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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION

1.1   INTRODUCTION

In South Africa, factors such as the influence of HIV/AIDS, poverty, violence, the effects of divorce, and stresses relating to changes in the political and educational systems, increasingly herald the transformation of many of the constant and stable structures in our children's lives i.e. the family unit, schools and communities. Exposure to crippling environmental, familial, and personal experiences has the potential to threaten the development of children and adolescents adversely to the extent that they succumb to the stresses they experience. Some may even develop emotional and behavioural disorders.

Since the 1970's there has been an increasing interest in the concept of "resilience". Researchers like Werner and Smith (1992:55); Garmezy and Rutter (1983:12); Smith and Carlson (1997:231); Minnard (2001:233) and Blum, McNeely and Nonnemaker (2002:29) have grappled with this phenomenon. They have tried to determine what makes it possible for certain children who, despite exposure to adverse circumstances, have the capacity to "bounce back" from a crisis or trauma, possibly even being strengthened by his (in this study the word "his" also refers to females) negative experience(s), whereas others become victims of their circumstances.

Resiliency research is contributing to a movement away from a pathology-based medical model where problems, needs and deficiencies are accentuated (Lubbe & Eloff 2003:80). Wolin and Wolin (1993:13) note that in the fields of psychology and psychiatry, there is "comfort in identifying, categorising and labelling diseases."

In contrast, the "asset-based approach" or "half-full-glass" approach to intervention mentioned by Kriek and Eloff (2003:39) focuses on the human strengths and assets of the individual and the resources in his environment that can be mobilised to help him with his "problem" and so empower him to help himself, as opposed to focussing solely on his problem and needs (Macdonald 1997:115). The Wellness Model of

Antonovsky (1987) focuses on the emergence of competence, empowerment and self-efficacy (Kriek & Eloff 2003:39).

The resilient adolescent has the capacity to deal with the obstacles which confront him successfully and at the same time he is able to focus on achieving his goals. Resilience embraces the ability of a child to deal more effectively with stress and pressure. This idea is echoed by Hauser (1999:3-4) when he suggests that resilient individuals demonstrate good individual adaptation despite adverse events and experiences of misfortunes.

In this chapter, the researcher will first elaborate on the awareness of the problem after which the problem that the researcher wishes to investigate will be stated. Following this, the aims of the research and the research method to be used to investigate the problem will be conveyed and the definition of terms used in the study will be clarified. A succinct preview of the chapters which will follow Chapter One will be given and the chapter will be concluded by a discussion of the value of this research for adolescents, educators, parents and educational psychologists in South Africa.

1.2   ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

1.2.1 Awareness of the problem

The researcher first became aware of the problem when, as a school counsellor at a secondary school, she came into contact with adolescents who lived in dire circumstances where problems with alcoholism, poverty, unemployment and abuse were prevalent. Some of the adolescents with whom she had conversations seemed to have an "inner strength" and a desire to achieve success despite their environment, whereas others who were in the same situation, seemed to become victims of their circumstances to the point where they seemed to feel overwhelmed by these and would "give up" by dropping out of school or by becoming depressed or by resorting to anti-social behaviour like drug use.

This growing awareness has led the researcher to ponder numerous questions:

- What is the nature of resilience?

- What are the general factors contributing to resilience?

- What are the personal attributes contributing to resilience?

- Is ego-strength allied to resilience?

- How can one determine how/why certain adolescents are more resilient?

  Is there a positive correlation between the capacity for using defence mechanisms and resilience?

- Which factors facilitate the process of overcoming adversity?

- Is the development of resilience dependant on resilient role models?

- What guidelines can be provided to ensure that educators (secondary) are equipped to foster adolescent resilience?

- Is resilience determined by the ability to employ creative problem-solving thought processes?

- Are resilience and intelligence inter-related?

- Is resilience related to the ability to cling to a vision of the future, regardless of the present reality?

- Does a positive self-concept necessarily give rise to resilience?

- What is the role of negative and positive self-talk in the development of resilience?

According to Henderson and Milstein (1996:2) more than any institution except the family, schools can provide the environment and conditions that foster resiliency in today's youth. Henderson and Milstein (1996:2) add that the stated goals of academic and life success for all learners and an enthusiastic, motivated, life-orientated staff involves increasing learner and educator resiliency. Minnard (2001:237) underscores this view of the school's role as a resiliency fostering institution. She suggests that the school is possibly the most notable social context for child development where myriad opportunities are provided for staff to nurture the youth in their care.

1.2.2 Statement of the problem

The researcher wishes to determine which factors, which contribute to resilience in adolescents, are absent in adolescents who are considered to be vulnerable or "at risk".

This problem promotes investigation of the following aspects:

- The nature of personal and environmental attributes in adolescents who are resilient.

- The role of personal attributes in adolescents who are resilient.

- The role of support in fostering resilience.

The research question is as follows:

Is it probable that adolescents possessing the personal attributes and environmental support which serve as a buffer against adversity would demonstrate a greater propensity to be resilient than adolescents who do not possess these attributes and who do not have the necessary support?

In the following paragraph, an explanation of the relevant hypotheses is presented.

1.2.3 Hypotheses

Although it is not necessary to make use of hypotheses in qualitative research, the researcher would like to make use of them in order to assist in structuring expected findings or outcomes.

The following hypotheses are stated in the light of the analysis of the problem and the statement of the problem:

- Personal and environmental attributes impact positively in resilience, especially with regard to resilient adolescents.

- Personal attributes would include ego-strength, intelligence, a positive self-concept, an "easy-going" personality, sound values, optimism, independence, good social skills and self-control.

- Environmental attributes would possibly include reliable, nurturing mentors, a school which fosters high expectations and community resources which can serve as a "safety net" to catch the child who is at risk.

- In the absence of personal and environmental attributes which contribute towards resilience, vulnerable adolescents are at risk of being maladjusted or unable to self-actualise.

In the following section the researcher wishes to indicate the demarcation of this study on resilience.

1.3   DEMARCATION OF RESEARCH

For the purposes of this dissertation of limited scope, the researcher intends to focus on and to clarify the following concepts used in this study: "Resilience in adolescents: a psycho-educational perspective." The research will be demarcated as follows:

1.3.1 Adolescent

For the purpose of this study the *adolescent* will be defined as the person in the developmental stage that occurs between childhood and adulthood i.e. between the ages of 12 to 25 years of age (Park 2004:50). The adolescent phase of development can be divided into three stages: early adolescence which usually includes children between the ages of 10 and 14, middle adolescence (15-17 years) and late adolescence (18-22 years). Adolescence is best described as a transitional period in which individuals experience major physical, cognitive and socio-affective changes towards maturity (Dumont & Provost 1999:344). Adolescence can be regarded as a process during which the attitudes and values necessary for effective participation in society are achieved (Geyser 1996:6). For the purposes of this study, the researcher will interview adolescents between grades 8 and 12 who are in the age group 13 to 18 years old. This group has been specifically selected for a number of reasons:

1. Over the years the researcher has witnessed this period of middle to late adolescence (± 14 -18 years) as being a very stormy time for adolescents. This view is supported by Stoiber and Good (1998:380). Carr-Gregg and Shale (2002:1-2) maintain that these adolescents undergo dramatic developmental challenges: physical, cognitive and socio-affective.

2. According to Carr-Gregg and Shale (2002:32-56) the period of middle to late adolescence is the time when the adolescent:

    - is most vulnerable to peer pressure;

- is searching for his or her identity;

- is most likely to reject adult control and support;

- is most likely to demonstrate possible rebellious behaviour and the likelihood of a breakdown in communication with care-givers;

- is most likely to indulge in risk-taking behaviour with drugs and sex;

- has a growing need for a guide or mentor.

  With this in mind, when research is done with this group of adolescents, one would be in a position to determine to what extent the individuals are able to cope with and to adapt to the changes and pressures to which they are exposed.

3. Another reason for selecting this group to research is due to the fact that relatively little research has been done on resilience in adolescents. More research has been done on resilience in childhood (Dumont & Provost 1999:344).

1.3.2 Resilience

The concept of resilience in this study will refer to the flexibility that allows certain adolescents who appear to be at risk to bounce back from adversity, to cope with and manage major difficulties and disadvantages of life, and even to thrive in the face of what appears to be overwhelming odds (Dent & Cameron 2003:5).

1.3.3 Psycho-educational

The term refers to psychological aspects of learning and behaviour as they occur in an educational context. It is the examination of the child/adolescent or a study of how the child/adolescent functions in the home or school setting under the assistance and injunction of educators (primary or secondary) (Lewis 2003:7).

The aims of the research will be discussed below.

1.4 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

1.4.1 Main aim: Literature study

The main aim of the research is to conduct a literature study which will focus on the following topics:

- The phenomenon of resilience. The following facets will be explored:

- o Several definitions of resilience.

- o A historical view of resilience including various facets of resilience, namely: personality traits contributing to resilience, protective factors, familial factors, extra-familial factors and risk factors impacting on resilience, the impact of therapeutic intervention on resilience and the role of the educator and school programme on resilience.

- The characteristics of a resilient adolescent. The following facets will be explored:

- o Several definitions of adolescence.

- o The phases and tasks of adolescence.

- o Who the adolescent is in psycho-educational terms.

1.4.2 Secondary aim: Qualitative assessment

The secondary aim is to undertake qualitative research to determine to what extent an identified group of four perceived resilient adolescents compare with four perceived non-resilient adolescents in exhibiting the personal attributes of resilient adolescents as conveyed in the literature study. Four of these adolescents' "stories" were analysed in detail and the other four adolescents' "stories" were summarised.

Furthermore the following will be investigated qualitatively:

- The extent to which environmental attributes played a role in the adolescent's resilience will be looked at.

- The role that the school and the adolescent's educators has played in fostering resilience in the adolescent will be explored.

The role that personal attributes of the adolescents play in fostering resilience in the adolescent has received far more scrutiny than the role that environmental attributes and the school and educators play in fostering resilience in adolescents (Todis, Bullis, Waintrup, Schultz & D'Ambrosio 2001:119; Williams, Linsey, Kurtz & Jarvis 2001:234). The reason that a qualitative approach will be used in this study of resilience is to gain a clearer and more in-depth theoretical understanding of both person-based and environmental variables associated with resilience (Garmezy 1988:29-44).

1.4.3 To suggest guidelines for educators

An effort will be made to suggest guidelines for educators, parents and educational psychologists on how to foster resilience in adolescents. The focus on such guidelines would be towards nurturing positive personal attributes which impact positively on resilience with the hope of enhancing these attributes and thereby fostering resilience.

1.4.4 Role of the educational psychologist

The role of the educational psychologist in fostering resilience will be explored.

The role of the educational psychologist as a supporter, initiator and facilitator of positive change in the school must be considered. The educational psychologist as member of the Teacher Support Team and often as part of the school clinic's multi-disciplinary team, is in a position to suggest and work out an overall "Care Plan" for the vulnerable adolescent. The "Care Plan" includes consideration of the "assets" and strengths in an adolescent's life. This "Care Plan" would include involvement from all the role players in the adolescent's life. It would also set out long-term objectives and arrangements for achieving these objectives. The educational psychologist would be responsible for overseeing that these objectives are realised.

The research method which will be implemented will be expounded upon in the next section.

1.5   RESEARCH METHOD

According to Charles (1995:5), the term "research" comes from the French word *rechercher* which means "to travel through or survey". According to Venter and Van Heerden (1989:109), research "i*s a human activity whereby a particular phenomenon in reality is studied objectively in order to establish a valid understanding of the phenomenon.*" In this instance the phenomenon of adolescent resilience within the psycho-educational context is to be investigated. Lewis (2003:5) suggests the necessity of using a valid research method in order to carry out this task – one which permits the researcher access to a particular phenomenon to ensure that the results obtained are valid and reliable.

In this research project, a theoretical investigation will be conducted which will entail a literature study of the phenomenon of resilience, pertaining more specifically to the

adolescent phase. Furthermore, qualitative research methods will be employed to collect data in order to determine which characteristics influence the phenomenon of resilience.

1.6   DEFINITION OF TERMS USED IN THE STUDY

The following terms will be referred to often and for the purposes of this study the researcher wishes to clarify them as follows:

1.6.1   Resilience

Resilience is a complex concept which, if it could be simplified, could be defined as the ability to bounce back from negative life experiences or crises and to continue to strive towards achieving self-actualisation. According to Higgins (1994:1) resilience implies that potential subjects are able to negotiate significant challenges to develop in order to complete the important developmental tasks which confront them as they grow. The idea of rebounding from adversity and being flexible and adaptable is echoed in Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2002:204) and Dent and Cameron (2003:5) as they define resilience as the ability to cope and "bounce back" from difficulties. Dent and Cameron (2003:5) add to this definition by suggesting that resilient individuals are often able to thrive in the face of what appears to be overwhelming odds.

Rutter (1985:598) and Gilligan (2001:5) suggest that resilience is not a fixed attribute but a cluster of processes that enables people to adapt to risks that are unavoidable in life. Werner and Smith (1982:84-93) and Gilligan (1997:67) concur with this view as they list various personal qualities and behaviours that they believe contribute to the cultivation of resilience e.g. an easy-going temperament, high intelligence, a repertoire of problem-solving abilities and the belief that one can influence events and make a difference in the present and the future (Gilligan 2001:5). The importance of adapting successfully in the face of trauma and high risk is a central theme in the definition of resilience.

Other authors appear to focus on skills. Corsini (2002:834) suggests that resilient children are those who are able to deal successfully with stresses and traumas that would devastate most other children. Kazdin (2000:64) notes that ego resilience implies resourceful, flexible responses to new or stressful situations. This helps to decide whether children work through and grow beyond their difficulties. Henderson

and Milstein (1996:34) echo this focus on resourcefulness and skills where they view resiliency as a process of coping with disruptive, stressful or challenging life events in a way that provides the individual with additional protective and coping skills that existed prior to the disruption that results from the event.

Macfarlane (1998:5) suggests that resilient youngsters may have a traumatic life world, characterised by poor relations and an inadequate educational climate, but despite this uncertain start, they *remain largely unnerved*. The researcher would question the use of the phrase "remain largely unnerved" as research has shown that these children are, in fact, affected by the difficulties with which they are confronted, yet are able to recover from these in spite of their dire circumstances. Their ability to recover, however, may be largely due to personal attributes and a supportive environment.

In terms of Unisa's perspective, namely in terms of the Relations Theory, resilience could be defined as the ability to continue to strive to achieve self-actualisation in spite of adverse life experiences.

According to Jacobs and Vrey (1992:54) and Macfarlane (1998:5) a person's outlook on life is shaped by his self-concept. The authors believe, therefore, that in order to determine a person's self-concept, it is essential to consider what he is saying to himself (self-dialogue). The intra-psychic dialogue is the way in which people talk to themselves about themselves. The nature of the intra-psychic dialogue, which occurs on an unconscious level, determines whether the individual develops a realistic or an unrealistic self-concept and whether this self-concept is positive or negative. According to the Relations Theory the nature of the self-concept will depend on how the children experience their own situations, for example at home, how they ascribe meaning to the experiences they encounter and the extent to which they are willing to become involved with these experiences (Roets 2002:23). The individual's tendency towards being resilient would be related to the nature of intra-psychic interaction occurring when the individual is faced with difficult or traumatic life experiences. The resilient individual would attribute meaning to the experience in such a manner that his self-concept would remain intact, thereby facilitating continued involvement. The self-talk of the resilient individual will evaluate the identity of the self, in terms of the trauma, in such a manner that the self-concept remains realistic and no lasting unrealistic positive or negative meaning attribution

occurs. Rather than allow the trauma experienced to define the self, it is regarded as an incident, but one that is not given the power to impact the rest of his life negatively. This, in turn, affects the individual's identity – in some cases as a survivor of adverse conditions, which may give meaning to the question "Who am I?" This question, when answered, may lead to the person developing his latent potential in order to self-actualise and to become all he can, wants to and should become.

Thus resilience may be seen as a multi-facetted, active process *which enables individuals to remain hardy human negotiators of life's curve balls* (Macfarlane 1998:5). The concept of resilience will be explored in greater depth in Chapter Two.

1.6.2 Adolescence

The term *adolescent* originates from the latin word "*adolescere*" which means to grow in maturity (Geyser 1996:7). Several definitions of the term "adolescence" exist. It is generally referred to as that period of life beginning with puberty and ending with completed growth and physical maturity. In the definitions of adolescence, much emphasis is placed on biological maturity and this is no less true for Kazdin (2000:39) who suggests that the changes of puberty include physical growth to adult height and weight, as well as the biological growth of internal and external organs related to reproductive functioning.

Corsini (2002:21) and Statt (2003:3) agree that adolescence is the period of life beginning with puberty and ending with completed growth and physical maturity. In humans, the period spans ages 12 – 21 in females and 13 – 22 in males. The aforementioned authors, however, look beyond the idea of the biological changes that take place during puberty to include other major changes that occur at varying rates. These include changes in sexual characteristics, body image, sexual interest, career development, intellectual development and self-concept.

Stoiber and Good (1998:380) agree that adolescence is a time of dramatic physiological and psychological transition, however, they refer to the stereotypical portrayal of adolescence as a time of conflict and upheaval. Macfarlane (2000:17) maintains that while this view of the adolescent has some truth to it, it largely ignores the central vulnerability of the adolescent. Stoiber and Good's (1998:380) view of adolescence as being a life phase where the adolescent is greatly affected by the stresses that he experiences, contrasts with Grossman, Beinashowitz, Anderson,

Sakurai, Finnin and Flaherty (1992:529) view of adolescents. The latter authors contend that normal adolescents do not experience major turmoil and do not manifest serious symptomology. Grossman, Beinashowitz, Anderson, Sakurai, Finnin and Flaherty (1992:529) do however predict future difficulties for adolescents who do experience significant distresses during this life phase.

Park (2004:50) introduces the idea of cognitive changes that occur in the brain during the phase of adolescence. She (Park) suggests that whereas it was previously believed that the phase of puberty ended at the age of 21/22 years, current research is showing that physiological changes in the brain which affect behaviour "typical" of adolescents, continue to take place until the age of 25. In the light of this new development, Park (2004:50) suggests that puberty possibly continues until the age of 25.

1.6.3 Psycho-educational perspective

This study is undertaken from a psycho-educational perspective which seeks to view the child and the adolescent as an integral part of the learning process. An effort is made to understand the child within his life world and within the learning process. Such an understanding will take note of all the variables which interact as learning and development occur (Macfarlane 1998:7). This research, however, also encompasses a broader social setting than the school and home.

In order for the phenomenon of adolescent resilience to be studied meaningfully, it should be studied from and structured according to a theoretical premise which includes psycho-educational criteria. In this instance, the entities of the Relations Theory (RT) of Vrey (1992) and Oosthuizen and Jacobs (1982) will be used as psycho-educational criteria. Roets (2002:14) states: *"Relations Theory takes as its point of departure the idea of people, spiritual beings, existing in their personal experiential worlds surrounded by other people and things."* This social interaction implies that there must be an interaction between the self and various components of the experiential world (i.e. objects and ideas, people and the individuals themselves). These interactions lead to relationships among the various mentioned experiential components, with the nature and quality of the relationships being influenced by the nature and quality of the interactions. Communication (both inter-and intra-relational) is important to lay the foundation of relationships.

As this dissertation aims at studying the concept of resilience from an psycho-educational perspective, it is essential to highlight the different components of the Relations Theory as this theory succinctly and logically explains how the inter-play between the different personality components can contribute to self-actualisation (and resilience) or not.

The following components of the Relations Theory are highlighted:

1.6.3.1   Identity, self-concept and self-esteem

One of the central developmental tasks of the adolescent is to forge an identity (Carr-Gregg & Shale 2002:32-53). Identity refers to the process whereby the person develops an idea of who he or she is. According to Vrey (1992:47) this progressive understanding of themselves takes place in association with other people, especially parents, educators and peers. Each person has a few identities. Identities are multi-faceted: every identity is built on the experience, involvement and meaning that is assigned to the situation by the person. According to Erikson's (1968) psychosocial stages of development, if identity formation is not achieved successfully, the adolescent will have identity diffusion. Mampane (2004:38) maintains that this will mean that the adolescent will not know what his purpose in life is, what they are capable of achieving and whether they can form and maintain relationships with others. Mampane (2004:38) suggests that these adolescents struggle with their emotional development and with how they believe they are perceived by others. The belief(s) that the adolescent harbours about how he is perceived by others will influence his self-concept. Self-concept refers to how people think about themselves, whilst self-esteem refers to how they feel about themselves (Roets 2002:19). One's concept or image of the self is the person's perception of himself and is formed by an evaluation and visualisation of the identity and is therefore dynamic. The evaluation of the self can lead to either positive or negative characteristics in a person. As a person's self-concept is shaped by the type of thinking patterns that he adheres to, the role of the intra-psychic dialogue contributes to either a positive or negative concept of the self (Roets 2002:19-23). These factors could impede the adolescent's eventual self-actualisation (Roets 2002:27) and impact on his ability to be resilient (Carr-Gregg & Shale 2002:32-53).

1.6.3.2   Self-actualisation

Although several definitions of this term exist (Roets 2002:27-34), in general terms, self-actualisation refers to the child's efforts to realise all of his latent potential in terms of every facet of development and learning. It is only by forging adequate relationships with parents, peers, educators, objects, ideas and with themselves that healthy egos, selves and identities are formed. In order to self-actualise meaningfully, adolescents have to become meaningfully involved in relationships, have significant experiences and have purposeful involvement in these relationships (Roets 2002:40-41).

1.6.3.3   Involvement

In order to possess and obtain knowledge, is necessary to become physically or mentally involved with knowledge (Roets 2002:41). Involvement therefore implies a desire or a will to act and implies perseverance, industriousness and dedication and energy expended in order to achieve a meaningful objective. Adolescents who have mentors, who have supportive environments and who involve themselves in their communities have a greater propensity to be resilient (McWhirter, McWhirter, McWhirter & McWhirter 1998:81; Donald *et al.* 2002:223-224; Dent & Cameron 2003:4).

In summary, adolescents orient themselves towards their world and in so doing attribute meaning, affected by emotion, towards others and objects. Meaning attribution depends on the degree to which the child experiences his involvement with objects or people. The resilient adolescent will attribute meaning to the experience in such a way that his self-concept will remain intact and this will facilitate continued involvement. The greater the involvement, the more intense the experience of meaning attribution as he differentiates, integrates and evaluates. The self-talk of the resilient individual will evaluate the identity of the self and if the self is evaluated positively and realistically, this will lead to the eventual formation of a positive self-concept, which in turn will promote self-actualisation. Self-actualisation will ultimately occur because the individual sees himself as able to achieve his potential in spite of adverse circumstances which he views as temporary obstacles in his path. This he does, rather than allowing himself to be defined by his dire circumstances.

In the next section, a preview of the chapters in this study will be briefly discussed.

1.7   PREVIEW OF CHAPTERS

Chapter Two will form a literature study looking at several definitions of resilience, a historical view of resilience and various facets of resilience, namely: personality traits contributing to resilience, protective factors, familial factors, extra-familial factors and risk factors impacting on resilience; the impact of therapeutic intervention on resilience and the role of the educator and school programme in resilience and the role of age and gender in resilience. This chapter will also explore several definitions of adolescence including a discussion of the phases and tasks of adolescence and who the adolescent is in psycho-educational terms.

Chapter Three will delineate the research methodology to be used in the qualitative study, including the aim and motivation of the empirical study as well as the research design to be followed (including the lists of questions, an adolescent interview schedule, collages, method of evaluation and possible results of this research study).

Chapter Four will discuss the research findings. The chapter will be concluded with an evaluation of the findings and recommendations. Aspects of resilience in adolescents which justify further research will also be alluded to.

1.8   CONCLUDING REMARKS

South Africa is a country which faces its own unique set of challenges i.e. HIV/AIDS, poverty, violence and many changes within communities, schools and families – particularly over the past ten years. Since the beginning of democracy in South Africa in 1994, there have been dramatic changes in our schools in particular, some of which include the government attempting far-reaching education policies and curriculum changes, with the latter being revised three times during the past decade. For the first time in 1994, different population groups were integrated into what was formerly known as Model-C schools. These changes have necessitated great adaptation from educators, learners and parents. The majority of the South African population is younger than 25 years of age and many experience a daily battle to ensure that their most basic of needs are met. There is great concern about the number of learners in our schools who fail to complete grade 12 and who drop out of school after Grades 8 and 9. Many of our adolescents grow up in similar adverse

conditions, yet why is it that only some of them have the ability to "bounce back" and to press on in spite of their dire circumstances?

The purpose of this chapter was to outline the direction that this research project will take as a need exists to understand the concept and nature of resilience as it applies to adolescents. A need also exists to develop appropriate guidelines for educators, parents and educational psychologists. These guidelines could enable them to instil and nurture those individual protective factors. This study also strives to highlight those protective factors that can be provided by the staff and institutions with whom and within which these adolescents spend so much of their time. The influence of protective factors have consistently emerged in other studies as key factors that can make a difference between an adolescent being resilient or vulnerable. This study attempts to discover to what extent this is true for adolescents in a South African context.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE OVERVIEW: ADOLESCENCE AND RESILIENCE

2.1　INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher proposes to provide a brief overview of adolescence and resilience. These concepts will be discussed in depth. Thereafter the researcher intends merging these concepts in order that it may become clear to the reader why adolescence is a particularly vulnerable time for teenagers who lack the skills needed to foster resilience. It will also become clear to the reader why it is imperative to instil and nurture resilience during adolescence.

2.2　ADOLESCENCE DEFINED

The term *adolescent* derives from the Latin word "*adolescere*" which means 'to grow in maturity' or 'to grow up' (Geyser 1996:7; Gouws, Kruger & Burger 2000:2). Although several definitions of the term "adolescence" exist, it is generally referred to as that developmental phase in the human life cycle that is situated between childhood and adulthood. Efforts to link a specific chronological age to this phase are rendered difficult due to major cultural differences (Gouws *et al.* 2000:2). In spite of this, the idea has long been held that the developmental stage of adolescence commences from 12 to 18 years old for females and from 13 to 21 years for males. In South Africa, adolescence legally ends at the age of 21, when parental consent expires and the person can be held liable for contractual obligations (Louw, Van Ede & Louw 1998:385).

Park (2004:50) however, suggests that current research is showing that physiological changes in the brain which affect behaviour, "typical" of adolescents, continue to take place until the age of 25. In the light of this new development, Park (2004:50) mentions that puberty possibly continues until the age of 25. Vrey (1992:165) suggests that the demands of a modern society necessitate that adolescence is extended so that the younger generation may be adequately equipped to tackle all facets of adult life.

Other authors (Kazdin 2000:39; Stoiber & Good 1998:380; Louw, Van Ede & Louw 1998:384) suggest that the onset of adolescence is marked by clearly discernable physical, physiological and psychological changes that form a natural part of this transition period. Adolescence is most notably characterized by the following:

- **Physical changes**

During puberty a rapid acceleration in height and weight occurs, reproductive organs become functional, sexual maturity is attained and secondary sexual characteristics appear (Shaffer 1999:167; Gouws *et al.* 2000:2). Vrey (1992:165) and Statt (2003:3) stress that it is mainly early and middle adolescence that is dominated by biological development.

- **Psychological characteristics**

Statt (2003:3) states that later adolescence is dominated by cultural demands. Other changes that take place during adolescence include major changes occurring in body image, sexual interest, career development, intellectual development, and self-concept (Corsini 2002:21). Louw *et al.* (1998:384) maintain that adolescence ends when the individual is reasonably certain of his or her identity, is emotionally independent of his parents, has developed a personal value system and is capable of establishing an adult love relationship and adult friendships.

Statt (2003:3) however notes that emotional, moral and intellectual development may not necessarily occur on the same time schedule as biological development. This idea is borne out in recent research where Park (2004:50) introduces the idea of cognitive changes that occur in the brain during the phase of adolescence. These changes have great bearing on the emotional development of the adolescent.

Stoiber and Good (1998:380) and Macfarlane (2000:17), while agreeing that the period of adolescence is one of dramatic physical and psychological transition, focus on the stereotypical portrayal of adolescence as often being a time of exploration, rebellion and upheaval. Grossman, Beinashowitz, Anderson, Sakurai, Finnin and Flaherty (1992:529) and Williams and McGillicuddy-De Lisi (2000:537) grant that adolescence is a time of major transition with the inevitable stresses of life span changes. These authors (Grossman *et al.* 1992:529 and Williams *et al.* 2000:537) are of the opinion that, contrary to popular belief, "normal" adolescents do not experience major turmoil and do not manifest serious symptomology. Grossman *et*

al. (1992:529) and Burt (2002:137) suggest that adolescents who do show evidence of significant distress are, in fact, in trouble and this distress is likely to predict future difficulty.

This researcher agrees with Macfarlane (1998:5) that while there may be some truth to the stereotypical idea of adolescence being a period of "storm and stress", the reality of adolescence is far more complicated. What follows is a brief outline of the most salient features of adolescence including the developmental stages and tasks of adolescence.

2.2.1   The developmental stages and tasks of adolescence

While adolescent development does not occur on a perfect continuum, it is convenient to talk about adolescent maturation in stages. Three stages of adolescence will be alluded to below:

- Early adolescence: ages 10-14

- Middle adolescence: ages 15-17 and

- Late adolescence: ages 18-22

(http://www.etr/prg/recapp/theories/AdolescentDevelopment/overview.htm)

In the discussion of adolescence above it was mentioned that during the three life stages of adolescence adolescents undergo rapid physical, cognitive, emotional, social and behavioural changes. These will be discussed in the table below in greater detail in order to highlight the differences in the key features between these stages. Havinghurst (1976:2) was the first person to propose that human development can best be thought of in terms of the developmental tasks that are normal in transition. Havinghurst (1976:2) defined a developmental task as a task which is undertaken at a certain period in the life of the individual. Successful achievement of which leads to his happiness and to success with later tasks, while failure leads to unhappiness in the individual, disapproval by the society and difficulty with later tasks. Havinghurst (1976:2) went on to identify eleven developmental tasks associated with the adolescent. Each of these tasks can also be seen as elements of the overall sense of self they carry with them as they move toward and into young adulthood.

Table 2.1: Key features of the three stages of adolescent development

Balk (1995:256-257); Carr-Gregg & Shale (2002:32-53); Burt (2002:137)

Aspect of Development	Early Adolescence Ages 10-14	Middle Adolescence Ages 15-17	Late Adolescence Ages 18-22
Physical	• Significant physical/sexual maturation • Intense concern with body image	• Continuing physical/sexual changes • Less concern with body image	• Physical/sexual changes complete • Greater acceptance of physical appearance
Cognitive	• Concrete thinking	• Growth and capacity to think abstractly	• Capacity for abstract thought in place
Emotional	• Growing independence in decision-making	• Development of sense of identity • Exploration of ability to attract partners begins	• Sense of identity established
Social	• Increasing influence of peers • Feeling attracted to others begins	• Enormous influence of peers/school environment • Increase in sexual interest	• Family influence more in balance with peer influence • Serious intimate relationships begin to develop • Transition to work, further study, independent living
Behavioural	• Experimenting with new ways of behaving begins	• Risk-taking behaviour	• Capacity for realistic risk assessments

The developmental tasks put forward by Havinghurst (1976:2), the initiator of the idea of developmental tasks, are discussed below:

2.2.1.1   *Acceptance of a changed physical appearance*

The adolescent must adapt to a new physical sense of self as at no other time since babyhood has the individual undergone such rapid and profound physical changes. Puberty is marked by sudden rapid growth in height and weight. The young person looks less like a child and more like a physically mature adult. The effect of this rapid change is that the young adolescent often feels alienated from his body.

2.2.1.2   Adjusting to new intellectual abilities

The adolescent must adjust to new intellectual abilities. He experiences a sudden increase in his ability to think about and to conceive his world with a new level of awareness. During adolescence he recognizes and understands abstractions for the first time.

2.2.1.3   Developmental of cognitive skills and the acquisition of knowledge

The adolescent must adjust to increased cognitive demands at school. Schools are regarded as institutions where adolescents are prepared for adult roles and responsibilities and for further tertiary education. As material is often presented in an abstract manner, those adolescents who have not yet achieved abstract thought, may find schoolwork frustrating.

2.2.1.4   Expansion of vocabulary skills

Adolescence is a time when the adolescent is required to expand his vocabulary skills in order to express himself meaningfully in preparation for adult roles and in order to cope with more complex ideas and tasks.

2.2.1.5   Development of an own identity

The adolescent begins to develop a personal sense of identity and to ask questions like "Who am I?" and "What does it mean to be me?" The adolescent begins to see himself as unique and separate from his parents. Erikson, (1968:135) in his classic work, Identity: Youth and Crisis, suggested that during adolescence individuals begin to develop an adult identity, the capacity for intimate relationships, and adult role responsibilities.

2.2.1.6   Selection of and preparation for a career

As part of his identity the adolescent needs to establish an idea of which career he would like to embark upon and which vocational goals he would like to pursue.

2.2.1.7   Development of independence from parents and other adults

The adolescent has a desire to be more independent and autonomous and to extricate himself from his parents and from the safety and security that his relationship with them offers. In his efforts to become and to be seen as an individual, it may sometimes seem as though he is being unco-operative.

2.2.1.8 Acceptance of an adjustment to certain groups

During middle adolescence, friendships with peers and being accepted by the peer group is extremely important. According to Ingersoll (2004) the degree to which the adolescent is able to make friends and be accepting of the peer group is a major indicator of how well he (the adolescent) will succeed in other areas of social and psychological development.

2.2.1.9 Development of a masculine or feminine gender role identity

The adolescent must come to terms with his sexuality and with the idea of what it means to be male or female. He must accommodate these concepts as well as values and morals into his self-image and self-concept.

2.2.1.10 Development of a value system and a philosophy of life based on a realistic and scientific world view

The adolescent must adopt a personal value system. The adolescent needs to evaluate his parents' values, values espoused by peers, his school, the media and the church as well as other sectors of society. He then needs to restructure these values, morals and beliefs into a personal ideology.

2.2.1.11 Development of socially responsible behaviour

The adolescent must develop increased self-control. Ingersoll (2004) notes that most young people engage in one or more behaviours that place them at social or educational risk particularly during early and middle adolescence. In time adolescents develop impulse control through which they assess which behaviours are acceptable and which are risky and may have adverse effects. According to Park (2004:53) scientists and the general public have usually attributed the bad decisions teenagers make to hormonal changes. However, neuroscientists who have been mapping brain changes in the developing brain, concur that the regions of the brain which are linked to responsible decision-making, exercising judgment and delayed gratification, are the last areas of the brain to mature. All too often, these areas of the brain have not finished maturing by late adolescence. The implication of this is that there is a time lapse between events which impel adolescents toward taking risks early in adolescence, and when sufficient brain evolution/maturation occurs that allows adolescents to think before they act.

In the discussion that follows, the development of the adolescent's identity will be discussed during which Erik Erikson's (1968) psychosocial approach will be awarded special attention.

2.2.2 Adolescence and identity development

2.2.2.1   Development of a distinct identity

Identity can be defined as the meaning attached by a person to himself as a person. The person must be in a position to answer the question "Who am I?" Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988:113) define identity as "knowing who and what one is and the knowledge that one is distinguishable from others. It is a sense of the self. It is concerned with those elements of character and personality that are distinguishing". Identity formation is a lifelong and largely unconscious process and the roots of one's identity can be traced back to early experiences between the mother and infant (Gouws *et al.* 2000:90). It is mainly during adolescence, however, that the adolescent experiments with a variety of identities and chooses a model or models (i.e. people the adolescent would like to resemble). This process of experimentation with many roles is necessary to facilitate the adolescent's quest to establish a sex role identity as well as an occupational and an ethnic identity. Erikson (1968:159) and Adams and Berzonsky (2003:207) support this idea of the value and necessary experimentation of roles when they suggest that identity formation is the synthesis and integration of childhood identifications into a new form that is uniquely one's own.

2.2.2.2   Erikson's psychosocial approach

Erikson (1968) theorised that personality development progresses through stages. During each stage, the child must resolve conflicts between needs or feelings and external obstacles. The satisfactory resolution of these conflicts leads to a healthy personality and a productive lifestyle (Bukatko & Daehler 2004:26).

Erikson (1968:94) outlined eight stages of development. The researcher will concentrate on the fifth stage as this stage is relevant to the phase of puberty to adulthood. This stage is called "Identity versus Role/Identity Confusion (Erikson 1968:130-135). (Adams & Berzonsky 2004:206). This stage with its significant events and outcomes is depicted below in Table 2.2 (Bukatko & Daehler 2004:26). The table will briefly be explained:

The fifth stage of development, which occurs during adolescence, is called "Identity versus Identity Confusion". During this stage of development the adolescent experiences a crisis where he is expected to adapt to new tasks and to experiment with various identities in order to be able to answer the question "Who am I?". Once he is able to discover who he is, he is able to forge a unique ethnic, occupational and sex role identity. Some adolescents however are confused about who they are and what their role is. They have not been able to integrate all of their identity roles into a unique identity and the outcome of this is that they are not in a position to answer the question "Who am I?"

Table 2.2: The fifth stage of development

(Bukatko & Daehler 2004:26)

Stage	Adaptive Mode	Significant Events and Outcomes
Identity Versus Identity Confusion (puberty to adulthood)	Integration – to be oneself (or not to be oneself)	The adolescent attempts to discover his identity and his place in society by trying out many roles in order to answer the question, "Who am I?"

2.2.2.3   Identity diffusion

Identity diffusion (or identity confusion) occurs when adolescents are incapable of making any decisions about themselves and their roles, or when there is too little opportunity for experimentation with social roles. They may also appear to be disinterested in finding personally expressive adult roles and values (Adams & Bezonsky 2003:208). The result of this is that the different roles cannot be integrated. This creates difficulties for the adolescent when he is confronted with conflicting value systems because he lacks the ability or self-confidence to make decisions. This state of confusion causes anxiety, apathy or hostility towards roles or values and may lead to feelings of incompetence and uncertainty or the forming of a negative identity and a lack of direction in life (Gouws *et al.* 2000:92-93).

