2. Michelle.	<i>It's a state of mind.</i>	Michelle engages in conversation and attempts to raise her power by denying the validity of the question
Line 2. Terry.	<i>It can be negative. It can be positive.</i>	Terry returns to the researcher's question and complies with the researcher's power.

Table 12. Second demonstration of the movement of power continued...,

Line	Dialogue	Commentary
Line 3. Researcher.	<i>Give me an example of negative power and positive power in your opinion?</i>	Researcher ignores Michelle's input, lowering her power and steers the discourse in the initiated direction, keeping on to the power held.
Line 4. Terry.	<i>Negative power is, for example, Hitler. He had negative power. He led so many people into thinking that other different kinds of people were bad and that is ...</i>	Terry is confident in his own power as he answers the question.
Line 5. Researcher.	<i>... is that negative power or is that using power negatively?</i>	Terry loses power with the interruption of the researcher and more so below when Michelle answers the question before he can. It could also be argued that the researcher is allying himself with Terry by becoming really engaged in conversation with him, this gives Terry little of power with each bit of attention.
Line 6. Michelle.	<i>That's using power negatively.</i>	Michelle has taken Terry's opportunity to answer the question, taking power from him to her. All of Michelle's speech so far has been short, definite and to the point. Terry needs to work hard to assert himself.
Line 7. Terry.	<i>Yea.</i>	Terry wants to get back in to the conversation and attempts Michelle's tactic or short answers. He also confers power to Michelle by agreeing with her.

Table 12. Second demonstration of the movement of power continued..,

<b>Line</b>	<b>Dialogue</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Line 8. Researcher.	<i>Is there a difference?</i>	Researcher now questions the status of both their answers, raising his power and lowering theirs.
Line 9. Michelle.	<i>Yes.</i>	Michelle holds on to some power by continuing with short succinct answers but holds herself back from putting herself on the frontline. One could suggest that Michelle already knows the answer but by leaving Terry to answer first, she learns what he learns and more. She learns not to make the same mistakes that he does.
Line 10. Terry.	<i>Negative power? What's negative power? There is no such thing as negative power. You either have power or you don't.</i>	Terry draws on the researcher's earlier redirection of the notion of negative power (Line 5), and contradicts his previous answer (Line 4). One could suggest that Terry is trying to establish what he thinks is the 'right' answer or the answer that he feels the researcher wants to hear.
Line 11. Researcher.	<i>So power is power?</i>	Researcher continues with the conversation as intended and does not reward Terry's attempt to get the answer right. The researcher does not give 'clues' to the right answer like a traditional teacher might.
Line 12. Terry.	<i>Power is just power.</i>	Terry feels confident with his assertion and holds on to his power.

Table 12. Second demonstration of the movement of power continued..,

<b>Line</b>	<b>Dialogue</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Line 13. Researcher.	<i>Does it depend on how power is used as to whether it's positive or negative?</i>	The researcher is listening to the answers and continuing to have a conversation. Terry and Michelle are learning how not to fail.
Line 14. Terry.	<i>Tell me a question about negative power. I don't think there is such a thing as negative power. Power can be used in a negative way or in a positive way and that was my example of negative way of using power.</i>	Terry once again is trying to figure out what the researcher means and what answer the researcher would consider as right. Terry is still confused from the earlier interruption (Line 5). Terry's power is lowered further.
Line 15. Researcher.	<i>What's a positive way of using power?</i>	Researcher partially accepts Terry's power and gives him a chance to cement it.
Line 16. Terry.	<i>Em ..., Do you have an answer to that Michelle?</i>	Terry still does not know what the researcher is looking for and is scared of giving the wrong answer.
Line 17. Michelle.	<i>No. I'll give my examples afterwards.</i>	Michelle may also be unsure of what the researcher is looking for and wants to listen to Terry and any mistakes he may make before she chooses what she feels is the right thing to say.
Line 18. Terry.	<i>Oh, you have your own examples. I thought we were working together on this.</i>	Terry attempts to increase his power by taking the moral high ground and appeals to Michelle's sense of partnership and equality. Terry also tries to save face.

Table 12. Second demonstration of the movement of power continued..,

Line	Dialogue	Commentary
Line 19. Michelle.	<i>Just because you can't answer a question doesn't mean you can get me to answer it.</i>	Michelle raises her own power status by lowering Terry's (not necessarily in a deliberate way). Michelle is more comfortable seeing if Terry's ideas are right or wrong before revealing her own.
Line 20. Terry.	<i>Yes I can. Positive power? Positive power by the Prime Minister. He has power and he can get his fellow people to work with him and then he can share that power between certain people in a positive way and apply that power in a positive attitude to benefit the country.</i>	Terry deflects Michelle's attempt to lower his power. Terry raises his power by answering the question.
Line 21. Michelle.	<i>Ok. My example is a really simple situation. In a schoolyard you have one person or you have people who are isolating another person – that's a use of negative power. Then you've got other people who won't put up with the isolation, who join this other person – that's use of positive power. You're using your own confidence and determination to make sure that this person isn't being isolated. Both positive and negative are using their determination and confidence to try and either isolate or un-isolate the person.</i>	Michelle senses that Terry is wrong and has somehow failed. This is her longest answer so far and she is more or less confident that Terry has done all the hard work for her in finding out what she feels is the right answer. Michelle's 'simple' situation is a slight on Terry's muddled and rushed examples where she did not help him. She has again lowered Terry's power and raised her own.

Although tables 11 and table 12 hold many similarities, the perspectives are very different. In terms of the shifting of power, I argue in this model that the researcher's

power remains above Terry and Michelle's at all times. Michelle's power is slightly lower than the researcher's, with Terry's power shifting from very low to just beneath Michelle's. Terry's power never exceeds Michelle's and only achieves brief moments of higher power when the researcher directs questions to him. We could therefore argue that although the researcher was trying to find out the core participants ideas on power, all he obtained was what the core participants felt he wanted them to say.

In chapter 6 I demonstrate that core group members felt they had gained knowledge about power and empowerment. I could try to argue that knowledge is power and therefore that some empowerment had taken place. Rather, I am going to draw on Weiner's theory of attribution (1986) to explore their attributions regarding empowerment. I explained earlier that attribution theory suggests that people attribute internal or external attributions concerning their perceived success or failure in situations. If a person attributes success due to their own ability or lack of it or to the endeavours of others, it is likely to affect how he or she responds to a particular activity. I asked each of the core group members what the word 'empowerment' meant to them at the beginning, during and at the end of their involvement in this research project. I am going to compare their answers, not in the linguistic or definitional development of their answers, but in their internal or external attributional qualities.

### 5.1. Empowerment.

As discussed in chapter 1, Strauss and Corbin (1990) argued that the qualitative methodology of grounded theory provides opportunities for the exploration of the constructs of people's experiences in terms of their thoughts, feelings and actions. I analysed the core groups' attributions in the general style of a grounded theory approach (Robson, 2006). I tried to interpret the attributions as the core group would have intended and to allow the categories to emerge from the data (Williams et al, 2004). Initially, I scanned the data for comments regarding empowerment and collected them into one file. I allowed basic categories to emerge as I immersed myself in the data.

I initially worked with six categories; self belief, ability to give, balance, skill, abuse of power and uncontrollable. The categories then changed and grew to seven; self belief/courage, giving/helping, skill, negativity, uncontrollable, contentment and control. I found that in the initial categorisation process I focused more on the



participants' words rather than their attributional qualities, which suggested category names to me. For example, in the 'self belief' category the participants used the word 'believe or belief' in many of their comments.

Following this, I developed the themes of the categories and separated out the attributions as either internal or external attributions. This gave me six categories; self belief/courage/confidence (internal attributions), enabling (internal attributions), enabling (external attributions), control (external attributions), negativity (external attributions) and uncontrollable (external attributions).

The literature on power suggests it as a force of control or that it is productive and emancipatory. Empowerment is achieved internally with self-confidence and belief in one's own abilities. Attributions that reflect this would be internal and enabling. Examples include those surrounding self-belief, internal power, confidence, courage, contentment and happiness.

When empowerment was described as a way of controlling others or was reliant on other people's opinion of an individual or the core group as a whole, I have labelled these attributions as external. Examples include the abuse of power and needing people to listen to you.

One category only held two comments and related empowerment to unconscious power and saying that empowerment was a bad thing have their own category of empowerment as an uncontrollable phenomenon. Although an unconscious attribution could be argued as originating internally (beneath the conscious) I have designated it as an external attribution due to its uncontrollable nature.

My final four categories were:

- Enabling (internal attributions).
- Enabling (external attributions).
- Controlling (external attributions).
- Uncontrollable (external attributions).

Table 13 Collated empowerment categories for the core group.

**Enabling.**

	Internal	External	Total
Terry	6	2	8
Tanya	2	0	2
Chantelle	3	0	3
Michelle	8	0	8
Robin	1	0	1
Total	16	6	22

**Controlling.**

	Controlling	Uncontrollable	Total
Terry	0	0	0
Tanya	0	2	2
Chantelle	1	0	1
Michelle	1	0	1
Robin	2	0	2
Total	4	2	6

I am presenting small numbers here and therefore appreciate that the use of percentages may be of little use. As I was working with differing numbers of attributions from each participant, I therefore felt the following analysis, using percentages, may help the reader appreciate how the participants viewed empowerment differently.

Table 13 demonstrates what the core group members communicated about how they felt about the concept of empowerment. All of Terry's attributions (n=8) about empowerment are to do with enabling from either an internal or an external perspective. This suggests that Terry feels empowerment can be achieved from within and without. Terry often talks about giving empowerment to people, which suggests that he feels we may not be able to achieve empowerment entirely on our own. Half of Tanya's attributions (n=2) concerning empowerment are internal and controllable, whereas the other half of her attributions (n=2) concerned uncontrollable external factors. This suggests that Tanya can feel empowered but can easily feel not in control. Three

quarters of Chantelle’s attributions (n=3) about empowerment were internal and controllable, whereas just one of her attributions was about external controlling factors. This suggests that Chantelle feels empowerment can be achieved from within or is under one’s control, but that it may also control us. 88% of Michelle’s attributions (n=9) regarding empowerment are to do with enabling from either an internal perspective, with just one concerned with controlling external attributes. All of Michelle’s internal enabling attributions indicates to me that she feels similarly to Terry that empowerment comes from within. One of Robin’s attributions was internal and enabling, whereas two others were external and controlling. This suggests to me that Robin may feel that empowerment is often out of his control.

Although this may be interesting, as mentioned, the numbers are small and therefore the tentative suggestions above may not be significant. I felt it would now be useful to separate out the attributions for each core group member and to put these attributions into date order and explore the occurrence of any patterns. Where there is a possibility for ambiguity between categories I have offered justifications for my choices.

Table 14. Tanya’s empowerment timeline.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Tanya</b>	
Jan 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>It sounds sort of bad?!</i></li> </ul>	Uncontrollable/external.
March 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Gaining power in self belief, self confidence and gaining power in yourself.</i></li> </ul>	Internal/enabling.
Feb 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I know what it means to me and that’s all that really matters.</i></li> <li>• <i>It’s sort of unconscious power. You don’t really realise it’s going on, it’s just there.</i></li> </ul>	Internal/enabling and uncontrollable/external.

Table 15. Michelle's empowerment timeline.

Date	Michelle	
Aug 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Confident in themselves and what they do and what they believe in.</i></li> <li>• <i>Somebody who is content and happy with themselves.</i></li> <li>• <i>Feeling a sense of contentment.</i></li> <li>• <i>If people are going to listen to you you're going to feel empowered.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Internal/enabling and external/controlling.            (Note: I have classed the final comment as external as I feel Michelle is saying that empowerment here is reached through the action/s of another).</p>
July 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To help others or to help yourself.</i></li> <li>• <i>Feeling confidence in yourself.</i></li> <li>• <i>To have confidence in yourself, be able to defend yourself and your views.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Internal/enabling .            (Note: I have classed the first comment as internal as although helping others is externally orientated it is an internal process .</p>
Jan 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>It means to believe in yourself and what you stand for and that you can defend what you believe in.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Internal/enabling.</p>

Table 16. Terry's empowerment timeline.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Terry</b>	
Aug 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Empowerment is opening up the way for someone for them to find their inner power themselves.</i></li> </ul>	External/enabling.
Aug 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Empowerment is a skill to release the inner strength, some which are even unseen and unheard about.</i></li> </ul>	External/enabling.
March 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>It's finding that guidance, that burst of strength that someone has hidden in side them.</i></li> <li>• <i>Giving someone the platform to achieve what they can really achieve.</i></li> </ul>	Internal/enabling.
July 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>When people unleash their powers and use it in a positive way to benefit themselves and others in society.</i></li> <li>• <i>Giving someone else the power.</i></li> </ul>	Internal/enabling.
Jan 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>When someone gets the necessary positive energy for them to act upon their feelings and emotions.</i></li> <li>• <i>It is a form of power which enables a person to go from an existing energy level to a higher one.</i></li> </ul>	Internal/enabling.

Table 17. Chantelle's empowerment timeline.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Chantelle</b>	
Jan 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I think that empowerment is when people think they have the right to belittle another person younger or of the same age.</i></li> </ul>	Controlling/external.
March 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Just to believe what you're doing is right and that even if people persuade you in different directions, just stand strong in what you believe in.</i></li> <li>• <i>To have the courage to overcome whatever situation you're in.</i></li> </ul>	Internal/enabling.
March 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I think empowerment means to use your own self will and courage to solve situations</i></li> </ul>	Internal/enabling.

Table 18. Robin's empowerment timeline.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Robin</b>	
Jan 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>When someone is in control of everything and is power.</i></li> </ul>	Controlling/external.
March 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>You need, if you're being bullied, to give the equal empowerment back to cancel out the bullying.</i></li> </ul>	Internal/enabling.
May 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Somebody who's higher up in the hierarchy, when they shouldn't be or should be, people who are taking control of situations, when they should be or shouldn't be.</i></li> </ul>	Controlling/external.

Table 19. Core project members empowerment process.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Project start</b>	<b>During project</b>	<b>End of project</b>
Terry	External enabling	Internal enabling	Internal enabling
Michelle	Internal/enabling and external/controlling	Internal/enabling	Internal/enabling
Tanya	Uncontrollable/external	Internal/enabling	Internal/enabling and uncontrollable/external
Chantelle	Controlling/external	Internal/enabling	Internal/enabling
Robin	Controlling/external	Internal/enabling	Controlling/external

We can see from Table 19 that at the start of the project all the core project members felt that empowerment was externally attributed to greater or lesser degrees. Terry and Michelle felt that empowerment was an enabling phenomenon. In addition, Michelle, from the start of the project, felt that empowerment came from within. Chantelle and Robin initially felt that empowerment was about controlling people and Tanya felt that empowerment was a negative external and possibly uncontrollable phenomenon. During the project, all the core participants found congruence with their ideas on empowerment. They all suggested that empowerment was an internal and enabling phenomenon, suggesting that they all felt some degree of control over their own empowerment and were potentially open to becoming more empowered. I find Terry’s journey particularly interesting; he started the project suggesting that empowerment was external and enabling and then found congruence with the rest of the core group that empowerment was enabling internally, a position he kept until the end of the project. 18-months later, after a period of reflection, Terry suggested again that empowerment was internally enabling. This suggests to me that Terry was able to build his self-confidence and belief during his time on the project. How much the project contributed to this feeling of empowerment I am unable to gauge. The fact that he continued building his belief and self-confidence after the project had finished certainly demonstrates that he was able to do this outside the confines of the project.

After the end of the project Terry, Michelle and Chantelle held on to the idea that empowerment is developed from within. Tanya, although feeling that empowerment may be possible from within, still felt that empowerment was external and subject to

uncontrollable forces. It appears that Robin fully reverts to his initial ideas of empowerment as an external force that controls people.

Robin did not relate empowerment to confidence or self-determination, but rather more as a negative force that is used to control or appear superior to others. This is clearly highlighted in the final reflective interview with Robin, eight months after the completion of the project:

Researcher *Do you think that your participation [in the project] gave you in any way a sense of empowerment for yourself?*

Robin *Not really, no.*

Researcher *Why not?*

Robin *I suppose in the workshops it did a bit, but I don't think of myself as more than anybody else.*

Researcher *Ok. What about your confidence?*

Robin *Yea, that's built I reckon, quite a lot because of it. It also hasn't changed it as well, obviously I try and learn from our mistakes because it makes it better in the long run.*

Researcher *Hmm. Ok. So do you think you feel more confident now than you did?*

Robin *Yea.*

Robin feels that he has not become empowered, relating this to feeling superior to other people. He says he feels that he has become more confident but also says that his confidence has not been changed. This suggests to me that Robin is confused about empowerment and confidence. I found it interesting in this short piece of dialogue that Robin brings up making mistakes and locates mistakes as a group problem, one that he is happy to take personal responsibility for (e.g. 'I try and learn'). I interpret this as demonstrating his lack of confidence by suggesting that any mistakes are the fault of the group. He is not confident enough to locate the cause of mistakes within himself.

We might also argue from table 19 that allowing students to step outside of traditional classrooms and away from traditional teaching methods, provides them with opportunities to empower themselves, and more importantly, it allows them the possibility of locating the source of empowerment within themselves.



The core group's reflections presented in chapter 6 reveal that most of the core group feel they achieved a sense of empowerment on the project. This was most pronounced in the final week of training, when Terry had a crisis. One of the most powerful influences over Terry was his perception of his family's views and the pressures that were brought to bear by his feelings of responsibility for these.

*... if you are still under 18 and still living with your parents and this and that, then your parents will still kind of have control over how your time is spent, even if it's that little bit ... they will still probably say "yeah you can spend it how you want" but then you won't be able to spend it without that thought "oh my god my parents might be upset with me" and this and that and obviously you are in that situation and you are trying to keep your parents happy, so in that sense there are serious limitations when you have that pressure put on you ... I think that is the dominant pressure ... that is probably the dominant pressure (core group member Terry in July 2007).*

This family pressure adversely affected Terry in the final week of training, during which time the core group of Terry and Michelle were both in residence near me. The following week was going to see them deliver their workshop to a variety of young people's groups in South West England. Out of the blue, Terry's father called him back to London to attend a family wedding, which sent Terry in to a panic. Eventually, he discussed his predicament with Michelle and me. Several options were talked through. I reminded Terry that if he felt he needed to return home, then it was his right to do so. I explained that I was not going to try and force him to stay; he had to make the decision for himself. We took a break from training and allowed Terry some space to reflect on his situation. Terry took some time to call his father, who also told him that it was up to him to make a choice. Terry made the decision not to go to the family wedding but to continue with the project. Moreover, he decided not to go home for the weekend, as originally planned, in case his family tried to change his mind while he was there.

*It's just a bit of luck cause if he [Terry's father] says I have to go then I probably would have had to go, do you know what I mean? That's why I'm not going [home] to see my family or parents this weekend because if I do go and then suddenly at the last minute my granny comes over and*

*says “no you have to go [to the wedding] and blah blah” then I will probably be in that situation but ten times worse because I’m surrounded by family and it’s like there’s a little path that would take me out to the PhD or whatever and like a big everyone looking towards me and ... I probably wouldn’t have been able to come [back on the research project]. So it’s better that if I do stay here just in case they say I do have to go and then they take me and blahdy blahdy blah! So any way it was a bit of a shock to me as well ... my dad basically he’s close with his cousins and then they know me but we don’t really get on in that friendly way, so he was saying it would be nice if you can come [to the wedding] but ... my dad has given me the choice (core group member Terry in July 2007).*

Researcher *So he’s given you a choice?*

Terry *Yes.*

Researcher *So you’ve weighed up that choice and you’ve made a choice that’s important for you.*

Terry *Yes.*

Terry goes on to explore his feelings further and demonstrates how proud he is about participating in this project and how important it is to him to complete it.

Terry *It’s not really that thing about having to do it, cause if I didn’t want to do it, the first thing I remember Andy [the researcher] clearly telling us is that you don’t have to do it, you can leave whenever you want and in the contract, I remember reading it as well, ‘You can leave [the project] whenever you want’. That wasn’t actually in my head, you know when I was speaking with my Dad. It wasn’t like ‘You know Dad, Andy said I could leave whenever I want’. You obviously, if you have that frame of mind, you won’t get anywhere. In life as well, if you have something that’s in your head that’s pulling you down, if you think negatively on that thing you can never actually achieve that goal.*

Researcher *So it’s not just about having to be there; it’s about you as well isn’t it?*

Terry *It’s like if you are building a house, you’ve built the house, it’s just the roof that needs putting on. If you just leave the house then it gets broken*

*away and put to waste. It's like something I've done, at least in the future and I can say to my kids or my grandchildren, I can say, and they will probably look towards me and think, "Hey if he's done something like that then why can't we do something even better", you know what I mean, and take it on to the next level ... and that's the actual whole thing about this, at least I can show them, "Listen if this is what your grandfather was like then why can't you be it? I have potential; you also have double the potential that I had". And obviously that thing about doing something for the community and making that difference, it does, other people also look at it and want to do it as well, and this is like something to look at and hey is that it. And I want to put it to an end, not to say 'Yeah I dropped out half way cause of this and that, this and that, and if I finish it its like stamped, done. Let's move on, next one. Bring it on. (July, 2007).*

Terry felt empowered enough to make his own decision, and thought through ways that would help make him keep to his decision. He was well aware of the powerful influence, whether conscious or unconscious, that his family, especially his granny, might have on him were he to be with them at that critical final week phase of the research project. Terry also demonstrated how his decision might impact on other people; as a role model for his children or grandchildren and the community.

## 5.2. Power

The disciplinary power of the school and the state has been discussed earlier in this chapter and in section 3.8. At various stages of the project, all the core participants suggested that they felt subjected to disciplinary power (Foucault, 2000b), particularly from their educational establishments. I never mentioned the concept of disciplinary power to the core participants. In the following passage we see Michelle and Terry, unprompted, discussing how disciplinary power affects their lives, and particularly their involvement in this research project:

Michelle        ..., *I think that schools like to... it's a control thing... they like people... they like students to be involved in extra curriculum activities that the school provide and also school approved extra curriculum activities like a swimming*

*team outside the school that is recognised in the school. It's almost like things that are going to benefit the school come first and then outside things, if it looks like it could be a good thing, if it could make the school look good because it's furthering the pupils but they can use it for themselves, then I think it's ok but I think if the school don't see a benefit from the outside projects then they are not going to be willing to let their students take time off because it's not as important as sitting your final exams and not as important as joining the rugby team and all this kind of thing.*

Terry *My secondary school was like that. They actually wanted ..., they encouraged me to go because they were getting that benefit out of it ..., I mean, certain teachers, you know, it depends on the subject. For example, my chemistry teacher would not recommend me. Actually when I first said it to her, you know, when I said I would probably miss a couple of days [to be involved in this project], she said, 'Don't go, it's not good for you, don't risk it'. She completely put me down and I realised, you know, for example somebody like my psychology teacher, she will talk to me and she was like, 'You go for it, it's a good opportunity, you will learn things out of it' (July, 2007).*

Michelle discusses disciplinary power from the perspective of the school and Terry talks from the perspective of individual teachers. Michelle is suggesting that schools only like to approve of extra-curricular activities if they can see a direct benefit coming back to the school, such as being able to promote it in the school's prospectus. Terry, on the other hand, suggests that teachers themselves could make a difference if they had a particular interest in the activity.

Disciplinary power in the eyes of young people, not only oppresses the young people involved, but may also ridicule them or hold back their ideas. Adults are perceived as not listening; they exert power and they are often unable to see things from the perspective of young people:

Researcher *What about adults? Do they take sessions run by young people seriously?*

Michelle *Not really.*

- Terry *That's the reason why – It's because they think we're having a laugh or they've got this thing in their heads, that young people aren't qualified or experienced.*
- Michelle *They don't want to listen.*
- Terry *It's that thing of power again where they think they're too powerful.*

*Power can be something for example which someone has in a way, which they use as in they can have power in themselves which they may control other people with. In that sense, that power they have is something other people must not have. If someone has it, it shows that person is in a higher stage than the other person is and therefore, I believe, will obey, in a way, the other person's power. The person that has power, it might have a physical thing, it might have a verbal thing, it might have an emotional thing which gives him that power. It might be something like ....er ....a gun, when guns were invented. That may give the meaning of power which might raise him above the level of others so that others won't come up to him and do something which he doesn't like because he has more power and therefore he can cause them harm (core group member Terry in 2007).*

The core group members wrestled with and explored the concept of power on many levels by means of discussions, interviews and questionnaires. Creative activities were also utilised to explore power including games, imagery and role-plays. In addition to the creative work on power that I facilitated with the core group members, they utilised a variety of creative activities exploring power in the sessions that they designed and delivered in schools. The July group used two games to explore power: 'Pass the Power' and the 'Power Walk'. The game of Pass the Power used sound as a representation of power that flowed, like electricity, through the group. The Power Walk game allowed users to explore perceptions of power and their own ability to gain power through a demonstration of their own walks. The Japan group utilised the creative game of 'Back-to-Back' in their sessions for users. This game demonstrates how players must use equal amounts of power with their partners to succeed.

At the beginning of the final set of sessions in July I asked Terry to explain to Michelle what their creative workshops had been about in Japan. Rather than describing an 'anti-

bullying workshop' he described the workshop from the perspective of an 'empowerment workshop':

*It was about power and it was about enabling people to use their own powers in a positive direction, in a positive way. Obviously everyone's got their own power but it's a matter of whether you use it in a way to help you, you know, go towards the right direction (core group member Terry in July 2007).*

In chapter 6 I discuss peer support and how it can help young people learn a range of skills including communication mediation skills, allows young people to take on more responsibility in their lives and offers them chances to share their ideas and become empowered. I also introduced the idea of external peer support (EPS).

Both in-house and external peer support projects always use young people in the process, and commentators believe that student-led programmes are seen to be the most effective (Paterson and Rigby, 1999) in dealing with the issues and sensitivities involved. Table 21 presents a comparison of the two approaches and what I believe are the main similarities and differences between them.

As I could find no research that detailed the effectiveness or outcomes of an external peer support project, I decided to compare some of the perceived outcomes of external peer support from this research project with what has been claimed for in-house peer support in other studies. When examining the effectiveness of this as a peer support project I decided to identify various outcomes for the core group members on the one hand and the outcomes for users of the workshop sessions delivered by the core group on the other.

