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BEING HOMELESS IN A SMALL CITY:

THE CASE OF THE OPEN ARMS DAY CENTRE

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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In loving memory of Naomi Maria Wakelin (Lofty) who will always be the heart and soul of the Open Arms Day Centre.[1]

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 Abstract

Homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand has been a significant issue for many years, with Māori being consistently overrepresented in local and national statistics. Whether living on the streets in an urban centre, small city, or rural area, homeless people frequently experience negative health consequences, stigma, and displacement. Due to the recent Covid-19 outbreak, street homeless people have been confronted with additional challenges, such as increased prejudices and social isolation. However, non-urban street life, such as in Whangārei, has been predominantly overlooked, and responses have remained scant and narrowly focused. Nevertheless, recent estimates demonstrate a significant increase in Whangārei's street homeless population. In order to effectively address this development, comprehensive understandings about the lifeworlds of those experiencing street homelessness in non-metropolitan areas must be sought. The present research addresses this knowledge gap in the context of the Open Arms Day Centre [OADC], a space of refuge, routine, and inclusion for Whangārei's street dwellers. Adopting a relational *Māori-centred ethnographic case study* approach, the experiences and standpoints of three OADC staff members, two volunteers, and three previously homeless service users [*whānau*] were explored. Insights into homelessness in Whangārei and the significance of the OADC were gained through the utilisation of a reflective research journal, photographic exercises, and in-depth semi-structured interviews. *Bricolage* was used as a method of analysis, permitting a wide range of considerations. These included diverse personal, systemic, and Māori cultural dynamics and understandings, as well as inputs from various perspectives, disciplines and experiences. Culturally orientated services, based on relational, inclusive, and empathetic conceptualisations of whānau and their needs, such as the OADC, were identified as pivotal for people's resilience and pathways out of homelessness. Future research on non-metropolitan homelessness is necessary to invoke transformative change.

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With your contribution and mine, the people will prosper.

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Preface

I am a German immigrant who moved to the Bay of Islands in Te Taitokerau (Northland) in 2010. My interest in homelessness began during my teenage years as a result of regular encounters with the highly visible street population of Frankfurt, the closest metropolis to my former hometown. My curiosity about the dynamics surrounding street homelessness was re-ignited when I was introduced to social and community psychological research and literature on the issue during my undergraduate studies, including the works of my supervisors. Since then, I knew that my thesis would be focussed on homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Over the past few years, homelessness outside of Aotearoa/New Zealand's major cities has been reported on to a greater extent. However, little seems to be known about the largely hidden phenomenon. Thus, using internet research, I decided to find out more about homelessness in Te Taitokerau, found the TTEHCT (Tai Tokerau Emergency Housing Charitable Trust) in Whangārei, and arranged a meeting with the kaiārahi (manager) in August 2019. The kaiārahi introduced me to 155 Whare Āwhina Community House staff members Carol Peters and Richard Pehi, who recommended the Open Arms Day Centre [OADC] as the site for my research project.

Despite the one-hour drive from my home, I subsequently became a regular volunteer at the centre for over one year, enabling me to build meaningful relationships with staff, volunteers, and whānau (service users). Nevertheless, the unanticipated Covid-19 outbreak and consequent lockdown constituted a major setback for my project. I was unable to volunteer for some time, and many whānau and prospective participants were either moved to motels or found shelter with family and friends. What is more, Lofty, a proposed participant and fundamental whānau member of the OADC, unexpectedly passed away in June 2020, leaving a deep hole in the Open Arms community.

The pandemic, in particular, changed the dynamics of the centre somewhat, as previously regular whānau visited less often, and new faces emerged. Notwithstanding, three whānau members agreed to participate, and the formal interviews began in July 2020. Two were recently accommodated, and one whānau member remained on the streets until our second interview. The Covid-19 pandemic required me to be flexible, not only regarding arrangements of interviews but also concerning the scope of interest, as the crisis and associated regulations and policy responses likely posed new challenges to and/or opportunities for the participants.

A total of seventeen interviews were conducted between July and September 2020, many of which lasted over two hours. However, although the project was time-consuming, continuing for over seventeen months, I highly enjoyed it, and the experiences, relationships, and insights I have gained are invaluable. Particularly with consideration of the very recent sizable increment of street homelessness in Whangārei (see George, Gowda, & Buchwald, 2021), I hope that this thesis will spark further research on the issue that will facilitate effective responses.

I commence this work by providing context to homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand and my research project. I introduce the OADC as the research setting and explore existing research and literature on the topic. Accordingly, the structural underpinnings and definitions of, as well as possible pathways into homelessness, are deliberated upon. Current responses and barriers to effective solutions, the specifics around non-metropolitan homelessness during the Covid-19 pandemic, and the importance of resilience are also discussed. I then present an outline and critical appraisal of how I conducted the present research, introducing the participants and explaining the employed methods, ethical concerns, and the analysis process. Chapter Three expounds the analysis and key findings, which are further discussed in the final chapter, including their wider implications and suggestions for future research on non-metropolitan homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Chapter One: Introduction

Homelessness has been an increasing issue in Aotearoa/New Zealand for many years. This reflects the far-reaching structural violence and social inequalities associated with colonialist and neoliberal ideologies that render those who are already socioeconomically disadvantaged more likely to find themselves without adequate homes (Bukowski & Buetow, 2011; Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017). In psychological research, homelessness is frequently portrayed as either the consequence of systemic inequities, denying homeless people their agency and resilience or as the result of people's poor choices, neglecting contributing structural inequalities (Stolte & Hodgetts, 2014). However, it is important to recognise that both personal and contextual factors contribute to homelessness in a complex, mutually constitutive manner. The experiences and demographics of homeless people are extremely heterogeneous, and their pathways into and out of homelessness often considerably, with diverse psychosocial *and* structural dynamics at play (Bray, 2009).

Homelessness outside of Aotearoa/New Zealand's metropolitan areas also remains largely overlooked in the psychological literature, with a strong focus on conducting research in the central Auckland area (Groot & Hodgetts, 2012; Groot, Hodgetts, Nikora, & Leggatt-Cook, 2011; Hodgetts & Stolte, 2016; Hodgetts et al., 2010; Hodgetts et al., 2011; King, Hodgetts, Rua, & Te Whetu, 2015). However, the issue has been expanding well beyond our urban centres, with Te Taitokerau (Northland) having the highest rates of homelessness per capita in 2018 (Amore, Viggers, & Howden-Chapman, 2020). Indeed, a recently-published report from the Northland District Health Board [NDHB] revealed an extreme increase in Whangārei's homeless population between 2018 and 2020, with numbers rising from 21 to 293 (George et al., 2021). Therefore, exploring people's shared and unique experiences of homelessness in a small city is essential for furthering our understanding of how people enter and/or escape, conceptualise, navigate around, and cope with this largely hidden phenomenon in a largely unexplored environment.

Despite a steady population increase over the past 15 years, Whangārei remains a small city, with just over 90,000 inhabitants in the entire Whangārei District in 2018 (Stats NZ, n.d.). Therefore, by immersing myself in the everyday operations and encounters of a recently established day shelter in Te Taitokerau's capital, I seek to provide a contextualised understanding of small-city homelessness. From a relational perspective, I explore the unique

and shared experiences and standpoints of people who have experienced homelessness in Whangārei and those who work alongside them. This focus facilitates an understanding of how people make sense of, cope with, and confront their circumstances in relation to broader societal dynamics and challenges taken-for-granted parochial assumptions about homelessness in Whangārei and beyond.

This chapter lays the groundwork for the present study, primarily with a review of the interdisciplinary literature, such as from psychology, sociology, economics, and history. I will first set the scene by introducing the research setting and then exploring the historical and continuing systemic issues underpinning homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and Whangārei in particular. Subsequently, I will examine diverse conceptualisations of homelessness and identify barriers to effective responses and potential solutions for addressing the problem. I will then review the literature on Aotearoa/New Zealand's non-metropolitan homelessness and consider some of the challenges associated with Covid-19, primarily in the light of newspaper articles. Finally, I will discuss the concept of resilience and why this is relevant in the lifeworlds of street dwellers.

The research setting: The Open Arms Day Centre

Te Ruruhau o Nga Ringa Ringa Tuwhera, or the Open Arms Day Centre [OADC], in Whangārei is a space where, six days a week, those in need can enjoy a meal, find respite from everyday stressors, socialise, wash their clothes, shower, access food parcels, and utilise a variety of services (e.g., legal advice and budgeting support; see Appendix A). Since 2019, 155 Whare Āwhina Community House [155], the OADC's parent organisation, is also part of Whangārei's Kainga Pumanawa (Housing First) initiative (Beehive, 2019), involving its housing team in triage work with chronically homeless whānau (service users) at the OADC.

Figure 1. Photograph of the OADC taken by Ben [homeless participant; see Chapter Two].

This space constitutes the setting for the present research. I was involved in the space as a volunteer for over one year, which provided me with rich insights into the complexities of poverty and homelessness in Te Taitokerau. Below, I will outline some of the OADC's history and background to facilitate a richer understanding of the space and the people who inhabit it, drawing on newspaper articles, my own observations, published and internal research, and conversations with the people involved. Finally, I will clarify why the OADC provides a *space of care* and why this is important for people who are homeless.

155 and the beginnings of the OADC

The OADC was established by 155 in 2018. This trust and NGO (non-governmental organisation) was founded in 1993 as a response to an urgent demand for a social space in which people experiencing hardship could engage in employment-related training and obtain free legal advice. Subsequently, the organisation, named after its address in 155 Kamo Road, was set up with the vision of a just society at its heart.

Figure 2. Sign of the 155 Whare Āwhina Community House. A photograph taken by Ben [homeless participant].

Since then, 155 has launched numerous short and long-term community projects, with some now operating independently. In response to the increasingly visible prevalence of homeless people in Whangārei in 2018 (Ali, 2018) , Carrie Kake, a Whangārei woman who has supported the homeless for many years, approached 155 with the vision of establishing the OADC. Her plans involved establishing a day centre that would provide respite and social care, improving people's quality of life (ODF, 2018). Ca rol Peters is a community development worker for 155 and Whangārei councillor who reflected on the very beginnings of the project:

> Right, so 2018 May, Carrie Kake came in here [the community house], and she said, "I want to open a drop-in centre for homeless people. There are homeless people that I've been dealing with, that I've been providing home, shelter for. … I'm helping them get on their feet". So, I came in to work with her because I do community development. Carrie and I went to see the mayor and told her that we wanted a place. … Yeah, and so, the mayor called me and said, you know, "Would you be interested in [the old army barracks]?". So, Carrie and I went down there, it was in a mess, the pipes were burst, people had ripped out the copper. There was, you know, graffiti everywhere …

As Carol Peters further explains, the project of the OADC was completed within six months and with minimal spending over budget, thanks to generous donations and the hard work of volunteers, including members of the homeless community. While the opening day was a high-profile event within the region, Carol recalls that the establishment of the OADC was met with varied reactions among the domiciled public:

> It's mixed. Some people, you know, they think that [the homeless are] responsible for their own condition, some people... And as a result, they're rough on them. They think they're an annoyance to their business, or whatever, or they're messy … So, there's some people like that. There are some people who are really philanthropic, they're very happy that Open Arms is there, they are very happy that they can do their little bit.

Media representations following the opening of the centre reflect these opposing reactions. While some newspaper articles tended to focus on the potential risks of providing a space for the homeless to congregate (Edge, 2019), others highlighted the positive outcomes the OADC entails for Whangārei's homeless community and how collective community efforts have helped to actualise the project (Te Hiku Media, 2018; Williams, 2018). To challenge negative assumptions about and prejudices against the OADC and its whānau, it is, therefore, necessary to delve deeper into its dynamics and to explain why and how it constitutes a space of care.

The OADC as a space of care

Similar to other projects initiated by 155, the OADC is founded upon a Kaupapa Māori framework, celebrating and applying fundamental Māori values to ensure the whānau feel at home and are cared for in a culturally appropriate manner (ODF, 2018). While Kaupapa Māori cannot be distinctly defined due to heterogeneous tribal differences in mātauranga (knowledge, understanding) and tikanga (protocol, custom, correct moral behaviour) Māori (Mahuika, 2008); for the OADC, this involves privileging and naturalising Māori ways of being through values and processes such as manaakitanga (hospitality, support, care and kindness towards others), hui (meeting, social gathering, dialogue), and whanaungatanga (social connections, sense of belonging; ODF, 2018). Importantly, whanaungatanga and whakawhanaungatanga (the process of establishing and maintaining relationships) are central to the OADC's efficacy, as they facilitate meaningful relationships between whānau,

volunteers, staff, and other organisations, all of which are essential for the objective of helping people in need (ODF, 2018).

In many respects, the day centre constitutes a culturally informed *space of care*. Conradson (2003) defines spaces of care as socio-spatial locations in which practices of care, namely mutual attentiveness, assistance, and empathy, are provided and received. Thus, spaces of care are collective co-constructed realms, dependent on meaningful and genuine social interactions. As a contrast to the *landscapes of despair,* characterised by an often-hostile environment on the streets and in inadequate shelters (Stolte & Hodgetts, 2015); the OADC not only provides physical shelter and assistance but functions as a space in which homeless people can belong and have their unique ways of being legitimised and honoured (King et al., 2015).

Figure 3. Whānau socialising in the OADC's dining room. A photograph taken by Slap [volunteer participant].

Although not all OADC whānau identify as Māori, my observations have shown that most are tangata whenua (indigenous people of the land/Māori), reflecting the overrepresentation

of Māori in local and national homelessness statistics (Amore et al., 2020). As George et al. (2021) report, Māori in Te Taitokerau are severely overrepresented in incipient and actual homelessness statistics. For instance, in 2020, Māori made up 75.48% of all emergency housing grant recipients in the area, highlighting the importance of culturally appropriate responses (George et al., 2021).

Based on my experiences within the space, the normalisation of tikanga Māori, such as karakia (prayer) and te reo (Māori language), has facilitated whakawhanaungatanga among diverse ethnic groups and creates a space of inclusion for all. Indeed, it can be argued that essential Māori values, such as manaakitanga and whanaungatanga, epitomise common human ethical principles (e.g., beneficence, non-maleficence, and special relationships), that have long been acknowledged as beneficial to people's interpersonal relationships and trust (MUHEC, 2017; Whaanga, 2012). To provide a better understanding of the daily operations of the OADC and the issues it seeks to address, homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and in Whangārei specifically, will now be discussed. This facilitates a broader contextual appreciation of the topic, highlights some of the weak points in current responses, and reveals why spaces of care, such as the OADC, are important.

Homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Whangārei in particular

Following standard definitional trends internationally (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017), homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand is defined as a dynamic process involving various states of and movements between housing needs, such as rough sleeping, night shelter residence, and couch surfing. Homelessness is not merely a state of living without shelter but also includes those who find themselves in severely inadequate living conditions, such as boarding houses, overcrowded housing, or mobile dwellings (Amore, Viggers, Baker, & Howden-Chapman, 2013). Although statistics on homelessness vastly underestimate the graveness of the situation, with an increasing number of individuals whose living situations cannot be determined, the numbers indicate that homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand has been growing dramatically. Indeed, between 2001 and 2013, estimated homelessness rates rose by over 40% nationally, resulting in an appraised national prevalence of 1%, a number that had largely remained the same between 2013 and 2018 (Amore, 2016; Amore et al., 2020). Since 2018, Northland has exhibited the highest approximated rates of homelessness, particularly of those living without a shelter, nationally (Amore et al., 2020). Together with

the recently identified severe increase in Whangārei's homeless population (George et al., 2021), these statistics beg the question of how homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand has emerged and why the issue has persisted and increased beyond our metropolitan areas.

While homelessness is the product of a complex interplay between both structural and personal vulnerabilities (Piat et al., 2015), Hodgetts and Stolte (2017) recognise that the highly intricate issue is embedded in and reflective of societal injustices and shortcomings that produce, reproduce and maintain our ever-growing wealth disparity. Nevertheless, many of us readily embrace the idea of our society being equitable, providing equal opportunities for everyone (Standing, 2014). Therefore, the mutually constitutive power relations, narratives, and political dynamics that underpin our well-established class differences must be explored to fully grasp the issue (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017). This entails adopting a relational view of homelessness, as a sharp edge of poverty, which moves away from widely-accepted individualistic understandings that project blame onto those affected. Instead, the relational perspective exposes the enrichment of some to the detriment of others (Mosse, 2010). Thus, it is necessary to explore some of Aotearoa/New Zealand's history and how its dynamics have contributed to the materialisation and perpetuation of homelessness nationally and in Whangārei specifically.

A history of colonisation and capitalism

Aotearoa/New Zealand's colonisation by European imperialist powers during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was driven by a strong ideology of progress, personal ownership, cultural supremacy, economic growth, and territorial expansion (Groot & Peters, 2016). This stood in contrast to Māori perspectives which involve a holistic understanding of and care for the natural environment, people, and ancestral and spiritual connections (Moewaka Barnes, Eich, & Yessilth, 2018). Despite these discrepancies, Māori-Pākehā (Europeans/settlers) relations have often been considered predominantly benign, to begin with, constituting mutually profitable trading affiliations (Walker, 1990). Subsequently, in 1840, Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi) was signed as an agreement between the Crown and a group of Māori chiefs to establish common terms on which Aotearoa/New Zealand could effectively function as a bicultural society (Edmonds, 2016). It appointed the Crown as the governing body [kāwanatanga] whilst Māori tribes should have sovereignty [rangatiratanga] over their physical, cultural and spiritual resources upheld (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2018). Indeed, Te Tiriti o Waitangi implied that "Within the rangatiratanga-kāwanatanga dynamic,

common sense practice for peaceable co-existence, mutual benefit, and development at all levels abound" (Nikora, 2018, p. 248).

Nevertheless, the power of the Crown's kāwanatanga was soon abused at the expense of tangata whenua. From the 1860s onwards, mainly with the help of newly passed legislation, extensive amounts of tribal lands were acquired and confiscated, separating many Māori from their whenua (lands) and thus from their economic, cultural, ancestral, and spiritual connections (Boast & Hill, 2009). One such piece of legislation was the *English Laws Act 1858*, which stated that "Where applicable, … made all English Laws that existed on 14 January 1840 also in force in New Zealand from that date, predating Te Tiriti o Waitangi" (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2018, p. 685). This act was particularly significant regarding property law, as it generalised, naturalised, and justified the Western assumption of individual ownership, providing fertile ground for the capitalist ideology that we take for granted in Aotearoa/New Zealand today (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2018).

As Walker, Burton, Akhurst, and Degirmencioglu (2015) explain, capitalism is founded on an unequal exchange of capital within a system. It relies on capital accumulation by one party and, therefore, the loss of capital by another. Thus, as a well-established economic system in Aotearoa/New Zealand, capitalism has clearly contributed to the growing chasm between rich and poor, and hence to the continued prevalence of homelessness. Together with historical and continuing processes of colonialism, it has laid the foundations for inequitable power relations and resource distributions that predominantly affect our most vulnerable citizens (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2018).

The neoliberal "fix"

Capitalist ideology and economy in Aotearoa/New Zealand had been upheld for over a century when a significant economic crisis led the Labour Government to take radical actions during the mid-1980s (Barnett & Bagshaw, 2020). *Neoliberalism* was perceived as the panacea for the economic stagnation of the time and entailed a shift from a government-coordinated economy to a laissez-faire, trickle-down, system (Walker, Burton, et al., 2015). This entailed large-scale financial deregulations and privatisations, resulting in the stagnation of "real terms" earnings, welfare cuts, increased personal debts, underemployment, sales of state housing, and deinstitutionalisations. Conversely, however, the neoliberal reforms have led to a wealth concentration among elites, further widening the dichotomy in the socio-

economic hierarchy (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017; Parliamentary Library, 2014; Walker, Burton, et al., 2015).

These repercussions also impacted Whangārei. Carol Peters, 155 community development worker, recalls how welfare cuts contributed to the rise of homelessness in the small city:

> Well, the issue of homelessness goes back to the budget of 1990. So that's where it started. Well, there are the two things they did. They totally reduced the benefit. … So, basically, from then, anybody that … was down the bottom … If they've ever been in unemployment, they quickly reduce any capital that they have … And they start to move in with their relatives and now all of that.

Another significant consequence of the neoliberal economic restructuring of the 1980s was the deinstitutionalisation of mental health, which also affected the Whangārei community. This involved the closure of many of Aotearoa/New Zealand's centralised psychiatric hospitals and a shift towards fragmented community-based mental health care facilities (Joseph & Kearns, 1996). Although, as Carol Peters explains, shutting down these often abusive and inhumane institutions initially resonated with many people, communities were frequently unequipped to adequately care for those suffering from mental distress. This led to increased adversity for mental health patients, including homelessness (Dear & Wolch, 2014):

> Another thing that happened at the time is they closed the institutions. So, they said, "… we're going to put all these people in community". And those of us that made submissions at the time said "Kia ora, good stuff, really good. But you need to make sure that when you do that, there are provisions for those people". So, immediately you had this big hump of people that had... some of them with severe mental illness, were dumped straight into homelessness. … And so, we made this... it was directly to do with government policies, because we decided to do this as a country. We decided that it was better for people to not be in the institutions. Yes, I know those institutions were abusive … But we needed to provide an alternative.

As evident in the statistics, homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and specifically in Whangārei, has remained an issue that continues to rise. However, this is not merely due to our neoliberal economic system but also founded on the pervasive and largely obscured worldview that neoliberalism implicates and naturalises.

Psychological "knowledge" production and the locus of control

The neoliberal economic model is founded on the ideals of rationality, uniformity, conformity, individual responsibility, and locus of control. From this perspective, the "free" neoliberal citizen is constructed as a competitive consumer who values and actively participates in the free-market economy, regarding success and failure as entirely self-made (Sondel, 2015). As Teo (2018) analyses, the *neoliberal form of subjectivity* (i.e., a neoliberal way of being and doing) has conquered all aspects of our WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialised, rich, democratic) lives, including the lifeworlds and selves of those who are marginalised. However, the domination of the neoliberal form of subjectivity has not occurred one-dimensionally. Rather, while cultural, historical, and societal dynamics provide a template, individuals (from all class backgrounds) are agentic and actively embrace such a form of subjectivity to access the benefits of neoliberalism (Teo, 2018). Considering people's embodiment of such a competitive and self-centred way of being and doing, it is unsurprising that neoliberal ideology has brought about inequality, a diminishment of social cohesion, and an increased disregard for the underprivileged "needy" "other" (Coombes, Denne, & Rangiwananga, 2016). Placing responsibility exclusively within the individual, therefore, can lead to "the prevalence of myths such as the notion that people 'choose to be homeless'" (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017, p. 123).

Arrigo's (2013) *society-of-captives-thesis* appropriately outlines how such an omnipresent subliminal ideology may work as a social divider and oppressing force within a society. By exemplifying those entrapped within the mental health and criminal justice system, he explains how people's potentials and unique identities are actively marginalised through assumed normativity. Neoliberal citizenship is contrasted with deviancy, such as homelessness, producing fear and anxiety among conforming citizens. According to Arrigo, this uneasiness is perpetuated and upheld not only through the underlying ideology itself, but also through derived narratives, systems and tools, and media representations. The narratives function to silence "otherness" and become accepted as common knowledge, such as hegemonic narratives of laziness and voluntary homelessness (Weng & Clark, 2018). The systems and tools operate to methodically assimilate differences, such as urban gentrification processes (Smith, Pride, & Schmitt-Sands, 2017). Furthermore, media outputs increase anxiety by portraying people as categorised individuals, such as generalisations of homeless people's addiction issues (Hodgetts, Hodgetts, & Radley, 2006). Arrigo argues that this

creates a self-sustaining system that is difficult to disrupt, as we, as its captives, have internalised and become loyal to our confinement (Arrigo, 2013).

Considering how power and oppression are consistently (re-)produced in our society, it becomes clear that WEIRD psychology, as an institution and community, has actively participated in the preservation of the society of captives (Rad, Martingano, & Ginges, 2018; Walker, Burton, et al., 2015). Psychology is deeply rooted in individualistic Western assumptions and values and has a longstanding history of corroborating colonial and capitalist ideas and agendas (Hodgetts et al., 2020). As Teo (2018, p. 586) identifies, "Because of establishing subjects (which are still subjected), neoliberalism relies heavily on the *psydisciplines* that play a significant role in articulating the [neoliberal form of subjectivity]". Indeed, through its theory, research, training, and practice, as well as the commodification thereof, WEIRD psychology has contributed to the narratives, systems and tools, and media depictions necessary to (re-)produce neoliberal subjectivities (Arrigo, 2013; Coombes et al., 2016). This, ultimately, diverts systemic responsibility to the individual, facilitating victim-blaming, social exclusion, and powerlessness of and for the precariat (Hodgetts, Chamberlain, Tankel, & Groot, 2013).

A relevant example of a psychological construct that readily produces and reproduces neoliberal ideology is Rotter's *locus of control* [LOC]. Put simply, LOC refers to the extent to which people believe that their achievements and misadventures are controlled by themselves (internal LOC) as opposed to external forces (external LOC; Lefcourt, 2014). Accordingly, people are likely to learn that their actions have a positive impact on their lives when they are reinforced by beneficial results, which is frequently associated with better social relationships and wellbeing (Burton, Westen, & Kowalski, 2012; Francis, 2014). However, the taken-for-granted glorification of the internal LOC decontextualises and individualises power discrepancies, directly corroborating neoliberal ideals of individual responsibility.

Indeed, the measuring of "self-control" in psychology can be likened to evaluating people's submission to neoliberal ideals and behaviours as self-control is central to being "successful" within the neoliberal economy (Teo, 2018). As Walker, Burton, et al. (2015, p. 268) recognise, "Through … such artefacts as … 'locus of control' …, complex social, political and economic relations have been funnelled into an array of pathologised individuals who require the remediation … of experts to solve their failure". The neoliberal citizen's all-

pervading urge to maintain an internal LOC contributes to individual victim-blaming processes, as attributing others' misfortune to their actions helps preserve the belief that we can actively avoid being in such circumstances ourselves (Maes, 1994). It is therefore paramount that we critically appraise and confront our assumptions that shape parochial standpoints.

As emphasised above, homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and Whangārei more specifically, is a significant issue that epitomises the extreme of our wide-reaching poverty dilemma. Contextualising the problem within the historical and present systemic dynamics within which it is deeply entrenched provides a more comprehensive and appropriate understanding of this reality than commonly-applied individualistic explanations. However, it is also important to explore the different definitions of homelessness and the intersections between social structures and personal vulnerabilities that may lead to the issue.

An inquiry into the concept of "homelessness"

Conceptualisations of homelessness are far from uniform. They may vary regarding how inclusive or exclusive they are, how the concept of "home" is defined, or how much they focus on individual-level versus system-level causes (Harris, 2015). Therefore, it is necessary to explore the associated discussions and how the issue is defined in the context of my research. As indicated in the previous section, while macro-level contributors to homelessness are crucial to recognise, individual influences also play a significant part (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017), creating a complex interplay that will be explored by looking at some possible pathways into homelessness. Subsequently, I will discuss some of the barriers to addressing the issue as well as some potential ways of counteracting homelessness on a societal level.

Debates around how homelessness may be defined remain important for many countries, as they entail major ramifications for bringing the phenomenon to light and shaping associated policy and service responses (Harris, 2015). For instance, Aotearoa/New Zealand's current comprehensive, but rather technocratic, definition of homelessness as "severe housing deprivation" (Amore et al., 2013) does call for more multifaceted answers than the United Nations' more simplistic two-stage differentiation between primary homelessness (i.e., rooflessness) and secondary homelessness (i.e., living without permanent or secure housing; UN, 2009). While it is now widely acknowledged that homelessness is a

process rather than a crystallised phenomenon, with many people transitioning between inadequate or insecure accommodation, temporary shelters, and rooflessness; replacing the term "homelessness" with abstract terms such as "severe housing deprivation" essentially reduces the problem to a solely housing-related issue (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017). This echoes common ambitions of "managing" this undesired minority through banishment or assimilation (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2016).

As Harris (2015) explains, although the term "homeless" may carry negative stereotypes and prejudices that have permeated into much of our taken-for-granted understandings, the term must be upheld for us to grasp the extent of the phenomenon. Indeed, narrow definitions can "function to depoliticize and de-humanize homelessness, and render homelessness unrecognizable to many members of society", therefore preventing awareness and open discussions about the issue (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017, p. 103). However, while preserving the term "homelessness" is necessary, the widespread fixation on finding appropriate definitions bears the risk of categorising people and thereby obscuring their diverse personalities and everyday experiences (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2016). Therefore, it is important to understand how homeless people make sense of their situations and to acknowledge those aspects of homelessness that surpass simplistic definitions of homelessness as "houselessness".

