Workplace Friendship and Anxiety: Organisational Insight through the

Psychodynamic Exploration of Interpersonal Relations

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DECLARATION

This thesis is a presentation of my own original research. Wherever contributions of others are included, every effort has been made to indicate this clearly by making reference to the literature.

ABSTRACT

In response to the increasing loneliness in contemporary society the UK Government has taken the agenda of the Jo Cox Commission seriously and employers are being urged to support intra-organisational relations (Marjoribanks, 2016). This reveals the need to build on the work of friendship scholars (Grey and Sturdy, 2007; Harding, 2013; Fritz, 2014; Rumens, 2017) who call for more critical empirical studies to appreciate workplace relations in all their emotional complexities.

This thesis critically investigates the emotional dynamics arising in connection with workplace friendships within the context of organisational efforts to eradicate favouritism. In tracing the conscious and unconscious responses from the organisational to the interpersonal level, my main aim was to explore the emotional dynamics of experiencing these relations. In doing so I have also investigated if and how organisational processes and practices can exacerbate individuals' psychic defensive apparatus surrounding these relations, resulting in affecting organisational identity as a whole.

My research is based on a single case study of a non-profit organisation that uses a bureaucratic procedure to manage social relations. This is to prevent conflicts of interest arising from making decisions that might be considered biased. I use semi-structured qualitative interviews influenced by free association interviewing (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000), life story interviewing

(Atkinson, 1998) and storytelling interviewing (Gabriel, 2000) to explore in-depth the workplace experiences of 30 organisational members, and to uncover collective defence mechanisms surrounding workplace friendship relations, following Menzies Lyth (1960). I also adopt concepts from the psychoanalytic school of Object Relations, notably transitional space (Winnicott, 1953; 1971), container-contained (Bion, 1962), and defence mechanisms (Klein, 1946) in combination with psychodynamic views of organisations to corroborate my empirical data.

This thesis offers new insights into the unconscious side of workplace friendship relations and in doing so, it uncovers the organisational manipulation and control of emotionality that have been unconsciously cast in the ethical language of 'defending' against favouritism. It thus urges organisational practitioners to reflect on chosen ways to fight unethical behaviour.

Introduction

Prologue

Almost 60 years have passed since Menzies Lyth (1960) famously demonstrated through a nursing study how organisational 'social systems' can function as collective defences against employees' anxieties, personal or/and induced by the nature of their work. Her study was based on Klein (1935, 1940, 1946; see also Segal, 1964; Mitchell, 1986; Likierman, 2001), an influential psychoanalyst from the Object Relations tradition, and was built on the psychodynamic work of Jaques (1953) and Trist and Bamforth (1951).

Her work continues to be an inspiration to many management and organisational scholars today, and has helped to uncover psychic dynamics of organisations, and thus has brought new insights into interpersonal relations unconsciously affected by so called the "paranoid-schizoid mode" of thinking and behaviour. When managers or employees act from this position, their "patterns of thought and experience [are] characterised by blame, scapegoating, idealisation, persecution and other distorted perceptions" (Krantz, 1997, p.3). This interferes with not only their personal ability to relate to others in the workplace, but also affects their ability to be spontaneous

(Krantz, 1997), to function "as an autonomous creative individual[s]" (Dubouloy, 2004, p.474), thus impairing the functioning of the organisation as a whole.

By way of example I recall a situation I found myself in when I was working as a professional in a not for profit sector organisation, which I then chose to focus on as my case study. I was in the middle of an informal workplace conversation with a highly respected senior manager when they invited me and my husband to have dinner with them one evening. I remember feeling enthusiastic as I had been recognised as a valued professional and an interesting person worthy of a potential friendship with a person higher in the organisational hierarchy. I considered this gesture to be an invitation to get to know them privately and to explore our commonalities outside of our workplace in the family setting. At the same time, I also remember feeling deflated, uneasy and confused. This was because following this warm invitation, I was reminded by this very manager of the Declaration of Interests form we both needed to fill in 'afterwards'. This was to ensure that our relation was not and would not be in conflict with organisational matters.

My heart sank and a plethora of questions was rising in me: Why would they act in this way? Did they not, after all, value me as a person worthy of their 'potential' friendship? What organisational, or even personal force was leading them to think that our relation, not even friendship at that point, could possibly cause a risk to our employer? Would our professional identities be tarnished

by having this friendship? Why was it perceived so dangerous, was everybody in such relations a villain? Were we committing an organisational 'sin' by thinking about socialising out of work? Who would be 'watching over' our dinner if we were to go ahead?

This simple invitation had contradicted my own ideals of working in not-for-profit organisations, and personal values of respect and freedom of thought. When encounters of private life are subjected to such silent scrutiny, where employees and managers feel persecuted even in their private life, to me in the first instance it resembled Foucault's analysis of the 'panopticon' where the inmates were subjected to the power discourses of prison to the point of self-inflicted discipline and control, even if they were not being watched (Kenny, Whittle and Willmott, 2011, p.22). I was intrigued and I could have indeed used the investigative lenses of 'surveillance' from critical management theory to understand what had just happened to both of us during this invitation for dinner. But I wanted to understand more, to look behind this power discourse. I wanted to reach the emotionality of this organisation that was not accessible to the human eye; I wanted to access the life 'below the surface' (Huffington et al., 2004), to uncover the root cause of such organisational thought and action. I wanted to help, like a psychoanalyst wants to help his/her patients. If this experience had left such a strong affective impression on me, how many more employees experienced the same whilst working for this or a similar employer?

After learning all I could about the psychoanalytic theory of Object Relations, starting with Gomez (1997) and working my way through the management and organisational literature influenced by this psychoanalytic stream, I started to interpret my own experience of the dinner invitation. I believed that the manager in question was acting out of the 'paranoid-schizoid' mode of thinking. I interpreted that their behaviour must have been a result of a social defence system created in this organisation. This organisation was conceiving personal and managerial fears of friendship at work, promoting impersonal behaviour and rational order of emotions, subjecting these to socially embedded control measures, and thus affecting organisational identity (Diamond, 1988, 1993).

The Significance of Studying Friendship Relations

Studying social relations matters. As shown in the prologue and what will be the main focus of this thesis, tracing interpersonal workplace relations through psychoanalytic lenses can open avenues to explore maladaptive forms of organisational behaviour (Jaques, 1955, p.479). For example, perceptions of persecutory anxiety in the managerial discourse (Krantz, 1997) could lead to uncovering various forms of control and manipulation of emotionality in the workplace as critiqued by Ilouz (2007).

First and foremost, I will provide a working definition of these relations and I will elaborate on the main theoretical themes that have informed my definition in chapter one Understanding Friendship at Work. I see the affectivity and intimacy as the most important characteristics of friendship attachment bonds in general life and at work. I recognise that the intensity of affects and intimacy would differ from person to person, as friendship affection and warmth could range from camaraderie to very close relations considered as akin to family ties (Spencer and Pahl, 2006; Grayling, 2013). A certain level of psychological distance between individuals is maintained at all times (Kant, 1797; Little, 1993; Ahmed, 1997).

Furthermore, trust and reciprocity have long been considered as important defining features of friendship (Aristotle, 2004 [350 BC]). Trust has been described as central to these relations (Pahl, 2000), and as a precondition to

psychological intimacy (Richardson and Ritchie, 1989; Rumens, 2008b; c). Reciprocity has been understood as an indicator of the quality of these relations, whilst recognising that giving and receiving between friends would not have to necessarily exist in comparable levels (Richardson and Ritchie, 1989, p.4; Rumens 2008b, p.9). However, since the "subjective meaning" that parties attribute to this relation can differ at any one time, one "may be faced [with] an entirely different attitude" from the other (Weber, 1962, p.64), and this attitude "may change" (ibid., p.65). Therefore it is important to realise that the awareness of this relation would come firstly from "its subject" rather than "the object" of affection (Derrida, 1994, p.10).

In friendship, individuals also long for (Bauman, 2003; Giddens, 1992) and are recognised for their uniqueness as human beings (Pahl, 2000; Harding, 2013). And finally, these relations are not entirely voluntary or spontaneous, because they are shaped by the social and cultural norms (Pahl, 2000; Rumens, 2008; Duck, 2011). In addition, as this thesis recognises the psychoanalytic lens of Object Relations as defined by Gomez (1997), the subjective experiences of friendships will also be thought of as determined by the individuals' psychological apparatus in relation to external reality. That is to stay, the internal conscious and unconscious dynamics of mental forces will be shaped to some extent by external environments and relations, such as friendship,

existing within them. These dynamics will equally determine to some extent subjective perceptions of these relations in the first place.

Organisational context problematizes friendships (Adams and Allan, 1998), especially their affective and intimate dimensions. Bridge and Baxter (1992, p.203) have already stated that communication between friends at work is coloured by the "added role component". That is, whilst alongside work related topics some of the private matters could be exchanged, the boundaries between public and private selves would be still "blurred" (Andrew and Montague, 1998). These boundaries affect what and how we share with our friends the feelings and emotions, our body language, and what we are willing to exchange. The effects of organisational setting on understanding of affectivity, intimacy, trust and the sense of equality as human beings will be explored in Chapter One in more detail. For now, I will concentrate on debating why is it worth studying workplace friendships in more detail.

With regards to challenges and opportunities of friendship at work, the managerialist research into workplace relations has already identified many of these. To name a few, amongst the negative attributes of these relations might belong information leakage (Conway, 2001), spreading of gossip or an increase in office romances (Berman, West and Richter, 2002).

Amongst potential positive attributes one should acknowledge a potential to increase employees' performance through instrumental support received from

friends (Pedersen and Lewis, 2012); dissemination of information leading to collaboration, creativity and innovation (Farrell, 2001; Waber, 2013; Conway, 2001); and positive employees' appraisal of their personal 'fit' with the organisation leading to organisational citizenship behaviour (Kim, Lin and Kim, 2017). As practice literature shows, a for-profit organisation called Zappos, based in Las Vegas, prides themselves in having the culture of friendship and family, and turning over several billion dollars a year (Hsieh, 2010).

However, social relations at work, whilst valuable to organisations, can equally be 'misused' to cover up some of the downsides of working life such as low employment status, unattractive remuneration packages, or emotional labour as shown in the study of shop assistants in south-east Britain (Pettinger, 2005). Even in call centres, often critiqued for their exploitative practices and effects of social isolation, employees were pledging being 'committed' to the organisation if they had quality relations with their workplace friends (Milner, Russell and Siemers, 2010). Thus adopting critical lenses, organisations not only use "workers' tacit skills but [also] their social milieu" (Pettinger, 2005, p.54) as a resource on their trajectory for success and profitability which has an exploitative effect.

Aside from this important issue, also the benefits and the negative consequences from interpersonal relations between individuals should not be overlooked. Year-on-year research undertaken by Relate, the UK's largest

provider of relationship support, shows the importance of the social relations in life and at work. A recent report (Relate, 2017) cites numerous research studies showing the impact of positive relations on the improved physical and psychological wellbeing of individuals, as well as on their increased sense of belonging in the community.

To illustrate, sociologists Spencer and Pahl (2006, p.199) interviewed 70 people across the UK in depth, investigating the role of their personal communities in general life, including friendships, as well as measuring their mental wellbeing via a General Health Questionnaire. As for friendship based communities, in their sample, the researchers did not find negative indicators of poor mental health (p.200). With regards to physiological wellbeing, especially at work, "subjective experience[s]" of positive social interactions do have an instant and also long term impact on the physical conditions of the human body (Heaphy and Dutton, 2008, p.138). These are associated with strengthening the cardiovascular system, the neuroendocrine and immune systems. In other words, such interactions have been linked with positive results in blood pressure and heart rate; in the levels of cortisol (stress hormone) and oxytocin; and in our immune cells' reactions to negative exposures to for example long term stress (Heaphy and Dutton, 2008, pp.142-150).

Yet still it is being reported that "more than one in eight (13%)" of the UK residents do not have close friendships at all in their lives or at work (Relate, 2017, p.8), with this figure increasing every year. The New Economics Foundation (The Cost of Loneliness to UK Employers, 2017) estimates that over one million employees in the UK feel lonely; and that the total cost of this loneliness to employers, considering ill-health, decreased productivity and heightened turnover, is £2.5 billion a year. Combating loneliness has recently also entered parliamentary debates thanks to the Jo Cox Commission, with the charity Relate (Marjoribanks, 2016) urging employers more than ever to support workplace relations and to train HR departments in taking these agendas further. Management and organisational scholars also advocate 'the protection' of these relations, and call for changes in the workplace policies to do so (Grey and Sturdy, 2007; Harding, 2013; Fritz, 2014; Rumens, 2017).

Workplace friendship is an emotionally complex type of relation and its potential negative consequences for individuals cannot be overlooked. It has captured not only the public tabloids' attention, but also academic appraisal. For example, Pahl (2002, p.420), an influential author in the sociology of friendship, has highlighted the questionable appointment of the Chancellor Gordon Brown who had been a long term friend of the Prime Minister at the time, Tony Blair. Such affective relations have been shown as problematic in the workplace as, putting aside the stake of the organisational reputation, or even that of the

country, friendships can evoke negative emotions in the parties involved. These can reach as far as experiencing anxiety when one has to reprimand a friend (Morrison and Nolan, 2007a), or evoke negative stress responses when friendship breaks down and friends have to continue to work together (Sias, 2006).

Friendships have long been considered as affectionate relations (e.g. Roseneil and Budgeon, 2004; Raymond, 1986; Carrier, 1999; Boyd and Taylor, 1998). Because of their affective and intimate nature, it is being argued here, workplace friendships are at loggerheads with how 'organisational rationality' is enforced, "bent on the eradication of emotions or at least keeping them off limits" (Bauman, 1994, p.5). It is the ongoing emphasis on the following of rules in these institutions, suppressing emotionality under the cover of risk management, that I believe is also responsible for the reduction in friendship relations in the workplace.

If workers will continue being treated as incapable of exercising "*moral judgements* [when working alongside their friends]*,* and are consequently not considered to be *moral subjects* – that is, persons capable of bearing a *moral responsibility,* not just a legal one, for their deeds*" (Bauman, 1994, p.3), the percentage of loneliness in the workplace that Relate (2017) keeps reporting on every year on will continue to rise. Loneliness is not only damaging for

individuals, but equally costly for employers and central to governmental debates.

Approaches to Studying Workplace Friendship

As highlighted in the previous section, it is considered paramount to know more about workplace friendship relations, how they operate and shape individuals' and organisational identities. But as Grey and Sturdy (2007) emphasise, they cannot and should not be studied solely from an organisational or individual perspective. Organisations and their members are nested or "embedded" in one another and thus friendships should be considered "both [as] an organisational phenomena and [as] a lived experience" (Grey and Sturdy, 2007, p.164).

Understanding these affective attachments with emotional investments between individuals requires paying attention to organisational arrangements. In order to progress from the intra-personal level, to the interpersonal and then organisational level, we need a 'psychodynamic' [1] conception of organisations

[1] The term 'dynamics' means the opposition of "mental forces" in the mind (Gabriel, 2008, p.238). A psychodynamic approach to organisations refers to looking at organisations through psychoanalytically informed lenses (Gabriel and Carr, 2002). It is mainly associated with the Tavistock Institute, however, in practice researchers and consultants may use similar terms such as "system psychodynamics", "psychoanalysis of organisations" or even more specifically "socioanalysis" (Long, 2013, p.xxi). In this thesis I will refer to 'psychodynamic perspectives' when I will discuss psychoanalysis in relation to the organisational context; and I will refer to 'psychoanalytic perspectives' when I will be referring to concepts from psychoanalytic theory.

and workplace friendships which extends our understanding of these relational dynamics in workplaces on the conscious, but also the unconscious level.

This thesis therefore builds on the existing workplace friendship research in that it adopts a psychodynamic perspective, following the pioneering work of the Tavistock intervention research tradition (Jaques, 1953; Menzies Lyth, 1960a; Jaques, 1955; Menzies Lyth, 1991; Trist and Bamforth, 1951) to pull out the implicit, the covert sides of these emotional relations that can influence positively, but equally can harm the healthy functioning of both individuals and organisations. Before going into specifics about what we could be gaining from the psychodynamically oriented friendship research in organisations, I will introduce some context on the interdisciplinary social relations research, going as far back as the 1920s.

Due in large part to the Hawthorne Studies (1924-1927), organisational research acknowledged socialising at work as an important element of organisational effectiveness (Linstead, Fulop and Lilley, 2009, p.152). The Studies highlighted the difference between the formal relations influenced by management systems, organisational goals and technology; and informal relations developing on the shop floor through staff interacting with each other, gossiping, joking, and forming informal groups (Morgan, 2009, p.35). Furthermore, Mayo was also trained in Jungian psychoanalysis, and shaped the focus of these studies on the emotional side of the organisation (Illouz,

2007, p.12). He used his skills in training researchers in using the therapeutic interview style to elicit "uncensored speech and emotions and [to] build trust" (Illouz, 2007, p.13).

The Hawthorne Studies have highlighted that if an organisation wished to be successful in the marketplace, it should ensure that "workplace relations contained care and attention to workers' feelings" (Illouz, 2007, p.12). This is an interesting "universal" finding, since all Mayo's research subjects were female, and thus we could see how so called feminine traits of focusing on emotional life and "selfhood" entered the managerial language, but "the process of redefining masculinity inside the workplace" started (Illouz, 2007, p.15).

This is the time when the "twentieth-century culture became "pre-occupied" with emotional life" at work as well as in general life (Illouz, 2007, p.6). The therapeutic language was introduced by psychologists into management and organisation studies most notably between the First and Second World Wars, influencing new management theory (Illouz, 2007, p.6). A new way of considering positioning of the self in relation to others was born, notably when drawing on one's past', influenced by a Freudian thesis spreading through American corporate culture at the time (Illouz, 2007, p.7). The individuals "were made" to focus on their emotional life, and managers started to display "so

called feminine attributes, such as paying attention to emotions, controlling anger, and listen empathetically to others" (Illouz, 2007, p.16).

Yet the Human Relations school, following Scientific Management, still considered emotions and emotional relating in organisations as "passions" to be managed, as "a threat to the order of modernity" (Hancock and Tyler, 2001, p.129). Thus any decision-making in the organisational setting that would have been influenced by emotions was regarded as "irrational, unconscious, and corporeal" (Hancock and Tyler, 2001, p.129).

However studies of interpersonal relations in the workplace continued to rise and one such classic study into informal relations at work is 'Banana Time' (Roy, 1959). It is not yet a study of friendship at work, but rather of an "informal self-organisation" at work influenced by hierarchical and group identity (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999, p.66). This study pitched acquaintanceships at work as distinctive relations from friendships based on the knowledge of colleagues for "smooth passing of the working time", restricted intimacy in interactions, and contact within working hours only (Morgan, 2009, p.40).

In the 1980s, following the Human Relations school and the studies that built on 'Banana Time', management scholars as well as practitioners started to be interested in "the benefits of creating social cohesion and value consensus through organisational 'communities' " (Thompson and McHugh, 2009, p.51). This is when the focus on the informal organisation started to flourish and

management was noticing much more "the internal dynamics of the small group" (Thompson and McHugh, 2009, p.51). They began to consider how "a degree of self-governance" within informal groupings could work in favour of organisational effectiveness (Thompson and McHugh, 2009, p.51). These considerations then led towards an increase in the interest of team working in the management and organisational literature in the 1980s.

However, the Human Relations school and also the behavioural and group psychology that followed were still focusing on a managerialistic way of increasing workers' productivity, rather than using the concepts of meaning created at work, sense-making or even unconscious processes accompanying working life (Linstead, Fulop and Lilley, 2009, pp.152-153) and thus enhancing the understanding of workplace friendships.

Since the 1990s, however, a "new paradigm" of personal social relations has been established and it has attracted a focus on friendship dyads with an interdisciplinary approach (Adams and Allan, 1998, p.2). For example, processes and structures of these relations per se have been examined by Blieszner and Adams (1992) and the context where these relations commence, flourish, or cease to exist had been highlighted by Adams and Allan (1998). The workplace friendship literature started to grow mainly in sociology scholarship around this time (e.g. Adams and Allan, 1998; Blieszner and Adams, 1992; Spencer and Pahl, 2006; Pahl, 2000; Roseneil and Budgeon,

2004). It has become an influential starting point for management and organisational scholars interested in workplace friendship studies as it is sociology

> that understands the porous and mutable nature of these relations and considers the social and personal factors that influence their role, place and meaning in the workplace (Rumens, 2017, p.1149).

Thanks to the growing literature that stressed the importance of emotions in corporate life (e.g. Hochschild, 1979, 1983, 2000; Fineman, 1993, 2003; Watson, 1994; Gabriel, 2000; Hancock and Tyler, 2001; see also Pahl, 2000 and Grey and Sturdy, 2007), building on the sociology on friendship, workplace friendship scholarship has been growing steadily ever since. In the management and organisation literature friendship has been studied on a broad spectrum using the positivistic lenses to interpretative lenses.

In the 21st century we also talk about 'post-positivism' as an approach to researching workplace relations that has evolved from positivism and conceptualises these relations "as "real" entities" existing "beyond human perception" - often involving researching noticeable communication patterns or attitudes and resulting in predictions of organisational outcomes (Sias, 2009, pp.5-10).

A recent example of the positivist approach is social network research in a start-up unit of a larger firm that examined friendships as informal networks that

carry trust, social support and identity formation and at the same time impact positively on the psychological contract that an employee has with an organisation (Ho, Rousseau and Levesque, 2006). Another example is research into government departments in South Korea and the USA with findings that friendship relations at work impact positively on work attitudes (Song, S., & Olshfski, 2008). Most recent is a meta-analysis of friendship research produced by Chung *et al.* (2017) that argues how friendship groups are better performers than acquaintanceship groups. Positivist approaches to workplace friendship research have however been criticised for looking at direct contributions of these relations to workplace productivity (Rumens, 2017; Grey and Sturdy, 2007).

There is also a strong stream of friendship research looking purely at communication patterns and measurable outcomes (Sias and Perry, 2004; Sias et al., 2004; Sias, 2006; Sias, Gallagher, Kopaneva and Pedersen, 2012; Bridge and Baxter, 1992). This research is calling for more studies of observable behaviour in maintaining workplace friendships (Sias et al., 2012). And last but not least, a large area of friendship research also exists within positive organisational scholarship examining, for example, how these relations contribute to positive identity construction at work (Dutton, Roberts and Bednar, 2010).

On the other side of the spectrum we can find more interpretive research largely influenced by the sociology of friendship as highlighted above. This type of research looks at personal lived experiences of workplace friendships, sense making and meaning making (Rumens, 2017). Here belong workplace studies of, for example, friendships of gay men (Rumens, 2008a; 2008b; 2009; Rumens and Kerfoot, 2009; Rumens, 2011) highlighting how gender impacts on understanding of these relations, or an autobiographic account of women's friendship positioned as an act of resistance in gendered workplaces (Andrew and Montague, 1998).

A prominent UK based workplace friendship scholar Rumens (2008a;b; 2009, 2011; Rumens and Kerfoot, 2009) has most recently invited social scientists to conduct more studies of these relations from an interpretative perspective, using the following frameworks based on the sociology of friendship: "workplace friendship as practices, workplace friendships as personal relations, and workplace friendships as social relations" (2017, p.1156).

None of these scholars above have, however, highlighted the use of psychoanalytic lenses to further the understanding of how these relations are emotionally processed by individuals at work, involving their conscious and unconscious psychological functioning, and how they in this way underpin organisational pathologies.

The advantage of using a psychoanalytically inspired theorisation of these relations in organisations is seen as enabling possible interpretations into the unconscious dimensions of these relations, whilst "engaging with the emotional and political contradictions that are integral to organisational life" (Vince, 2016, p.800).

It is Hollway (2011, p.56) that urges the social scientists to consider "emotions (or affect)" at all times in their work, as without these "meaning making is impossible". A 'psychodynamic perspective' is the only perspective that enables an in-depth exploration of emotionally complex friendship relations, as well as their related socially structured anxieties in a given organisational environment (drawing on Stapley, 1996, p.49). Looking at human experiences in organisations through the British Object Relations psychoanalytic framework, as will be shown in this thesis, can enhance not only the study of emotional processes but also that of organisational behaviour more generally, how it is shaped by conscious and unconscious processes and thus affecting the nature of organisational identity, defined by Diamond (1988, 1993, 2017) as collective unconscious patterns of behaviour and thoughts of organisational members.

Synopsis

This thesis closely focuses on the intersubjective[2] nature of friendship relations, and the impact of these meaningful social phenomena on forming organisational identity. In particular it is concerned with a critical investigation of the emotional dynamics arising in connection with friendships, especially within the context of organisational principles of rationality. In doing so, this thesis also investigates the circumstances under which organisational processes and practices can exacerbate individuals' psychic defensive apparatus surrounding these relations, thus affecting individuals' as well as organisational identity.

Key insights will be dawn by interpreting the unique stories of employees and managers of a not-for-profit organisation which has adopted a 'conflict of interests' policy that also covers friendship relations in order to maintain a fair and equitable workplace. Whilst I cannot generalise "empirically", I will make certain "procedural generalisations" (Watson, 2001, xiv) based on the uniqueness of this unusual research settings that gave me an opportunity to

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[2] Emotions in organisations are researched as properties of individuals, their own reactions to external environment, or as collective responses that are central to organisational life and the functioning (e.g. Fineman, 2003) as pointed out by Handy and Rowlands (2016). Researching emotions of organisational members as "intersubjective, collective phenomena" means looking at emotions and organisational context as interacting with and thus influencing/ shaping each other (Handy and Rowlands, 2006, p.3).

explore the process of rationalisation of emotionally complex friendship relations. One can then generalise that the way the management of this organisation went about protecting against favouritism and bias has the potential of evoking strong emotional response in organisational members that can be potentially harmful to individuals as well as the organisation as a whole.

The research questions that have guided this research are as follows:

RQ1) What are the intersubjective collective emotional properties of workplace friendship arising in a particular organisational context?

RQ2) How could collective anxieties/frustrations/fears in relation to workplace friendships be exacerbated by organisational policies and practices?

RQ3) What are the nature of collective defence mechanisms surrounding workplace friendships in a particular organisational context?

RQ4) What are the opportunities and challenges of experiencing workplace friendship in terms of forming close attachments within organisational boundaries?

Firstly, in the literature review, a cross-disciplinary study on friendship at work will be undertaken to position friendship as affectively complex relations (see chapter one). Emotions in organisations will then be explored against the organisational principles of rationality and morality (see chapter two).

An overview of psychoanalysis in organisational research will be presented, and the benefits of using the Object Relations school will be explored. The social defence theory framework will be introduced and a psychodynamic conception of friendship relations and organisations will be put forward.

The methodology will follow with outlining the research philosophy and principles of interpretivism, then proceeding with the research strategy of a case study. Written documents, semi-structured interviews and autoethnography will all considered as sources of data for this study. Data analysis will follow the principles of psychoanalytically informed discourse analysis and thematic analysis, and will be divided into two parts – organisational pathology and the opportunities and challenges of workplace friendship, as follows.

Through social defence theory (Menzies Lyth, 1960; Jaques, 1953, 1955) the unconscious dimensions of interpersonal relating will be positioned against a bureaucratic measure governing friendships and the discourse of professionalism. In doing so, it will be explored how organisational identity (Diamond, 1988, 1993) has been affected.

This approach is known as 'psychoanalysing' organisations as understood by Gabriel (1999b), Gabriel and Carr (2002) and Gabriel (2008, p.237). In other words, the organisation will be approached in the same way as a psychoanalyst would treat an ill patient (Gabriel and Carr, 2002). Pathological processes of

anxiety and paranoia will be interpreted alongside organisational attitude towards workplace friendship. The studied organisation will be 'metaphorically diagnosed' (Sievers, 2006, p.111) as displaying neurotic traits in terms of a defensive collective mode of functioning surrounding friendship.

Secondly, the opportunities and challenges of experiencing friendships will be explored on an interpersonal level within a given organisational context, thus organisations will be 'studied psychoanalytically' (Gabriel and Carr, 2002; Gabriel, 2008). A careful interpretation of the unique friendship experiences will be based on the premise that these relations are very complex and emotionally charged (e.g. Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991; Tidwell, Reis and Shaver, 1996; Carrier, 1999; Mikulincer and Shaver, 2007). I will show that friendship relations can not only evoke in individuals psychological defence mechanisms, but by exploring them as 'transitional' relations drawing on Winnicott's work (1953, 1965, 1971, 1989) and 'containing' relations drawing on Bion's work (1961, 1962), I will evidence how they can shape subjectivity and intersubjectivity. Finally I will draw out challenges that these relations pose to both individuals and organisations, namely, the workings of friendship envy, the experiences of friendship loyalty and ambivalence.

This structure of the analysis will enable progressing through the emotional dynamics of workplace friendship but to shedding light on the areas of organisational bureaucracy and culture that might at first seem to be 'protecting'

staff members against potential anxieties arising from the intricacies of workplace relations in relation to favouritism and bias. But as will be seen later on, if such protection is taken too far, both individuals and organisations will become the carriers of harmful consequences.

The main assumption that this thesis is based on is that organisational members are able to psychologically function from a 'depressive' position (Klein, 1946; Segal, 1964; Mitchell, 1986) when it comes to workplace friendship relating, and they should be encouraged to do so. This means that they are able to show interest in others, be inquisitive rather than fearful of meaningful relating and able to manage rather than being avoidant of conflict; also able to display the emotional states of "guilt, the desire for love, mourning or reparation" in organisational settings (Sievers, 2006, p.112).

In other words, organisational members should be encouraged, and allowed to display a certain amount of mature readiness, so they can meaningfully relate to others, and deal with potential relational anxieties, rather than defending against these relations by methods that have their roots in early infancy. This assumption serves my psycho-social inquiry into organisational motives to introduce methods of control aimed at workplace friendships.

Theoretically this thesis contributes conceptually to workplace friendship scholarship in terms of adopting psychodynamic lenses when approaching the interpretation of these highly affective and intimate relations in a unique

organisational setting preferring rational thought and behaviour. In this way I provide new possibilities for understanding of emotional struggles that accompany friendship relations when they are subjected to organisational control, and new avenues for understanding of how friendships shape emotional processing of experiencing organisational reality.

I also acknowledge that these relations are "embedded" in organisations in accordance with Grey and Sturdy (2007, p.164), and I evidence how a psychodynamic conception of workplace friendship relations enables to appreciate them on the intra-personal, interpersonal and collective level. I therefore show the value that psychoanalytic Object Relations framework brings to the study of friendship relations.

In doing so, I also contribute to psychoanalytically oriented management and organisational research, notably the research studies influenced by the Object Relations tradition. Specifically, through studying workplace friendship, I identify organisational pathologies of paranoia and anxiety - metaphorically speaking the signs of organisational neuroticism (Kets de Vries and Associates, 1991; Krantz, 1997, 2006) that run through organisational identity (Diamond, 1988, 1993, 2017) in relation to workplace friendship.

Finally, this study has also implications to the study of organisational behaviour more widely. By using friendship as a method of inquiry with psychodynamic lenses I uncover on one hand the signs of maladaptive organisational

behaviour identified by Jaques (1955, p.479) as "manifestations of unreality, splitting, hostility, suspicion". On the other hand I identify signs of organisational misbehaviour (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999), namely workplace bullying, insubordination, unfairness with regards to the followership of policies, mistrust and betrayal. All these behaviours are found to be 'hidden' realities of the studied non-profit organisation which strives to be fair and just in their conduct, yet as it will be shown, the by-product of such ethical behaviour is the unconscious demonisation of organisational relations.

Chapter one: Understanding Friendship at Work

1.1 Introduction

Friendship has been a central topic of reflection in human life since 500 years BC. The beginnings of these reflections can be found in the philosophical work of Aristotle, Plato and Cicero (Derrida, 1994). Yet the famous truism can be found in almost all friendship literature: 'friendship is hard to define'.

Many researchers have picked up on a tendency of their participants to idealise the meaning of the word 'friend' (e.g. Rubin, 1985; Gouldner and Symons Strong, 1987; Spencer and Pahl, 2006). One of the possible explanations could be that when abstract matters are investigated, there is an increased tendency to idealise such concepts (Rubin, 1985). Or whilst being reflective about personal relations, people might be just expressing their wishes or ideals as exact opposites of their private circumstances.

Furthermore, when researching friendship, the research subjects can also act and present themselves differently to the researcher as opposed to how they have been perceived in their private life encounters. It is Harding (2013, p.42) who recalls a research encounter with a friend during which "a change in subject positions" occurred. The author perceived her friendship with a family

friend Frank as a joyful and reciprocal relation, emotionally expressive, where the discussions about his colleagues and customers at work were very vivid and frequent. However, once interviewed for research purposes, as Harding recalls, Frank altered his accounts of working life and focused on positive experiences and business success (Harding, 2013). In this situation, which resembles a formal rapport, Frank presented himself as a business owner looking for approval and recognition from Harding, not as his friend, but as a respected academic in management scholarship. Such 'change of subject positions' creates a unique barrier in researching friendship in terms of getting closer to understanding how this relation is subjectively experienced.

Rumens (2008, p.4) has already highlighted the interdisciplinary character of these relations, and how various facets have been developed by different disciplines ranging from anthropology, psychology and sociology to queer and feminist studies. His theorisation of friendship in gay men's lives stresses the variance in the importance that individuals put on these relations in general life and at work. With that said, what positive and negative affects do we subjectively experience, consciously and unconsciously, will also differ from person to person. This emotional complexity is what makes them such intriguing relations to explore, and an ideal platform to trace how affects unfold within organisational context.

In the following sections I will introduce the main theoretical themes that have shaped my answer to the ontological question of 'what is' workplace friendship in terms of affects and intimacy, 'who is' a workplace friend, and 'why' we initiate these relations in the first place. As friendship in the workplace within management and organisation studies has not received the same attention as friendship in general life (Harding, 2013, p.104), I will be drawing on this body of literature before reserving separate subsections to specifically problematise the workplace dimensions of affective and intimate relations. By doing so, I follow the assertion of the communication scholars Bridge and Baxter (1992, p.203) that workplace friendship contains an "added role component" which differentiates it from private life relations.

Before I proceed with the following discussion, I would like to elaborate on the understanding of affect across psychosocial and organisational studies, as there have been numerous interpretations of this concept (Fotaki, 2014).

Affect has been understood as part of the "inner energy" that fuels emotions (Illouz, 2007, p.2). Emotions are then conceptualised as "deeply internalised and unreflexive" parts of our actions that are, aside of our psychological state, influenced by cultural norms and social relations (Illouz, 2007, pp.2-3). We are often unaware of them: they are "pre-reflexive" (Illouz, 2007, p.3).

Fineman (2003, p.9) sees affect as covering both feelings and emotions, whilst distinguishing between these. In recognising that our experiences are socially

constructed, that is, impacted by social norms and impression management, emotions represent our 'outer' experience; what we emote can be generally observed, on "display"; and feelings are hidden from the eye of the observer (Fineman, 2003a, p.8). Moods represent feelings that last a long time.

There is also workplace friendship research arguing that "interpersonal affect regulation", that is deliberately trying to regulate or "shape others' feelings", is one of the influential factors for individuals to appraise their workplace friendships positively (Niven, Holman and Totterdell, 2012, p.778). In this research affect is equated with feelings in friendship relations.

Affects are also understood as including emotions and bodily experiences, thus being the link between bodies, when we encounter other people, enabling "the intersubjective transmission of intensity" that escapes our language (Fotaki, Kenny and Vachhani, 2017, p.6). Similarly as Illouz (2007, p.3) claims about emotions, all affects can be conceptualised as "pre-reflexively experienced through the body" (Fotaki, Kenny and Vachhani, 2017, p.7).

Ahmed (2004, p.28) discusses "affect as "readings of the bodies of others". In doing so, she argues that feelings convert quickly into the appraisal of others and "'it hurts' becomes, 'you hurt me', which might become, 'you are hurtful', or even 'you are bad'" (Ahmed, 2004, p.28). Therefore, affects influence sense-making of an encounter, the meaning making in the intersubjective space. And

meaning making through the power of feelings is what makes us human, alongside "culture, language, or discourse" (Chodorow, 1999, p.5).

To conclude, affect is an innate feature of all organisational interpersonal encounters (Fotaki, Kenny and Vachhani, 2017), and it will be understood here as encompassing emotions, feelings, moods, sentiments, drives and bodily responses, being "pre-reflexively experienced through the body" (Fotaki, Kenny and Vachhani, 2017, p.7), laden with energy and intensity, and thus helping to establish personal meanings of these interpersonal encounters (Ahmed, 2004).

When exploring the affective nature of friendship, it is not possible to cover all the affects that these relations attract. Therefore on the basis of philosophy, sociology and social psychology I will primarily focus on the affect of friendship love and friendship intimacy and how they shape the ontology of friendship relations. This is because friendship love has been the centre of friendship theorisation ever since the Ancient Greece. In fact, for Greek philosophers friendship was considered of a higher status than marriage (Raymond, 1986, p.224). Aside from philosophical understanding of what forms the friendship love can take, and how we can identify friendship relations, I will draw on sociology and social psychology to highlight the differences and similarities between romantic and friendship love.

Sociology will enable to consider the "individual aspiration and experience" whilst pointing out their "social and collective content" (Illouz, 2012, p.12). I will

be drawing on the context of dispersed communities, urban and suburban settings (Peel, Reed and Walter, 2009; Roseneil and Budgeon, 2004) when problematizing the nature of modern relations (Bauman, 2003; Giddens, 1991; Illouz, 2012) and highlighting their transient characteristics, the notion of self-love and the desire to be recognised.

Social psychology (e.g. Argyle, 1967; Hogg and Vaughan, 2014; Floyd, 2006) will help me to elaborate on other affects associated with love, and will provide different lenses from sociology in terms of understanding the circumstances of friendship initiation, such as the attractiveness arising in the proximity of the space and other similarities.

With regards to friendships being considered as intimate relations, philosophical lenses will be used to close the gap between affectivity and intimacy through the desire of self-disclosure (Kant, 1996). An interdisciplinary scholarship will then enable to closer define the meaning of the intimacy between friends. Sociological lenses (Illouz, 2007; Bauman, 2003) alongside the management scholarship (Hancock and Tyler, 2004; 2009) will be drawn on to understand the facets of modern emotional intimacy.

And finally I will devote my attention to the workplace context. I will consider how it shapes the nature of affects, their functions in 'blurring' the home/work boundaries, being political, driving the desire for recognition and the notion of friendship exclusivity. Before I will start exploring the emotionality of friendship

relations, I would like to establish their positioning in organisational structures, to which I now turn.

1.2 Positioning Workplace Friendship

Social relations are created by repeated social interactions and may be referred to as "social ties" or "connections" between people (Kirke, 2007, p.54). The intertwined social relations then create social networks (Kirke, 2007). Such relations can be classed as formal, informal and the 'in-between'. Formal relations are defined by corporate rules, such as relations between line managers and subordinates, or between clients and sales advisors (Carrier, 1999, p.21).

Friendship relations have been classed by organisational scholars as belonging to the informal parts of organisations (e.g. Mullins, 2007); they have been referred to as 'informal workplace relations' (Rumens, 2009); as well as 'non-work related relations' (Pettinger, 2005).

The informality may be linked to the fact that friendships have been described as spontaneous and voluntary personal social relations (Pahl, 2000). But they are not spontaneous or voluntary in their entirety. Duck (2011, p.14) for example strongly expresses his reservations with researching personal relations such as friendships based on the assumptions of voluntary

associations, and he stresses the impact of societal norms on our personal emotional restraint or control. He contends:

> In telling stories, relating to others, performing socially accepted rituals of relations, and maintaining both your relations and your personal freedom, you are not simply expressing personal choice or reacting to your own internal emotions. You are moulding your behaviour and your relations to forms imposed by a society outside of yourself (ibid, p.17).

In organisational settings, the impact of rules and regulations on one's behaviour and therefore on formation of friendships is even more evident than in general life. There is also pre-existing collegiality within the same organisational boundaries (Bridge and Baxter, 1992) and the impact of other variables, such as gender and sexuality (Rumens, 2008; 2009; 2011); all can be significant in the development of workplace friendship. Therefore one has to always take into account the context as it impacts on their construction, whether we are discussing community, network or workplace (Adams and Allan, 1998).

Yet, one does maintain a certain amount of spontaneity and personal freedom in friendship. To start with, there is no contract between individuals that sets out or imposes its rules and regulations (Grayling, 2013; Pahl, 2000). Friendships may also begin at work, but they are not 'defined' by the employer (e.g. Carrier, 1999; Rumens, 2011). Indeed, "[if] we feel obliged to be a friend,

then it is not true friendship", contends Pahl (2000, p.61). And because of these attributes - relative spontaneity and freedom - friendship stands out from other social relations in the workplace, which are controlled by the organisation (Rubin, 1985).

Therefore friendships at work cannot be classed simply as informal relations. They do not just belong to the 'white spaces' between the 'black' vertical reporting lines of an organisational chart (Rummler and Brache, 1991). They are not 'private affairs', but they blur the boundaries between private life and work life (Pettinger, 2005; Andrew and Montague, 1998). Because friendships are developed and maintained *alongside* and *within* formally defined employment rules, and last beyond the organisational boundaries, it is considered more appropriate to refer to these relations as "blended" (Bridge and Baxter, 1992, p.200; my emphasis) or "non-formal" (Mao, 2006, p.1826) rather than to address them as 'informal'.

The emotional properties of friendship as affective and intimate relations will now follow.

1.3 Affective Relations

As the academic debates on friendship in philosophy, sociology and social psychology all have in common the affect of love, this will be a natural starting point for a critical discussion. At first the love for a friend will be considered in terms of what forms can it take, how and why it arises in contemporary relations and how it compares to a romantic love. A critical consideration will be also given to the workplace dimension of friendship, highlighting the presence of negative emotions such as deception, stress or anxiety; alongside positive emotions, such as laughter and desire for recognition. This is where I will also discuss how affectivity in friendship can become the source of judgement of third parties in the workplace, and thus the display of affectivity will be problematised.

In ancient Greece friendship was referred to as 'philia', a distinct form of love, a "sentiment of friendship" already noted in Plato's writing and continued with Aristotle's (Grayling, 2013, p.31). Yet translating 'philia' as friendship is not such a straightforward matter, since it also referred to family relations and social and political connections of the time (Grayling, 2013, p.31). French (2007) summarises the distinction between classical traditions and modern understanding of friendship as a "public good" (p.258) vs a "private affair"

(p.256). Feminist philosophers such as Raymond (1986, loc.287, Introduction)[3] critique this ancient Greek notion of "friendship [holding] states together", since at the time of Aristotle's writing, women did not have any "civic status", or rights, thus "friendship was an affair between men, as was also politics".

However, as it is argued by some philosophical traditions today, the Ancient Greek theorising of friendship such as Aristotle's (2004 [350 BC]) notion of 'civic friendship', is as beneficial for contemporary society as back then (Leontsini, 2013). It is because of the meaning ascribed to this friendship as a relation that can enhance "the unity of both state and community by transmitting feelings of intimacy and solidarity" (Leontsini, 2013, p.21). In other words, because it is based on "affection and generosity" (Leontsini, 2013, p.21), it provides for the "recognition of individuals" as well as "mutual concern", often seen as lacking in modern society (p.33).

To summarise, the term 'philia' in some contexts can represent social and political connections, but it can also signify the love of a friend, a particular type of love signifying an affectionate attachment towards the other, whilst being concerned for their wellbeing, "recognising" one another. Considering these

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[3] To comply with Harvard Referencing, all Kindle for Mac references contain location (loc.), chapter number, with the page number included where it is available. This approach will be applied to electronic references throughout the thesis.

friendship attributes, seeing it as one of the "four loves" that we experience (C.S.Lewis, 1960), these relations carry a significant role in our lives.

Aristotle (2004 [250 BC]) considered friendship as an essential life ingredient. He argued that "[n]obody would choose to live without friends even if he had all the other good things" (ibid., p.200). His thesis on friendship positions these relations as means to achieve 'happiness' which to Aristotle (2004 [350 BC], p.247) stands for "a kind of an activity", rather than a feeling. And he makes a similar distinction between a feeling, an activity and a state when he discusses friendship.

When tracing affect in his thesis, Aristotle (2004 [350 BC]) equates friendship love with affection, and recognises that it evolves on the basis of similarity between parties in the following three ways. The love that is aroused around what one receives back from these relations ("friendship based on utility"), around the pleasure derived from these relations ("friendship based on pleasure"), and from being recognised by the other for "what [one] is", whilst "desir[ing] the good of their friends for the friends' sake" (Aristotle, 2004 [350BC], pp.204-206).

In addition to recognising all these types of love, Aristotle (2004 [350BC], pp.208-209) considers friendship to be not only a feeling, but also "a state" and "an activity". Firstly, because it contains the mutual affection, with the object of affection being chosen; and involves wishing "good" for the other (ibid.). This

wish, however, does not stem from loving a friend, but first and foremost from friendship being "a <moral> state" (ibid., emphasis author's own).

Secondly, as Derrida (1994, p.8) highlights in Aristotle's work (2004 [350BC]), friendship is "an act of loving" which precedes that of "being loved", thus friendship is understood as "the act and the activity" of love. This is because friendship to Aristotle (2004 [350BC], p.213) comprises of more acts of giving, rather than being on the receiving end.

The meaning of these acts of affection, according to Derrida (1994, p.9), lies in our "knowledge". This is because we ought to 'know' if/when we love the other, but we might not necessarily 'know' whether the other loves us back. Therefore, when we are trying to ascertain whether we are in a friendship relation, we should have available a degree of "self-consciousness" to help us to answer this question (Derrida, 1994, p.9). A friend then is "the person who loves before being the person who is loved" (Derrida, 1994, p.9). Thus, when we are discussing friendship from this point of view, the awareness of this relation would come firstly from "its subject" which loves rather than "the object" that is being loved (Derrida, 1994, p.10). This theorisation is useful in establishing the natural flow of affection in friendship.

Kant (1797, Part II, Chapter 1, p.216) also extensively elaborates on friendship, yet his thesis is stronger in the sense of warning against understanding of friendship only in terms of feelings. Kant (1797, Part II, Chapter 1, p.215) in his

later writings on friendships, in the Metaphysics of Morals, sees this relation as "the union of two persons through equal mutual love, [but also] respect". This is what makes friendship in Kantian thesis (ibid.) "a duty set by reason"; and although he does not claim it to be leading to an ultimate happiness as Aristotle (2004 [350 BC]) has done above, friendship parties are regarded as "deserving of happiness". In the section on <u>Intimacy</u> that will follow, I shall discuss the interplay of love and respect affecting self-disclosures as argued by Kant. Although respect has also been noted in Aristotelian (2004 [350]) writings on friendship, Kant (1797) is much more elaborative.

So far it is evident that whether we think of friendship as "a moral state", as an activity of loving (Aristotle, 2004 [350BC], p.209) or as an act of "duty" (Kant, 1797, Part II, Chapter 1, p.215), the philosophical debates are centring around the affect of love, summarised as the 'affection and warmth' towards one another (Grayling, 2013).

Friendship has indeed been described as an affectionate, rather than a loving relation by others than philosophers, for example, by sociologists, anthropologists, and management and organisation scholars (e.g. Roseneil and Budgeon, 2004; Raymond, 1986; Carrier, 1999; Boyd and Taylor, 1998).

If we look beyond philosophy, affection also means psychological attachment, fondness, a form of passion or attraction towards the other (Raymond, 1986; Andrew and Montague, 1998). In the context of feminist friendship, for example,

affection has been connected to "the state of influencing, acting upon, moving, and impressing, and of being influenced, acted upon, moved, and impressed by other women" (Raymond, 1986, loc.280, ch.1). Thus affection in friendship does not only mean to love and to be attracted to each other, but also being 'moved' to action, to be inspired by the other.

Going back to the philosophical texts on friendship love, this affect appears in philosophical texts in the following three forms, as "*storge, pragma,* and *ludus*" in the ancient Greek vocabulary (Grayling, 2013, p.173, emphasis author's own).

'Storge' stands for brotherly love (Grayling, 2013, p.173), the love akin to brotherhood. And fraternity is indeed the term used in Derrida's (1994) search for understanding of friendship. However, he asserts that we ought to exercise caution in using it for example in relation to political regimes (Derrida, 1994, p.233). This is because when we compare a friend to a brother, the attributes of this relation appear to take on not only "familial" but also masculine forms, forms of the dominant masculine power to be more precise, as highlighted by Collins' introduction to Derrida's thesis on friendship (1994, p.viii). The discourse of brotherhood has therefore discriminating, or "neutralising" effects which can disguise a form of manipulation (Collins, 1994, p.viii). This is because of the fact that "the sister will never provide a docile example for the concept of fraternity" (Collins, 1994, p.viii), and thus using the discourse of

friendship in relation to political association, or democratic regimes may imply "marginalising" the feminine, raising the question of inequality (Derrida, 1994, p.229).

In addition, Aristotle (2004 [350 BC], cited in Derrida, 1994, p.11) associated friendship love with the "maternal *joy* or *enjoyment [jouissance]"*. It is because he understood these relations as arising from "parental affection" (Aristotle, 2004 [350 BC], p.221)*.* This consideration highlighted the spontaneous aspect of friendship, and a positive association with family, which is important, as friendship ties are generally considered to be different on the basis of our ability to choose them.