### 5.3. Outcomes for peer supporters.

There is a huge amount of evidence indicating that the training, and experience of peer support, benefits those trained (Smith and Watson, 2004), but peer supporters have not always felt their work was valued (Lines, 2005). Outcomes for peer supporters generally include building confidence, developing a sense of responsibility; valuing people more; feeling gratification at doing something to help the quality of life for others; and

satisfaction at learning new skills (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008). Peer support also helps individuals improve their own interpersonal skills (Lines, 2005). In addition,

*Peer support appears to give direction to some young people's altruistic wishes to address injustices such as bullying ..., that the training enhances their communication and problem-solving skills and their capacity to feel empathy for peers in distress (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008. p. 97).*

Peer supporters generally report that they are contributing positively to the life of the school (Price and Jones, 2001), and virtually all peer supporters spontaneously spoke of their satisfaction in helping make the school a safer place (Cowie et al, 2004). Peer supporters also improve their ability to resolve conflicts, to give and receive positive comments, to co-operate, to communicate and to listen to each other (Cremin, 2002).

What were the outcomes for the core group external peer supporters?

I am a firm believer that training does not stop at the end of a specific training period but is carried on into work and practice. In working out how much training the core group received during this project, I have added up all their training hours and the hours they spent delivering their sessions to their users. I have not included overnight stays, travel times, time spent reflecting on the work or additional homework such as writing training diaries and individual bits of research. The core group members' total training hours ranged from nearly 100 hours to just under 40 hours. See table 20.

Table 20. Total hours of training for core group members.

Terry	Michelle	Tanya	Robin	Chantelle
92 hours	47 hours	45 hours	45 hours	39 hours

All of the core group members reported that they gained some positive outcomes from this project. Terry and Michelle appeared to gain more in terms of outcomes than the other core group members, which is not unexpected due to their longer and concentrated training period and, in Terry's case in particular, the amount and level of commitment made to the project.

I demonstrate in chapter 6 that the core group members learned new skills in creating, delivering and facilitating creative workshops, and how they explored concepts of oppression, power and empathy on a deep level. In addition to becoming more empowered, core group members were able to explore and define key terms such as bullying. *Young members got an awareness of bullying in general* (feedback from core group member Robin in 2008) and *felt a lot more confident in a variety of situations, including running workshops* (feedback from core group members Robin in 2008; Michelle and Terry in 2007 and 2009).

The core group made new alliances and felt supported by each other (feedback from core group members Robin in 2008; Terry and Michelle in 2007). Terry, in addition to learning new skills, also learned how to listen to constructive criticism without feeling attacked, and used suggestions as a positive means to self-growth:

*I was able to work better as a team [player and had], better delivery skills, better trained with dealing with people and their emotional stories ... [and realised some of my] faults when you're criticised but you eventually get to understand and learn from these to improve yourself* (feedback from core group member Terry in 2007).

Michelle, in 2009, said that the project had helped her achieve *more understanding and [become] a better team worker*. Chantelle, in 2008, suggested that the project had given her *a broader outlook on the world*. The core group had *lots of fun* during the project (core group members Michelle in 2009 and Terry in 2007).

It is possible to detect the sense of pride that Terry feels in helping people and how this research project helped him do that. It is almost as if Terry has grown into an anti-bullying missionary, spreading the word to all humanity, and suggesting that it is everyone's moral duty to help in the eradication of bullying from our society.

*I'm part of this project because I feel that bullying cannot be eradicated. I have a solid belief that it is not going to go away. If it does, it will take about probably a thousand years to take away. My mission is to actually reduce the percentage and I feel that everyone who is a human being and can live, live life I mean, has a duty to actually help their community. I*



*feel that, to me, bullying is a serious issue. I've seen it happen and the feelings have gone around, and it does actually create chaos in our society. I felt that this way is a way of me learning and teaching so at the same time I can be advising people or doing things that will help people, benefit, you know* (feedback from core group member Terry in 2007).

Many of the core group's members felt a real ownership about the work they created. In the following comment we see just how important the workshop plan is to Terry, how integral he is to it, and how he feels it actually contains 'essences' of him within it, almost as if he has given birth to a child. *It's got essences of us, it's like a big kiddy, like it's got the ritual, the dance, poem and freeze frame and things like that* (core group member Terry in 2007).

The benefits for both external and in-house peer supporters appear to be broadly similar. The external peer supporters benefited from a longer training period than most in-house schemes, which probably helped them explore some of the issues, such as those of power, in more depth.

Table 21. Outcomes for peer supporters.

<b>In-house peer-support</b> (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008; Cowie and Wallace, 2000).	<b>External peer support</b>
Building confidence.	Building confidence. Feelings of empowerment.
Feeling good about helping others.	Satisfaction and pride in helping other people.
Satisfaction at learning new skills.	Satisfaction at learning new skills.
Satisfaction at helping make the school a safer place.	Made new friends and alliances. Better understanding of people.
Improved ability to resolve conflicts.	Broader awareness of bullying and the world in general.
	Sense of joy at having so much fun.

#### 5.4. Outcomes for users of peer support systems.

There is much less detail in the literature about the outcomes for peer support users than for the peer supporters themselves. There is some research regarding immediate impact, but only a few in-house schemes have been re-evaluated by researchers some time after a scheme has been introduced in a school. I have not been back to any of the schools where my core group ran their sessions. The only data I have regarding the outcomes for the users is that which was directly given after each session in both written evaluation sheets and filmed discussions. My data can therefore show some of the possible immediate effects of the sessions but cannot demonstrate any long-term beneficial outcomes.

Studies carried out by Naylor and Cowie found that 82 per cent of users reported that they found peer support useful or very useful; 82 per cent said they found them helpful in giving them the strength to deal with bullying; and 80 per cent said they would recommend the system to a friend (Cowie and Hutson et al, 2008). However, although many of the peer support programmes aim to reduce bullying and so enhance pupils' perceptions of feeling safe at school, there appears to be little hard evidence to indicate the extent to which they achieve this (Cowie and Hutson et al, 2008). This is backed up by Smith who states that specific benefits for victims of bullying remain to be proven (2004). In addition to not being able to reach everybody, particularly disadvantaged young people, some peer support programmes reporters suggest that poor communication and lack of commitment on the part of staff and pupils are key barriers to success (Cowie and Hutson et al, 2008).

One important outcome of peer support is that the users feel empowered to talk about negative things that happen to them, (Cowie and Hutson et al, 2008). Peer supporters also provide new information and act as role models (Visser, 2004) to users and help educate young people in the crucial skills of responding creatively to conflict (Cremin, 2002).

Research suggests that less than a quarter of young people who have been bullied use an in-house school peer support service, which is noticeably less than the proportion that had sought support or help from a parent, friend or teacher (Boulton, 2005). Indeed it may be the case that most bullying is initially dealt with at home rather than in school,

as pupils were significantly more likely to tell someone at home that they had been bullied than to tell their teacher at school (Smith and Sharp, 1994; Lowenstein, 1978; Ahmad and Smith, 1990; Lines 2005). This suggests that teachers may be the last to know about bullying incidents in secondary school (Lines, 2005). Michelle asks us to:

*... go ask the teachers how many bullying problems they've sorted out because it's not going to be that many because normally young people, if they can't sort it out themselves, that's when they go to the teachers. They never go to the teachers first, so that's why teachers don't hear about most of it because the young people sort it out.... or try to at least (core group member Michelle in 2007).*

The reasons behind why young people are less likely to tell adults about bullying at school are many and the arguments can be problematic. They include the perception that many young people feel that teachers may not have the necessary skills or training to deal with issues of bullying, that peer support schemes are not supported by all members of staff in a school, that the scheme is not promoted effectively enough, and that some peer support schemes are seen as a clique for the peer supporters. Other reasons why peer support schemes appear underused include the use of inappropriate rooms to work in and the lack of on-going training for many peer supporters. I believe it is important at this stage not to look at how many young people use a scheme in school, but to recognise that the 'presence' of a scheme may be enough in itself to help create more of an anti-bullying atmosphere. One can argue then

*... that it is not so much that the existence of a peer support service reduces bullying and violence by its presence and the actions of the peer supporters. Rather, it is the awareness that peer supporters are there to help that enables students to perceive school as a safer place (Cowie et al, 2008. p. 70).*

There is evidence from teachers that peer support schemes benefit students in many ways, including pupil empowerment; a whole school approach; resources; support of mediators; choice, rewards and incentives; and social skills training for all pupils (Cremin, 2002). In terms of how young people, the users of the schemes, feel about the benefits of peer support schemes can be difficult to gauge. There is very little evidence, from the young people themselves, indicating they found a scheme useful or how they had personally benefited from a scheme.

The majority of users of in-house peer support schemes say they find their scheme 'useful' (Cowie et al, 2008), and helped make their school feel 'safer' (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008) than it had been. Some students felt they were now treated with respect, had more of a sense of belonging in their school and that it was more acceptable now to report bullying (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008) than it was before the scheme was introduced.

I am going to explore the outcomes for users of this external peer support project from two angles. Firstly, I will analyse what the core participants felt their users gained from their sessions. I will then explore what the users themselves say they gained from the sessions.

With regard to the core group members' gains, Terry believed that as a peer supporter on this project he helped some users find the courage to deal with bullying in a respectful equal peer-to-peer relationship that teachers would be unable to do.

*We gave them that student-to-student helpful support. We gave them the courage in certain things that they could do in order to overcome bullying. We gave them that student feeling that they're speaking to one of themselves and not to someone who's in that older position where you always have to respect and look up to and not say something wrong – always have that feeling of that you're going to say something wrong and it's going to turn out disastrous. We gave them that support that they can't get from teachers but they can get from us* (feedback from core group member Terry in 2007).

The entire core group felt that their users benefited from their workshop sessions, although Robin felt that any benefits would be short lived (feedback from core group member Robin in 2008). Michelle felt that even the peer mentors in one school learned about bullying and benefited from their session (feedback from core group member Michelle in 2007). Terry was passionate that he felt their participants had gained positive outcomes from the sessions and learnt many things:

*We did succeed in the majority of schools that we did go to, in a sense that we did get into their inner being and they did reveal a lot of things to us. I*

*think that the suggestions that we gave to them and the experiences that we shared with them, I think that they did learn* (feedback from core group member Terry in 2007).

The 'inner being' that Terry talks about is discussed further in section 3.8 in the context of empowerment, and shows, I believe, that Terry felt he and his fellow core group members were able to work on a deep level with their participants. Despite their sessions only being an hour long, the fact that they were of a similar age and that they used a variety of creative techniques, gave them a deeper access to their thoughts and ideas than most adults could have achieved in a relatively short period of time. The core group believed that their users gained a *greater awareness of bullying* or *improved their confidence* to deal with bullying (feedback from core group members Tanya, Robin and Chantelle in 2008; Terry and Michelle in 2007); *learnt new strategies* to deal with bullying (feedback from core group members Michelle and Terry in 2007); *improved their ability to work in groups* (feedback from core group member Michelle in 2007) and learnt how to create a piece of drama and new games (feedback from core group member Terry in 2007). Robin, in 2008, also felt that the users were *entertained* by their sessions.

*Certain things that I was told were that they learnt different types of bullying that they didn't know before. They definitely learnt strategies to overcome those types of bullying. They also said that they learnt how to create drama and they learnt how to tackle ways of bullying through the drama that was presented to them* (core group member Terry in 2007).

It was important to carefully evaluate the sessions run by the core group. Smith suggests that evaluations based on pupil reports are likely to be most valid (Smith, 2003). Therefore, following each workshop session delivered by the core group, all of their participants (n=72) were given a one-page questionnaire which they were asked to complete (see appendix 6 for a copy of the questionnaire). There was a statement on the front of each questionnaire outlining that this was a small-scale study to deal with bullying and that all participants would remain anonymous. Participants were asked to answer all questions as honestly as they could and were told that they could ask questions about any words or phrases they found difficult to understand in the questionnaire. This statement was also read out to the participants before they filled in

their sheets and they were invited to ask any questions before starting. The participants were all then given 10-15 minute to complete their sheets. To gain additional insights, on several occasions some of the participants were also interviewed using video, concerning their thoughts, feelings and ideas on the workshop they had just experienced. Participation was voluntary, but no one declined to participate. As mentioned in the introduction, making these tapes available would go against the ethical principals on which the research was based.

Initially, I collated all the answers from the questionnaires and filmed interviews into one document relating to what the users felt they had learned from the sessions. Following this I broadly categorised the answers into seven categories: strategies, bullying, drama, games, working with others, facts and statistics and miscellaneous. I then reflected on the categories and their contents, moving back and forth between the data and the categories. Another researcher checked these categories and we eventually agreed on five central categories: personal development, greater awareness of bullying, how to bully, uncategorised and nothing. I split the first two categories into sub categories. The personal development category had eight sub categories: new strategies to deal with bullying, new dramas, games and creative activities, appropriate behaviour, developed personally, interact in a co-operative way and empathy. The awareness category had four sub categories: a greater awareness of bullying, new facts and statistics about bullying, effects or results of bullying, and anti bullying resources. Following a period of further reflection I combined the categories of uncategorised and nothing into one category, leaving me with four categories:

- Peer personal development
- Greater awareness of bullying
- How to bully
- Not categorised or nothing

On the questionnaires (n=72) I asked participants whether they had found the sessions useful and to name three things that they had learned in the workshop. 98 per cent of participants stated that they had found the session useful with 72 per cent stating that they found the session very or outstandingly useful. This compares with 82 per cent of users in a previous study who found in-house peer support useful or very useful (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008). In terms of learning, 94 per cent of participants said they learned

something in the workshop session. Despite being asked to name three things they had learned, not all participants who stated they had learnt something gave more than one answer to this question.

Table 22 provides a list of what users said they had benefitted from the sessions. Appendix 9 provides a detailed breakdown of all answers. Over two thirds of users felt they learned new strategies to deal with bullying; over a third learned new creative activities; more than a quarter felt they had developed a greater awareness of bullying; and a tenth felt they had learned new groupwork strategies. It may be cause for concern that three users said they had learned how to bully. It is not clear whether this was an active wish to put what they had learned in to practice or that the knowledge of what to expect from a bully would be useful to them.

Table 22. What users said they learned from the sessions.

<b>Peer personal development:</b>	
<i>New strategies to deal with bullying.</i>	69% (n=50).
<i>New games, dramas and activities.</i>	40.30% (n=29).
<i>How to behave appropriately.</i>	25% (n=18).
<i>Personal development in general.</i>	23.60% (n=17).
<i>To interact in co-operative way.</i>	13.9% (n=10).
<i>More about empathy.</i>	2.8% (n=2).
<b>Greater awareness of bullying:</b>	
<i>General greater awareness of bullying.</i>	27.80% (n=20).
<i>New statistics and facts about bullying.</i>	14.3% (n=11).
<i>The results or effects of bullying.</i>	4.20% (n=3).
<i>About new anti-bullying resources.</i>	4.20% (n=3).
<b>How to bully:</b>	
<i>How to bully.</i>	4.20% (n=3).
<b>Not categorised or nothing learned:</b>	
<i>Learned nothing.</i>	2.80% (n=2).
<i>Uncategorised.</i>	4.20% (n=3).
<i>Did not answer question.</i>	2.8% (n=2).

One of the worries often mentioned in the media, regarding educating young people on certain issues such as bullying or other issues, is that this education in itself could

actually teach people how to do things, i.e. that this education in itself could actually teach people how to do things that some adults don't want young people to do or even to know about at their age. For example labour MP Jim Dobbin was quoted in the Mail Online suggesting that *The danger with sex education is that it promotes sex among young people* (Brogan, 2008). I have also heard similar arguments against anti-bullying education.

Table 23 demonstrates that the outcomes for the users of the external peer support workshops from the point of view of the users appear to be in line with the expectations of the core group members. One possible exception is the idea of increasing confidence. Only one user specifically mentioned learning about confidence on the evaluation sheets.

Table 23. Outcomes for external peer support users.

<b>Peer supporters comments</b>	<b>Peer support users comments</b>
<i>It was useful.</i>	<i>It was useful.</i>
<i>Learned new strategies to deal with bullying.</i>	<i>Learned new strategies to deal with bullying.</i>
<i>Greater awareness about bullying.</i>	<i>Greater awareness about bullying.</i>
<i>Learned about groupwork.</i>	<i>Learned about groupwork.</i>
<i>Learned new games and dramatic presentation.</i>	<i>Learned new creative activities.</i>
<i>Had fun.</i>	<i>Had fun.</i>
<i>Improved confidence.</i>	

From the video footage and the written data I deduce that one of the reasons for the success of the sessions from the point of view of the users was that the sessions were fun, comfortable and relaxed. Being run by young people meant that they were more approachable, understanding and could create a *safe space in which nothing horrible was going to happen* (feedback from a workshop participant in 2007). 87 per cent of the participants liked the fact that the session was fun and creative (see table 24). Typical of the video footage comments include the following: *I liked the whole thing because none of us fell out and it was really fun because everyone got along* (feedback from a workshop participant in July 2007).



*I think the whole workshop was brilliant. We learned all sorts of things like how to stick up for ourselves. I think it was really fun and I think when we did that last game that was fun. We had to think of all sorts of strategies ..., It was just brilliant. And I liked doing the acting* (feedback from a workshop participant in July 2007).

Without wishing to over emphasise the fun or playful aspect of these sessions I want to refer the reader to sections 3.9 – 3.96, where I demonstrate the importance of a playful atmosphere in dealing with difficult issues. I would also like to draw the reader’s attention to the fact that philosophers from Plato through to Huizinga, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, and Heidegger have all viewed ‘play’ as one of the most valuable tools in exploring and explaining human behaviour (Anchor, 1978). In addition, the playful element helps relax the participants so that they can talk more freely; motivates members to do well, and allows participants to engage in learning without realising that they are in a process of learning. The rules of a game help with issues of safety and the distancing of a game can actually bring us closer to the subject we are exploring.

*[As this workshop] was taught by younger students I found it easier to listen to it and like sometimes if you listen to adults it’s not very clear and you don’t understand it very well* (feedback from a workshop participant in July 2007).

The video evidence is backed up by data from the evaluation sheets that nearly 90 per cent of users liked the playful and creative aspects of the session most and over half of all participants found nothing in the session that they did not like.

Table 24. What the users liked most about the workshop.

<i>Creative, fun and groupwork aspects.</i>	87.5% (n=63).
<i>Learning about strategies.</i>	5.5% (n=4).
<i>Everything.</i>	6.9% (n=5).

Table 25. What the users liked least about the workshop.

<i>Nothing.</i>	53% (n=38).
<i>The drama performed at the start of the session.</i>	12.5% (n=9).
<i>Certain games.</i>	12.5% (n=9).
<i>Certain boring bits.</i>	4.2% (n=3).
<i>Writing out this sheet.</i>	4.2% (n=3).
<i>Illegible or not answered.</i>	8.3% (n=6).
<i>When there was a lot of noise.</i>	1.4% (n=1).
<i>The facilitator's scruffy handwriting.</i>	1.4% (n=1).
<i>Bullying.</i>	1.4% (n=1).

5.5. What teachers and observers thought of the sessions.

At each venue that the core group visited in July 2007 at least one member of staff observed and completed an evaluation sheet at the end of the session. Staff were informed, just as the students, that their answers would remain anonymous and that they should ask me if they had any questions about the sheets and their contents. A total of seven members of staff filled in an evaluation sheet. All seven staff said they thought that the sessions were good and that they found the sessions personally useful, with six out of the seven saying they found the sessions very useful.

I found it interesting to note that despite the creative and fun element being one of the favourite elements for the users, the staff had mixed feelings; just under half of the teachers would have preferred fewer games and wanted the core group facilitators to be a little stricter with the participants, but all were enthusiastic about the involvement of young facilitators. Although the staff appeared positive and supportive, we can still see a difference in the reactions of staff and young people. The majority of staff would have liked the sessions to be more structured in a traditional teaching style session, with few games and more information given.

Table 26. Staff feedback from the sessions ran by core group.

<i>The session was good.</i>	100% (n=7).
<i>The session was personally very useful.</i>	86% (n=6).
<i>The session was personally useful.</i>	14% (n=1).

Table 27. What the staff liked most about the sessions

<i>The games.</i>	(n=2).
<i>The relaxed and comfortable atmosphere.</i>	(n=2).
<i>The facilitator's enthusiasm.</i>	(n=2).
<i>The important messages to consider.</i>	(n=1).

Table 28. What the staff liked least about the sessions.

<i>Need more assertive strategies or more facilitators to control children.</i>	(n=2).
<i>One of the games made the students too excitable.</i>	(n=1).
<i>Facilitators should relax and trust their work more.</i>	(n=1).
<i>Too many games.</i>	(n=1).
<i>The session was too short.</i>	(n=1).
<i>Did not answer question.</i>	(n=1)

Table 29. What the staff thought it was like having the session run by young people.

<i>Refreshing.</i>	(n=1).
<i>The young facilitators needed to learn to treat their participants as individuals and trust that their instructions are clear enough.</i>	(n=1).
<i>Great.</i>	(n=1).
<i>Better than older because age group are 'hot off the press' as it were – experiences in bullying environment at college/school.</i>	(n=1).
<i>Good as children can see younger role models.</i>	(n=1).
<i>Much more effective way of getting the message across.</i>	(n=1).

The staff appeared to be supportive of the peer supporters for various reasons including the effectiveness of the message, the possibility for role modelling and the refreshing

change in dynamic of the lessons. Less than half of the staff comments favoured the fun aspect of the sessions compared to over three-quarters of the students. Although all of the staff found the sessions good and all of them found the sessions useful, they generally felt the peer supporters lacked control, played too many games and lacked experience.

The findings in this research are in line with the literature; peer supporters and users of peer support systems perceive positive benefits of peer support. The literature suggests that some adults are reluctant to share power with young people (Cowie, 2004) and that learners often do not have a trusting relationship with their teachers (Visser, 2004). Although teachers said the sessions were good, found them personally useful and liked the idea of sessions run by young people, they all would have liked the sessions run differently. How much this is due to the difficulty of adults trusting and power sharing with young people is difficult to tell.

In this chapter I have demonstrated that peer support is a form of youth participation which can lead to youth empowerment. Peer support and youth participation are not about letting young people just doing their own thing. Young people want the chance to make mistakes but they also want the help, support and guidance of teachers and other dedicated adults. Peer support is about a careful and well managed strategy for enabling young people to take a greater degree of responsibility over their own lives and relationships, with the full support of a dedicated staff team (Cremin, 2002).

Youth participation is a form of empowerment and has a variety of effective models, such as peer support, that demonstrate co-construction of learning happening on many levels. The following chapter explores learning in more depth from the perspective of the core group and myself.

## Chapter 6. Learning.

In this chapter I want to take the reader on a journey of learning, of my learning and some of the core group's learning. I will not be measuring the learning of core group participants against one another. *Pupils benefit to the greatest extent to which they are capable ... some pupils move more slowly than others ...* [and therefore] *it is important that the teacher does not have predetermined limits in mind for any individual pupil* (Postlethwaite, 1993).

I will look at learning from several perspectives including a traditional model of measuring an increase in knowledge to ideas of co-construction of learning and exploring how participants felt about their learning. I include analysis that demonstrates learning processes and outcomes, although not all my analysis of the participants' work is in this chapter. I point my readers to the chapters on power and youth participation for further data analysis.

*Although much of students' and teachers' day-to-day cognitions, actions, and talk is more focused on comparative performance and technical evaluation than on learning* (Nicholls, 1989. p. 40), schools are ostensibly about learning. I therefore felt internal pressure to in some way 'prove' that my core group had learned things. Initially I had in mind that I needed to examine what the core group members had learned during the project or what the students could demonstrate as to their increase in knowledge and their changes in understanding as a result of their experiences in the project (Entwistle in Byrne et al, 2002. p. 28). I wanted to discover whether the participants had gained knowledge and were therefore better prepared for solving problems they might meet in life. This way of thinking could be described as being rather outdated and not in keeping with a constructivist approach or an action research project which is *based* on a joint learning process of researchers and researched (Coenen and Khonraad, 2003). Charly Ryan, when discussing an action research project remarked that *In my room downstairs ... I have a quote taken from Eisner ..., that always children learn so much more and so much less than the teacher planned (laughter) ... they learn more of what you planned, because they learn about all sorts of other things ...* (in Kusch et al, 2005. p. 465).

Learning is a living process, much as how Dewey might talk about education as a process of living and that education is part of life. Children learn from doing, experimenting and being able to think independently (Dewey, 1966 and 1969). Children learn from each other, they learn when they play and they learn when they interact with their peers they construct knowledge together, or climb a metaphorical scaffold, as in the zone of proximal development (Mooney, 2000), created by peers working with them. When asked, students suggest that their motivation has a huge influence on their learning. Postlethwaite and Haggarty (2002) suggest that the young people's views about motivation are a close match to psychological theories of motivation and include; group affiliation; metacognition or the knowledge, control and awareness of learning processes and the ability to think about one's thinking (Anderson et al, 2009); the ability to engage with teachers; taking responsibility for one's own learning and making an effort.

The process I took the core participants through was geared towards helping them develop the skills and confidence to design their own creative workshop sessions and for them to deliver the sessions to other young people in a range of different educational settings. In the sessions that I delivered to the core group I included:

- trust and confidence games.
- games and activities that explored power relationships.
- voice and presentation skills training.
- practice and rehearsal of possibilities.
- activities and information to help explore current issues around bullying.
- pilot workshop sessions.
- feedback in the form of 'notes', such as the notes a Director might give to Actors after a dress rehearsal of a show.
- time for reflection and discussion of activities and process.

Kelly (1955) suggests that individuals should talk about and suggest their own constructs for their behaviour. I wanted to trust what my core group members told me or showed me and did not always search for hidden meanings or subtexts. It is without doubt that the core group participants learned things during the time period of this project. How much of that is due to participation in the project or how much was due to

my input, the input of their fellow group members and the effort that each one put in themselves would be impossible to gauge. Outside of the project all the core participants would have had many other influences around them, like school, friends, family and the media.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into five sections, as follows:

The first two sections take a more traditional approach to evaluating learning by showing how the core group participants increased their knowledge and understanding on particular topic areas. Section one explores the concept of bullying in this way demonstrating the ability of the young people concerned to offer up a strong definition of bullying, and Section two explores the concept of empathy. Sections three and four utilise Weiner's (1986) theory of attribution (see section 2.2) to examine how the core group felt about the project and their learning. Specifically in these sections I explore the core group's attributions for success and failure, and their attributions for how satisfied they felt about their involvement in the project. The fifth section also makes use of Weiner's theory of attribution in exploring success and failure from the perspective of the core group members who finished the project (unlike the previous similar analysis which was more of a snapshot during the middle of the project). In this section I demonstrate how attribution theory can be refined to provide more reliable data by separating out reasons from causes extending Weiner's (2006) ideas that we should not look for reasons but for causes in attributional analysis.

#### 6.1. Section 1: The definition of bullying

Bullying and how it is defined is discussed at some length in this section, sections 3.1, 3.11 and 3.2 respectively (See appendix 2 for 25 definitions of bullying).

I have demonstrated that bullying can mean different things to different people and although there is currently no consensus regarding its definition (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008), one aspect, that of 'repetition', is in most definitions (Rigby, 1996 and 2002; Fitzgerald 1999; Olweus, 1993; Randall 1996; Hunter and Boyle 2002; Askew, 1988; Cowie and Jennifer, 2008).

