SECOND LIFE:

FROM KIWI SOLDIER TO CIVILIAN

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Thomas R. Smart

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Abstract

Experiences of sixteen former New Zealand (NZ) Army soldiers and officers were analysed to investigate the transition from NZ Army service to civilian life. All participants completed demographic questionnaires and participated in semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis was used to identify and interpret patterns in relation to the research question. Analysis indicated that transition from the NZ Army is an experience comprising a search for personal meaning, vocational and identity adaptations, and social support in various forms. Having joined the NZ Army to fulfil personal incentives, soldiers realise career aspirations through the application of their skills during overseas missions and other activities. The transition process, which begins with disidentification and a manifest desire to leave, includes a search for rewarding employment beyond the NZ Army. Former soldiers use education, as well as personal strengths gained during service, to achieve vocational goals. Social aspects of the transition experience include poor leadership and disappointing farewells, fuelling discontent toward the NZ Army. In contrast, camaraderie between soldiers is a memorable and valued element of the NZ Army career. Having left the NZ Army, individuals experience a loss of this bond, negotiating personal identities while drawing on social support to successfully manage transitional challenges.

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Introduction

"A man is always a teller of tales, he lives surrounded by his stories and the stories of others, he sees everything that happens to him through them; and he tries to live his own life as if he were telling a story." (Ronkainen, Ryba, & Nesti, 2013, p. 391).

The present study addresses the transition from military to civilian life. Service within the NZ Army, as within any military environment, exposes individuals to unique cultural and experiential factors. Upon enlisting in the NZ Army there is a period of transition, as the individual adapts to military life. Likewise, upon retirement from the NZ Army, former soldiers and officers will experience a period of transition away from military culture. This transitional experience is likely to include positive aspects; such as the fostering of individual strengths through military service which prove advantageous in civilian life. Simultaneously, the process of transition may prove difficult, as sense must be made of past experiences, and as an adaptation away from military life occurs. This project will investigate the lived experience of this transition, both positive and negative aspects, and describe how people experience transition from the NZ Army to civilian life. The findings of this project may assist in the design of interventions to support individual's movement into civilian life.

The issue of transitioning from military to civilian life is a topic of research and interventions in allied countries, such as Britain and the United States of America. However, there has been no research conducted, nor interventions designed, around the topic of transitioning from the NZ military to civilian life. This thesis project addresses this lack of knowledge in the New Zealand context.

All serving personnel have to leave the NZ Army at some stage in their lives. The Army career has been compared to those of athletes and dancers, in that retirement often occurs before the age of thirty five, and sometimes earlier (Roncaglia, 2006). Such an early retirement necessitates a second career for most who serve, as most do not serve long enough to be financially capable of full retirement. The value placed on youth by the military also increases the likelihood of retirement as soldiers age (Kelty,

Kleykamp, & Segal, 2010). These realities show that transition is a subject relevant to most who serve, as they will be required to establish civilian careers after their service.

Research has shown that transition can have wide ranging positive and negative effects. Mental and physical health, economic and social well-being, and social and familial domains can be effected (Spiro & Settersten, 2012). While most experience a productive transition, securing employment and adapting to civilian life (Herman & Yarwood, 2014), the unique nature of each transition must be acknowledged. Every former soldier will move through transition uniquely, adjusting to the return home differently (Adler, Zamorski, & Britt, 2011), and experiencing the pleasures and struggles of transition in distinctive ways.

Chapter One: Research Background

During our life-course, from birth to death, we find ourselves immersed in a variety of social worlds, environments, and vocational arenas. According to Elder (1986), the experiences and events of our daily lives motivate and inform our life decisions. This suggests that, when presented with an existential crossroads, our past experiences influence the life direction we choose. The decision to retire, or change career, is a decision which exerts great influence on our life story and can be one of the most important decisions made in life, especially if that work is personally meaningful (Osborne, 2012).

Military Service Effects on Life

International research has shown that military service can enhance, or threaten, individual development.

Gowan, Craft, and Zimmermann (2000) explained that service within the military determines one's lifestyle, and has far reaching effects on all aspects of life. The general nature of military service is individually transformational and deeply personal. The civilian who arrives at basic training on day-one must be transformed into an effective soldier. Roucek (1935) described this experience as a transplantation from a civilian world to a military world. To successfully move through this experience, civilian society and family are left behind, enabling one to embrace military discipline and culture as the new normality (Roucek, 1935). In this sense, the military life is seen as a greedy one, and a career choice which influences one's life more so than most civilian vocations (Alpass, Long, Chamberlain, & MacDonald, 1997). Military careers influence all life domains, including the nature of family and social circumstances. As Hatch et al. (2013) described, the far reaching effects of military service stem from the nature of military cohesion, requiring strong soldier identities in order to maintain the motivation of the force during overseas missions.

Living life as a military person, having transformed from civilian to soldier, can have a multitude of negative life impacts. Spiro and Settersten (2012) discussed several issues, including emotional and physical injury from training and overseas deployments. They

also mentioned that military life can have lasting implications for health, social role acquisition, and economic security. Jackson, Thoemmes, Jonkmann, Ludtke, and Trautwein (2012) seconded these findings, reporting that those who have not served in the military have more earning potential than those who have served. There may also be a delay in adult identity development, as observed in young Israeli adults following compulsory service in the Israeli Defence Force (Baum et al., 2013). This developmental delay was significant when compared with the that of young adults from other countries. Baum et al. (2013) associated this delay with the impersonal and group oriented nature of military service, claiming that military service restricts personal growth of youth who would otherwise be making future plans, and developing adult identities.

It is important to understand that military service can also be beneficial for the life-course. Successful transition may be more likely when one acknowledges and leverages these benefits. A wide range of positive consequences of military service are likely; leadership skills, educational opportunities, strong social connections, and a genuine concern for encouraging the next generation (Spiro & Settersten, 2012). Normative military values, such as goal orientation and perseverance, are likely to be internalised by individuals and inform their post-service behaviour (Hope, 2012). These remnants of service can provide an individual with the strengths and abilities to thrive in the civilian environment. The decision to join the military can be understood as protective for the life-course (Hatch et al., 2013).

Previous research presents a balanced argument between the benefits and harmful consequences of military service. This highlights the importance of maintaining an objective outlook towards the transition experience; an understanding that military service can provide both strengths and weaknesses. Each individual will experience the military in unique and personal ways, gaining strengths and vulnerabilities from an experience which has to capacity to change lives forever (Elder, Gimbel, & Ivie, 1991).

Transition

An understanding of transition, as an experiential phenomenon, is important to this research. As stated by Morin (2011), military service is a demanding occupation, but the

transition to civilian life also presents unique challenges. According to Ray and Heaslip (2011), the transition experience begins when a potential decision to leave the military is first considered. Osborne (2012) presented a similar perspective, stating that a growing interest in a major life decision represents the first stage of transition. This contemplative stage illustrates the importance of the decision to leave, as it will trigger changes in both role and social status (Hatch et al., 2013). Following initial contemplation, the decision to leave the military disengages one from the military world (Koenig, Maguen, Monroy, Mayott, & Seal, 2014), placing the retiree in an intrepid neutral space of endless possibilities (Hope, 2012). While occupying this neutral space one must choose a future direction, fostering new beginnings, adapting, and moving forward into civilian life (Hope, 2012).

Transition is seen as an adaptive process, from one life to another. Herman and Yarwood (2014) suggested that transition should not be seen as a single event, but as a process which occurs over time. A conceptual model of the transition process was presented by Robertson (2013). Robertson asserted that successful transition depends upon an individual's ability to use available resources to their advantage, such as social support, personal strengths, and coping mechanisms. The transition process is therefore an experiential and adaptive process, travelled through for the realisation of a desired lifestyle. Regardless of whether this is a positive or negative experience, all people leaving the military must endure it (Adler et al., 2011). In fact, transition is experienced by all people, from all walks of life. As Baillie and Danish (1992) explained, athletes undergo a similar process of role socialization as experienced by soldiers, and undergo transition when their careers end. Transition should be viewed as a common human experience, rather than an experience unique to the military population.

The goals and end points of transition are predominantly framed in terms of growth. Hale (2008) described transition as an opportunity for individual development. They emphasise the value of the transition process itself, in that it enables an individual to grow towards a new state following a decision to pursue change. The adjustment required to move from military to civilian life is said to provide developmental benefits. This goal of transitional growth was expressed by Vindevogel, Broekaert, and Derluyn (2013) in their study of former Ugandan child soldiers. A sense of belonging to their families, and to the civilian community, was an important aspect of growth for these

young men. Becoming the person they wanted to be, making their idealised self concept a reality, was also an important element of their post-military growth.

Cultural Transition

Researchers have indicated that those transitioning from the military often feel culturally different to civilians. According to Demers (2013) this sense of difference indicates that the creation of a military identity has relegated the civilian identity to the past. Demers (2013) asserted that, through military training and identification, individuals come to value military norms of duty, loyalty and collectivism. The military identity and cultural values are often in conflict with more individualistic civilian values. Seeing oneself as culturally different to civilians can isolate those who are transitioning from the military. Demers (2011) suggested that, having been trained to value status and group cohesion, retiring soldiers often feel misunderstood when such values are not reciprocated by civilians.

Ray and Heaslip (2011) suggested that transition from the military is a transition across cultures, and can be characterised as a "reverse culture shock" (Ray & Heaslip, 2011, p. 199). Those in transition need to develop cultural competence, relearning civilian cultural values and norms. Adapting to civilian beliefs and values can be a stressful and demanding developmental task (Eriksen, 2006). A compounding issue for this cultural challenge is that the transitioning soldier might not be the only person who has changed. Family members and friends are likely to have changed through time and experience (Schuetz, 1945). Those in transition and those welcoming them home need to bridge cultural divides in pursuit of a reconnection. According to Demers (2011), while struggling to reconnect with loved ones, people in transition can feel culturally isolated; torn between a desire to connect and a longing for the familiar military environment. Hale (2008) suggests that, to transition successfully, one must be willing to develop new meaning, and to accept the necessity of the cultural shift.

Identity in Transition

A wide range of research has discussed identity within the context of the transition experience. Studies investigating transition have positioned identity as the second major

component alongside the cultural dimension. McAdams (1995) described identity as one's inner story consisting of past, present and future, providing an individual with meaning and purpose. Hope (2012) refers to identity as the organising tool for the personality, as a sense of self which is influenced by connections, experiences and roles within the social world. They stated that identity is a largely unconscious sense of who one is internally and in relation to society. In line with this description, Brewin, Garnett, and Andrews (2011) described identity as a collation of beliefs about oneself and the outside world which provide a sense of self-definition. Identity therefore allows meaning to be made about existence through personal selfhood, and about the outside world through social identity (Cast & Burke, 2002). Identity allows people to position themselves within society, to feel that they fit within a specific sector of their external world. Cook-Sather (2006) suggested that this is the role of identity, enabling us to feel a sense of belonging within social context. Cook-Sather (2006) explained the self as a more personal sense of one's attributes and beliefs which constructs identities to suit current external environments. In this sense, self and identity cooperate to provide a coherent understanding of oneself, both introspectively and in relation to one's environment.

Studies investigating transition experiences have often used identity as a conceptual framework. A number of researchers see identity as a central component to the adaptive journey of transition. Hope (2012) suggested that a life transition, such as that from military to civilian life, can be equated to a transition of self. This acknowledges the requirement for an adaptation and redefinition of one's sense of self (Brunger, Serrato, & Ogden, 2013). In the case of the current study this requires moving from self as soldier to self as civilian. Brunger et al. (2013) described such a shift as challenging, entailing a struggle to maintain the highly valued army identity, while developing the civilian identity necessary for the new environment. This struggle is referred to as the liminality stage of transition. According to Demers (2011) liminality is an important stage for the development of a civilian identity following military service. They explained that the individual is moving between two worlds, and liminality provides a bridge to their new self. Demers (2011) emphasized that veterans are in charge of this liminality stage, and are free to construct a suitable identity, whether this is a dual military-civilian identity or another variation. Whatever design their new identity takes, Hope (2012) asserted that the individual must become comfortable with the adopted

identity, it's related values, social roles, and behaviours. They stressed that identity adaptation, whether complete or partial, is the key to transition, and requires a willingness to renew oneself and accept identities which are relevant to the civilian environment. The undesirable alternative is to live with a military identity which is irrelevant to the civilian social world.

Brunger et al. (2013) used Identity Process Theory (IPT) to explain identity adaptation in the context of military transition. IPT asserts that identity results from an interaction between consciousness, memory, characteristics of the person as an organism, and structures of society. IPT proposes a process by which identity is restructured depending on how important a new identity element is to one's self esteem, self efficacy, and positive distinctiveness. IPT explains that possible identities, such as a new civilian identity, must be valued before being adopted by an individual. If the new civilian identity is to be valued, Vindevogel et al. (2013) suggests that the military identity should be abandoned to make way for the new post-military identity. Vindevogel et al. (2013) implied that, in order to adapt to civilian life, the military identity should be subordinated, as associated military values may conflict with those of a civilian identity.

Transition researchers have also discussed the implications of identity complexity. For example, Lavallee and Robinson (2007) explained that athletes are prone to developing limited self concepts, as those who commit totally to sport, often from a young age, miss the opportunity to develop other identities. Individuals with identities based on one role are likely to experience greater loss upon role exit, and face the challenge of creating replacement identities. Stier (2007) explained that high commitment roles have a strong influence on a person's identity. These authors describe this as a "role-person merger" (Stier, 2007, p. 101), as the person becomes reliant on their role for self esteem. In this case an individual will find it hard to adapt their identity, as they do not know themselves beyond the cherished role. Lally (2007) indicated that alternate identities are sacrificed when such high identity commitment occurs. They stated that development of a restricted identity may be beneficial to a high commitment career, enabling high work achievement. However, following the loss of an identity-defining role, Lally (2007) suggests that one is confronted by a void, a confused sense of self. Osborne (2012) concurred with this perspective, and suggested that a diverse identity should be fostered, regardless of the commitment demanded by a work role. They found that such diversity

correlates with satisfaction with one's self concept, which in turn supports high self esteem. In the absence of alternate identities, the loss of an important work identity can be severely traumatic to an individual (Osborne, 2012). The ideal approach, according to Jones (2013), is to construct a varied identity which incorporates past and present identities. Individuals who integrated various identities, such as civilian, student, and military veteran, were better able to adapt from military to civilian environments.

Challenging Transitions

Various studies have shown that transition is often a demanding and taxing experience, requiring significant personal coping resources. A study of Canadian Forces in 2010 found that 37.6% of army veteran participants felt their transition to civilian life was unsuccessful (Black & Papile, 2010). Baillie and Danish (1992) observed that transition may be experienced as brief and uneventful, or as acutely distressing and difficult.

Stressors related to transition have been well documented by previous researchers. Baum et al. (2013) asserted that psychosocial behaviours, such as the ability to interact with civilians, can be affected. They also suggested that military veterans are more likely to commit suicide than civilians. Athletic transition research sheds some light on the likely experiences of retiring soldiers. In terms of precise stressors, Grove, Lavallee, and Gordon (1997) explained that athletes in transition are challenged by identity problems, exhausted coping resources, and the need to develop future plans. Baillie and Danish (1992) added that when athletes retire, they face a loss of status and income, and are required to adjust to new social roles within their families. The adaptation away from the sporting role, and into new social roles, is said to be a major stressor. According to Baillie and Danish (1992), when an athlete's self esteem is contingent on their athletic role, role loss and pressure to adapt can provoke anxiety. The athlete, having sacrificed other aspects of life to pursue sporting success, may feel they are at square one and starting adult life over again. Research shows that military veterans are likely to experience transition in similar ways. Brewin et al. (2011) pointed out that some veterans characterise transition as a period of personal loss. This loss is related to declining self worth and apathy towards the future. As Brunger et al. (2013) suggested, this sense of loss may also be related to the loss of the military identity which provided a foundation for self esteem. Having lost this identity, the environment in which it is

relevant, and those comrades who shared it, this loss of belonging and identity can lead to a demanding transition (Brunger et al., 2013). A challenging transition may include chronic health problems, social difficulties, and abuse of substances and alcohol (Black & Papile, 2010). Relationships may suffer, and veterans are more likely to experience divorce during transition (Black & Papile, 2010). Baum et al. (2013) cautioned that such social unrest can compromise the wellbeing of those in transition as well as those close to them.

Managing the stressors of a challenging transition can be demanding. Previous research shows that coping behaviours, positive and negative, make an important contribution to transition outcomes. According to Baillie and Danish (1992), coping is a reaction to any change or traumatic event which causes stress. The style of coping which a person adopts can influence long term outcomes. Positive coping strategies, such as goal setting, physical exercise, and keeping occupied, can promote positive adjustment (Grove et al., 1997). However, research shows that negative coping styles are commonly adopted by former soldiers during transition. Such coping styles can include the use of emotional numbness, reduced communication, and denial (Ray & Heaslip, 2011). Black and Papile (2010) showed that, in an attempt to numb painful emotions, such coping styles are often coupled with alcohol and substance use. Adler et al. (2011) stated that, when such coping styles are adopted, a supportive social network can encourage positive coping strategies.

Adapting and Thriving

While various researchers report negative coping styles in transition, there is also evidence of positive coping and growth. According to Iverson et al. (2005) most veterans eventually experience growth during their transition. It is the minority, and often those with post-service mental illness, who are socially excluded and vulnerable following military service. Iverson et al. (2005) explained that military service provides most people with enhanced opportunities for education and employment.

In terms of successful transition, Baillie and Danish (1992) asserted that transition usually follows a grief cycle; "shock, denial, anger, depression, understanding, and acceptance" (Baillie & Danish, 1992, p. 90). Following this cycle, a period of personal

growth is generally expected. This period of growth can be influenced by a number of factors. According to Osborne (2012), people must remain engaged in the activities of life, rather than withdraw, in order to adjust and grow through transition. Osborne (2012) also asserted that those who voluntarily retire, retaining a sense of control, are better off than those whose employment is terminated. The cognitive appraisals people make of their military service are also related to overall outcomes. Those who rate their time in the military positively are more likely to attain qualifications, gain employment, and achieve higher incomes. Other effective coping strategies can include securing work that provides satisfaction, social support from spouse and family, and maintaining stable mental health (Black & Papile, 2010).

Various researchers have emphasised the gradual, developmental nature of positive adaptation during transition. This is a gradual process, in which an individual moves from one career or educational world to another (Baillie & Danish, 1992). The gradual and developmental nature of transition implies a need for patience, as goals and behaviours adapt over time (Martin, Fogarty, & Albion, 2014). This recognizes the power of time, and assumes a taken for granted human ability to adapt to new environments (Eriksen, 2006). One is required to embrace the unknown courageously, with faith in their human ability to adapt and grow away from the military and into the civilian world. As Eriksen (2006) claimed, as time passes in transition, one's ability to create meaning increases. This encourages the healing and tolerance required to embrace the nuances of civilian culture.

The desire to gain alternative employment is often at the core of a decision to leave the military. Studies investigating transition have shown the importance of the post military career path. Black and Papile (2010) observed that Canadian military veterans viewed finding satisfying employment as the most important outcome of their transition. According to Eriksen (2006) work is an important aspect of life which fulfils a number of individual needs. These needs include promotion, confidence, mastery, work identity, and career based life goals. Those in transition often face obstacles when seeking satisfaction of these needs. Gade, Lakhani, and Kimmel (1991) found that Vietnam veterans were delayed in both educational and career advancement. This increased the challenge of post military life, and contributed to high unemployment rates and reduced income levels among Vietnam veterans. Smith (1999) maintained this view, suggesting

that those in transition, once experts in a career field, can find themselves as beginners in a new occupation. Roncaglia (2006), in their study of retiring ballet dancers, raised valuable points in regards to modern careers. Similar to the careers of athletes and soldiers, dancers often retire early and face many more years of employment before retirement. Roncaglia (2006) claimed that multiple career transitions are to be expected as the norm in the modern age. Roncaglia suggested that transition is a skill to be mastered by all, a requirement for navigation in the modern employment world. It is through a mastery of transition that individuals can thrive in today's fluid career environment.

Previous research portrays transition as an adaptation to the civilian world. Culture and identity are presented as primary components of the transition experience. The literature suggests that transition can be a challenging process, while also presenting an opportunity for growth and prosperity. Taking previous research into consideration, this study aims to investigate the lived experience of transitioning from life as a uniformed member of the NZ Army to life as a civilian, following voluntary resignation.

Chapter Two: Methodology

Sixteen semi-structured interviews of ex-NZ Army personnel were conducted and analysed with thematic analysis to explore the experience of transitioning from the NZ Army to civilian life. Service in the NZ Army was operationally defined as uniformed rather than civilian employment, full time or regular force rather than part time or territorial force (TF), in any corps or unit, and in the role of soldier or officer. Transition was operationally defined as beginning when an individual starts to consider a voluntary decision to leave the NZ Army. The ending of transition is subjective, and occurs when the person feels they have successfully transitioned from the NZ Army to their new environment.

Participants

Participant Selection Strategy

The criteria for participant selection were developed to ensure this broad perspective, rather than restricting participation to specific branches of the NZ Army. Broad sampling aimed to meet the operationalisation of NZ Army, as described above, to gather rich data to accurately answer the research question.

Participants were required to have experienced or be in the process of transitioning from the NZ Army. They also had to have voluntarily left any corps of the regular force of the NZ Army. Those who were otherwise discharged, such as for medical or disciplinary reasons, were not selected. This exclusion was made to eliminate anticipated differences between voluntary and involuntary retirement.

During the process of leaving the NZ Army, retiring soldiers can choose to either transfer to the territorial force of the NZ Army or to leave the military entirely. Participants were therefore included irrespective of continued service with the territorial force of the NZ Army. However, current members of the Territorial 3/6 Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (3/6RNZIR, Auckland) were excluded. At the time of the interviews the researcher was serving at 3/6RNZIR in the rank of Captain, and

interviewing members of this unit may have caused a conflict of interest or coercion effect.

