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“You can’t leave your life to chance.” Transitioning from offending in  
emerging adults.

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

Master of Arts

in

Psychology

at Massey University, Albany, New Zealand.

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2017

### **Abstract**

There is currently limited very research about how emerging adult's transition out of crime. This study interviewed nine emerging adults who successfully transitioned out of crime by the age of 25. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and transcribed verbatim. The data was analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis. Participants described their experience of transition as a build-up of distress combined with reasons to stop, shifts in perceptions around offending and their identity, a challenging process that they felt fortunate to have accomplished, a noticeable improvement in their lives and ongoing temptation or thoughts about offending. The results suggested three main findings; that the process of desistance is similar in emerging adults and adult populations, that there could be a universal mechanism of change underlying all behaviour, and that control theories may better explain desistance behaviour than dominant models of behaviour change such as the transtheoretical model of change.

### **Acknowledgements**

First and foremost I want to say thank-you to all of the participants who agreed to be a part of this study. Thank-you for your bravery, and generosity of time, and willingness to help others who might follow in your footsteps.

To my supervisor Dr. Mei Wah Williams, thank you for all of your support, feedback and guidance throughout the project.

E te whaea Maria Mareroa, tēnā koe. Nāu i āwhinatia, nāu i manaakitia. Maria Mareroa, thank you. [For] Your support, your generosity. Your consultation on this project was much appreciated.

To my mother-in-law Jenny thank-you for the many hours you spent transcribing.

To Averil and Julia, and the numerous friends and family who have were so generous with their time to proofread my work and give me feedback about this project.

Thank you to my family who indirectly helped me with this project in practical support and motivation. You are my motivation for doing this work, to make the community a little safer for all of us.

He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata. What is the most important thing in this world? It is people, it is people, it is people.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application 16/26.

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