I believe that how some of the core group members altered their conceptions of what the word bullying meant to them over time to be a very useful indicator of learning in this project, as bullying was one of the main focuses of their work, and at the time this was the only anti-bullying project the core group members were involved in. I cannot use this indicator for all the participants, because for those who did not complete the final sessions in July, I only have their initial definition of bullying and no other follow-ups or references to refined definitions. I will therefore concentrate this section on Terry and Michelle who were both at the beginning and at the end of the project. My one comment at this stage would be that some of the core group participants who did not finish the project appeared to be more confused about certain key terms such as ‘bullying’ and ‘empowerment’, than those who did complete the final stage of the project. For example, just after the first pilot workshop that the core group delivered, Tanya mentions in her reflective diary that she *got a bit defensive on the bullying question* *\*\*embarrassed face\*\** [sic] *so I will have to do something about my own issues before helping others sort out theirs!!* (feedback from core group member Tanya in February 2007). Another example concerns the word ‘empowerment’, which was used a great deal during the project. On the first day of Tanya’s involvement in the project she was asked, like the others, to fill in a short questionnaire, one of the questions was about the word empowerment. Tanya wrote *I wanted to write more. Didn’t really understand the questions on empowerment*. When asked about the word empowerment one-year after she left the project Tanya said *I’m still confused about what it means*.

I felt it was important for the participants to come up with their own working definition of the word bullying so that they could apply it to their workshops. In the first session of this project Terry gave quite a detailed definition of the word bullying: *Bullying is hurting someone and leaving them physically, socially and mentally disorientated. This can happen for a variety of reasons, which is different for everyone*. Here we see Terry talking about the injuries (hurt) and scars (physical, social and mental disorientation) suffered by people who have been bullied. In addition Terry says that it can happen for a variety of reasons and that we can experience bullying in different ways. Using Berkowitz’s definition of aggression *intentional injury of another* (in Rigby, 2002. p. 30), Terry’s definition of bullying, like some of the definitions created by many other authors, fails to *differentiate bullying from aggression, or at least interpersonal aggression* (Rigby, 2002. p.30), much in the way Randall does in his definition: *aggressive behaviour arising from the deliberate intent to cause physical or*



*psychological distress to others* (Randall, 1996. p. 5). In addition, what is missing from Terry's definition, is this idea of *intentionality*.

Michelle's first definition of bullying was "*It's like a continuous act of making somebody uncomfortable and doubt themselves*". Here Michelle includes the idea that bullying is 'sustained' (continuous) over a period of time, where the bullied do not feel happy (uncomfortable) with themselves and may even be questioning (doubt) their existence. What is missing from Michelle's definition is the idea of *intentionality*, as in Terry's definition, and the idea of the potential physical aspects of bullying.

11 months into the project Terry had modified his definition to *bullying means to hurt someone in a way leaving an emotional stain on their heart. It is a form of physical, mental or verbal abuse towards another or a group of people which usually is repeated* (core group member Terry in 2007). Terry's original definition focussed predominantly on the *results* of bullying, ie the pain and the scars as a result of being bullied. The pain and scars caused by bullying are still within Terry's new definition (hurt and emotional stain), but he adds three more important aspects; that bullying is abusive, that it can happen to both individuals and groups and that it usually happens more than once (repeated). For a brief moment I thought that I also saw the idea of *intentionality* within Terry's new definition; bullying *means* to hurt ....., the word '*means*', it could be argued, can be used to equate to how one might use the word '*intends*'. On reflection I think this was a misinterpretation on my part. Terry is actually just starting a sentence ..., and telling us what bullying *means* to him.

11 months in to the project Michelle had also amended her definition: *To isolate, cause physical, verbal or emotional abuse to one or more persons* (core group member Michelle in 2007). Michelle's original definition focussed predominantly on the emotional side of bullying (issues of comfort and doubt), whereas her new definition includes the physical and verbal aspects of bullying. In addition Michelle's first definition is focused predominantly on the individual but she includes the idea of the 'group' in her new definition. Michelle's new definition no longer includes the idea of bullying being sustained over time and she does not mention the idea of repetition as Terry has done. Michelle had strong feelings about not including the idea of repetition as we can see from the following dialogue spoken in July 2007:

Terry *We're still unsure if we should add repeatedly on the end. Bullying can happen at an instant, it can just happen once and somebody really shy can be called a name or something and that might hurt someone just as bad as if it was repeated over a period of time. So we're still not sure if we should add the word repeatedly and that sort of links in with the word abuse so.....Michelle, what do you reckon?*

Michelle *You're the one who disagrees with the repeatedly thing. I think that it shouldn't be there.*

Terry *I disagree, yes but then again.....,*

Michelle *I think it shouldn't be there at all and that's me and that's one hundred per cent.*

Terry *I think it shouldn't be there as well.....,*

Michelle *I think it shouldn't be there one hundred per cent and I'm not wavering.*

Michelle goes on to explain her reasoning in more detail: *It's true it happens again and again but it can also happen once from lots of different people at the same time and personally they can feel like they're being bullied from all these people even though it might not look like it. Still, to them, it's bullying so why should it have to happen more than once to the same person for it to be classed a bullying.*

We see here quite advanced thinking as regards the idea of 'repetition', that bullying does not need to be repeated by the same person to be bullying, as a bullied person could be picked on once by lots of different people, which would still make it bullying.

After several days of working together, Terry and Michelle refined their definition to:

*Bullying means to isolate, cause physical, verbal or emotional stress to one or more persons usually again and again (core group members Terry and Michelle in July 2007).*

Terry went on to say that this definition *doesn't cover every single area, you know every corner of what bullying means but we have tried to add as much as we can and try to keep it simple, cause it's gonna' be for children, also for adults (core group member Terry in July 2007).*

Researcher *How did you arrive at that definition?*

Michelle                    *A lot of discussion and debating ...*  
Terry                        *...,and just picking up the essences of here and here ...*  
Michelle                    *..., and research. Research, discuss and debate.*

A little later Terry says: *Yeah keep it simple and precise, bang the definitions there and people remember it.*

Michelle and Terry tell us that they want to find a definition that is meaningful and memorable, while being simple. A definition that they can use with the people the young people they will be working with.

How does their final definition compare to the latest ideas on bullying? For this I took ideas from a new publication, one that neither I nor the core group participants could have had access to during the project. Here the authors mention the *key characteristics that constitute bullying ... include the deliberate intention to harm another individual; repetition of the bullying behaviour over time and an imbalance of power* (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008. p. 1).

In their definition Terry and Michelle talk about *causing* stress. We see the *deliberate intentionality* aspect within this idea of cause/effect. Pain, harm and hurt here appear to have been distilled down to *stress*. We see the idea of *repetition* when they suggest that *it usually happens again and again*. We do not see any suggestions as to an imbalance of power, but we are given examples of the types of pain that bullying can cause, being *physical, verbal and emotional*. I think that using *isolate* as the first word in their definition suggested to me a very powerful way to bully someone, I also feel that isolation and loneliness are often some of the main sensations that people who are bullied and those that bully feel a lot. As we know, bullying can *lead to social isolation* (Cowie and Jennifer, 2008. p. 42). I also suggest that leaving in the word isolate helps take the idea of bullying away from the earlier conflict differentiating bullying from aggression.

Cowie and Jennifer go on to say in their book that a *review of the literature suggests that teachers and pupils hold much broader definitions of bullying than those used by researchers* (2008. p.2). Rigby (2002) has provided an excellent review of bullying definitions but I believe that although his concluding definition of bullying may be of

use to researchers, it would be unworkable and not understood in many schools, especially pupils in primary schools:

*Bullying involves a desire to hurt + hurtful action + a power imbalance + (typically) repetition + an unjust use of power + evident enjoyment by the aggressor and generally a sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim (Rigby, 2002. p. 51).*

We see from their comments that both Terry and Michelle have changed their understanding and demonstrated an increase in knowledge of what bullying means as a result of discussion, debates and research during their experiences in the project. I find it interesting that although Terry and Michelle state that they have learned many things on this project, they never once, unprompted, say they learned anything about bullying.

## 6.2. Section 2: Empathy

Goleman (1995) suggests that people having empathy is one of the main indicators of their high emotional intelligence. There is much discussion as to whether empathy is a learnt attribute, or an automatic response of the nervous system (Preston and Waal, 2002. p. 2). Wherever empathy comes from, it appears to be that *one of our basic needs is to be understood* (Kunyk & Olson, 2001. p. 317). Researchers are in general agreement that the more similar or closer related to another person we are the more we might be able to adopt their point of view (Preston and Waal, 2002. p. 16) and that *understanding the emotion of others entails to some degree experiencing the emotion observed* (Preston and Waal, 2002. p. 10).

It is therefore a small leap for us to appreciate that relatives and friends will generally not have too much difficulty appreciating the feelings and views of each other. Indeed it has been argued that relationships and friendships are characterised by imitative or reciprocal behaviour in children as young as two-years old (Preston and Waal, 2002).

Empathy, or variations of it, can be found in many species, not just humans. *The most robust findings across all species studied are for familiarity or similarity of the subject with the object and previous experience with the distress situation* (Preston and Waal, 2002. p. 16). I felt that exploring signs of empathy and the development of it within core group members might be an indicator regarding learning and motivation to learn on this

project. The core group members are not related to or friends with their workshop participants, which suggests they have to take a larger leap in order understand their points of view. *Empathy is more likely to occur when individuals are motivated to be empathic* (Anderson and Keltner, 2001. p. 21), and to *empathise with and respond appropriately to others' emotions requires the child to infer these mental states based on understanding how they are induced and how they relate to one another and to behaviour* (Brownell et al, 2002. p. 28).

Kunyk and Olsen (2001) explored the concept of empathy in some depth and suggest that the *five conceptualisations are empathy as a human trait, empathy as a professional state, empathy as a communication process, empathy as caring, and finally, empathy as a special relationship* (p. 318). As a working definition for this project I am going to combine two conceptualisations of empathy as a professional state; *the ability to see the world as another person sees it* (Price and Archbald, 1997) and *the ability to access thoughts and feelings of clients* (Thompson, 1996).

Although Terry never uses the word *empathy*, we find him on many occasions telling us how he has learned to see things from another person's point of view and to access clients' inner thoughts and feelings. *The part I enjoyed most was the hot seat. It gave me the power to view life from a different character's perspective. Also having others talk was good because you experience another person's inner thoughts.* The following year Terry tells us how difficult it can be access the inner thoughts of clients. *I've learnt that it takes a lot of, a lot of, a lot of energy and self awareness to get close to people and to get their inner thoughts expressed to you so that you can help them with any issues that they are facing. I've also learnt that different people do like to be approached in different ways and there are several ways in approaching people.* At the end of the project Terry tells us how important he believes empathy is in developing working relationships. *I've learned that if I do place myself in other people's perspectives, or you know other people's views and how they see everything um you can learn, you can learn more about how they feel and how you see it and how you see them as in a person. Yeah it's good .*

Similarly Michelle explains how she has learnt ideas about empathy. *Today I've played a lot of games, learning how to deal with different situations. I've seen other young people's perspectives of the bullies, bullied and empowered. I've gotten into the role of someone else and tried to think in their point of view and I've co-created a piece of*

*empowering energising ritual. I've told stories and listened to others. And looked at different attitudes on perspectives of children and young people.*

Unlike Terry, Michelle does explicitly mention the word empathy and demonstrates how important she feels empathy is in 'peer-to-peer' work.

Michelle *The ones that are adult led are led by adults and the ones that are young people led are led by young people. That's probably the biggest difference (laughing).*

Interviewer *What difference does that make in the delivery of.....*

Michelle *There's empathy isn't it. You're going to be more able to relate and be empathic with people who are your own age group and have been through what you've been through or similar things to what you've been through rather than people saying, 'I remember when I was bullied 13 years ago'. People just don't believe that things can still be the same as they were, that much difference in time and they still understand (17<sup>th</sup> July 2007).*

Terry appeared to have a role in helping other core group participants explore empathy:

Researcher *So how did you feel about Terry's comment when he said he felt doing each other's ritual actually brought you closer together a bit. Did you have any similar feelings or?*

Tanya *(laughing) I thought what he said was funny. Em....I can understand what he means but I don't think I felt it as intensely as he did (laughs).....em.....,I don't know – I sort of found it really spiritual and it made me laugh.*

Researcher *It held resonance for you i.e. you could understand what he was talking about and also it gave you a sense of empathy, of understanding of.....,*

Tanya *Yea.*

Researcher *.....of what he went through. For me, that's not handling it in a bad way, that is actually being very sensitive to it. Until you'd made the comment that you could have handled it better, for me, I*

*thought it actually allowed you to see Terry and his story and racism in a way that you hadn't seen it before and so actually enlightened you in some way and – I don't know – maybe even helped you grow a bit or...*

Tanya *Yeah I think it did. It sort of made me realise that....I mean you hear it on the news and its not... it doesn't touch you in any way. It's when he said that and I could understand more because he also said the rest of the story and like – you were sort of tuned in on what was going on in the story, you could sort of picture it in your mind so it touches you more than if you just hear it on the news because it sort of – this is what happens – that's it – next story whereas it covered feelings and stuff when Terry told it (18<sup>th</sup> March 2007).*

Tanya gained some understanding of empathy during this project as we see when she applies it to herself when asked if the project had changed her:

Teacher *Do you think you're different though? Do you think it's changed you?*

Tanya *I don't really think it has. I don't know because I can't....., If I was watching myself from another perspective, I'd probably see a lot of changes but you can't really tell with yourself because it's yourself (8<sup>th</sup> February 2008).*

There is a difference in feeling empathy and in understanding empathy on a conceptual level. I was unable to find evidence that Tanya had gained a deep understanding of empathy as that achieved by Terry or Michelle. This was due probably, in part at least, to the length of time of her involvement in the project. Tanya found *seeing the others' point of view [as] interesting* (core group member Tanya in February 2007) and recognised it in her final analysis of the project that *the whole process of it helped because you hear about other peoples' opinions and you start to analyse them* (core group member Tanya in February 2008).

I was not able to find any evidence that Chantelle had gained anything other than a basic understanding of empathy. Much of what Chantelle felt she had learned related to

herself and building up her own self confidence. *I think from the whole experience I've learnt that to believe in yourself kind of comes across in your audience's reaction because I'm not really a confident speaker in front of people but maybe believing in what you want to say and that they're not going to judge you on what you're going to say* (core group member Chantelle in March 2007). Similarly in May 2008, I had the following dialogue with Chantelle:

Interviewer *Do you think that you gained any skills from working in the project?*

Chantelle *Probably, maybe confidence because I'm not the best speaker in front of people! (short giggle) Just to say your own thing in front of people without them taking offence or anything was a beginning for me and just to I think, I don't know, just the confidence thing for because I'm not the best speaker (short giggle).*

I did find evidence showing Chantelle's thoughts on the importance of empathy when she discussed her favourite project memory, and related how she liked seeing views from people in a different culture.

Interviewer *What's your fondest memory of working on the project?*

Chantelle *Does it have to relate to the people?*

Interviewer *No, anything to do with it, but to do with being involved in the project.*

Chantelle *Em...I think going over to Japan was amazing. It was something none of us would have ever thought we would go to. I think seeing another way of people's life. Japan is different to the Western countries over here and their way of living is different to how we live. I think to go and see their schools and how they operate and their way of teaching - putting their shoes on before they walk around and things. I think the way people react to you over there is different because we've all got different colour skin. I remember they were like 'oh Chantelle's got red hair' kind of thing. You don't see that over there. I think it was just nice to get involved in someone else's culture than yourself [sic] (23<sup>rd</sup> May 2008).*

I found no evidence that Robin developed a sense of empathy on this project. Robin cared a lot about dealing with issues of bullying and finding ways to help his participants. I feel that Robin had a preconceived idea of what he wanted to impart in



his workshops and he felt that it was his job to get that information across, rather than trying to see or access new feelings or points of view from his participants. *As a group I think that we helped all the people who we taught. I think we gave them the right ways how to help. I mean there were a few times when doing the workshops where there were a few tough crowds but I think still we managed to get over to them what we think and what we teach* (core group member Robin in March 2007).

I was interested to note that some of the core group's participants displayed evidence of having gained empathy from the workshop ran by the core group. The following is taken from feedback sessions with workshop participants of the core group. I believe it shows that games and activities delivered by the core group helped develop a sense of empathy. All the names have been changed:

Tracey *I reckon it was alright. I liked it because it made me think that people don't like bullying.*

Interviewer *Do you want to carry on?*

Tracey *I liked it because people don't like bullying and when we were doing my drama in my group I didn't really like it because they kept calling me names and everything* (24<sup>th</sup> July 2007).

Sharon *I learnt that normally the bully is the one with the problem. If they're feeling insecure in themselves, they're probably going to take it out on someone else.*

Alisha *To make them feel better.*

Catherine *The problem is, at the time you feel so good because you're bullying but then when it comes to it's all been sorted out, you feel like.....*

Tom *Guilty.*

Catherine *Yeah, the guilt is weighing you down on your shoulders and you feel like you just don't want to go on anymore – you can't take it anymore* (26<sup>th</sup> July 2007).

### 6.3. Section 3. Success or failure snapshot.

It is clearly important for me to identify my criteria for successful outcomes on this project. After considerable reflection, I decided to use the following: the empowerment of the participants; wanting participants to have undergone substantial learning and that

all participants successfully complete the project. However, my criteria for success later moved towards being able to communicate the thoughts, feelings and ideas of the young people that I worked with in a way that represents them, their work and the processes that they went through sympathetically and with minimal bias. One way of attempting to achieve this is to use alternative and complimentary forms of analysis. Sections 3 and 4 utilise Weiners (1986) attribution theory (see section 2.2) to not only help create a degree of distance from the data but also allowing me to look at the data in a different way.

Success rarely comes to us by accident. Success takes effort. For people to put in a lot of effort they need to be highly motivated. Weiner (1986) suggests that there is a close link between learning, emotion and motivation, and it is the attributions, made for success or failure in learning that are the key mediating variables. To explore this idea further I chose what I thought would be a stage in the project where the core group participants should have been highly motivated; just before their trip to Japan. For this section I have chosen a brief snapshot in time of approximately 15 minutes. This 15 minutes was immediately after the core group had run their first workshop in England and were excited about their impending trip to Japan. I expected them to be highly motivated towards the project at this point and I felt that their current heightened state of awareness and excitement would allow them a freer and safe space to talk about how they really felt.

I must point out that 15 minutes of dialogue to work from is quite short. Indeed it only represents 1800 words (approx.). From these words I drew on 71 statements or attributions; 18 from Terry; 21 from Tanya, 18 from Chantelle and 14 from Robin. Although the numbers are small and therefore percentages are likely to be of limited significance, I suggest that the time and space of heightened awareness allowed for freer and therefore potentially less censorship of their personal thoughts and feelings. At the time this dialogue was recorded neither the core group participants nor I knew that it would be used in this way. Indeed if I had had the foresight I may well have asked completely different questions. I could then argue that this short dialogue of 1800 words was unconstrained, with limited bias and censorship due to the heightened state of awareness of the core group members and myself.

I argue in section 2.2 why attribution theory might be useful in attempting to understand how the core group felt about their learning. Essentially this approach suggests that people attribute different causes or causal attributions to those areas of their lives in which they perceive themselves to have succeeded or failed (Williams et al, 2004). Strauss and Corbin (1990) argued that the qualitative methodology of grounded theory provides opportunities for the exploration of the constructs of people's experiences in terms of their thoughts, feelings and actions. I analysed the core groups' attributions in the general style of a grounded theory approach (Robson, 2006). I tried to interpret the attributions as the core group would have intended and to allow the categories to emerge from the data (Williams et al, 2004). I had one other researcher look over and check the categories and the comments within them. The constructivist slant on grounded theory recognises the mutual creation of knowledge by the viewer and the viewed and aims toward interpretive understanding of subjects' meanings (Charmaz, 2000). Analysis was achieved through the constant comparative analysis of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1971; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Initially I separated the attributions into four tables; one table for each core member. I then created one table that allowed me to form initial categories of information. As I was working I looked for categories within categories, sub categories and new categories. Following this I then separated out the attributions once more for each core member with the aim of identifying a central category. I was exploring how the core participants felt as regards the success or failure of their workshop. I wanted to know what they attributed their success or lack of it to.

This was my first attempt at attributional analysis and I found that identifying the categories that I should be using to be problematic. Initially my categories centred on 'being in control' and 'not being in control', which evolved into 'doing well' and 'not doing well'. Although these categories may appear similar, at the time of coding I felt that I had made a huge leap from 'being in control' to 'doing well'. It was this process that helped me see that feeling one was in control had a lot to do with feeling positive about one's ability to do well. At this stage I repeatedly went back to the original data to check the attributions' contexts. I then looked for additional particular sub categories within my main categories of doing well/not doing well, paying particular attention to the reasons the core group constructed for their successes and failures, as it was

important to see whether they saw these as due to internal or external factors, were changeable or unchangeable, controllable or uncontrollable (Williams et al, 2004).

From 15 minutes of dialogue I categorised and analysed n=71 comments from the core group members. Comments for doing well n=39 and comments for not doing well were n=32.

Terry demonstrated that he felt the workshop was successful with four of his attributions suggesting that this was due to group efforts; (e.g. *I enjoyed working with these people, I enjoyed the vibrant atmosphere and lots of energy*). two of his attributions related to an innate or external attribution (e.g. *they could relate to us more easily, it was sort of empowering people*) and one to his own personal ability (*I was a bit panicky but overcame it*). There was one attribution to enjoyment (*It was excellent*) and another one of Terry's comments related to personal achievement (*we have now got the reassurance that they did enjoy it*).

In terms of the group not doing well five of Terry's attributions related to group effort or lack of it; (e.g. *we need to check timekeeping, we need more energy and enthusiasm and we didn't make use of the prepared music*). Two of his comments were due to external factors that they should use music and two of his attributions were related to his own personal abilities; (e.g. *I made a mistake and styled it out but not sure if it worked, and I didn't know what time we started*).

Tanya believed with four of her attributions that the causes for success were due to external factors such as; (e.g. *I thought they would not like the classroom but they came up with some good stuff, I don't know what else you (the researcher) can do to help us, and it helped that they liked it 'cause now I've got the buzz for it*). Two of her attributions were related to group success; (e.g. *Once they realised we were serious they stopped mucking around*). One of her attributions related to her personal ability; (*I said guys it's a serious thing and they all shut up*), and one was related to her personal enjoyment; (*it's been really good today*).

In terms of not doing well eight of Tanya's attributions related to external factors relating to resources, the users, core group members and the content of the workshop; (e.g. *sometimes I can't hear you (to other core group members), the role-play was*

*shorter than I thought and that the researcher should have been responsible for the workshop timings*). Four of her attributions related to group effort; (e.g. *we need to work on our timekeeping, and we need to make sure everyone is involved and we need to rearrange the room*). Just one of her comments was related to a lack of confidence in her personal ability; (*the first time I saw them I was like 'oh no'*).

Chantelle thought, with eight of her attributions that success was due to external factors; (e.g. *they wanted to know our opinion, they responded well, and that they came up with sensible questions, we know what they are probably going to feel like*). Two of her attributions to success related to group effort; (e.g. *I think it went really well, it's a really good thing*). One of her comments related to her enjoyment of the session; (*a positive experience*) and one of her answers related to personal achievement (*I have got more confidence now*).

In terms of not doing well four of Chantelle's attributions related to external reasons; (e.g. *The board took longer than expected and I want to know what's coming*). Two of her attributions related to group effort; (e.g. *we need more preparation time and we need to arrange the room before participants enter*).

Robin's attributions suggest four of his causes for doing well were due to external factors (e.g. *they really enjoyed it, the people were really good to work with and we don't need a flipchart*). Two of his attributions related to group effort; (e.g. *we vibed off each other and nothing you (the researcher) can do to help us*). Two of his attributions related to his enjoyment; (e.g. *felt really good and enjoyed it*), and unlike any of the other core group members, two of his attributions related to time; (e.g. *it went really really fast and I am happy with the game it took up 5-10 minutes*).

All of Robin's attributions (n=4) about not doing well related to group effort; (e.g. *we just need more practice, Tanya was stuck on lines and I kept asking "what's the time"*).

### Doing Well.

- 46% of the core group's attributions regarding doing well centred on external factors; reasons that were outside of the control of the core group members. 60% of

Chantelle's, 50% of Tanya's and 40% of Robin's attributions for success were external, non controllable factors, whereas they made up only 22% of Terry's attributions for success.

- Conversely 44% of the attributions relating to success from Terry centred on group effort, whereas for Tanya it was 25%, for Robin it was 20% and Chantelle it was 16%.
- 25% of Chantelle's comments and 20% of Robin's, 12.5% of Tanya's and 11% of Terry's attributions related to their enjoyment of the session.
- 12% of Tanya's and 11% of Terry's attributions for success were regarding their own personal ability. Neither Chantelle nor Robin attributes success to their personal ability.

Table 30. Attributions for doing well.

Name	Group effort	Personal ability	Enjoyment	External	Achievement	Time	Total
Terry	4	1	1	2	1	0	9
Tanya	2	1	1	4	0	0	8
Chantelle	2	0	1	8	1	0	12
Robin	2	0	2	4	0	2	10
Total	10	2	5	18	2	2	39

Not Doing Well.

- 46% of the core groups' attributions about not doing well referred to lack of group effort, 43% to external factors and 6% to lack of personal effort.
- All of Robin's attributions for not doing well referred to lack of group effort, whereas it was 50% for Terry, 30% for Chantelle and 25% for Tanya.
- 65% of Chantelle's, 61% of Tanya's and 20% of Terry's attributions for not doing well were seen as due to external factors.
- 12% of Tanya's and 11% of Terry's attributions for not doing well were down to their own lack of effort.

Table 31 Attributions for not doing well.

Name	Group effort	External	Internal	Total
Terry	5	3	1	9
Tanya	4	8	1	13
Chantelle	2	4	0	6
Robin	4	0	0	4
Total	15	14	2	32

Summary of the core group participants feelings towards success and failure of the project to date.

As discussed at the beginning of this section, the evidence from this data is drawn from only 15 minutes of dialogue. Although I argue that this dialogue could be relatively uncontaminated with bias, the evidence is not strong enough to draw conclusions. I would therefore like to offer some suggested hypotheses about the core groups' feelings of success and failure.

Terry.

Just under half of Terry's attributions regarding both doing well and not doing well had to do with group effort, and just over 10% of his attributions related to do with personal effort. In contrast only 20% of Terry's attributions for doing well and not doing well had to do with external factors. This suggests to me that not only does Terry feel confident and in control of his own learning, he is also demonstrating collective responsibility of the core group for either doing well or not doing well in delivering their workshops. Toland and Boyle (2008) suggest that people who have more feelings of control over their learning demonstrated increased motivation. This in turn led to continuing effort. Terry appears to feel in control of his learning and to be highly motivated. Despite suggesting the positive atmosphere and vibrant energy as reasons for doing well, Terry, it seems, wants more of this, wants more effort; *We need more energy and enthusiasm.*

Table 32. Terry's attributions for doing well.