Because homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand is deeply interwoven with the historical and ongoing dynamics of colonialism, capitalism, and neoliberalism, many Māori can identify with the issue, as cultural, physical, spiritual and financial disenfranchisements left many without "homes". In this sense, situating the concept of homelessness within Māori cultural understandings, in contrast to the reductionist Western focus on houselessness, provides a much more holistic and insightful appreciation of what a "home", and particularly being without one, entails (King et al., 2015). Similar to other indigenous understandings, Māori define "home" as a place in which one feels connected to and is empowered by physical, social, spiritual, cultural, and ancestral forces (Te Ahukaramū, 2007). Conversely then, indigenous understandings of homelessness proclaim complex processes of disconnection of which a lack of adequate housing is merely one aspect. Thus, indigenous understandings encompass psychosocial and spiritual adversity as well as material hardship (Groot & Peters, 2016). Therefore, solely focusing on the simplistic and individually focused "solution" of re-housing is insufficient for recovering often long-lost holistic connections and resolving inter-generational trauma.

Considering the overrepresentation of Māori in national and local homelessness estimations, it becomes clear that there is a strong need for the inclusion of Māori conceptualisations of the issue in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Groot, Hodgetts, Nikora, & Rua, 2011). I argue that to fathom the complex phenomenon; we must move to a relational definition that takes into consideration indigenous worldviews as well as intertwined structural and personal dynamics. Consequently, while maintaining the term "homelessness", I will look into the lifeworlds of those affected and deliberate on how disconnection may be relevant to these people's lives and how a "home" may sometimes be outside, rather than inside one's abode.

The pathways into homelessness

There have been longstanding discrepancies between individual and macro-level explanations for why people become homeless. As outlined earlier, systemic factors clearly play a part, historically and currently. Such understandings resonate with much of the European research on the issue, which tends to contextualise homeless persons within the structural dynamics that contribute to their fate (Baptista & Marlier, 2019). Despite notable differences between European governments and representatives, structural determinants tend to be slightly more emphasised, rendering interventions more likely to be of broader societal nature (Busch-Geertsema, Edgar, O'Sullivan, & Pleace, 2010). In contrast, many Anglophone, particularly North American, approaches to homelessness research have been more individually focused, centralising personal frailties, and hence are inclined to engage in individualised punitive responses (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017). However, despite common dichotomisations of individual and structural levels of influence, it has become increasingly acknowledged that both are intertwined in a complex reciprocal and often mutually constitutive dynamic (Piat et al., 2015). Accordingly, Hodgetts and Stolte (2017) point out that personal vulnerabilities do not lead to homelessness in themselves but rather may trigger such a dilemma in the context of an inequitable society. It is, therefore, useful to explore deeper the dynamics involved in people's diverse pathways into homelessness.

Bray (2009) identifies various individual risk factors that increase the likelihood of people entering homelessness. These include, but are not limited to, mental illness, substance abuse, histories of abuse and victimisation, dysfunctional family dynamics, physical health problems, and the involvement of foster homes and child protective services. However, with underpinning structural determinants at play, it is unsurprising, for example, that mental

illness and substance abuse may contribute to people becoming homeless while people's symptoms may be simultaneously aggravated by the experience itself (O'Hara, 2007). Thus, structural factors that prevent people from escaping homelessness, such as inadequate or inaccessible mental health and addiction services, are at a complex interplay with their personal vulnerabilities and may jointly act to perpetuate the issue.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to recognise that the precariat is consistently at the highest risk of becoming homeless, with poverty being the principal determinant. This is often ignored by researchers fixated on "individual risk factors", overlooking that additional potential determinants, such as substance abuse or mental illness, often emerge as people attempt to cope with their hardships (Bray, 2009; Johnsen & Watts, 2014). As Hodgetts and Stolte (2017) explain, in many OECD countries today, wages and welfare provisions are unliveable and housing costs are exuberant, leaving many people confronted with choosing between eating and paying rent. Additionally, in the context of our colonialist neoliberal economy, impoverishment is frequently intergenerational, maintained by complex processes that restrict social mobility (Lawson-Te Aho et al., 2019; Walker, Burton, et al., 2015). Consequently, many reach a point where homelessness becomes a pragmatic alternative (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017).

In an eye-opening Aotearoa/New Zealand study by Hodgetts, Stolte, Nikora, and Groot (2012), the authors analyse two different social classes from which street homeless participants in Auckland originated. Although aware that "class" is a delicate term, they actively use and politicise the concept to highlight often obscured inequitable power dynamics within our society. As a result, they identified significant differences between those who drop into homelessness as a result of particular life events and those who "can be 'homeless' well before they become houseless" due to lifelong impoverishment and disconnection (Hodgetts et al., 2012, p. 1214). The latter constitute the majority, not only because people experiencing poverty are most likely to drift into homelessness (Johnsen & Watts, 2014), but also due to many services being aligned with the objectives of rehabilitating those who are accustomed to and capable of functioning as "normative neoliberal citizens" (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017; Hodgetts et al., 2012).

Considering the pervasive risk factor of poverty with regards to homelessness as well as the inadequacy of services for those who do not fit neoliberal norms, it becomes clear that we must prioritise responses to homelessness that address underlying structural factors.

Therefore, I will now delve deeper into the structural barriers of addressing the issue and some possible solutions at the macro-level.

Responses and barriers to addressing homelessness

As previously discussed, psychological research and the constructs that derive from it are often not as useful for understanding the lived experiences of homeless people as we might hope. Moreover, they frequently contribute to perpetuating assumptions of the "deviant other" whose circumstances are self-inflicted. As Hodgetts et al. (2011) highlight, such notions help those who profit from and support neoliberal agendas to maintain their beliefs in an equitable society. Such parochial understandings of homelessness actively conceal the realities and decision-making processes involved in homeless people's lives. Importantly, however, people may decide to be homeless, not only as a pragmatic choice on the brink of survival; there are many reasons why people may prefer living on the streets, such as escaping violence, leaving overcrowded living situations, or seeking a sense of community that is otherwise missing (Stewart & Townley, 2020). Thus, for those who experience suffering and hardship while being housed, the street may constitute a space for cultivating a sense of belonging and "home" (Bell & Walsh, 2015). However, unilateral perceptions of homelessness prevent addressing the issue comprehensively and effectively, as responses and interventions largely remain individualistic, reductionist, and punitive.

In line with the classic psychological concepts of stereotype threat and internalisation (Aronson & Dee, 2012; Vieson, 2018), Arrigo (2013) emphasises that within the society of captives, our status as "other" becomes readily internalised through processes of repeated marginalisation, discrimination and associated narratives. Therefore, WEIRD psychological "knowledges" that support and disseminate such narratives and processes may facilitate self-perceptions of deviance, failure, and unworthiness (Walker, Hanna, & Hart, 2015). This, in turn, contributes to homeless people's avoidance of seeking support services, particularly when these are under-resourced, too individualistic in orientation, and discriminating (Hegenbarth, 2013). Julian Tudor Hart's *inverse care law* reflects such dynamics. It purports that those who are most in need of medical and social care receive it the least, directly mirroring broader inequitable power dynamics and resource distributions (Fiscella & Shin, 2005).

With health disparities between the homeless and the domiciled population being severe (Bowen, Savino, & Irish, 2019), it is important to understand why these exist and how they contribute to a vicious cycle that constitutes a major barrier to addressing homelessness. We must, therefore, recognise the *social determinants of health* or those aspects of our society that lead to augmented health-related and psychosocial risks among the precariat (Hetherington & Hamlet, 2018). For homeless people, these health-related risks relate to both material aspects, such as malnutrition or being cold, and psychosocial factors, such as consistent stress. However, the outlined issues of inadequate and discriminatory health resources, feelings of unworthiness, having multiple intersecting axes of disadvantage, and having limited time and resources to access healthcare services and to follow regimens all stand in a mutually constitutive relation to homelessness (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017; Stolte & Hodgetts, 2015).

An example of such a domino effect is that despite common assumptions of laziness, being homeless requires consistent tedious work. This entails much stress for those affected, particularly when common health-enhancing practices, such as washing or sleeping, are considered unacceptable when carried out publicly (Stolte & Hodgetts, 2015). For homeless people, such "mundane" practices can become stressful as they often need to travel (e.g., to a public bathroom) and try to mask their homelessness (Johnsen, Fitzpatrick, & Watts, 2018). Moreover, together with the daily stressors of arranging food and a safe place to sleep, accessing healthcare services for assumed minor ailments naturally becomes a secondary concern (Purkey & MacKenzie, 2019). Nevertheless, homeless people are frequently denied respite and leisure practices that help enhance psychosocial and physical wellbeing. Those engaging in leisure are commonly expected to participate in the free market economy, rendering homeless people undeserving of breaks from everyday pressures (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2016). Moreover, the common discriminatory exclusion of homeless people from public places, such as libraries, further contributes to their increased physical and psychosocial health-related risks by denying them access to safety and social participation (Hodgetts et al., 2008; Johnsen et al., 2018).

Central to this chapter is the assertion that addressing the current increase in homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand requires not only the development of non-discriminatory services but also change at the structural level. Essential is a move away from managing the issue in ways that lead to victim-blaming and, instead, engaging in active prevention and recovery processes (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017). This entails a shift in our

conceptualisations of homelessness, turning individualistic assumptions into relational understandings.

Therefore, historical and ideological forces that underpin our current inequality must be exposed, politicising homelessness rather than reducing it to a dilemma caused solely by housing issues and individual frailties (Sharam & Hulse, 2014). Thus, marginalised voices and local narratives must be included to inform our understandings and to challenge universal narratives constructed by the uninvolved domiciled public (Massie, Machin, McCormack, & Kurth, 2018). Consequently, psychological research needs to be conducted collaboratively *with* homeless participants, providing opportunities to voice complex experiences for those who are experts on their own lives (Rappaport, 1995). Finally, focusing on holistic approaches to tackling the issue, addressing people's physical, psychological, social, spiritual, and cultural needs, such as through judgement-free spaces of care, is necessary to transform the inverse care law back into a "direct care law" (King et al., 2015).

Although I am aware of the limited impact my research may have, I aim to impact communal and local narratives by working *with* my participants to provide them with a space to share their standpoints as well as positive and negative experiences. As I will discuss in Chapter Two, the employed methodology directly lends itself to these aims, facilitating the unmasking of the historical and systemic violence and the personal struggles that underlie those accounts. However, first, it is important to explore the unique aspects of non-metropolitan homelessness and how the recent global outbreak of Covid-19 has affected this phenomenon.

Being homeless in a small city during a global pandemic

To contextualise my research in Whangārei further, it is now important to delve into the particular dynamics surrounding homelessness outside of our metropolitan centres. To grasp the lifeworlds of my participants more effectively, I will investigate some of the contributing factors to non-urban homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand, particular challenges for addressing the issue, and how people's experiences may be impacted by being homeless in rural areas and small cities. Moreover, because my research was conducted in 2020, a year blindsided by the outbreak of a global pandemic that has generated severe economic, social, ontological, and psychological crises among the domiciled public; it is vital to investigate

how homeless people have experienced this enduring dilemma and whether governmental responses have been useful for those affected.

Psychological research and literature on non-metropolitan homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand are virtually non-existent. However, I draw on the accounts from various service provides and literature from the fields of socio-cultural geography, political science, social work, and criminal justice from within Aotearoa/New Zealand and beyond. I considered voices on both rural and small-city homelessness, as small cities frequently constitute the centres of surrounding rural homelessness (Kading & Walmsley, 2018).

The surge of neoliberal hardship beginning in the mid-1980s, involving unemployment and a lack of affordable housing, was followed by a mass migration from Aotearoa/New Zealand's urban centres to rural and small-town areas, particularly among the precariat (Waldegrave & Stuart, 1997). Although internal migration has been fluctuating, factors such as economic pressures, disillusionment with city life, and a yearning to return home have resulted in many city dwellers becoming rural inhabitants over the years (Kearns, 2006). Indeed, a recent report shows that between 2013 and 2017, almost 33,000 people moved out of Auckland, of which more than 18% chose Te Taitokerau as their new place of residence (Patterson, 2019). While the report deems these migration patterns as beneficial to the affected non-metropolitan regions (Patterson, 2019); it has now been widely acknowledged that they directly impacted on the exacerbation of homelessness in Te Taitokerau. The population increase, together with the associated snapping up of rental stock and rent increases, have left many low-income locals without affordable housing options (Whale, 2017).

Moreover, many urban homeless people have decided to move away from Aotearoa/New Zealand's metropolitan areas for various reasons. For example, in a newspaper article following the opening of the OADC in 2018, Carol Peters explained that "people were coming up from Auckland 'to sleep on the streets because it's warmer' which added to the number of homeless in Whangārei" (MacLean, 2018, para. 22). Indeed, being on the streets in non-metropolitan areas may entail many advantages, such as increased safety and proximity to family (Kearns, 2006) and finding social participation, leisure, and privacy among "fellow" campers during the summer months (King, 2017). However, rural and small-city homelessness bears its unique challenges and risks. Social services, shelters, and emergency housing, and employment opportunities are generally more overburdened and

geographically scattered compared to urban centres. This frequently requires those who are homeless in non-metropolitan areas to travel long distances and to move across locations (Easterday, Driscoll, & Ramaswamy, 2019). Considering the lack of public transport in rural Aotearoa/New Zealand, accessing services, maintaining short-term tenancies, and staying in employment can subsequently be challenging (Fitzgerald, 2012). Furthermore, while interpersonal problems due to overcrowded housing are particularly prevalent in non-urban areas (Allen and Clarke, 2018), social exclusion also poses a significant issue as people tend to conceal their homelessness from close-knit rural communities (Fitzgerald, 2012).

Non-metropolitan homelessness is also frequently overlooked by central authorities and the domiciled public. One major contributor to the inconspicuousness of the issue lies within the narrow and cliché-ridden definition of homelessness as "urban rough sleeping" (Faneva, 2016). King (2017) argues that such reductionist conceptualisations of homelessness are easily embodied by those affected. Thus, people who are homeless but not houseless (i.e., the majority of Aotearoa/New Zealand's non-metropolitan homeless) may not identify as such, leading to feelings of unworthiness of social service support (King, 2017). What further exacerbates the underutilisation of services by the rural homeless is a fear of disclosure of private information, an apprehension of being stigmatised within the community, and worries about relocating to receive adequate care (King, 2017; Taylor, 2018). Thus, not only are rural homeless people less likely to receive adequate care and support compared to their urban counterparts (Patton, 1988), their numbers are also likely underestimated (Fitzgerald, 2012).

However, the determinants of homelessness, and non-metropolitan homelessness, in particular, are much more profound. As Kading and Walmsley (2018) discuss in a Canadian context, neoliberal processes of decentralisation, privatisation, and deinstitutionalisation have left local governments to fend for themselves, lacking financial and human resources and autonomous decision-making power (Kading & Walmsley, 2018). Thus, local incentives to address homelessness are dependent on the goodwill of the central government, leaving politicians, such as Whangārei mayor Sheryl Mai, pleading for support. Despite the Whangārei District Council's diagnosis of housing as a major priority, "Alone, Whangārei District Council cannot fully address these housing issues" and "greater support and focus from Central Government [is needed]" (RNZ, 2020, para. 4 & 2). Locally developed responses are at constant risk of being obstructed by wider economic pressures as financial resources are already limited (Kading & Walmsley, 2018). Additionally, due to the widespread marginalisation of non-metropolitan homelessness, national responses have been

predominantly aimed at its severe repercussions, such as illness, violence, and death, rather than the issue itself (Johnston, 2017; Kearns, 2006; One News, 2019). Thus, attention to the issue must be given by the central government to support local initiatives surrounding this pressing problem.

Considering the extremely limited literature on non-metropolitan homelessness, it becomes apparent that awareness about its dynamics must be raised, and ways for the central government to support small communities in tackling the issue must be found. For the present research, it is paramount to recognise the unique dynamics surrounding rural and small-city homelessness, as they, directly and indirectly, impact the standpoints and experiences of the participants.

In the context of the 2020 global outbreak of Covid-19 and associated lockdown and social distancing measures, the lives of all New Zealanders have changed significantly. However, little is known about how this has affected the lifeworlds of urban and non-urban homeless people. The Labour government responded to the outbreak by providing hotel/ motel accommodation for homeless people for one year and a promise to subsequently reduce homelessness nationally by providing more and improved public housing (Graham-McLay, 2020). Indeed, the pandemic presented a unique opportunity as concealed homelessness was rendered more visible through people's placements in hotels/motels, allowing agencies and social services to support them directly (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2020). However, reflecting on this initiative one year onwards, it becomes clear that the "simple" (re-)housing of homeless people has involved various challenges. I will now discuss these by drawing primarily on international literature and local newspaper articles due to the lack of research on the topic.

Because *social distancing* has become part of our everyday vocabulary since the Covid-19 outbreak, it is essential to consider what this means for those without homes. While the pandemic-associated term refers to physical distancing, social distancing is inevitable for those who already live on the margins (Patel et al., 2020). Hodgetts et al. (2011) conceptualised the phenomenon as a fluid everyday practice of psychologically and physically establishing and diminishing boundaries and territories between ourselves and the "other". Domiciled constructions of homelessness, therefore, entail far-reaching consequences for those affected, underpinning processes and practices of social exclusion and discrimination (Hodgetts et al., 2011). The "new compulsory social distancing" invokes additional challenges for the homeless population. Because the severe adverse health

outcomes for many homeless people are well-known among the domiciled public (Cuthill, 2018a), pandemics, like Covid-19, can bring about added stigma and discrimination. Accordingly, widespread narratives of disease and lack of hygiene, together with media headlines such as "Covid 19 coronavirus: Fears rough sleepers targeting restaurants in lockdown" may lead to increased social distancing practices among the domiciled public (Banerjee & Bhattacharya, 2020; Tan, 2020).

Although the compulsory separation of homeless people from the domiciled public may have been a relief for many, their isolation has entailed severe consequences. Limited access to public spaces, such as libraries or community centres decreased social participation during higher Covid-19 alert levels. For those affected by homelessness, this involved a loss of interpersonal connectedness important for everyday coping and wellbeing (Perri, Dosani, & Hwang, 2020). On the contrary, for many of those staying with family or friends, social distancing was impossible as overcrowding became a major issue, leading to interpersonal tensions, sickness, and, at times, a return to the streets (Corlett, 2020b; Hyslop, 2020). Thus, experiencing immense stressors and loneliness and, simultaneously, being unable to engage in leisure and social activities has likely exacerbated hardship during and beyond the lockdown (Hodgetts et al., 2008).

Moreover, although motels can provide physical comfort, the isolation entailed in dwelling in a segregated confined space can be overwhelming and unbearable (Ecker & Aubry, 2016). As George et al. (2021, p. 48) recognise, a house does not necessarily constitute a "home":

> … as of November 30 2020, 1200 individuals were housed in motels. While this solution 'puts a roof over their heads', the emotional impact of living in a motel has not been taken into account … . Motels are designed for transient populations, not as permanent dwellings and are usually small and therefore often overcrowded, with little space for anyone to call their own.

Additionally, the criminalisation of previously "normal" behaviours has led to a heightened level of state and interpersonal surveillance, begging the longstanding question of how much disciplinary control and privacy invasion is justified in exchange for security and safety (Foucault, 1982; Lindsay, 2020). While there is no definite answer to this conundrum, risk mitigation is likely conceptualised as less crucial for those whose everyday survival takes precedence (Purkey & MacKenzie, 2019). Indeed, when asked about the perceived threat of

contracting Covid-19, Reuben, a homeless interviewee for RNZ responds, "'We've actually got worries of our own, to go through each day. It's bottom of our priority list'" (Corlett, 2020a, para. 7). Such perceptions and priorities, in addition to the isolation, paperwork, restrictions, and surveillance motel living entails, contribute to our understanding of why some have chosen to stay on the streets or to leave emergency accommodations prematurely (Broughton, 2020; Cropp, 2020).

So, despite the initial euphoria about having housed the majority of Aotearoa/New Zealand's "streeties" in the first half of 2020 (Andelane, 2020; Davison, 2020), efforts to eliminate homelessness have proven largely unsuccessful (Menon, 2021). While many of those who were chronically homeless are now in permanent housing; over the past year, more and more newly homeless people have emerged (Corlett, 2020c). Correspondingly, emergency housing demands have increased dramatically; many emergency accommodations are dangerous, unhealthy, and overcrowded (Blake-Persen, 2021; Dreaver, 2020); and emergency housing residents are frequently deemed as a risk to public safety and local repute, leading to public resistance (Patterson, 2021; Wall, 2021). Thus, homelessness continues to be a significant issue in Aotearoa/New Zealand in 2021, and those affected likely experience discrimination and threats to personal safety.

Thus, the Covid-19 outbreak in Aotearoa/New Zealand has entailed many severe repercussions, with those who are already most underprivileged suffering the most. Adversities experienced by homeless people involve financial hardship, physical discomfort and threat, loneliness, and social exclusion. As Blake (2020) explains, preparation for, survival through, and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic is ultimately a matter of privilege, particularly as financial crises affect the precariat most harshly (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017). It is, therefore, essential to consider these issues in the present research, as participants' experiences and stories are underpinned by the complex difficulties of our present time. Nevertheless, as discussed below, it is also important to recognise the extra-ordinary strengths homeless people possess and exhibit to persevere through everyday challenges and struggles.

Resilience: The key to everyday "survival" and wellbeing

Recognising the adverse circumstances homeless people face is important for considering possibilities for change. However, common preoccupations with negative aspects of

homelessness in research and literature bear the risk of dehumanising and assimilating those without homes, ultimately overriding their agency and strengths (Cuthill, 2018b). *Resilience* is a multifaceted concept, generally referring to the ability to adapt to adverse conditions, helping people to cope with and overcome suffering and hardship (Paul, Corneau, Boozary, & Stergiopoulos, 2018). Although resilience can be conceptualised as an integral part of neoliberal life due to its association with individual responsibility (Teo, 2018), here, people's creative responses to adverse circumstances are considered without losing sight of structural determinants (Groot, Hodgetts, Nikora, & Leggatt-Cook, 2011). Accordingly, despite common conceptualisations of resilience as a fixed personality trait, resilience is highly context-dependent and functions on multiple levels, including psychological factors, social connections and processes, and active applications of coping and survival strategies (Herrman et al., 2011). For example, resilience on the streets may be fostered through group membership, humour, and enjoyable activities (Groot et al., 2008). However, accounts of such multi-layered resilience and positive experiences are often overlooked in the homelessness literature despite playing an important role in many homeless people's everyday survival and wellbeing (Cuthill, 2018b).

Feeling positively and meaningfully connected to others is highly valuable for people's ability to buffer stress and hardship (Burton et al., 2012; Henly, Danziger, & Offer, 2005; Thoits, 1986). This highlights the relational nature of resilience which can be actively cultivated through a sense of community, belonging, support, and trust on the streets (Groot et al., 2008). For instance, Langegger (2016) argues that claims to spaces, or "primitive property", on the street that resist governmental property regulations, can be viewed as collective acts of resilience, promoting group strength and reciprocity. Indeed, collective resilience can be, actively or passively, fostered in particular circumstances and environments through mutually benefitting exchanges (Stokols, Lejano, & Hipp, 2013). For example, as Carol Peters explains:

> When you're down and out, and I've observed this from the group at Open Arms, you share what you've got. You really really care about each other. The example I could give is Lofty... When I went for Council, she supported me, acting as human sandwich boards, and doing stuff like that. And so, I said, "Look, aw look Lofty, you're really doing a good job. Here's 50 bucks [$50]." And she says, "Thank you very much." She takes the 50 bucks, turns around, she comes back, and she hasn't spent it on herself. She bought cigarettes … for everybody. And there she is, giving out the cigarettes to people,

> so, from her 50 bucks, everybody gained, you know? Like, that's what I've learned from them, their generosity of heart, their care for each other is high. And so, … when you have nothing, the best of human nature comes out.

Thus, while such altruistic acts of support and kindness are not obviously conducive to the resilience of the "giver", it can be argued that they constitute active strategies for cultivating resilience on a relational level (Herrman et al., 2011). Moreover, integration into groups can support resilience by facilitating adaptation to street life through the sharing of skills and strengths between group members (Hodgetts, Radley, Chamberlain, & Hodgetts, 2007). It is, therefore, essential to move beyond individualistic notions of the "deviant broken other" and "powerless victim of systemic inequity". Instead, we must delve into the ways homeless people construct their everyday lives around survival as well as personal and relational wellbeing (Radley, Hodgetts, & Cullen, 2005).

Although the complex issue of homelessness cannot be fully laid out in this introduction, the literature, research, and issues discussed thus far establish the foundations for the present study. This thesis is intended to provide insights into the lived experiences of people facing homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand's non-metropolitan areas and into the role spaces of care may play in their lives. To do so, I have conducted this research from a relational perspective, considering wider structural determinants of homelessness as well as individual vulnerabilities and contexts. The aims of this study are (a) gaining an in-depth understanding of the unique experiences and standpoints of people who have experienced homelessness in Whangārei; (b) exploring the significance of and dynamics surrounding the OADC as a space of care; and (c) impacting on communal and local narratives on the issue by providing a space for participants to voice their stories and viewpoints.

In Chapter Two, I will discuss the methodological approach, including a rationale for adopting a Māori-centred approach and an introduction of the participants, a justification for conducting an ethnographic case study, an outline of the research process, a consideration of potential ethical issues, and an explanation of the analysis process. In Chapter Three, the analysis is presented, introducing the key findings of my research. Finally, in Chapter Four, the findings will be further deliberated upon and reviewed in relation to the literature.

Chapter Two: Methodology

To achieve an in-depth understanding of the everyday experiences of the participants in the context of the OADC, it is paramount to build meaningful and trusting relationships with those involved. Not only are such relationships essential for working ethically *with* Māori participants (Hudson & Russell, 2009) and people who are experiencing homelessness, as a vulnerable population (Paradis, 2000), mutually trustful and reciprocal relationships also facilitate a co-construction of meaning. This is important for shifting from the reproduction of public accounts, or what participants think researchers want to hear, to the sharing of private accounts, which participants often consider less acceptable to others, but which come closer to their direct and felt experiences of street life (Groot & Hodgetts, 2012). Thus, by adopting a Māori-centred, case-based ethnographic approach, involving volunteer work, direct observations, informal conversations, photo-production activities, and interviews, whakawhanaungatanga (establishing and maintaining trusting, genuine, and reciprocal relationships) became central to the research process (Walker, Eketone, & Gibbs, 2006).

Particularly for me as a tauiwi (foreign, non-Māori), this culturally informed approach was fundamental to ensuring that my research is responsive to the needs of the Māori participants (Came, 2013). Therefore, by sharing the outcomes of this research as well as by co-constructing meaning and consulting with staff and volunteers of the Māori-led 155 organisation and the OADC, the present research strives to benefit the organisation and the participants involved (Macfarlane, 2016). Moreover, my co-supervisor, Pita King, has whakapapa connections (genealogical ties) to the North and explored the lifeworlds of homeless Māori men in his own master's thesis and subsequent publications (King, 2014; King et al., 2015; King, Hodgetts, Rua, & Te Whetu, 2016). With his advice, feedback, and support, I have strived to safeguard the cultural appropriateness of the research process.

Following and celebrating the famous whakataukī (proverb) "He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata!" (What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, it is people, it is people), the people involved are central to the present research. Indeed, as Masters-Awatere and colleagues (2019) highlight, people are pivotal to holistic wellbeing in te ao Māori (Māori world(view)). Subsequently, this chapter begins by outlining how my project was informed by a Māori-centred community psychology approach and by introducing the participants. Then, a rationale for adopting an ethnographic case study design will be provided. Next, the research process, including my involvement with the OADC, the

participant recruitment, and the employed methods, will be laid out and justified. Consequently, ethical considerations will be discussed in light of the *Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations Involving Human Participants* (MUHEC, 2017) as well as Māori ethical values. Finally, the process of analysis, which took place simultaneously to the engagements with the participants, will be described and substantiated.

Māori-centred approach and the participants

Māori-centred research is underpinned by Kaupapa Māori theory, a heterogeneous and extensive conceptualisation of Māori epistemologies, cosmology, methodologies, and ethics that serve to raise crucial questions about the involvement, decision-making power, and representation of Māori in research (Mahuika, 2008). Moreover, Kaupapa Māori theory requires and facilitates investigations into researchers' accountability and legitimisation of knowledge, forestalling possibilities of marginalising rangatiratanga and mātauranga Māori (Mane, 2009). While resisting processes of colonialism in knowledge production, Kaupapa Māori theory draws on tikanga and mātauranga Māori as well as Western epistemologies and knowledges. Scholars adopting this approach seek to legitimise Māori understandings, to redress historical and ongoing colonialist injustices, and to strive towards collective growth and prosperity for Māori (Bishop, 2008).