The second type of love in friendship is referred to as 'pragma', being "the bond that grows out of companionship and shared interests" (Grayling, 2013, p.173). Aristotle referred to friends as very close, if not identical reflections of each other (Raymond, 1986; Pahl, 2000). Derrida (1994, p.6) too acknowledges that in friendship first comes the "affinity of alliance", the "familial proximity" that brings us closer as friends, whilst Lewis (1960, p.78) theorises that the typical opening in friendship would be similar to "'What?', 'You too?', 'I thought I was the only one' ".

Apart from the physical proximity, familiarity, and similarity of attitudes, the third type of love that grows between friends recognised by philosophy is 'ludus',

"the lighter and less committed interchanges of playful camaraderie" (Grayling, 2013, p.173).

The important issues to take away from such philosophical distinctions of friendship are that these relations have been theorised as a moral state (Aristotle, 2004 [350BC]), or an act of duty (Kant, 1996), whilst containing some form of loving the other. This 'activity' of loving is in philosophy equated with affection which varies in its intensity and commitment, and it draws on the similarity of interests.

Such categorisation of the acts of loving also in parts resembles the variety of friendship roles that have been observed by sociologists Spencer and Pahl (2006). In their extensive friendship research, they categorised eight types of general life friends, whilst stating that such a classification was by no means exhaustive. A friend, according to them, can then range from "an associate [to] a useful contact, a favour friend, a fun friend, a helpmate, a comforter, a confidant, [and] a soulmate" (Spencer and Pahl, 2006, p.60). These types of friends can be of equal or lesser importance for each individual. For example, "fun friends" have been described as "refreshing"compared to the "bubbles in the champagne", necessary to counterweight more serious, intimate friends (Spencer and Pahl, 2006, p.198).

Indeed, the truism of 'friendship takes many forms' (Grayling, 2013, p.174) is apt here. Especially if adopting, for example, the social constructionist

perspective of looking at identities which are multiple at any one time, also modifiable, whether we are considering workplaces or the society more general (Kenny, Whittle and Willmott, 2011, p.62), then friends would be instrumental in supporting each other to "express [these] different sides of [themselves]" in different social contexts (Grayling, 2013, p.174). Here we should take into consideration that the display of affection, as an externally oriented emotion, is influenced by cultural and societal norms as well as by family upbringing (Floyd, 2006, p.189).

When we think of friendship as 'containing' such variety of our feelings and expressions of "affection and warmth" towards the other, this is one of the considerations that make friendship love more distinct from romantic love (Grayling, 2013, p.173). In the following discussion I will draw on the distinctions in more detail, however, I will also highlight the similar traits of these affects.

1.3.1 Friendship and Romantic Love

Friendship love has been considered a very distinct from 'eros', the Greek term for *romantic love*. This distinction is mainly based on the intensity of affects, and the exclusivity attributed to the romantic partners (Berman, West and Richter, 2002, p.218).

According to social psychologists, romantic love stands for "an intensely emotional state and a confusion of feelings: tenderness, sexuality, elation and pain, anxiety and relief, altruism and jealousy" (Hogg and Vaughan, 2014, p.561). Romantic love is therefore more intermittent, that is, the loving relation is exposed to more frequent emotional highs and lows, and thus it requires a lot more effort than friendship (Rangell, 2009, p.236; Argyle, 1972, p.120). As for the exclusivity, it is Pahl (2000, p.164) who, through his extensive sociological thesis of friendship highlights that these relations are "fundamentally egalitarian, individualistic and exclusive". This is not to say that lovers cannot acknowledge each other as their best friends. Moreover, sociologists point out that one can dip in and out of friendship and love, and in some cases, ex-lovers play a pivotal role in people's lives as their friends (e.g. research participant Polly; Roseneil and Budgeon, 2004).

The similarities, rather than distinctions between friendship love and romantic love are therefore coming to fore, and I will now focus on these.

When we look at romantic love as a sentiment, it is not only important to acknowledge that it attracts positive and negative emotions, or as Illouz (2012, p.17) puts it, "romantic misery and happiness". But when paying attention to the "social and collective content" (Illouz, 2012, p.14) of intimate relations, we should notice that love has become very deterministic of one's "social sense of worth", and that affects, such as "passion[s]" in romantic relations", have been

subjected to "rationalization" (p.16). Taking this argument into consideration, I claim that despite differences highlighted above, friendship love has similar properties to romantic love.

Firstly, these two types of love meet in Giddens's (1991) theorisation of contemporary interpersonal relations that are fuelled by the affect of love. In fact, love has been considered to be a leading affect in contemporary relations because it fulfils the "emotional and individualistic" needs that are typical for contemporary society (Illouz, 2012, p.12).

Both romantic and friendship relations have been labelled as "pure relationships" (Giddens, 1991, loc.132, p.6, Ch. Introduction) because we enter into them, irrespective of "external" environments, family ties, social situation, and 'purely' for the reason of gaining "rewards". In the case of romantic relations, marriages are evoked and maintained only "as long as, [they] deliver emotional satisfaction". (Giddens, 1991, loc.1627, p.89, Ch. 3). As for "modern friendships", they are equally maintained only until mutual rewards are derived from them, including the exchange of affects, the "sentiments of closeness [that are being] reciprocated for their own sake" (Giddens, 1991, loc.1633, p.90, Ch.3).

Furthermore, under the influence of heightened "reflexive questioning", the friendship parties too forever oscillate around their feeling of contentment gained from the interpersonal relating (Giddens, 1991, loc.1661, p.90, Ch.3).

And when there is a sense of dissatisfaction with what is being returned, an imbalance in commitment for example, the parties are claimed to break down the ties a lot quicker than in the past (ibid).

The parties enter into the contemporary relations and leave them how they please, whether we are considering friendships or romantic love (Illouz, 2012, p.12). In addition to such transience, the experience of modern relations also contains traces of mistrust and competitiveness (Bauman, 2003, pp.87-91), which accompany the instrumental or emotional rewards, and the quest to satisfy our emotional needs, and balance the exchange of affects. The concept of trust will be expanded upon in the section on <u>Intimate Relations.</u>

Another similarity between friendship and romantic love is that they both arise out of self-love, they share the fulfilment of the affect of desire to be recognised as unique human beings, and thus recognising one's own self-worth.

Romantic partners have been thought of as capable of strengthening "the moral individualism that had accompanied the rise of the public sphere" (Illouz, 2012, p.12). For Illouz (2012, p.112) through being in romantic love, we gain a sense of being more socially noticeable, we are regarded as unique human beings, we gain more self-appreciation, we focus on ourselves more often, we love ourselves more.

As for the friendship, the beginnings of self-love can be traced back to the Aristotelian (2004 [BC350], p.209) theorisation of moral friendship. He states that "in loving a friend they are loving their own good" (ibid.). Therefore, friendship has long been regarded as able to fulfil one's sense of self-worth. According to Illouz (2012, p.112) this is an important characteristic of any interpersonal relations because the contemporary citizens are more and more pressured to "develop a sense of uniqueness", to be different to others, and this is why one is often faced with "the difficulty to establish one's self-worth". Bauman (2003, p.80) argues that "we can [only] begin to love ourselves" once "others…love us first", and highlights that self-love has been long considered as "a matter of survival", a natural instinct (ibid., p.78). Therefore, in looking for the fulfilment of our needs of self-love, and gaining a sense of self-worth, we naturally seek companionship.

This is one of the reasons why in contemporary society we crave to be acknowledged, to feel as unique human beings, to be recognised and respected though being "talked to" and "listened to attentively" (Bauman, 2003, pp.80-81).

The desire to seek out friendship is therefore a natural affect, linked closely to loving the self in the first instance. This notion compliments the philosophical debate above, where it has been highlighted through the works of Derrida (1994, p.10) that in the friendship love, the "subject" which loves comes before

"the object" that is being loved. Aristotle (2004 [350 BC], p.213) has argued that this is because friendship comprises of more acts of giving, rather than being on the receiving end. This does not mean that friendship consists of altruistic actions but that, on the basis of the sociological debates, the 'act of loving', rather than 'being loved' comes first because of the strong instinct of self-love.

The increase of self-worth comes from the capacity of friends to be able to recognise each other as unique human beings. This has been highlighted both through the sociology of friendship (e.g. Pahl, 2000), but also through philosophy (e.g. Leontsini, 2013). As already discussed through the philosophical lenses above, friendship is based on affection, and in this way it naturally lends itself to a type of "recognition of individuals" by centring on a "mutual concern", often seen as lacking in modern society (Leontsini, 2013, pp.21-33).

The recognition of the uniqueness can be found, for example, in the personal circumstances of those who "lead … the most individualised" lives (Roseneil and Budgeon, 2004, p.153). Adults not living in traditional heterosexual partnerships, who are separated or who prefer to remain single, living alone or in a shared accommodation, tend to draw more on friendship than romantic relations when it comes to fulfilling their emotional and instrumental needs (Roseneil and Budgeon, 2004, p.153). This has been reported to be the case especially in the "urban and suburban" areas where friends rather than family

are sought "for the kinds of advice, resources and recreation that might once have involved family, kin and neighbours" (Peel, Reed and Walter, 2009, p.317).

This contemporary tendency to seek out friendships over the romantic ones is an important point to consider, not only because of the Illouz's (2012, p.12) claim that the self-appreciation is impaired in the face of "contemporary individualism". But also because of the Bauman's (2003, pp.99-107) warning about the current nature of private relations evolving in the crowded spaces of modern cities. He argues that the urban spaces are getting fuller and fuller of psychologically distant individuals, meaning that "strangers remain strangers for a long time to come" (ibid., p.105). Friendship relations can act as facilitators of breaching such estrangement.

This is because they can arouse a sense of belonging in these spaces, when they become a part of individuals' "personal communities", that is, those informal ties that are considered as having a significant personal value (Spencer and Pahl, 2006, p.54). Although 'personal communities' may consist of family members, colleagues or neighbours, they are all valuable because they provide a sense of "structure and meaning to [each other's] lives" (Spencer and Pahl, 2006, p.45), which is additional to the increased sense of self-worth gained from being involved in friendship relations.

So far I have critically discussed the nature of contemporary friendship relations, which share similarities with the romantic relations in the sense of being exclusive, rather than inclusive; having a transient nature (Giddens, 1993); able to provide a recognition of uniqueness and thus contributing to an increased sense of self-worth. I highlighted above that on the basis of sociological debates (Bauman, 2003) the reason why we initiate these relations is the fundamental act of self-love.

Social psychologists interested in friendship formation point out that it is the "*initial attraction between strangers*" [italics author's own], as one of the primary affective processes, that is activated when we are drawn towards each other (Duck, 2011, p.15). When we experience attraction, we then recognise the unique characteristics of individuals; therefore this area has also been of primary interest to psychologists, social psychologists and psychoanalysis, point out Adams and Allan (1998, p.1).

The likeness of the other person grows with a geographical closeness or "proximity", followed by "familiarity" or feelings of being at ease in the company of the other, leading to the uncovering of the "similarity of attitudes" between each other (Hogg and Vaughan, 2014, p.544). Unpacking potential similarities, Blieszner and Adams (1992, p.74) refer to "cognitive processes" of friendship formation, and in doing so they put forward characteristics such as ethnic background, gender or age, values or opinions that attract friends towards each

other. They also stress mutual "satisfaction" as an important element of these relations, whether it is stemming from, for example, the provision of instrumental and/or emotional support (Blieszner and Adams, 1992, p.75). With the increased liking come increased frequency of interactions with others, and these factors have been recognised as the basis of the friendship formation (Argyle, 1967).

Sociologists have on the other hand argued that friendships between people of different socio-economic backgrounds, demographics or interests are less likely to develop (e.g. Pahl, 2000, p.163). If one was to choose a friend only on the basis of resemblance to himself/herself, a formation of such friendship could be considered as a rather self-centred process, criticizes Pahl (2000). Rumens (2011, p.7) equally points out that forming friendships only on a similarity basis could lead to "stereotyp[ing] and prejudice", missing the opportunities of "self-growth, understanding and acceptance". Furthermore, when such relation is based only on resemblance factors, once these are lost, for example, by revealing sexual orientation in gay men's lives, friendship is very likely to break down (Rumens, 2011, p.6).

To summarise the affective nature of friendship has been explored firstly through the philosophical debates focusing on friendship love equated with affection, similarity and warmth, together with highlighting the flow of these affects between the parties, and the various forms the love can take. Sociology

has then enabled to define the nature of contemporary friendship love. It is exclusive, transient, arising primarily from self-love, enabling to satisfy the feeling of self-worth and the desire for recognition of the individuals' uniqueness which are strengthened by the individualism in the society. Social psychologists have provided a window into the initiation of friendship love through highlighting the attractiveness of the parties, leading to the increased frequency of interactions.

The following subchapter will explore the affective nature of friendship within workplace context.

1.3.2 Affective Dimensions of Friendship in the Workplace

To reiterate from the chapter introduction, this thesis acknowledges that affect is a fundamental part of all organisational interpersonal relations, and that it captures not only emotions, but equally feelings, moods, drives, and bodily experiences. So far, friendship has been explored mainly through the affect of love equated with affection, warmth, also self-love, the feeling of self-worth and the desire to be recognised.

In order to fully appreciate the affective dimension of workplace friendship, it is important to engage with affect theory further. Affect was brought to the attention of organisational scholars as early as during the Hawthorne Studies

(Illouz, 2007, pp.12-14). Yet, the benefits of changing any organisational behaviour, policies or practices as a result of affect studies have still not been strongly narrated in the literature to catch 'the eye' of organisational practitioners (Vince, 2016). This is perhaps because methodologically speaking, the concept is "typically theoretical and abstract in nature" (Fotaki, Kenny and Vachhani, 2017, p.8) thus difficult to investigate, and the affect literature by management and organisational scholars is still growing, as demonstrated recently by the special issue of Organisation (Fotaki, Kenny and Vachhani, 2017).

Affective relations are the centrality of organisational life (Fotaki, Kenny and Vachhani, 2017). The emotional side of friendship relations has already been highlighted by Rumens (2008a, p.91) when seeing them as "an important feature of the emotional landscape of work organisations".

Because of the strong emotional investments in these relations, they are exposed to not only positive but also negative affects. These can be caused by betrayal in general terms (French, Gosling and Case, 2009; Grayling, 2013, p.179); or the affects of discomfort following deceptive perceptions when contrasting views are expressed at work on an important matter (Andrew and Montague, 1998, p.360). In a workplace setting, friendship can be "harmful" when swaying one's decision-making so "one does irrational things" Grayling, 2013, p.182). One may feel more inclined to contact their friends at work rather

than other colleagues, if a help or support is needed (Elsesser and Peplau, 2006, p.1084). This could on the one hand help to get things done in a more effective way, but there is also a risk associated with a 'friend' being overwhelmed with queries from other 'friends' which may not feel within the remit of their work role. They may feel obliged to assist and resolve the query, contributing thus to an imbalance of work tasks. Moreover, we may feel more comfortable to contact our friends if we need help or support at work than other colleagues.

To problematise the affective dimension of workplace friendship empirically and theoretically further, I will use an autobiographical feminist study by Andrew and Montague (1998). Their account of workplace friendship in academia is infused with warmth, intensity, positive, but also negative feelings, emotions; also moods, including "shared laughter", "fun", "deeper empathy", "pleasure", and equally "hurt" with "betrayal" (ibid.). Their account enables me to highlight several important properties of affect in relation to friendship relations as follows.

Firstly, the authors recognise that workplace friendship affects arising on an interpersonal level are impacted by personality attributes and individual differences, but at the same time by a given organisational context.

For example, because the authors feel that their "boundaries" between work and private lives are "blurred" (p.356), the emotions, feelings and moods, and

equally bodily experiences in response to how they relate to each other are also 'blurred' - that is affected by both worlds, "the latest happenings" at work and at home (p.357). For example, they describe a dilemma of "getting in touch" (p.357) after work as problematic, since it requires a "complex negotiation" of emotions and moods connected with their identities as friends that are at the same time work colleagues. They keep asking themselves questions, such as, "Are we intruding on time which is a precious escape from work?" (p.357). Or equally, the type of "anger, distress, frustration" (p.356) that they then share with each other at work or at home is often a result of their interactions with male academic colleagues. In this context their workplace friendship affects are influenced in large part by workplace relations.

Andrew and Montague (1998) further highlight the "empowering" (p.361) nature of their affects in connection with working in an oppressive gendered workplace. In doing so they recognise the political aspect of their friendship, and thus, I would add, of their affects too. This is because their affects serve as drives, the strong emotions, feelings, moods, or bodily experiences in relation to their workplace circumstances: they are the motivators for their "acts of resistance" in a male dominated workplace (p.361).

At the same time this section shows how affects in workplace friendship can be the targets of negative perceptions. They can become the source of judgement, providing the 'oppressors', in their case male academic colleagues, with an

opportunity to 'attack' their professionalism, their academic integrity. They recall an experience of completing a project in advance of the deadline because they were able to feel relaxed around each other (Andrew and Montague, 1998, p.360). Upon completion, instead of positive recognition from their colleagues, they were the receptors of accusations of substituting their 'real work' for fun, since they were 'laughing' whilst working together. This is in line with Rumens' (2009, p.139) claim that friendships are "fragile and vulnerable to criticism from within the organisation".

Since affect theory is often used in connection with exploration of power and political discourse (Kenny, 2012; Fotaki, Kenny and Vachhani, 2017), this affective recollection enables me to highlight how oppressive power discourses can be detected through friendship affect "in the gendered workplace" (Andrew and Montague, 1998, p.355).

Other authors also highlight similar issues of perceptions in relation to displaying affect in the workplace. It is important to acknowledge that the display of affect can culturally vary in its intensity, frequency, and its genuineness (Floyd, 2006, p.189), and thus also in how it is perceived and received. Elsesser and Peplau (2006), in a study of 41 US professionals, highlight the fear that accompanies the display of affection towards a friend as they/ or third parties can misperceive it as sexual harassment, or romantic advancements. In fact, the fear of sexual harassment is considered as the most

cited affect that affects how workplace friendship is experienced, alongside the managerialist perceptions that friendship clouds judgements and leads to favouritism (Berman, West and Richter, 2002b). The issues of favouritism will be explored in more detail in the chapter on <u>Friendship and Rationality</u>.

Lastly, Andrew and Montague (1998) mention the feeling of "deeper empathy" towards each other, that has led them to an "exclusion as well as inclusion" of others from their friendship (p.358). In drawing on Raymond (1986), the authors highlight that this exclusion can appear through social structures. Namely "sisterhood" has been historically regarded as a discriminatory practice by feminist studies in terms of ostracising "Black, lesbian and working class perspectives" (Andrew and Montague, 1998, p.358). This point is similar to Derrida's (1994) notion of brotherly love, discussed at the beginning of this section, as having a "neutralising" effects which can disguise a form of manipulation of female friends and colleagues (Collins, 1994, p.viii).

It is not only social structures of friendship that may appear discriminatory, but as Andrew and Montague (1998) highlight, also friends' emotional needs of socialising just with one another at times, to celebrate and to enjoy their friendship. The perceptions of discrimination were in this context mainly received from their male colleagues.

Establishing affect in friendship as accompanied by such 'excluding' and including actions raised by the 'deeper empathy' for a friend, enables me to

highlight two additional important attributes of friendship in general life that apply to the workplace as well – the issue of feeling as equals in the workplace; and the affect of the desire for recognition.

When discussing friendship and romantic love in the previous chapter, I have already touched upon the notion of exclusivity present in both of these relations. Friendship relations are "fundamentally egalitarian, individualistic and exclusive" claims Pahl (2000, p.164). These terms though mainly refer to considering and treating each other as unique, rather than about individuals in social structures (Pahl, 2000, p.164). In other words, whilst friendship practices can exclude others, or be perceived as such, at the same time friends recognise each other's individuality. In this context we then talk about friendship equality and reciprocity, as promoted by Rumens (2011, p.6), friendship is "a voluntary, spontaneous human relation between *equals* that involves the reciprocation of goodwill" [my italics].

But treating each other as equal in organisational practice, in line with the employment law in western organisations resonates with non-discriminatory, fair and inclusive treatment of all. In this sense such consideration of friendship can be contradictory with employment law, workplace norms and hierarchical structures. For this reason, whilst not denying the notion of exclusion, the terms "affinity and togetherness" chosen by an anthropologist Barcellos Rezende

(1999, p.93) are considered as better suited, since they describe the mutual recognition of friends as equal human beings at work.

Mutual recognition was already noted as one of the attributes of friendship in the section above when exploring the meaning of the Greek term 'philia', in terms of social or political connections, but equally in terms of affectionate friendship relations, characterised by mutual care; and the desire to be recognised has been brought up in the context of struggles to establish one's own self-worth in contemporary individualised society (Illouz, 2012) and self-love (Bauman, 2003). Andrew and Montague's (1998) description of the feeling of 'deeper empathy' towards one another, understanding one another on a higher level than could be achieved through other workplace relations, is interpreted here as the very important attribute of friendship at work. I interpret it as an ability to fulfil the desire for recognition in the workplace context.

Amongst the feminist critical theorists it is Harding (2013) who explicitly foregrounds the concept of positive recognition in connection to workplace friendship. The author (2013, p.111) demonstrates how archaeologists' hard manual 'labour' is turned into meaningful 'work' in terms of self-development and personal satisfaction from one's work thanks to workplace friendships (Harding, 2013, p.111). This happens through mutual social support, transfer of affect in the form of "care and nurturing", but foremost, because mutual

"recognition" as a professional is received from a friend, rather than the employer (Harding, 2013, p.111).

In this way, the author highlights that striving for 'positive acknowledgement' can also prevent us from a "murder of possible selves" and "the deaths of the me's-who-might-have-been" (Harding, 2013, p.145), and instead lead to our self-development through friendship at work. This is because in our ever desiring postmodern capitalist society where we look for the "means of constituting an ideal(ised), aspired-to self" (Harding, 2013, p.176), we don't realise that we are working for organisations that are destroying our "dream of becoming" (p.145), making us "faceless", mere "zombie-machines" at work.

To summarise, affects of friendship at work are 'blurred', they cross boundaries between work and private lives, and in this sense they require 'complex negotiations'. Affects of friendship can also have a political nature, in other words, they can drive the relation towards social change and resistance in oppressive work environments. On the other hand, these affects can drive also negative perceptions of friends in the workplace, thus being a threat to their professional identities.

Workplace friendship can also drive the desire for recognition as a professional and to be treated as an equal human being, therefore contributing to self-development and positive formation of identity. And lastly, affects of friendship at work can contribute to the exclusive as well as inclusive nature of friendship,

and thus it is considered wise here to describe these relations in terms of affinity and togetherness, rather than relations between equals.

Based on the above exploration of the ontology of friendship, this thesis will centre on an argument that workplace friendship is highly affective, with the affect being an innate feature of these relations. In the following section friendship as an intimate relation will be critically examined.

1.4 Intimate Relations

Alongside the affective nature, intimacy has also been considered as a defining characteristic of the Western conceptualisation of friendship, including workplace friendship (Grey and Sturdy, 2007, p.163). French (2007, p.256) highlights how friendships in postmodern society are understood within the realms of privacy, as "more or less intimate" relations. However, when asked about intimacy in friendship relations, research participants have been known to reflect on romantic relations, or "sexual components" instead (Parks and Floyd, 1996, p.103).

For these reasons, I will seek clarification of the meaning of emotional intimacy in friendship relations using interdisciplinary scholarship. I will proceed with critically discussing the reported reduction of close friendships in contemporary society (Relate, 2017). Following this I will explore how friendship intimacy is

presented in workplace literature. I will problematize the notion of 'liquid' (Bauman, 2003) relations at work and explore the complex relation between workplace friendship intimacy and trust. I will conclude with stressing the importance of studying intimacy because it is not only central to these relations, alongside affect, but it also has been shown to help workplace friends with coping in oppressive workplaces.

Intimacy of friendship in itself covers a variety of affects. Even Kant (1797, Part II, Chapter 1, p.216), who with his critical imperative devalues emotional side of these relations, and advocates "moral friendship" based on mutual respect as preferable to "friendship based on feelings" (ibid.), he still recognises a centrality of affects within these relations. But it is not love that Kantian (1996) thesis expands on. It is that of a desire and drive for self-disclosure.

This is the affect, he asserts, that leads us to keep searching for the one to whom we can entrust ourselves and "reveal [ourselves] with complete confidence" (ibid., p.217). In order to fulfil this need, he promotes truly 'moral' friends as capable of attaining to a mutual respect that enables such disclosures to happen. Therefore, even if adopting those philosophical lenses that celebrate friendship as a moral duty above the affective relations, the desires and drives remain the strong defining characteristics.

In addition to understanding friendship intimacy as an effect of self-disclosure, according to communication scholarship (Petronio, 2002) psychological

intimacy is thought to be more holistic. Intimacy is a sense of "knowing someone deeply in physical, psychological, emotional, and behavioural ways" and private disclosures are "the process" of getting to know them by sharing private information (Petronio, 2002, p.6). Such a 'process' could involve for example the exchange of private experiences (Richardson and Ritchie, 1989), confessing "embarrassing stories" or private ambitions (Bane, Cornish, Erspamer and Kampman, 2010, p.133). Feeling emotionally "touched" by friends, that is being "affected or moved" by a warm smile or a caring text (Ahmed, 1997, p.27), are the signs of intimacy in a more holistic way.

In general life, intimacy has been regarded by psychologists as a "deeper experience" of friendship than for example socialising with friends (Richardson and Ritchie, 1989, p.3). It is so because it provides "a kind of emotional net", "a sense of emotional involvement and security" (Richardson and Ritchie, 1989, p.4).

For sociology scholars intimacy, defined as having "an intimate knowledge" of the other, is what makes friendships differ from acquaintanceships (Morgan, 2009, p.40). Others highlight that 'doing intimacy' comprises of "listening [to] and reading more closely" others, and as such intimacy allows us to "be touched by what [we] hear, even if, or indeed because, what [we] hear remains a secret that cannot be translated" (Ahmed, 1997, p.43).

Yet, whilst being attentive to what others are saying, and being in the present moment with them, we should remain aware of the 'psychological distances' between individuals as human beings (Ahmed, 1997). In other words, we need "to become close enough such that we realise we cannot inhabit each other's skin" (Ahmed, 1997, p.44). The philosophy of friendship sheds a different light on the psychological distancing. This argument comes through Kant's (1797, Part II, Chapter 1, p.215) assertion that intimacy is always "limit[ed]" between the parties, and for this reason friendship is to him "unattainable in practice".

Out of friendship love, which binds friendship parties together, Kant (1797) argues that friends should be able to give and receive some critical feedback. Indeed, these relations have been celebrated for their ability to gain our self-knowledge since Aristotle (2004 [BC 350]). They may not be a mirror *of* ourselves as Aristotle claimed (Pahl, 2000, p.83, my emphasis), but friends have been recognised for their ability to show a mirror *on* ourselves (Rubin, 1985, p.40, my emphasis). Kantian thesis then enhances this argument by stressing the importance of not only knowing oneself, but also of the realisation that our friend intimately knows us (Veltman, 2004, p.234).

Yet once a critique is delivered, raised on the basis of the intimate knowledge, the recipient according to Kant (1797, Part II, Chapter 1, p.215) would ultimately regard it as a "lack of respect". For this reason, a psychological distance

between parties will always remain an inevitable part of friendship relations, an inevitable part of intimate knowing one another.

Such conceptualisation of intimacy therefore raises a question of 'how intimate are we with our friends' in the modern society. The beginning of the 21st century is marked as largely individualised, where intimacy spaces are changing (Roseneil and Budgeon, 2004, p.139). Friends rather than romantic partners have become the main providers of continuous support (Roseneil and Budgeon, 2004; Rumens, 2011; Peel, Reed and Walter, 2009). As highlighted in the section on Affective Relations, this is especially the case in "urban and suburban" areas (Peel, Reed and Walter, 2009, p.317) and in communities where people are "leading the most individualised" lives, such as adults not living in traditional heterosexual partnerships, who are separated or who prefer to remain single, living alone or in a shared accommodation (Roseneil and Budgeon, 2004, p.153).

Yet Bauman (2003) warns us of the prevailing fragility of human bonds. He highlights how people in modern times, instead of being able or willing to reflect on their relations and acts of relating, prefer discussing "connections, 'connecting' and 'being connected'" (Bauman, 2003, xi).

Similarly Hancock and Tyler (2004) highlight that managerial discourse has blurred the boundaries between home and work, and has made the social relations of everyday life, "communication and sense-making" (p.619) more

"performative rather than critical" (p.624). Our own "freedom to pursue our sense of self through genuinely inter-subjective social relations" has been impaired and we are now 'managing' ourselves, whilst lacking in "authentic experiences of being" (p.640). Our intimate relations such as friendships are being affected by missing authenticity and the continuous pursuit of accomplishment, of the "project of the self" (p.623). The management fashion, "as a historically specific logic of control and coordination" is altering our private lives and in this way we are becoming 'rationalised', that is "oriented towards the systematic regulation of complex systems to resource and mediate", to self-manage even our intimate relations (Hancock and Tyler, 2009, p.xi).

In addition, one cannot miss out an important work of Illouz (2007) who traces the growth of intimate emotions from the influential figures of modernity, such as Marx, Weber and Simmel, to the post-modern society. In her work Illouz (2007) contends that intimacies in general life, in workplaces, and in our own relation to ourselves are "cold". She argues that intimacy has become rationalised, an object of quantitative evaluation leading to "different self-understanding" (p.32) based on the results of psychological testing. In fact, what has happened to intimate relations in the contemporary society is their "textualisation" (p.33).

In other words, the *private psychological* self [has become] a public performance" in general life (Illouz, 2007, p.78, italics author's own). This is

because we are made to reflect on the self and "give names to emotions in order to manage them", and by doing so disturb their spontaneous character, their "volatile, transient, and contextual nature" (Illouz, 2007, p.33). As a result, intimacy has become trapped between the "instrumental assertions of the self" and "spontaneous emotionality" (Illouz, 2007, p.29). In other words, how we "talk" about intimate relations and how we "manage" them has somewhat become subjected to "a common and highly standardized language" that would have been influenced in great detail by psychology as well as the culture in which we live and work (Illouz, 2007, p.112).

To demonstrate the "textualisation" of emotions and the "standardisation of language" resulting in 'coldness' of intimacy, some of the examples that Illouz (2007) uses are from dating websites and self-help personality questionnaires. Intimacy in friendship is affected in the same way and I will now demonstrate this in an example of devising an intimacy scale.

Karpman (2010), a former trainee of Berne (1972), developed a psychological scale of 'intimacy' [understood here as private disclosures], in which he discusses the topics covered in a discussion between friends. He moves between 0% closeness experienced by strangers to 100% closeness noted for best friends, looking at the topics of discussion. Such 'measured' intimacy has been incorporated into training for people to 'improve' on their intimacy scale. This theory stands on the premise that there are common points of discussion

which may lead to "deeper relations at home and work" including friendships (Karpman, 2010, p.227). According to Karpman (2010) intimacy is a social skill to be gained and therefore in this form it is promoted as part of cognitive behavioural therapy, practiced by coaches, mentors, counsellors or as a self-help tool.

If we even engage with the idea of 'measuring' intimacy as a communication skill, the need of being psychologically distant whilst being intimate with one another should be appreciated, as was discussed above, drawing on Ahmed (1997). Nevertheless, intimacy as a 'skill' cannot be gained as a result of "working hard for it", restate Richardson and Ritchie (1989, p.4). It is because aside from 'spontaneous emotionality' (Illouz, 2007), intimacy also involves a "kind of personal chemistry" which is regarded as its vital ingredient, alongside an existing friendship affection (Richardson and Ritchie, 1989, p.4).

Karpman's (2010) theory is a direct example of what Illouz (2007, p.31) calls "cultural transformation of the conduct of the self in intimate relations", in other words, intimate relations that have been "rationalised" in modern society under the influence of psychology, and friendships have not been an exception.

The price for this ordering of emotions is that they have become "locked into literacy", "objects to be observed and manipulated" (Illouz, 2007, p.33). Writing down emotions, or evaluating yourself on the scale of intimacy (Karpman, 2010), choosing the topics of discussion to 'unlock' the intimacy, can all be

translated into "detaching from the self, being observed, manipulated, and controlled" (Illouz, 2007, p.33).

Going back to Relate (2017) a UK charity mentioned in <u>The Significance of studying Friendship Relations</u> section in the Introduction, which reports a year-on-year the reduction of close friendships in modern times, one of the possible causes of this could be our loss of spontaneous intimacy replaced by the trained, emotionally controlled presentation of the self in general life and/or in the workplace.

Contrary to this rather dark picture of 'impaired' quality relations Pahl (2002) and Spencer and Pahl (2006) argue that people do still have strong relational bonds and a variety of personal friendship communities, consisting of different friendship types, ranging from more trusting, meaningful ones to peripheral friendships. However, the argument in this subsection is that the intimate friendship relations have been reduced, or some have been replaced by their 'liquid' counterparts (Bauman, 2003).

Indeed, people have a different 'mix' of friends. Some of us are enclosed by many friends to socialise with, however some of us have nobody with whom we feel close (Richardson and Ritchie, 1989, p.5). But, as Derrida (1994, pp.235-236) contests the remark attributed to Aristotle "O my friends, there is no friend!", we ourselves might be guilty of idealisation tendencies towards friendship relations, including intimacy.

He reminds us that this is a relation that we have to work on, it is "never a present given, it belongs to the experience of expectation, promise or engagement" (Derrida, 1994, p.236). It is a relation that attracts a myriad of complex affects (see section on Affective Relations), that are working hand-in-hand with the various facets of emotional intimacy, facing control and manipulation (Illouz, 2007) arising from our contemporary 'managed' lives and workplaces (Hancock and Tyler, 2004; 2009).

1.4.1 Intimate Dimensions of Friendship in the Workplace

Whilst the preceding section has highlighted the various facets of intimacy, I will now explore how organisational context mediates our understanding of this concept in relation to workplace friendship.

Conceptualising intimacy in workplace relating only in terms of personal disclosures out of which "closeness and connectedness" arise would be limiting (Rumens, 2008, p.11). After all, sharing private information does not automatically lead to intimacy, as it occurs in the workplace for many reasons: "individuals may wish to relieve a burden, gain control, enjoy self-expression, or possibly develop [psychological and/or physical] intimacy" (Petronio, 2002, p.6).

Drawing on the sociology of friendship, feminism and queer theory, Rumens (2008, p.11) highlights that intimacy in the workplace should also be equated with "material assistance and care to another individual". It does not mean directly replacing it with instrumentality, but it is important to recognise that they often "overlap", in fact, the search for instrumental help may often lead to intimacy (Rumens, 2008, p.12). From this perspective intimacy between workplace friends does not belong solely to "individuals or organisations", but evolves and exists in the interpersonal space affected by organisational context (Rumens, 2008, p.11).

Building on the preceding critical debate on the absence of intimate friendship in contemporary society due to the decrease of emotional spontaneity vs increased manipulation and control of emotionality (Illouz, 2007), self-management of our everyday life (Hancock and Tyler, 2004, 2009), or even our idealisation tendencies (Derrida, 1994), how we make and maintain intimacy at work has also been affected.

New ways of work could be considered in part responsible for the rise of acquaintances in our lives perhaps at the cost of more intimate friendship ties. It is the flexibility and fluidity of work, the service economy, and disembodied labour that have been identified as indicative of the increase of acquaintances that we make in and through work (Morgan, 2009).

According to management practitioners, remote working can impair opportunities to make and maintain closer relations. Equally the recent trends in hot-desking, or the obvious choice of using emails rather than interacting with colleagues face-to-face, or via any intra-organisational communication channels may affect such opportunities (People Management, 2016, p.33).

Aside from these trends, intimacy between workplace friends can also be affected by communication tensions (Bridge and Baxter, 1992). As Illouz (2007, p.21) warns, communication in organisations is

> a slippery sociological centaur: it is justified on strategic grounds, as it is supposed to enable one to achieve and secure one's goals. Yet, the success of one's strategic goal is preconditioned on the implementation of a dynamic of [social] recognition. It is this emotional, linguistic, and ultimately social competence which is supposed to help one achieve success inside the corporation.

In a way this 'competence' of the 'corporate selfhood' (Illouz, 2007) affects the presentation of the self in the organisation, affects how one navigates through organisational politics, and in doing so, affects how one relates to others in the workplace.

Thus, one may be deceived by the 'corporate' presentation of the 'other' and, in perceiving them as a friend, disclose personal information that they may later regret. This is only one of the possibilities of how sharing confidential

information through friendship might be potentially harmful to individuals later in organisational life (Berman, West and Richter, 2002). Friends in the workplace have thus been labelled as "naïve" (Berman, West and Richter, 2002, p.219). This is not to say that private disclosures to friends do not have a positive influence on individuals. For example, Kram and Isabella (1985) have shown that personal and professional development in the workplace has been mediated by higher amount of self-disclosure, and also trust.

Trust in connection with disclosures is another important characteristic of workplace friendship. It has been presented in the literature as one of the main ingredients of western conceptualisation of friendship alongside "fidelity, solidarity" (French, 2007, p.259; also Pahl, 2000; Spencer and Pahl, 2006; Blieszner and Adams, 1992). In life or work situations when one is faced with setbacks, workplace friends play a very important role, when they *can* act as "trusted confidants" (Rumens, 2011, p.123, emphasis my own). I use the emphasis to highlight that trust in workplace relations is not a straightforward matter.

In the management and organisational literature trust has been defined as believing in the good intentions of the other, especially in the leader-follower relation (Dirks, 2000), as well as having "willingness to be vulnerable" (Mayer, Davis and Schoorman, 1995, p.729). Interestingly, the managerialistic conceptualisation of trust in the organisation is that it leads to an "affective

organisational commitment", but also that it is connected to the "feelings of vulnerability, uncertainty and risk" on the side of organisational members (Albrecht, 2006, p.109). And I would like to argue that the same feelings accompany trust between workplace friends which makes the intimacy of these relations much more complex.

First of all, the uncertainty and the risks of being "compromised" by "private disclosures to the wrong people" at work have long been recognised as problematic by communication scholars (Petronio, 2002, p.1). In building friendship relations, one may expect that "mutual support" will always be available (Grey and Sturdy, 2007, p.163), yet it may not always be reciprocated. The problem of reciprocity has been conceptualised by Bridge and Baxter (1992, p.203) as a dialectical tension of "instrumentality and affection", when a friendship favour can turn into an obligation of returning it, or the genuineness of one's affection can be questioned (Bridge and Baxter, 1992, p.203).

When someone feels vulnerable in the context of trust, it means that they have been harmed in some way by trusting another (Maclagan, 1998, p.56). French, Gosling and Case (2009, p.147) propose that it is trust which makes friendship especially susceptible "to betrayal, magnifying the impact of the perceived 'treachery' ".

Furthermore, sharing private or organisational information to a trusted confidant, a friend in this case, can give rise to a certain "political vulnerability"

(Berman, West and Richter, 2002, p.219), whilst withdrawing information may appear as undermining trust and openness, thus eroding any base for friendship. That is to say, the "expectations of close friendship may contradict the role-based expectations of work association" which may lead to conflict situations in friendship dyads, friendship groups or between friends and the organisation (Bridge and Baxter, 1992, p.202). Some organisational members, such as those in Human Resources, are especially privileged to confidential information and off-the-record internal discussions. There is no doubt that at times this knowledge becomes burdensome, especially when for example a quiet warning about upcoming redundancies could save a friend from making financial mistakes before taking out a large mortgage (Sales, 2016).

To summarise, workplace friendship intimacy involves a more holistic psychological understanding of one another that evolves in an interpersonal space. It is concerned with "care and material assistance" to others (Rumens, 2008, p.11) as well as with self-disclosures. Intimacy in workplace friendships however does not come easy. Alongside trust, it involves the tensions of vulnerability, risks, uncertainties, communication dilemmas, entangled in the web of 'cold' intimacies (Illouz, 2007) and self-managed life (Hancock and Tyler, 2004, 2009).

Yet, I argue that one should not avoid intimate relations in the workplace because of these complexities. Friendship as an affective and intimate relation,

as conceptualised so far, might to some feel like 'hard work', whilst the deeper meaning of these relations might be missed.

Gender studies into friendship at work conducted by Rumens (2008; 2009; 2011) have advanced these issues significantly. Alongside feminist theory such studies continue to challenge the common bias existing in the workplace, as well as in scholarly debates in 'categorising' friendship intimacy and expressing emotions as 'feminine' or the provision of instrumental support as 'masculine' (Wood and Inman, 1993; Parks and Floyd, 1996). Thus in organisations where masculinity prevails, emotionality and intimacy would be seen as unwanted, perhaps suspicious parts of one's working life, and this would in return, I argue, impact on interpersonal friendship relations, and thus affect private life.

In challenging gender stereotypes in relation to the perceptions of friendship at work Rumens (2009, p.138) argues that there is variation in how men need and provide emotional support, and this variation also applies to instrumental assistance. At the same time Parks and Floyd (1996, p.103) found no gender differences in labelling same sex or cross-sex friendships as intimate relations in their empirical study of 270 students. Therefore, such 'labelling' is unhelpful, I would argue, and is damaging for friendship relations.

In exploring and understanding the significance of gender studies in relation to workplace friendship (Rumens, 2008, p.2) highlights especially that intimacy in

these relations is important in order to continue fighting unfair and oppressive workplaces, and their "heteronormative pressures".

To demonstrate, opening up to a male workplace friend about emotions and feelings in relation to having a gay partner suffering with HIV has not only strengthened the friendship "affinity" between two workplace friends, but equally has helped this gay man to avoid being targeted by insensitive workplace "'idle gossip'" resulting from sexual stereotypes (Rumens, 2009, p.147).

Thus the intimacy of friendship can result in the emotional support of "one or both friends" (Rumens, 2008, p.25), and in fact "information peers" have been considered the only relations at work that are not concerned with such support (Kram and Isabella, 1985, p.119).

To conclude intimacy in friendship at work should never be downplayed or problematised as being "of little value" (Rumens, 2008, p.9) neither by scholars, nor by practitioners or organisations that are driven by the 'rationality of thought and behaviour'. I will dedicate the next section to problematizing of organisational efforts in combating workplace friendships as emotional relations.

Chapter two: Friendship and Rationality

2.1 Introduction

In the following chapter, I will reflect on how friendship is viewed by organisations that focus on 'rationality of thought and behaviour' and consider social relations such as friendships in the workplace as 'too emotional', 'irrational', 'sentimental', 'unruly' or interfering with decision-making. I will draw on Weber's (1962, 1968) critique of emotionality and personal relations, and his views on the dehumanizing effects of bureaucracy.

Adopting a Weberian outlook, organisations may view friendships as prone to attracting some forms of unethical organisational behaviour, such as favouritism, nepotism or corruption; and it is only natural to see organisational efforts deployed to avoid such behaviour. However, attention needs to be paid to how organisations go about governing workplace friendships and the effects that these efforts have on human nature. Once I have discussed the bureaucratic structures of a declaration of interests, policies and codes of conduct, I will engage in a discussion on the relationship between rationality, emotions and morality with reference to business ethics.

2.2 Bureaucratic Measures governing Workplace Friendship

Workplace friendships are understood here as relations that are accompanied by a variety of tensions between some of the friendship principles, but also their emotional and intimate dimensions and organisational realities, expectations, norms of behaviour and codes of conduct.

Organisations that prefer the 'rationality of thought and behaviour' address these tensions by either teaching organisational members and/or devising bureaucratic measures under the cover of risk management, "to protect organisational privacy and internal organisational functioning" (Petronio, 2002, p.174). Some of the risks of not doing so are seen as leading to misconduct, whistle-blowing, favouritism, corruption or nepotism.

As for example Albrecht (2006, p.115) points out, if there is an increasing belief in an organisation that one can only succeed if one makes favourable 'connections', rather than working to their best ability and being fairly appraised for their efforts, there will be an increased domination of "'cliques' or 'in-groups'", resulting in staff feeling "vulnerable, at risk and unsupported." There is a likelihood of staff losing trust in such an organisation that in turn may result in, for example, missing an organisational commitment. In other words, they might feel emotionally detached, be negative about the organisation or work only to their job descriptions (Albrecht, 2006, p.116).

For these reasons, organisational policies have been developed to formally forbid intimate relations such as shown in the feminist study of a US not-for-profit organisation looking after victims of domestic violence (e.g. Ashcraft, 2000). These policies, however, appear to be more common in the US rather than in the UK. In fact, Rath (2006, p.50) states that policies of friendship relations are common in "several major retailers" in the US, but has not been more specific than that.

In UK employment practice, romantic relations rather than friendships are usually considered as conflicting the workplace relations, yet the majority of UK employers do not have workplace relation policies in place. The recent survey from XpertHR (Wolff, 2012) into workplace relations shows that 73% out of a surveyed 200 employers did not introduce an explicit policy, yet 42% of them considered it necessary. Instead in the practitioner literature, there is ample guidance on 'managing' personal relations in the workplace, but still without a specific distinction between family relations, romantic relations or friendship relations. With regards to workplace friendship specifically, I have not found any information detailing the existence of formal policies in the employment law advice sources e.g. XpertHR. I, therefore, consider formal friendship policies to be rare and certainly not commonplace in the UK.

There is however a recommendation that employees disclose their friendship relations to their superiors if they are "working in the same department or

section, or whose work involves regular contact with the individual in question"
(Macdonald, 2014). Such practice is more common in public sector
organisations, where it is then considered helpful to record this information in
personnel files whilst the protection of confidentiality is an obvious outcome. In
some cases, organisations devise a bureaucratic formal measure to capture
this information, which is usually called the Conflict of Interest measure. Whilst
in romantic relations, couples may not be allowed to work in the same
department, to work for a competitor, or to appraise each other's performance
(Petronio, 2002, p.174); with regards to friendship relations, it is assumed that
the same rules would apply.

For the reason of lacking examples of UK practices, I will now present a single
account of an employee working for a US-based retail company, reported by a
consultancy study conducted by Rath (2006, pp.48-50), that was endorsed by
Gallup. This is so that the circumstances and the likely negative impact on
individuals' psychological functioning can be empirically evidenced.
Furthermore, as will be presented at a later stage, the chosen case study
organisation has also engaged in bureaucratic efforts to control friendship
relations.

When Rath (2006) interviewed Laura, one of the research participants, she was
employed as a sales associate by one of the US' largest clothing retailers. This
employer had adopted a formal friendship policy that disallowed management

from being friends with their direct line reportees, and friendship was only 'permitted' between organisational members of the same employment status. What is even more surprising is that a free number was in place that encouraged intra-organisational reporting of the policy breach, in other words, employees spying on each other. Rath (2006, p.48) also reports on a tale circulating within this company about a manager who received a formal reprimand "for talking to an employee, in passing, at a local restaurant", since only a 'Hello' acknowledgement was allowed outside of the workplace across the organisational hierarchy.

Going back to the personal story of Laura, thanks to living and working in a large metropolitan area, she and her manager friend Beth managed to 'hide' their friendship from the eyes of the employer. But when the company relocated her into a new smaller community, not knowing anyone, she befriended a shift supervisor named Yolanda, not her direct line manager. Unfortunately, they were 'reported on' by a fellow colleague when socialising outside of working hours, and they were both "forced to discontinue their friendship to keep their jobs" Rath (2006, p.49). It was further reported that this experience had a negative psychological impact on Laura's personal life in the small community and had affected her organisational life too.

Ashcraft (2000) also reported negative consequences of having a bureaucratic policy promoting emotional detachment behaviour of professionals. Such a

policy had intensified the split between public and private selves in the workplace because the studied organisation at the same time celebrated informal networks and friendly and friendship relations, which was contradictory to the bureaucratic measure introduced.

Another bureaucratic measure relevant to friendship relations in the workplace are codes of conduct. As highlighted by Bridge and Baxter (1992, p.203) the majority of western organisations are governed by the moral principle of fair and equal treatment and in bureaucratic organisations, this principle is then reflected in such procedures. They usually outline that organisational members should act within professional boundaries, meaning adhering to the rules of objectivity, rationality and impersonality.

HR professionals are seen as advisors to line managers in cases when there is uncertainty whether a personal relationship could impact on the employee's "objectivity or integrity being challenged" and/or such a relation may attract these perceptions (Macdonald, 2014). As Rumens (2009, p.139) points out, friendships are "fragile and vulnerable to criticism from within the organisation". In the previous section on Affective Relations, I mentioned how Andrew and Montague (1998) from a feminist perspective portray their own friendship as an object of scrutiny by their male colleagues because of the perceptions of it being disruptive and discriminating.

Following codes of conduct, as Rumens (2008b, p.96) points out, and adhering to the principles of 'objectivity' in for example recruitment and selection process, one can become wary of friendship relations. This is so because organisational members could be swayed to a biased subjective act of preferring a friend to another external candidate.

Indeed as shown in an ethnographic study of social relations of shop assistants in a retail store in south-east Britain, workplace friendship networks can become the preferred way of gaining employment (Pettinger, 2005). Furthermore, "promotion or other contractual changes" could also be the result of 'fitting into' the organisational in-groups (Pettinger, 2005, p.43). Pettinger (2005, p.43) reports that the majority of her interviewees were subjected to nepotism, as they succeeded in the recruitment process thanks to their friendly, friendship or family connections with already existing organisational members. This behaviour is typical of not only retail but also of the hospitality sector (Pettinger, 2005).

But before friendship relations at work become automatically tarnished as biased or corrupted, one has to take into account contextual factors. For example, smaller hotels have been known to use informal recruitment channels (Lockyer and Scholarios, 2004), including friendship networks. And whilst these methods might be considered inadequate in terms of meeting skills needs (Lockyer and Scholarios, 2004), or seen as corrupted, they may often be the

only methods of recruiting staff in certain economic regions known for shortages of skilled labour.