In order to promote richness of data, other individual differences common within the NZ Army were not controlled for when selecting participants. Specifically, participants were sought who were male or female, had served at any time in the past, regardless of whether they saw service during overseas operations. Participants were also sought regardless of their service as a commissioned officer, the managerial stream within the military, or as a soldier or non-commissioned officer. These choices were made in light of previous research. MacLean and Elder (2007) explained that veteran officers of World War Two were favoured over veteran soldiers by post-war employers. Morin (2011) found a similar benefit for ex-officers, showing that service as a commissioned officer correlated with a smoother transition home. The inclusion of such individual differences amongst participants ensured a broad range of ex-NZ Army participants were recruited. Having people who served in different roles within the NZ Army, and left at different times over the past few decades, shows that transitioning is an experience not unique to one sub-group of the NZ Army, and may be universal to all generations. The inclusion of a broad sample provided the opportunity to capture varied service and transitional experiences, and to highlight the environmental factors that impact on transition, encouraging enrichment of the data gathered.

While richness of data was sought through a broad sample, this qualitative research did not seek to make generalisations to the NZ Army population, and a representative sample was not sought. Sandelowski (1995) explained that participants in such qualitative research are selected based on the information they can contribute to answer the research question, rather than to generalise to a population.

The reader should note that 'soldier' is also used throughout this thesis as a generic term to include both officers and soldiers. Appendix A specifies which participants served within the officer and soldier ranks, as well as the highest rank they attained.

Participant Recruitment

Various technology based methods were used to inform and recruit participants through a snowballing method. Having recently served in the NZ Army the researcher's social network provided a useful participant source. In August 2014 a group message was delivered via Facebook to 87 contacts who had previously served, or were continuing to serve, in the NZ Army. Potential participants were not approached individually, in an effort to avoid coercion. This group message described the research aim, ethical parameters, and the importance of both informed consent and voluntary participation. A digital copy of the Massey University Research Information Sheet (Appendix B) was also attached. The author's civilian email address was provided to enable respondents to reply anonymously. A private email was also sent to the National Chief Executive Officer of the Returned and Services Association (RSA) informing him of the research outline, and requesting his voluntary assistance to gather participants. Consequently, a 'Tweet' was posted on the RSA Twitter page (https://twitter.com/RSA_National) including a brief summary of the project and the researcher's email address.

Potential participants voluntarily emailed the researcher with expressions of interest. These volunteers were questioned in reference to the participation criteria explained previously. Volunteers who did not meet these requirements were thanked for their interest, while those who satisfied the criteria were confirmed as participants via email or phone.

Sample size is an important consideration when conducting qualitative research. The sample should be of an appropriate size to allow for detailed analysis of each interview, and to enable the gathering of rich data relevant to the research question (Sandelowski, 1995). According to Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) 12-20 participants are generally required to achieve these aims during qualitative research. The decision to cease interviewing participants in this research was based on the concept of theoretical saturation. Saturation occurs when no new data categories are being found during interviews and previously discovered topics are being repeated (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). When saturation is reached, the researcher should feel satisfied that data gathered is sufficient to conduct the intended thematic analysis, and that there are no further substantial elements of the experience to unveil (Sandelowski, 1995). This point of saturation was reached after 16 interviews were conducted, with seven ex-

officers and nine ex-soldiers, and no further participants were recruited or interviewed. See Appendix A for participant demographic data.

Cultural Considerations

Culture was considered as an important component of this research. Maori culture is an important research factor as Maori represent a significant proportion of NZ Army soldiers. The implications of this research for the Maori community, as well as for Pakeha and other cultures, were considered during the project. The principles of participation, protection and partnership ensure that Maori are active in research design, and individual and collective rights and values are protected and respected (Hudson & Russell, 2009).

To ensure a bicultural approach within this research, a consultation occurred between the researcher and Mr Nephi Skipwith, the Massey University School of Psychology Kaumatua, on 21 August 2014 at Albany. This consultation involved discussion of the influence of culture on meaning making, and the importance of Te Whare Tapa Wha in Maori life and during transition. Maori people experience their world through culturally unique values and identities (Reid, 2011). Maori values, experiences and beliefs can influence the transition experience in unique ways. According to Pitama et al. (2007), Te Whare Tapa Wha provides a framework for understanding Maori world views. It includes four pillars of holistic health, which are likened to the four walls of the meeting house or Whare; physical health, spiritual health, family health and mental health. This holistic perspective, which places a high value on collectivism and relationships, is identified by Reid (2011) as pivotal to Maori wellbeing. Family and relationships are also important to Maori wellbeing, as illustrated by the Meihana Model, a clinical assessment tool for Maori clients which recognises the importance of family in Maori mental health (Pitama et al., 2007). Frameworks such as Te Whare Tapa Wha and the Meihana Model highlight a unique Maori world view which can influence how they experience life and transition.

This research was not specifically focused on Maori ex-service persons, but rather on retired members of the NZ Army. Regardless of the participants' ethnicities, it is important to understand that the NZ Army is a culturally inclusive organisation, uniting

all members under common values. The NZ Army holds Maori culture at the heart of it's identity, and carries the Maori tribal name of Ngati Tumatauenga; tribe of the god of war. Maori culture forms an influential part of an individual's NZ Army career, and those who serve are often exposed to Maori cultural practices such as haka and marae ceremonies. Therefore, Maori culture and it's collectivist values are likely to be personally relevant to both Maori and non-Maori soldiers during their transition from the NZ Army.

Qualitative Approach

The paradigm of research determines the philosophical outlook; epistemology or what is considered as knowledge, ontology or what counts as reality, and the forms of logic used to develop insights and findings. In seeking to understand the experience of transition, this research follows a post-positivistic tradition which seeks to reveal meanings and feelings related to specific experiences. This research aims to shed light on the explanations people have for their experience of transition. Such an approach places people as central to the research, as we seek to understand how and why they behave as they do through their experiences (McGregor & Murnane, 2010).

Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews with sixteen ex-NZ Army personnel, who had served between 1956 and 2014, were conducted and analysed to answer the research question. One participant was Maori and female, while fifteen participants were New Zealand European and male. Each interview was conducted at a time and location selected by the participant. Eleven interviews were held in person; four at participants' homes and seven at their workplaces. Five interviews were completed via Skype or phone to participants' homes due to research funding and geographical limitations. Phone interviews were initiated by the researcher to ensure participants incurred no calling charges. Interview duration was dictated by the participants' answers and discussions, ranging from 31 minutes to 1 hour and 51 minutes, with an average interview time of 1 hour and 14 minutes.

When interviewing in person, each participant was phoned the day prior to confirm the location and time. Upon arrival rapport was established through introductions, before commencing the interview process. Printed copies of the Massey University Research Information Sheet (Appendix B), Free Support Agencies List (Appendix F), Participant Consent Form (Appendix C) and the Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix D) were provided. The overall aim of the research was discussed, ensuring the participant was cognisant of this. Each participant then completed the Demographic Questionnaire, followed by a discussion about informed consent. The only possible discomfort during participation was in answering questions which the participant was sensitive to. For example, discussion of any trauma suffered in the NZ Army, or relationship problems after leaving the NZ Army, may have caused some distress. Participants retained the right to refuse to answer questions or make comment if they were not comfortable. If participants became upset in this process, which did not occur, the interview would be stopped and resume when the participant was comfortable. Participants were also made aware that they had the right to ask for the voice recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview, to withdraw from the study up to fifteen days after the interview, to ask any questions about the study at any time during participation, and to be given access to a summary of the project findings when it was concluded. Participants then signed the Participant Consent Form. Interviews conducted using Skype or phone were consented and questionnaires completed verbally, and all documents were provided digitally via email. All information provided by the participants remained confidential to the researcher and project supervisors. Data gathered from each participant was allocated a pseudonym during analysis.

All semi-structured interviews were conducted and recorded using a dictaphone. The headings outlined in the Semi-Structured Interview Schedule (Appendix E) were used to guide the interview. However, questions were led by the participant responses, enabling rich data gathering through a process of guided discovery. At the conclusion of each interview the researcher thanked the participant for their participation. In recognition of their time, participants who were interviewed in person were offered a Koha (gift) in the form of a $20 Motor Trade Association (MTA) Voucher. Two participants refused to accept the Koha out of courtesy, while nine participants were happy to receive the Koha. Participants who were interviewed on Skype or phone were thanked for their contribution to the research.

Despite having not approached individuals directly during recruitment, 11 of the 16 participants were known as previous work acquaintances to the researcher. This was anticipated due to the researcher's recent service in the NZ Army and the small size of the organization. This familiarity proved to be a beneficial factor when interviewing, as the establishment of rapport was amplified by common experience and understanding. However, the researcher was cautious that ex-soldier participants may be influenced by a coercion effect when answering questions; conforming to questions rather than answering objectively. It was identified that this behaviour could be triggered if the researcher identified as an Officer, which in turn may cause ex-soldier participants to perceive an authority relationship. In order to mitigate this the researcher maintained a casual approach throughout all phases of the research. Efforts were made to avoid conversations about the researcher's previous status, as well as maintaining a first name basis to establish rapport as civilians outside of the military context. This approach was employed throughout all interviews, and was evidenced as effective by the rich, objective nature of the data gathered. Additionally, the interview process proved intrinsically valuable to some of the participants, who mentioned that it was therapeutic to discuss their transition experiences.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic Analysis enables qualitative data to be analysed and understood. This method allows patterns to be seen, perceived, encoded, and interpreted through a logical analytical process (Boyatzis, 1998). By searching across all interview transcripts, collectively known as the data set, patterns are able to be identified and analysed. Meaning can then be perceived and reported through an organised set of clustered themes, providing a detailed report about the experience in question, such as that of military transition (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The value of thematic analysis is vested in it's ability to illuminate the experiences and perspectives of personal stories which may have otherwise remained untold (Boyatzis, 1998). Each individual seeks to create a meaningful storyline for their past experiences, and thematic analysis enables this meaning to be revealed and reported as themes (Demers, 2011).

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), the thematic analysis process begins when patterns start to be perceived within the data. Patterns may include repeated meaning making related to the experience, or issues which appear to be common among various participants. Perception of patterns often commences during data collection, as the researcher becomes familiar with the interview content. All perceived patterns should be noted, as they represent the early stages of coding and theme development. In order to enhance one's ability to see patterns, the researcher should become deeply immersed in the interview transcripts. Braun and Clarke (2006) identified two ways to achieve this; through repetitive reading of the transcripts, and through transcription itself. Transcription, although time consuming, is a vital part of data familiarisation and is considered as an analytic stage. During transcription, a verbatim transcript of each interview is written, and the researcher gains a thorough understanding of the meanings, issues, and possible codes and themes within the data. Immersion in the data, through reading and transcription, allows a researcher to understand and engage with the experiences which the participants have conveyed (Polit & Beck, 2010). Gaining an understanding of each participant's account is important at this stage, before data is segmented into codes and the extracts of various participants are clustered under themes. The researcher must have a clear understanding of the broad story of each participant, through immersion in the data, as context can be lost in the upcoming coding and theme development stages (Ayres, Kavanaugh, & Knafl, 2003).

Following transcription and immersion within the interview extracts, a deliberate stage of coding occurs. For the purpose of this research, a data-driven or inductive approach was taken to coding of data. This approach involves interpreting the meaning within the information contained in interview transcripts (Boyatzis, 1998). Codes are developed based on what appears in the data, rather than basing them on preconceived theoretical parameters. However, the reflexive position of the researcher still influences what they perceive as meaningful and choose to code. Despite this unavoidable subjectivity of the coding process, best efforts should be made to develop diverse codes and maintain an objective perspective while coding the transcripts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). When coding is performed in such a manner it allows codes to convey the qualitative depth of the participants' experiences (Boyatzis, 1998). The practical process of coding begins with those notes taken during the data immersion stage. The coding process involves reading each interview transcript, and applying unique codes to each point of interest as

it appears. Codes are made with the phenomena in mind, in this case the experience of transition. Extracts are coded when the researcher perceives content as meaningful towards explaining an aspect of the transition experience. These codes represent potential themes, and those extracts which are coded similarly are grouped together to form meaningful groups.

Having applied codes to extracts across all interview transcripts, and clustered coded extracts together, theme development begins. Themes are products of how we think about and make sense of the data gathered, and they collectively provide a way of understanding the overall research findings (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes enable codes to be clustered into organised groups, and each theme represents a unique aspect of meaning related to the research topic (Ayres et al., 2003). Where required, an overall theme can be developed to include various related subthemes. The relationships between codes, themes and subthemes are considered, in order to weave them into themes in a coherent manner. The initial theme development ends when all data extracts are collated under possible themes and subthemes.

The thematic analysis process began when the interviews were conducted. Interviewing the participants provided a first-hand familiarisation with the data. Transcripts were then transcribed, and any initial ideas for codes were noted during this process. During transcription the data was read and re-read to ensure accuracy. This also enabled immersion and familiarity with the data.

Initial codes were generated by repeatedly reading transcripts and labelling extracts according to ideas and issues raised. All coded extracts were collated together, retaining enough text within each extract to preserve context for the reader.

Themes were developed by searching across initial codes for patterns and combining coded extracts into overarching groups or themes. At this stage there were twenty possible themes, with no subthemes identified.

The twenty themes were then reviewed and refined. Firstly, all coded extracts were reviewed to consider whether they suited their current theme, and those which resonated with other themes were moved. Extracts which did not contribute to the themes were

discarded. Secondly, the themes themselves were reviewed to check that each was unique, and that each was adequately supported by data. Some themes which related to the same issues in transition were merged, becoming one theme or a theme containing subthemes. Each theme was reviewed once more, and it's extracts ordered in a way which best conveyed the key messages. Themes and subthemes were named to best represent their topics. Following the theme review, the final twelve themes and related subthemes remained.

The twelve themes were clustered into three sections; Self and Role, Self and Others, and Self and Self. Themes related to work, social and personal aspects of transition were placed in each of these sections accordingly. The three sections were ordered as above to allow an understanding of transition in relation to career, social, and finally the elements of identity and behaviour. Within these three sections, the themes were arranged to correlate with the chronology of the transition experience, and to allow knowledge gained from each theme to compliment following themes. Clustering of themes intended to promote a clear and accurate understanding of the experience of transitioning from the NZ Army.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is an important aspect of qualitative research. Pillow (2003) described reflexivity as self awareness on the researcher's behalf, and as a comprehension of the relationships between researcher, participants, and the data gathered. According to Finlay (2002), reflexivity is a deliberate and conscious recognition of oneself as a researcher and the active role of the researcher in analysis of the data.

Employing reflexivity allows researchers to transparently explain their position in relation to the research. Their unique background and identity is made clear, and how these elements may influence the research process and findings (Pillow, 2003). Such reflexive clarity enhances trustworthiness of qualitative studies, as readers are made aware of the subjective factors which influence the analysis and findings. The researcher is positioned as central to the study.

Reflexivity is consciously performed throughout the entire research process. According to Etherington (2004), reflexivity requires a constant awareness of personal factors which influence how we engage with participants and data, and how we present our findings.

I served in the NZ Army; in The First Battalion Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (1RNZIR). I joined the NZ Army in 2003, at 17 years of age, and served in the Regular Force until 2013, retiring at the rank of Captain. During this time I fulfilled the roles of Platoon Commander and Company 2IC at Whiskey Company 1RNZIR, Patrol Commander and Liaison Officer during Operation CRIB 15 in Afghanistan, and Plans Officer within the NZ Contingent of the Multinational Force and Observers in Sinai, Egypt. I continue to serve within 3/6 Battalion of the Territorial Force NZ Army in Auckland. I chose this project due to my previous experience, having served with and transitioned from the NZ Army. This experience showed me that there are many contrasts between life in the military and life in the civilian world. Having experienced the transition from military to civilian life I understand that this experience can be rewarding and challenging.

The building of rapport and trust with participants was enhanced by my military background. I was able to relate to the experiences of participants, which put them at ease and supported the gathering of rich data. My relatability to the experiences of participants provided a key strength during this research. I was able to connect with participants' stories and understand their accounts, which often required a tacit understanding of military context and language. My preunderstanding of military service and transition enabled me to comprehend the experiences recalled by participants during interviews. My background also enabled an understanding of previous transition literature when theorizing my findings. My knowledge of military service and transition also enhanced my perception of themes during the thematic analysis process. Having served on overseas operations as an NZ Army officer, I was able to understand and interpret the participants' experiences.

Social Cognitive Theory provided the theoretical perspective for this research project. Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory posits that humans are able to agentically regulate their lives and adaptation to changes therein (Bandura, 2002). Agency describes

the ability to develop plans for the future, and implement them to influence the life-course. By taking an agentive approach, humans are capable of controlling the outcomes of their lives, rather than being passive onlookers of circumstances (Bandura, 2006). Those who retire from the NZ Army are required to adapt and renew themselves in the face of changing environments. The decision to leave the NZ Army is itself an act of agency and self determination. Following this decision, former soldiers plan and perform their desired goals, shaping their post-NZ Army life paths.

Chapter Three: Findings

The findings of the thematic analysis are presented below. Twelve themes, incorporating ten subthemes, are organised within three sections as follows; Self and Role, Self and Others, and Self and Self. These section headings represent the interaction between the retiring soldier and career, social and personal elements.

Self and Role includes four themes related to the NZ Army career, the decision process around leaving, and the pursuit of a rewarding second career.

Self and Others includes five themes related to social interactions which occurred during and following service. These include relationships with people such as NZ Army leaders and comrades, spouses, civilian friends and family, and civilian colleagues and employers.

Self and Self includes three themes related to identity adaptation during transition, and behaviours conditioned during service. The themes within this section reveal a reconsideration of one's personal and social identities during the transition process.

Section One: Self and Role

Self and Role includes the four themes of Reasons to Join, Career Highlights, Disidentification, and Career, Education, and Experience.

Theme One: Reasons to Join

Reasons to join the NZ Army was a strong theme that was identified during the thematic analysis. This theme is about the reasons participants gave for their initial decision to join the NZ Army and included meeting individual needs, such as personal satisfaction and educational advancement, as well as patriotic service.

Despite the decision to join occurring prior to their transition, this theme provides context to understand the participants' journeys, and enables a holistic understanding of transition experiences. By joining the military the participants have triggered

developments related to their social selves (Matschke & Sassenberg, 2012). According to Demers (2011), a decision to join the military foreshadows militarization; a socialization into military world views and identities. It is with this initial decision that they take their first step into the military institution.

The participants' journeys began with the decision to move from a civilian identity to a soldier identity. William, a 35 year old former Captain in the Royal New Zealand Artillery, expressed his desires for variety, the outdoors, and a challenge

> *...There was something about it that interested me, that always interested me. Like as a kid I wasn't allowed to play with guns or anything like that but there's photos of me wearing army gear as a kid...I know I love a challenge. I don't like being bored...I like to be indoors, outdoors, a bit of variety in your day, which is why I quite like teaching now, 'cause I'm not doing the same thing every day. Different lessons, different times, it's all students. So I like that variety that you can get, and I'm guessing that's what appealed to me, and I hate being told what to do so I was never going to be a soldier...They just saw that I was at university and they go "Oh we reckon you'd be a good officer"...*

When presented with an opportunity to assume a new role, individuals will assess whether that role is compatible with their self concept; whether they can see themselves in the role (Kleine, Kleine, & Brunswick, 2009). Motivations to join new groups can include push factors, such as to escape a negative environment, or pull factors based around positive opportunities (Matschke & Sassenberg, 2012). Simon, a 66 year old former Warrant Officer in the Royal New Zealand Dental Corp, talked about the opportunity to be trained as a dental mechanic

> *Always wanted to...because I was sixteen and a half, and my parents would not sign the paper, I had to learn a trade...I did Art at school, I did sculpture, I did a lot of clay work, and one of the teachers said "If you do something you should do something with your hands"...I said to him "What about this dental mechanic?" as it was in those days...Because at that stage the Army was really the only place you could learn it properly anyway, because there was no formal*

> *training, yet the Army had a proper formal training of four stars and you went*
> *through that...*

Simon's background in art and sculpture was well suited to the opportunity of dentistry training. Kleine et al. (2009) discussed that a person's vision of who they want to be, their ideal self, influences their behaviours in relation to their desired identity. In this case, training in dentistry likely appealed to Simon's idealised self image, based upon his interest in the arts and the transferability of his sculptural skills to dentistry.

Alan, a 33 year old former Captain in the Royal New Zealand Engineers, also saw an opportunity to pursue his field of interest as an NZ Army engineer, as well as to serve his country

> *...Engineers sounded good fun...I studied chemical engineering, didn't want to*
> *get into that field, wanted to do more of a civil type role and having that*
> *construction engineer option was good, within the Army. And then you have*
> *your travel overseas, bit of patriotism coming in...I know it sounds cheesy but*
> *you know you wouldn't stay in there for an extended period of time if you didn't*
> *want to serve your country I guess...*

Alan's desire to serve highlights a positive view of military service. This republican perception of service places self sacrifice for society in high esteem. Individuals who maintain such beliefs often manifest a desire to contribute to the "common good" (Sasson-Levy, 2002, p. 359). For those who value military service, joining the NZ Army provides positive feedback and a sense of pride. When such personal benefits are anticipated from military service the decision to enlist becomes more likely (Kleine et al., 2009).

Tony, a 34 year old former Corporal in the Royal New Zealand Engineers, talked about the influence his family service history had on his decision

> *...I left half way through 7th form. I enjoyed school but I was pretty*
> *disengaged...I was there pretty much to play Rugby...couldn't see myself sitting*

> *in a classroom after high school, university. So my brother and father were both in the Army...*

As discussed by Kleine et al. (2009), symbolic-interactionist-role-identity-theory shows how social networks can influence self defining decisions. Self defining decisions are more likely to be made when a person has been socialized in favour of the decision. In Tony's case, his family history of service in the NZ Army likely influenced his decision process.