As Kaupapa Māori research is generally conceptualised as "research by Maori, for Maori and with Maori" (Walker et al., 2006, p. 331) and because Māori control over the research processes and outcomes is limited in the present study, I refrain from terming my research Kaupapa Māori research. However, as will be discussed in this chapter, this project emerged as a result of community engagement and consultation with Māori, in a Māori-led organisation, and with considerable supervisory input from a Kaupapa Māori scholar, building and fostering the very collaborative and reciprocal relationships that Kaupapa Māori theory centralises. Indeed, as Bishop (2011) analyses, the relationship to the research participants, rather than the researcher's ethnicity, is central for research underpinned by Kaupapa Māori theory. Through the processes of whakawhanaungatanga, genuine and trusting relationships provide the foundations for a common agenda in which meanings are co-created, and the researcher (Māori or non-Māori) acts as an agent for participants, their stories and standpoints (Woller, 2013).

Accordingly, through a commitment to the politicisation of Māori homelessness, the meaningful engagement with participants, the legitimisation and accurate representation of participant accounts, as well as the consultation with, involvement in, and celebrations of the achievements of a Māori-led service provider, this present research is Māori-centred (Kerr, Penney, Moewaka Barnes, & McCreanor, 2009). As I will demonstrate throughout this chapter, core Māori values and concepts, on which Kaupapa Māori theory and te ao Māori are predicated, have been naturalised and upheld throughout the research process, rendering the approach culturally appropriate and responsive (Macfarlane, 2016). While the values underpinning Kaupapa Māori theory have been defined multifariously, for the present study, specific attention has been paid to processes of whakawhanaungatanga (Walker et al., 2006); *tino rangatiratanga*, Māori as self-determining partners with tauiwi, here involving research *for* and *with* Māori (Bishop, 2008); *mātauranga Māori*, the naturalisation of tikanga Māori and Māori understandings (Kerr et al., 2009); and *hurihuringa*, the consistent and ongoing critical reflection throughout the present research, involving reflexivity as accountability (Jones, Ingham, Davies, & Cram, 2010; Valenzuela, 2013).

All participants in this research are of Māori descent, except for Carol Peters, who is of Pākehā descent. Three of the eight participants were female, and five contributors were male. To grasp the dynamics surrounding the OADC and the lifeworlds of its homeless whānau, the eight participants were comprised of three staff, one Food Rescue Northland volunteer, one OADC volunteer, and three previously homeless whānau. The inclusion of staff and volunteers allowed for a broader understanding of homelessness in Whangārei and the OADC as a space of care and further facilitated the consultation and collaboration with the service provider to ensure the research project meets the expectations and values of the organisation.

The three staff members were Carol Peters, Richard Pehi, and Jane, who provided precious contextual information for the present research. Whangārei-born Carol Peters (early 70s) actively contributed to establishing the 155 trust in 1993 and the OADC in 2018. As a passionate community development worker, she has initiated and been involved in numerous community-led projects. In 2015, Carol completed her PhD on the development of a community-led Whangārei television station (Channel North; Peters, 2015) and in 2018, she was awarded the Queen's Service Medal. In 2019, she was a finalist for the Women of Influence Award, and, in the same year, she became a councillor for Whangārei's Okara Ward.

Richard Pehi, in his 50s, was born in Tokoroa in the Waikato region and has whakapapa connections to the Hokianga in the Far North. Following his career in social work, including work in mental health and community development, Richard began working at the OADC. As a member of 155's housing team, his work involves triaging homeless whānau in line with Whangārei's Kainga Pumanawa principles. Jane is in her 20s and worked as a whānau support advocate for 155 between 2017 and 2021. She was born and raised in Coromandel with a Hauraki-Tainui heritage and moved to Whangārei in 2016. Prior to this relocation, Jane and her family experienced homelessness first-hand when living in a severely overcrowded house after her parents' farming contract had run out. Jane was part of the original establishment of the OADC and worked in the centre on a casual basis, supporting and advocating for whānau with diverse needs.

The two participating volunteers were Slap [pseudonym] and Alizé [pseudonym]. Slap volunteered for Food Rescue Northland, a project initiated by 155 which redistributes surplus food from food retailers to community organisations around Te Taitokerau (see Appendix A). In Whangārei, Food Rescue operates from the OADC's premises, leading staff and volunteers of both organisations to communicate with and assist each other. Slap is in his 40s and was born in Whangārei. When he was in his 20s, Slap moved to Australia and resided there for over 15 years. While in Australia, he experienced homelessness, sleeping in his car for one month and becoming a service user of a centre similar to the OADC. When he returned to Whangārei, a family member worked at the OADC, leading to his initially unofficial involvement and subsequently formal volunteering for Food Rescue Northland. Slap was housed in a hotel as part of the government's response to homelessness in the Covid-19 pandemic during his participation in the research. Alizé is in her early 50s and from Whanganui in the Manawatū-Whanganui region. After experiences of homelessness in Auckland, Alizé became homeless again after moving to Whangārei in 2014. Through her friend, Lofty, whom she met whilst being homeless in Auckland, Alizé became involved as a volunteer at the OADC since its beginnings in 2018. Alizé was also accommodated in a hotel at the time of the interviews.

The three previously homeless whānau who participated in the present research are all male and of Ngāti Whātua descent. They are close friends and stayed together for the majority of their street homelessness. Two of them, Ugly [pseudonym], and Māori Jesus [pseudonym], are in their 50s, and Ben [pseudonym] is in his 40s. Before Ugly moved onto the streets of Whangārei, he lived in Wellsford, in the North Auckland region. He recognised

the harsh realities some homeless people suffered through and became part of a weekly soup kitchen initiative. After spending much time on the streets, Ugly finally decided to join the homeless community while working full-time. Indeed, Ugly had never been unemployed during his eight years of homelessness, and work-related relocations as well as housing shortages contributed to his street homelessness in different areas around Auckland and Northland. Ugly acquired motel accommodation shortly before being interviewed.

Māori Jesus was born and raised in South Auckland as part of a family of nine children. With his family being part of a Church, he was raised with firm Christian and Māori cultural values. As a teenager, Māori Jesus first came into conflict with the law, was subsequently institutionalised, and, eventually, became incarcerated. Since then, he has experienced multiple episodes of street homelessness in various locations. Māori Jesus is a critical thinker and well-educated in areas such as Aotearoa/New Zealand history and philosophy. He was one of the last remaining houseless people in Whangārei after the government's housing response to Covid-19. He acquired accommodation at a camp ground during his participation in the present research.

Ben was born in Helensville in the North Auckland region to a family with strong Māori cultural traditions. He had been a hard worker all his life, acquiring diverse work-related certificates and holding multiple supervisor and managerial positions while being a single parent. However, the burglary of his house precipitated a downward spiral of unemployment, depression, and homelessness. Due to his vehicles being stolen, Ben lost his transport to work and subsequently had to resign. He was unable to pay rent, lost his home, and had to make the heart-breaking decision of leaving his son in the care of his mother in Whangārei. After three months of couch surfing in West Auckland, Ben decided to hitchhike to Whangārei to reconnect with his children, where he became street homeless for over one year. Ben was housed in an apartment approximately nine months before participating in the present research.

As is discussed below, the ethnographic case study design is a valuable approach to centralising the participants and maintaining meaningful relationships with them while exploring their lifeworlds. This design, along with the employment of diverse qualitative methods, facilitates whakawhanaungatanga through the deep prolonged engagement with the contributors; tino rangatiratanga by ensuring the participants can maintain their agency and voice; mātauranga Māori through the integration of Māori cultural values into the approach;

and hurihuringa by allowing for and requiring my consistent reflexivity. Subsequently, the ethical concerns involved will be addressed, and the process of analysis will be outlined.

The ethnographic case study design

The adoption of an ethnographic case study approach lends itself to the aims of this research by providing the groundwork for (a) unmasking structural inequities, (b) highlighting people's agency, (c) gaining an in-depth appreciation of the dynamics surrounding the OADC and the participants' lifeworlds, as well as (d) positively affecting communal and local narratives (Groot, Hodgetts, Nikora, & Leggatt-Cook, 2011; Hodgetts & Stolte, 2012). With people at the centre of this research, this qualitative, immersed, and responsive approach is highly appropriate for the deep engagement and whakawhanaungatanga with the people involved.

My one-year involvement with and volunteering for the OADC allowed me to capture the contexts within which the participants' experiences and accounts are embedded and enabled me to grasp changes across time. Furthermore, the extended engagements with the participants rendered the present research less exploitative than approaches that necessitate distant and objective researcher-participant relationships (Smith, 2012). This is particularly crucial when conducting research *with* and *for* Māori who, historically and continually, have experienced exploitation through WEIRD (psychological) knowledge production *on* them (Bishop, 2011; Hodgetts et al., 2021). Finally, a rich, detailed presentation of the case of the OADC allows the reader to imagine herself in the everyday operations of the centre and the lifeworlds of the participants. In a society that is increasingly socially, economically, and culturally divided, this is vital. By facilitating the reader's conceived presence in this social world, the issue (homelessness) becomes a shared concern, contributing to the possibility of social action and change (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2012).

Ethnographic research has long been overlooked in social psychological research and only relatively recently gained new popularity (Griffin & Bengry-Howell, 2017). By adopting an emic (insider) stance, ethnographic fieldwork is based on the assumption that social and cultural conditions and meanings are fundamental components of people's everyday lives. Thus, to grasp everyday phenomena, community research must investigate the contexts in which it is enmeshed (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010). Therefore, ethnography strives to understand how people make sense of their circumstances and experiences through the

prolonged immersion of the researcher in the research setting and the employment of a wide range of methods (e.g., questionnaires, participant observation, and interviews; Orellana, 2020). Multiple qualitative research methods were employed, including ethnographic fieldwork; the documentation of and reflection on this fieldwork through a reflective research journal; photographic exercises; and semi-structured, kanohi ki te kanohi (face-to-face) interviews. The repeated and in-depth interactions involved in using such an array of methods, underpinned by my consistent ethnographic immersion, facilitated whakawhanaungatanga and a subsequent shift from participants' public stories to revelations of more private "truths" (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2012).

As Griffin and Bengry-Howell (2017, p. 40) explain, in ethnographic research, "A specific social group or *case* [emphasis added] will be studied in its 'natural' setting. … [which] entails the researcher becoming part of this 'natural' setting for the duration of a study". Indeed, qualitative case studies are underpinned by the notion that the real-life context in which a case (e.g., a site, person, group, community, or institution) is situated is integral to understanding its complex dynamics (Edwards, 1998). As Hodgetts and Stolte (2012) explain, this provides an opportunity for participants to exhibit their agency by portraying themselves as examples while acknowledging broader macro-level influences. Thus, case-based research requires the intensive investigation of a phenomenon by using prolonged and diverse ways of gathering information about its specifics (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Case-based research, with its focus on in-depth, contextual, and bottom-up understandings, has been identified as particularly useful for exploring issues surrounding homelessness due to their intricate relationships between micro and macro-level factors, the ever-changing and transient lives of those involved, and the diverse sub-groups and individuals affected (Pable, 2013). Moreover, as Speer and Christens (2012) identify, case studies are specifically apposite for exploring the multifarious and ever-changing nature of community reactions to adversity and, together with ethnographic fieldwork, provide deep insights into these everyday complexities (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2012). Therefore, exploring the case of the OADC as an exemplar of a space of care that comprises service provider and whānau responses to homelessness in time of a global crisis is appropriate for the goals of the present research.

Importantly, flexibility is paramount in ethnographic case studies, particularly when operating in dynamic settings, whilst seeking to ensure the needs and expectations of participants and the organisation are met (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Golding, Foley, & Weadon,

2020). In the present research, the very definition of the case under investigation was changed from "homelessness in Whangārei" to "the case of the OADC" as, during my ethnographic immersion, I had come to recognise that the OADC constitutes a central intersection in which the experiences and standpoints of homeless people and service providers meet and are mutually constructed. Also, the initially proposed mapping exercises were generally not well-received among the participants, leading to this method being intentionally abandoned, and interview locations and times were altered according to the needs and demands of the participants and the OADC. Thus, the ethnographic case study design permitted the necessary ongoing adaptation of methods and interactions to balance the needs of everyone involved and to capture the ever-changing and evolving nature of the OADC.

Based on the longstanding embeddedness of WEIRD social psychology in rationalism, individualism, and positivism (Tuffin, 2005), more orthodox or quantitatively-oriented researchers may criticise the limited internal and external validity of ethnographic case-based research. Not only are such studies difficult, or even impossible, to replicate, they are also non-generalisable, in the sample to population sense, due to their extremely specific focus (LeCompte & Preissle Goetz, 1982). Moreover, evaluated from such a quantitatively-orientated perspective, case studies are frequently viewed as limited contributions to the major endeavour of scientific psychological knowledge production (e.g., Cozby & Bates, 2012, p. 122).

However, the aim of such research is not that of finding ubiquitous "truths" but that of grasping varied, particular, and practicable meanings that hold "ecological and psychopolitical validity" rather than scientific validity (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2012, p. 387). Acquiring in-depth understandings that have significance in the real world is central, rather than reducing participants and their contexts to allegedly measurable universal variables. Furthermore, if internal validity is defined as the robust design of a research study, allowing for conclusions about causal relationships between variables (Salkind, 2010), then this construct is clearly irrelevant to ethnographic case-based research. Instead, unique, complex, and dynamic aspects are the very points of interest that help avoid the over-generalisation of abstract "truths", detached from everyday complexities (Griffin & Bengry-Howell, 2017). One commonly raised issue in ethnographic case-based research is "researcher bias" in which scientific rigour is "at risk" due to the researcher's subjectivity or bias (Parker-Jenkins, 2018). However, not only do the deep and long-lasting engagements with the participants and their contexts provide space for open discussions, negotiations, and reflection; bias can also

catalyse debate and action, as a researcher's investment in a political issue, such as homelessness, is fundamental for critical engagements with the topic (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2012).

Thus, the ethnographic case-study approach allows for drawing connections between the micro and the macro-level factors involved in a particular case, facilitating the identification of both unique and commonplace aspects (Delmar, 2010). As discussed in Chapter One, structural dynamics, such as neoliberal economic values and beliefs, permeate into and are reproduced in micro-level relations (Teo, 2018). Simmel theorised this phenomenon, arguing that in order for researchers to understand macro-level dynamics and developments, they ought to investigate local grass-root experiences and circumstances which reflect broader events (Christodoulou, 2021). Thus, we can not only explore societal dynamics through certain exemplars (Walker, Burton, et al., 2015); ethnographic case-based research also allows us to investigate how these are linked in everyday life by abductively relating a specific case to known psychological theories and constructs (King, 2014). As outlined below, this technique has guided the analysis process of the present research. However, first, the research process will be outlined and substantiated.

The research process

My interest in homelessness first arose as a teenager living in suburban Germany, observing people in the inner city of Frankfurt who creatively made homes for themselves on the streets. Since moving to Te Taitokerau in 2010, I recognised the severity of the issue here in urban Aotearoa/New Zealand and, in more recent years, also in some small-town and rural areas. Through my undergraduate degree, I first discovered social and community psychological research on the issue of homelessness, sparking my eagerness to explore some of the longstanding questions I had. Thus, I found the TTEHCT (Tai Tokerau Emergency Housing Charitable Trust) through an online search and arranged a meeting with the kaiārahi (manager) in August 2019. Before our hui, I gathered donations from friends and family, including clothes and toys, as a koha (gift, offering) for the kaiārahi's time and contribution. As Hodgetts et al. (2013) recognise, reciprocal relationships with stakeholders are central to community research as they facilitate inclusion and integrity and promote tino rangatiratanga through establishing a shared kaupapa (agenda, initiative, purpose; Bishop, 2008). Thus, the groundwork for an equitable and empowering partnership was laid.

A further hui with the TTEHCT's kaiārahi, Carol Peters and Richard Pehi was arranged for September 2019. We discussed some possible approaches to the present research and the OADC was suggested as the research site. Conferring with these stakeholders ensured their agreement with my project, establishing a foundation for their needs and expectations to be met, and confirming their status as self-determining partners (Bishop, 2008). Shortly after our meeting, I visited the OADC for the first time, where I was warmly welcomed. I was provided with a tour of the premises and invited to socialise with the whānau over a cup of coffee. In my reflective research journal, I recapitulated the experience as follows:

> I went to the OADC today and met Samantha Cassidy [the kaiārahi] for the first time. She was very welcoming and encouraged me to drop in anytime to engage with whānau. She told me that, when introducing the proposed research, I will probably receive some resistance but that once I establish relationships, I will be fine. I left the OADC with a positive feeling and an urge to return.

I subsequently returned to the OADC on multiple occasions where I engaged with whānau by exchanging our whakapapa (genealogy), stories, and circumstances, and sharing kai (food). In line with tikanga Māori, the acts of sharing kai, whakapapa, and personal stories are particularly essential in research because they facilitate the establishment of trust and demonstrate mutuality and reciprocity (Walker et al., 2006), moving beyond simplistic "small talk". However, I also experienced some anticipated initial resistance:

> He [whānau member] told me that he has seen researchers come and go. He believes that "many researchers think they can change the world, or eradicate homelessness, but then they get disappointed when they fail." He then urged me to spend time with himself and his friends under their bridge, as this would be the only way to truly learn about homelessness. [Field note, 15 October 2019]

This conversation demonstrated not only the usefulness of ethnographic immersion for grasping the complexities surrounding homelessness, but also the importance of genuine relationships with whānau to overcome this resistance, which is often based on previous experiences of exploitation (Bishop, 2011). Nevertheless, the interactions with whānau were predominantly positive, and I felt welcomed and accepted. One particularly prominent whānau I engaged with was Lofty, a tall and outspoken woman who had been homeless for a significant amount of time, had a good sense of humour, and was an integral part of the OADC. After meeting her for the first time, I noted in my research diary that:

> Lofty helps out around the place. She wipes tables and does not hesitate to remind whānau of the OADC's rules. The first thing she said to me was, "Oh, you'll fit right in." She then asked laughingly, "Can I live with you? I'll do the dishes", which made everyone in the dining room chuckle.

As becomes apparent in the following chapters, despite Lofty's passing in June 2020, she remains fundamental to the OADC's heart and soul and to those whānau who were close to her. Two of these whānau (and participants) are Ugly and Ben, who I met at my second visit to the OADC. Again, humour aided the breakdown of boundaries between myself and the "them", facilitating an open conversation. "Ben said, 'Hi, my name is Awesome, and his name is Ugly' as he pointed at Ugly, laughing heartily" (Field note, 15 October 2019). As McGovern (2012) demonstrates in her prodigious New Zealand ethnographic study of a street homeless man in Wellington, humour may play a wide range of roles in people's lives on the streets, including a diminishment or maintenance of distance to the domiciled public. In the present research, humour was a valuable means for building and maintaining rapport with and assisting in the acquisition of deeper insights into the lifeworlds of homeless people. I will now outline and discuss the processes involved in my fieldwork and volunteering, reflective journaling, participant enrolment, and how information was gathered through the employment of interviews and photographic exercises.

Volunteering, the reflective research journal, and participant recruitment

Between October 2019 and February 2020, I continued to visit the OADC regularly, enhancing the relationships with whānau, volunteers, and staff. I observed the everyday operations, occurrences, and interactions within the space and engaged in more in-depth conversations about the present research. On February 3 2020, I became an official volunteer for the OADC, which enabled me to reciprocate the support I had received and, simultaneously, to immerse myself in the context in which potential participants interact, providing rich insights into the relational, spatial and material dimensions of their everyday lives (Groot & Hodgetts, 2012). My weekly work involved a wide range of tasks, including packing and distributing food parcels and interviewing whānau regarding their eligibility, overseeing the reception, helping in the kitchen, and supporting Food Rescue Northland operations where needed. This extensive volunteer work allowed me to gain insight into the diverse operations of the OADC, meet and closely engage with the staff and volunteers, and

share information about the present research through casual conversations and the daily debriefings.

Figure 4. Alizé and myself on reception duties. A photograph taken by volunteer participant Slap.

Importantly, my ethnographic observations at the OADC were by no means objective but mutually constitutive with my assumptions, values, choices, experiences, and actions throughout and beyond the research processes (Robertson & Masters-Awatere, 2007). Accordingly, I ensured that the constructed nature of the research findings was rendered transparent by keeping a reflective research journal (Ortlipp, 2008). Documenting relevant interactions and occurrences before and throughout the research and critically reflecting on these, facilitated an extended and continued awareness of myself and others. As Etherington (2004) emphasises, reflective research journals are vital tools for deliberating our experiences of the research journey, our impact within the research setting and on participants, our research relationships, and our assumptions and biases. Indeed, reflecting on these aspects can promote communication with participants as we can address our potentially negative emotions and thoughts that may prevent us from open-mindedly engaging with others.

Moreover, becoming aware of our biases through reflective journaling can provide a way of delving deeper into the topic of interest as we explore the roots of our passions (Etherington, 2004).

The structure of my reflective research journal was inspired by Ngahuia Te Awekotuku's (University of Waikato) recommendations (see Appendix B). It involved field notes based on my ethnographic immersion; auto-reflective commentary on my work, such as my previous experiences with the topic; experiences with my community, friends and family and how these related to the research topic; media observations; and a book list and references. Such documentations not only facilitated processes of reflexivity and transparency but also contextualised and rendered more pertinent the dynamics related to homelessness in my surroundings. The journal was partially hand-written and partially typed and printed and guided the data collection and analysis throughout and beyond my research. Due to the flexible nature of ethnographic case studies, the reflective journal was also exceptionally useful for maintaining an overview of research processes as they unfolded. As will be discussed next, multiple changes were made throughout the data collection due to the Covid-19 outbreak, changing requirements of the OADC, and the lives of the participants.

Following Aotearoa/New Zealand's initial level four lockdown between March 25 and April 28 2020, the OADC continued to operate under the same conditions as during the lockdown until Aotearoa/New Zealand returned to alert level one (i.e., June 8 2020). To protect the OADC's vulnerable whānau, this involved full closure of the premises except for daily takeaway lunches, weekly food parcels, and pre-booked showers for rough sleepers. Thus, my ethnographic immersion and volunteer work were interrupted, and I could not engage with whānau for over two months. Additionally, many of the whānau I had formed relationships with did no longer visit the OADC regularly due to being accommodated in motels and emergency housing. Nevertheless, I began distributing information sheets (see Appendix C) to whānau and volunteers on the July 1 2020. Despite several whānau agreeing to participate, further adjustments had to be made, as interviews had to be rescheduled or cancelled based on incidents and changes in the OADC and the whānau's lives.

I initially approached whānau members I had built rapport with, which was met with mixed reactions. As some showed little interest in the research project, I recognised the importance of timing. Overall, whānau appeared less curious about the research when I approached them in times of immediate need, such as before mealtimes or when they visited

the OADC for food parcels. On the contrary, when I waited until whānau were relaxing outside or in the dining room, they were more likely to read and consider the information sheet. However, I never pressured anyone into accepting the information sheet and verbally assured whānau that it was not a problem if they declined. Despite minimal initial enthusiasm among whānau, snowball sampling occurred naturally after further discussing the research with one of the participants. Subsequently, two more whānau approached me and agreed to contribute to the present research. Both volunteers, as well as the three staff members forthwith agreed to participate. The information sheet for staff members included similar information to those prepared for the whānau and volunteers; however, the photography exercise and interview and the closing-off conversation were omitted, as their participation in these was not possible due to occupational time restrictions.

Following the completion of the research, I have continued to be in sporadic contact with the participants. I also engaged in some paid work at the OADC, and I am now working as the coordinator of 155's community law centre in Kaikohe. Remaining in close contact with the organisation has enabled me to stay up-to-date with the occurrences at the OADC and ensure that the needs and expectations about my research have been met. I will now describe and legitimise the methods employed in the research process and explain how these have contributed to meeting the goals of the present research.

Photography, mapping, and interviews

Seventeen individual, semi-structured, kanohi ki te kanohi interviews were conducted between July 9 and September 18 2020, employing open-ended questions and lasting between 45 and 180 minutes. Eleven interviews were held in a private room at the OADC, and six took place in a private room at the 155 Whare Āwina Community House. Being present at the OADC at least three times per week during this 10-week period allowed me to conduct interviews impromptu, which was necessary due to the dynamic nature of the OADC and participants' lifeworlds. I, therefore, was consistently prepared, carrying information sheets, consent forms, recording devices, and the koha with me at all times. For each interview, refreshments (i.e., snacks, hot and cold drinks) were offered, and the participants were given time to make themselves comfortable and engage in informal conversations beforehand.

Sharing kai is an essential aspect of tikanga Māori. Not only as a means of showing reciprocity in the research relationship (Hodgetts et al., 2013); but it also incorporates and normalises manaakitanga, which entails demonstration of respect and aroha (love, empathy, compassion) to participants (Edwards, McManus, & McCreanor, 2005). Thus, the seemingly simple act of sharing kai provides opportunities for building and strengthening rapport and trust (i.e., whakawhanaungatanga) between the participants and the researcher (Bishop, 1999). Furthermore, together with the exchange of one's whakapapa, such as through casual conversations before the interviews, participants can make an informed decision about their participation based on the extent of trust and mutual understanding with the researcher (Walker et al., 2006).

Each interview was audio-recorded by simultaneously using two applications on my laptop and an application on my mobile phone. Although some notes were taken during the interviews, I experienced excessive note-taking as distracting for myself and the participants. As Muswazi and Nhamo (2013) identify, note-taking can have a disrupting effect on the communication with participants and, particularly when discussing sensitive or intimate topics, such as the private accounts of the participants, taking notes can lead to feelings of anxiety and irritation. Thus, I decided to document relevant utterances and occurrences after the interviews were completed rather than during the interview process.

Interview guides were prepared for the initial background interviews, covering broad areas of interest that varied across homeless participants, volunteers, and staff. For instance, in addition to the interview guide for whānau (see Appendix D), volunteers were asked about their volunteering experiences and staff members about the emergence of and dynamics surrounding the OADC. Finally, a generic interview guide was prepared for the photo-elicitation interviews (see Appendix E). However, the interview guides were adapted and partially ignored during the interviews as the conversations unfolded naturally. Participants responded to many of the prepared questions unknowingly and at times, their stories highlighted the irrelevance of those questions to their accounts. Furthermore, new, often unanticipated, areas of interest were discovered in the interviews, leading to rich and varied information.

Audio-recording the interviews further facilitated open, free-flowing conversations as they occur in everyday life. Such uninterrupted exchanges of knowledge and experiences are an integral part of the oral traditions in te ao Māori. The concept of kōrero (narrative, story,

discourse, discussion) has been fundamental to transmitting Māori cultural values, culture, and history, honouring the speaker and her stories (Ware, Forster, & Breheny, 2018). Thus, by promoting undisturbed conversations, the participants' voices were privileged and meaning-making occurred naturally, across time and space. Between each conversation, I reflected on the shared stories and, where necessary, altered the interview guide for the following interview accordingly.

Eight initial background interviews, including the one-off interviews with staff members, were held in July 2020. Although at first, staff member Richard Pehi intended to participate in the photographic exercise, time constraints did not permit this. The background interviews were set out to produce an understanding of a wide range of relevant topics, including the participants' awareness of homelessness in Whangārei; community awareness of and attitudes towards the issue; pathways into and out of homelessness; navigating everyday life as a homeless person; experiences with non-metropolitan versus urban homelessness; homelessness during the Covid-19 pandemic; possible solutions and barriers to the problem; experiences as a volunteer or staff member at the OADC; as well as information about the OADC, including its emergence, challenges and successes, and Māori cultural aspects.

To gain more in-depth insights into these experiences, the participants were invited to partake in a mapping exercise during the background interviews. They were provided with coloured pencils, a map of Whangārei, a floor plan of the OADC (see Appendix F), and blank sheets of paper to draw on if they wished. As Ravn and Duff (2015) highlight, mapping exercises can be beneficial for conducting research with and for populations that are difficult to access. Not only can these exercises elicit actions and experiences which are challenging to verbalise due to their "deviant" or illegal nature, they also provide richer understandings of people's everyday lives outside of the research setting (Eldhose, 2014; Ravn & Duff, 2015). However, as discussed earlier, processes of whakawhanaungatanga facilitated the open verbal sharing of participants' private accounts, which was reflected in their disinterest in the mapping exercise.

At the end of the initial background interviews, the homeless and volunteer participants were introduced to the photographic exercises and provided with cameras, unless they could use their mobile phones. They were asked to take photographs of anything or anyone important to their experiences of homelessness in Whangārei and the OADC.