However, as already pointed out by Rumens (2008b, p.97), this is not to say that favouritism and nepotism already present in the recruitment and selection process goes without some manifestations of unfair treatment during the employment life cycle.

Such favouritism does not have to be obvious preferential treatment, but also the so-called problem of "extreme dependency" (Boyd and Taylor, 1998, p.17). This occurs when a leader is concerned with equal treatment of all staff, but at the same time, they feel that their 'friend' should also be included in all important decisions since they are risking hurting the friend's feelings (Boyd and Taylor, 1998). These expectations could create a natural conflict in an individual, a conflict between the principles of equality and care of friendship relations and organisational rationality. For example, Bridge and Baxter (1992, p.203) highlight that

> the expectation of supportiveness in close friendship creates the moral legitimacy, if not a requirement, for close friends to display special treatment and favouritism, thereby indicating that they regard one another as special and unique.

Preferring one friend over another, unfairly 'using' a friend for organisational favours, or assigning them additional work tasks would not only result in an

imbalance of personal rewards, and thus breaching the friendship "reciprocity" principle (Morrison and Nolan, 2009, p.51; Bridge and Baxter, 1992), but could also lead to legal cases of discrimination or grievance. In summary, contextual factors within the workplace should always be taken into account as these ascribe "meanings attributed to the role of workplace friendships" (Rumens, 2008b, p.98).

However, what Rumens (2008b) fails to note is that in many workplaces the underlying assumption as to why such unethical conduct occurs, and thus prompting organisations to devise bureaucratic procedures reaching as far as friendship relations, could be the belief that the rationality of thought and behaviour is deemed incompatible with the emotional complexity of workplace friendship. This is because the principles on which friendship is built, such as those mentioned so far - trust, reciprocity, empathy, care, compassion would affect rational decision-making in organisations. Yet in management and organisational literature centred on workplace friendship, this point has not been sufficiently theoretically developed or empirically explored, but the relation between rationality and emotions has been elaborated significantly in the literature on ethics and moral philosophy to which I will now turn.

2.3 Rational Decision-Making, Morality and Emotions

When we look into the philosophical debates, we find opposing viewpoints between rationality and emotions. On one side, we find a view that emotions are uncontrollable attributes of human nature that hinder our cognitive capacities (Bagnoli, 2011). This is because we are regarded as "possessed by them", thus we are not able to function as "autonom[ous]" and rational human beings (Bagnoli, 2011, p.1). From this point of view, emotions are regarded as "feelings or sensations" (Bagnoli, 2011, p.5). What this would mean for friendship relations is that they would be categorically discounted from rational decision making, because the emotional aspect of this relation cannot be 'controlled'.

On the other side are positioned debates that treat emotions of friendship, friendly and familiar relations such as "respect, love, and compassion", as a required part of morality (Bagnoli, 2011, p.1). This is because these represent "the value for others", the essence of humanity, and in this way are considered necessary to guide moral actions (Bagnoli, 2011, p.1). In relation to friendship, this broadly speaking "sentimentalist" strand of philosophical debate would regard the love for a friend as the root of moral reason and thus it would be this love that would motivate us to act morally, for example, in not betraying a friend or being dishonest with them (Bagnoli, 2011, p.64).

Taking philosophical debates into business ethics, it is the former rationalist view that is the most prevalent, claim Ten Bos and Willmott (2001). That is, holding reason above emotions when it comes to moral action (Ten Bos and Willmott, 2001). This view claims that emotions are "morally irrelevant" because they cannot be fully controlled and thus they cannot become anybody's responsibility or "duty" (Bos and Willmott, 2001, p.773).

This view is also predominant in the mainstream organisational theory that considers managers as rational agents, and thanks to the application of logic they are thought to achieve the efficient and effective running of organisations (Thompson and McHugh, 2009). Those who oppose such actions are often referred to as "governed by a 'logic of sentiment' rather than one of efficiency" (Thompson and McHugh, 2009, p.11). In opposition to such claims stands critical management and organisation research highlighting that organisations are in fact "emotional arenas" (Fineman, 1993) and that there is a considerable "emotional dimension to managerial work" (Watson, 2001, p.180). Yet, the principles of rationality still seem to prevail, and historically have been connected to Weberian bureaucratic principles.

When defining the functioning of capitalism in Western society, Weber (1968, p.1394) referred to a "performance of a machine", with this term suggesting the mechanisation of work, technology, systematization, formal authority, the use of law, policies and procedures, the application of logic rather than senses or

emotions in decision-making. In his extensive scholarly work, amongst his observations of the features of capitalism were "a legal system" and the bureaucratic form of administration, also the principles of rationality referred to as "calcula[bility]" and predictability of performance (ibid.).

Andreski (1983, p.7) highlights that Weber's use of the term "rationalisation" signified the rise of science and scientific outlook" in the public, commercial and political sphere. This was therefore different from the use of the term by, for example, psychoanalysis in the case of hypnosis and justification, explanation of one's actions (ibid.).

Bureaucrats for Weber (1968, p.1394) were "the judges, officials, officers, supervisors, clerks and non-commissioned officers", who were formally recruited to the system, specialized and trained. Going back to his term "machine" above in relation to capitalism, Weber did not advocate a machine like mindset. In fact, he did recognise the role of imagination and independence in the decision-making by bureaucrats. Yet Weber (1968, p.1404) still raised the bureaucrat's "sense of duty" above emotionality, for example, in followership of the rules set by a "director". Even if one was to object to them personally.

The functioning of a bureaucratic office, therefore, rests primarily on the followership of so called *"general rules",* and any personal relations are also subjected to these (Weber, 1968, p.958; emphasis author's own). Modern

bureaucracy in this way appeared to be fighting favouritism, which Weber (ibid.) attributed to "patrimonialism", a more traditional form of authority.

There is no place for kinship, friendly or friendship relations, preferring any religious or ethical standards in a bureaucratic office (Whimser, 2004, p.209). The price for striving for such 'objectivization' of organisational conduct in the pursuit of efficiency and effectiveness of an organisation or a state as a whole, is a "dehumanization of its processes" (Whimser, 2004, p.209). Weber (1968, p.975) advocated:

> Bureaucracy develops the more perfectly, the more it is "dehumanized," the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational, and emotional elements which escape calculation. This is appraised as its special virtue by capitalism.

Yet, by stripping any individual form their emotions bureaucracy depreciates the essential features of what it means to be a human being (Bauman, 1989, pp.102-104). Bauman (1989, p. 103) warns the society and reminds them of an extreme and horrifying manifestation of such "effective dehumaniz[ation]", and hence the devaluation of any moral conduct influenced by emotions – the holocaust. However, Du Gay (1999) argues that Bauman's (1989) conceptualization of the dehumanizing and demoralizing effects of bureaucratic

procedures should be distinguished from Weberian thesis that is situated in particular historical and political context.

He points out that what Weber's bureaucrat is capable of diverse and equal treatment of individuals "apart from status and ascription, so that the partialities of partronage and the dangers of corruption might be avoided" (Du Gay, 1999, p.579). With regards to Bauman's (1989) work, Du Gay (ibid.) highlights the bias of racism and politics that influenced the bureaucratic conduct at the time.

Whilst I am not suggesting to apply Weberian thesis uniformly to any office conduct, ascribing amorality or the lack of ethics to all bureaucrats, it is still the case that he excluded relations based on strong emotions, such as love, from any official duties. All relations of the loving nature in Weberian thesis were described as belonging to the personal realms of life, being "of an emotional nature" and "effectually closed" (Weber, 1962, p.99). Such positioning of these relations indicated to Weber that they were exclusive (ibid.), and therefore not suited to his 'ideal type bureaucracy'.

It is because such bureaucracy promoted the separation of work and private life (Giddes, 1989, p.278) and emotions such as love were seen as threatening "impartial bureaucracy" at work (Spicer and Cederström, 2010, p.133). There was a belief that although this 'detachment' does not completely prevent, it "reduces" favouritism and corruption (Giddens, 1989, p.279). It is therefore clear that from this point of view any close relation could be perceived as a form

of organisational misbehaviour, although most often mentioned are romantic relations (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999, p.122) rather than friendship.

Bureaucratic efforts to rationalise emotionality still exist in contemporary organisations (e.g. Ashcraft, 2000), and as Putnam and Mumby (1993, p.39) point out, even the daily realities of the Western society are influenced by elevating rationality over emotions. In organisational discourse, emotions are undervalued as they are perceived to be limiting organisational effectiveness. Such a hierarchy, as Putnam and Mumby (1993, p.40) argue, leads to "a particular type of moral order, one that reflects the politics of social interaction rather than a universal norm of behaviour".

Moreover, Western society has created the so called "myth of rationality" that separates thinking from emotions, and attributes certain concepts to one or the other, thus creating dichotomies:

"Reason, cognition and thinking become processes linked to rationality [also treated as masculine] while passion, affect, and feeling become indices of emotionality [treated as feminine]" (Putnam and Mumby, 1993, p.40)

When we position emotional relations, such as workplace friendships, into this order of thought, it comes as no surprise that friendship emotions would come out as unfit for organisational realities and effectiveness. It could be argued that they would be thought of not only as inappropriate, but also treated with

suspicion as 'chaotic' and 'weak' relations, coming as 'seconds' in such a 'moral order of interactions', and thus would appear in need of organisational control. That is, being treated by the same norms as are used to control emotions.

The similar point that emotional relations have no place in rational decision-making, or that emotions are subordinates of reason is often attributed to Kantian ethics and then linked to business ethics (Ten Bos and Willmott, 2001). Yet Kant's rationalism, especially his later writings, should not be used to theorise about the distinction between reason and emotion as two opposite categories, warns Bagnoli (2011, p.11). Instead, it should be used to understand "the domain and the function of practical reason" because Kant (no date, cited in Bagnoli, 2011, p.11) recognised "moral sensibility" as influential in practical reasoning, but he did not see emotions as "drives to action". I will use Kant's ethics in this way, to explore further practical reasoning and friendship relations.

Firstly, Kant's understanding of friendship at the beginning of his writing was similar to Aristotle's (Grayling, 2013, p.98). Aristotle (2004 [350 BC], pp.204-205) recognised three types of friends, with the perfect friendship being "based on goodness" aimed at the other, rather than on one's own "utility" or "pleasure" obtained from such relation. Kant's triadic distinction of friendship was "those of need, taste and disposition", with the third one being "the highest" form requiring complete self-disclosure and trust in the other (Grayling, 2013, p.98).

In his later writings, he defines this relation as "the union of two persons through equal mutual love and respect" (Kant, 1797, loc.6136, p.214, ch.2). His argument is that love brings friends closer to each other, however, this love should not exist without respect. "Emotion is blind in its choice", he contends and explains that respect is required to "prevent excessive familiarity" and "interruptions", to maintain a certain distance in this relation (Kant, 1797, loc.6199, p.216, ch.2).

In reading such an account of friendship, one could say that Kant would view friendship as 'interrupting' moral action. Yet Bagnoli (2011, p.77) conceptualises Kant's respect as "the emotional aspect of practical reason". This is so because this respect [in our case respect for a friend] motivates us, it leads us to "moral sensibility", to question the status quo, and thus influences our moral reasoning (Bagnoli, 2011, p.78).

Kantian ethics, therefore, puts forward the view that emotions in friendship are "not *the sole* ground of what is truly moral" (Grayling, 2013, p.99, emphasis my own), but they should not be discounted. For example, when we look at the reasoning of not deceiving a friend, from Kant's rationalist perspective, we would arrive at this decision, not because of our love for them, but because of our respect towards them (Bagnoli, 2011, p.64). Taking this view into account one should not say that friendship would automatically cloud's one's moral

action and their judgement, but that one would arrive at a moral decision based on one's respect towards a friend.

In relation to business ethics, there is also a different view, that of Ten Bos and Willmott (2001) who in drawing on Vetlesen (1994) argue that hierarchical positioning of emotions and reason is unhelpful, whether it is putting emotions 'above' or 'below' reason. This is because, in order for us to act morally, we require a "balance between our cognitive powers and our emotional powers" (Vetlesen, 1994, loc.170, Introduction). For example, in order for us to recognise a situation as morally critical, that is a situation important for moral action, we are required to have an emotional response to it in the first place, in order to be affected by it (Vetlesen, 1994).

Thus with reference to workplace friendship, stating that one cannot act morally if they have a concern for a friend means treating all friendships as sentimental relations that should give way, at all times and all costs, to rationality, order and objectivity. Yet the threat imposed by this assumption is, drawing on Vetlesen (1994, loc.185, Introduction), "the overemphasis on the cognitive with a no less selective emphasis on the emotional".

The result of such overemphasis in the workplace is then linked with tarnishing friendship relations and thus banishing emotionality out of the workplace. Emotions such as love, "passions and attachments are what ignite and motivate people" at work and thus not ignoring them is considered paramount

(Spicer and Cederström, 2010, p.133). Putnam and Mumby (1993, p.40) have advised a long time ago that "inability to experience any emotions is negative: an unemotional person is alienated and amoral". When it comes to emotional censure during interpersonal interactions in the workplace, it results in the modification of "relational perceptions and changed communication patterns" (Putnam and Mumby, 1993, p.44).

Such rationalisation in combination with our already self-managed 'corporate selfhood' (Illouz, 2007) (see the section on Intimate Relations) would significantly alter our capacity for emotional intimacy. These alterations may not only result in downgrading "an intense friendship to the status of casual co-working" (Putnam and Mumby, 1993, p.44) but it is possible that all interpersonal relating in the workplace might be "demonized" and "paranoia institutionalised" (Ashcraft, 2000, p.377).

Bauman (1994, pp.4-5) has also highlighted that the process of "the elimination of emotions" from decision-making would lead to contemporary organisations becoming "the enemies of affection", "incarnations of rationality and instruments of rationalisation". Although, as Ten Bos and Willmott (2001) point out, Bauman's thesis, and thus equally Putnam and Mumby's (1993) above regard emotion and reason to be in a hierarchical relation, as opposed to dualistic.

Nevertheless, it is important to stress that considerations of emotions as "potentially disruptive" in the workplace then transpires into the design, adoption and promotion of organisational ethical codes (Ten Bos and Willmott, pp.775-776). What is more, there is a danger that organisational members would consider all that is mentioned in these ethical codes as moral (Ten Bos and Willmott, 2001, p.780). The morality of managerial decision-making then becomes "neutralise[d]", reflected in how employees are being treated, restructures are carried out or employment terms are re-assessed (Bos and Willmott, p.781).

This is then transferred into treating friends at work as villains, and instead of being protected by any rights or policies as some management and organisation scholars advocate (e.g. Harding, 2013; Rumens, 2017), they are being subjected to organisational relation control of codes of conduct or conflict of interest policies as shown above.

It is Harding (2013, p.113) who suggests that "workplace friendships [should be made] visible, giving recognition to their importance and ensuring that they become governed by a range of rights", whilst advocating that these relations contribute to social recognition in the workplace and self-development of individuals. Equally Rumens (2017, p.1163) argues for the need to introduce employment policies that are "more inclusive" when it comes to workplace relations and challenges practitioners to take into consideration how

"employees feel about work policies designed to manage the lived experiences of friendship at work".

Yet, even those in organisations that specifically promote friendship cultures, where intimacy is celebrated, alongside "individuality, choice, and antiauthoritarianism", such practices have been critiqued for being just another form of normative organisational control (Costas, 2012, p.377).

To conclude, eliminating emotionality from the workplace has been equated in this chapter by eliminating friendship relations. And subjecting emotions and emotional relating to business ethics that are "led by overly rational assumptions", might, as Ten Bos and Willmott (2001, p.770) argue, "undermine rather than contribute to moral action". The negative psychological consequences that individuals may suffer as a result of policies and practices targeting interpersonal relating in US retail companies, and in doing so also encouraging 'spying' on colleagues as reported by Rath (2006), is considered here only one example of such impairment.

Furthermore, equating friendship with sentimental emotionality means missing on the potential of this relation to lead to moral action. With its affection, care and concern for the other, but also the vulnerability or anxiety that comes with it, individuals are able to influence organisational decision-making also positively, not only negatively, thus resulting in favouritism as an example given above.

Thus workplaces should just strive to provide opportunities for interpersonal relating rather than evoking implicit or explicit control measures. In order to do so, organisations should understand the psychodynamics of interpersonal relating, as well as psychodynamics of social defences, in order to pay attention to organisational behaviour and bureaucratic measures that might be harmful to individuals and, subsequently organisations themselves. A psychodynamic perspective will now be introduced.

Chapter three: Psychodynamics of Friendship Relations

3.1 Introduction

In the following section I will demonstrate how psychodynamic perspectives can enhance the study of workplace friendships; and the study of organisational processes through the lenses of workplace friendships. In order to fully appreciate the emotional dimension of friendship at work, as it is argued here, it is not possible to separate the mental functioning of organisational members from that of organisational behaviour. In other words, it is considered necessary to understand workplace friendships as highly complex emotional relations with the complexity being the result of an interplay between organisation and individual and/or collective psyche of the organisation.

As I already showed in the preceding sections on affect and intimacy, the emotional dimension of friendship arises in the interpersonal space and is in large part affected by organisational context. Grey and Sturdy (2007) highlight that the study of workplace friendship should not only focus on the context, but should consider the "embeddedness" of friendship and organisation in each other. I elaborate on their statement by arguing that because individual and/or

collective mental processes of friendship relating and organisational behaviour are 'embedded' in each other, a psychodynamic perspective is the only perspective that helps to ground such a nested conceptualisation of these interpersonal affective and intimate relations.

From individuals' perspective, psychoanalysis is based on an understanding that every individual experiences conflicts of his/her mental forces, and their subsequent anxieties (Freud, 1991 [1963]; Kahn, 2002), which may be well moderated but never completely removed (Gomez, 1997, p.2). The mind is thus considered as being "dynamic[4] rather than static" meaning that it is in large part unconscious, containing "thoughts, feelings and wishes" that sometimes clash with the consciousness and the external world (Milton, Polmear and Fabricius, 2011, p.19). For this reason a myriad of internal "conflicts" exist in every individual, with or without mental illness (Milton, Polmear and Fabricius, 2011, p.19), and are referred to as intrapsychic conflicts. This is not to say that when we consider individual psychology we are disregarding the relations to others. In fact the conscious, preconscious and unconscious parts of the mind are in

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[4] It was Freud's basic assumption that in every individual exists an opposition of "mental forces" that creates 'dynamics' in the mind; some of these forces may function out of awareness of individuals, such as "sexual desires", others could be found in society such as "social obligations" or in the conscious part of the mind (Gabriel, 2008, pp.238).

large part influenced by society and culture as stressed by for example Chodorow (1999) or Stapley (1996).

Taking this viewpoint, psychoanalytic perspectives enable us to study the complexity of emotional relating of individuals to others, that is on an interpersonal level. For example, Ogden's (1992, 1994, 2004) conceptualisation of an 'analytic third' arising in an interpersonal space between analyst and patient enables us to see the workings of defence mechanisms, and development of 'intersubjectivity[5]' though which individual subjects are created. Psychoanalysis no longer considers the intrapsychic but interpersonal level, and exploring what happens in such an 'in between' space between analyst and patient has been lately considered the cornerstone of psychoanalytic theory (Ogden, 1994, loc. 1001, ch.5).

Specifically the school of Object Relations enables tracing of interpersonal elements of relations through the concept of 'object' as highlighted by Dashtipour and Vidaillet (2017, p.20). Furthermore, Gomez (1997, p.1) explains that this school is based on the premise that a human being is first and foremost a social being, and thus relations are "at the heart of what it is to

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[5] The concept of intersubjectivity is referred to as "recognizing the other as well as being recognized by other… in the potential space" (Chodorow, 1999, p.266, drawing on Ogden, 1994). This space in psychoanalysis is between the analyst and the patient; as between a mother and her child. I argue that this is the space also created between friends.

be human". This school of thought enables to see how our thought patterns and personality styles are affected by the relations we enter into throughout our life, but also how these relations in reverse influence our personality (ibid., p.2). For these reasons I will focus on the stream of psychoanalytic theory and that of organisation and management literature influenced by this school of thought.

Lastly, the Kleinian school enables to trace particular types of intense anxiety and defences that arise during the subject-object relations, also theorising and exploration of how object and subject influence each other. The central theme of Kleinian studies have been a variety of anxieties and defence mechanisms. The complexity of interplay between the psychological apparatus of individuals and organisations has been demonstrated through studying the psychodynamics of 'social defences' (Menzies Lyth, 1960) and individual anxieties evoked by organisations and work roles (e.g.Obholzer and Zagier Roberts, 1994). One of the first influential organisational studies, that is based on Kleinian school, is the nursing study by Menzies Lyth (1960). This study shows the contribution of this school to organisational studies not only through the interpretation of individuals' "affective suffering" at work as a result of "a dysfunctional work organisation" (Dashtipour and Vidaillet, 2017, p.27). This work has also highlighted the important role of the workplace in helping individuals to adapt/ to deal with their anxieties. As Hinshelwood, (2001, p.45) puts it, the institutions have an important role of supporting individuals with

"bearing the unbearable". In this way Object Relations theory, and Kleinian school in particular, helps us to contextualise the relation of individuals to organisational arrangements and rules, as well as to other people.

For the reasons outlined above a psychodynamic perspective is considered here significant in tracing the complexity of emotional dimensions of friendships at work as 'embedded' relations (Grey and Sturdy, 2017) in organisational context. A brief overview of psychoanalytic theory will be given at first to lay theoretical foundations from this discipline, before proceeding with introducing the psychodynamics of social defences and psychodynamic perspectives problematising friendship affectivity and intimacy at work. The psychoanalytic theory of Winnicott (1953; 1971) and Bion (1962) will be used to elaborate on opportunities that workplace friendship can bring to individuals and organisations by contributing to organisational 'holding environments'.

3.2 Overview of Psychoanalysis and Object Relations School

At the core of psychoanalytic thought is the ontology of human beings not regarded as subjects that have and 'know' one true core self[6]. That is being "the unitary rational subject[s] promoted within scientific psychology and Western culture" (Gough, 2004, p.248). Quite the opposite, individuals are regarded as 'subjects' or 'selves', as "fragmented, defensive creature[s], permeated by images and sensations about significant others" (Gough, 2004, p.248). A large proportion of "thought and activity takes place outside of conscious awareness" (Hunt, 1989, p.25), and thus individuals are continuously unconsciously defending against the impulses versus the objective external reality (Kahn, 2002). Their internal world is intertwined by anxieties (Hoggett, 2006, p.180), the intensity of which is changing but never completely diminishing (Gomez, 1997, p.2).

Such understanding is eloquently put by Alexandrov (2009, p.41):

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[6] As per Gabriel (1999, p.307), the concept of self "overlaps extensively with [the concepts of] identity, ego and subjectivity" and is deployed by psychoanalytic writers "in a conventional way".Yet, psychoanalytic understanding of the self goes beyond "postmodern" conceptualizing of the self as fragmented (ibid.). The self is "an illusion in the technical sense, i.e. a wish-fulfilling fantasy through which the ego seeks to console itself, as though it were an artefact, part of the content of the ego-ideal" (ibid.) At the same time, the self in this thesis is regarded as influenced by the inner world, but also by culture and society (Chodorow, 1999); although psychoanalysts use the concept of self "in a conventional way" (Gabriel, 1999, p.307).

> In the light of psychoanalytic knowledge, the optimistic perception of the human subject as an autonomous, rational, monadic entity has to be left behind for a more sophisticated and humble idea of man as an embodied, emotionally driven, and culturally contingent being, entangled in complex web of meanings and relations.

Individuals are also understood as "psychosocial" subjects, being "simultaneously psychic and social" (Holloway and Jefferson, 2000, p.14). In other words, they are "defended subjects" (Hollway and Jefferson, 2005, p.151), with their "desires" and "contradictions" influenced and shaped by social environments (Kenny and Fotaki, 2014, p.18).

Psychoanalysis therefore permits an interpretation of the interaction, the relation between individual and social psychological and emotional malfunctioning. As Gabriel (2014, p.83) puts it, psychoanalysis enables

> an exploration of how individual and social pathologies feed off each other – how, in other words, individual anxieties, symptoms and suffering feed off and reinforce the neurotic qualities of social groups, organisations, and indeed society at large.

The psychodynamic exploration of workplace friendship will focus on the Object Relations school, the theory to which I now turn. Initially, this school was a British continuation of the Freudian school of thought and is indeed deeply influenced by Freudian rather than Jungian theories (Gomez, 1997). Object

Relations theorists, such as Klein, Winnicott, Bowlby, Bion, whilst pursuing their own understanding of "infant development", all emphasized the very influential role of relation with the primary carer (Hall, Godwin and Snell, 2010, p.26).

Freudian theory introduced the term 'object' in terms of being the target of one's basic instincts, such as "objects for libidinal *cathexis* or objects which generate *identification*" (Gabriel, 1999, p.301; emphasis author's own). In psychoanalysis, however, 'object' is not only understood in terms of being an aim of an instinct, but also is used to explain "'object' of attraction or love for the subject – usually, a person" (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.275). Therefore, another person can be experienced as a whole 'object' or in terms of his or her parts - a 'part object'.

These 'objects' or 'part objects' can exist in the external world or/and in one`s phantasy world (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.273). A person (the subject) is then understood in terms of how he or she relates to other objects, and this relation is then dependent on personality characteristics, on one`s perceptions of these objects "that [are] to some extent or other phantasied", and also on ways of defending against anxiety (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.277).

The self, the subject, is then not only studied in terms of external relations to others but also internal modes of relating which could be conscious or unconscious (Gomez, 1991, p.2). Internal or external objects and the relation towards them are therefore shaped by one`s "phantasies and feelings, they are

projected and introjected, they are split into good and bad and they constantly define and redefine the ego" (Gabriel, 1999, p.301).

But it is not only one way, from subject to object, that object relations are understood; the relations are also reversed (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.278). For example, in Kleinian theory, one studies how these 'objects' influence the subject in terms of chasing or comforting (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.278). These objects are "both hateful and loving" towards the subject and thus influence not only the phantasised internal relations but also the relation or the attitude of this subject towards external reality (Gough, 2004, p.248).

To fully appreciate the workings of these objects, I will now present in brief psychoanalytic understanding of the unconscious mind and its functioning, followed by a critical exploration of the workings of some defence mechanisms through Kleinian theory. The psychodynamics of organisations will then follow.

3.2.1 The Unconscious Mind, Defence Mechanisms and Anxiety

The unconscious[7] part of the mind was not identified by Freud but was long known to his predecessors (Kahn, 2002). Freud's major contribution, however, is in a greater exploration of the unconscious, and in bringing it to the fore of our knowledge so we would and could understand more "of our own psychic life" (Kahn, 2002, p.16). Later in his career, Freud observed unclear, differing uses of the unconscious concept and he presented "a new structural account of the mind" consisting of the 'id', the 'ego' and the 'superego' (Strachy, 1991, p.21).

The 'id' stands for the instincts, impulses, feelings, desires contained in our mind that are "primitive and bodily based" (Milton, Polmear and Fabricius, 2011, p.20). According to Freudian theory, a large part of them is "of a sexual nature or of a destructive nature" (Strachy, 1991). Freud's consideration of sexual drives is how he understood affects, mainly reflected in the "psychic apparatus" of individuals, and experienced not only as subjective, "pleasant, or painful,

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[7] Kahn (2002, p.17) uses the term 'unconscious' majorly as an adjective, the same as Freud used to do, to refer to the characteristics of thought processes that are out of reach of our awareness. Psychoanalytic literature also refers to 'the unconscious' meaning "the entire collection of unconscious mental events" (Kahn, 2002, p.17). In this thesis these terms will be used in the same way.

precise or undefined", but also as representing a certain energy assigned to the libidinal drive (Dashtipour and Vidaillet, 2017, p.20).

They could be for example some sexual instincts or the feelings of disgust, hate or aggression, and all of them demand to be fulfilled right away, in accordance with Freud's "pleasure principle" which demands the delivery of "pleasure" immediately, or to be satisfied at once (Kahn, 2002, p.24). They could become too heavy or too incompatible to bear, such as being sexually drawn to a family member (Milton, Polmear and Fabricius, 2011, p.22). Whatever the nature of these affects, if we understand them as instincts, they are spontaneous, unstructured, unaffected by the social order (Stapley, 1996, p.133). They are not all automatically dangerous, as it is in the unconscious where "our creativity, and our playfulness" originates (Kahn, 2002, p.25).

In childhood, another force develops called the 'superego' that then strives to rationalise the 'id' and threatens it with "punishment" (Kahn, 2002, p. 121). It is because the 'superego' represents the requirements of the external environment, the moral pressures of the society embedded in one`s mind (Kahn, 2002; Starchy, 1991). It represents "the social order" (Gabriel, 2008, p.221). And as some of these impulses or affects would be deemed inappropriate by the societal order and morality, they need to be controlled. These are especially those that the external world would not find acceptable, and we would not be able to regard ourselves as "reasonable, decent people

by our own and our society's standards" (Milton, Polmear and Fabricius, 2011, p.22). Their fulfilment is being prevented by "more social and civilised mental forces" conceptualised as the 'superego' (Strachy, 1991, p.20). And from the potential clashes between the 'id' and the 'superego', anxiety arises, as "realistic, moral, and neurotic" (Kahn, 2002, p.122).

Finally, the 'ego' emerges to "mediate" between the two, to achieve a healthy mental life balance by preventing the rise of a conflict; it is "the watchman in [Freud`s original] model [of the mind as] the drawing room and the entrance hall" (Kahn, 2002, p. 27). The ego then guards the mind from being overpowered by the clashes between the 'id' and the 'superego'. The ego is however not only unconscious but also has a conscious dimension (Gabriel, 2008, p.221), whilst the 'id' and the 'superego' work completely unconsciously (Milton, Polmear and Fabricius, 2011, p.21).

The tools that the 'ego' uses in these situations are so called 'defence mechanisms' (Milton, Polmear and Fabricius, 2011; Kahn, 2002). They serve to "transform our perceptions" so that we can manage "the anxiety-induced tensions" (Thompson and McHugh, 2009, p.280).

These mechanisms are therefore a set of mental "processes" that function to protect an individual from those "feelings" that could be painful if one was aware of them, such as anxiety (Gabriel, 2008, p.74). Kahn (2002, p.123), in addition to feelings, also talks about painful "impulses" that could be either one`s own

or those of "other people or the realities of the world" that one could be defending against. To which Gabriel (2008, p.74) adds "memories" of traumatic events or other mental "forces" that indeed could impact negatively on the mental well-being of an individual and this is why they are defended, pushed to the unconscious.

Freud claimed that these defence mechanisms are not only used and explored in therapy settings but also belong to the day to day lives of individuals, and they are necessary for healthy mental life (Kahn, 2002, p.122). They have been recognized as "automatic and unconscious" parts of our lived experiences (Milton, Polmear and Fabricius (2011, p.22).

However, they can also become problematic when they are used disproportionately, in an excessive degree (Kahn, 2002, p.122)

> [i]n an attempt to protect themselves from anxiety, people sometimes institute excessive defensive measures that become persistent parts of their character and seriously burdensome.

Freud already recognized a group of these defences, such as repression, denial, projection, reaction formation, identification with the aggressor, displacement and turning against the self (Kahn, 2002).

On the contrary to Freud, Klein was very interested with the development of the unconscious in the young age and devoted her work to the formation of the

unconscious defence apparatus in infancy and early childhood (Hall, Godwin and Snell, 2010, p.28).

And it is indeed Kleinian work that had a major influence on the early exploratory research work in organisations (e.g. Menzies Lyth, 1960; Jaques, 1953). As social defence mechanisms and the patterns of anxieties in relation to friendship surfacing collectively will be applied to analysing the case study, it is important to introduce her work in some detail. I will start with explaining the role of 'developmental positions', associated anxiety and defence mechanisms.

When a Kleinian infant is born, the ego is not yet "well-integrated", and is not similar to the ego "of a child or a fully developed adult" (Segal, 1964, p.24). Therefore it has to develop and it grows through entering two "positions"; the first one is up to the infant`s first four months and the second one follows up to its first year (Segal, 1964, p.ix). Segal`s understanding of Klein`s use of the term "position" is that it refers not to a mental state that changes or diminishes, but that it remains in our life from early infancy through adulthood to retirement, it is "a specific configuration of object relations, anxieties and defences" (Segal, 1964, p.ix). I will now explain the defences that are deployed by the ego in each of these positions.

3.2.2 Defences in the 'Paranoid-schizoid Position'

Each of the development positions of Klein comes not only with different defence mechanisms but also with a different "pattern of impulses [and] anxieties" (Jaques, 1953, p.4) that will now be further explored.

An infant goes through the 'paranoid-schizoid position' from birth up to three or four months (Jaques, 1953). This position is however not abandoned but is returned to throughout the entire life span in different degrees (Melanie Klein Trust, 2016a), or as Laplanche and Pontalis (1988, p.298) point out "in the course of childhood and particularly in paranoid and schizophrenic states in the adult". Klein (1946, p.99) further re-affirms this finding by clarifying that in some cases certain types of the unconscious anxieties experienced in the early years of life could be traced in those who suffer from schizophrenia.

The first relation that the infant has is with the primary carer, this usually being the mother, however, it does not recognize her as a whole human being or an object but experiences her as "part object" instead (Segal, 1964, p.ix). The whole of time in this position, therefore, is saturated with part object relations, and an example of the main part object that Klein uses is the maternal breast (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.298).

According to Klein, the ego of an infant experiences the external environment as "both satisfying and frustrating, [through] two main conflicting instincts – love

and hate" (Hall, Godwin and Snell, 2010, p.28). This is because the surrounding environment also impacts on the infant's ego and exposes it to the "anxieties" related to "the trauma of birth" as well as to "the warmth, love and feeding received from its mother" (Segal, 1964, p.25).

The emotional life in relation to these opposing instincts is also very intense, especially because the death instinct is at this stage very "aggressive" (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.298), in fact attacking and chasing the good part-objects, and is thus being experienced as fearful (Razinsky, 2013, p.193). The strong emotions that accompany this stage are for example "intense…greed, anxiety" and so on (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.298). This anxiety is also referred to as "persecutory anxiety" (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.299; Jaques, 1953, p.5; my emphasis) or, as mentioned by Klein (1946, p.99), "persecutory fears, including the fear of being poisoned and devoured". The fears connected to this type of anxiety are therefore of a paranoid nature, including "fears of being attacked and annihilated" (Stein, 2000, p.195) drawing on Klein, 1935).

These paranoid fears or anxieties take place in the phantasies[8] of the inner world of a baby, and therefore the first defence mechanism that is also of "a

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[8] Phantasy can be explained as activities of our "imagination, which involves an idea, a desire, or a detailed scene or sequence of scenes" (Gabriel, 1999, p.105). Some psychoanalytic researchers use a different spelling of this term, referring to the unconscious imagination as

phantastic nature" occurs – referred to as "splitting" (Klein, 1946, p.101, *my emphasis*). In other words, the ego protects itself from this anxiety by 'splitting itself' into phantasies of the good and bad inner objects that exist in the baby's internal world, and furthermore, the 'part object' is also perceived to be 'split' into good and bad (Jaques, 1953, p.5). Thus, early on, the splitting occurs in "the self" of the baby as well as in "the object" (Klein, 1946, p.101).

Then the series of 'projection' and 'introjection' follows. The defence mechanism of "projection" serves the ego to fight the arising "anxiety by ridding it of danger and badness" and is followed by "introjection of the good object" (Klein, 1946, p.101).

Although Jaques (1953, p.5) only emphasizes the bad being 'projected' out, and the good 'introjected', both Laplanche and Pontalis (1988) and Segal (1964) show that both parts go through these cycles. Many authors following Klein do have a tendency to see 'projection' only in terms of expelling 'the bad', but the Archives of Melanie Klein evidence that she referred to both "good as well as bad parts of the self" being 'projected out' (Spillius, 2012, p.8).

The "love or hate" is projected onto the good or bad 'part object' of the mother (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.299). And this is when 'a good breast' found

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´phantasy ` and conscious imagination as ´fantasy` e.g. Menzies Lyth (1963); the same distinction will be made in this work.

in Kleinian work (e.g.1946) is felt as gratifying and a 'bad breast' is felt as "frustrating, persecutory and is hated" (Melanie Klein Trust, 2016b). At times of prevailing hatred, the object (e.g. parts of the mother's body or "other people") will be continuously refused and perceived as threatening (Gough, 2004, p.248, see also Segal, 1964, p.25). This feeling produces more anxiety in the child and leads to further projection and splitting (Gough, 2004, p.248). Or the bad 'object' that feeds the baby is perceived as dangerous, "a persecutor" (Segal, 1964, p.25). The good object is also partly projected outwards, and thus the breast has also its other side – "the ideal breast" (Segal, 1964, p.26):

> The infant`s aim is to try to acquire, to keep inside and to identify with the ideal object, seen as life-giving and protective, and to keep out the bad object and those parts of the self which contain the death instinct (Segal, 1964, p.26).

With regards to 'introjection' as the third type of defence in this position, the good object is always idealised as providing endless satisfaction, and through 'introjection' the ego takes on the good part to be protected against anxiety (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.299). As detailed in the Melanie Klein Archive (Spillius, 2012, p.11)

> a person's sense of his own identity is built up around the internalised good object. If this internalisation is not secure, the person resorts to intensive but 'unselective' introjection and to equally intensive and piecemeal projections of aspects of the self.

In other words, if the good internal object is not internalised sufficiently to enable the identification process, the development of the ego suffers resulting in "introjective and projective identifications …[being]… not only complex but also fragmented, unselective and unstable" (Spillius, 2012, p.15).

If the bad part, that is experienced as 'persecutory', is introjected, the ego would be threatened with "destruction" (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.299). And therefore it tends to use the fourth type of defence mechanism, that is 'denial' of the bad, in other words when the "bad experiences are omnipotently denied whenever possible" so that the ego is not destroyed but preserved (Melanie Klein Trust, 2016b).

Therefore, in the 'paranoid-schizoid position' the primitive defence mechanisms are 'splitting' into good and bad, 'projection' and 'introjection' of the good and bad parts of the self, as well as 'idealisation' of the good and 'denial' of the bad. They are used against specific anxieties, "to externalise disturbing feelings, particularly aggression and envy" (Krantz, 2006, p.228). And the deployment of these defence mechanisms in the context of early years' object relations influences the development of "the ego and super-ego and prepare the ground for the onset of the Oedipus complex in the second half of the first year" (Klein, 1946, p.99).

In summary, the ego pushes out the dangerous part of the self, and it strives to keep or to become the good part; in psychoanalytic terms, the ego strives to

"project the bad" and "introject the good" (Segal, 1964, p.26). This is why Klein called this position "paranoid-schizoid" – "paranoid" because the ego fights "the leading anxiety" and "schizoid" because of its tendency to divide or 'split' itself and 'project out' the death instinct (Segal, 1964, p.26).

3.2.3 Defences in the 'Depressive Position'

In 'the depressive position' the primary carers are not experienced as part objects but as whole objects, its mother, therefore, is beginning to be perceived "as a whole person" (Segal, 1964, p.ix). This position is not without its own defence repertoire of a different nature. The infant experiences "a prevalence of integration" but also that of "ambivalence, depressive anxiety and guilt" (Segal, 1964, p.ix).

In other words, in different life scenarios ambivalence can provoke anxiety and guilt (Parker, 2005, p.8). It captures contradictory psychological states of loving and hating the same object, and Klein (1940) started to explore this concept at a particularly difficult time in her life when she lost her son to a hiking accident and her daughter had turned against her theories (Mitchell, 1986, p.146). She wrote about it in connection with the 'depressive position' and the state of 'mourning' - losing an object. Parker (2005, p.7) highlights Klein's (1940) position on ambivalence - that love and hate will always exist in the psyche,

but their ratio so to speak will change from person to person and situation to situation. And although love can become a prevalent feeling, hate will never diminish completely (Parker, 2005, p.7). Furthermore, love and hate both originate in the unconscious, but it is love rather than hate that becomes more accessible to consciousness, points out Parker (2005, p.6) when exploring maternal ambivalence.

If the child's environment is soaked with troublesome experiences instead of pleasing ones, it is not only their ambivalent feelings that are going to exacerbate, but their feelings of "trust and hope" are also going to be negatively affected, leading to "anxieties about inner annihilation and external persecution" (Klein, 1940, cited in Bott Spillus et al., 2011, loc. 2799, ch.5, p.96). In other words, ambivalent feelings can tear or split an individual into two and affect their ability to have faith in their environment or persons they'll come into contact with in the future, in order to defend themselves against this depressive type of anxiety.

In the 'depressive' position, according to social psychologist Gough (2004, p.248) the mother is now perceived as a whole individual that is able to contain both "good and bad features" and such realisation is considered as a more developed understanding of the external reality, a "more mature orientation, which avoids simplistic, defensive categorisations of self and world".

The paranoid-schizoid position is, however, never completely replaced by the depressive position thus "the defences against the depressive conflict bring about regression to paranoid-schizoid phenomena, so that the individual at all times may oscillate between the two " (Segal, 1964, p.ix). Especially in critical situations, challenging situations bring out the defences of the 'paranoid-schizoid position', and for this reason Klein has never called these positions 'stages' of human life development (Gough, 2004, p.249).

For example, Gough (2004, p.249) claims that in an environment where for example masculinity is challenged, then the defences of the 'paranoid-schizoid position' would surface in men and influence how self and others are presented. This would lead to "a particular construction of self and denigrated others, such as women and gay men" (Gough, 2004, p.249).

Taking on board this claim, it is possible to suggest and this thesis will investigate that these types of defences could also surface when constructing the phenomenon of workplace friendship in a workplace environment where such a relation is subjected to organisational rationality. Using the Kleinian concept of 'persecutory anxiety' the perception of others in such an environment, subjected to a continuum of projection and splitting, may "become imbued with emotional intensity" (Gough, 2004, p.249). Thus it could be expected that this relation would be constructed as dangerous to self and others, thus refrained from and infused with strong emotional reactions.

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In this way, the psychodynamics of social defences, to which I now turn, can help to extend the conceptualisation of friendship as an emotionally conflicting relation with organisations that prefer the rationality of 'thought and behaviour' as presented in the <u>Friendship and Rationality</u> chapter.

3.3 Social Defence Systems

In organisational research, there are two distinctive approaches using psychoanalytic lenses. The first stream of research is interested in "*studying organisations psychoanalytically*" and the second approach is about "*psychoanalysing organisations*" [italics author`s own] (Gabriel, 2008, p.237; Gabriel and Carr, 2002, pp.352-353).

When organisations are 'psychoanalysed', psychoanalysis is deployed as an intervention to 'cure an ill patient' (Gabriel and Carr, 2002, p.352). Organisations are regarded as first and foremost "patterns of human behaviour" (Stapley, 1996, p.24), not considered as rational entities. Instead, they are

> much like their human creators and inhabitants, … comprised of manifest and latent, as well as conscious and unconscious dynamics that make them complex and challenging to comprehend (Diamond and Allcorn, 2009, p.11).

Organisations are thus studied as groups, building on Bion's (1961) work. On the other hand, studying organisations psychoanalytically focuses on

organisational members as 'defended subjects' and uses psychosocial lenses with paying attention to personal histories (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000, 2005) to explore the influence of organisations on their emotional experiences of working lives (Gabriel, 2008, p.237). In this thesis, a combined approach will be used. Individual stories will be looked at to problematize the interpersonal level of friendship relating. A chosen organisation will be analysed as if it had a 'personality' (Stapley, 1996). That is 'metaphorically speaking' its illnesses will be diagnosed (Sievers, 2006; Stapley, 1996) and it will be regarded as if is suffering from neurosis (Kets de Vries and Miller, 1984; Diamond, 1985).

As pointed out by Jaques (1955, p.479), this is not to say that organisations are psychotic as such. It means that they are regarded as "social system[s] (or subsystem[s]), which induce psychotic reactions in their role holders either temporarily or permanently" (Sievers, 2006, p.112). Thus, through the psychodynamic exploration of social relating of individuals in groups we can observe collective psychological reactions that may mirror the unconscious defensive mechanisms, such as "splitting, hostility, suspicion and other forms of maladaptive behaviour", summarises Mnguni (2010, p.122).

The approach to studying organisations through psychodynamics of social defences has developed since the Second World War, focusing on "groups, organisations and society in general" (Stein, 2000, p.195).

However, the pioneers of this research approach are Menzies Lyth (1960, 1991) Jaques (1953, 1955) and Trist and Bamforth (1951). Their work was followed by De Board (1978) who presented the collection of thoughts on the psychoanalysis of organisations at the time. Kets de Vries and Miller (1984) introduced the concept of 'the neurotic organisation', illustrating further the workings of the defence systems in intra-organisational relating as reflecting the psychological state of organisational leaders.

This approach has since been used extensively by organisational consultants and researchers. For example, bureaucratic practices have been analysed as social defences of "organisational rituals" (Hirschhorn, 1988; Diamond, 1985; Baum, 1987). Working in sustainability (Mnguni, 2010) or working in partnerships to tackle problems in connection with supporting Travellers in Northern Ireland (Boydell, 2005) have been diagnosed as arousing a variety of social defences. The emotional pressures of human services professionals have been researched by the members of the Tavistock Clinic Consulting Group such as by Obholzer and Zagier Roberts (1994).

I will now present the pioneering works of social defences in more detail. Jaques (1955, p.479) pointed out that what individuals in organisations do have in common is the existence of defences against anxiety. He hypothesised that individual and group behaviour in organisations leads to these defences being reflected in organisational life, through "externalising those impulses and

internal objects that would otherwise give rise to psychotic anxiety" (Jaques, 1955, p.479). Thus one could trace in organisations what he calls a variety of "maladaptive behaviour" such as "manifestations of unreality, splitting, hostility, suspicion" (Jaques, 1955, p.479) and so on.

In his earlier research Jaques (1953, p.4), drawing on Klein's work of individual defence mechanisms in the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions, analysed "socially structured defence mechanisms" by looking at job roles, organisational hierarchy and culture. He conducted three years' research at the Glacier Metal Company (1948-1951). The following social defence mechanisms have been identified in the exploration of the negotiations process of changing the existing reward system in a department of 60 people. Firstly, the workers' mistrust in management and their unconscious feelings of ambivalence towards their union representatives was presented. Secondly, workers were idealised by management, presented as a group that had their complete trust and the union representatives were the receptors of the staff's projections of hostile impulses.

Menzies Lyth (1960) in turn studied student nurses in the 1950s, when in post-war Britain the Tavistock Institute in London was commissioned to conduct research into their high levels of turnover in hospitals (Whitwell, 2008). Menzies Lyth (1960) as a psychoanalyst led a research group that conducted organisational diagnosis and provided therapy led explanations and solutions

to the issues identified. She used "a socio-therapeutic relation[9]" approach to do so.

It was identified that the large proportion of emotional struggles and psychological unease amongst the staff was attributed to physically and psychologically demanding tasks of nursing care, such as looking after patients with often terminal illnesses, facing pain, discomfort and death (Menzies Lyth, 1960, p.98). It was also highlighted that nurses often have to perform tasks that would be considered as psychologically challenging, "by ordinary standards, [as] distasteful, disgusting, and frightening" (Menzies Lyth, 1960, p.98).

These 'ordinary' day to day work tasks, as well as psychological stress and demands of not only patients but also their relatives towards nurses increased the level of nurses' own psychic anxieties that were already being defended by their psychic defence mechanisms developed in early infancy, interpreted Menzies Lyth (1960, p.98) based on Klein`s research.

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[9] In Menzies Lyth (1960, p.97) a socio-therapeutic research means conducting organisational diagnosis to identify organisational issues first, then to present the initial findings and their interpretations to participants in the study. The therapeutic part then stands for being able to access the participant`s reactions, their "resistance" and/or "acceptance" of explanations, in this research based on psychoanalysis (Menzies Lyth, 1960, p.97). This process can then enable an in-depth understanding of deeper organisational issues, or "the growth of insight into the nature of the problem" (Menzies Lyth, 1960, p.97).

Therefore, the unconscious intense phantasies intensified through their work situations had become real for these nurses, they became "part of a nurse's adult life" through their projections into the external environment (De Board, 1978, p.122). And thus the "socially structured defence mechanisms" were detectable in the organisational "structure", "culture" and "mode of functioning" of the hospital (Menzies Lyth, 1960, p.101). The problem was not that these defences were instigated, but that they were used in "the excessive degree" and thus accentuated the 'professional' emotional detachment of student nurses from their patients (Diamond, 1985, p.664).

For example, staff were rotated frequently between different departments as well as hospitals. Patients were not referred to by name either, but by number or by their illness; prescriptions were issued automatically whether they were needed or not; the excessive use of checklists was identified. These systems disabled nurses to be able to deal with their anxieties aroused by their day to day work but had instead enabled their "systematic avoidance" (Stein, 2000, p.196).

The social defence theory is built on the premise that one of the many reasons why individuals join organisations is to strengthen their own defence mechanisms (Jaques, 1953). Therefore what unites all of the organisational members is their use of organisations as one of the means available to help them to deal with their individual anxieties (De Board, 1978, p.121). Individual

"psychotic processes" belong to healthy human development (Jaques, 1953, p.3) and on this premise, they are experienced by all of the members. Looking at organisations in this way they could be claimed as being very important players in the lives of individuals since they should be encouraging the healthy development of individuals and by doing so resulting in a healthy organisation itself.