Rachel, a 26 year old former Sergeant in the Royal New Zealand Army Logistics Regiment, spoke of the NZ Army as an opportunity for positive change

> *I joined the Army to pretty much get away from the lifestyle that I was about to head down...from drugs and alcohol pretty much...Yea I would say it was one of the best moves that I had made...*

Individuals often decide to join the military in order to seek opportunities, as well as in pursuit of safety (Burkhart & Hogan, 2015). Such "protective expectations" (Bubolz & Simi, 2015, p. 335) have also been reported in studies of gang membership. People decide to join such groups based on their expectations of being protected socially, physically, economically and psychologically. The military offers such benefits, enabling one to move from a civilian world to a military world, finding a new social environment and identity (Elder et al., 1991). The nature of this change, from civilian to military worlds, can provide an opportunity to leave undesirable environments for a more appealing life trajectory.

Ben, a 33 year old former Corporal in the Royal New Zealand Army Medical Corp, saw the NZ Army as an opportunity to gain personal development, dignity, and a sense of direction and purpose

> *Before I joined the Army I was born and raised in Whangarei, up north, and I kind of just coasted through the early years of my life...I had no direction and no meaning and I didn't have a lot of dignity, and I realised that there might be the potential that they might give me that...So that's why I joined the military...*

The decision to join collective groups, such as gangs or the army, is often related to the desire to fulfil personal needs. Societal stereotypes about such groups often promise varying forms of personal and social success (Bubolz & Simi, 2015). According to Elder (1986), individuals who lack a sense of purpose often join the military in search of competence, status, purpose, pride and self respect. The military offers such personal benefits with immediacy, as the army uniform provides a symbol for a new status bound identity (Brunger et al., 2013). By joining the military one's self esteem is developed, which as Brunger et al. (2013) explains, is vital to the maintenance of a positive identity. For those who lack a sense of direction and self esteem, the NZ Army is an organisation which offers a high degree of personal reward.

The participants' decisions to join the NZ Army were driven largely by desires for personal reward. The rewards sought included challenge and job variety, vocational training, and positive life change. The opportunity to proudly serve New Zealand also contributed to their decision. Membership in the NZ Army was anticipated as a source of need satisfaction; a common motivation for joining groups (Matschke & Sassenberg, 2012). Their decision to join triggered the development of army identities, and the next theme of career highlights reveals how these identities were enacted and actualised.

Theme Two: Career Highlights

Career highlights was an important theme which illustrated the treasured points of the participants' NZ Army careers. Although this theme occurred before their transitions commenced, it provides context to understand transition in relation to the rewarding careers which preceded a decision to leave.

Having joined the NZ Army, participants spoke about the highlights of their military careers. These were based around opportunities to use their training in reality, whether on operational deployment or during other activities. Having joined the military, the participants had transformed from civilians to soldiers (Burkhart & Hogan, 2015). The highlights which they experienced represent a realisation of their goals and aspirations, and the enactment of their military identity.

Ben talked about deploying on operations to the Solomon Islands, saying

> *...Got deployed for the first time, to the Sollies and that cemented it as far as I was concerned, I was like "This is what people in the military do, they get a skill set and they go overseas and they support troops and this is going fantastic"...*

Henry, a 41 year old former Chaplain in the Royal New Zealand Chaplains Department, also spoke favourably about his deployments to Afghanistan and the Solomon Islands

> *...So I had two deployments; to Afghanistan and then to the Solomon Islands. I really enjoyed the fact that so much of what seems to be in the Army is we are training and practicing and prepping to do what we did over there. I think that's what I enjoyed, that it wasn't training. Like you know you go and do an exercise, well the enemy's not shooting at you, no one's actually dead, no one's got real problems you know. So the idea of actually going on deployment, and actually dealing with real time problems in an operational environment actually really made a lot of sense to me...*

Operational deployment constitutes a milestone within the military career. Achievement of pivotal career goals, such as deploying overseas, represents what is referred to as the "maturity performance stage" (Torregrosa, Boixados, Valiente, & Cruz, 2004, p. 39), a time of high role dedication and striving to achieve primary career motives.

Having joined the military, soldiers assume a sense of self which aligns appropriately with the values and motives of the military (Solomon, 1954). Adoption of a soldier identity promotes the internalisation of appropriate behavioural goals, such as desiring deployment on overseas missions. Realisation of such goals provides a validation of one's self concept and identity as a soldier. Soldiers who manage to deploy overseas are able to self actualise and perform their soldier identity in a rewarding way (O'Connor & Yballe, 2007). According to O'Connor and Yballe (2007), self actualizing individuals act in ways which show deep commitment to their core values. Operational deployment symbolises such a self actualization in the lives of soldiers.

Robert, a 38 year old former Staff Sergeant in the New Zealand Army Physical Training Corp, experienced his deployments to East Timor and Afghanistan as rewarding

> *One of my deployments, probably Timor or Afghan, were both highlights for totally different reasons...In Timor I really enjoyed being a Rifleman (Infantry Soldier), whereas in Afghan I had [other duties] over there. So they were both professionally challenging for different reasons...*

Alan shared similar recollections of his deployments to Afghanistan and Tonga, saying

> *Probably the biggest highlight and the thing I'd really like to do again would be the Afghanistan deployment...So I got in there, my job was to get lots of stuff built. I achieved it, set up lots of stuff for the next rotation to get things built. Like it was just a professionally rewarding deployment. And then probably the other one would be did that three month stint in Tonga, building for the Tongan Police Force. So that was just taking like you know having a group of guys working for ya and getting something built, it was awesome...*

Having internalised the military identity, the fulfilment of the NZ Army role becomes individually meaningful. Collective identities are formed within organisations to promote behaviour which benefits the group (Hatch et al., 2013). Overseas deployments are satisfying to soldiers, perhaps because they enjoy behaving in ways which glorify their collective military identity. Such satisfaction indicates that deployments and career highlights represent a self actualisation of the soldier identity. According to Maslow (1967), self-actualizing people incorporate their primary motives into their self concept. Such motives within the NZ Army context are likely to include operational deployments, as well as the opportunity to use military skills in real and threatening environments.

Tony explained that higher threat levels, during his deployment to Iraq, provided greater personal reward than the benign environment of East Timor

> *...On the other hand going to Iraq, it was fuckin completely opposite, just full on everything you trained for. Ya know we were over there once again doing*

construction not kicking in doors ya know, but going from A to B to get to your task site was pretty fuckin awesome, more exciting you know. We were in land rovers, soft skin land rovers...Very different aye both of them. Like Timor's shit, great experience like don't get me wrong I loved the experience, but looking back just it was almost like pretend you know, like the threat levels...

According to Settersten, Day, Elder, and Waldinger (2012), exposure to risk and danger, especially that of an extreme nature, can provide a sense of achievement for soldiers. They are likely to experience feelings of conquering personal boundaries and exceeding personal limitations. High threat environments can therefore lead veterans to appraise deployments more positively. Experiences in threatening warzone environments can provide soldiers with a sense of accomplishment and personal growth. William recalled the personal advancement he experienced during his deployment to Afghanistan

The highlight is definitely the operational deployments. Like the fact that you actually get to put into practice all that training that you've done for years...The thing that I learnt the most from the trip was, and my wife will say it as well, is I changed while I was over there...It makes you grow up fast. You know you've got lives of people under your control. You know, planning and the other bits and pieces...I would've been very disappointed if I hadn't managed to get on an operational deployment...

Deployment is the pinnacle which justifies all previous military training. Numerous personal benefits come from deploying overseas; general life experience, increased responsibility, and stress management skills. Those who find meaning in their deployment experiences, recollecting them favourably, are more likely to perceive such personal benefits (Britt, Adler, & Bartone, 2001). The participants appraised their deployments positively and therefore gained satisfaction, personal growth, self actualization, and a justification of their military training from them.

Dale, a 77 year old former Brigadier in the Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment, recalled his most satisfying roles in the NZ Army, showing that training environments can also provide satisfaction

> *...I think probably the most satisfying job was CO (Commanding Officer) of the Battalion...I ran the biggest exercise that had ever been run in New Zealand. I dunno what numbers it would be but it was well over 5000 people involved with Airforce and Navy...a vast operation...*

Alpass et al. (1997) discussed various factors which contribute to work satisfaction, including the opportunities to employ skills during work, and to experience responsibility and difficulty. These factors are seen to influence the level of identification one has with a role. Through their career highlights, whether during operations or training, the participants were able to realise and strengthen their military identities. Achievement of pivotal career goals, according to Smith (1999), can facilitate a smooth transition. The achievement of their goals and career highlights is likely to have provided participants with career closure, and helped them to move forward into post-military lives. This theme represents the pinnacle of their identification as soldiers, which serves as a precursor to the next theme of disidentification; the beginning of transition.

Theme Three: Disidentification

According to Hope (2012), disidentification is a process which deconstructs a previously self-defining identity. Disidentification presented as a strong theme throughout the interviews. Having achieved their career highlights, participants experienced a lack of motivation to continue serving, and a shift in their future goals. Their transition commenced with this theme, as they began to consider alternative employment options outside of the military. The process of disidentification was comprised of three subthemes, which collectively enabled participants to temporally distance themselves from their military roles and identities. The three subthemes included non-operational lowpoint, bureaucratic frustrations, and leaving for career.

Subtheme One: Non-Operational Lowpoint

Following the achievement of career highlights, the subtheme of non-operational lowpoint was prevalent throughout the interviews. Participants discussed a sense of boredom and reduced purpose following overseas deployments. Having experienced

overseas missions as personally rewarding, the return to garrison life was in stark contrast. As described in the previous theme, deployment represented a fulfilment of the soldier identity. The period following deployment appears to contrast this highlight, depriving participants of identity fulfilment, and prompting a questioning of their soldier identity. Identity provides one with the ability to articulate a coherent, yet fluid and adaptable, self concept (Higate, 2001). According to Markus and Wurf (1987), one's self concept provides a blueprint for behaviour, and will adapt in response to challenging social environments. Individuals will seek to maintain coherence between their outside environment and their identity. When this is achieved, self concept and identity enable one to value their current social group, remaining motivated to behave in coherence with the outside world (Markus, 1977). When identity coherence is lost, the current social group and social identity may be devalued. Henry explained his post-deployment environment as disappointing, which is likely to have deprived him of identity fulfilment, and led to a negative perception of his NZ Army career

> *...so I got back from Afghanistan with this wonderful mission where I was given so much freedom and I felt as though my brain, my intellect and my ability were used at the very limits of my ability. You know, I felt very stretched and I enjoyed that. I got back to camp and I was sort of put back in a box really, you know and some officers and some organisations basically take the attitude "If we need a prayer padre we'll give you a call otherwise, you know, leave us alone". And so that was part of the push factor...*

A sense of disillusionment can occur when one's social group fails to satisfy personal expectations. Having experienced an incongruence between identity standards and what the group provides, an individual is likely to begin to disidentify, reducing the personal importance of the related social identity. This identity reduction marks the first stage of pulling away from a social group, and is a critical part of the role exit process (Bubolz & Simi, 2015).

Mike, a 28 year old former Lance Corporal in the Royal New Zealand Armoured Corp, explained such an experience following his deployments

The low points is usually after you get back from tour, when you go back to work and it's just fuckin depressing man. Especially yea because you go from being on operational tempo, doing shit that at the time matters, and you just go to training and it's just like you're back to square one, every time...when you came back you're just another number in the thing, where as it's a lot more fuckin personal when you're overseas on deployment...

Gary, a 28 year old former Lance Corporal in the New Zealand Military Intelligence Company, recalled his post-deployment boredom, sense of being undervalued, and desire to take control of his life

Well I got bored actually...once I got back I realised that it's too much waiting around and too much just you feel like your life isn't worth a whole lot to them. It's like you know you're wasting time doing absolutely nothing on a day to day basis...I just got over it and I was in the end my time is worth more than this and my life is worth more than this. So just started to think about what I wanted to do actually and yea went and did it basically...

Frustration, boredom and discontentment are common among soldiers who glean less meaning from post-deployment work (Adler et al., 2011). Deriving meaning from work is related to motivation and satisfaction, while a lack of perceived meaning signals the beginnings of disidentification. Upon returning home soldiers are likely to feel reduced autonomy in comparison to the responsibility accorded to them while overseas (Adler et al., 2011). Consequently, the individual begins to disidentify, and cognitions of independence and personal autonomy are likely to increase. This process is described as "seperation-individuation" (Bubolz & Simi, 2015, p. 340), and often presents as a reduced dependence on the group and others. The group is no longer viewed as capable of satisfying one's expectations, personal needs, or identity standards. With no incentive to continue to identify with the collective, or to subjugate individual needs for the greater good, cognitions begin to take on an individualistic tone. The individual may formulate personal goals which do not depend on the group. With no personal gain offered from the group, one's desire to behave in a collectivist manner is lessened. This turn to individualism, despite depriving the group of one's commitment, is likely to benefit personal well-being, as individualists tend to prioritise personal needs over

social needs, and are often more intrinsically satisfied (Rego & Cunha, 2009). Peter, a 29 year old former Corporal in the Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment, explained how his personal goals became more important once he had achieved his goal of deploying overseas

> *...So I guess that was my first inkling, but when it really became reality I guess was when I was over there and I was "Oh ok, well I'm here now" (Afghanistan)...I kinda knew that, well, it's gunna be slowing down after that ya know...it's gunna go back to the big lull period for the Army ya know...So I kinda started looking at, ok, maybe it's time to do this other opportunity while it's there, and that's when I made the decision while I was on CRIB (Afghanistan)...*

While operational deployment embodies the ultimate achievement of the military identity, the return to work in New Zealand does not meet the standards of the soldier identity. The non-operational work environment prompted a distancing from the soldier identity. This beginning of disidentification triggered changes in self concept and a pulling away from the soldier identity (Stier, 2007). Bureaucratic frustrations, the second subtheme, contribute to this process, as perceptions of the organisation itself shift in a way that encourages a decision to leave.

Subtheme Two: Bureaucratic Frustrations

Bureaucratic frustrations were discussed by a number of participants, and contributed to their overall disidentification. The process of disidentification appeared to occur gradually, and this subtheme highlighted a negative redefinition of the organisation. Bureaucratic processes, policies which conflicted with stated values, and disappointing employee treatment contributed to participants' disillusionment. The participants had certain expectations of the NZ Army which often contrasted with reality, fuelling their sense of discontent.

Tony expressed an increased dislike for NZ Army bureaucracy as he was promoted through the ranks

...I left because I just wasn't enjoying it anymore. I suppose the longer I was in the more away from the coalface I got...The higher I got, the more involved, with promotion, the more I saw the inside of how decisions were made and stuff and that's sort of why, that started the ball rolling, "It's not for me anymore"...

William voiced similar views about bureaucracy, as well as a desire for autonomy

The other one as well was that in the military shit seems to float to the top. Because I mean you get the people…; down to earth, honest, hard workers, but we get out because we realise we're up against all of this bureaucracy and all of this bullshit, and you can't actually accomplish what you need to accomplish in the right way. So you sort of hit a point where you go "What's the point? I might as well just get out and go do something with my life. Why am I letting these guys control what I do, when I do it, how I do it, when I can go and try and control that myself."...Like I left on quite a bitter note. I was very disillusioned when I left, I was not happy about it at all...

These frustrations with the military are not uncommon, as low job satisfaction is often reported by soldiers (Alpass et al., 1997). Lack of job satisfaction is related to the nature of military service, which commonly includes seperation from loved ones and exposure to dangerous situations. The expectations which military members place on the organization also contribute to low satisfaction. The military promotes organizational identification, based on reciprocal values such as loyalty and trust. Soldiers will internalise these values in order to feel a sense of belonging and safety, and will expect the organisation to abide by them (Hope, 2012). Reduced employee job satisfaction is likely when the organisation acts in contradiction to it's values. According to Martin et al. (2014), dissatisfaction with the work organisation, such as frustrations with bureaucracy, can contribute to reduced job identification. Henry's comments show how organisational actions, when misaligned with NZ Army values, fuelled his disidentification

I think probably my disconnect or my disappointments are when our stated values and the reality don't line up...I think that was especially difficult during the IMPing process (redundancy process for long-serving NZ Army members)

> *where I think some really poor decisions were made and the impact of that's going to be felt for a long time...I think the gap between stated values and reality I struggle with...*

Membership does not guarantee that employees will identify with an organisation (Ruvolo, 2004). An individual may be a member of the NZ Army, however the degree of organisational commitment is dependent upon their feelings of attachment. Commitment requires a belief in the values and purpose of the organisation, which in turn will motivate continued participation. Misaligned values and behaviour, such as those observed by Henry, contradict the actions which soldiers expect from the NZ Army. This contradiction is likely to reduce feelings of attachment and organisational commitment, and contribute to disidentification from the NZ Army (Vigoda-Gadot, Baruch, & Grimland, 2010).

Mike's disidentification was related to a perception that the NZ Army had stopped caring for employees

> *...when I started ya know a lot more benefits, it seemed that you were a lot more well looked after and it was a lot more personal. And then as things progressed and policies took place you were just another number. You weren't looked after and a lot of the benefits of being in the Army were just being cut back...*

Mike's expectations of personal reward were not being met by the NZ Army. Bubolz and Simi (2015), in their study of gang exit, explained that unmet membership expectations, such as protection and support, can result in anger and discontent. This discontent, fostered by a difference between expectations and the reality of gang life, leads to disillusionment, and then to disidentification; a reduction of the personal value of the group identity. This makes the decision to leave more realistic and appealing, and less threatening to a soldiers personal identity. Non-operational lowpoints and bureaucratic frustrations reduced the participants level of identification with the NZ Army organisation. The final subtheme, leaving for career, illustrates the participants' decisions to leave the NZ Army in pursuit of a fulfilling second career.

Subtheme Three: Leaving for Career

The subtheme of leaving for career revealed how feelings of being undervalued and underutilised, and a desire to achieve career potential, contributed to disidentification and a decision to leave the NZ Army. Participants explained their dissatisfaction with their military careers, and the resulting interest in alternative employment.

Rachel explained the direction of her NZ Army career as a push factor

> *...another reason why I left was because the role that I'd been put into, so I'd been taken from a training role and then put back into an office just staring at a computer, and I'd specifically asked if I could go back into a training role and they said "No you're a caterer first not a soldier."...To be honest I thought to myself "Well I could go be a civilian and push paper and get paid almost the same so I'll just get out and do that instead."...I was at the time one of the best instructors especially for the female instructors. And then for me to come back and pretty much it just felt like moving backwards...you come back and just get "Oh well you're just a nobody go back to the kitchen."...*

According to Langkamer and Ervin (2008), employees will appraise their work environment based on it's meaning and significance, formulating an overall perception of the psychological climate. How the psychological climate is perceived will influence appraisals and attitudes towards workplace events. Anger can provide the mechanism with which to psychologically distance oneself from a work environment. Anger does not lead immediately to a decision to resign, but rather it contributes to the gradual process of disidentification (Bubolz & Simi, 2015). This disidentification process takes time, and persistent discrepancies in the workplace which conflict with identity standards gradually lead one towards decisive action (Cast & Burke, 2002).

Tony, a trained carpenter, was also dissatisfied with his career path

> *...when I went to leave the Troop Staff Sergeant at the time was like "Na stay in" and I was like "You've done twenty years, I've done twelve, you're sitting just opposite me in the office, I don't wanna be there in eight years time." Just*

> *getting further away from the core things I really enjoyed doing, was probably yea, the bits I didn't like. Turning into an administrator pretty much ya know...*

In order to be satisfied with one's work, positive cognitive assessments need to be made in relation to job autonomy and challenge (Langkamer & Ervin, 2008). Negative appraisal of these two factors is likely to cause reduced job satisfaction. Another important factor is the way in which one derives meaning from work. If meaning is derived from a work aspect that has been relegated to the past, such as the meaning Tony assigned to his role as a carpenter, one's sense of self may be threatened**.** Deprivation of such sources of meaning can prompt first thoughts about relinquishing a role. When deprived of meaningful work, soldiers are likely to experience role stagnation, which is characterised by reduced focus and decreased motivation (Stier, 2007). Alan experienced role stagnation when he was denied control over his future career plan

> *...the next posting I had was Wellington. I wasn't particularly interested...I worked through my career plan and where I thought I needed to go and you know what I needed to do and then basically that was completely different to what the Engineers and the Military Secretary thought I should be up to, and I didn't understand that, and so started looking. And yea found good money down in Christchurch...*

Henry had a similar experience, realising an attractive alternative outside of the NZ Army

> *I finished my Doctorate, [blank] made me an offer where I'd be using my brain and I'd have influence and I could be stretched again, so that was part of the pull factors you know...I think the biggest pull factor was probably the ability to just be exposed and really be stretched again, where as I felt like I was playing inside myself when I got back from the mission (Afghanistan)...*

In response to career stagnation, identity is likely to work as a process to assist coping and adaptation to the changing work environment. According to Berzonsky (2004), negative feedback from work environments can encourage a modification of one's work

identity. These identity changes can redefine what is important to an individual, and prompt a reconsideration of career goals. In response to an unfavourable career path, soldiers are likely to disidentify with their role and create alternate career plans. The meaning assigned to the stagnated career is reduced, while new career plans gain meaning in one's identity structure.

Mike's comments indicated that personal reward was a motivator for career choices

> *...I think it was a good thing for me to do at the time, but I wish I left about four years earlier. I just don't really see that there was much for me to gain after my second Afghan trip...if I left then I would've been in a much better position now. Just the timing would've been a lot better for the Oil and Gas Industry in New Zealand...*

The desire for personal gain from work is a key ingredient for job satisfaction. Those who are provided with opportunities for personal development and career advancement are often more satisfied (Rego & Cunha, 2009). Alternatively, the absence of personal reward can foster discontent, increasing apathy towards career prospects, and fuelling a desire to make a life change (Bubolz & Simi, 2015).