Minimal instructions were provided to ensure participants could freely engage in the exercise. As Klitzing (2004) highlights, for research with marginalised and difficult-to-access populations, photographic exercises and subsequent photo-elicitation interviews, as opposed to interviews alone, can promote participants' confidence in and enjoyment of the research process. Additionally, similar to the mapping exercises, the use of photography enables participants to express their everyday experiences and circumstances more deeply and richly by illustrating these through their own lens, expressing material, social, cultural, and situational dynamics in ways that may be problematic to verbalise (Bowes-Catton, Barker, & Richards, 2021).

Moreover, the engagement with their lifeworlds through photography allows participants to view their activities and circumstances from a different perspective, facilitating conscientisation processes and, therefore, empowerment for positive change (Radley et al., 2005). Importantly, as system-level dynamics are reflected and reproduced in local, micro-level relations (Teo, 2018), photographs illustrating how people construct identities within their everyday contexts enable researchers to draw connections between participants' lifeworlds and broader macro-level phenomena (Hodgetts et al., 2006).

However, photo-elicitation as a method can also involve challenges, particularly regarding time and access (Klitzing, 2004). For instance, due to particular changes in Alizé's [volunteer participant] life during and time restrictions of the research, she was unable to partake in the photographic exercise. While this may seem like a limitation, Hodgetts, Chamberlain, and Radley (2007) recognise that the absence of photographs can serve as an opportunity for discussion about the aspects of everyday life that cannot or could not be pictured. Therefore, in the photo-elicitation interviews, I asked all participants whether there were aspects they would have liked to photograph but did not have an opportunity to. This led to oftentimes vivid descriptions of the contexts in which they had resided in the past and were living in currently. Additionally, video materials, instead of photographs, employed by Ugly [homeless participant], provide rich information. Not only did the audio-visual recordings permit me to imagine myself in Ugly's (past homeless) lifeworld, it also empowered him to tell his story without interruptions and to reproduce situations he encountered during his time on the streets (Pini & Walkerdine, 2021). Screenshots of the video materials were taken for inclusion in this thesis, and Ugly's recorded accounts were considered similar to the interview materials.

Therefore, photographic exercises, combined with photo-elicitation interviews, are a highly appropriate method for the present research. Not only do they facilitate an acquisition of in-depth and often unanticipated, insights; they also support the research objective of creating contextual and relational understandings of homelessness by identifying systemic issues in local representations (Bowes-Catton et al., 2021; Hodgetts et al., 2006; Teo, 2018). Additionally, photographs in research can constitute a powerful tool for raising awareness about social justice issues (Sanon, Evans-Agnew, & Boutain, 2014), providing this research with possibilities to inform the domiciled public about the often-obscured realities of homelessness in a small city.

The final closing-off conversations which Ugly [homeless participant] could not attend due to his relocation and time restrictions, were intended to enable participants to reflect on the research experience, add to their accounts if they wished, and ask questions or voice concerns. No interview guides were prepared for these conversations, and generic questions, such as “Did you enjoy partaking in this research?” or “Did any concerns or questions arise regarding the research?” were asked. This enabled the participants and me to reflect on the processes involved and to consider possible ethical issues that may have emanated.

As outlined in this section, the employment of visual methods and open-ended conversations in the context of the ethnographic case study design as a flexible, immersed, and responsive approach was highly useful for striving towards the research aims. These methods highlight the participants’ agency while unmasking structural inequities. They also help gain an in-depth appreciation of people’s lifeworlds and the dynamics surrounding the OADC, holding possibilities of positively affecting communal and local narratives. However, specific ethical aspects must be considered in such an approach which will be discussed next.

Ethical considerations

Ethical approval for the present research was obtained from the Massey University Human Ethics Committee [MUHEC]. The *Code of ethical conduct for research, teaching and evaluations involving human participants* (MUHEC, 2017) as well as the *Te Ara Tika* Māori ethics framework (Hudson, Milne, Reynolds, Russell, & Smith, 2010) were considered to safeguard the participants and myself as much as possible. As a Māori-centred approach, this research has focussed on acknowledging, incorporating, and protecting Māori cultural ways

of being as the bedrock of ethical conduct. Therefore, I have utilised the Te Ara Tika structure to demonstrate the ethical considerations relevant to the present research while confirming that the interdependent principles of the MUHEC's *Code of Ethics* (2017; i.e., autonomy, avoidance of harm, benefit, justice, and special relationships) have been taken seriously and adhered to.

However, it is important to recognise that through the dynamic nature of ethnographic fieldwork, ethical conduct involved a high degree of flexibility and adaptation, requiring considerable susceptibility to situation-dependent nuances (Sultana, 2007). Indeed, as Greeff and Rennie (2016) discuss, *phronesis* (i.e., practical wisdom) is a fundamental aspect of ethical decision-making in the everyday workings of community research, an aspect of ethical conduct that moves beyond the rather rigid guidelines of research ethics committees. Thus, in the present research, ethical behaviours and norms were reflexively negotiated and adapted across situations to protect the university, the organisation, the participants, and myself.

The Te Ara Tika framework (Hudson et al., 2010) comprises four interwoven Māori cultural concepts: (a) whakapapa (relationships), (b) tika (purposefulness), (c) manaakitanga (cultural and social responsibility), and (d) mana (justice and equity). Ethical behaviour in each of these four domains can reach from "minimum standards", to "good practice", to the ideal of "best practice".

According to Hudson et al. (2010), *Whakapapa* refers to the building and maintenance of relationships with Māori participants and stakeholders, which not only comprises the ethical principle of *special relationships* (MUHEC, 2017, i.e., adherence to the ethical obligations produced through the relationships with the participants, communities, organisations, and the university). It also relates to Te Tiriti o Waitangi's *partnership* principle, epitomising reciprocity, collaboration, and honesty between the researcher, the participants, and Māori stakeholders (Cargo, Waitoki, & Feather, 2016; MUHEC, 2017).

The present research indicates good practice (engagement). As outlined previously, my project involved positive long-term engagements with Māori stakeholders (i.e., 155), including continuous consultations before, during, and beyond the research. It was also ensured that the research aligns with their objectives, as homelessness in Whangārei presents an issue that is particularly relevant to Māori due to their consistent overrepresentation in the statistics (George et al., 2021; Hudson et al., 2010). The participant information sheet (see

Appendix C) provided clearly laid-out information regarding the research processes and aims, management of the acquired data, and how the findings will be shared (i.e., a summary for each participant and an openly accessible printed version of the thesis for the OADC). Finally, informed consent was obtained from each participant (see Appendix G), and they were verbally reminded of the information contained in the participant information sheet prior to their contributions. Thus, the special relationships between myself, the participants, and the organisation are transparent, meaningful, and fair.

Tika applies to the research design regarding producing the suggested outcomes and impacting beneficially on the participants and stakeholders (Hudson et al., 2010). This concept aligns with the Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles of *participation* and *protection*, underscoring the equitable and positive involvement of Māori at all levels of psychological research and practice and demanding the safeguarding of Māori rights and concerns (Cargo et al., 2016; MUHEC, 2017). Tika also aligns with the ethical principle of *justice* (MUHEC, 2017), requiring fair opportunities for participation in and an impartial distribution of advantages and disadvantages resulting from the project.

This research project demonstrates good practice (Māori-centred) based on ongoing consultations and collaborations with Māori stakeholders and Māori as essential contributors in different roles, including 155 staff, the OADC volunteers and participants, and my Māori supervisor (Hudson et al., 2010). Equal opportunities for participation were also ensured. Therefore, along with the outcome-appropriate employment of an ethnographic case study design (as discussed in this chapter), the present research displays a purposeful and inclusive approach.

The third Māori ethical principle of the Te Ara Tika framework is that of *manaakitanga*, or the respectful and culturally appropriate treatment and protection of the people involved (Hudson et al., 2010). Manaakitanga, therefore, links to MUHEC's (2017) principle of *autonomy*, necessitating respect for people, voluntary and informed consent, and the protection of privacy and confidentiality. Additionally, manaakitanga relates to Te Tiriti o Waitangi's *partnership* principle, as it requires regardful and culturally safe collaborations with Māori stakeholders and participants (Cargo et al., 2016; MUHEC, 2017).

The present research manifests good practice (cultural safety), as the goals of the project have been collectively discussed with relevant stakeholders, and the research was implemented in a culturally safe way, including the protection of participants' privacy and

confidentiality (Hudson et al., 2010). The incorporation of tikanga Māori into the research process, such as sharing kai and facilitating whakawhanaungatanga and kōrero has promoted respectful and culturally safe engagements. Moreover, the comprehensive information sheet (see Appendix C) assured participants that their confidentiality and privacy would be upheld, for example, by blurring faces in the photographs and using pseudonyms. However, staff members preferred their names to be disclosed, and three other participants chose to use their nicknames. Therefore, an additional name disclosure consent form (see Appendix H) was signed by six of the eight participants. The participants were also reminded of their right to withdraw at any time without negative consequences, and my own, my supervisors', and the Massey University directors of research ethics' contact information was provided on the information sheet should concerns about the research arise. Thus, the present research involves a high standard of social and cultural responsibility, observed and safeguarded throughout and beyond the research process.

Finally, *mana* refers to the individual and collective power relations in the research and, consequently, to issues of fairness and distributive justice (Hudson et al., 2010). This relates to Te Tiriti o Waitangi's principle of *protection,* safeguarding Māori cultural values and processes (Cargo et al., 2016; MUHEC, 2017). Moreover, the concept of mana captures the MUHEC's (2017) principles of *justice*, *beneficence*, and *non-maleficence*, as it refers to the equitable distribution of benefits and minimisation of potential harms resulting from the research.

Due to the lack of direct contact with regional iwi and hapū (here: sub-tribe), the present research cannot be considered as exhibiting good practice (mana whenua) or best practice (mana whakahaere). However, the minimum standard (mana tangata) has been fulfilled. Arguably, through the meaningful relationships with 155 stakeholders who, in turn, collaborate closely with local marae (social or ceremonial communal venues for Māori cultural ways of being; Peters, 2001); the expectations of local iwi and hapū may have been recognised (Hudson et al., 2010). The participants were verbally informed about the minimisation of potential risks (e.g., through the use of pseudonyms) as well as in the information sheet (see Appendix C). Reciprocity was an essential aspect of the research. So, the OADC was provided with a koha of $100 and the participants' time was reciprocated with $25 (i.e., supermarket voucher) for each interview. As Bishop (2008) identifies, koha plays an integral part in protecting the participants' mana. Their decision to accept the koha grants them self-determination, as they confirm their agreement to a shared research agenda

that necessitates power-sharing and collaboration. However, in this flexible approach, monetary koha was not considered as appropriate by one of the participants. Thus, after learning about the participant's keen interest in native plants, I provided him with an alternative koha of a potted koromiko tree for his motel apartment. This is a good example of situational ethical decision-making that goes beyond institutional guidelines and requires phronetic deliberations (Greeff & Rennie, 2016). The benefits of the research will be shared with 155, as this thesis will be available to publish on 155's website and in print at the OADC.

Throughout this immersed and flexible research process, potential themes and issues for analysis were considered creatively and organically by drawing connections between my observations, field notes, engagements, and existing theories. Thus, as will be outlined in the next section, the analysis constituted a continuous process that, through the employment of *abductive* reasoning, related specific local interactions, occurrences, and accounts to broader theoretical frameworks and social processes.

The process of analysis

Within scientific knowledge production, including experimental psychological research, *inductive* and *deductive* interpretative approaches have dominated the field. While inductive research seeks to develop theories about rather recondite phenomena by drawing on probability measures, deductive studies endeavour to test existing theories by drawing truth claims from tested hypotheses (Soiferman, 2010). *Abductive* reasoning, or "*inference to the best explanation*" on the other hand, has received much less attention in psychological research, possibly due to the seemingly ungraspable nature of the implicit experiential knowledges involved (Hiles, Čermák, & Chrz, 2017, p. 159). Although considering particular accounts and circumstances, and attempting to produce generalised theories about these, could be regarded as apposite for the analysis of this research, relying on probability measures would certainly not be desirable or possible. Rather than objectively assessing how frequently certain phenomena occur within a social group or space, the principal goal of this research was to understand the participants' lifeworlds in-depth, including both common and unique aspects.

A deductive interpretative approach to the present research is also unsuitable. While existing theories must be drawn on in this analysis, a pursuit of finding "proofs" to deem

these theories universally “true” would be inappropriate, as the complex and dynamic everyday lives of the participants cannot be reduced to universal laws. Instead, these lifeworlds constitute the very ordinary and extra-ordinary nuances I seek to understand (Højholt & Schraube, 2016).

As Chamberlain (2000) cautions, novel qualitative researchers in psychology frequently succumb to the temptation of *methodolatry*, or the orthodox application and endorsement of established methods without considering their capacity to capture the complex phenomena under investigation. Chamberlain explains that the novice qualitative researcher learns the “correct” application of particular approaches to analysis, often following step-by-step guides that “offer a description of what was said rather than an interpretation that provides insight into the experience” (Chamberlain, 2000, p. 289).

In contrast, I approached the analysis as a *bricoleur* or “do-it-yourselfer”, a person who utilises the tools and skills at hand to complete a task (Rahman & Scaife, 2006). Levi-Strauss extended the meaning of the terms bricoleur and *bricolage* (i.e., do-it-yourself) in his 1962 book *The Savage Mind* by exploring how novel solutions can be actively constructed through the employment of a person’s or a society’s existing knowledge and ideas (Johnson, 2012). In research, acting as a bricoleur involves drawing on diverse interdisciplinary methodological and analytical approaches as well as one’s multifaceted academic and lay knowledge to produce a “collage”, or coherent picture, of the obtained information (Rahman & Scaife, 2006). Importantly, however, this coherence is likely insufficient when evaluated from a traditional objectivist perspective. Rather, the produced representations are embedded in the very subjectivity and equivocation that are intrinsic to the processes of reporting and reading, providing spaces for diverse interpretations on the part of the readers (Markham, 2005). Thus, employing bricolage rather than highly procedure-driven analytic methods helps to avoid the issue of reductionist methodolatry whilst allowing for a wide range of understandings to emerge (Kincheloe, 2001).

Drawing on my skills and experiences, I acted as a bricoleur throughout the research process, which commenced with my fieldwork and research journal, and continued beyond the interview phase. Although I sought the help of a transcription company (i.e., transcriptionpuppy.com) for some of the interviews, much of the analysis occurred during my own transcriptions. Without the imposition of theoretical assumptions underpinning prevailing standardised methodological procedures, I was use of a broad body of knowledge

to genuinely investigate the complexities of the participants' lifeworlds (Kincheloe, 2005). I analysed the gathered observational, visual, and verbal information abductively by creatively constructing depictions and explanations as they are found in everyday life (Hodgetts, Rua, King, & Te Whetu, 2016). Consequently, this organic nonlinear approach to analysis does not comprise clearly perceptible or definable analytic stages. My interpretative process occurred on multiple levels, directly and indirectly, and iteratively throughout the research.

As Markham (2005, p. 814) highlights, bricolage, as a method of analysis, "can function politically to encourage multiple perspectives, yet the interpretations are not unlimited, as the author still structures the experience of reading." Not only can this approach challenge orthodox analytic approaches that may serve to (re-)produce individualistic and reductionist systems of knowledge production; it also offers a space for reflexivity on the part of the researcher and the audience as interpretative choices are outlined and, therefore, can be scrutinised and critiqued (Markham, 2005). In the present analysis, I seek to evoke insights into homelessness in Whangārei that are not regulated or predicted by prescribed analysis procedures, but that take into consideration and reflect multiple levels of meaning-making (Higgins & Eden, 2015).

As discussed earlier, the critical appraisal and politicisation of colonising forms of knowledge production in psychology (e.g., by acting as a bricoleur) is crucial when working with marginalised groups, such as homeless Māori. Issues of exploitation and cultural misappropriation in psychological research, as experienced by Māori throughout and beyond history, can be countered by representing their experiences and accounts in a critically reflexive manner (Smith, 2012). As bricolage involves considering multiple forms of meaning-making, it also allows for the appraisal of data through a Māori cultural lens (Cardno, Rosales-Anderson, & McDonald, 2017). As a tauiwi researcher conducting research with Māori participants in a Māori-led organisation, this was imperative, as participants' understandings and accounts were likely shaped by cultural perspectives to which I am an outsider. Thus, by drawing on a wide range of knowledges and frames of reference, including Māori cultural concepts, I identified themes that were prominent as well as unique to participants' accounts, reflecting ordinary and extra-ordinary aspects of their lifeworlds. These themes will be outlined, contextualised, and discussed in the following chapter (i.e., Chapter Three).

Chapter Three: Analysis

The analysis is presented in six sections that document the participants' understandings of homelessness, their constructions of the OADC and its significance in their everyday lives, how they individually and collectively conducted and coped with their lives on the streets, and some of the barriers to addressing homelessness. The visual, verbal, and observational materials were analysed thematically, focusing on both unique and shared facets of homelessness, the OADC, and associated topics. As discussed in Chapter Two, local and seemingly ordinary experiences and circumstances frequently provide insights into broader system-level affairs (Christodoulou, 2021). Thus, the participants' everyday lives were investigated, involving aspects they may themselves view as insignificant. Although the six overarching themes identified are complexly intertwined and interdependent, they are discussed in separate thematic sections, applying diverse theoretical considerations. They collectively contribute to a coherent "collage" of understanding (Rahman & Scaife, 2006):

First, participants' understandings of homelessness are deliberated upon, demonstrating how they construct an identity that challenges commonly-held conceptualisations. Secondly, their accounts of becoming homeless are discussed, identifying the diversity of pathways into homelessness. Subsequently, the functioning of the OADC as a space of care is considered, recognising the centre's crucial role of constituting the ordinary in often extra-ordinary lives. Then, the participants' experiences with being homeless in Whangārei are analysed, establishing social distancing and "nearing" practices that have displaced or included them in everyday domiciled life. Next, personal strategies for resilience are investigated, determining processes of manaakitanga, ngā ara taiao (connections with the natural environment), and wairuatanga (Māori spirituality) as essential. Finally, the importance of group membership is examined, distinguishing processes of home-making as crucial for establishing relational resilience and discussing how prevailing domiciled understandings of "home" function as barriers to exiting street life. All direct quotations extracted from the interviews and videos will be *italicised* to differentiate between the participants' accounts and other materials.

Resisting an enslaved "homeless" identity

To gain an in-depth understanding of the unique experiences and standpoints of people who have been homeless in Whangārei, it is crucial to explore their own conceptualisations of the

phenomenon. As Rappaport (1995) stresses, to genuinely grasp the participants' lifeworlds and perceptions, it is essential for them, as experts on their own lives, to express their outlooks on the phenomena under investigation. When asked about their understanding of the concept of "homelessness", those participants who have experienced homelessness first-hand critiqued the use of the term in itself. Alizé, who has been intermittently homeless while volunteering at the OADC, points out the reductionist and discriminatory function of the term: "*You can't put a label on something like that ... You know, ... It's like, a dubbing label, 'homeless', that's it. Nothing else, you're just 'homeless'.*" Here we see some pushback against such a label being used to eclipse, obscure, or reduce a person's sense of self to this one aspect of their lives. Ben, who resided on the streets of Whangārei for over one year, also cautions about the risk of generalisation when describing people as "homeless":

> *I try not to use the word "homeless" for those ones who have nowhere to go and families in struggles. I don't word it out like that. You can't really categorise it as a single thing because everybody is individual in their own separate little situations.*

Alizé's and Ben's accounts indicate the importance of considering insider perspectives on the phenomenon, as their experiences with rooflessness have provided them with understandings of the multifariousness of the issue and people's circumstances. Moreover, they point to the negative impacts such classifications can entail. According to the *labelling theory*, society tends to label individuals who are perceived as deviant, such as the "mentally ill" or the "homeless", situating deviance as a product of denunciation rather than circumstance. This stigmatisation serves as a way of controlling the "deviant other" by imposing narrowly defined identities onto their bodies, facilitating authority over their lives through the imposition of governmental and societal regulations (Scheff, 1974; Scheff & Sundstrom, 1970).

Hodgetts and Stolte (2017) also identify issues of being fixated on defining "homelessness". Definitions are often narrowly focused on the issue of "houselessness", indicating the objective of "managing", rather than helping, the deviant "homeless other". Māori Jesus voices such concerns. He has spent many years on the streets but has never classed himself as being "homeless" or abnormal:

> *Living how I am living, I do not see that as being different ... I mean, my circumstances and my bed, so to speak, might put me somewhere else, but I go to sleep like everyone else. Just because I sleep in a different place does not mean I am* – [homeless]. *I have*

never been "homeless". I have grown up knowing who I am, and where I come from. I was never homeless; I just did not have a home. It's life. We choose to make these choices, and they take you down that way. And then you are stuck with that label for life. I don't see the positive in calling someone "homeless". And so, I am just another one of society's labels that's in the "too hard basket".

Definitions of deviant behaviours and identities, such as "being homeless", are always contextually embedded and dependent on the historical, socio-cultural, and politico-economic conditions they are constructed in (Parker, 2014). For instance, the concept of kāinga kore ("homeless"), in the sense of rooflessness, has not existed in te ao Māori until relatively recently. Rather, "home" is conceptualised holistically, referring to social, physical, spiritual, and psychological connections (Tomlins Jahnke, 2002).

Above, Māori Jesus declines to adopt a subject position of "deviant other" by defining "home" through the closely related Māori cultural concepts of whakapapa and tūrangawaewae (a place of strength and belonging, a home). As Groot and colleagues (2010, p. 127) note, "A tūrangawaewae is something that is engaged, nurtured and sustained … connections that are lived in the present." Thus, although not physically realised at the time, Māori Jesus is mentally and spiritually connected to his ancestry and place of origin, providing him with a strong (Māori) identity that contradicts and challenges the Western colonialist and capitalist label of "homeless". Indeed, he explains that he has never had the desire to be part of a financially-driven society whose morals and values contradict his own:

I did not worry about money. Why? It was not important. And I never learned about the importance of money. I know, it is good to have but that was not how we were raised. Church, I was brought up in a church … along with Māori values.

In our conversations, Māori Jesus consistently stressed how capitalist values have suppressed and obscured what is important in life, such as social and spiritual connections and a healthy natural environment, and, in turn, induced a preoccupation with financial gain. Figure 5 depicts a local mural that successfully captures Māori Jesus' standpoint:

Figure 5. Mural depicting "modern slavery", taken by Māori Jesus [homeless participant].

As he further explains: "*We are already born into slavery … I think we live in, you know, slavery is still around today. … How is that able to happen? How are they able to continue?*" Not only does Māori Jesus ask how "*they*" (i.e., the colonialist/capitalist elites) are able to continue commodifying our lives within Western ethnocentric neoliberal society; he also expresses his concern about the internalisation of associated labels and stereotypes by fellow (homeless) Māori:

> *I see a lot of these Māori going around getting drunk and then saying* [talking about their tribal ancestry]. *And then, what do you say, you are homeless? I just cannot understand it. If you know where you come from, why are yous calling yourselves "homeless"? Because that is not our word. I know that it don't come from our culture, our society. And so, why do you choose to be labelled with that?*

As Zufferey and Kerr (2004) explain, identities are fluid, contextually embedded, and relational, changing across situations and circumstances, time and space. Here, Māori Jesus asserts his agency and sense of Māori self by protesting impositions of Pākehā categorisations and by distancing himself from Māori who may have accepted the label of

"homeless" ("*yous*"), while acknowledging a common Māori heritage ("*our culture, our society*"). As proposed by the labelling theory, labelled individuals are likely to take on the role of "deviant other", becoming part of a self-perpetuating apparatus by adopting associated stereotypical identities and behaviours (Scheff, 1974, 2013). Māori Jesus is aware of this issue and conceptualises such individuals as "slaves" of the system, cautioning about the colonialist and neoliberal agendas underpinning the "homeless label".

When considering Māori Jesus' accounts in light of "identity talk", or the active construction of one's self through conversation, his use of pronouns indicates his embracement of a "houseless identity" in contrast to a "domiciled capitalist identity" (Snow & Anderson, 1987). For example: "*… <u>We</u> choose to make these choices, and <u>they</u> take you down that way.*" Accordingly, he highlights that being housed does not necessarily equate to having a home: "*I know people living in the worst of situations … They live in a household, but they just fight, bicker, money issues, drugs. All this shit, and they have a roof. Might as well be homeless*." Thus, Māori Jesus is not challenging his subject position as a person living without a house. He opposes the imposition of Pākehā labels onto him that categorise him as a failed neoliberal citizen and deny his holistic understandings of "home" and self. Instead, homelessness for Māori Jesus refers to a sense of "spiritual homelessness", a disrupted identity that resulted from a loss of connection to one's ancestry and homeland (Memmott, Long, Chambers, & Spring, 2003). As he states," *I feel sorry for people who have their ancestry but don't know how to tap into it."*, referring to those who adopt a homeless identity and, therefore, neglect their traditional Māori heritage.

Participants also challenged commonly-held domiciled assumptions about homelessness being a predominantly negative experience. As Alizé reflects:

> *It's an experience, you know? It opens up how people look at you ... You don't choose it but, it's like, you seem to be comfortable with it. Okay, I may not have been comfortable with the homelessness, but I managed to adapt to it, you know? It opens up a whole new perspective ... and getting to know Lofty and all the other whānau out there, you know. For me, that was a blessing.*

Ben also insists that the positive outcomes resulting from his experience of homelessness outweigh associated discomforts:

> *Just memories, good memories, I mean ... It's just a nice experience, from a person who worked most of his life and never had those sort of experiences. I suppose it's got*

its own pros and cons, to the whole thing, you know. Pros more than cons in the way I see it. You know, it was an experience that brought forward a part of my life that I never knew about. And now I've got a better understanding of what it's like for people on the streets.".

Both, Alizé and Ben, "constructed a positive alternative discourse related to the '*other reality*' of homelessness " (Zufferey & Kerr, 2004, p. 348) by emphasising the advantages they have gained through experiencing street life. In particular, they underscored the broader perspectives and meaningful relationships they have attained. As McAdams (2013) suggests, exploring people's life stories facilitates insights into how they construct their identities through narratives about their past, present, and futures. Specifically, narratives about positive outcomes resulting from negative circumstances function as protective buffers, fostering resilience and psycho-emotional wellbeing. Indeed, the participants do not describe street life itself as a purely positive experience: "*I may not have been comfortable with the homelessness, but I managed to adapt to it*" (Alizé)*;* "*it's got its own pros and cons, to the whole thing*" (Ben). Rather, they focus on its advantages, obstructing potentially negative memories that may affect their psychological resilience. Nevertheless, Somerville (1992) explains that the meaningful relationships built and maintained throughout experiences of homelessness can produce a sense of home, generating beneficial circumstances that may not have been previously encountered. As Alizé explains "*... and getting to know Lofty and all the other whānau out there, you know. For me, that was a blessing.*".

As discussed in this section, the participants countered taken-for-granted domiciled assumptions about a unilaterally negative "homeless identity" and "homeless experience". Instead, they actively constructed their identities by opposing the colonialist neoliberal system and framing their experiences with homelessness as having positive consequences which, in turn, may safeguard their psychological wellbeing.

"Drifters" and "droppers": Diverse pathways into homelessness

To grasp the participants' experiences in more depth, it is now important to explore how they first found themselves on the streets. Ugly, Māori Jesus, and Alizé voiced previous experiences with street life in different locales, including Auckland's centre and outskirts. Their former lives were textured by significant family disruptions during childhood and adolescence. Ugly explains that he and his brother followed in the footsteps of his gang-

affiliated uncles when he was a child, leading to acts of violence and a subsequent family disruption at an early age:

> *I got kicked out of Whangārei when I was nine. Yeah, because of what me and my older brother had done. You see, we come from a real good family.* [But], *what me and my brother had done wasn't very good … I didn't get home until I was 21.*

Separation from his family during middle childhood was likely traumatic for Ugly and has been found to contribute to long-term psychosocial and emotional difficulties (Hoffnung et al., 2013). Indeed, Bray (2009) identifies the involvement of child welfare services as having a strong correlation with homelessness, particularly as children exit institutions and foster homes and through severed child-parent relationships.

Similarly, Māori Jesus also constructs himself as the "black sheep" in his well-adjusted family and recalls being separated from them due to engaging in criminal acts. He was institutionalised as a teenager during the 1970s:

> *So, I grew up in the Church. I was the odd one in the family. And then I started playing up, like I was a little different from them. And so, I ended up in the system where you are just abused… That was from about the mid-seventies to the eighties. And then straight from there to jail… I think I was in my teens, and then I started getting into stealing and shit like that, and violence…*

According to Pollock (2011), residential institutions for children and youth, including those who had been charged with crimes, increased swiftly between the 1940s and the 1970s. Māori boys were overrepresented as a result of shifting much of the day-to-day care of "problematic" children from the extended whānau to state facilities before closing most of them in the mid-1980s neoliberal era. Māori Jesus' account aligns with Stanley's (2017) assertion that children and adolescents, placed in Aotearoa/New Zealand's residential care institutions between the 1950s and 1990s, had a much greater likelihood of transitioning into prison. Multiple factors can contribute to such life trajectories, including adopting criminal behaviours as a survival strategy within the institutions, social disadvantages and psychological difficulties upon exiting the facilities, and discrimination within the justice system. Importantly, all of these issues were exacerbated for Māori, increasing their tendencies to offend to survive physically, such as through committing robberies, and psychologically, for example by joining gangs to gain a sense of self-worth and community.