2.3   ADOLESCENCE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF RELATIONS THEORY

As this dissertation attempts to study resilience in adolescents from a psycho-educational perspective, it is essential to highlight the different key concepts of the

Unisa Model of Educational Psychology's Relations Theory. Table 2.3 below summarises the key concepts of the Relations Theory:

Table 2.3: Key concepts of Relations Theory

(Macfarlane 2000:24)

CONCEPT	DEFINITION AND ADOLESCENT TASKS
Attribution of meaning	The adolescent attaches meaning to the relationship in which he finds himself. Meaning is both individual, and actively assigned. In other words it is intentional and personal. It facilitates meaningful orientation to the environment.
Involvement	Involvement suggests a willingness or drive to participate: it is "… the psychic vitality or vigour with which a meaningful objective is pursued and achieved".. (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg 1993:191). It implies activity and intentionality. Attribution of meaning is facilitated by involvement.
Experience	Experience is the sum total of feelings and / or meaning deriving from an encounter. As the adolescent undergoes the experience, personal meaning is assigned which in turn impacts on the quality of a relationship. Experience can be negative or positive.
Self-identity	Identity formation is the process through which an adolescent goes to decide who he is. Self-identity answers the question "Who am I?" It is a subjective view of the self, and is intrinsic to all actions.
Self-concept	The self-concept, or core of the personality, is the dynamic sum of beliefs and attitudes concerning the self-identity. It is generally measured against subjective standards and is highly significant to the self. Self-concept can be realistically or unrealistically positive or negative. It impacts directly on the behaviour.
Self-esteem	The perception of how others see the self, and what their opinion of the self is, results in self-esteem. It is the evaluative part of the self-concept.
Self-actualisation	Self-actualisation is fulfilling potential: it is becoming the very best that an adolescent can become. It requires total involvement, and is an active process. A positive self-concept underlies self-actualisation.
Intra-psychic structure	The intra-psychic structure refers to the gestalt of the "I", "self", "self-identity" and "self-concept". Intra-psychic relations refers to the adolescent's self-talk, or what he says to himself about himself. His self-talk impacts on his sense of identity, which in turn affects his self-concept and finally his behaviour.

The concepts described in Table 2.3 are defined and integrated with the tasks of the adolescent and an attempt is made to assist the reader in understanding the terminology intrinsic to the Relations Theory. This theory logically explains how the inter-play between the different personality components of the adolescent can contribute towards an integrated identity. An integrated identity will ultimately lead to self-actualisation and resilience. A detailed explanation of the concepts of the Relations Theory and the inter-play between the different personality components was provided in Chapter One of this dissertation.

Unisa's Relations Theory takes as its point of departure that one is not a being living in isolation but that one is surrounded by people and things with which we interact and to/with whom we relate. From the quality of our involvement and interactions with people and things we learn to develop a sense of who we are and how we believe we are perceived by others as well as how we perceive ourselves. We evaluate our worth based on these perceptions and on the beliefs that we have about ourselves. These beliefs affect our self-esteem. If a person has a low self-esteem he will not believe that he is capable of achieving his full potential and of self-actualising. This in turn will have implications for his ability to be resilient or to demonstrate qualities of resilience. In the ensuing discussion of the concept of resilience it will become clear that this concept is a complex one to understand because it involves dynamic interactions between the individual and his internal and external environments as well as his ability to adapt to these dynamic interactions.

The concept of resilience will be discussed next.

2.4   THE CONCEPT OF RESILIENCE

2.4.1 Introduction

Resilience refers to a dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity. Two critical conditions are inferred within this concept:

- The person should have been/be exposed to significant threat(s) or to severe adversity and

- the person should achieve positive adaptation despite major assaults on the

developmental process (Smokowski, Reynolds & Bezruczko 1999:426; Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker 2000:543; Masten 2001:228).

2.4.2 Historical context

The investigation of factors that result in adaptive outcomes in the presence of adversity was initially studied in the mid-1970's when researchers discovered that schizophrenics with the least severe courses of illness were characterized by a pre-morbid history of relative competence at work, social relations, marriage, and capacity to fulfil responsibility. Children of schizophrenic mothers who seemed to thrive despite their high-risk status led to increasing efforts to understand individual variations in response to adversity. Following Werner, Bierman and French's (1971) groundbreaking studies on children in Hawaii, research on resilience expanded to include multiple adverse conditions such as socio-economic disadvantage, and associated risks, parental mental illness, urban poverty and community violence, chronic illness and catastrophic life events. The focus of this research was a systematic search for protective factors or forces which distinguished between children who seemed well adjusted and those who were comparatively less well adjusted (Garmezy, Masten & Tellegan 1984:98; Masten & O'Connor 1989:274-278; Luthar, Ciccheti & Becker 2000:544).

Initially an effort was made to focus on the internal or personal qualities or attributes of "resilient children", such as autonomy and high self-esteem. However, researchers began to acknowledge that resilience may often spring from factors outside of the child. Research (Werner & Smith 1982:119-136) eventually identified three sets of factors implicated in the development of resilience. These are:

a) attributes of the children themselves,

b) aspects of their families and

c) characteristics of their wider environments.

The construct of resilience will be discussed in greater detail below in an attempt to clarify this complex construct.

2.4.3 The construct of resilience

The theoretical and research literature on resilience reflects little consensus about definitions of resilience and many definitions of this complex concept exist.

Many developmental investigators have defined resilience in terms of the child who is able to meet the major expectations of a given society or culture in historical context for the behaviour of children of that age and situation, for example, achieving the necessary developmental tasks, cultural age expectations and competencies (Masten 2001:229).

Masten (2001:229) notes that particularly in fields concerned with the prevention of substance abuse and psychopathology, investigators have focused on the absence of psychopathology or a low level of symptoms and impairment as the criterion for resilience, rather than the presence of academic or social achievements.

Masten (2001:227) and Waller (2000:291) note that early images of resilience in both academic work and mass media implied that resilient children had some special personality trait or remarkable coping style. These children were often described as "stress-resistant," "resilient" or "invulnerable". They were children who have developed productive strategies to cope with their difficulties (McWhirter, McWhirter, McWhirter & McWhirter 1998:79). Werner and Smith (1982:48) described resilience in children as "*the child who works well, loves well and expects well, notwithstanding profound life adversity".* Masten (2001:227) however suggests that there is nothing remarkable about resilient children and the great surprise of resilience research is the ordinariness of the phenomenon of resilience that results in most cases from the operation of basic human adaptational systems. Masten (2001:229) questions whether to define resilience on the basis of external adaptation criteria (such as academic achievement or the absence of delinquency) or internal criteria (psychological well-being or low levels of distress) or both. Minnard (2001:233) adheres to the view of resilience being defined in terms of how well adaptation takes place when he focuses on the phenomenon of the child who despite exposure to significant risk factors and crippling, environmental, familial, and personal experiences, shows good adaptation and develops normally. In Minnard's (2001:233) view these children exhibit competence, independence, and adaptability. Waller (2000:291) cautions against focussing exclusively on the individual traits of the child as he says that this approach obscures the ecosystemic context of resilience which emphasises the inter-relatedness between individuals and social systems (families, groups, organisations) and the continuous adaptation between individuals and their environments.

Research (Waller 2000:291) has found that if these social systems are protected and in good working order, development is robust even in the face of severe adversity, yet if these major systems are impaired, then the risk for developmental problems is much greater, particularly if the environmental hazards are prolonged. Garbarino (1994) in McWhirter *et al.* (1998:80) contends that given sufficient exposure to miserable, social, familial, and educational environments, all children and youth fail to do well. Garbarino's (1994:114) view is that each child has a "tipping point" between doing well and failing to do well (i.e. feeling despair, having low self-esteem and demonstrating dysfunctional behaviours). Waller (2000:293) concurs with this view when she points out that resilience is not the absence of vulnerability. In her (Waller 2000:293) opinion, no-one is either resilient or vulnerable all the time. Rather, some people are resilient in response to one adverse life event and vulnerable to another life event. This novel perspective is useful in order to distinguish between youth who do well and have hope and those who fail and feel despair.

For the purposes of this study the researcher will adhere to Luthar, Cicchetti and Becker (2000:543), Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2002:204) and Dent and Cameron's (2003:5) definitions which describe resilience as the flexibility or ability to rebound from adversity and to cope with, adapt positively to and manage major difficulties and disadvantages in life, and even to thrive in the face of what appears to be overwhelming odds. For the researcher however, the true test of a resilient individual is not only the positive adaptation within the context of adversity, but the continued striving towards self-actualisation and a positive future in spite of setbacks. The impression should not be created in this study that resilient individuals are immune to life's challenges, however, resilient individuals have good outcomes in spite of serious threats to adaptation or development (Masten 2001:228). A discussion of adolescence and resilience will be discussed in the next paragraph.

2.5   ADOLESCENCE AND RESILIENCE

As mentioned previously, adolescence can be described as a transitional period in which individuals experience major physical, cognitive, and socio-affective changes. Other life events, such as family structure changes, school changes, and accidents can also affect adolescents' well-being. Some children appear to adapt successfully

and are even stimulated by these life events whereas others seem to experience adjustment problems, behavioural problems and covert psychological difficulties, such as problems of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (Luthar *et al.* 2000:548). For the researcher, appropriate indicators of resilience among adolescents who have been exposed to adversity would be academic success and positive relationships with peers as well as adults.

Dumont and Provost (1999:344) suggest that the study of the individual differences between adolescents who appear to adapt successfully in spite of adversity and those who appear to be negatively impacted in the face of adversity, may provide information on potential protective factors that may help adolescents in at-risk contexts. Jackson and Martin (1998:571) concur with this view but add that the extent to which children who face high risk situations fare well in life depends on the extent to which the risk factors in their lives are balanced by individual and environmental protective factors.

Dent and Cameron (2003:4) suggest that both protective and adverse factors are influential in the development of a young person, yet according to them, the traditional focus of much of the published research has been on vulnerability and the likelihood of most individuals succumbing to the negative outcomes in life. Several authors have identified specific risk and protective factors that have shown significant and predictive correlations with adolescent substance abuse and criminal behaviour across multiple longitudinal studies (Pollard, Hawkins and Arthur 1999:146). These authors suggest that not all of these risk or protective factors will ultimately prove to be causal factors. Pollard *et al.* (1999:146) are of the opinion that manipulation of risk and protective factors through prevention experiments will help to determine their causal role in the etiology of behaviour. The difference between protective factors on the one hand, and adverse (risk) factors on the other hand, will be clarified below.

2.6   PROTECTIVE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO RESILIENCE

Werner and Smith's (1992:3) well-accepted definition of protective factors refers to biological or psychological hazards that increase the likelihood of a negative developmental outcome in a grouping of people. Dent and Cameron (2003:4), Donald, Lazarus, Lolwana (2002:222) and Rodgers (2002:1025) agree with this

definition however they emphasise the idea of a protective factor not only buffering the young person, but in some cases, strengthening the child's response to single or multiple stresses. Among the most widely cited protective factors for youths are optimization of academic and social competence, caring and supportive adult-child relationships, and supportive school climates (Stoiber & Good 1998:395; Todis, Bullis, Waintrup, Schultz & D'Ambrosio 2001:137; Zimmerman et al. 2003:236; Minnard 2001:235).

Protective factors appear to be the building blocks of resilience with the development of resilience depending on many different transactions between the individual's internal and environmental protective factors. Burt (2002:138) notes that much research has focussed on trying to identify protective factors and to learn how they work, for instance, whether they are independent, positive factors in their own right or whether they have effects primarily when there are risk factors that need to be alleviated.

Research has confirmed the role of key protective factors which have been identified across a number of different studies. These fall into three main categories:

- Personal or individual characteristics or attributes of a child or adolescent.

- Characteristics (e.g. climate and resources) within an adolescent's family.

- Characteristics of formal and informal social support networks into which a youth might be connected (Pollard, Hawkins & Arthur 1999:146; Smokowksi, Reynolds & Bezruczko 1999:426).

Within groups of youngsters exposed to significant adversities, those with protective attributes frequently fare better that adolescents who lack them (Luthar & Cicchetti 2000:859).

The individual characteristics contributing to resilience will be discussed separately in the paragraphs that follow.

2.6.1 Individual characteristics contributing to resilience

An array of personal attributes differentiates resilient children from their vulnerable peers. These include:

- **Effective communication**

Children are enabled, through good communication skills to express their needs, thoughts and feelings. They are also able to negotiate emotionally hazardous experiences and to avoid feeling overwhelmed and helpless in the face of adversity and difficulty (Early & Vonk 2001:18).

- **Pro-active problem-solving skills/effective coping skills**

The ability to cope effectively with anxiety and stress is another skill which differentiates low-risk from high-risk young people. Effective coping skills influence the individual's response to stress, which in turn affects the way that person deals with conflicts with others. Depending on the young person's problem-solving skills, he could either cope with humour, altruism or by focusing his attention elsewhere, or he could withdraw, act out, etcetera. The resilient child would do the former (i.e. cope with humour, focus his attention elsewhere.)

This view is reinforced by Masten, Best and Garmezy (1990:432) and Lewis (1999:202) who suggested that children who display resilience demonstrate the capacity for solving problems and believe in their own capabilities. McWhirter *et al.* (1998:82) concur with this statement but emphasise the resilient adolescent's ability to consider the consequences of his decisions. These abilities appear to relate to high intelligence which will be discussed next.

- **High intelligence**

Smith and Carlson (1997:238) and Wang, Haertel and Walberg (1997:19) make mention of the fact that intelligence has been linked to resilience. Wang *et al.* (1997:19) found that resilient children usually score higher on verbal tests. Masten, Best and Garmezy (1990:432) found that more intellectually able children often have socio-economic and educational advantages, as well as more able parents. They may be able to quickly and accurately discern danger, find havens, and locate sources of help and consequently adapt better in the face of adversity.

- **Good inter-personal skills/social competence/social bonding**

Sociability and a well developed sense of humour have been found to have protective value for older children as their social competence elicits positive responses from others. This is related to the development of a good self-concept

which will be discussed below (Krovetza 1999:121). McWhirter *et al.* (1998:87) have identified several core skills which are essential for satisfying social relationships and for more effective interpersonal problem solving: developing and maintaining friendships, sharing laughter and jokes with peers, knowing how to join a group activity, skilfully ending a conversation, and interacting with a variety of peers and others.

- **Good self-concept and good self-esteem**

Resilient children appear to have a positive self-concept and a strong feeling of self-worth. When adolescents feel good about themselves, they actively and positively become involved with and seek out others for example, educators, parents and peers. If they experience this involvement positively, they feel empowered as people in their own right who may develop a positive self-concept and self-esteem. Smith and Carlson (1997:238) and Early and Vonk (2001:12) maintain that these components together with acceptance and optimism have been linked with protection. Donald *et al.* (2002:223) say that these characteristics feed into each other in a reinforcing way.

- **An "easy" temperament**

Children with "easy" temperaments who were described as friendly and cuddly appeared, in studies of temperament in children, to attract more favourable responses from their care-givers than those infants who were described as "difficult" or "slow to warm up" (Smith & Carlson 1997:238; McMillan & Reed 1994:27; Werner & Smith 1982:173).

- **A strong internal locus of control**

If one adolescent feels that he may be effective and have some sense of power or control over their environment, it becomes possible to hope, to plan, and to set personal goals. Without this internal locus of control, children feel powerless. They may feel that forces outside of themselves control and shape their lives (McWhirter *et al.* 1998:87; Lewis 1999:202; Worrall & Hale 2001:372). Wang *et al.* (1997:19) suggest that resilient children are resourceful and flexible and can be independent when necessary and that this resourcefulness is what sets them apart and makes them feel that they are in control of their own lives. Capella and Weinstein (2001:759) and McWhirter and McWhirter (1998:82) add that the adolescent's

feelings of mastery and the ability to delay gratification contribute to a sense of self-control.

- **Healthy beliefs**

Closely related to the above resilience factor is the resilient adolescent's faith in a higher power or a religious philosophy of life, which has, according to Smith and Carlson (1997:238), also been associated with protection from negative outcomes. Masten, Best and Garmezy (1990:432), Hood and Carruthers (2002:143) and Vakalahi (2001:37) indicate that religion may enhance positive beliefs about the self and provide social connectedness derived from abstract relationships with religious protective figures and concrete relationships provided by supportive members within a religious community.

- **Sense of purpose and future**

Resilient youth have goals, educational aspirations, persistence, hopefulness, and a sense of a bright future (Krovetz 1999:121; Kalil & Kunz 1999:199).

- **Gender and age**

Smith and Carlson (1997:238) are of the opinion that gender is an individual characteristic that conditions the effect of stress on adjustment, although the effect of gender varies with age. Smith and Carlson (1997:238) maintain that most studies find that during early and middle childhood, boys are more vulnerable to stressful life events such as divorce than girls. However, during adolescence the reverse is true: girls report more stressful life events, evaluate them as more stressful, and have more negative outcomes (like depression and eating disorders) in the face of stress than boys (Reimer 2002:42). Boys may, however, report less stress, but they may exhibit distress more behaviourally, for example, through anti-social or aggressive behaviour and substance abuse. Reimer (2002:42) notes that difficulties with behavioural control often puts boys on collision courses with educators and undermines their level of academic engagement. Masten *et al.* (1990:433) note that older children and adolescents have been reported to have stronger and longer lasting reactions to major disasters than very young children, at least in the absence of harm to the primary care-giver. This may be mainly due to the fact that the older child is more aware of the implications of the disaster and connected to a wider network of people who may have been affected by the disaster. Research also

suggests that different protective factors come into play at different stages. Late childhood and early adolescence in particular, provide opportunities for new behaviours to emerge as adolescents have experiences outside the family circle, in school, with peers, and in social opportunities. During middle and later adolescence, however, social support can elevate risk if teens have negative peer groups (Smith & Carlson 1997:239). Age also influences how one views stress, the kinds and numbers of life events experienced, the coping resources available to combat stressful events, coping styles and strategy, and the importance of the family as a buffer.

2.6.2 Family factors in risk and resiliency

The family environment is probably one of the most important influences on the psychosocial development of young people. Smokowksi *et al.* (1999:927) found that care-giving in the child's first year of life to be the most powerful predictor of childhood resilience. Smith and Carlson (1997:239) and Grossman (1992:447) mention that qualitative studies of children in high-risk, disadvantaged settings have characterized resilient children as having resilient families. Examples of this include parents and children in poor and disrupted communities who use particular coping strategies, including extending child-care responsibilities to multiple individuals, assuming a flexible maternal role, and locating outside resources and safe niches within the communities such as after-school or day-care programs. The presence of fathers and relationships free of conflict have been found to enhance parenting and child outcomes. Grossman *et al.* (1992:530) and McWhirter *et al.* (1998:81) refer to various familial factors that can serve a protective function in that they contribute to resilience in children. These factors include:

2.6.2.1 *Absence of marital discord*

The avoidance of marital conflict, violence and abuse helps to provide a safe and healthy environment for children.

2.6.2.2 *Healthy, caring relationship with at least one parent or stable care-giver*

Adolescents who are strongly bonded to their parents are less likely to engage in substance abuse because they are most likely to adhere to the rules and regulations established by those individuals or systems (Vakalahi 2001:34; Smokowski *et al.*

1999:427). Involvement with the child is useful in the development of independence and self-direction that are essential to resiliency (Keogh 2000:5).

Donald *et al.* (2002:223) propose that although the nurturing relationship may frequently be with a mother or father, that it need not necessarily always be the case. In Southern Africa, for instance, in many families, the grandmother or another relative may fulfil this role.

2.6.2.3   *Positive parenting*

Many aspects of positive parenting could be mentioned:

- Among families living in conditions of poverty, positive parenting encompassing high monitoring, support, and cohesiveness can help children maintain adequate levels of adjustment (Luthar & Goldstein 2004:503). This style of parenting which includes adequate monitoring and support of the child is called authoritative parenting (Masten 2001:232; Dent & Cameron 2003:8; Shucksmith, Hendry & Glendinning 1995:254).

- When parents model healthy communication patterns and skills such as attending and focusing, this may lead to academic and task orientation in young people (McWhirter *et al.* 1998:82). Children and families that engage in interactions that promote the expression of independent thought and allow for an exchange of ideas between parents and children are more likely to exhibit psychosocial competence (McWhirter *et al.* 1998:82). When children observe adults responding to challenges with humour and a willingness to try again, they are more likely to choose the same kind of response for themselves (Janas 2002:121; Hood & Carruthers 2002:144).

- Parents who encourage competence (e.g. academic achievement) and support the child in developing skills and goals that are linked to the broader social setting, contribute directly to their child's resiliency (Donald *et al.* 2002:223; Dekovic & Meeus 1997:163).

2.6.2.4   *Influencing the adolescent's support systems*

McWhirter *et al.* (1998:82) and Wang *et al.* (1997:20) suggest that the family can also contribute to resiliency indirectly, through its influence on their children's support systems for example by exposing their children to religious and church-related

organizations or to community groups and by encouraging their participation in organised adult-child programs. The adults in these organizations provide a helpful support network that fosters resiliency. The family also plays an important role in influencing the adolescent's values. When a family has a strong, coherent, and consistent set of values in the form of a religious belief or a consistent set of (high) expectations, rules, and structure within the family, this serves as a protective factor for the adolescent (Donald *et al.* 2002:224; Masten, Best & Garmezy 1990:432).

2.6.2.5 *Family cohesion and positive family bonding*

Springer *et al.* (1997:437) propose that families can contribute to adolescent resiliency in the following ways:

- they can contribute to the ability to develop close, trusting relations through family bonding and caring relations with parents;

- they can develop purpose and positive expectations in life;

- they can develop co-operativeness and belonging through opportunities for meaningful family involvement;

- they can encourage adult support in critical decision making and positive choices and

- they can provide a cohesive and supportive family environment with strong family traditions and rituals (Lewis 1999:135).

2.6.3 Characteristics of social support networks

The environment beyond the family also provides wonderful opportunities for support and maturity in children. Resilient children and adolescents are thought to utilise social support systems more effectively than their peers (Smokolowski *et al.* 1999:427). Community networks act as a general protective factor for children and have important protective functions. Krovetz (1999:2) notes that a resilient community is a community that has high expectations, purposeful support and offers on-going opportunities for meaningful participation. Donald *et al.* (2002:224) cite a number of community networks and the functions that they fulfil. These include the peer group and myriad people outside the family with whom the child has an opportunity to interact with on a regular basis. The roles that these groups play in the adolescent's life will be discussed in greater detail below.

2.6.3.1   *Peers*

Peers have a strong influence on the development of any child. Although the importance of the peer group is generally recognized, the nature of the peer group is important. Peer influence may be even more powerful in situations where the adolescent receives little or no social support (Capella & Weinstein 2001:759). In contexts like these, the peer group may have to make up for the lack of other forms of support, including family support. If the adolescent experiences a sense of belonging, acceptance, is able to forge an identity and absorbs certain values through the peer group, then he develops resilience as these qualities and the interaction with the peer group serve as protective factors (Donald *et al.* 2002:224; Smith & Carlson 1997:240; Rodgers 2002:1026).

2.6.3.2   *People outside of the family*

Educators, school counsellors, sports coaches, religious leaders and other adults who hold positions of social responsibility are possible people with whom the adolescent may identify. The adolescent may see these people as possible role models who form a supportive network. (Lowenthal 1998:49). Werner and Smith (1992:178) perceive these people as being in a position to encourage and accept the adolescent unconditionally and in so doing, have a positive influence on his self-concept, identity and goals. These external support systems can reward the adolescent's abilities and skills and provide him with a sense of meaning and internal locus of control or a belief system by which to live. In this regard, the school environment must not be underestimated as a potential supportive milieu for adolescents who experience stress and trauma. McWhirter *et al.* (1998:81) suggest that when social support is low in one setting (e.g. the family), the other settings need to compensate for the lack or assist in re-constructing the support that is needed to make the weaker area stronger. Involving children in extra-curricular activities and helping them to achieve in academic areas will increase their resilience. This is true because not only will these adolescents be involved in constructive, supervised activity on and off the sports field, but they will have the opportunity to have access to peers and adults who care about, encourage and support them. This will enhancing their feelings of worth. When an adolescent feels valued and cared for and has supportive networks, his chances of being resilient and of self-actualising are greatly enhanced. The school's role will be discussed later.

Local community contacts and friends of the family and kin often provide a supportive network. The more freedom the child has to approach trusted others with his problems, the greater the chances that he can be assisted to cope with stressful situations and difficulties.

Donald *et al.* (2002:224) note that in communities where a strong premium is placed on the good of the community as a whole, and on the social responsibility that each member of the community has towards the other members, the social support network becomes much wider than a network of individuals with whom one has contact. These value systems are common in Southern Africa.

In the following paragraph the concept of risk factors will be explained as well as how it is related to resilience.

2.7   RISK FACTORS AND RESILIENCE

Dent and Cameron (2003:4) and Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2002:222) define risk or adverse factors as those circumstances that combine to threaten or challenge healthy development and positive adaptational outcomes (Waller 2001:292). Durlak (1998:513) suggests that certain negative experiences are most often associated with major negative outcomes and although many children exposed to adversities do not develop major problems, a risk factor can increase the probability of a negative outcome. Smith and Carlson (1997:235) and Waller (2001:293) stress, however, that it is the cumulative effect of risk factors rather than a single specific risk factor that tends to produce negative outcomes more consistently.

Smith and Carlson (1997:234) mention that there is consensus on the clusters of risk factors that are associated with negative outcomes. These risk factors are influences occurring at any systemic level (i.e. individual, family, community and/or society).

In the following paragraph the various risk factors that impact on the individual, family and community systems, increasing the likelihood of a child being non-resilient, are listed.

2.7.1 Characteristics of individuals

Smith and Carlson (1997:235) note that children are vulnerable to developmental risks in early childhood. These may be due to:

- perinatal problems (Early & Vonk 2001:12)

- serious/chronic illness

- developmental delays

- genetic disorders/disabilities

- prolonged separation from primary care-giver in first life year and

- temperament (Cosden 2001:355; Smith & Carlson 1997:235; Keogh 2000:3)

2.7.2 Family risk factors

Family risk factors have been associated with negative child outcomes (Buysse 1997:647; Smith & Carlson 1997:235; Jackson & Martin 1998:577; Kalil & Kunz 1999:198; Keogh 2000:4).

Those factors which are a source of stress for children include:

- out-of-home placement e.g. admission of child into community care

- family conflict and psychopathology

- unsafe neighbourhood

- severe marital discord

- maternal depression

- divorce and separation

- family deviance e.g. parental criminality

- neglectful and abusive parents

- certain parenting styles (authoritarian/non-responsive, laissez-faire/permissive child-rearing practices)

- major family events e.g. bereavement, unemployment

- severe family conflict

- insecure attachment and poor family communication (Daniel, Wassell, Ennis, Gilligan & Ennis 1997:212).

- poor supervision

- large family size

- poverty/low socio-economic status

- overcrowded home

- frequent changes in residence

- low parent education

- social isolation

- unsafe neighbourhood
- children closely spaced
- parent substance abuse
- mother's mental health

While it appears that there are myriad adverse factors within the child as well as outside of the child which could "tip the balance" in favour of the child being seen as "at risk" or vulnerable. It should be borne in mind that some children appear to thrive in the face of adversity.

2.7.3 Risk factors associated with social contexts

Negative family and child outcomes have also been liked to harmful environments and social conditions, dangerous and disorganized neighbourhoods and low social status. In the Southern African context and in particular the South African context, it goes without saying that pandemics like HIV/AIDS, illnesses like tuberculosis, poverty and high levels of violence, take their toll on family well-being and stability and are major risk factors associated with negative child outcomes. In the paragraph below, special attention will be focussed on the risk factors associated with the school and the peer group as it is within these two contexts that the adolescent spends most of his time.

2.7.3.1 Risk factors associated with the school

A lack of specific school environment variables during adolescence have been demonstrated to contribute towards adolescents being regarded as being "at risk". These variables include:

- poor scholastic motivation and academic performance

- conflict with educators

- an impoverished school culture with low standards of achievement

- undemocratic teaching style (Buysse 1997:647)

- a lack of school structural support during the transition from primary school to high school (Capella & Weinstein 2001:759).

It is a well accepted fact the peer group plays a dominant role in the adolescent's life where the opinions of the peers and acceptance by peers can eclipse the influence

of care-givers and educators. While the influence of the peer group may often be positive and supportive, propelling the adolescent towards self-actualisation, this is not always the case. It is therefore necessary to take cognisance of the negative impact that the peer group can sometimes have on the adolescent in order that its influence can be diluted. In the next paragraph the negative influences of the peer group, which serve as risk factors, are alluded to briefly.

2.7.3.2   *The peer group*

Negative peer behaviour has been found to be associated with poor psychological functioning and poor school grades (Capella & Weinstein 2001:759). Other ways in which the negative influence of the peer group can contribute to an adolescent being non-resilient include the following:

- anti-social behaviour in friends;

- risky leisure time behaviour (alcohol and drug abuse combined with hanging around the streets);

- relationship problems with peers (Buysse 1997:647; Dekovic & Meeus 1997:164; Cosden 2001:355).

Research (Minnard 2001:237; Dent & Cameron 2003:11; Janas & Nabors 2000:18-20) has shown that the role of the school and its educators should not be under-estimated in fostering resilience. In many cases, when the adolescent who was perceived to be resilient was questioned about the factors that contributed to his being resilient, mention was made by the adolescent of educators who served as mentors to him during difficult times in his life and of sports coaches who encouraged and believed in him. The structure and nurturance provided by the school environment was perceived as a source of security and comfort in many cases. Below is a discussion of the role that the school and the educator plays in fostering resilience in the adolescent.

2.8   THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL AND THE EDUCATOR IN FOSTERING RESILIENCE

The importance of success in school was highlighted by Minnard (2001:237) when it was pointed out that good educational attainment was associated with good personal outcomes and was therefore a protective factor that should be aimed for. According

to Dent and Cameron (2003:11) there has until recently, been a reluctance to grasp the implications of the now well-established evidence that schools do make an essential difference to a learner's attainment, behaviour and self-worth. However, Oddone (2002:275), Wang *et al.* (1997:19) and Janas and Nabors (2000:18-20) suggest ways that educators can make an effort to reduce risk and enhance resilience in schools by facilitating academic growth and by becoming mentors and positive role models for adolescents. Educators can emphasise protective factors such as the following (Smokowski *et al.* 1999:428; Bruce 1995:179; Janas 2002:20; Janas & Nabors 2000:20; Becker & Luthar 2002:201; Reed, McMillan & McBee 1995:8; Kalil & Kunz 1999:197).

- Educators could provide for and encourage meaningful participation at school that engages students and staff beyond traditional measures of success e.g. beyond test scores and grades (Smokowksi *et al.* 1999:428).

- Educators could increase the learner's capacity for pro-social bonding by teaching and modelling pro-social behaviour, and by providing settings for inter-personal connections of sufficient quality and intensity to allow for development and appreciation.

- Educators could identify expectations and set clear, consistent boundaries in ways that emphasize desired social norms. This is more useful than simply listing behaviours that are discouraged or forbidden.

- Educators could teach life skills that enable learners to participate successfully in relationships at school and elsewhere (Bruce 1995:179; Janas 2002:119; Janas & Nabors 2000:20).

- Educators could provide care and support so that learners have a sense of belonging at school that protects them from feeling alienated (Krovetz 1999:22).

- Educators could ensure that caring connections continue once a young person leaves their classroom or school (Becker & Luthar 2002:201; Reed, McMillan & McBee 1995:8).

- Educators could communicate high expectations, which convey optimism, hope, and confidence in learners, and recognise their capacity to succeed (Kalil & Kunz 1999:197).

- Educators could avoid referring to adolescents as "high risk". They should rather use the terminology "from high-risk environments."

- Educators could provide more intensive intervention for those most vulnerable.

- Educators could focus on assessing protective factors, competencies, and strengths in addition to weaknesses, deficits, and risks.

- Educators could be optimistic and caring leaders.

With regard to the educator being an optimistic leader, Brooks (2001:13) notes that one of the factors that enable children of misfortune to beat the heavy odds against them, is the presence of a charismatic adult – a person with whom they can identify and from whom they can gather strength. As adolescents spend so much time at school, more often than not, this person turns out to be an educator (Brooks 2001:13). Research has shown that learners who feel encouraged by their educators are more committed to learning and more successful academically (Becker & Luthar 2002:202). Brooks (2001:20) suggests some practical ways in which the educator could become a child's "charismatic adult" and in so doing touch the child's heart and mind. These steps include being empathetic, avoiding words that are accusatory, minimizing his fears of failure and humiliation, by encouraging him, and by recognising his strengths and by helping the learner to feel appreciated and special. Henderson (1997:10) emphasises that the attitude of the educator should be a "resiliency attitude", which she (Henderson 1997:10) believes is the first step to fostering resiliency in a school. This attitude involves searching for, nurturing and reinforcing "any scrap" of resilience, and examining situations in which learners "outmanoeuvred, outlasted, outwitted or outreached" an adversity. It also involves the verbal and non-verbal communication of the message to the learner that his problems are steps on the journey of life - not the end of the road. The educator also undertakes to face the challenges which the child faces with the child in an effort to assist the child to "bounce back" (Henderson 1997:11).

Martin (2002:42) focuses on strategies for intervention that educators can apply in the classroom to enhance the academic resilience and motivation of the learners. These include:

- improving learners' approach to their schoolwork;
- improving learners' beliefs about themselves;

- improving attitudes towards learning, achievement and school;

- improving study skills;

- improving educators' messages to learners.

Martin (2002:42) also suggests the implementation of intervention strategies on a meta-level, which involves educators' messages to learners, and which addresses educators' expectations for learners, how learning is structured and paced, feedback to learners on their work, and classroom goals and assessment.

The educational psychologist is increasingly becoming an integral part of the school environment either as a member of the school's teaching staff or by nature of the supportive and consultative role that he plays as an employee of educational support centres or school clinics. The role that the educational psychologist, who is in the service of the school, plays in intervention will be discussed next.

2.9   THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST IN INTERVENTION

There are many opportunities for the educational psychologist to initiate and support positive change in one of the most influential aspects of the young person's life, namely his experience of school. Intervention can occur at various levels to bring about positive change for vulnerable learners. These are summarised below:

- Vulnerable children should be treated as a priority group. The educational psychologist needs to recognize the variety and complexity of these children's needs, understand the importance of a team approach in co-operating and enabling the local school clinics and learner support teams to put into practice its shared responsibilities for corporate parenting. Cameron and Dent (2003:14) suggest that an overall "Care Plan" be formulated that sets out long-term objectives for the child and the arrangements for achieving these objectives.

- The educational psychologist can use his influence to try to ensure that classrooms be made more supportive and more conducive to learning. This can be done by training educators in skills e.g. communication skills, defensive discipline, anger management, and other skills which enable them (the educators) to approach the learner in an assertive and supportive manner.

- The educational psychologist could encourage the conveying of different life skills as part of individual educational plans. These skills would include

foundations skills (e.g. memory, listening comprehension), higher order skills (e.g. meta-cognition, individual learning style), self-understanding and management skills (e.g. self-perception, personal attributions of success and failure, self-regulation of learning and behaviour, intrinsic motivation) and social interaction skills (e.g. social competence and the management of bullying and intimidation). These can all be taught to the vulnerable child by the educational psychologist.

- Educational psychologists can also work at a systemic level to ensure that schools are havens where children feel welcome and valued. The educational psychologist can use his position to convey information to the staff regarding a deeper knowledge of vulnerability and resilience. This knowledge could assist them to acquire greater insight into common and frequently unquestioned practices in education.

Cameron and Dent (2003:15) provide further examples of how psychology could play a role within the school system:

- The educational psychologist could steer the school towards modifying behavioural techniques used in disciplinary action. The psychologist could emphasise positive discipline techniques which build up a child, as opposed to negative disciplinary action where a child is made to feel shamed, labelled and worthless.

- The educational psychologist could offer senior management and the school governing body advice on how to create a school culture which promotes opportunities for forming positive relationships between learners and between educators and learners.

- The educational psychologist's knowledge of mentorship programmes could be used to support vulnerable children by assisting these schools to create opportunities to form relationships with novel adults, interact with young peers and experience and recognize personal success (Cameron & Dent 2003:13).

The role of the educational psychologist as a valuable resource in intervention, in the fostering of resilience in adolescents and in the support of educators in their quest to be models of resilience, cannot be under-estimated. With the recent introduction of OBE (Outcomes Based Education) it is becoming increasingly evident that some

schools are not recognising the valuable role that educational psychologists have to play in the broader spectrum of the school as mentioned above. In the researcher's experience, the influence of many educational psychologists within the school system is being limited to teaching Life Orientation classes and they are being saddled with heavy teaching and administrative loads. In many cases they are having to refer clients to professionals outside the school for assistance because they do not have the time to do therapy or assessments. This situation is highly unsatisfactory as not only is the role of the educational psychology profession being undermined and devalued, but the child, parent and school are not benefiting maximally from the expertise of the educational psychologist. It will be up to each individual educational psychologist within the school system to re-evaluate his situation and to re-negotiate his job description so that he is able to render the best service possible within the environment in which he finds himself.

This chapter will conclude in the next paragraph with a brief summary of the outline of Chapter Two.

2.10   CONCLUSION

An effort has been made in this chapter to provide clarity on the concepts used in the study. The role of various factors in the different systems that the adolescent is exposed to, which contribute towards risk and resilience in the adolescent, was also explored. In the next chapter, attention will be given to the empirical investigation: the process, findings and interpretation of the results. The purpose of the empirical investigation will be to identify the characteristics of a resilient adolescent. Specific attention will be given to the personal attributes and environmental attributes that distinguish perceived resilient from perceived non-resilient adolescents. Furthermore, the role that the school and the adolescent's educators played in fostering resilience in the adolescent will be briefly explored.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will provide an outline of the aim and motivation of the research study, as well as the research methods to be used. This outline will include the description of the research group, diagnostic media to be used, method of evaluation and possible results of this research study. The research problem will be discussed next.

3.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

The researcher wishes to determine which factors that contribute to resilience in adolescents are absent in adolescents who are considered to be vulnerable or "at risk".

This problem promotes investigation of the following aspects:

- The nature of personal attributes in adolescents who are resilient.

- The role of environmental attributes in adolescents who are resilient.

The research question is as follows:

Is it probable that adolescents possessing the personal attributes and environmental support which serve as a buffer against adversity would demonstrate a greater propensity to be resilient than adolescents who do not possess these attributes and who do not have the necessary support?

In the following paragraph, an explanation of the relevant hypotheses is presented.

3.2.1 Hypotheses

Although it is not necessary to make use of hypotheses in qualitative research, the researcher would like to make use of them in order to assist in structuring expected findings or outcomes.

The following hypotheses are stated in the light of the analysis of the problem and the statement of the problem:

- Specific personal and environmental attributes impact positively on resilience, especially with regard to resilient adolescents.

- Personal attributes would include ego-strength, intelligence, a positive self-concept, an "easy-going" personality, sound values, optimism, independence, good social skills and self-control.