However, more often than not, organisations are guilty of ignoring or neglecting the very "unconscious processes, particularly the hidden effects on the institution of its job of bearing the unbearable"; the 'protective efforts fail' and lead to "detrimental effects" experienced by organisational members themselves (Hinshelwood, 2001, p.45).

Not only they do arouse "primary anxieties" connected to the nature of work, but also "secondary anxieties" result from the organisation being unable to offer support, help, assistance in dealing with these anxieties (Menzies Lyth, 1960, p.110). And thus such 'defence systems' in organisations stimulate "individual or collective delusions, whose result is to exacerbate organisational problems and failings" (Gabriel, 2008, p.76). In other words, organisations fail individuals and themselves.

3.4 Kleinian Developmental Positions in Organisations

On the basis of identifying individual and collective defence mechanisms, some organisational researchers and consultants have also classified the behaviour and thought processes of organisational members as 'paranoid-schizoid' or 'depressive', based on the Kleinian thesis.

Krantz (2006, p.228) highlights that if management psychologically functions from the 'paranoid-schizoid' position, they "are notable for their grandiosity, persecutory perceptions and inflexible thinking". Similarly, Diamond, Allcorn and Stein (2004, p.42) point out that if one is experiencing organisational life from 'the paranoid-schizoid' position they perceive the organisation as saturated with clashes and rivalry between different "discrete divisions, departments, sections, groups, skill sets, knowledge bases and professions".

If there are splits "in the social system itself" (Kets de Vries and Associates, 1991, p.223), management could be perceived as harsh and uncompromising, whilst organisational members would consider themselves as accessible and pleasant. This can happen when, for example, demands are made on staff members to reduce spending costs. In such situations organisational members may experience "their own anxieties about money and spending", they may become uncomfortable with the stringent control measures (Kets de Vries and Associates, 1991, p.223). They might "internalise [an] image" of management

as being strict, inflexible, unreasonable in their demands, and in combination with their own anxieties about the cost cutting exercises, they will project "these feelings and their associated images" onto management (Kets de Vries and Associates, 1991, p.223).

In such organisations, HR departments are in demand by managers who are under constant pressure to "need to motivate, replace, discipline or remove a worker" (Diamond, Allcorn and Stein, 2004, p.42). But this is not an unusual organisational experience, "rather typical of many workplace cultures in which people engage in object-to-object relations" (Diamond, Allcorn and Stein, 2004, p.42).

When organisational members act out of the 'depressive' position, they would be able "to integrate experience, think, collaborate, tolerate complexity, and assess reality from multiple perspectives" (Krantz, 2006, p.228). This is because they would be able to see themselves as individuals capable of making their own decisions, having "one`s own thoughts, and feeling one`s own feelings" and also respecting others for their individualism and independence (Diamond, Allcorn and Stein, 2004,p.38). In practice, for example in a hospital setting, this would then transpire in the nursing staff being able to "provide sufficient care, 'love' and the acknowledgement of ambivalences" of patients (Sievers, 2006, p.108).

When acting out of this position, organisational members use "less regressive defenses such as humor and rationalisation", and social relations are then perceived as "productive, creative and synergistic" (Diamond, Allcorn and Stein, 2004, p.41). Whereas in the paranoid-schizoid position, relations are more polarised, marked by rivalry, where "individuals, sections, departments and divisions conduct intra-organisational warfare that consumes organisational resources" (Diamond, Allcorn and Stein, 2004, p.42).

The theory of social defences and Klein's developmental positions applied to organisational life will inform the organisational pathology of the chosen case study. With regards to emotional dynamics of friendship at the interpersonal level, I now present a critical analysis of possible work situations and related anxieties, feelings of guilt or any other emotional sufferings that are likely to arise in connection with friendship.

3.5 Psychodynamic Perspectives on Affect and Intimacy in Friendship

In the section on Affective Relations, the affectionate dimension signifying loving relations (Raymond, 1986) has been critically examined through ancient Greek philosophy. Grayling (2013, p.173) highlighted that friendship love has been known as 'storge', 'pragma' and 'ludus', indicating 'brotherly bonds', 'companionship and similarity', and 'playful camaraderie'.

Psychoanalytic theory can extend the understanding of 'storge' of workplace friends through highlighting that childhood experiences and the relation with primary carers are influential, alongside socio-economic and cultural factors, on our ability to initiate and maintain friendship bonds in adulthood (e.g. Little, 1993). These experiences and maternal relations, or 'attachment figures', are the subject of attachment theory, formed by a British psychoanalyst Bowlby (1940/ 1979/ 1988). Most often, attachment behaviour is studied through personality characteristics, based on the model devised by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991), in order to 'categorise' the attachment styles of individuals.

In relation to friendship 'storge', on the basis of friendship research in adolescence by Zimmermann (2004, p.94), following Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991), it is possible to theorise that our affective attachment bonds with friends would be experienced as more emotionally intense and we would be more comfortable with discussing intimacy, and feeling autonomous rather than fearful in friendship relations should we 'meet' the psychological profile of 'secure attachment' as opposed to 'dismissing attachment'. Such conceptualisation of forming attachment bonds helps us to consider that not everybody has the "ability" to form or even to sustain friendship (Rangell, 2009, p.222).

Rather than 'measuring' ourselves against a scale, we could consider the process of seeking close friendships in life and at work as akin to seeking

'attachment figures' in accordance with the 'attachment theory'. If we compare Aristotle's (no date, cited in Derrida, 1994, p.11) highest form of friendship love being described as the "maternal *joy* or *enjoyment [jouissance]",* with a consideration of attachment figures as "affectionate, trusted, and supportive" (Mikulciner and Shaver, 2007, loc 407, ch.1), we can see the resemblance between having a close friend and having a strong bond with a primary carer. Seeking such bonds has been recognised as "a natural and functional human phenomenon" (Mikulciner and Shaver, 2007, loc 407, ch.1). In the workplace, leadership has already been researched through the notion of attachment (Wu and Parker, 2014) and I argue that workplace friendship should also be studied from this perspective, yet there is a limited scope in this thesis to cover such elaboration in detail.

If we consider only the affective dimension of these bonds, Bowlby (1988, location 244, ch.1) highlighted that it is "the intensity of emotion that accompanies" the attachment behaviour that stands out. He gives examples of pleasure and security, but once the bond is endangered, the emotions that follow are that of pain, annoyance, even conscious or unconscious "jealousy" and/or "anxiety" (Bowlby, 1988, location 250, ch.1).

This is where it is important to highlight that workplace friendship may also come with similarly strong emotions, although friendship researchers rarely mention the unconscious dimension. According to friendship scholars, when

workplace friendship breaks down, some individuals have been known to experience intense negative emotions. But aside of experiencing, for example, negative stress, the "feelings of isolation, frustration, and unhappiness" (Sias et al., 2004, p.337; Sias, 2006), conscious or unconscious anxieties, or even decreased self-worth associated with the loss of a close attachment figure, from the unconscious point of view it is likely that a form of "primitive anxiety" could arise here connected to the loss and separation, which is innate to human beings (Obholzer, 1994, p.206).

Individuals have also been reported becoming resentful towards their jobs, they could have decreased motivation to form any other relations in the workplace, as well as experiencing decreased self-worth (Morrison and Nolan, 2007) and wanting to leave their employer (Sias et al., 2004, p.321). Therefore, it is possible to theorise that a type of unconscious anxiety aroused by job roles themselves (see earlier section on Social Defence Systems) is likely to be strengthened through friendship deterioration.

It is not only friendship deterioration but also day to day management roles and responsibilities that can affect friendship relations. For example, experiencing conscious anxiety has been cited as the negative consequence of reprimanding, disciplining a friend in a workplace (Morrison and Nolan, 2007a; b). As a result of disagreements with workplace friends, a loss of trust in other colleagues as potential friends have also been reported (Sias et al., 2004).

Friends can also feel vulnerable, exposed to friends' power or even tricked into politics of "suspicion, dirty hands, and hidden agendas" (Van Der Zweerde, 2007, p.147), thus inviting the feelings of hate.

To continue with the affect of friendship love, in the chapter on <u>Affective Relations</u> it was also understood as based on the similarity between friends, referred to in ancient Greece as 'pragma' (Grayling, 2013, p.173). Here a psychoanalytic concept of 'identification' can help to extend this understanding.

This concept is often confused with 'introjection', but it refers to a "less automatic and unconscious defence" than the latter (Kahn, 2002, p.133). To 'introject' attributes means that we unconsciously assume these attributes are ours (Kahn, 2002, p.133). Through the process of identifying with someone, we assimilate them. We can talk about children endorsing parental attitudes, standards and values of their mentors or the manners of their friends (Kahn, 2002, p.133). In the workplace, such identification can happen with individuals or groups as highlighted by Stapley (1996, p.147) drawing on Freudian theory.

If we take an identification with a group of friends at work as an example, we can look at it from two perspectives. When one identifies with a group or a similar individual, it means that they find "other like-minded persons… in the same social boundaries" and this, in turn, is likely to decrease the feelings of "confusion and anxiety" connected to not belonging (Stapley, 1996, p.65). Therefore, being part of a group of workplace friends can decrease an

unconscious anxiety of isolation, not being accepted. According to Obholzer (1994, p.206) the feelings of loss and separation are categorised as unconscious "primitive anxiety[ies]" as mentioned above. In addition, gaining a "group identity can become for the individual the symbolic representation of a nurturing mother" and therefore hypothetically satisfy the need of "unity", the "need to belong" (Stapley, 1996, p.147).

Such an understanding of workplace friendship adds to the management and organisation literature in understanding how friends can enhance the feelings of "belonging to the workplace culture/community" (Pettinger, 2005, p.54). They can also be helpful in gaining a job or even with promotional prospects (ibid.).

However, belonging to friendship circles can also have a negative impact on individuals at work, in terms of "understand[ing] and construct[ing] themselves in line with the preferred company self" (Costas, 2012, p.391). This is why joining friendship circles has also been identified as a form of "identity regulation" (Costas, 2012, p.391).

Furthermore, when one is joining a group or an organisation as a new recruit, they are also likely to be suffering from an unconscious anxiety of "self-fragmentation... and loss of individuality" as a result (Diamond, 1985, p.664). Thus becoming a member of a group of friends as a new recruit may be perceived as intensifying such unconscious feelings and might even lead to this

individual engaging in other unhelpful unconscious "ritualistic" (Diamond, 1985, p.664) organisational behaviour.

Therefore, identifying with a group of friends at work, and thus seeing such a "group as an extension of himself and impelling him to remain in direct contact with the other members and to adhere to the group standards" (Stapley, 1996, p.146), can be perceived as an emotionally positive and also a negative experience.

Lastly, the third type of friendship love has been described above as "playful camaraderie" or 'ludus' (Grayling, 2013, p.173). Through Freudian theory it is recognised that "our creativity, and our playfulness" originates from the unconscious (Kahn, 2002, p.25). Therefore, the affect of the desire to be creative is regarded as being innate in us (Stapley, 1996). Friendship networks have been reported to increase dissemination of information leading to collaboration, creativity and innovation (Farrell, 2001; Waber, 2013; Conway, 2001); but in psychoanalysis creativity is often associated with play (Winnicott, 1971; see also Stapley, 1996, pp.122-140). Workplace friends therefore, in their 'playful camaraderie', could potentially prepare an environment for such creativity to flourish between organisational members Yet, as Stapley (1996, pp.135-136) also points out, creativity is not without unconscious anxiety and the feelings of guilt associated with expressing for example contradictory views to others, escaping the norms, or again the feelings of being 'alone' in the

creative process. On the other hand, suppressing creativity can lead to "anxiety which is dealt with by denial of the 'discovery'" (Stapley, 1996, p.135).

Furthermore, when we apply psychoanalytic perspectives on the 'blurred' nature of affect in friendship at work, that is, affects as crossing personal life and work life as I highlighted above on an example of friendship between Andrew and Montague (1998), I argue that we find further unconscious affective responses of unconscious suffering that are likely to arise at this intersection of personal and workplace relations. Andrew and Montague (1998, p.357) state:

> Because our relation with one another is partly shaped by our work, the differentiation is not an easy one to make. This inevitably raises questions for our "private" lives too… there are times when we might hesitate to get in touch. Are we intruding on time which is a precious escape from work?

To corroborate their statement, Stapley (1996, p.140) points out that 'being creative', that is 'being spontaneous' in organisations is often crossed with our conscious beliefs "instructing us what we may and may not do… developed from the world of our reality". And at this intersection, unconscious guilt arises (Stapley, 1996, p.140).

Organisational norms and values that are part of Andrew and Montague's (1998) professional selves continue affecting their private selves, and their capacity to relate to each other in and outside of the workplace. As highlighted

in the section on <u>Positioning Workplace Friendship</u>, friendship relations contain elements of spontaneity (e.g. Pahl, 2000), and in the chapter on <u>Friendship and Rationality</u> I have shown various bureaucratic measures of how organisations try to control relating in the workplace.

As organisational norms and expectations of behaviour cross into our personal lives because our sense of professional identity does not stop at the organisational door, this, in turn, affects our capacity to relate to a friend who is also a colleague, even when we are outside of the workplace. And this is how a psychodynamic perspective can extend the understanding of the emotional complexity of friendship between Andrew and Montague (1998).

Whether we acknowledge that painful suffering of unconscious anxiety or guilt is likely to arise when we are interacting with our workplace friends also depends, I argue, on the assumption that we have about individuals in organisations. That is, if we adopt the "rational-system view" then organisational members would seem capable of suppressing their emotional side (Watson, 2017, loc.6938, p.301, ch.10). As a result, their organisational realities could appear unaffected by the likes of friendship relations, as they might imply a clear boundary imposed between private life and work life. The boundaries would not be perceived as 'blurred' as Andrew and Montague (1998) described above.

However, if we adopt "an emergent-relational view", we would understand that organisational members are at the same time rational and emotional, and that "their feelings about the world and their reasoning capacities mutually influence each other" (Watson, 2017, loc.6938, p.301, ch.10). Therefore, their interpersonal relations would be consciously or unconsciously affected too at these crossroads of rationality and emotionality, since, as is being argued here, workplace friendship relations are first and foremost emotional relations (e.g. Grayling, 2013).

Furthermore, psychoanalytic perspectives also enable to corroborate the affect of the desire to be recognised by a friend. In the section on <u>Affective Relations</u> I have highlighted the quality of workplace friendship to fulfil the desire to be positively recognised as professional (Harding, 2013).

If we adopt Lacanian psychoanalytic lenses to explore this term, we can arrive at an understanding that friendship fulfils an important role of helping our ego, treated as fragile and split, to identify with the imaginary reflection of our desired self as seen in the other (Kenny, p.1183). In other words, we are driven to identify ourselves with "the positive reflection" of ourselves that we see "'in the gaze'" of the other (Bailly, 2009, p.38).

Such a drive can have negative consequences for individuals as well as the positives that were argued by Harding (2013). This is because striving for "positive acknowledgement" of others can lead us to be subjected to power

discourses as shown by Kenny (2012) in a study of international development. Kenny's (2012) at the time drive to work in humanitarian aid resulted in her adoption of the chosen donor's vocabulary to impress them which was contradicting with her personal values and beliefs.

If we look at this desire of recognition through the lenses of the psychoanalytic Object Relations theory, however, we come to an understanding that it had been the integral part of friendship relations all this time, rather than a consequence of them. As French, Gosling and Case (2009, p.6) put it:

> The infant is, in short, in a relational world in which it exists as 'an other' to others. This state of being-for-another drives a profound anxiety: am I anything myself?

The authors explain this theorisation in the context of feeling betrayed by a friend and argue that one's psychological state of mind can reach a realisation "of being 'handed over', with one's existential self-knowing [being] dependent on others" (French, Gosling and Case, 2009, p.6). Thus our desire to know ourselves is fulfilled through interpersonal relating and being 'recognised' by others. This realisation is akin to a new-born's psychological state, thus being innate to us. In other words, recognition as a human being is central to friendship relations and does not come as a consequence of being friends.

To conclude the unconscious affective states of anxiety, guilt and other unconscious reactions are considered here inherent to friendship relations in

the workplace. Friendship may also lead to them or/ and be accompanied by them, thus they should not be omitted from exploration of friendships as complex emotional relations. I will now show how the psychodynamic perspective may enhance the understanding of friendships as intimate relations.

With regards to intimacy, it has been discussed in the section on <u>Intimate Relations</u> above that being intimate with one another means not only close 'reading' of each other but also maintaining 'psychological distances' (Ahmed, 1997).

Psychoanalytic theories, the basis of which are childhood experiences influencing adulthood, offer a similar understanding of such distances when discussing intimacy. In order to achieve the "balance of rapprochement" psychological "separateness", akin to Ahmed (1997), is advocated by Little (1993, p.53), who draws on psychoanalytic thought of Winnicott's (1953; 1971) transitional object and phenomena.

When we are able to experience friendship intimacy whilst remaining ourselves in others' company, we can come to "understand that we are not born either attached or separated but with the capacity to learn how to interweave the two" (Little, 1993, p.53). In other words, friends have to have the ability to be together, as well as to be detached from each other, in order to be authentic, rather than becoming an encroachment on each other.

Aside from stressing the psychological distance, psychoanalysts also propose that being intimate with the 'other' means being honest and unafraid of displaying a certain amount of vulnerability (Berne, 1964), and similarly with sociologists (e.g. Pahl, 2000), they stress the spontaneous nature of these relations. As Berne (1964, p.160) puts it:

> Intimacy means the spontaneous, game-free candidness of an aware person [acknowledging the present], the liberation of the eidetically[10] perceptive, uncorrupted Child in all its naiveté living in the here and now (Berne, 1964, p.160).

In Berne's (1964) conceptualisation of intimacy, aside from spontaneity and vulnerability, the link to the 'id' as our unconscious part of the mind is being made. He sees intimacy to be arising from this part of the unconscious. And therefore, as highlighted above in relation to anxiety arising from affective experiences of the 'blurred' boundaries between private life and work life, being intimate with a friend who is at the same time a work colleague, that is being spontaneous and vulnerable is crossing with organisational rationality, may give rise to a type of unconscious anxiety.

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[10] Eidetic is understood as the capacity of being aware of the external reality (Berne, 1964, p.158). "Awareness" is then described as the ability to be in the moment, "the capacity to see a coffee pot and hear the birds sing in one's own way, and not the way one was taught" (Berne, 1964, p.158).

For example, communication tensions of disclosures between friends have been problematised by Bridge and Baxter (1992) and alongside the complexity of trust that may be undermined by friends 'closedness', presented in the section on <u>Intimate Relations</u>. Intimacy between friends in these situations may be accompanied by the affects of unconscious or even conscious guilt from not being able to 'disclose fully' all that is available to us and confide in a friend, since we may be privileged to organisational information that may be at times emotionally burdensome, but upon disclosing it to a workplace friend, it may end up being compromising.

To be fully available to another, reaching intimacy at its highest point is not possible at all, argues Klein (1963). In her last paper (Klein, 1963) she describes intimacy from the point of view of an unconscious connection which arises for the first time in life during an act of baby feeding. This experience lays "the foundation for the most complete experience of being understood" (Klein, 1963, p.301). Our adulthood is then explained from the point of view of pursuing an unsatisfied desire to be completely understood, that is, understood "without words" (Klein, 1963, p.301). It is then proposed that such a desire contributes to us feeling lonely in life, which arises "from the depressive feeling of an irretrievable loss" (Klein, 1963, p.301).

Thus one will never be fully "available" to the other, or "indeed [we are not] as available to them as we would like to think", contends Likierman (2001, p.196)

in her readings of Klein's work. Such conceptualisation of intimacy enables us to understand our possible dissatisfaction when psychological needs of feeling intimate with others are not being met (Likierman, 2001, p.196). A certain comfort may bring the realisation that some levels of intimacy can be achieved. This occurs when the inner feelings are being shared with the other, which are not necessarily reserved for verbal expressions only (Rubin,1985, p.68; Ahmed, 1997, p.27).

Therefore, a psychoanalytic understanding of intimacy means being available to one another whilst being psychologically distant, allowing oneself to be vulnerable and spontaneous, whilst realising that a type of unconscious suffering such as guilt may arise when intimacy crosses with, what Stapley (1996, p.140) says is in connection with spontaneity, the expectations of "how we ought to behave", arising "from the world of our reality".

I have so far problematised friendship relations at work as emotionally complex relations, attracting a variety of affects, conscious and unconscious, that may evoke joy but also psychological pain. At the centre of these relations is intimacy, yet seeking to be 'completely understood' is a desire that will never be fulfilled (Klein, 1963, p.301). In the following two sections I will evidence how psychodynamic perspectives can offer insights not only into emotional challenges but also into opportunities that these relations may bring to individuals and organisations.

3.6 Holding Environments

In this subsection I will argue that friendship relations have a capacity to function as 'transitional' relations and 'containing' relations in the workplace. I argue that they constitute personal 'holding environments', and in this way, they have the potential to contribute to 'good enough holding environments' of organisations. To link to management and organisational literature, these concepts help to address the developmental function of identity[11], and help to understand subjectivity and intersubjectivity.

In order to provide context for exploration of workplace friendships as 'transitional' relations and 'containing' relations, I will first briefly introduce Winnicott's (1953, 1971) concept of 'maternal holding environment' of 'good enough mothering', and I will then transition to Winnicott's (1953, 1971) transitional phenomena and Bion's (1962) container-contained concepts.

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[11] Identity is understood in accordance with Chodorow's (1999, p.5) elaboration of sense of self as: "…shaped, determined, or constituted by language and culture" and "equally shaped and constituted from inner life, and the inner world is not a direct reflection or a result of that which is given and exterior."

Holding environment is not just the metaphor for physically caring for the child and psychologically being absorbed as if 'at one with an infant', attending to all of its needs and becoming a part of his/her own time. The concept represents a significant contribution to the psychoanalytic literature as it is

> an ontological concept that [Winnicott] uses to explore the specific qualities of the experience of being alive at different developmental stages as well as the changing intrapsychic-interpersonal means by which the sense of continuity of being is sustained over time (Ogden, 2004, p.1350).

The benefits of holding environment include being able to safely explore the external environment, to "trust in one's surroundings", and to become "a genuine creative individual" (Van Buskirk and McGrath, 1999, p.808). Winnicott (no date, cited in Stapley, 1996, p.142) stressed that in such an environment "there is never just an infant", meaning that the attachment relations between the primary carer and the infant are "interrelations", influencing each other in order to thrive.

Holding environment starts with the mother and the infant but is gradually in life filled with other primary carers, family members, friends, connections, and transitional objects provided by culture (Van Buskirk and McGrath, 1999, p.808). As friends have also been referred to as "transitional others" (Little, 1993, p.55), I will now focus on the sense-making of 'transitional' relations.

Little's (1993, p.47) theorizing of friendship as 'transitional' relations is that two or more friends can become a certain "part of each other", yet that friendship in such a form is too ideal, or "pure friendship". Little (1993) questions the real existence of friends as 'transitional' relations, as for him, the transition resembles the ideals as celebrated by Aristotle or De Montaigne. Aristotle (2004 [350 BC], pp.204-205) recognised three types of friends, with the perfect friendship being "based on goodness" aimed at the other, rather than on one's own "utility" or "pleasure" obtained from such a relation. De Montaigne (1991, p.9) highlighted the unity of "souls" in a perfect friendship. The transitional function of friendship has also been eloquently described by C.S. Lewis (1960, p.74)

> if, of three friends (A, B and C), A should die, then B loses not only A but 'A's part in C', while C loses not only A but 'A's part in B'. In each of my friends there is something that only some other friend can fully bring out.

C.S. Lewis' (1960) theorizing of friendship as 'transitional' relations suggests that certain parts of our identity can be only brought out by friendship.

I argue that the transitional role of friends has not been all idealised. Friends in organisational literature have been reported to carry the capacity of enabling one to become who he/she wishes to become, to develop personally and/or professionally as a unique human being (e.g. Rumens, 2017; Harding, 2013; Andrew and Montague, 1998). However, there is a scope in understanding how

such transitioning works, as it implies 'changing one another', or as Ogden (1994) puts it, 'transitional' relations enable 'transformation of subjectivity'.

I will now briefly explain the workings of transitional objects in holding environments. Winnicott's (1953) transitional object could be for example a toy, a phenomenon such as a poem or a musical piece (Gomez, 1997, p.93). Through this object, one can achieve "a stage of relative independence" (Phillips, 2007, p.113, ch.4). The infant sucks on the blanket or a toy which are "an as-if object[s]" enabling the differentiation between the breast, "me" and "not me" imagination, in other words, the "different positioning of the infant in the world" (Carr and Downs, 2004, p.353).

It links the infant's subjective world with the objective reality (Carr and Downs, 2004, p.353), and this is where this transition occurs. The transitional space is an area that is then created, between the inner selves and the external reality (Winnicott, 1953; 1971), "the individual and the environment" (Stapley, 1996, p.132). It is "a space that connects and separates" (Ogden, 1994, loc.896, p.75, ch.4). This conceptualisation is important as it enables us to understand "the dialectical tension of internality and externality", as explained by Ogden (1994, loc.908, ch.4). He asserts that

> a third area of experiencing is generated that lies between me and not-me, between reality and fantasy, while fully partaking of both poles of these dialectics. It is in the space created between these poles that symbols are

created and imaginative psychological activity takes place (Ogden, 1994, loc.908, ch.4).

Out of this space between an individual and an object or an individual and a surrounding environment, a "cultural experience" emerges or is formed (Winnicott, 1971, p.135). This 'space' means an ambivalent space, "neither 'me' nor 'not me'" space (Milton, Polmear and Fabricius, 2011, p.152), which serves as the path for an infant to develop from being entirely dependent on the mother to be able to part with her. It is an important part in the child's development, because it represents the beginnings of sensing its own autonomy and independence (Gomez, 1999). If such a developmental path is crossed, and infant is not able to separate from the mother, there is a danger that later in life they would not be able to relate to others (Van Buskirk and McGrath, 1999, p.810). They could also suffer from

chronic and debilitating anxiety at the prospect of meeting and confronting others [which] can produce a diminution of vitality and creativity as the "true self" (the core of energy and potential creativity) becomes increasingly hidden (Van Buskirk and McGrath, 1999, p.810).

If we take the corporate world as an example, the inability to 'separate' and connect to external reality, instead becoming 'trapped' in our inner world, may lead to the splitting of the ego and the development of Winnicott's (1999 [1988], pp.107-108) "false self". A false selfhood in corporate life implies being

"compliant and defensive" as an opposite to us being more "authentic and resilient" (Diamond, 2017, p.300).

The 'false self' functioning in the workplace has been translated into unhealthy organisational behaviour, such as the emotionally polarised schizoid behaviour of Enron's CFO Andrew Fastow (Carr and Downs, 2004), or deceptive behaviour (Diamond, 2017, p.300) which can be ultimately damaging to the organisation as a whole. As Carr and Downs (2004, p.354) interpret Winnicott's writing:

> [A] person who lives in a realm of subjective omnipotence, with no bridge to objective reality, is self-absorbed and autistic. A person who lives only in the realm of objective reality, with no roots in subjective omnipotence, is superficially adjusted, but lacks passion and originality.

Personal resilience, relative authenticity, rather than overwhelming defensiveness, individuality and originality are the attributes that are to be gained through transitional objects encountered through the life time.

On the other hand, if an individual is able to function 'separately', they should have a psychological capacity to be alone in the company of the other (Winnicott, 1958); having intimate relations whilst maintaining a psychological space between each other (Ahmed, 1997). And as being intimate is central to friendship, separateness from the mother is also a determinant of having successful friendship relations, highlights Little (1993, p.55). It is because it not

only enables creativity to emerge out of the transitional space as Winnicott (1953; 1971) explains but also being "original" (Little, 1993, p.55), meaning functioning as a unique person.

It is also the imagination, formation of symbols and creativity that is being encouraged in this space (Stapley, 1996, p.132). Encouraging creativity also means being spontaneous, and spontaneity is the very quality of intimate relations that is, as Illouz (2007) argues, being threatened in contemporary society. Yet thanks to transitional objects and spaces that they create, individuals should be able to function independently in the external world, "as an autonomous, creative individual[s]" (Dubouloy, 2004, p.474).

Ahmed (1997), (see section on Intimate Relations) argues that it is psychology, in particular, psychoanalysis and their "lexicon", which is in part to blame for how we make sense of our intimacy; that the "conduct of the self in intimate relations" has been "cultural[ly] transform[ed]" by the likes of therapeutic language and self-help literature (Ahmed, 1997, p.31). Paradoxically, with the support of the very lexicon of psychoanalysis, in particular with Winnicott's (1953; 1971) conceptualisation of transitional space and transitional phenomena, I have argued that workplace friends have a role to play in us becoming closer to the spontaneous parts of ourselves. In other words, I argue that friendship has the potential to make intimacies in contemporary society a little 'warmer', through providing opportunities to connect to others as more

autonomous, spontaneous selves. In this way, interacting with workplace friends would also affect how we communicate and present our "competent corporate selfhood" (Ahmed, 1997, p.22). I will apply this theorisation to my case study.

The maternal holding environment is also strengthened through the mother being able to function as a container of discomfort and anxieties. Bion's (1962) concept of container refers to the way of thinking about emotional experiences, and how it is processed through containing, rather than what we think (Ogden, 2004, p.1354). Similarly to the transitional object, "the subject is conceived of as arising in a dialectic (a dialogue) of self and Other" (Ogden, 1994, loc.807, ch.4), so the interrelatedness between the mother and infant is stressed.

Ogden (2004, p.1356) argues that Bion's (1962) container-contained is "a process" of thinking occurring in the mind, involving unconscious dreaming, "preconscious dreamlike thinking (reverie)" and conscious thinking. Reverie is the type of thinking connected to the mother's capacity of "emotional communication and her actions" such as holding the infant, feeding it, rocking it rather than ignoring it, as understood by Hollway (2011, p.54). It is "the psychological state" in which the mother serves the 'containing' function, that is when she interprets her child's "internal states" such as physiological tightening that is interpreted by the mother as hunger (Ogden, 1992, p.618).

The concept of the 'contained' are then those unconscious, preconscious and conscious thoughts and feelings linked to the given emotional experience (Ogden, 2004, p.1356). In organisational settings then, the contained could be "the reality of work experience" for example in the public sector (Foster, 2013, p.124).

Bion (1962, p.90) derives these concepts from Klein's 'projective identification' process when the "fears" of an infant are projected into the mother's "good breast" who is able to absorb them and 'return' to the infant in an acceptable form. Bion (1962) then took this concept further and theorised that an infant projects emotional experiences that it is unable to process into the mother, and the mother through "the unconscious psychological work of dreaming the infant's unbearable experience" is able to return this experience to the infant so that he is able to process it (Ogden, 2004, p.1357).

Taking this process into the psychoanalytic relation between a patient and an analyst, it doesn't mean that the analyst brings to light what was not visible, but that a new "analytic subject who had not previously existed" is created (Ogden, 1992, p.619). This process is therefore not simple or linear, as Ogden (1992, p.619) points out, but it takes place in the 'in between space' of the patient and the analyst, in the "intersubjectivity" which arises (p.618).

Alongside Bion's mother, Segal (1975, pp.134-135), referred to in Bott Spllius et al. (2011, loc. 7680), describes the process of containment through

explaining Klein's paranoid-schizoid mechanisms triggered by relating to an object as follows:

> When an infant has an intolerable anxiety, he deals with it by projecting it into the mother. The mother's response is to acknowledge the anxiety and do whatever is necessary to relieve the infant's distress. The infant's perception is that he has projected something intolerable into his object, but the object was capable of containing it and dealing with it. He can then reintroject not only his original anxiety but an anxiety modified by having been contained. He also introjects an object capable of containing and dealing with anxiety.

Therefore a 'good enough' relation between the mother and the infant can lead to healthy emotional development (Winnicott, 1989) through taking in the 'modified' anxiety, as well as the mother as the object being able to absorb and handle the initial projection.

3.6.1 Organisations, Holding Environments and Friendship

Organisational cultures have been conceptualised as 'holding environments' (e.g. Stapley, 1996; Van Buskirk and McGrath, 1999). Van Buskirk and McGrath (1999) have studied the Community Women's Education Project in Philadelphia and have seen the components of a 'good enough holding environment' through organisational culture conceptualised as "practices,

symbols, structures" (p.814). They propose that in such cultures individuals can identify with their organisations; they are able to enact "me-not me" transitional boundaries through voicing their disagreement – similar to the mother being "resisted"- and/or becoming 'independent' of negative feedback, able to 'own it', rather than be overwhelmed by or avoidant of it. Furthermore, such a culture contains transitional objects that encourage "creativity and growth", and "provide the stability for moving on" (ibid.). The benefits in the organisational holding environment are then seen in the development of students' identities and their abilities to continue in further education, which in return gives the Education Project "the energy and focus to do its work" (p.830).

Stapley (1996) provides a similar definition of organisational 'holding environments'. They provide opportunities for group identification, they enable individuals to be able to explore, without the anxiety of "venturing into the unknown" being overwhelming (p.148). They inspire creativity, as well as interpersonal and organisational trust (ibid.).

Psychoanalytically oriented organisational research has also developed arguments about institutions serving the functions of 'containers', which are very similar to the above concept of 'holding environments'. The most known work in this area is the work of the Tavistock Clinic Consulting. For example Obholzer and Zagier Roberts (1994) in a collection of articles argue that the primary tasks of human services organisations and the roles that staff occupy

in them can arouse various layers of anxiety, ranging from primitive to personal. This anxiety can be exacerbated by change processes, and therefore organisations are urged to embrace their roles as 'containers', and to put systems in place that enable the containment of anxieties, for example, by regularly communicating with staff, or having forums for group reflection and release of tensions.

There are also organisational structures such as partnerships that have been attributed a function of containment of staff anxieties for example aroused by working with Traveller groups, idealising them rather than challenging some of their negative behaviour (Boydell, 2005). By being able to contain these types of anxieties, partnerships are then conceptualised as enablers of "creativity" and the efforts to avoid individuals' defensive reactions that would otherwise follow as a consequence of these anxieties (Boydell, 2005, p.232).

Whether we are engaging in describing the process of holding through transitioning or containing of anxieties, workplace friendship appears to have qualities that are analogous to both and, thus, these relations could support organisational roles of 'containers' or 'holding cultures'. In the above section on Psychodynamic Perspectives on Affect and Intimacy we can see how various qualities of these relations resemble holding environments, ranging from spontaneity, playfulness and creativity, group identifications, being emotionally

available to the other. In the empirical section, this theorisation will be applied to the case study.

Conceptually it will build upon organisational friendship literature by stressing the developmental side of these relations. Rumens (2017, p.1151) acknowledges the sociological thesis on friendship and appeals to social scientists for

> responsibility for attending how workplace friendship can contribute to human flourishing, helping individuals to pursue a meaningful existence along different pre-established and new pathways.

He is doing so alongside Fritz (2014, p.464) who from a more general standpoint of researching workplace relations also highlights the need for qualitative organisational studies to target "human thriving" at the workplace. After all, whether friends through one's life can be called "developmental assets or liabilities depends on several conditions, especially the characteristics of one's friends and the quality of one's relation with them" (Hartup and Stevens, 1999, p.79).

Chapter four: Researching Friendship Psycho-socially

4.1 Introduction

A psychodynamic view of friendships at work enables us to look at these phenomena in a different light to what has been done to date in the management and organisational literature. In the following section, I will show how working psychoanalytically affects methodology, and also more widely I will reflect on the limits of using psychoanalysis outside of the clinical setting.

4.2 Interpretivist Perspective

With regards to the research philosophy perspective, this thesis follows 'interpretivism'. Interpretivism is understood as epistemologically opposite to positivism (Bryman and Bell, 2011, pp.16-18), arguing that there is no one way to understand the world, because "the world is interpreted through the mind" of every individual (Williams and May, 1996, p.60), thus the knowledge produced is based on the principles of subjectivity rather than objectivity. The categorisation and measurement of 'positivism', the opposite of interpretivism, are considered in this thesis as "woefully inadequate" (Thompson, 2016, p.58),

because this work is centred on the study of the emotional complexity of interpersonal relating at work. As shown in the section on <u>Social defences</u>, organisations are not considered here as rational entities.

Psychoanalytic perspectives on organisational life have been seen by some researchers as parallel with hermeneutic enquiry (e.g. Handy and Rowlands, 2016). It could be because hermeneutics acknowledges the role of "implicit interpretations" in research work (Parker, 1996, p.15). However, as pointed out by Clarke and Hoggett (2009, p.5) hermeneutics is based on assumptions that "much of this world is accessible to the "confessor" of it", whilst the ontological assumptions of psychoanalytic perspectives are that much of the mind is unconscious (e.g. Hunt, 1989, p.25).

If we wish to compare psychosocial research with a hermeneutic enquiry, we can call it "triple hermeneutics", as it concerns the interpretation of both the researcher and research participant (Alexandrov, 2009, p.47). In other words "it attempts to interpret the interpretative activity of both the actors in the studied field and the researcher in the context of their interaction" (Alexandrow, 2009, p.47). To do this, to interpret the 'hidden' meanings of their interaction, 'transference' and 'countertransference' as psychoanalytic 'tools' have become the 'cornerstone' of psycho-social research (Clarke and Hoggett, 2009, p.5; Hinshelwood, 1994, p.13), the basis of organisational analysis through

psychoanalytic enquiry (Stapley, 1996); and organisational consultation (Diamond and Allcorn, 2003).

To explain 'transference', in the therapy room "the direct wishes" are transferred to the psychoanalyst whilst carrying strong emotional intensity (Hinshelwood, 1994, p.13). It means that feelings and emotions we once had towards an authoritative figure from our past could be evoked by social interaction. An interviewer can also represent a person onto whom these feelings and emotions are being transferred. 'Countertransference' is then the 'response' to what is being transferred, whilst both responses are unconscious (Gabriel, 1999b, p.310).

Psychoanalysis has also been compared to phenomenology, the philosophy concerned with 'sense-making' (Bryman and Bell, 2011, p.18) or meaning-making of human life experiences (Bloor and Wood, 2006, p.128; also Thompson, 2016, p.58; Bryman and Bell, 2011). Methodologically though adopting phenomenology means to explore why people act in certain situations the way they do, "or to influence that behaviour in a particular direction", because it is meaning that is considered to be a key influencer in understanding making particular choices in life (Thompson, 2016, p.58). Psycho-social methodologies are however concerned with researching "beneath the surface and beyond purely discursive" (Clarke and Hoggett, 2009, pp.2-3), and therefore meaning-making is not considered possible without acknowledging

the inner world alongside the impact of culture and society (e.g. Chodorow, 1999).

In addition to studying social phenomena through unconscious dynamics, these methodologies acknowledge the 'self-interpretations' or 'self-reflections' of a researcher as interacting with the researched 'at the level of the unconscious' to be part of the empirical data (Clarke and Hoggett, 2009, pp.2-3). And the level of analysis of the chosen case study will demonstrate how I have applied these principles to interpret organisational life and friendship interactions. Furthermore, I also enriched my data set with autoethnographic elements, as will be explained and demonstrated in the ch. 4.6 on Data Collection.

Of course, in interpretative research, the role of a researcher is not considered as independent but "interacting" with the participants and thus influencing how knowledge is being produced (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015, p.71). A reflection on my influence on knowledge co-construction will be presented in the Ch. 4.5 on Insider-outsider that will follow the justification of the choice of case study settings. In psychoanalytically informed research, the role of affects is imperative, as well as paying attention to what is "unexpected, irrational, and spontaneous" in the research encounter (Hunt, 1989, p.21). This is to acknowledge though that phenomenologically informed research also pays

attention to the implicit, it has an interest in exploring "something 'beneath' the manifest" (Karlsson, 2010, p.15).

There is no scope to discuss in more detail the difference between phenomenology and psychoanalysis, however, I would like to highlight a rare and important theorisation of Karlsson (2010) that shows how phenomenological thinking about consciousness "can help in illuminating the conditions for the possibility" of the unconscious (p.19). The connecting points between these traditions have been established as follows:

"interest in the subjective, the concepts of intentionality and meaning, interest in the latent, the significance of reflection, the value of openness the break with the common-sense attitude, and responsibility as an ethical principle" (Karlsson, 2010, p.20).

Having discussed in brief the debates between psychoanalysis and other interpretive traditions, the need for continuity is being stressed by Gabriel (1999). The author emphasises that psychoanalysis in organisational research should not be regarded as a standalone tradition, but rather "as continuous with other traditions", that is, being sensitive to areas where maybe other traditions refuse to look, whilst "using essentially the same modes of reasoning, arguing and demonstrating" (Gabriel, 1999, p.253).

The following section will be concerned with some of the critical debates highlighting the complexity of psychoanalytically informed research.

4.3 Critique of Psychoanalytically informed Social Research

As I have already shown in the section on <u>Psychodynamics of Friendship Relations</u>, individuals are assumed to be 'defended' subjects, with a large part of their mind being unconscious. It is permeated with anxieties, images, thoughts, feelings that can be detected through "jokes, parapraxes [Freudian slips], dramatic themes, dreams, fantasies, and affective intonations" influencing how we experience our day to day life (Hunt, 1989, p.25). Freud (1991 [1963], p.95) has developed his theories through paying attention to what others considered unimportant, incidental or even meaningless occurrences, for example:

> slips of the tongue together with their cognate forms (slips of pen, misreading, and mishearing); forgetting, subdivided according to the objects forgotten (proper names, foreign words, intentions or impressions); and bungled actions, mislaying and losing.

The psychoanalytic perspective even assumes that unconscious thoughts and feelings can also be 'hidden' behind "what appears as rational instrumental action" (Hunt, 1989, p.25). Psychoanalytic perspectives do not dispute "reason

and rationality in human affairs", but they do recognise that for example a seemingly rational quest "for profit or career" advancement could also be underwritten by affects of fear, desire, anxiety, rage, hysteria and so on (Gabriel and Carr, 2002, p.354). And therefore trying to identify and interpret the meanings of action and thought, whether appearing rational or emotional on the outside, is a challenge to psychoanalysts as well as management and organisational scholars.

Psychoanalytic perspectives have received an ample "academic and scientific" critique with regards to vast epistemological issues of validity and truth (Parker and Fotaki, 2014, p.4). I recall my personal encounter with Yiannis Gabriel who highlighted that if I wanted to pursue an academic career with psychoanalytically informed social research, I will find a plethora of resistance in my publishing endeavours. There is a critique for example on the prevalent use of case studies in psychoanalytic research, and/or accusing it as not impartial enough, not objective and thus the outcomes not being generalisable (Hall, Godwin and Snell, 2010, p.68). As a result, "[p]sychoanalysis is in crisis, and one of the ways it tries to address that crisis is to show that it can pass the tests that are set it by positivists" in the UK and USA, highlights Parker in his conversation with Fotaki (Parker and Fotaki, 2014, p.4). These tests are built on the basis that research is only considered "meaningful" if "the truth can be

verified", so the crucial issue here is "the principle of verifiability" (Parker, 1996, p.14).

However, objective research that follows the principles of logic should also acknowledge that in order to construct such studies, "interpretive choices" are being made, also "subjectivity", and "intersubjectivity" impacting on the construction of knowledge often remain unacknowledged (Parker, 1996, p.15). This is not to claim that positivist research is not reliable, but to state that when we come to study social phenomena, emotional undercurrents of human life and organisations, such philosophies and informed methodologies are deemed unsuitable (Parker, 1996, p.15). Furthermore, psychoanalysis does not seek truths about objective reality, but it aims to "provide a setting in which the individual can explore her/his own history and its meaning, that is, their own subjective truth" (Hall, Godwin and Snell, 2010, p.74).

Yet psychoanalytically informed research does not stay on an individual or interpersonal level as it is often claimed. Such research has reached beyond the analyst and analysand relation: "[i]t has developed theories of group behaviour, or work relations, leadership, religion, art, culture and so forth", highlight Gabriel and Carr (2002, p.351).

And in organisational research it helps us to theorize about and thus to learn more about emotional life, but also about oppressive power structures and norms of behaviour (Fotaki, Long and Schwartz, 2012, p.1105) that are

deemed acceptable whilst not realising that they might be impairing healthy psychological functioning of organisational members, and ultimately impacting on organisations too.

Another type of critique of psychoanalysis comes from "Lacanian and post-Lacanian feminist psychoanalytic writings" on the understanding of subjectivity and the self as "not fixed but fluid" (Parker, 1992, pp.250-251). Parker (1992, p.251) critiques this view by believing that postmodern writings are in fact saturated with a desire to "dissolve psychic and social structures" through "speak[ing] differently" about some traditional conceptions or beliefs. To which Fotaki, Long and Schwartz (2012, p.1105) add that psychoanalysis, in fact, provides "the most advanced and compelling conception of human subjectivity that any theoretical approach has to offer"; and in this way, it helps to problematize organisations and society (p.1114).

4.4 The Choice of Case Study

Eisenhardt (1989, p.534) defines a case study as "a research strategy which focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings". In such 'settings' the advantage of using a case study is that an array of perspectives can be obtained, and that is by either collecting a variety of accounts or by using a combination of methods (Lewis and McNaughton Nicholls, 2014, p.66).

Furthermore, if research is 'interpretivist', it translates into a variety of interpretations that can be obtained, and it can be also very complex and detailed (Black, 2006).

Because this study uses a psychoanalytic theoretical framework, psychoanalytic research is usually detailed and focused on small samples, thus case studies whether of individuals or single organisation are preferred (Gabriel, 1999, p.266). At the same time, the choice of case studies is made so that opposing views could be compared and contrasted (Gabriel, 1999, p.266). In addition, meanings that arise in the research subjects through their own interpretations are also context bound (Hussey and Hussey, 1997, p.65).

Taking all of this into consideration a case study was chosen as the most suitable research strategy to be able to conduct a detailed exploration of the emotional apparatus of the workplace friendship phenomenon. As I explained in chapter three, the psychoanalytic lenses have enabled me to move from the individual emotional experiences, their perceptions, fears, anxieties and defence mechanisms, to the collective level. The research strategy of a particular group of employees within a voluntary sector organisation was therefore crucial for me to be able to focus on the individual and the collective elements sufficiently in-depth, so that I could evidence the unhealthy functioning of social defence mechanism within the particular organisational setting.

The disadvantage of industry wide generalisations has been considered, but as will be shown, the insights into emotional reactions evoked by organisational efforts to rationalise complex interpersonal relations are, I believe, "relevant beyond the case", as argued by Kenny (2012, p.1187).

The single case study chosen was a UK based non-profit organisation, that will be referred to as The Friendly Organisation to maintain anonymity and confidentiality. Taking into account ethical considerations, the problematic nature of conceiving the anonymity of organisations is often discussed (e.g. Gabriel, 2012). In that respect, location, historical settings, or detailed descriptions of organisational activities, names of individuals, detailed accounts of stories are conceived in order to protect not only the organisation but also participants and non-participants of the study (Bryman and Bell, 2011, pp.122-146). This could be problematic for researchers as some significant detail could be "vital for analysis" yet they have to be modified (Gabriel, 2012, p.1139). In this research, every effort has been made to maintain confidentiality, whilst also modifying or leaving out certain data, "without .. altering the underlying patterns" (Gabriel, 2012, p.1139).

For this reason, the nature of non-profit work will be discussed in general terms, without going into the industry specifics, the exact type of job roles, and the type of UK governmental policies and regulatory frameworks directly impacting on its viability.

As an estimate, the organisation at the time of the fieldwork had approximately 200 employees out of which three-quarters worked at the front line. The remaining quarter of organisational members were from Senior Management across corporate support departments such as Finance, Human Resources, Marketing, Audit Functions and other industry specific Departments. The corporate support services, management and industry specific Departments were at the time of the fieldwork based at the Head Office and the frontline facing staff were spread between the Head Office and several Area Offices.

In terms of formal hierarchy, the Chief Executive and the organisation reports on its activities to the board on a regular basis. The board members are members of communities that the organisation serves, as well as members of the general public with special expertise to advise on current affairs of the organisation. The organisational structure recognises the groups of Senior Management, Middle Management, Supervisors, Team Leaders and front line and back office staff.

This organisation has undergone several restructures in the past 10 years. These consisted of three TUPE transfers of relatively large departments and were accompanied by challenges of cultural differences and acceptance of new organisational members. There were also numerous intra-organisational restructures often resulting in redundancies, justified as necessary by

management in order to provide customer services to the vulnerable parts of society in an effective and efficient manner.

Such frequent organisational change was also the result of the gradual withdrawal of governmental funding, changing legislation, and the pressure of becoming more 'business-like' that are facing the non-profit sector in the UK as well as in the US (Sanders and McClellan, 2014). Over the years The Friendly Organisation has developed business focused services, thus a proportion of its income stems from, for example, providing paid-for management expertise to its sister organisations, which is then 'gift-aided' to the organisation.

Such understanding of the case study is in line with studying organisations as 'open systems', typical for psycho-social research as highlighted by, for example, Handy and Rowlands (2016). The 'open systems theory' means that organisations not only interact with their environments but that they are also influenced by "external force[s]" such as governmental policies, public perception and opinions and so on (Stapley, 1996, p.189). Equally, this theory recognises that the organisational members unconsciously influence and are influenced by the "organisational system" (Handy and Rowlands, 2016, p.6).

The case study was chosen not only because it interacts with its environment as an 'open system'. The reasons were several. Firstly, the non-profit sector but also the public sector comes with their particular set of pressures that makes them distinct from the private sector. To start with, they are directly

influenced, or dependent on UK Government policies that could be unworkable because of the lack of clarity (Fotaki, 2010). Organisations that are publicly funded are also subjected to regulatory and audit practices that come with their own set of challenges (McGivern and Ferlie, 2007).