Combined with prejudices against institutionalised (Māori) in the criminal justice system, a pathway into custody is laid for many (Stanley, 2017):

> *…I learned about envy and greed and all this other shit. But that was in the system. That was pumped into you. If you don't do something here, you are nothing. Okay, but I never heard that kōrero when I was at home, in the Church, or around the family. Although I am the odd one out, I'm still part of the family.*

Here, Māori Jesus explains how the culture of state care facilities fostered behaviours and thought processes that contradict the moral framework he internalised through his upbringing with his whānau. His utterance of "*I'm still part of the family*" indicates his continued affiliation with his whānau and the Church's moral codes, despite his actions contravening them at times. Māori Jesus recognises that adopting potentially immoral or nefarious ideas and practices was a way of surviving the hostile culture of the institution, leading him onto a pathway of addiction, incarceration, and houselessness:

> *Well, colonization, eh? Drug dependency, alcohol, gambling, and all these things started to filter into my life. It just got heavier and heavier. And say, you go out and do things for you have to feed the habits, so to speak. Shit like stealing cars, robbing shops, eh …*

Regarding the implications of neoliberal government-level deinstitutionalisations, Dear and Wolch's (2014) *landscapes of despair* invoke common life trajectories from state facilities to poverty and homelessness for previously institutionalised people, situated within often under-resourced communities. This process is exemplified through Māori Jesus' story on a personal local level, as he exited the residential care facility in the 1980s, a time when the neoliberal reforms were introduced, and many people transitioned from state institutions into the communities. This led to community-led services being frequently overwhelmed and unable to meet the demands of their new residents (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017; Joseph & Kearns, 1996).

Alizé was raised by her grandparents and encountered grief and disruption when she was 17 years old and both her grandparents passed away. Alizé had little contact with her biological parents and siblings whilst growing up, and her grandparents sheltered her from family violence:

I just got so used to not really having them [parents] *around. And 'cos the thing with my grandparents is, you know, when they had disagreements, my grandfather never hit my nan. You know, ... it'll be like, they don't want us to be around it* [violence]. *... So, I didn't know what violence was, you know?*

Alizé also explains that the passing of her grandparents forced her to live with her parents. This is when she witnessed domestic violence between her parents and struggled to build a meaningful and loving relationship with her mother:

... I was at college then, when my nan passed. You know, for me everything just went straight downhill because I knew I had to go, I had to end up going back to my parents, and I didn't want to. ... So, I had a hard life with my parents, especially with my mom. ... You know, and I look at them, eh, and it's like, "Man, this family is dysfunctional."

This dysfunctional situation led to a downward spiral of instability, contributing to Alizé's eventual homelessness. Alizé's, Ugly's, and Māori Jesus' childhood experiences can be seen as positioning them as "drifters", or people who slid into street life as a continuation of the trauma and hardships they had experienced (Hodgetts et al., 2012). As Alizé explains, much of her life has been structured around coping with repeated incidents of stress and suffering, including the death of her children's father, homelessness in Auckland, and severe domestic violence, which directly preceded her life on Whangārei's streets:

I got into a relationship which was hell. I was living my own nightmare, Kim. It was just pure hell. And then, you know, coming here to Whangārei, because they put me in a safe house up in [Northland town], *and I was there for a bit. I says to the support people there, "I'm going back to Whangārei". And they says, "Aw, but isn't that where he goes and visits?" I go, "I don't care. I made Whangārei my home. I'm working, I'm gonna go back to work, nothing for me here."*

Alizé's brave decision to move from the safe house to Whangārei led her to a situation of increased danger and uncertainty and, eventually, street life. For Ugly, his initiation to life on the streets was a matter of choice as his empathy towards the homeless people he encountered was too overwhelming, a choice that led to eight years of street life:

I had a house and everything. But then I found people on the street. So, I moved out of the house, and that's what made me and my wife split up. I spent too much time on the

> *streets instead of home. I saw them* [streeties] *having a hard time. I couldn't stand seeing somebody out there in the rain or something. So, I went out there with them. But I always worked. But I stayed on the streets, that's what's my downfall.*

Ugly presents his homelessness as initiated by his compassion and perpetuated by the dissolution of his marriage. Due to his life, textured by disruption, norm-breaching, and trauma, Ugly likely felt connected to others facing adverse life circumstances. Through whakawhanaungatanga, or meaningful relationship-building, with the "street people", a commitment to manaakitanga, reciprocal caring, arose, putting a strain on Ugly's familial obligations (*cf*. Groot, Hodgetts, Nikora, & Rua, 2010). As Henare (1988, p. 26) explains, "[Manaaki] is the principle of the quality of caring, kindness, hospitality and showing respect for others. It is a means of expressing mana. … To exhibit manaaki is to raise one's mana (mana-aki) through generosity." Indeed, manaakitanga can serve as a means of building resilience because in te ao Māori, resilience is not merely created through an ability to sustain oneself, but also relies on acts of manaakitanga towards others (King et al., 2015). Ugly's decision to reside with and care for people on the streets, as an act of manaakitanga, provided him not only with meaningful relationships but raised his mana and, therefore, contributed to his strength and resilience.

Ben's introduction to homelessness, on the other hand, can be interpreted as a "drop", an experience underpinned by an unanticipated life event that left him destitute and prompted a vortex of hardship and depression (Hodgetts et al., 2012). He explains that, despite coming from a hard-working, functional family with strong Māori values, he resorted to delinquency to increase his income as a sole parent. Although this worked well for some time, the theft of his belongings led to disaster:

> *It was a bad decision on my behalf. I trusted somebody, they stole off me, and I ended up in the absolute lurch, where I had to give him* [son] *up. I was not able to put a roof on his head, and so I had to ring his mom up and I say, "Look, can you come get this boy. I cannot put a roof on his head." It was one of the hardest decisions I ever had to make in my life. It was absolutely brutal. I was extremely locked down with depression. And that is how I ended up on the streets.*

"Droppers" like Ben commonly struggle more than "drifters" to adjust to street life due to their previous identities of norm-abiding working- or middle-class citizens (Hodgetts et al., 2012). However, as will be discussed later in this chapter, Ben adjusted well to street life

through the support of his *street family* (Groot & Hodgetts, 2015). Nevertheless, he was the first person from his social group to be re-housed, indicating his familiarity with and comfort in domiciled life (Hodgetts et al., 2012).

As discussed in this section, participant pathways into homelessness are multifarious, intricate, and underpinned by systemic issues as well as agency and active decision-making. While some participants drifted into life on the streets as an extension of ongoing adverse life events and circumstances, Ben was faced with an unexpected episode of hardship that ultimately induced his drop into homelessness. Importantly, as demonstrated through Ugly's account, raising one's mana and resilience through reciprocal acts of manaakitanga may constitute a contributing factor to entering and perpetuating street life. Next, the participants' construction of the OADC will be explored.

The "ordinary" in the "extra-ordinary": The OADC as a space of care and routine

To explore the significance of and dynamics surrounding the OADC, it is essential to delve into the participants' construction of the centre as a part of their experiences with street life as well as paid and volunteer work. As discussed in Chapter One, Conradson (2003) characterises *spaces of care* as socio-spatial co-constructed sites, contingent on authentic, reciprocal, attentive, supporting, and empathetic social interactions between staff, volunteers, and service users. Thereby, spaces of care bear possibilities of strengthening and constructing alternative identities to the often-adopted and reductionist identities of "homeless". Moreover, spaces of care, such as the OADC, can constitute spaces for routine and "normality" in lives that are frequently textured by disruption and ambiguity, commonly perceived as "extra-ordinary" by the domiciled public (Hodgetts et al., 2016). As staff member Jane explains, the OADC offers a realm of respite, re-humanisation, and inclusivity in which homeless people, whether Māori or non-Māori, can feel at "home", at least temporarily:

> *I don't think being homeless is, you know, I don't think we can blame that entirely on their loss of connections to their whakapapa and everything else, but it's not helping. You know, I grew up with a very strong Māori background … And I think it's just, you know, we've lost the teachings of Māori. With a lot of our older ones that come in here, they, you know, not only lost it, because it wasn't taught to them, but then ended up with*

gang involvement, and the drugs and alcohol, and all the rest of it. So I'm glad that we can open the doors and sort of take them back through, you know, not necessarily a Māori-based anything, but just try and reintegrate them back into being human.

Here, Jane acknowledges the diverse pathways into and circumstances surrounding homelessness and the importance of acknowledging people's humanness, regardless of their backgrounds. Although the majority of the OADC's whānau identify as Māori, not all identify with Māori culture to the same extent. Indeed, Durie (2001) clarifies that a unified Māori identity is a product invented by colonial powers as Māori are heterogeneous peoples with diverse histories, cultural backdrops, and understandings. A phenomenon further complicated by the dynamics of colonialism.

Nevertheless, Richard Pehi explains that, at times, the implementation of tikanga Māori can have advantageous effects on the whānau, particularly when they are feeling overwhelmed by their often-disrupted life dynamics:

... [Māori cultural elements] *will calm things down. It's just a shift when it happens. And I used to do that a lot when I was working in mental health. When people are disorganised and are ruminating about things, sometimes you got to break that cycle. And for a short period, you break that cycle, and you bring them into a space around manaaki* [show respect, generosity, and care] ... *So, those sorts of things really bring it back down to the core.*

Thus, tikanga Māori can temporarily invoke calmness and restore order in the lives of the OADC whānau, bringing a sense of normality into their extra-ordinary lifeworlds. Accordingly, spaces of care can enhance people's self-concepts and forms of subjectivity through engagements in manaakitanga (i.e., mana-raising; Conradson, 2003; King et al., 2015). Richard exemplifies how manaakitanga may be realised without imposing a particular worldview onto the whānau:

There are opportunities around when we eat, to put in some of those things like blessing the food. A lot of people think "Aw, I am not religious." Tell you what? We just thank the cook, how does that sound? And, just thank the people that are helping her. And thank those who set this place up so that we could come and have something to eat. Why don't we start there? So, it's just about thanking those who have put their time forward to help. So, that's about manaakitanga. It's about supporting each other.

Here, Richard demonstrates how manaakitanga, through dynamic traditional practices, such as karakia, can be beneficial for all whānau and can promote whanaungatanga and strengthened mana for all involved.

As Jane also explains, te ao Māori revolves around reciprocal caring, empathy, and aroha, a way of understanding and being that can be beneficial to anyone, but particularly those who find themselves in adverse circumstances:

> *So, Māori have a very big whānau-based kaupapa. Māori have always been ones to look out for one another, the same as what the homeless do, you know? Cook big feeds and, you know, sit around and laugh with each other. And I think, in a space where they're at their lowest, they need to be able to walk into a place that's caring, that can provide them with everything that they can't get outside of the doors. And, that's not me being biased because I'm Māori. A lot of our whānau that come in here are Māori as well. But I think it's just the kaupapa of Māori, being able to ... treat them like they're people. You know, we refer to them as "whānau", as opposed to "clients", because that makes us the same. You know, it's not a "us" and "them" thing. We're not above them. We're the same.*

Jane highlights in her account that aspects of inclusivity, acceptance and genuine care are deeply engrained in Māori culture, which are reflected in the engagements at the OADC. Moreover, as King et al. (2015) recognise, through the history and ongoing dynamics of colonialism, including disenfranchisement, dispossession, and cultural uprooting, many Māori can relate to homeless people, as they share stories of loss, exclusion, and grief. Thus, through the incorporation of tikanga Māori into the OADC's everyday interactions, whanaungatanga, aroha, and manaakitanga among all whānau are facilitated.

The OADC is also a space where street dwellers can find temporary relief from their everyday stressors, a safe haven that protects from the dangers and ambiguities of the everyday lifeworlds of many whānau. For instance, the OADC's Mother Theresa room permits whānau to engage in domiciled practices usually performed in people's living rooms, such as reading a book or having a nap (see Figure 6). As Jane states:

> *Open Arms has always had the aspect of, you know, almost like giving them a cuddle. It's their safe space. ... it's their space to come in and know that everything's gonna be okay. Even if just for a short while. I mean, it's their time to be able to just ... They can*

just come in and have a nice, warm kai and just enjoy the company of everybody else without, you know, "This is my part of the bridge"!

Figure 6. The OADC's Mother Theresa room. A photograph taken by Slap [volunteer participant].

The OADC lives up to its name, welcoming whānau with "Open Arms", as reflected in Jane's account." Jane also mentions the importance of social connections that are fostered by simply spending time in this space of care and sharing food (kai). As discussed previously, sharing kai is a vital facet of tikanga Māori, not only encouraging processes of manaakitanga, as explained by Richard, and aroha (Edwards et al., 2005); but also facilitating the sharing of each other's whakapapa and, therefore, whakawhanaungatanga (Bishop, 1999). Subsequently, kai epitomises the mutual attentiveness, authenticity, and empathy that underpin the OADC as a space of care (Conradson, 2003). Whilst food provides physical sustenance; it can also offer a locus for routine:

I definitely had routines. Like, for going to get meals. I had this one place, they covered Mondays and Fridays [see Figure 8]. *We had Open Arms at the time, back then, they were only doing main* [meals] *on Tuesdays and Thursdays. So, that is Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. On Wednesdays, you had the* [soup kitchen in Whangārei; see Figure 7]. *So, there is your Monday to Friday. Then, you had another*

church that would do Sundays. So, you were only left to have to fend for yourself on a Saturday.

Ben’s account demonstrates the bilateral function of food as a crucial element for physical and psychosocial survival in the lifeworlds of homeless people. The latter is realised through finding a routine and, thereby, a sense of purpose while building meaningful relationships with people in different locales.

Figure 7. Ben’s [homeless participant] photograph of a soup kitchen in Whangārei that he frequented as part of his routine.

Figure 8. A photograph taken by Ben [homeless participant] of a sign of a soup kitchen he visited regularly.

As Conradson (2003) observes, drop-in centres can provide a point of reference around which whānau can structure their day, providing social interaction and order in somewhat chaotic lives. Considering the importance of kai, the OADC kitchen (see Figure 9) constitutes the centrepiece around which the centre functions as a space of care. Many whānau structure their days around the OADC's meal times, helping to maintain a routine, nourish their bodies, socialise, engage in whakawhanaungatanga and manaakitanga, and hence, find a sense of calmness and "normality".

Figure 9. "Where the magic happens": The OADC kitchen. A photograph taken by Slap [volunteer participant].

As Ugly explains, Ben and himself frequented the OADC on a daily basis, providing them with a routine and physical exercise: "*Yeah, me and* [Ben]*, our thing was to go for a run every morning. And then go in here* [OADC] *for breakfast. And then back on the streets again.*" According to Wolch, Rahimian, and Koegel (1993) creating and adhering to a routine through daily mobility can be understood as a coping success, demonstrating access to social and tangible supports and creativity in managing everyday stressors through the routine itself.

The availability of spaces of care, such as the OADC provides a basis for the establishment of routines for whānau as well as for the volunteer participants, both of whom have experienced homelessness first-hand. Thus, the OADC provides a crucial coping resource, offering structure and routine, fostering a sense of purpose, and promoting important social relationships. As King et al.'s (2015) research highlights, being granted a sense of autonomy on the marae provided an opportunity for homeless Māori men to partake in the creation of the space and to uphold their mana by giving and receiving care at the same time. Similarly, Alizé and Slap started off as whānau at the OADC and continue to utilise its services due to their low socio-economic background and housing insecurity. Thus, they engage in daily processes of manaakitanga at the OADC, providing and receiving support simultaneously. Slap explains his reasons for becoming a volunteer with Food Rescue (see Figure 10) after returning from Australia:

> *The company, the different sort of atmosphere. Instead of being out there and, you know, drinking or taking drugs or anything like that… Plus, I started to get bored … It's just the same routine every day and it started to get a bit boring.*

Slap points out the importance of temporarily dissociating himself from a routine defined by substance use and, instead, engaging in a routine characterised by positivity and beneficial social connections. This aligns with Walker, Hanna, et al.'s (2015) identification that the regular structure volunteering involves can bring about confidence and self-efficacy for members of the precariat. Together with the positive engagements with whānau, staff, and other volunteers, volunteering can "improve social and psychological resources in such a way to help people to counter negative moods, anxiety and depression" (p. 507).

Alizé construes the benefits she gains through her volunteer work predominantly through the relationships she has established which have helped her cope with everyday problems:

> *…I love the staff and the volunteers, I love the whānau, you know, and I love meeting new people… Even Liz* [155 CEO] *was saying, she goes, "You know, through the years that you've been volunteering for Open Arms". She goes, "I've seen you grow, you know. You're growing so much." … You got the right people, you're surrounded by the right people, you know, and you can talk to them, and they're giving you positivity, so that's good… Every day, on my days on, I look forward to it. Coming down here and, "Okay, what's the day going to bring?".*

As Walker, Hanna, et al. (2015) maintain, giving back to people within their community, many of whom experience similar issues to their own, provides opportunities for building friendships and reciprocity. An inclusion as essential contributing members of the OADC helps shift the volunteers' self-regard to a more confident and positive one, raising their self-worth and strengthening their identities as "givers" rather than merely "receivers". This aligns with the processes of manaakitanga, as the volunteers' mana is augmented through their acts of giving. Accordingly, the participants point out the insignificance of monetary

remuneration for their work, as they are compensated through mana-raising processes: "*It's about being me, being here. Helping… It's not about the money.*" (Slap).

Figure 10. Slap's [volunteer participant] photograph of part of the Food Rescue crew in front of the Food Rescue van.

Alizé agrees, highlighting the importance of the relationships she has established through her engagement in volunteer work and the compensation she is receiving through the processes of manaakitanga:

> *I don't care if it's "just" volunteering. For me it's not about the money. For me it's about giving back! … And 'cos the other highlight for me is, you know, meeting people like you, and Liz, and Richard, all of them, you know, the other volunteers, it's been a blessing.*

Briefly, the OADC is co-created as a space of care by the whānau, volunteers, and staff. Through processes of genuine engagement, authenticity, and compassion, the OADC provides a space for respite from the everyday stressors of street life. It provides an external structure around which whānau can organise their day, with kai as a fundamental aspect, offering a sense of ordinariness in often extra-ordinary lives. Kai constitutes a physical, psychological, social, and emotional resource. It provides opportunities for processes of manaakitanga, raising the mana of those who provide the kai and installing a sense of

calmness into whānau. Kai facilitates whakawhanaungatanga and comprises a resource around which whānau establish a daily routine, providing a sense of normalcy and promoting healthy coping strategies. Thus, kai is central to the OADC's operations as a space of care, where the mana of staff, volunteers, and whānau is enhanced.

Social distancing and nearing in a small city

To gain insights into the lifeworlds of the participants, it is also important to delve into their experiences of interacting with Whangārei's domiciled public. As Hodgetts et al. (2011) argue, domiciled constructions of homelessness are crucial to discern, as associated social distancing practices entail widespread consequences for its homeless members, including discrimination and segregation. Importantly, social distancing is construed as a fluid everyday social practice, contingent on people's situations across time and space, rather than a rigid cognitive construct. Thus, a relational approach that acknowledges interpersonal relations between domiciled and homeless people as socially produced is adopted (Hodgetts et al., 2011). The participants foregrounded negative and positive engagements with the domiciled public in Whangārei, involving social distancing but also social "nearing" practices. Their experiences were also compared to street life Auckland, exploring similarities and differences between metropolitan and small-city social distancing practices.

As Cloke, Widdowfield, and Milbourne (2000) establish, street homelessness directly contradicts constructions of the "rural idyll", which is epitomised through safety, orderliness, and freedom from urban problems. Subsequently, a "sociospatialisation of homelessness" takes place in which social constructions of vagrancy "become spatialised into the city and, equally important, out of rural spaces." (p. 79). Accordingly, homeless people residing in rural areas are often forced to move to small cities where the required services are centralised (Cloke et al., 2000). This can be seen in Whangārei, as many street dwellers originate from neighbouring rural settlements but have been pushed into the small city to meet their needs. However, as Ugly illustrates, constructions of homelessness in Whangārei have been spatialised out of the central business district and into the peripheries:

> *The hardest thing about being on the streets was to be accepted. A lot of* [domiciled] *people would see us as bludgers and all that kind of thing. Made us sad. Scroungers and all that kind of thing. But that's the thing I heard. Down here* [central Whangārei], *eh. When people found out we're down at the park* [Jubilee Park; see Figure 11] *there,*

we're lucky the people up our street liked us. But once we got past our street and turned down the shop area, a lot of people were going "Aw, you should be down the park" and all that kind of thing.

Ugly demonstrates how certain members of the domiciled public actively engaged in social distancing practices that purposefully created socio-spatial barriers to remove the "undesirable other" from privileged local spaces. As Hodgetts et al. (2011) argue, compassion and affinity are frequently diminished when the "other" is physically present and visible and increases when physically segregated and obscured.

Figure 11. A screenshot of Jubilee Park from one of Ugly's [homeless participant] videos.

For instance, Ben recalls being excluded from a fundraiser event intended to support Whangārei's homeless population:

Every year, Tai Tokerau [Emergency Housing Charitable Trust] *does a fundraising there* [Canopy Bridge; see Figure 12]. *And they call it "sleeping rough"* ["Hope for the Homeless"]. *It's usually to fundraise for the homeless. And some of the people would turn up and build themselves, like they would get really stuck into it, build themselves cardboard box homes. And when you see them when they wake up in the morning, they are not used to the hard ground* [laughing]. *They are limping and, you know, but they put in a hard valid effort. So, me and Ugly turned up one time, and they tried to kick us out. And we said, "No, we are actually the homeless ones"* [laughing]. *"We are the ones why you're here, you know?" And then, they tried to stop us from coming in because all the other people there were "decent folk".*

Ben exemplifies how sympathy and compassion may decline as homeless people approximate and become visible. Paradoxically, the fundraisers expressed affinity to Whangārei's homeless and attempted to illuminate their struggles as long as they were absent, claiming the socio-spatial realm of the Canopy Bridge as a space for "*decent folk*" that excludes "the homeless" and renders their visibility unacceptable.

Figure 12. Ben's [homeless participant] photograph of the Canopy Bridge where an annual fundraiser for the homeless is held.

Narratives regarding homelessness, as often re-produced through media representations (Hodgetts et al., 2011), also affected the participants' endeavours to exit street life, maintain employment, and participate as "normal" citizens Whangārei's civic life. Alizé explains the struggles she encountered when attempting to find accommodation through local real estate agents:

> *Like, when I was applying for homes, and then we'd go into the real estates, and I'm telling them, you know, "I'm homeless.". You know, they just looked at me, and it's like, "Aw, nah!". You know, and it's easy for WINZ and that to say, "Apply for places.". You apply for them, you don't get them, ... or you're getting the comment, "Ah nah, it's been taken."*

Alizé raises how prejudices and stereotypes, underpinned by deficit-focussed narratives, can lead to acts of discrimination that prevent her from changing the very situation she is

disfavoured for. This illustrates how discrimination in the housing market leads to a perpetuation of homelessness for many, bringing about a vicious cycle of frustration, hopelessness, and diminished self-worth.

Similarly, maintaining a sense of normalcy and participation in everyday domiciled life through upholding employment can be difficult for people on the streets, as Ugly reveals:

> *And then they found out that I was on the streets... and this was between me and the workers. This group. When they didn't know, we were so close, until they found that I was on the streets. It's just toxic people out there…. turned up to work every day and that, long hours. When they found that I was on the streets, I was sent home. ... When they find that you're on the streets, mate, it distances. It's incredible, you know. And then my boss rang me up and told me not to come back to work. That's the last thing I ever heard of him.*

Despite his former identity of "worker" and "friend", Ugly was reduced to being the "homeless deviant other" once they discovered he was houseless. This exposes the pervasive impact narratives of deficit and deviance can have, even surmounting close and meaningful relationships while denying access to necessary a means of earning an income. As Ben recounts, disregard for homeless people in Whangārei can also, at times, be observed when attempting to participate in everyday domiciled life, for example as a customer in a coffee shop:

> [There] *is a café, and one of my street mates went to go and walked in there for a cup of coffee one morning, and that guy turns around and says, "We do not serve your kind in here." ... and we all went over there, and he called the police on us. So, we had to leave. It was an explicit sign of discrimination. Even to this day, he still will not serve me either.*

Here, social distancing takes place directly and blatantly as Ben's friend is actively excluded from the socio-spatial realm of the café, deeming "*your kind*" unacceptable. The staff clarify that the café is a space reserved for domiciled individuals and exhibit no empathy when directly confronted with a homeless person. As the homeless "other" is banned from such spaces, their participation in civic life is severely restricted. This is a significant issue as participation is essential for nurturing a sense of belonging and identity as a rightful community member while challenging binary distinctions between "us" and "them". Through such accounts of discrimination and socio-spatial exclusion, the close connection between the

symbolic space of narratives, the material space of the small city, and the lifeworlds of the homeless participants have been highlighted (Hodgetts et al., 2008). Nevertheless, the participants also recount positive experiences with the domiciled public that diminished social distance.

In his second video, Ugly shows me around a shack behind a row of coffee shops (see Figure 13) in central Whangārei where he and some of his friends used to sleep:

> *And we used to go out here, and we used to find food all around here, just from the shop around the corner here* [see Figure 14]. ... *When we used to wake up, we used to find coffees, and food ...*

Figure 13. A screenshot of Ugly's [homeless participant] second video of the shack in central Whangārei where he used to sleep.

Here, the café staff exhibit empathy and compassion through acts that reduce the social distance between "us" and "them". While remaining physically obscured by residing behind, instead of in front of, the cafés, the homeless men are accepted and cared for. However, as social distancing is situation and experience-dependent (Hodgetts et al., 2011), it remains unclear whether they would have been welcomed into the socio-spatial realm of (or in front of) the café. Notwithstanding, the café staff, temporarily, transcended the abyss between the domiciled and homeless worlds.

Figure 14. The coffee shop that delivered food and hot drinks to Ugly and his friends. A screenshot taken from Ugly's [homeless participant] second video.

Ben tells me about a protest he, Ugly, and some friends engaged in over three weeks at the central bus stop in Whangārei (see Figures 15 and 16).[2] Although deliberately increasing their visibility and claiming a prime public space, local café staff supported them, bringing them tea in the mornings:

> *… It was out in the open, straight across the road from the* [gas] *station, there was a major line of cars coming through! I was like, "Are you kidding me, bro?" and he goes "No I am not kidding you." He starts making up his bed… We slept there for about three weeks! … For the first week, it was pretty quiet, … Then, a lady came over one morning, "Good morning, guys!" They did cups of teas for us, mate. … The locals have really kind hearts.*

Ben demonstrates that compassion from the domiciled public is also possible when they render themselves visible and transgress socio-spatial boundaries. However, as Ben further specifies, they made a conscious effort to conform to domiciled norms and reduced their visibility during particular times:

> *We are really good with the public because the kids use the buses, so we were usually gone by seven o'clock before any of the kids turned up. We would pick up our stuff, and we would head to the Open Arms. We were quite considerate like that.*

[2] Details about this protest are omitted to protect the participants.

Evading prime public places to avoid confrontation shows Ben’s and his friends’ awareness of the conditionality their acceptance in such spaces is contingent on. As Hodgetts et al. (2011) explain, social distance is in a consistent tension between “near” and “far”, where homeless individuals and groups are more readily tolerated among the domiciled public when they comply with taken-for-granted domiciled norms and kept at a distance when violating such rules.

Figure 15. Ben’s [homeless participant] photograph of his temporary sleeping place at the bus stop in central Whangārei.

Figure 16. Ben’s [homeless participant] view from his sleeping spot at the bus stop.

Social distance was also diminished with the neighbours around Jubilee Park, where Ugly, Ben, Māori Jesus, Alizé, and Lofty stayed for varying amounts of time:

> *Yes,* [we got on with the neighbours] *'cos we cleaned it up* [see Figure 17]. *We made sure, when we first got down there, there was a lot of beer bottles all on the football grounds. And there was all glass throughout the stadium. But we cleaned it all out. Picked up all the bottles and all that kind of thing. The lawnmower man was quite happy with us.* (Ugly)

Figure 17. A pile of rubbish Ugly, Ben and their friends cleaned up before moving into Jubilee Park. A photograph taken by Ben [homeless participant].