<b>Group effort</b>	<b>Personal ability</b>	<b>Enjoyment</b>	<b>Personal achievement</b>	<b>External</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I enjoyed working with these people.</i></li> <li>• <i>A lot of energy in the vibrant atmosphere.</i></li> <li>• <i>I enjoyed the vibrant atmosphere.</i></li> <li>• <i>Lots of energy.</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>I was a bit panicky but overcame it.</i></p>	<p><i>It was excellent.</i></p>	<p><i>We have now got the reassurance that they did enjoy it.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>It was sort of empowering people.</i></li> <li>• <i>The (users) could relate to us more easily cause we've been through the stage they are going through now.</i></li> </ul>

Table 33. Terry's attributions for not doing well.

<b>Group effort</b>	<b>External</b>	<b>Internal</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We need to check timekeeping.</i></li> <li>• <i>We need more energy and more enthusiasm.</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>Music would have given them that little buzz on entering – a bit more than just a classroom.</i></p>	<p><i>I made a mistake but styled it out I'm not sure if it worked well.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We didn't make use of the music we prepared.</i></li> <li>• <i>We all kept 15 minutes (ref. timekeeping) (Note: this was a joke as no-one had kept time).</i></li> <li>• <i>(We need) to know when the session starts.</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>I think a bit more than just a classroom (ref. music).</i></p>	<p><i>I didn't know what time it started so I didn't know how long it was or how long we had left.</i></p>

Chantelle

60%-65% of Chantelle's attributions for both doing well and not doing well related to external factors. Chantelle did not attribute doing well or not doing well to her own personal ability; a small number of her attributions for both success and failure related



to group effort. When looking at Chantelle’s attributions for doing well I noticed that over 60% of her external attributions had to do with how other people evaluated her performance, such as ‘*they wanted to know our opinion*’, ‘*they responded well*’ and ‘*they got involved*’. When people *believe they have little control over the attribute itself, their focus is on implications their performance has for others’ evaluations of them. These individuals tend to view effort and ability as inversely related, thus seeing high effort as an indicator of low ability* (Lapadat, 2000. p. 39). This suggests to me that although she felt there were many successful attributes to the workshop, and although she explicitly stated that she had learned to feel more confident, Chantelle is more concerned with how other people perceive her performance than how she perceives her own. Chantelle feels that there is not much that she can do, other than the abilities she already possesses and that success or failure of the workshops is mainly out of her control. How this reflects on her motivation is difficult to ascertain. One could argue that her motivation to be involved is not so much about the project herself but partly about demonstrating her *abilities in relation to other students, gain recognition from parents and teachers, avoid punishment, and to obtain better grades* (Abdullah, 2008, p. 47).

Table 34. Chantelle’s attributions for not doing well.

<b>Group effort</b>	<b>External</b>
<i>We need more preparation time.</i>	<i>The board took longer than expected.</i>
<i>We need to arrange the room before participants enter.</i>	<i>Cause in that game they were all sitting down after one round and you were like still going, so I was like ‘and again’ (Note: externally attributing failure to the participants sitting down too quickly).</i>
	<i>(I would like to) know what’s coming.</i>
	<i>(When we went to classroom) they were like ‘oh great’ (Note: externally attributing failure to the venue).</i>

Table 35. Chantelle's attributions for doing well.

<b>Group effort</b>	<b>Enjoyment</b>	<b>External</b>	<b>Personal achievement</b>
<i>I think it went really well.</i>	<i>Positive experience.</i>	<i>The circle was good as everyone faced each other – no one can hide away.</i>	(I've got more) <i>confidence</i> (now).
<i>It's a really good thing.</i>		<i>They (the users) were good – they came in and did the characters.</i>	
		<i>(Users) came up with sensible questions and answers.</i>	
		<i>They wanted to know our opinion.</i>	
		<i>(Users) responded well.</i>	
		<i>(Users) got involved.</i>	
		<i>We don't specifically need it (both Robin and Chantelle say 'need it' together, referring to music).</i>	
		<i>We know what they are probably going to feel like.</i>	

Tanya

A quarter of Tanya's attributions for both doing well and not doing well were related to group effort. 50% of her attributions for doing well and 61% for not doing well identified external factors. 12% of both her attributions for doing well and not doing well were due to personal effort. This suggests to me that, like Terry, Tanya attributed doing well and not doing well to group efforts, although the sense of group collective responsibility is not as strong as Terry's. Unlike Chantelle's 60%, only a quarter of Tanya's external attributions about doing well had to do with how other's perceived her performance; '[it helped that they liked it] *cause now I've got the buzz for it*'. It is interesting that her one attribution here specifically relates to: '*they have validated me [us] so now I can appreciate it*'. Tanya therefore, in my opinion, now that her work has, in her eyes, been validated is demonstrating some motivation, although outside influences play a large role in the success or failure of the tasks.

Table 36. Tanya’s attributions for doing well.

<b>Group effort</b>	<b>Personal ability</b>	<b>Enjoyment</b>	<b>External</b>
<i>Once they realised we were serious they stopped mucking around.</i>	<i>I said “guys it’s a serious thing” and they all shut up (i.e. I managed to control them).</i>	<i>It’s been really good today.</i>	<i>I thought they would not like the classroom but they came up with good stuff.</i>
Tanya answers Robin’s statement about vibing off each other with ‘picked it up’.			<i>I don’t know what else you (the researcher) can do to help in our prep (Note: ‘external’ due to other’s helping in workshop preparation).</i>
			<i>It helped that they liked it ‘cause now I’ve got the buzz for it.</i>
			<i>We don’t really need it (music at start).</i>

Table 37. Tanya’s attributions for not doing well.

<b>Group effort</b>	<b>External</b>	<b>Internal</b>
<i>We need some little signals (between us) for ‘stop’ etc (when we are running activities with separate groups).</i>	<i>They (the users) like working in the chill-out area but groaned when we had to go into the classroom for second half of workshop.</i>	<i>The first time I saw them I was like ‘Oh no’</i>
<i>We need to work on our timekeeping.</i>	<i>Sometimes I can’t hear you (Core group) in the role-play as I have my back to you.</i>	<i>(Chantelle says ‘oh no’ at the</i>
<i>We need to make sure that everyone is involved.</i>	<i>A group of girls sitting in the corner at one end, they weren’t bothered, they actually said that to me.</i>	<i>same time).</i>

Table 37. Tanya's attributions for not doing well continued...

<b>Group effort</b>	<b>External</b>	<b>Internal</b>
<i>We need to rearrange the room.</i>	<i>Users started acting like little kids when we said the word 'sex'.</i>	
	<i>It might help if we had a flipchart.</i>	
	<i>They were immature at the start.</i>	
	<i>You (the researcher) was [sic] responsible for timing.</i>	
	<i>The role play was shorter than I thought.</i>	

Robin.

All of Robin's attributions for not doing well were related to the lack of group effort, whereas only 20% of his attributions for success were due to group effort. I should point out at this point that talking from the perspective of the 'group' can be seen as an internal attribution if one is part of that group and if one sees oneself as part of that group. The major difference between this and someone talking from the perspective of themselves is that responsibility for success and failure can be shared.

40% of Robin's attributions for success were due to external factors. This initially demonstrates to me that Robin feels all failures will be down to lack of group effort, he takes no personal responsibility for this and does not believe that external factors play a role in whether they don't do well. On the other hand, according to Robin the group had less than a 20% responsibility for success. Half of Robin's attributions for not doing well relate to poor performance of other group members; '*Tanya was stuck on lines and Chantelle and I were like 'what do I say' and 'whenever Chantelle was like talking, I was like 'what's the time, what's the time'.*' This suggests to me that Robin will not take any personal responsibility for the failure of the project, but will either allocate collective responsibility or find ways to buffer himself from any personal shortcomings that he perceives. I believe this demonstrates that Robin is fairly motivated to get more out of the team, and that as long as others try harder so will he. 20% of his attributions towards success were in successfully using up time. This suggests two things to me that

either Robin felt it very important that workshop participants needed to be fully engaged in activities in order for them to be successful or that he was so engaged in what he was doing that time was experienced more slowly. A distortion of time occurs when one is involved in the flow of creativity; hours may pass in what seems like a few minutes (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). Csikszentmihalyi also suggests that the process of discovery involved in creating something new appears to be one of the most enjoyable activities any human can be involved in (1996).

Table 38. Robin’s attributions for doing well.

<b>Group effort</b>	<b>Enjoyment</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>External</b>
<i>We vibed off each other.</i>	<i>Enjoyed it.</i>	<i>It went really really fast.</i>	<i>They really enjoyed it.</i>
<i>Nothing you (the researcher) can do to help us.</i>	<i>Felt really good.</i>	<i>I am happy with the game – it took up 5-10 minutes.</i>	<i>We don’t specifically need it (both Robin and Chantelle say ‘need it’ together, referring to music).</i>
			<i>I don’t think we need a flipchart ‘cause any school we go in will have a flipchart – just spending more money.</i>
			<i>The people were really good to work with.</i>

Table 39. Robin’s attributions for not doing well.

<b>Group effort</b>
<i>We just need more practice.</i>
<i>(During activities) we all look over at each other (when do we stop?).</i>
<i>Tanya was stuck on lines and Chantelle and I were like ‘what do I say’?</i>
<i>Whenever Chantelle was like talking, I was like “what’s the time, what’s the time”.</i>

Drawing upon the above analysis I tentatively suggest that most core group participants feel that being able to work together as a group is the most important aspect of a successful project. This was most clearly identified by Terry, Tanya and Robin.

Terry and Tanya both feel that doing well and not doing well are due to group efforts and Robin, from a slightly different standpoint feels that all failures are due to lack of group effort. Chantelle on the other hand generally feels both success and failure are due to external causes.

At this point in the process Terry is demonstrating to me a high level of motivation, confidence and personal and collective responsibility. Both Tanya and Chantelle need external recognition or validation to stay motivated. Robin's motivation is dependent on the group working well together.

It has been the attributional analysis that has allowed me a new insight into the data. In my reflective diary when I first carried out this analysis I noted that I would have found it useful to have performed the analysis at the time or very soon after having collected this data as it could have been a useful indicator in how the group and group members were feeling towards the project and towards each other. In this way I could have detected some of the project's shortcomings and pinpointed certain creative activities to increasing the motivation of certain group members. This may have helped prevent the dropout of three of the core group members.

#### 6.4. Section 4. Satisfaction of core group.

In Section 3 I explored motivation through ideas of success and failure at a key moment in time, just before the core group set off to Japan to deliver their workshops. I suggested that if I had analysed the data at the time that I may have been able to prevent some of the group drop out. Another way to explore the likelihood of dropout is to explore how satisfied the core group participants were with the project. I chose another moment for this piece of analysis; the final session of the current core group on the 18<sup>th</sup> March 2007. Three core group participants were present: Terry, Tanya and Robin. Chantelle was not present and unbeknown to me at the time, Chantelle was not to rejoin the project again. This session also turned out to be the last session for Tanya and Robin.

For this analysis I am using a limited amount of data; three short interviews with Terry, Tanya and Robin totalling 2000 words (approx.). From this data I identified a total of 32 attributions regarding satisfaction and dissatisfaction; 15 from Terry; eight from Tanya and nine from Robin. Although I am operating with small numbers my analysis is targeted and specific. Percentages will; therefore be of limited significance and I will not be attempting any generalisations or final conclusions.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Weiner's (1986) theory of attribution, suggests that there is a close link between learning, emotion and motivation, and it is the attributions, made for success or failure in learning that are key in mediating this. I interviewed Terry, Tanya and Robin at the end of this session. Their attributions about the session, the activities and their personal learning in this session may give an indication as to whether participants were satisfied with the project at this stage and whether the end of the current core group could have been predicted at this stage. I analysed the core group's attributions in the general style of a grounded theory approach (Robson, 2006). I tried to interpret the attributions as the core group would have intended and to allow the categories to emerge from the data (Williams et al, 2004).

The first set of categories to emerge was; Activities; Learning; Session; Venue; Issues and Energy. These developed into; Positivity; Negativity; Empathy; Learning and Uncomfortable. The third phase of categorisation resulted in the categories being reduced to four; Satisfaction; Dissatisfaction; Empathy and Learning. At this point I separated out the categories into internal and external attributions, this doubling the categories to eight. Finally I chose my root category: Satisfaction, and developed four final categories of; Satisfied (internally attributed); Satisfied (externally attributed); dissatisfied (internally attributed) and Unsatisfied (externally attributed). See table 40 for a breakdown of attributional scores.

Table 40. Attributions of satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

Attributions from the final session of the core group on the 18<sup>th</sup> march 2007.

<b>Satisfied Internal</b>	<b>Satisfied External</b>	<b>Dissatisfied Internal</b>	<b>Dissatisfied External</b>
<i>I've also learnt that doing someone else's ritual made me understand them better (Terry).</i>	<i>The balloon volley ball and when we did our individual stories was the highlight today (Tanya).</i>	<i>The ritual thing was a bit weird. I just made mine more into a dance routine (Tanya).</i>	<i>There aren't any bad points apart for [sic] one of our group members not turning up (Terry).</i>
<i>You could sort of picture it in your mind so it touches you more than if you just hear it on the news (Tanya).</i>	<i>Having a personal space where it's quiet and our privacy is not invaded, I think allows us to open up a bit more than how we would, for example outside somewhere people are watching us (Terry).</i>	<i>It made me feel quite sad that I had to make up something but it, yeah, it was alright (Robin).</i>	<i>Because nobody likes talking about it and stuff (Robin).</i>
<i>I think I've learnt a bit today like - what ritual means and things like that (Robin).</i>	<i>When everyone's full of energy it gives me that extra energy as well because people around me (Terry).</i>	<i>I could have handled it a bit better. I sort of went all quiet and I wasn't myself (Tanya).</i>	
<i>I've learnt what a ritual is (Terry).</i>	<i>I think today's session was really interesting, fascinating at some points (Terry).</i>	<i>I can understand what he means but I don't think I felt it as intensely as he did (Tanya).</i>	



Table 40. Attributions of satisfaction and dissatisfaction continued..

<b>Satisfied Internal</b>	<b>Satisfied External</b>	<b>Dissatisfied Internal</b>	<b>Dissatisfied External</b>
<i>Yeah, we can have fun and we learn at the same time (Terry).</i>	<i>The session was alright today – yeah it's been good (Robin).</i>	<i>I need to look at my own issues (Tanya).</i>	
<i>Yeah, I'm very happy (Terry).</i>	<i>I'm happy with everybody else, their contribution (Terry).</i>	<i>I haven't learnt anything about myself today (Robin).</i>	
<i>I was moved by Terry's story about racism (Tanya).</i>	<i>I think the highlight has got to be some of the games (Robin).</i>	<i>The bad points were that we could have been a bit more snappy on time (Terry).</i>	
	<i>I just think the space here is fantastic (Terry).</i>		
	<i>Yeah, I think you had quite a lot of energy in today's session – yeah – a lot of contribution – fantastic (Terry).</i>		
	<i>I like the stories (Terry).</i>		
	<i>The highlights were also the games, fun activities (Terry).</i>		
	<i>It was fun (Tanya).</i>		
	<i>The highlights have been the rituals, very positive (Terry).</i>		

Table 40. Attributions of satisfaction and dissatisfaction continued...

<b>Satisfied Internal</b>	<b>Satisfied External</b>	<b>Dissatisfied Internal</b>	<b>Dissatisfied External</b>
	<i>It's been alright</i> (Robin).		
	<i>It's been good</i> (Robin).		
	<i>They were quite fun</i> (Robin).		

Table 41. Collated categories of satisfaction for the core group members.

Satisfied

<b>Name</b>	<b>Internal</b>	<b>External</b>	<b>Total</b>
Terry	4	9	13
Tanya	2	2	4
Robin	1	5	6
Total	7	16	23

Table 42. Collated categories of dissatisfaction for the core group members.

Dissatisfied

<b>Name</b>	<b>Internal</b>	<b>External</b>	<b>Total</b>
Terry	1	1	2
Tanya	4	0	4
Robin	2	1	3
Total	7	2	9

Table 41 shows that 87% (n=13) of Terry's total attributions relate to feeling satisfied about the project, compared to 67% (n=6) of Robin's attributions and 50% (n=4) of Tanya's. 60% (n=9) of the attributions regarding satisfaction related to external factors for Terry, such as; liking the space, being happy with fellow participants, liking the games, activities, rituals, stories, energy and group contributions. Two of Tanya's four

attributions regarding satisfaction related to external factors such as liking certain activities and having fun, whereas five of Robin's six attributions about satisfaction concerned external reasons such as saying the session was good and the activities were fun.

All of (n=4) Tanya's attributions relating to dissatisfaction were internal such as; finding the ritual a bit weird; not handling certain things well and wanting to work on her own issues. This compared to two of Robin's three attributions; *I felt sad and I haven't learnt anything about myself*. One of Terry's two attributions relating to dissatisfaction was of an internal nature and related to his and the group's poor timekeeping.

The data suggests that Terry is feeling extremely positive about the project. Over half of his attributions related to external factors, which included the contributions of his group members, the space they were working in and the activities they participated in. This demonstrates to me that Terry is feeling highly motivated towards working on the project, arguably more motivated than any of the other core group members. One might argue that Tanya was feeling least satisfied with the project. I suggest that, as all of her attributions for not being satisfied were internal, she was feeling quite frustrated with her own contributions. As Chantelle was not present, this could also have had a bearing on how she was feeling as the only girl in the group. Most of Robin's attributions related to being satisfied, one of these was internal, which could suggest that Robin could find it difficult to get motivated without the support of the group.

Although, as discussed, I am working with relatively low numbers in terms of data collected, comparing the results from Section's three and four reveals many similarities on how members were feeling about themselves, other group members and the project itself. This data could not be used to predict drop out rate of participants, but it can highlight whether a person feels highly motivated towards a project or those who may be feeling somewhat ambivalent.

#### 6.5. Section 5. Success or failure of the project.

In the previous two sections I worked with relatively minimal data to explore how core group participants felt about the project, specifically in the realms of success and

satisfaction. I see these two analysis sections as interim snapshots that could have been useful in gauging the dynamics of the group at the time. My final attributional analysis in this chapter explores success and failure of the project from the point of view of the core group participants who completed the training. In the context of this study I used attribution theory to explore whether or not the core group members felt in control of their own learning and how they felt about the contributions from their fellow group members. In addition I used attribution theory to explore how they felt about the concept of empowerment in relation to their own lives and the lives of their users.

The final two core group participants were Terry and Michelle. Terry stayed with the project from the start and Michelle rejoined after Robin, Tanya and Chantelle left. The sample used for this analysis was much larger than in the previous two sections. Attributions were taken from a sample of over 35,000 words. I examined the data from the final two weeks of training that included six days of residential training and the data from their workshop deliveries. I also took data from their daily reflection sheets, filmed interviews and filmed discussions. I looked for examples of their attributions towards the process, the activities, themselves, fellow group members, the facilitators, resources, venue and any attributions directed at how they were feeling at a particular time during the sessions. Eventually I found 220 attributions. I analysed the core group's attributions in the general style of a grounded theory approach (Robson, 2006). I tried to interpret the attributions as the core group would have intended and to allow the categories to emerge from the data (Williams et al, 2004). I had one other researcher look over and check the categories and the comments within them at each stage. Analysis was achieved through the constant comparative analysis of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1999; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Initially I separated the attributions into two tables; one table for each core member. I then created one table that allowed me to form initial categories of information. In the second stage 13 categories emerged from the data: Process; Learning; Personal achievement; Empathy; Reason for participation; Activities; Barriers to participation; Incentives for participation; Facilitators or researcher; Opinions; Researcher; Opportunity to participation; Proactiveness. After reflection, in stage three, I refined and opened the categories which increased the number of categories to 25: Distractions; Anxiety; Preparation; Role Model; Achievement; Confusion; Sacrifices; Feedback; Effort; Initiative; Ethics; Venue; Empathy; Confidence; Identity; School Authority;

Pressure; Benefits; Obstacles; Workshop Delivery; Training and Learning; Group Dynamics; Improvements; Group work; Incentives.

To help ensure that the data I was working with was reliable I took my attributional analysis in this section to another level and attempted to only include attributions that were specifically causal. This led me to explore the differences between causes and reasons for action. Weiner (2006) suggests that we should not look for reasons but for causes, as attribution theory cannot capture the thought behind reason. Davidson famously argued that the only clear way to understand action explanation is to hold that reasons are causes (Risjord, 2005). Weiner (2006) argues that reasons are linked to intentional actions and what appears to be free will. Therefore, explanations or justifications that make a choice understandable will not be useful in attributional analysis, intentional action explanations cannot be causal explanations. Risjord (2005) argues that beliefs and pro-attitudes may be causes of action, but contra Davidson, a causal relationship between the action and the reason is not sufficient for explanation. Trying to grasp the difference between what I saw as a blurring of concepts, in stage four I carefully went through the 220 attributions I had categorised filtering out those comments that I felt explained intentional actions, and those that did not attribute success or failure of the project in some form. I kept those comments that were able to give a causal explanation of action. I was left with 99 attributions.

During stage five I looked for categories within categories, sub categories and new categories. I lost many categories and found some new ones. Five categories emerged from the data at this stage: Groupwork; Workshop delivery; Project format; Choices; and Initiative.

In stage six I looked for internal and external attributions. Seven categories emerged from the data: Choices (internal); Format (external); Workshops (internal); Workshops (external); Groupwork (internal); Groupwork (external); and Initiative (internal).

Core categories of 'success' and 'failure' emerged in stage seven of the data. I categorised an attribution as external if I felt that the attribution had been influenced by outside behaviour. For example, Michelle said '*I felt comfortable working with you, and it gave me the confidence because I knew we were there for each other*'. One could argue here that Michelle is internally attributing success to her ability of 'being there for

someone else'. Contra this argument we could argue that Michelle's attribution shows signs of being influenced by external forces or agents; that of 'her partner' or of 'positive interaction'. Therefore any attributions that show signs of external influences I have placed in external categories.

#### Terry's breakdowns.

Terry's total attributions = 63.

75% (n=47) of Terry's attributions are for success.

25% (n=16) of Terry's attributions are for failure.

17% (n=11) of Terry's attributions attribute success internally.

57% (n=36) of Terry's attributions attribute success externally.

1.6% (n=1) of Terry's attributions attribute failure internally.

22% (n=15) of Terry's attributions attribute failure externally.

#### Michelle's breakdowns.

Michelle's total attributions = 36.

53% (n=19) of Michelle's attributions are for success.

47% (n=17) of Michelle's attributions are for failure.

19% (n=5) of Michelle's attributions attribute success internally.

39% (n=14) of Michelle's attributions attribute success externally.

5.5% (n=2) of Michelle's attributions attribute failure internally.

42% (n=15) of Michelle's attributions attribute failure externally.

#### Attributions for success.

53% (n=19) of Michelle's and 75% (n=47) of Terry's attributions are for success. Out of these attributions Terry attributes 23% (n=11) and Michelle 26% (n=5) of them internally; and 67% (n=36) and 64% (n=14) externally respectively.

Three quarters of Terry's attributions are for success compared to just over half of Michelle's. This could suggest that Terry felt the project was more successful than Michelle did.

57% (n=36) of Terry's and 39% (n=14) of Michelle's attributions regarding success were external. Out of these 75% (n=27) of Terry's and 71% (n=10) of Michelle's attributed success to the organisation, planning and content of the project.

28% (n=4) of Michelle's and 25% (n=9) of Terry's attributions regarding success were externally related to how they felt about the success of the workshops they delivered in schools.

17% (n=11) of Terry's and 19% (n=5) of Michelle's attributions regarding success were internal. Out of these 60% (n=3) of Michelle's and 22% (n=2) of Terry's attributions were about being confident.

36% (n=4) of Terry's and 20% (n=1) of Michelle's internal attributions of success related to the effort and determination they had put in.

The evidence here suggests that Terry and Michelle were not involved in this project for purely altruistic feelings. Roughly a quarter of their attributions for success involved them feeling good about themselves. Three of Terry's internal attributions regarding success were about people recognising the good work that he was doing, such as; *I myself, you know, hey I've done something good and I'll be remembered for a good thing*. Whereas only one of Michelle's internal attributions regarding success was about feeling good about helping people; *It's a good thing that you feel good for helping other people because it makes you want to help other people more*.

Two of Terry's internal attributions regarding success were about feeling empowered, for example; *So it's balance between peer pressure and yourself and it's hard to go against your parents*.

#### Attributions for failure.

25% (n=16) of Terry's and 47% (n=17) of Michelle's attributions are for failure. Most of which both Terry (n=15) and Michelle (n=15) attribute to external causes, as compared with (n=1) and (n= 2) respectively to internal causes.

44% (n=7) of Terry's attributions regarding failure were seen as due to previous group members leaving and the repetition of some of the activities for the new group member such as; *because there are less people now, it seems that it is much less lively and interactive and we are repeating things we have already done which makes me extremely bored!* Although there were comments in the data from Michelle about other group members leaving I have not counted them as attributions for Michelle, as they are more opinion based rather than causal statements.

35% (n=6) of Michelle's attributions regarding failure were related to her feeling that the workshops they had delivered were not totally successful for example; *I thought it went really bad and It was a complete and utter shambles*, whereas only two of Terry's attributions were considered to be due to the failure of elements of the workshops for example; *I don't like this space. It was really compact but I thought I might as well get on with it - Last workshop so just deliver it.*

Three of Terry's attributions regarding failure saw the causes to be due to group members' lack of effort such as; *Andy [the researcher] has to show us how to be less lazy or how to overcome that laziness factor because I felt very lazy today.* This compares to just one of Michelle's attributions; *I also feel that both of us could have made more of an effort to get our own points across.*

Two of Terry's attributions regarding failure related to being overruled on certain decisions by the other group member Michelle such as; *I just feel all decisions have to go in one direction.* Only one of Michelle's internal attributions for failure was about her forcing her ideas; *I feel that I was maybe a bit pushy.*

Only one of Terry's attributions for failure was internal, where he felt that he had not prepared himself as best he could. Two of Michelle's attributions regarding failure were internal; *When I was telling my story it was difficult and I feel that I was maybe a bit pushy.*

About a quarter (n=4) of Michelle's attributions for failure were allocated to the organisation of the research project such as; *too much concentrated time on discussion and sitting still is draining and it was always random times.* A further four of Terry's attributions regarding failure were about the project organisation such as; *you have*



*respected the fact that people have the right to pull out at anytime and I think we shouldn't have too many options.*

### Summary.

A quarter of Terry's attributions were concerned with failure, mainly focused on other project members leaving leading to much unhappiness that they had left. Terry felt that I was wrong to let the other core group participants leave so easily. One of the knock-on effects was that he had to repeat a few stages with a new group member, which he found boring.