The theme of disidentification, comprised of the three subthemes discussed, led the participants towards a final decision to leave. Tainted perceptions of their workplaces most likely impacted on their attitudes and commitment to the NZ Army (Langkamer & Ervin, 2008). In the face of dissatisfying non-operational periods, stagnating career paths, frustrating bureaucracy and employee treatment, the participants began to look elsewhere for gainful employment. The next theme, career, education and experience, describes the search for an enriching post-military career, which is paralleled by the career and personal value of having served in the NZ Army.

Theme Four: Career, Education and Experience

The theme of career, education and experience was pervasive throughout the interviews. This theme, which comprises five subthemes, explains the experience of pursuing employment after leaving. Participants set themselves high standards for post-service

employment, and leveraged their military experience and education to enhance employability. The work experience they gained in the NZ Army proved valuable, and they summarised their military service as a fulfilling period in their lives. The five subthemes are arranged in order to convey the experience of this career search, second career attainment, and finally the rewarding nature of service in the NZ Army. Subthemes include career liminality, education for career, valued work experience, second career success, and rewarding service.

Subtheme One: Career Liminality

The subtheme of career liminality sheds light on the search for rewarding employment after leaving the NZ Army. Participants had high standards and expectations for their second careers, and sought fulfilment of their potential through their career search. These desires for a satisfying second career indicated their drive to achieve, while also prolonging their search for adequate post-military work.

Adam, a 31 year old former Major in the Royal New Zealand Engineers, explained the difficult search for a satisfactory post-NZ Army job

> *It's difficult to get those positions because there's so many people that have been around for so long, they're a preferred applicant because they're a known entity...there's a lot of uncertainty about what we should do. You know whether I should go back to the military, which I don't really want to, or if I don't then take the risk of not finding another job here...it's not easy mate, it's not easy getting a decent job, just have to keep trying really...*

The difficult search for a satisfactory job, in the face of obstacles such as limited industry experience, represents the reality of the transitional stage of liminality. Cook-Sather (2006) discussed Victor Turner's theory of liminality, which describes a time of being "betwixt and between" (Cook-Sather, 2006, p. 110). Turner developed this theory while analysing tribal social systems and the rites of passage their members undergo to move from one life stage to another. Liminality appears as a stage during any transition from one state to another, commencing with a seperation, such as leaving the NZ Army. Following this seperation there is a time of social seclusion and transformation; the

period of post-military unemployment in this case. During liminality an individual must cross a transformational bridge, becoming a new version of themselves to match their new environment. During this transformation, one is positioned ambiguously, being neither the person they once were, nor the person they will become. William explained his challenging post-NZ Army liminality

> *...When we got to [city] we had an apartment, neither of us had jobs. We had enough money to survive for two or three months but it was like well shit if we don't find a job, and then when I got to [city] I found out that they hated ex-military people generally the civilian workforce. So I was a bit anxious about what sort of work I was going to find and what I could do if I didn't get any work...the first couple of months were very stressful, but as I said it was purely because of the anxiety about not finding work...*

William's liminal period was characterised by a stressful search for work. As Negewo-Oda and White (2011) explained, liminality can be experienced positively or negatively, depending on the contextual factors of a person's situation. However, they emphasised that liminality provides an opportunity for freedom and new beginnings. In William's case, the NZ Army environment was relegated to the past, and a new work environment had not yet been realised. In this liminal space, cognitive schemata which were developed for life in the military world are likely to become irrelevant (Cook-Sather, 2006). While this can be a time of challenge, it also presents an opportunity to renew oneself, to tailor a new career environment, and to develop new cognitive schemata and ways of seeing the world.

Rachel's post-NZ Army job search was also challenging, however her personal skills helped her to manage her liminal stage

> *When I started telling them that I'd made my mind up that I wanted to leave the Army the initial bit was a little bit daunting trying to find a job. Especially a job that I felt I was suited to...Because my partner he's also out and he never went through any of that process either, and he's struggling to find work. He doesn't know how to sell himself or he's got no idea on how to even set up a CV. Whereas for myself I like googling things I just go on the internet and yea, and*

> *just draw from past experiences really, that's all I did to manage to be able to get through...*

Proactivity towards career development enhances control during the liminal stage, and is characteristic of the modern career environment. In the modern working world, employees are more likely to move between roles and manage their own career paths. This career fluidity is the new norm and requires a more adaptable sense of self to manage career related identity shifts (Nazar & Van der Heijden, 2013). Transition outcomes are likely to be determined by one's ability to control the liminal stage and adapt to new career prospects. Peter took control of his post-military liminality, and future career path, by developing multiple options

> *Yea I'm taking it as it comes because, um, there definitely is a path you can follow on the rigs...So like we're talking your more senior ones so for my case I could go BCO, Ballast Control Operator...but it's a fuckin expensive course...I don't know where I sit you know...During that phase in 2012 when I was a bit unsure of work, my wife pretty much got me to enrol with the Police...I've recently just done it again...to have an option there...I haven't discounted potentially joining the Air Force.*

Gary also took control of his liminal time and career plan, striving to find a personally challenging role

> *...I went to work for an engineering firm up here as like a structural draftsman...Got into the wrong job...it wasn't challenging enough...finished my apprenticeship in about four months and as soon as I'd done that they offered me the site management position at that apartment building, so I opened up that job and got it running...until I stepped into another position as project manager for the company, and I've been doing that for a few months now...in the past few weeks I've been looking at moving on into a bigger commercial company and getting a good career path so that I can just stay there and carry on...*

An agentic approach to personal career development, assuming responsibility for one's own career, illustrates the concept of the "Protean Career" (Baruch & Quick, 2009, p.

277). In Greek mythology, the god Proteus was able to change his shape at will. Such is the case with those who display agency towards career development. High life satisfaction is likely when one's career paths are personally controlled, rather than being dictated by an employer. Multiple careers are common in the modern working environment, and those who take control of career trajectories can satisfy personal expectations and experience personal growth (Vigoda-Gadot et al., 2010). Tony explained the importance of finding a role which satisfied his expectations

> *...A few jobs popped up but then the one I was after, I was quite keen to get into sales...So yea got a job as a sales rep...did that for another two years, a year and a bit actually. I really enjoyed it, learnt a lot. It was good seeing the business side of it, and how that side of it worked, the ins and outs of stuff...I tell a lot of the guys who I catch up with now who are thinking of leaving or have left ya know it's like "Back yourself to go for good jobs with what you're doing, but make sure you are going to a job of either on that same level or a step up you know. Don't get out if it's fuckin taking a step down. Otherwise yea it'll be a struggle."...*

Assuming career responsibility allows an individual to navigate towards roles which match their expectations. They can compare potential job choices with alternative options, selecting and eliminating roles to meet personal expectations. Vocations selected through such an engaged process are likely to provide purpose and meaning, allowing identity to be expressed authentically. On the contrary, a failure to find a satisfactory role can promote feelings of frustration and depression (Ronkainen et al., 2013). Those who agentically search for fulfilling employment are likely to achieve positive outcomes through their liminal experience. Securing a job which meets expectations can therefore serve as a measure for transitional success, enabling one to feel that leaving the NZ Army was a wise decision. Alan stressed the importance of self-efficacy when applying such agentic control to the career liminality stage

> *...You've just gotta grow a massive ego and walk around like you're awesome and sell yourself, you'll get a job...*

High self-efficacy increases the chances of gaining future employment. Behaviours which relate to high self-efficacy include ambition, a desire to develop and learn, and a sense of responsibility over the career path (Gowan et al., 2000). The ability to make career decisions, and believe they can be achieved, depends upon self efficacy. As Gati, Ryzhik, and Vertsberger (2013) explained, those who believe they are capable of making personal career decisions are more decisive when searching for new employment. Agency during the liminal stage of career search requires a belief that one is capable of realising their idealised second career.

The next subtheme shows that agency was also applied in the participants' pursuit of education. In their search for fulfilling employment, participants turned to education to proactively enhance their employability.

Subtheme Two: Education for Career

The subtheme of education for career shows a dissatisfaction with the minimal or irrelevant civilian qualifications attained in the NZ Army. In their search for a second career, the participants showed the courage and motivation to seek satisfying employment. Having gained limited formal qualifications while in the NZ Army, participants identified study as a requirement for successful transition. By setting educational goals, the participants aimed to enhance the likelihood of gaining worthwhile employment.

Tim, a 66 year old former Warrant Officer in the Royal New Zealand Engineers, spoke about a lack of transferable civilian qualifications from his NZ Army career

> *In my day we were coursed to buggery, these were all leadership courses that I completed. I enjoyed it, I did thousands of courses...boy they didn't give us nothing. And that's why when I left the Army I went straight into landscaping...The leadership training alone, you know Junior NCOs (promotion course), Corporals to Sergeants (promotion course), you know 99% of that's leadership, and nothing was happening, you know one could have been a certificate in Business Management. There's plenty of certificates...*

William had a similar experience trying to equate military courses to civilian qualifications

> *I talked to the School of Army Administration to try and get them to translate those courses into qualifications and they couldn't tell me...to say like the Grade Three Staff and Tactics is equivalent to what? What sort of level university paper? And it took me about a month for them to actually get something to me and go "Oh yea it's about the equivalent of about a Level Two". And I was like "What sort of Level Two?". You know just drove me mental...*

Military veterans often find that skills acquired during service have little relevance, or cannot be translated, to civilian qualifications or roles (Clemens & Milsom, 2008). Specific military trades, such as carpentry, can provide useful civilian qualifications which are not offered by other trades. Those who attain higher ranks, especially in the commissioned officer stream, are also at an advantage. Former soldiers who reached higher ranks or gained trades while serving are more likely to find employment comparable to their previous military role (Spiegel & Shultz, 2003). However, in the absence of transferable skills and high rank, the transitioning soldier often returns to the bottom of the career or education ladder. Paul, a 25 year old former Lieutenant in the Royal New Zealand Artillery, a combat oriented unit, experienced such an educational dilemma

> *Like civilian recognised ones? Nothing meaningful. We did a university paper when we were at OCS (Officer Cadet School, New Zealand) and I think I've got a Certificate in Outdoor Recreation or something, but real token. So no, I think I got my Class Two Learners, so no. In the Artillery nothing I can take away...*

Mike spoke about in-service education as a missed opportunity

> *...Speaking to the dudes who are still in, doing extramural, I think that needs to be pushed as an option as well more. If I knew then what I know now I probably wouldn't have left. I mean getting a degree for free is pretty sick. Not just the normal ones as well...*

Experiencing a lack of civilian qualifications, or an irrelevance of military skills to civilian work, is likely to make transition more difficult. The ability to adjust and find satisfying work can be hindered by these factors, as expectations of a rewarding second career are compromised (Spiegel & Shultz, 2003). The solution to this predicament appears to be education. Soldiers who continue to pursue education during service are more likely to find satisfying work, and experience a less disruptive career transition (Gade et al., 1991). Ben, having entered university after serving, saw civilian education as a prerequisite to gaining meaningful employment

> *I got my Approved Handlers Certificate (Environmental Health) and your Level One Business Management papers are all there, but nothing that you could slot into an extra two years at university and come out with a degree, you'd have to start again...I talked to my partner and I said "I don't like being in the military anymore, but I don't have any skills, I've got nothing, I've got no civilian skills whatsoever. I'm confident in myself, I can talk forever, and I've had experience in retail before but that's some ground level shit"...*

Taking control of one's education, in order to enhance career prospects, mirrors the responsibility taken by the participants during the career liminality stage. Education is a proactive action aimed towards making career expectations more realistic. With an idealised second career in mind, education can be seen as a tool of career agency. As Bandura (2001) explains, agentic behaviour enables one to control how they develop and adapt to changing environments. People create plans and appropriate courses of action which they expect will lead them to goal achievement. Having set their objectives, such as the gaining of satisfactory employment, people will behave agentically to reach them. The incentives for such goal realisation are likely to be pride, self-worth and a sense of satisfaction (Bandura, 2001). This agency towards career aspirations demonstrates the human ability to self regulate and adapt identities towards changing and anticipated environments; a social cognitive identity process which supports goal achievement and the overall transition (Berzonsky, 2004).

Rachel viewed her in-service education as irrelevant, proactively developing study plans to support her career goals

> *So I got my Diploma in Food and Beverage Service, which I'll probably never*
> *use, and the Firstline Management Level Four and Adult Education. They're the*
> *ones you get off Junior NCOs and those are the only ones that I've got...I've*
> *thought about doing online study for personal training...I'm just ticking away at*
> *that as best as I can when I get some down time...*

Education, when used as a pathway to career success, resembles a form of problem focussed coping. People use behavioural and cognitive strategies to cope with stress inducing situations (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). Proactive approaches to education seek to ameliorate the negative emotions related to career liminality. Such proactivity is an example of problem-focussed coping; using action plans to overcome a situation appraised as controllable. Problem focussed coping tends to have positive outcomes, as opposed to the distress which results from emotional coping (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). The use of education as a mechanism for problem-focussed coping was also evident in Peter's comments

> *I've just done pre-enrolment with Massey, so I'm looking at doing a business*
> *degree, all by distance. I think in this day and age you need some tertiary*
> *education for the better jobs...all the ones that I have looked at that don't require*
> *a tertiary education are pretty mundane. Wouldn't get the same kind of*
> *responsibility ya know.*

Higher education levels are a contributing factor to the employability of military veterans (Baruch & Quick, 2009). Having identified this, the participants decided to set educational goals to mitigate their lack of civilian qualifications. Education provides them with a way to alleviate the problem of employability, and contributes positively to the overall coping process. Such problem-focussed approaches are more likely to be adopted by those with high self-esteem, and who believe they can succeed in education and career (Gowan et al., 2000). Self-esteem helps to foster a belief that constructive steps, such as education, can be taken to address the overall career problem. Reaching a point of high self-esteem and constructive goal setting can take time during transition, often requiring a "cognitive shift" (Grove et al., 1997, p. 200) from emotional to problem-focussed coping. This cognitive shift is likely to occur following an initial period of post-resignation emotional unrest.

While dissatisfied with inadequate in-service qualifications, the participants gained useful skills and knowledge in the NZ Army. The next subtheme shows that these benefits were perceived as strengths during the career transition.

Subtheme Three: Valued Work Experience

The subtheme of valued work experience shows that, in the pursuit of second careers, the participants identified the value of their NZ Army work experience. Their military careers provided them with varied experiences and skills which aided their career search and success.

Rachel's experiences in the NZ Army helped her to gain employment

> *...the job I'm doing now we're dealing with youth that are quite violent. So I was talking to my boss about it and he was saying the thing that they liked about my experiences and work ethic was that because I'd been up to TAD I sort of knew how to deal with troubled youth. We used to get troubled kids come through all the time, and dealing with risk up there we're sort of doing the same thing down here. So I think that's good for the CV as well...*

Transition from the armed forces can be difficult. Finding occupations which closely align to previous military experience, as in Rachel's case, can ease the experience (Higate, 2001). Similarity between a new role and previous role may provide a sense of continuity and emotional stability. This can assist one to adapt to civilian life, as similar roles enable a transferral of military skills, as well as offering the comfort of familiar work environments (Brunger et al., 2013). While such benefits can assist one's transition, the seeking of continuity through post-military careers can limit the social transition. Entering vocations which are similar to the military may delay one's adaptation to civilian culture, maintaining military identities and behaviours rather than those suited to civilian cultures (Brunger et al., 2013). Despite the cautions against career continuity, experience within the NZ Army undoubtedly provides participants with useful strengths for civilian work. Alan explained such benefits from his NZ Army career

> *...I think a lot of it came down to the experience I had doing a lot of construction jobs with the Army...we had a whole lot of little construction jobs...Like all of that stuff I did just the practical experience was what got me in the door...that decision making ability and stuff, I think that's quite valued as well...Even stupid stuff like you think of all the personnel reporting you do on your soldiers, and the performance feedback...You've just gotta think really hard about the role you wanna get and how you're gunna sell yourself to get it...*

Herman and Yarwood (2014) argued that the seeking of continuity through similar work environments can hinder transition. Former soldiers who seek similarly masculine roles, such as in security contracting and mining, are said to be maintaining military identities and avoiding an adaptation to civilian life. However, in the case of participants such as Alan, the benefits of military service have provided functional strengths for the civilian labour market.

Military veterans who lack civilian qualifications often use their previous experiences as leverage in the competitive job market (Spiegel & Shultz, 2003). Career relevant strengths gained from military service are varied, as Alan explained. By leveraging work experiences to gain civilian employment, one can capitalize on military service, despite lacking civilian qualifications. Military service can therefore be framed as a self-enhancing experience which promotes a successful transition (Kelty et al., 2010). Dale found his experience as a senior officer to be of great value in civilian life

> *You've got problems to solve wherever you go and I think if you've had the discipline that we had and the teaching, the really good teaching that we had at Duntroon. That's why the buggers who left early have done so well. They were way ahead of their damn contemporaries in looking at a problem, breaking it down to it's component parts, looking for the essentials, finding out what the hell you want to be doing, how you can make changes, and then having the organisational capacity and knowing how to muster that to get on and do the job...My son in law went through Duntroon and he's now a highly successful businessman.*

Service within the officer ranks, as opposed to as a soldier, enhances one's ability to make a smooth transition (Baruch & Quick, 2009). Leadership, planning and decision making skills are the focal point of the officer career, providing a skillset which is relevant to civilian work. Former officers, especially senior officers, are well practiced in managerial skills which align to corporate and management roles. Officers, regardless of their corps or unit, are endowed with a transferrable skillset, and have an advantage over soldiers who often have limited leadership experience or qualifications.

Military values are taught to all members of the NZ Army, both soldiers and officers. William explained that the values he learned are useful in his work as a school teacher

> *A lot of the structure and discipline and procedures that the military taught me is what I still use today. The simple things like respect, following orders, doing what you're told...All the little things, and that's what I try to teach the kids at school now. You know, that they've got to take ownership over their own activities because while yes it's not going to result in someone dying, ultimately it's gunna effect their future in the long run. So I think a lot of the basic core components of what the military does is good...*

The personal cultures which soldiers develop, such as William's preference for structure and discipline, are a result of military training (Hale, 2008). Upon joining the NZ Army, and throughout their service, soldiers are indoctrinated to behave in accordance with military culture. Soldiers are encouraged to internalise the norms and values of the military (Lande, 2007). Military tenets are predominantly positive, and likely to prove advantageous during post-military civilian work. Brewin et al. (2011) found that many soldiers learn positively from their in-service experiences. Those who serve in non-combat areas, such as Rachel's service as a trainer, are likely to develop job skills relevant to civilian work. Conversely, those who serve in combat roles as William did, are more likely to develop attributes of personal values and pride (Gade et al., 1991).

Subtheme Four: Second Career Success

The participants had embarked on a search for rewarding employment, with high expectations for their second careers. The subtheme of second career success shows that the realisation of career goals represents a breakthrough in the career transition journey.

Tim explained how, through determination and self belief, he established his own business

> *I left the Army, I didn't want to look back, and I went straight out and just bought my own business, and that's why we moved to Hamilton. Because I'd seen too many men stay in Palmerston or Burnham or Papakura and you know become part of the Mess or still a part of the Army, couldn't break away, and I thought shit that's not good, so that's what I did...I worked for myself, and boy it was hard, that was a learning curve I tell ya. I mean you know just paying GST, the tax system I had no idea at all. I soon learnt, because I'm pretty good on the computer...*

Self-efficacy is a determining factor in second career success. In order to succeed in a demanding task, such as career transition, one must believe it is within their capabilities (Gowan et al., 2000). Self-efficacy is important in social cognitive theory, as a belief in one's ability can determine a number of factors; whether cognitions are optimistic or pessimistic, which challenges appear to be surmountable, and levels of motivation and effort one conjures in the face of obstacles (Bandura, 2001). When making a career transition, high self-efficacy enables agentic behaviour towards desired goals, such as establishment of a business, as well as a belief that a successful vocational transition in possible.

While self-efficacy is important it should be complimented by the use of effective coping strategies. When challenged by transition, an individual needs to employ personal strengths and acknowledge weaknesses (Smith, 1999). Tim's reference to transition as a learning curve is an example of personal growth; a frequently used coping mechanism during transition (Grove et al., 1997). By identifying weaknesses, individual's can learn and grow in areas which require development. Growth is likely to assist adaptation and enable an understanding of the newly encountered civilian world.

Former soldiers aspire to develop second-careers that meet their expectations. Henry expressed the satisfaction provided by securing his desired role

> *...We have about a thousand students...all the way up to Doctoral Programmes, and I'm mostly in the high end, so Bachelors, Masters and Doctoral students...Compared to the Defence Force, you know like I felt like I was in a little box and my organisational ability, my strategic thinking was not actually used at all in the Defence Force...*

Attaining a satisfactory second career is a key milestone when transitioning from the NZ Army. Work is an important aspect of life which impacts on our personal well-being. Being employed provides a degree of psychological support and a sense of purpose. Work allows one to feel like a useful member of society, and provides opportunities to gain status and structure (Paul & Batinic, 2010). Employment within a satisfying role provides meaning to life and a chance to reach personal expectations of potential (Britt et al., 2001). Securing a post-military career provides important ingredients for a successful transition. Dale experienced such career success after leaving the NZ Army, adapting and thriving in the civilian work environment

> *...back to Auckland, and a friend of mine had been running a project here and had wanted to move on, and he said "are you interested?" so I said "yip". It would be an opportunity to get back, get something going, get into the community etc, so that's what I did...It was the completion of the [building]...I had to manage the building of that bloody thing, didn't have a bloody clue, but they had a very good foreman...And then the [blank] job came up and I applied for that job there, and I ran the [business] for thirteen years, in [city], and was bloody, I enjoyed it. Very satisfying...it's been a real success story...*

Networking is especially useful for former senior officers, due to their corporate level experience, and the prevalence of networking in the civilian corporate world (Baruch & Quick, 2009). The benefits of networking can be amplified by searching for roles relevant to previous military experience. Dale's post-NZ Army career success was likely associated with his previous service as a senior officer, his use of networking, and his selection of roles which suited his strategic management skills.