- Environmental attributes would include reliable, nurturing mentors, a school which fosters high expectations and empathy and community resources like sports and religious clubs and organisations with involved adults who can serve as a "safety net" to catch the adolescent who is at risk.

- In the absence of personal and environmental attributes which contribute towards resilience, vulnerable adolescents are at risk of being maladjusted or unable to self-actualize.

In the following section the researcher wishes to indicate the aim of the research in this study on resilience.

3.3 AIM OF THE RESEARCH

The main purpose of the study was to conduct a literature study which focussed on the phenomenon of resilience. The following facets were explored:

- Several definitions of resilience.

- A historical view of resilience including various facets of resilience, namely: personality traits contributing to resilience, protective factors, familial factors, extra-familial factors and risk factors impacting on resilience, the impact of therapeutic intervention on resilience and the role of the educator and school programme on resilience.

- The characteristics of a resilient adolescent. The following facets were explored:

- Several definitions of adolescence.

- The stages and tasks of adolescence.

- Who the adolescent is in psycho-educational terms.

- A qualitative assessment of why certain adolescents are more resilient than others.

All of these themes were elaborated upon in Chapter Two.

The secondary aim is to undertake qualitative research to determine to what extent an identified group of four perceived resilient adolescents compare with four perceived non-resilient adolescents in exhibiting the personal attributes of resilient adolescents as conveyed in the literature study.

The research also aims to understand the environment, the school and the educators' roles in fostering resilience in adolescents.

The qualitative research method which will be implemented will be expounded upon in the next section.

3.4 RESEARCH METHODS

Qualitative data collection methods were used to determine which adolescents are vulnerable or resilient. These data collection methods will be discussed in greater detail after the concept of *qualitative research* is clarified below.

3.4.1 Qualitative research

Providing a precise definition is a challenge as the term "qualitative research" is used as an overarching category, covering a wide range of approaches and methods found within different research disciplines. The term "qualitative research" refers to any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification (Richie & Lewis 2003:3). Denzin and Lincoln (2000:3) and Snape and Spencer (2003:3) attempt to explain this concept as a naturalistic, interpretative approach concerned with understanding the meanings which people attach to phenomena (actions, decisions, beliefs and values) within their social worlds. Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

Snape and Spencer (2003:3) add that some researchers have also focused on essential aspects of methodology as defining characteristics of qualitative research. These include: the overall research perspective and the importance of the participants' frames of reference, the flexible nature of research design, the volume and richness of qualitative data, the distinctive approaches to analysis and interpretation and the kind of outputs that derive from qualitative research. Certain

data methods have been identified with qualitative research. These include: observational methods, in-depth interviewing, group discussions, narratives, and the analysis of documentary evidence (Snape & Spencer 2003:3).

While practitioners of qualitative research vary greatly in the extent to which they rely on particular methods of data collection, the researcher made use of implementing two lists of questions, both for educators to complete, and implementing an adolescent interview schedule for the participants. Each participant also completed a collage. In the implementation of the qualitative research methods, the focus was on a few (eight) participants. Greater detail will be provided below in terms of how these participants were identified.

3.4.2 Selection of the participants

The participants in the study consisted of high school learners in grades 8 to 12 as well as their educators. Each group will be discussed individually below.

3.4.2.1   The educators

As the researcher currently works at a former Model-C school in the Western Cape and has good relations with the staff and participants alike, it was practical to undertake the research at this particular school. The educators at the aforementioned school who were invited to participate in the study were those who felt that they knew the participants in the various grades and sections well. These educators were teaching or had taught these participants between 3 and 6 periods per week over a period of at least three months in the case of the Grade 8 participants and for at least one year in the case of the other participants. Educators who had forged relationships with the participants on the sports fields, study classes or during extra-mural activities were also invited to participate in the study as it was felt that they would know the participant well enough to be able to evaluate him in terms of the lists of questions provided to the educators. The lists of questions were used to determine whether a participant was perceived as vulnerable or resilient by these educators. More information on these questions will be discussed below.

Permission was requested from the school authorities to undertake a research study regarding resilience in adolescents at a school in the Western Cape. Meetings were held with the researcher and the curricular educators and grade heads for the Grades 8 to 12 participants. These educators know the participants well as they

teach them between 3 and 6 periods per week. Some of these educators have taught the same participants for more than one year and are involved in cultural and sports activities with the participants. The grade heads remain the "father" or "mother" of their particular grade from Grade 8 until Grade 12 and during that time come to know the individuals in their grade extremely well. At the meetings with the educators, the researcher explained the research proposal to them. Those educators who, due to their involvement with the participant(s) felt that they knew the participants well enough to evaluate them, were identified. Twelve educators who fell into this category volunteered to evaluate the participants whom they felt they knew well. Two lists of questions were handed to each of these educators.

The Resilience and Vulnerability Questionnaires (Addenda A and B) were handed to the identified educators who were requested, in separate meetings, to identify at least four vulnerable and four resilient participants whom they (the educators) teach and whom they know well enough to evaluate. The Resilience and Vulnerability Questionnaires required the educators to evaluate the participants' social and academic behaviours and the level of support that they (the participants) enjoyed, based on their (the educators') perception of the participants. This they did confidentially. Once the educators had handed in the names of the participants whom they had identified, the grade heads of each grade met with the researcher to discuss the names and backgrounds of those adolescents whom they felt would be suitable participants in the study. The researcher selected four perceived vulnerable and four perceived resilient participants based on the information obtained at the meeting with the grade heads. The researcher then approached the adolescents whom she regarded as suitable participants for the study.

3.4.2.2   *The learners*

In identifying the eight participants for the research (four resilient and four non-resilient), it was deemed necessary to include adolescents between the ages of 14 and 18 as very little research in terms of resilience has been done with this particular age group. The Grade 8 to 12 learners of a particular school were targeted for the research as they are within the middle to late adolescent age range (14-18 years). There are a total of 991 Grade 8 to 12 learners in the school. The eight participants included one Grade 8 learner, one Grade 9 learner, two Grade 10 learners, one Grade eleven learner and three Grade 12 learners. The participants' participation

was voluntary yet permission was requested from the participants' parents for them to participate in the study as sensitive information regarding the participants' families was asked when the Child and Youth Resilience Measure (Ungar, Adams, Normand 2005) was implemented. The participants are all from the white ethnic race, two of whom were Afrikaans speaking and 6 of whom were English speaking. Three of the participants are female. They were in grades 10, 11 and 12 respectively. Five of the participants are male. One was in Grade 8, one in Grade 9, one in Grade 10 and two were in Grade 12. The researcher spent two sessions with each participant. During the first session, a taped interview with each participant was held in the school's guidance office. The questions that were put to the participants in the interview were those listed in the (adapted) Child and Youth Resilience Measure (see Addendum C). Once the participants had completed the interview, they individually completed their collages. The collages represented their past, present and future. The collages were completed at home but were brought to school where they were discussed with the researcher during a second session. During the second session, the researcher recorded the participant's feedback on audio tape. At the end of the second session, the collages were handed to the researcher who digitally photographed the collages. The manner in which the interviews and collages were analysed in this study will be clarified below.

3.4.3 Lists of questions

Two lists of questions were shown to, given to and discussed with the educators and grade heads of each grade. The educators were asked to evaluate and to select participants whom they perceived to be vulnerable or resilient, based on the questions set out in the lists of questions. More information in this regard is supplied below. These lists of questions were developed by Macfarlane (1998). Macfarlane termed the one list of questions the "Vulnerability Questionnaire" (see Addendum A) and the other list of questions, the "Resilience Questionnaire" (see Addendum B). Each list of questions will be clarified below:

3.4.3.1 *The Vulnerability Questionnaire*

The Vulnerability Questionnaire (Macfarlane 1998) consists of a list of 30 questions. These questions explored the participant's perceived personal attributes, his involvement at school and in the community, his adaptability, social skills, behaviour,

support systems and future orientation. The educators were asked to evaluate a participant whom they thought to be vulnerable, on the basis of the 30 questions listed in the questionnaire. The educators were asked to select participants who had met with much adversity in life but who appeared to have succumbed to the stresses that they had experienced. The questions pertain to the personal attributes, the environmental factors as well as the role of the environment and the school in fostering non-resilience or vulnerability as mentioned in the literature as highlighted in Chapter Two of this study. The aim of this list of questions therefore, was to identify prospective participants for the research study who were perceived by the educators as being vulnerable or "at risk". Participants who were considered to be vulnerable achieved a score of 20 or more out of 30 on this questionnaire. Once the educators had identified the participants, after consultation with the grade heads, four participants who were perceived as being most "at risk" were selected and an appropriate interview schedule was decided upon as this would be implemented with each participant.

3.4.3.2   *The Resilience Questionnaire*

The Resilience Questionnaire (Macfarlane 1998) consists of 30 questions pertaining to the personal attributes, environmental factors as well as the role of the school and the environment in fostering resilience in the participant. The attributes necessary for resilience are mentioned in chapter two of this study. The educators were asked to identify prospective participants for the research study whom they perceived as being resilient. The participants whom the educators were asked to consider were participants who had met with much adversity yet, who, in spite of this, had achieved well and who appeared to move forward with his life. Once these (four) participants were identified, four perceived resilient participants were selected and the interviews were held with them. The four perceived resilient participants were selected on the basis of the amount of success they had achieved across systems (home, school, community) and the degree to which they had been exposed to adversity in their lives. The participants who were perceived as resilient achieved a score of above 20 of a possible 30 on the questionnaire

3.4.4 The Child and Youth Resilience Measure

The Child and Youth Resilience Measure (see Addendum C) was adapted and used with each participant in the study during the structured interview. The Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM) used in this study was adapted from the Child and Youth Resilience Measure which was created by a multi-disciplinary team for the International Resilience Study lead by Dr Michael Ungar in 2005. The researcher adapted the questions used in this study in two ways: Firstly, by improving the English language in order to make the questions more understandable, relevant and unambiguous for the participants. (Richie & Lewis 2003:48; Babbie & Mouton 2002:237-239) and secondly, by including questions pertaining to the resilient factors mentioned in Chapter Two of this study. The inclusion of these would provide the researcher with an opportunity to glean more information relating to the personal attributes of the adolescent which contribute to resilience. Ungar et al's (2005) study, on the other hand, concentrated mainly on the participant in the community and the influence that the community had on his (the participant's) resilience status.

The following table presents the resilience factor and the question that was asked in order to determine the behaviour associated with that resilience factor. The resilience factors which have been highlighted in the literature are evident in the table below. These factors seek to explore the personal attributes of each participant and the roles of the environmental and of the school in fostering resilience in the participant. The formulation of each question is supported by the literature review. The letter Q refers to the question that is being asked.

Table 3.1: The Child and Youth Resilience Measure (adapted version)

Resilience Factor	Question	Motivation for question formulation
Sense of Control	How do you experience bad things that happen? (Q1a) How does your family experience bad things that happen? (Q1b) How does your community experience bad things that happen? (Q1c)	When children observe adults responding to challenges with humour and willingness to try again, they are more likely to choose the same kind of response themselves (Janas 2002:121).
	What meaning do you attach to bad experiences? (Q2)	Resilient individuals are able to distance themselves from situations causing pain (Brook & Goldstein 2001:14).
	What do you do to handle that which you experience? (Q3a) What does your family say about bad things that happen? (Q3b) What does your community say about bad things that happen? (Q3c)	Resilient children are resourceful and flexible and can be independent when necessary. It is this resourcefulness which sets them apart and makes them feel in control of their own lives (Capella & Weinstein 2001:759).
	What does it mean to you to be healthy? (Q11a) What does it mean to your family to	The rationale behind this question has to do with determining whether the adolescent regards health as only physical or considers the idea of mental health.

	be healthy? (Q11b)	
	What does it mean to your community to be healthy? (Q11c)	
	What do you do in order to be spiritually, physically, emotionally and intellectually strong? (Q24)	Resilient individuals believe they are masters of their own destiny and perceive success to be rooted in their efforts and abilities (Brooks & Goldstein 2001:137).
	Are you assertive? (Q25a) How do you show your assertiveness? (Q25b)	Resilient children are able to take charge of themselves and to seek solutions to problems (Joseph 1994:36).
	How do you feel about the use of substances like alcohol and drugs? (Q38)	Adolescents who are strongly bonded to their parents are less likely to engage in substance abuse (Vakalahi 2001:34).
	Do you have a feeling of control over your world? (Q27a) How does this affect your life? (Q27b) How much uncertainty do you feel comfortable living with? (Q30)	If adolescents feel that they can be effective and have a sense of power or control over their environment, it becomes possible to hope and plan and to set personal goals (McWhirter et al 1998:87).
Problem-Solving	Who, in your life, thinks of solutions to problems first? (Q4)	Resilient children have a proactive approach to problem-solving; not waiting for others to do things for them (Joseph 1994:28).
	Can you describe your ability to solve problems? (Q26a) Are your problem-solving abilities better or worse than those of other people? (Q26b) How do you know this? (Q26c)	Resilient children are those who have developed productive strategies to cope with their difficulties (McWhirter et al 1998:89). Children who display resilience, demonstrate the capacity for solving problems and believe in their own capabilities (Lewis 1999:202).
Role Model	Do you have a role model? (Q20a) Can you describe the qualities that you admire about him/her? (Q20b)	People in the community who hold positions of social responsibility whom the child identifies with and sees as a role model are in a position to encourage and accept the child unconditionally and in so doing have a positive influence on his self-concept, identity and goals (Werner & Smith 1992:178).
Self-Awareness	What role do friends play in your life? (Q6a) How do they contribute to your identity? (Q6b) What kind of friend are you? (Q7a) What do you contribute to your friendships? (Q7b)	Several core skills essential for satisfying social relationships and for more effective problem-solving include developing and maintaining friendships, sharing laughs and jokes with peers … (McWhirter et al 1998:87).
	If you died today, how would people describe you at your funeral?(Q34)	Resilient children appear to have a positive self-concept and a feeling of self-worth (Kalil & Kunz 1999:197).
	What do you think about the different aspects of your life? (Q35)	"Islands of competence ", areas of strength in children's lives need to be promoted to improve their self-esteem (Brooks & Goldstein 2001:13) and when social support is low in one setting, other settings need to compensate for the lack or assist in making the weaker area stronger (McWhirter et al 1998:81).
Perseverance	How would you describe someone who grew up faced with difficult circumstances yet managed to achieve success despite challenges? (Q21) Can you tell me of a time when you demonstrated determination and perseverance? (Q33)	Resilient individuals are able to distance themselves from situations causing pain. They understand they did not create them and cannot fix them; however, they can cope with them and emerge stronger (Thomsen 2002:28).
	Tell me a story about a child who achieved success despite challenges that he had to face. (Q40) Tell me a story of how you were able to overcome challenges in your personal life, family life or in your community. (Q41)	Resilient children are flexible and able to rebound from adversity and to cope with, adapt positively to and manage major difficulties and disadvantages in life. Some are even able to thrive in the face of what seem overwhelming odds (Dent & Cameron 2003:5).
	What were the personal	Resilient children are self-reliant, skilful and responsible

	characteristics that helped you to overcome challenges in your life? (Q42)	individuals who are able to take charge of themselves (Joseph 1994:31-33).
	How do you feel when others around you experience success? (Q29)	Resilient children are able to perceive that success is rooted in effort and ability (Brooks & Goldstein 2001:168-169). The participant's response would give the researcher insight into the participant's perception of whether he sees success as a function of hard work and perseverance and whether he is able to express appreciation for others' efforts and successes.
	Do you feel equal to other people? (Q10a) Are there people with whom you do not feel equal? (Q10b) How do they make you feel? (Q10c) What do they do to make you feel this way? (Q10d)	Resilient children have a positive self-concept and a strong feeling of self-worth (Kalil & Kunz 1999:197).
	Would you describe yourself as an optimist or a pessimist? (Q31)	Optimism has been seen as a protective factor and conveys acceptance of or contentment with one's lot in life (Early & Vonk 2001:12).
	What role does humour play in your life? (Q 39)	Sociability and a good sense of humour have been found to have protective value for older children as their social competence elicits positive responses by others (Krovetz 1999:121).
Future Orientation	Do you have personal goals and dreams that you should like to realize? (Q36a) What are they? (Q36b) What is your definition of success? (Q28)	Resilient youth have goals, educational aspirations, persistence, hopefulness and a sense of a bright future (Krovetz 1999:121). Resilience and self-worth are enhanced when children are provided with the opportunity to shine and taste success including making a positive difference in their world (Brooks & Goldstein 2001:14).
Support: Having and using supportive relationships across contexts	How accepting is your community towards teenagers' problem behaviour(s)? (Q8a) Provide examples of such behaviours and how the community reacted.(Q8b) What is your opinion of the reactions? (Q8c)	People who hold positions of social responsibility with whom the child identifies and who accept the child unconditionally and encourage the child, can have a positive influence on the self-concept, identity and goals of the child (Werner & Smith 1992:178). This question tests the participants' judgements and opinions.
	Do you belong to any community organizations? (Q9a) What values do these organizations stand for? (Q13)	When social support is low in one setting (e.g. the family) the other settings need to compensate for the lack or assist in reconstructing the support that is needed to make the weaker area stronger (McWhirter et al 1998:81). These external support systems can reward the child's abilities and skills and provide him with a sense of meaning and internal locus of control or a belief system by which to live (Werner & Smith 1998:45).
	Can you describe how your care-givers/parents looked after you? (Q12) Who believed in and supported you the most during a difficult time in your life? (Q43)	Support and affection from one/more adults is often cited as a crucial factor for buffering the effects of risk and promoting healthy adolescent development (Smokowski et al 1999:427).
	What expectations do your parents/care-givers have of you? (Q13)	When a family has a strong and consistent set of values or a consistent set of realistic expectations, rules and structures within the family, this also serves as a protective factor for the adolescent (Donald et al 2002:224).
	Can you describe the nature of the relationship that you have with your parents/care-givers? (Q14)	Involvement with the child is useful in the development of independent self-direction that is essential for resiliency (Keogh 2000:5)
	Do you and your parents/care-givers participate in any leisure activities together? (Q15) Can you tell me more about these? (Q15b)	Involvement with the child is useful in the development of independent self-direction that is essential for resiliency (Keogh 2000:5)
	How does your family communicate? (Q16a)	When parents model healthy communication patterns … this may lead to academic and task orientation in resilient children

	How do you know what they think of you? (Q16b)	(McWhirter et al 1998:82). Children and families that engage in interactions that promote the expression of independent thought and allow for exchange of ideas between parents and children are more likely to exhibit psychosocial competence (McWhirter et al 1998:82).
	How does your family monitor you in order to know where you are and what you are doing? (Q17)	Positive parenting encompasses high monitoring, support and cohesiveness which help children maintain adequate levels of adjustment (Luthar & Goldstein 2004:503).
	How do you know how to behave in certain social situations and with certain people? (Q18a) How well do you do in social situations? (Q18b)	Resilient children are sociable and are good at developing and maintaining friendships, knowing how to join in group activities, skillfully ending a conversation and interacting with a variety of peers and others (McWhirter et al 1998:87).
	Are you popular? (Q18c) Do others think good things about you? (Q18d) Has this changed over time? (Q18e)	Resilient children are socially skillful, well-liked and able to solicit support from others (Joseph 1994:29). If resilient children experience involvement positively, they feel empowered as people in their own right and develop a positive self-concept and self-esteem (Kalil & Kunz 1999:197).
	How easily do you find it to communicate with others of all ages? (Q19)	Children are enabled through good communication skills to express their needs, thoughts and feelings and to negotiate emotionally hazardous experiences (Early & Vonk 2001:18).
	Do you have any other meaningful relationships with people at school, at home or in the community? (Q22)	Adolescents who feel good about themselves actively and positively become involved with and seek out others for example educators, parents and peers and if they experience this involvement positively, then they feel empowered (Smith & Carlson 1997238).
	Can you tell me about a person in your life who has "been there" for you during challenging times in your life? (Q 23a) Why was this person important to you? (Q23b) What did they mean to you? (Q23c)	One of the factors that enable children of misfortune to beat the heavy odds against them is the presence of a charismatic adult with whom they can identify and from whom they can gather strength (Brooks 2001:13).
	What are your feelings towards your school? (Q32a) Can you tell me about your feelings of belonging at school? (Q32b) Can you describe any feelings of loyalty or pride that you may feel as a learner of this school? (Q32c)	Providing care and support so that participants have a sense of belonging at school protects them from feeling alienated (Krovetz 1999:22).
	How dependent are you on those around you for emotional survival? (Q37)	Resilient children are self-reliant and skilful to get appropriate help from others (Joseph 1994:31-33). Resilient children are able to search for love by connecting with and attracting the attention of available adults (Benard 2004:15).

3.4.5 The Collage

The collage is a projective technique which can be used to encourage participants to project their private and unconscious beliefs and subjective associations which the participants may be unable to articulate (Craig & Douglas 1999:2). The collage is an active method of data collection which may be more suitable for studying the participants in different dynamic systems (home, school, community) (Deacon 2000:2). The eight research participants were asked to make a collage of their lives depicting the past, the present and the future. They then had to supplement their creation with their own explanation of the collage in words. A transcription of the

participant's feedback can be found in Addendum D and digital photographs of the collages of participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 are included in Addendum E.

The rationale behind using the collage in the research study is three-fold: firstly, the use of the collage engages the participants in the data collection process and makes an effort to encapsulate the multi-dimensionality of the participant's experience. Secondly, this method enabled the researcher to learn more fully about the perceptions, feelings and life events of the participants, making the research more engaging, creative and exciting. Thirdly, by broadening the ways in which the researcher collects data and by using multiple data sources and collection methods, the researcher is building trustworthiness into the research (Deacon 2000:1-3).

3.5 RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION

Analysis of the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure and the collages of each participant will help the researcher to consider whether the selected participants are classified as resilient or non-resilient. This classification will be based on the participant's personal transactions across contexts (family, school, community). The resilience status of the participants is evaluated from the analysis of the interviews using the information provided in the literature study which indicates specific factors which are predictive of resilience (and, therefore, of non-resilience).

In this study the working definition of resilience refers to having good or desirable outcomes (as opposed to undesirable outcomes) in spite of serious threats to adaptation or development (Masten 2001:228). The outcome of having survived in the face of adversity is not only the positive adaptation within the context of adversity, but also the continued striving towards self-actualisation and a positive future in spite of setbacks. Resilient individuals will be considered to have a hardy personality because hardy individuals are likely to employ adaptive coping strategies and not maladaptive responses like denial or behavioural avoidance (Kaplan 1999:20-21).

The participants' interpretation of their collages and the themes that emerged from these, were analysed and compared to the themes that emerged from the analysis of the interviews to determine to what extent these (collage) themes reinforced or refuted the perception of the participant as resilient or non-resilient.

A narrative description of four interviews,[*] two in each group, will be presented below, followed by a tabulation of the remaining four interviews. The narrative description of the interviews serves as an example of the analysis and interpretation carried out on the eight interviews. Participants 1 and 2 are perceived as resilient participants and participants 3 and 4 are perceived as being non-resilient participants.

3.5.1 Narrative analysis of four interviews and the collages

The narrative analysis for each participant will commence with biographical information for each participant. Thereafter, the interview with the participant will be

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[*] See Appendix D for the transcript of all eight interviews.

analysed to determine to what extent the participant's responses to the questions asked in the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure reflect resilient or non-resilient qualities. Extracts from each interview will be highlighted and commented upon. These extracts pertain specifically to the resilience (or non-resilience/vulnerability) factors which were found in the literature (see Chapter Two of this study). The resilience factors which will be highlighted are: supportive relationships, sense of control, problem-solving skills, role model, self-awareness, perseverance and future orientation. After the narrative analysis of each interview a summary of the findings of each participant is provided. The function of the summary is to condense the information gleaned from the interview under the following headings: personal attributes, role of the environment and role of the school. These three areas are the areas which the research study set out to investigate. Finally, the themes which emerge in the participant's collage are discussed. The themes which emerge from the analysis of the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure and each participant's collage are discussed briefly at the end of participant's summary. Once all the interviews and all the collages have been discussed and analysed, the results are integrated and discussed at length under the heading "Comparison of Results". In the interviews with the participants, the italics indicate that the participant is speaking. The full interview with each participant can be viewed in Addendum D.

3.5.1.1   Participant 1 (resilient)

Table 3.2

Age	Gender	Grade	Risk factors inferred from interview and educator information	Protective factors inferred from interview
18	Male	12	No relationship with biological father, unstable primary school history, financial difficulties, step-father imprisoned	Supportive mother, family and friends, supportive community, sport, sense of humour, academic competence, future aspirations

Biographical information

The participant is the second child of four. He currently lives with his mother and two half siblings. According to the participant he never knew his biological father who absconded when he was nine months old. At about this time his sister was kidnapped by his biological father. As a child he attended eight different primary schools and moved as many times as his parents had difficulty finding employment.

His high school career has been more stable. The family has always battled financially and towards the end of last year, under a shroud of secrecy, his step-father, whom he regards as his step-father, was convicted of fraud and imprisoned. At this time, the participant needed to assist his mother financially and emotionally with his siblings.

The participant presented himself as a modest, affable and relaxed young man with a wry sense of humour.

Supportive relationships

The participant has a very good relationship with his mother whom he respects and whom he regards as being supportive and proud of him: "M*y mom wants me to do what I want to do. She's very supportive. It's not about earning money. They encourage me and they don't force me in any direction."* He identifies qualities within himself as being similar to those of his mother: *"… I'm a lot like my mom: independent and we both do our own thing …"* However, he also sees his mother (and the rest of his family) as people who don't talk about their emotions and he also identifies with this: *"… my mom doesn't talk about things … if things are bad, my mom doesn't talk about it …"* He sees his mother as a protector now and when he was younger: *" My mom, she sorts out things quickly. You look up to her. She's hectic … she doesn't take nonsense from people at work. People are scared of her."* When asked about the way he was cared for by her when he was younger, he responded: *"… she shielded me. I didn't know what was going on. I thought it was normal …"* The role of this participant's friends is to provide him with emotional support: *"My friends are everything. I laugh with them and they're always there."* He regards them as people who are non-judgmental and unconditionally accepting. They are people who encourage his individuality: *"They bring out who I am because I am me and they are them. They encourage me to be myself and they do not force me to do what I don't want to do."* His description of himself as a friend shows that he is also protective and loyal towards his friends: *"Loyal … I'm protective … if one of my friends is in trouble … I'm there. I'm serving and supportive."*

The role of the community and his friends' parents have been protective factors in his life as various people served as a "safety net" for him at various times: *"… various people at various times. X's dad and family at the beginning of high school, then Y's*

mom took me in for a month and recently my next door neighbour, Z's dad, was helpful and was always there when I needed something … They were there when I needed them … very supportive … The people I associate with are extremely supportive. Older people are extremely supportive. They take a liking to me and my friends. They share their wisdom and crack a joke." However, it is evident that older people are drawn to the participant owing to his good communication and socialisation skills, easy-going temperament, maturity and self-confidence: *"I could always relate to other people's parents and I often spend half an hour talking to them before I even start visiting with my friend. … I find it pretty easy to communicate with people of all ages. People are all the same. It doesn't matter how old you are. You have the same being inside you regardless of age …"*

The role of sport (previously weightlifting and now karate) has shown him what he is capable of achieving if he is disciplined and it is helping him to develop an individual philosophy of life. The role that the school and his educators play in his life is a small one. He sees the educators as being supportive in the sense that they've encouraged him and raised his awareness of his academic competencies: *"… yes, there were teachers who were there for me and spur me on and tell me what I'm capable of …"* but he appears to have mixed feelings about school: on the one hand he enjoys schoolwork, grappling with problems and achieving academically. On the other hand he doesn't feel that he belongs at school and he feels no loyalty towards school: *"I have no sense of loyalty towards the school. I don't feel that I belong. There are better things out there than school. School's always supposed to be the best years of your life but the level of education's going down and the easier the work, the more the people fail …"*

Sense of control

He feels in control of and takes responsibility for his world in spite of circumstances sometimes being out of his control: He is philosophical about this: *"(I have) a lot , a lot, a lot (of control over my world). I decide what happens and we're unlimited … if the shit hits the fan, then I'm still in control … It (uncertainty) doesn't bother me. I have learnt to live with a lot of uncertainty and things have a way of working themselves out."*

Problem-solving

The participant has many ways of solving problems. One of these is not to allow himself to feel: *"When I experience bad things, I don't allow it to affect me … I don't allow myself to feel … emotionally … I don't have many emotions. I love my family ..."* However, he demonstrates self-awareness when he admits "*… I think it's a coping mechanism."* and later he demonstrates insight, intelligence, self-control, maturity and independence when he suggests that one of the personal qualities that has served him well in overcoming obstacles, is *"seeing circumstances as apart from myself; as a separate entity … you know the saying: don't bring your problems to work . Don't take what happens to you at home to school and work. Block it."* The participant uses everyday activities like studying and sport as a release for his internalized emotions and in so doing finds a healthy outlet for them: *"I have my releases: martial arts. I enjoy it. I enjoy everything. I have this attitude to do it. Even if I study for an exam, I use it as a release …"* He also admits to humour playing a large role in his life and as serving as an outlet for him: "*I like humour a lot. I like jokes and that. It's cool. Everybody jokes around here. It's a release from stress. I like playing the fool."* When he talks about obstacles that he has encountered in his life, he does so matter-of-factly. He makes a plan. One never has a sense that he feels like a victim. For instance, at home he acts maturely, responsibly and independently and has taken on the role of assisting and supporting his mother and siblings. In the process, he demonstrated that he is capable of developing autonomous problem-solving skills: *"My dad went to prison and I had to look after my brother and sister and my mom was frantic and I had to find schools for my brother and sister and organise transport for myself to and from school and I had to get a job to help my mom with money."* In fact, when asked whether he is an optimist or a pessimist, he answered: *"I strive for the best but I often expect it to get rough before it gets better. I'm a realist."* The latter comments serve as another illustration of his ability to think maturely and to "think outside of the box." When he is questioned about his problem-solving skills, his responses hint at his autonomy, internal locus of control, sense of accountability and self-belief: *"I don't panic. I think everyone tends to rise, to think, in bad situations under pressure. I don't think that we're designed to crumble under pressure. I think we're designed to excel."*

Role models

The themes of independence, self-sufficiency and resourcefulness and a desire for self-improvement emerge in his description of his role models: He respects physical and mental toughness and he strives for balance and wants to self-actualise: *"… These guys (*he points to karate teachers' photographs*) in the kushi are hectic. They're unlimited in the way they perceive themselves, that they don't have boundaries … another role model I had … was Fajita in Dragon Ball Z. He had an attitude I liked: "never say die". He was never the best. He was an aggressive character and he never went to others for help but when he got pushed and he was backed into a corner, the most amazing things came out of him."* The themes of independence and resilience are alluded to here.

Self-awareness

In trying to arrive at an individual philosophy of life, which is typical of the stage of late adolescence, in which the participant finds himself, he demonstrates self-awareness and independent thinking, a quality he also values in others: *"Intellectually, I don't read much but I must change that. I like to go to school. I like to solve Maths problems to keep me mentally fit and I like debating things like religion and politics and I listen to others' controversial ideas and their thinking of things and I listen and read up and make up my own mind …"* His regard for individuality and autonomy and intrinsic motivation is reflected in his thoughts on teenagers and the challenges that face them: *"Challenges that face teenagers include difficulties to be themselves one hundred percent. They follow trends … have no self-motivation. They're all on one track. They all wear the same clothes, do the same thing. There's no individuality. They're scared to step outside and be themselves, and to think for themselves ... I like to surround myself with free thinkers. In grades 8 and 9 I also was like that and drank and smoked but I quit as I see no point to it."*

Perseverance

He demonstrates perseverance when he attempts an experiment in order to "prove a theory" to himself i.e. the theory that he is taught in karate is that we are unlimited and that if we want to do something badly enough and we work hard at it, it can become a reality. In proving this theory to himself, his determination, strong will, hardy personality and perseverance are evident: *"In standard 9, the last term, I*

planned to go to university, so I put my mind to it and went from failing to passing nicely and then in grade 12 I got four A's in the first term and during that time I was working double shifts as a waiter over weekends to help my mom financially. I was teaching eight karate classes during the week and I was studying for my driver's licence and it was just after my dad went to prison for fraud.

Future orientation

Karate has also helped him to make a decision about his future goals: *"(I want to get) a few dans behind my name, to be well-off, financially secure, to open up a grand doju place, to buy a piece of land and to study martial arts for seven years.*

SUMMARY

Role of the environment

The participant has experienced much uncertainty and instability in his life yet the unconditional support and strength of his mother and the support and acceptance from friends and friends' parents over the years have helped him to navigate difficult times in his adolescence seemingly well. His sense of humour, intelligence and good socialisation skills have endeared him to those around him and have helped him to establish good social relations and social systems.

Personal attributes

The participant recognises his strengths and weaknesses, yet he accepts them, is realistic about them and is willing to make changes to improve in areas where he feels this is necessary. This self-awareness and maturity is also evident in that he is comfortable enough with the person that he is, that he shows disinterest in others' opinions of him, especially if they should wish him to be a conformist. He comes across as being very much his own person who follows his own head and uses his own resources in situations. He demonstrates reliability, commitment, competence and a sense of control with regard to his schoolwork, friendships, work over weekends, as well as his karate. It appears that one of the appeals of karate is that if offers him stability and predictability, factors that he has lacked in his life. (He shared this with the researcher after the interview). Karate and his schoolwork afford him the experience of success and a sense of control. With his schoolwork he is confident of his abilities and he has intrinsic motivation to succeed academically. The participant

is philosophical about life and his problems yet he sees them as manageable with time and effort and he has self-confidence and belief in his own capabilities. His sense of humour bonds him to others yet it also helps him to de-stress. He demonstrates strength, confidence and commitment to succeed in all that he undertakes which is important to him.

Role of the school

Although he says that he likes school and can see the necessity of attending school, he sees himself as an individualist who doesn't "belong" although he experiences his educators as encouraging.

This participant is resilient.

Collage

The participant's collage (Addendum E) reflects his realistic and positive outlook on life. He doesn't dwell on the past but the greatest amount of space in his collage is given to his future vision of his life and what he would like it to contain. The themes of independence, self-awareness, internal locus of control, the support of friends and family, balance and optimism are prevalent and support that which he conveyed in the individual interview.

Integration of themes from collage and the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM)

It is evident from both the collage and the CYRM that the participant tends not to dwell on the past although he alludes to it on occasion. When he speaks of his past, he does so without malice and bitterness. Rather he does so matter-of-factly. Particularly in the collage, he conveys a very clear idea of what his future should hold for him. The themes of independence, self-awareness, internal locus of control, family support, support of friends, the need to strive for a balance and optimism are evident throughout. One of the themes that emerges most strongly in both the collage and the CYRM, is the theme of self-reliance and the ability to cope and "to make a plan" under pressure.

3.5.1.2   Participant 2 (resilient)

Table 3.3

Age	Gender	Grade	Risk factors inferred from interview and educator information	Protective factors inferred from interview
15	Male	9	Psychopathology in parent, poor relationship with mother, neglect	Easy-going temperament, sense of humour, academic competence, future goals, sport, supportive friends, supportive family, religious, self-confidence

Biographical information

The participant currently lives with his father, step-mother and older brother. The participant had no contact with his father for eleven years after his parents' divorce. When the participant was 9 years old, his mother, who suffers from schizophrenia, uprooted him and his older brother and kept them out of school for three years. She travelled and worked around South Africa for three years, during which time they lived in their car, with family and in caravan parks as she moved from job to job and from town to town. At one stage three years ago, his mother took them into a mountainous area for three weeks. She told them that they were going to Israel through the mountains. During this experience, the participant and his brother almost died from dehydration and exposure to the elements. Eventually the participant and his brother stood up to their mother and contacted a family member to rescue them from their plight. They went to stay with their aunt and uncle and attended school for the first time in three years. Until recently the participant was not allowed contact with his mother as she was regarded as a threat to their safety. They still do not have direct contact with her. They may only receive gifts and letters from her.

Supportive relationships

The participant considers himself competent with a well-structured support system (financial and emotional): *"… and now they're looking after us well and we get food every day … mostly we've got everything …"* The family system appears to be predictable and close-knit with regular family rituals: *"… usually every Friday night we go out to eat and every Sunday it's family day and we go to the beach or play cards or monopoly together …"* Other supportive family members that have "been

there" for him in challenging times include his aunt and uncle with whom they lived with shortly after they stood up to their mother: *"… my aunt and my uncle did help me through it … my aunt, my father's sister supported me most of the time. She was always there to help me. She showed me how to study …"* He experiences success and competence at school and is motivated to perform better and has future aspirations …"*I think school is a bit hard but I think school's good and I enjoy school … I do feel that I belong here. My loyalty is towards this school and how I show my loyalty is to dress neatly, participate in sport and do well in my work and to be nice to the teachers …"* Previous experiences of school have also been positive. He also talks highly of his brother who took responsibility for him at a difficult time in their lives and who "was there" for him in times of need. The participant finds his friends very supportive and he also sees himself as a supportive friend: *"My friends are company, they're funny, they're entertainment … when I'm sad they help me to feel calm, they support me. I'm a good friend … I usually help my friends with homework and during breaks if they've got family problems, I help them.*

Sense of control

He sees himself as assertive, particularly if he feels that he has been treated too harshly or unfairly although he is discerning as to when the appropriate time is to assert control: *"Either I stand up for myself or I'll take action or I'll leave it for the time being".* He demonstrates responsibility and integrity when he says about his parents:

" … if my brother gets blamed for something which is my fault I go up to my parents and tell my brother to keep quiet and I tell my parents it's my fault and I get angry, calm down and apologize afterwards". He does, however, on occasion, behave submissively in order to facilitate/manipulate a win-win situation especially when it comes to pacifying his father: *"... mostly I let them have their way and mostly I say what I want to say in a way that is a win-win situation. For instance, I get into an argument with my dad. I let him win by letting him say his say but I also win by saying I'm sorry because then he forgives me and we usually talk calmly after that."*

Problem-solving skills

In his dealings with family and with everyday problems, the participant demonstrates good problem-solving skills and a sense of control, maturity and flexibility in his approach to conflict. He recognises that his calm, relaxed approach in

communication and correct timing, accomplishes more than an emotional approach: *"My dad and my brother over-react and over-do everything and blow it out of proportion. I'm the only one who is calm and relaxed about bad things that happen …"* He identifies with and admires his step-mother's (and his uncle's) calm conflict management style: *"When it comes to arguments, she* (his step-mother) *says, "Let's all sit down and discuss this and sort it out …"* He sees her as an ally in that either he or his step-mother think of solutions to problems first *"… because my brother and my father over-react and they can't be calm. My step-mother and I are the calm ones and we can sort it out … my uncle in Holland… he has the same interests as me and he likes talking and making jokes and showing his emotions and he takes things calmly when it comes to arguments.* "He sees humour as playing a large role in his life. He feels it helps him to connect with others: *"… I think humour helps me to make friends with older people and others and that's how I've made my friends now."* He finds his step-mother approachable: *"With my step-mother it's* (the nature of their relationship) *probably open. I can talk to her whenever because she already has a child …"* He sees his parents as having expectations of him: *"They expect me to do well at school, to pass all my standards and to pass matric … they trust me and they know I won't do anything bad, which I won't."* He is very compliant and sometimes feels shamed and stressed when he is in trouble at home: *"… when I do something wrong, I feel like the black sheep in the family … when I get into trouble and I have to wait for my parents to find out so that I can be punished, then I stress."*

Role model

He sees his uncle in Holland as his role model. He admires his sense of humour and adventurous spirit. He also shares the same interests as his uncle.