Furthermore, universalist values of fairness and equality have been reported to motivate the workers in the public sector more than profitability (Hoggett, 2006, p.189). Should these conflict with organisational norms or behaviour, they are likely to inflict internal conflict in organisational members (Hoggett, 2006). As was shown in the ethnographic field study of Sanders and McClellan (2014), the pursuit of being 'business-like' whilst attending to a social mission is accompanied by "tensions" in organisational members.

Last but not least, as pointed out by Menzies Lyth (1960), as well as Obholzer (1994), job roles in human services can evoke particular anxieties in individuals and thereby create specific individual and collective defence mechanisms.

Perhaps this is why much of psychodynamic research is situated in the healthcare and care sectors. To illustrate, in organisational literature British NHS practices and policies have been explored extensively through social defence theory. A few examples are the recent works of Hinshelwood and Skogstad (2000); Hinshelwood (2001); Obholzer and Zagier Roberts (1994). Fotaki (2010, 2006) and Fotaki and Hyde (2014) also studied public healthcare policies; McGivern and Ferlie (2007) uncovered hidden anxieties connected to

practices of NHS appraisals; Fischer (2012) studied psychodynamics in a 'democratic therapeutic community'. Other examples of work in public sector organisations come from sustainability (Mnguni, 2010), or collaborative work with travellers in Ireland (Boydell, 2005).

Secondly, I would like to acknowledge that I once was a member of this organisation thus I was able to secure "the right (in-depth) access" to the organisation (Alvesson, 2012, p.88) with relative ease. Whilst this fact can be regarded by some as a hindrance to impartiality, my affiliation has enabled me to gain entry and insights which I believe are unique to this case study. This particular type of research comes with a set of challenges, aside from anonymity, which I address in the Insider-outsider section.

I have benefited from being an insider to this organisation in the past also in the sense of being aware of its bureaucratic efforts, in line with risk management, to control and monitor existing and potential conflicts of interests of organisational members. From an organisational point of view, workplace friendships were also considered to be conflicting and compromising relations. Having highlighted in the section on Friendship and Rationality how in the UK such bureaucratic measures covering workplace friendship are rare, I consider this case study to be a unique setting.

Gabriel (1999, p.266) suggests that a good case study for psychoanalysis in organisations could be *the 'critical' case study"* [emphasis author`s own], "[i]f

the argument can be established for such a critical case, the argument is likely to be equally valid in less extreme cases." I believe that the chosen case study will enable me to highlight emotional complexities of subjecting friendship to bureaucratic controls, and therefore is a likelihood of similar issues recurring in other organisations, but perhaps in a less extreme way.

4.5 Insider-outsider and Ethical Considerations

I have been privileged to once having been a staff member of the chosen organisation. My identity as a researcher can be compared to the 'insider-outsider' of Cunliffe and Karunanayake (2013, p.372). I was "indigenous" to The Friendly Organisation and thus some may have perceived me as "one-of-us" (Cunliffe and Karunanayake, 2013, p.372), whilst others may have seen me as an organisational member. Such positioning requires heightened reflexivity foremost from the ethical stance (Bryman and Bell, 2011, p.132). To check and reflect on my possible influence, at the end of the interview I asked my participants what impact my former role had on their accounts.

Psycho-social research specifically requires a "reflexive practitioner", meaning "sustained and critical self-reflection on [the methods] and practice, to recognize [the] emotional involvement in the project, whether conscious or unconscious" (Clarke and Hoggett, 2009, p.7). This is because such research

differs from others in social science because of the ontological conception of the self (Clarke and Hoggett, 2009, p.21) which I have discussed in the chapter on Psychodynamics of Friendship Relations.

During the research process, we do not necessarily know what makes us act in a certain way, therefore we have to be alert to the emotional dynamics of our interaction (Clarke and Hoggett, 2009, p.21). I have been aware that my interaction with participants is affected by "the consciousness and culture" of each encounter (Hunt, 1989, p.20), and that transference and countertransference, as already highlighted in the section on Interpretivist Perspective, would affect our subject-object relations.

To illustrate, my very first interview steps were soaked with nervousness, uncertainty, as an 'insider-outsider' fearing the impressions I was going to leave on my participants in my newly disclosed identity of the researcher. I was fearful of discouraging remarks that I had been subjected to in terms of breaching 'practicality of professional life' with the 'impracticability of academia'. Whilst experiencing these feelings, Roger was my very first interview participant and at various points during the interview he kept joking, referring to me as 'Dr Freud', and at one time had compared the interview process to being "in a psychiatrist chair".

At these moments through countertransference I identified with what was being transferred which intensified fears of my own. However, through the research

process, I learnt to trust that "subjects are often blind to who the researchers are and what they are actually doing, favouring their own fantasies and notions about them" (Hunt, 1989, p.20). As I progressed with my interviews I was able to see interactions from a more distant perspective, and remained unaffected, detached from the encounters, which is a necessary skill of psycho-social researchers, to acknowledge but also to try to avoid "self-deceit" of misinterpreting what we see as our own (Alexandrov, 2009, p.43).

The notion of transference-countertransference had therefore fuelled my reflexivity and interaction with the data from the very beginning of my research journey. These 'tools' enabled me to see how I was "positioned in relation to" my research subjects (Hollway and Jefferson, 2005, p.151). I kept reflecting on these encounters and their meanings in my preliminary data analysis.

As will be seen in the data analysis I learnt how to use psychoanalytic concepts to move from the intra-personal level to the interpersonal and collective level, to uncover wider meanings about friendship complexities in organisations. As Parker (1997, p.8) highlights, this is the strength of psychoanalytic perspectives. It enables "a reflection, compression and reduction of societal phenomena to the level of the individual, it does so in a way that also reveals something more of the nature of those phenomena".

Yet such psycho-social research reflexivity not only comes with acknowledging one's own fears, and unconscious reactions to participants (e.g. Gilmour,

2009). There is a need to understand that a research encounter is not therapy, for a start, interpretations are not being made during the research encounter, but "the dynamics of interaction, including the researcher's contributions" are part of the data (Alexandrov, 2009, p.42).

And because of the interpretative nature of research and unconscious dynamics, ethical conundrums arise at all times in the research process, especially in terms of communicating interpretations to research subjects. Alexandrov (2009) and Hollway and Jefferson (2000) stress that research subjects should be recognised for their ability to remain autonomous, independent human beings, that could learn from what could be perceived as "painful feedback" without automatically inflicting "harm". This is akin to Winnicott's (1953; 1971) conception of transitional object and the interpretation of 'me-not me' boundaries by Van Buskirk and McGrath (1999), in terms of being able to grow and mature upon receiving feedback, whether it is negative or positive, instead of being harmed by it.

I have not offered my individual interpretations to individuals, as during the pilot I did not receive much engagement from my participants post interviews. I will reflect on these instances again in section on Data Analysis & Interpretation when I will be discussing the dis-engagement with the interview process after I sent the transcripts or audio-recordings to my participants. In the case of this dis-engagement being an attempt to avoid the 're-living' of their often intense

emotional experiences that were captured in the transcripts and recordings; proceeding with discussing anxiety and 'pushing' for opening up further felt inappropriate. On reflection, had I prepared my participants by informing them that the interview will have two parts with the latter being an offer of my interpretations, this could have produced even more fruitful data.

I reassured my participants that I was researching the collective, social phenomena. I also made them aware of the research purpose, of the publication requirements, and of the organisational request to receive an information report based on my findings. All of my participants received an information sheet attached to informed consent (see Appendix 2).

Reflecting further on my role as an insider-outsider, my research had been accompanied by affects of uncertainty and discomfort at times, when three of the research participants started to reflect on me as their workplace friend. These instances were spontaneous yet to me they felt at times unexpected. Initially, I did not consider my personal friendship with some of the participants as problematic, since these relations have long been established as one of the successful methods of qualitative enquiry, having roots in anthropology and advocating the richness of the data obtained (e.g. Tillmann-Healy, 2003). When interviewing friends I had been aware that I would have to "continually step back from experiences and relationships and examine them analytically and critically" (Tillmann-Healy, 2003, p.735), more than I would have done with the

acquaintances I spoke to. Yet this process was not without emotional turmoil arising in me at the time.

For example, during the interview with Sally, she asked whether she can include me in the drawing of her friends and I agreed. Yet when she started drawing me and explaining how she saw me, I reacted uncomfortably and expressively: "No::! Please don't draw me!" (s.182), in a desperate grasp to 'step back' from this research. I kept reminding myself of my researcher role, yet she saw me as her friend first and foremost which I respected.

She pressed on and drew a funny picture of me, adding a moving commentary of our friendship, which reconfirmed to me the incredibly powerful emotional dynamics involved in researching friends. Friendship as a method demands not only attending to the ethics of care (Noddings, 2010; Tillmann-Healy, 2003). That is putting aside our own values and projects with channelling all efforts to listen attentively to the other, to understand their expressed needs (Noddings, 2010, p.391). But also involves "a radical reciprocity [and] a move from studying "them" to studying *us*" (Tillmann-Healy, 2003, p.735; emphasis author's own). Openings such as Sally's enabled me to reflect on myself and the value I placed on friendship relations.

Furthermore, during my research encounters and empirical work, I had to remain alert to my own conscious or unconscious thinking that could have lead me towards acting as a 'guardian' of The Friendly Organisation, against

bringing it into disrepute or showing it in a negative light. It is Alvesson (2003, p.21) who highlights that as an employee, one can encounter "not only the internalisation of, or identification with, certain values and ideals constraining one's consciousness but also a moral imperative to express oneself in loyal terms" as an insider.

I had to question my personal views of organisational practice, I also had to alter my language, moving from 'we' as an organisation to 'they'. The following statement from my research journal after my first interview with Roger evidences paying attention to my own positioning and assumptions:

> This was my first interview and I was already conscious of my own emotional responses to the people that were on the list – I recognised some of the names that Roger had put down. I kept repeating in my head, 'I have to remain impartial!'. Remaining alert.

It could also be argued that because I have known the interview participants in a work context, and some of them through friendship relations, they would shy away from opening up. I argue that another 'neutral researcher' would not be able to gain the same level of access and the depth of the stories told, as there has been an amount of pre-existing trust I was able to build on.

Anonymity has been ensured by asking participants to choose their own pseudonyms and by reassuring them on the information sheet (Appendix 2) and during the interview that The Friendly Organisation was not going to have

any access to the transcripts, but would obtain an anonymised summary of recommendations for organisational practice.

By highlighting the 'honesty' of the research participants, the interviews could be seen as siding towards co-construction or 'localism' (Silverman, 1993; Alvesson, 2003), where I was building a rapport with the participants by occasionally 'disclosing' my own personal stories and views when needed to encourage more reflexivity and to build a 'safe' environment in which the story was produced (Roulston, 2010). Such process of self-disclosure of my own experiences not only enabled me to explore the emotional dynamics between the researcher and research participant later on, but also to incorporate the elements of auto-ethnography in the analysis and interpretation (see sections 4.6 and 4.7). I have done so by acknowledging that the inclusion of my personal stories led to the co-construction of the stories told, but also that they are important on their own (Ellis, 2004, p.65).

Furthermore, I did not regard my participants as "competent and moral truth teller[s]" (Alvesson 2003, p.14), or that they were even aware of their own emotions and able to express their experiences consciously because I was once their colleague, or that this was even possible to achieve. Empirical data in social science cannot be taken as an absolute representation of the external reality (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2011, p.4). Therefore, the primary emphasis should not be on the empirical data but on "how 'data' are constructed for the

benefit of theoretical reasoning" (Sutton & Staw, 1995, cited in Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011, p.4).

It is being an insider-outsider, along with the constant questioning of my assumptions and positions that lead to a reflexive interpretation of my data, and the dynamics of my research encounter. As put by Riach (2009, p.360) an insider-outsider is able to consider "alternative epistemological perspectives" generated "by research participants".

4.6 Data Collection

The method of data collection included consideration of organisational written documents. I then conducted semi-structured interviews, and considered some of the autoethnographic elements, where appropriate, based on my own experiences of the relationship policy.

At first, I looked at the organisational policy on relations and the organisational strategy to explore the initial organisational positioning towards friendships. This was followed by 30 semi-structured in-depth interviews, eight of which were conducted as part of the pilot. In terms of sampling, the 'declarations' of friends noted on the Declaration of Interest Form were used as a starting point. I contacted a sample of individuals across organisational hierarchy who declared close friendship relations at work. I then followed by snowballing

sampling (Rumens, 2008, 2011), following the recommendations of my participants of those individuals who were known to/ or suspected to have friendships at work, or would, in their opinion, be an interesting person to talk to on this topic (see Appendix 3 for a sample of the interview questions - 'Closure').

As Alvesson (2012) calls for researchers to be creative in their methodologies, I contacted ex-employees, as well as employees who were leaving the organisation at the time of the data collection. Following the snowballing technique described above, I also spoke with employees who had not made any friends in The Friendly Organisation. The shortest interview was one hour and 30 minutes long and the longest lasted two hours. They were all conducted away from the working environment, during or after the working time of the participants.

Prior to the interviews, each participant was sent a Consent Form and the Information Sheet. Initially, through my pilot, each individual was asked to prepare a list of people that they have met through work and who have been or had been personally important to them. The definition of importance was left intentionally open to see if any workplace friends would appear on the lists. Following the pilot, I reformulated the questions in the Information sheet and I asked my participants to think of people they would have worked with and were currently considering or had considered their friends.

Equally, my method of discussing stories changed during the collection of the data. In the pilot, my interviewees were asked to write the names of the people they came up with on sticky labels and I asked them to place these on a template of an affective map (a circle of importance) as follows.

The participants were asked to imagine themselves in the middle of these circles and to place the sticky labels with the names of people who were personally important to them around the centre, as and where they felt appropriate. This method had been inspired by an in-depth study of friendship in general life by Spencer and Pahl (2006) who were interested in personal communities consisting of friendships, and have helped to demonstrate that the roles of friends differ from one individual to the next.

The circles of importance were also used to study the role of social support in personal networks, including personal life friends, and were used to illustrate the changing need and provision of social support through the life course of an individual due to changes in socio-economic situation and life circumstances, time, period, culture etc (Kahn and Antonucci, 1980). Kahn and Antonucci (1980) did explain that some individuals may not have social support circles, and expressed the opinion that having no one as a provider of social support can lead to increased levels of stress and thus impact on the psychological wellbeing of an individual. They were also discussing the boundaries between the circles. Furthermore, Schulz and Sklaveniti (2017) used a similar approach,

identified as Ego-Map interviews, in order to establish how people position themselves in relation to communication and information technologies.

Initially, the interview tool of affective maps was considered ideal to support the reflexivity of participants. By the eighth interview, however, it started to be more of an obstruction. It transpired that friendship at work was not a structured phenomenon, it was much messier than these circles 'allowed'. For example, friends can move in and out of the circle (psychologically closer or further apart) according to various contexts. Furthermore, the tool proved restrictive, leading me to ask participants to define exactly the position of friends in line with these circles. In addition, some participants found it difficult to reflect on themselves and their positions, and perceptions of friends at work.

Thus after the initial eight interviews, these circles were replaced with drawings (see Appendix 1 for an example of the drawings and Appendix 2 for the Information Sheet, following the Ethics approval). I presented my participants with a blank sheet of A3 paper and coloured pens, and asked them to draw how they felt they saw themselves and their workplace friends. I also encouraged them to think in metaphors and where possible I gave some examples of other participants' drawings, whilst adhering to anonymity and confidentiality. This additional method of data collection enabled the participants to visualise themselves and their workplace friends and allowed the flow of creativity and imagination.

This method was preferred to the circles of importance that encouraged the mental 'organisation' of friendship relations. Drawings enabled them to draw out ambiguities, contradictions, intricacies of these experiences, following the social science researchers Riach, Rumens and Tyler (2015). Equally, the drawing process was used to support a psycho-social method of 'free association of thought' as used by Hollway and Jefferson (2000). Therefore it was seen as a supportive tool to evoke affective responses, rather than as a main data collection instrument.

On many occasions, I was faced with the affect of fear and an initial resistance of my participants to draw. It was often the case that they were uncomfortable with the idea of artistic expression. For example, in Leslie's case a response of "I am not creative at all.." (s.89) was followed by an even stronger statement of "I am REALLY not creative!" (s.97). However, in believing in the importance and purpose of this supplementary method, and inspired by the creativity of 'not knowing', imagination and improvisation in the organisational life as promoted by Chapman (2014), I persevered with including the drawings into my interviews.

It is Winnicott (1986, p.41) who foregrounds the idea that everyone is capable of creativity, whilst referring to seeing things "afresh all the time", and avoiding conformity. This capability distinguishes "creative living" from being engaged in producing an artistic piece, that is generally attributed to having a specific talent

or skill (ibid., p.44). I kept reassuring my participants that even a dot or a line was in this case classed as a drawing and that they were not expected to have any 'artistic' skills for this research task. I also informed them of this activity on the Information sheet prior to interview (see Appendix 2), however, I did not specify what and how we would be drawing so that the participants could not 'practice' before hand.

Following the pilot, aside from changing the supplementary method of 'circles' to 'drawings', I reformulated my initial set of questions, to be less structured, more open-ended. The interviews resembled more a form of discussion as I progressed through the research and gained confidence in collecting the data. In terms of designing the interview questions, I was influenced by free association interviewing (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000), life story interviewing (Atkinson, 1998) and storytelling interviewing (Gabriel, 2000).

Free association interviewing was introduced by Hollway and Jefferson (2000) as a distinctive psycho-social method to accompany life story interviews. This research loosely followed their approach in that the questions were semi-structured as opposed to unstructured, as they recommended to reach the unconscious. Based on how to approach the questioning of the research subject in a psycho-social study as summarised by Boydell (2009, p.243), the questions asked were in the majority open-ended, the 'why' question was used

to a minimum level, and I did follow the interviewees' thoughts by formulating the questions during my interview by using their own words.

The focus during my interviews was also on personal stories in order to understand the emotions accompanying workplace friendship experiences. I did not only ask about the friendship stories from The Friendly Organisation. My participants were also reflecting on the friendship stories that had arisen during the course of their employment more general. This enabled me to understand friendship phenomena as not only evolving in one organisational context.

I followed Gabriel's (2004) elicitation of stories. Gabriel (2004, p.2) distinguishes between "'text', 'narrative', and 'story'", whilst arguing that one is not a substitute for the other. They differ because

> stories are particular types of narratives and … narratives are particular types of texts, all of which may feature in discourses. What makes narratives different from other texts is a clear time sequence and what makes stories different from other narratives is a plot (Gabriel, 2004, p.2).

The function of stories has been described as enhancing learning, influencing hearts and minds (Gabriel, 2013). They are the means of highlighting the unusual; they "give us [the researchers] access to what lies behind the normal and mundane" (Gabriel, 2000, p.240); at times they enable researchers to uncover organisational anxieties that would otherwise have remained silent

(Gabriel, 2013). It has been recommended that organisational stories should be taken into consideration when one is seeking to understand organisational symbolism and emotions in organisational life (Gabriel, 2000, p.240).

Stories and narratives in organisations have been analysed by comparing them to myths (e.g. Gabriel, 2004), folklore (e.g. Reedy, 2009), or in the case of psychoanalysis, to identify unconscious psychoanalytic defence mechanisms by asking "why" people tell certain stories (Clarke, 2002, p.177). In psychoanalytic approaches, an interpretative attitude of an unconscious mind is required, building on Freud's work on the interpretation of dreams, looking for example for "the repressed wishes and desires" (Gabriel, 1991, p.320). Via stories one can examine "[d]eception, blind-spots, wishful thinking, the desire to please or to manipulate an audience, lapses of memory, confusion" and so on (Gabriel, 2004b, p.29).

For example, Gabriel (2012) reflects on an organisation that went through a transformation process to increase its effectiveness. However, they failed to do so miserably as they did not consider important to acknowledge the emotional void post mass redundancies, bypassing "separation rituals or psychological mourning" (ibid., pp.1137-1152). The 'new' organisational story post-transformation was full of "well-rehearsed signifiers, such as 'excellence', 'cutting edge' and 'world class'", yet these were interpreted as wish-fulfilling fantasies contrasting with the day to day reality (ibid., p.1140). When applying

psychoanalytic lenses to interpreting such organisational story, Gabriel uses the concept of psychological 'repression' of the reality, and foregrounds the theoretical concept of organisational 'miasma', referring to "a paralysis of resistance, an experience of pollution and uncleanliness, and feelings of disgust, worthlessness and corruption" (ibid., p.1137).

In a way stories share some resemblance with the free association method as pointed out by Holloway and Jefferson (2000, p.35). This is because eliciting stories enable the interviewee's mind to 'free-associate' as follows:

> The particular story told, the manner and detail of its telling, the points emphasised, the morals drawn, all represent choices made by the story-teller. Such choices are revealing, often more so than the teller suspects (ibid.).

At the same time, stories about lived experiences that are told and retold are usually much clearer and less complex than the actual experiences (Duck, 2011, p.14). Therefore, it is not being claimed that the stories in this research are true representations of experience. Firstly, when considering psycho-social lenses, the responses of participants are not to be "necessarily… taken at face value" because the very participants are considered as "defended subjects", full of internal conflicts (Hollway and Jefferson, 2005, p.151). Secondly, when the experience is narrated, it is already "filtered", not "duplicated" (Weick, 1995, p.128). Even the "personal narratives" are already significantly amended when they are told (Weick, 1995, p.128). Therefore, it is stories of research

participants that enable one to "[stay] closer to actual life-events than methods that elicit explanations", and they are considered as a valid and reliable research method (Holloway and Jefferson, 2000, p.32).

Overall in organisational research, stories are created, told and re-told as a way of making sense of working environments, various social encounters and events that carry deeper meanings to individuals (Weick, 1995; Boje, 1991; Gabriel, 2000). In fact, Boje (1991, p.106) is amongst many other organisational scholars who would argue that in order to understand how people make sense of organisations, collecting and analysing stories within these organisations, rather than factual information, is more significant. This research is situated in the 'non-formal' organisation as noted in the introductory chapter, and thus stories that escaped the "rationalised impersonal control" of organisations (Gabriel, 1995, p.491) have been treated with high relevance.

To compliment my data collection methods of interviewing and written documents, and to enrich my case study data, I also experimented with autoethnography. I was an 'insider-outsider' (see section 4.5), and therefore once "indigenous" (Cunliffe and Karunanayake, 2013, p.372) to the case study culture. Rather than denying my participation in the research, this position enabled me to empathise, recognise and sometimes identify with the affects that my participants were recalling. Such understanding in a researcher-researched relationship are according to Gadd (2004) very valuable in order to

prevent the interviewee to engage in excessively defensive narratives in a psycho-social study.

As for the autoethnographic research, Weir and Clarke (2018) recently argued that emotional identification with the field has been regarded as a necessary consequence of any research, adding value to the work rather than jeopardising its 'authenticity'. The autoethnographic elements serve not only my own sense-making by 'honestly' reflecting on my lived experiences (Weir and Clarke, 2018). But in the words of Ellis and Bochner (2000, p.738) "through understanding [myself] comes understanding others". My experimenting with autoethnographic elements add to the generalizability of this research in terms of seeing how my reflections and emotional experiences are typical of others, "since we all participate in a limited number of cultures and institutions" (Ellis, 1999, p.674). I have also taken into consideration how my experiences connected to the wider claims about the dehumanizing effects of bureaucracy (Weber, 1968; Whimser, 2004; see also section 2.3). In this way, I acknowledged the aim of autoethnography to link personal lived experiences with the wider socio-cultural context, and to allow for "non traditional forms of inquiry and expression" (Wall, 2006, p.146).

I have already acknowledged the role of an interpretivist researcher in co-constructing the knowledge produced during the interviews (e.g. Gadd, 2004; Roulston, 2010; Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015). As I explained in section 4.5, a

specific feature of psycho-social research is the acknowledgement of the emotional dynamics of the research encounter. Such dynamics become a part of the data set and a 'tool' for exploration of the researcher's positionality (Hollway and Jefferson, 2005, p.151; Clarke and Hoggett, 2009, p.21; Alexandrov, 2009). However, being the 'insider-outsider' enabled me to embrace this unique position and to enrich my data set further.

During my interviews with my participants, their stories evoked an emotional response in me in relation to my own experiences in the case study organisation. When I opened up about these experiences, during the interviews, I started to regard my own reactions as important in their "own right, not as a tactic" to get my participants to open up more (Ellis, 2004, p.65; student Valerie). I ensured however that my affects, joys and/ or pains which surfaced in the research encounter, did not 'overpower' the stories told by my participants, in line with an autoethnographic type of research (Ellis, 2004).

I regarded any affects that I shared during interview encounters as an additional method of data collection and therefore I also subjected these to analysis and interpretation, drawing out the "intimate and sensitive" elements (Beck, Brewis, and Davies, 2018, p.250), opening myself to be vulnerable as a research subject, and fearing not being able to retrieve what was revealed or to control how it will be interpreted (Ellis and Bochner, 2000; Ellis, 1999).

Finally, embedding autoethnographic elements also enabled me to reflect on the impact the research subject and the process of research had on me, following the path of the collective autoethnographic work of Beck, Brewis and Davies (2018). The researchers reflected deeply about their experiences of being academics and the impact their research subject of menopause and economic participation had on them, including reflections on the effects of "shifting subjectivities as the project progressed" (ibid., p.248).

In my research journal during my pilot study, I wrote down my reflections about how each story and comment "struck a different chord in me", how they were shaping my personal experiences. And indeed as it will be seen later on, my subjectivity of a critical researcher had at one point during the research moved from being indifferent to, to being fearful of, friendship encounters at work (see section 5.2.4). I saw an opportunity in such a shift in my subjectivity and added it to the body of the evidence on the emotional impact of "excessive defence" and its manifestation at The Friendly Organisation.

By conducting this case study research I, therefore, strived to highlight that the personal voice in the research matters greatly, agreeing with the argument of Ellis and Bochner (2000, p.746):

> A text that functions as an agent of self-discovery or self-creation, for the author as well as for those who read and engage the text, is only threatening under a

narrow definition of social inquiry, one that eschews a social science with a moral center and a heart.

When autoethnographic elements enter the research process, they serve to fight what Gadd (2004) explicitly foregrounded as problematic in his practice of the 'free association' interviewing (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000). That is the tendency of social scientists to position themselves 'higher' in the hierarchy, "to interpret with" and to write "with authority", as if they were immune to "emotional dilemmas" and did not have to make any ethical or/and "moral choices" (Ellis and Bochner, 2000, p.747).

By not carving out my personal self from the interview process, and by interpreting my responses retrospectively, I was able to be close to what Ellis (1999, p.675) describes as "emotional recall". That is to move between being emotionally close to, yet distant from the lived experiences. Ellis (1991, p.23) in her extensive autoethnographic research has also used 'sociological introspection' to reflect on and to interpret one's own emotions, and to evidence what role these emotions play in the meaning-making process for individuals and for "socially shared cognitions". My autoethnographic elements differ in the sense that I am focusing on both conscious and unconscious parts of lived experiences of me and my participants induced by the organisational processes. I am doing so in line with my psycho-social inquiry into emotional life, recognising that the meaning-making process is impossible without

acknowledging society, culture but also in large part the unconscious mind of individuals (Chodorow, 1999).

For example, in interpreting my research encounter with Francis in section 5.2.3, I explicitly foregrounded how my experience of interviewing on the subject of the bureaucratic policy had been reflected in the evidence body. By applying the psychoanalytic concepts of 'persecutory anxiety' and 'projective identification' I explored how my own feelings and sense-making connected to Francis's and others in the research process and thus furthering understanding of the destructive impact of bureaucratic rules targeting interpersonal relating (e.g. Ashcraft, 2000).

4.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis in psycho-social research starts with the repeated listening of the interview accounts and a detailed transcription process (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000; Clarke, 2002), to which I now turn.

All the interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed verbatim. Brinkmann and Kvale (2015, p.213) assert that "there is no true, objective transformation from the oral to the written mode". In terms of validity of transcripts, I acknowledge that all transcription work is already influenced by the theoretical lenses and view of the world of the researcher (Brinkmann and

Kvale, 2015). Furthermore, it is not only a theoretical position or even methodology that influences this work, but also the socio-cultural background of the researcher has an impact on such data (Bird, 2005, p.229).

Because this thesis uses psychoanalytic lenses, capturing emotions in the transcripts as close as possible was considered necessary. Jørgensen and Phillips (2002, p.81) point out that discourse analysts need to take into account their research question in order to choose the way the data will be transcribed. If one is conducting "microlinguistic analysis" then detailed transcriptions are preferred (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, p.81), and resources such as those detailed by Departments of Linguistics (e.g. Bucholtz and Du Bois, [no year]) could be used. But in the case of "less detailed textual analysis" capturing instances such as "pauses, silent periods and overlaps between speakers" would be sufficient and a lot of times this is used by discourse psychologists (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, p.81).

In the case of psycho-social research, capturing the "emotional tone, long pauses or avoidances" is important in order to be able to interpret the data with psychoanalytic lenses (Hollway and Jefferson, 2005, p.151). For example, Hollway and Jefferson (2000, p.51) presents a vignette from a 'free association' interview on the fear of crime to evidence how paying attention to the "change of tone" by Wendy, the researcher, enabled her to interpret the emotional

dynamics of the research encounter through 'transference' and 'countertransference'.

I therefore ensured that the transcripts captured all the words spoken, as well as hesitations, unfinished words or interjections, pauses, laughter, and other emotional expressions. Although this was not a linguistic piece of transcription intended for conversation analysis, transcribing conventions by Roulston (2010) have been partially utilised throughout, to assist with 'capturing' emotions in the written text. This was a very time consuming process, and very detailed. Often passages had to be played more than two to three times before I captured all 'incomplete' parts of one sentence (e.g. Tyler`s transcript contained a lot of unfinished parts). For this reason, it was necessary to seek support with the transcription and external transcribers, a friend and a family member, following the same process, helped me to get through this process, adhering to strict confidentiality by signing a non-disclosure agreement.

A thorough and it could be said attentive transcription work allowed me to note some initial commentaries, reactions, observations and annotations on the side of the transcribed text. As Brinkmann and Kvale (2015, p.207) state, when researchers do their own transcriptions, in the process of doing so "the social and emotional aspects of the interview situation" will come to the fore, and thus enable them to note first interpretations down as they arise.

Great attention had been paid to linking these annotations correctly to the corresponding text, therefore all the paragraphs were organised into sections and numbered. Occasionally this involved my commentaries too if necessary. For example, when I present an extract from the interview with Sheila as 's.114-115', I indicate that the relevant text can be located in 114th and 115th paragraph (section) of the transcript. Such numbering was useful for later coding and thematic analysis, also to help me navigate in the transcripts since some were as long as 40 pages (e.g. Leslie) following a two hours interview.

This detailed process allowed me to reflect on the data as I was re-listening to these and transcribing, and had taken me back to the interview participants and interview settings. This approach is also based on that of Hollway and Jefferson (2000) who acknowledge that although we can never understand the whole person, a holistic understanding can be achieved by paying attention to not only the interviews per se, but also the "memories" of interviews", the post-interview "notes", the connections between the interviews when mentioning the same person or the same events, as well as careful transcription of and re-listening to the audio notes, devoting each day to a different participant (p.69).

After the interview, all participants received either an audio-recording of the interview via Dropbox.com or a transcribed interview via providing a private email address, and thus had an opportunity to exclude parts of the interview or all from consideration if they wished to do so. I did not receive any corrections

of it, which in some cases might imply that the participants were content with their account. Equally, it could have been a sign of their disinterest or even an attempt to avoid the 're-living' of their emotional experiences that were captured in the transcripts and recordings.

It is also known that verbatim transcriptions could be received with refusal from the participants or even criticism, as the text could "appear incoherent and confused speech, even as indicating a lower level of intellectual functioning" (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015, p.213). This was not the case, as a careful consideration was given to informing the participants about the differences between written and spoken format, as recommended by Brinkmann and Kvale (2015). However, a few participants, Tyler and Charlie, stressed strict confidentiality when working with the data, as they felt they disclosed to me much more than intended.

In addition, during my pilot I attempted to follow up with the participants by email to seek clarification of some of their answers, however, this has proven unsuccessful as very few responded. This could be due to the lack of time or becoming disinterested in the interview process.

From the ethical point of view, all the interviewees were asked to choose their pseudonym, which was then used in the transcripts themselves and throughout this thesis. Only I have access to the true names of the participants. Furthermore, the names of colleagues and acquaintances mentioned in the

interviews were anonymised. Simple letters F1-F20 were used, to indicate the order in which the friends' names were brought up during the interview.

After completing my transcriptions I ended up with a large amount of data and using qualitative software could have been helpful. However, as Clarke (2002, p.179) draws on Holloway and Jefferson (2000), if at this point any software was used, there would be a danger of the analysis becoming too "descriptive". I would have been unable to trace contradictions, subject positions and understand subjects in their own right before constructing my thematic framework as detailed by Spencer et al. (2003).

I therefore used an old fashioned Word document where I first recorded themes and subthemes informed by my literature review and preliminary readings of data. I then gradually expanded themes by adding the relevant detail – reference - from each transcript, understood as the process of "indexing" by Spencer et al. (2003, p.300) and linking to themes. By using the Word document, I was able to directly comment and insert my further interpretations, in addition to what I observed during the transcription process. Finally, I proceeded with sorting the data, that is going through my indexed data, and drawing similarities. See Appendix 5 for final themes.

In interpreting the data, I followed the principle of looking 'beyond the data', searching "for unconscious forces beneath what is said" (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015, p.240). In this research, it was assumed that emotional relating

(friendship relating) was influenced by the unconscious dimension of the mind, thus it was important to pay attention to both, its conscious and unconscious manifestations (Stapley, 1996, p.23). I will now explain how this was achieved.

Studying friendship psycho-socially in this thesis meant combining discourse analysis and psychoanalysis. Social psychologists have been discussing discourse analysis (DA) and its crossovers with psychoanalysis for some time, for example, Billing (1997), Parker (1997) or Gough (2004). They all agree that the commonalities of these two approaches are centred around "language and its interpretation", although in a different format (Gough, 2004, p.245). Psychoanalysis is concerned with the talk occurring in a therapy setting whereas DA focuses on the interpretation of written texts or interview talk (Gough, 2004, p.245). In terms of the discursive impact on the understanding of the self and the impact of language on "the construction of selves and subjectivity" there is a consensus that discourse is not all that there is about the "thinking, feeling human subject" (Willing, 2013, loc. 5470).

Indeed, Parker (1997, p.7) argues that psychoanalysis is not only about discourse. It is not just about language or talk or texts. Studying social phenomena psychoanalytically means also paying attention to "patterns of meanings" determined by the local culture of the interaction with our research participants (Parker, 1997, p.7). As Gabriel (2014, p.84) eloquently summarises this approach

in interpreting a story, a myth or a dream, we are not simply uncovering different layers of meaning; we are working against unconscious defences that systematically seek to distort meaning.

What discourse analysts and psychoanalysts have in common, as pointed by Gough (2004, p.246), is understanding the human being not as a whole but as split, "fragmented, whether torn between desire and reason (psychoanalysis) or distributed along a range of subject positions (discourse analysis)".

A researcher using DA in combination with psychoanalysis has to pay attention to "psychological/cognitive concepts such as emotion and memory" as language properties (Gough, 2004, p.246). Researchers, therefore, focus on emotionally intense statements to help to illuminate the psychoanalytic focus of the data. In particular, the "irrational emotion as a threat to rational self-preservation is helpful in understanding discursive construction", in my case, of workplace friendship (Gough, 2004, p.249).

This approach is advocated by a branch of DA called discursive psychology ("DP"). It is this form of DA that allows for drawing on "theoretical constructs from outside of a discursive framework" (Willing, 2013, loc 5487), and is also most often used with psychoanalysis (Gough, 2004, p.246). It was for example used by Boydell (2005; 2009) to study the workings of partnerships in Northern Ireland and this thesis continues in this tradition.

It was also believed that through talking about a social phenomenon, such as talking about friendship, this phenomenon becomes "discursive", that is translated into language (Frosh, 1999, p.386). The concept of discourse is considered here limiting in capturing the wholeness of one's lived experience, conscious and unconscious, as there will always remain the need to acknowledge the complexity of emotional dynamics, "the foreign or the 'strange'" (ibid., p.382). In other words, the discourse is not all that has to be taken into consideration when making sense of a phenomenon. It is important to look "outside of the discourse" and to consider unconscious phantasy, "which pours in and around the discursive a realm of passionate being which is *irreducible*" (Frosh, 1999, p.386). This does not mean that the unconscious desires or anxieties cannot be traced in the language, or that we are not influenced by the social and political environment where we live, as pointed out by Frosh (1999, p.387):

> Deeply, passionately, unconsciously, people are political - racialized, gendered, classed to the core of their identities. Equally deeply, erratically and bizarrely, social events are infused with fantasy [referring to the unconscious phantasy as used in this thesis] - eroticized, exaggerated, full of fears and desires.

The understanding that what is being said does not have to exactly reflect the same phenomenon, albeit without the acknowledgement of the unconscious,

is the premise of the DA. In other words, DA also recognises "the function performed by language, rather than language as an accurate reflection of something else" (Boydell, 2009, p.249). And this is the meeting point of the discursive and the psychoanalytic understanding of the subject.

In psycho-social analysis, to acknowledge going 'beyond' the discursive (Forsh, 1999), Hollway and Jefferson (2005, p.149) as well as Willig (2013, loc.5470) recommend studying the interviewees' "emotional investments in particular discourses and subject positions". Parker (1997, p.8) equally stresses paying attention to how we as researchers and researched "position" ourselves in the discourse, how we understand and present ourselves in the discourse and how we 'change' these positions, as these changes could be the points of interpretation of unconscious forces.

From the discursive point of view, I was looking at what was said, what was not said, contradicting passages, what was the position of the subject, who else was mentioned, how subjects used their talk, intonation (see Appendix 4 for transcription conventions and details of transcription process). From a psychoanalytical point of view, I was following Saville Young and Frosh (2010); Gough (2009, 2004); Hollway and Jefferson (2000, 2005) and Gabriel (1999, 2014). I was deploying psychoanalytic concepts, as they were "relayed through [western] culture as components of a discourse" (Parker, 1997, p.7), used in the works of the above mentioned authors.

I was paying attention to the feelings and emotional reactions that were present in the texts. I drew out guilt, envy, hatred; I also interpreted the ways that participants related to me as an interviewer and my reactions to them by using psychoanalytic concepts of transference and countertransference; and I also drew out possible interpretations of discursive subject positions through defence mechanisms, such as denial, idealisation, splitting and projection where appropriate.

For example, by following the 'free association' approach I paid attention to the flow of the participants' thoughts, "their contradictions and avoidances" (Boydell, 2009, p.243) as follows. In the analysis (see section on Excessive Defence) I followed contradictory speech pattern of Bert. Notably, I traced how Bert's train of thought moved from trusting all staff in their ability to make impartial decisions to concluding that friendship relations were problematic in their own right. In the analysis of an 'Emotionally Detached Professional' (see section 5.3.2) I presented how Leslie 'moved' from discussing her current supportive employment role to describing HR professionals as unable to form friendships. Such contradicting passages immediately attracted my attention and through the application of psychoanalytic concept of, for example, splitting and projection one is able to interpret the distinctive position of friends as 'unwanted objects' in the unconscious of Bert and Leslie. In the section on Ritualistic Practice I too analysed a contradictory statement from Alan who

referred to friends as 'a dangerous game' and 'not a problem' at the same time, adding to the evidence body on persecutory anxiety. I acknowledged that anxiety, conscious or unconscious, "can be a valuable source of data about the significance of issues that arise in the course of the interaction" (Stapley, 1996, p.23), yet it is often missed out from the interpretations and data analysis in social science.

I also interpreted a variety of metaphors that enabled me to highlight the intensity of anxiety experienced by my interviewees. For example, I drew out Sheila's 'pressure cooker' in the section on Ritualistic Practice. This metaphor, and how it was used to me, symbolised the persecutory anxiety in Sheila's narrative. I also identified the defence mechanism of projection in Martha's use of the metaphor 'feral' in the chapter on 'Scapegoating Area Offices'.

To triangulate my data with the researcher reflexivity in a psycho-social research encounter (Saville Young and Frosh, 2010, p.513) I used the psychoanalytic concept of countertransference. For example, in the section on 'Complacent Culture' I discuss my interaction with Daisy when I was asking about her perceptions of the policy on friendships. The countertransference enabled to see myself as an 'unwanted inquisitor' and I applied more reflexivity than I would have done just by reflecting on being the 'insider-outsider' (see section 4.5) to The Friendly Organisation. Furthermore, I also reflected on my feelings and emotions when I was receiving the perspectives of the senior post

holders on the policy in the section 5.2.2 on the <u>Complacent Culture</u>. Such reflexivity enabled me to use the psychoanalytic concepts of 'psychological regression' and 'splitting' to identify the collective stance of management towards friendship relations.

The following presentation of analysis contains the most poignant statements with the emotional undertone that help to illustrate the main focus of the themes. I will focus on organisational pathology which will be followed by analysing the emotional experiences of interpersonal friendship relations. Data Analysis part one, therefore, consists of accounts from The Friendly Organisation and part two concerns friendship opportunities and challenges that can arise during the course of employment. However, when I use stories to highlight particular phenomena or concepts that help to illuminate specifics of friendship relations, I focus notably on The Friendly Organisation to draw on organisational context.

In the Data Analysis chapters, I use some quantifications in the form of quantifiers, such as 'some, many, a lot of'; but also in the form of counting the variance of certain phenomenon, such as experiences of trust (section 6.5.1) or confidence in reliability (section 6.5.2). In epistemological terms, following Silverman (2013) and Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009), I recognise that such simple quantifications can aid rather than impair qualitative data analysis, as

long as they do not take "an upper hand, but are subordinated to a well thought out overall research view" (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009, loc.358, ch.1, p.8).

By including these quantifications I do not wish to claim any objectivity or generalizability, validity or reliability here in the positivist sense, but I aim to pinpoint the centrality and explore the variance of specific forms of language within the broader discourse. For example, in the case of trust (see section 6.5.1) I regard simple counting techniques as another piece of data in interpreting sense-making of friendship relations. The quantifications help me to illustrate why and how trusting a workplace friend can contribute to creating 'good enough' organisational holding environments. Where possible I present stories to evidence the opportunities and challenges that workplace friendship creates for individuals in a way that would otherwise "escape the gaze of quantitative research" (Silverman, 2013, loc.1912, ch.4).

Chapter five: Data Analysis Part One

We must devote our interest and concern as much with the 'health' of the institution

as with the health of the individuals.

(Hinshelwood, 2001, p.45)

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explore the collective defensive elements aimed at friendship with a view to identify how they shape the "organisational dynamics and modes of thinking" (Sievers, 2006, p.108) and the organisational identity overall, understood as the patterns of conscious and unconscious interpersonal relating (Diamond, 1988, 1993).

To achieve the above the organisational policy making and the discourse of professionalism will be analysed following the psycho-social work of Boydell (2005, 2009) by using Armstrong's (2005) 'organisation-in-the-mind' concept. This is because this concept enables us to comprehend the organisational identity in terms of its "emotional reality… which is registered in [the staff], and is informing [their] relatedness to the organisation, consciously and unconsciously" (Armstrong, 2005, loc.938). The concept comprises of emotional experiences of phenomena that are not only contained in the individual employees but are "belonging to the organisation as a whole, as one

"psycho-social field" (Boydell, 2009, p.246). It covers their collective "inner resonances, representations and experiences" (Sievers, 2006, p.108).

I will adapt this concept to the exploration of policy making which I will refer to as a 'policy-in-the-mind' and to the discourse of professionalism which will be labelled as a 'professional-in-the-mind'. This conceptualisation will enable me to explore not only the descriptive, rational side registered in my interviewees but also the collective emotional reality in relation to these concepts, their emotional relatedness to the organisation overall.

5.2 Policy-in-the-mind

One of the reasons the case study was chosen was because it had in place a bureaucratic measure of workplace friendship called the Declaration of Interests ("DofI" henceforth). The DofI was a form that served the organisation to identify the types of relations that members of staff had within or outside its boundaries that could potentially be regarded as a conflict of interest, such as close personal relations with contractors or customers themselves. One such relation that was regarded as potentially conflicting was also workplace friendship.

This section will begin with exploring the DofI document, it will then proceed with the interpretation of this policy by my interviewees. A complacent culture

where my interviewees felt happy to declare their friendships will be contrasted with a culture of policing these relations, evoking emotions akin to persecutory anxiety from the Kleinian thesis, as explained in the literature review, see section 3.2.

5.2.1 Awareness of the Policy

The DofI policy had been in existence since approximately 2006 (Robyn, s.293)[12]. In Robyn's own words "the obligation to declare relations, personal relations formally" had always been there (Robyn, s.293). However, in the past the form focused more on the declaration of suppliers (Robyn, s.303), whereas the focus on friendship was brought up in 2012 (Robyn, s.305). Sheila confirmed this practice and recollected the events of the summer of 2012, "when you had to write down everybody that you were friends with and to what level of friendship you had with them" (Sheila, s.28).

All of my participants were aware of the existence of the DofI but the awareness of having to declare close friendships wasn't always there. When I asked about the act of declaring, some claimed that they had not been doing so because they did not read the form properly (e.g. Martha), or did not know of the

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[12] Robyn, s.293 refers to a section in the transcript. All of the transcribed text has been numbered for ease of reference including the interviewees' and interviewer's responses, as explained in section 4.7.

obligation to declare their close personal friends in the workplace (e.g. Dudley; Lucius); others believed that the declaration was for family members only (Dean); or for contractors (Ariel), friends who were engaged in business transactions with them (e.g. Lucy, Lilly), or that declaring a friend was only relevant if there was a conflict in terms of misunderstandings or arguments and so on (e.g. Marilyn, Sam, Leslie).

On the other hand, there were participants who had been religiously declaring their friends (Kate, Fred, Rick, Sheila, Tyler, Emily, Charlie, Sally). And my conversation with Robyn (s.297-301) from the department partly responsible for collecting the responses and designing the form with the HR team, confirmed unanimously that it concerned the declaration of close friendships.

These varied responses surfaced despite the fact that the version of the form on page one explicitly asked people to declare the following:

> I am related to,1 / close personal friends with,[2] or have regular contact with the following; who are currently involved on a business level with [The Friendly Organisation]; including employees or board members (please see end note for the definition of personal/business contacts).
>
> Name:………………………………
>
> Their relation to me:………….
>
> Role:……………………………..

Close personal friendship was even defined by the organisation on page five of the form as follows:

> Close friend: it is impossible to define what we mean by a close friend, as you must use your personal judgement. However, the following might assist you; for instance, if you frequently socialise with someone actively outside of work, you might wish to declare it. Similarly, if you believe in hindsight; that it might be considered that you had a conflict of interest in making a decision that might be considered preferential by a colleague who you also regard as a friend, then it would be sensible to declare it.

From the form itself, it is evident that The Friendly Organisation made a distinction between 'a regular friend' and 'a close personal friend'. They positioned close personal friendship as a relation more susceptible to 'a potential or actual conflict of interest' than a more distant friendship or acquaintanceship. The form also referred to declaring any relatives involved with The Friendly Organisation, and personal or business contacts being for example contractors or suppliers to the organisation. Therefore, close friendship was perceived by the organisation alongside these relations as a possible barrier to "the highest standards of conduct" (The_Friendly_Organisation, 2015, p.1) and in the case of breaching the policy a disciplinary action was likely to follow, as outlined on the form.

Despite this written guidance the interpretation of the DofI policy itself, especially with regards to understanding conflict and workplace friendship, resulted in a variety of responses and thus it appears ambiguous. Ambiguity has been known to exist in "bureaucratic structures" as identified by Baum (1987, pp.44-56), although his work focused on clarity in identification of responsibilities and authority. The wording or motivation behind this policy was not clear to some staff members, for example, in understanding where the organisation saw the risks with regards to the workplace friendship itself and what was done with the information gathered afterwards. Even Sandra (s.123), from the HR department partly responsible for the collection of the form, admitted that she did not know what the organisation did with the information on friendship.

5.2.2 Complacent Culture

Observations of the dynamics between myself and my participants when questioning their thoughts about the DofI policy had led me to uncover the complacent culture that was shaping their professional identities. I also interpreted the reactions to my enquiries about the policy as a form of defensiveness, a psychological regression. It was as if the participants were not only defending the rationality of the bureaucratic tool itself, but also that of

the organisation, which appeared to them as non-intrusive, not interfering with people's personal lives.

I will start the presentation of the data analysis with Daisy and Sandra from the HR department that was partly responsible for the design of the DofI and the administration of the responses. This was not unusual as HR departments are involved in the guardianship of codes of conduct, in compliance and monitoring procedures in organisations (e.g.Winstanley and Woodall, 2000).

Daisy was recommended to me by one of my participants to shed more light on the obligation to declare workplace friendships. This is how our discussion on the policy went:

> s.111.Daisy: Um, so on the- the declaration of interest, I am not sure people would <u>always</u> know that they have to declare a friendship, <u>a work</u> friendship on there. Um, I don't think we have a <u>huge</u> amount of work friendships declared on our Declaration of interests.

> s.112.IR: Uh-huh.

> s.113.Daisy: People would only really declare, um, YEAH can't really think of ANY <u>work</u> friendships that have been declared on there. I am not sure that people see that as a (), or as an issue.