Cultural acceptance is also an important element if one wishes to function well within the civilian workforce. Adler (1975) explained that a final stage of transition involves gaining an appreciation of civilian culture, both for it's similarities and differences to military culture. This allows an individual to trust and respect civilians, and work effectively with them and as one of them. In order to move forward in the world of work, as Dale did, former soldiers must learn to adjust identities and integrate into civilian workplaces (Jones, 2013).

Finding a satisfying job after leaving the NZ Army has resonated through the themes as a major transitional goal. Tony spoke about career attainment as a turning point and as an end to his transition

> *...So I'm the Operations Manager here...I was thinking about it last night, is the transition, so until I got this Operations Managers job, I even said it to my boss, I finally feel like I'm back to where I need to be. So from when I left the Army as a Troop Sergeant to now, what's that, four or five years, I finally feel like I've probably fully transitioned...Back in a position where I feel that I'm doing or can use the skills that I have...like when I was in London I was just back on the tools. I'd turn up and "what do you want me to do?" which was cool at the time, and then teaching the drop outs, even at the sales rep, I really enjoyed the sales side of it and the chase of getting clients over the line, but then also my boss I could do a better job than him, whereas now I feel like all my skills are utilised, it's a challenge for me. I don't struggle but it's a challenge...*

Mike also saw his post-NZ Army career progress as an end-marker of transition

> *...I dunno, it's weird, once you're 100% set on the break and shits going alright for you, you don't really worry about it too much...once I got into a steady contract in Australia and that I would say that's probably when I was 100% sure that I wasn't going back...*

Gaining meaningful employment represents a positive stage in transition. While transition can be a stressful experience, it can also be a time of "social rebirth"

(Ronkainen et al., 2013, p. 388). Rather than viewing transition as a single event, it should be considered as a gradual adjustment process to a new environment (Stier, 2007). The attainment of satisfying work, which fulfils personal expectations and standards, is a key step in this adjustment process. Rather than viewing the transition as a "social death" (Smith, 1999, p. 17), career milestones provide an opportunity for ex-soldiers to become the person they envisioned. By gaining satisfying employment the participants have been symbolically reborn. They have been able to realise a revised self concept; one which was merely an idea when they decided to leave the NZ Army. Finding satisfying work therefore constitutes a second self actualisation. The first was discussed in the career highlights theme, when they achieved the core goals related to the soldier identity. The second self actualisation occurs as the post-NZ Army career is realised; a valued goal for the post-military self. As O'Connor and Yballe (2007) explained, self actualisation involves taking control of one's own growth and development. This can involve a personal struggle to identify one's values and talents, gain an understanding of one's true self, and then to become that person in reality. By taking this journey and searching for the idealised self, as the participants have by seeking new careers, former soldiers can achieve their potential and realise their career transition goals (Osborne, 2012).

Subtheme Five: Rewarding Service

Having left the NZ Army, the participants retrospectively viewed their NZ Army careers favourably. Their military service had been a time of personal growth, achievement, and goal realisation.

William spoke positively about his time in the NZ Army

> *I really enjoyed it, and I think it was very valuable...*

Tony also saw value in his service

> *...Had a great time, I think it set me up for life really well, some really great mates, some great experiences that people who haven't been in the forces can't experience, so yea...*

There is much to be gained from military service. Former soldiers often enjoy a more positive self image, and heightened self efficacy (Elder, 1986). These benefits are related to the process of militarisation which soldiers experience; their training leading to greater maturity, self awareness, and resourcefulness. Military service provides soldiers with a positive source of personal development, and is commonly a life-altering period of growth and maturation (Jackson et al., 2012). Ben recalled his service as a positive time of personal improvement

> *...I felt proud that I had done something that other people had failed at and I'd never done that before, never had that sense of accomplishment. I felt pretty good about that, and that carried me through for years into my career, that sense of dignity, that I had been provided a direction and expectations were placed on me that I could meet...*

Adam also summarised his military service in a positive manner

> *...By in large I enjoyed sort of all of my postings, and by exception there were a few sort of things which made work not as enjoyable. But by in large I enjoyed my Army experience...*

Army veterans often speak favourably about their experiences, especially those which led to self development (Gade et al., 1991). Having a positive perception of one's past service is likely to stimulate an adaptive transition. Demers (2011) used narrative theory to point out that constructing a clear, coherent narrative of the past is important for identity development. Construction of a clear historical narrative allows one to make sense of the past in meaningful ways, such as leaving the NZ Army. It is through a coherent narrative and a clear perception of past events that meaning and sense can be made of transition (Schok, Kleber, & Lensvelt-Mulders, 2010).

Simon spoke about his NZ Army time with nostalgia

> *So I was there and I was a dental tech...I just dragged the box out last night and looked back up some of the old things...*

Henry echoed this outlook of nostalgic pride

> *...I think what I enjoyed the most about the Defence Force was being part of history. Like so for the rest of my life, whenever I read about New Zealand's involvement in Afghanistan, I was part of that...*

In order to adapt in a positive way, retirees appraisals of their service should be positive, such as the pleasant nostalgia shown by Simon and Henry (Settersten et al., 2012). The way in which retirees perceive their military service is highly predictive of their post-military well-being. Memory works in a biased fashion, which may be helpful in forming positive appraisals of service. According to Madan, Ludvig, and Spetch (2014), people tend to remember the aspects of events which triggered positive emotional responses. Former soldiers are therefore more likely to positively appraise their service, and experience improved well-being as a result. Through positive appraisals of their pasts, former soldiers can appreciate the personal benefits provided by military service. Recognising these positive aspects, such as enjoyment and personal development, can increase the chance of transition being a time of growth (Schok et al., 2010).

The theme of career, education, and experience, comprised of the five subthemes above, revealed the participants' desire and drive to gain satisfying post-military work. They achieved this goal, aided by education and previous work experience, concluding the career transition and bridging the divide between military and civilian work. The next section, self and others, turns the focus towards interpersonal aspects which are relevant to the transition experience.

Section Two: Self and Others

Self and Others includes the five themes of Discouraging Leadership, Unceremonious Farewell, Social Support, Camaraderie, and Cross Cultural Journey.

Theme Five: Discouraging Leadership

Discouraging leadership was a strong theme which was evident during the thematic analysis. Participants recalled negative encounters with leaders, and the absence of effective leadership. Disappointing leadership experiences facilitated negative feelings towards the organisation, contributing to discontent and the decision to leave.

Paul expressed a lack of respect for NZ Army leaders

> *...I guess the low point there are a lot of bureaucratic frustrations I found, you know a lot of people telling you what you can and can't do without real valid reasons for it...There seems to be a lot of, like a lot of incompetence amongst people and you know a lot of people get to high ranks not because they're good but because they don't leave. It's a war of attrition and those who hang around the longest get the rank...*

Individuals will appraise events and decide what specific experiences, such as perceived poor leadership, mean to them (Gowan et al., 2000). The nature of their appraisals will influence their selection of coping behaviours. In this case, it is likely that poor leadership was perceived as stress inducing, and therefore detrimental to personal well-being (Carston & Gardner, 2009). Such a negative appraisal of leaders is likely to have contributed to the disidentification process highlighted in previous themes. Negative appraisals of leaders may have been generalised towards the wider organisation, prompting contemplation of a decision to leave. As discussed by Folkman and Moskowitz (2004), such decisions are likely when an individual feels their goals, such as being satisfied with work, have been threatened.

Rachel recounted similar encounters with people in leadership positions

> *...I was at the point where I didn't care and I didn't like the culture that they were trying to introduce so I was going above them...everybody could see it from the outside but nobody on the inside was talking and speaking up...Pretty much there was only two of us Senior NCOs who were there to look after the soldiers, the rest of the Senior NCOs were just in it for themselves. And a lot of our young people were leaving which I found quite hard considering that I'd just spent the last three years training most of them up to be soldiers, and then watching them*

*leave, through to some of the staff members not wanting to care about them or
not wanting to look after them...*

Signals of disrespect from leaders are likely to foster dissatisfaction within an
organisation (Elsbach, Stigliani, & Stroud, 2012). In Rachel's case, poor leadership from
her fellow non-commissioned officers may have contributed to her dissatisfaction.
Elsbach et al. (2012) found, in their study of Hewlett Packard, that unfair treatment and
signs of disrespect toward employees led to distrust of those in leadership positions.
Conversely, when a positive culture was fostered, they observed growth in employee
commitment and morale. Effective leadership helps employees to deepen their purpose
and desire to work, as well as influencing personal well-being (O'Connor & Yballe,
2007). William experienced an absence of invigorating leadership, which prompted his
decision to leave

> *...they sent me into the field with a broken leg. I had a cast on...I said I can go
> for the day but then I've got to come back into camp at night, because I've got a
> broken leg, and they were like "oh yea". I spent two weeks in the field. The
> officer made me climb down from the top of the turret to talk to him, instead of
> him climbing up, I've got a broken leg, it's snowing. I was like this is just insane.
> That was the straw that broke the camel's back. I just said "fuck this I'm done". I
> said "you're treating me like a piece of meat."...I just got home from that
> exercise, sat down with my wife...I had Colonel X, he came to my office after I
> put my papers in and tried to talk me out of it. He asked what could he do to
> make me stay in. And I said "there's absolutely nothing you can do, you've
> already screwed the pooch"...*

Expectations of being well led are reflective of reciprocity theory, which states that the
returning of benefits given is a key part of social life and exchange (Molm, 2010).
Individuals expect that a return on investment will occur, such as the provision of sound
leadership in exchange for hard work and commitment. Molm, Peterson, and Takahashi
(1999) explained that exchange relations will not develop when such benefits or
contributions are not reciprocated. Motivation to contribute will decrease as it becomes
clear that one's contributions will not be reciprocated as expected. An experience of
such disappointing social relations is likely to enhance feelings of discontent. These

feelings can crystallise due to poor leadership experiences, contributing to disillusionment and disidentification (Bubolz & Simi, 2015). Following a period of disidentification, which includes those factors discussed in previous themes, a breaking point can occur which triggers a life changing decision, such as deciding to leave the NZ Army. Single events in time, such as a negative interaction with a leader, can prompt a realisation, or epiphany, which provides an individual with clarity about the contemplated decision. This can lead to substantial changes in one's perception of the group they belong to, motivating a decision to leave (Bubolz & Simi, 2015). Tony recalled an interaction with his superior officer that solidified his decision to leave

> *...I can even remember the day that my mind was made up. The final nail in the coffin funnily enough a young Lieutenant came into the office and he said "go into the system and look up how many guys you have who have over 20 leave days, do it on a spreadsheet and give me the spreadsheet, then put an email out, let them know". I said "sweet as I'll see them in O'Gp tomorrow and I'll tell them check your leave balances, if you have over 20 you're gunna lose them unless you take them by September". He said "na I want you to go through all the guys" and you're talking about 35 guys, "I want you to go through every single one on the system, pull up the spreadsheet". And I was like "so you're telling me this is what you want me to do, so I have 12 years experience as an engineer and a carpenter and this is what you want me to spend the next two or three hours doing?" and he was like "yep". I said "righty oh". So he left. I looked up my own leave balance, looked up how many days, I had two and a half months leave owing, worked out I had two weeks to go before I could do that. So I put in my leave application to get that and then as soon as that got approved I put my 717 in...The coffin had 90% of the nails in it, but that was the fuckin "that's it man, time to go"...*

Those who are highly committed to a role are likely to delay their decision to leave. The decision to retire is not merely about changing roles, but a desertion of a central and treasured identity. Soldiers and athletes who show strong identity commitment to their role are likely to be reluctant to retire, choosing instead to continue despite dissatisfying work conditions. According to Baillie and Danish (1992), deciding to retire in such cases becomes easier with more exposure to negative events, such as the participants'

encounters with poor leadership. Such experiences are likely to tarnish attitudes towards the NZ Army, contributing to a negative view of the work environment, and cueing the much anticipated decision to leave. The importance of chance encounters with leaders should not be underestimated, as employees view leadership behaviours as symbols of the organisation (Aldwin & Stokols, 1988). Leadership behaviours which contrast with expectations may amplify other negative feelings, such as those fostered during disidentification, and motivate a decision to leave the NZ Army.

Theme Six: Unceremonious Farewell

The theme of unceremonious farewell shows how participants were subject to negative stigma, poor treatment and inadequate farewells at the conclusion of their NZ Army service. Having served the organisation with loyalty and commitment, this experience was one of ingratitude and rejection.

Ben discussed the stigma attached to a decision to leave the NZ Army

> *In all aspects of your life, if you don't like what you've got then you make attempts to change it...The military's funny in that there's this perception that if you do that, if you're not happy and you voice it and you say "I'm not happy with the situation I want a change" like you're letting some unknown perception that you are not military material or something like that, like you're not supposed to do that...Like you're letting the military down, that's probably it...*

Roncaglia (2006) explained that thoughts of leaving are often considered defeatist, and perceived as an admission of failure. Managers often avoid discussions of post-career plans, so as not to detract from the current role focus. Parallels with these findings can be made with Ben's comments, in that a negative stigma is attached to a decision to leave the NZ Army. However, according to Smith (1999), planning for the future is actually likely to reduce uncertainty, enhancing an individual's present performance and contribution. Despite these evidenced benefits of pre-transitional planning, Peter recalled being stigmatised and disrespected during his leaving process

> *Got a bit disheartened when they bloody sent my medals out in the mail...they*
> *were in the office and he wouldn't give them to me...These are my Afghan and*
> *my three year medal so, so I was a bit gutted they got sent out...I tried to get*
> *them myself and he just wouldn't give them to me, and I was like "it's in your*
> *office, I can see it."...I was trying to explain my case but ya know, a Corporal*
> *who's getting out talking to a WO1 (Warrant Officer Class One) ya know, he's*
> *just like fuck you're mud ya know...*

Deciding to leave the NZ Army is likely to alter how colleagues and comrades perceive the retiring soldier. Hegemonic masculinity, which represents a dominant form of masculine culture, is a predominant part of military culture. Military personnel often enact hegemonic masculine discourse to dominate and position others as inferior (Hinojosa, 2010). This is a way of creating symbolic power to elevate oneself, or the military, above those who are perceived as outgroups, such as civilians. Having decided to leave, it is likely that the retiree's commitment is questioned, and they are categorized by comrades as inferior. This phenomena may account for the lack of respect shown by Peter's superior. Such a rejection and discriminatory categorization undermines one's social identity, loyalty to the group, and self-esteem (Matschke & Sassenberg, 2010). Rejection encourages a negative relationship between an individual and the group, reducing one's attachment to the collective and encouraging disidentification. Mike also discussed a leaving experience comprised of rejection and ingratitude after his eight years of service

> *So I chucked in my 717...no one really seemed to give a fuck either way, so I was*
> *like sweet, I don't really feel guilty...When I first chucked my papers in like they*
> *weren't getting sorted at all. I pretty much had to organise my own release and*
> *had to write my own letter of recognition and shit, and just got the CO to sign it.*
> *That was pretty fuckin dogshit on the Battalion's behalf aye...it was just sort of*
> *"catch ya cunt"... I think because when dudes leave the Army it's really*
> *discouraged and frowned upon...usually when you leave you get something from*
> *the Company, fuckin even just a hollow square (ad-hoc parade held by the*
> *Officer Commanding), na didn't get none of that, that fucked me off. Ya know,*
> *gave fuckin eight years to that unit and nothing...*

Mike's experience was likely the result of reduced trust from his colleagues. According to Baumeister and Leary (1995), signals of reduced commitment, such as a decision to leave a group, can reduce trust. The decision to leave indicates a lack of concern for the groups purpose, and members who remain have no reason to show continued trust. This withdrawal of trust is often shown through farewell ceremonies which are impersonal and poorly planned. Such farewells are likely to communicate ingratitude and a devaluation of one's past contributions (Osborne, 2012). Gratitude is an important social behaviour which allows positive feedback through reciprocation and appreciation (Nelson, 2009). Tony interpreted his unceremonious farewell as ingratitude for his twelve years of service

> *SSM (Squadron Sergeant Major) even asked me "oh what do you want, you can get a pewter or a plaque" and I said "I want both." He goes "na you can't have both". "So I've been paying into the UPF (Unit Personnel Fund) for fuckin 12 years, I want fuckin both!", "You can't!". So I only got the pewter, well it's like "fuck"...I was a little bit bitter actually, at the farewell, because of what was thrown together for that amount of experience and you know, some left over sausages and a couple of dozen beers and a pewter with my name on it, it's like "fuck"...the fact I went back and signed out, some dude that was there, I can't even remember who it was actually, so he wouldn't have been someone I was involved with within my career, and shook his hand and "Best of luck. Give us your ID Card, that would be great" (laughing)...*

Rejection and exclusion are common aspects of ingratitude, and both contribute to negative emotions (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Ingratitude, such as that recalled by Tony, can lead to feelings of anger and anxiety. The experience of ingratitude when leaving the NZ Army deprived the participants of the benefits of gratitude. According to Wood, Joseph, and Maltby (2009)*,* gratitude is important for well-being, as it enables meaning to be created and personal growth to occur. Poor farewell ceremonies may reduce the ability for one to experience transition as a meaningful growth experience. Rachel recalled harassment, disrespect, and ingratitude during her final days in the NZ Army

I had to track down my paperwork quite a few times which was getting quite frustrating because it was accidentally getting lost on peoples desks...I just started getting fragged (harassed by peers for leaving) which made me want to leave even more. Like they were just making me do jobs in unrealistic timings and trying to make me look like an idiot before I left...It was right up until the day that I left. Even the day I left they were still trying to get me on the way out...I had a farewell but I found out about it on the day...It was like "Oh yip thank you for serving, thank you for coming back, here's your plaque, see you later" and I was like "Oh yip sweet as so ten years of my career, of my life, has just gone down the drain, sweet as, up yours I'm out of here". I was quite angry...Because I know other people that have done far less, like there was a person that was leaving to be posted to another unit that same week and they got like this big party and everything was all planned out, I was like "oh yip sweet as, priorities right."...

Poorly organised and insincere farewells can impede the broader transition process. Farewell ceremonies are intended to show appreciation for one's military service, however they often lack authenticity or effort (Herman & Yarwood, 2014). Unceremonious farewells can portray one's contribution to the military as wasted effort, increasing the difficulty related to meaningfully appraising the past and adapting into the future. Gratitude, referred to as the "moral memory of mankind" (Nelson, 2009, p. 39), is a vital part of society. The expression of gratitude encourages others to behave in socially acceptable ways, such as by honouring reciprocal relationships. Ingratitude, such as that which Rachel recalled, may indicate that the time and effort expended by participants during their service was not meaningful.

Theme Seven: Social Support

This theme shows the importance of social support in the pursuit of a successful transition. Having experienced a sense of ingratitude and rejection from the NZ Army, the participants relied upon non-military sources of social support following their departure.

When asked whether he lost anything by leaving the NZ Army, Paul mentioned a loss of security

> *...I don't know man, there was a really good security blanket when you're in the Army. You could fuck up really badly but you'd still get fed and you'd still, you know they would sort out your accommodation if you got kicked out of your house or anything like that. So there's that you know really good security blanket which you don't get when you get out of the Army...*

Paul's comments emphasise the importance of social support when moving from the secure military collective to civilian society. Military life, by it's collectivist nature, cocoons soldiers within a support network while they wear the uniform (Herman & Yarwood, 2014). From the day they leave, this military social support is usually withdrawn (Brewin et al., 2011). Carl, a 28 year old former 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment, received no social support from the military during his transition, saying

> *Na definitely not from a military standpoint, na. But you know I mean family and friends I guess...*

Tim experienced the same lack of organisational support from the NZ Army, saying

> *We had the resettlement course...Shit, two days...*

Organisational support to retirees is important for their adaptation to civilian life. According to Gowan et al. (2000), transitions are managed more successfully when such social support is provided. The management of retiring employees has also been noted as a contributing factor to the commitment of remaining employees (Vigoda-Gadot et al., 2010). When retirees are appreciated and valued, those who remain learn that their efforts will also be valued. In the absence of organisational transition support, both the retiree and remaining comrades miss out on these potential benefits.

Pre-retirement planning is an important part of the transition process. Planning for transition provides the retiring soldier with various advantages. Increased personal

control and self-efficacy during transition are two benefits provided by such planning (Martin et al., 2014). Pre-transition planning also enables military leavers to direct anxieties related to transition towards planning, rather than to less productive forms of coping (Spiegel & Shultz, 2003). Much of this anxiety can arise from fears of losing military support, as illustrated by Paul's comments above. Those leaving the military tend to fear the impending self-reliance and unknown nature of the future (Torregrosa et al., 2004). Pre-retirement planning provides a way to allay such fears.