Self-awareness

He is empathetic, socially adept and confident. *"… I can talk easily to all people and sometimes I make jokes and things which only they can understand … I'm very talkative and make jokes around my family and around my step-mother's friends." "... my life now is very happy and normal with my parents and that. It's fun and a little bit hard sometimes. When it comes to family and arguments and schoolwork … but mostly it's a happy and fun-filled life."*

Perseverance

He demonstrated great tenacity and singleness of purpose after having been out of school for three years: *"When I was in standard 4 I had this chance to take one year to catch up the two of the three that I had missed … my challenge was to try and get through grade 7 … I studied hard and at the end I ended up with the highest marks of all the grade six classes for History and I think for Maths. I overcame that problem with the help of my family."*

Future orientation

He has future aspirations which include playing rugby for the first team, doing computer programming and travelling extensively.

SUMMARY

Role of the environment

The participant forged strong bonds with a small group of friends and doesn't allow himself to be swayed by peer pressure. He has a close-knit family that offers structure and security which he appreciates. He sees his life as happy and fun-filled and he experiences his life as stable and he is confident of his ability to manage stressors in his environment. Although his relationship with his father is not as close and comfortable as he would like it to be, he makes an effort to strike a balance between maintaining peace in the home and reaching his objectives, albeit it in a submissive manner at times. He has successfully established supportive relations with peers and family.

Personal attributes

The participant has an optimistic view of life. He, for the most part, feels in control of his life and strives to achieve academically and on the sports field. His easy-going, relaxed temperament and sense of humour endear him to his friends and family and help him to demonstrate flexible problem-solving skills, initiative and independent decision making in his school, home and community environment. His kindness and empathy are demonstrated in his willingness to help his friends who struggle academically. He is religious and although he no longer attends church, he prays to God and he sees this as assisting him to be mentally and emotionally stronger.

Role of the school

The participant feels a sense of belonging at school. He dresses neatly, is respectful towards educators and makes an effort to hand in projects on time to demonstrate his sense of belonging and contentment at school. He finds the educators friendly and supportive and he experiences success in his academic and sports activities.

The interview analysis indicates that he is resilient.

Collage

The participant's collage reflects his experiences in the past. As his past has dominated most of his life, this is reflected in the collage with most space being given to this part of his life. It appears that he regards the happenings in his past as events which transpired and are part of his past. He doesn't dwell on the happenings or see these events as definitive of who he is. He talks about his current interests and hobbies when reflecting on the present and his future dreams and aspirations in terms of his career and leisure activities are reflected in his future vision of his life. The tone of his collage is positive and realistic. Please refer to Addendum D for the transcript.

Integration of themes from collage and the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM)

Both the participant's collage and CYRM support his attempts at growth towards self-actualisation and his embracing of new opportunities and challenges in which he's never had the opportunity of being involved. His tone of voice and the imagery that he selects for the collage indicates that he is adjusting well in his new environment and that his future is optimistic.

3.5.1.3   Participant 3 (non-resilient/vulnerable)

Table 3.4

Age	Gender	Grade	Risk factors inferred from interview and educator information	Protective factors inferred from interview
16	Male	10	Poor relationship with mother, sexual abuse, physical abuse, financial difficulties, academic difficulties, behavioural difficulties, peer rejection	Future aspirations, sense of humour, relationship with father

Biographical information

The participant lives with his father. His mother lives in another part of the country with his step-father and younger brother. He has no contact with his mother and step-father, however he phones his brother occasionally. Before his parents were divorced a few years ago, he often witnessed his father physically abusing his mother often. When he was five years old, he was sexually abused by a teenage girl. Until very recently other experiences in his life led him to wonder about his sexual identity. He and his father used to have physical and verbal fights on a regular basis until recently when they both went to therapy to address their difficulties. They currently enjoy a better relationship. They have financial difficulties. The participant has no good friends at school and feels rejected by the "in" crowd and all the people who used to be his friends are no longer his friends. He feels that he smothers them and they get irritated by him. At school he has behaved inappropriately towards educators and presents minor behavioural problems. He is currently failing grade 10. At the time of the interview, the participant was very downcast and spoke in partial sentences. However, he presents himself as a polite, honest young man.

Supportive relationships

At school, he gets on well with most of his educators whom he finds supportive yet he sabotages the relationships with his educators by speaking inappropriately to them or by disrupting their classes. He feels that his father does a good job of caring for him but he also regards their communication as superficial and not completely honest and open: *"At this stage it's a "lekker" relationship. We don't fight. He can talk to me. I can talk to him. Sometimes we butt heads but not often. We both set our boundaries. Our relationship is superficial. We don't communicate well. We'll say what we want (to say) but it's not good. We hide things from one another … he wants me to do well at school, to have a good job one day. He expects me not to use drugs … he expects me to get good marks and to be good."* He sees the community as being unsupportive, uncaring and intolerant of teenagers and he insinuates that they do not take the trouble to connect with or help teenagers with problems. They just see them as a nuisance: *"… troublemakers … they don't care … they don't care if children have problems. They don't try to help them. They only see problems and that's all that they see."* He doesn't belong to any community organisations. He used to go to a church youth group but stopped attending when a girlfriend stopped going.

Sense of control

A theme that emerges from time to time throughout the interview, is his belief or wish that many things in his life would be better <u>if</u> he were more glib, <u>if</u> he had friends like those he had in England which would, in turn improve his image at school, <u>if</u> his schoolwork were better … He has an external locus of control. The participant uses emotionally-focused coping mechanisms and lacks flexible and creative problem-solving skills. The participant seeks to establish an identity. This is evident from his reply to the question of how his friends contribute towards his identity: *" (They influence it a little here) but in England, a lot. It influenced my music, how I behaved, who I am, what I would do, anything … if my friends listen to certain music, then I'd also listen to such music. If they do certain things then I'd also do that. I try and grab stuff from other people's lives for my own life and if I had friends like those I had in England, then it would have made my image better at school because these friends would have helped me and things …"* and *"… friends play a small role in my life …"* The participant tends to be somewhat pessimistic in his interaction with others and is harshly critical of himself and of others' perceptions of him. His frustration at not being accepted and supported by his peers is evident as is peer pressure: *"… at this stage it's very bad (*his friendships*) because some people don't like drinking and some people don't like smoking. Some people just don't like my music. Some people don't like my childish behaviour. Some people don't like it if I want to be myself. At this stage there are not really friends for me."* He appears to feel like a victim and he feels inferior to others, particularly certain groups of learners at school whom he says, make him feel *"bad"*. He says that they do this by *"brag(ging). They make me feel as though their problems are bigger than mine. They do better academically than I do and I'm stupid. Sometimes they say bad things about me (I'm psycho, childish, loud …), they try and break me down."* And *"… when some people liked me, then some other people didn't like me and when some people didn't like me, then some other people did like me …"*

Problem-solving

When asked who thinks of solutions first, he replied, *"Always the other person … (never me)."* This sense of helplessness and ineffectuality is evident in the manner in which he says he copes with problems: *"By ignoring it, just by getting away from it, that's all."* This theme of building up walls around himself in order to survive and

withdrawing from people and challenges is reinforced by him when he says that he *"builds up a barrier"* in order to be spiritually, physically, intellectually and emotionally strong. He mentions that his problem-solving methods are *"worse"* (than other people's.) He puts this down to the fact that he is not glib and a smooth talker *"gladdebek"* who is able to achieve success in relationships as well as in schoolwork, areas in which he feels he fails. His thinking is wishful and somewhat unrealistic.

Role model

The participant's role models are singers like Eminem who lived in poverty and managed to make a success of their lives despite hardship and obstacles.

Self-awareness

He mentions that he feels inadequate and sometimes finds it difficult when socialising and communicating with others: *"… not easy* (to communicate with people of all ages) *but I'm sort of shy with girls, … with old people? I don't like it. With kids? I sometimes feel like a pervert. Old people I don't like talking to …"*

His view that peer pressure is one of the greatest challenges/stressors facing a teenager today, is expressed as a double bind: *"... peer pressure and parents and drugs go together with sex, alcohol, driving cars, racing with cars, what type of friends you have…everything. That is everything and if you don't do it, you stress and if you do it, you also stress ..."*

His feelings of not belonging and not being good enough are conveyed when he says "*I don't feel that I belong (*at school*)."* When he is confronted with academic stressors, he feels overwhelmed. He sees himself as having a great deal to offer as a friend. He appears tentative in the sense that he applies conditions to his friendship and although he would want a good friend, he also appears to have awareness about his tendency to want to overwhelm his friends: *I'm game for anything most of the time. I try to make jokes and be funny. I'll be there and be loyal but if they are not prepared to be loyal and supportive of me, they mustn't expect me to be there for them … I won't smother them but if it's a very good friend, I would want to spend lots of time with him."*

Future orientation

The participant has future aspirations, some of which are romantic. However, he

clearly would like to do a job for which he has an aptitude and where he will obtain job satisfaction and be and feel competent. He would like to have the happiness, success and love of close friends and a stable family that he lacks in the present: *"I'd like to do something that I love and get good money for it. That would be cool … a goal that I really want to achieve is to do something and be good at it. I wouldn't do extremely well, but I wouldn't do bad." Success is knowing what you do and why you are doing it and knowing what you want in life, having a happy family and a good foundation and a good house … good friends, the house and the job and friends."*

SUMMARY

The role of the environment

The participant indicates lack of confidence and a lack of control across contexts in his life. He is not coping well in his school environment where he experiences academic problems. He doesn't experience success and competence in this environment. He is especially despondent about his social interactions with peers where he feels like a victim, misunderstood, unappreciated and rejected. He has a supportive father, yet sadly he says that no-one has ever "been there" for him during difficult times and those that were have let him down.

Personal attributes

The participant appears to lack assertiveness and self-efficacy. He leaves some issues unresolved or ignores them. Such a passive attitude may possibly negatively impact on his future interactions and reinforce his feeling of helplessness. He was harsh and self-critical and he overlooked some of his positive points and abilities, for instance, his honesty, sense of humour and his loyalty, to name a few. He also has future aspirations. However he gives up easily and lacks perseverance and commitment to overcome academic challenges. He is inclined to make impulsive decisions to solve problems or to withdraw and not to take responsibility for these behaviours. Instead he may be reactive, blaming others for his behaviour. He tends to dwell on the past and has much pain as a result of past incidents.

Role of the school

The participant is able to solicit support from some educators whom he perceives to be potential mother figures in his life. The educators have made an effort to be

understanding, but because he has difficulty with recognising personal boundaries, he soon sabotages relationships by being too familiar or too arrogant. He does not experience a feeling of belonging at school however, and fails to achieve academically. He does, however, play rugby. He has a strong need for encouragement and support and he needs to experience success and approval from others. He is non-resilient.

Collage

The participant only depicted the past in his collage and when asked to describe what was conveyed in the collage, he spoke about incidents of being bullied during primary school and of being humiliated and smacked at home for either eating too little or too much. His collage depicted the past including memories of his father abusing his mother, anger at his mother's rejection of him and rejection by his peers who bullied him. He spoke of the pain inside him that he desperately wants to end and of his mother (whom he hates because he feels that she abandoned him) being compared to a dragon. However, the dragon, according to him, also refers to something inside him that chases him. These themes are all negative and painful and they seemed to overwhelm him. When he was asked about the pictures that he would include in his collage to depict the present and future, he mentioned themes that reflected his current struggles with academic work and peer relationships as he mentioned that he would include pictures of a person spending time on his schoolwork, a person "having problems with friends" and his interests in music and computers. The future would hopefully bring, according to him, all the things that he currently does not have (a family, friends, a nice house, etc) and he would be able to experience love and success and a sense of belonging.

Integration of themes from collage and the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM)

In both the collage and the CYRM, the participant's experiences of abandonment, rejection, pain and his feelings of helplessness and ineffectuality are evident. In both media, he expresses a longing for a feeling of connectedness and belonging with others (peers and adults). His difficulties with schoolwork and socialising are themes which are repeated in both media used and his future is depicted as an ideal of all that he would like to have and which he doesn't currently possess.

3.5.1.4   Participant 4 (non-resilient/vulnerable)

Table 3.5

Age	Gender	Grade	Risk factors inferred from interview and educator information	Protective factors inferred from interview
18	Male	12	Alcoholic father, divorced parents recovering drug addict, depression, financial difficulties	Future aspirations, sense of humour, relationship with friends, high intelligence, writing talent

Biographical information

The participant lives with his mother who is strong, self-sacrificing and extremely hardworking. He has an elder sister and a father whom he visits every Saturday night. The participant is extremely intelligent. However, owing to his drug use over a period of several years, he has never achieved the academic heights of which he is capable. The participant entered rehab last year and has subsequently been picking up the pieces of his life. He attends NarcAnon (Narcotics Anonymous) meetings regularly and has shown great commitment to his continuing recovery, however recently he almost suffered a mental breakdown and went into a severe depression. He took medication for a few months but refuses to be "dependent on chemicals", due to his five years of drug use. He has decided to discontinue his medication in spite of the advice of some of the adults in his life. The participant is currently in a place where he is not yet ready to trust himself outside of his very strict routine in case he succumbs to the temptation of drugs again. Furthermore he busies himself with his writing, watching movies and playing computer games in order not to have to have too much time to think. Some days the participant appears to be making great strides. However, in his honest account of his thoughts, actions and feelings as conveyed in the interview with him, it is evident that he is still in a process of learning and growth and that he needs much support.

A few specific themes emerged from the interview. These will be discussed in the context of the themes identified in the study and how these relate to resilience.

Supportive relationships

He appears to feel ambivalence about his relationship with his parents because he knows his relationship with them is superficial and he appears to show remorse for

what he has put them through and he wants to repay them for the sacrifices that they have made for him. He says, *"… recently I have come to realize that my parents are just people like me and share the very emotions I would choose to shun. It's my turn to give back to them and no longer be a hindrance and the black sheep of the family … I will give them reason for their effort and give all that I can back to them to improve their quality of life like they did mine."* He credits his father with making an effort to get to know him and he lauds his mother for the unconditional love and the sacrifices that she has made for him. He also admires her drive and tenacity.

He sees his educators and the community as having been supportive, "… *there was always constant emotional and spiritual support … (help) was offered and I kindly declined. It's rare that people care in this day and age and it's not an exaggeration when our school is referred to as 'the school with the heart' because the staff really does care."* However he sees school as a stepping stone to greater things, *"It is merely a stepping stone on my journey to success …(I) didn't want to be here and now I am I must make the best of it."* The participant was 'bust' (caught) for drugs at his present school and he was reluctant to return to this school due to all the negative memories and his fear of having been labelled by the learners and staff. The participant has a close circle of friends, many of whom are a little older than he is. They are his strongest allies and his main circle of support. They offer him structure and give his life meaning, *(They are) my leash."* They offer him unconditional regard, however what they all have in common is a superior intellect. They also enjoy stimulating, philosophical conversations and enjoy the energy that comes from belonging and having shared abilities and interests: "*Social commentators all of us … they too are aloof such as I and therefore understand my somewhat morbid but realistic views on human nature and life in general because they, too, are articulate thinkers."* He also makes mention of his unique brand of humour and wit, which he feels his friends understand.

He appears to have superficial relationships with his parents. *"My family is always here but only on a superficial basis …"* He appears to share pleasant "pastimes" with his mother.

Sense of control

The participant believes that he has and needs a great sense of control over his

environment. This stems from past hurts and possible feelings of abandonment and rejection: *"I must … have control of the situation … Therefore I never really put myself into a social situation unless I am one hundred percent sure of the outcome* and *I now choose to enter a situation on my own terms when I can calculate an outcome that would be to my benefit ..."* This need for control over himself as well as over situations (and other people's perceptions of him) that he encounters appear to increase his feelings of isolation because he often refers to his interaction with others in terminology that suggests that he is "*calculating*", "*vampiric"* and "*manipulative".*

Problem-solving

When the participant finds himself in a situation which he feels he cannot control or where he fears that others will see through his motives, he escapes or leaves before he is hurt or abandoned: *"… if the situation doesn't fit my criteria I just bail (leave)." "It's rare that someone can see through me but when they do I tend not to hang around long enough for the outcome."* For him, self preservation is essential and this is achieved primarily through escapism and withdrawal: *"I … choose to use music and sleep and whatever I can to distract myself … drugs and sex (are) merely coping mechanisms to distract themselves from the emotions they are feeling."* At all costs self preservation is essential for him. He shies away from emotion as he feels that it makes him weak and vulnerable, *"Emotions merely cloud your judgement and your ability to succeed in the given situation." "I choose to live like a machine and live only for myself, never letting anyone in and never coming out."* The idea of his comparing himself to a machine is a prolific theme during the interview. *"The fatal flaw that is human nature is emotion … messages received by synapses dictate our actions to us. They merely cause us pain and I chose not to undergo this emotional turmoil I…" "… not people, not friends and not love or any of the other emotions that make us weak."* In order to avoid the pain that emotion may bring, he tries hard to allow himself to be ruled by his rational mind: *"… there just needs to be someone that doesn't let their emotions cloud their decision."* He believes that he is good at solving problems as he is very rational: *"I am an articulate thinker and I try to rationalize the situation and then take the appropriate steps to solve the problem."* What is clear throughout the interview is that the participant has the tendency to intellectualise things i.e. spirituality, life and the human condition. Although he says that he has grown spiritually and perceives life and his relationships with people differently and

philosophises about life, he appears not to have internalized the spirituality that he regularly refers to: *"I have grown spiritually and (have) tried to make amends for my past indiscretions and I think people have noticed and have changed their attitudes towards me."* Later in the interview he says, *"The spirituality I do experience is short-lived and superficial …"* *"I have realized that once we realize the inevitability of pain and misfortune the outcome becomes a lot more bearable."* The latter statement by the participant is not congruent with his behaviour of withdrawal, avoidance, escapism and need for control of situations in which he finds himself.

Role model

The participant's role model is a writer who is clearly, from his description, an individualist who writes with passion, creativity and honesty; whose writings speak to the participant at this time of his life. The participant is also a talented writer whose dream is to become a writer and a reporter

Self-awareness

His identity appears to be enmeshed with that of the drug sub-culture as he often makes mention of his battle to recovery. He still appears to define himself by the 'drug addict' label. This is a dominant theme throughout. He is very much aware of the effect that he has on others and has great insight into his motives and behaviour. He has also referred to himself as being "vampiric", "calculating" and "manipulative", which are very negative terms.

Perseverance

His mother insisted that he return to the same school where he was caught with drugs. He found returning to the same environment very difficult but he has shown great perseverance in his ability to cope under these difficult conditions. His inability to confront emotions and difficult situations in other areas of his life, suggest a lack of perseverance.

Future orientation

The participant wishes to become a journalist, to travel and to be a success in life: *"It (school) is merely a stepping stone on my journey to success…"* His future orientation emerged more clearly in his collage.

SUMMARY

Role of the environment

The participant's friends play the most supportive role in his life. However, he keeps his emotional distance from his family and his mother who has been very supportive.

Personal attributes

The participant's sense of humour, excellent communication skills and intelligence are qualities that could steer him towards resilience. Unfortunately, his sense of shame, guilt, remorse, confusion, bitterness and his defensiveness appear to overwhelm him at times, to the point where he is still vulnerable.

Role of the school

The school and its educators have made enormous efforts to encourage, support, and cajole this participant as they have always been convinced of his enormous potential. The participant's lack of belief in himself and his defiance in the past, scuppered these relationships at times. However, the school never gave up on him. The participant acknowledges the school's efforts when he refers to the school as "the school with the heart".

Collage

In his collage, the themes were once again coloured by his prolonged drug use and his sadness at the wastage and loss not only of time and opportunities but also of close friends who succumbed to drugs. He depicted his present as uncertain as he was coming to terms with his new identity without drugs. He felt that he was in a moratorium in that he was in a school environment where he felt that he couldn't escape others' perceptions of his past life as a drug addict and the temptations that still awaited him in that environment. He saw school as a means to an end. He felt that he couldn't wait to move on to the next phase of his life which would be exotic as he'd live in a foreign county (to escape?). He'd fulfil a dream to be a reporter and writer and he would live on his own terms and would not allow himself to be encumbered by emotion or love.

Integration of themes from collage and the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM)

The themes of the need for escapism from reality, a desire for control, feelings of

loneliness and of not being understood and pain are dominant. On an intellectual level, the participant provides insight into what he wants from life and how he believes he should be and would like to be, However, at times, these glimmers of insight appear to be overwhelmed by contradictions between who he thinks he is and how he sees himself and how he would like to be i.e. forging a new identity apart from the drugs. He appears to be confused about his identity and it is clear to the researcher that he needs support to forge a new identity apart from drugs. He could also possibly benefit from support for the hurts that he has experienced which, according to him, have affected his "faith in humanity".

The participant has made great strides in his recovery and has demonstrated perseverance, humour, guilt and remorse (also in his conversations with the researcher) and has come a long way in the past year. He still has good days when he appears optimistic and cheery and bad days when he is withdrawn, morbid and bitter. His future plans are optimistic and realistic and it is hoped that as he matures and tests his skills and gifts in a new environment he will risk feeling positive emotions, like love, again. Currently the researcher sees the participant as lacking resilience in terms of many of the criteria of the study because the participant is more resilient than he was a year ago, it would be true to say that the participant is in the process of becoming more resilient and will hopefully achieve resilience with the necessary support.

Below is an analysis of the remaining four interviews which are presented in tabular form. These four remaining interviews are of two perceived resilient participants (participants 5 and 6) and of two perceived non-resilient participants (participants 7 and 8). The seven resilience factors which were highlighted in the above four interviews, will be applied to the four interviews which follow. The complete interviews may be viewed in Addendum D.

3.5.2 Tabulated analysis of the interviews of the four remaining participants

Table 3.6: Tabulated analysis of the interviews of the four remaining participants

Age	Gender	Grade	Risk Factors inferred from interview and educator information	Participant Number	Protective Factors inferred from interview and educator information	Resilience and non-resilience inferred from interview and educator information

| 17 | F | 11 | Adopted, divorce, father imprisoned for fraud, financial difficulties | 5 | Supportive mother, supportive educators, supportive friends, religion, academic competence, | **Biographical**
The participant comes from a family of three. She has a loving, nurturing, strong mother who has high expectations of her.
Social relationships
She has enjoyed academic and emotional support from educators since she was in primary school owing to her strong academic and sporting abilities. She has strong feelings of belonging and loyalty towards the school. She attracts many friends who are drawn to her calm authority, easy-going and fun-loving personality and humility. They seek her advice although she prefers to confide in an adult mentor.
Sense of control
She likes to have control over her environment and attributes her success in academics and sport to her tenacity and hard work.
Problem-solving
She has a positive and realistic approach to life, preferring to see difficulties as learning opportunities. She trusts her own judgement and seeks to solve her own problems, showing maturity. Her religious beliefs and her sound relationships help to buffer the stressors in her life. However, she dislikes conflict which leads to her being passive in certain situations and she tends to be overly sensitive. She sometimes compares herself to others unfavourably.
Role model
Her role model is a combination of different people in her life - all of whom reflect the qualities of openness, generosity, honesty and love that she would like to be known for.
Self-awareness
The participant sees herself as competent, a good friend, optimistic, hardworking and easy-going.
Perseverance
She has demonstrated perseverance in more than one area of her life: on the tennis courts where she played with a hurt shoulder because she wanted to finish the game and when she struggles with mathematics, she grapples with a problem until she is able to solve it.
Future orientation
However, for the most part, she has realistic aspirations and is optimistic about her future. She is resilient. |
| 16 | F | 10 | Father's death Financial, difficulties, sexual abuse, learning problem | 6 | Religion, supportive family, supportive educators, supportive friends | **Biographical**
The participant is the younger of two children. Her father was shot and died when she was six years old.
Supportive relationships
She lives with her mother and brother, both of whom she regards as very supportive. She sees her brother as protective and her mother is described |

						as nurturing and kind. The participant experiences a sense of control at school where she feels a sense of belonging. She perceives her educators as supportive, motivating and kind. She has an optimistic outlook on life and has a grateful spirit, taking nothing for granted in her life. She is well liked by her friends and educators as she is outgoing, empathetic and helpful. She finds support and solace in her friends, her church friends and particularly in her relationship with God. Sense of control She bounced back from a period where she succumbed to peer pressure to do drugs and drink alcohol and party She feels that she has a strong sense of control over her life. Problem-solving She is a flexible problem-solver and she mainly solves problems and conflict through communication. Role model Her mother is her role model. She admires her nurturing ability and her great love for her children. Self-awareness Her strengths include her ability to "think out of the box", her non-judgemental attitude towards others and her humour. Perseverance. She struggles with schoolwork due to specific learning problems. However, with perseverance and determination, she copes academically. Future orientation She has clear ideas about her future career, to be a youth minister. She is resilient.
14	M	8	Divorce, financial difficulties, behavioural difficulties, violence in the home, alcohol abuse (step-father)	7	Supportive mother, supportive friends, supportive educators, leadership qualities, talent (drawing)	Biographical The participant is the elder of two children. His parents divorced when he was three years old. His father disappeared for a lengthy period of time and he had no contact with him. His step-father is verbally and physically abusive. The participant's primary school career was fraught with conflict, suspensions and the possibility of expulsion. He completed a period of community service for physical assault. His high school career started off badly as he presented behavioural difficulties. Supportive relationships In the interview he describes his mother as supportive, yet she is working three jobs, so he doesn't see her very much. As a child he always saw his mother as his protector, someone who believed in him. However, he sometimes takes on the role of protector to her and his little sister when his step-father is violent. He describes his life as okay. He perceives his educators as supportive

						and motivating and he feels that he belongs at his school. The participant is talented in drawing.
						<u>Sense of control</u>
						He feels pessimistic, helpless and sad about the conflict at home. He has leadership qualities.
						<u>Problem-solving</u>
						The participant says that he solves problems by communicating, however, he often resorts to physical means to try to solve his problems.
						<u>Role model</u>
						His father is his role model because he is kind and has moved away from a homeless, drifter way of life to become a useful member of society again.
						<u>Self-awareness</u>
						He sees himself as a loyal friend who has demonstrated empathy and helpfulness.
						<u>Perseverance</u>
						There is little information to suggest that he has demonstrated perseverance as he gives up easily or is avoidant when he is faced with difficulty in the school situation.
						<u>Future orientation</u>
						His main desire in terms of his future is to pass school and to be happy.
						The participant has the potential to be resilient with enough encouragement and support as has been shown by his new high school. Currently the participant is non-resilient although he shows many resilient characteristics.
18	F	12	Adopted, mother died, father alcoholic, brother drug addict, physical abuse	8	Supportive friends, supportive educators, supportive aunt	<u>Biographical</u>
						The participant is the youngest of three children. Her mother died when she was 10 years old. Her father drinks heavily, as does his new wife. The participant is against the marriage and feels unhappy at home.
						<u>Social relationships</u>
						The participant doesn't have a good relationship with her father. She is angry with him for his neglect and lack of interest in her and their exchanges are business-like. The father's ex-girlfriend physically abused the participant. Her brother was a drug addict. Her aunt and cousin are the people in her life who are stalwarts to her. They have nurtured her and provided respite and security at difficult times in her life. She has a close circle of friends and a supportive boyfriend who share her sense of humour.
						<u>Sense of control</u>
						She feels pessimistic about her life and like a victim at times. She harbours resentment and bitterness towards some ex-friends, whom she feels are jealous of her and want to make her life a misery. This they do by spreading rumours that she is a "druggie".
						<u>Problem-solving</u>
						The participant is not coping

							academically at school or behaviourally at home where she tends to withdraw from conflict by escaping to her friends. At other times, however, she is street-smart and can be assertive and can make an effort to solve her problems independently or with the help of her friends. Role model She didn't have a role model but when pressed to mention one, she referred to her deceased mother who was kind and nurturing. Self-awareness She sees herself as a good and loyal friend. She realises that she may be depressed but she also sees herself as someone who is a "tough cookie". Perseverance She did persevere for many years while her father was drinking, to put on a happy face and to look after herself. However, with his new relationship and marriage, she felt unwanted and she had reached a point in her life, where she was finding it difficult to be the "happy" person that she had been. Future orientation She has a vague idea of her future plans. The participant uses drugs and alcohol. The participant demonstrates some factors associated with resilience although currently she appears to be non-resilient.

The eight participants (four resilient and four non-resilient) in the study have each been discussed at length in terms of certain factors of resilience as identified in the literature. The results of the study with regard to each participant will be compared below in terms of the unique resilience factors which have emerged from the literature and from the interviews with the participants.

3.6 COMPARISON OF RESULTS

It was decided that the resilience and non-resilience status of the participants would be determined on the basis of various factors which were highlighted in the literature study with the most salient criteria being the adolescent's positive ability to adapt in the face of adversity and the continued striving towards self-actualisation. Self-actualisation implies that he will have: a feeling of control over his life, intrinsic motivation, future aspirations, commitment, respect, a sense of humour, optimism, a pro-active approach to life, the ability to persevere in the face of hardship, good problem-solving skills, self-awareness and self-confidence. Furthermore, it is

expected that he will achieve well academically and socially i.e. have a well-developed ability to socialise with all age groups and have the ability to attract support from those around him. The characteristics needed for self-actualisation mentioned above, are the same characteristics required for a person to be resilient (as was mentioned in the literature). Other characteristics of resilient children include their ability to bond with people in their lives, a staunch acceptance of reality, a deep belief, often buttressed by strongly-held values that life is meaningful, and an uncanny ability to improvise (Coutu 2002:48). The resilient and non-resilient participants will be compared on the basis of the following factors which play a role in resilience: the degree to which they have access to social support, the degree to which they are able to solve problems, their sense of control over their lives, the quality and the role of a role model in their lives, their self-awareness, perseverance, belief system, competence, view of life, sense of humour, attitude and future orientation.

Social support

The results of the study indicate that the resilient participants (Participants 1, 2, 5 and 6) appeared to cope well across social systems (home, school, community). Each of these resilient participants indicated that he had one adult who was nurturing, supportive, independent and available to him. This person was also often capable of solving problems. In these four cases, this person was the mother. Each of the perceived resilient participants had forged good relationships with friends, educators or adults in the community who could act as mentors to them and who created circles of support for them, particularly during difficult times. They all indicated that at least one adult had always been available to them as a source of emotional support. They appeared happy with their choice of friends and their relationships were seen as sources of emotional support and mutually satisfying. They all felt a sense of belonging at school and in the community, although the extent to which they experienced this feeling differed e.g. Participant 1 felt that his educators were encouraging, yet he did not experience a sense of belonging at school. On the other hand, the non-resilient participants were not successful in identifying and making use of most protective factors available in their social systems. What was clear is that the non-resilient participants appeared not to have close-knit relationships with one caring or charismatic adult. Although each of these

adolescents had one adult in his life to whom he felt he could turn for support in times of trouble, in the case of two of the participants (3 and 4), the relationship with the significant adult was either perceived as being superficial (participant 4) or conditional (candidate 3). In the case of participant 7, his mother appeared to be unavailable physically owing to work commitments or she was viewed by him as needing his nurturing and protection. Participant 8 was the only non-resilient participant who had an adult that she could rely on. The non-resilient participants' friends, however, played a large and supportive role. Participants 4, 7 and 8 mentioned that their friends provided the most support to them. None of them had real mentors or extensive circles of support. Participant 3 mentioned that he had no real friends and had difficulty making friends. He felt that he had no support and he had never felt that anyone had ever supported him. Two of the participants (7 and 8) experienced a sense of belonging at their school and felt that the educators were supportive. However, participant 4, while admitting to having caring educators, felt that he did not belong and that he only attended school out of necessity. Participant 3 did not experience a sense of belonging at school. Two of the participants (3 and 8) participated in extra-mural activities offered at school. The others were not involved in any community activities.

Problem-solving

The resilient participants demonstrated independence, responsibility, a sense of control, self-efficacy, planning and resourcefulness in their problem-solving. Most participants had the insight and self-awareness to see beyond the difficult times in their lives towards a better time (participants 1, 5 and 6). They knew what they needed and how to acquire it and viewed their problems as challenges that had to be overcome. They appeared to tackle the stressors in their life head-on and to see these as a challenge (participants 1, 2, 5 and 6). These participants demonstrated optimism and certainty in their ability to handle challenges, thus they have an internal locus of control. They also demonstrated strength and commitment to succeed in their environments without any form of psychological help except the support and love of their friends and families. They all expressed assertiveness and self-assuredness and were pro-active. On the other hand, the participants who were perceived as being non-resilient, demonstrated a lack of flexible problem-solving skills (participants 3, 4, 7, 8) often depending on others for solutions (participant 3) or

believing, mistakenly, that they could provide the solutions (participant 4). They experienced stressful events as overwhelming, causing them to react aggressively or to withdraw (participants 3, 4, 7, 8). This contributed to them sometimes feeling alienated and misunderstood (participants 3, 4, 8). They often experienced a lack of control over their lives where they were unable to find alternative solutions to their problems and they experienced little success in their lives. They all indulged in alcohol and/or drug use.

Sense of control

According to Boyd and Eckert (2002:10-11) non-resilience indicates the inability to learn and grow through experience and a loss of hope and optimism, which the researcher witnessed in participants 3 and 4 and to a lesser extent in participants 7 and 8. This loss of hope and optimism results in the individual choosing an empty life and assuming a victim's mentality. Such individuals fail to manage stress but instead, they prefer to toughen their minds, bodies and spirits by combating stress in a reactive way. In the cases of participants 3, 4 and 8 in particular, this was evident in their withdrawing from others and their feelings of helplessness in certain situations. This feeling of helplessness was also experienced by participant 7. These participants fail to bounce back if they experience their situations as too overwhelming and as too stressful and they feel resentment and despair and are victim-like. According to Coutu (2002:55) there is good evidence that when people are put under pressure, they regress to their most habituated ways of responding. These participants fail to adapt positively within their environments and their chances of developing positively and of self-actualising are greatly reduced.

Role model

The resilient participants' role models were mainly their mothers or people whom they knew who radiated nurturance, friendliness, an adventurous spirit and a caring attitude (participants 2, 5 and 6) or whose philosophy of life they adhered to (participant 1). In the case of the non-resilient participants, besides participant 7, whose role model was his father, their role models were individuals who had mastered a skill well (participants 3 and 4).

Self-awareness

The resilient participants perceived themselves as likeable, capable and confident.

They all had cheerful dispositions and easy-going personalities, although they were also assertive. They all conveyed a sense of feeling comfortable in their own skins and not needing or desiring the approval of others (especially those of their own age). They were friendly and open with good communication skills. They had realistic views about their strengths and weaknesses and were willing to work on improving their weaknesses. They were clearly able to see the link between the choices that they had made and the consequences of these choices and were able to take responsibility for these choices. The adolescents who were perceived as non-resilient were pessimistic. They were not assertive in their environment. They gave up easily and had an external locus of control (participants 3, 4, 7 and 8). They appeared to have an unrealistic negative self-concept because they could see little good in themselves (participants 3 and 4). Their communication skills were not very good, except for participant 4, who was a skilled communicator. All four of the non-resilient participants appeared to be down-hearted and unmotivated at the time of the interview.

Perseverance

The resilient participants all persevered in the face of hardship in their lives and none of them conveyed a sense of being a victim. Rather they were of the opinion that they had built character from the experience. The non-resilient participants appeared to have difficulty persevering in relationships, in schoolwork and in extra-mural activities. They tended to withdraw (participants 3, 4, 8), escape (participants 3, 4, 7, 8) or retaliate (participants 3, 4, 7, 8) when faced with hardship, obstacles or perceived rejection.

Belief system

Three of the resilient participants (participants 2, 5 and 6) were religious and one of the resilient participants (participant 1) strongly believed in a philosophy of life that espoused the striving after higher ideals and self-actualization. Their faith in a higher calling or a higher being gave their lives meaning and served as a source of comfort during difficult times. Of the non-resilient participants, only participants 4 and 7 expressed that they had a philosophy of life that they adhered to. Participant 4, however, admitted that he felt disillusioned with his spirituality which he described as "short-lived."

Competence at school

The resilient participants were all involved in extra-mural activities at school and outside school and achieved well academically, whereas the non-resilient participants, for the most part, did not participate in extra-mural activities. The non-resilient participants tended to experience behavioural and academic problems and did not hand in tasks and homework regularly.

View of life

The resilient participants all shared a realistic view of life. When the collages were discussed by the resilient participants, it was evident that they were able to talk about their perceptions and experiences matter-of-factly. The resilient participants conveyed the insight that negative experiences were part of their past. They felt that they couldn't change the experience and that they were not responsible for them happening. Instead, they felt that had learnt from these experiences and they were confident that the negative experience(s) did not define them as people. In other words, the resilient participants had devised constructs about their suffering to create some sort of meaning for themselves and others. All of the participants in the study felt that their trials had made them stronger people and that they had developed character as a result of their difficulties. The non-resilient participants, on the other hand, felt overwhelmed by the stresses of life and had difficulty rebounding from these (participants 3, 4 and to a lesser extent participants 7 and 8). These participants saw life as a scary, threatening place where they needed to protect themselves from others who might want to hurt them. In order to survive depend on themselves (participants 3, 4 and 8). They had difficulty not labelling themselves based on their negative past experiences and appeared to define themselves according to these events (participants 3, 4 and 7). When discussing their collages, the researcher was struck by the emotions of pain and guilt conveyed by the participants as they spoke about the negative experiences of the past on which they appeared to dwell. The present was conveyed as a state of moratorium that was either depicted as confusing or undesirable.