Although Jubilee Park does not constitute a prime public space in Whangārei, the neighbours accepted the group as the kaitiaki (guardians, caregivers, custodians) of the abandoned stadium, a role they took on by maintaining peace and orderliness. Indeed, as Alizé recounts, social nearing rested upon mutual respect and protection:

> *And the good thing about being there was, the neighbours along that street, they all knew* [Lofty] *and visited her. But when they saw someone else over there, when we're not there, you know, they'll tell us. They were really cool, you know? We weren't the ones that were the trouble makers, that was our visitors. You know, so, we were pretty damn careful about who would come down there.*

Alizé also expresses an awareness about the conditionality underpinning social closeness to the domiciled neighbours by taking measures to uphold an advantageous reputation, in contrast to the "*trouble makers*" (Cohen & Wagner, 1992). By meeting the neighbours' expectations, the group could maintain social closeness and, therefore, imagine and somewhat participate in civic life through processes of neighbourliness.

Importantly, as Alizé points out, immediate contact with streeties like herself reduces fear of contact and facilitates meaningful connections:

> *And then the teenagers* [visiting Jubilee Park] *... They'd go home and tell their parents, you know?… bringing kai and that for us down, you know. And they go, "That's from our mom and dad." And* [parents are] *like, "Nah, you do that, you feed the whānau down there." And, you know, we're grateful.*

Alizé's account somewhat aligns with Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis, contending that supportive interaction, shared objectives, backing from external authorities, and direct personal contact can improve relations between antagonistic groups. However, Pettigrew and Tropp (2000) found that in contrast to Allport's conceptualisation of intergroup relations as being primarily dependent on cognitive constructs, they are rather contingent on emotional factors, with contact leading to more positive relations despite sustained negative preconceptions. Moreover, Lee, Farrell, and Link's (2004) research broadens the concept of "contact" to "exposure", arguing that "Regardless of whether exposure is via information from third-party sources, observation in everyday settings, face-to-face interaction, or out-group membership, it seems to make a difference in how the public views homelessness." (p. 58). This phenomenon becomes apparent when considering Alizé's account. Through the teenagers' direct contact, their parents are indirectly exposed to this homeless group, promoting empathy, a sense of shared humanness, and, thereby, diminished social distance. However, personal contact with the homeless population is still a powerful factor for producing beneficial intergroup relations:

> *With some of the* [domiciled] *people that's been coming in* [to the OADC]*, you know, having a look for themselves, getting the tour. You know, it's opened up a whole new perspective. So, they tell their friends… Then their friends are coming in, making inquiries, you know. And loving the history behind the place ... Like, "See, it's not as bad as you think it was."* (Alizé)

As Hodgetts and colleagues (2011) acknowledge, spaces where the domiciled public meet their homeless counterparts are by no means neutral but constitute products of rivalry over socio-spatial rights to particular areas. Although, within the "geography of everyday life", domiciled members of society are usually in control over their contact with homeless people (Hodgetts et al., 2011, p. 1741); when they enter the OADC, the whānau can manage these relationships in a space that is occupied by them, with the domiciled public as outsiders.

In short, participant experiences with Whangārei's housed population vary. When asked whether they noted any differences in social relations with the domiciled public in Auckland,

those who had experienced street homelessness in the city responded unilaterally. All reported less perceived bias and greater tolerance in the metropolitan area. People in Whangārei, in contrast, appeared to generalise quickly based on deviant behaviours of very few homeless people, as Ugly recounts:

> [Community reactions in Whangārei were] *Not very good! ... not very good. Umm, we're looked upon as scabs and that kind of thing. But there's only a few of them that go out and do that. But it just falls back on to you anyway.*

Considering Lee et al.'s (2004) and Pettigrew and Tropp's (2000) interpretations of the contact hypothesis, this could be explained by a lack of exposure to the local homeless population who are frequently "socio-spatialised" out of the town centre. Moreover, emotional responses to particular homeless subgroups and individuals transgressing socio-spatial boundaries and exhibiting behaviours that introduce "urban problems" to the small city may affect such reactions (Cloke et al., 2000). Finally, media portrayals of locals who live on the street, some of which have represented them as potential threats to small-city tranquillity (see Chapter One), likely underpin hostile generalisations (Hodgetts et al., 2011). On the contrary, Alizé underscores the open-mindedness, care, and support by people and businesses in central Auckland:

> *You know, in a big city like that, being Auckland, people cared, they never judged. Yep, they knew people were homeless, and some of them didn't like the idea. But, at the same time, you know, never really had a lot of negativity out there... than what it is here. You know, even with some of the businesses ... Yes, they didn't like, you know, some of them sleeping outside their businesses, fair enough! But, you know, at least they didn't have attitudes and things like that. And if someone was caught, sleeping outside their businesses, you know, by people that worked there, they'd either give them money or give them a kai or something. You know, so, that's the only difference from Auckland to Whangārei, they just talked to you like you weren't homeless.*

As Hodgetts et al. (2011, p. 1750) recognise, the inner-city domiciled public may "accept [homeless people] as a 'normal' feature of urban life", which may decrease social distance due to regular exposure reinforced by the homeless population's high visibility. As Pettigrew and Tropp (2000) argue, negative preconceptions may remain; however, empathy, compassion, and positive rapport may increase through everyday voluntary and involuntary

exposure. Nevertheless, becoming used to highly visible street dwellers may also lead to ignorance and insensitivity, as Jane recalls:

> *I've been down there* [central Auckland] *and watched somebody stand over somebody else, you know, on the street. They knew that they were there but just walked straight over them. And, you know, that was quite heart-breaking. Because you see that and think, you know, "You obviously know they are there, why don't you try and help them?" And then, you look at how much people there are on the street. And then you think, "Is that just the normal?" You know, I'm glad that, here in Whangārei, we don't have that same aspect.*

The homeless "other" can be a distressing reminder of inequality in our society, frequently leading to individual deficit-focussed explanations and an active detachment from and negligence of those who live on the streets (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017). Kinnick, Krugman, and Cameron (1996) found that intensive exposure to social problems, such as homelessness, can lead to "compassion fatigue" or emotional exhaustion and subsequent affective desensitisation and disinterest. In Auckland's city centre, the high visibility of homeless people may entail emotional numbness among the domiciled public while the distress, evoked by encountering homeless people as a symbol of societal injustice, may promote increased victim-blaming and subsequent ignorance.

This section highlights the complexity of social distancing in the small city of Whangārei by illustrating the close relationship of narratives, the material space of the small city, and the participants' lifeworlds. Narratives symbolically underpin the material realities of the participants through social distancing practices by the domiciled public that entail socio-spatialisations away from much of Whangārei's civic life. This involves social isolation and contitutes direct barriers to re-entering domiciled life. However, the participants also reported instances of temporary "social nearing" practices, contingent on their abidance of domiciled norms and the situations and experiences of domiciled locals. In contrast, when the domiciled public enters spaces occupied by the local homeless population, such as the OADC, intergroup relationships may be enhanced more meaningfully. Within such settings, homeless people can exercise more agency over the social distance practices within which they are embroiled, necessitating visitors to commit to the experience as outsiders.

Regular exposure to homeless individuals may indeed support positive intergroup rapport, despite the preservation of deeply ingrained prejudices and stereotypes (Lee et al.,

2004; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000). As illustrated by the participants, the everyday visibility of homeless people in metropolitan Auckland may, therefore, lead to increased understanding and support among businesses and residents in comparison to Whangārei. However, increased exposure to homelessness, as a reminder of the inequalities in our society, can also reduce empathy through processes of victim-blaming and compassion fatigue (Kinnick et al., 1996). Considering the impact of social distancing on the lifworlds of the participants, it is now appropriate to explore how they coped with such issues while being homeless in the small city.

Manaakitanga, ngā ara taiao, and wairuatanga: Personal strategies for resilience

Looking into the participants' strategies for resilience goes beyond the purely negative conceptions of homelessness that have been challenged by the participants (first section above) and permit a deeper exploration of their understandings, identity constructions, and holistic relationships. On a personal level, delving into the psychological factors that supported the participants' active employments of coping strategies provides insights into aspects of their agency and humanness in the context of their homelessness (Montgomery, 1994). However, personal resilience can by no means be conceptualised as rigid individual personality traits but must be considered as context-sensitive and relational (Hartling, 2008). Particularly from a Māori cultural perspective, which holds at its core the interconnectedness between all beings, time, and space (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2018), resilience cannot be construed as an individual isolated phenomenon. It is always dependent on a person's spiritual, physical, social, emotional, historical, present, and approaching relationships.

Many people experiencing homelessness face a constant threat of losing their sense of self on the street. This is associated with reduced self-regard, confidence, and self-efficacy (Boydell, Goering, & Morrell-Bellai, 2000). However, through their accounts and photographs, the participants exhibited unique and parallel personal strategies for resilience which helped counteract such threats to the self.

As discussed earlier, manaakitanga serves to express and heighten one's mana, which is integral to a positive Māori identity and wellbeing (Henare, 1988). Indeed, as a participant in Savage et al.'s (2018, p. 15) research reveals, "'(I get my strength from) 'Being Māori'

immediately what comes to mind is manaakitanga that's what we do'". Similarly, Māori Jesus expounds on how processes of giving work as a strength-based source of resilience:

> *But when it comes to giving... Hey, I would give away everything I can. And they feel stink. I don't do it to make you feel stink. I just do it to make me feel better about my circumstances, eh? I do it for me. It's not about making you look smaller, it's not like that. …* [Giving is] *very, very powerful.*

This explanation directly addresses how manaakitanga is inextricably intertwined with personal resilience and can serve as a strategy to uphold a positive identity, confidence, and a sense of self-worth. Moreover, through Māori Jesus' account, it becomes clear that personal resilience is a highly relational concept, underpinned by social and spiritual connections. As Henare (1988) clarifies, mana, the dignity, pride, and (spiritual) power deriving from processes of manaakitanga, "is a quality which cannot be generated for oneself; neither can it be possessed for one-self, rather mana is generated by others and bestowed upon both individuals and groups." (p. 18). Thus, without holistic connections, the mana of the giver and the receiver cannot be provoked, increased, or maintained. Rather, through the processes of manaakitanga, Māori Jesus' own mana and that of the recipients is heightened, serving as a source of resilience and strength for both parties.

With mana being an essential aspect of resilience in te ao Māori, it is essential to recognise its contingency on the interconnected aspects of nature, social relationships, and spiritual ancestors (Henare, 1988). For instance, Māori Jesus' photographs (see Figures 18 and 19) predominantly depict aspects of the natural world which he identifies as the life source of any existence and which must be preserved:

> *I took these photos because that's what's important in life. First and foremost, I mean, without our system, solar, eco, and Mother Nature, and rain ... Nothing! And all of these things provided by nature, and its power … if we don't notice what's happening, if we don't do something about it, then, the future for our next generations will be sad… Well, I mean, you know, we just create so much propaganda over the decades, centuries, I suppose [that] with money, you can buy anything. Well, you can't!*

Figure 18. The sun as the giver of life, a photograph taken by Māori Jesus [homeless participant].

Figure 19. Rain as a source of life. A photograph taken by Māori Jesus [homeless participant].

Māori Jesus not only illustrates the interconnectedness of natural elements in the cycle of life, he also situates himself within these processes. Thereby, he actively detaches himself from a neoliberal ideology that privileges financial gain over the existential importance of sustaining

life. Moreover, in contrast to imaging adverse aspects of street life, these photographs indicate the importance of nature in Māori Jesus' strategies for resilience.

Alizé also explains how being connected to the natural environment, and particularly water, helps her ground herself and provides a broader outlook on her circumstances.

> *… most of the time I spend down at the town basin, you know, because I like to be near water. And that makes you think, "Aw". And, you know, … makes you think about life in general, you know?*

As McLachlan, Waitoki, Harris, and Jones (2021) recognise, Māori wellbeing (mauri ora) is dependent on preserving and, were necessary, restoring mauri, the life force that connects the material and physical aspects of life, and that exists within all living things, individually and collectively. Mauri encapsulates and moderates both inner harmony and wellbeing as well as relationships between people and the natural and spiritual realms (Henare, 1988). Notably, "Ngā ara taiao: Connection with the environment", has been identified as an essential factor in the development of a secure identity that fosters wellbeing and resilience through an engagement in mauri (McLachlan et al., 2021, p. 82).

Finding oneself in adverse circumstances, such as homelessness, necessitates persons to return to a primordial connection with the natural environment, not only for maintaining psychological strength but also as a source of sustenance. As Ugly explains: "*We used to catch parore* [type of fish]*, all in this river* [see Figure 20]. *Just around here is where we had all our lines. And that's our food, saved us going to any food source* [i.e., social services]*."*

Figure 20. A screenshot of Ugly's [homeless participant] fifth video of the river under the bridge (their temporary street home).

For Ugly, connecting to the river served to sustain oneself physically while maintaining mana, identity, and resilience through independence from local soup kitchens. Furthermore, te taiao (nature, the natural environment) is also intrinsically linked to the notion of whakapapa, as it underpins connections to ancestors and determines Māori cultural beliefs and practices (McLachlan et al., 2021). For instance, Māori Jesus recalls the photographic exercise as a healing experience, as it allowed him to reconnect with his forebearers through meaningful engagements with te taiao:

> *Yeah, even that* [photographic exercise] *itself was … therapeutic, so to speak. To get back to my roots, that I come from… So, a lot of the photos are around this thing here* [Hātea River and Whangārei Falls; see Figures 21 and 22]. *Why? … That was the Falls back in the day. That's how my people would have seen it.*

Figure 21. A photograph taken by Māori Jesus [homeless participant] of the Whangārei Falls.

Figure 22. A photograph taken by Māori Jesus [homeless participant] of Hātea River.

As Māori Jesus highlights, te taiao is an essential source for participation in processes of mauri and whakapapa, both of which are crucial for retaining a positive self-construal and sense of place in the face of displacement (Groot, Hodgetts, Nikora, & Leggatt-Cook, 2011). This is closely connected to processes of wairuatanga which links the supernatural realm with te taiao and whakapapa and constitutes the basis for all existence and wellbeing in te ao

Māori (Valentine, Tassell-Matamua, & Flett, 2017). While wairuatanga may be connected with formal religiosity, this is by no means necessary, as it permeates into every aspect of life, inside and outside of people's conscious awareness (Mark & Lyons, 2010).

Wairuatanga, spirituality, and religiosity have been identified as important protective buffers from adversity and are related to confidence, life satisfaction, and resilience (Salgado, 2014). As Māori Jesus explains:

> *Without hope and faith, I would probably be one of these "homeless" people. But I got knowledge. Enough knowledge to keep me where I need to be, rather than down. I am living a good life. Well, my God says so. He blesses me with all that I have. ... without a belief or, you know, something like that, spiritual, you're just going through the motions.*

Māori Jesus demonstrates how his wairuatanga provides him with the strength to actively desist a "homeless identity" while maintaining his mauri, wellbeing and resilience throughout his street life.

Ugly conceptualises wairuatanga through self-belief and self-efficacy, rather than formally prescribed conceptualisations of "God" which he illustrated through paintings in his room at Jubilee Park (see Figure 23):

> *Yeah umm, not very nice paintings for people, eh. Oh, it's not religious, eh. It was all about religion, but not religious, eh. I was trying to teach the guys like [Ben] and them to believe in themselves. Yeah, not that man up there. I don't believe in him anyway, but it's to believe in yourself. That's what my dad told me, eh. If you believe in yourself, you can do anything. And, that's the thing, like, I had on my walls ... 'Cause, you're the only one that can pick the right or wrong way.*

Although Ugly seemingly detaches himself from wairuatanga and spirituality, his engagement in the creative arts and caring for others (i.e., manaakitanga) through his teachings constitute participation in wairuatanga that enhances his own and others' resilience and mana. His art served as a way of reconnecting with the values he learned from his father and allowed for the transmission of such understandings to others, facilitating manaakitanga and whanaungatanga (McLachlan et al., 2021). In this context, Ugly takes on a "role as a mentor as it is located within the process of whanaungatanga." (Groot, Hodgetts, Nikora, Rua, & Groot, 2015, p. 64), providing him with a sense of place and belonging.

Figure 23. A screenshot taken from Ugly's [homeless participant] eighth video of his wall art at Jubilee Park.

Briefly, for the participants, strategies for personal resilience in the face of homelessness are complexly embedded in and contextualised by processes of manaakitanga, connections with te taiao, and wairuatanga. While manaakitanga serves as a means for enhancing mana collectively through acts of giving and receiving, it supports personal resilience and strength in a holistic manner. Ngā ara taiao, has been identified as a significant aspect of pursuing wellbeing, or mauri ora, as it provides psychological, spiritual, and physical sustenance integral to survival while providing a resource for connecting with one's whakapapa and wairuatanga. Finally, wairuatanga, with its diverse and intricate manifestations, also comprises an essential foundation for positive identity formation and resilience. Embraced multifariously by the participants, it can provide important strengths, such as for relinquishing a "homeless identity". Wairuatanga can be adopted through processes of manaakitanga and whanaungatanga, concepts that are, in turn, essential for Māori resilience. With resilience being a highly relational concept, particularly within te ao Māori, it is now crucial to explore its socio-relational facets.

A house is not necessarily a home:

Home-making and relational resilience

Lives textured by family disruption and dysfunction, as seen in some of the participants, can lead to a displacement from the social connections that are essential to home-making (Groot

et al., 2015). This is important because home-making comprises a process of securing a social and physical environment while providing fertile grounds for healthy and meaningful relationships. To gain further insights into participant experiences of street life, it is critical to explore how relationships can support a houseless yet home-like sense of belonging and purpose (Groot et al., 2015). As Rivlin and Moore (2001) highlight, the meaning of "home" is not necessarily a matter of physical shelter but rather is dependent on home-making as a subjective socio-psychological process of dwelling, underpinned by people's agency and meaningful relationships. Often manifested as group collaboration and solidarity, home-making can occur to varying degrees on the streets and manifest psychologically through a sense of community, belonging, trust, and resilience (Ayed, Syeda, Bird, Priebe, & Jones, 2020; Rivlin & Moore, 2001). For example, Ben illustrates the comfort he and his friends created under a bridge in Whangārei (see Figures 20 and 24):

> *It just looks like a bridge now because it was cleaned up. I was going to cart down a couple of pallets and lock them up so you can see exactly how it was. It is hard to imagine until you actually see it. When you see it, it is actually quite impressive. It was actually one of my best street homes, definitely. Through all weathers, through the storms, and on Guy Fawkes night, the skies would light up, and it would reflect off the river that was underneath me.*

Ben romanticises the bridge as an idyllic comfortable place. In contrast to common domiciled assumptions, this outside space provided shelter and constituted one of his street homing experiences. Ben actively confronts and challenges misconceptions about houselessness as a solely negative and uncomfortable experience that deprives people of a sense of home.

Figure 24. A photograph taken by Ben [homeless participant] of his bed under the bridge.

Indeed, this bridge has much symbolic meaning for Ben, as it was the site where he was introduced to his street family, Lofty, Ugly, and Māori Jesus. From this group, underpinned by reciprocity and relationships similar to that of a biological family (Groot & Hodgetts, 2015), he learned how to create a home on the streets. Ben tells me that after sleeping uncomfortably and unsafely in a public space for a few nights, Māori Jesus, who he had met many years before, approached him. He instantly took Ben in and showed him how to render the street life experience more pleasant:

> *He had these pallets that were hooked up underneath the bridge and made a nice, covered, sleeping quarters. It was absolutely awesome. The sun would heat up the concrete of the bridge, and the bridge would heat up the sleeping quarters. Usually, we didn't need blankets. … Bro, I felt sorry for some of the people on the streets. They did not have the sort of luxury that I had.*

Through particular material objects, in this case wood pallets and a bridge, the street family created some comfort, safety, and a sense of place in various locales around the small city. These sites acted as the group's base of operations, where trust fostered trust and from which they embodied routines (Groot et al., 2015). For example, Ben explains how his circle of trust (i.e., street family) enabled him to cultivate resilience by acquiring knowledge from the older and more experienced group members:

> *So, I only surrounded myself with those types of people, and I ended up with Ugly and Lofty. That is why I chose to live with them. They are older than me, but it's nice to*

know their stories as well because it's all about the learning for me; different people and different things. ... They are quite civilized, and that is why I chose to have them inside my tight little circle. But it's only a few people like [Māori Jesus]*, Ugly, and Lofty. They are the only ones ... I chose to only trust them, and everybody else I can't trust, as far as I am concerned, until I get to know them a bit better.*

Through such extracts, we can understand that the materially and socio-spatially constructed street homes can come to constitute the centre of the group's cultivation of positive place-based identities and relationships of solidarity and trust. Street resilience is often anchored in relationships of trust, reciprocity, and collaboration (Cuba & Hummon, 1993). Moreover, as Noble (2004) identifies, objects epitomise social connections and facilitate the social construction of "family". As Ugly recalls:

A lot of people couldn't believe it because when we camped up here, we had pallets and all that in here. Pretty mean. It was one of our best spots that we ever had, was in here. Slept under a few bridges around this town. ... We used to have heaps of fun under here.

Ugly and Ben constructed a place-based group identity, which challenges homeless stereotypes through a rhetorical contrast with other presumably less organised and inventive groups. As Ben states: "*… I felt sorry for some of the people on the streets. They did not have the sort of luxury that I had.*" Thus, the bridge constituted a materially and socio-psychologically constructed street home for fostering whanaungatanga, in-group bonding, out-group differentiation, and personal and relational resilience (Knight, 2017).

Home-making was essential for the group within different locales around the small city. While engaging in collective home-making, the street family respected each other's need for privacy. For instance, they established a place-based identity at Jubilee Park, which fostered whanaungatanga and subsequently resilience among the street family. However, each family member was granted a space in which personal identities could unfold and be augmented. As Ben reminisces:

It took us all day, about six of us, we went down there [Jubilee Park] *and cleaned this place right up. All the glass, and we piled up all of the rubbish into one spot and made it more habitable for living* [see Figure 18]*. And then, we built it into our own homes. We put up windows, we got canvases and stuff to cover up all the holes that were up in the top of the walls, and stuff like that. We made ourselves little curtain*

doors, so it separates our sleeping quarters from our lounge quarters. Then you got a separated wall and a little curtain door. And there is a nice changing room part … and that was our lounge. Each room had the same lounge [see Figure 25].

Figure 25. The shared lounge at Jubilee Park. A screenshot taken from Ugly's [homeless participant] eighth video.

The street family's reciprocal relationships also allowed for their considerable independence which they pride themselves in and which, in turn, reinforced their resilience through the pursuit of a common idealistic goal, namely autarky. As Ugly explains in his eighth video: "*We stayed at Jubilee for about a year, and we had everything. … When we were in here, we didn't ask anybody for anything."* Similarly, Ben explains the importance of preparing their own meals:

We were cooking because we were in Jubilee. … We would buy a gas cooker so we could cook our own meals and we can do the independent life … Have a little bit of a community meal… and have that homely feel.

Ben highlights the centrality of kai in the home-making process and in processes of whanaungantanga and group independence. They engaged in collective actions surrounding food that help construct a socio-spatial home on the streets. Thus, by supporting each other, the group's coherence and team work is underscored, promoting personal and collective resilience.

Leisure practices, which are paramount for people's wellness, especially when faced with adverse circumstances, also constituted an integral aspect of the street family's strategies

for resilience. Not only did engagements in leisure provide a temporary escape from the everyday struggles of street life, they also permitted participation in domiciled life and bonding among each other and with other homeless people (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2016; Kjølsrød, 2019). For example, Ben explains how fishing on Saturdays provided the street family with food, served as a means of socialising with each other, granted respite from everyday stressors, and brought about opportunities for interacting with the domiciled public:

> *So, for the Saturdays, me and Ugly and a couple of other street people, we would take our fishing lines and we would go down to the Hub* [see Figure 26]*, and we would catch parore and black snapper ... and eels. And right next to the Hub, where the kid's playground was* [see Figure 28]*, there is an electric barbecue* [see Figure 27]. *It's free for the public. We would hang our eels and fish up in the tree, and skin them, and cook them on this barbecue… We would feed a lot of people… The kids would actually come and watch us cooking our fish, and we would go, "Would you like to try some?" and some kids would try some, some kids would go "No, thank you". They would watch us. "You want to have a go?" And so we would show them* [how to fish]*, and you see their eyes light up, and even their parents are all nice and bright-eyed.*

As Hodgetts and Stolte (2016) explicate, occupying non-judgemental leisure spaces can permit homeless people to transcend their subject positioning in society as "estranged others" and participate in civic life as regular citizens along with domiciled others. This is exemplified through Ben's account, as he describes his acceptance by the domiciled public as a highlight of engaging in the weekly leisure practice.

Figure 26. The Hub, the Saturday fishing spot. A photograph taken by Ben [homeless participant].

Figure 27. The electric barbeque at the Hub. A photograph taken by Ben [homeless participant].

Figure 28. The playground next to the Hub. A photograph taken by Ben [homeless participant].

Importantly, membership in the group has fostered place-based and collective identities that the participants found challenging to neglect once housed. As Ugly explains in his ninth video:

> *I wish I was back here actually* [Jubilee Park]. *Where I am now, I sleep on the floor. I open the door… I kind of miss it, eh. I'm having a hard time trying to sleep at the moment, and it's been about a month since I've been in there* [motel room]. *But I gotta keep the doors open because there is not enough fresh air going through the house. But I gotta get used to it.*

A "home" is not simply comprised of a house (Rivlin & Moore, 2001). Instead, a home is dependent on people's ability to engage in home-making processes. Ugly's account demonstrates how home-making is severely limited in his hotel room, where he is now accommodated with his daughter and moko (grandchild; see Figure 29).

Figure 29. Ugly’s [homeless participant] motel room. A screenshot taken from his final video.

Taken-for-granted domiciled understandings of “home” and “comfort” do not necessarily align with the perceptions of the “homeless other”. While the domiciled public generally understands having a comfortable bed and the ability to close the doors and windows to protect oneself from “the elements”, Ugly yearns for exposure to these which he has become accustomed to over his eight years of houselessness.

Accordingly, Ben explains his continued affiliation with the street family which led to his temporarily continued voluntary street life:

> *When I first got my home, I still didn’t have nothing. It was like sleeping on the streets. Actually, when I first got to my home, I stayed on the street for another month to look after Ugly and Lofty. So, even though I was paying rent and power for my house, I still stayed on the streets until I found somebody else to look after my room, where we all stayed at Jubilee, someone that I could trust. I was not just going to give it to any Tom, Dick, or Harry.*

Ben touches on the expectations and responsibilities that underpin the group’s collective identity, which was sustained through his continued affiliation. By looking after Ugly and Lofty and ensuring the next “tenant” at Jubilee Park would be trustworthy, Ben maintained a group and place-based identity beyond being housed.

Alizé also reflects on her time at Jubilee Park nostalgically and highlights the punitive measures implemented at the hotel she is staying in; a place she calls “*maximum security*”:

> *I dread going back to the* [hotel]*, even just for a shower and stuff, you know Kim? It's like, "Oh, what are they gonna ask today?". You know, you walk through the door they go, "So, where are you going? How long are you gonna be? When are you coming back?"… I'm getting sick of it, repeating myself, you know?*

As Alizé highlights, despite common domiciled conceptions of hotel accommodation being universally pleasant for homeless individuals, they can entail major negative shifts, such as a sudden lack in privacy and freedom as well as social isolation: *"I mean, yeah, we understand why we can't have visitors* [at the hotel]*, you know, 'cos it's a corporate place and it's all good, but like, you know, it does get too much."* (Alizé). Thus, separation from one's social group due to being housed is particularly difficult for homeless people who have established group and place-based identities that have provided sources of wellbeing and resilience for an extended period of time. This complicates the process of exiting the streets, as new forms of home-making must be engaged with, commonly without the social support that one's street family provided. Furthermore, in contrast to commonly-accepted understandings of domiciled life being less burdensome than life on the streets, Ben explicates how becoming housed can involve new financial issues:

> *Well, being on the streets, and you are getting a benefit, the job seekers' is like 250 bucks. You don't have bills; you don't pay the rent, you don't pay for power, you don't really have to buy food either, because Open Arms and these other places that I was telling you about, they supply food… You got certain struggles on the streets. But when you are going to a house, the struggles change. There is a whole new different set of struggles. Now, … you've got your bills to pay and you've got electricity, you've got the rent. I always have to pay on water rates. It's only five bucks a week, usually covers it. But what came with that was that it gave me an address, and all other places that I owed money to now have a place to send me a bill. Like … this is from a car from years and years ago, the interest rate has gone up so much, I owe this company like 14 grand* [$14,000] *now… So, I had to go and make some arrangements and start paying this. So, I still only get $250 a week and with my rent and all that coming out, I end up with about $70 to $80. And that is all I got left to buy my food.*

Ben's account demonstrates a common barrier to addressing homelessness. Together with a dismantlement of people's place-based and group identities, people departing street life are frequently confronted with financial struggles which they did not have to overcome while

being homeless. As Hodgetts and Stolte (2017, p. 106) identify, "being housed and poor is often only marginally better than being unhoused and poor. … [Therefore,] In the age of penal welfare, homelessness can be a pragmatic option.".