In the absence of assistance from the NZ Army, Tony's ex-army friends provided him with valuable social support

> *That was it you know, it was like ya know, there wasn't a chat with the psych, or a chat with careers advisors or anything. So looking back at it, would that have been helpful? Shit yea. In fact I paid $250 to do my CV, you'd think within the Army's realm there'd be somebody who'd be able to, but yea na nothing at all...So yea actually my transition was a little bit different you know. I wasn't leaving the Army for another job, I was literally getting on a plane to go and have some fun. I planned on going for a year ya know, I was 28 and didn't want to be coming back in my mid-30s and be starting over again, I was like "fuck it I'll go for a year, and get work". I had a job lined up already, through a few of the boys who'd been builders, and then yea just went over there for 14 months I ended up doing. And yea I just called it "neverneverland", it was no worries, just did what the fuck I wanted you know, holidays, work. I was on contract so if I didn't work I didn't get paid...3 Engineer Regiment we called it...at times you'd have 10-20 ex-army guys. Yea they reckon there was always a new rotation coming through. The guys would do their two years and leave, then another couple would trip in...But that's been going on since 2003. It's just been huge, especially engineers...*

Keeping in contact with ex-army colleagues, as Tony did, can help one to overcome the challenges of transition. The relationships which develop in the military are often strong, and maintaining these bonds provides the supportive elements of shared service histories and camaraderie (Herman & Yarwood, 2014). Adjusting well through transition can rely heavily on support from others. Ongoing support, from people such

as family and friends, can help to foster a positive self image during transition. This support contributes to a successful adaptation from the soldier identity to civilian identity (Baillie & Danish, 1992). When satisfactory social support is provided, individuals are more likely to experience personal growth, and adapt positively following their military service (Linley & Joseph, 2004). Alan recalled how his transition was assisted by colleagues in his new workplace

> *…You get into a new office, you're in a new role, you're still not entirely sure of how to do, you don't know how to do this new job yet. All these new people to meet, like it's quite, it's scary but I think you'd find that switching between any jobs. You know just being in that new environment, with people you don't know, doing a thing you don't know ya know entirely, I think it would undo most people. But people I work with, the little team that I have is full of awesome people and that being able to get on with those guys, that helped the transition a lot as well...*

Social support from civilians, who are unrelated to the soldier identity, is likely to help transition (Lally, 2007). The support which Alan received from his new colleagues helped him to adapt to the civilian workforce. Peter's spouse and family were a source of support during his transition

> *Well obviously straight away spouse and family. Mrs was awesome ya know. She supported me throughout the whole thing. But it was nerves here at the same time for both of us. But she was great and obviously her family are awesome so, and my family live away but they were there on the phone and all that so yea...*

Social support has positive implications for health. Events which are stressful can be buffered by adequate social support (Ruvolo, 2004). Those who provide social support can assist former soldiers to piece together a plan for the future. Alternative options can be discussed with loved ones, dividing the burden of decision making (Stier, 2007). Family members and loved ones of the transitioning soldier are instrumental to transition, providing support which is often not provided by the military. Effective social support provides a productive alternative to enduring transition in isolation.

William's supportive partnership with his wife helped him to navigate his transition

> *...So we came back to Hamilton, and that's when I had to decide what do I do. It was Police or teaching, because they both interested me. Teaching ended up being the way to go, otherwise we would've both had to move to Wellington. So did a year at teachers college, we lived in Hamilton, my wife commuted out to here. Then literally within three days of finishing my teaching course I scored the job at [blank] College...So we scored that, moved, and we decided that we've both got jobs we may as well buy here, buy big. And we've been here ever since to be honest, and we love it...*

Social support, whatever the source, provides a valuable coping mechanism for the transition from the NZ Army to civilian life. Support may come from family, friends, spouses, work colleagues, and others. Such support provides a person in transition with useful material and psychological assistance, enhancing well-being and alleviating transition related stress (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Social support also contributes to appraisals of situations as less challenging, enabling challenges in transition to be overcome. Through the use of supportive relationships, former soldiers are better able to cope during their adaptation to civilian life (Cobb, 1976). Hunt and Robbins (2001) explained that high levels of social support were directly related to the post-war adjustments of Korean War prisoners of war and World War Two veterans. Their study explained two benefits of social support; a buffering effect which assists coping when confronted with potentially harmful events, and an overall effect which enhances well-being regardless of outside environments. Social support is therefore a useful coping mechanism in both challenging and benign environments. Ex-military comrades often provide such support, as Tony recalled, by helping former soldiers to make meaning of their military experiences. Veterans associations can also provide a setting for former comrades to discuss experiences with others who were there, creating shared understandings of the past (Hunt & Robbins, 2001). Another common source of social support is families and spouses. Having a supportive spouse is predicative of positive adjustment during transition (Osborne, 2012). Spouses often provide long term emotional and practical support, which continues for many years after military service (Hunt & Robbins, 2001). Social support, which the participants received from family,

friends, new colleagues, spouses, and former comrades, can enhance coping through transition and in the years following military service.

Theme Eight: Camaraderie

The theme of camaraderie represents a second highlight in the participants' military careers; the first having been discussed in the career highlights theme. Comprising two subthemes, treasured bonds and lost belonging, the theme of camaraderie shows the meaning attributed to the bond between soldiers.

Subtheme One: Treasured Bonds

Participants spoke favourably about the social environment and friendships forged within the military.

Tony recalled camaraderie as a valued aspect of his time in the NZ Army

> *Best parts, at the time working with your best mates, probably I knew that at the time. Joined up with most of them, played rugby with them, ended up flatting with them, going overseas with them, ya know forged some pretty strong relationships...*

Military camaraderie is unique from that experienced in other areas of society. From the first days of basic training, soldiers develop a sense of interdependence and team culture (Hale, 2008). The nature of army work, which involves working in cohesive teams, requires individuals to bond closely and contribute to the team. The result of military training is a closeness unlike that found between civilian friends; a deep emotional bond between soldiers (Green, Emslie, O'Neill, Hunt, & Walker, 2010). Soldiers are trained and prepared to deploy on overseas missions, and to selflessly serve the team before their own interests, often in life threatening situations. This manifests as a high level of devotion to each other; a deep attachment which is likened to that between mother and child (Yerushalmi, 1997). Such strong bonds, which are emotionally intense, provide a great deal of social gratification to soldiers, as Tony explained. Cohesion amongst soldiers is typical of the hegemonic masculinity espoused by the military. In line with

this dominant masculinity, soldiers are not only trained to show controlled aggression, but to care deeply for one another in a culture of reciprocal self sacrifice (Green et al., 2010).

Carl spoke fondly about the friendships he made during his service

> *Yea well first Basic (basic training) was pretty awesome. I remember that being pretty fun you know, good bunch of blokes and good physical shit...I do cherish the friendships I made there...I dunno yea the camaraderie and friendship was probably a highlight, some of the drinking and parties...*

Social relationships provide an important source of self definition. Social identity theory posits three aspects of self. Individual, which includes traits which make a person unique. Relational, which is formed in relation to close relationships one has with others. Finally, collective self, which is developed based on the groups to which one belongs (Hogg, Abrams, Otten, & Hinkle, 2004). The close bonds experienced by the participants are likely to contribute to the relational and collective aspects of their social identity. The close friendships they experience therefore represent defining aspects of their individual identities (Roncaglia, 2006). When a person identifies with a group, they internalise their social identity as part of their self concept. The group, and the associated bonds, then become an important aspect of who they are (Ruvolo, 2004). It becomes hard to distinguish between the individual self, the relational self, and the collective self. Such strong bonds, as recalled by the participants, form an integral part of the soldier's personal and social identity.

In addition to a sense of identity, camaraderie also satisfies the human need for belonging. Baumeister and Leary (1995) discussed Maslow's hierarchy, highlighting that needs for self esteem and actualization cannot be realised until belonging and love are attained. In order to achieve these needs, frequent interactions of a pleasant nature need to occur between people who care about each other's welfare. When such interactions occur, soldiers can fulfil needs for love and belonging, gaining personal satisfaction from close bonds with their comrades (Knowles & Gardner, 2008).

Paul recalled the satisfying social environment within the NZ Army

> *...the good memories and shit that I have of it it's always like you know like hanging out with the dudes and going to the mess and getting on the piss with your mates and shit all the time. You know it's like a really exclusive sort of environment. You live in the barracks with your mates and then you go to work with your mates and then you come home and get on the piss with them...so you know making really good mates I reckon is a real high point...*

Homophily explains how people enjoy interacting with those who display similar attributes to themselves (Hatch et al., 2013). Soldiers are likely to enjoy socialising together due to homophily. Through military training, soldiers develop military identities which are very similar (Hale, 2008). Shared military identities enable them to understand and appreciate each other's similarities, despite differing pre-military backgrounds. Positive relationships can be more easily formed when there is a shared understanding, and a congruence between perceptions and values. Such interactions are experienced as rewarding, which incentivises continued social interaction (Greenwald & Pettigrew, 2014). Soldiers are likely to experience such reward from camaraderie and find pleasure in their close friendships. The close nature of military friendships also helps to internalise the military identity. As emotional attachment and commitment increases as camaraderie develops, those role-based identities which soldiers possess also develop (Walker & Lynn, 2013). According to Myers (2014), a fusion between group and individual identities can occur, and this may explain the role of camaraderie in the growth of the army identity. When such a fusion occurs, one's social identity, such as the soldier identity, becomes indistinguishable from the individual identity. This increases conformity to group norms and the willingness to sacrifice self for the group. By identifying closely with others who share the soldier identity, the participants are more likely to develop a strong military social identity (Franke, 2000). This increased military identity, fuelled by common identities with other soldiers, leads to a stronger social identification and attachment to the organisation (Hogg et al., 2004). With this in mind, it is likely that participants perceive their comrades to be just as much a part of the NZ Army as the organisation itself, and their identification with comrades may increase their identification with the NZ Army.

William discussed the social highlights of his NZ Army service

> *The other thing that I'd say was a big plus about the military is the comradeship and the friendships that you make. Like the people that I joined with, like Michael, we met on the shuttle ride to Dunedin Airport, and we were both students, to go up to the OSB (Officer Selection Board) and we've been friends ever since...So there's like people that I talk to all the time...*

Adam also spoke about the value of military comradeship

> *I think the biggest highlight that sticks in my mind is the people that you meet. You know what it's like, you meet lots of great people, that's a lasting memory for me...*

Comradeship is valued by soldiers largely due to it's importance to the military. According to Demers (2013), comradeship is taught as a soldierly behaviour during basic training; a bond which separates them from their civilian counterparts. By participating in and enjoying camaraderie, soldiers are performing their army identity as dictated by their training. While individualistic behaviours involve self-interest, collectivist behaviours place the group above the individual (Rego & Cunha, 2009). The military fosters collectivism in soldiers, and as the participants have shown, soldiers gain great personal satisfaction from bonds formed in the military. Camaraderie can therefore be seen as mutually beneficial to both the military and the soldier. While close bonds provide soldiers with personal satisfaction, they provide the military with loyal and committed soldiers (Demers, 2011). The loss of these bonds, as shown in the next subtheme, is a significant part of the transition experience.

Subtheme Two: Lost Belonging

Participants described leaving the NZ Army as an experience of lost belonging which necessitated adaptation to a new social world.

Mike explained the absence of camaraderie following his departure from the military

> *Missing your mates is a big part, it's the sense of community that you had and the sense of belonging and purpose that you had in the Army and yea, trying to get that back...that was probably the best thing about being in the Army, was you're just going to work to hang out with your mates, and then yea...*

Henry also missed belonging to the military

> *...I miss being part of that gang I think, is what I miss the most...*

Having experienced the highlight of close military bonds, losing them may contribute to the challenge of transition. Camaraderie is a source of support for soldiers, helping them through difficult training and overseas deployments. The loss of such relationships is a common antecedent for depression, social dysphoria, anxiety, distress and grief (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Soldiers are likely to feel lonely and unhappy following the loss of close bonds. Camaraderie provided fulfilment and a satisfaction of each soldiers need for belonging. The loss of this belonging often effects one's cognitions, emotions, behaviours, and quality of life (Gere & MacDonald, 2010). As discussed by Brunger et al. (2013), the loss of camaraderie also has profound implications for the soldier identity. Camaraderie is seen as a reinforcer of the military identity, as strong relationships comprise a foundational aspect of army life. The loss of these bonds can undermine and fracture the soldier identity, leaving former soldiers to reconstruct a new sense of self. This change requires adaptation and adjustment, which Simon eluded to

> *Yea it's because you're around a lot of other people and then suddenly you weren't, you were on your own, and that was a bit, ya know, took a bit of getting used to because you were always in a fairly close environment with other people and that. And not having that close environment and others around you, you just went to work and you came home, and that was it. So that was a little different...*

While time and space can facilitate one's adaptation to the civilian world (Demers, 2011), social isolation can precipitate disorders such as depression and anxiety (Hatch et al., 2013). According to Black and Papile (2010), diminished social bonds with former comrades can foreshadow a socially isolated transition. Peter understood this social loss as part of the transition process, and valued those friendships which endured

You find that a lot of the mates that you were with you don't really, I wouldn't say it's disheartening but like you know, unless you're really close, you just don't really hear from them anymore. And that's not a bad thing...the reason you had that friendship is because you actually were stuck with each other. Well not stuck but you worked with each other, but yea my real close mates I do still keep in touch with. That's pretty cool yea...

Peter's comments indicate an understanding that, when one leaves the military, the bonds formed can be lost. It is likely that the relationships formed in the military become irrelevant upon leaving. These bonds are likely to have been motivated by a desire to construct a sense of oneself as a soldier through affiliation with other soldiers (Ruvolo, 2004). When a soldier leaves the army, and ceases to be a serving member, that affiliation no longer serves it's purpose and those relationships may end.

The theme of camaraderie showed the cherished bonds which exist between soldiers, and how transition alters these relationships. The next theme demonstrates how those in transition are confronted by the nuances of civilian culture.

Theme Nine: Cross Cultural Journey

Cross cultural journey presented as a strong theme during the thematic analysis. During transition the participants felt culturally different to civilians. Separated from the familiarity of the military, civilian culture appeared as a paradoxical environment which demanded adaptation.

Paul experienced a cross-cultural shift when he left the NZ Army

...when you're in the Army, I think you've got a really narrow world view and you know the things that you think are important are largely fabricated because your life is, well certainly if you're living on base or living on camp, you know your world becomes so small...I think you become sort of pretty narrow minded, because you're in that environment where everyone's just, you know a lot of people with very similar sort of opinions on things and because you're so

> *isolated you become really like, you become kind of radicalised you know...So you get out of the Army and you kind of, all of a sudden you meet these people who have ideas that are different from yours and you know I guess you come to sort of appreciate that there are other world views...*

A need for cultural adaptation was also mentioned by Tony

> *...I think when you've been in eight odd years it takes a while for you to click out of what you know...*

Culture is integral to the experience of transitioning from the NZ Army. Culture refers to those shared practices and values which are normative to a specific social group (Koenig et al., 2014). When living in a military environment, the appropriate norms become ingrained aspects of one's behaviour (Greenwald & Pettigrew, 2014). It is within culturally embedded environments, whether they are civilian or military, that we learn what is normal. Culture is a diverse part of humankind which influences a person's cognitive and behavioural tendencies (Hogg et al., 2004). The military is a culturally rich environment, with unique values and norms which drive the behaviour of soldiers. According to Higate (2001), soldiers develop a form of dependency for military culture and the highly structured nature of army life. Soldiers are provided with all of their basic needs during service, and are somewhat institutionalised, as opposed to living independently like their civilian counterparts. Soldiers become accustomed to having their life decisions made by the military hierarchy, and often fail to develop the ability to self regulate (Jones, 2013). While living within the military culture, soldiers are taken care of by the organisation, diminishing the need for self regulation and enabling complete devotion to the group. While this is normal in the military, the transitioning soldier needs to adapt to the individualistic norms of civilian culture, and become dependent on oneself rather than on the military (Jones, 2013).

Military retirees are likely to experience a culture shock upon re-entry to civilian life. Having bridged the gap from civilian to military culture when joining, the reverse must now occur. Civilian culture can be confronting to the retiring soldier, accompanied by feelings of being alone and misunderstood (Black & Papile, 2010). Having left military culture, which had shaped their identity, there is now a need to reintegrate and mould

identities to civilian culture (Koenig et al., 2014). This cross cultural journey can leave one feeling out of place and culturally different to new people and surroundings; an overall sense of reverse culture shock (Adler, 1975). Gary explained how his army identity contributed to feelings of dissimilarity

> *...like my old school friend he was a hippie...It was a different atmosphere than anything that I was ever, it was not me. I went into a situation with a group of people that I wouldn't normally hang out with...I didn't identify with anybody to begin with, so I was still very much Army because I didn't fit in with them at all...*

This sense of contrast between oneself and civilians is likely the result of carrying the army identity into post-military life. This identity, which develops in the military, enables one's service to be furnished with personal meaning (Hale, 2008). However, the army identity is created with relevance to a military environment which differs from civilian society. Also, army identities are likely to coexist with similar military self schemas, leading to a self perception of being a soldier, and to cognitions and behaviours tailored for military culture (Markus, 1977). Former soldiers who enter civilian life with such self schemata are likely to encounter cultural challenge. As discussed by Koenig et al. (2014), transitioning veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan recalled demanding transitions, exacerbated by the conflict between their military identity and civilian culture. Civilian and military cultures differ in many ways, and the identities developed by those who inhabit them often differ similarly. Tim revealed his perceptions of civilians in the workforce, comparing military and civilian cultures

> *...Because they often ask me "what happens to a guy in the Army who didn't work?", I said "we didn't have any". We didn't. Might for five minutes but he'd soon change his bloody attitude when he got a thick ear, I said "we didn't have malingerers, everybody was a worker" so yea...Completely different, and of course all the cuddles out here, they all give each other a cuddle and I say I don't do cuddles (laughing), oh don't touch...*

Mike held similar views towards civilians, denigrating their work ethic in comparison to that encouraged in the NZ Army

> *When you first come to fuckin civi-street you realise how fuckin useless people*
> *are...Oil and Gas is no different man, there's some fuckin massive spastics there*
> *that I don't know how the fuck they get by. Yea they just need to be led. They're*
> *just used to someone always picking up the slack you know. The New Zealand*
> *Army especially what I've noticed is if someone can see that something is fuckin*
> *going to shit someone grips it up and fuckin gets the job done. Whereas these*
> *dudes would rather, they're still getting paid to fuckin do fuck all or do heaps...*

During military service, soldiers are trained to conform with military norms, which include high standards of work efficiency and discipline. Conformity, as discussed by Greenwald and Pettigrew (2014), often leads to favouritism for one's group over an outside group. Such ingroup favouritism is said to lead to an increased acceptance for group norms, and discrimination towards out-groups. Soldiers are therefore likely to perceive civilians as the out-group, and develop negative stereotypes for the civilian population.

Social categorization is a common tool of group development, allowing people to fit others into categories which suit their self-perceptions. Such categorization is often done in a way which aggrandizes the in-group, in order to symbolically position one's own group as superior to the other (Rabbie, Schot, & Visser, 1989). Such categorization, or social comparison, enables individuals to feel pride in their group, and to experience heightened self esteem through their membership. These social phenomena, which are largely enacted through discourse, provide a way of positively evaluating oneself and the treasured group (Myers, 2014). By categorizing civilians in such a way, they are not seen as individuals, but rather through the lens of stereotyping. Civilians can therefore be viewed by soldiers as prototypical, sharing the same inferior traits rather than possessing rich individual differences (Hogg et al., 2004). Stereotyping usually includes positive views of one's ingroup at the same time, providing a clear comparison of the generalised characteristics of civilians versus those of soldiers. With a clear perception of civilians and military, albeit generalised and socially construed, one can build a strong military self concept and identity. According to Myers (2014), much of social comparison and ingroup favouritism is motivated by the personal search for a self-concept which is positive. By stereotyping civilians, and positioning them as

inferior to military culture, those who espouse the military identity are wielding the power of hegemonic masculinity (Hinojosa, 2010). Viewing and speaking about civilians as inferior, and as less competent and ill-disciplined, enables a hegemonically masculine identity to be developed, strengthening the self concept through social comparison (Hale, 2008). In this sense, negative perceptions of civilians are likely motivated towards enhancing the soldiers self esteem and military identity, rather than towards alienating or mistreating civilians. Peter maintained his army identity and views after leaving, which is likely to have cued frustrations with his civilian oil-drilling colleagues

> *...found it hard to adjust to the way civilians acted...people really sweat the small stuff ya know, just whinge and moan about pathetic little things...At the start I tried to fight it big time, I was like "oh fuckin this is stupid, they're doing it the wrong way, they're doing it three times the wrong way"...And then um I had some issues with a couple of the blokes out there, they were just fuckin real catty and cliquey and all that, and I kind of just, one day he was bitching and moaning and I told him to pull his fuckin head in and that, yea it kinda hit home to me that you know, people out on civi street, it's not the same...I see things from a soldiers perspective a lot of the time, I'm like, I wanna tell people just to harden the fuck up, and get on with it...you just can't do that in civilian life...I dislike people that aren't reliable, it really pisses me off. Why'd you say you're guna do it if you ain't gunna do it ya know, just stuff like that...*

Peter's comments highlight a disjuncture between civilian and military cultures, specifically around work related expectations and behaviours. Military cultures contrast with civilian life by nature of the military masculine ideal, which disparages the expression of emotions and encourages emotional control and toughness (Green et al., 2010). Having learned such values, and developed views of military efficiency as superior, civilian work behaviours are likely to contrast with soldiers previous experiences. There are two options for the transitioning person in this situation; to stoically oppose civilian cultural norms, or to acknowledge the need to adapt across cultures.

Henry provided another anecdote of cultural incongruity in his new workplace

> *Well work was a bit difficult because, not in any major ways, but the harder way was learning to write civilian again. You know, "can you have that up by 1400hrs", well you know with civilians you've gotta go you know "how was your day?" and ya know "what were the dogs doing?" and you know. So not that I was in long but you realise when I was in the Defence Force you know you don't write flowery emails. You write the data that you need to express and you get it done...So just having to pull back from that sort of you know "what do you think of that?", "that's crap, I don't like it, I think it's rubbish", you know oh well that's a bit harsh, you know it's like oh yea it probably is. I need to frame that better, I mean I still agree with what I said but I need to dress it up a bit, you know...*

Adapting from military to civilian culture requires one to identify, understand, and accommodate the idiosyncrasies of civilian culture. Military service can isolate soldiers from civilian culture, and from normative civilian behaviours (Spiegel & Shultz, 2003). Soldiers are unlikely to intimately encounter civilian culture until their transition, at which point they must transform their social habits to suit the civilian domain (Schuetz, 1945). This transformation is a challenging endeavour, as former soldiers learn to behave in accordance with civilian cultural standards.