Sense of humour

All of the resilient participants had a sense of humour and oftentimes they were able to laugh at themselves without being defensive. The non-resilient participants used

their sense of humour to mask their pain. Their dark, self deprecatory humour conveyed cynicism, bitterness and pain (participants 3, 4 and 7).

Attitude

The resilient participants conveyed a sense of joy and an attitude of gratitude (i.e. they are grateful for the smallest things and they do not take things in their lives for granted.) This attitude of gratitude was a common thread amongst the participants which the researcher had not previously come across in the literature study. This attitude of joy and gratitude was not witnessed at all amongst the non-resilient participants.

Future orientation

The resilient participants could talk with great anticipation of future dreams and aspirations and they could build bridges from present-day hardships to a fuller, better constructed future. These bridges make the present manageable, removing the sense that the present is overwhelming. Their future dreams all included having a successful career and hopes of being content. The non-resilient participants (participants 3, 4 and 7) depicted the future as an ideal of their present where all the problems and pain that they currently experience would be part of the past. Their futures, according to them, held much promise of happiness and success.

3.7   CONCLUSION

This study attempted to discern the differences between perceived resilient and non-resilient adolescents between the ages of 14 years and 18 years. Specific attention was given to the nature of personal and environmental attributes found in adolescents who are resilient and non-resilient and the role that these attributes play in fostering resilience or contributing to non-resilience. According to Kumpfer (1999:189) the social environment of an individual is extremely important to the resilient process. It serves to influence the social development of the child and can either buffer or intensify the impact of stressful and challenging events in the child. In this study, the role of supportive systems in the adolescent's life was explored to determine how these systems contribute to an adolescent being either resilient or non-resilient. It was evident that the resilient participants in the study had many systems of support at home, at school and in the community. Most of them viewed their mothers as their most stable and consistent source of support. Due to their

good communication skills, sense of humour, optimistic view of life and easy-going personalities, they appeared to attract people towards them who could offer them support. In contrast, the non-resilient participants appeared to lack social support from parents, educators and community sources. Only one of them had an adult as a primary source of support but even then, this adult's support was seen as less important than the support offered by the participant's peers. The seeming lack of support enjoyed by the resilient adolescents appeared to be mainly due to them isolating themselves from others and their lack of participation at school and in the community. The non-resilient participants found their greatest source of support in their friends, some of whom were not necessarily good role models. The resilient participants appeared to see life as a challenge whilst the non-resilient participants withdrew from life and saw it as a journey peppered with potholes which had the potential to trip them up. This view affected their ability to persevere when confronted with hardship. Most of the resilient participants had positive images of themselves as capable and hardy people, whereas the non-resilient participants had unrealistic negative views of themselves as failures and victims of their circumstances.

Many powerful themes emerged in all of the participant's stories and during the interviews. These themes were, for the most part, reinforced by the collages which the adolescents made to illustrate their past, present and future worlds. The results, findings, conclusions and limitations of the study will be expounded upon more clearly and more comprehensively in chapter four.

CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains a summary of both the theory and the empirical investigation done in this study. Mention is made of the findings in the study and recommendations are made in order to address possible strategies for further research needed in the field of resilience. A summary, the findings and the recommendations of the literature study will be discussed next.

4.2   SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LITERATURE STUDY

The aim of the literature study was to discuss the concepts of resilience and adolescence in depth.

4.2.1 Summary and findings

Chapter One outlined the rationale and aims of the literature study which focussed primarily on the phenomena of resilience and adolescence. In Chapter Two, these concepts were explored in greater detail. Several definitions of adolescence were explored and adolescence, it was determined, is the developmental phase in the human life cycle which is situated between childhood and adulthood. Whilst some authors emphasise the biological maturation which takes place during puberty (Kazdin 2000:39; Stoiber & Good 1998:380), others agree that adolescence is also a period during which major psychological changes occur (Corsini 2002:21; Statt 2003:3). The authors who were consulted on this topic hold different opinions with regard to when the different phases of adolescence commence and end (Corsini 2002:21; Statt 2003:3). Park's (2004:50) recent research casts new light on this issue when she (Park) suggests that the phase of middle to late adolescence spans the period from 13 years old to 25 years old. Previously it was believed that the phase of adolescence ends at the age of 21 for females and at the age of 22 for

males. An overview of the developmental tasks of the adolescent according to Havinghurst (1976:2) and Erikson (1968:56-71) was discussed, where the latter author emphasised the adolescent's desire to establish a unique identity in order to answer the question "Who am I?" Unisa's Relations Theory (Vrey 1992; Oosthuizen & Jacobs 1982) was also briefly mentioned as it takes as its point of departure that one is not a being living in isolation but that one is surrounded by people and things with which we interact and to/with whom we relate. These interactions will determine whether or not and how well, we self-actualise. Self-actualisation refers to one becoming all that one is capable of being or realising one's potential. Self-actualisation is one of the characteristic factors of a resilient adolescent. Having explored the concept of adolescence, the complex concept of resilience was studied.

In an effort to understand this concept of resilience, the historical context of resilience, with specific attention to Werner, Bierman and French's (1971) groundbreaking research with children in Hawaii, was alluded to. Werner, Bierman and French (1971) noticed that some of the children in Hawaii who had been raised by schizophrenic mothers, appeared to thrive in spite of their high-risk status. This led to increasing efforts to understand individual variations in response to adversity. Research on resilience expanded to include multiple adverse conditions such as socio-economic disadvantage, parental mental illness, urban poverty and community violence, chronic illness and catastrophic life events. This research focussed on a systematic search for protective factors which distinguished children who seemed well adjusted from those who were comparatively less well adjusted (Garmezy, Masten & Tellegan 1984:98; Masten & O'Connor 1989:274-278; Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker 2000:544). Initially an effort was made to focus on the personal qualities of resilient children, such as autonomy and high self-esteem. However, researchers began to acknowledge that resilience may spring from factors outside of the child and prolific resilience researchers, Werner and Smith (1982:119-36) eventually identified three sets of factors implicated in the development of resilience: attributes of the children themselves, aspects of their families and characteristics of their wider social environments. Whilst distinguishing between children who are well adjusted and those who were less well adjusted, Waller (2000:291) picked up on Garmezy, Masten and Tellegan's (1984:98) idea that resilience springs from factors outside the child. In line with this idea, Waller (2000:291) emphasised the ecosystemic approach

which stresses the inter-relatedness between individuals and their social systems. On the other hand, the importance of the adolescent's personality attributes and how these specific personality traits contribute to his resilience has been emphasised. Masten (2001:229) however, challenged this idea of the resilient child being remarkable in any way. Masten (2001:229) also questioned whether to define resilience in terms of internal criteria or in terms of external adaptational criteria. Instead, Masten (2001:229) considers resilience in terms of how well the child adapts to his environment in the face of challenges. The characteristics of the individual, the family and the individual's support networks are mentioned in Chapter Two, with specific attention given to the role that these systems play in contributing towards resilience and non-resilience.

Having discussed the theory behind the study, it was decided that the resilience and non-resilience status of the adolescent participants would be determined on the basis of various factors which were highlighted in the literature study with the most salient criteria being the adolescent's positive ability to adapt in the face of adversity and the continued striving towards self-actualisation. Self-actualisation implies that the adolescent will have: a feeling of control over his life as well as intrinsic motivation, future aspirations, commitment, respect, a sense of humour, optimism, a pro-active approach to life, the ability to persevere in the face of hardship, good problem-solving skills, self-awareness and self-confidence. Furthermore, it is expected that the adolescent who is resilient will achieve well academically and socially i.e. have a well developed ability to socialize with all age groups and have the ability to attract support from those around him. Other characteristics of resilient adolescents include their ability to bond with people in their lives, a staunch acceptance of reality, a deep belief, often buttressed by strongly-held values, that life is meaningful; and an uncanny ability to improvise (Coutu 2002:48; Zimmerman *et al.* 2003:236; Minnard 2001:235; Early & Vonk 2001:18; Masten, Best & Garmezy 1990:432; Krovetz 1999:121; Donald *et al.* 2002:223; Kalil & Kunz 1999:199).

4.2.2 Critique on the literature

In this section, a critique will be made with regard to the literature study.

- The literature that the researcher came across alluded to resilience in a manner that one resided under the impression that resilience or non-resilience are

absolute concepts. Nowhere in the literature that was read by the researcher, was mention ever made of the fact that resilience may possibly fall on a continuum.

- In the literature it was clear that the individual characteristic of optimism was often found to be possessed by resilient children. However, the researcher never came across any allusions, in the literature, to "an attitude of gratitude" or a "mindset of thankfulness" (for one's blessings). It was evident from this study that this "attitude of gratitude" was a common characteristic amongst the resilient participants that may set a resilient and a non-resilient person apart.

- It is not clear from the literature how the coping strategies of the adolescent contribute to or impact on resilience.

- The mentorship programmes alluded to in the literature, for the most part, focussed on the importance of a supportive relationship between an adult and an adolescent, involved in a special programme in the school or in the community or in an institution. The literature that the researcher came across did not feature research on peer mentoring programmes and their impact on the resilience of the adolescent.

4.2.3 Recommendations

In this section, recommendations will be made pertaining to the literature study with regards to future research in the area of adolescence and resilience.

- Most of the literature on resilience focuses on children. More research should be done on resilience in adolescents.

- Adolescence is a period when the adolescent's peers are extremely important to him. As a result, the affect of peer mentoring and its ability to contribute towards building resilience in adolescents could be studied.

- As educators are closely involved in adolescents' lives for a great part of each day, a practical training program, which assists educators to increase assets and decrease risks, could be developed.

In the following section, the empirical investigation will be summarised, the findings discussed and recommendations made.

4.3 SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

The aim of the empirical investigation was to undertake qualitative research to determine to what extent an identified group of four perceived resilient adolescents compare with four perceived non-resilient adolescents in exhibiting the personal attributes of resilient adolescents as conveyed in the literature study. Furthermore, the following was also investigated qualitatively: the extent to which environmental attributes played a role in the adolescent's resilience and the role that the school and the adolescent's educators played in fostering resilience in the adolescent.

The research question was formulated as follows: Is it probable that adolescents possessing the personal attributes and environmental support which serve as a buffer against adversity would demonstrate a greater propensity to be resilient than adolescents who do not possess these attributes and who do not have the necessary support?

The hypotheses below were stated in the light of the analysis of the problem and the statement of the problem. The findings of the empirical investigation and how they relate to the hypotheses will be summarised in greater detail below once the qualitative data collection methods and the findings gleaned from using these have been discussed. The hypotheses are:

- Personal and environmental attributes impact positively in resilience, especially with regard to resilient adolescents.

- Personal attributes would include ego-strength, intelligence, a positive self-concept, an "easy-going" personality, sound values, optimism, independence, good social skills and self-control.

- Environmental attributes would possibly include reliable, nurturing mentors, a school which fosters high expectations and community resources which can serve as a "safety net" to catch the adolescent who is at risk.

- In the absence of personal and environmental attributes which contribute towards resilience, vulnerable adolescents are at risk of being maladjusted or unable to self-actualise.

Chapter Three reported the qualitative research procedure, the collection of data, the processing of data and the interpretation and evaluation of results. The study intended to identify resilient and non-resilient learners using educator evaluation, interviews and collages. To assist with the selection of non-resilient and resilient learners, three lists of questions were used (two for the educators and one for the learners). The two lists of questions used for the educators were the Vulnerability Questionnaire and the Resilience Questionnaire respectively. The aim of these two sets of questions was to identify prospective participants for the research study as the questions in the two lists of questions related to the personal attributes, the environmental factors as well as the role of the environment and the school in fostering resilience or vulnerability as mentioned in the literature. These lists of questions were developed by Macfarlane (1998). The third list of questions, which was used by the participants in the study, was an adapted version of the Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM). The CYRM was developed by Ungar *et al.* (2005). The researcher interviewed each participant using the adapted CYRM because the CYRM includes questions which provided the researcher with an opportunity to glean information relating to the factors in the literature which contribute towards resilience. These adolescent participants were also each requested to complete a collage. The aims, functions and findings of the collage will be summarised in greater detail after the aims and findings of the two questionnaires and the Child and Youth Resilience Measure which were implemented, are discussed.

4.3.1 The Vulnerability Questionnaire

The first questionnaire, the Vulnerability Questionnaire, was used by the educators to identify perceived vulnerable or non-resilient adolescents. The questions in the questionnaire explored the adolescent's perceived personal attributes, his involvement at school and in the community, his adaptability, social skills, behaviour, support systems and future orientation. The aforementioned factors are called resilience factors in the literature and are useful in identifying vulnerable (or resilient) adolescents. The researcher found the Vulnerability Questionnaire to be reliable in

assisting educators to identify perceived vulnerable adolescents. The same areas in which the adolescent lacked resilience when the results of the adolescent's CYRM and collage were analysed, were reflected in the educators' perceptions of him based on the questions in the Vulnerability Questionnaire.

4.3.2 The Resilience Questionnaire

The second questionnaire, the Resilience Questionnaire, was used by the educators to identify perceived resilient adolescents. The questions in the questionnaire explored various resilience factors obtained the literature such as the adolescent's perceived personal attributes, his involvement at school and in the community, his adaptability, social skills, behaviour, support systems and future orientation. The educator was expected to identify a resilient adolescent participant for the empirical study based on positive responses to the questions exploring the resilience factors. The researcher found the Resilience Questionnaire to be reliable in identifying perceived resilient adolescents because the adolescents who were perceived to be resilient by the educators were also found to be resilient by the researcher when their (the resilient adolescents') responses to the Child and Youth Resilient Measure together with their collages were analysed.

4.3.3 The Child and Youth Resilience Measure (adapted)

Once the adolescent participants were identified using the Vulnerability Questionnaire and the Resilience Questionnaire, the researcher interviewed each perceived vulnerable and perceived resilient adolescent using the third questionnaire, the (adapted) Child and Youth Resilience Measure. The analysis of the participants' responses to the Child and Youth Resilience Measure explored various resilience factors which had previously been identified in the literature review. These included environmental stressors, coping strategies, perceived role demands, personal attributes and the interaction between the adolescents and the social systems (family, school and community) in their environment. The adolescent's perception of and involvement in these social systems was explored. The risk and protective factors that shape the development of the adolescent as he interacts with his environment were also investigated. The analysis of the adolescents' responses to the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure demonstrated the importance of these social systems and the adolescent's

perception of these systems in supporting him to be resilient and in influencing the following: his values, his self-efficacy, autonomy, locus of control, independence, problem-solving strategies, sense of control and purpose in life. His role models, ability to be flexible and to adapt, his perception of his identity and his future aspirations, were also explored and analysed.

From the investigation and analysis of the adolescents' responses, it became abundantly clear that the resilient participants did, indeed, possess personal attributes which set them apart from their non-resilient counterparts. These personal attributes were discussed extensively in Chapter Three of this study. By the same token, not only did the resilient participants appear to enjoy more environmental support from their families, schools and communities, but they often took the initiative to access these support systems independently or they possessed the personal attributes which spontaneously attracted support from others around them. The resilient learners were able to overcome the obstacles that they faced. They appeared not to dwell on their difficult pasts or their problems. Rather they viewed hardship realistically and as a character-building exercise and even spoke philosophically about difficulties that they had encountered. They expressed courage and self-belief. They experienced success in the environments in which they found themselves. The opposite was true for the non-resilient participants. These non-resilient learners struggled with peer pressure, pain and rejection. It was clear that they had an external locus of control and experienced a victim mentality. They appeared to react to their surroundings and to the people in their surroundings aggressively or by withdrawing. They also experienced feelings of helplessness in certain situations and feelings of failure in overcoming the stress in their lives. They were unable to utilise the available protective factors in their environment, often shunning adults and potential mentors in favour of friends. They were often uninvolved in their schools and communities and experienced academic difficulties and poorer social skills than their resilient counterparts. In this study it was found that the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM) was reliable in identifying resilient and non-resilient adolescent learners. The adolescent participants' responses to the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure demonstrated the protective factors and risk factors which the participant perceived as contributing to his perceived ability to overcome the stressors that he encountered.

Recommendations with regard to how to improve the use of the adapted CYRM in future empirical investigations will be discussed below:

4.3.3.1 *Recommendations with regard to the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure*

- More specific questions relating to the role that the educator(s) and the school environment play in the adolescent's life and how they contribute to the adolescent's resilience could have been included in the adapted CYRM so that during the interview, more information in this regard could have been gleaned from the participant.

4.3.4 The interviews

Each participant voluntarily subjected himself to a structured interview. The questions which the researcher asked the adolescent's came from the Child and Youth Resilient Measure (Ungar *et al.* 2005) which the researcher adapted. The main aims of the interviews included:

- The researcher was in a position where she was able to "connect" with the participants by asking them the questions herself and in so doing obtain answers to the questions first-hand.

- The interview served as a suitable platform for the researcher to glean information from the participant. The researcher enjoyed the interaction with the participants as not only was each participant extremely interesting, but the researcher was afforded the opportunity to request the participant to qualify his responses to the questions posed. This proved very helpful to the researcher in understanding the participant's reference framework and views on the different issues discussed. This, in turn, added depth to the analyses of the interviews.

4.3.5 The collages

One of the aims of the collages was to collect data regarding the participants' sub-conscious and conscious experiences, beliefs and subjective associations in their lives. Other rationales for using the collages included:

The (the collages) were useful in supplementing the participants' life stories. They added another colourful dimension to the study and, without exception, contributed to underscoring the themes already alluded to in the interview with the participant.

They also gave the researcher insight into deeper issues with which the participant was grappling and which may have contributed to his resilience or non-resilience. When the collages and the feedback on the collages of the four vulnerable adolescents were analysed, they yielded themes which reinforced the themes which were conveyed by the adolescents during their interviews using the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure. The non-resilient participants, for instance, more often than not, reflected struggles with pain, past hurts, rejection and poor choices and these appeared to dominate their collages. On the other hand, the resilient participants' collages, for the most part, reflected positive images, future aspirations, stability, and contentment.

4.3.5.1 Recommendations with regard to the collages

- It would be a good idea to, if time allowed, observe the participants make their collages as one would be able to note other interesting information, for example, with which time frame the participant commenced (past, present or future).

- It was also established that collages are most effectively used by participants who are fairly articulate and are able to verbalise, satisfactorily, what they have depicted. In the event of this not happening, the researcher had to ask pointed questions which could contaminate the analysis of the collages.

In the following paragraph, the hypotheses which were posed in Chapter One of the empirical study will be discussed in light of the findings. The main findings of this empirical investigation will also be discussed below.

4.3.6 Discussion of hypotheses based on the findings of the empirical investigation

The hypotheses will be discussed In light of the findings in this empirical study:

- As far as the first hypothesis above is concerned, it was found that the personal and environmental attributes which impact positively in resilience, did in fact, differ greatly from those of the non-resilient participant. The characteristics of the individual and his social systems were alluded to in Chapter Three of this study and the results gleaned from the analysis of the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure support this hypothesis.

- The second hypothesis, stated that personal attributes of the resilient adolescent would include ego-strength, intelligence, a positive self-concept, an "easy going" personality, sound values, optimism, independence, good social skills and self-control. This hypothesis was supported by the investigation and the resilience factors included in the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure were reliable in assessing these personal attributes of the resilient participant.

- The third hypothesis stated that environmental attributes of the resilient adolescent would possibly include reliable, nurturing mentors, a school which fosters high expectations and community resources which can serve as a "safety net" to catch the adolescent who is at risk. This hypothesis was supported by the investigation as all of the resilient participants had access to at least one caring, involved adult. In most of the cases in this study, that reliable, nurturing adult was the participant's mother. All of the resilient participants were involved in sport and/or cultural activities either at school or in their communities. Three of the four non-resilient participants did not have one reliable adult in their lives and only one was involved in sport at school. None of them participated in the community activities.

- The fourth hypothesis stated that in the absence of personal and environmental attributes which contribute towards resilience, vulnerable adolescents are at risk of being maladjusted or unable to self-actualise. This hypothesis was supported by the investigation in the sense that the non-resilient participants appeared to be shying away from achieving according to their potential. This was evident in their lack of participation and involvement in their communities and school. They appeared to be maladjusted in the sense that they tended to withdraw from the support structures around them, felt like victims and, for the most part, appeared to have symptoms of depression.

One of the main findings of the research is the researcher's realisation that resilience or non-resilience are not absolute concepts. It became abundantly clear that these concepts could be placed on a continuum as some of the adolescents who were perceived to be resilient also had areas in their lives where they were vulnerable. They were, however, regarded as resilient because the protective factors in their lives and their positive attributes outweighed the negative ones. The opposite was true for the learners who were perceived as non-resilient. In the case of learner 4

however, whom the researcher has known for three years, this learner is less non-resilient that he was one year ago, yet he is in a process of coming to terms with his new identity and in a process of moving away from absolute non-resilience to a less absolute form of non-resilience. In the process more insight has come about and an intellectual analysis and understanding of his way of being needs to be substituted, in time, by a real experiencing of those things that he understands intellectually.

Other problems that were experienced during the empirical investigation will be discussed below.

4.4   PROBLEMS THAT WERE EXPERIENCED DURING THE INVESTIGATION

The problems or limitations of the study discussed in this section should serve as guidelines to improve on the future way of implementing the research process. Firstly, problems experienced with regard to the literature study will be discussed and secondly, problems with regard to the empirical research will be discussed.

4.4.1 Problems experienced with regard to the literature study

- Only limited sources were consulted as this dissertation is study of limited scope.

- The researcher found no information on resilient or non-resilient adolescent learners in former Model-C schools in South Africa.

- For the most part, much of the literature focuses mainly on children and adolescents in American society. South African adolescents have their own set of unique challenges and stressors, many of which spring from the unique nature of our society.

- While a great deal of literature was available on the concept of resilience, most appeared to be studies on "at risk" youth or vulnerable youth in juvenile detention centres or on children. There was very little information available on the topic of "resilience in adolescents" and few studies appeared to focus on the "normal" adolescent who is resilient.

The various problems experienced with regard to the qualitative research project will be discussed below.

4.4.2 Problems experienced with regard to the qualitative research project

4.4.2.1   *Practical problems*

- In the case of grade 8 learners, the educators had some difficulty in identifying vulnerable and resilient participants, using these questionnaires, in the first three months of the year. This is because they were not familiar with the learners.

- A time lapse, owing to personal obligations on the part of the researcher, occurred between the learners being identified in March by the educators and the interviews taking place in June/July. This proved not to be ideal because during this time frame a great deal of change occurred in the life of one of the participants, which created a shift from his being perceived as absolutely non-resilient to his being perceived as bordering on resilience. For example, Learner 8 was identified as being non-resilient as he was extremely challenging and disruptive. He had arrived at his high school with a reputation as a troublemaker with a negative attitude. His educators, however, had a meeting early in the year and decided to take on the challenge of trying to change his attitude and behaviour by making school a positive environment for him. By the time he was interviewed, his attitude and behaviour had changed so positively and so dramatically, that although he was still regarded as non-resilient in many ways, there were many ways in which he had demonstrated resilience and continues to progress towards resilience.

- Some of the learners, while expressing a desire to be part of the research study, demonstrated a lack of commitment and courtesy at times. They would not have their collages ready at the time agreed upon or they would not arrive for the scheduled appointments. This resulted in time delays with the data collection.

4.4.2.2   Problems with questionnaires

Three questionnaires/lists of questions were used: the Vulnerability Questionnaire, the Resilience Questionnaire (Macfarlane 1998) and the (adapted) Child and Youth Resilience Measure (Ungar *et al.* 2005). The researcher did not experience problems with the Vulnerability Questionnaire and the Resilience Questionnaire. These two questionnaires were given to the educators to use to identify participants for the empirical study and these two questionnaires were simply worded, concise and easy to administer and to understand. The third list of questions, the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure which was given to the adolescents, posed a few problems:

- The Child and Youth Resilience Measure in its original form was inadequate for the purposes of this research as the original version concentrated mainly on the participant in the community and the influence of the community on the participant's resilience status. The Child and Youth Resilience Measure was adapted by the researcher to include more questions relating to the personal attributes of the adolescent which contribute to resilience.

- The English language of the original CYRM was improved to make the questions more understandable and less ambiguous for the adolescents. Although the wording of the questions asked during the Child and Youth Resilience Measure were clarified and simplified, it was still evident to the researcher that, at times, the participants were unsure of what was being asked of them or they did not understand the vocabulary used.

4.4.2.3   Problems with interviews

- The venues selected for the interviews caused disruptions At school, the guidance counsellor's office was used for interviews, and at the end of each period sirens and learners shuffling past to attend their next class created unnecessary noise which disrupted the interview. Learners wanting to see the guidance teacher peeped through the glass window in the door or opened the door unannounced. The participants were not awarded the privacy they deserved at this venue and the disruptions interrupted the flow of the interview.

4.4.2.4   Problems with collages

- The researcher found that the learners enjoyed making the collages and discussing them. However, in the case of learner 8, a Grade 8 male, he appeared to lack the verbal ability to express what he had depicted in his collage and he needed to be prompted by the researcher in order for her (the researcher) to obtain the necessary information. The collage, therefore, needs to be used circumspectly with younger participants who are sometimes less verbally proficient.

Aspects justifying further research will be discussed below.

4.5   ASPECTS OF RESILIENCE IN ADOLESCENTS WHICH JUSTIFY FURTHER RESEARCH

The aspects of resilience in adolescents which justify further research will be discussed by firstly referring to the aspects of the literature study which justify further research and secondly by referring to the aspects of the empirical investigation which justify further research.

4.5.1 Aspects of the literature study which justify further research

- It is not clear in the literature study whether the learners who were identified as resilient are just that, resilient, or whether their coping strategies are better developed than those learners who are perceived to be non-resilient.

4.5.2 Aspects of the empirical investigation which justify further research

- Research needs to be done on how the participants' different coping strategies contribute to their being resilient as these strategies could be taught to learners as a skill to acquire.

- It is not enough to know which child, family and environmental factors are involved in resilience. We need to know how such factors may contribute to positive outcomes.

- The developmental progression from resilience to non-resilience needs to be researched.

- The influence of the peer group on the adolescent's resilience or non-resilience needs to be explored.

   The conclusions arrived at in this study will be discussed next.

4.6   IN CONCLUSION

It became clear from the research study that it is indeed probable that adolescents possessing the personal attributes and environmental support which serve as a buffer against adversity would demonstrate a greater propensity to be resilient than adolescents who do not possess these attributes and who do not have the necessary support.

The researcher believes that we all have the capacity to bounce back and to adapt positively in the face of adversity. Whether and how we do so, depends

predominantly, on the one hand, on the protective factors that are available to us and to which we've been exposed and on the other hand, the risk factors to which we have been exposed to and our internal personality attributes. Resilience, in the researcher's view, is a process where a person can move back and forth on a continuum between different stages of resilience and non-resilience depending on the amount of stress that one experiences in different situations with which one is confronted. The researcher, therefore, agrees with Garbarino in McWhirter (1998:80) who maintains that each person has a "tipping point" between doing well and having hope and failing and feeling despair. This balance may be tipped when the person experiences overwhelming stress to which he is unable to adapt at that point. The person's ability to adapt is facilitated by the number and presence of protective factors in his environment which will ameliorate the number and presence of the risk factors in his life. This inability to adapt could determine that a person can become non-resilient.

The researcher's exploration has taught her much about resilience - a fascinating subject that remains one of the great puzzles of human nature, like creativity or the religious instinct. In sifting through psychological research and in reflecting on the stories of resilience, the researcher has had the privilege of seeing a little more deeply into the hearts and minds of adolescents and, in doing so, looked more deeply into the human psyche as well. Resilience is a way of facing and understanding the world that is deeply etched into a person's mind and soul. Resilient people face life with staunchness, make meaning of hardship instead of crying out in despair, and improvise solutions with resourcefulness. Others do not. This is the nature of resilience and we shall never completely understand it. However, in spite of this, a person's level of resilience will determine who succeeds and who fails. Therefore, it remains our work as parents, educators and psychologists to continue to use each opportunity to connect with our youth and to try and be that one significant, encouraging adult on whom they can depend to help them to succeed.

ADDENDUM A: VULNERABILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

(Macfarlane 1998:64)

This list of questions is to be completed by an educator who knows the child well enough to be able to answer the questions below. The educator should have taught the participant for at least one year in the case of a grade 9 to 12 participant and for at least three months in the case of a grade 8 participant and/or be involved in extra-mural activities, sports coaching or study classes with the participant.

The purpose of this list of questions is to identify vulnerable children. A vulnerable child could be described as one who has experienced trauma and pain and who appears to have succumbed to life's blows.

Please would you be so kind as to write down any child's name whom you would regard as being vulnerable. Once you have completed the list of questions, please return the list to the researcher.

Name:..

Which qualities, traits or characteristics of the child lead you to believe that he/she is vulnerable?

....

....

Please describe the circumstances of which you are aware, that you believe may be contributing to this participant's vulnerability.

....

....

In your opinion, which of the following characteristics are present in the above participant's personality, environment and family. Please tick the relevant characteristics below:

- Shows little/no initiative
- Demonstrates little co-operation and interest
- Does not participate in extra-mural activities
- Is not involved in the community
- Has poor self-esteem, self-confidence

- Has external locus of control (i.e. feels events in his/her life and own behaviour controlled by forces outside of self)

- Demonstrates poor self-control (needs immediate gratification)

- Negative attitude e.g. selfish, feels life owes him/her

- Labile, difficult temperament

- Poor communication skills

- Inadequate social skills

- Inadequate inter-personal skills

- Lacks independence

- Lacks perseverance, determination

- Few, low expectations of self, others, situations

- Poor adaptability

- Has difficulty coping with anxiety and stress (acts out, uses evasive actions like withdrawal, denial, succumbs to anxiety, depression)

- Negative behaviour e.g. aggressive, disruptive, apathetic, withdrawn

- Has little desire to improve self

- Demonstrates behavioural and/or emotional problems

- Not future-orientated, dwells on past

- Has some distressing habits

- Underachieves academically (has average to above average intelligence)

- Does not have the ability to consider consequences of actions, decisions

- Has no sense of purpose in life

- Has little/no affiliation to his/her school

- Lack of family support

- Lack of support system

- Lack of structure, boundaries at home

- Negative peer affiliation

- Abuses substances e.g. drugs, alcohol

Thank you for your assistance and time. It is very much appreciated.

ADDENDUM B: RESILIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

(Macfarlane 1998:66)

This list of questions is to be completed by an educator who knows the child well enough to be able to answer the questions below. The educator should have taught the participant for at least one year in the case of grades 9 to 12 and for at least three months in the case of a grade 8 participant and/or be involved in extra-mural activities, sports coaching or study classes with the participant.

Resilience is defined as the ability to bounce back from adversity; to allow life's blows to bend you but not to break you. According to Macfarlane (1998:89) this does not imply an invulnerability to life's blows, but rather the capacity to rebound from pain and trauma and then in spite of this, to move forward with life once more.

If you are able to identify any children that you teach who fit this description, please be so kind as to complete the following list of questions and hand your completed list to the researcher.

Name of resilient child (in your view):...

Which qualities or characteristics of the child make you believe that he/she is resilient?

....

....

In your opinion, which of the following qualities would you say are present in the above participant's personality, environment and family. Please tick the relevant characteristics below:

- Shows initiative, finds solutions to problems
- Demonstrates co-operation and interest
- Participates in extra-mural activities
- Participates in the community
- Has good self-esteem, self-confidence
- Has internal locus of control (i.e. feels events in his/her life and own behaviour controlled by self)
- Demonstrates good self-control (able to delay gratification of needs)

- Positive attitude e.g. caring, cheerful, altruistic

- Phlegmatic, calm, easy temperament

- Good communication skills

- Good social skills

- Good inter-personal skills

- Is independent

- Possesses perseverance and determination

- Has high expectations of self, others, situations

- Good adaptability

- Has no difficulty coping with anxiety and stress (uses humour, focuses attention elsewhere, etc.)

- Positive behaviour e.g. pro-active

- Has desire to improve self

- Future-orientated, has goals and plans

- Has good habits

- Achieves academically (has average to above average intelligence)

- Has the ability to consider consequences of actions, decisions

- Has a sense of purpose in life

- Has a positive affiliation with the school

- Has family support

- Has a support system

- Has structure, boundaries at home

- Positive peer affiliation

- Does not abuse substances e.g. alcohol, drugs

Thank you for your assistance and time. It is very much appreciated.

ADDENDUM C: THE CHILD AND YOUTH RESILIENCE MEASURE

(Adapted from the Child and Youth Resilience Measure created by a multi-disciplinary team for the International Resilience Study lead by Dr Michael Ungar (www.resilienceproject.co.za).

The adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure will be used with each learner in the research study. The participant's responses will be analysed according to the criteria set out in the literature for resilience and non-resilience in order to determine whether the individual participants are resilient or non-resilient.

Instructions to the participant:

I am going to ask you a number of questions. Please be as honest as you can. The information conveyed to the researcher is confidential and will be used for research purposes only. The names of the research participants will not be used in the research study.

1a.   How do you experience bad things that happen?

1b.   How does your family experience bad things that happen?

1c.   How does your community experience bad things that happen?

2.   What meaning do you attach to bad experiences?

3a.   What do you do to handle that which you experience?

3b.   What does your family say about bad things when they happen?

3c.   What does your community say about bad things that happen?

4.   Who, in your life, thinks of solutions to the problems first?

5.   What are the kinds of things which are most challenging for the teenagers who grow up in your community?

6a.   What role do your friends play in your life?

6b.   How do they contribute to your identity (i.e. to the person that you are)?

7a.   What kind of friend are you?

7b.   What do you contribute to your friendships?

8a.   How accepting is your community towards teenager's problem behaviour(s)?

8b.   Provide examples of such behaviour(s) and how the community reacted.

8c.   What is your opinion of the reactions?

9a   Do you belong to any community organizations?

9b.   What values do these organizations stand for?

10a.   Do you feel equal to other people?

10b.	Are there people with whom you do not feel equal?
10c.	How do these people make you feel?
10d.	What do they do to make you feel this way?
11a.	What does it mean to you to be healthy?
11b.	What does it mean to your family to be healthy?
11c.	What does it mean to the community to be healthy?
12.	Can you describe how your parents/care-givers cared/looked after you?
13.	What expectations do your parents/care-givers have of you?
14.	Can you describe the nature of the relationship that you have with your parents/care-givers?
15a.	Do you and your parents/care-givers participate in any leisure activities together?
15b.	Can you tell me more about these?
16a.	How does your family communicate?
16b.	How do you know what they think of you?
17.	How does your family monitor you in order to know where you are and what you are doing?
18a.	How do you know how to behave in certain social situations and with certain people?
18b.	How well do you do in social situations?
18c.	Are you popular?
18d.	Do others think good things of you?
18e.	Has this changed over time?
19.	How easily do you find it to communicate with others of all ages?
20a.	Do you have a role model?
20b.	Can you describe the qualities that you admire about him/her?
21.	How would you describe someone who grew up faced with difficult circumstances yet managed to achieve success despite challenges?
22.	Do you have any other meaningful relationships with people at school, at home or in the community?
23a.	Is there anyone in your life who has "been there" for you during challenging times in your life?
23b.	Why was/is this person important to you?
23c.	What did they mean to you?
24.	What do you do in order to be spiritually, physically, intellectually and emotionally strong?
25a.	Are you assertive?

25b.   How do you show your assertiveness?

26a.   Can you describe you ability to solve problems?

26b.   Are your problem-solving abilities better or worse than other peoples'?

26c.   How do you know this?

27a.   Do you have a feeling of control over your world?

27b.   How does this affect your life?

28.   What is your definition of success?

29.   How do you feel when others around you experience success?

30.   How much uncertainty do you feel comfortable living with?

31.   Would you describe yourself as an optimist or a pessimist?

32a.   What are your feelings towards your school?

32b.   Can you tell me about any feelings of belonging that you may have as a participant of your school?

32c.   Can you describe any feelings of loyalty or pride that you may have towards your school?

33.   Can you tell me of a time when you demonstrated determination and perseverance?

34.   If you died today, how would people describe you at your funeral?

35.   What do you think of the different aspects of your life?

36a.   Do you have any personal goals and dreams that you should like to realize?

36b.   What are they?

37.   How dependent are you on those around you for your emotional survival?

38.   How do you feel about the use of substances like alcohol and drugs?

39.   What role does humour play in your life?

40.   Tell me a story of a child who achieved success despite challenges that he/she had to face.

41.   Tell me a story of how you were able to overcome challenges in your personal life, family life or in your community.

42.   What would you say were the personal characteristics that helped you to overcome challenges in your life?

43.   Who believed in and supported you the most during a difficult time in your life?

ADDENDUM D: TRANSCRIPTS OF THE FULL INTERVIEWS OF ALL THE PARTICIPANTS

INTERVIEW 1:   Using the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure

Table D1: PARTICIPANT 1 (resilient)

Age	Gender	Grade	Risk factors inferred from interview and educator information	Protective factors inferred from interview
18	Male	12	No relationship with biological father, unstable primary school history, financial difficulties, step-father imprisoned	Supportive mother, family and friends, supportive community, sport, sense of humour, academic competence, future aspirations

(R= researcher; L= learner)

R: How do you, your family and your community experience bad things that happen?

L: When I experience bad things I don't let it affect me. My mom doesn't talk about things and the community and friends say "Ja, ja, ja, shame, shame, shame."

R: What do you do with your feelings?

L: I don't allow myself to feel. I think it's a coping mechanism.

R: What do you do with bad things that happen?

L: I have my releases: martial arts. I enjoy it. I enjoy everything. I have this attitude to do it. Even if I study for an exam, I use it as a release. If things are bad, my mom doesn't talk about it and my half-brother and half-sister take it bad. My half-brother is misbehaving and has a chip on his shoulder.

R: What do people say about bad things that happen?

L: People tend to lie. This thing about the next door neighbour who is my dad's friend. He told me a wild story about why my dad went to jail. My mother told me another story and my gran told me a completely different story. I don't know who to believe.

R: Who thinks of solutions to the problems first?

L: My mom. She sorts things out very quickly. You look up to her. She's hectic.

R: What are the kinds of things which are most challenging for the teenagers who grow up in your community?

L: To be themselves one hundred percent. They all follow trends, have no self-motivation. They're all on one track. They all wear the same clothes, do the same thing, there's no individuality. They're scared to step outside and be themselves, and to think for themselves. They've been programmed since birth. I like to surround myself with free thinkers. In grades 8 and 9 I was also like that and drank and smoked but I quit as I see no point in it.

R: What role do your friends play in your life?

L: My friends are everything. I laugh with them and they're always there.