Considering such issues, in addition to the challenges of re-constructing new identities, it is hardly surprising that the participants remembered their time on the streets nostalgically. For example, Alizé, in the context of her challenging life in the hotel, remembers the Jubilee Park as a safe space to which she can return if she is left stranded by the system:

> *Okay, you know, it* [Jubilee Park] *wasn't a home, but that was our home during that time. You know… after being placed in the motels and that, and then going back there, to have a look, you know, it's like* [Alizé sighs deeply]. *And like, what if we all become homeless again and got kicked out of the motels? ... we know that we're not going to, but what if? You know, that could've been our home to go back to.*

Such accounts highlight significant barriers to addressing homelessness, often overlooked by policy-makers. However, the street family, comprised of Ugly, Ben, Māori Jesus, and, formerly, Lofty, decided to utilise their group cohesion and support to exit street life and remain off the streets. As Ugly states:

> *Because of Lofty, that woman, it was time to move on. We all made each other a promise that we would get out of here* [Jubilee Park] *and find us something, a place, and to better ourselves. A few months ago, I got a place... And I promised I would never ever go back out on the streets again... And that's one thing I love about the guys I was on the streets with, they meant it.*

The street family continued on beyond exiting street life, facilitating resilience in the face of transitioning from homelessness into housing, as they collectively strived towards a domiciled future without losing their friendship.

In short, meaningful relationships that allow for processes of home-making are essential for the establishment of resilience on a relational level. As seen in the street family, such relationships are necessarily underpinned by processes of whanaungatanga, collective efforts to home-making, and surety that individual identity formation and enhancement is achievable. These efforts facilitate the production of particular communal and individual place-based identities, as demonstrated through the socio-spatial realms of the bridge and Jubilee Park.

Importantly, pallets constitute objects that epitomise these processes and, thereby, a "home" on the streets that promotes a collective pursuit of independence. Through the participants' accounts, common misconceptions about the experience of homelessness, such as constant extreme discomfort, have been challenged. Leisure practices were also identified as resilience-enhancing, granting in- and out-group whanaungatanga, participation in civic life, and temporary respite from the homeless identity and associated stressors. Finally, challenges to exiting street life and embracing domiciled life have been highlighted and interpreted as being underlaid by enduring place-based and group identities, restricted home-making possibilities in the domiciled world, diverging understandings of "comfort" and "home", punitive approaches to "managing" homeless people in motel/hotel accommodations, and financial struggles that render homelessness a pragmatic solution in some instances. In the final chapter, I will expand the key findings in relation to the research aims and literature to explore their wider implications.

Chapter Four: Discussion

Homelessness is a serious societal issue that, as is evident in the research participants' accounts, is shaped by personal, relational and structural considerations (Stolte & Hodgetts, 2014). In many respects, street homelessness is the sharp edge of growing inequalities that are disproportionately impacting people with personal vulnerabilities including, familial breakups, housing insecurity, health, and substance misuse issues (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017). While the majority of psychological literature about homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand has focussed on metropolitan centres (e.g., Auckland and Wellington); the lifeworlds of the increasing amount of street dwellers in rural areas and small cities, such as Whangārei, has not received the same level of consideration (George et al., 2021; Groot & Hodgetts, 2012; Groot, Hodgetts, Nikora, & Leggatt-Cook, 2011; Hodgetts & Stolte, 2016; Hodgetts et al., 2011; Hodgetts et al., 2010; King, et al., 2015). Although this thesis cannot fully demystify the multifarious and vast aspects of small-city street life in Aotearoa/New Zealand, I investigated the largely unexplored issue by recognising the mutual constitution of both personal and contextual factors intertwined with the phenomenon.

Through my extended engagements and cultivation of meaningful relationships, participants shared their personal stories of life on the streets of Whangārei. Drawing on these accounts, I was able to address the three research aims of this thesis. First, I gained detailed understandings of the participants' experiences of and outlooks on homelessness in Whangārei. Secondly, I was able to engage with the everyday processes of the OADC and its significance in the lives of the participants. Finally, although effecting change in communal and local narratives can only be realised after the present research becomes accessible to the public; current problematic narratives and associated policies that obstruct effective responses to homelessness locally are emphasised, and suggestions for ameliorative and transformative change are provided.

This chapter expands upon the key findings presented in Chapter Three by considering these further in terms of existing research and their wider implications. First, the participants' identity constructions that desist taken-for-granted negative preconceptions and labels of the neoliberal society of captives (Arrigo, 2013) will be discussed. Then, the seemingly mundane but profoundly meaningful objects of kai and pallets will be explored in relation to manifestations of manaakitanga and associated strategies for resilience. Lastly, prevalent barriers to effectively addressing homelessness, primarily in small cities, will be

drawn together and deliberated upon, and I will reflect on this thesis with regards to its contributions and potential for future research.

"I have never been 'homeless'": Desisting the neoliberal society of captives

Aotearoa/New Zealand's colonial history and continued dynamics of colonialism have directly and indirectly contributed to an overrepresentation of Māori in national homelessness statistics (Groot, Hodgetts, Nikora, & Rua, 2011; Groot & Peters, 2016; Robertson & Masters-Awatere, 2007). This is evidenced in local estimations, as Te Taitokerau's Northland District Health Board reported an approximated three quarters of its homeless population to be of Māori descent (George et al., 2021). Colonial forces have, however, also brought about significant ideological transformations that suppressed much of the Māori (holistic) worldviews and focussed on economic advancements, progress, and individual success (Groot & Peters, 2016; Moewaka Barnes et al., 2018). This has led to a self-perpetuating system in which inequitable power relations, deficit-focussed narratives, and market-driven politics are mutually constitutive and serve to uphold our highly disproportionate socio-economic hierarchy (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017). Arrigo's (2013) society-of-captives-thesis epitomises this process by analysing how discriminating hegemonic and colonial narratives, assimilating systems and tools, and tension-invoking media representations lead to a subdual of non-normative identities. Accordingly, identities and, thereby, potentials of people who do not "fit" taken-for-granted notions of normalcy, such as street dwellers, are suppressed through a self-perpetuating circuit of inequity.

Since the introduction of the neoliberal reforms in Aotearoa/New Zealand, this cyclical self-sustaining force has arguably intensified, cultivating a neoliberal form of subjectivity that radically excludes "non-conforming" citizens and readily places responsibility for any failings onto the individual (Teo, 2018). This can entail a societal acceptance of myths that serve to divide the economically productive "neoliberal subject" from the supposedly unproductive "other", which are corroborated through psychological constructs such as the locus of control (LOC; Walker, Burton, et al., 2015). Narrow definitions of homelessness that predominantly focus on houselessness and, thereby, neglect important aspects of street resilience, exemplify this. Thus, simplified and discriminatory narratives corroborate our inequitable system, promoting simplistic efforts to manage the "undesirables", either through ostracism or assimilation (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2016).

Teo (2018) emphasises that although a framework for the adoption of neoliberal subjectivities is provided, people are by no means passive, but make active decisions to participate in or desist the neoliberal cycle of power. This can be seen in the agentic and conscious renunciation of a stereotypical "Western neoliberal homeless identity" among the participants, illustrated through statements such as: "*I have never been homeless*", "*We are already born into slavery*" and "*I am just another one of society's labels that's in the 'too hard basket'*" (Māori Jesus). Indeed, this participant actively dissociates himself from the money-driven neoliberal apparatus by depicting (through his photographs) the fundamental importance of the natural cycle of life in which he situates himself. This self-positioning encapsulates his values and worldview that directly contradict the market-driven system.

Rather, through their own "tales of joy", or the positive accounts of their experiences with street life, the participants actively re-story themselves as agentic home-makers on the streets (see section two). Indeed, challenging common "tales of terror", as told by the domiciled public about the lives of street dwellers, serves to foster a sense of self-worth and self-efficacy (Cuthill, 2018b; Rappaport, 2000). Moreover, as Rappaport (2000, p. 1) emphasises, "the mission of community psychology/social science can be understood as a calling to use our tools … to assist others in the job of turning tales of terror into tales of joy. Such work is the essence of personal and social change." Thus, by collaborating with and foregrounding the participants' accounts of joy, strength, and resilience, the present research holds possibilities for positive change.

These processes also stress the significance of normalising Māori cultural understandings of "home" that are defined through connections and empowerments of the physical, social, spiritual, and psychological realms (Groot & Peters, 2016; Te Ahukaramū, 2007). Mutually constitutive with strategies for resilience (see section two), participant Māori Jesus construes his houseless identity through such holistic connections by referring to aspects of whakapapa and the sustained cultivation of and engagements with his tūrangawaewae. Thus, he distances himself from being homeless in a spiritual sense in contrast to others who he views as having internalised a neoliberal homeless identity and, thereby, lost important holistic relations (Memmott et al., 2003).

Other participants also constructed narratives about their experiences on the street of Whangārei that repudiated neoliberal sensibilities and associated identities (Arrigo, 2013; Scheff, 1974; Scheff & Sundstrom, 1970). Supported by and contributing to their resilience,

they accentuated positive experiences with small-city homelessness and advantageous consequences thereof. They actively challenged reductionist narratives of deficit, discomfort, and depression as the sole components of homelessness which supports their psycho-emotional wellbeing and serves to retain important positive place-based and group identities (McAdams, 2013). For instance, participants Ben and Ugly's highly visible protest at Whangārei's central bus stop supported their endeavour of exhibiting political agency, challenging assumptions of homelessness as powerlessness and disinterest; and of performing homeless identities that contradict stereotypes and prejudices by adhering to domiciled norms. Through this collective act of resilience, group strength and reciprocity was reinforced, "while creating a context for political empowerment and facilitating positive identity construction." (Cohen & Wagner, 1992, p. 38; Langegger, 2016).

As discussed in this section, the participants demonstrated awareness of and exceptional agency to counter their imposed identities of "deviant other" within the neoliberal society of captives. By constructing positive personal, group, and place-based identities that contradict commonly-held assumptions about the meaning and nature of homelessness, the participants acted as political activists. They strived towards subverting negative preconceptions and associated marginalisation and oppression, implicated in the present neoliberal power apparatus. Moreover, to effectively understand and apply conceptualisations of "home" and "homelessness" that differ from prevalent limited definitions, it is paramount to adopt a relational and culturally responsive approach, acknowledging the interconnectedness between physical, psychological, social, and emotional dimensions. I will now discuss the strategies for resilience, as indicated by the participants, that underpin and are underpinned by agentic identity constructions desisting the neoliberal society of captives.

Kai, pallets, and manaakitanga: Strategies for resilience

Losing one's sense of self is a realistic threat for many people living on the streets (Boydell et al., 2000). However, as the participants in the present research emphasise, being houseless is not merely a negative experience. Rather, through creative, unique and parallel strategies, the participants succeeded in cultivating identities that challenged common misconceptions of street life (see section one). This signifies considerable resilience on part of the participants and, in turn, helps foster creative responses to adversity (Groot, Hodgetts, Nikora, & Leggatt-Cook, 2011). Resilience has been shown to be highly relational; embedded

in holistic connections between the material, psychological, social, emotional, and spiritual realms; and contingent on resources and spaces of care, such as the OADC (Herrman et al., 2011; Wolch et al., 1993). Thus, to effectively pursue Aotearoa/New Zealand's goal of abolishing homelessness nationwide (Menon, 2021), the resilience of those living on the streets must be better understood and harnessed in service and housing responses.

Investigating the participants' resilient responses to street life was, therefore, important not only for highlighting their agency, strengths, and humanness (Groot, Hodgetts, Nikora, & Leggatt-Cook, 2011); but also for considering useful responses to the issue. Considering ostensibly mundane facets of the participants' lifeworlds on the streets has spotlighted their intrinsic deep-rooted meanings that are pivotal to the strategies for resilience the participants engage with (Hodgetts et al., 2008). Accordingly, three interrelated aspects have been identified as most central to the participants' resilience, namely kai (food), the use of material objects (e.g., wood palletts), and associated manifestations of manaakitanga. They provided the participants with sources for making homes on the streets from which the resilient strategies of routine, independence, leisure, whanaungatanga, and wairuatanga could be realised (Groot et al., 2015; Rivlin & Moore, 2001).

Kai comprises a material, psychological, social, and emotional resource for people who are faced with life on the streets. As became apparent in the participants' stories, kai constituted a locus for the street family's collective home-making efforts. These revolved around communal endeavours towards independence from social services and the construction of home-spaces of mutual support. These street homes served as bases from which the participants could embody daily routines that facilitated their pursuit of autarky by engaging in hunting for kai and kai-related necessities. Wolch et al. (1993) identify how daily mobilities in the context of routines constitute a positive coping strategy for people on the streets, as everyday stressors can be managed in healthful ways. Accordingly, as explained in Chapter Three, the material and socio-psychological street homes of the bridge and Jubilee Park served as spaces of kai-related independence and routine that fostered whanaungatanga, out-group differentiation, and both personal and relational resilience (Groot et al., 2015; Knight, 2017). Thus, home-making processes were mutually constitutive with trusting relationships and resilience. While the relationships within the street family participating in this research promoted resilience and, thereby, provided fertile ground for the construction of a "home"; collective "home" constructions encouraged whanaungatanga and, therefore, resilience (Groot et al., 2015; Rivlin & Moore, 2001).

These important home-making processes were further promoted by a repurposing of material objects, such as wooden pallets, as exemplified in the socio-spatial realm of the bridge. For example, for Ben, the bridge held symbolic meaning, a place which he remembered nostalgically as it constitutes a locale that marked his involvement and coalescence with, as well as his learning from the street family. Indeed, the use of pallets acted as a means of installing positive place-based identities among the group that, in turn, underpinned trust, reciprocity, and collaboration that endured beyond street life (Cuba & Hummon, 1993). Although such collective place-based identities bear the risk of re-entering street life once exited (Groot & Hodgetts, 2015), they also increase group cohesion that can promote resilience for coping with the challenges entailed in the transition into domiciled life. This was seen in the accounts of the street family who promised each other to remain off the streets. Thus, seemingly insignificant and often discarded objects, such as pallets, can facilitate and epitomise highly consequential processes, including socio-spatial, material, and psychological constructs of “home” and “family”, that are fundamental for responding to adverse circumstances in creative, resilient ways (Hodgetts et al., 2010; Noble, 2004).

Kai also aided connections with te taiao (the natural environment), as was seen in the participants’ ties with the river under the bridge. Through timeless Māori activities like fishing and eeling, the street family engaged in ngā ara taiao, which is central to mauri ora (Māori wellbeing) as it promotes a secure personal identity that fosters mana and resilience (McLachlan et al., 2021). Moreover, the river also advanced the street family’s independence as it allowed the participants to secure kai without the support from outsiders, further boosting their whanaungatanga and resilience. Consequently, the participants’ resilience was fostered through maintaining a sense of normality in their often disrupted lives within an everyday landscape surrounding their street homes, the natural environment, and spaces of care such as the OADC (Hodgetts et al., 2016).

With the street homes constituting bases from which strategies for resilience could be embodied, the participants were also able to perform recreational practices. While fishing on Saturdays contributed to their physical wellbeing through kai, it also formed part of their weekly routine. Moreover, it served as a means of enhancing psych-social contentment as the street family temporarily engaged in Whangārei’s domiciled life and, thereby, temporarily transcended their subject positioning as “homeless other” (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2016; Kjølsrød, 2019). Indeed, leisure practices, although often denied to homeless people, constitute ordinary humanising activities in the extra-ordinary circumstances of the participants,

contributing to physical, emotional, and psycho-social wellbeing and resilience (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2016).

Although autarky (self-sufficiency) constituted an idealistic goal for the street family, such complete independence was not always possible. Therefore, their routines were often determined by meal times at different social services, including the OADC. As identified in the analysis process, the OADC constitutes a space of care and routine for those whose lives are frequently textured by disruption and ambiguity. Particularly, what renders the OADC a space that provides authenticity, reciprocity, empathy, and a sense of normalcy, is the centrality of kai. Kai at the OADC promotes routine for the whānau and volunteers; it provides opportunities for the engagement with tikanga Māori, such as through karakia; it facilitates manaakitanga; and it encourages whakawhanaungatanga. Thus, the volunteers' and whānau's subjectivities are enhanced as their mana is raised through genuine, empathetic, and affectionate processes of giving and receiving that establish an external structure around which they can manage daily routines (Conradson, 2003; Wolch et al., 1993).

Importantly, Māori, as a heterogeneous people, as well as non-Māori, benefit from these processes. Engagements with tikanga Māori promote a sense of orderliness within often extra-ordinary lives. Indeed, kai is an integral facet of te ao Māori (Edwards et al., 2005) that, as recognised in the analysis, acts as a centrepiece to the rehumanisation of whānau and volunteers. Thus, kai, in the context of the OADC, furthers the whānau's and volunteers' resilience through a sense of regularity, calmness, heightened mana, and acceptance. This highlights the importance of situating resilience within te ao Māori understandings which helps us understand how creative responses to hardship can be facilitated through kai, an understanding that is paramount for promoting policy responses that permit these processes.

The OADC, as a socio-spatial space constructed around the powerful resource of kai, also provides a geography of everyday life in which local street dwellers are in control over social distancing practices, in contrast to their relative powerlessness experienced in prime public spaces (Hodgetts et al., 2011). The space for care may help improve relations with the domiciled public more meaningfully, as contact is directed by the usually-marginalised party who is in control over presenting their lives to the domiciled "outsiders". Especially for Māori who have experienced historical and ongoing social distancing through colonial processes of disenfranchisement, marginalisation, and discrimination (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2018), judgement-free spaces of care, such as the OADC, are essential for finding respite

from such everyday everyday processes (Cuthill, 2018b; King et al., 2015). While Māori are more likely to relate to others without a "home" due to shared stories of hardship and depreciation (King et al., 2015), the OADC epitomises holistic understandings of inclusion, acceptance, belonging, and equality.

Subsequently, it has become apparent that kai, the Māori cultural concept of manaakitanga, and resilience are inextricably intertwined. Manaakitanga serves to enhance the mana of the provider and the recipient through acts of giving, supporting, caring for, protecting, and showing respect (Henare, 1988). As reflected in Chapter Three, manaakitanga was an important aspect in the lives of the homeless participants. Expressions of manaakitanga provided them with resilience through caring and providing for, teaching, and safeguarding each other that led to the formation of a tight and seemingly irreplaceable circle of trust (Groot et al., 2015). Indeed, while participant Ugly explained how manaakitanga prompted his introduction to street life, participant Ben highlighted how he successfully adapted to homelessness through the manaakitanga of the street family who shared their knowledge, skills, and aroha. As Herrman et al. (2011) expound, altruistic acts of kindness, as seen in the manaakitanga amongst the street family, constitute active strategies for resilience as they embellish self-regard, confidence, and mutual support.

As mana, summoned and intensified through processes of manaakitanga, "is always closely linked to the powers of the spiritual ancestors", it is mutually constitutive with wairuatanga (spirituality; Henare, 1988, p. 17). Although the participants exhibited diverse understandings and manifestations of wairuatanga, the analysis demonstrated its significance in their strategies for resilience. For instance, participant Ugly engaged in processes of wairuatanga through artistic wall paintings that simultaneously served to perform manaakitanga by teaching his street family about his conceptualisation of wairuatanga as personal efficacy. Moreover, this facilitated holistic communications with Ugly's whakapapa, as he explains that, while being a mentor for the street family (*cf.*, Groot et al., 2015), he transmits the values and understandings he learned from his father.

Such connections were essential for the participants' personal and relational resilience as could be seen in participant Māori Jesus' self-proclaimed therapeutic engagement with his ancestors through taking photographs of his natural surroundings. Accordingly, manaakitanga, with its implicated processes of whanaungatanga, trust, wairuatanga, and whakapapa, is critical for the participants' personal and communal resilience. It promotes the

acquisition of practical skills to adopting to streets life, as seen in Ben's story; the psycho-social construction of a street family; and holistic connections with the spiritual world, ancestors, and family, ultimately heightening people's mana and, thereby, resilience.

This section has highlighted the importance of delving deeply into the participants' everyday lives on the street, as often presumably unremarkable aspects of their lifeworlds foreground important facets of strengths and holistic connections that are crucial for street resilience. Their agentic strategies for resilience have been shown to be highly relational with reciprocal caring relationships at the centre. These relationships, in turn, were upheld and strengthened through processes of home-making, routine, independence, leisure, whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, and wairuatanga. This is important because it highlights not only the strengths and determination of the homeless participants, but also challenges common conceptualisations of resilience as an individualistic concept that is determined by self-responsibility and personality (Herrman et al., 2011; Teo, 2018). As will be deliberated upon next, holistic understandings of resilience are a necessary aspect of establishing effective responses to homelessness. Being aware of its intricate and relational nature is indispensable for supporting people in exiting street life and successfully adapting to domiciled life.

Barriers to addressing street homelessness in Whangārei and beyond

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, pathways into and out of homelessness are predicated on a complex interplay between personal susceptibilities and systemic determinants, with individual vulnerabilities frequently being triggered by broader social inequities (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017). For example, as Bray (2009) identifies, meso and macro-level factors, such as family disruption and an involvement of child protective services, as seen in the participants' accounts, can increase the likelihood of people entering and decrease their chances of exiting street life due to triggered personal vulnerabilities (e.g., mental health or substance abuse issues). Moreover, pathways into street life are further underpinned by system-level neoliberal and colonialist dynamics which gave momentum to self-perpetuating socio-economic inequalities, leading, for instance, to pervasive institutionalisations and subsequent abrupt deinstitutionalisations, particularly for Māori (see section one; Dear & Wolch, 2014; Pollock, 2011; Stanley, 2017). Thus, political and economic decisions have permeated into people's lives, producing domino effects of

disadvantage that render a drift into homelessness more probable (Johnsen et al., 2018; Johnsen & Watts, 2014).

Street people are more likely to have drifted into homelessness due to lives textured by disruption, trauma, and financial insecurity (Hodgetts et al., 2012). Many services are focussed on the "rehabilitation" of formerly "functioning neoliberal subjects" who have "dropped" into homelessness due to unforeseen circumstances, such as participant Ben (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017; Hodgetts et al., 2012). Indeed, Ben was the first member of the street family to become housed and, despite its initial challenges, succeeded in remaining off the streets. This constitutes a major barrier to tackling street homelessness in a competent manner. Particularly, the failure to appropriately assist the majority of streeties who have gradually transitioned into houselessness is exacerbated through their diminished likelihood of accessing services that are non-inclusive, judgemental, and too individualistically orientated (Hegenbarth, 2013). Thus, as suggested by the *inverse care law*, those in most need receive the least support, reflecting systemic inequities that tend to perpetuate hardship (Fiscella & Shin, 2005).

So, to effectively assist "drifters" in finding appropriate pathways out of street life, spaces of care, such as the OADC are crucial. These spaces must be founded upon informed understandings of street life that permit the heterogeneous persons affected to make positive changes in their own lives. For instance, instead of pressuring people into entering domiciled life, services must recognise and accept the diverse reasons for people's street life, including finding a sense of "home" they may not have previously experienced (Stewart & Townley, 2020). However, adequate services, such as the OADC, that are able to support strategies for resilience, including home-making processes beyond exiting street life, are scarce and often overburdened (Kading & Walmsley, 2018). As Wolch et al. (1993) emphasise, the resilience-invoking routines of street people are highly contingent on access to resources (e.g., kai) through spaces of care. However, mechanisms of decentralisation, privatisation, and deinstitutionalisation have left many local governments, such as the Whangārei District Council, with limited resources and highly reliant on the generosity of the central government (Kading & Walmsley, 2018). Moreover, as non-metropolitan homelessness remains largely overlooked in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Kearns, 2006), national responses are often restricted to urban centres (Johnston, 2017; Kearns, 2006). This poses a constant risk to spaces like the OADC of being hindered by broader economic imperatives (Kading & Walmsley, 2018).

Additionally, the participants in this research observed greater social distance to the domiciled public when compared to metropolitan Auckland, which contributes to difficulties exiting the streets. Indeed, social distancing practices in the small city, as recounted by the participants Ugly and Alizé, entailed direct exclusions from resources that are fundamental to exiting street life, including housing and employment. However, social distancing practices vary considerably within locales and across time (Hodgetts et al., 2011), rendering rigid comparisons problematic. This highlights the necessity of challenging taken-for-granted "tales of terror" across diverse locations that socio-spatialise street people away from services, resources, and prime public spaces that are essential for their psycho-social and physical survival as well as their opportunities for exiting street life (Cloke et al., 2000; Kearns, 2006; Rappaport, 2000).

Considering discriminatory social distancing practices and the often disrupted and distressing lives of the participants previous to being houseless, it is unsurprising that ties with the street family remained strong, with the street constituting a space where a sense of belonging and "home" could be nurtured (Bell & Walsh, 2015). Grounded in processes of manaakitanga and whanaungatanga (see section two), street homes and the street family, therefore, remained an integral part of the participants' lives, leading to prolonged voluntary houselessness for Ben and a yearning for a return to the street for Ugly. The group's collaboration and solidarity, mutually constitutive with collective home-making efforts, entailed strong place-based and group affiliations which appear to be reinforced through domiciled social distancing practices (Henare, 1988; Hodgetts et al., 2011; King et al., 2015). For example, due to their socio-spatialisation out of Whangārei's privileged public areas, the street family strived towards maintaining their status as kaitiaki at Jubilee Park through collective efforts to keep the space clean, facilitating participation in domiciled life by means of a sense of neighbourliness. This also exemplifies the conditionality of "social nearing" in the small city, as temporary transcendences of the social chasm between domiciled and homeless worlds were commonly achieved through the participants' adherence to domiciled norms.

Compliance with domiciled expectations and regulations can be particularly challenging when transitioning from the streets into domiciled life, however. Especially, when home-making possibilities are restricted by punitive accommodation policies and associated social isolation. For example, Aotearoa/New Zealand's central government responses to the Covid-19 pandemic involved placing around 1,200 "severely housing

deprived” individuals and families in hotel/motel accommodations with an end goal of eradicating homelessness altogether (George et al., 2021; Graham-McLay, 2020). Despite the ostensibly exceptional opportunity for social services to address and assist those who previously lived on the streets (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2020), diverse challenges were brought to light in the participants’ stories. As George et al. (2021) asserted, while providing shelter for those living on the streets may appear as a satisfactory solution for the homelessness crisis, motels are not intended as long-term “homes”. These locales severely restrict the very home-making processes that are crucial for people’s resilience and wellbeing (Rivlin & Moore, 2001). The entailed social isolation, particularly from the street family and daily home-making routines has posed serious challenges to these participants. Alizé explained that punitive measures, such as the invasion of her privacy and the prohibition of visitors, exacerbated this issue, as she termed her hotel “*maximum security*”. Home-making is contingent on genuine trusting relationships and a sense of control over one’s home-space. Therefore, the physical restrictions of hotel/motel accommodation and the entailed segregation from important social connections contribute to a new sense of “homelessness” despite being housed (Groot & Hodgetts, 2015).

However, such issues remain largely overlooked leading to one-size-fits-all approaches to managing and re-housing the “homeless other” (Groot & Hodgetts, 2015; Groot et al., 2015; Hodgetts & Stolte, 2016; Rivlin & Moore, 2001). Together with new financial struggles associated with having an address, as exemplified by Ben; abruptly adjusting to social isolation, a lack of freedom, threats of eviction, and limited home-making opportunities constituted serious difficulties for the participants exiting street life. This, at least partially, explains why some people decided to decline or prematurely leave hotel/motel accommodations offered as a Covid-19 response (Broughton, 2020; Cropp, 2020).

As discussed in this final chapter, common barriers to the participants’ pathways out of street life are related to social distancing practices, underpinned by taken-for-granted domiciled “tales of terror” that focus on houselessness as a matter of deficit, individual responsibility, discomfort, and depression. This leads to reductionist responses to the issue, such as services that are predominantly aimed at the minority of people who have “dropped” into homelessness as well as the recent Covid-19 related hotel/motel placements. Such narrowly directed responses bear diverse challenges for people exiting street life which are frequently overlooked.

Instead, I argue, services and responses to street homelessness must be underlain by relational and holistic understandings of the issue, acknowledging the heterogeneity, agency, and resilience of the people affected. Homeless people, as seen in the participants' stories, have diverse backgrounds and understandings and that must be recognised, accepted, and built upon. Additionally, the participants demonstrated exceptional agency through which they actively resisted domiciled labels and stereotypes and, individually and collectively, established strategies for resilience. The OADC, as a space of care, provides an exceptional example of a responsive service that is founded on comprehensive, empathetic, and strength-based understandings of homelessness. Thus, while it constitutes a source of resilience for "drifters", "droppers", Māori, and non-Māori street dwellers alike; it also provides opportunities for finding channels out of homelessness that are based on whānau terms.