As discussed previously, a prejudice towards civilian culture is likely to enhance the self concept of serving soldiers. However, when they leave the military world, such views can isolate and alienate them from civilians. Avoiding this outcome requires an acceptance of cultural differences, and a willingness to adapt to new conventions. According to Adler et al. (2011), for former soldiers to adapt in transition they must adjust militarised cognitive habits, embracing civilian skills such as the ability to identify and convey emotions. Adjustment and adaptation are important ingredients for a successful transition from military to civilian culture.

The next section, self and self, shows the journey of identity adaptation experienced in transition. Participants reconsidered their personal and social identities, and drew strength from behaviours conditioned through military service.

Section Three: Self and Self

Self and Self includes the three themes of Identity Loss and Continuity, Alternate Identities, and Conditioned Behaviours.

Theme Ten: Identity Loss and Continuity

The theme of identity loss and continuity highlighted the personal value of the army identity. Transition led participants to reassess their identities and to develop strategies to retain esteemed military identities.

Mike explained the personal importance of his army identity

> *Like I don't think you ever stop missing the Army, in all honesty. Because I'd been in the Army since 17 it's all your formative fuckin years. It's a big part of who you are, especially how it's developed you as an adult...*

Military service represents a key developmental stage in the lives of those who serve. According to Herman and Yarwood (2014), the personal identity of soldiers is largely a military one, especially for those who serve for many years. Leaving the army involves leaving part of themselves behind, and this can lead former soldiers to grieve for the loss of personal identity (Robertson, 2013). Transition threatens one's sense of self, and presents an often intimidating need to manage changing identities. Reshaping the identity and self concept can be stressful, as this requires one to learn new self-conceptions and behaviours (Burke, 1991). This is especially challenging when the identity loss is profound, as seen in retiring gymnasts, who often do not know themselves beyond their sport (Lavallee & Robinson, 2007). Soldiers are prone to such challenge when transitioning, as they have to revisit what Erikson referred to as the identity development stage. This stage typically occurs between adolescence and adulthood, enabling the formation of a coherent self concept and a bridging of the divide from teenager to adult (Sneed, Whitbourne, & Culang, 2006). Transitioning from the NZ Army leads one to question the ingredients of their identity in such a way, as Peter revealed

I'll be honest with you. One of the difficult things is leaving and next minute you're just nobody again...In the Army you kind of felt that you were someone, you had a purpose, you were proud, wore the uniform you know, and yea definitely when you leave you're just like "uh, just a fuckin regular anybody" ya know. That was hard. I think that's an ego thing again as well, because I always was proud that I was a soldier, ya know. And then one of those things that you're so proud of is just gone all of a sudden. Um yea, also what was hard is moving off into my new career and being a soldier didn't mean nothing really...I'd still class myself as 50/50 soldier/civilian I guess...I just will always identify myself in my mind as a soldier...There've been a few times when people have said "you're not a soldier anymore" and I'm like "well, it played ten years part of my life, it's always gunna be there" if you know what I mean, and also for those younger years, when you are developing I guess, as an adult, it was, 18-19, everything I knew was about being a soldier so yea. I'll always identify myself as an infantry soldier. Proud of it, love it, ya know, cocky about it as we are, no doubt about it you know...

When soldiers leave the army, they must undergo the personal transition of negotiating their identity (Jones, 2013). Redefining identity is an important part of adjusting through the transition experience, and is often made more difficult when the past identity remains strong. A strong role-based identity has the potential to restrict development of a varied self-concept, and the loss of such a dominant identity can be challenging (Martin et al., 2014). Alternatively, when one can envision a variety of possible identities, they are more capable of adapting to an identity loss (Myers, 2014).

The theory of liminality can be revisited to conceptualise the renegotiation of identity after leaving the NZ Army. According to Herman and Yarwood (2014), transition is a process of identity evolution, within which liminality is just one stage. Liminality, the stage of being between old and new identities, is a natural part of growing through change. Liminality should be seen as a time of personal opportunity, rather than as a catastrophic loss of self. Liminality provides the time and opportunity to reconstruct the self towards the restoration of an identity which relates to a new environment (Vindevogel et al., 2013). Through this liminal stage, those who identify highly with the military are more likely to preserve an army identity (Franke, 2000). Post-service

commitment to the army identity indicates that it can provide an indispensable source of personal meaning and pride.

High commitment to the NZ Army identity was also expressed by Tim

> *...You know what website I read every night?...My wife's watching coronation street, I go into this one. This is a soldiers website...so I know everything that's going on...brilliant photographs...army, navy and airforce...I can relate to all that.*

Robert explained his strong soldier identity, and how the part-time NZ Army helps to maintain it

> *I still see myself as a soldier. Once a soldier always a soldier, and by virtue of the fact that I'm still in the TF. I always saw myself as a soldier first, even though I was a PTI (NZ Army Physical Training Instructor)...*

Military life has an enduring influence on the personal identity of those who serve (Brewin et al., 2011). The soldier role constitutes a proud aspect of their past, and a highlight of their life story. During transition, the former soldier is faced with two options; to maintain an aspect of the treasured military identity, or to relegate it to the past. Given the value attached to the army identity, it is common for it to be partially maintained. According to Herman and Yarwood (2014), this continuity of identity provides a way of coping with the end of the military career, and enables one to maintain a precious aspect of their self concept. While adaptation to civilian life is often challenging, maintaining an aspect of their military identity can help former soldiers to retain the pride and meaning of their past career (Burkhart & Hogan, 2015). For Alan and William, the part-time NZ Army provided a way of continuing to identify as a soldier. Alan said

> *Probably Engineer, I always describe myself as an Engineer, but soldier as well. Pretty proud of my nearly ten years service. I don't like to think of myself as a veteran, or ex-serviceman, because I'm still serving (in the TF), so I'm still happy to think of myself as army...*

William mirrored this sentiment

> *I rejoined the TF when I came back, in 2011...I just missed it, really wanted to get back involved...*

As discussed by Koenig et al. (2014), continuity is commonly used by retiring soldiers to ease the adjustment process. Soldiers often seek a comfortable balance between their soldier identity and the civilian identities which develop during their transition process. The achievement of this balance is likely to produce a functional, multi-faceted sense of self, with a synergy of military and civilian identities. However, as cautioned by Herman and Yarwood (2014), it is vital that new identities continue to be developed alongside the continued soldier identity. If dual military-civilian identities are not achieved, continuity can be maladaptive, hindering the creation of new identities which are relevant to the post-military reality. Continuing to identify as a soldier, if not combined with an openness to recreate civilian identities, can lead one to live in relation to the past rather than the present and future. Baillie and Danish (1992) discussed this as a problem in the transitions of professional athletes, who show high-commitment to their careers, often clinging to their athlete identities to the exclusion of new identities. Green et al. (2010) also discussed the potential harm of seeking identity continuity, through research focussed on homeless ex-British Army veterans. These veterans were sleeping on the streets, as well as heavily drinking, in order to regain the sense of belonging they had experienced in the military. Despite the dangers of continuity discussed in previous research, the participants used continuity as a productive way to keep their prized soldier identity alive. Henry explained

> *Yea I think I still have that as part of who I am...I think that's still an aspect of who I am...I think partly because I'm in the Reserves, I think that definitely helps...ex-serviceman I suppose, yea I'm ex-Regular. I suppose you're never not though. In my mind I'm never not a soldier anymore, you know an Army Chaplain...*

Continuity provides a valuable way of coping in transition, and of maintaining a positive identity after leaving the NZ Army. According to Breakwell's Identity

Principle, the maintenance of an identity which is marked by control and competence will support self-efficacy. The absence of such an identity will produce feelings of powerlessness and lost control (Brunger et al., 2013). Through the challenge of transition, and the identity threat it presents, continuity helps former soldiers to maintain a strong identity and high self-efficacy. By maintaining their soldier identity, often through reconnecting with military environments, they are better able to cope with the identity challenges of transition (Burkhart & Hogan, 2015). Continuity can preserve a sense of identity, enabling one to gradually adapt while conserving pride in their soldiering past.

The next theme, alternate identities, sheds more light on the identity journey of transition; a process of identity contemplation and reformation.

Theme Eleven: Alternate Identities

While the previous theme acknowledged a continuity of the soldier identity, the theme of alternate identities reveals the adoption of other identity aspects during transition. The participants also considered their deservedness of veteran status in search of a post-military self concept.

Alan felt he did not deserve to refer to himself as a Veteran

> *...Technically I've been in the Army and I've been on operations so yes I'm a Veteran, but I feel like I need to be retired you know, late 50s early 60s, before I call myself a Veteran. There's a lot of honour in that word I think and when I think of Veterans I think of old guys that served in World War Two and Vietnam and actually did war fighting. So I wouldn't think of myself as that...until you've done a beach landing under fire and killed lots of Nazis, I'd be undeserved of that word...*

Paul showed a similar perspective

> *I dunno I kind of feel like you would've had to have done a tour to be a Veteran. Yea to me a Veteran is someone who's like served in World War Two or some*

> *shit. You know like I don't feel like you're entitled to be a Veteran if you spent 6*
> *months in Timor...Yea like there's guys who had rough tours in Afghan and shit*
> *like yea sure take it, but yea I dunno I think Veteran probably has a bit more*
> *meaning to it. You know some connotations of something a bit more than*
> *hanging out in Linton for four years...*

Alan and Paul indicated that certain identity standards should be met, such as having served in combat, to earn the veteran identity. Having served during peace keeping deployments, rather than in wartime, they felt undeserving of this identity. This inability to self-categorize as a veteran, despite having served on overseas operations, denies the former soldier of this valuable post-military identity. The veteran identity enables one to access the global veteran culture, providing an identity with which to bridge the military-civilian divide. According to Ray and Heaslip (2011), the veteran culture provides a valuable form of social support to military veterans, with a unique blend of civilian and military cultures. Identification as a veteran enables one to belong to this community, and maintain a sense of belonging and connection which is often lost in transition (Burkhart & Hogan, 2015). However, by applying exclusive standards to the veteran identity, such as the prerequisite for combat experience, those outside this category cannot internalise a veteran self concept. As discussed by Campbell, Assanand, and Di Paula (2000), the self concept is a cognitive-schema comprised of beliefs and memories about oneself, and provides a tool for self-categorization. In order to identify as a veteran, one must feel they meet the benchmarks for the veteran self concept. Tim, who served during the Vietnam War rather than on peace-keeping missions, felt he deserved to call himself a veteran

> *Oh I use the word Veteran. I'm a Veteran. All the time. And even now a lot of*
> *these people think a Veteran means an old person. They don't think of a Veteran*
> *as a soldier or a serviceman...we always used to joke that we were the civilians*
> *of the army, you know being engineers. It was about as close as you could*
> *get...but I still very much identify myself as ex-serviceman, very proud of it...*

While the veteran identity appeared to be unattainable without wartime or combat experience, other identities were internalised by the participants through their transition.

Tony felt ineligible for the veteran identity, however he described other self-relevant and cherished identities

> *Yea I really struggle with "Veteran". I don't think I did enough to deserve it aye. Like my Dad served in Vietnam, my Granddad served in World War Two, they're Veterans, and then some of the boys in Afghan and that have the right to probably call themselves Veterans...I dunno what the other guys that served in Iraq would've thought. It was pretty dangerous, but yea just feels strange aye, putting that tag, ya know like I've got the badge (NZ Veterans Badge), I've never worn it, I just can't do it...I'm a husband, which I'm very proud of. Father, with another one on the way next week. And then yea, and Operations Manager...I'm very proud of what I do with my work in the company. I'm very much a company-man you know, I have found that, even though the last two jobs I haven't really loved. I've been very dedicated and loyal to those people you know, whether that's been bred into me from the Army as well. But yea very much identify myself with my career as Operations Manager...*

Investing in identities during transition, other than the military identity, is an important aspect of adapting to the new environment. The transition process provides the freedom to develop one's personal identity, having cast aside the full-time military environment (Osborne, 2012). Possible identities need to be considered, as the veteran identity was, and tested for compatibility with an individual's self-conceptions. The former soldier enters a process of personal negotiation, evaluating possible identities for their value, and selecting or eliminating them accordingly (Demers, 2013). Such negotiations will continue until one realises a valued and relevant self concept and identity structure. This ability to adapt identities to changing environments is referred to as identity balance. According to Whitbourne, Sneed, and Skultety (2002), those who are capable of accommodating and abandoning identities are able to maintain self-efficacy in the face of life changes such as career transition and aging. It is this flexibility of self, the ability to evolve in such a personal way, which facilitates a smooth transition into civilian society. Those who understand that identities take work, that we are always becoming ourselves, rather than possessing concrete identities, can benefit from the flexibility of identity. As described by Nazar and Van der Heijden (2013), identity is evolving, constituting a story of self which is written throughout life. Those who are able to

reconstruct their identities as their lives continue, altering themselves to correspond to new realities, are more likely to flourish through transition.

Rachel and Simon described some of their non-military identities. Rachel listed her post-NZ Army identities

> *Mother, cleaner (laughing). Yea that's pretty much it aye...*

Simon spoke about his predominant civilian identity

> *I'm a Clinical Dental Technician, yea, I identify with that. But if people say "oh where'd you learn?", "in the Army"...or I say I'm an ex-serviceman...We were always told "you're a soldier first and foremost and a Dental Technician second" you know, but I always say I'm a Dental Technician, that's what we were, and used to say to us "you're a soldier first", "na I'm a Dental Technician", I used to piss the RSM off something horrible (laughing)...*

The fluidity of identity allows individuals to develop diverse notions of self, and to transform through their transition. Despite the impression of identity as central and permanent, identities are always changeable. It is through this fluid nature of identity that adaptation from the military to civilian world is feasible (Herman & Yarwood, 2014). By renovating identities, those in transition can embrace new ways of seeing themselves in relation to new social worlds (Berzonsky, 2004). This ability to advance identities in the face of change allows envisaged post-military selves to be realised. Development of new and relevant identities will encourage a successful transition, allowing adjustment to changing career and personal contexts. Gary described his adjustment, embracing a new career while maintaining his soldier identity as a source of pride

> *I have transitioned now, but it's only been recent, and I can sort of look back and realise that I'm fully into the world now. It's got a lot to do with your career too, because once you start looking forward and going "these are my prospects and this is what I'm doing" you look back less and less...And I'll always be proud that I did that, and the Army is very much a part of who I am, put it on*

> *every CV, ya know it's in my life and even though it was only a few years it means a lot...*

Gary's account, and perception of an ending to his transition, suggests a reconstructed post-military identity which suits civilian life and retains pride for the past. The accomplishment of such a well founded identity structure can take a period of time. The transition of gang-leavers provides an illustration of this gradual identity adaptation. According to Bubolz and Simi (2015), gang exit entails a gradual distancing from the gang, a slow disidentification from the gang identity and members. Following this detachment, the personal identity of gang leavers expands to incorporate non-gang aspects into the self concept. This gradual identity transformation was alluded to by Ben, as he explained an identity shift during his first year of transition

> *...I felt like it took me last year to come to terms that I wasn't in the military anymore. I'd constantly find myself comparing what I was doing to what I had been doing...But I feel like this year there's been that shift where I'm a student now, an adult student with his own life going on in the background, but I've reconciled that that was my old life...I never felt like I was 100% military. I always felt like there was a portion of myself that was just me...like I was the guy who reads comic books, or doesn't want to go outside for a run when it's raining, or spends his weekends watching horror movies...when I joined civilian life that part started to expand until it overtook the guy who was a soldier first...*

Having a multifaceted identity is helpful during the transition. Individuals are likely to experience a sense of loss for their military identity. When their identity includes other aspects, which can endure the seperation from the military, a sense of self can be retained (Osborne, 2012). Development of a complex sense of self has a buffering effect on stress associated with transitioning from the military. By possessing other identity aspects which can bolster the self concept, potential stress related to loss of the soldier identity can be mitigated (Ruvolo, 2004).

Transition is marked by an initial stage of liminality and a need to adapt to new circumstances. Following liminality, an experience of self renewal is typical, entailing the formulation of unique identity structures which facilitate coping and thriving within

non-military worlds. The key to successful self-renewal is the construction of an identity which accommodates one's newfound ex-soldier status, as well as non-military aspects of oneself (Hope, 2012). As described by Demers (2013), this can be viewed as the drafting of a clear life narrative which acknowledges bygone identities, and provides a coherent story of past, present and future. Having generated a clear narrative of one's life thus far, and of the anticipated future, the former soldier can forge a positive identity which is pertinent to new surroundings. At this point, while acknowledging the eternal fluidity of identity, the transition to a post-military self concept can be considered complete (Vindevogel et al., 2013).

The next theme, conditioned behaviours, shows how participants' transitions were supported by strengths gained during military service.

Theme Twelve: Conditioned Behaviours

Conditioned behaviours presented as a strong theme during the thematic analysis. Participants described the behavioural benefits of having served in the NZ Army, including hardiness, work ethic and loyalty.

Mike discussed valuable habits gained from his service, and demonstrated his hardiness through an ability to cope in austere environments

> *Yea your time management, you always get shit ready, you're always on time, 5 minutes before. There's a lot of fuckin good habits that you gain. I think fuckin in terms of cleanliness and order and shit the rest of the world sees you as OCD, but it's like fuck you're just being thorough. It's very hard having to dumb down those habits as well. You kind of have to, to get along with people. It's not too bad. There's a lot of good habits that come from being in the Army...We had a couple of rounds (bullets) skip in front of us and one roll over (vehicle accident) when I was driving and another one when someone else was. I dunno, nothing that I would say was traumatic. Like you see some messed up shit, but nothing overly traumatic. I think the worst one was when one of our informants (a local Afghani providing information to NZ Forces) got disembowelled but that was*

> *"eh". We had his body in the car, cunts pulled us over, opens the door and "oh fuck"...*

Military training is stereotyped as a pathway to maturity and discipline, especially for young men. Soldiers learn a new standard of discipline, adopting daily behaviours which are conducted with military precision and attention to detail. When a trained soldier enters civilian life they bring a set of conditioned behaviours which enabled them to function within military culture. Whether they choose to maintain these behaviours is often irrelevant to their successful transition. Rather, according to Herman and Yarwood (2014), the exertion of personal control is what matters,. Having left the military, former soldiers are able to be agents of their own behaviour, rather than conforming to military norms. It is this regained behavioural control that provides personal empowerment during transition.

According to Maddi (2006), hardy attitudes can be developed through training and experience, enabling soldiers to cope effectively in stressful environments. Hardiness is comprised of three elements; commitment to continue through stressful situations, control of difficult external conditions, and perceptions of high pressure circumstances as challenging or rewarding (Maddi, 2006). Hardy attitudes are likely to facilitate coping during the transition process, as hardy individuals perceive stress as a meaningful challenge (Britt et al., 2001).

Conditioned behaviours from military service are likely to take many forms. Gary explained how the work ethic he learned spurred his educational success

> *...So having gone to study after having been in the Army was really good for me because if I'd done it when I left school I probably would have failed, but the Army teaches you a lot about just commitment...that work ethic to just continue and do the job you have to do and the best that you can do it. So did really well in study and got like first in class and that sort of stuff...*

Service within the military is likely to lead to the development of positive traits which are useful in civilian life. Identification as a soldier implies an internalisation of the values, behaviours and motivations associated with that role. The self concepts of

soldiers are likely to be constructed in reference to military behaviours, such as the work ethic explained by Gary (Walker & Lynn, 2013). When an individual leaves the NZ Army, this self concept may still exert influence over their behaviour. Those behaviours which enabled effective functioning in the military can translate as personal strengths in civilian life. Despite having left the NZ Army, the soldier identity and it's related behaviours can leave a lasting impression on one's character. Peter described how loyalty and hardiness learned in the NZ Army influenced his post-military behaviour

> *...Oh I guess a bit of a staunch person, staunch in the way that um friends are very important, try to be loyal and ya know as best a friend as I can. Help out my mates, and my wife and all that. But I think that kind of also goes hand in hand of a soldier if ya know what I mean...Yea I'd say 50/50 civilian/soldier. I mean for instance I was down Queenstown for my honeymoon and I was snowboarding and I bloody decided "right, I'm gunna climb that fuckin peak there, 'cause there might be some big view or something". I was climbing up and I was like "fuck this sucks, what am I doing this for?" ya know. Then I was like, I remember thinking to myself "nup, you're a fuckin grunt (infantry soldier), shut up and keep going" ya know. Like that's the way I was thinking, just to give you a little example.*

Behaviours which are typical of the soldier identity can be viewed as remnants of military training. According to Green et al. (2010), soldiers learn to display soldierly behaviours, such as loyalty and hardiness. Military training imbues each individual with such characteristics, enabling them to contribute to the success of military operations. From a social perspective, it is in the best interests of soldiers to behave in accordance with their training, as prototypical behaviours promote positive feedback from others (Hogg et al., 2004). Stereotypical soldierly behaviours are therefore reinforced during service, encouraging soldiers to behave in line with their training. By behaving in such a manner, soldiers internalise the values and norms of the military, strengthening their soldier identity. This is referred to as a process of deindividuation, as soldiers lose a sense of their pre-military self, and tend towards the identity and behaviours acquired through their training (Myers, 2014). Membership within the NZ Army generates a

military social identity, leading to soldierly behaviours, such as those which the participants have perceived as strengths (Matschke & Sassenberg, 2012).

Hardiness was highlighted repeatedly by the participants as a benefit of having served. There are various benefits to hardy attitudes, including enhanced coping when events are perceived as threatening (Schok et al., 2010), and increased hopefulness during adversity (Griffith & West, 2013). Hardiness is therefore likely to support the transition process, reinforcing the ability to cope when confronted with challenges. Tony recalled some challenging situations during his service, demonstrating the utility of hardy attitudes in the NZ Army environment

> *In Iraq for instance we got rocket attacked, putting up wire when there's big riots going on and we had big Challenger Tanks as our security, shit like that you know. At the time it didn't freak me out, doesn't freak me out now...Heaps of minor accidents, you know guys on the job site getting hurt, cutting fingers or getting knocked out by bits of timber. Bailey Bridges going in the gap, those sort of things. Being out on a bridge in Iraq for fuckin thirty hours and rounds (bullets fired by the enemy) getting popped off (laughing)...*

Such an ability to cope in challenging environments may facilitate a successful transition. Research suggests that hardiness reduces stress and enhances health and performance (Maddi, 2006). An ideal outcome of transition is to grow and adapt after leaving the NZ Army. Hardiness supports this growth in the face of adversity, and enhances one's ability to bounce back positively, rather than following a negative pathway during transition (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004).