R: How do they contribute to your identity (i.e. to the person that you are)?

L: They bring out who I am because I am me and they are them. They encourage me to be myself and they do not force me to do what I don't want to do.

R: What kind of friend are you?

L: I don't know. Loyal…I don't change friends every 5 seconds. I'm protective…if one of my friends is in trouble…I'm there. I'm serving and supportive.

R: How accepting is your community towards teenagers' problem behaviour(s)?

L: The people I associate with are extremely supportive. Older people are extremely supportive. They take a liking to me and my friends. They share their wisdom and crack a joke.

R: Provide examples/an explanation of such behaviour(s).

L: Speed (driving), a whole bunch of kids in our school speed between BP in XXX and XXX on their motorbikes. Drugs, although the kids who are using it are trying to act cool. Drugs are major things, cigarettes, alcohol and using your weekend to get drunk and waste your hard-earned money. I'd rather use my weekend to spend at home and learn although I like an occasional party.

R: Do you belong to any community organizations?

L: Karate Jutsa.

R: If so, which values are espoused by these organizations/what do these organizations stand for?

L: Quite a lot. Not limiting. The words "I can't" are outlawed here. If you say "I'll try", you're also being defeatist so you must say "I do, I do, I do". Here they drill it into you. Family values are promoted, being kind to others, the circle of life is taught here: that you get what you give out, compassion …

R: Do you feel equal to other people?

L: Yes.

R: Are there people with whom you do not feel equal?

L: No.

R: What does it mean to you, your family and your community to be healthy, now and when you were younger?

L: To be financially secure is to be healthy in my house. In my family it doesn't mean physical health. My mother and my brother are quite plump.

R: Can you describe how your parents/care-givers cared/look(ed) after you?

L: They shielded me. I didn't know what was going on. I thought nothing of changing schools eight times. I thought it was normal and got used to it. They shielded me.

R: What expectations do they have of you that they convey to you?

L: My mom wants me to do what I want to do. She's very supportive. It's not about earning money. They encourage me and they don't force me in any direction.

R: Can you describe the nature of the relationship that you have with your parents/care-givers?

L: I approach my mom. I get a response and I make up my own mind. My brother and I have brotherly fights. My sister and I get on pretty much. We all have a casual yet superficial relationship. It's okay but it's not open. You have to search. We all go about our everyday lives because there's not much time ...

R: Do you and your parents/care-givers participate in any leisure activities together?

L: No. My sister and brother do stuff with my mom but I'm always in and out.

R: How do you know what they think of you?

L: They're truthful. I'm a lot like my mom: independent and we both do our own thing. They're proud of me.

R: How does your family monitor you in order to know where you are and what you are doing?

L: They adhere to the saying "if you love them set them free ..." She doesn't phone, only every now and then. She trusts me. I tell her what time I'm going to get back.

R: How do you know how to behave in certain social situations and with certain people?

L: There are many social situations. I try not to go according to the norms like everyone. I think about it and my heart tells me what to do. I act according to the mood. I try and put myself into other people's shoes, and gauge the mood and take it from there.

R: Are you popular?

L: I get on well with people but I wouldn't say I'm popular.

R: Do others think good things of you?

L: I hope so. I don't care. I'd like it but I don't actually care. Most people treat me like a hectic adult.

R: Has this changed over time?

L: Ja, I suppose so. I could always relate to people's parents.

R: How easily do you find it to communicate with others of all ages?

L: Pretty easy, no problem. People are all the same. It doesn't matter how old you are. You have the same being inside you regardless of age. I'll show respect.

R: Do you have a role model?

L: Not now, although these guys in the kushi ... (points to a framed picture with photographs of karate teachers' faces) are hectic.

R: Can you describe them and the qualities that you admire about them?

L: They're unlimited in the way that they perceive themselves, that they don't have boundaries. I have tried to prove that theory and in a way I have when I got four A's ... another role model I had when I was in grade 8 and 9 was Fajita in Dragon Ball Z (children's animated television programme). He had an attitude I

liked: never say die. He was never the best. He was an aggressive character and he never went to others for help but when he got pushed and he was backed into a corner, the most amazing things came out of him.

R: How would you describe someone who grew up faced with difficult circumstances yet managed to achieve success despite challenges?

L: I wouldn't put them onto a pedestal because I wouldn't think of them greatly but I would think good of them.

R: Do you have any other meaningful relationships with people at school, at home or in your community?

L: Relationships built with my karate buddies, animals, family at home and friends.

R: Is there anyone in your life who has "been there" for you during challenging times in your life?

L: Various people at various times. D's dad and family at the beginning of high school, then J's mom took me in for a month and recently my next door neighbour, E's dad, was helpful and always there for me if I needed something.

R: Why were these people important to you and what did/do they mean to you?

L: They were there when I needed them ... very supportive.

R: What do you do in order to be spiritually, physically, intellectually and emotionally strong?

L: Physically I used to do weight-lifting and reached the SA junior champs. Now it's karate. Intellectually I don't read much but I must change that. I like to go to school. Solving maths problems keeps me mentally fit and I like debating things like religion and politics and I listen to others' controversial ideas and their thinking of things and I listen and read up and make up my own mind. Emotionally I don't have many emotions. I love my family ... Spiritually I've pushed religion to the side and I think Jesus and that is a load of (expletive). (He goes into a long explanation of how he cannot serve a god who doesn't give you a choice: you either serve him or you go to hell, so there is no choice according to him. He (A) believes that all things in life are inter-connected.) I am busy sorting out my philosophy of life.

R: Are you assertive?

L: I'd like to think of myself as assertive. I see myself as assertive.

R: How do you show your assertiveness?

L: I take the lead in situations.

R: Can you describe your ability to solve problems?

L: Average

R: Are your problem-solving abilities better or worse than other people's? How do you know this?

L: I don't panic. I think everyone tends to rise, to think in bad situations under pressure. I don't think that we're designed to crumble under pressure. I think that we're designed to excel.

R: Do you have a feeling of control over your world? How does this affect your life?

L: A lot, a lot, a lot. I decide what happens and we're unlimited. If the shit does hit the fan, then I'm still in control.

R: What is your definition of success?

L: Succeeding over yourself, doing something more that what you mentally think you're capable of.

R: How do you feel when others around you experience success?

L: It's good for them. I'm happy for them.

R: With how much uncertainty do you feel comfortable living?

L: It doesn't bother me. I have learnt to live with a lot of uncertainty and things have a way of working themselves out.

R: Would you describe yourself as an optimist or a pessimist?

L: I strive for the best but I often expect it to get rough before it gets better. I'm a realist.

R: What are your feelings towards your school?

L: I have no sense of loyalty towards the school. I don't feel that I belong. There are better things out there than school. School's always supposed to be the best years of your life but the level of education is going down.

R: Were there ever educators at school who supported you?

L: Yes, there are educators who were there for me and who spur me on and tell me what I'm capable of.

R: Can you tell me of a time when you demonstrated determination and perseverance?

L: In standard 9, the last term, I planned to go to university, so I put my mind to it and went from failing to passing quite nicely and then in Grade 12 I got four A's in the first term and during that time I was working double shifts as a waiter over weekends to help my mom financially, I was teaching eight karate classes a weekend, I was studying for my drivers licence and it was just after my dad went to prison for fraud.

R: If you died today, how would people describe you at your funeral?

L: That I enjoyed the simple things in life, that I was not driven by materialism: to get a house and a car and a BMW, that I did something worthwhile with my life.

R: What do you think about your life? Would you feel comfortable sharing thoughts about this with me?

L: Mediocre. It's not ripping yet, it's not hectic (everything going very well). The karate's good and I'm trying to balance my life.

R: Do you have personal goals and dreams that you should like to realize? What are they?

L: A few dans (levels in karate) behind my name, to be well off or financially secure, to open up a grand doju place, to buy a piece of land and to study martial arts for seven years.

R: How dependent are you on other people for your emotional survival?

L: Not much.

R: Do you use substances like alcohol and drugs? What do people around you think of this?

L: Occasionally I drink and have a good time when it's time to have a good time. My friends are not against it. Some people enjoy getting drunk. I enjoy getting drunk about once a year.

R: What role does humour play in your life?

L: A lot. I like jokes and that. It's cool. Everybody jokes around here. It's a release from stress. I like playing the fool.

R: Tell me a story of a child that grew up and despite challenges that he/she faced, was able to be successful.

L: There was a boy who started his martial arts career and was on a farm training. He came for his training and his master took a liking to him and he was quite good. Then the master went away and the other people saw this and this guy was left on the farm. The other people pushed him and laid a bet as to who was going to get him off the farm the fastest. They made life difficult for him for instance they deprived him of sleep and pushed him to the limit but he survived and he was the smallest lion in the lion cage but he turned out to be the top one who ended up training all of the others.

R: Tell me a story of how you were able to overcome challenges in your personal life, family life or in your community.

L: My dad went to prison and I didn't have transport to school and I had to look after my brother and sister and my mom was frantic and I had to find schools for my brother and sister and ride my bicycle from XXX to XXX and back every day to get to school and I had to get a job to help my mom with money and I had to organize transport.

R: What would you say were the personal characteristics that helped you to overcome difficult obstacles in your life?

L: Seeing the circumstances as apart from myself, as a separate entity. You know that saying: don't bring your problems to work. Well, don't take what happens at home to school and work. Block it.

R: Who believed in and supported you the most during this time?

L: Friends are always there.

COLLAGE

(The participant says of his collage): *The past is the past and this picture symbolizes all the times we moved. We were forever moving. The picture of the dogs reminds me of all the dogs I've had in my life. There was George, Fluffy, Como, Rocky, Toffee ...The picture of Jonty Rhodes reminds me of myself. I'm busy, busy, busy. I'm always moving. I left an open spot on the collage to show that the past is the past and it is a small section. I don't want to dwell on that stuff.*

In the present, (the picture of) Jonty (Rhodes) is central. He represents the future and the present. There's a picture of a family and that represents my family. They're quite important to me right now. There's always stuff going on in my family. The picture of the garden thing represents my karate place that I have in mind for my future. It represents me in the open ... my security area and I take comfort in that. The future has lots of pics that are part of my dynamic plan. The biggest part shows a café which is a fun type of thing. It shows my friends there. My life won't be all work, work, work. I've got to have friends in my life as well. The picture of the funny man doing strange things represents my desire not to go about life in the normal way: going first to university then getting married, having kids and then dying. I want an unusual life which is outside of the rules. Martial arts is my future. The picture of the young kids represents the fact that I'm still young and I want to achieve things while I am still young. At the bottom is a picture of another country. I want to use my martial arts to travel around. I want to travel and the garden at the bottom of the collage represents the piece of land on which I'd like to retire one day.

INTERVIEW 2:   Using the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure

Table D2: PARTICIPANT 2 (resilient)

Age	Gender	Grade	Risk factors inferred from interview and educator information	Protective factors inferred from interview
15	Male	9	Psychopathology in parent, poor relationship with mother, neglect	Easy-going temperament, sense of humour, academic competence, future goals, sport, supportive friends, supportive family, religious, self-confidence

R: How do you, your family and your community experience bad things that happen?

L: Usually when I hear something I get this anger in me and I want to scream. My family also gets angry.

R: You feel outraged?

L: Like this thing with Zuma and those kinds of stuff. Me and my family were angry about Zuma and actually we were relieved that he was taken off as deputy president. Usually we get angry when bad things happen and we feel better later once we've cooled down. My dad and my brother tend to over-react and over-do everything and blow it out of proportion. I'm the only one who is calm and relaxed about bad things that happen.

R: What meaning do you attach to bad experiences?

L: Either I stand up for myself or I take action or I'll just leave it for the time being. If one of my parents did something bad to us, I'll leave it but once they've screamed at us, I'll get angry and not keep it inside, If my brother gets blamed for something which is my fault, I go up to my parents and tell my brother to keep quiet and I tell my parents it's my fault and I get angry, calm down and apologize afterwards.

R: What do people do to handle that which they experience?

L: If it's got to do with family, most people hide it away or keep it a secret, or run away from a bad situation and make sure there's someone else who can take the blame instead of them (he went on to relate an incident that he witnessed where a child was hit by a vehicle that sped off as the driver didn't want to take responsibility for his actions.

R: What do they say about the bad things when they happen?

L: They usually don't say anything right away, but my parents would keep quiet and go behind closed doors and gossip about it or exaggerate how bad it is.

R: Who thinks of solutions to the problems first?

L: My step-mother. When it comes to arguments, she says, "Let's all sit down and discuss this and sort it out" or it's me because my father and my brother over-react and they can't be calm. My step-mother and I are the calm ones and we can sort it out.

R: What are the kinds of things which are most challenging for the teenagers who grow up in your community?

L: Right now, what I see around me is school. I see them struggling at school because their minds are on what they're going to do over the weekend at home or drinking.

R: Are you saying that drinking is a challenging teenage behaviour?

L: Definitely. Yes, because weekends they go drinking and to parties and get messed up and they can't concentrate on work.

R: What role do your friends play in your life?

L: Mostly being friends: they're company, they're funny, for entertainment.

R: How do they contribute to your identity (i.e. to the person that you are)?

L: So far my friends haven't contributed much because most of my friends I've only known since last year but when I'm sad they help me to feel calm. They support me. That's what they usually do.

R: What kind of friend are you?

L: I'm a good friend, not excellent. I usually help all my friends with homework and during breaks, if they've got family problems, I help them. If I go to my family and tell them that one of my friends has a problem at home, they'll try and give advice and I ask them if my friends can stay over for the night.

R: What do you contribute to your friendships?

L: I'm supportive and I help them with their work if they struggle and I try and give them advice if they have problems.

R: How accepting is your community towards teenager's problem behaviour(s)?

L: I think most communities do tolerate things. If teens drink and smoke, the community and the teen's parents tolerate it and don't try and stop it. They just leave them to be the way they are but some parents like taking care of them and won't tolerate it.

R: Provide examples/an explanation of such behaviour(s).

L: Like drinking and smoking.

R: Do you belong to any community organizations?

L: We used to belong to church and youth but now my parents aren't going to church anymore so I don't go anymore.

R: If so, which values are espoused by these organizations/what do these organizations stand for?

L: Mostly serving God and teaching us the right things like not to use drugs.

R: Do you feel equal to other people?

L: As a human, yes.

R: Are there people with whom you do not feel equal?

L: Some people are ... I can't really give it a name ... With some people I feel less hope. When I do something wrong, I feel like the black sheep in the family but sometimes I feel higher than my friends at school when they struggle with work and I can help them and I do better than them. I don't feel better than most people.

R: How do people who are higher than you make you feel?

L: Mainly upset or sad because they're better than me, so what am I? Or, since they're higher than me, I must try and get to the same level.

R: What does it mean to you, your family and your community to be healthy, now and when you were younger?

L: It's a big deal for me and my family and the community. So far I see amongst my friends that they drink and smoke and that, but to me and my family none of us smoke and we drink a little wine now and then. We go to doctors to find out our blood type and do everything we can to stay healthy.

R: Can you describe how your parents/care-givers cared/look(ed) after you?

L: In the past or the present? In the past, probably not that good because we were very very thin and I was very sick and my brother ... both of us were very thin but now they're looking after us well and obviously we get food every day, proper clothing, we've got bedding and mostly we've got everything, but in the past it was bad.

R: What expectations do they have of you that they convey to you?

L: Mostly to pass matric and to pass all the years and terms and that, to get good marks and they expect us not to drink and smoke. They expect us to go out more and not to sit around the house and that, and they expect us to be good.

R: Can you describe the nature of the relationship that you have with your parents/care-givers?

L: With my step-mother it's probably open. I can talk to her whenever because she's already had a child whose 21 but my dad I never saw for 11 years, so it's still hard to talk to him because he's not used to it, sot that part's more like ... it's not that easy to talk to my father and that. We don't have a strong relationship but only a good one where we can talk sometimes. Usually we ... it's more of a quiet one. We don't always talk.

R: Do you and your parents/care-givers participate in any leisure activities together? Can you tell me more about this?

L: Usually. Well, we don't do that much together because usually it's me and my friends but usually every Friday night we go out and every Friday and Sunday it's family night and we go to the beach or play cards or monopoly together.

R: How does your family express itself/communicate?

L: Usually we're happy with each other but if you're angry that day for some or other reason, you're abrupt with others in the family but we usually have a happy kind of feeling.

R: How do you know what they think of you?

L: My parents think I'm mostly doing chores and that and I know they think good of me. I don't know whether my father has favourites but mostly they treat me ... or they know that I'm good and that they think that I'm good because I do a lot of stuff for them like washing the dishes, mowing the lawn and they think I'm a good boy.

R: How does your family monitor you in order to know where you are and what you are doing?

L: My family doesn't monitor me if I go out because they trust me and they know I won't do anything bad, which I won't.

R: How do you know how to behave in certain social situations and with certain people?

L: Well, so far my parents obviously taught me how to behave. It's just something that comes to me. Since I've been small I've known exactly how to behave.

R: How well do you do in social situations?

L: I'm very talkative and make jokes around my family and around my step-mother's friends.

R: Are you popular?

L: In school probably not that much but I have a bunch of friends right now. When it comes to my family and that, ja, because they know that I like talking and I don't mind making jokes the whole time.

R: Do others think good things of you?

L: Yes.

R: Has this changed over time?

L: No, I don't think so.

R: How easily do you find it to communicate with others of all ages?

L: When I'm not under pressure I can easily talk to all people and sometimes I make jokes and things which only they can understand. With younger children and teenagers, it's a little bit harder because they don't always appreciate my stupid jokes and they have different thoughts and are thinking of other stuff. With my friends I don't have a problem communicating with.

R: Do you have a role model?

L: My uncle who lives in Holland. He's the person I'd like to be like because he likes computers like me and he's a computer programmer and that and he likes to do stuff like karate and he likes travelling around the world and that's what I want to do.

R: Can you describe them and the qualities that you admire about them?

L: He has the same interests as me and he likes talking and making jokes and he likes showing his emotions and he takes things calmly when it comes to arguments.

R: How would you describe someone who grew up faced with difficult circumstances yet managed to achieve success despite challenges?

L: I'd describe him as strong-willed. He's got courage to face the world even after it's happened.

R: Do you have any other meaningful relationships with people at school, at home or in your community?

L: My friendships with my friends now, mainly with XXX and them because he's the one mainly that I help and he's the one who mainly helps me when it comes to family things and that friendship is a very strong friendship because we help each other.

R: Is there anyone in your life who has "been there" for you during challenging times in your life?

L: Yes, my brother. Through the times when my mother was mad and he always stood up for me. If me and my mother fight, he'd always stand in front of me and he'd stand in front of my mother and tell her not to hurt me and that. And if she does, he'd stop her. He's been there all the time. He's the one who got us out of the situation that we were in.

R: Why was/is this person important to you and what did/do they mean to you?

L: He was the one who took responsibility for me when my mother couldn't take care of us.

R: What do you do in order to be spiritually, physically, intellectually and emotionally strong?

L: To get myself confident I go to a quiet area and I think or pray to get myself and my mind strong. I play rugby and underwater hockey. Sometimes I run and

throw discus. I study. I usually need to keep my brain occupied by reading magazines or watching T.V.

R: Are you assertive? How do you show your assertiveness?

L: Sometimes, yes but mostly I let them have their way and mostly I say it in a way that is a win-win situation. For instance, if I get into an argument with my dad, I let him win by letting him say his say but I also win by saying I'm sorry because then he forgives me and we usually talk calmly after that.

R: Can you describe you ability to solve problems?

L: In talking. Sometimes I talk my way out of problems but mostly I talk to them to make sure that they don't come after me and that's how I make sure that it's okay.

R: Are your problem-solving abilities better or worse than other people's? How do you know this?

L: I do know that it's better than my dad and brother because they usually solve problems with force and anger and I do it calmly and I say sorry at the end so that I don't get into trouble. If I know that I've done wrong, I'll say that I've done wrong.

R: Do you have a feeling of control over your world? How does this affect your life?

L: Only when it comes to a situation that I caused, can I control it but not always because if I try to be first in my family, my dad shows me that it won't work. I can control thinks like my schoolwork and chores at home and things that I can do.

R: What is your definition of success?

L: When you do like a task and not like you get 100 percent but when you feel good about yourself, that's when you are a success. Even if you get 60 percent but you feel good about it, you did it. You handed it in on time. You got a good mark or a compliment from the teacher..

R: How do you feel when others around you experience success?

L: I feel proud and that I'm not the only one who can succeed. I feel happy because at least they're doing good and that. Ja, I know that they're doing good and I'm doing good.

R: With how much uncertainty do you feel comfortable living?

L: None, actually. I don't mind not knowing what's going to happen next except when I get into trouble and I have to wait for my parents to find out so that I can be punished. Then I stress.

R: Would you describe yourself as an optimist or a pessimist?

L: Mostly an optimist because when I don't do well in one exam, I still feel that I tried. I like being positive about my work and about how I'll handle situations.

R: What are your feelings towards your school?

L: I think school is a little bit hard but I think school's good and I enjoy school and that's where I talk to my friends and learn.

R: Do you feel that you belong and do you feel any loyalty or pride in being a learner of this school?

L: Yes, I do feel I belong here. My loyalty is to this school. How I show my loyalty is to dress neatly, participate in sports and do well in my work and to be nice to the teachers.

R: Can you tell me of a time when you demonstrated determination and perseverance?

L: When I had a choice of going with my mother in the past, the day we got out of the bad situation, I had a choice: I wanted to give up. I felt bad and I chose to go with my brother and my brother and I went to my aunt and I couldn't take it and I just wanted to give up right there and then and run away and not be near anyone. And I don't know where I got the courage but I stood up against my mother and I said, "Okay, I can't take this anymore. I want to have a happy and a normal life" and I said that I was going with my brother to Potch. And we went to my aunt and we had been out of school for three years and we started at a school that let me do two years in one year and I came top of the class.

R: If you died today, how would people describe you at your funeral?

L: I think they'd probably describe me as irritating and annoying but in a funny way and my parents would describe me as a good boy and mostly, there will mostly be good thoughts about me.

R: What do you think about your life? Would you feel comfortable sharing thoughts about this with me?

L: My life ... now my life is happy and normal with my parents and that. It's fun and a little bit hard sometimes. When it comes to family and arguments and schoolwork, then I start stressing but mostly it's a happy and fun-filled life.

R: Do you have personal goals and dreams that you should like to realize? What are they?

L: My goal is to eventually, when I'm older, to do computes and make programs and games for the future and to pass matric with good marks and to one day continue to play rugby for the first team.

R: How dependent are you on other people for your emotional survival?

L: Very dependent. Because if my friends, family or brother don't help me emotionally, I think I'd go mad because when things pack on me, these people help to support and calm me.

R: Do you use substances like alcohol and drugs?

L: No.

R: What role does humour play in your life?

L: A very big role because without humour ... I think humour helps me to make friends with older people and others and that's how I've made my friends now.

R: Tell me a story of a child that grew up and despite challenges that he/she faced, was able to be successful.

L: When I was in standard 4 I had this chance to get into school because my mother kept us out of school for three years and me and my brother's challenge

was to go to school in Jo'burg and they let us take two years to catch up the three we had missed then I'd be in grade 7 by then. And my challenge was to try and get through grade 6 and I was out of school for three years and that.

R: How did you catch up?

L: My aunt and my uncle did help me through it but I studied a lot and I concentrated. That's where I learnt to concentrate as I never really had much concentration before then. I overcame that problem of missing three years of school with determination as I was determined to pass those two years and I studied hard and at the end I ended up with the highest marks of all the grade six classes for History and I think for Maths. I overcame that problem with the help of my family.

R: Did you have extra lessons as well?

L: No.

R: Tell me a story of how you were able to overcome challenges in your personal life, family life or in your community.

L: It's the same story as I just told.

R: What would you say were the personal characteristics that helped you to overcome difficult obstacles in your life?

L: Mostly my faith to pass, determination and obviously the help of my family and I was determined to pass.

R: Who believed in and supported you the most during this time?

L: My aunt, my father's sister supported me most of the time. She was always there to help me. She showed me how to study and obviously I prayed about it a lot.

COLLAGE

The participant points to the picture of the family:

This reminds me of my family, the way we were before my father and mother broke up and got divorced and from there my mother, my brother and I started living together and that. I don't know what was wrong with my mother but she had this kind of mental illness and a couple of years after the divorce when me and my brother were 8 and 9 (years old) she took my brother and me into the mountains (picture of mountain) and she said that she was going to Israel through the mountains and we went on this hiking trip or something and that's where I couldn't go any further. I couldn't take it anymore and that's this (picture of the hospital) because if I'd stayed another week in the mountains, I would have died. And then after recovery my mother and us went to a place called Richard's Bay (picture of sea) and we lived around there for three years and this picture of the dog reminds me of how we were animal lovers and had cats. During the three years at Richard's Bay the picture of

*the pen reminds me of how we were out of school because my mother was still bad but then we stood up to my mother and we went to my aunt and uncle and back to school. In the present, I like skateboarding and I'm learning to skate and to play the guitar (*picture of cello*) and I am playing rugby and I enjoy computers and in the future I would like to work with computers, play rugby for the first team, travel around and be adventurous (*picture of snowboarding*) like my uncle in Holland and have a happy life.*

INTERVIEW 3:   Using the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure

Table D3: PARTICIPANT 3 (non-resilient)

Age	Gender	Grade	Risk factors inferred from interview and educator information	Protective factors inferred from interview
16	Male	10	Poor relationship with mother, sexual abuse, physical abuse, financial difficulties, academic difficulties, behavioural difficulties, peer rejection	Future aspirations, sense of humour, relationship with father

R: How do you, your family and your community experience bad things that happen?

L: I don't know what the community says but my dad says it's bad and he gets on with life.

R: What meaning do you attach to bad experiences?

L: It's very bad. It's hate, it's rage, it's everything ...

R: What do people do to handle that which they experience?

L: To try and improve it? They try and do something about it, like they try to improve. They try to think that okay, that was the past and one must move forward and try to make the best of the situation.

R: What do people say when bad things happen?

L: People say lots of things. Sometimes it's tragic, it's bad. Some people get angry, frustrated. Some people get sad. Some people ignore it.

R: Who thinks of solutions to the problems first?

L: Always the other person.

R: So you never think of solutions?

L: No.

R: What are the kinds of things which are most challenging for the teenagers who grow up in your community?

L: Stress at school, parents, drugs, peer pressure. Peer pressure and parents and drugs go together with sex, alcohol, driving cars, racing with cars, what type of friends you have, everything. That is everything and if you don't do it, you stress and if you do it then you also stress. Daily stress at school, like today. It's all stress.

R: What role do your friends play in your life?

L: Big but not at the moment ... very little actually.

R: How do they contribute to your identity (i.e. to the person that you are)?

L: A little but in England a lot. It influenced my music, how I behave, who I am, what I would do, anything – except for my morality. If my friends listen to certain music then I'd also listen to such music. If they do certain things then I'd also do that. I try and grab/take stuff from other people's lives for my own life and if I had friends like I had in England, then my image would be happy and it would have made my image better at school because these friends would really have helped me and things. I think at this stage it is crap compared to England.

R: What kind of friend are you?

L: At this stage it looks very bad because some people don't like drinking and some people don't like smoking. Some people just don't like my music. Some people don't like my childish behaviour. Some people don't like it if I want to be myself. At this stage there are not really friends for me.

R: What do you contribute to your friendships?

L: I'm game for anything most of the time. I try to make jokes and be funny. I'll be there and be loyal but if they are not prepared to be loyal and supportive of me, they mustn't expect me to be there for them and at this stage, it's half and half ... I won't smother them but if it's a very good friend, I would want to spend lots of time with him.

R: How accepting is your community towards teenager's problem behaviour(s)?

L: Troublemakers. They don't think much of them. They don't care. They let the children carry on ... If it's a troublemaker, they'll throw the person out. They don't care if children have problems. They don't try to help them. They only see problems and that's all that they see.

R: Provide examples/an explanation of such behaviour(s).

L: Rebel, rebel, anything, alcohol, anything that is illegal. Trying to be disrespectful, untidy, anything against the law ...

R: Do you belong to any community organizations?

L: No.

R: Do you feel equal to other people?

L: No.

R: Are there people with whom you do not feel equal?

L: Many.

R: How do these people make you feel?

L: Bad. Sometimes good but mostly bad.

R: What do they do to make you feel this way?

L: They brag. They make me feel as though their problems are bigger than mine. They do better academically than I do and I'm stupid. Sometimes they say bad things about me, they try and break me down.

R: What does it mean to you, your family and your community to be healthy, now and when you were younger?

L: When I was young, it was a great thing. Now it's still a big thing but it's not as bad as it was. My dad's a hygiene freak and I'm not so bad.

R: Can you describe how your parents/care-givers cared/look(ed) after you?

L: Past tense or now? Bad, bad, good, bad, and now my dad's doing a good job.

R: What expectations do they have of you that they convey to you?

L: He wants me to do well at school, to have a good job one day. He expects me not to use drugs and things like that. He expects good marks and he expects me to be good.

R: Can you describe the nature of the relationship that you have with your parents/care-givers?

L: At this stage it's a "lekker" relationship. We don't fight. He can talk to me. I can talk to him. Sometimes we butt heads but not often. We both set our boundaries.

R: Do you and your dad participate in any leisure activities together? Can you tell me more about this?

L: Every second Friday we play pool and go drinking.

R: Every second Friday?

L: Not always. Sometimes when he feels like it and his girlfriend doesn't mind.

R: How does your family express itself/communicate?

L: Not that good. We'll say what we want but it's not good. We hide things from one another. We talk, yes, we talk, but it's ...

R: Superficial?

L: Yes.

R: How do you know what they think of you?

L: He'll tell me. I don't work hard enough, I am lazy, I eat a lot and sometimes I can be a pleasure.

R: How does your family monitor you in order to know where you are and what you are doing?

L: Cellphone and other people as spies.

R: How do you know how to behave in certain social situations and with certain people?

L: How do I know? I don't. I just do what I want to. It's just a feeling that I get, like house to house ... when I move, I just get a feeling at a house of how to act.

Sometimes I act totally in another way but sometimes all the people, I'll talk to them, act normal, formal. Around children I'll act crazy, I'll be screaming and I'll go mad.

R: How do you know how to act?

L: I just get a feeling.

R: How well do you do in social situations?

L: Sometimes okay

R: Are you popular?

L: No.

R: Do others think good things of you?

L: Sometimes.

R: Has this changed over time?

L: No. It changed but different people have changed. When some people liked me, then some other people didn't like me and some when some people liked me then others don't, so the tables have turned.

R: How easy do you find it to communicate with others of all ages?

L: Not easy but I'm sort of shy with girls so ja ... With old people? I don't like it. With kids? I sometimes feel like a pervert. Old people I don't like talking to. They go on and on and on. My dad's girlfriend ... she still lives with her parents and they're old and I don't like them.

R: Do you have a role model?

L: No.

R: Can you describe qualities that you would admire if you had a role model?

L: Lots of things: their uniqueness and the quality they put into something and people who are good at something they do like music groups, people who are good drivers, someone who is good at school. I'm finding it very hard.

R: How would you describe someone who grew up faced with difficult circumstances yet managed to achieve success despite challenges?

L: Extraordinary, magnificent. Look at Eminem. He got a home for himself. He's rich and everything and he had a bad life.

R: Do you have any other meaningful relationships with people at school, at home or in your community?

L: Some friends that I went to see everyday and this other girl.

R: Is there anyone in your life who has "been there" for you during challenging times in your life?

L: No-one.

R: What do you do in order to be spiritually, physically, intellectually and emotionally strong?

L: Build up a barrier

R: Are you assertive?

L: Sometimes.

R: How do you show your assertiveness?

L: I express it.

R: How?

L: I say, "No, now this is not good for me" and I do something else ... something like that ...

R: Can you describe your ability to solve problems?

L: Good and bad: school good, in life it would be better than bad.

R: Are your problem-solving abilities better or worse than other people's? How do you know this?

L: Worse. Schoolwork and people. There are people who are better than bad. There are people who are "gladdebekke" (they are good with words) and people who are insincere. I should like to be able to be like that (good with words) to get through situations easily.

R: Do you have a feeling of control over your world?

L: No.

R: How does this affect your life?

L: As they say in Afrikaans: "Spyt kom te laat" (by the time you regret something, it is too late to change it). At this stage, everything looks good to me: yes, yes, yes, happy, happy, happy, but then it meets with reality and it all falls down.

R: What is your definition of success?

L: Wellbeing, knowing what you do and why you are doing it and knowing what you want in life, having a happy family and a good foundation and a good house and a car and a job would be nice, and a few, 5 or 6 ... under 10, good friends, the house and the job and the friends would be success.

R: How do you feel when others around you experience success?

L: Sometimes sad. I feel good for them but today, I'll be truthful. I did badly (in the examinations), really bad and the people who did good, they're like ... "No, I could have done better ..." and if I were them, I'd be like ... "yes! Oh holy!" and they're like, "Oh, this is so bad ..."

R: With how much uncertainty do you feel comfortable living?

L: Nothing, a small amount but I'd like to know everything.

R: Would you describe yourself as an optimist or a pessimist?

L: In the middle ... more a pessimist.

R: What are your feelings towards your school? Do you feel that you belong and do you feel any loyalty or pride in being a participant of this school?

L: No, I don't feel that I belong.

R: Can you tell me of a time when you demonstrated determination and perseverance?

L: I said that I wouldn't speak to my step-dad and I did that and I never talked to him for three weeks.

R: If you died today, how would people describe you at your funeral?

L: There'd be no-one at the funeral.

R: I'd be there.

L: There'd be a few. The old people and out of school people would say he's handsome and that he had good manners and yes, I just had good manners ... The children would say I'm psycho, loud ... I don't know ... that's the feeling I get now.

R: What do you think about your life? Would you feel comfortable sharing thoughts about this with me?

L: At this stage, reality ... it's not good. It's not up to standard. I'd like to better it. I'd like to change schoolwork. If I could do better at schoolwork, everything in the future could be good ... my friendships and handling of girls ...

R: Do you have personal goals and dreams that you should like to realize? What are they?

L: Yes. I'd like to be in a band. I would want to be someone who doesn't really have to work for money ...

R: (laughs) We'd all like that!

L: ... someone who does what he loves. If I could do anything that I love and get good money for it ... you won't have to worry about money ... that would be cool. It's like a person who does crafts. He gets pleasure from doing it. What I want to do would have something to do with computers ... an accountant, a drummer, music, computers, cars ... a goal that I really want to achieve is to do something and be good at it. I wouldn't do extremely well, but I wouldn't do badly.

R: How dependent are you on other people for your emotional survival?

L: Lots ... a little more than half.

R: Do you use substances like alcohol and drugs? What do people around you think of this?

L: Some people think badly of me because they think "I owe you" but people that know me very well, know that I just drink to ... because I like it. It's just occasional. Many people talk about alcohol, alcoholics and stuff like that. I just make jokes about it. Like this Friday I want to have a party with drinks and stuff like that and some people say, "Ja, but we don't drink and na, na, na" and they try and say, "You're bad if you drink and you're a bad person ... "

R: What role does humour play in your life?

L: A good role. A big role. I like humour.

R: Tell me a story of a child that grew up and despite challenges that he/she faced, was able to be successful.

L: Just the story of Eminem. Like I said, he grew up poor and he became rich and he's good at his music.

R: Tell me a story of how you were able to overcome challenges in your personal life, family life or in your community.

L: By ignoring it, just be getting away from it, that's all.

R: Are you referring to the time when you were living with your mom?

L: My mother and I just don't get along. I'm talking about my fiends ... like in the past, ignoring those that were bad ...

R: What would you say were the personal characteristics that helped you to overcome difficult obstacles in your life?

L: I don't know.

R: Who believed in and supported you the most during this time?

L: No-one. The people who still did, still dropped me anyhow, so that doesn't count.

COLLAGE

The participant arrived at the interview with his collage depicting pictures representing only the past history of his life. He was asked to depict the past, present and future.

The first picture is of a woman. It reminds me of the times when my dad used to hit my mother. The woman has bruises on her face. The next picture is a mirror image (of the cellphones): black and white. It's confusing. It's not nice. There's the (food pictures) ice-cream that fits with KFC, milkshake ... drive thru'. I've been insulted most of my life. There was a time when I was little that I wouldn't eat anything and I was smacked because of that and I ate sweets and then I began to eat anything and then they began to smack me and told me to stop eating. And KFC's food, we eat it from time to time. (He points to the "Victim Alert ..." picture). I was bullied in primary school and the baby grabbing the cat's tail and biting it (picture). "Take the pain out" refers to the pain that I have inside and the diamond dragon ... it's not really about the diamonds and stuff, it's more about the dragon. I feel like there's a lot of anger in me and my mother is like a dragon.

I asked the participant to tell me what he would have put onto his collage had he depicted the present and future. His response was as follows*:*

Present: I'd probably put in computers. I'd put in music as this is a big part of my life, a person doing school work, a guitar and drums and someone having a problem with his relationships.

Future: I'd put in a computer, a person who looks happy and enjoying himself; a person who has a family, is healthy, has a home and a nice car, children with his family and friends.

INTERVIEW 4:   Using the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure

Table D4: PARTICIPANT 4 (non-resilient)

Age	Gender	Grade	Risk factors inferred from interview and educator information	Protective factors inferred from interview
18	Male	12	Alcoholic father, divorced parents recovering drug addict, depression, financial difficulties	Future aspirations, sense of humour, relationship with friends, high intelligence, writing talent

R: How do you, your family and your community experience bad things that happen?

L: My experience has shown me that people, including my family have a tendency to try and escape or distract themselves from the problem at hand. I, myself, being a former drug-addict and escape artist choose to use music and sleep and whatever I can to distract myself. However, recently thanks to the teachings of one M. Scott Peck, I have realized that once we realize the inevitability of pain and misfortune, the outcome becomes a lot more bearable.

R: What meaning do you attach to bad experiences?

L: They are not to be taken lightly. Life is one big learning experience where our competence for dealing with the aforementioned bad things is tested. One must take heed but not dwell and use it to improve your life.

R: What do people do to handle that which they experience?

L: Escapism. Everyone deals with grief and sorrow in their own way and I have come to realize that whether it be religion, drugs or sex, it is merely a coping mechanism to distract themselves from the emotions that they are feeling.

R: What do they say about the bad things when they happen?

L: People either suffer from neurosis or character defects and depending on which category they fall into, (this) will determine their way of dealing with the situation. Those with neurosis tend to rehash the events and dwell whilst taking all the blame and those with defects tend to blame everyone but themselves for the events which have transpired.

R: Who thinks of solutions to the problems first?