Michelle felt the project was less successful than did Terry. She was least happy with how they had delivered their workshops, although most of the negative comments come from after their final workshop. Both Terry and Michelle had wanted the final workshop to be their best and had built themselves up to this. This led to a degree of tension and they felt, despite excellent feedback from their participants, that they had not performed as well as they could.

From this data I suggest that both Terry and Michelle felt that overall this project was a success for them. Three quarters of Terry's and over a half of Michelle's attributions were for success. Drawing on the evidence from sections 3 and 4, I would also like to suggest that Terry has remained highly motivated throughout the project and has continually felt that it was successful. Over half of the causes that Terry identified as contributing to success were external. It would seem that Terry's motivation was so high to succeed and complete the project, that even when he felt that certain parts were being repeated for other group members, he kept strongly motivated. This is also supported by data in section 5.3 discussing outcomes for the core group external peer supporters. Despite strong pressure from his family to attend a family wedding, Terry still felt motivated enough to stay with the project.

From my own perspective, like Terry, I was unhappy that three core group members did not complete the training. Although this caused difficulties within the group and the project itself was put in jeopardy, the commitment and motivation of those who remained and rejoined demonstrated the strength of the process and the structures that had been put in place.

## 6.6. Section 6. Training and development.

The final section in this chapter explores the training and development of the core group members and some of what their eventual clients thought of their sessions. I also examine myself as a responsible creative workshop facilitator.

Part of the core group members' training was aimed at developing their skills as facilitators of their creative sessions. Another way to show whether learning has taken place on this project is to examine what key skills have been nurtured, particularly around those of the 'creative workshop facilitator'. In Section 2 I suggested with the help of Kunyk and Olsen (2001) that empathy is *the ability to see the world as another person sees it and the ability to access thoughts and feelings of clients*. Which links importantly to the idea of the responsible facilitator. The *responsible facilitator* [is] *concerned with the process of the client's journey and not of his or her own* (Jennings et al, 1994. p. 16). We need empathy with our clients in order to be effectively involved in their process.

This idea of Jennings' is interesting and before examining it in context with my core participants, I applied this idea to myself in the context of this project; 'Was I a responsible facilitator of the project sessions?' To be strictly in line with Jennings' statement I would have to answer 'no'. Although I was concerned with the journey of all my core group members, I was also concerned with my own journey on this project, the journey that was directed towards the completion of a PhD thesis.

Similarly, I believe the core group participants were not only concerned with the journeys of their workshop participants, they were also concerned with their own journeys and what they might get out of the project for themselves. Terry wanted to learn and gain knowledge about bullying, he also wanted to be able to share this knowledge with other people. [What] *I would like to get out is knowledge and something I can share with others so that they can in turn learn from this too through me ... I really look forward to learning ...* (core group member Terry in August 2006) and *I hope to build up my self confidence and I hope to learn something, something new and I hope to teach something new* (core group member Terry in January 2007), and *I felt that this way is a way of me learning and teaching so at the same time I can be advising people or doing things that will help people, benefit, you know* (core group

member Terry in July 2007). Consistently throughout the project we see that the journey of Terry's participants are as important for him as is his own journey. Tanya, in 2008, on the other hand was very open about her school work being the most important focus for her. *I'm sorry to say but school is the most important thing for me at the moment. My grades are going to stick with me throughout my life. I think it [dealing with bullying] is important because everyone is affected but it's not as important as other things can be.*

At the start of the project, when asked what she hoped to achieve, Michelle, in 2006, said *To help, to listen to young people.* The following year Michelle suggests that it is natural even when we want to help people, that we want or need some kind of benefit in return. This process may be conscious or unconscious, and may be as simple as making us *feel good.*

*Yeah, I think that's just a human thing like nobody's going to ... There's only a handful of people who will do something completely selfless. It's a natural thing to think, is this going to benefit me, am I going to ... and of course we're going to benefit. The experience and the skills that we're going to be gaining from doing this is good as well but it's not the fact that we're just benefiting, it's because we like the fact that other people are benefiting too because it makes us feel good. People do things for other people to make themselves feel good. They don't just do it so that other people can feel okay* (core group member Michelle in July 2007).

When Chantelle joined the project she wanted to gain *self-confidence and helping some younger people with issues we've already been through.* Chantelle showed signs of *concern with the process of her client's journey* as we see from an extract of her work diary:

*You could see the audience getting a bit fidgety and nervous about opening up their feelings to the rest of their peers. The "chavs" or so called popular people then started to mock the "geekier" people of their year as they volunteered their answers and immediately I could sense their sorrow in putting up their hand to answer a question in case they got picked on or*

*laughed at by other members of their year (core group member Chantelle in January 2007).*

I could not find any evidence showing Robin's *concern with the process of the workshop participants journey and not of his own*. When asked what interested him in being involved in the project Robin said that he would like to meet and work with different people and make some new friends, along with building his own confidence (feedback from core group member Robin in January 2007). When asked in his final reflective interview Robin said that he thought his workshop participants had learned something about bullying and were entertained but any effects of the work would be short term.

[The workshop participants] *got out a knowledge about bullying. Entertainment, seeing me get slapped was quite funny. But yea, I think they got quite a lot out of it ..., I don't think it would've lasted long though* (core group member Robin in May 2008).

I will use Dwivedi's summary of the facilitator's role to explore whether the core group members felt they became trained group work facilitators as a result of this project and came to understand how the staff involved in running groups play a key role. *They need to be able to listen to young people and create the right sort of atmosphere for talk. They need to be conversant in techniques for encouraging groups to talk and in how to manage groups in a variety of situations* (1993, p. 268).

I have broken this down into four essential elements the core group members need to have developed; a) good listening skills, b) the ability to create a comfortable atmosphere, c) the ability to use creative discussion techniques and d) to be able to manage groups in different situations.

a) Have good listening skills.

Terry certainly felt he had developed his listening skills; *I feel more confident when approaching people, listening to people and generally interacting with people*. After their second workshop Terry and Michelle demonstrated their listening skills while receiving feedback from their participants.

*It was really nice to see them not just saying it was fun we had a really good time or the games were great, it was good to see them discussing why they thought it was good or why they thought it wasn't so good. They were weighing up the options while they were discussing so we understood why it was good to have a workshop rather than just having they're great kind of thing (core group member Michelle in July 2007).*

*I think it was a brilliant idea doing the evaluation at the end. It made me and Michelle pick up on certain points that we can do better at next time and also for your research PhD you've got quite a lot of good discussion points that you can also use. Both of us benefited quite a lot, don't you think? (core group member Terry in July 2007).*

I was unable to find evidence that Chantelle, Tanya or Robin had developed good listening skills as a result of this project.

b) Ability to create a comfortable atmosphere.

Both Terry and Michelle knew about the importance of creating a welcoming atmosphere,

*..., you have to praise everyone and encourage other people so if you say that wasn't good then.....No I've learnt that ..., even though some things might not be good, but you still have to praise it for other people to come and participate because that's the main important thing (core group member Terry in July 2007).*

*I learnt that young people deserve respect, as always. I learnt, well I didn't learn I sort of put it to the test that if you respect young people you get the respect back (core group member Terry in July 2007).*

*Some music or some background noise ... you either welcome them like 'hi' and the teacher starts ushering them in or start with like our freeze frame position ... then they know that something is about to happen, they are not*

*then sitting there thinking what is going on, why are they not talking (core group member Michelle in July 2007).*

Michelle *Yes of course. If you treat somebody as equal then they are going to be more likely to feel they're capable of doing something.*

Terry *They'll probably relate to you better as well.*

Michelle *It's going to give them more confidence and they're going to like you more and be more open with you (23<sup>rd</sup> July 2007).*

Terry and Michelle were able to create a comfortable atmosphere even when they felt sessions had not gone as well as they hoped, as we see from the feedback of one of their participants.

*I thought it [the workshop] was very fluid actually. In terms of focus I thought the handing over and the running and energy was good - as a participant. Because it's what I do, I noticed things as well. So my general sense of it was, very safe, very confident and very fluid. I'm not just saying that to be nice. I genuinely felt that (Participant of the core group's workshop on the 27<sup>th</sup> July 2007).*

Robin knew the difficulties in creating a welcoming atmosphere but understood that there needed to be an underlying fun element where facilitators had to work hard at creating the right atmosphere. *The workshop went well but the crowd was hard to win over, it could have been the fact that this was our first proper workshop and we bounce off of each other really well it was good fun (core group member Robin in February 2007).*

Although in my opinion both Chantelle and Tanya knew the importance of creating a comfortable atmosphere I found no evidence in the data of them exploring or discussing these ideas.

### c) Have creative discussion techniques.

All of the workshops that the core group delivered utilised a mixture of creative discussion activities. As a group they were all able to utilise a mixture of creative

discussion techniques such as role-play, improvisation, games, imagery. Terry shows us why he feels it is important to have a variety of these techniques to use at our disposal. ... *All in all, speaking generally, you have to be clear and concise, give demonstrations about what you're doing because to certain people it might make sense verbally but other people might like it in a pictorial way ... So in a way, different people learn in different ways and that's something I learned so in the future if I was to do something, if I was to teach someone something, I will make sure I cover it with a demonstration and verbally so that people see it in different ways and understand it* (core group member Terry in July 2007). This is backed up by the comments of the core group's participants. *Well it's ..., all the games. It's a really fun way of explaining things. In class no-one can remember and it's like [acts like he's falling asleep] but here we're actually playing games like children like to do and so we're actually doing what we want to do and learning at the same time* (Participant of the core group members workshop on the 26<sup>th</sup> July 2007).

d) Able to manage groups in different situations.

All of the core group ran sessions in a variety of settings to a variety of groups. Terry became very aware of the importance of flexibility in dealing with different groups and different group members. *I've learnt that ..., that working with different people who are from a different background with different ways of speaking to their man, you know, dealing with certain issues in an appropriate way ..., Other things are ..., you know ..., some people ..., you have to sort of respect the fact that some people have different disabilities and different ways of behaving themselves ..., you have to make it in a way that such, things, you know, people feel that they want to participate* (core group member Terry in July 2007).

Both Terry and Michelle's group management skills progressed in each workshop they delivered; *after today's session, if tomorrow me and Michelle want to run a session of 50 people, then bring it on, because now I know the techniques and at least I've put it into action once* (core group member Terry in July 2007). They also demonstrated that effective management took teamwork.

Terry *I think the young people and the way they conducted themselves was really good. If you work as a team it's easier to keep them in focus and*

*attending all the time. Rather than just one person shouting, today both me and Michelle worked together to keep them quiet and it did work. It was really good.*

Researcher *Do you think you worked well together?*

Michelle *Yeah, I think we did.*

Terry *Yeah, there was a good supporting team thing going on which was really encouraging and motivating (23<sup>rd</sup> July 2007).*

Tanya was able to manage groups in different situations. *I think it's like the same, you've got to learn to adapt, if we like didn't have a difficult group we couldn't have learned to bounce off each other and help each other out and stuff like that* (core group member Tanya in March 2007). Due possibly to the incomplete training, Tanya, as a young person, did not feel comfortable being fully in control of a group as we see from her following two comments. *I felt a bit exposed, as there wasn't a teacher to control the class. That's one of the main things I'm afraid will happen- the kids will riot or something!* (core group member Tanya in February 2007) and *I still think you need an adult though, because you need that element of control. I mean if I was left in a room with 30 other kids (laughs) and one of them started making a fuss ... Some students realise oh there's not an adult here and take advantage of the lack of authority – so you need a backup* (core group member Tanya in February 2008).

Robin was also able to grasp the idea of flexibility with different groups in different situations. *I've learnt that it's ..., bullying is a bigger issue than I first thought and that even though you – like – in a session someone might not like you – like in the actual group they don't like you - who you're like in the audience – if one person doesn't like you, you know how to try to get them back on side and try to help yourself and if you fall out with them to regain their trust again. It can be quite a tricky thing to do within an hour* (core group member Robin in March 2007). Robin and Tanya also saw the importance of working together in a team to help manage different group dynamics.

Robin *I think also that we vibed off each other, like when I thought someone was struggling I ...*

Tanya *... picked it up yeah ...*

Robin *... and I know that quite a few of you did that for me as well (all agree), so ... (19<sup>th</sup> January 2007).*



Quite early on Robin showed signs of improvisational ability and a desire to approach the needs of each group in different ways. I feel that this could have been developed a lot further if Robin had stayed on in the project till the end. *I know I sound weird when I say this, but you don't really need lines as such because every group's different* (core group member Robin in January 2007).

The core group ran a variety of sessions in different contexts and with different kinds of people, young and old. The overall responses from all the sessions were very positive. I had to search quite deeply to find any negative comments and even these were usually contextualised in a positive way. *Don't take offence but it wasn't explained very well cause I heard that you were allowed to run and then I heard that you were only allowed one footstep. So I was really confused. But it was good* (participant of the core group members workshop in July 2007).

With some core group participants I was able to get some extensive feedback. After one particular session run by Terry and Michelle, some of the participants were told that the core group members had been really nervous before delivering the workshop and they felt this had spoiled the workshop. As we can see from the following dialogue, the participants had not noticed the nervousness and felt they had masked it really well and channelled it in to positive energy.

Boy *I think their nerves were over run by their enthusiasm because it didn't show that they were nervous.*

Researcher *So you think that they managed to keep their nervousness hidden, if you like, or channelled?*

Boy *Yeah.*

Girl *I thought they looked like they were sort of focused on what they were doing. They didn't look like nervous as all. They just looked like they were just doing what they were supposed to be doing and making it energetic so that everybody would get up. They didn't look like they were nervous because it was just so energising. (27<sup>th</sup> July 2007).*

The organiser of this workshop session summed up the potential difficulties for the core group in this session as the people they worked with did not know each other and were of different ages.

*Can I say something from the perspective of the person who brought the group together to be in the workshop? ... I was apprehensive but personally apprehensive because it was concocted. It was a group that has no natural affinity to each other apart that somehow they have some connection to me. Because it's outside of school time, it's outside of college time everybody that had expressed interest have now gone and got jobs. I was thinking that it's an unusual workshop group. It's not just because of the different ages but that actually most people didn't know each other ... so I think the thing that you're talking about, Michelle, about people not being over expressive and talking a lot, I think you achieved a great deal in terms of how willing people were to talk and say things in that environment. The two older girls came to the workshop very, very nervous and relatively reluctant to come because they didn't do drama and they thought it might be full on acting. They came with grace because Tony [one of the workshop participants] asked them to come. So the fact that you got the both of them to, so quickly, invest energy and talk because they were relaxed. So actually, although we didn't expressively say that, you actually had quite a difficult group dynamic to start with (Organiser of the group that core group members ran a workshop with on the 27<sup>th</sup> July 2007).*

### Summary

All of the core group members were involved at varying levels of intensity and for varying length of time on this project, but the evidence gathered indicates that those members who were involved till the end of the project learned more than those who were not.

I have tried to explore learning from several different angles including; what core group members could demonstrate as to their increase in knowledge; how successful they thought the project was; what participants of their sessions thought and what key skills had been nurtured during the course of the project. Further analysis can be found in chapters 4 and 5, including an exploration of the empowerment of the core group members during the project and an exploration of the outcomes for both the core group participants and the users.

We can clearly see that both Terry and Michelle have increased their knowledge and understanding of what bullying is. They have also demonstrated a deep awareness of empathy. In terms of the facilitation skills they developed during the course of the project I feel that both Terry and Michelle are now capable of running a variety of creative workshops on their own or with other group members. Tanya, Chantelle and Robin did not complete the training process and although I was able to demonstrate that some learning had taken place, I believe that this learning was minimal. Nevertheless I believe as a group they could still run successful creative workshops with a variety of small groups.

## Chapter 7. Conclusions.

The evidence suggests that this project has had a profound effect on the core group members in a number of different ways. My research question asked whether young people could develop and deliver effective creative anti-bullying strategies. In terms of effectiveness, I have demonstrated that the core group members gained insights around the subject of bullying including its definition and its relationship to power; I have shown how core group members gained in confidence and competence as creative workshop facilitators; I have, in addition, set out how core group members increased their skills as peer supporters including such skills as active listening, empathy and general groupwork. This was not the perfect project; many mistakes were made. In some ways I might suggest that many of the mistakes and misunderstandings helped focus the core group participants and myself on some of the issues that needed more attention. The core group were able to develop and design these creative workshops with adult guidance, a process they found empowering, enlightening and educational; their workshop sessions were not only well received in the UK with British students, they were able to cross borders and have some apparent effectiveness with students in Japan.

The core group members on this project experienced learning from many angles and many perspectives. They all demonstrated increases in knowledge, such as in their ability to define key terms, they built up their confidence and were all able to design and deliver workshops to other students. We have also seen core group members developing further awareness of empathy, role and identity. They have developed a range of skills including facilitation skills, listening skills and leadership skills.

It is not only the young people who worked on this project who have increased knowledge and developed skills. As a researcher and theatre practitioner my knowledge and skills have developed immensely. Probably one of the biggest impacts in terms of the development of practice is the conceptualisation of external peer support and its relationship to more conventional approaches to peer support.

Peer support is about peers supporting their peers. To date, this has mainly been conceived of as occurring within a school context and as part of a whole school approach. The outcomes for the core group have been similar to the outcomes for peer

supporters found in the literature. I have demonstrated that peer support can be successful when provided from outside of the school context and that peer support learning techniques can be utilised by a variety of practitioners.

Although the only visible difference in peer support and external peer support is that one takes place in school and the other outside of school, we can find other subtle differences, most notable of which is that training ‘outside of school’ has a marked difference on the peer supporters allowing them to step away from the constraints that schools may have on participants.

There may be an argument that keeping peer support as an internal mechanism is not allowing it to grow or propagate. In this way it remains insular and has the possibility of stagnation. It could also be argued that keeping external peer support away from schools has the possibility of stunting training growth and minimising a potential market for external peer supporters. There is actually a great potential for both forms of peer support to learn from each other.

External peer supporters could benefit from closer links with schools and students they may work with for future collaborations. Internal peer supporters could also benefit from additional training that is currently offered to external peer supporters. The biggest impact, for me, has been that schools have the potential to expand their ‘internal’ peer support services so that their peer supporters also become external peer supporters. This could be a way for successful in-house peer support systems to expand and export their success to other schools. In this way an in-house system can also become an external peer support service. The benefits are potentially huge. The peer supporters would receive additional training, particularly ‘on-the-job’ training that would occur when the peer supporters delivered training outside of their school environment. Not only could the peer supporters export their good practice to other schools but also out of the school environment altogether within youth clubs and for community groups. We could also see the peer supporters delivering training and presentations to teachers, youth workers and even other adults in a workplace environment.

For school peer supporters to be able to look outwards will not only allow them to export their tried and tested methods to other schools and institutions, they will, in turn, learn from the people they work with. Their peer support service would be expanded

with the possibility of attracting more funding for more training and more resources. In this way we have a snowball effect where more users will eventually benefit, thus benefiting schools as a whole.

There is great potential for the peer supporters to help train new peer supporters from other schools. In this way best practice is demonstrated and taken up, links are created between schools and network opportunities are created for both students and teachers. We also see the possibility of more power being transferred to students and young people, and as I have demonstrated, adults and teachers do not need to fear young people in this context. Indeed, it allows for the possibility of young people teaching teachers as well as teachers teaching young people. Allowing young people to have some power does not mean that they are going to abuse that power and it does not mean that they are going to abuse each other or us. Power sharing with young people provides benefits to both adults and young people alike. Teachers do not need to pretend that they have all the right answers, and co-constructive methods of teaching and learning new ideas, could produce new and novel solutions and knowledge. This kind of education allows for the possibility for us all to nurture our talents, to share our ideas and allows us all the possibility of being creative.

From the expansion of schools' peer support services in these ways, as well as the availability of additional training opportunities, we see school generated work placement opportunities becoming possible and a whole new set of role-models are potentially developed. The net result of this could lead to happier and more confident students and young people in schools across the country.

The training of my core group (external peer supporters) was undertaken using techniques of theatre-in-education and social theatre. I argued in chapter three that social theatre took over from a gap left by theatre-in-education during the late 1980's with the introduction of the national curriculum. This new movement became one of exploring social problems and difficulties and led to the development of ideas such as the theatre of the oppressed, forum theatre and theatre of peace. It was not until the late 1990's that theatre-in-education came back into its own with its link to citizenship education. Theatre-in-education practitioners now have an arsenal of new techniques with which to use in schools which include those borrowed from social theatre. Forum theatre is one prime example. Forum theatre was a technique developed by Augusto

Boal as one of his techniques of the theatre of the oppressed in order to help people who are oppressed find solutions and alternative ways of acting so that they can remove or reduce the oppression they are feeling or experiencing. It is a technique now used extensively within theatre-in-education circles as a way of sharing ideas, communicating information, developing skills and trying out possibilities of action in a variety of contexts. The techniques of forum theatre are no longer just about oppression or even just about social issues, they are educative techniques that can be used in the broadest of subject areas. For example, theatre-in-education can be used to explore social agendas on the citizenship agenda, particularly those of bullying, as used in this project. Other areas include health education as a whole, learning about respect, and demonstrating role modelling.

Social theatre and theatre-in-education hold very similar values and utilise techniques from both disciplines, to the extent that it might even be possible to subsume each into the other, particularly as theatre-in-education is no longer confined to school settings; although I prefer to look at them as related and complimentary disciplines. Both social theatre and theatre-in-education involve some kind of performance and are used by groups for groups. However, there is a potential conflict between these theories and psychological theories in terms of task and group dynamics. It has been argued that concentrating on group dynamics can sometimes make us lose sight of the subject matter we are exploring.

Although social theatre and theatre-in-education practitioners know the importance of group dynamics and utilise many techniques to ensure good groupwork, in social theatre and theatre-in-education we are invited to place tasks before group dynamics. The task always comes first. This could be argued to be one of the techniques of theatre rehearsals in general. When actors may be blocked by their own relationships within the play, theatre directors may sometimes direct the actors to solve tasks – this can take them away from thinking about the play itself and therefore their relationships within it. They may also find that the process of solving the tasks will in turn transform the relationships within the play itself. This view goes against the principles of group dynamics which have influenced groupwork and therapeutic practice since the 1960's, where relationships are given primordial importance (Tselikas, 2009). What I often find is that groups like relationship discussions, which are usually safe and often promote good feeling with the group. The result is often that the group spends lots of time on

group bonding but avoiding the tasks to be confronted. If we place tasks before relationships, the process of working on the tasks themselves often promotes good group dynamics and group bonding. It is a group process that happens naturally when the group is involved in tasks that need to be solved. The data from my research demonstrates this quite aptly. Despite all the difficulties experienced by myself and the core group members on this project, we can see that the task always remained the dominant factor. In fact, group dynamics were developed through the tasks and activities in which the core group got involved. Examples of group tasks being the dominant factor in this research include the rituals (e.g Chapter 4, Session 19), hot seats (e.g. Chapter 4, Session 1), activity delivery (e.g. Chapter 4, Sessions 6, 13, 14, 15 and 16) and group games (e.g, Chapter 4, Session 9).

My aims for this project were to evaluate and improve my practice and to empower those who were involved in the project. I wanted everyone involved to benefit in some way and to ensure no one would be damaged as a result of the research or the research process. The project was therefore conceived as a collaboration between the core group members and myself. For much of the process the young people involved moved forward in a number of positive ways. They chose how to present themselves, how much time to commit, when to take time off school, how they were going to design their workshop sessions and how they were going to deliver them. As a group we developed a sense of trust between us, and whenever and wherever we were involved, we all supported each other completely.

There are many issues relating to bullying, one of which is the central part played by power. A lack of power can lead to bullying, just as too much power can lead to bullying. We need to find a balance so that we do not have abuses of power, which is bullying. The evidence demonstrates that some of the most effective programmes to deal with bullying are led by students or young people. Peer support can be seen as a form of youth participation, which, as has been suggested, can lead to empowerment. Young people need opportunities to experience and exercise power and those who are bullied need to find ways of becoming empowered out of their bullying cycles. My research suggests that one of the keys to self-determination is finding ways to locate power and harness it for empowerment. A non-threatening, co-constructive way is the use of creative action methods. Creative practice ensures co-operative and productive groupwork and allows closed minds to open up and explore in safety. The use of



creative arts, theatre, ritual, dance, drama, poetry, and specific techniques such as those found in the Theatre of the Oppressed provides a possibility for the transformation of action and in so doing transforms the nature of power itself. Therein empowerment is within our grasp.

In all of this, and similar research, we have problems of definition. Defining terms like power, bullying and empowerment is not only problematic, there are also many confusions between the concepts and terms involved. I have demonstrated that by working together it is possible to develop agreement. Agreements on the definition, particularly of the word bullying, may open up many more avenues of exploration and strategy. If four young people can develop a congruence of ideas on empowerment then I am sure that we could find, with some effort, a congruence of ideas on bullying.

This research project will improve, and has improved my practice already. While re-checking my research diaries I note several entries concerning 'reflection' and how much reflection is related to self and improving future practice through a retrospective analysis of action. This was particularly apparent for me when trying to build a new group, and with the core group members when they reflected on their workshop delivery sessions. I had to constantly remind myself to re-explore my positions by questioning assumptions about myself including my values, ideas, knowledge, motivation and prejudices. For example; what was my own position in relation to this research? What were my past relevant experiences? What biases was I carrying?

The continual reflection helped me during some of the difficult and depressing aspects of the research process, particularly through the difficult dropouts and negotiations with the schools. I found myself also examining assumptions taken for granted by institutions, schools, colleges etc. What were their sub-cultures and understanding values? Did their rhetoric match their values/ethos etc? This helped build my facilitation and organisational skills and improve my understanding of school and education systems.

My trust of people's capabilities and the capability of young people, although always strong, has been given new vitality and vision. I have always been a supporter of partnership and collaborative working. This research has presented me with a range of possible action and co-construction of working in partnership with individuals and

groups. I have also learned that rights and responsibilities are more tightly linked than I had previously realised. It has been suggested by Terry, one of the core group members, that I have been guilty of giving away too many rights and not expecting enough responsibility. It is not possible to have rights without some form of responsibility. Even in their simplest forms, if we all have rights, it means that my rights might conflict with your rights, therefore we have a responsibility towards each other.

The model of peer support can be used in a wide range of situations within school. It does not have to stop at challenging bullying. Peer support can help in improving study skills in all subjects and assisting with a wide range of difficulties. Successful peer support programmes can export their success across subject areas within a school and outside of schools to other schools and community groups. Peer support does not have to stop with young people. Adult peer support can be organised in similar ways.