Having presented the findings of this study, through the twelve themes, the next chapter provides a discussion of transition support interventions.

Chapter Four: Interventions

Given the findings of this research, it is relevant to review suggested interventions in order to understand how future transition support initiatives might be designed in New Zealand. Previous research in the field of military transition provides insights into modes of support. Two specific areas of focus have been recommended when considering transition support; identity and vocation.

Brunger et al. (2013) emphasised the need for support which facilitates identity adjustment during transition, rather than focussing on vocational aspects. Suggested identity interventions are centred around reconstruction of personal narratives which combine service experiences with the post-military reality. This narrative reconstruction aims to enable former soldiers to reimagine themselves as civilians, developing non-military identities with which to lead productive lives (Demers, 2013). According to Demers (2011), former soldiers are often distressed by feelings of being torn between civilian and military identities. Such problems can be addressed by using socially supportive environments to improve self-knowledge and make sense of one's past. Engagement with other veterans enables such support, as they can share familiar stories, reflecting and developing meaningful past narratives (Wilson, Leary, Mitchell, & Ritchie, 2009). In addition to making sense of the past, gaining self awareness is another important output of identity-focussed interventions. Athletes are encouraged to foster a broad self concept during their careers, mitigating the sense of athletic identity loss caused by retirement (Martin et al., 2014). Developing such self awareness can help former soldiers to develop values, talents, and interests to incorporate into their post-military identities.

Practical career assistance is also a valued part of transition support. In addition to training in job search and interviewing, introductions to industry are a suggested intervention. According to Baruch and Quick (2009), exposure to specific non-military industries can help second careers to be smoothly established. Knowledge about the functioning of industries, as well as possible roles within them, can help second careers to be selected and pursued. An understanding of civilian work cultures, before they are encountered, can also enable soldiers to comprehend the cross cultural adjustment their transition will demand.

Individual counselling is widely acknowledged as an effective means of delivering transition support. This approach enables each retiree's needs to be identified, and offers a secure environment within which to voice concerns and difficulties related to transition. For example, behavioural counselling can address and modify unhelpful behaviours and cognitions which contribute to poor transitional adjustment (Baillie & Danish, 1992). Counsellors can also support soldiers in organising the vocational and personal aspects of the transition, ensuring that a sense of control is gained during this chaotic time of life change (Amdur et al., 2011). Support from counsellors can also include help with career decision making, translation of curriculum vitae from military to civilian language, and job and financial planning (Clemens & Milsom, 2008).

There are various examples of transition support interventions which exist globally. An assessment of their helpfulness is beyond the scope of this research. However, a selection of initiatives are listed below to provide an understanding of transition assistance programmes:

Veterans First Point: This is a veteran-run organisation which supports veterans in Scotland. They provide peer support, psychological and psychiatric services (http://www.veteransfirstpoint.org.uk/) (Green et al., 2010).

Career Transition Partnership (CTP): CTP provides various forms of support to soldiers leaving the British Army. These include bridging assistance in the form of training in curriculum vitae writing, interviewing and self-promotion. CTP also helps soldiers to undergo trade specific training, such as building apprenticeships, and transferral of skills to work as school teachers, prior to departing the military. Leavers are provided support for two years following their departure date (https://www.ctp.org.uk/futurehorizons) (Herman & Yarwood, 2014).

National Athlete Career and Education (NACE) Program/Personal Excellence: NACE, a program now renamed as Personal Excellence, provides Australian athletes with development in educational and career skills. This enables them to prepare for post-sporting lives while continuing to compete (http://www.ausport.gov.au/ais/personal_excellence) (Martin et al., 2014).

Peace of Mind Program (POM): The Israeli Centre for the Treatment of Psychotrauma designed this program which is implemented within the Israel Defence Force and Canada. Based on building of resilience, the POM Program uses adventure training models to develop self-concept and normalise traumatic experiences among serving and retiring soldiers (http://www.pomcanada.com/our-mission) (Baum et al., 2013).

Veterans Transition Network (VTN): The University of British Columbia developed this program, which provides counselling and support groups to Canadian veterans experiencing challenging transitions. VTN courses are paid for by donations, and they employ mental health professionals to provide social, career and self development advice (https://vtncanada.org/) (Black & Papile, 2010).

Operational Stress Injury Social Support Program: This Canadian program provides a peer support network to service members before and after discharge (https://www.osiss.ca/en/) (Mansfield, Bender, Hourani, & Larson, 2011).

Coming Home Project (CHP): The CHP assists United States veterans of Afghanistan and Iraq to reintegrate into civilian life. Retreats are provided for military veterans, their families and military care providers. Female-only retreats are also conducted. Techniques including mindfulness and relaxation are taught to help to reduce deployment related trauma, as well as facilitate the post-military transition (http://www.cominghomeproject.net/) (Bobrow, Cook, Knowles, & Vieten, 2012).

US Army Job Assistance Centre: Job counsellors are employed within this US Army department. They facilitate the transition of soldiers, providing vocational training to enhance skills related to securing civilian work (Gowan et al., 2000).

Post 9/11 GI Bill: United States military retirees who have served since September 11, 2001, are provided with funding to support post-service education. These benefits can also be transferred to fund education for their children or spouse (Kelty et al., 2010).

Team Rubicon: Ex-soldiers within the United States are able to participate in disaster relief and community work with Team Rubicon. This provides an opportunity to regain self worth and a sense of purpose after leaving the military. This also allows civilian society to benefit from the skills they gained in the military (http://www.teamrubiconusa.org/).

Chapter Five: Conclusions

Research Limitations

Despite the enhanced understanding of transition provided by this research, it is important to note the limitations of this study.

The dependence upon volunteers meant that the range of participants could not be controlled. Within the sixteen participants, there was only one woman, who was also the only Maori volunteer. The remainder were men who identified as New Zealand European. Despite the multicultural nature of the NZ Army, no participants of other ethnicities, such as Pacific Island or Asian, were recruited.

Former soldiers who may have been struggling with mental illness challenges were not captured by this research. All participants reported that they were psychologically healthy, with none indicating mental illness as a result of their military service, transition, or due to other precipitants.

Only those who had voluntarily left the NZ Army were accepted as participants. Former soldiers who experienced involuntary discharge were excluded. Examples of involuntary release might include medical or disciplinary discharge, and nonrenewal of one's employment contract.

The focus of this research was transition from the NZ Army, to the exclusion of the wider military. However, the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) operates in a joint fashion, with cooperation between Army, Navy, Air Force, Special Forces and the various headquarters elements. By virtue of this cooperative approach, military transition is a subject which is relevant to all sectors of the NZDF.

As this research focussed on the experience of transitioning soldiers, others who may be involved in transition were not interviewed. Specifically, providers of possible transition support in the NZ Army were not included, such as military commanders, padres, psychologists and counsellors. Families, friends, and post-military employers, who may be integral to the transition experience, were also not involved in this study.

Lastly, the cross-sectional nature of this study captured data at a specific point in time, rather than gathering data longitudinally to understand how individuals adapt through transition over time.

Future Directions

The following future directions are suggested in light of the research limitations, and in consideration of other empirical evidence.

Longitudinal studies would enable the process of transition from the NZ Army to be better understood. As transition is a process which occurs over time, longitudinal research would enhance understanding of the adaptations of identity and career in relation to the passage of time.

Military service has been shown to have differing life-course effects depending on when it occurs. Elder et al. (1991) discussed that joining the military after high school enhances personal development and future opportunities. Conversely, joining the military later in life causes more disruption to career and family domains. Researchers should seek to understand if such effects of service are mirrored among New Zealand soldiers.

Future studies should investigate the transition of those who leave the NZ Army involuntarily. Voluntary retirement can increase feelings of control and efficacy, while involuntary departure contributes to a sense of futility and hopelessness during the adjustment process (Smith, 1999). Future research should also illuminate how transitions are experienced across varied cultures, between genders, and throughout the wider NZDF.

Researchers should investigate transitions of those NZ Army leavers diagnosed with various mental health disorders, such as post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression, which previous research highlight as common by-products of military service. According to MacLean and Elder (2007), soldiers who experience combat are likely to have worse post-service outcomes than others. PTSD is a widely researched

consequence of military service, and often leads to identity disruptions and social isolation among veterans (Brewin et al., 2011). Also, depression is often linked to sadness, irritability and suicidality in soldiers returning from overseas missions, and is likely to effect the transition (Knobloch & Theiss, 2011).

A wide range of researchers have discussed the collective nature of transition. While soldiers must adapt to civilian settings, their families and communities experience their return (Negewo-Oda & White, 2011). Military families and children, who are used to coping with repeated separations, now have to adjust to new household dynamics and routines (Park, 2011). While soldiers live their lives within the military, their civilian loved ones also live through the passage of time. Re-entry of the military member into civilian circles suggests an adjustment for all involved. Research should be designed to understand the experience of the families, friends and communities of former NZ Army soldiers.

Studies investigating cultural beliefs of transitioning NZ Army soldiers would be beneficial. According to Sasson-Levy (2002), the military accepts chauvinist behaviours from men which are not accepted in civilian social settings. Women serving in the military commonly report sexual harassment, and verbal gender harassment (Demers, 2013). If such behaviours are condoned during service, and carried into civilian life, they are likely to be disruptive during transition.

Researchers should also seek to understand how female soldiers are acculturated, and the effects this may have on their post-military life. Previous research has shown that female soldiers manage their behaviours, presenting themselves in masculine ways which are acceptable in the military (Demers, 2013). This is often at the expense of stereotypically feminine practices, which are associated with civilian women. Future research should determine the positive and negative aspects of females experiences in the NZ Army, and how militarisation influences their transitions.

Hypervigilance is a behaviour commonly reported by soldiers who have deployed on overseas operations. While this was not a prevalent theme in the current study, wider literature suggests that hypervigilance is pervasive in transition. Kimble, Fleming, and Bennion (2013) discussed that military deployment to threatening environments can

condition soldiers to behave with hypervigilance. During deployments such behaviours are adaptive, as soldiers develop cognitive habits to remain aware of potential dangers. However, upon return home, these can prove both functional and problematic. Hypervigilance, despite it's value in high threat environments, has been related to an increased likelihood of post-deployment mental illness (Koenig et al., 2014). It is important that future research seeks to understand the implications of hypervigilant behaviours which are maintained following service in the NZ Army.

Conclusion

This project aimed to investigate the lived experience of transitioning from life as a uniformed member of the NZ Army to life as a civilian, following voluntary resignation. The findings revealed a transition experience characterised by vocational and identity adaptation, the search and gaining of personal meaning, and the significance of social support in it's various forms. The main findings and conclusions drawn from this study, which are summarised below, were coherent with the literature.

Individuals join the NZ Army in pursuit of personal satisfaction and opportunity. These rewarding incentives are varied; educational advancement, patriotic service, challenge, job variety, safety, dignity, and a sense of direction and purpose. Regardless of reasons to join, this decision prompts the development of the army identity. The opportunity to employ military skills and training, whether during active operations or other activities, facilitates the actualisation of this military identity. Exposure to threatening situations during overseas deployments amplifies the rewarding nature of this identity enactment.

Transition commences with a consideration of the decision to leave, which coincides with the beginning of disidentification. Having actualised the soldier identity, the return to non-operational work in New Zealand, and frustrations with organisational bureaucracy, cue a deconstruction of the military identity. While the soldier identity often retains it's meaning in the post-military self concept, personal goals and alternative employment options begin to take precedence.

The decision to leave the NZ Army is coupled with high expectations of second careers. In the search for satisfying employment, former soldiers manage this liminal period

with an agentic approach. Education is used to enhance employability, and military skills and experiences are leveraged towards success in civilian work environments. Trade qualifications, military values, and leadership skills aid the search for meaningful employment. Attainment of civilian employment constitutes an actualisation of the post-military identity, and a bridging of the divide between soldiering and civilian work.

Social aspects of transition occur simultaneously alongside the vocational experiences. The absence of effective leadership encourages negative feelings towards the NZ Army, encouraging disidentification and consideration of a decision to leave, and therefore the beginning of the transition process. Poor farewell ceremonies present one's previous service as meaningless, signalling ingratitude and rejection toward retiring soldiers, and reinforcing discontent. Experiences of dissatisfying leadership and farewells are juxtaposed with those of camaraderie. The treasured bonds formed between soldiers constitute a high point in their careers. Upon leaving the NZ Army these rewarding social connections are lost, threatening the soldier identity and necessitating an adaptation towards the civilian social world. Cultural adjustment is a challenging part of transition, as the contradictions between civilian and military norms are confronted and overcome. Social support, from various sources, enhances one's ability to cope with both cultural and vocational challenges of transition.

Personal and social identities are reconsidered and adapted during transition. The soldier identity is often maintained, allowing for a gradual adjustment and conservation of this proud aspect of one's past. Alternate identity aspects are also considered, and those which are deemed appropriate and deserved are adopted. These include the identity of veteran, as well as personally meaningful aspects of self. Transition requires the development of an identity which incorporates non-military aspects of self, while also acknowledging one's soldiering past.

This study showed that service within the NZ Army facilitates personal growth and goal achievement. Despite the challenges of the transition process, the participants managed to navigate pathways through liminality towards second career success and renewed identities. Successful transition, from kiwi soldier to civilian, is aided by the application of strengths gained during NZ Army service and the provision of effective social support.

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Appendix A

						Participant Descriptive Statistics	
Name	**Interview date and age**	**Ethnicity**	**Relationship**	**Children/Dep**	**Length of Service**	**Trade, Corp, Unit**	**Rank**
Peter	01/09/14, 29 years	NZ European (NZE)	Married	No	8 years	Rifleman, Royal NZ Infantry Regiment (RNZIR), 1RNZIR	Corporal (soldier)
Mike	01/09/14, 28 years	NZE	De Facto	No	8 years	Royal NZ Armoured Corp (RNZAC)	Lance Corporal (soldier)
Tony	02/09/14, 34 years	NZE	Married	Yes	10 years	Royal NZ Engineers (RNZE), Carpenter	Corporal (soldier)
William	2/9/14, 35 years	NZE	Married	Yes	8 years	16 Fd Regt, Royal NZ Artillery	Captain (officer)
Henry	3/9/14, 41 years	NZE	Married	Yes	4 years	Royal NZ Chaplains Department	Chaplain (Major, officer)
Simon	4/9/14, 66 years	NZE	Married	Yes	27 years	Royal NZ Dental Corp	Warrant Officer Class One (soldier)
Dale	11/9/14, 77 years	NZE	Married	Yes	37 years	Royal NZ Infantry Regiment (RNZIR), 1RNZIR	Brigadier (officer)
Paul	12/9/14, 25 years	NZE	De Facto	No	5 years	163 Bty, 16 Fd Regt, RNZA	Lieutenant (officer)
Ben	17/9/14, 33 years	NZE	De Facto	No	9 years	Royal NZ Army Medical Corp	Corporal (soldier)
Carl	18/9/14, 28 years	NZE	Single	No	2 years	Royal NZ Infantry Regiment (RNZIR), 2/1RNZIR	2nd Lieutenant (officer)
Robert	18/9/14, 38 years	NZE	Separated	Yes	20 years	NZ Army Physical Training Corp, Physical Training Instructor	Staff Sergeant (soldier)
Alan	25/9/14, 33 years	NZE	Single	No	10 years	Royal NZ Engineers	Captain (officer)
Tim	26/9/14, 66 years	NZE	Married	Yes	30 years	Royal NZ Engineers	Warrant Officer Class One (soldier)
Gary	30/9/14, 28 years	NZE	Single	No	3 years	1(NZ) Military Intelligence Company	Lance Corporal (soldier)
Rachel	07/10/14, 26 years	Maori	De Facto	Yes	9 years	Royal NZ Army Logistics Regiment	Sergeant (soldier)
Adam	06/10/14, 31 years	NZE	De Facto	Yes	13 years	Royal NZ Engineers, 2nd Engineer Regiment	Major (officer)

Appendix B

Second Life: From Kiwi Soldier to Civilian

INFORMATION SHEET

Researcher's Introduction
My name is Tommy Smart, and I am currently studying towards a Masters in Psychology at Massey University.

Before commencing this course of study I served in the New Zealand (NZ) Army; in The First Battalion Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (1RNZIR). I joined the NZ Army in 2003 and served in the Regular Force until 2012. During this time I fulfilled the roles of Platoon Commander and Company 2IC at Whiskey Company 1RNZIR, Patrol Commander and Liaison Officer during Operation CRIB 15 in Afghanistan, and Plans Officer within the NZ Contingent in Sinai. I continue to serve within 3/6 Battalion of the Territorial Force NZ Army in Auckland.

As part of my study I am conducting a research project around the experience of transitioning into civilian life after voluntarily retiring from the NZ Army. Having served within the NZ Army, and experienced the transition back into civilian life.

Project Description and Invitation to Participate
My research project, *Second Life: From Kiwi Soldier to Civilian*, aims to investigate how people experience the transition from the NZ Army to civilian life. This project will enhance the understanding of how this process of transition is experienced in New Zealand. The results of this research will be published in an academic journal article, and will also be made available to the NZ Army for their information.

If you have voluntarily retired from the NZ Army I would like to hear about your experience of transitioning back into civilian life. I would like to hear what the experience was like for you, what aspects were good or bad, and any other thoughts or ideas you may have about this transition process.

Information Management
Information will be collected from between fifteen and twenty participants, using a demographic questionnaire and an interview. The information gathered will be used to write the final research report. All information will be kept confidential and any information used with be anonymized.

Participation
If you decide to take part you would be involved in an interview and collection of demographic data. The interview would be audiotaped and take approximately an hour and a half. However, this timeframe can be changed to suit you. The interview would take place at a location that is convenient for you. If you are unable to meet in person the interview can be conducted over Skype. All information you give will be completely confidential to myself and my project supervisors (Associate Professor Paul Merrick and Veronica Hopner at Massey University).

Participation in interviews will involve answering questions about your transition from the Army.

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:
• decline to talk about any particular topic during the interview;
• withdraw from the study up to fifteen days after the interview;
• ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;

- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used and that identifying personal details will be kept confidential unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded;
- ask for the voice recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application 14/034. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Andrew Chrystall, Acting Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, telephone 09 414 0800 x 43317 email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz.

You do not have to take part in this study; participation is entirely voluntary. If you would like to participate or to have more information about the project, please contact myself in the first instance, or my supervisor:

Tommy Smart   or   Supervisor: Associate Professor Paul Merrick
tommypastrana@hotmail.com   p.l.merrick@massey.ac.nz
0272574194   (09) 414 0800 ext. 43109

Thank you.

Appendix C

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

Second Life: From Kiwi Soldier to Civilian

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: **Date:**

Full Name - printed

If you would like to receive a summary of the finding when the project is finished, please provide your email address below

Email address	

Appendix D

Second Life: From Kiwi Soldier to Civilian

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Please select or write your answers below. Upon completion of this questionnaire, please hand it to the researcher.

Please answer the following questions:

1. **Today's Date:**

2. **Name:**

3. **Date of Birth:**

4. **Gender:**   Male   Female   Other

5. **Ethnicity:**
    - New Zealand European
    - Maori
    - Samoan
    - Cook Island Maori
    - Tongan
    - Niuean
    - Chinese
    - Indian
    - Other: (please state)...................................

6. **Relationship Status:** Single   De Facto   Married   Civil Union   Divorced   Separated   Widowed

7. **Do you have dependents and/or children?:**   Yes   No

8. **Date Joined the New Zealand (NZ) Army:**

9. **Trade, Corps and Unit while in the NZ Army:**

10. **Highest Rank Held in the NZ Army:**

11. **Date Left the NZ Army:**

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix E

Second Life: From Kiwi Soldier to Civilian

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The semi-structured nature of this interview schedule will enable flexible discussion based on what the participant believes is important.

The following topics will be addressed during the interview with each participant:

Topic One: New Zealand (NZ) Army Career:
This topic will include discussion of the participant's experiences in the NZ Army, operational deployments, and their reasons for leaving the NZ Army.

Topic Two: Transition from the NZ Army to Civilian:
This topic will include discussion of the participant's experience of transitioning from the NZ Army to civilian life, any aspects which were stressful or positive, and any goals for the future.

Topic Three: Work and Education:
This topic will include discussion of the participant's previous work experience, qualifications gained in the NZ Army, and experiences with work and study since leaving the NZ Army.

Topic Four: Social Support:
This topic will include discussion of the participant's experiences of social support during their transition, including the effect the transition has had on relationships with their spouse, children, family and friends.

Topic Five: Self and Identity:
This topic will include discussion of the participant's identity, whether they still identity with the military, and how they perceive themselves in the civilian context.

Appendix F

Free Support Agencies List:

- **Veterans Affairs helpline:** 0800 4 VETERAN (if you have deployed on operations).

- **Lifeline Aotearoa:** 0800 543 354. Free phone counseling 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- **Depression Helpline:** 0800 111 757. http://www.depression.org.nz/

- **Samaritans:** 0800 726 666. Free phone counseling 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- **Citizen's Advice Bureau:** 0800 367 222

- **Gambling Problem Helpline Service:** 0800 654 655

- **Alcohol Hotline:** 0800 787 797

- **Outline (gay, lesbian, transgender support):** 0800 802 437

- **Chinese Lifeline:** 0800 888 880

- **http://afterdeployment.t2.health.mil/:** This United States Military website provides self-help resources for dealing with common problems faced during transition.

- **http://maketheconnection.net/events/transitioning-from-service:** This United States Military website provides many videos and comments from people who have experienced transition to civilian life.