L: I am an articulate thinker and try to rationalize the situation and then take the appropriate steps to solve the problem at hand. There just needs to be someone that doesn't let their emotions cloud their decisions and they are generally those who can make the best of the two-sided coin.

R: What are the kinds of things which are most challenging for the teenagers who grow up in your community?

L: Drugs. I have seen a lot in my time and it really is killing the kids of the suburbs. Too many friends have either gone to jail, to rehab, gone crazy or now suffer from psychosis which is incurable. Sad but true, this is a difficult age where one defines themselves for the rest of their life and most are just looking for somewhere to belong. Naïve and impressionable they crumble when it comes to saying "NO" for they crave acceptance in the eyes of the "Cool" kids. Too much emphasis is put on reaching this figurative social status, and if you aren't in you are shunned and ridiculed for being an individual.

R: What role do your friends play in your life?

L: (They are) my leash. They are the keepers of my sanity, my brothers, psychiatrists and confidantes. After years of friendship I have only recently let them into the dark recesses of my mind and instead of mocking me as I feared, they embraced me with open arms. When I am with them I feed off their energy and relay it back at them and my state of mind is immediately enlightened. They too are aloof such as I and, therefore, understand my somewhat morbid, but realistic views on human nature and life in general because they too are articulate thinkers.

R: How do they contribute to your identity? (i.e. to the person that you are)?

L: I prefer to surround myself with those that not only understand me, but also those with a tactless kind of honesty that forces you to question your actions. They have this intense energy that just radiates from them and I just feed off it and keep the flow going. Not taking yourself too seriously, but also knowing enough through the process of trial and error to take heed and watch. Social commentators, all of us. Either that or we are all just professional lethargic but it has been a long journey and many lessons were learnt.

R: What kind of friend are you? / What do you contribute to your friendships?

L: Comic relief, as well as quality content on what it is to be human and the nature of humans. Among my friends and I there is a great deal of life experience and as a result we are able to solve most problems efficiently and without delay. There are two sides to me. One is the more melancholic and introspective XXX who plays the role of social commentator with his intellectual peers; the other is the Fiend. Too weird to live and too rare to die, one of God's own prototypes never considered for mass production. This side of me is the one that just radiates positive energy and can look for the lighter side in any given situation. A true character and a walking enigma, this is what draws people to me and in my friendship my friends say that spending a day with me is like watching TV.

R: How accepting is your community towards teenager's problem behaviour(s)?

L: The main problem in our community is drugs. Personal opinion from a former drug abuser is that it has in fact reached pandemic proportions. I was one of the ill-fated children who decided to dabble in the field of narcotics, and in my escapades I was offered help on numerous occasions. It is not a mental problem because "addicts" are of a very high intellectual level and in fact the problem lies with their soul. It took me a long time to realise this and no matter how many times I fell flat, there was always constant emotional and spiritual

support. In this town if you are a parent you either have a child that does drugs or you have come into contact with someone who has, therefore, one must be able to deal with the situation rationally. The law on the other hand, personal opinion, is far too lenient on offenders. Possession of Marijuana less than 500g (0.5Kg) is R100 fine or 1 month in jail. No record either so someone who is caught with just under half a kilogram of weed is let off scot free! It has actually reached a point where it is taboo and, therefore, unless you really go crackers from the drugs you are left to your own devices. Ignorance is bliss and the general populous in this area would rather not deal with the problem at hand.

R: Provide examples/an explanation of such behaviours

L: There are meetings for those who feel they have a drug problem. There are also guidance counsellors and an array of psychologists in the area. For those who can't afford it there is the Helderberg Crisis Clinic. However, there is only so much the community can do; the rest depends on the individual. If you really want help you will find it, but in my experience it was offered and I kindly declined. It's rare that people care in this day and age and it's not an exaggeration when our school is referred to as the school with the heart because the staff really do care.

R: Do you belong to any community organizations?

L: Narcotics Anonymous.

R: If so, which values are espoused by these organisations/what do these organisations stand for?

L: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions. Unconditional love and acceptance, and support for those who are still coming to grips with their sanity as they face the daily trials and tribulations of life on life's terms.

R: Do you feel equal to other people? Are there people with whom you do not feel equal? How do these people make you feel? What do they do to make you feel this way?

L: To be honest, no, because I have learnt that those that think they are better than everyone else merely have an inferiority complex. I really have partied enough for a small continent and I feel I finally have a grip on reality and what is important in life and not to care about social status and who is cool or not. I am happy with myself and if you don't like me then you don't have to be around me. In fact, if anything I think I am better than everyone else because I have grown spiritually and know that happiness is what you make it.

R: What does it mean to you, your family and your community to be healthy, now and when you were younger?

L: To my community, I don't know because I can't speak for the masses. I do know that we live in a culture of excess and spiritual growth is dependant on mental and physical well-being. You are what you eat. My family are very healthy. They don't drink or smoke and if so it is done in careful moderation because of their age. After years of playing Russian Roulette with my coronary arteries and my nervous system, one can always repair damage that has been done. As a former tweaker and perfectionist with incredible attention to detail in all facets of life, Eastern medicine and traditions appeal to me because as opposed to Western medicine where you diagnose and then cure, the aim is rather never to

get sick at all. To fine tune the body to such as state that it is impenetrable to disease and infection is my method of choice.

R: Can you describe how your parents/care-givers cared/look(ed) after you?

L: I was a spoilt brat. I got what I wanted when I wanted it. The unconditional love of my parents and their desire to ensure that my quality of life is good whilst sacrificing their own wants and needs.

R: What expectations do they have of you that they convey to you?

L: They are trying to give me everything they didn't have. As the protégé of the family I am expected to succeed and as my last great act of defiance to a community that uses me as the poster-child of what not to do, get fantastic marks and leave my name on history.

R: Can you describe the nature of the relationship that you have with you parents/care-givers?

L: For the greater part of my life it was superficial. However recently I have come to realise that my parents are just people like me and share the very emotions I would chose to shun. It's my turn to give back to them and no longer be a hindrance and the black sheep of the family. My father, however, was not there for most of my life and now in the twilight of his life has chosen to make a concrete effort to know his spawn. Honestly, I use him to a certain degree. I refer to it as "hush money" for the years missed but as I said before my spiritual growth has granted me certain epiphanies and with them come changes. I will give them a reason for their effort and give all that I can back to them. To improve their quality of life as they did mine.

R: Do you and your parents/care-givers participate in any leisure activities together? Can you tell me more about this?

L: We go out to eat, a lot. In fact that is the only contact my father and I have, is our monthly or fortnightly dinner date. My mother and I do the same. However, we have more of a bond owing to the fact that I live with her. Whether it be watching our favourite TV show or going shopping it's just general conversation where we share our views on life as human beings. It's the same with my father and I, except we have less in common.

R: How does your family express itself/communicate? How do you know what they think of you?

L: In my drug addiction I was constantly in isolation and now that I have come out of my hole, I find it a lot easier just to throw stuff in the mix and have a conversation about life and values with my parents of all people! Just a solid chatting session every now and then solves most problems. The ability to rationalise comes naturally to my family so communication flows fluently. If I am told to do something, I do it. No questions asked, the path of least resistance is my preferred method of solving problems. Apart from the occasional venting session where I am put in the spotlight for doing something wrong, I own up to my responsibility and do what needs to be done. No bullshit. Hey, honesty is the best policy.

R: How does your family monitor you in order to know where you are and what you are doing?

L: I tell them exactly what I plan to do, because lying just causes problems and a breakdown in communications. Suppose my cell phone is my link to the world outside my head and is in itself another one of my leashes.

R: How do you know how to behave in certain social situations and with certain people? How well do you do in social situations? Are you popular? Do others think good things of you? Has this changed over time?

L: I feel I have been in all the situations before and through the process of trial and error have learnt how to deal with all ordeals. If the situation doesn't fit my criteria, I just bail or when needed blend in using my skills as a social chameleon. Tell the masses what they want to hear and once again take the path of least resistance. Popular? I think so. I have the ability so fit in with all sorts of people. Consider it a skill that comes with the field of narcotics and I am a funny guy by nature so people enjoy my company. Variety is the spice of life and if knowledge is power then wisdom is refined. Wisdom can only be obtained by experience and seeing as though life is one long learning experience I must integrate myself into all social circles in order to know where I stand and have control of the situation. The price you pay for years of being a master of malice is that you make enemies and because of this only those that truly know me appreciate my unique brand of humour and wit. I have grown spiritually and tried to make amends for my past indiscretions and I think people have noticed and changed their attitudes towards me. They have come to realise that there is a lot more to the "Fiend" than they thought.

R: How easily do you find it to communicate with others of all ages?

L: Very easily because we as a species have something in common. Therefore, even the "cool" guy can relate to the underdog and people are like molecules. They are constantly changing and, therefore, we must learn to adapt to our surroundings and to do so, one must include all facets and people into the equation.

R: Do you have role models? Can you describe them and the qualities that you admire about them?

L: Hunter S. Thompson. His writing is not just that of an incoherent lunatic but rather the commentary of someone who has chosen a way of life that forces him to be seen as "outside the box". Writing where so much of one's soul is put into one's writing that the entire topic takes on an entirely new form. This, coupled with wisdom from years past make him a literary genius.

R: How would you describe someone who grew up faced with difficult circumstances yet managed to achieve success despite challenges?

L: Normal, because there is not one person who grew up without a problem of epic proportions. If you have not felt pain then you don't know what it means to be alive. Life is a constant test of our coping mechanisms and something seen as inconsequential to one person can be life-altering for the next.

R: Do you have any meaningful relationships with people at school, at home or in your community?

L: Other than my friends, none. There was my significant co-dependant other but my abuse of her emotions and my vampiric ways were exposed and her love dissolved. XXX had a profound influence on my life. She was there for me when

I first experienced emotions I didn't even have for the greater part of my life. However, now I have almost lost all faith in humanity. Her decision to leave me threw my world into disarray. I was thrown into the dark recesses of my mind and spent most of my days in reflective thought questioning my very existence. There is only one thing I can be certain of in life and that is me. I cannot swear on someone else's behalf because I am not inside their head. I now chose only to enter a situation on my own terms when I can calculate an outcome that would be to my benefit.

R: Is there anyone in your life who has "been there" for you during challenging times in your life? Why was/is this person important to you and what did/do they mean to you?

L: My family are always here but only on a superficial basis. The only person that really had a profound effect on my emotional state of being and my current perceptions on life was XXX. She made me feel like a normal person and for a short period of time I had a soul. Now I choose to be a machine and live only for myself never letting anyone in and never coming out.

R: What do you do in order to be spiritually, physically, intellectually and emotionally strong?

L: Exercise and meditation as well as my writing. These are generally all solo endeavours and it helps me keep my insanity intact as well as honing my ability for manipulation and keeps my brain at its peak. The spirituality I do experience is short lived and superficial. I chose to be a cold and calculating machine after I was abandoned by the one I love and my only coping mechanism, drugs was taken away.

R: Are you assertive? How do you show your assertiveness?

L: Yes, I think so. Emotions merely cloud your judgement and your ability to succeed in the given situation. I tend to work by statistics and past experiences and that's why I know that I have the charisma that allows me to get what I want when I want it. Sick? Twisted? Maybe, but I have wisdom beyond my years and I have acquired skills that allow me to bend all to my will. It's rare that someone can see through me but when they do, I tend not to hang around long enough for the outcome.

R: Can you describe your ability to solve problems? Are your problem-solving abilities better or worse than other people's? How do you know this?

L: I feel mine are far better than the average individual because I have learnt through a process of trial and error how to deal with the problem at hand. The fatal flaw that is human nature is emotion. These messages received by synapses dictate our actions to us. They merely cause us pain and I chose not to undergo this emotional turmoil and articulately and rationally approach the problem and take time to deliberate as to the solution.

R: Do you have a feeling of control over your world? How does this affect your life?

L: Yes, because I chose only to enter on my own terms and will make sure I get what I want when I want it. The vampire who only uses and abuses, however, now it is done with tact as opposed to years before when I was merely unaware of what I was doing. The effect? People get pushed away or rather you just

won't let them in and if you do its on your terms. By living like this I am coming one step closer to being a machine.

R: What is your definition of success?

L: What I want, when I want it and how I want it.

R: How do you feel when others around you experience success?

L: I will pretend to care and be happy for them but I know honestly that I couldn't be bothered. There are very few people that know and appreciate me for what I really am and it is those people that I will genuinely show interest in and give them the recognition they deserve.

R: With how much uncertainty do you feel comfortable living?

L: None! After years of playing the aforementioned Russian Roulette with drugs and not knowing myself, let alone the nature of my surroundings, I now make sure I have a full understanding of the situation at hand.

R: Would you describe yourself as an optimist or a pessimist?

L: Neither. I am a realist.

R: What are your feelings towards your school? Do you feel that you belong and do you feel any loyalty or pride in being a participant of this school?

L: It is merely a stepping stone on my journey to success and what I want when I want it. I didn't want to be there and now I must make the best of it. Being intelligent in a school full of clowns and jokers really forces you to be singled out and in all honesty I would rather just be another number.

R: Can you tell me of a time when you demonstrated determination and perseverance?

L: Rehab and my drug addiction are at the core of my perceptions of my life today as well as the relationship where someone pulled me out of my shell for the first time in my life. The rest of my life is a challenge where I need to be on my toes all the time and be constantly aware of my goals and how I intend to reach them.

R: If you died today, how would people describe you at your funeral?

L: A living, breathing and walking enigma.

R: What do you think about your life? Would you feel comfortable sharing thoughts about this with me?

L: A well-oiled machine of my own perceptions. I have no problem telling you because again there are very few people that can see through me and I won't hang around for the outcome and if I do, it's not like you're going to understand me. Nobody ever does because I am one of God's own prototypes never considered for mass production. Too weird to live and too rare to die.

R: Do you have personal goals and dreams that you should like to realize? What are they?

L: To write my book and leave my name on history. The world is my oyster and frankly if you know you will succeed and are willing to do all, and I mean all in

your power to get it then nothing else matters. Not people, not friends and not love or any of the other emotions that make us weak.

R: How dependant are you on other people for your emotional survival?

L: Not at all. I don't even think I need to elaborate on this topic.

R: Do you use substances like alcohol and drugs? What do people around you think of this?

L: I drink every now and then when put in a social situation. Drugs are taboo because there are some people who can do them recreationally but I have proven to myself through trial and error that I can't do it. As I said before statistics are what matter and I don't need to undergo the insanity and emptiness that was active addiction. Therefore, I never really put myself into a social situation unless I am 100% sure of the outcome.

R: What role does humour play in your life?

L: For someone who was addicted to good feelings, laughter and humour are just a sucker rush for me and it's not that hard to look on the brighter side of life when you spend the greater part of yours looking down on the world from the gutter.

R: Tell me a story of a child that grew up and despite challenges that he/she faced was able to be successful.

L: My mother was an only child and came from an average family. With no tertiary education she managed to climb her way up the corporate ladder and achieve without the aid of her parents. I am eternally grateful to this woman who puts her own happiness after mine and, therefore, she is not just a role model but an inspiration.

R: Tell me a story of how you were able to overcome challenges in you personal life, family life or in your community?

L: Perseverance and using my brain. Drugs, relationships and people all just bring problems so now I use my ultimate defence mechanism, withdrawal. My life up until about a year ago was just one big calamity and I now know what needs to be done in order to get my way. Bite the bullet till its your time to shine.

R: What would you say were the personal characteristics that helped you to overcome difficult obstacles in your life?

L: My intellect and self-sufficiency as well as my wisdom gained through years and years of non-stop fuck-ups.

R: Who believed in you and supported you the most during this time?

L: My mother and my mates. My mother's love is unconditional and her instincts, maternal. My mates just appreciate me with flaws and all and just enjoy being along for the ride because they know what I can do.

COLLAGE

On the right is my past, in the middle, my present and on the left the future. The right is my past. It's me. It's all the photos I have of myself in active (drug) addiction.

That's part of my life I don't really want to remember. I've taken heed of the lesson I've learnt and I've used it to be fine: just me surrounded by drugs that I loved the most. I was like a vindictive person. I thought of myself as the Master of Malice. It's like "heart of hell" (picture). I let very few people get close to me, that's why I was like alone, isolated by the drugs over there and the "sex, lies" (picture) and then "Stepping Stones" (picture of logo of recovery centre for addiction where he was admitted for three weeks.) was one of the turning points of my life. The present is pretty much the big question mark because I'm on the verge of taking that step towards the future that I want to obtain and the feet (picture) symbolize me moving on to the future. I'm just killing time at the moment ... Then on the left: "I'm alive!" (picture) for the first time in a while. I'm going to achieve what I want. I'll be studying ... doing the journalism thing. I want to go abroad preferably to somewhere that has cultural heritage. That's why I see myself living in Greece or somewhere on an island in the Caribbean, or rather France. The guy on the typewriter (Journalism) and it's my passion and it's…he's writing (picture of man writing), something I take pride in. And, trance parties (picture) because I will be going to those until the day I die. I won't be doing the drugs but I still feel more at home there than I do anywhere else because even if I'm not on the same level as the people going there (because they use drugs and alcohol), at least they can understand where I'm coming from, whereas pretty much everywhere else, I feel pretty much very isolated because no-one really understands the solitude ...

I asked him about his experience of making the collage:

That was very fruitful. It's just my next phase that is going to happen soon ... that's why I'm not really doing anything now. I'm just finishing school and then I'm starting on that life that I want to get to straight away. When I was doing the poster, when I was thinking about my past, it bummed me out a bit. I felt a bit depressed because that was the vast majority of my life and I was alone and horribly alone. It was just me and my drugs and that's all I needed. It was insanity, a sick, sick pattern and I was malicious and that's why I can honestly say that more of my effort went into the section on the past than into the present and future because I tend to dwell on the past but through doing this I've learnt to live and let live. I've learnt from what happened and I'm trying to move on but it brought up a lot of old feelings and guilt and resentment and stuff like that. Like the friend in the picture with me. He's crazy

and on medication. He's a walking zombie and when I think of this I think of all the friends I've lost. If they're not in rehab, then they're in jail. And, if they're not in jail, then they can't function properly in society so that's it. I've seen some incredibly articulate, intelligent people who are shadows of their former selves. I'll continue to go to trance parties because that's my norm. I can express myself in dance at trance parties and that's my little security blanket and if you take that away, I'll die. I'll stick to what I know. Trance parties defined me. It was something I latched onto when I was 14 (years old) and made part of me. It gives me a sense of belonging sans the drugs and it helps me because it tends to get a little lonely and I feed off people's energy just as I do with my friends.

INTERVIEW 5: Using the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure

Table D5: PARTICIPANT 5 (resilient)

Age	Gender	Grade	Risk factors inferred from interview and educator information	Protective factors inferred from interview 5
17	F	11	Adopted, divorce, father imprisoned for fraud, financial difficulties	Supportive mother, supportive educators, supportive friends, religion, academic competence,

R: How do you, your family and your community experience bad things that happen?

L: My mom and I discuss it and decide what to do about it.

R: What meaning do you attach to bad experiences?

L: I don't really focus on bad things. I try to focus on the good things and as long as I don't feel responsible for it, it's okay and if I'm responsible for it. I'll try and learn from them.

R: Who thinks of solutions to the problems first?

L: Probably my mom. If something bothers me and I don't think it concerns my mom, I speak to a friend.

R: What are the kinds of things which are most challenging for the teenagers who grow up in your community?

L: Peer pressure, drinking, sleeping around.

R: What role do your friends play in your life?

L: I can't really speak to my friends at school but they're okay to spend time with. I can't trust my friends at school but I speak to J. I do have friends I can speak to. There are different levels of friends and I tell some of them more than others.

R: How do they contribute to your identity (i.e. to the person that you are)?

L: I don't think they contribute to who I am because I wouldn't want their influence because I don't always agree with things that they do. I decide what I want.

R: What kind of friend are you?/What do you contribute to your friendships?

L: It depends on which friends ... I know everything about all of them so they can trust me but I'm not always as open to them.

R: How accepting is your community towards teenagers' problem behaviour(s)?

L: I don't think they are very accepting

R: Provide examples/an explanation of such behaviour(s).

L: Some of the girls sleep around and their parents don't know or they don't say anything about it to their parents. The guys drink. No-one wants to talk about it to each other so they just carry on and if they could speak to their parents, they probably wouldn't need to do all of these things.

R: Do you belong to any community organizations?

L: Yes, church and Sunday school and youth.

R: If so, which values are espoused by these organizations/what do these organizations stand for?

L: Honesty. Perfect behaviour.

R: Do you feel equal to other people?

L: Yes, not all people but some people. I don't feel equal to qualified people like doctors and some older people and people who accomplish a lot of things in sport. I feel that I can't compare.

R: How do these people make you feel? What do they do to make you feel this way?

L: Some of them have accomplished a lot in a short space of time. One feels one can't compare and sometimes you don't think you're equal.

R: What does it mean to you, your family and your community to be healthy, now and when you were younger?

L: If I had an amputation, I'd not be very confident. I wouldn't go so far in sport but I really appreciate that I'm healthy and capable of doing what I can do.

R: Can you describe how your parents/care-givers cared/look(ed) after you?

L: My mother looked after me quite well. I have very protective people around me but not over-protective, so I'm quite normal.

R: What expectations do they have of you that they convey to you?

L: A lot. She has high expectations of me. I hurt my shoulder and then I couldn't play tennis anymore and it felt as though she was angry with me even though I couldn't help it. Once I mentioned that I wanted to be a physiotherapist and now it's this big thing and there's lots of pressure.

R: Can you describe the nature of the relationship that you have with your mother?

L: We're very close and speak about most things and we enjoy being in each other's company most of the time.

R: Do you and your mom participate in any leisure activities together? Can you tell me more about this?

L: We go on holiday together. We go to the movies and we watch television ... we do everything together

R: How does your family express itself/communicate? How do you know what they think of you?

L: We have good communication except with my brother. He gets angry and communication stops when someone gets angry but afterwards we'll start talking again. My family tells me what they think of me.

R: How does your family monitor you in order to know where you are and what you are doing?

L: They don't always. They trust me.

R: How do you know how to behave in certain social situations and with certain people?

L: It's something you learn. It's something that comes and sometimes you learn from your mistakes and things like that and some people speak to you about appropriate behaviour.

R: How well do you do in social situations?

L: I've noticed that sometimes I'm reserved and sometimes I don't like being in a crowd and the centre of attention. I'd rather be one on one later. I warm up when I get to know people.

R: Are you popular?

L: I'm normal, not popular.

R: Do others think good things of you?

L: Yes, I think so.

R: Has this changed over time?

L: People have never had a reason to think bad stuff of me. I haven't given them a reason.

R: How easily do you find it to communicate with others of all ages?

L: Very easily.

R: Do you have a role model?

L: I have a combination of role models. I don't like everything that one person does.

R: Can you describe them and the qualities that you admire about them?

L: I like my mom's openness and honesty. I admire the lovingness of my grandfather's sister. She was non-judgmental and open to everyone. I like some of the stuff of X (her openness) and a some things of a lot of other people and I like Y's positive attitude.

R: How would you describe someone who grew up faced with difficult circumstances yet managed to achieve success despite challenges?

L: I would say they're strong within themselves. I admire such a person.

R: Do you have any other meaningful relationships with people at school, at home or in your community?

L: Ja, my mom and some friends and J.

R: Is there anyone in your life who has "been there" for you during challenging times in your life? Why was/is this person important to you and what did/do they mean to you?

L: My mom is important because she's my mom and because she's a stable part of my life.

R: What do you do in order to be spiritually, physically, intellectually and emotionally strong?

L: I read books about all kinds of topics. I do sport. I study and I talk to people.

R: Are you assertive?

L: Not always

R: How do you show your assertiveness?

L: I wouldn't tell someone to their face that I can't do something that I agreed to do. I dislike confrontation. I would phone or sms the person to tell them.

R: Can you describe you ability to solve problems?

L: I have the ability to know what to do but usually I try to find confirmation by talking to others and seeking their guidance and then I make up my own mind but usually I have the right idea.

R: Are your problem-solving abilities better or worse than other people's?

L: For my age? I think better.

R: How do you know this?

L: Because others always ask me for help and advice.

R: Do you have a feeling of control over your world? How does this affect your life?

L: Not always but I like knowing that I'm in control of something.

R: What is your definition of success?

L: Becoming what you can to your own ability. Success is personal to each individual.

R: How do you feel when others around you experience success?

L: Happy for them except if I was in consideration for the same thing and I lost against that person. I'd still congratulate the person but I'd be angry and disappointed with myself for not achieving it but happy for the person.

R: With how much uncertainty do you feel comfortable living?

L: Not much.

R: Would you describe yourself as an optimist or a pessimist?

L: An optimist.

R: What are your feelings towards your school?

L: It differs from time to time. Sometimes I feel frustrated if something happens at school. If something bothers me, sometimes I feel frustrated. Sometimes If people are rude around you and gossip, I feel as though I'm not supposed to be here. I get frustrated if people from other schools break down our school. I believe that we are a good school and we can do well.

R: Do you feel that you belong and do you feel any loyalty or pride in being a participant of this school?

L: Yes, I feel like I belong. I do feel loyalty and pride.

R: Can you tell me of a time when you demonstrated determination and perseverance?

L: I played a tennis match while my shoulder was sore and the teacher wanted me to stop playing because of the pain but I just wanted to finish the match and I didn't care if I win or lose as long as I finished the match. Also when I don't understand something in Maths for instance, I will try and get help and try and work it out and I'll sit with something until I understand it.

R: If you died today, how would people describe you at your funeral?

L: An honest person who is fun to be around.

R: What do you think about your life? Would you feel comfortable sharing thoughts about this with me?

L: I think that I'm fairly lucky to be where I am. I appreciate my life because there's a lot of stuff that could've been different. Lots of times I'm confused.

R: Do you have personal goals and dreams that you would like to realize? What are they?

L: I'd like to be successful for myself and not for anyone else. I'd like to enjoy my life and still be serious enough to get somewhere. I'm still deciding on my goal. I want to get an A (symbol)

R: How dependent are you on other people for your emotional survival?

L: A lot but I could survive to a great extent without depending on others if I had to.

R: Do you use substances like alcohol and drugs?

L: No.

R: What role does humour play in your life?

L: A big role.

R: Tell me a story of a child that grew up and despite challenges that he/she faced, was able to be successful.

L: I cannot think of one right now.

R: Tell me a story of how you were able to overcome challenges in your personal life, family life or in your community.

L: When my father got out of jail and wanted to make contact with me while he was visiting his parents in XXX, my mother wanted me to visit him but my friend from overseas was visiting me on that day and I preferred to see her instead. I

sms'd my father to tell him this and he was unhappy about it and has taken my pocket money away from me since then and I decided that he hasn't been there for me for most of my life and he isn't good for me and I'd prefer to live my life without him in it. It was a difficult decision but I believe that it is the best decision for me.

R: What would you say were the personal characteristics that helped you to overcome difficult obstacles in your life?

L: I don't really get stressed about issues. I handle pressure well. I don't get anxious and I try and focus on the good stuff (anything positive that someone has said to me that day) or whatever has happened.

R: Who believed in and supported you the most during this time?

L: My mom

COLLAGE

On my collage is the past when I moved to Cape Town. The picture of the suitcase reminds me of Grade 1 and the picture of the water reminds me of my love for swimming. The bicycle picture reminds me of when I was three/four years old and I got a nice bicycle from my grandmother. The picture of the mother and daughter is a picture of my mother and me. The tree picture reminds me of our home in the Transvaal where we had lots of trees. I liked to climb them and I was good at it.

In the present: I care for people (picture "care for carers"). The picture "happy heart" represents me because I think that I have a happy heart. The picture "real achiever" means that I believe I achieve a lot, enough. The quote "It's important not to live your live thinking about what others think of you." I believe that it's true. The girl's face represents the silly side of me. It's a silly picture because sometimes I can be silly. The Nike Active picture: I like to be active and I am active. The quote: "inner support" shows that I rely a lot on myself. The quote: "Do it work" means I want to work hard. The word "sports" is there because I love sport. The book picture shows work that I do. The picture of the girl smiling is a happy picture and the water feature in the garden is so nice. It's a nice peaceful garden. I like being peaceful and relaxing.

In the future (bottom left)I want to be happy while I'm working one day. I want to travel (picture), to have be with friends (bottom picture), I want a relationship with my mom and a daughter too (picture top right of mother and daughter). I want to have a little boy (top left picture of boy and puppy). I want a cute husband (picture of married couple), keep fit and stay in shape, "have a family that loves you is the main thing", be "truly inspired" and be successful in whatever I do. To "reflect perfection". I

believe that this is truly possible. The girl in the black cowboy hat (picture) is happy and I also want to be happy. The girl in the boat (centre picture): she looks free and I want freedom of choice and speech but it sometimes gets me into trouble. The words "inspired energy" show that I want to be an inspired person with lots of energy.

This participant's collage reflects a great deal of positivism, love, caring and hope and she has a positive attitude and good self-esteem. She does not mention anything negative in her collage. Her past and present are depicted realistically and her future holds much hope and promise. Her mother is mentioned more than once, reflecting their close bond. Clearly she is a person who is happy with who she is although she wishes to continue to strive to be the best that she thinks she can be. Her caring nature and her love of people are reflected in her collage, as well as her interests and certain aspects of her personality. She sees some of her interests and loves (love of sport, love of mother and friends, love of peace) and her success as being enduring into the future. This collage is a good reflection of this participant's resilience.

INTERVIEW 6:   Using the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure

Table D6: PARTICIPANT 6 (resilient)

Age	Gender	Grade	Risk factors inferred from interview and educator information	Protective factors inferred from interview 6
16	F	10	Father's death Financial, difficulties, sexual abuse, learning problem	Religion, supportive family, supportive educators, supportive friends

R: How do you, your family and your community experience bad things that happen?

L: What do you mean?

R: Anything bad that happens in your life, the life of your family and your community, how do you experience these things?

L: Sad, depressed if someone whose close to you dies or something but if it's something like a robbery or something like that, we feel happy that we're still living in a reasonably safe environment.

R: Would you question it?

L: Yes, definitely.

R: What meaning do you attach to bad experiences? What do you think or feel about it?

L: Well, I'd feel bad about it. If it was rape or something, you get scared and that if it's one of your friends or someone close to you and especially if it happens today and you really feel worried.

R: What do people do to handle that which they experience?

L: Often, they often turn to drinking and drugs and that they go out and try and run away from their problems.

R: What do they say? What do people say in the community and in your family about the bad things that happen? When they talk about it, what do they say?

L: They often look at the negative side of it and not out of the box. For instance, why has someone done something or committed suicide. They'll often say, "Oh well, he's committed suicide, you know and that's really bad and that's a bad person" and they don't see it from that person's aspect.

R: Who thinks of solutions to the problems first in your family and in your community?

L: I actually think that mayors, well, we don't have a mayor, but leaders often don't think. They only think about themselves and people who are close and often good friends you usually try and get them help. In our family my mom usually thinks of solutions.

R: What are the kinds of things which are most challenging for the teenagers who grow up in your community?

L: Peer pressure is one of the main things, like if you're "in" or not, do you smoke, do you drink, what type of friends do you have, 'cos your friends say who you are.

R: So a lot to do with peer pressure.

R: What role do your friends play in your life?

L: Your friends play the biggest role in your life even bigger than your parents because your friends, you can speak more honestly with them than with your parents and even though you're close to your parents, you don't want to tell them, oh, you did this and you did that, so your friends are your main people you like, they are like for you through everything.

R: How do your friends contribute to your identity (i.e. to the person that you are)?

L: Well, I have got a very nice group of friends now and they support what I do and they acknowledge it and they are very supportive and they know what I've been through and that, and they help me when I'm struggling a bit.

R: So, they are there to support you?

L: Yes.

R: What kind of friend are you?/What do you contribute to your friendships?

L: I listen a lot to people's problems and I understand them and I don't judge them. I don't judge people hardly ever and it may sound really bad but I don't shout at them. I will try and explain to them what I will really do and what I think about it

and if they are doing something really good, I will say, "That's really good and I like what you are doing".

R: So you encourage them. How accepting is our community towards teenagers' problem behaviour(s)?

L: I don't think it's accepting at all, because often when you read the local newspaper people will say, "Ja, teenagers are doing this and this and that." Even though I know that some of the times we shouldn't, I don't think that our community is as strong as it should be.

R: What do you mean by "our community is not strong ..."

L: Well, nobody communicates with each other and nobody really cares if you do something. "You can do what you want, it's your business, as long as it's not on their property.

R: Are you saying that people in the community don't want to take ownership of what goes on in their community as long as it doesn't affect them directly?

L: Yes, Ja. But, I think that they are also a little bit scared, because they are scared that it might happen to them if they should get involved.

R: Can you provide examples/an explanation of such behaviour(s).

L: Smoking and drinking like in the roads. They don't encourage them to stop and that and people just shout at one another and if you're smoking weed in the streets or drinking and that's just how people behave: shouting or swearing in the roads or pulling nasty signs or driving in the roads and you don't really care.

R: If you had a magic wand, how would you like to change this?

L: That people would speak to one another decently and respect each other and their belongings and they must think before they speak and think if it will hurt the other person or not.

R: So, you'd like people to look out for and to encourage others more?

L: Yes.

R: Do you belong to any community organizations?

L: Well, I go to church and at school, I 'm a JIK (Christian organistion) leader and when I can, I help out at the place where they give food to the homeless people.

R: Which values are espoused by these organizations/what do these organizations stand for?

L: I think they're all based on caring for one another and that you shouldn't be alone. And the shelters and that ... instead of showing that people do care for the homeless and people are concerned about what they are going to do with their lives.

R: Do you feel equal to other people?

L: No (laughs). No, because I don't think we all should be equal. We should all be individuals.

R: Are there people with whom you do not feel equal?

L: Yes and no. (Laughs). Yes, um, my friends ... I think we all look at one another equally and in your little clique of friends, you don't think "this one's better than that one" yet when one goes out and there are people with more money than you, and even though money isn't a big deal, sometimes it does make you feel bad or whatever. Everyone's going out and you can't ... just things like that.

R: So, if I'm understanding you correctly, you're saying that sometimes materialism creates a feeling of not being equal to those people.

L: Well, in that way but not in personality-wise and it also depends on if someone is shy or someone's not.

R: If someone's shy or someone's not ...

L: If the person is a bubbly person or if people don't feel accepted or are quieter. Because I know someone who is very shy and he doesn't speak lots and people criticize him because he's an introvert.

R: How do these people make you feel? What do they do to make you feel this way?

L: I'm an extrovert and people often put you down and say this and that and that like hurts me. They'll say, "oh, but you don't drink or smoke anymore and you're not cool and that and that also hurts a person.

R: How do you handle that?

L: Well, nowadays I just say it's a better way of life in the long run. It may not be so now. People might not see me the same and that but your morals should be higher than what people say and one or two people should not put you down. If you're happy with yourself you shouldn't want a double life or do things because other people expect that of you.

R: What does it mean to you, your family and your community to be healthy, now and when you were younger?

L: I think everyone should be hygienic and clean. It's just not right to sit with old food under your bed and old milk. It's very unhygienic and I've seen people get sick from it and sometimes street people come up to you and smell and you can hardly breathe almost. I also like to go to gym and to swim. At home we're not allowed to eat junk food.

R: Can you describe how your parents/care-givers cared/look(ed) after you?

L: Well, my father died when I was small, so my mother looks after me and she does a very good job of it. She always makes sure that there's stuff for us and she always tries to give us more than what we expect and she helps a lot.

R: How?

L: Just like doing little things and taking us places and she always tries to do more.

R: What kinds of things does she do which makes you know she cares?

L: Just small things like making breakfast in the morning, taking me to my friends, because if I don't feel like walking, I ask her and going out of her way to take us places, buy us things and just show love.

R: How does she show love?

L: She'll come and sit by me and we'll talk and she always listens to me and sometimes she will judge but she tries hard not to.

R: What expectations do they have of you that they convey to you?

L: She expects me to get high marks because she says I'm not stupid, I'm very clever and I'm just lazy and she wants me to study hard and she expects me to study hard and to try and achieve better marks and she will always encourage me to do well and she wants me to study and then to go and study after school.

R: Can you describe the nature of the relationship that you have with your mom?

L: At one stage we had a very bad relationship and we were knocking heads a lot but we don't as much as we used to. But, sometimes we still do in some respect and how we look at life. I look at it differently. I am a little more laid-back than my mom and she is a little bit of a perfectionist, so we butt heads quite a lot about that but we do have a good relationship and I'm not as honest with her as I want to be and sometimes as she would like me to be because sometimes I feel that I can't tell her everything as often she wants to know this and this and this and I don't like to say anything to her.

R: What is the biggest thing that prevents you from being completely honest with her?

L: How she reacts. She does sometimes judge me and how she's going to judge me and what she's going to think and I'm scared that she'll be disappointed.

R: Do you and your mom participate in any leisure activities together? Can you tell me more about this?

L: No.

R: How does your family express itself/communicate?

L: Well, we don't actually communicate enough. We all keep in our little bubble and we don't talk a lot. And myself, my brother and my mom, we all keep our problems to ourselves and after a while everyone explodes and everyone will be "snot and trane" and then we'll all talk and then it will all be fine.

R: How do you know what your family thinks of you?

L: Well, how I know is when other people say to you: "Well, your brother says this and that ..." and when other people from outside say nice stuff, like teachers and that.

R: Will your mom tell you what she thinks of you?

L: Yes, sometimes, she'll be happy and she'll say, "I'm glad you've done this and I'm happy that your marks are getting better" and she'll say nice things.

R: How does your family monitor you in order to know where you are and what you are doing?

L: Well, I'm very open with that. I tell my mother where I'm going and I have this fear that if something happens and she doesn't know, then it can just be like bad, so I always tell her where I'm going to be and that's why I will phone her and tell her where I'm going and when I get there I'll 'phone her once and tell her that everything's fine.

R: How do you know how to behave in certain social situations and with certain people?

L: Well, I think that I never used to and I went overboard, but now I can say that if I'm out with my old friends or whatever, then I won't do that and they know it. I think that if you tell them, they also relax a bit and I think that you should have a couple of really close friends and not just anyone you know because sometimes they will go and say stuff and it all comes out wrong and just to behave in front of some people and you can't just change and be one way with some friends and another way with others. It's just not right.

R: How well do you do in social situations?

L: I'd say quite well. I'm a very social person. I always have to have my say though and (laughs) and often when people speak to me and that, I listen without judging and I will talk to anyone and just be yourself.

R: Are you popular?