Although external peer support is not a new phenomenon, this would appear to be the first time it has been researched and identified as such. I hope that this research helps open up the doors to new angles of research on peer support. I think particularly useful would be longitudinal studies on peer support and peer support systems. I also think that research about peer support by young people could throw up some very interesting results and could open up the way for research to be truly empowering for the young people involved.

This research has been a process of change for me and my participants. It has left a quote by Farouk Kadoumi ringing in my ears: Miracles happen when there is a dedication to change oneself (Hickson, 1995).

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## Appendix 1.

### Details of the schools and institutions involved in this research project.

#### Central Foundation Boys School.

The Ofsted report for 2006 made the following remarks about Central Foundation School for Boys (Ofsted, 2006).

*Central Foundation Boys' School is a smaller than average over-subscribed secondary school, with business and enterprise specialist status. It has a small sixth form that is part of a recently formed consortium with two other local schools. The proportion of boys who are eligible for free school meals is more than double the national average and over a quarter of the students have additional learning needs. Students have a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and a high proportion speak English as an additional language ... Central Foundation Boys' is a good school. The adults who work in the school have a clear focus on inclusion. They are dedicated to ensuring that no boy should be prevented from learning for any reason. Achievement is good. From a lower than average starting point, boys make good progress and achieve standards in line with national averages ... The school provides outstanding care and support, particularly for those students who do not speak English as a first language and those who have special educational needs. Recently, the staff have targeted support on those who are gifted and talented and have successfully raised the aspirations of this group of boys. The school provides an environment in which the boys feel safe. The atmosphere is calm and boys are well behaved ... Standards achieved by students in the sixth form are in line with national averages ... Boys start school with standards that are lower than average. They make good progress and when they take tests and examinations at the end of Years 9 and 11 they reach standards close to national averages ... Many students contribute to the school through the school council and the schemes for buddying and mentoring.*

#### Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr.

There has been no OFSTED report for this school in the last three years. I found the following information about Plasmawr school from Wikipedia:

*During its first nine years, the school has been acclaimed for its work in the fields of equality of opportunity and social inclusion, developing emotional intelligence and in the performing arts. The school also offers a wide range of sporting activities including all major team sports and rowing, canoeing and climbing ... Students have become regular winners at the National Urdd 'Eisteddfod' in a range of dramatic and musical competitions. The school is also an EU Comenius school and has active overseas partners in France, Brittany, the Netherlands, Lesotho & Japan. The school also offers the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification in addition to GCSE, BTEC and A Level courses ... 79% of the pupils come from homes where Welsh is not spoken. 9% of the pupils belong to the wide range of ethnic minorities which make up the population of Cardiff (Wikipedia, 2009).*



### Worle Community School.

The Ofsted report for 2005 made the following remarks about Worle Community School (Ofsted, 2005).

*Worle Community School is a large comprehensive school in Worle on the eastern outskirts of Weston-super-Mare. The school has expanded recently and now has 1500 boys and girls aged between 11 and 16 years of age. Most of the large employers have closed down and in many ways Weston-super-Mare is an economically depressed area. The school has achieved Specialist Arts College status as well as being part of a wider educational partnership with other schools in the area. This has broadened effectively the range of activities and opportunities to support learning that the school is able to offer to its students. There are very small numbers of students from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of students who are eligible for free school meals is below average. There is little movement of students to and from other schools ... The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory ... Worle Community School is a safe community that cares well for its students. Behaviour overall is good. The curriculum provides a wide range of activities to meet the needs and interests of students. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The school gives satisfactory value for money ... The personal development of the students is good. They take opportunities when given to be independent, work co-operatively and enjoy roles of responsibility, both in school and in the local community*

### Dawn Center Empowerment Cafe.

*The Dawn Centre, in Osaka, Japan, is an institution dedicated to the promotion of independence and equal opportunity for men and women. With “ women ” as its key word, the Dawn Center provides extensive information, lectures and such for the purpose of developing and fostering ability and learning, women's counselling, promotion of international exchanges, and implementation of various projects using the many functions of the facility. In addition, there is a hall and meeting rooms that residents of the prefecture can broadly use as places for exchange, learning, culture, creativity and expression (Dawn Center, 2007). The core group ran their workshop session with a mixed group of mothers and children. 30 participants.*

### Oldmixon Primary School.

The Ofsted report for 2008 made the following remarks about Oldmixon Primary School (Ofsted, 2008).

*Oldmixon Primary School is of average size and serves a mixed area that includes the local community and further afield. The socio-economic circumstances of many families are not favourable and this is reflected in the high numbers who are entitled to free school meals. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is high, although the number with statements (highest forms of need) is average. Pupils' needs are wide ranging and include severe learning, language, literacy, emotional and behavioural difficulties ... Oldmixon Primary School gives its pupils a satisfactory education. It has significant strengths. High standards of care lead to pupils' good personal development and behaviour. The school has experienced some disruption to staffing in the last few years, including senior leaders, and this led to some underachievement ... Children enter school with skills that are well below those typical for their age, and satisfactory progress overall in EYFS means that standards remain at*

*this level on entry to Year 1. Standards for Year 6 in 2008 national tests were below average in reading and mathematics. The school has disputed the exceptionally low writing results and papers are still being remarked ... Pupils greatly enjoy school and are very proud to attend. In fact, attendance has improved well in the last 18 months and is now average.*

#### Sandford primary School.

The Ofsted report for 2008 made the following remarks about Sandford primary School (Ofsted, 2008a).

*This is a small village primary school, with five classes, all of which consist of mixed-age groups. All pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below the national average. Children start school with standards expected for their age ... This is a good school with outstanding features. At the heart of the school's success is very effective leadership and management ... Achievement is good and pupils reach above average standards by the time they leave the school ... Excellent care, guidance and support make a significant contribution to pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils genuinely enjoy school and all that it offers and this is reflected in their good attendance. They have an excellent understanding of the need for healthy living and talk with great enthusiasm about the imminent arrival of the healthy tuck-shop. Relationships are excellent and the positive impact of the work of the peer mediators is a key factor in this. Pupils with learning difficulties are supported particularly well, especially by the learning support assistants ... Pupils' achievement is good and they reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school. There is no significant variation in the achievement of boys and girls ... Pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities and the take-up is high.*

#### Barcode Youth Cafe.

*The aim of Barcode is to provide a safe, high quality venue for young people to adopt as their base in town. The venue provides a youth café, club style nights with resident DJ, chill out centre, karaoke, base for youth twinning visits, opportunity to play and listen to live music (Barcode, 2009). The core group ran a session that ended up only being with two participants. Despite this the session was tremendous.*

#### South Devon College (ages 8 to 58).

On their website, South Devon College quote their latest outstanding OFSTED report (Ofsted, 2008b). *Whether an 'A' Level student, a degree student, an apprentice, a vocational student, a basic skills' student or on an Adult & Community Learning student, the report conveys in great detail the way South Devon College ensures that each and every learner exceeds their potential.* The core group ran a session for a mixed group of children and adults. 9 participants aged 8 to 58 years.

#### 4 Junior High Schools (Japan).

Junior High schools in Japan serve as a bridge between elementary and high schools. They are in England what we might call 'middle' schools. These four Junior High schools are typical of the Junior High schools found in Japan. The sessions were very

novel for them and they received much media interest, particularly as they were being run by young people.

*The teaching force in lower-secondary schools is two-thirds male. Schools are headed by principals, 99% of whom were men in 1988. Teachers often majored in the subjects they taught, and more than 80% graduated from a four-year college. Classes are large, with thirty-eight students per class on average ... Instruction tends to rely on the lecture method. All course contents are specified in the Course of Study for Lower Secondary Schools. The curriculum covers Japanese language, social studies, mathematics, science, music, fine arts, health, and physical education. All students also are exposed to either industrial arts or homemaking. Moral education and special activities continue to receive attention. Students also attend mandatory club meetings during school hours, and many also participate in after-school clubs. The ministry recognises a need to improve the teaching of all foreign languages, especially English ... Two problems of great concern to educators and citizens began to appear at the lower-secondary level in the 1980s: bullying, which remains a major problem, and the school-refusal syndrome (toko kyohi—manifested by a student's excessive absenteeism), which was on the rise. (Wikipedia, 2009a).*

Note: In this appendix I have used Wikipedia to reference several of the institutions. Wikipedia was a last resort where there was no OFSTED reports or other independent references for these institutions. I have cross checked the Wikipedia references with either their own websites or a prospectus.

Although Wikipedia is not liked by many academics it can be argued that it is a continually growing and relevant medium with increasing verification measures in place. In 2005, a study by the magazine Nature found that Wikipedia was as accurate on science as the Encyclopedia Britannica (BBC, 2005).

Appendix 2.

25 definitions of bullying.

<b>Definition</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<i>Wilful conscious desire to hurt another and put him/her under stress.</i>	Tattum and Tattum, 1992.
<i>Being exposed repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students.</i>	Olweus, 1993.
<i>A systematic abuse of power.</i>	Smith and Sharp, 1994.
<i>Aggressive behaviour arising from the deliberate intent to cause physical or psychological distress to others.</i>	Randall, 1996.
<i>Anything which one or more people do to another person to hurt or upset them. Also, bullying does not happen once – it happens again and again.</i>	Hunter and Boyle, 2002.
<i>A continuum of behaviour that involves the attempt to gain power and dominance over another.</i>	Askew, 1988.
<i>Meant to hurt, deliberate and repeated over a period of time.</i>	Collins, 2004.
<i>Abuse of power, persistent, premeditated, causes pain and distress.</i>	Baker and Smith, 2005.
<i>Longstanding violence, physical or psychological, conducted by an individual or group and directed against an individual who is not able to defend himself in the actual situation.</i>	Roland, 1988.
<i>Social interaction where a more dominant individual exhibits aggressive behaviour which is intended to and does, in fact, cause distress to a less dominant individual.</i>	Stephenson and Smith, 1988.
<i>The repeated attack – physical, psychological, social or verbal – by those in a position of power, which is formally or situationally defined, on those who are powerless to resist, with the intention of causing distress for their own gain or gratification.</i>	Besag, 1991.
<i>Vicious aggressive behaviour, often repeated towards a victim who is unable to defend themselves effectively.</i>	Smith and Morita, 1999.
<i>Wilful, conscious desire to hurt someone else.</i>	Mellor, 1999.
<i>Repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others.</i>	Byrne, 1999.
<i>Continuous abusive behaviour, either physical or psychological, carried out by one student/students against another/others.</i>	Ortega & Mora-Merchan, 1999.
<i>Repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful one.</i>	Farrington in Junger-Tas, 1999.
<i>All kinds of physical or verbal aggression as well as intentional or thoughtless harming, ridiculing, humiliating and name calling of peers and younger children.</i>	Janowski, 1999.

25 definitions of bullying continued...

<b>Definition</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<i>Cruel, abusive behaviour which is persistent and pervasive and causes suffering to individuals which is severe and sustained.</i>	Rigby, 1996.
<i>Bullying involves a desire to hurt, plus a hurtful action and a power imbalance and (typically) repetition and an unjust use of power and evident enjoyment by the aggressor and generally a sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim.</i>	Rigby, 2002.
<i>A situation where one or several individuals persistently over a period of time perceive themselves to be on the receiving end of negative actions from one or several persons, in a situation where the target of bullying has difficulty in defending him or herself against these actions.</i>	Hoel, Faragher & Cooper, 2004.
<i>A social behaviour, often involving groups, takes place repeatedly over time, involves an imbalance of power, meets the needs of those holding the power, causes harm to those that are powerless to stop it, can take many forms: verbal, physical and psychological.</i>	Robinson and Maines, 2000.
<i>A form of aggression, a kind of behaviour that deliberately sets out to intimidate or hurt another person by causing them physical or psychological distress, and the bully is more powerful than the victim.</i>	Stones, 1998.
<i>Physical, verbal or psychological attack or intimidation that is intended to cause fear, distress or harm to the victim, and where the intimidation involves an imbalance of power in favour of the perpetrator.</i>	Slee, 2003.
<i>Physical, verbal or psychological attack or intimidation that is intended to cause fear, distress or harm to the victim, with a more powerful person oppressing a less powerful one.</i>	Baldry & Farrington, 2000.
<i>The incivilities which disturb school life (including impoliteness, noise, disorder, etc).</i>	Fabre-Cornali et al in Smith et al 1999.

Appendix 3.

Coding of bullying definitions.

<b>Defining words</b>	<b>References</b>
<i>Repeated, continuous, persistent, longstanding, sustained.</i>	Olweus, 1993; Hunter and Boyle, 2002; Collins, 2004; Askew, 1988; Baker and Smith, 2005; Roland, 1988; Besag, 1991; Smith and Morita, 1999; Byrne, 1999; Ortega & Mora-Merchan, 1999; Farrington in Junger-Tas, 1999; Rigby, 1996; Rigby, 2002; Hoel, Faragher & Cooper, 2004; Robinson and Maines, 2000.
<i>Wilful, deliberate, meant, intentional, premeditated, conscious, systematic.</i>	Tattum and Tattum, 1992; Randall, 1996; Collins, 2004; Stephenson and Smith, 1988; Besag, 1991; Mellor, 1999; Janowski, 1999; Stones, 1998; Baldry & Farrington, 2000 and Baker and Smith, 2005; Mellor, 1999; Smith and Sharp, 1994.
<i>Pervasive.</i>	Rigby, 1996.
<i>Desire to hurt.</i>	Tattum and Tattum, 1992; Mellor, 1999; Rigby, 2002; Stones, 1998.
<i>For gain or gratification, enjoyment.</i>	Besag, 1991; Rigby, 2002.
<i>Abuse of power, unjust use of power.</i>	Smith and Sharp, 1994; Baker and Smith, 2005; Rigby, 2002.
<i>Gain power.</i>	Askew, 1988.
<i>By those in power.</i>	Besag, 1991; Farrington in Junger-Tas, 1999; Robinson and Maines, 2000.
<i>Imbalance of power.</i>	Robinson and Maines, 2000; Stones, 1998; Slee, 2003; Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Rigby, 2002.
<i>Directed at those that are unable to defend.</i>	Roland, 1988; Hoel, Faragher & Cooper, 2004.
<i>Causes hurt, pain, harm, suffering, upset.</i>	Hunter and Boyle, 2002; Baker and Smith, 2005; Janowski, 1999; Rigby, 2002; Robinson and Maines, 2000; Rigby, 1996; Slee, 2003; Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Hunter and Boyle, 2002.
<i>Cause fear</i>	Slee, 2003; Baldry & Farrington, 2000
<i>Causes stress, cause distress.</i>	Tattum and Tattum, 1992; Randall, 1996; Baker and Smith, 2005; Stephenson and Smith, 1988; Besag, 1991; Stones, 1998; Slee, 2003; Baldry & Farrington, 2000.
<i>Aggressive behaviour, aggression.</i>	Randall, 1996; Stephenson and Smith, 1988; Smith and Morita, 1999; Byrne, 1999; Stones, 1988; Janowski, 1999.
<i>Violence.</i>	Roland, 1988.
<i>Abusive behaviour.</i>	Ortega & Mora-Merchan, 1999; Rigby, 1996.
<i>Exposure to negative actions by others.</i>	Olweus, 1993; Hoel, Faragher & Cooper, 2004.

Coding of bullying definitions continued...

<b>Defining words</b>	<b>References</b>
<i>Oppression, dominance, intimidation.</i>	Farrington in Junger-Tas, 1999; Rigby, 2002; Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Askew, 1988; Stephenson and Smith, 1988; Stones, 1998; Slee, 2003.
<i>Physical and psychological.</i>	Roland, 1988; Randall, 1996; Besag, 1991; Byrne, 1999; Ortega & Mora-Merchan, 1999; Farrington in Junger-Tas, 1999; Janowski, 1999; Robinson and Maines, 2000; Stones, 1998; Slee, 2003; Baldry & Farrington, 2000.
<i>Verbal.</i>	Byrne, 1999; Besag, 1991; Robinson and Maines, 2000; Slee, 2003; Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Janowski, 1999.
<i>Social, social interaction.</i>	Besag, 1991; Robinson and Maines, 2000; Stephenson and Smith, 1988.
<i>Ridiculing, humiliating, thoughtless.</i>	Janowski, 1999.
<i>Cruel, severe.</i>	Rigby, 1996.
<i>Vicious.</i>	Smith and Morita, 1999.
<i>Incivilities which disturb school life.</i>	Fabre-Cornali et al in Smith et al 1999.

Appendix 4.

Poem written by core group members that they used as part of their workshop.

Bully approach poem.

*Between the waves there is a sense of darkness,  
But pearls of light can be seen on the horizon,  
The bursting rainbow covered by stormy skies,  
Reflects a shining star full of hope.*

*Schemes and strategies forgotten like lost treasure,  
Available to all to help with good measure.*

*Curricular approaches will give you a guideline,  
To equip and enable students in the frontline.*

*Peer support,  
Peer listening,  
Meditation,  
Mentoring.  
Peer education,  
Befriending,  
And advocacy,  
Pupils uniting together in harmony,  
Keeping the good vibe eternally.*

*Support groups and shared concern  
Bringing pupils together, a safe place to learn.*

*There is circle time,  
Reducing bully crime,  
Also circle of friends,  
To help you make amends.*

*The waves now seem calmer than they were before,  
The light is now brighter shining on the shore,  
The clouds have parted and the rainbow is glowing,  
And he stars full of hope and continually flowing.*

By Michelle and Terry July 2007



Appendix 5.

Parental consent form.

I give my consent to \_\_\_\_\_\* participating in the anti-bullying film and research project, which will entail by son/daughter\*\* participating in creative drama workshops that may be filmed.

I also give my consent to my son/daughter\*\* to be filmed and interviewed for this film research project.

I understand that my son/daughter\*\* will be involved in regular skills training activities for this project and that the project will involve a trip abroad. Trained adults will supervise all the activities and the trip undertaken abroad.

My son/daughter\*\* will be going through a process of learning about issues of bullying and how to resolve them and will ultimately design and deliver their own anti-bullying project with other teenagers to groups in schools, youth clubs and other settings in Japan and England.

My son/daughter\*\* will not be forced to do anything they do not want to do and I understand that he/she\*\* may stop participating in the project if they so wish at any time.

I understand that this project will form part of a PhD research project through the University of Exeter, England.

My son/daughter\*\* will be given a free copy of the final film.

Read signed and agreed by \_\_\_\_\_

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

Please state whether you are parent or guardian of the above named young person

\_\_\_\_\_

Age and date of birth of the young person \_\_\_\_\_

Your telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Your address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\* Please write in your son or daughter's name here

\*\* Please delete as applicable

Please return form to:

Appendix 6.

Evaluation sheet given to participants of the core group's workshop sessions and teachers who observed the sessions.

Anti-Bullying Workshop Evaluation Sheet. This workshop is part of a small study about young people tackling bullying. Your name will not be shown to anyone, you will remain anonymous. Please answer all questions as honestly as you can. If you do not understand any of the words or phrases please ask a member of the team for help. Thank you very much.

- a) Date \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Name of school \_\_\_\_\_ c) Your age \_\_\_\_\_
- d) Tick the relevant box:    Male            Female?
- e) Overall what did you think of this workshop? (Please tick box)  
    Fantastic.    Good.    Fair.    Poor.
- f) How useful was this workshop for you? (Please tick box)  
    Outstandingly.    Very.    Partly.    Not at all.
- g) What did you like most about this workshop? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- h) What did you like least about this workshop? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- i) Name three things that you have learned in this workshop.  
1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_
- j) What does the word bullying mean to you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- k) What was it like having this workshop run by young people? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- l) Is there any difference being taught by young people rather than by adults?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- m) Would you like more sessions run by young people? (Please tick box)  
    Yes            No
- n) Why do you think more lessons are not taught by young people? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- o) Any other comments? \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 7

### Sample activities with the core group.

Mask interviews. The core group made their own masks, created characters with them and then I interviewed their masks. All of the interview questions and responses are improvised.

### Interview with Terry's mask of the bully.

Researcher *Hello.*  
Mask *Hi.*  
Researcher *What's your name?*  
Mask *Jim.*  
Researcher *Where you from Jim?*  
Mask: *NE London.*  
Researcher *What you been doin' today?*  
Mask *Just been hangin' around down the alley behind my house.*  
Researcher *Yeah.*  
Mask *Yeah with a couple of mates, havin' a pint.*  
Researcher *Havin a pint?*  
Mask *Yeah.*  
Researcher *How old are you Jim?*  
Mask *Um um um ... 15.*  
Researcher *You're 15.*  
Mask *Yeah.*  
Researcher *Where do you live?*  
Mask *I live in Paddy Rd.*  
Researcher *Who do you live with?*  
Mask *My mum.*  
Researcher *Your mum?*  
Mask *Yeah.*  
Researcher *What happened to your dad?*  
Mask *They broke up.*  
Researcher *Yeah? Do you see your dad?*  
Mask *No, he don't care about me.*  
Researcher *He doesn't care about you?*  
Mask *No.*  
Researcher *You got any brothers or sisters?*  
Mask *No.*  
Researcher *Just you and your mum on your own?*  
Mask *Yeah.*  
Researcher *Yeah? Is that all right?*  
Mask *Well she don't care about me.*  
Researcher *She don't care about you either?*  
Mask *I can come home any time I want.*  
Researcher *Can you?*  
Mask *Yeah!*  
Researcher *Is that fun?*  
Mask *Yeah ... That's a man's dream.*  
Researcher *Are you a man?*  
Mask *Yeah, I like to call myself a man.*

Researcher *Yeah?*  
 Mask *Yeah.*  
 Researcher *Are you tough?*  
 Mask *Yeah I am.*  
 Researcher *Yeah. Does nobody mess with you?*  
 Mask *No. If anyone step up to me I punch them in the face.*  
 Researcher *Yeah?*  
 Mask *Yeah!*  
 Researcher *What if somebody said something to your mum?*  
 Mask *Then they getting it ... bad.*  
 Researcher *But I thought your mother didn't care about you?*  
 Mask *Yeah but my mum is my mum.*  
 Researcher *So you gonna do them in are you?*  
 Mask *Yeah ... they don't have no right to say anything to my mum.*  
 Researcher *What's the most important thing in your life?*  
 Mask *My money.*  
 Researcher *Your money?*  
 Mask *Yeah.*  
 Researcher *Are you rich?*  
 Mask *Not really.*  
 Researcher *How do you get your money?*  
 Mask *I beat kids up for it.*  
 Researcher *Yeah?*  
 Mask *Yeah.*  
 Researcher *So they give it to you?*  
 Mask *Yeah they give it to me.*  
**Pause**  
 Researcher *Okay. What do you think about middle class kids?*  
 Mask *They're the easy ones, they have the most money too. Just punch them in their face, take their money off them and walk away , don't have to do no ruck.*  
 Researcher *Cool Anything you want to say to us?*  
 Mask *Nah, I don't. Just getin' on with my life.*  
 Researcher *Okay. Well you get on with your life.*  
 Mask *Yeah you get on with yours too.*  
 Researcher *I will and you ain't havin' any of my money. See you later.*  
 Mask *(kisses his teeth).*

Interview with Michelle's mask.

