

**EXPLORING CONNECTEDNESS: THE
MEANING OF TRANSITION
EXPERIENCES FOR PATIENTS WITHIN A
FORENSIC PSYCHIATRIC SERVICE**

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TRANSITION – IS COMPLEX

- Is the psychological adaptation process undergone as a result of a situational change.
- Transition occurs when reality is disrupted
- It is complex and not easily explained
- Dynamic and non-linear
- All transitions, including positive ones, cause some level of strain
- There are a number of different frameworks used to describe transition

THE PROJECT

- Qualitative Research
- Guided by Phenomenological Theory
 - Heideggerian
- Semi-structured interviews were used
- Before, during and after transition interviews
- Interviewees
 - All had been in a secure unit for a minimum of 3 months
 - Identified as requiring further forensic psychiatric rehabilitation
 - They selected their own pseudonym

THEMES

- Being-in-the-world of being free
- Stepping Stones
- Doing what you have to to prove yourself
- Assistance comes in many forms

BEING-IN-THE-WORLD OF BEING FREE

You don't feel so tight and locked down. Like, (secure unit) is a locked ward so you feel a bit locked down whereas here it's not so you feel a bit more, a little bit off your shoulders and that so a little more free.

Casper

Umm yeah, no it will be alright. Yeah it will be a bit different staying in a building that's not locked. Yeah I can cope with that... I've got no concerns. It will be just a bit different atmosphere. Take a while to get used to that, the doors been open and stuff yeah.

Shrek

It was easy, if I got some drugs I'd flush them down the toilet or down the sink... Cause if I smoke any drugs they will just send me back to (secure unit) so, [My choices are] to smoke it, not to smoke the drugs.

Kee

STEPPING STONES

To get my own house, go to (name of town) for Christmas and New Years, find some work, save up and buy a car.

Anakin

My thoughts would be like cool. Close to being, close to being a step away from being a free man again, yep a step to more freedom, back to (supported accommodation).

Jae

Just deal with each day, one day at a time you know rather, I just can't deal with thinking too far ahead. Too much stuff going on so I just try and deal with each day, get through each day and don't do anything wrong that could get me in trouble.

Shrek

DOING WHAT YOU HAVE TO, TO PROVE YOURSELF

Before you move from the closed ward to an open ward you have to go through certain risk assessments, through the nurses, the psychologists and the psychiatrists and the OT and you have to get their approvals as a team to move from a closed ward to the open ward. That's how it works.

Richard

Arrr I think so yeah. A bit reassuring. Maybe just sticking to the rules sort of thing. Just the nurses and that, yeah. They lay down the rules and yeah pretty much straightforward.

Casper

If you try and conceal what you're doing yeah and if you do that you end up staying in hospital a lot longer. If you're honest you get to go from the locked ward to the open ward. I was supposed to be in the locked ward for (number of years) Umm I came here in (two months less) so I umm yeah I got two months, I was here two months earlier because of being honest with the nurses, the doctors and the whole team.

Richard

ASSISTANCE COMES IN MANY FORMS

Arrr, you know being welcoming and saying I yeah welcome yep, yep. Plus I knew like a few people before I came during my transition period. So it made it a bit easier as well. It just made it easy. You know not coming to a strange place where strange people are. I already knew them and it made it a lot easier.

Casper

You get to talk to one another when you're preparing the food and stuff and that way you make kinda like friendships but over in the locked wards ohh I'm not a very sociable person.

Richard

Oh I just work on the ward cars and then moved on to doing staff cars, I made a 180 bucks in (locked ward). Just cleaning cars. 180 bucks in nine days, yeah it's good. It gives me something to do.

Anakin

CONNECTEDNESS

- The notion of connectedness is supported by transition literature
- So how is connectedness to the process of transition generated?
 - Occupations
 - Place
 - Person

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Facilitating connectedness to the process of transition should be the priority.
 - Transition plans need to be personalised
 - Policies to be developed which makes the person transitioning the focus
 - Support is personalised
 - Recognition more than a physical move is happening by staff
- Facilitate connections to people, place and occupations

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