In the present research, the participants acted as political activists by emphasising their "tales of joy" that often remain obscured to the domiciled public. The employment of a Māori-centred ethnographic case study approach enabled me to foreground these stories, providing possibilities for change (Rappaport, 2000). This is important because research on homelessness has been frequently preoccupied with negative aspects of homelessness, bearing the risk of neglecting its human and heterogeneous facets and, thereby, extending commonly-held parochial preconceptions (Cuthill, 2018b; Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017). Instead, my findings highlight the relevance of exploring local and seemingly mundane aspects of life on the streets and available resources that encapsulate substantial meaning (Christodoulou, 2021).

Thus, attuned to and derived from an in-depth local inquiry, my findings can assist developments and extensions of policies and services that acknowledge and appropriately address the heterogeneity and strengths of the people involved. For instance, providing responses to homelessness that acknowledge the importance of spaces of care and of housing services that promote social connectedness and home-making, would be exceptionally useful for tackling the issue. Especially with regards to the recently increasing non-metropolitan street life in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Amore et al., 2020; George et al., 2021), it is pivotal that awareness and understanding about the issue is circulated to prevent underfunding for such essential spaces like the OADC; central government and societal negligence due to its limited visibility; and heightened social distance due to predominantly negative domiciled narratives.

In sum, my research approach enabled me to gain deep insights into the lifeworlds of the participants who experienced street life in a small city, a phenomenon that has been under-explored in Aotearoa/New Zealand's psychological research (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2012; Walker et al., 2006). My volunteer work and continued immersion in the participants' lives, in the context of the OADC, was essential for moving beyond public accounts and engaging in a co-creation of meaning *with* the centre's whānau, volunteers, and staff (Groot & Hodgetts, 2012). This also facilitated a politicisation of the issue, which is deeply interwoven with colonialist, capitalist, and neoliberal forces and exacerbated in times of the Covid-19 crisis (Blake, 2020; Groot & Peters, 2016; Walker, Burton, et al., 2015); yet, remains often overlooked by the central government and the domiciled public. Furthermore, the adoption of a relational understanding of and approach to non-metropolitan homelessness, which takes into account individual, structural, and Māori cultural considerations, has permitted a far-reaching investigation of the issue and subsequent inclusive and comprehensive findings.

Nevertheless, future quantitative and qualitative research, underpinned by relational and Māori cultural understandings, on non-metropolitan homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand is necessary to raise awareness and explore further facets of the issue. Quantitative research approaches could shed further light on street life and the significance of spaces of care in rural and small-city Aotearoa/New Zealand. They could also compare these dynamics with urban homelessness on a larger scale. Qualitative research, on the other hand, could explore the findings of the present research, such as the identified strategies for resilience and social distancing practices, in more depth and across different locales. Particularly, qualitative research would be able to shed light on how home-making processes may be promoted for people exiting the streets. I hope that this thesis will prompt such future research endeavours.

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Appendix A

The 2019 OADC brochure

Open Arms Tour

- ***Entrance next to reception***: This room is dedicated to our NZ Army as this space had been the army hall for over a hundred years, called Harding Hall where the picture of Harding resides on the wall. When the army heard that Open Arms were to be situated in Harding Hall they were of great approval and thought this fitted with their kaupapa of service. The pictures that hang in the entrance were gifted and loaned by the NZ Army and RSA.

- ***To the left of Entrance***: We have the Paataka (that is regularly stocked) next to the Managers office where we also use as our triage room. Services held in this room are:
  - Advocate Monday & Thursday 8.30 am – 12.00 pm (Beneficiaries)
  - Ki A Ora Ngatiwai Health Clinic, Tuesday 9.30 am – 12.00 pm
  - Counselling available on appointments

The right to the entrance: is our staff office. Our volunteers sit at reception and then we have our Food Rescue team and our Housing team who are Kainga Pumanawa Housing 1st and Emergency Navigator who work with our homeless to get into long sustainable accommodation with support of wrap around services.

Dining Room

Breakfast provided every morning:
Monday – Fridays 7.00 am – 9.00 am
Saturday & Sunday 9.00 am – 10.00 am
Lunches provided on:
Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday & Sunday
11.00 am – 12.00 pm

This is where the magic happens, the conversations flow, the puku gets full. Originally the place was falling apart, it was dark, dingy, no carpet, damp, and holes everywhere. The fixing up of this space was done by many helping hands from different services, agencies, companies, individuals, the community. A vision initially brought to 155 by Carrie Kake in 2018, the project team had delivered within a few months what we now have, this Ataahua space.

Play & Triage Room 2

This room was painted by the volunteers next door from Hundertwasser who wanted to be a part of this project. We also use this room as another triage room for our Housing team and as an interview room for those other agencies that will use this space.

Mother Theresa Room

The Mother Theresa room is a resting space for our whanau, where they can relax, watch a movie and have a nap if they are living on the street. Cool in the Summer time but warm in the Winter. This is a popular spot for our whanau.

Kitchen:

The kitchen was originally the bunker room for the Army and was two separate rooms with one sink. One of our whanau who was a 505 worked late nights after work to put the place together, ready to use. A lot of whanau that use this space were part of putting in the hard work of getting this space up and running. A well-loved space as the kai dished up are very well received.

Facilities available:

- Showers
- Toilets
- Lockers (rough sleepers)
- Washing Machine
- Paataka (kai)

Other Services provided:

- Hairdressers (3rd Monday of the month)
- Acupuncture (1st Tuesday of the month)

155 Services provided:

- Whanau Support
- Taitokerau Community Law
- Mothers moving mountains
- Food Rescue
- Housing First – Kainga Pumanuwa and Emergency Navigation

Food Rescue Warehouse

Regular supply of avocado (when in season), bread from local supermarkets.

155 Food Rescue Northland– Whakaora Kai Taitokerau

Mission: Zero Waste, Zero Hunger

FR are an initiative that aims to redistribute quality surplus food from retailers to community groups who support people in need. We hope to provide community groups with a wide range of healthy and nutritious food. Waste minimization also is a fundamental part of our ethos. Reducing waste going to landfill reduces harm on our environment.

Contact Details:
Phone: 09 4370185 ext 4

Website: whare.org.nz
FB: https://www.facebook.com/openarmsdaycentre/

TE RURUHAU ONGA RINGA RINGA TUWHERA

Centre Tour

Open 7 days a week

(We are a service provided by 155 Whare Awhina Community House)

09 437 0185

Monday – Friday
7.00 am – 1.00 pm
Saturday – Sunday
9.00 am – 1.00 pm

Appendix B

The Art of Journaling for Research Purposes – originally created by Ngahuia Te Awekotuku

<u>Explaining the Journal Parts and their Relevance.</u>

1) Introduction and auto-reflective commentary on your work.

Introduce yourself. Write something about you; your plans, expectations; then comment if your work experiences relate to them. With each entry you make, be sure to write the date! Your reflections on the experience can contribute to your analysis further down the track. Refer to any readings you have done this week about the issues.

2) Community, whanau and everyday experience.

Keep a record of hui; meetings you attend – date, who is there, who isn't, venue, weather, all that. Take notes of discussions. Also other events – kappa haka, birthdays, graduations, hui, sports, unveilings, poukai, Ahurei, weddings, regatta, exhibitions, Kday, waka ama, anything you may attend. Observe people, places you visit like marae, galleries, flea markets, museums, or other towns. Think about what is happening around you.

3) Media observations.

Watch out for, and collect or record then comment on media items that you feel are relevant to your project, or research interests. These can be films like Avatar or Precious or older examples like Mauri, Utu or Ngati. Other stuff like news clippings, advertisements, song lyrics, posters, downloaded material, photos, postcards, tickets, magazine articles, brochures (e.g. Hauora, TWoA, or Auahi Kore pamphlets). Include a brief caption. If you see anything on MTV, Te Karere or other television, make a note of it, give the date of the programme. It does not have to be Maori or Pacific. It can be Navajo or Al Jezeera or Rastafari or Clan McLeod or Saami. Describe WHY you noticed the news item, and how it was relevant to your project or your own journey. Try to do at least one or two every week.

4) Visual and illustrative elements.

Include this material to enhance, illustrate, expand on your reflections – or also because you like it! Make your own drawings or pictures, or doodles are fine. You can put in photographs, Xerox copies, cut outs maps, original sketches, downloaded stuff, stickers, charts, anything visual. Even three dimensional material, like raranga, bling, or beading, if it fits!

5) Traditional elements.

Waiata koroua, whaikorero, karanga, notes from particular encounters, pohiri or hui – what a reo karanga may have alluded to; what a speaker may have said; all this is good, and may be pertinent later.

6) Book list and references.

At the end of the journal, list all the books, articles, movies, videos you have read or seen. If you've commented on music, list the CD by title, and artist's or group's name. If you've included videos or movies, record the title, year, and director's name.

You can write in Maori and/or English – tuhia nga reo e rua.

Appendix C

Participant Information Sheet for OADC Whānau and Volunteers

Being Homeless in a Small City:

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Who is the researcher and what is the purpose of this project?

My name is Kim Finkler and I am conducting this research as part of my Master of Science (Psychology) degree. My research supervisors are Prof Darrin Hodgetts and Dr Pita King. The purpose of this research is to explore pathways into and out of homelessness as well as your everyday experiences with homelessness in Whangārei. The Open Arms Day Centre will be the focal point of this research. Therefore, homeless clients, volunteers, and staff are invited to participate in this research.

An Invitation to Participate

I would like to invite you to take part in this research, which will take place at the Open Arms Day Centre. Your participation is voluntary, and you should feel no pressure to participate. If you agree to take part, you will be involved in three interviews that include a mapping and a photographic exercise. If you agree to participate, you will still be able to withdraw at any time. Upon completion of the project, you will receive a koha (gift) of a Prezzy Card at the value of $75 ($25 per interview). A koha will also be provided to the Open Arms Day Centre.

What will I be asked to do if I decide to participate?

You will be asked to take part in a background interview (including a mapping exercise), a photography project, a follow-up interview to discuss your photographs, and a closing-off conversation.

1. The Background Interview and Mapping Exercise

First, you will be asked to partake in a background interview and a mapping exercise in a private room at the Open Arms Day Centre. This session will be one-on-one with me and will take around 60 to 90 minutes. This timeframe is flexible and will depend on how the conversation goes. Refreshments will be provided, and the interview will be audio-recorded.

During this interview, you will be asked to take part in a mapping exercise, focused on your own history and experiences of homelessness and your experiences at the Open Arms Day Centre. I will provide you with a print-out map of Whangārei and a floor plan of the Open Arms Day Centre, and you will be invited to draw on these as well as sheets of paper if required. No drawing skills are necessary for this exercise, and you can change or add to your illustrations any time after this session.

After the first interview, I will explain the photographic exercise that will follow.

2. The Photography Exercise and Interview

The photography exercise will take place over the week following the background interview. You will be invited to take photographs of your week, including any time at the Open Arms Day Centre. You will be asked to use your own camera phone if you have one. Otherwise, I will provide you with a camera to use. You will then bring the photographs to discuss these with me in a second interview. This photo-elicitation interview will also take place in a private room at the Open Arms Day Centre and will be audio-recorded. The timeframe for the photo-elicitation interview is entirely dependent on how many photographs you have chosen and how much you would like to talk about them.

3. Closing off the Conversation

You will be asked to meet with me two weeks after the photo-elicitation interview to share any further information you may have regarding your experiences with homelessness and the Open Arms Day Centre, and for me to clarify any issues you have raised. This closing off conversation will also take place in a private room at the Open Arms Day Centre and the timeframe also depends on the depth of our discussions. This discussion will also be audio-recorded so I can thoroughly consider your input.

What about my privacy, confidentiality, and access to the findings?

Please be assured that every reasonable step will be taken to protect your privacy and confidentiality. A pseudonym, of your choosing, will be used to identify you during the project. However, if you wish, your name can be disclosed.

The faces of people depicted in your photographs will also be blurred. The information you provide will only be used for the purpose of this research and will be stored on a password-protected, secure computer file. These records will be destroyed seven years after they have last been used.

You will be provided with a summary of the research findings and a copy of the full thesis will be provided to the Open Arms Day Centre. I also plan to hold a photographic exhibition as part of the project, and you are invited to the event.

What are my rights as a research participant?

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation to participate and have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study at any time;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off during the interviews.

Who can I contact if I have any questions or concerns about the project?

If you have any concerns or questions about the research, please do not hesitate to email me (Kimfinkler89@gmail.com) or one of my supervisors (D.J.Hodgetts@massey.ac.nz, P.R.W.King@massey.ac.nz).

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Prof Craig Johnson, Director, Research Ethics, telephone 06 356 9099 x 85271, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix D

Interview Guide for Initial Background Interviews with Whānau

Initial Background Interviews with Whānau: Interview Guide

Introduction

Welcome participants into the interview room and initiate a general conversation. Offer food and a hot drink as a way to connect. Explain the purpose of the set-up (recording devices) and remind participants of their rights and confidentiality.

Explain to participants the objectives of the initial interview/conversation, which aims to:

- Learn about their personal background stories and experiences with homelessness.
- Understand how they have heard about the Open Arms Day Centre and their experiences using its services.
- Explore their standpoints on the issue of homelessness in Whangārei in terms of its causes, everyday survival, and potential solutions.
    - This interview is intended to proceed as an informal conversation, so please ask questions any time and just relax.

Provide a print-out map of Whangārei, a floor plan of the Open Arms Day Centre, blank sheets of paper, and coloured pencils for participants. Then, explain to participants the mapping exercise by clarifying that they may draw on the map/floor plan/blank paper any time during the conversation. Remind participants that drawing skills are not necessary for this exercise and encourage them to just be creative and "have fun with it". Then, explain to participants the objectives of this exercise, which aims to:

- Spark conversation about the experiences they are picturing.
- Gain a richer understanding of their everyday lives outside of the research setting.
- Visualise situations, places, people, or objects that are difficult or impossible to access directly during the research.
- Enable them to approach their experiences from a different perspective (which may facilitate a process of conscientisation).
- Illustrate experiences that are challenging to verbalise due to various reasons.

Becoming homeless

- Can you tell me about the first time you thought of yourself as being homeless?
- Can you tell me about how you adjusted to being homeless?
- What would you say are the primary causes of homelessness?

Being homeless

- If you were to summarise what it's like to be homeless what would you say?
- What are the most important concerns you face as a homeless person?

- What would you say was your worst day of being homeless?
- What would you say was your best day of being homeless?
- Who is helpful to know on the streets?
- How do you overcome challenging situations?
- Do you think homelessness affects your health? How?
- What happens in a typical day or week?
- When you're on the street is it hard work?
- What do you do to keep yourself going on a day-to-day basis?
- Are there any particular place or places where you feel comfortable or safe? [a home]
    - Tell me about that/those.

Rural vs urban

- Have you ever been homeless in a bigger city?
    - If so, how was this different/similar?
    - If not, how do you think it would be different/similar?

Covid-19

- What has changed for you since the Corona pandemic?
- Has the pandemic made it more or less difficult to be homeless?
- Do you think there has been enough support for homeless people since the pandemic?
- Do you think these supports will be long-term solutions for homeless people?

Social Services

- Can you tell me about the first time you had contact with social services (e.g. WINZ, Oranga Tamariki/CYFS, Housing NZ, disability services, mental health providers, etc.)?
    - What was that like?
    - What have your experiences been since?

The Open Arms Day Centre and possible solutions and barriers

- How often do you come to the Open Arms Day Centre?
    - What services have you used here?
- What do you enjoy most about coming here? Why?
- What do you enjoy least coming here? Why?
- Do you think the centre can help people overcome homelessness?

    - Why/why not?
- What do you think would be the ideal solution(s) to homelessness?
- What do you think are the major barriers to addressing solving the issue?

Culture

- Do you think the Open Arms Day Centre is a culturally safe space for Māori? Why?/Why not?/How?

Moving around

Bring out the *map* and ask participant to indicate where they go regularly and what places are important to them. Ask them to identify specific sites or routes:

- Where they go regularly – how often? What times of the day/night?
- How do they get there?
- What happens at these places?

What interactions do they have - positive or negative experiences?

- Where do you feel safe or unsafe? (e.g. library, marae, etc.)
- Why do you go there?
- Are there places you avoid? If so, why?

Relationships

Tell us about the people that are important to you?

- Other homeless people
- Family and housed friends
- How does your family see you, or respond to you?
- Members of the general public
- Have your friends and relationships with family [social networks] changed with your homelessness?
- Are you still in contact with people from before you were homeless? Tell me about that.

Representations of homelessness

- Do you think homelessness is a well-known issue among the Whangārei community?
- How do you feel others who are not homeless see you? [tell me about it] [example]
- Does this differ for homeless people from different racial groups [eg., Maori / PI]
- What images of homelessness do media promote?
    - Any examples? / your reactions to these?

Futures

- Can you tell me about where you see yourself in two or three years time?
- Do you have any specific ideas about how you will get there?
- Who or what will be important in this?

Interesting stories

- Is there a particular story that you would like to share in terms of your own homelessness or someone else's? For example, a particularly funny, sad, or typical one?

Closing the interview

Go over the main points that we discussed and encourage further input from participants.

- So, we talked about … Is there anything I may have missed or is there anything else you would like to discuss?
- Do you have any questions about this interview or my research?

Introduction to the photographic exercise

Now, the second part of my research is where you get to take photographs. So, I would like to ask you to use your phone/this camera to take photographs of your week, which may include any time at the Open Arms Day Centre. Remember, you can take photos of whatever spaces, situations, people, or objects that seem important to you.

Photographic guidelines

Please make sure you ask people before you take photographs of them. If they have any questions or concerns regarding the use of their photographs, please feel free to explain to them the nature of my research and that their faces will be blurred (unless they insist otherwise). If they have any further queries, please refer them to me.

We will meet here again in around week (four to seven days from now) to discuss your photographs. I will upload them to my laptop, and we will discuss them from there. So, please ensure you bring a USB cable with you, which will connect your phone to the laptop (if applicable).

Appendix E

Interview Guide for Photo-Elicitation Interviews with all Participants

Photo-Elicitation Interviews with all Participants

Introduction

Welcome participants into the interview room and initiate a general conversation. Offer food and a hot drink as a way to connect. Remind participants of their rights and confidentiality.

Explain to participants the objectives of the photography interview, which aims to:

- Explore the photographs they decided to take.
- Provide them with an opportunity to describe their experiences of taking the photographs.
- Enable them to explain what these images mean to them and why.
    - This interview is also intended to proceed as an informal conversation, so please ask questions any time and just relax.

Overview of all photographs

Show the photographs in thumbnail view on the laptop and initiate the conversation.

- Can you tell me a little bit about how you got started with this exercise?
    - What did you photograph first?
- How did you find taking the photographs?
- Out of all these photographs, which one would you say best captures your experience as a volunteer/staff member at Open Arms/ your sense of homelessness?
- Out of all these photographs, which one would you say best captures (your experience with) homelessness?
- Who in the photographs is (particularly) important to you (regarding your role at the Open Arms Day Centre and/or experiences with homelessness)?
- Do any of these photographs depict any particular challenges for you (either ones you have encountered at the centre and/or on the streets)?
    - If so, is this a challenge you encounter frequently?
    - If so, how do you usually deal with this challenge and how did you deal with it in this instance?
- Do any of these photographs depict any cultural aspects of the centre and/or your life (patterns/interactions, e.g. karakia)?
    - If so, which ones, and why do you think these are important?
- Do any of these photographs relate to (changes due to) the Covid-19 pandemic?

    - If so, how do you feel about these changes?
    - Do you think these changes have been an effective way of keeping people safe while continuing to look after our homeless whānau?
    - How do you think the whānau feels about these changes?
- Were there any people, moments, objects, or places *you would have liked to have photographed* but were not able to?
    - If so, why were you not able to?
    - Why would a photograph of this have been important to you?

Looking at individual photographs

Present each photograph to the participant in full screen mode, from oldest to newest, and initiate the conversation.

- What does this picture show?
- What does this picture mean to you?
- Can you tell me why you chose this image?
- Can you tell me about the situation in which you took the photograph?/What made you take the photograph in that particular moment?
- Did this photograph turn out like you expected?

Choosing photos for the photo book/exhibition

Explain plans regarding the photo book and/or exhibition. Explain that not every photo may be possible to be included but that I will do my best. Present the photos in thumbnail view again and ask:

- Which photos would you choose to be included in the photo book and/or exhibition?

Click on each chosen photo:

- Why would you choose this photo in particular?
- What title would you give this photo?

Closing the interview

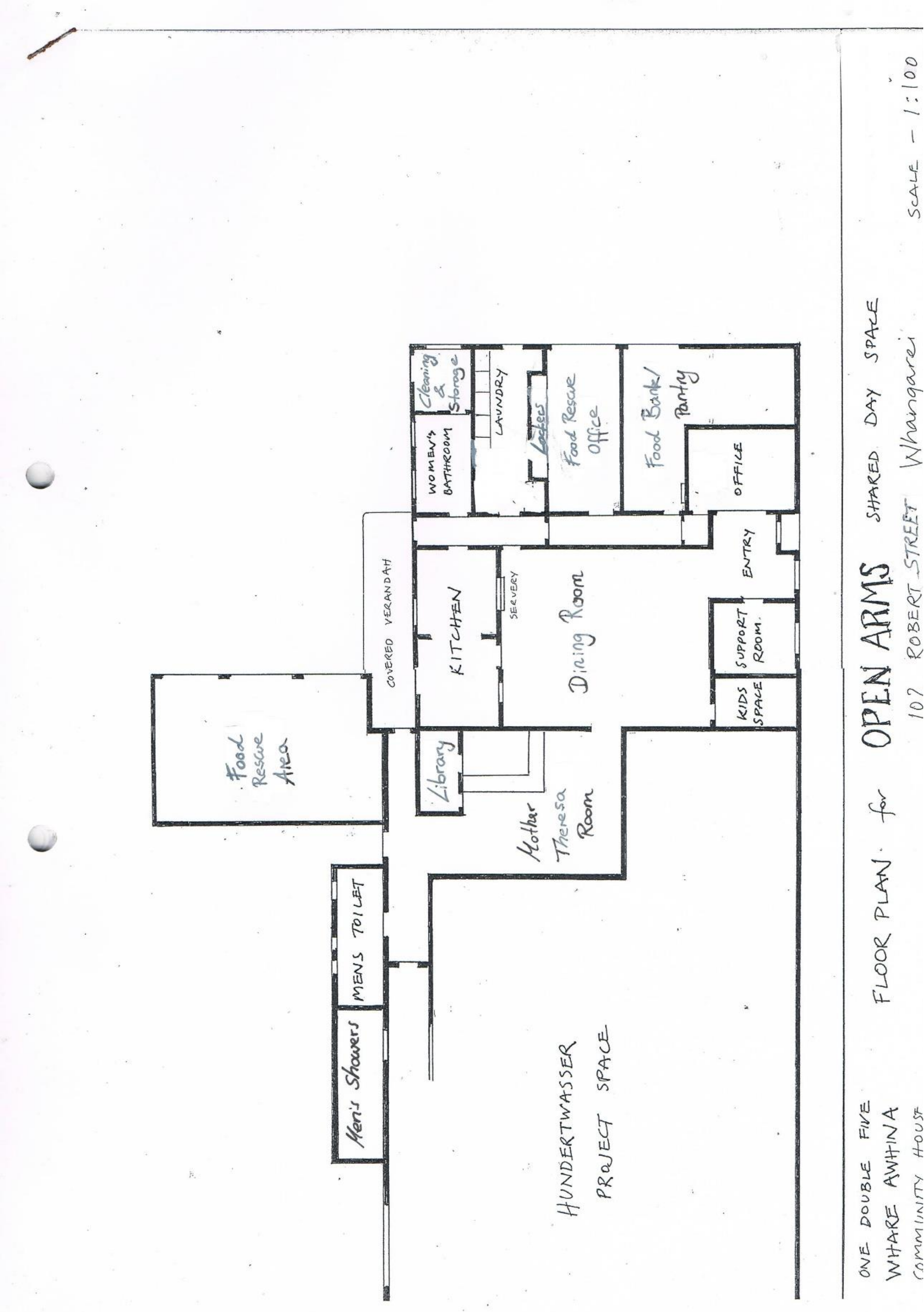
Go over the main points that we discussed and encourage further input from participants.

- So, we talked about … Is there anything I may have missed or is there anything else you would like to discuss?
- Do you have any questions about this interview or my research?

Thank the participant. Also remind the participant that they can contact either the Open Arms Day Centre or myself anytime if they any have queries or want an update about the research progress.

Appendix F

Floor Plan of the OADC (The original was altered to match the current use of the space)



Appendix G

Informed Consent Form

Being Homeless in a Small City

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I have read and I understand the Information Sheet. I have had the details of the study explained to me and any questions I had, have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I may ask further questions at any time. I have been given enough time to consider whether to participate in this study, and I understand participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time.

1. I agree to the interviews being sound recorded.
2. I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Declaration by Participant:

I [print full name] ____________________ hereby consent to take part in this study.

Signature: ________________________ Date: ________________

Appendix H

Name Disclosure Consent Form

Being Homeless in a Small City

NAME DISCLOSURE CONSENT FORM

I have read and I understand the Information Sheet. I have been given the option of using a pseudonym. I understand that by using my real name, or a nickname identifiable by others, my identity as a participant in this study may be revealed. I have been given enough time to consider whether to reveal my real name or an identifiable nickname, and I understand that this identity disclosure is voluntary and that I may change my name to a pseudonym at any time before completion of the study.

Declaration by Participant:

I [print full name] ____________________ hereby consent to disclose my real name, or use a nickname identifiable by others, for the purpose of this study.

Signature: ________________________ Date: ________________

Glossary (Moorfield, 2011)

Aroha	Love, affection, empathy, compassion
Hapū	Sub-tribe, kinship group, clan; pregnant, expectant, to be conceived in the womb
He aha te mea nui o te ao?	What is the most important thing in the world?
He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata!	It is people, it is people, it is people!
Hui	Meeting, social gathering, dialogue
Iwi	Tribe, extended kinship group
Kai	Food, meal
Kaiārahi	Guide, conductor, manager, leader, mentor
Kāinga kore	Homeless, lacking a home
Kaitiaki	Guardian, caregiver, custodian, keeper, minder, trustee, steward
Kaitiakitanga	Guardianship, stewartship
Kanohi ki te kanohi	Face-to-face, in person
Karakia	Prayer
Kaupapa	Agenda, topic, initiative, plan, purpose
Kāwanatanga	Governing body, authority
Koha	Gift, offering, contribution, donation
Kōrero	Story, narrative, discussion, discourse, speech, information, news
Koro	Grandfather, grandpa, elderly man

Mana	Justice, equity, prestige, authority, control, (spiritual) power, influence, status, charisma
Manaaki	To support, care for, give hospitality to, protect; show respect, generosity and care for others.
Manaakitanga	Hospitality, support, care and kindness towards others
Marae	Social or ceremonial communal venue for Māori cultural ways of being
Mātauranga	Knowledge, understanding
Mauri	Life force, vital essence, a material symbol of a life principle, source of emotions; the essential quality and vitality of a being or entity
Mauri ora	Wellbeing as dependent on the prosperity of all interdependent physical, spiritual, social, and psychological aspects of life, sustaining each other.
Moko(puna)	Grandchild
Ngā ara taiao	Connection with the natural environment
Pākehā	European/non-Māori
Parore	Type of fish (black bream), most common in shallow waters around the northeastern North Island.
Rangatahi	Young people, young generation
Rangatiratanga	Sovereignty, chieftainship, chiefly authority

Taiao	World, earth, natural world, environment, nature, country
Te ao Māori	The Māori world(view)
Tauiwi	Foreigner, European, non-Māori
Te Taitokerau	Northland
Tangata whenua	Indigenous people of the land/Māori
Te reo	Māori language
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	The Treaty of Waitangi
Tika	Purposefulness, truth, correctness, justice, fairness, righteousness
Tikanga	Protocol, custom, correct moral behaviour
Tūrangawaewae	A place to stand, a place of strength, a place of belonging, home
Wairuatanga	Māori spirituality, based on the interconnection between the supernatural realm, the natural environment, and ancestral ways of being.
Whānau	(Extended) family
Whanaungatanga	Social connections, sense of belonging
Whakamā	Shame, embarrassment, self-abasement, self-doubt; to be ashamed, shy, bashful, embarrassed; feeling inferior
Whakapapa	Genealogy, genealogical lineage, descent
Whakataukī	Proverb
Whakawhanaungatanga	The process of establishing and maintaining relationships

Whenua	Land(s), territory, placenta