It seemed that at first she was questioning my understanding of the policy in relation to friendships, and this was immediately followed by the generalisation of others as not seeing the existence of this form as problematic as I did. I felt

that her discourse was soaked with a type of denial and attack on me, because of my almost immediate response to her in a defensive stance, "don't look at me as if I'm fishing for something, I'm asking how do you perceive it as a [job role]?" (Daisy, s.116; my reaction).

I interpreted my engagement with Daisy through a counter-transference as follows. I had identified with what she was projecting into me – I was the unwanted inquisitor, daring to critique the policy that in her own words wasn't, after all, "aim[ed] at work friendship" (Daisy, s.121), the organisation was thus not questioning these relations and nobody seemed to have any issues with it other than me (s.113).

Interestingly I received a similar response from Sandra, also from the HR Department, who was partly responsible for the collection of the forms. She also emphasized that neither she, nor others saw the policy as problematic. In fact, from her position, she perceived it as an 'interesting' tool rather than invasive, as it opened a window into friendship reciprocation (s.124-131).

Sandra and Daisy did not appear to have considered the emotional impact of the policy on themselves or others in terms of a possible violation of their privacy when questioning friendships. I observed them as the emotionless followers or the enforcers of the bureaucratic rules that did not question policies or their intentions, in line with the often quoted critique of bureaucratic HR departments (e.g. Wright, 2008). In addition, their self-presentation appeared

to be influenced by the contemporary trend of managerial discourse, as highlighted by Hancock and Tyler (2004). They were both focused on the need to subject their private relations, and therefore those of others, to "the rational and systematic management of the self" in order to be 'successful', thus mirroring the "performative" rather than critical reflexivity (ibid., p.631). Work and home in their accounts appeared to be no longer separate entities, thus they were reflective of the trend indicating that "people's work has become more of a dominant force within their life'" (ibid., p.638).

Following on from their statements, indeed some of the employees - Kate, Sam, Rick and Emily - stressed having no problems with the declaration of friends. Rick and Emily, in particular, did not fail to mention that they had 'nothing to hide' from the organisation in this respect, therefore, they were happy to disclose their friendship. It was as if they were proud to be considered 'clean', not flawed in any way by conflicting relations, in their minds they were doing their 'jobs right', doing what the organisation expected them to do. They were willing to share every bit of them, including their personal lives in order to 'fit in'. Once again, their self-presentation contained some elements of "performative" rather than critical reflexivity, with them being more than ready to 'manage' their everyday private relations, and craving to be acknowledged as successful professionals for doing so (Hancock and Tyler, 2004, p.631).

From the management position, Tyler (s.190) simply stated, "Well, that's the company's policy so therefore we are asked to do it, I'll do it. I don't (1.0), you know, I don't, it's not an issue." He highlighted to me the need for organisational "transparency" therefore the DofI had to exist in the organisation and there was no need to question it.

Apart from looking at the above responses, the level of complacency amongst my interviewees struck me. There was not one person who confronted the management openly about the rule, or voiced their disappointment, or questioned it, although as will be seen in the following section, the policy did evoke very strong emotional reactions in some.

The high level of complacency without critique was not only appearing in relation to the policy itself. Through my interviews I have already picked up on the ambiguity of my participants, where whilst voicing their passions about the organisation and its primary task of devotion to communities and vulnerable adults, they were not able to voice a critique in general without fear of various reasons (e.g. Lilly, Leslie, Tyler).

In relation to a critique, Lilly, for example, wanted to retract any criticism of the policy that she addressed firstly as 'mad': "I'd just, I think it's gone mad. I think it's almost like policy gone mad!" (s.739). This reaction was almost immediately followed by her apology, "Sorry they might not like the answer … I might need that edited" (s.745-747). Tyler wanted to retract a critique from his interview

and asked me to guarantee that it will never get back to The Friendly Organisation (s.53), whilst voicing disappointment with the strong complacent culture (s.231). This culture was also identified as such by Leslie (s.240), Martha (s.340) and Alan (s.339).

Alan (s.341) even vividly recalled a time when he was kicked under the table when openly questioning the leadership decisions at a Senior Management meeting, with the words "Shut up!, 'We don't do things like that!'". When I asked Leslie (s.24) in a management position why she never voiced her disappointment with the long hours' culture that she felt so strongly about, she explained, "No we don't when we are scared of our jobs you know, and we`re trying to impress".

Francis, Brooke, Marilyn and Ted brought up the idea of the management decisions ruling, meaning that managerial decisions often took precedence over listening to experienced staff. Although the organisation did involve staff in new projects to take their opinion on board, there were times when these acts felt like fruitless exercises for show, as the management would have already 'made their mind up anyway' (Brooke, s.585).

Therefore, going back to the policy, questioning it openly could have also been perceived as a pointless act by organisational members, and being complacent was the safest way 'to be'. Not wanting to lose their jobs, or maybe being weary of the potential negative consequences, staff and even some members of the

management seemed to almost unconsciously defend themselves against critiquing the leadership decisions. This was as if the act of voicing their own feelings, or opinions was perceived as inappropriate, or able to cause them harm and pain.

On the opposite side, there was myself. Looking at my own reactions to my interviewees, I felt uncomfortable, almost paranoid when asking those in senior positions, the decision-makers, the shapers of organisational rules and procedures - Daisy, Sandra, Tyler, but also Charlie, Bert, Ariel and Roger about the policy. It was as if I was seeing something that was not there, problematising an issue that was not a problem after all. According to organisational psychoanalysts, when a person questioning the rules is labelled as paranoid, as pointed by Huffington et al. (2004), there is often an unconscious denial at play. Denial then allows "the problems to fester below the surface" (Huffington et al., 2004, loc.1920).

Thus for someone like me in the role of a researcher, questioning the system would be called "unhelpful, or paranoid, or disloyal, or displaying negative attitudes, or talking down the organisation" (Huffington et al., 2004, loc.1920). Diamond (2017, p.304) also interpreted similar interactions between staff and organisational consultants as a form of "primitive defensive processes such as psychological regression and splitting". These would be presented in a form of projection of "blame" or "bad feelings" or disappointment in the organisation

onto the consultant in a form of verbal expressions such as "Well, it really wasn't so bad until you showed up!" (Diamond, 2017, p.305).

Whilst nobody voiced their critique of me as a researcher, I did indeed feel that the collective response of the decision-makers and some organisational actors to me was mirroring a form of such psychological regression. It was as if their good and bad feelings not only about the policy but about the organisation more generally, were split into good and bad. I was then the recipient of their projected bad, critical feelings in relation to seeing the questioning of workplace friendships as problematic, too personal, stretching far beyond the working lives of individuals, perhaps a step too far, or even a subtle form of organisational control. These feelings were aroused in me whilst they were presenting the form as 'good', as a perfectly rational bureaucratic tool necessary for the organisation to guard its conflicts of interests.

I was reminded of the response of one of the senior managers – Charlie's. He interestingly also stressed having "no issue" with declaring his close friendships, followed by a statement, "I think if you've got nothing to hide, then that ain't a problem, is it, you know" (s.324). It was as if the invasion of privacy was the organisational right, and yet again, critiquing it would be regarded as being shady or questionable.

His statement invited me to consider the notion of a 'person –organisation' fit. Mnguni (2010, p.123) highlighted that if the collective defence mechanisms,

such as psychological regression in this case, go against the individual ones, a person's choice is either to comply with the collective, even if they are not sure whether it is right, or they could question the system but it would be at their loss. The result of such misalignment would be, in most cases, the need to leave the system – to resign. In these interactions (with Daisy, Sandra, Tyler, Charlie, Ariel and Roger) I felt reminded strongly that I did not fit in any more, I was the odd one out.

Yet although nobody had directly questioned the existence or the purpose of the policy with the management, I was not the only one who was puzzled by its existence and in the following section, I will explore the perceptions of the DofI taking the shape of persecution.

5.2.3 Ritualistic Practice [13] and Persecutory Anxiety

There was a small group of managers and employees, who, whilst still being compliant with the policy, that is declaring friends and/or being aware of the request to do so, saw it as invasive (Sheila, Fred, Alan, Leslie, Sally). By

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[13] I based the title of this section on research by Diamond (1985), who interpreted bureaucratic activities in organisations through lenses of individuals' "obsessional neurosis" illness and as a result he termed these activities as "ritualistic", aimed at coping with anxiety over losing control.

invasion, I mean interfering with people's private lives, for example, forcing them to define and categorise their friendships. I also came across accounts that I interpreted as containing persecutory anxiety in relation to organisational relating. I will now present some examples to illustrate these points.

Several interviewees struggled with expressing what a workplace friend meant to them, and thus who the close friend that should have been declared was. Yet the DofI somewhat bypassed the complexity of these relations and instead "<u>forced</u> people to kind of go, 'Well am I friends? Am I not?" according to Fred (s.77). Defining the status of people's friendships had caused confusion in some, resembling children's games as Sheila implied several times (s.127, s.130 and also s.155). For example:

> s.127.Sheila: How STUPID! How stupid, right-! What are we like 12? I remember like being with my brother once said to me, 'I've got more friends than you!' and I said, 'No you haven't!' and we wrote them down-.

> s.130.Sheila: Yeah, and it then becomes, 'Are you going to declare me?', Hmm, I don't know, are you going to declare me?', 'What's the status of our friendship?', 'Do we take like really good friends, or medium friends', heh heh.

Sheila's statements invite the interpretation that the policy evoked the feelings of being managed like a child that was in need of such close monitoring, and it became very unnatural to her.

In Martha's (s.321) and Alan's (s.305) accounts, the form was presented as "silly". Alan even recalled, "a couple of people who had to reciprocate friendship declarations when they [did not] think they [were] friends with people" (s.307). Thus the policy was perceived as an instigator of artificial friendships. In addition, my conversations with Francis (s.124) and Sandra (s.133) highlighted the local process of 'enforcement' of declarations between friends, when a member of the HR department would verbally 'verify' friendships if the records on the DofI did not match. Therefore, such questioning of friendship by an organisational member could have been perceived as an organisational bureaucratic ritual (Diamond, 1985), a policing activity of workplace friendships, being intrusive for many more members of staff, not only the small group of interviewees I have identified.

From the first part of this thesis, it is evident that friendships are affective relations, concerning love for a friend. In fact "an act of loving" which precedes that of "being loved" is at the centre of friendship ontology (Derrida, 1994, p.8, drawing on Aristotle). Being aware that we are "an object" of friendship love to some extent remains "an accident" (Derrida, 1994, p.9), it is not a requirement of friendship. Being a friend to someone might not necessarily be accessible to us, we do not 'need' to know that we are friends to someone as "friendship can be thought and lived without the least reference to the be-loved" (Derrida, 1994, p.9).

Derrida (1994, p.11) asserts that "[i]f a friend had to choose between knowing and being known, he would choose knowing rather than being known". It is important to highlight here the word 'to choose', as one should be able to choose whether they would make 'the object' aware of their affection, of their friendship love. However, by this policy, The Friendly Organisation elevates itself above this personal choice, and whilst one does not have to comply with the policy, it represents a subtle form of interference with what is defined by Derrida (1994) drawing on Aristotle as a natural order of affect in friendship. Friendship relations and friendship affect is therefore being subjected to, required to conform to organisational norms.

It is important to mention that the intrusive perceptions did not appear in all of my interviewees' accounts, and there were also those who were strong advocates of the declaration without mentioning any interference with privacy. These were mostly the members of the Management Team (Robyn, Daisy, Sandra, Jeff, Roger, Tyler, Charlie); and those who were oblivious to the whole process – not interested in reading the form properly (Dean and his direct line reports).

There were also those participants who claimed their non-awareness of declaring friendships, but I still asked them a hypothetical question, how would it make them feel having to have to write down their workplace friendships had they read the form word by word. The responses I received were along the lines

of such a declaration evoking disappointment in the company (Dean, s.462), stressing that "what people get up to in their personal life is-you know, it's up to them" (s.480), Lilly's response of "policy [would have] gone mad" (s.739), Megan's (s.282) reaction "to me it's none of their business, heh heh, that's just my- (to think that they're) watching you, and monitoring everything you do- I just- it really irritates me".

These statements started to echo in me the concept of the 'unthought known' (Bollas,1987, cited in Chodorow, 1999, pp.252-253). It was as if Dean, Lilly, Megan and others with similar reactions (Martha, Lucy) always *knew* too that questioning of their workplace friendships was of a personal nature, stretching far beyond their working lives, an indirect form of organisational control, perhaps a step too far, yet disturbing the status quo and openly standing up against the DofI or critiquing the decision-makers had *never entered their thoughts.*

Instead, the answer I received was that they didn't read the form or weren't aware of the need to declare close friendships which I interpreted as an unconscious reaction – they did not see, or perhaps did not want to see the organisation as policing workplace relating through the means of the DofI. Yet when I pointed out the need to declare close friendships, I received their sudden disapproval. Here I was reminded of Lucy's (s.431) statement which I

interpreted as another sign of indirect organizational control of workplace friendships and perceptions of policing rules:

> But <u>do </u>you see what I me::an? It's, it's almost like you're <u>not allowed</u> to have – this is why I talk about professionalism, this is why I talk about going out for lunch, I, you know...

Her use of language, the emphasis conveys the unexpectedness of the need to declare close friendships, and the personal thoughts on being implicitly prohibited to form friendships.

I will now present those accounts where the DofI policy is portrayed as not only intrusive, prohibiting friendships, but also as evoking persecutory fears, akin to the persecutory anxiety belonging to the paranoid-schizoid position in Kleinian theory. This type of anxiety is connected to "persecutory fears" (Klein, 1946, p.99) or "fears of being attacked and annihilated" (Stein, 2000, p.195, drawing on Klein, 1935). One way of detecting it is through the identification of defence mechanisms such as projection, splitting or idealisation. These mechanisms, in turn, attract particular kinds of thought processes and behaviours affecting interpersonal relating in organisations such as "blame, scapegoating, idealisation, persecution and other distorted perceptions" (Krantz, 1997, p.3). In summary, it would be others who would be perceived as persecutory if an unconscious anxiety was at play (Gough, 2004, p.254).

I will now trace persecutory perceptions in relation to the policy and the interpersonal relating more general, beginning with Sheila's (s.114-115) account which was the most vivid. When describing her passage from The Friendly Organisation to a new organisation she opened up about changing her approach to relating in the workplace as a consequence of having been employed by The Friendly Organisation:

> s.114.Sheila: …I think at The Friendly Organisation they tried to pull out SO much, you know, you had to declare everything, and that <u>aired</u> the dirty laundry more than you wanted it to**,** and it was very <u>gossipy</u>. And I was really aware of that happening in another place but I've gone to a place where I have not let that happen by <u>not</u> oversharing. But it also doesn't happen I don't think, people don't. You know, when you are at work, you are at work aren't you?

> s.IR: So you think that that was the Declaration of Interest that made you to (.) share dirty laundry, or?

> s.115.Sheila: I guess SO. I THINK, I THINK I just think that The Friendly Organisation had this like a 'shining light' on it [people's private lives] and it just made it like a pressure cooker I suppose.

In comparing her time at The Friendly Organisation with that of her current employment she was suggesting that she was unable to keep enough information private. Her metaphors of 'pulling out SO much', 'airing dirty laundry' (s.114) and 'a shining light' (s.115) conveyed the idea of the policy

being used as a symbolic tool to interfere with the private, hidden spheres of life, where workplace friendships also belonged. They suggested the strong need to detect, uncover everything that was hidden from the eye of the organisation. A fear of negative consequences could also be detected in Sheila's metaphors, the fear of being hurt, embarrassed, maybe shamed or judged by others once these relations would have been uncovered, which as it appeared, were perceived to be 'dirty' and/or problematic by the organisation itself.

Her subsequent use of the 'pressure cooker' (s.115) metaphor invites the interpretation of her fearing the negative consequences of getting caught, as if by a police commander. This suggests that she was made to feel that she had 'something to hide', mirroring Charlie's statement above from the Senior Management, "I think if you've got nothing to hide, then that ain't a problem, is it, you know" (s.324)." Interpreting the emotional relating towards the organisation, The Friendly Organisation in her mind was a persecutor, hunting her down through the DofI for having what was perceived as 'dirty', problematic relations – friendships. According to the organisation, she did not indeed have any 'right' to 'hide' them.

The feelings of confusion, intrusiveness, persecution by the policy itself, and mistrust in the organisation and interpersonal relating, were very intense feelings aroused within my participants in relation to a single form, the very

form that the decision-makers and organisational influencers Daisy, Sandra, Tyler, Charlie in the above section described as 'not problematic' for people, and which Robyn even described as 'objective'.

To my surprise, Bert, a member of the Senior Management, was not sure whether the form should have been in place altogether in relation to friendships (s.61). Yet it was allowed to exist and affect others like Sheila. I therefore asked myself, 'Where does this fear of persecution come from?'. One possibility appeared obvious to me, the policy itself threatened a non-compliant worker with a disciplinary action.

Therefore there were negative consequences and the organisation felt the need to highlight these in the policy, meaning that it did put emphasis on organisational relating, which was in favour of managing through the punishment of the disobedient. Furthermore, Roger, a Senior Manager himself commented, although critically, about the DofI and its serving as a "protection instrument for the organisation" as follows. If it was found out that an existing relation was conflicting with the organisation, and it had not been declared, the employee would have suffered. Roger stressed the choice of words which would be used to greet such an employee: "'Whoa but you did or didn't declare this particular relation!'" (s.227). These words evoked an idea of a trial, with a form used as evidence of misconduct, and the employees being harmed as a result of it if not compliant.

Another possible cause of the persecutory perceptions was in Sheila's personal experience of viewing workplace friendship as personally challenging, maybe at times potentially dangerous to the organisation itself, such as when involving gossiping. And as she did point out that The Friendly Organisation was "very gossipy" (s.114), similarly to Leslie and Robyn, the negative perceptions of friendships, and possible persecutory behaviour on the side of the organisation could have been evoked. Indeed, one of the often quoted negative attributes of workplace friendship is gossip. Friends are even at times perceived as "naïve" because they may share confidential information that might be potentially harmful to themselves later in organisational life (Berman, West and Richter, 2002, p.219). Therefore gossip could be partly responsible for the perceptions of workplace friendship as 'dirty', an unwelcome act in this organisation.

Yet Sheila was defending herself from any conceptualisation of friendships and 'her own failing', as if it belonged to the experience at work evoking unconscious anxiety. As Gough (2004, p.254) points out, according to Klein, the "unconscious anxieties are given shape, projected onto 'legitimate' others outside the self, who are then perceived as persecutory". And indeed in Sheila's emotional experience of organisational relating and the policy itself, the persecutory perceptions have been detected above.

However, before labelling any policy as persecutory or even basing any organisational analysis on one example, although very vivid, further examples will be presented, to show the depth and complexity of emotional experiences.

When I asked Leslie (s.240) whether she felt that The Friendly Organisation enabled friendships to flourish, her train of thought lead her to discuss "the fear factor" within the company. Thus whilst Sheila was already questioning the motives of others for friendly relating, Leslie had linked organisational relating with the fear of 'fitting in'. Leslie did not just mention the word 'fear', her discourse was soaked with the repetition of this word meaning that this emotion was "convey[ed] more powerfully" (Hollway and Jefferson, 2005, p.160) and added strength to her account. Because persecutory anxiety is a very intense emotion, I interpreted her statements as containing persecutory perceptions, stemming from feeling persecutory anxiety in relation to the organisation that is able to threaten and even persecute those who would 'dare' to go against the norm – and form close workplace friendships.

I then sensed similar emotional intensity coming through Alan's discourse in relation to the act of declaring workplace friends as follows:

> s.331.IR: So hypothetically, if you had made any friends at The Friendly Organisation, would you disclose them?

> s.332.Alan: A::WH, that's a question! Um::, no.

s.333.IR: Heh, why?

s.334.Alan: Nothing to do with work=

s.335.IR: =fair enough=

s.336.Alan: I think↑, um:: (2.0), yeah it's a dangerous game. I- I, um, that's difficult, isn't↑ it↓. I-, you know, I don't know what to think about, um, you know relations within work, that's difficult, isn't it, frowned upon. But I don't think that's a problem. Um (1.0), no, it's difficult.

From the transcript conventions used in this section, it is evident that Alan was puzzled, or surprised by the question of disclosing friendships (s.332). The inner conflict that the policy was causing here can be observed through the repetition of the phrase "nothing to do with work" (s.334) and "difficult" (s.336). The image of the policy conveyed in his speech was not only an intrusive object (s.334) but also a threatening object, able to split or fragment his core self when we were discussing workplace friendship. He was presenting himself as someone who did not "think that's a problem" (s. 336) to have friends at work, yet to declare them would have been "a dangerous game" (line 336), and therefore such acts should be avoided.

His use of the metaphor of 'a dangerous game' therefore invites an interpretation that the image of this policy in his mind was too persecutory. It evoked persecutory feelings in Alan as it had in his mind a potential to threaten

his professional identity, his employment status, his recognition by the organisation. A similar interpretation can be corroborated further by a statement from Jeff (ss.242-243). Whilst he was happy to declare his friendships on the DofI, it had crossed his mind that the act of declaring itself had the potential to flaw his professional image at work. It was as if special powers were attributed to the DofI, powers to even victimise the individual because of the association with 'the wrong type of friends'.

In relation to persecutory perceptions, I also would like to bring to attention my own affective reactions during the interview with Francis. This is to add to the evidence base on the complexities of the emotional processing of friendship relations under the strain of bureaucratic control. As I explained in section 4.5 I once was an insider to the case study culture. Therefore it came as no surprise to me that at times I identified with the anxiety and fear in my participants' accounts. As a past member of this organisation, I had my own memories and experiences which sometimes resembled and sometimes differed from theirs. Contrary to my initial expectations, my participants were opening up to me with their emotions and feelings. I therefore felt almost obliged to return their openness by sharing my stories with them. This approach also reflects the 'conversational' element that I experimented with in my interviews, however, at no point I did allow for my stories, the feelings and meaning-making to 'overpower' the stories of others (Ellis, 2004).

I saw these moments as my opportunity to embed the elements of autoethnography into my thesis, as I explained in section 4.6 on <u>Data Collection</u>. My aim was to interpret the emotional statements that were particularly intense, "in their own right" (Ellis, 2004, p.65; student Valerie). This was to explore how they stand by themselves, but also in relation to the collective culture of this organisation.

An example of this process was my conversation with Francis, where the image of the policy in my own mind resembled strongly that of the images above – the invasion of my own private life, sensing persecution and a threat to professional identity:

> s.246.IR: you see when I was working at the FS I was asked, I just went for a dinner somewhere, round someone's house and I was <u>asked</u> that I am aware of the declaration of interests and I had to declare it. I was like 'you gotta be kidding me'=
>
> s.247.Francis: =really?
>
> s.248.IR: I haven't even formed a friend- and I am not even a friend with that person now, it has just put me off a great deal and for me is like 'how dare you putting these things', 'it's my personal life, LET ME BE!', you [know?
>
> s.249. Francis: [yeah.

Leading up to this moment in the conversation was Francis's contemplation on how he was unsure whether a close personal friendship was being formed

between him and a colleague with whom he was attending exercise classes after work. He claimed that he had not "really thought" about declaring their relations to the organisation (Francis, s.245).

Francis's uncertainty about friendship feelings arose in me a myriad of intense emotions at the time, that appeared to be still 'raw', unprocessed. When I was a member of the case study organisation, I too had to contemplate on the flow of affect between myself and my colleagues. There were times when I felt that any possible affection and warmth leading up to a friendship were affected by the need to declare my personal relations on the DofI policy. Yet I took no action at the time.

Firstly, to declare one's friendship means a clarification of friends' affective state. But affects do have a "pre-reflexive" character (Fotaki, Kenny and Vachhani, 2017, p.7), emotions equally so (Illouz, 2007, pp.2-3) as explained in the chapter 1.3 on Affective Relations. As friendship is a self-conscious act (Derrida, 1994), the 'act of friendship' in the situation that I opened to Francis about, had not been 'born' as yet. However, I was already reminded about declaring it. For me, I was experiencing warmth towards the other but this emotion was not an 'act of friendship'.

Drawing on my literature review above, Illouz (2007, p.2, italics author's own) refers to having an emotion as "*not* action per se, but it is the inner energy [of this emotion] that propels us toward an act, what gives a particular "mood" or

"coloration to an act". Therefore it would have been this energy that would have prompted my former colleague and myself towards an act of discussing having dinner together. To me, this discussion did not mean that there was a friendship that needed to be declared, but our possible future relations out of work may have led to the feelings of 'love of friendship' (Derrida, 1994) towards my colleague. Yet, though the declaration policy, for me the emotions, the energy that I felt towards this colleague were destroyed. In the conversation with them, I remember acknowledging the DofI existence, but simply not proceeding with the dinner on this occasion, looking for an excuse. There has not been any friendship between us to this day.

During my interview with Francis, I felt vulnerable when I opened up about this personal experience and I was surprised about the intensity of emotions that the conversation fuelled. I also felt vulnerable when I was interpreting my reactions, for I will not know how these autoethnographic elements will be re-interpreted by the reader (Ellis and Bochner, 2000; Ellis, 1999).

When considering my opening to Francis I sensed my confusion and anger at The Friendly Organisation for interfering to such degree with my relations. I felt the overbearing and unnecessary pressure expedited at me through this policy. My intense negative feelings and emotions came through in the discourse. In s.248 the capitalised words 'LET ME BE!' signify that in my mind the policy was a fearful persecutor, and I was outraged for being a victim, desperately trying

to escape its claws. I interpret my response through the feelings of being under attack, persecuted for my emotions, for friendships that have not yet been 'born', for possible close relations that I may have wished to pursue one day. I interpret that at that moment in time I felt split, fragmented.

This is because earlier during the interview Francis (s.217) reminded me of our past discussion in the workplace, and how I was once clarifying to him the organisational definition of friendship, advocating the organisational pursuits of risk management. In addition, as mentioned above, I simply avoided any possible socializing out work with the senior member of the management team who invited me to dinner, to bypass any need to declare it.

As Frosh (1999, p.383; emphasis author's own) contemplates, "*at the time of the experience*", when I was interacting with the senior manager, the idea of needing to declare my relations, and my discursive reaction to it there and then was not something that "could [have been] transformed into a piece of knowledge". At the time I was simply avoiding the friendly interactions, puzzled by the affects of friendship, yet I was not able to or ready to make sense of the overwhelming emotions I would have been experiencing at the time.

These emotions came through later, in the interview with Francis. Yet after such an outburst of the emotional force of my words 'LET ME BE!', I uttered a disappointment with such form of organisational control by adding that "there is a lot that work wants" (s.250), and at that point, I offered Francis a drink. I

was rushing to pursue a different interview question, aiming at personal development. It was as if the whole emotional experience was too heavy to bear. Even after the events, I tried to push it away, to sweep it under the carpet, to let it go unnoticed. And I almost succeeded.

By applying the psychoanalytic lenses, I interpret that the phantasy of persecution was very vivid in my mind, even at the point of the initial encounter with my 'potential' friend from senior management. Through my discussion with Francis, it is possible to interpret more clearly how I had been projecting the 'unwanted' anxiety out, resulting in seeing the policy as a persecutor, and this recollection was my own way of defending against it. In addition, the concept of 'projective identification' is also useful here. Francis was my 18th interviewee. By the time I interviewed him, I had already spoken with Sheila, Martha, Lucy and Alan amongst many others, where the persecutory perceptions were present. In the language of projective interpretation, I, therefore, interpret that by the time I had my interview encounter with Francis I projectively identified with the persecutory phantasies of my interviewees. That is, I introjected the same idea. I interpret that their feelings of anger, bitterness or disappointment that were projected out during my research became a part of myself in certain moments.

I can evidence this by reflecting on the flow of the discussion with Francis. If such strong negative feelings and emotions were evoked in me at one point in

the interview, I would have expected to find a similar fantasy of being persecuted also in his statement.

I listened to our conversation carefully again, and I checked the transcript. I considered for a moment whether I was 'over-identifying' with the idea of persecution and Sheila's 'pressure cooker' became just too familiar. It could have lead me to see it existing in others, yet I have stumbled upon the following statement of Francis (s.128) that preceded my opening above, which I initially overlooked:

> [B]e- because the way it makes staff feel is that in some way you're gonna be watched, that friendship is going to be watched by people. So I think that people get a bit scared of even declaring certain people.

Francis referred to others 'being watched' and feeling 'a bit scared'. It was as if the act of declaring workplace friendship existed in people's minds as an undercover investigation, enquiring into people's relations to find out about a possible, imaginary, or real conflict of interests. It was a persecutor, to be 'scared' of, avoided. Staff according to Francis were therefore apprehensive about their trust towards managerial intent of declaring their relations.

From Marilyn's (s.567) statement, similar emotions were coming to the fore, in particular, the need to hide relations from the eyes of the organisation. Marilyn did not declare any of her workplace friends as there was no apparent conflict to her. However, she opened up about a friendship that had arisen between

her and a customer and her personal feelings of the need to disguise it. The reason for this was her inner fear about possible negative consequences, including breaking up the friendship that she had built up over the years. Out of her statement, I interpreted that she felt mistrust towards management in respect of their management of organisational relating through the DofI.

And finally, the feelings of interference and persecution were also present in Martha's statement. She had not been declaring her friendships because allegedly she did not read the form properly. So I asked again hypothetically what would have happened had she read the form (s.316-320). Martha expanded on a story of her friendship with F2, and how she attributed management decision-making for changing seating arrangements to feelings of being watched and subsequently being moved away from her friend. Considering the pessimistic words she stressed in s.316, I interpreted that this experience has caused her paranoid feelings about her friendships going forward. The DofI to her was a surveillance tool for the organisation to 'put barriers', in other words, to obstruct these relations from happening. Therefore she was wary of the intent of managing interpersonal relating at The Friendly Organisation.

To summarise, through all of the above accounts, Sheila's, Leslie's, Alan's, Jeff's, and in my experience and the emotional outburst during the conversation with Francis, in Francis's own account, Marilyn's and Martha's, I detected the

vivid imaginary of 'the feelings of being watched', 'scared', the need to hide friendships, or feeling 'worried', or pressurised to hide relations, to declare them or to avoid them. Each account contained unique recollections of personal experiences, and I interpreted these universally as being underpinned by persecutory perceptions. That is, the image of the DofI was evoking the feeling of being persecuted for having friendship relations at the organisation. These perceptions arise according to Kleinian theory in the 'paranoid-schizoid' position (Krantz, 1997, 2006).

Hoyle (2004, loc.1802) in organisational research identified that people can easily find themselves reacting from this position when for example faced with changes to their workplace. She meant that people would display what she classed as "extreme behaviour" giving examples of "a sycophant or saboteur response" (Hoyle, 2004, loc.1802) with such behaviour affecting the "organisational dynamics and modes of thinking" (Sievers, 2006, p.108). In my view, the above metaphors are examples of extreme feelings, the shared fantasies of persecution leading to an increasing doubt and mistrust that underpinned the staff discourse about the use and the managerial intent of the DofI policy itself.

I claim this to be a collective response, not only because I have presented the accounts above. I can do so additionally because I traced the collective in the following response of senior manager Bert (s.56):

Yeah, ehm, I think it's very hit and miss, you know, I mean some people go way over the top and declare everyone whom they ever had a cup of coffee with, whereas other people just turn their blind eye to it, you know.

Based on his statement, in addition to the above, it is possible to interpret that it is very likely that the strong emotional experience of the policy was experienced as overwhelming by a proportion of staff, who felt obliged to declare small acts of relating, even in Bert's own words having "a cup of coffee". I attributed their motives for doing so to the persecutory perceptions arising from a possibility to be punished by the organisation in some way if not having done so. I then interpreted this overbearing pressure to declare every movement where a possible conflict of interest might arise as rooted in paranoid anxiety, or in irrational fear.

The Kleinian concept of paranoid anxiety from the 'paranoid-schizoid position' therefore enables the conceptualisation of the DofI as a persecutory object in the minds of participants.

Kets de Vries and Associates (1991) and Kets De Vries (2004) attribute persecutory perceptions to a 'paranoid organisational culture' that according to them stems from the leadership style of top executives. They go on to describe the style as soaked with suspicion, mistrust in others and perceptions that everybody is against them (Kets de Vries and Associates, 1991, p.247). Indeed, everybody at some point in their life experiences "mildly dysfunctional

neurotic traits", such as "shyness, depression, irrational fears, suspicion, and so on" (Kets de Vries and Miller, 1984, p.19). But on occasions, there will be dominant fantasies that will influence the actions of the leaders, the main decision makers, and their style will affect the rest of the organisation that can then be labelled as 'neurotic' (Kets de Vries and Miller, 1984, p.19).

Although this data analysis did not focus on the leadership team, the neurotic traits that Kets de Vries and Associates (1991), Kets de Vries (2004) and Kets de Vries and Miller (1984) identified have been detected amongst the staff and some of the managers of this organisation in relation to the DofI policy. I interpreted that the suspicion, persecutory perceptions, mistrust connected to the DofI had been projected towards the originators of the policy – the management. However, as will be seen in the following subsection, the policy was not intended to be a persecutor but to rather serve as a defensive tool.

5.2.4 Excessive Defence

Further to finding the traces of persecutory anxiety in the above statements, I was interested in exploring why the policy was introduced in the first place. Whilst still following how the policy was presented in the discourse of my participants, this time I was searching for the images of 'the policy in the minds'

of managers only. During my research, I spoke with 14 managers and 4 senior managers.

Accusations of Favouritism

The first reason for the existence of the DofI was presented to me as the result of external environment pressures, in relation to transparency within organisational operations. This was voiced by managers Robyn and Fred, as well as Daisy from the HR team. However, in Fred's response, I also identified an instigation of paranoia attributed to management in relation to the bureaucracy at The Friendly Organisation.

At one point in our interview, we were discussing the differences between public/voluntary sector organisations and private sector organisations in terms of friendly relating and work in general. Fred stressed that "there's a lot, a lot of rules and regulations" (s.157) that The Friendly Organisation had to abide by, one of them was a 'Gratuities Register' (s.165), where a corporate dinner with a customer would have to be declared to protect against the allegations of favouritism. The external regulatory powers were therefore seen in his statement as the originators of the bureaucratic organisational responses that served as defensive tools against unfair or biased organisational behaviour.

In addition, if paying attention to Fred's (s.169) use of interpretative repertoires of 'a mockery', 'stupid', 'farcical', it is possible to state that some of the bureaucratic rules at The Friendly Organisation have evoked in him the feelings of outrage, oppression, absurdity. He brought up a story of having to 'register' that he received an advent calendar from an external supplier (s.169), as it could have been compromising. His strong reactions suggest that the decision-makers behind these bureaucratic rules could have carried a form of suspicion, even paranoia that has led them to implement them.

The organisational response to favouritism in the form of declaring close friendships could also fall into such category of extreme reactions, or a form of overbearing control. This is the view that was reflected in the account of Fred throughout, who, although seeing how workplace friendship could be problematic in a workplace, and who himself had put conscious barriers into his relations, he was also puzzled by this form questioning his personal definition of friendships. He also referred to it as "a sledgehammer to crack a nut" implying ridiculous, over the top, overbearing control (s.76).

Whilst Jeff's (s.238) statement rationalised the existence of the policy as a tool to survey staff with a purpose to protect against favouritism especially in a line management relation, the reaction Tyler (s.191-194) had to declaring friendships enables us to see how the form had evoked an extreme reaction in day to day organisational life. Tyler admitted to looking after a pet of his friend

F3. He felt therefore the need to declare this friendship on the DofI, as he felt strongly that it would have been susceptible to accusations of favouritism because he was, in his own words 'providing a service' (s.194).

Fear as the predominant emotion in the paranoid-schizoid position (Hinshelwood, 1994, p.106) is present in this statement in connection to the imaginary accusations of favouritism. He stressed the word 'THEREFORE' (s.194) suggesting the causational link between being associated with a friend whilst doing favours, and being perceived as automatically biased and thus flawed in the eyes of the organisation.

Another extreme reaction was mentioned by Deborah (s.293), who in her own words was "caught out" by her manager for not declaring friends of her child whilst dealing with a customer. Her children went to the same school and were in a friendly relation with those of the customer. Deborah's interpretative repertoire about the DofI conveys shock, disbelief, and disappointment with the words her manager used when discussing this situation, "'… 'you're lucky,' [they] said, 'that you weren't suspended from work.'" It is evident from her discourse that the punishment for non-compliance was very high and it had affected Deborah emotionally.

Finally, seeing the emotional strain with which a couple of my interviewees narrated their story of being accused of biased behaviour because of their friendship to me represented another extreme reaction of management to

favouritism. This example corroborates the idea of how friendship was automatically labelled with bias at The Friendly Organisation and thus partly explains why the organisation saw the need to have such a policy in place.

The story relates to a manager who, after promoting their subordinate as a result of a fair interview process, was directly questioned about this conduct with the underlying accusation of bias. As a result of this the promoted employee felt injustice that the friendship with their line manager had stopped them from being recognized for their skills and competence by the organisation; and the manager felt hurt that their professional judgement of promoting in their eyes a competent employee was put into question. All this happened whilst the DofI policy was in existence and their friendship was transparent.

This story was also commented on by Bert (s.84), the Senior Manager:

> Now, that was never proven or anything but obviously you know that is a danger when you are friends at work , you know, you get that sort of accusations back against you.

His commentary to me represents the strong discomfort of management with favouritism and the automatic attribution of bias and prejudice to workplace friendship. At first he acknowledged that the favouritism was not proven in this case, but strongly suspected to be present because of the friendship. He justified the automatic suspicion by linking it to friendship as a relation that will

always attract these accusations, therefore stressing that the act of promoting a friend inevitably "… didn't feel right" (s.86).

I also asked Bert about the stance of The Friendly Organisation towards friendships. He confirmed that the leadership of the organisation "[got] very concerned about too close relations with certain people" (s.81), especially in line management as they were opened to "accusations of um (.), you know, persuasion and things like that, you know" (s.82).

These organisational fears of favouritism can be seen on one hand as perfectly justified. The Friendly Organisation belonged to non-profit and public sector organisations accountable for public funds and open to public scrutiny, accountable to the board of governors. However, the DofI can be interpreted as an extreme response of the organisation to friendship at work, a weapon to maintain a fair and equitable workplace because of the responses it has produced.

Thus it is possible to see the DofI acting as an extreme defensive mechanism for this organisation, against the anxiety of bias, in order to maintain a fair and equitable workplace. Therefore implementing the responsibility of protection into bureaucratic rules, such as the DofI, could be seen as a defensive response.

Trust No One!

The second reason for introducing the DofI by the management was, as I interpreted from my data, mistrust in the staff themselves. This was contrary to the above section where I showed that the DofI for some staff carried the images of mistrust in the organisation, and the originators of the policy – the management. This conceptualisation is possible when expanding on the lenses of the Kleinian concept of the 'paranoid-schizoid' as mentioned above, and applying it across the whole organisation.

Going back to the origins of the term, the 'paranoid-schizoid' position is called "paranoid" because the ego fights "the leading anxiety" and "schizoid" because of its tendency to divide or 'split' itself and 'project out' the death instinct (Segal, 1964, p.26). In organisations, as explained by Halton (2004, loc.1995), this position is likely to be characterised by "fragmentation" where "[e]ach side sees the other side as a dangerous threat to the welfare and values of the organisation".

With this application of the concept to organisations and considering the situation at The Friendly Organisation, it is possible to see on one side the persecutory anxiety in some of the reactions of staff as shown in the above section, imagining the originators of such bureaucratic rules as paranoid, not worthy of trust. And on the other side it is possible to observe the reactions of

management (Jeff, Bert, Tyler, Daisy, Roger, Robyn) perceiving staff as not trustworthy when it comes to friendships and professional conduct as follows.

Jeff's train of thought in the conversation with me brought him to speculate that no policy was needed in an ideal world where one could be trusted to perform on the job (s.239). But this was not the case in reality, certainly not in the reality of The Friendly Organisation. When I questioned his views, and asked him whether the DofI meant that the organisation did not trust its employees, his response was that there was "a risk that it could be seen not to be trusting." (Jeff, s.241). Jeff saw the importance of the policy on declaration of friendships and was openly declaring all of his relations within the organisation.

Bert's (s.63) train of thought in one paragraph led him from stating that "you gotta rely on staff using their common sense and their professional judgement" to concluding that with friendship "it becomes very very hard". He did not admit to having any friendships at The Friendly Organisation.

When I asked Tyler why was there a need "to monitor people" with regards to friendships and professional conduct, his immediate response was to "trust no one!" (s.198). He subsequently tried to take this comment back, and then expanded on his personal view of the "damage relations and friendships can have" (s.202). After all, he has kept his personal and professional life separate as he did not wish "to put anybody else into a compromising position or upset anybody" (s.202).

Daisy (s.267) was a strong advocate of friendship being more of a burden for a workplace, and to my question about examples where friendship was not ideal at The Friendly Organisation, she explained how she would have to watch over the conduct of one of the most recently promoted managers, as they had friends in their team that they were now line managing. They were for Daisy a "one to watch" if performance management would have to be instigated in his team (s.267).

Roger saw the DofI as "a protection instrument for the organisation" (s.227). He continued stating that it was however "kinda arbitrary" (s.227) in how it was put into practice, not because it was not worthy of having, but because the relations, or the discussions between line reports and managers around managing these relations such as friendships were not sufficiently controlled. This was brought up because there was a section to tick off within the DofI form to confirm that a manager had a discussion with their subordinate about the matters disclosed. He posed an indirect question, "has anyone followed up on that " (s.227). His reactions suggest to me his strong belief in the need to guard the organisation against relations such as friendships through this or a similar instrument because the staff could not be trusted in managing these themselves. His view of friendships at work was that they were not necessary, but they cannot be avoided, should not be discouraged, but control measures would need to be put in place.

To conclude I would like to highlight the statement of Robyn (s.355), and her comments across the interview, including the drawing, that add to my evidence of interpreting the policy functioning as a symbol of mistrust in people's professional conduct:

> [I]t wouldn't even occur to people↑, that they shouldn't be interviewing someone they considered to be a friend , or they shouldn't be <u>line</u> managing someone they considered to be a friend .

I draw this interpretation on the basis of her use of the words 'would not' and 'should not' implying an imperative on how the policy was meant to appear in people's minds. It was as if it had an authoritative command over people's emotional relations. The policy had an intention of being their moral compass. She was also advocating that friendship matters should be stated in "in black and white", rather than "relying on people's principles" (s.361) and was highlighting the importance of having "one central place to look" for friendships (s.359). On her drawing of friendships (see Appendix 1 - the drawing of a tree), her 'true friends' in the organisation were 'below the surface', represented as the roots of a tree, as if 'hidden' from the eyes of the organisation. She also expressed how she would never be able to form friendships with her team colleagues because of the "very fine line" between friendships and professional conduct that she was not willing to cross personally.

The polarisation of the views of each side – staff and management as 'one to watch' – is coming across strongly through these statements, corroborated by managerial stances on friendships at work; and therefore it is possible to theorise that both staff and management operate from the position of 'paranoid-schizoid' where their 'primitive' anxieties and defences were being reflected in their thoughts about each other and could have indeed led to the creation of the DofI policy in the first place. The image of this policy was that of a tool to manage untrustworthy staff who might not be able to conduct themselves professionally when faced with friendships at work.

An Internalised Symbol of Morality

The policy has been so far presented as an extreme response to favouritism; also a symbol of managerial mistrust in people's professional conduct; but from Robyn's account it is possible to draw one more interpretation –image of the policy as the organisational super-ego, a guardian of moral principles.

By paying attention to her language of 'should not' and 'would not' in the above passage (s.355), and throughout her account, the policy that was 'in her mind' presented as 'rational and objective':

s.300.IR: =what does it say?=

s.301.Robyn: =that-, that-, that it's of, an objective thing↑. Um, there's no kind of clear cut definition-↑. But then we give some examples, so it's somebody that you socialise with outside of work↑-, or that you talk to, communicate with, about, um, on a personal level. Um, so, yeah, but I think you're – there wasn't so much onus on the friendships before↓=

Her use of 'we' and 'you' in s.301 was to me mirroring the image of a superego that existed to oversee the actions of a disobedient ego or even the impulsive id. These very characteristics indeed do not go hand in hand with friendship that is emotional and instinctive.

It was Kets de Vries and Associates who highlighted that a superego can exist in organisational policies (1991, p.227). It is Freudian structural theory that enables us to see its operations as follows. The id is "the impulsive, pleasure-oriented" part of ourselves, with the ego representing "the rational" self and the superego being more of a moral compass (Thompson and McHugh, 2009, p.280). Friendships then, in line with the literature reviewed, can be seen on one hand as the individualised relations that exist voluntarily and spontaneously (Pahl, 2000) like the 'id'. They are also affected by organisational, societal and cultural contexts in which they occur (Adams and Allan, 1998b). Therefore, at the same time they are subjected to self-governance within our professional selves in the workplace, the 'rationalisation

processes of egos' that are then reflected in our organisational conduct, the presentation of the self. The superego also affects conduct as it is

> [a]n internal structure or part of the self that, as internal authority, reflects on the self, makes judgements, exerts moral pressure and is the seat of conscience, guilt and self-esteem" (Bott Spllius et al., 2011, loc. 4141).

Therefore, the image of the policy here was that of an authoritative figure, the necessary tool of the organisation to morally guide people's actions, including their 'impulsive', 'messy' friendships because they could not be trusted to manage these themselves.

Apart from Robyn's statement above I found more examples of the images where the policy became a part of the managerial self, an internal object influencing their actions. The corporate language in Francis's (s.118) statement came through when discussing the regularity of the obligation to declare friendships. At this point she mentioned that "we have to fill in every year where you talk about your f- close personal friends". In addition she (s.136) justified its existence as a protection in an interview situation, and suggested that it was an action tool for the HR department, who carried the responsibility to 'stop' any such acts from happening.

Tyler (s.190) as a middle manager internalised this policy too, which can be interpreted through his choice of language, "Well, that's the company's policy so therefore we are asked to do it, I'll do it". This rule was also exerting a

pressure on his conscience in day to day practice when interacting with his friends Lucy and F3.

These statements confirm Stapley's (1996, p.190) theorisation that employees of an organisation are able to 'introject' "collective demands instead of uniquely personal ones" and this was possible to identify through the language of the above statements paying attention to the collective in the formulations 'we must do' or 'we are professionals who', and so on.

All of the above demonstrates that the DofI was seen as a carrier of strong universalist values of fairness and equality, that have been reported to motivate workers in the public sector more than profitability (Hoggett, 2006, p.189). At The Friendly Organisation there was seen to be a need to instil these values amongst employees who were perceived as susceptible to being led astray by their friends at work and therefore could not be trusted. It conveys the idea that friendship at work has a large potential to harm this organisation, as a disobedient 'id', and that employees' personal anxieties around wrestling with favouritism and ambivalence of these personal relations needed to be defended through a common way of behaving – declaring their workplace friends. The need for protection was brought up so often that on occasions I myself started to fear friendship at work and I projectively identified with organisational anxieties surrounding risks that this relation could bring.

In the next chapter I would like to explore the idea of 'double standards' resulting in organisational splitting and projection at The Friendly Organisation.

5.2.5 Organisational Splitting

At The Friendly Organisation, there is not only the evidence of the split in terms of trust between the decision-makers and those who were expected to follow the DofI as shown above. I also identified another split that was in the minds of my participants created by the different ways of how the implicit rule of 'no-friendships', implying 'being emotional', was applied to some but not the others across the organisation.

Fred, one of the Senior Managers who was a great advocate of bureaucracy 'gone mad' at The Friendly Organisation, in the end did not have a problem with the DofI as such. He brought up instead the unfairness in the application of the implicit 'no friendship rule'. I was intrigued by his discourse, and when I started analysing the transcripts I have indeed identified a new pattern of 'double standards' existing amongst management as follows.

Alan's statement (s.338) highlighted that "there [were] lots of underlying friendships" at the top of the organisation. This was followed by Robyn's (s.375) disappointment in a member of the Leadership team who did not lead by example in following the policy of declaration. Fred (s.134) referred to the rule

of the potential conflict seen in workplace friendship not being applied when it came to the senior leaders themselves.

Emily (s.363) voiced her disappointment when she stressed her professional self as distancing from displaying friendship affection at work, yet stressing how Senior Management did not follow the same rule of distancing. She gave me a few examples of what was in her eyes perceived as unprofessional friendship conduct of managers (s.367 and s.373) and continued with shock in her voice for 'told how one should behave'(s.387).

And finally, both Fred (s.191-193) and Sheila (s.159) expressed doubts about practices within the organisation. Fred questioned the morality of some staff who befriended the leadership team members and "then that <u>could</u> make a difference↑" (s.191) to their career within the organisation. Sheila was adamant that she had witnessed dubious practices (s.159), such as people being "promoted and people get favourably treated because they were friends" (s.159). Yet she felt she was directly "accused of doing it" (s.159), when she felt she did not. And finally I was reminded of the statement from Jeff (s.231), highlighting that staff already perceived friendships existing in the management with pessimism and doubt.

The picture of the culture of complacency and mistrust was after analysing these transcripts starting to turn into a culture of accusations, projections of favouritism and splitting. In the above statements, there was considerable anger being projected into some members of the management because they were seen as engaging in friendship practices and/ in addition (not) declaring these, and thus breaking 'their own rules' of favouritism. Yet they expected full conformity from others. The punishment was therefore applied differently to different groups within the organisation.