L: I wouldn't say I'm popular. I'd just say I know a lot of people and quite a lot of people know me because I've had lots of friends and groups of friends. Not everyone likes me.

R: Do others think good things of you?

L: I'd say yes and no. Yes, the way I am now and no the way I was. Once I stopped with my old friends, I realized how actually bad I was and that and people started coming to me and saying, "ja, XXX, I don't think you should do this and that and I just like think that people think good things of me now because lots and lots of people have come up to me and said that they respect me for what I've done and for leaving my old friends.

R: Has what they think of you changed over time?

L: Yes.

R: How easily do you find it to communicate with others of all ages?

L: Very easily.

R: Do you have a role model?

L: Yes, my mom.

R: Can you describe her and the qualities that you admire about her?

L: Caring no matter what and no matter how often you upset the person. My mom still loves me and she'll still do stuff and be understanding and that's how I want to be. No matter how cross a person makes you, you still love them.

R: How would you describe someone who grew up faced with difficult circumstances yet managed to achieve success despite challenges?

L: I think often difficulties make you stronger as a person. You learn to live with a bit less and I think you actually want to do good because often you want to be better than what happened and you don't want that to influence your children's lives and so you try to be better and try much more than other people.

R: So, how would you describe people who've been through a lot and try to be successful?

L:	Well, I respect them for doing that and I think it takes a lot of hard work, not giving up when things go wrong, just to try harder.

R:	Do you have any other meaningful relationships with people at school, at home or in your community?

L:	Well, my brother means so much to me. He's like my father almost. I can speak to him about stuff and he's like me, he doesn't judge people, so I can speak to him no matter what and my best friend as well and one of my friend's judges and the other one doesn't so sometimes I tell the one a bit more than I tell the other and they mean the world to me and I don't know what I would do without them.

R:	Is there anyone in your life who has "been there" for you during challenging times in your life?

L:	My mom and my best friend whom I've known my whole life and we split up but she's always been there on the sideline helping me.

R:	Why was/is this person important to you and what did/do they mean to you?

L:	Well, my mom's obviously important to me and XXX helps me through ... it can be the smallest thing, like I need money or I just need a shoulder to cry on and she's there.

R:	What do you do in order to be spiritually, physically, intellectually and emotionally strong?

L:	Well, I have a good relationship with God and I love doing Christian things and being involved in such things and emotionally I think it's better if you don't try and keep everything bottled up inside and you speak to someone and you don't go to things that's going to cause you to come out bad and just like helping people.

R:	Are you assertive?

L:	No, I'm not assertive.

R:	Can you describe your ability to solve problems?

L:	I listen to people and I understand and I think outside the box and I try and most of the time I go out of my way to do something to help that person. If they need something I'll try to do that or if they need me to be somewhere I'll try and be there in five minutes if something bad has happened.

R:	Are your problem-solving abilities better or worse than other people's? How do you know this?

L:	I think they are a bit better because I have lots of people coming to me and speaking to me about their problems and that and I know a lot of people say they like me because I don't judge people easily and I'm a Christian.

R:	Do you have a feeling of control over your world? How does this affect your life?

L:	Yes and no. I can have control over my life but not over the world (laughs). In ways with my friends yet, if stuff happens, I can't control that but I have control over the friends that I choose because I think that's one of a teenager's main problems is choosing the right friends.

R:	What is your definition of success?

L: My definition is that it's something you've been wanting to do and you finally achieve it and you've worked really hard to get where you are and it is something that you've been wanting that you finally get. Well, I think that I'm successful already. It's a little bit creepy but I've gone from good to bad and back to good and that's success in a way and to be able to say that something that you set for yourself (that's not necessarily visible on the outside) that you've achieved it.

R: How do you feel when others around you experience success?

L: I'm happy for that person because it's a nice feeling and everyone wants to be successful.

R: With how much uncertainty do you feel comfortable living?

L: I don't like being uncertain. I can tell you that. I hate it when you're not sure when someone or something is going to react and you're really stressed about it. For instance, when you do something and you don't know how others will accept it. When I got converted I didn't know whether I would be alone or have friends.

R: Would you describe yourself as an optimist or a pessimist?

L: An optimist.

R: What are your feelings towards your school?

L: I like my school a lot but sometimes I think that the discipline is a bit lax the way people walk all over their educators. I find that disgusting. I know that I used to do that but now I look at it as bad and this school is a very nice school and the teachers are very supportive.

R: Do you feel that you belong and do you feel any loyalty or pride in being a participant of this school?

L: Yes, I do feel that I belong here and I'm proud to be a participant of XXX.

R: Can you tell me of a time when you demonstrated determination and perseverance?

L: Well, sometimes I have had to make sacrifices to get good marks and sometimes I have had to save up for something before I could finally buy it.

R: If you died today, how would people describe you at your funeral?

L: A very bubbly person who most of the time had a smile on her face, being an optimist and helping people and I'm understanding.

R: What do you think about your life? Would you feel comfortable sharing thoughts about this with me?

L: I think my life has had ups and downs. My father died when I was small (6 years old) and I've been through financial difficulties when my mom didn't have money to support the family. When I look at my life, I always think that there are people who have it a lot more harsh and so I don't worry about it because there's people who don't even have family and who don't even have a house and I always look at that and carry on.

R: Do you have personal goals and dreams that you would like to realize? What are they?

L: I want to finish school and somebody has already offered to pay for my studies after school. I'd like to be a youth minister and just be able to help people and to serve them.

R: How dependent are you on other people for your emotional survival?

L: Sometimes I need one person but I don't like to go to others. I try and sort it out myself because I have a good relationship with God.

R: Do you use substances like alcohol and drugs?

L: No.

R: What do people around you think of this?

L: I know lots of people outside of my group of friends are trying drugs to see how it feels and the same with alcohol but I don't think it's cool. I've been there and I think it's the most common thing for a girl to get drunk, but it's just not right.

R: What role does humour play in your life?

L: I laugh very easily. Humour plays a huge role in my life. They say that laughter is the best medicine and I believe that it's true.

R: Tell me a story of a child that grew up and in spite of challenges that he/she faced, was able to be successful.

L: I read this other story about a girl whose parents were drug addicts and most of the time she didn't have food and she'd go work two jobs and she was still a student and she got A symbols for all her work because she wanted to be successful and she went to university and studied something in Biology and she said she didn't want to end up the same way as her parents.

R: Tell me a story of how you were able to overcome challenges in your personal life, family life or in your community.

L: Because I lost my father at a young age, I learnt how to be independent and not to rely on my father. Some people learn to rely on their fathers and I've learnt not to and I work, for instance, to make my own money. My father died and I never accepted it until last year and then I was sexually abused when I was small and I couldn't sort that out and I was trapped inside and I wouldn't go out of the house but dealing with it has made me a stronger person. Last year I spoke about it for the first time and this other girl helped me through it.

R: What would you say were the personal characteristics that helped you to overcome difficult obstacles in your life?

L: Lately I've been able to speak. I speak to God and I always compare myself to others who have less than I do and that helps a lot. If I get R20 it is not a lot but I think of those who don't have anything.

R: Who believed in and supported you the most during this time?

L: My mom and my brother.

COLLAGE

In the past I was happy and then my dad died and I started getting attention from

other guys and I started getting high (refers to words "low down') and using alcohol and after the high I'd get a low and then I was unhappy and had (refers to words "real friends") who obviously were not my real friends at that stage and then I felt the garbage (refers to word "garbage") and the sin.

In the present I got to know God and the truth about life and Brett Andersen (refers to picture). He organized a camp and I had a reason for living and I met God and I've got real friends and I started making sense of life and love and I became a youth leader and working with all kinds of people and working for God and I've still got sin (picture) in it because I still sin.

In the future I put whatever God wants me to do and what I'd like to do is be a youth counsellor, go to "Pneumatics", a bible college, and do counselling. I still have the word "sin" in my collage because sin is part of my past, present and future.

After we had looked at the collage together, the participant showed me her photo album of her life since her birth until the present. After this I asked her whether she found the making of her collage meaningful. Her reply follows:

When I did it and looked at it, I saw, wow! I messed up my life a lot and I got quite a fright afterwards. When I came to the present I was blown away by how much my life has changed. I always thought about it but actually seeing it on paper made a big difference because you know the difference but you cannot always see it.

In the future I'm looking forward to all that God has in store for me. I've changed a lot and I feel more confident and happy and I don't have to hide my feelings anymore and I don't have to hide who I am and I can talk about it. I've got more support from my real friends and from God and people who are willing to help me.

INTERVIEW 7:   Using the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure
Table D7: PARTICIPANT 7 (non-resilient)

Age	Gender	Grade	Risk factors inferred from interview and educator information	Protective factors inferred from interview 7
14	M	8	Divorce, financial difficulties, behavioural difficulties, violence in the home, alcohol abuse (step-father)	Supportive mother, supportive friends, supportive educators, leadership qualities, talent (drawing)

I am going to ask you a number of questions. Please be as honest as you can. The information conveyed to the researcher is confidential and will be used for research purposes only. The names of the research participants will not be used in the research study.

R: How do you, your family and your community experience bad things that happen?

L: I suppose I just try and put it behind me or forget about it,

R: So, are you saying that you don't deal with it; that you try and forget about it?

L: Ja. Well, it depends on what the situation is ... whether it's something I can deal with or not. Usually I have general ways to deal with it.

R: And, how does your community and family deal with bad things that happen?

L: I'm not sure how the community deals with it, but my family usually runs and will help. If someone loses someone who dies, they'll try and say they're sorry.

R: What do people think when bad experiences happen?

L: Well, everything happens for a reason, so ...

R: What do people do to handle that which they experience?

L: Some people deal with it in their own way, some go to a psychologist and others try and solve it.

R: What do they say about the bad things when they happen?

L: It depends on what happens. Some sit down and say what happened.

R: Who thinks of solutions to the problems first?

L: Usually in my family it's my mom.

R: What are the kinds of things which are most challenging for teenagers who grow up in your community?

R: Well, drugs and stuff like that. It's difficult for teenagers because there are lots of people in streets selling drugs and it is difficult to say no and that because it is everywhere.

R: So, in your opinion drugs is the main threat to teenagers?

L: Ja.

R: What role do your friends play in your life?

L: A big role because they are the people that I can talk to and that I trust and if something happens there is someone I can speak to.

R: How do they contribute to your identity (i.e. to the person that you are)?

L: Well, if they see that I'm doing something wrong, or something, if we go out then I might do something wrong and they would say: "Hang on, just think about what you're doing and ... um ... ja, they'll show me the right way.

R: Will you always do what your friends say?

L: Well, I wouldn't always listen to them but I'd take a second to think about what I'm doing and if a friend of mine says, "Don't do that, rather don't", I'd wait and not go ahead. I'd listen. Sometimes I'd do the exact opposite of what I'm not supposed to do.

R: What kind of friend are you?/What do you contribute to your friendships?

L: I have a lot of friends but I only have one friend who is special and that I can speak to and he can speak to me. We don't talk about who is better or not. I think that I'm a pretty good friend because I don't backstab my friends and I support them.

R: How accepting is your community towards teenager's problem behaviour(s)? How tolerant of teenagers' behaviour are they in your opinion?

L: Well, when I was in primary school, I was a real rebel and I wouldn't listen to anyone and I was suspended from school four times. All the people in my community's children went to the same schools and everyone knew me, so I would walk down the road and get skew looks all the time. So, I don't think people are really accepting and most people who didn't even know me and who had just heard of me, thought "No" ...

R: It must have been very difficult for you?

L: Yes, I think ... my friend's mother ... I wasn't allowed at their house because of stuff like that. It's changed for me since I've been at high school.

R: How has it changed for you?

L: Well, now I don't get into trouble anymore.

R: Can you provide other examples of behaviours that teenagers find challenging or difficult?

L: Um ... there's like a lot of people, young teenage people, who'd go around and do stupid things like take out (break) all the lights in the whole place (a complex in the community) and things like that ...

R: Do you belong to any community organizations?

L: No.

R: Do you feel equal to other people?

L: Ja.

R: Are there people with whom you do not feel equal?

L: Not really. I feel we're all humans.

R: What does it mean to you, your family and your community to be healthy, now and when you were younger?

L: Well, I think it's quite important because if you're not healthy then you can't go out and do things.

R: Can you describe how your parents/care-givers cared/look(ed) after you?

L: I think my mom ... My parents got divorced when I was young. I was three (years old) when they got divorced and they always used to fight and when they got divorced they always used to fight and after that my mom, she was always

with me and stood by me. Even in primary school, someone used to throw papers at the educator and I wasn't even in the class but I used to get blamed. But, even when she knew I was a naughty little child in primary school, when something like that would happen, she used to believe in me that I didn't do it and she'd go and talk to the school. Recently ... it was actually quite a while ago, my mom got a boyfriend and they used to fight a lot so that was like a whole saga kind of thing.

R: So, you stayed with your mother, sister, and your mom's boyfriend and your dad moved out?

L: Ja, we moved out and we found a place of our own and my mom's boyfriend used to come over often and everything was fine. Now they've decided to live together and they work together and everything is too much for them because they run three jobs and it causes too much ...

R: Stress?

L: Ja.

R: Did your mom work when you were little or did she stay at home with you?

L: Me and my sister went to a day-care crèche and then my mom would work and fetch us after work.

R: What expectations do they have of you that they convey to you?

L: Well, she just wants me to do well at school. She wants me to come to high school and to start over. She doesn't want me to mess up on high school like I did in primary school. She just wants me to do well.

R: How do you think you're doing?

L: I think I'm doing much better than in primary school.

R: Can you describe the nature of the relationship that you have with your mom?

L: We have a good relationship.

R: Can you tell me more about that?

L: If I do something wrong, I go to her and say to her that I've done something wrong. She'll understand and she'll make me understand that I did wrong and that I mustn't do it again and she trusts me not to do it again.

R: Do you and your parents/care-givers participate in any leisure activities together?

L: No, because my mom is always working. They work from 8 until 7 everyday and at weekends she's always working and on public holidays they work.

R: Do you do anything together?

L: We eat supper together at the table now and again.

R: How does your family express itself/communicate?

L: Well, I don't know. Sometimes when we're having dinner, we'll come together and talk.

R: Tell me more about that and your relationships to one another.

L: Well, me and my sister used to fight like cat and dog but now we have a good relationship and my mom. I don't like my mom's boyfriend much. I don't speak to him and I don't speak to her much about it because she's always working and something like that. And four nights of the week they'll have an argument because of work or something.

R: What do you do if there's an argument?

L: If it gets too bad and they really start arguing, I'll tell my mom to go and sit in the room and I'll go get her a cup of coffee or something.

R: What does she do? You seem to take over the role of protector.

L: She understands. When that happens I don't really speak to him (boyfriend).

R: Tell me more about that.

L: Most of the time I know he's wrong and he goes on and on and he's always on someone's case. He always finds something wrong and I'll just tell my sister to go and sit in the room, relax, everything will be fine

R: So, you're the protector.

L: Yes, I am.

R: What does your mother say when this happens?

L: I don't know ...

R: Does she care about you?

L: I know my mom does care for me but she really doesn't have the time to care.

R: What does she do when there is an argument?

L: She just starts crying ...

R: How do you know what they think of you?

L: They tell me and I just know.

R: How does your family monitor you in order to know where you are and what you are doing?

L: Um ... my mom would phone me in a day and in the holidays when I go out. I say to her: "Mom, I'm going to so and so and I'll be back and I'll phone her and tell her that we're doing this instead of that and she'll phone me every 2-3 hours to check up on me and to see if I'm all right.

R: How do you feel about that?

L: Well, I always try and put myself in her situation and I know she's concerned about me; that I'm out on the streets – not exactly on the streets but she's worried about me and wants to know that I'm okay.

R: Did your mother work when you were little?

L: My mom used to work in a normal job from nine to four/five (o'clock) then a half day job because my father was working and earning a steady income and she insisted on getting a half day job. And, then she and her boyfriend started working together at the same company because they're reps for the one company and reps for a security company and then brokers for another company and then they bought a XXX business. The one business is not doing

too well and they may lose it. I don't really see it as their fault. They work together. The problem is they're always with each other.

R: How do you know how to behave in certain social situations and with certain people?

L: When I'm with different people, I can see what kind of people they are; what's happening and how to behave. For instance if I go to a restaurant or something like that, I wouldn't burp or do something wrong.

R: So, you suss out the situation and see what is appropriate behaviour in social situations. How well do you do in social situations?

L: I think I do pretty well. Obviously I've had my embarrassing situations like dropping a fork onto the floor or something like that.

R: Are you popular?

L: I don't know. Seriously I don't see it as someone's popular. I think we're all ... I know a lot of different people of different ages. Honestly, I don't know what popular is and what you have to do to be popular.

R: Do others think good things of you?

L: I'm sure they do, cause I treat everyone the same. I'm not rude to anyone.

R: Has this changed over time?

L: Yes, very much. At my old school, I didn't have a classroom. I had a desk outside the principal's office and that is where I worked.

R: How did you know what work to do?

L: The teacher came and said: "Do this". And, if there was something I didn't understand, I'd go to the class but I wasn't allowed in the class. I had to stand outside where the other children couldn't see me.

R: How long did that last?

L: For one year ... for three terms of last year. When I was sitting outside the headmaster's office, people would come past and mock me all the time and I could do nothing and there was one specific person ...

R: An educator?

L: ... no, a boy who was always, always mocking me and that and I used to say, "Look here, if I do anything to him, I'll just get into more trouble and he'll run to the principal and I'll get expelled". And, I had a girlfriend at that stage and he was always looking for trouble with me at that stage and I didn't know. I punched him and that wasn't good either and now I'm in high school and it's a clean slate and there are lots of new people who don't know me.

R: How easily do you find it to communicate with others of all ages?

L: I find it quite easy. I have a lot of friends who are much older than me and some of them are working and sometimes when I haven't got a lift, I'll phone them and say, "Come pick me up".

R: Do you have a role model?

L: Not really. I look up to my dad. He also went through quite a rough time. He also didn't have a home or a job and he was staying in a shelter at one stage and I really don't know what happened but now he's driving a BMW and he lives in a big house.

R: Do you have contact with your dad?

L: Yes, I see him every second weekend.

R: Can you describe him and the qualities that you admire about him?

L: He's an understanding person, slow to get cross, he never gives up. If he has to do something like fix a car or something, he won't give up until the car's perfect.

R: To what extent do you have these qualities of your father?

L: Well, I'm understanding and caring and I'm trying my best.

R: How would you describe someone who grew up faced with difficult circumstances yet managed to achieve success despite challenges?

L: It's like my father. I would say that person, I dunno, is really strong.

R: Do you have any other meaningful relationships with people at school, at home or in your community?

L: Yes, well I have a girlfriend and other friends.

R: Is there anyone in your life who has "been there" for you during challenging times in your life?

L: Yes, my mother.

R: Why was/is this person important to you and what did/do they mean to you?

L: She was important to me. She always made me feel better when something was wrong. She comforted me if things go wrong.

R: What do you do in order to be spiritually, physically, intellectually and emotionally strong?

L: I am a Christian. I pray to God and ask him to help me through the day and the days to come. I play rugby and I like reading those books that give you choices and stuff and I love to play pool.

R: Are you assertive?

L: Yes, I think I am in most situations, not in all situations. Sometimes I'm aggressive and sometimes passive.

R: How do you show your assertiveness?

L: If I see a chocolate lying on the bed, I will tell my sister that I want it but I'll cut it in half and share it with her.

R: Can you describe your ability to solve problems?

L: It is different to how I used to solve them. In the past I solved them with my fists; now I try and sit down with the person and talk. It's just not worth it to fight. When I used my fists, I got community service and I may not get into trouble for another year. I can't afford to get into trouble. It was difficult in the past. I had lots of stuff going on in my head: things going on at home, wondering where's

my dad is and what he's doing, am I going to get into trouble at school today, the guy at school ... I lost my temper, I don't know what happened.

R: Was there ever an educator who believed in you?

L: No, I was seeing four psychologists: one was a parent at our school. He wasn't a psychologist, he spoke to me about God. It was nice. He would take me to the Spur and talk to me. I saw the school psychologist and these other two ladies. Every day of the week I saw a different person.

R: Did you find this helpful?

L: No.

R: How come?

L: When I was in grade 3 my mom put me on the list to see the school psychologist. When I finally got there, I spoke to her, she said that she'd come the next week, but she was sick and I never saw her again. The same with the other lady. I never felt that it helped, when I was in the school and when everyone just saw me as a bad child. It feels strange but I never used to go out and look for trouble …

R: It used to find you ...

L: Ja ... um ... the one day at the school, someone tripped me and I asked him, "Now why did you do that?", and the one guy swore at me and he went and told the teacher that I swore at him and then it was during the exams and everyone came out at 12 o'clock but the teacher told me that I had to stay in and I thought that was unfair. So, when the bell rang, I ran out but my bicycle was parked next to the classroom and the teacher put his hand out of the window and grabbed my wheel and told me to come back inside. I said, "Okay" and when he let go of my wheel, I rode away ... stupid stuff. And, I got into big trouble and later you say to yourself, "What's the use? I'm going to get into trouble anyway."

R: Are your problem-solving abilities better or worse than other people's? How do you know this?

L: Quite good. I've solved many of my problems. I don't know if they're better than other peoples'

R: Do you have a feeling of control over your world?

L: There are a few things that I can change but the rest I can't. I can't make my parents change but I can stop them from arguing. I feel sometimes that I don't have control at all. I feel like burying my head in a hole, like sitting and rotting, not caring.

R: When that happens how do you feel?

L: Sad.

R: How does this affect your life?

L: There's a lot of stuff I can't control. I can't stop it from happening but I can stop it from being so bad.

R: Do you have anything that you do in order to make you feel better?

L: Writing (angry) songs and poetry, drawing. I love playing pool and when I play pool, I feel better. There was a psychologist I was seeing who told me that when I see my parents argue, I should say to them: "Why are you arguing? You guys are acting like children, you know." I went and did this and I got hit, so that didn't work.

R: What is your definition of success?

L: Being able to achieve your goals and do good at school and to be a good person. Just do your work, respect, manners and get a good job.

R: How do you feel when others around you experience success?

L: I feel happy for them.

R: With how much uncertainty do you feel comfortable living?

L: I dunno. I don't like it. Sometimes I'm lying in my room and he (mother's boyfriend) drinks. He buys a box and drinks a box a night. My mom doesn't drink. He drinks and anything can happen ...

R: Is he an alcoholic and does he get violent when he drinks?

L: I think so. It depends on his mood. If he's drunk, he gets violent and starts an argument.

R: Does he get physical when he gets violent?

L: Yes, he does that to my mom and when this happens, I run out of my room and jump on him and it sometimes happens to me too. Last ear he was so rude to me and my sister. He said something to me and I didn't hear him and he thought I was being rude to him and he grabbed me by my hair and I grabbed a knife and threatened to stab him. I felt bad afterwards and apologized.

R: It sounds as though it can be very scary living at your house sometimes. Would you describe yourself as an optimist or a pessimist?

L: I try and look on the bright side and think that things will be fine.

R: What are your feelings towards your school? Do you feel that you belong and do you feel any loyalty or pride in being a participant of this school?

L: I do feel that I belong. This is a good school with good teachers.

R: Can you tell me of a time when you demonstrated determination and perseverance?

L: Um ... like the time in primary school that I told you about.

R: If you died today, how would people describe you at your funeral?

L: I'm sure they'd describe me as a good person.

R: (laughs) Could you tell me more about that?

L: I'm caring and kind.

R: What do you think about your life? Would you feel comfortable sharing thoughts about this with me?

L: I'm not happy with my life but I'm not unhappy either. It's all right.

R: Do you have personal goals and dreams that you should like to realize? What are they?

L: I'd like to good at school, get matric, study whatever I want, get a good job.

R: How dependent are you on other people for your emotional survival?

L: I'm not very dependant... I sometimes need someone to cheer me up.

R: Do you use substances like alcohol and drugs?

L: Definitely not.

R: What do people around you think of this?

L: Some people may think it's good to do and other may think it's not so good.

R: What role does humour play in your life?

L: Quite a big role. It cheers me up.

R: Tell me a story of a child that grew up and in spite of challenges that he/she faced, was able to be successful.

L: I don't know a story about that.

R: Tell me a story of how you were able to overcome challenges in your personal life, family life or in your community.

L: Um ... well, I like ... like I said. My parents got divorce, my father left home, I was bad in primary school and now I'm better in high school.

R: What would you say were the personal characteristics that helped you to overcome difficult obstacles in your life?

L: I was persevering, didn't give up easily, I was caring and I wasn't going to do something stupid.

R: Who believed in and supported you the most during this time?

L: My mother and friends.

COLLAGE

I have the past, present and future and I've got a whole lot of faces showing emotion. In the past I had a whole bunch of sad emotions. I was unhappy. I was unsure. I wasn't very confident and now in the present I'm a bit better. I'm not so sad anymore and in the future I have a bunch of happy faces.

INTERVIEW 8: Using the adapted Child and Youth Resilience Measure
Table D8: PARTICIPANT 8 (non-resilient)

Age	Gender	Grade	Risk factors inferred from interview and educator information	Protective factors inferred from interview
18	F	12	Adopted, mother died, father alcoholic, brother drug addict, physical abuse	Supportive friends, supportive educators, supportive aunt.

R: How do you, your family and your community experience bad things that happen?

L: Well, we don't really speak about it.

R: What meaning do you attach to bad experiences?

L: Well, I think to myself that people don't really speak about it, but it depends on the situation. Where I stay it happens a lot that people don't speak about bad things that happen, not because of me but because of just where I am. Sometimes I keep in all my anger and then I blow up.

R: Do you feel better once you've done that?

L: I don't get very far with it but yes, I do feel better afterwards.

R: What do people do to handle that which they experience?

L: They drink, take drugs and forget about their problems or just are not around those people who give them problems.

R: What do they say about the bad things when they happen?

L: Either they don't care or they do care or they don't want to speak about it.

R: Who thinks of solutions to the problems first?

L: There's no-one in our family who really thinks of solutions. If I see something in the house that is going to cause a problem, I just try and avoid it or I do something about it before the conflict starts.

R: Tell me more about that.

L: I dunno. There are plenty of examples but I can't think of any at the moment.

R: What are the kinds of things which are most challenging for teenagers who grow up in your community?

L: Well, I'd say friends, peer pressure, schoolwork, being with their family, going out with their family because they'd rather go with their friends.

R: What role do your friends play in your life?

L: My friends play a very big role because if I have problems I speak to them and tell them everything and if I don't want to be at home and I don't want to be around the problem, I go to them. They play a very big role.

R: How do they contribute to your identity (i.e. to the person that you are)?

L: Well, they try and tell me if I've done something wrong and I mustn't do that or they tell me what they think is right and what they will do.

R: What kind of friend are you? What do you contribute to your friendships?

L: Basically the same. I help them and tell them what I would do; what they must do and what they must say. Basically we're always together. We're very close.

R: How accepting is your community towards teenagers' problem behaviour(s)?

L: Well, the community actually knows what's going on. They are intolerant. They don't care and they turn a blind eye.

R: Can you tell me more about that?

L: Well, clubs and places that are for under 18's. Children go there and alcohol gets sold to them and drugs.

R: Do you belong to any community organizations?

L: No.

R: Do you feel equal to other people?

L: No.

R: Are there people with whom you do not feel equal?

L: Well, it depends. There are people who either think they're better than anyone else because they get spoilt more and they get anything that they want and that's how I think people why people think they're better than you. It's just the way they are.

R: So, if I understand you correctly you're saying that if people have more material things, they think they're better than others?

L: Just the way they are ... I can say a few people ... we used to be friends but now we hardly greet each other and we're in the same class as well. They compare themselves to other people and they just think they're the best.

R: What makes the difference? Material things?

L: Ja, like little things. Small little things.

R: What do they do to make you feel this way?

L: Lots of conflict recently, lots of bad vibes. They try and cause trouble for other people because they're jealous and they want this or they want that or they try and cause conflict and they try and cause trouble.

R: What does it mean to you, your family and your community to be healthy, now and when you were younger?

L: Um, for me to be healthy you have to be healthy to live every day.

R: Can you describe how your parents/care-givers cared/look(ed) after you?

L: Ja, I was looked after very well. I was actually very spoilt and got what I wanted until a certain few years where everything changed.

R: When did it change?

L: In about standard 5. I had to start living and doing things for myself and nothing was done for me.

R: What happened to change things?

L: Well, my mom died and I was in standard 4. My dad's new girlfriend, his (father's) drinking, my brothers and my friends.

R: So, you had to grow up very quickly?

L: Ja. I've found that I'm a much stronger person. I'm actually grateful in a way and I know how to handle situations, situations that I probably wouldn't have known how to handle otherwise.

R: What kind of situations?

L: I dunno. Lots of things like ... it depends on the situation. Like some people don't even know how to put on a stove ... simple things. I can't think of specific examples. I stand up for myself. I say what I want to say and I don't really care about what other people think.

R: What expectations do they have of you that they convey to you?

L: Well, my dad expects me to pass and leave school and get a job and do well and make money. That's what I think. I don't really know.

R: Can you describe the nature of the relationship that you have with your parents/care-givers?

L: "Hello, goodbye. Where are you going? When will you be back?"

R: Do you and your parents/care-givers participate in any leisure activities together?

L: No.

R: How does your family express itself/communicate?

L: Well, I'd actually say that the family communicates more with me than they do with my dad. If they phone, they phone me and invite us there for the day. There's conflict between them and my dad but they don't have anything against us. Yes, it depends who it is: my dad's side of the family or my mom's side of the family.

R: How do you know what they think of you?

L: What they say to me when I see them ... They say I'm looking good, how's school going, what do you want to do after school ... That if I need help I must come to them. They know my situation at home.

R: How does your family monitor you in order to know where you are and what you are doing?

L: I leave a letter. They phone me and we sms.

R: How do you know how to behave in certain social situations and with certain people?

L: The way I was brought up. I can see how other people are behaving at places.

R: How well do you do in social situations?

L: I actually love going out and like to be in social situations. I prefer it to being at home.

R: Are you popular?

L: Amongst my friends ... we don't compare ... we're all the same.

R: Do others think good things of you?

L: Amongst my family and friends, yes. There have been stories that have come out about me.

R: Has this changed over time?

L: At the moment I'm a druggie amongst certain people and my friends know for a fact that it's not true. And, my friends who are not my friends anymore are just

jealous and they're trying to make my life miserable because I'm not friends with them anymore.

R: How easily do you find it to communicate with others of all ages?

L: I communicate better with older people and my close friends and guys – not girls. And younger people, I dunno ... younger than 6 ... I dunno.

R: Do you have a role model?

L: No.

R: Can you describe them and the qualities that you admire?

L: Nothing in specific, none that I can think of.

R: How would you describe someone who grew up faced with difficult circumstances yet managed to achieve success despite challenges?

L: Very strong ... brave.

R: Do you have any other meaningful relationships with people at school, at home or in your community?

L: Well, my friends and my boyfriend and certain family members.

R: Is there anyone in your life who has "been there" for you during challenging times in your life?

L: Well, my cousin and I are very close and my aunt. If I need something I go to her.

R: Why was/is this person important to you and what did/do they mean to you?

L: They always take me out of the place for a while and they'll tell me what to do and they'll always be there for me.

R: What do you do in order to be spiritually, physically, intellectually and emotionally strong?

L: I come to school, I do sport, hockey, which takes my mind off things that bother me. I go out with my friends and my boyfriend means a lot to me.

R: Are you assertive?

L: I don't let people walk all over me. I can be very straight forward if I want to be and I can be assertive if I want to be. I will tell a person what I think of them.

R: How do you show your assertiveness?

L: If I do something wrong, I'll admit it and be honest about it.

R: Can you describe you ability to solve problems?

L: Sometimes with certain things, it stays with me and bothers me all the time and with other things it's talked about and it comes to a solution.

R: Are your problem-solving abilities better or worse than other people's? How do you know this?

L: Sometimes better. Sometimes the talking helps; sometimes it doesn't. I think that everyone has their own preference on how to solve their problems.

R: Do you have a feeling of control over your world?

L: Not really. I don't know what to say.

R: What is your definition of success?

L: Finish school, get a job, have a nice wealthy family.

R: How do you feel when others around you experience success?

L: Sometimes jealous; sometimes I want to look up to them and try harder.

R: With how much uncertainty do you feel comfortable living?

L: Not a lot.

R: Would you describe yourself as an optimist or a pessimist?

L: Normally the same amount of positive and negative. It depends on the situation. A bit of both. It depends on the situation.

R: What are your feelings towards your school?

L: I'm proud that I'm in this school. I love the school although it has changed quite a bit but I like this school and I don't think I'll really fit in at any other school.

R: Do you feel that you belong and do you feel any loyalty or pride in being a participant of this school?

L: Yes. I feel that I belong and as I said, I like this school.

R: Can you tell me of a time when you demonstrated determination and perseverance?

L: After my mother's death ... I don't know if you mean it like this but I learnt a lot about myself. In many ways I can do things now that children my age need help with. I can do things myself. I've learnt lots of things. I can't think of definite things.

R: If you died today, how would people describe you at your funeral?

L: Probably a friendly person. I always make people laugh when they're sad. Honest, lively.

R: What do you think about your life?

L: It could be better. Also, I suppose if I try harder and I don't let others bring me down, it will be better.

R: Do you have personal goals and dreams that you should like to realize? What are they?

L: I'd like to have a stable family, better communication, after school get a job.

R: How dependent are you on other people for your emotional survival?

L: Not much. I control my own ... I sort out my problems myself.

R: Do you use substances like alcohol and drugs? What do people around you think of this?

L: Well, people around me do the same so ... I drink and I've taken drugs but I mean, ja, my friends, some of them have something against it and some of them don't. But, it's my life and lots of people don't actually know.

R: What role does humour play in your life?

L: A lot. Ja. Me and my friends do stupid things together which only we will find funny and then we laugh because of what we said or what we do.

R: Tell me a story of a child that grew up and despite challenges that he/she faced, was able to be successful.

L: I can't think of one.

R: Tell me a story of how you were able to overcome challenges in your personal life, family life or in your community.

L: Well, I just did what I thought was right and if I needed help, I'd ask someone who I thought would be able to help me with what I needed help with.

R: What would you say were the personal characteristics that helped you to overcome difficult obstacles in your life?

L: Well, I'm always friendly and happy and I don't show when something upsets me or is bothering me. All of my friends know me very well and can see if something is bothering me but my family don't always know.

R: Who believed in and supported you the most during this time?

L: My friends and my aunt.

COLLAGE

The participant points to her collage:

In the past I took on and off the tracks. I can be on and think everything is on track and then something can happen and everything is off track again. There's been lots of decision-making in my life. I've had to make a lot of decisions. There's been a lot of violence and abuse and upsets. (She points to the sad picture in her collage). There was sadness about everything and I was on drugs. There's been lots of competition between me and my brothers for example I was told that my brother can do that i.e. well at school and why can't you do that? My older brother was quite clever and he used to pass everything and they used to ask me why I can't do that.

The participant was asked about her experiences in making the "past" section of the collage. She replied:

Making it brought back memories and I felt strong that I went through all that and thinking that not many people of that age went through that stuff.

In the present I've got certain dreams and I feel that I get forced into doing certain things against my will and I get persuaded to do things that I don't want to do or go to. I have a nice friendship circle and there's a nice bond between me and my friends. There's smoking and problems at school and at home. Then I've got a

boyfriend and a lover which both go together and I feel a lot of love between us. The picture of drama means that there's always a lot of drama wherever I am. The word "fear" shows that I fear what is going to happen next and what a person's going to say or do. The picture of tears means that some days I cry for no reason. I am moody and take it out on my boyfriend.

In the future there's going to be lots of decision-making. I'd like to have a family one day and I'd like to be happy and well off and have physical and mental health.

„

ADDENDUM E

COLLAGES OF PARTICIPANTS

Participant 1

DRIVE-THRU

Take the pain out

VICTIM ALERT! YOUR CHILD MAY BE BEING BULLIED IF HE:

Participant 5

love...

Care for the Carers
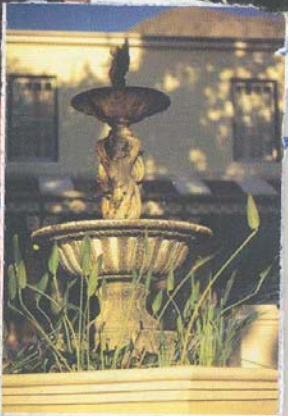
happy

heart.

real

achiever

It's important not
to live your life
thinking about what
others think of you."

sports

DO IT WORK

inner
support GET A

PAST!!

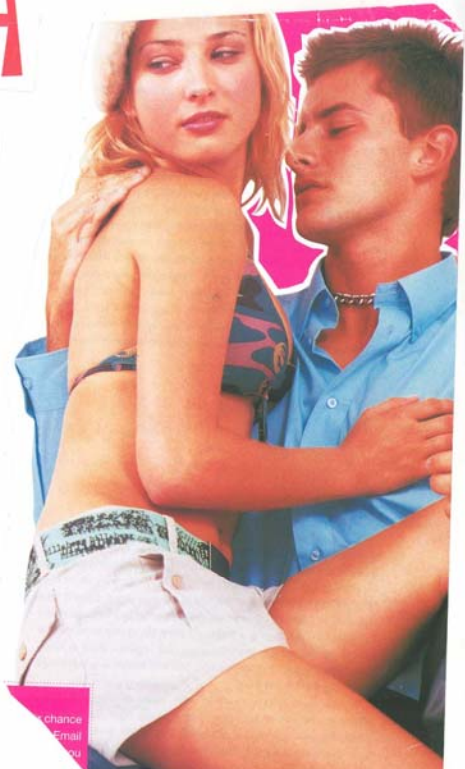Was happy then...

Death Murder death
us do part

how I miss

GARBAGE
BLEED
LIKE
ME

HIGH

Unhappy
Real Friend...

The low
down

sin

PRESANT

THE CALLING

TRUTH
the self-image issue

Happy

BEING RE-CYCLED BY GOD

Real Friends

I am happy!

brett anderson

a reason for living

the youth leader's big

Making Sense of Life & Love

Light up

SIN

Future

Business
Consulting

Youth
group

What Ever

GoD Wants

Me to do !

Councelling.

Pneumatix

Sin

Past...

attitude

Drugs

Abuse

violent

Decisions

tracks

On and off the

Competition

terrified'

PRESENT...

love

drama

'Fear

stylish

boyfriend

FRIENDSHIP

PROBLEMS

smoking

dreams

decisions

force

tears

FUTURE...

physical and mental health

decisions

family

of Mother's Day is

Be happy

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