Researcher *Hiya.*  
 Mask *Hi.*  
 Researcher *What's your name?*  
 Mask *Bob Sawyer.*  
 Researcher *Bob who?*  
 Mask *Sawyer.*  
 Researcher *Bob Vasawyer?*  
 Mask *Bob Sawyer.*  
 Researcher *Yeah, are you foreign?*  
 Mask *No.*  
 Researcher *What kind of name is Bob Vaawyer then?*  
 Mask *Its not Vasawyer, its Sawyer.*

Researcher *Sawyer?*  
 Mask *Yeah.*  
 Researcher *What like soil?*  
 Mask *No.*  
 Researcher *What, what's it like then? I haven't heard of that name before. What is it like. Tom Sawyer, is he your brother?*  
 Mask *No.*  
 Researcher *No?*  
 Mask *Er er.*  
 Researcher *Do you know Tom Sawyer?*  
 Mask *No ... I've heard of him.*  
 Researcher *You've heard of him?*  
 Mask *Ur huh.*  
 Researcher *Okay. So where do you live um Tom ... oh it's not Tom is it ...*  
 Mask *Bob!*  
 Researcher *Bob. What like one of those things in the sea?*  
 Mask *Yeah.*  
 Researcher *Bob up and down.*  
 Mask *Yeah.*  
 Researcher *Okay, Bob, so what's your name, I mean where do you live?*  
 Mask *Why should I tell you?*  
 Researcher *Cause I've asked.*  
 Mask *I live ... I live in Weston-super-Mare.*  
 Researcher *In Weston-super-Mare?*  
 Mask *Yep.*  
 Researcher *Yeah? And er do you live, how old are you?*  
 Mask *I'm 43.*  
 Researcher *43?*  
 Mask *Yup.*  
 Researcher *Yeah? And who do you live with?*  
 Mask *I live with my daughter Amy.*  
 Researcher *Amy?*  
 Mask *Yup.*  
 Researcher *Yeah and what about your wife?*  
 Mask *Oh I recently got divorced.*  
 Researcher *Did you?*  
 Mask *Yup.*  
 Researcher *Okay, What was that your choice?*  
 Mask *Yup.*  
 Researcher *Yeah, why?*  
 Mask *Because she was violent.*  
 Researcher *She was violent?*  
 Mask *She was violent and controlling.*  
 Researcher *Violent and controlling?*  
 Mask *Yeah she used to beat up my, she used to beat up Amy and she wouldn't let me interfere at all.*  
 Researcher *Yeah?*  
 Mask *Yeah.*  
 Researcher *What did she used to do to Amy then?*  
 Mask *She used to lock her in her room and stuff.*  
 Researcher *Okay.*  
 Mask *Yeah.*

Researcher *Was that fun?*  
 Mask *No.*  
 Researcher *No?*  
 Mask *No.*  
 Researcher *Okay. So um you left her?*  
 Mask *Yeah.*  
 Researcher *How does Amy feel about that?*  
 Mask *She's happy she's good. I got full custody of her.*  
 Researcher *Yeah?*  
 Mask *Yeah.*  
 Researcher *Okay and does the mum ever see Amy?*  
 Mask *Not yet, we've only recently got divorced.*  
 Researcher *Okay, so since you've split up your daughter hasn't seen her?*  
 Mask *Not yet.*  
 Researcher *No?*  
 Mask *No.*  
 Researcher *Has she tried?*  
 Mask *No she hasn't.*  
 Researcher *She got another boyfriend?*  
 Mask *Not that I know of?*  
 Researcher *No? Okay. Does she still live around here or has she gone away?*  
 Mask *I don't know.*  
 Researcher *Don't know don't care?*  
 Mask *No.*  
 Researcher *Yeah. What about you, are you seeing anyone else?*  
 Mask *Nope.*  
 Researcher *No?*  
 Mask *No. It's all about Amy.*  
 Researcher *Just you and Amy yeah?*  
 Mask *Yeah.*  
 Researcher *Are you working?*  
 Mask *I do.*  
 Researcher *Yeah?*  
 Mask *Yup.*  
 Researcher *What do you do?*  
 Mask *I'm in architecture.*  
 Researcher *You're in architecture?*  
 Mask *Yup.*  
 Researcher *What you 'in' architecture?*  
 Mask *Yeah, in the field of architecture.*  
 Researcher *What, in the field of architecture, what as a field ...*  
 Mask *(Sighs).*  
 Researcher *... full of architecture?*  
 Mask *(Sighs).*  
 Researcher *Is there a field that's full or architecture?*  
 Mask *No!*  
 Researcher *So you said you are in the field of architecture?*  
 Mask *The field as in (sighs) .*  
 Researcher *Do you get upset easily Bob?*  
 Mask *No.*  
 Researcher *No?*  
 Mask *No. You're just asking difficult questions.*

Researcher *Okay, what like your job?*  
 Mask *Yeah (laughs).*  
 Researcher *Okay, so how long have you been in the 'field' of architecture?*  
 Mask *13 years.*  
 Researcher *13 years?*  
 Mask *Yup.*  
 Researcher *Is it your dream job?*  
 Mask *No.*  
 In *No? Do you like it a little bit?*  
 Mask *Yeah. Yeah it's all right all right as it goes.*  
 Researcher *What would your dream job be?*  
 Mask *I don't even know.*  
 Researcher *No?*  
 Mask *No.*  
 Researcher *Don't you have any dreams?*  
 Mask *Just a safe future for me and Amy init.*  
 Researcher *Yeah, okay. Init yeah. You don't sound like you're originally from Weston-super-Mare.*  
 Mask *I was born in London.*  
 Researcher *Born in London?*  
 Mask *Yup.*  
 Researcher *Okay ... okay. How long have you been living here?*  
 Mask *Been here ... 16 years.*  
 Researcher *16 years?*  
 Mask *Yeah.*  
 Researcher *Okay, so you only got into the 'field' of architecture once you moved here.*  
 Mask *Yep.*  
 Researcher *Is that cause it's like a rural country and er got lots of fields.*  
 Mask *Yeah (laughs) That's exactly why (laughs).*  
 Researcher *Okay. So do you miss London?*  
 Mask *No.*  
 Researcher *No. Not (pause). What about your family, Amy's grandparents and stuff?*  
 Mask *Yeah Betty Sue grandmother, my mother.*  
 Researcher *What about her mum's parents?*  
 Mask *Oh they still see her.*  
 Researcher *They still see her?*  
 Mask *Yeah they are lovely people .*  
 Researcher *Okay and so you get on with them alright?*  
 Mask *Yeah.*  
 Researcher *Okay and they kinda accepted what happened?*  
 Mask *Yeah. Well they know what she's like, so ...*  
 Researcher *Yeah okay, so she's always been a violent person?*  
 Mask *Yup.*  
 Researcher *So why did you hook up with her in the first place?*  
 Mask *Because she wasn't violent to begin with, she hid it, she was violent but she hid it well.*  
 Researcher *Okay. So tell me something that you believe in.*  
 Mask *I believe in keeping my daughter safe.*  
 Researcher *Okay, and what do you think is the best way to keep her safe?*  
 Mask *Keeping her away from her mother ... for the moment.*  
 Researcher *Okay, cool. anything else you want to say to us.*

## Appendix 8.

### External peer support (EPS) example training module.

#### Session 1: Introductory session. All day (suggest six hours).

- 9:00 Introductions and physical warm-up
- 10:00 Voice warm up. Demonstrate importance of voice warm ups (see Berry, 1975)
- 10:30 Trust games (see Hickson, 1995)
- 11:00 Introduce theories of childhood (see Mooney, 2000)
- 11:30 Group members each choose a theory and creates a demonstration of that theory.
- 11:45 Show presentations
- 12:00 Lunch
- 13:00 Energy, groupwork and focus games (see Hickson, 1995)
- 13:35 Drawing stereotypes: the bully, the bullied, the empowered person
- 13:45 Share pictures and discuss
- 13:50 Separately each person creates a short ritual that represents giving power to them or powering themselves up
- 14:00 Share each others rituals
- 14:10 The group learn each others rituals
- 14:20 The group join up all the rituals together into one synchronised ritual: they all do each others rituals – just made in to one (one minute in length). Practice.
- 14:30 Perform ritual. Discuss. Practice again
- 14:40 Perform ritual again
- 14:45 Refreshments break
- 15:00 Energy game (see Hickson, 1995)
- 15:10 Mask-making (using white disposable plates, string and felt-tip pens).  
Each participant makes two masks: A Mask of the bully and a Mask of someone overcoming bullying. (If you finish early create a history or help others).
- 15:30 Show masks. Each mask is introduced with a brief history. You are the voice for your masks.
- 15:40 Hot seat people wearing a mask (does not have to be their own mask), they must answer as if they are the character of the mask.
- 15:45 As a group tell each other a story of bullying, one that they have experienced themselves.
- 15:50 Combine all three stories in to one story
- 16:00 Create a short play/scene/presentation of the new story. You may use the masks if you wish. Rehearse the scene. Characterisation!
- 16:10 Perform the scene
- 16:15 Feedback
- 16:20 Create a collage of the masks on the floor. You are responsible to the placing of your own two masks. You may move them until you are happy with their position in relation to all the other masks. Discuss the collage
- 16:30 Think about what you have learned today
- 16:40 Write reflective diaries
- 16:55 Questions and answers
- 17:00 Finish

#### Session 2: What is bullying session. (suggest four hours).

- 10:00 Physical warm-up
- 10:30 Voice warm up (see Berry, 1975)



- 11:00 Trust game (see Hickson, 1995)
- 11:15 Think about what the word bullying means to you. Share your idea with a partner.
- 11:30 Mind map on flipchart: What does the word bullying represent to us?
- 12:00 Lunch
- 13:00 Energy game (see Hickson, 1995)
- 13:15 As a group look at current definitions of bullying  
Discuss, share, argue, reason.
- 13:45 Using the mind map and the definitions as a group co-construct your own definition of bullying. Keep in mind the reasons for the definition: So the group has it's own understanding in order to create their workshop and if a participant asks what it means to you that you have an answer.
- 14:15 Group leader questions the groups definitions, finds holes, argues against and gets them really thinking deeply about why they have chosen certain words and positions. Group continues to build their definition.
- 14:30 Think about what you have learned today
- 14:40 Write reflective diaries
- 14:55 Questions and answers
- 15:00 Finish

Session 3: Use and abuse of power session. (suggest four hours).

- 10:00 Physical warm-up
- 10:30 Voice warm up (see Berry, 1975)
- 11:00 Trust game (see Hickson, 1995)
- 11:15 Game of power (see Hickson, 1995)
- 12:00 Lunch
- 13:00 Blind car (see Hickson, 1995)
- 13:15 Follow the palm (see Hickson, 1995)
- 13:30 Power walks (see Hickson, 1995)
- 13:45 Pass the power (see Hickson, 1995: Pass the clap)
- 14:00 Think about the groups definition of bullying in relation to the work done in this session. Does the group want to make any changes to their definition?
- 14:15 Images of power (see Hickson, 1995)
- 14:30 Think about what you have learned today
- 14:40 Write reflective diaries
- 14:55 Questions and answers
- 15:00 Finish

Session 4: Self confidence and empowerment session. (suggest four hours).

- 10:00 Physical warm-up
- 10:30 Voice warm up (see Berry, 1975)
- 11:00 Trust game (see Hickson, 1995)
- 11:15 Rehearse and perform ritual from session 1
- 12:00 Lunch
- 13:00 In pairs discuss what makes us feel confident. Create a presentation demonstrating this. Show presentations.
- 13:30 What is empowerment. Create a mind map in flip chart. Discuss.
- 14:00 Blind run (see Hickson, 1995)
- 14:10 Goalkeeper (see Hickson, 1995)
- 14:20 Images of empowerment (see Hickson, 1995). Discuss imagery.

- 14:30 Think about what you have learned today
- 14:40 Write reflective diaries
- 14:55 Questions and answers
- 15:00 Finish

Session 5: Role-play, identity and empathy session. (suggest four hours).

- 10:00 Physical warm-up
- 10:30 Voice warm up (see Berry, 1975)
- 11:00 Trust game (see Hickson, 1995)
- 11:15 Perform group ritual
- 11:20 On your own think about something important to you and the reasons why it is important. Create a short scene demonstrating this think in action. Perform scenes to each other. In pairs join scenes to create one scene. Show new scenes. Discuss.
- 12:00 Lunch
- 13:00 Trust game (see Hickson, 1995)
- 13:15 Using the scenes created before lunch as material the group embarks on a forum theatre session (see Hickson, 1995) to explore each other's feelings.
- 14:00 Mirror, mirror on the wall (see Hickson, 1995)
- 14:30 Think about what you have learned today
- 14:40 Write reflective diaries
- 14:55 Questions and answers
- 15:00 Finish

Session 6: Experiencing other people's techniques session. (suggest four hours).

Another facilitator not connected to the group should run this session. The brief is that they should run a creative anti-bullying workshop with your participants. Let them design their own session and run it from their perspective. End the session the same way with diaries and a question and answer session.

Session 7: Recap and alternative strategies session. (suggest four hours).

- 10:00 Physical warm-up
- 10:30 Voice warm up (see Berry, 1975)
- 11:00 Trust game (see Hickson, 1995)
- 11:15 Perform group ritual
- 11:30 Mind map: Recap everything learned and everything seen of heard that the group feels is important to date. Discuss.
- 12:00 Lunch.
- 13:00 Facilitator presents a range of anti-bullying strategies. Group tries them out with each other through various role-plays. Discuss what works well and the reasons why it works well.
- 14:00 Each group member presents an activity that in some way incorporates one the of the strategies in the form of a game. All participate. Discuss.
- 14:30 Think about what you have learned today
- 14:40 Write reflective diaries
- 14:55 Questions and answers
- 15:00 Finish

Session 8: Developing own workshop session. (suggest four hours).

- 10:00 Physical warm-up
- 10:30 Voice warm up (see Berry, 1975)
- 11:00 Trust game (see Hickson, 1995)
- 11:15 Perform group ritual
- 11:20 As a group create a mind map of what is needed in an anti-bullying workshop. Include aims, objectives, tasks, reasons, logistics, needs, wants etc
- 12:00 Lunch
- 13:00 Trust game (see Hickson, 1995)
- 13:15 As a group create a first draft workshop plan
- 14:15 Facilitator question some of the activities, order and reasoning behind the plan. Finish first draft plan.
- 14:30 Think about what you have learned today
- 14:40 Write reflective diaries
- 14:55 Questions and answers
- 15:00 Finish

Session 9: Developing own workshop session 2. (suggest four hours).

- 10:00 Physical warm-up
- 10:30 Voice warm up (see Berry, 1975)
- 11:00 Trust game (see Hickson, 1995)
- 11:15 Perform group ritual
- 11:20 Go over first draft plan. Discuss, amend and add or delete as necessary.
- 12:00 Lunch
- 13:00 Trust game (see Hickson, 1995)
- 13:15 Each participant starts to present elements of the created workshop. This not only gives participants confidence in presenting it also gives groups members an idea of how well an activity might work.
- 14:00 Go over first draft plan. Discuss, amend and add or delete as necessary. How will group members deliver the session. Who will keep time and who will deliver which activities or which elements of the session.
- 14:30 Think about what you have learned today
- 14:40 Write reflective diaries
- 14:55 Questions and answers
- 15:00 Finish

Session 10: Testing out own workshop session 1. (suggest two hours).

The group would have created a one hour creative anti-bullying workshop. I suggest that this is tested out with students their own age or younger. A group of up to 30 students should be adequate. Let them run the whole session – let the fail if need be. You as group leader should not intervene at all. The group need to learn how to get themselves out of trouble.

Following the workshop have a group feedback session. Let the participants feedback to your core group what they thought of the session, how they think it could be improved, what they liked and what they did not like.

Remember to leave time for reflective diaries.

Session 11: Reassess and redesign own workshop session. (suggest four hours).

- 10:00 Physical warm-up
- 10:30 Voice warm up (see Berry, 1975)
- 11:00 Trust game (see Hickson, 1995)
- 11:15 Perform group ritual
- 11:20 Discuss experience of last session. Use the experience to draw up a final workshop plan
- 12:00 Lunch
- 13:00 Trust game (see Hickson, 1995)
- 13:15 Continue refining workshop plan.
- 13:45 Half the group runs half the workshop to the other half and then change over (You will find that as they know the activities it will run quicker than normal)
- 14:00 Draw up final plan
- 14:40 Write reflective diaries
- 14:55 Questions and answers
- 15:00 Finish

Session 12: Testing out own workshop session 2. (suggest two hours).

The group would have created a one hour creative anti-bullying workshop. I suggest that this is tested out with students their own age or younger. A group of up to 30 students should be adequate. Let them run the whole session – let them fail if need be. You as group leader should not intervene at all. The group need to learn how to get themselves out of trouble.

Following the workshop have a group feedback session. Let the participants feedback to your core group what they thought of the session, how they think it could be improved, what they liked and what they did not like.

Remember to leave time for reflective diaries.

Session 13: Reassess and redesign own workshop session. (suggest four hours).

- 10:00 Physical warm-up
- 10:30 Voice warm up (see Berry, 1975)
- 11:00 Trust game (see Hickson, 1995)
- 11:15 Perform group ritual
- 11:20 Discuss experience of last session. Use the experience to draw up a final workshop plan
- 12:00 Lunch
- 13:00 Trust game (see Hickson, 1995)
- 13:15 Image of the group (see Hickson, 1995)
- 14:00 Group body sculpt – theme of empowerment (see Hickson, 1995)
- 14:30 Think about what you have learned today
- 14:40 Write reflective diaries
- 14:55 Questions and answers
- 15:00 Finish

## Appendix 9.

### Workshop feedback totals from the users/participants of the core group's sessions.

#### Total number of participants.

Male	40
Female	32
Total	72

#### What did YOU think of this workshop?

Fantastic	46
Good	25
Fair	0
Poor	0
Not answered	1

#### How USEFUL was this workshop for you?

Outstandingly	17
Very	35
Partly	19
Not at all	0
Not answered	1

#### What did you like MOST about this workshop?

##### Singing and dancing.

I liked it when we had to make a play, song,  
or poem and the walk. 1

The song at the start 1

The dance at the start 1

##### Walk of Power.

The walk of power/Power walk 9

The power walk and the games 2

##### Drama/acting.

The drama and the power walk 1

The drama/I like doing the short  
drama scenes the most/Doing the drama 9

I liked doing and watching other people's dramas 1

When we do the acting/The acting/The acting  
we got to do 3

##### Games.

Playing all the bully games and the drama session 1

Playing the games/The games/I like playing  
the games 17

Lava game 3

The games about bullying 1

The games and the play/The plays and games 2

The drama and the lava game 1

The drama and games 1

The games and power dance at the beginning 1

##### Teamwork.

Team work games 1

Groupwork 1

Loads of group things, working with new people	1
Terry's power walk and group working	1
<u>Misc answers.</u>	
That they actually convince people to stand up for themselves or stop bullying people	1
We get to learn what not to do	1
How we learnt as the same time as playing	1
How it teaches students to stand up for themselves	1
The stuff we done	1
The active side of their ideas	1
When we could express our feelings	1
They weren't afraid of messing up and could trust us	1
Fun	1
All of it/Everything	5
The active pieces, the raised my confidence	1

What did you like LEAST about this workshop?

The beginning.

The poem by Michelle as I could not understand it that much.	1
When they did the song/poem at the start. It was creepy.	1
The bit at the very start/The intro	3

Drama.

The drama	2
The play that Terry and Michelle did at the beginning	2

Liked everything.

I liked it all/Nothing/It was all Good/I think there was nothing to dislike/Nothing was boring/Nothing at all/I didn't hate anything	38
--	----

The power walk.

The power walk.	2
Watching people do the power walk.	1

Games.

The clap (researcher: one of the games)	1
Power games	1
The lava game	4

Misc answers.

When there was a lot of noise by other people	1
Standing around.	1
Bullying.	1
We can learn something (researcher: did he understand the question?)	1
It got a bit boring	1
Didn't have loads you could relate to except drama thing	1
The briefness of the strategies.	1
The ladies scruffy handwriting.	1
This sheet	1

I don't know/Thinking of stuff to write here.	2
Illegible/not answered/did not answer	5

Name three things that you have LEARNED in this workshop.

Strategies.

Tell someone/Tell someone if you're being bullied	4
Not to be nasty.	1
Stand up for yourself/How to stick up for myself/Stick up for yourself/How to stand up to bullies	4
Speak for yourself	1
Help others/To help others with their bullying problems	2
Stop bullying/How to stop bullying/Ways to stop bullying	6
Not to punch	1
Not to kick.	1
Tell a teacher/Tell a teacher or someone/Tell a teacher or adult/Tell an adult	4
Walk away/Just walk away when people are bullying you/Run away when people are bullying you	3
Strategies of dealing with bullying/How to deal with bullying/How to stop bullying/To use strategies/Different strategies	13
To sort it out/How to sort things out/How to solve problems	4
Walking with pride.	1
What to do if I'm getting picked on/bullied	2
Martial arts helps.	1
Don't hide it away.	1
Teachers can do something about it.	1
Not to laugh at people.	1
Act like a friend and then they will be your friend.	1
How not to bully and prevent it/Not to bully/Never to bully	5
Do not retaliate.	1
How to deal with things.	1
To be happy.	1
Not to leave people out/Not to leave anyone out of games.	2
The names of websites that will help	2
Not to harm anyone	1
How to work better against bully.	1
That if can stop it do it	1
<u>Bullying.</u>	
Bullying/About bullying	3
What types of bullying there are/Different kinds of bullying/More ways of bullying? What types of bullying there are/That there is more than one type of bullying/Different ways bully/	11

Bullying words	1
Name calling.	1
Ignoring is bullying/Ignoring is a type of bullying	2
Bullying is not a joke/Bullying is Serious/That bullying can be very serious	3
Bullying is what you think it is.	1
How bullying affects people.	1
That bullying isn't just kicking, hitting etc.	1
How much it can hurt someone/It hurts people	2
Bullying is a giant problem.	1
To stop bullying.	1
That people don't know if someone been bullied.	1
That stopping bullying is very important.	1
Why not to bully/Not to bully	4
<u>Drama.</u>	
Drama	6
Role play.	1
To act/How to act	2
<u>Games and activities.</u>	
Games/Three games/More games/	
New games/playing games	9
Different games.	1
The Powerful /Walk of power/Attitude walk	7
Try to get across the lava.	1
Power walk anything you want it to be	1
<u>Misc or not sure.</u>	
It's possible to hop and carry	1
More name.	1
ipoweri.	1
Don't put yourself.	1
To have proper fun	1
To be able to express my feelings (researcher: this was a boy)	1
To push myself to the limit.	1
I like to take part	1
How to feel good about walking.	1
Most people think that the teacher isn't listening.	1
To take power into anti bullying	1
Not to abuse power	1
Different ways to do.	1
Know how to do it.	1
Everyone can be friends/Wherever you go you can make new friends	2
Martial arts isn't just kicking and punching.	1
Having power.	1
Confidence	1
Strength	1
Anything is possible	1

NOTE: There are at least ten more pages of these evaluation totals. If the reader wishes to see them please contact the researcher Andy Hickson via e-mail: [hickson@hotmail.com](mailto:hickson@hotmail.com)



## Appendix 10.

### Example core group transcript.

Tape Number: 9. Interview with Terry and Michelle (continued from tape 8).

#### Terry

..... *to do something towards society. I myself, you know, hey I've done something good.*

#### Michelle

*So that makes you feel good.*

#### Terry

*Yeah, yeah.*

#### Michelle

*If you didn't get that, you'd be less likely y to want to do something good. So it's a good thing that you feel good for helping other people because it makes you want to help other people more. When people say they help people for the sake of helping people not for the satisfaction or what they're going to gain, they're lying to themselves and they're lying to the other people.*

#### Terry

*I see myself as a stepping stone for other people because once someone sees me doing something they think, 'hey he's doing it like this and he's talking about it and he's having a good time and he's also helping people at the same time'. It motivates other people and that's why I feel that I'm here. I want to show other people that even though I'm doing four A' levels, I'm doing this, I'm doing that, but I still, you know....., Whatever you do, you always still have some time that you can at least contribute towards society and you can make that difference. If no one actually does make use of that time, then issues are going to get worse and you know, no one is going to have time to take care and if someone looks at me and goes, he's not doing it so why should I do it, I can give that excuse to people to say, look he's not doing it. I am doing it now. If I can do it then everyone else can. Everyone else can put that equal amount of effort into it, you know, to actually make that difference. If we do get people to do it, then people look back and other people look at that person and say, that person is doing it so why aren't you doing it, why aren't I doing it and it just gets more people into it.*

#### Michelle

*Like a chain letter.*

#### Terry

*Yeah, yeah.*

#### Researcher

*Do you think that to be involved in a project like this you need to have that seed inside of you that it's something you really want to be involved in or do you think that there's a way of capturing people to get involved in something like this and ultimately they don't really believe it or actually really want to do it, they just do it because they feel obliged to or forced to?*

Michelle

*I think it's possible to do that but you're not going to get, you're not going to get the same effects that it has on people who really, who really want to do it. You can easily rope people in with all sorts of anything to say do this but it's not the people who are....the other people who are meant to be involved are not going to believe it They're not going to think, oh this is such an important issue we have to do something about this or that workshop really helped me because there's going to be something in the back of their minds thinking was that all a joke, was that a serious thing, you know, the people running this workshop weren't very enthusiastic. You've got to have....It's better to have people who have passion for the issue and want to....can have real objective views and stuff, that want to do it rather than just people who haven't really.....,who say, yeah I'll do that, that sounds kind of cool. You need the positive energy and need the drive to be able to have the impact on people rather than just thinking, yeah well I could do that, I'm not busy that day kind of thing.*

Terry

*If you don't have the passion to do it when other people see you they don't get that feeling that person really wants to do it or that person is really into doing it or they can do it. If someone is doing it for the sake of it then the actual thing is not portrayed as being like that, taken seriously, you know. They look at you and think you can't even do it properly. If someone is really into it then they'll try in that way and then even if they can't actually do it, that trying thing covers that, you know, builds a bridge over that thing. I think that's really important what you said, yeah.*

Researcher

*So Michelle, when I initially asked the question do you feel there's a selfish bit of you that helps you if you like or gives you the drive to be involved in something like this..... What am I trying to say here? I don't know what I'm trying to say.*

Michelle

*We'll come back to it later then.*

Researcher

*Yeah, we'll come back to it.....But no actually it kind of moves I think to a sensitive topic if you like or a sensitive area and that is and this is.....your honesty will be really appreciated here because you've experienced this.....,since the project started we've had what I would call two major drop outs. It started and then we had two people leave, then we recruited again and then we had those three members leave and then we've had a couple of people who have nearly been involved but didn't quite make it and now Michelle you've come back into the fold. So the group itself has gone through quite a lot of changes. Terry, you'll have an unique view on this because you've seen the whole thing happening in your own eyes but from within the group so they're different from my eyes. Can you analyse a) why you think - your own experience will be useful here - why people have dropped out. Is it something about the process? Is it something about the people themselves? Is it something about my expectations of people, for example. Is it to do with me? Why do you think it's happened?*

Terry.

*First of all I think that before everything comes out, what ever decisions are made, people have certain things to do which they feel are more important than other things and obviously if they have pressure from their families or friends to do one thing and*

*the other, then they'd probably go towards that direction more because its hard to go against your parents words about doing certain things and so forth. If that's overcome and you continue in the same path, I think certain people need certain things to look forward to, you know. There's certain people who do it because they feel that whatever they do is still making a difference but other people would do it as a job. If you think about it they'll want to do it and get something out of it physically not within themselves.*

Researcher.

*Like a wage?*

Terry.

*Yeah, a wage, a physical wage. Some people would do it because they feel that it's like food for their heart, if you know what I mean, something that they're doing properly. If you don't give them that thing to look forward to then that motivation goes. That's something that I really saw, for example, after we came back from Japan we met here but then it was less lively and some people didn't turn up, communication was broken and lost. Even if someone, one person does try, you can't always keep it circulating. The chain is broken somewhere so it stops. I felt that was a thing. Personally I feel that the trip should have been at the end and that would have kept everyone motivated throughout, people would have and kept that communication link going and we could have stayed intact. Certain people...I mean you can't tell from the outside why they are doing it, you know. They can say one thing but mean another thing. So I mean, to actually not be taken down by that factor, just to be on the safe side, keep the trip at the end and that would have kept, what personally I think, from what I've heard and what I've been told and what I've experienced myself, I think personally why the others have left is because there is nothing to look forward to now, do you know what I mean? Its just like being here and then doing something.....,*

Michelle.

*They don't get the satisfaction out of doing the workshops and seeing that, how other people benefit.....,*

Terry

*Yeah.*

Michelle.