The psychoanalysis of organisations enables the interpretation of this type of organisational behaviour as splitting into 'us and them'. This concept is explained by Grosz (2014, p.69) as

> an unconscious strategy that aims to keep us ignorant of feelings in ourselves that we're unable to tolerate. Typically, we want to see ourselves as good, and put those aspects of ourselves that we find shameful into another person or a group. Splitting is one way we have of getting rid of self-knowledge.

In organisational behaviour, splitting can also exist in the form of denying what Grosz (2014, p.69) would call the "unbearable" forms of behaviour in ourselves. By losing our own self-awareness of being problematic, we split off the problems and see them as existing in others – we project them out. It is also possible that even after the projection we continue to engage in this behaviour.

When applying these lenses to the above statements it is interpreted that some members of the management, whilst being aware of the DofI and the organisation's position on friendships, 'split off' the part of themselves associated with these relations as it could have been seen as problematic in the eyes of the organisation. Yet they saw the rest of the staff as 'others' whose friendships needed to be controlled by such a policy.

It seemed that the decision-makers in this organisation were projecting onto the rest of the staff the fear that the values and principles of equality, fairness, impartiality were threatened by friendships and close relations, whilst at the same time they themselves engaged in these practices. It was as if in Grosz's (2014, p.69) words, they 'got rid of self-knowledge', yet were prepared to punish others for not following the rule, taking it as far as evoking persecutory anxiety in some, as shown above.

To conclude, it appears that some of the management team engaged in friendship behaviour that wasn't welcomed or celebrated by this organisation. And whilst pointing fingers at 'others' and seeing the need for the DofI to exist to allegedly protect The Friendly Organisation, yet not being compliant themselves, they evoked persecutory perceptions and mistrust resulting in extreme responses as shown in the above sections.

Organisations are clusters of groups, and it was Bion (1961) who took individual defences to the notion of the group and group behaviour as highlighted by De Board (1978, p.45):

> The persecutory anxiety and fear, characteristic of the infantile position, occurs in the group when the members of that group are faced by the reality of their own behaviour.

Therefore the perceptions of persecution and extreme emotional responses in this organisation, in accordance with psychoanalytic organisational theory, can be classed as infantile. And when looking deeper below the surface, one reason for why they are occurring can be because some members of the management group are themselves doubtful about their own behaviour. After all, Tyler's statement summarised that some of the organisational groups operated from such infantile positions, "the organisation isn't as grown up as we'd like to think we are" (s.64). And in his own words the complacent culture was potentially stemming from "people's insecurities" (s.62), "[w]here they are themselves, what they want out of it" (s.64). Thus, as shown above, it was possible to identify the traces of fear, paranoia, anxiety, and the mechanisms of defence of projection as well as splitting, with these emotions and behaviours belonging to the paranoid-schizoid position (e.g. Hinshelwood, 1994; Segal, 1964).

5.3 Professional-in-the-mind

In talking about friendship at work, my interviewees often used the words 'professional'; 'professionalism'; 'business-like environment', being 'business-focused', how one should behave at The Friendly Organisation, how the organisation is portrayed. Professionalism was also a symbol of attachment to the organisation, promoting employee commitment, for example, according to Leslie (s.302), she felt very "proud" to work there as the organisation was "perceived out there as professional".

Whilst the organisation, its business-like focus and its values of community support appealed to many of my participants, the implicit organisational message was also carried through the discourse – whilst working here, friendships should be kept outside the front door.

5.3.1 Scapegoated Area Offices: 'Ferals'

As I was completing my data analysis, I focused on the interviewees from the Area Office, seeking what was the collective image of these offices in relation to the Head Office. Some of my participants (Audrey, Lucy, Sheila, Ariel, Deborah and Francis) commented how the Head Office portrayed a different image to the Area Offices with regards to the level of friendliness and friendly behaviour. Interestingly it was Ariel (s.426) who suspected that because of the

level of management that resided at the Head Office staff may have thought about having to have to display "different" behaviour, meaning being professional in their conduct and day to day workplace interactions.

Audrey's (s.150) account of the Area Offices was indeed very friendly, almost idealistic:

> I think sometimes people used to come from other offices and be really shocked – not shocked, but surprised how the rapport was in the office. I think they used to find it, 'Ooh!' You know, 'They're all really friendly in [Area Office]. They all really like each other!' Well yeah – we do! We're like a family, that's how it was. So...

It was Audrey, also Lucy and Ariel who used the discourse of family in relation to relations in Area Offices, meaning that to some members of staff their colleagues at these offices represented family relations in terms of being psychologically close to them.

However, in the managerial discourse, these relations in the area offices were presented as a barrier to efficient staff performance and a professional image as follows.

Roger, a Senior Manager, used the words of "struggle" with their friendship interactions openly on display. He stressed several times that staff "are there to work, not necessarily there to socialise with whom they perceive to be their

friends." (s.239). He expressed strong views about any type of socialising belonging to out of the office time, "socialising in ºyour own timeº" (s.240) was no problem.

In Jeff's (s.332) discourse, the metaphor of the area office used was "a general hot bed of friendships". The socialising aspect in area offices was presented as a web in need of unpicking, as something that was "currently being challenged, and it's, it's under a bit of pressure" (s.332).

Ariel commented that the area office staff felt like a family without having an awareness of friendships impacting on their jobs (s.324); however, she also stressed that her challenge as a manager was influencing other managers' perceptions about the closeness being disturbing. There was no problem in the actual performance of her team, she stressed, as they were achieving all the set targets (s.364): "um, so, I don't think - I think it was more challenging the percept-everybody else's perception about why that was a bad thing that they were close." This could be interpreted as management strongly attributing to friendship 'imagined' properties of organisational disturbance.

The images of staff in these area offices conveyed here mirrors that of disobedient children that needed to be controlled, and these images were based on the 'real and/or imaginary' perceptions that friendships blocked the efficient running of day to day operations.

And indeed, the following conversations with a staff member Martha and a manager Sheila confirmed these interpretations:

s.140.IR: So was there some kind of talk or a speech or how do you know about people perceiving {the Area Office} in that way?

s.141.Martha: There is so many ways. As I've explained I've moved different offices and as soon as you leave {Area Office 1}, you hear what everybody else has to say about them. Um, and more than once the conversation has been raised, that they, the word that they use is 'feral'

s.142.IR: feral?

s.143.Martha: yes. That the {Area Office 1} is <u>feral</u>. I've been told that by Senior Managers, um, our manager told another colleague recently that that's what we are seen as. Um, like, um, what're they called- Senior Management team, sort of directors, they come and

s.144.IR: what's feral?

s.145.Martha: feral is um, like a wild <u>cat</u>

s.146.IR: okay

s.147.Martha: like they can't be controlled.

From Martha's statement, the metaphor of feral used by managers in relation to relations within an area office stands out. It implies an unprofessional, not

competent office where friendly and friendship relations were allowed to flourish for some time, and almost mushroomed out of managerial control.

Ferals are wild animals that escaped from captivity or domestication. The 'wild spirit' of friendship in this sense separates organisational members engaged in these relations from emotionally detached professionals. This metaphor evokes the analogy of disobedience, unreliability, unwelcomed behaviour, a behaviour derived by urges, by the unruly, spontaneous unconscious 'id'.

It is Bagnoli (2011) who reminds us that in philosophy animal drives are equated by some with being disorderly, messy, erratic, interfering with the principles of logic and morality. I have used philosophy to problematize emotionality in relation to morality and business ethics in the chapter on Friendship and Rationality. The metaphor of feral to me highlighted the view of friendships as unpredictable, reflected in the "dichotomies" of western society and organisational order that consider "rationality" as "objective, orderly, and mental while emotionality reflects the subjective, chaotic, and bodily drives" (Putnam and Mumby, 1993, p.40). Friendships are equated here with unpredictability and impossibility to control, akin to descriptions of emotions perceived by bureaucracies as "erratic, rule-free, and hence impossible to predict and even less to control" (Bauman, 1994, pp.6-7). They need to be captured, organisational control needs to be seized.

The metaphor of feral suggests organisational efforts to fight the anxiety of losing control. Diamond (1985, p.663) compares many of bureaucratic measures in organisations to the mental disorder of "obsessional neurosis", "obsessional thinking and compulsive action". To him, such behaviour serves to defend against "anxiety about losing control over impulses of the id" (Diamond, 1985, p.663). It is therefore interpreted that The Friendly Organisation feels the need to subject friendships to control through policy so it is able to exercise control over these relations which are spontaneous, impulsive, disobedient.

Sheila, in a different area office, had identified with similar perceptions of scapegoating (s.65). She was a witness of "a lot of negative comments" about them, such as being "stuck in the past", or "not corporate enough" (s.67). Her discourse also suggested that friendships were not welcomed in the eyes of senior management, as they would have contributed to the offices not being progressive enough and fitting with the corporate image of the organisation.

The offices that were built on friendships or friendly relations carried the idea of corporate resentment, not fitting the institutional image of professionalism, being business-like and performing.

What it then meant to be business-like can be interpreted from the following accounts. I was reminded of Lilly's (s.64) comment about how the current workplace environment at the Head Office that had changed and how the

organisation "got bigger, more professional, didn't↑ it↓". Her discourse of professionalism implied not having fun at work, or being spontaneous at work with others, but rather acting more seriously and responsibly. Martha (s.139) implied that not only conversations but also having a laugh and a joke were not being welcomed in the Area Office where she worked, as it was often commented upon "in a passive/aggressive way". Lucy gave me more examples of professional behaviour along the lines of not being allowed to eat breakfast at one's desk (s.471) and avoiding putting 'Hi' in email communication (s.465). Equally when Jeff (s.162) was describing his frustrations with a friend in Senior Management he stressed that this manager requested to discuss strictly only work related matters at work.

From a psychoanalytic point of view, a form of institutional discrimination (Boydell, 2005) can be seen, reinforcing certain expected behaviours, and whist doing so, engaging in the actions of scapegoating. It was as if the area offices became a target of projected organisational anxieties, insecurities and uncertainties about friendships.

Kets de Vries and Associates (1991, p.224) point out that:

> [w]hen people feel vulnerable, inadequate, guilty, or inferior, they project these feelings onto some outsider, who is then experienced in just these ways.

The offices where friendships flourished were undoubtedly perceived as inadequate in the eyes of management and these perceptions resulted in an extreme reaction of staff who felt according to both Martha and Lucy restricted in their office interactions, at times almost paranoid, 'being watched':

> s.127.Martha: Um, and I'd say we are not <u>as close</u> at work, because the office atmosphere recently is terrible, you can't have any real personal conversation. So we are more, um, in communication outside of work and our friendship has grown from there.

> s.128.IR: So, what's that about that office? So you can't have a conversation because

> s.129.Martha: <u>because</u>

> s.130.IR: it is so small?

> s.131.Martha: Be-, because they pretty much <u>told</u> you are not allowed. The atmosphere in the office has just become, um, it is like you're micromanaged beyond belief, but any kind of 'not doing your work' is frowned upon, and you just, it's like (.), it's like you are constantly being <u>watched</u>. Everybody gets this feeling of always being watched and whatever you are doing is, it is not (2.0), they're just (.)

Out of Martha's statement, personal frustrations, anger edging on paranoia can be interpreted. Martha attributed to Senior Management the idea of very close scrutiny of office interactions linked with the processes of 'micromanagement

beyond belief' (s.131). In her own words "if you, you go in one day and there's no managers the work still gets <u>done</u> but there is a nice atmosphere. You go in the next day, the managers are there, the atmosphere is <u>awful</u>." (s.133). Lucy (s.459) had very similar perceptions and used the same discourse of 'being watched' and having to have to "be careful what you say", suggesting feeling paranoid about office interactions and the experiences of 'dis-identification' (e.g. Costas and Fleming, 2009, p.365; Hochschild, 1983) when it is not possible to be the true self under such conditions.

To conclude this subsection, the management regarded friendships as unprofessional relations because of the 'real or imagined' reason of these being too distracting in Area Offices in comparison to the Head Office, thus needing to be controlled. As Mnguni (2010, p.122) highlights, in cases of scapegoating in groups, the tensions would be "split off" and the negative aspects projected into "the different 'other' [in-group], whether real or imagined".

The area offices were thus targeted as the different other within the organisation, and the close surveillance of staff interactions was instigated as a result. Being under close scrutiny by management evoked in some members of staff uncomfortable feelings ascribing paranoid properties to such management behaviour. This had led to the mobilisation of the individual 'defensive mechanisms' of organisational members, such as going out for lunch (Lucy and Martha) to share mutual frustrations; feeling negative about the

organisation to the point of wishing to leave (Martha, Sheila), and feeling the need to vent these perceptions.

5.3.2 Emotionally Detached Professional

The discourse of professionalism in this organisation was centred around maintaining the distance between friendship and work, as if 'being emotional' was positioned as a 'threat' to the organisation being seen as 'not business like' – 'not doing the job right'. A professional was presented as a rational person, able to avoid closeness and intimacy, a non-emotional person; similar to an image of a professional in the feminist organisation studied by Ashcraft (2000) where the bureaucratic rules about interpersonal relating intensified the split between the public and private selves. Yet as Ahmed (2004, p.4) points out "attending to emotions might show us how all actions are reactions, in the sense that what we do is shaped by the contact we have with others".

I would like to open this data analysis section with the statement of Dudley who in describing the culture of this organisation as "business and business only" (s.358), stressed that the friendship line was not a "fine line, that line [was] quite thick at The Friendly Organisation" (s.358). This statement summarises what others have implicitly suggested; friendship relations were not welcomed in this organisation, friendship formation was not openly discouraged, but it was not

encouraged either. In everyday discourse, the term professionalism equates to a competent self (Morris, 2008) and it was interesting to observe how the image of a 'competent self' as an emotionally detached figure was emerging out of the discourse of my participants.

I will now present the occasions where the distancing from friendships was brought up, never directly, but always subtly as follows. The thick line that Dudley described above was encompassing the discourse of HR professionals that I have spoken to. Daisy very strongly identified with her role of an HR professional. She referred to workplace friendship as an incredibly demanding relation requiring strong efforts to maintain a separation between private life and work, "There is always going be this potential of something that you just can't, you have to keep separate↑↓." However, rather than stating that in her mind it doesn't fit the image of the HR professional, she kept stressing on several occasions how she was busy in her private life, therefore did not have time or space for workplace friends. It was as if she was unconsciously defending from the organisational perceptions of friendships. She used a very strong interpretative repertoire in terms of maintaining "the line" between herself and workplace friends, and not ever crossing it (s.165). Daisy (s.167) even identified

two people that [she] could've imagined to almost being friends with outside of work. But, [she] didn't <u>ever</u> cross the line" (s.165)… "it's best just not to be... .

The separation of private and work life in her mind felt very intense, and because she was repeating the words of separation, the split was even "convey[ed] more powerfully" through her account (Hollway and Jefferson, 2005, p.160), suggesting that there is more to this self-distancing from friendships. For her, these relations at work were in the 'no go zone', the zone that was not worthy of entering. She even identified two organisational members with whom she 'could have been' friends, but decided not to. It is, therefore, possible to see her as a defended subject, fearful of the potential negative consequences that friendships could have on her work life at The Friendly Organisation. It is because she did not have any friendships, and consciously kept any temptations at bay that she self-identified herself as an unbiased professional, able to carry out her role. After all, it is the CIPD Code of professional conduct (Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development, n.d., p.1, emphasis my own) that states firmly that the HR members of this professional body should

ensure that their professional judgement is not compromised nor *could be perceived* as being compromised because of bias, or the undue influence of others.

Therefore friendships, because they carry the possibility of 'perception', a suspicion of bias from others, do not go hand in hand with this professional conduct. This is even more exacerbated at The Friendly Organisation where friendships are automatically equated with bias as noted in the above data analysis. This is similar to Bauman's (1994, p.12) view of modern times:

> In business there are no friends and no neighbours. Indeed, it might even help if the partner of a transaction is a complete stranger and remains so, since only then may instrumental rationality gain the uncontested ascendancy it needs: knowing too much of them may – who knows? – lead to a personal, emotional relation, which will inevitably confuse and cloud judgement. Like the *spirit de corps* of corporative bureaucracy, the spirit of business militates against sentiments, the moral sentiments most prominent among them.

I found the same "emotional investment in [this] in particular discourses and subject positions" (Willig, 2013, loc.5470; also Hollway and Jefferson, 2005, pp.149-159) in the account of Sandra (s.17), another HR professional, who stressed her conscious choices, how she "deliberately never made any friends with" her colleagues. This was presented as her efforts to avoid "accidentally let[ting] something slip" and thus appearing in a difficult "compromising position" (Sandra, s.17). Again, this behaviour is also in line with the "Ethical Standards and Integrity" stated in the Code of Conduct (Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development, n.d., p.1) with reference to safeguarding personal,

sensitive and business information. Friendships are therefore portrayed as tricky, dangerous to professional competence and behaviour required not only by the very profession but also in line with the professional identity of my participants.

Whilst Daisy and Sandra consciously avoided friendships, Robyn (s.55-59) recollected a sudden barrier put up by another person from HR whom she once felt a certain amount of friendship intimacy. She used a very strong emotional tone when conveying her story that I interpreted as containing not only the elements of surprise but also emotional pain, feeling hurt. The inhibition is clear, Person 1 firmly yet suddenly separated themselves from Robyn. The motivation of their actions could be explained as a reaction to the perception of others as not adhering to the Conduct, thus not being regarded as a competent self (Morris, 2008); but it is interpreted here more as a reaction to the organisational implicit inhibition of friendship which is based on their unexpected change in friendship behaviour.

Leslie also recollected a rumour of a member of the HR team being 'moved' to another department because they were not discreet enough and ".. had too many friendships" (Leslie, s.159). It wasn't my role to investigate whether this story was a truthful one, but to pay attention to what was believed to be 'appropriate' behaviour in the organisation. Interestingly, a similar story was brought up by Daisy, referring to the friendships of her HR colleague as

"awkward" (s.267). Their relations were scapegoated, passed to me as an example of the inappropriateness of any such close personal relations between the person from the HR team and any other member of the organisation.

As the last example of the intense splitting occurring within the HR team, I would like to highlight my conversation with Leslie who in conversation about her current employment in a supportive role, brought up that when you are in HR, "you can`t really form friendships!" (s.141), as you may never be sure about their genuineness.

This quote carries significance in two ways. Firstly, I was taken by surprise of how automatic her assumption of not having any friends if one is working in HR was. Secondly, her train of thought took her from discussing supportiveness to banning friendships. Being supportive, empathetic, understanding is implied in the HR profession, but these are also inherent qualities in friendship, and when this relation is inhibited in any way, genuine acts of empathy and sensitivity to the needs of others may also be affected, thus impairing intra-organisational relating.

The mechanism of splitting off from workplace friendships was therefore not only evident in the actions of a few HR members, but it has become a socially structured mechanism of the wider HR team. These organisational members were defending from friendship that carried in their minds strong connotations of bias, favouritism, ethical and integrity standards of maintaining individual and

organisational confidentiality. The defensive behaviour was not individualised anymore but had been lifted to the realms of the collective, through what I see as "the excessive degree of preoccupation" with detachment (Diamond, 1985). And thus the organisational stance towards friendships was coming through more consistently and intensively. I will now present the stories of my participants from other departments in relation to the emotional detachment from friendships and their meaning of professionalism.

Tyler (s.165) brought up a story on how he was asked at interview stage about managing friendship relations with his subordinates from the same team when being promoted. This simple example serves as evidence of organisational perceptions on friendship relations. Because they were seen as worthy of questioning in the internal recruitment process, and the candidates' answers formed a part of the assessment criteria, it shows that friendships were regarded as problematic and/or indeed challenging for individuals to manage.

Emily (s.426), a member of staff, presented herself as a professional when it comes to friendships at work, which she referred to as "keeping [her] work and social life very separate". She highlighted the role of hierarchy in this separation, stipulating that she would 'never' form friendships with those of higher positions, especially in Senior Management (s.362). She also stressed having "a split personality when it [came] to friendship and the work" which

formed a quite important layer of her own experience of professional behaviour (s.298; also s.389).

Both managers Ariel (s.444) and Roger (s.181) presented themselves as 'professionals' able to control their emotions at work. Roger, the Senior Manager, was stressing that in his opinion personal life should not impact on work life any way (s.181).

Other managers in the organisation were presented by some of my participants as unable to talk to me because to discuss workplace friendship would go against their 'professional' image. For example, when I asked Fred whether I could talk to one of his close friends from Senior Management, his answer was silence followed by his firm statement that they would not be willing to be interviewed (s.208) and distracting me from discussing this matter further. When I then invited the Senior Manager themselves to an interview with me, on 13th January 2016, they indeed politely declined participation in my interview via email referencing the words "difficult to have relations with work colleagues". However, I was already aware of their close friendship with Fred. This scenario suggests their own inner identification with not discussing their friendships openly, keeping these 'hidden' from the eyes of the organisation.

The same situation repeated in my interview with Brooke (s.707) and Marilyn (s.693) who commented on another Senior Manager who would allegedly not agree to an interview with me because they would think it inappropriate to

discuss friendships. They both concluded that this Senior Manager did not have any friends at work. This was their assumption and the Senior Manager could also have been 'avoiding' openly displaying any friendship relations at work.

Brooke (s.166) and Marilyn (s.729) also contemplated another Middle Manager being 'very professional', meaning that they kept their friendships and work very separate therefore they avoided engaging in these type of relations altogether.

Lucius, Lilly and also Leslie (s.58) presented their managerial selves as "very clean" and "completely fair" whether line managing a friend or colleague, able and willing to maintain the distance between the two. Robyn (ss.77-79) stressed how she was only able to maintain a 'work friendship' at work with two of her colleagues neither of them would consider it 'appropriate' to socialise outside of work. They have been direct line reports of each other. This was despite Robyn's belief that they would get on outside of working hours as friends. I also had a long discussion about installing a line between social life and work life with a Senior Manager Bert (ss.48-54).

An extreme example of separating the managerial self from friendships and informal interactions with subordinates was brought up by Francis and Lucius. Firstly, Francis (s.44) in response to my question about whether she had changed the way she formed friendships now to what she did in the past, she responded:

> I think I am more likely to (.) I am more aware of um people who are in a more senior position to me and whether they'd be comfortable with certain friendships. Heh.

Here she is implying that the management felt uncomfortable with friendships and friendly relations across the organisational hierarchy. This perception was strengthened by her story of a Senior Manager in an Area Office, whom she used to class as a workplace friend until she came to realise indirectly that it was considered inappropriate in the organisation's eyes. This realisation came out of the commentary that this friend/Senior Manager made when the rest of the small area office team decided to go out for a picnic, as Francis (s.46) recollected:

> 'Awh well I can't be seen with staff anyway↓↑', and every- everyone was just like 'WH(h)AT?!' heh.

Interestingly, Francis did not want to expand on why this comment had been made (s.56), in fact, to my surprise, she was very apologetic about the Senior Manager's comment. Francis called it a throwaway remark (s.56), as if trying to repress the hurt it had caused her, as it could be implied from the shock in her voice transcribed by the capitalisation of the word 'what' above.

Lucius recollected a sudden change of behaviour of his one time friend F12. This was the same Senior Manager that Francis talked about above. They were

no longer willing to engage in friendly behaviour with Lucius or others of a similar position, and Lucius attributed it to their recent promotion into Senior Management. Lucius's (s.312) story, whilst voicing strong disappointment in his friendship with F12, evidences the greater emphasis on maintaining the distance with subordinates the higher one progresses across the organisational hierarchy.

Lucy's (331-339) discourse carried a similar message, she sounded almost apologetic for calling her line manager a friend and in her account, the words of maintaining the "line" appeared often. Interestingly when talking to Tyler himself, he was indeed very careful about whether to call Lucy a friend too.

Sheila (s.101) recalled with shock and disappointment in her voice a situation when she was told she had to change her personality of being 'too friendly' if she "wanted to fit in at The Friendly Organisation".

Therefore, it is evident that if one wanted to be recognised as a professional, they were expected to split off any emotional attachments. 'A professional does not engage in too friendly behaviour' was an implied organisational message, the 'dis-identification' (e.g. Costas and Fleming, 2009, p.365; Hochschild, 1983) when they cannot be themselves at work was implied.

And finally, in the accounts of my interviewees, I also stumbled upon the references of maturity and childish behaviour in relation to having friendships

at work and being a professional. It started with the scapegoating example of the area offices, where Martha and Lucy worked. Martha used several times in different passages the words of being "treated like children↑" (s.133) when it came to "micromanaging" interpersonal relating, including friendship behaviour within the area office. However, it was in both Roger's and Jeff's discourse where I found several references of "maturity" in connection with "managing" their friendship relations at work. The strongest association of displaying workplace friendship with infantile references was conveyed in the following exchange I had with Roger, the Senior Manager. In trying to see how far I could take our conversation about professionalism, I joked:

> s.232.IR: heh, I hug {my friend} ALL THE TIME, heh heh
>
> s.233.Roger: I have an issue with that, but then, that's for another conversation.
>
> s.234.IR: No, no, this is the-, this is about you, not about me.
>
> s.235.Roger: I, I-, I guess it is that, that I, I try not to, um, . I can't say that I do it all the time as I don't↑; {a friend and I are seeing each other socially}, but we don't talk about it hue::, you know openly but people are aware of that. Um, and I think there is a danger that people can misconstrue the nature of, of our relation and how that works. Um, because we make judgements all the time.

And that's that thing about the <u>hugging in the office</u>. Um, would you hug <u>everyone </u>in the office?

s.236.IR: Only a friend.

s.237.Roger: Um, and actually, does that make people feel uncomfortable?

s.238.IR: Um, could be, some.

s.239.Roger: And people will look at it and think, well, hang on, is that <really appropriate>; and then there is a thing about <u>external visitors</u> being in the office. You know, a, a, and is that the culture of The Friendly Organisation? Is it a <u>professional</u> office or is it↑ a bit of a, (.), a jolly↓.

To interpret the above I will use the concept of transference and countertransference. Roger labelled my behaviour as unworthy of 'adult' professionalism (is it↑ a bit of a, (.), a jolly↓, s.239), and through countertransference, I strongly identified with it for the duration of our conversation. I consider his reaction to my comment about hugging a friend in the office 'all the time' as extreme. I felt patronised, my behaviour was infantilised, I even lowered my voice in my response to him (s.238). His reaction to me mirrored that of an informal reprimand, highlighting the inappropriateness of my display of emotions on the work platform and the severe consequences of the organisational image being flawed by my actions.

His reaction can be interpreted as reflecting his personal frustrated wishes, struggles with emotional detachment when it came to suppressing love for a friend, or any other emotions at work. However, what is more important is that 'a professional self' was presented here as 'a grown-up self', whilst the display of emotions was considered an act of inferiority, childlike.

As I was coming to an end with my interviewees, and I was coming across the professional discourse so often, I questioned Bert, the Senior Manager, about organisational trust in people being professional adults able to manage their friendships versus being controlled like children. His answer was the following:

> Yeah, I think it's difficult. I mean I've been accused of a, showing favouritism over appointments, and I, I'll swear by that, you↑ know, that um, I made the decision fairly. But how the hell do you ever prove that, it's another matter (Bert, s.94).

Bert's statement generalises that one will have to be always treated with suspicion because there is no proof in friendship at work being fair, it is too 'messy' for objective organisational measures, it is a phenomenon that escapes the laws of rationalism. It is thus possible to deduct that because of this, the childlike controls like that of DofI above were perceived as a necessity in this organisation. In conclusion, in order for one to be considered as 'an adult professional', they should avoid friendships.

I would like to acknowledge that detachment from friendship relations can also stem from personality attachment orientation and it can be an individual defence mechanism. For example, Tyler has self-identified as an independent person, "self-reliant or self-sufficient, and also very <u>private</u>" (s.36). Equally, Emily, Sandra, Lucius stressed how distancing from friendship was also their personal choice. Roger indeed referred to his past and how he was 'hurt' by trust before therefore he was cautious about close relations.

I interpreted the references to psychological distancing away from friendship relating, each important in its own way, as being in "the excessive degree" (Diamond, 1985, p.664). On the organisational level, it is possible to see the strong influence on the intensified split in my participants' minds between friendship as a private relation and the workplace in order to be perceived, recognised as a 'professional'. The detachment was, therefore, another 'excessive' collective defence mechanism aside from the DofI policy, that did not fulfil its intended 'defensive' function. In my belief, this mechanism was 'misbehaving'.

5.3.3 A Professional: Friend or Foe

Carrying on from the above, it did not surprise me to find several acts of friendship betrayal in the accounts of my participants. It was as if betrayal of friendship in the name of guarding organisational integrity became consciously

or unconsciously an intrinsic part of organisational behaviour, an accepted norm, or even more, rewarded by the recognition of the professional self, worthy of the company's praise (Lucius, s.81).

Roger (s.269), my first participant, brought up a story of being betrayed by a friend who in formal organisational proceedings of a grievance investigation "lied" about giving him advice and guidance. He lost all trust in this person (s.277) and their friendship broke down.

Francis (s.60) felt betrayed by her former friend, a Senior Manager, who once they became her line manager, deleted her off Facebook without having a word with her. She perceived this act as cold, emotionless, that made her feel unimportant as a human being, a workplace friend and a colleague, not worthy of an explanation. In addition, when I asked Francis whether she thought workplace friendship was discouraged at The Friendly Organisation, she stated it was not, yet she herself avoided socialising on nights out for the fear of "things [being] reported" back in the office (s.349).

Martha (s.353) contemplated a friendship with a Manager that 'could have existed', however, the career drive of this Manager made them capable of "standing on you to get high up↑", in other words betraying friendship for being formally recognised by the company as a loyal professional.

Disappointment also carried through Sam's and Lucius' discourse when telling a story of a 'Facebook workplace friend' having 'sold their trust' for pledging loyalty to the company (Sam, s.190). In other words, they were referred to a disciplinary action for an online comment about their day to day work. This comment was seen by a former friend who was in a higher formal position to them and reported it back in the office as inappropriate behaviour. They both would have preferred having a quiet word, or words of advice instead. Lucius believed that the reason of the person who reported them was "to score marks for themselves" (s.59), to belong to a certain group, to be "seen by other higher members of The FS that they are protecting the company" (s.80).

Interestingly, the same story was also brought up by Brooke (s.102) as a warning example of 'friends' in this organisation who would not hesitate to harm one's feelings and will put the organisation first for their own private reasons. This story had instilled in Lucius and Sam the suspicion about treacherous waters running below not only friendships but any interpersonal relations. as evidenced in my discussion with Lucius (s.99-103).

The actions of this manager-friend, who acted as a professional, putting the company first, aroused anxiety bordering on paranoia in Lucius. He became a lot more guarded in his social interactions within the company not only with this individual but with others in general. His statement (s.103) also suggests further 'attacks' and the existence of victims who would be happy to disclose parts of

their private selves, not realising that they are being 'watched' and possibly opening themselves to future formal reprimands in the name of the greater good of the organisation.

Sally (s.281) also brought up a Facebook related story of being reprimanded for supporting a friend on this platform. She found these acts absurd and felt "threatened" (s.279) by the management.

Dean treated interpersonal relations within offices with an equal amount of suspicion. He felt that people listened to other people's conversations in the open plan offices, and his train of thought led him to comment on how quickly an email would be sent to a figure of authority if for example a direction or an instruction was misinterpreted, not acted upon, suggesting a telling culture, a culture of betrayal (s.301). This had resulted in Dean always taking phone calls from his subordinate team members, including friends, outside of the office.

On occasion, the interpretative repertoires surrounding the HR function, in particular, were also referring to betrayal of various kinds. The function was understood as being heavily bureaucratic as a result of, in Fred's (s.159-161) terms, containing "fear… that something might go wrong". Thus it was perceived as having created numerous policies across the organisation for the staff to follow to 'protect' the organisation against risk. Dudley (s.386-394) conveyed the image of HR being a very professional function, very risk aware, 'proactive' in fact, which on face value suggested a positive image of the HR

team with its bureaucracy serving a very good protective function within the organisation. However, whilst Dudley also described the organisation as very professional, she immediately followed with a striking statement of the organisation not being considerate of the feelings of their employees and the impact it had on them (s.382-387). As an example, she brought up the ignorance of huge stress that was inflicted upon individuals, "in some cases unmanageable" (s.388).

It seemed that the HR team with its bureaucracy was carrying the impossible goals and hopes of this public sector organisation to be presented as "in Weber's terms, a particular kind of moral institution in which the impartiality and fairness [were] paramount" (Hoggett, 2006, p.178), all under the umbrella of 'professional' organisation. Yet whilst identifying itself with this image, it seemed to have forgotten the emotionality and complexity of human beings within.

Alan (s.330) used a very strong imaginary in describing the HR function as "a dark shadow, like an eclipse of the sun" when describing the number of and the 'banal' nature of disciplinary hearings carried out at The Friendly Organisation. This suggests punishment for the sake of punishing. Leslie (s.13) described the frequent restructures using a metaphor of 'an animal shooting place', suggesting that staff were considered as animals to be controlled rather than valued as individuals. According to Lucius, The Friendly Organisation was

not a place of treating people like individuals and treating them fairly (s.257). He considered himself and others as "a number" rather than a person and in connection with these thoughts he gave me an example of the most recent mishandling of the restructure.

The ignorance of the feelings of loss was brought up by Lucy (s.92) in connection with losing work related friends for various reasons, such as restructures, and the organisation not being empathetic to these experiences, instead, these were being brushed under the carpet by HR issuing the leavers' statement.

Fred stated very firmly that there were members of the HR team that he would have not given this interview to (s.202), portraying mistrust in the function itself. Deborah commented on her deep disappointment with the function as according to her personal experience it was not about the welfare of the staff any more (s.371).

Brooke named three out of seven HR team members as trusting and understanding of staff one minute, yet 'running to management' with the gained information next. She had an awareness that one had to go by "what's right by policy and by the business↓", but equally expressed disappointment that as a result, there was no one that employees could confide in (s.350). When I asked her to comment on my influence on the interview process as her ex-colleague,

she stated that she would have said the same thing to another researcher but not one person from HR (s.709). Around this person, one had to be "careful" as "one minute [they could] be friends with everyone and the next [they are] slagging you off" (Brooke, s.121). Leslie (s.201) used almost similar words to describe the same colleague and added another name.

In conclusion, all of these stories, accounts and metaphors suggest that some members of staff felt in the name of professionalism 'compelled' to act as the internal spies of organisational relating, and at times their actions aroused paranoid feelings amongst others about the motives for social interactions, informal discussions, private conversations. They convey a culture of suspicion, mistrust, betrayal and demonise emotionality and interpersonal relating, not just friendships within The Friendly Organisation. The professional in the mind is then portrayed as loyal to the organisation, not afraid of putting its reputation before any personal relations. Yet one has to be wary of these professionals and guard one's private self as one could be reprimanded for their actions in private life perceived a lot of times as interfering with company matters. The HR function in this organisation appeared to have an overbearing authority at an intimate level.

Doubts about the integrity of the organisation seemed to have become an innate feature, an accepted norm of the social system within The Friendly

Organisation. The fact that so many stories of suspicion, betrayal and pretended friendship have been identified suggests an ongoing process of deception, a violation of moral standards by those in a position of power, resulting in an infringement of trust, and belief in the leadership team.

These metaphors and statements above to me contain the traces of what Obholzer (1994, pp.206-207) refers to as 'primitive anxiety' in reference to HR and the organisation itself. This, as is pointed out, is a type of anxiety that arises notably during organisational change, but what is more important, it replaces the feelings of being "protect[ed by organisations] from personal and social breakdown" and of belonging with those of loss and abandonment. I interpreted that these primitive anxieties were evoked by the approach taken to deal with individuals during the disciplinaries, restructures or day to day matters.

Finding anxieties in reference to the HR function I felt was paradoxical as one of the purposes of HRM has been to look after the welfare of the staff. The times of the bureaucratic personnel functions from the 1970s and 1980s are supposedly long gone and HRM has been fighting for its recognition as "a managerial profession" advocating its importance in terms of strategic impact on organisational competitiveness (Wright, 2008, p.1067) and the wellbeing of staff (Guest, 2002; Kowalski and Loretto, 2017).

As Krantz suggests, such a breach or "transgression" in terms of betrayal is not without "the distinctive social and psychological challenges for leaders and

followers coping with betrayal" (Krantz, 2006, p.222), as it creates a significant discontent and confusion in the organisation. After all, I was reminded of a discussion with Fred that sums up the attitude towards the leadership team. To my surprise Fred (s.183), as one of the Senior Managers, named the organisation as "leaderless" in connection to the having a clarity in the "direction… [and] communication" (s.189) from the top of the organisation.

The above stories and statements, however, stand as a paradox to the promotion of the organisation as an inclusive and supportive workplace as will be explored in the next chapter.

5.4 The Stepford Wives

The Corporate Strategy 2016-2019 of The Friendly Organisation included People Strategy and showed the organisation's strong commitment to its employees. The first line of this strategy clearly stated:

> We are one team, supporting and encouraging each other. (The_Friendly_Organisation, 2017, p.11)

This statement suggests a strong unified culture and the literature review of social networks indicates that cohesiveness in the workplace where staff are interconnected should be marked with cooperation, trust and social support (Ho, Rousseau and Levesque, 2006).

Taking into consideration the role of space, as mentioned in the first part of my analysis, many of my participants developed friendships by working closely with each other (e.g. Dudley, s.274; Lucy s.355, s.294, Daisy, s.189, Robyn, s.35, Lilly, s.418, Rick s.10, s.19, Sam s.11, Roger s.240, Jeff, s.114, Brooke, s.68, Francis, s.68 and so on). The layout of all offices of The Friendly Organisation was 'open plan' without privacy but known in general discourse for promoting interpersonal relations.

In my conversation with Bert (s.107) it was stressed that the open-plan offices were the purpose of creating an all-embracing organisation, "I think it's trying to be more inclusive rather than reduces sort of silo working and things of that nature". Lilly saw workplace friendships as "encourage[d] because of the way" the offices were arranged (s.93). The open planning was adopted about ten years ago (Lilly, s.83-85) and encouraged friendship relating, as Lilly herself confirmed that because of the seating arrangements being "a real mix (.)" (s.93) she formed several workplace friendships. Roger (s.355) also highlighted the cohesiveness of the organisation.

Even more, The Friendly Organisation at times presented themselves as a "family" (Alan, s.319), and indeed the discourse of some individuals was saturated with the expressions of care, mutual support, looking after each other. Admittedly, these were the individuals from area offices rather than the Head Office. Family cultures characterise themselves by being "a source of

meaning and companionship" where "individuals have their proper place in it, just as in a family" (Gabriel, 1999, p.180). The family references were not only found in the discourse involving friendship dyads (e.g. Marilyn, Brooke), but also covered the sense making of relating within the whole area offices:

> I THINK it's lovely and I do actually feel like, most of the time, we are a nice little supportive family that looks after each other↑, I think you get to know people's little ways and you know who, yea hh. who to say what to in the nicest possible way and um, but we do look <after each other> (Francis, s.336, about area office 2).

> Okay it's an interesting one, because they've always been known as quite a close team, and quite almost like a family (Ariel, s.308, about an area office 1).

Lucy also stated that her friendships were a part of her "work family" (s.165) and that if anybody left whether voluntarily or as part of the redundancy/dismissal process, she'd miss them as a family member (s.391). Audrey equally expressed the strong feelings of loss when leaving one of the area offices, "I did miss them all, terribly" (s.152).

The notion of family was however also invoked in the organisational activities, such as fundraising events where individuals bonded even more; and at times members of their families were invited (Francis, s.140).

Rituals of group socialising after work was also present in some area offices (Lucy, s.55 and Francis, s.347). Sometimes these rituals did involve feelings of inauthenticity (Costas, 2012, p.388), for example, Lucy felt the need to attend social events, even if she felt that she had not much in common with her colleagues socially. Other rituals, corporately organised annual staff conferences and Christmas parties, had most recently been reduced due to budget cuts (Brooke, s.42), and they were greatly missed. These events still remained fondly in my interviewees' memories, ranging from the earliest times when the organisation was half its size and the parties were very informal (Lilly, s.77), to more recent events, such as those of 2009, the times when there used to be "big The Friendly Organisation Christmas part[ies]" (Jeff, s.108), full of good times at work that stretched to social activities post work, leading to strengthening of friendship bonds (Jeff, s.120):

The organisation also celebrated informality through its 'dress down Fridays' (Alan, s.169); and employees more often than not knew each other prior to working there (Robyn, s.307). The organisation thus portrayed itself as an inclusive workplace to the outsider, that at times may have even felt like a family to the insider, especially when working in the area offices.

Even if The Friendly Organisation did not openly define itself as a family, based on the above it shared certain characteristics with both family cultures and friendship cultures. For example, as seen in the sections in relation to

professionalism, the management was in a strong position of authority like in family cultures, also a strong unity of one team was promoted (Costas, 2012, 377).

On the other hand, with its open space offices and frequent organisational change, whilst mixing occasional informality with professionalism and promoting friendliness and dependency, the culture of The Friendly Organisation was akin to the friendship cultures as defined by Costas (2012). It seemed "more open and fluid but also less protective and stable" (ibid., pp.377-378). But neither family culture nor friendly and friendship culture go hand in hand with the acts of friendship betrayal or even double standards for punishment, paranoid feelings or even fear outlined above.

In trying to understand these controversies, I was reminded of a commentary that Alan made when describing The Friendly Organisation:

> s.319. Alan: "I'll tell you why I think it is an anachronism, because <u>on</u> the surface it's a very friendly place↓, it's a bit like Stepford Wives, it's very friendly place: 'Ho ho ho, nice office, we all love each other. We <u>care</u> for each other. We are <u>a family</u>.'

> s.320.Alan: And <u>yet</u>, they <u>don't</u> think twice about bringing – I've never been anywhere where there's been more investigations, disciplinary inquiries, um, into people's behaviour, um, intrusions, thinking, considering that people's private lives are a concern of a business.

When I explained to Alan that putting the organisation into disrepute by comments on Facebook or other private acts is the probable reason for the disciplinary actions, he surprisingly continued stating how he enjoyed working at The Friendly Organisation (s.322). It was as if he was trying to soften what he said, to suppress it even as if identifying with the image of Stepford Wives himself, yet feeling unconsciously strongly against the deceptive organisational image of an inclusive, friendly, familial and happy workplace.

The same controversy was highlighted to me by Fred, who described the organisation as "very confused" with regards to its rules (s.134), "So it's like: no silos! be friendly! get on with your colleagues! but don't be too friendly!" (s.134). He was also privy to discussions where friendships at work were not regarded favourably.

Indeed, Sheila and Sally were told on different occasions "mixed messages↑ about whether [they] could or couldn't be friends" (s.27), yet Sheila pointed the finger to the management itself struggling with the ambiguity of the relations (s.117).

Sheila felt very negatively about the nature of interpersonal relating within the organisation. She was comparing her organisational experiences to pressurised situations as shown in the section on Ritualistic Practice (5.2.3). Working at The Friendly Organisation was for her highly stressful. It was a place

where her private relations, in fact, her private life, was disputed and confronted by others. The others who have had the apparent obsession of 'acting out' being friendly with each other (s.115):

> And I- I just don't understand it. I just really don't↓, people were o_bsessed_ with spending time with people they didn't want to spend time with at The Friendly Organisation.

In relation to 'acting out', organisational scholars have highlighted that in organisations where friendships are celebrated, individuals can 'act' as if they are overly dependent on each other. That is, they "seek to be known by others, participate in the various cultural activities, and indeed, form friendships with others" (Costas, 2012, p.391). Whilst The Friendly Organisation did not position itself as a company that encourages friendships, but rather acts as a family, encouraging 'integration', the apparent acts of over-friendliness may entail a certain form of self-regulation to 'fit in' with the homogenous 'Stepford Wives' culture, rather than having a genuine interest in others. Sheila appeared to be questioning the real motives of others' in doing so, and her language was soaked with mistrust towards her colleagues, a certain form of paranoia, suspicion about genuine intentions of the friendliness of others.

And finally, when I asked Dudley to compare her friendships at The Friendly Organisation with those from her previous occupations, she stated that The Friendly Organisation was not in favour of friendships (s.354). Although she

was not subjected to any such discussions herself, this message had been implied to her (s.356).

Thus The Friendly Organisation was not 'so friendly' after all. It was as if its stance towards friendships was ambivalent, paradoxically promoting inclusivity, portraying the perfect 'Stepford Wives' image, evoking the feelings of family and teamwork, yet unconsciously repulsing friendships by putting 'defences' such as the DofI in place. Interpersonal relations were subjected to organisational scrutiny under the cover of risk management, yet the 'rules' around organisational relating were unclear, creating confusion, paranoid feelings.

Chapter six: Data Analysis Part Two

The warmth of friendship is the warmth of a blanket, wrapped and clasped, but always in danger of blowing away, or being torn from my back by another, or by fate itself.

(French, Gosling, Case, 2009, p.6)

6.1 Introduction

This section will be concerned with opportunities of friendships as 'transitional' and 'containing' relations, and challenges of friendships in terms of experiencing envy, psychological splitting and ambivalence.

With regards to 'transitional' relations, I will draw on Winnicott's (1953, 1971) concept of transitional object and transitional space. I will explore the opportunity of friends in creating such transitional spaces understood as the spaces in between one's internal psychological world and external reality (Winnicott, 1953; 1971). As Winnicott (1971, p.3, emphasis author's own) argued, aside from using a concept of interpersonal relations when describing interactions of human beings, there is a need to acknowledge

the third part of the life of a human being, a part that we cannot ignore, is an intermediate area of *experiencing,* to which inner reality and external life both contribute.

Because trust and confidence in reliability in the mother make possible for the infant to transition into independence, I will start my analysis by tracing experiences of friendship in terms of trusting and having confidence in the reliability of friends. I will then expand on Litte's (1993) understanding of 'transitional' friendship relations as becoming 'a part of each other'. Being 'transitional' also implies 'to change', and therefore I will draw on Hollway's (2011) interpretation of transitional space in order to show how thinking about organisational reality through workplace friendship can contribute to a process of imagination and change within individuals, and thus can contribute positively to their identity construction.

I will then build on the examples used, and proceed with expanding on understanding of friendships as 'containing' relations of workplace anxieties. I will focus on tracing the process of 'holding' through Bion's (1962) container-contained concepts, focusing on projective identification and the 'contained' emotional experiences (Ogden, 2004) and work experiences (Foster, 2013).

I will conclude this section by tracing friendship challenges in the stories of my participants, and through the concepts of envy, splitting and ambivalence, I will finalise the demonstration of the conceptual value that psychoanalysis brings to the study of workplace friendship relations.

6.2 Transitional Relations

In the following section, I will explore the properties of transitional space between friends and thus confirm their capacity to provide opportunities for individuals to become more independent in the workplace. It is through the existence of the transitional space that one is able to lead an independent and creative life (Winnicott, 1971).

In the workplace being creative does not always have to be translated into coming up with new ideas, but also into "being oneself while being with others" (Winnicott, 1971, p.55), being a spontaneous self (Stapley, 1996), an autonomous self (Dubouloy, 2004); an "authentic and resilient" self (Diamond, 2017, p.300) as noted in the literature review section Holding Environments (3.6). One is then, in turn, able to be more productive in organisational terms and contribute to organisational goals, rather than putting forward a 'false self' in the form of schizoid behaviour (Carr and Downs, 2004), or deceptive behaviour (Diamond, 2017).

As explored in the literature review, friends in general life have been understood as "the transitional other" (Little, 1993, p.55) and enablers of the passage through the transitional space. However, in order for the transitional space between workplace friends to, as with general life friends, "assist change" (Little, 1993, p.54) and to be truly "nurturing" (Diamond, 2017, p.293),

it should, according to Winnicott (1971), contain *trust and confidence in reliability.* Most of the research participants referred to both of these concepts, and I will now explore how they have made sense of them.

6.2.1 Transitional Space between Friends

Firstly, from the interview data, I identified several facets of *trust*. Meaning making and social dynamics of trusting workplace friends arose often in the interviewees' accounts. These moments, although at times influenced by the recognition of limitations to self-disclosures as a result of formal organisational structures, were full of reflections about trust in terms of (1) the ability to keep any disclosed information confidential, (2) the feelings of being 'protected' by friends in the workplace, (3) shared experiences of workplace hostility and (4) a friendly assistance available when in the need of personal and/or professional development.

In the literature review (see Intimate Dimensions of Friendship at Work) I argued that trust between workplace friends is accompanied by the affects of feeling vulnerable and exposed, uncertain about confidentiality, and willing to undertake the risks of self-disclosure, as identified by Albrecht (2006, p.109) in the case of managerialistic conceptualisation of trust in organisations. These

affects surrounding trust, I argued, made the intimacy of workplace relations emotionally complex.

One of the first characteristics of trust that I have noticed in my interview data was indeed a recognition of limitations to trusting workplace friends when self-disclosing. In these instances, it was important to take into account the "added role component" (Bridge and Baxter, 1992, p.203), which I believed added to the complexity of trusting a friend, even if they had been recognised as a 'safe' outlet for anxieties experienced in personal and organisational life. For example, Fred (s.89) did not feel able to disclose even to his closest friend at work F1 all one would want to disclose to a friend. He felt the burden of formal organisational structures impacting on his trust and ability to become vulnerable in front of a workplace friend. Equally, he was considerate of this friend and contemplated on their possibility to be compromised by certain disclosed information, such as Fred looking for another job. Fred was stressing the treatment of workplace "implications" that such self-disclosure could have on F1 and reassured me that this would not be the case if Fred had already left The Friendly Organisation. Similar limitations of self-disclosures were brought up by several participants (5) during my interviews.