*They see less benefits for themselves so therefore they think, well what's the point in me doing this when I've got so much out of it already, I don't need to do this, I already know this, I've already done this.*

Terry

*Yeah, absolutely. You get that feeling as well. And as I saw certain things as in, if I couldn't do something and I had this big thing coming up, I will try to do it, I will .....*

Michelle

*....Overcome it*

Terry

*Yeah, overcome it because I will be in that state where I'm getting this arousal where hey we're going somewhere, you know, let me just give it a try and I'll do it. But I saw*

*for myself, after that thing was over, when the big trip to Japan was over, people didn't have that arousal in them anymore and it was like.....*

Michelle

*They probably enjoyed the trip more than the actual project.*

Terry

*Yeah that's it and the same thing before the trip, someone will get motivated and they will do it but after the trip it's like there's nothing in there no more, there's nothing pushing them, like I cant do this no more, I'm not bothered, stop making me do it. It's like, you get that kind of attitude and I don't know. That's what I've experienced and it's like probably the main source of why people have dropped out because they're not seeing the light any more for example. I mean, different people see light in different ways and obviously, their light was just going to Japan and.....as far as I can see. I might be wrong but from.....because I knew them personally as well...so I'm not sure.*

Researcher

*Before Michelle says anything Terry, using your same analysis on the beginning group, how would you use your analysis for Michelle and Lorna dropping out for example?*

Terry

*That was the thing that I said in the start where, you know, certain things are prioritised more than other things and if you've got family and friends or whoever, even yourself, if you think that that directions the best for you then it's hard to go to the other direction because if you did and then you didn't get what you wanted out of that, then you'd blame yourself and you'd think, why did I do that. That would put you off for the rest of the time from going into that environment again - do you know what I mean? For example, if I was to leave this course work that I had to do and I came to this thing and then I failed my whatever, the next time I was asked to go to the session or whatever, I would think differently about it. I would automatically label it as something bad. I think it was the right decision for themselves because they know best for themselves. I think if it was to benefit themselves and, you know, keep that path open because, I mean, Michelle's rejoined and that's better than her not rejoining now, you know, leaving then and not actually coming.....going through then, but then having finding out she's done something, messed something up, you know with something else and then not coming here now and completely abandoning it. I think she's done the right decision to actually go forward with her thing there and then to complete that and rejoin again rather than joining then and then messing that up and then forgetting this because it's messed that up, you know, it sort of ties big knots in things. I think them sort of decisions I fully respect and I feel at certain times I would actually have to, you know, not go to certain things, you know, to actually keep it balanced, yeah.*

Researcher

*On that it's always been very clear hasn't it? I can think of....That decision you made very early on, you didn't leave it. As soon as you realised it you were honest and you let me know and the others know what your decision was, as soon as you knew you didn't say yeah, no, yeah, no, you said ok its come to a point, that's what my decision is and then we had time to.....*

Michelle

*Get other people..,*

Researcher

*... get other people and what have you. Also you kind of called it a carrot, the visit to Japan.*

Terry

*Why a carrot?*

Researcher

*No alright, sorry, you called it as a.....,*

Terry

*... is it when.....*

Researcher

*... that's not the word you used but an incentive, you said that it is some kind of incentive. The trip to Japan was available to both of you right from the very start, wasn't it? So in terms of it being an incentive, in the beginning it didn't keep, it didn't sort of....., you weren't thinking, oh I want to go to Japan, I'm going to stay just because I want to go to Japan. So what my question is, is that it's always been there, you've suggested that it might have been an incentive for some people and that – and I do take on board that if we'd had it right at the end then it might have kept some people on board right to the end.*

Michelle

*But then do you want to keep those people on board just because of the trip.*

Researcher

*That was going to be my question, yes – what is in here and what are you going to portray in your workshops.*

Michelle

*Of course it was a difficult decision but Japan wasn't the main thing on my mind. It was like, ok, well, I've got the rest of my life to visit Japan. I've got two major things that I'm doing, I've got this project which is almost like an extra curriculum activity, like going swimming after school but more intense than that and then you've got your education which you've been in like you've been in a solid stretcher since you were four years old and you can see the finish line and there's only a couple more years and you just don't want to have to re-do that. That was kind of the main thing. It's like this project, said it was going to be available. It wasn't the fact that I was missing Japan, it was the fact that either I put a hundred per cent into one of them or fifty per cent into each. I just didn't think that was fair to me or the group to just put half my effort in and then recent, if I failed something, resenting one of the groups. I thought it would be better for me to just do, because I couldn't get the time off college, just to do that....., It was just during the term time I couldn't give up the time.*

Terry

*Yeah, same for me during other projects as well. There were certain times where it was pulling me but then again I was thinking that if I do not like attend the last few weeks of school, because what it is that they want us to actually work throughout the summer.....,*

Michelle

*Start on A'levels.*

Terry

*Yeah, start in that frame of mind so I thought....., I did speak to the teacher but you know there are certain things where you have to feel.....you do it but then you do it so that it benefits that indirectly because then again if I didn't go and something bad happened then I'd probably think the next time Andy called me up and said, you coming down, I'd probably think maybe not because.....,*

Michelle

*It kind of, not un-purifies it, that's kind of the wrong type of word, it kind of ....Its a thing you look forward to doing and its something that you're really up for and it's something you do because you can help other people and yeah, it makes you feel good and then if it's got, if you associate it with bad things then you're not going to want to do it any more.*

Terry

*Yeah. It's that psychological effect, I think, how you.....,if you see something bad going on you automatically label it as bad. For example if I hear a song and something bad was going on at that time, then the next time I hear that some it will remind me about that bad thing. Trying to prevent that, that's the reason, I think, certain times it is right, I feel it's right to take that certain path and still keep it as something that shows it in a positive light.*

Researcher

*You know I always like, if at all possible to see the positives in things and in people and to be fair on the three that have recently left, the official line was that the school would not give them the time off.*

Michelle

*That's probably true. I wouldn't doubt that was true.*

Terry

*I don't think that's true.*

Michelle

*Do you not?*

Terry

*I'm sorry but I just do not think that that was true. Can I.....*

Researcher

*Yeah, yeah.*

Terry

*Because at the end of the day I've been in secondary school myself. I've been in year ten as well and I know what it's like. I've been in the same systematic way that they're going through things as well. Most schools, to my knowledge, they won't start something at the end of year ten.*

Michelle

*That's kind of like, that's not the point. It's like school, it depends what kind of school your at, but schools have a thing about attendance. They...you... hardly... it's really*

*difficult unless...like it's the Japan thing that probably made them say yes as well because it's like, good exposure and it's Japan and they can put it in their school, not curriculum but they can put it in their glossy thing.....,*

Researcher

*Prospectus – They have done.*

Michelle

*Yeah, prospectus and then it's like, three of our pupils missed two weeks off school to do workshops. It's not as glamorous. It's kind of a glamour thing I think. They probably didn't say a downright no but they probably frowned upon it and that probably had an effect on the decisions they made.*

Terry

*The thing is, it's year ten and there are no major exams in year ten as far as I know.*

Michelle

*You've got just the end of year exams.*

Terry

*Yeah but that's internal exams isn't it? You can do that a week later or...*

Michelle

*It's like mock exams. Schools make a big deal out them. Every exam they make a big deal about.*

Researcher

*It's the last week of term remember that we're talking about.*

Terry

*If they were doing mocks, they would do them in May, June, do you reckon? Mock exams.....*

Michelle

*I think it's around now because it's not the same time that they do they're GCSE's. It's later isn't it?*

Terry

*I think it's earlier because GCSE's is a long period and they don't interfere with.....*

Researcher

*Just to re-focus on that point - Both of you have had to take, you at the beginning Michelle and you Terry more so recently this year in January, have had to take time off your studies to be involved - have you gone and approached your teachers yourselves or have you expected me to go in and try and sort things out with your teachers for you.*

Terry

*I approached my teachers myself and I thought that if I can handle it myself and I can explain it to them myself it would probably be more effective than someone else calling in because at the end of the day if they completely restricted me and then said completely no without a reason, I would probably ask Andy to probably send a letter or something. At the end of the day, if it's for a good reason and you're not doing*

*anything productive, then it's not bad and if you have the ability to catch up later on, then I'm willing to put that effort in. That's what I had to do with the Japan thing. I came back and I missed an exam on the Friday I think it was but it was alright because after I came back my teacher said you have another week just to revise it and on that following Friday she gave me the exam and I did it and it was fine.*

Researcher

*Did you pass?*

Terry

*Yeah, I passed, hopefully yeah. It did take double the effort but then I thought, that's life, you know, certain times you are going to have to put double the effort in and you know, you're doing it for a good reason as well. So that effort and the effort in Japan all comes down together and it all links up as well, so I don't mind doing that at all. Teachers do give you that opportunity to do it unless it's obviously an official exam and you can't do it at another time then it's not a good enough excuse. Coming back on to that point, if you're not doing anything in school then I don't see why teachers have to keep you because this educational thing can be counted as attendance as well, do you know what I mean?*

Michelle

*Yeah, yeah, voluntary work.*

Terry

*If they really wanted to they could send the register to Andy and get him to fill it out if they were late or if they came on time. That is attendance.*

Michelle

*Yeah.*

Terry

*And you know, if you're going to come to work, that is what everyone is aiming for, you're going to have this kind of situation where you're going to have to turn up to certain things on time.*

Michelle

*If anything this is better than.....,*

Terry

*Yeah, absolutely.*

Michelle

*This is better for your C.V – to have this on your C.V rather than saying, oh yes I stayed in school for the past few weeks and all we did was sit around eating sweets and watching DVDs.*

Terry

*And this attendance will probably mean more to jobs than school because obviously school, you think of school like well I might be late or I have to be on time for the sake of it but this is more like something away from school and you can practice your attendance in a real life situation. If the school really wanted to do that, they could. They could at least talk to Andy and say, you know, suggest the idea or different ideas of*



*how they could work around it but obviously the way it's looking at it.....the members themselves aren't asking Andy for advise or, you know, if they were really into it they would probably get Andy on their side and they would work together, work themselves against the school. The school, I don't think.....*

Researcher

*I did actually offer both with Robin and Tanya if they wanted to have a meeting with the school or with the teachers and so on but they declined. So I don't know what they did. Ok, if we make it more general. I think part of what we talked about is one of the barriers to youth participation. I said one but there's quite a few things and one of the things you've mentioned already is the barrier within ourselves but also if you're under eighteen you've got more restrictions from society like you have to follow the schools rules and you have to follow your parents rules and so on and so on. So those can be, if they're put on a young person negatively, a barrier to youth participation. So in a general sense what do you think are the main barriers to youth participation? – By youth participation I mean young people being involved in projects that they have some control in and input. Not to say running themselves because I'm here supervising and guiding but I'm also trying to get it so that you have as much control over what you output and get out of this project as you can.*

Terry

*It depends on what you see as more fruitful or what you see as you can get more things out of. For example you might find that all your mates are going to the beach next week and you have to miss is...*

Michelle

*..., a peer pressure thing.*

Terry

*Yeah, peer pressure. It's yourself as well at the same time because you can think, am I going to get more out of going to the beach or am I going to get more out of coming here and you know, doing things, you know. There are certain things where you can postpone and do it later again but some people may think that you can't do it later again because certain things might effect it. So it's balance between peer pressure and yourself because I mean.....,*

Michelle

*It's like the media as well isn't it? You see all the famous people going to parties and doing fun things and then not doing anything productive for other people and you think that's what it's like when you're an adult so why not do that now, kind of thing.*

Researcher

*Ok, it's the same question, I'm just asking it in a different way. One of the difficulties of being on this, even though it's a youth participation project, is actually to get the people, to get young people involved and to stay involved in a sustained way from start to finish. We can't say that it hasn't been difficult because it has been because we've had one person so far and we're not at the end yet so touch wood that both of you are going to remain until the end of next week. What do you think that - not just me but anybody that's working with young people or just groups of young people that are working themselves to get their own project - what is it that can be done that's going to help enable them or motivate them or to a) get their involvement and b) to keep them*

*involved in a sustained way so it's not, oh actually I don't want to go to that thing today because I've got this other thing that I've want to do that's more important or?*

Michelle

*I think it's just some people need to see a physical and I think if you had a physical thing at the end as well like you have, like the Japan trip we have in the middle which I think is the right thing to do because it kind of weeded out the people who weren't as focused and positive about the project but if you have – not even like many or any thing – just like a short film or to see how they, instead of just having people coming up after a session and saying wow that was really good, I really benefited from it, actually seeing something that could actually benefit people further just not in the project, like a short film you could hand out to people or I don't know, an end, just an end project like from all your hard work or kind of everything put into one final thing and being able to be used over again kind of thing.*

Terry

*Yeah, I think that's pretty good. I would probably suggest the same thing as Michelle as well but during that stage because there can be an end thing that you can look for but you need something to keep them going lanes to get to that stage. I don't know, you could probably add more teenage things into it like, there might be a disco on this night....*

Michelle

*A day out.*

Terry

*A day out or go to the cinema or go bowling, whatever. - Something that they can relate to as well during the course of the track. I think that would keep them on board as well because if it's just like working, working, working then it doesn't.....,I don't know.....,It made me feel that they're being caged into something and they're not free and not they're seeing more people and you know.....,If they've got something they can relate to then they'll think, yes this is for me and it's something which I'm prepared to do.*

Michelle

*I think also because it's been over a year and it was always random times like there wasn't really a structure of.....you didn't know that far in advance when you had to have the time off. People make plans and it's easier to use a free weekend than to cancel plans or to have to re-arrange plans because then you've got other people getting angry and you're getting angry because you're having to miss things and other people are getting angry at you. So I think if it was more like in the beginning when you had.... you made a schedule right in the beginning and then found out in the same session who could and who couldn't make it and then in the first session and for the next year you'd know you've got to go to this place at this time and you know you're going to miss xxxx of school, you're going to miss xxxx of different activities. I think you'll be more inclined to keep coming because they know what they're missing and when they're missing and right from the beginning they feel that's fine, other than two weeks before prom, they find out they're going to miss the biggest event of the year or whatever.*

Terry

*Or, yeah, that's a way of doing it. That's safe concrete dates where you have to actually go through.*

Michelle

*Signing a contract.*

Terry

*Yeah.*

Researcher

*We had... .When we very first started, didn't we have some concrete dates to work on?*

Michelle

*They weren't concrete. They were kind of like, oh yeah around this time between here and here we might have something there rather than....., Then you can't plan things. If you want to go out or you want to do other things and you can't because you've got to wait and by the time you find out what you're going to do you've found out it's too late to do this or the other, kind of thing.*

Terry

*I think you make a set date and probably everyone has a calendar or a diary and actually write it down and like book it physically rather than thinking I'm going to keep that day free – Saturday to Tuesday, I'm going to keep that free and there might be one day during that week. Another point, saying it for the whole year, I think it should be more like three months because certain things can come up for example there might be a party or you know, certain things do come up. So just that tiny bit of flexibility three months ahead, if you have that...*

Researcher

*Do three months and then another three months?*

Terry

*Yeah, and then stop it and then do another three months. If you do it for the whole year you don't know what certain things might creep up at certain times. Certain things are unavoidable as you said is the problem, you know. It's like an event you've been looking forward to but.... Three months, people do get notices two or three months ahead and if they do have that at that time they can quickly change it, everyone has that little adaptability. A tiny bit of flexibility will keep the people happy but then it will benefit the project in a serious way as well because then certain dates will be fixed. I think, as Michelle mentioned as well, that setting the actual specific date.*

Michelle

*And when you're going to be away for long periods of time, to know those in advance.*

Terry

*Yeah, absolutely.*

Researcher

*So getting back to barriers, do you think that schools – I'm not talking about any schools in particular, just schools in general – help students to get involved in projects outside the school or do you think they hinder them?*

Michelle

*I think that schools like to... it's a control thing... they like people... they like students to be involved in extra curriculum activities that the school provide and also school approved extra curriculum activities like a swimming team outside the school that is recognised in the school. It's almost like things that are going to benefit the school come first and then outside things, if it look like it could be a good thing, if it could make the school look good because it's furthering the pupils but they can use it for themselves, then I think it's ok but I think if the school don't see a benefit from the outside projects then they are not going to be willing to let their students take time off because it's not as important as sitting your final exams and not as important as joining the rugby team and all this kind of thing.*

Terry

*My secondary school was like that. They actually wanted.... They encouraged me to go because they were getting that benefit out of it.*

Michelle

*But they want to keep tabs. They want to be able to be in control.*

Terry

*Yeah, to say that this student from this school went this and that. My college is really completely different. I mean, the college has got it's name and they're in the state of private education and this and that so I still remember and I should mention that when I told my head teacher, my principle, my college principle about an anti bullying conference, I gave her a form and she went, 'What you talking about? We don't get no bullying here. We're in college now, you're all grown up' and that just struck me so bad. I just kept calm and I just walked away. I didn't say anything. I didn't even say goodbye, nothing like that, just calm, backed off and walked downstairs and that's it. I let it out downstairs, do you know what I mean. I just thought to myself, how stuck up can you be?*

Michelle

*How ignorant can you be, yeah.*

Terry

*It's a good college yeah, you know...*

Michelle

*But there's bullying everywhere.....,*

Terry

*...There's bullying everywhere.....,She didn't appreciate it either. She didn't say, oh well how long have you been. Then I was thinking, she can't even use the excuse that she was busy because she wasn't busy she was just sitting in her.....,we were just going into her office just sitting down and it just.....,I don't know how.....,I thought, alright, fine, it is a good college but still you should acknowledge that these things do go on and it just bought me down in a sense and I was thinking, 'oh my god'.....,just weird, you know.*

Michelle

*Its like there's so many people like that, that just.....,*

Terry

*Yeah. I told another teacher, she's like the student support officer. She was really interested. She was talking to me about it and asking how did you get involved and this and that and she was like, 'we'll need you for the tutor' and I was like, 'ok, no problem, I'll be willing to, willing to help out. I can advise you on how, certain resources they could use'. I recommended you also as well, Andy - you know the child rights thing.....I mean, that is nice because, I mean, she can appreciate what I'm doing and I in turn can help her out. In other words, my head teacher, she's not appreciating this so I'm just thinking, 'I don't need you either'. So in that sense, I think schools can be helpful or cannot be helpful but it depends on what type of school it is and what the motive is to actually.....,*

Researcher

*Does it depend on the teachers?*

Michelle

*Yeah, completely, like, you'd know there would be certain teachers you wouldn't approach about some things because you know, they're just not interested. It's not their field so why should they care and there are some teachers who are really interested and want it You've got the teachers who are looking out for the student and you've got the teachers who are looking out for the school's reputation and there's a big divide between different teachers.*

Terry

*I've seen that difference. I've seen that difference.*

Michelle

*It is, it is and you don't really notice it at the time but looking back and thinking back to the teachers - you've got the half of the teachers who are like the higher up teachers and who are trying to make the school good which is fair enough as they've got to get the funding. They've got to get everything and without them the wheels wouldn't be turning but you've also got to think there's no point in just having a good school. What if your students all come out traumatised? It's not helping anybody. You've got to kind of have an in between balance which is difficult to find. It's almost like if you agree to students to be doing extra curriculum activities, its almost like the teachers are being seen as weak. It's like they're being friends rather than teachers and going, 'oh yeah, that's good,' and talking to you like people.*

Terry

*That's where the teacher's personality comes in.*

Michelle

*Yeah it just it depends on the person and whether they're into the teaching for the power or helping the students.*

Terry

*I've seen a big difference to....I mean, certain teachers, you know, it depends on the subject. For example, my chemistry teacher would not recommend me. Actually when I first said it to her, you know, when I said I would probably miss a couple of days, she said, 'Don't go, it's not good for you, don't risk it'. She completely put me down and I realised, you know, for example somebody like my psychology teacher, she will talk to me and she was like, 'You go for it, it's a good opportunity, you will learn things out of*

*it'. So it depends because, I mean, the way the chemistry teacher has been taught and there has obviously been a computer input whereas the psychology teacher works with people and is like, more rounded. I've seen that difference where certain teachers from certain areas will de-motivate you and then other teachers will encourage you going into it. So it depends who you talk to and whatever you study does shape your personality in a way. That's one thing I've seen as well with teachers but you know, you, you have that control. So obviously if you are into it, whatever other teachers say, it doesn't touch you does it. So... That's something you've got to bear in mind. Different people have different ideas. It's just the way they.....*

#### Researcher

*Ok, so you've mentioned peer pressure, you mentioned school/teachers, you mentioned having incentives - which could possibly be a good thing or a bad thing depending on what your ultimate aim is - and also having times/timings negotiated. Is there any thing you think that makes it difficult for young people to be involved in projects that aren't officially run by the school or something, where you're captured in there already and don't actually have a choice of ?*

#### Michelle

*It's like, you're family as well isn't it? - Family views and family values, whether it's going to go against all that.*

#### Terry

*That's an interesting issue as well, having the teachers, the incentives... I think that falls into it's own category. It depends on how your parents see it, really. If they see it as a good thing obviously they will encourage you to go but if they see it as something bad then.... It actually depends on the way they see it.*

#### Michelle

*It depends on what types of people they are. Again it's like what their aims are. Some parents want their children to go through school and go to university and then get a nine to five job and just go through the motions and then you've got other people's parents who want their children to live life and want their children to see all different aspects of everything and further themselves in personal ways rather than academic ways.*

#### Terry

*I think there should be a balance. That's the correct way I reckon. From my experience as well, I think if you keep a balance ....Obviously sometimes one is going to need to go higher and other times the other needs to go higher and this and that but then if you've got that balance, you can learn both ways so you can keep people happy and you can keep yourself going through places in a nice smooth way. It depends because certain parents want 100% and certain parents want it 20% . It's completely varied I reckon.*

#### Researcher

*What would you say to the person who inside them, they really want to do something but because of the pressure from parents or school or both, they cant? What do you think they need to help them go forth? I know I put names...*

Michelle

*It's a doubt thing isn't it? It's a....You weigh up options and you weigh, well, this could.,....It's again about benefiting yourself....It's like, you think, ok, well this will benefit me because I'll learn this and this and this but then my parents are going to be angry with me and I'm not going to get my pocket money for three months and I'm not going to do be able to do anything. You've got that kind of thing or you're going to be like, my teachers now hate me and they're going to be really mean to me in school and not take on my opinion and mark my test down instead of up like everybody else, kind of thing. You've got to kind of.....,It's a balance where you've got to think, is it worth, to help these other people, is it worth my suffering for the next two or three years, kind of thing.*

Terry

*How do you overcome that though? For example, if someone was in that situation, how would.....I wouldn't know how to overcome that. I mean, if your parents were against it then they couldn't .....That's probably the worse because you're living with them twenty-four-seven.*

Michelle

*Yeah. It's basically a full.....*

Terry

*It's a full stop.*

Michelle

*It's a full stop until you're confident enough in yourself to be able to challenge them and be able to get your point across in a calm adult way and be like, 'but you have to see it in this, this and this way rather than seeing all the negatives you've got to accept that yes I'm going to miss a week off school.*

Continued on tape ten (not supplied).

NOTE: There are hundreds more pages of these transcripts. If the reader wishes to see them for a specific research project then please contact the researcher Andy Hickson via e-mail: [hickson@hotmail.com](mailto:hickson@hotmail.com). Please note that the original video tapes have been destroyed as per the ethics policy of this research project.

## Appendix 11

### Other relevant psychological perspectives to this research.

#### Transformative theory.

*Transformative theorists assume that knowledge is not neutral, but is influenced by human interests, that all knowledge reflects the power and social relationships within society, and that an important purpose of knowledge construction is to help people improve society* (Banks in Mertens, 1999. p. 4). Transformative theory has often been applied when working with marginalised groups or on emancipatory projects (Mertens, 1999).

"Transformative Learning" is a term that stems from Transformative Learning Theory (Mezirow, 2000b), which describes a learning process of *becoming critically aware of one's own tacit assumptions and expectations and those of others and assessing their relevance for making an interpretation* (Mezirow, 2000b. p. 4). Transformative Learning often involves deep, powerful emotions or beliefs and is evidenced in action.

*At its core, the idea is elegant in its simplicity. We make meaning of the world through our experiences. What happens once, we expect to happen again. Through this process, we develop habits of mind or a frame of reference for understanding the world, much of which is uncritically assimilated. In the process of daily living, we absorb values, assumptions, and beliefs about how things are without much thought. When something different happens, we can be led to question our way of seeing the world. We ask, "What happened here?" and "How did I come to think this way?" and "Why is this important?" This questioning, or critical self-reflection, may not be linear or sequential or appear at the time to be logical, but it is essentially a rational process of seeing that our previously held views no longer fit—they are too narrow, too limiting, and do not explain the new experience. Given that we are social creatures, we most likely discuss this process with others, or as Mezirow says, we engage in discourse* (Cranton and King, 2003. p. 32).

Transformative learning takes place when we open up our minds to the possibility to change, to see alternatives and thereby behave differently. Transformative theory promotes reflection on practice and learning. If we do not consciously think about and reflect on our practice, we become nothing more than automatons following a dubious set of rules or principles (Cranton and King, 2003). We can understand transformative learning as being associated with meaning making and critical thinking, while also allowing for emancipation. Transformative theory can be seen as being about finding ways to understand ourselves, to understand others and the norms of our schools, communities and societies in which we live.

#### Group dynamic theory.

All psychologists would say that some understanding of group processes are essential if there is to be any analysis of what happens in group situations (Douglas, 1983). Groupwork helps us to develop as social, cultural and spiritual beings (Hickson, 1997b). We are all part of a group. We were born into a group and share many of the values of that group. We also die in groups. Bion suggested that groups held three 'basic



assumptions' – fight, flight and pairing – and that these basic assumptions bonded group members together, creating security and unity (Hickson, 1997b). The group in this can work in cooperation with a kind of collective group mentality. When exploring intentions one should take account of group intentions rather than the individual intentions of all its individuals (Bion, 1961). The fundamental process of a group is interaction; unless members of a group interact in some way there is no group (Douglas, 1983).

The term 'group dynamics' implies that individual behaviours may differ depending on an individuals' current or future connections to a social group. Group dynamics could be described as a field of study within the social sciences that focuses on the processes of groups.

Lewin in addition to his commitment to solving conflict also pioneered group dynamic theory (and action research) (Burness, 2004). He developed group dynamics to explore the way groups and individuals act and react to changing circumstances. Group dynamics form a basis for group therapy and other groupwork activities. Group dynamics may also be exploited by steering a group in a particular direction, gaining profit or other such motivation. Lewin believed that the key to resolving social conflict was to facilitate learning and so enable individuals to understand and restructure their perceptions of the world around them. Group dynamic theory could be argued as being part of a unified whole; unifying much of Lewin's work including action research, field theory and his three steps model. Lewin saw them as a unified whole with each element supporting and reinforcing the others and all of them necessary to understand and bring about planned change, whether it be at the level of the individual, group, organization or even society (Burness, 2004).

Shutz (1958) looked at group relations from the perspective of inclusion, control, and affection. This became the basis for a theory of group behaviour that saw groups as resolving issues in each of these stages in order to be able to develop to the next stage. Conversely, a group may also devolve to an earlier stage if unable to resolve outstanding issues in a particular stage. Berman and Zimpfer (1980) suggest that enduring lasting positive effects from groupwork activity are quite rare for participants.

Tuckman (1965) proposed a four-stage model that creates the ideal group decision making process in the following four stages:

- Forming (pretending to get on or get along with others);
- Storming (letting down the politeness barrier and trying to get down to the issues even if tempers flare up);
- Norming (getting used to each other and developing trust and productivity);
- Performing (working in a group to a common goal on a highly efficient and cooperative basis).

It has been suggested that groups often develop unconscious pressures for conformity from peers or compliance with group leader's perspectives (Bern and Sundelius, 1994).

It has been recognised that newly formed groups often lack a group specific sub culture, leading to group insecurity. This can make groups susceptible to directive leadership from one or more assertive members. This can produce manipulation of group decision processes involving a subtle mix of cohesion and conflict. *Manipulation entails the implementation of a hidden agenda by one or more group members, through the*

*deliberate structuring of the process or the substantive information base* (Bern and Sundelius, 1994. p. 104). *Social psychologists, however, tend to believe that dyads (and trios) exhibit different dynamic patterns than larger groups of individuals* (Bern and Sundelius, 1994. p. 106).

There is a conflict for me here. It has been argued that concentrating on group dynamics can sometimes make us lose sight of the subject matter we are exploring. Defining concrete tasks to be solved within a piece of theatre, for example, will direct the group's attention to the play and away from personal relationships, hence promoting concentration on the play and also allowing for personal relationships to be transformed and forged through the play (Spolin in Tselikas, 2009).