Many of my participants, when commenting on their workplace friendships, connected the discourse of trust with that of being able to *keep information confidential* (11). Indeed trust in the workplace friendship literature has been

connected to the ability to share confidential information (e.g.Bridge and Baxter, 1992, p.203).

My participants also often brought up the situations where friends were presented in symbolic terms as their *trusted 'protectors'* in the workplace (12). There were instances when a friend was threatened by a CEO because of getting drunk at work parties (Alan, s.77; in his previous employment); or where a friend was underperforming (Lucy, s.169; at The Friendly Organisation), or did not have sufficient experience and knowledge of policies and procedures at work (Kate, s.103; at The Friendly Organisation). In these situations, workplace friends were able to step in and either put in a good word for a friend to save them from dismissal (Alan, s.78; in his previous employment), or they covered up the evidence of underperformance at work (Lucy, s.169; at The Friendly Organisation), or they gently pointed out inappropriate behaviour at work when managers were in the office (Kate, s.103; in her previous employment). These incidents were regarded as the building blocks of friendships and the presence of workplace friends was highly appreciated in all of these situations.

Trust also brought people together when they felt threatened by workplace hostility. For example, Lucius (s.166) addressed his workplace friends at The Friendly Organisation as mediators of workplace sanctions, as trusted persons who would be able to "maybe soften the blow" for him.

Developmental aspects of workplace friendship, fulfilling the desire for professional recognition (Harding, 2013), were brought up by many of my participants (14) and mentioned often several times in their accounts (18). There were instances when some of my participants, such as Sandra and Audrey did not see any direct impact of friends on their professional lives, but during an interview they both indirectly opened up about situations where their workplace friends had impacted on their professional identity construction, most notably through instrumental support at work (Audrey, s.213; at The Friendly Organisation), training support (Sandra, s.16; at her previous employer) or gaining new perspectives on life and work (Sandra, s.209; at The Friendly Organisation). With regards to a direct impact on professional growth and seeing potential in a friend, I would like to bring up two examples as follows.

Sam described F2 at The Friendly Organisation as someone who had pushed his limits to do things he was uncomfortable with, such as public speaking (s.98). Whereas Sam was not trusting himself and would never put himself forward for such a task, F2 was able to absorb that fear, reposition it, and help Sam to prepare. He "always tries to… edge me a little bit" claimed Sam (s.98). Sam saw this push from his comfort zone both positively and negatively (s.98), but admitted that it was possible that F2 "probably knows me better than I know me sometimes" (s.103). Thus through seeing the potential in Sam, F2 would push him out of his comfort zone (s.103) "as a mate" (s.104).

I encountered a similar situation in an interview with Jeff who felt he was being encouraged by his workplace friends at The Friendly Organisation to move on with his career. He was encouraged because according to them he had "far more potential" (s.273). Such comments from his friends had boosted his self-confidence: "'Aww right, maybe I am a bit more capable than I give myself a credit for'" (s.273). I questioned Jeff whether the support that he has received from his friends in a form of coaching for example and the nudge to progress his career, was specific to workplace friendship, rather than collegiality. His answer was as follows:

> No. I don't think he would`ve shown that level of interest that he has shown, um, and the level of support if we weren't friends. He, he`d, he would be wasting his time, I don't see why he would= (Jeff, s.280).

My participants brought up examples of change, either in their professional or personal lives where they were able to develop, to learn, to grow because of the influence of their workplace friends*.* Trust for 6 of my participants was foremost linked to the ability of *workplace friends not being judgemental, but accepting.* For example, Roger (s.134) highlighted the power of workplace friendship at The Friendly Organisation to influence his personal life:

> Um, in a work setting F1 has no influence whatsoever. I would suggest. Ehm (.) personal, um, often he`d be there telling me I am an idiot, heh. And he has, I guess, a right to be able to do that because he is my friend. Um, whereas

> other people wouldn't allow that to happen. Because I trust his judgement. I trust his advice. And that's the same with F2 as well.

From the above examples it is evident that despite the complexity of trust in workplace friendship, affected by formal organisational structures and the "added work component", it was still very central and valued element of lived experiences of workplace friendship. Trust evoked the sense of certain safety in the workplace, when friends acted as trusted protectors, at times they were approached as mediators of workplace hostility, they enabled the move towards a positive construction of self and self-development at work or in personal life, and their opinions were generally valued in terms of self-improvement.

Aside from trust, another characteristic of workplace friendship relations arising from my data was that of *confidence in friends' reliability*. I observed friendship sense-making focusing on the following themes: (1) friends being a reliable source of work-related knowledge, (2) valuing constancy of friends' presence, and (3) appreciating confidence building through friendship. I will now explore how and why these instances arose in my data.

The sheer presence of a workplace friend when one needs to call on their support was greatly appreciated, especially in the current economic climate where organisational change has become the day to day reality. For example, in The Friendly Organisation, my participants referred to frequent restructures,

and redundancies in various contexts. Therefore, the sense of stability seemed irreplaceable. This was in terms of knowing that a friend is on the other end of a phone to provide advice or guidance, even when in a different department.

A very central appreciation occurring in the discourse of friendship relations was in reference to friends being *a reliable source of work-related knowledge*, mentioned by 10 of my participants. For example, Dean (s.343) referred to his friends at The Friendly Organisation in relation to their capacity to help him to problem solve at work (Dean, s.343). Workplace friends were becoming mentors, or coaches at work in his discourse, wiser figures, not only able to listen but to also provide confidential advice when needed. I questioned Dean's sense making and I mentioned that the role of a coach or a wiser figure is usually attributed to management. His response was that although both of his managers were very approachable, he would avoid calling them often with work related conundrums, as it "isn't good for business" (s.345). In these situations, he would rather approach his work related friends, "but generally if I speak to anyone of these guys, I can either work it out or you know they'll just point me in the right direction. Just- be open about it, not worry about what you're saying to them so" (s.345). Self-development at work was, therefore, occurring through friends as teachers, advisors, wiser figures.

Furthermore, the sense making of work friends as '*always being there*' when any kind of support was needed, whether at work or in the personal lives, was

occurring even more often (14 occasions, 9 participants); and resonates even more with Winnicott's (1953; 1971; 1989) concept of confidence in a mother's reliability as highlighted in the Psychodynamic Perspectives section.

For example, it was Robyn who contemplated deeply on her friend from previous employment leaving their shared workplace in a technology company. She compared it to a "security blanket at work [that] was gone↑. Like, my, my ally was gone↑, and that, yeah, it wasn't quite the same after that for me↑ at work↑." (s.273). The importance with which she is describing this relation is similar to that of Winnicott (1989, p.50) in his collection of essays describing the transitional object, such as the above noted blanket, as "a first symbol" of an infant, as something one is able to return to, representing

> confidence in the union of baby and mother based on the experience of the mother's reliability and capacity to know what the baby needs through identification with the baby.

This statement if interpreted on its own may be telling about an insufficient transitional space that was created by this friendship, as Robyn was not able to exist completely independently after he left the company. However, whilst he was there, through identification with him, Robyn was able to have a secure

feeling of constant presence (s.275), that later on translated into a more confident self as follows:

> I was quite shy and not very good at putting myself forward↑, and so he kind of helped me to, he helped to raise my profile I suppose. Because once people saw that he was taking an interest in me and that we had a friendship, they were kind of like, 'Oh, Ok↑↓↑, so you must be alright then, if he likes you↑↓↑.' And, and then that helped me to do my job better I suppose↑ (Robyn, s. 17).

His presence gave her a sense of security in the organisation, which at the time contributed to her healthy professional and personal development. This friendship brought together her inner insecure self, timid, apprehensive of others' perceptions, even anxious, with the organisational reality of Robyn being recognised as knowledgeable and competent.

Similar situations of *confidence building through friendship* were mentioned on 11 occasions by 8 of my participants. Through the emphasis and sheer variance of these experiences of friendship dynamics, I interpret that workplace friends are able to contribute to transitioning in terms of their ability to bridge the inner self with the external world, leading to self-development and a growing sense of self-worth.

Furthermore, going back to the awareness of their availability at times of need, this is almost akin to the presence of Winnicott's (1953; 1971) 'good enough

mothers' or primary caregivers. One could argue that workplace friends do not carry the characteristics of primary caregivers, that it is not possible to compare workplace friendship to this type of relation. After all in the organisational literature Bowlby's (1988) attachment figure may appear more suitable for leadership and followership as shown for example by Wu and Parker (2014). Yet in my interviews workplace friends from The Friendly Organisation were considered a family in the following ways.

There were references made to friends as a work family (e.g. Lucy, s.157, s161; Audrey, s.82, Deborah, s.199; Kate, s.174); part of a general life family (Rick, s.107) or "brotherly sort of friendship more than anything else" (Sam, s.123); "a long lost brother" (Audrey, s.120); "a bit like a brother" (Dean, s.157), "like a surrogate mum slash grandmother" (Martha, s.214); "a motherly figure" (Dudley, s.340) "a work mother" (Kate, s.49; also s.75 and s.103), and "a father figure" (Dean, s.142), a "sister" (Rick, s.114).

Although it is not the focus of this thesis to explore metaphors of workplace family through attachment theory, these references show that to some, friends do play a very significant part in their lives, resembling close family relations, or even primary carers.

The identification with the 'good object' such as a parent can have a prominent impact on the development and growing sense of wellbeing of an individual (Hinshelwood, 1994, pp.71-72), which corresponds with the existing research

in sociology showing how social connectedness can impact positively on health and wellbeing (e.g. Putnam, 2000) and that friendship can have the same positive effects (Spencer and Pahl, 2006). And although this research is not concerned with the concept of wellbeing as such, the data show how workplace friends, akin to primary caregivers, through knowledge sharing and their constancy of support contribute to nurturing transitional spaces where individuals can grow.

To summarise, the combination of trust and confidence in friendship reliability enables workplace friends to serve as contributors to transitional spaces, and in this sense friendship relations are able to be considered as elements of 'good enough' organisational holding environments. It is these spaces that have a potential to influence the development of spontaneous, autonomous and creative selves in the workplace and thus, in more general terms, workplace friends also contribute to organisational effectiveness in this manner.

I will now proceed with further exploration of transitional space between friends. Drawing on Ogden (1994, ch.4, loc.893) and Little (1993) I will demonstrate how one is able to live their life 'through' friendship, to be independent but at the same time, to be at one with the Other.

6.2.2 An Extension to and Other to the Self

The section on <u>Holding Environments</u> expanded on Little's (1993, p.47) idea of 'transitional' relations referring to general life friendships where two or more friends can become a certain "part of each other". This is believed to occur rather implicitly, through "mutual empathy and artfulness" with people sometimes "projecting themselves into their friends" or living their lives through their friends (Little, 1993, p.47). This process was most vivid in the following accounts.

When I asked Martha how she selected her workplace friends during the pre-interview preparation, she opened up about having different friends with different meanings to her:

> like I've got some friends that like come to, um, gatherings outside of work, I've got friends that we've got some similarities with our families, so it was all about figuring out who was important to me in different aspects of my life (Martha, s.10).

Based on the above quote it is possible to see that workplace friendship is indeed highly individualised. It was not only Martha but all of my participants who expanded on their workplace friendships in terms of similarities, shared activities, hobbies, interests, family histories or even shared humour. This understanding of workplace friendship concept is similar to Grey and Sturdy (2007, p.163), who alongside historical and cultural differences highlight these

characteristics as distinguishing factors from colleagues and other workplace relations.

Little's (1993) understanding of 'transitional' relations however goes further into becoming parts of each other, and with this in mind I read the following quote from Lilly (s.836):

> I just think (.) my experience of friendships is a variety, is a spice, you know, I like having a variety of different friends, different, (.) a friend to make me laugh, a friend to bring me back down to earth heh, you know to keep me sane. Um I just, I that's how I see friends. They're all there for a certain purpose, sometimes just to get you through a period of life. Unfortunately there are short term, um.

Lilly compared her workplace friends to different spices, all having different purpose in her life, as if through her workplace friendship she was able to see or develop different parts of herself in certain periods of her life. From having different parts of the self 'spiced' by workplace friendship, Martha (s.297) also reflected on her sense of self being compartmentalised amongst her general life friends and workplace friends, whereby "..[b]etween the three of them, they know everything, heh." This statement can be read not only in terms of personal disclosures, but also in terms of her understanding of the self being affected by workplace friendship.

Alan also expanded in his interview about the purpose of workplace friends in his life amongst other people that have influenced his sense of self. He approached this subject through a metaphor of the self-help guides as follows:

> You know they've all added to my ways of thinking, my thought processes. And I am a big self-improvement book person. I mean I constantly buy myself improvement books. All the time, any wacky cracko bonkers idea I'll have a go at, and err, and these people are a bit like an assembly of self-help guides, they've all given me bits and bobs. But they've all been, I've got to admit, you know what I am saying (Alan, s.346).

The metaphor suggests the ability of workplace friendship to mould different parts of the self, and without these 'books' there is a danger that the parts that they touched would remain dormant.

The above examples of friendship sense-making, contemplating on each friend as able to stimulate different parts of the self, metaphorically speaking in terms of different spices or self-help books, they all could be understood in terms of Rumens's (2011, p.2) claim that workplace friends deeply influence our choice of "which identities to use as the primary threads in fashioning a meaningful sense of self and a viable life". However, to me they also demonstrate the sense making of friendship opportunities in becoming a certain "part of each other" (Little, 1993, p.47), whilst remaining independent of each other.

Ogden (1994, ch.4, loc.916, p.77) explains that in order for the transitional phenomena to be created and for the independence to arise in the transitional space

> [t]he infant requires the experience of a particular form of intersubjectivity in which the mother's *being* is experienced simultaneously as an extension of himself and as other to himself.

Whilst the above examples start to show how subjectivity in friendship shifts as a result of friendship, where a friend can metaphorically become an extension of each other, I now would like to present two stories that to me evidence how imagination and sense of authenticity and integrity can arise as a result of thinking influenced by friendship, and are therefore more explicit in demonstrating the possibility of living as an extension of friends, but equally being independent of them.

6.2.3 Process of Imagination, Self-integrity and Authenticity

When going through Little's (1993, p.47) work on psychoanalytic understanding of general life friendships as 'transitional' relations, I came up against his expression of friends "living ventriloquist lives that extend the options in their own". To me this statement resonates with Ogden's (1994, ch.4, loc.916, p.77) take on intersubjectivity in terms of possible extensions on the self, arising in

transitional space, as cited above. I will now explore how extending of the self through friendship is possible in two ways. Firstly, I will draw on Hollway's (2011) exploration of transitional space through imagination, and secondly I will explore the psychological process of self-integration and gaining a sense of relative authenticity, as mentioned by Diamond (2017, p.292), when highlighting the benefits of Winnicott's theory of object relations and transitional space.

The story of Alan forms the evidence for the emergence of imagination of living one's life through friendship. Alan (s.251) expanded on his workplace friendship with F3. At first, he described F3 as someone important in his life with whom he "just shared interests" with (Alan, s.75). He then explained that F3 and another friend were "the closest [he] has been to real friends at work that transcended [his] workplace". Such sense-making of friendship relations evidences the experiences of "blended relations" (Bridge and Baxter, 1992, p.200), that is how the workplace environment blends with personal life through workplace friendship.

However, this relatively 'simple' sharing of personal interests with his friend from previous employment to The Friendly Organisation, had a much deeper meaning. As he explained later in our discussion:

> F3 and I we swap musical things we need to listen to every two or three days. We just you know links to things, we meet at concerts and things. So we still,

ehm, you know, he's done things, he's actually lived my life for me, because

I've sent him off to America to do a couple of things with his local friends that I

wanted to do but I am not allowed to do really (Alan, s.251).

The workplace friendship has developed into a strong personal bond that enabled Alan to experience things through his friend F3. F3 is positioned here as an 'extension' of Alan's own life, his personal wishes, his imagination. Alan has 'identified' with this friend. It is through this workplace friendship that he is able to transition, to imagine what life would be if he could go to America.

His statement of "living my life for me" is a continuation of Little's (1993) idea of friendship relations being 'transitional' relations, that is, enabling to be 'the self through others'. Because Alan refers to cultural experiences in foreign countries and musical experiences, these examples also support the idea of friends "living ventriloquist lives that extend the options in their own" (Little, 1993, p.47). When paying attention to the imagination process, it is possible to see how friends enable to bridge the inner self and outer reality, arising in the transitional space of Winnicott (1953; 1971). It is in this very space where playfulness, creativity and imagination are believed to arise (ibid.).

Hollway (2011), through a psycho-social discursive reading of identity transition, uses her own emotional reactions to the data, and gives an example of how an imaginative world can meet the external world in this intermediate area, in the 'in-between' space. Using her conceptualisation, my reading of

Alan's subjective processing of external reality is that he felt restricted to live his life fully, especially when it comes to his cultural, musical and art interests. He felt constrained by his marital responsibilities. However, through his friend F3 he was able to transition into the 'self-that-could have been' as Harding (2013) would put it.

He was processing this restraint emotionally, "… I value my space, my personal space, because I can live my own world really" (Alan, s.253). This is where one can see his inner reality emerging in terms of living in his "own world", in combination with imaginatively living a different version of his life through his friend (s.251). The external reality are his marital matters where Alan and his wife "don't share any musical taste, any cultural taste, anything" (Alan, s.251). The inner psychological world is coming together with the external world through an interpersonal relation with F3. Alan was able to imagine different possibilities of his life through F3 and continue to live his external marital life happily.

This example shows "a non-cognitive kind of thinking where imagination can emerge and still conjure with reality" (Hollway, 2011, p.56), in this case through workplace friendship. By tracing such imagination process it is now possible to see how friends are able to, as Little (1993, p.47) claims, broaden each other's creative, artistic part of subjectivity. This is not to the detriment of friends. Quite

the opposite, such imagination in this case contributes to the psychological wellbeing of individuals.

Now I would like to present a story of Martha in relation to her workplace experience of a grievance process at The Friendly Organisation. Through her story I will explore not only the process of imagination, but also how Winnicott's (1953; 1971) concept of transitional space enables the emergence of psychological processes of "self-integrity and authenticity" as mentioned by Diamond (2017, p.292).

Martha was facing, in Hollway's (2001, p.52) terms, "difficult reality" in the workplace. She filed a grievance against a manager from her office, and during the investigation process she was transferred to another office, to be away from her team and the process. The grievance did not go as she hoped for. With regards to her team, she already felt misunderstood. The grievance, she believed, would have even worsen the situation. This is because Martha described the office as a volatile place where "it is very easy to become a negative person in there↓, or the 'butt of negativity' if you go above (.), if you speak out about somebody" (s.61). And she indeed dared to file the grievance.

When she was describing the grievance process itself, she used emotionally expressive words. She compared it to "a plague" (s.89), "the worst experience" (s.90), expressing her disappointment in the system, and how it was more

harmful than beneficial to any employee. She felt victimized not only by her team, but also by the whole organisation where she worked. These are very strong subjective emotional statements in respect of the organisational reality, suggesting that her inner world was indeed soaked with anxiety, feelings of persecution and false accusations.

Martha struggled with the misperceptions of her team in relation to her personality, questioning her personal values of care and fairness according which she lived and worked. Through her statements a strong sense of injustice was coming through. She stated:

> I think I have got this persona at work, not so much with these people [friends] because they know me better, but this persona at work which I am hoping not to take into the new place. It is that I am really emotionless and unfriendly and strict. Because of my role, because you can't worry too much about what people are feeling because it cuts down to [my job taks]… (Martha, s.272).

Martha felt a sense of misalignment between her personality, job requirements and the perceptions of herself by her colleagues. She considered herself as a considerate and caring person, yet she felt that she had to foreground different parts of her personality in order to perform well and to succeed at The Friendly Organisation. Despite of her pride in doing the job well, she expressed that even management believed that she had "no people skills" (Martha, s.275). She strongly objected to such belief, advocating that:

> I deal with people every day, I just have to be in a certain way in certain situations, and I am more than capable of changing that depending on the situation I am in (s.275).

She was defending her need to control her emotions in particular job situations. To her, it was her mechanism of coping. Taking into account her emotional investment in the above accounts, she was strongly positioning herself as a victim of the organisational formal system.

To summarise, Martha had been struggling with processing such difficult organisational reality, instigating feelings of uncertainty, persecution, injustice. A "one-sided judgement" (Hollway, 2011, p.53) of her ability to deal with this reality could have been that Martha was an independent and competent individual, who would have been capable of taking things into her own hands, and that she had all of the organisational formal procedures, such as job description, job specification, organisational performance policies and grievance policies to support her.

However, the organisational reality was affecting her so profoundly, that even months after the grievance process ended, and she was able to return back to her team, she felt that she could not stay at The Friendly Organisation anymore. In her own words, she "had to leave to be able to wash some of that away and start again, because it was never going to work [there] (Martha, s.276). It was as if she was referring metaphorically to washing off the dirt, stains that were

attached to her personality at The Friendly Organisation, caused by the very formal procedures that are initially designed to ensure fairness and equality in the workplace. I would like to point out that she had more than five years of service at this organisation, so this emotional experience would not have been a short term, a 'spirit of a moment' matter.

Tracing further her positioning in the account, to uncover further "how she felt and thought" (Hollway, 2011, p.53), Martha (s.265) presented herself as a 'worrier':

> If I had said something and it has upset somebody I will play it over in my head again and again and again and I would worry that I had upset someone. Because I just overthink everything. And it is not just afterwards, but I overthink before. Like 'if I would do this, this would happen, and what if that happens'.

Martha's inner reality would have made it difficult for her to think about carrying on working at The Friendly Organisation, whilst these misperceptions about her existed, and the situation worsened after the grievance process. Her workplace friendships played an important role in helping her to process these emotional experiences as follows:

> s.330 Martha: I guess by HAVING close personal relations it's, it's made me more (1.0) able to be myself at, at work. Especially post grievance and everything that happened there, having their support has helped me to move beyond that; whereas as I said before I can be quite a worrier. The whole

coming back after the grievance was <u>really</u> a concern, and having them, these two there (F1 and F2), I knew that things would be, would be ok. And then just going forward from there being able to just be me around, around them; it's nice not to, to try and pretend to be someone else.

s.331 Martha: Like F1 and I we've just been normal together the whole time and then obviously, through having <u>her</u> relation, <u>her </u>friendship I can then start being normal with other people around the office; because she is like a support there that I can always go back to.

It is her sense of self that almost became 'lost' at The Friendly Organisation, but she was able to gain back her sense of integrity and authenticity through her friendship with F1 and F2. When she was in their company, Martha did not need to "pretend to be someone else" (s.330) and was able to be "normal" (s.331). In her own words, her friends have helped to "remove and element" of her job role that she did not identify with personally in her account. Yet she was still required to perform according to the procedures, and to control her emotional responses when dealing with customers, "this is what has to be done" (s.272).

Friends in this example are portrayed as enablers of living through the external reality of organisational misperceptions, helping her to process these strong emotional experiences and to connect with her own inner values of care, fairness and empathy, whilst following strict workplace procedures. Her friends

were able to see her, to recognise the part of her personality that she most identified with. With regards to her job role, when I asked Martha (s.120) how these friends have influenced her, her sense-making went as follows:

> Yeah. She [F2], she's, she has expanded my knowledge massively, um, and also the pair of them have expanded my more supportive side of things. Because when I was in [the Head Office], and it was all about process and I was with F3 who is more [procedures] and has always been pretty much [procedures]. Coming to see these guys [F1 and F2] and, and being with them all the time, where they are more supportive, I've taken on more of their supportive side I would say.

Because of their friendship, she believed, that she had taken on board the opinions of F1 and F2 more than that of other colleagues. When I apply Ogden's (1994, loc.916, ch.4, p.77) understanding that in transitional space the object of affection is experienced as an "extension on the self", I interpret that the reason Martha's developed "more supportive side" at work is because of her strong identification and interaction with her friends as a person and as a professional. Her desire to be recognised for being a supportive professional rather than an emotionless individual was coming through very strongly. It was as if she projected the supporting part of the self onto her friends and then re-introjected it through their interactions, to reinforce it, to defend against the anxiety of false accusations and job compliance. Such sense-making of her

friendship resonates with the rise of Winnicott's (1965; 1971) 'true self' in her, which Diamond (2017, p.300) interprets in organisational setting as being more "authentic and resilient" than just simply following the procedures, being "compliant and defensive".

As for the imagination in transitional space, one of the occasions it would have occured would have been following the conclusion of the grievance process. This is when Martha returned back to her office and the team. Building on Hollway's (2011) understanding of imagination, already traced in Alan's story above, Martha's thought processes with high probability would have been as follows: 'her friends in the office, they would have seen her for who she was, not for her role and thus she was able to continue to work in the office'. Albeit for a short time.

Hollway (2011, p.55) stresses that the transitioning process does not mean thinking logically, e.g. 'the grievance process is over, I can now return back to the office and continue working as I had been'. It is about processing the difficult external reality in the 'in between' space. This could be by the process of imagination occurring between her inner world of worries and persecutory anxiety and the external organisational reality of misperceptions and job requirements. I see her friendship also being an important part in gaining "self-integrity and authenticity" in the workplace, as understood by Diamond (2017, p.292). This was in terms of friends recognising the parts of her identity that

she identified with the most. By recognising herself through her friends, she was able to live in the external reality.

The above examples have provided a different take on becoming Ogden's (1994, ch.4, loc.916, p.77) "extension to and other to the self". Martha's story in particular also offer opportunities to conceptually explore the 'containing' function of friendships, by drawing on Bion's (1962) concepts of container-contained. I will explore her friendship stories from this point of view and add others to form the evidence base for understanding friendship as 'containing' relations.

6.3 Containing Relations

In this section I will present examples from my interview data to demonstrate how and in what situations workplace friends can act as 'containers' of workplace anxieties. I explored this idea theoretically in the literature review (see Holding Environments). The main psychoanalytic concept that I will use here will be the 'container–contained' relation (Bion, 1962)**.** Bion's (1962) concept of a container changes over time and refers to "the full spectrum of ways of processing experience from the most destructive and deadening to the most creative and growth-promoting" (Ogden, 2004, p.1349). The concept of the 'contained' refers to affects that an individual is unable to process and it

also changes over time (Ogden, 2004). It reflects "the range and depth of thoughts and feelings that one is able to derive from one's emotional experience" (Ogden, 2004, p.1358).

6.3.1 Containing Function

Many of my participants highlighted the function of their workplace friends as *'buffers' of negative emotions*, *serving as receptors of work related tensions (15 interviewees on 19 occasions) and personal life conundrums (16 interviewees, 17 occasions).* This was for example in connection with their ability to act as providers of new perspectives (5 participants, on 6 occasions).

For example, Sally used the metaphor of the counselling couch (s.205) when talking about F4 from The Friendly Organisation. She was referring to the ability of F4 to act as a therapist in the instances when she found herself upset at work. This suggests the unique capacity of workplace friends to absorb negativity, and through interpretation, able to provide further guidance.

By putting things into perspective rather than reacting to the comments, or taking a higher moral stance, friends [F4] could think along similar lines to an analyst " 'Why this?', 'Why now?' and 'What does this feel like for me, and what does it feel like being [Sally] at this moment?'" (Milton, Polmear and Fabricius, 2011, p.10). In this way, friends are able to serve as 'containers', when they do

not act defensively, but are able to "hold on to the distress" (Milton, Polmear and Fabricius, 2011, p.10) of the other, able to invite their friends to think, to talk about, and to emotionally process external realities in quiet spaces at work or outside of work.

Similar patterns in workplace friendship emotional support, without such explicit demonstration, were mentioned by, for example Parris, Vickers and Wilkes (2008), where friends have been identified as mechanisms for expressions or the relief of strong feelings, personal or work related. In connection to the 'releasing power' of emotions within the workplace context, Martha (s.155) stressed the importance of workplace friendship whilst working at The Friendly Organisation:

> s.154.IR: Do you feel- then, that friends are therefore important for <u>you</u>?

> s.155.Martha: Yeah! Yeah, because when you feel like you don't wanna go to <u>work</u>, if you didn't have that friendship it would be even <u>worse</u>, there is no release. It would just be this const-, this day of 'U::h, I<u> hate work</u>!', whereas because you've already built up those relationships and the atmosphere in work is rubbish, you can on the slide go 'Aw, isn't it rubbish today… awh, blah blah?!' and just get the opportunity to, to release some of the, the feelings that you are having. Whereas if you didn't have that, it would be <u>awful</u>. Seven day, seven hours a day just sat in this awful atmosphere with nobody to talk to. You'd just be .hhh.

The above statement implies a possible symbolic 'suffocation at work' without the 'containing' capacity of her friends. She eloquently highlights their 'releasing power', which is even more emphasized by her deep in-breath at the end of the statement. Friends had helped her to breathe at work, they had been her channels for 'venting', releasing work related frustrations, and in this way they would have helped her to process any frustrations connected to her job role, to the organisation, or even personal frustrations.

From Martha's story above (see <u>Process of Imagination, Self-integrity and Authenticity</u>) as well as from the statement that I have just introduced (s.155) The Friendly Organisation appeared to be acting as a "defective container" of her emotional life (Diamond, 1998). It was unable to facilitate, for example, the process of imagination in the sense that she would be able to see herself as an independent and competent in the workplace. This is where her friends would have needed to have stepped in, so that she could process her inner insecurities and external organisational reality, discomfort.

Taking her statement (s.155) at face value, one could interpret that Martha was talking about day to day challenges at work outside of her control. However, as it transpired through my conversation with Martha, she was one of the participants that had appeared to be one of the most critical of The Friendly Organisation, and that much of her inner frustrations have been caused by the external reality at work.

In our dialogue I traced frustrations in connection with her job and being misunderstood for a "harsh" persona that she had to adopt when acting in line with her profession (s.69); frustrations in relation to the organisation that came through strongest upon the closure of our discussion, "if I can say something that's gonna make them to change the way they treat people then all the better" (s.342); and personal anxieties going back as far as her childhood (s.265).

There is a lot to be contained from Martha's existence in this organisation, and a part of the 'containing' relations is the ability to project the overwhelming feelings into the 'container'. Leaders or organisations have been reported to act as such 'containers' (e.g. Diamond, 1998, p.319). However, as evident from my conversation with Lucy, Martha did not feel supported, "helped by line managers" in her career progression (Lucy, s.221). There were also "a couple of people in the office who weren't very nice to her" (Lucy, s.221); resulting in Martha's feelings of isolation (Lucy, s.222), and in the end in accentuating paranoid traits of beliefs that she wasn't welcome any more at The Friendly Organisation. These instances and experiences led her to look for another job (Lucy, s.232).

At first, it is possible to interpret in Martha's negative emotional experience at The Friendly Organisation the workings of a projection mechanism. As explained in the section on Psychodynamics of Friendship Relations, these mechanisms are evoked in an individual to protect them against anxiety caused

by a conflict between internal impulses and external reality (e.g. Kets de Vries and Miller, 1984, p.136). For example in organisational settings one could be convinced that the external environment, a department or a leader is responsible for sidelining, persecution or being dismissive (Kets de Vries and Miller, 1984, p.139), which is similar to the situations described by Martha and Lucy.

In these situations, without arguing against objective reality, it is possible that "[i]nternal personal conflicts [are being] projected onto the interpersonal or even inter-institutional stage", as Stokes points out (1994, p.124). That is when an individual is projecting the unwanted, hated parts of the self into the organisation and its components (ibid).

Martha's projection of intrapersonal frustrations onto the organisational environment and organisational actors was mediated by workplace friendship – that is as Rumens (2001) points out - the necessary and inevitable ingredient of organisational life itself. But frustrations or even anxieties do not have to be intrapersonal. They can also arise from organisational environments themselves (e.g. Obholzer, 1994).

What matters is that if there is no faith left in individuals such as Martha that there will be a safe and secure workplace environment for containment of intrapersonal conflicts, emotional experiences or work reality; and that leaders will be capable of the "communication of affect", rather than suppressing it

(Diamond, 1998, p.319), they could adopt further defensive reactions other than projection. For example, they could fall into an unconscious regression which has been translated in organisational life as a high dependency on the leader or inability to face challenging decisions (Diamond, 1998, p.318).

In organisations, regression can arise when "self-esteem is seriously threatened" by for example questioning one's competence or decision-making (Kets de Vries and Miller, 1984, p.138). And not only from Martha's interview, but on several more occasions I sensed parts of such unconscious regression existing amongst the staff at The Friendly Organisation, with the following statement being one of the comments I encountered:

> You know, I am not saying that it doesn't always work, but sometimes, we should just (1.0), you don't want 'yes' men, you don't want people just to do…" (Tyler, s.58).

And as already evidenced in section on Complacent Culture, decision-making at The Friendly Organisation was strongly impaired by defensive mechanisms. Organisations themselves are intertwined with opportunities to arouse anxieties of different types in their members and therefore it should be in organisational interests to support relations that enable the 'containing' function to flourish. I will now present another example to add to the evidence base on the 'containing' opportunities of friendship relations.

6.3.2 Containing Anxiety at Times of Organisational Change

Organisational change such as redundancy proceedings, retirement, dismissals and reorganisations can arouse negative emotional experiences in organisational members, inclusive of conscious and unconscious anxiety (Obholzer, 1994). In this subsection I will focus on the story of Sally and F4, undergoing organisational change process at The Friendly Organisation. I consider this story as the most illustrative from my interview data, to demonstrate the 'containing' function of friendship relations in a workplace environment undergoing organisational change.

Bion's (1962) concepts of container-contained are understood as a way of thinking about emotional experiences, and how these are processed through containing, rather than by simply being influenced by the other [a friend in this case] about what to think, as it was demonstrated above in the transitional space. In Ogden's (2004, p.1354) words:

> [t]he idea of the container–contained addresses not what we think, but the way we think, that is, how we process lived experience and what occurs psychically when we are unable to do psychological work with that experience.

From the literature review (see Psychodynamic Perspectives) it is known that Bion's (1962) concepts of the container-contained evolved from Klein's conceptualisation of 'projective identification' process. Hinshelwood (1994, p.128) further stresses that in this process, specifically between mother and

infant, the mother is able to retain a balanced outlook, rather than to become overwhelmed by the projected feelings of the infant.

Furthermore, the mother is also able to become "attuned" to the infant's emotional experience (Hinshelwood, 1994, p.129). For example in the case of the infant experiencing panic, she would feel "rising panic in herself" during the projective identification. When applying this type of identification in the context of analyst and analysand in a therapy, "the idea of interdependence between subject and object" would arise (Ogden, 1994, loc.327, ch.1). I will now apply this theorisation to workplace friendship.

In the section above (see Containing Function) I have already highlighted the metaphor of a counselling couch that Sally used to describe her friend's capacity to contain the anxieties brought up by work or personal life. I will now look at how Sally was acting as a 'container' for her friend in return. At the time of interviewing, F4, Sally's workplace friend, a long serving employee, has gone through a redundancy process at The Friendly Organisation. Sally supported them emotionally, but also instrumentally with regards to job search advice all the way through. She remained in contact with them after they left The Friendly Organisation. Her response to my question on 'how did this support to date make her feel' was as follows:

> Supporting him, it was just sa::d, after all that time being with someone. It was
> really upsetting to see [them] like it.. [section taken out due to anonymity]. It's

just, it must have been so scary. Being at the same place for [many] years, and

waking up one day and not having to go there anymore. It must be – that's a

long time. It must have been a really, really weird sensation for [them]. So I

was glad I was there as [their] friend, sort of thing. Help [them] (Sally, s.107).

Sally was extremely empathetic to the situation that F4 found themselves in

and had a strong emotional reaction to it. To start with she opened up to me by

using the intense emotional words of "[really upsetting to see [them] like it…"

(Sally, s.107). She stressed her sadness in a vignette before s.107 too, "I felt

so bad… poor [them]" (s.99).

Sally is acting as the 'container' in this situation. Through projective

identification she has been able to 'process' their experience. She has become

'attuned', as if she has been participating in what F4 had been feeling within.

She has visualised F4's waking up one day, with feelings of despair and

suffocation entering F4's inner world upon awakening post restructure without

a job to go to.

Sally's (s.107) talk about "sensations" upon "waking up". Ogden (2004, p.1357)

explains that "the container" changes over time, similarly to 'the contained'

feelings and emotions. "The container" manifests itself in their capacity to do

"(predominantly) unconscious psychological work" through dreaming, which in

a therapy may become the process of remembering the patient's dreams and

the associations of the analyst with these dreams. I suggest that Sally's

capacity to be the 'container' of F4's feelings and emotions is enhancing at the point when she is identifying herself with the horrid "sensations", almost nightmare-like that would be likely to occur during the dreaming of F4, and would become conscious when he was waking up during the redundancy process. It is as if she was able to identify with "dreaming and thinking those thoughts" (Ogden, 2004, p.1359).

In this way she was 'participating' in F4's experience of loss and isolation, an experience of his inner anxiety. Here we can see that her ability to be so 'identified with' F4's suffering is an interdependent quality of their intimacy. It has arisen between them, as a result of their interactions, as a result of their ability to recognise each other as a friend, as a human being and professional in that workplace setting.

I interpret that what needed to be 'contained' in this situation was the emotional experience and work experience of F4. Ogden (2004, p.1358) highlights that 'the contained' can change and "grow" over time, and it reflects the variety of affects, "the range and depth of thoughts and feelings that one is able to derive from one's emotional experience." First of all, from Sally's above description of F4's state of mind, I interpret the feelings of emotional pain, fear, confusion and shock that would have been accompanying F4's day to day working life.

When focusing on the affective dimension of this account in relation to F4's feelings, Obholzer's (1994, p.206) unconscious "primitive anxiety" of "feeling

lost and alone" can be detected. F4 is very likely to have experienced these at the realisation of when they were suddenly being separated from the company that they were a part of for most of their life (p.207). F4 is experiencing Sally as a friend with whom they are able to be intimate, that is, a friend who is appearing understanding of their emotional processing, and the receptor of their emotional projections of 'loss and isolation'.

Four other interviewees also opened up about F4 as follows. Brooke (s.342) claimed that she met F4 post redundancy and described herself as a receptor of F4's hatred towards their line manager. Marilyn (s.87) described the outcome of the redundancy process with shock in her voice; to her it was "°an enormous thing↓°, to happen at The Friendly Organisation↓°. They <u>didn't</u> <u>want</u> to keep F4". And Alan (s.115) opened up about F4 in general as being hard working, talented, yet unappreciated by the company, "much maligned in the business – disrespected by the bosses who don't realise the amount of work that goes through that part of the business". Finally Charlie (s.56) highlighted F4's significance in making The Friendly Organisation what it is today.

Out of these statements a sense of organisational injustice is coming to the fore, and F4 is being portrayed as a subject possibly suffering also from the second type of unconscious anxiety, what Obholzer (1994, p.207) describes as "anxiety [that] arises from the nature of the work". Such anxiety is likely to have

been connected with F4 not feeling recognised as a professional, a victim undervalued in his position, unappreciated for his life time work and dedication to the organisation.

These statements, commencing with Sally and finishing with Charlie, help to build up a picture of the overwhelming emotional experience that F4 could have been facing at the time of redundancy proceedings and consultation process. In addition, F4 was also struggling with the reality of work experience, portrayed as unable to contain it or comprehend it. This interpretation is based on Sally's opening up about F4 being given a choice during a consultation process, and she was portrayed as the only person whom he trusted with this information and confided in (s.97) at work, outside of work (s.100-s101). This shows not only the significance of Sally's presence in this process, but also the incapacity of anybody else in the company to serve as a container of F4's anxieties. Sally also provided an instrumental help to F4 in terms of building their CV.

I interpret such type of interactions to be an example of 'blurred' boundaries of intimacy, accompanied by high levels of trust, as discussed in the theoretical section on Intimate Relations. Sally and F4's emotional experience of intimacy is a 'containing' relation that served to process F4's emotional reality and work reality.

Out of this processing experience, in the 'in between' space of inner world and external reality a new "analytic subject who had not previously existed" is to be

created, according to Ogden (1992, p.619). As noted in the literature review, as a result of the containing process in a therapy session, the "intersubjectivity" would arise (ibid. p.618).

In this respect, I explored Sally's (s.89) concluding words, that the redundancy process made her realise how much she got on with F4, therefore their identification bond became stronger:

> But yeah, we are friends. We became even closer with all the restructuring thing that happened, because that made you realise how much you get on with someone.

The new analytic subject had emerged that was not here before, Sally had a realisation about her own private life, a realisation of feeling higher intimacy towards her workplace friend. F4 was described as having succeeded in securing a position in another company shortly afterwards, and doing well (Charlie, s.56). I therefore attribute to their intimate relations F4's recovery from anxieties suffered, conscious and unconscious injuries endured, and the new parts of the selves emerging in Sally and F4, able to stand up again.

Organisational change had inspired many stories of my participants, in fact 5 more interviewees mentioned friendship support during the unsettling time of restructures or redundancies. This was mainly in the context of The Friendly Organisation as the organisation has undergone two mergers and 2-3 yearly departmental reorganisations in its most recent history, and had been

portrayed on many occasions as the unable to 'contain' people's anxieties, as shown above.

I found the above story the most appropriate to demonstrate the possibilities that psychoanalysis offers conceptually to understanding of friendship relations as 'containing' relations. In particular, I showed how emotional reality and work reality during organisational change can be processed through workplace friendship intimacy. In particular, I traced the workings of projective identification and a change of subjectivity. As Hollway (2011, p.54) puts it, this example demonstrates "the kind of processing that contains the anxieties involved in affects (positive as well as negative)", where affects are being understood as emotional experiences (p.59).

6.3.3 Reducing Anxiety through Identification

Organisations, even in times of change, have a capacity to retain certain traits for a long time, and it is down to organisational members to readjust to "fit in", points out Menzies Lyth (1991, p.361). One of the ways that individuals accommodate change is through *"introjective identification"* [my emphasis] meaning absorbing and "identify[ing] with the main characteristics of the institution" if they wish to stay (Menzies Lyth, 1991, p.362). In workplace friendship I would like to propose that it is the process of such introjective

identification that enables the capacity to understand workplace challenges, or in Rick's (s.157) words the "expectations", "frustrations" and "politics".

When demonstrating care for a friend amongst my participants, the importance of the *shared understanding of the workplace* and their ability of introjective identification that was often mentioned – on 12 occasions by 8 of my participants. For example friends have a better understanding of the workplace than romantic partners (Lucy, s.240). Martha (s.240) stressed that romantic partners are still important, in fact they "get to hear the rant and everything" (s.239) in her own words; however there were times when partners did not or would not understand. This was the case of Dean (s.340-342) when he was coming home "mentally tired" after being promoted from being a "manual labour[er]" to an office manager (s.342).

One could argue that line managers have also identified with the organisational environment and therefore they could serve the effective function of 'containers'. However, Audrey, similarly to Martha, stressed that at The Friendly Organisation she was not feeling "comfortable" disclosing personal matters and frustrations (s.102) to her superiors. Equally Kate (s.77) stressed that precisely because they are not in a line management relation with her friends, the disclosure and the process of containing can be more effective between them.

In the case of workplace friends, rather than general life friends, through the familiarity with the organisational environment, they can act as 'wiser figures'

and providers of constructive advice. Introjective identification is coming through when exploring these friends' abilities to understand situations at times better than romantic partners, due to their time they have spent in the shared organisational environment. They have an advance in understanding of the type of challenges and frustrations one's job or the organisation may arouse. In this case, building on the sociology of friendship (e.g. Roseneil and Budgeon, 2004) it can be claimed that workplace friends, rather than general life friends, romantic partners or line managers, have become the main providers of continuous support in the workplace as a result of being intimate with one another.

In the same way as the process of introjective identification with an organisation, one could also talk about the process of "identification with a group" (Stapley, 1996, p.65). Being recognised by the group therefore reduces the anxiety of not belonging, or uncertainty of not being accepted.

It has already been claimed that friendship at work could enhance the feelings of "belonging to the workplace culture/community", it can be helpful in gaining a job or even promotional prospects (Pettinger, 2005, p.54). Pettinger (2005) however does not discusses the decrease of individual and workplace anxiety through identification with friends at work, but rather explores their sociability factors. Amongst my participants, the significance of group identification was mentioned on three occasions, notably by Kate, Daisy and Jeff in relation with

their previous employers. They were either moving into a new geographical area (Daisy, s.55; Jeff, s.35) or being the newest, the youngest and the least experienced member of a team (Kate, s.139).

For example, in Jeff's case a positive influence of group identification on his job performance was stressed as follows (s.198).

> And I think, I think in being surrounded by those people, F4, Roger and F3, I was able to be relaxed and be myself in a work environment. And I think by being that I`m <u>better</u> able to perform↑. I am not very comfortable with having to be in a certain, you know, having to be in a certain way.

The group identification did not therefore however just benefit individuals in terms of helping them to adapt to the working environment or help them to contain anxieties, but also from an organisational point of view, it contributed to improving productivity and teamwork.

The importance of workplace friendship for the individual and subsequently for the organisation lies not only in simply addressing friends as being supportive emotionally or instrumentally. Their contribution lies in their ability to contain anxieties, whether these are personal or triggered by the job role or workplace environment. The release of tension, although often bounded by the organisational hierarchy, has been shown as effective especially at times of organisational change.

Friends do have the ability to decrease anxieties through introjective or group identification, but also through humor or acting as analysts, able to put things into perspective. Their 'containing' capacity has been conceptualised through the empirical data not just in terms of individual benefits, but also an attempt has been made to show, where possible, how organisations can gain from workplace friendship partnerships. In particular, they need to avoid regressive behaviour of staff through passive leader followership or avoidance of critical incidents as highlighted by Diamond (1998) in the case where organisations are 'defective' containers of workplace anxieties.

To summarise this section on friendships as 'containing' relations, I did not just want to highlight the function of workplace friends as providers of emotional support, or even by presenting Martha's and Sally's story, I did not mean to adopt a gendered view. For example, in the study of Parris, Vickers and Wilkes (2008) women are presented as more likely than men to seek this type of support at work. I did not want to, either, add to the evidence base on personal disclosures between friends, that is being 'filtered', bounded by organisational hierarchy in many cases, as pointed out for example by Lively (2000) in a study of law firms. Although I found that my participants, namely Emily, Sheila, Roger, Fred actively reflected on who to "pick and choose " (Emily, s.324) when they were contemplating on self-disclosures.

By exploring the conceptual possibilities that psychoanalysis offers to the study of friendship, specifically aiming at being intimate with one another, I contribute to the debates highlighting the affective dimension of workplace friendship in oppressive organisational environments, such as those identified in gender studies - by Andrew and Montague (1998) discussing female friendship in masculine cultures, or by Rumens (2009) discussing the function of women in supporting gay men in oppressive heteronormative cultures (Rumens, 2009). Such environments, where friendship is covertly frowned upon, could evoke intrapersonal conflicts bordering on the line of paranoid traits, and could result in not only projecting these out into the organisation and organisational actors, but also in regressive behaviour akin to passive defensive behaviour at work, and the culture of 'yes men'.

The following section will consider how organisational psychoanalysis can be used to understand harmful aspects of workplace friendship. The same lenses of "embeddedness" (Grey and Sturdy, 2007) will be used, that is showing both individual and organisational perspectives. The variety of social defence mechanisms will be identified to add a new dimension to the use of friendship in analysing organisational behaviour.

6.4 Challenges of Workplace Friendship

Workplace friendships can not only be conceptualised as 'transitional' relations in institutions, or 'containers' of the workplace anxiety, as demonstrated above; they can also contribute to intense experiences of negative emotions as discussed in the literature review.

As Roger (s.364) stressed, the risks of being hurt and feeling uncomfortable in the company of the other are "magnified" by the workplace:

> The impact of something that goes wrong in that friendship is greater than outside of work. You cannot walk away from friendship at work. It is magnified.

Friendship breakdown was mentioned in my interviews on 11 occasions, by 11 participants. And apart from personal disappointments, friendship fallouts have been recognised for making office life difficult, even if two friends start to get on better (e.g. Sheila, s.81). It's not only falling out, but also living together with workplace friends can bring particular frustrations into these relations (e.g. Martha, s.182). Sharing one household with several work colleagues who were at the same time recognised as workplace friends affected their day to day working life, as reported by Martha (s.183) "it did get a bit awkward at times".

Friendship can also break down due to betrayal that has been conceptualised in the literature as "synchronous" to friendship, that is, the possibility of which is always present (French, Gosling and Case, 2009, p.7). The closer the

friends, the more intense negative emotions may flow as a result of such breakdown (French, Gosling and Case, 2009, p.5).

One particular type of friendship breakdown instigated by workplace rivalry is envy that I would like to explore in more detail using psychoanalytic lenses.

6.4.1 Friendship Envy

On occasion friendship envy has appeared in my interview accounts. When I asked about a situation that made my participants laugh or feel sad, proud or angry involving workplace friends, almost all chose to discuss happy humorous times. The majority of the responses I obtained with regards to negativity were along the lines of not getting frustrated or sad with friends at work, but with other people reacting to their friendship (e.g. Sheila; Emily; Martha; Lucy; Tyler; Lucius; Fred).

Three stories have captured my attention. All of these contained emotionally intense statements, making them an ideal platform for exploration of envy and corresponding defence mechanisms in play. Both Gough (2004, p.249) and Stapley (1996, p.24) highlighted observing the emotional intensity demonstrated in discourse as it can uncover some of the defences against anxieties and thus the research analysis can gain the unconscious dimension. It is important however to stress that envy is different from anxiety in that it is

not defended against, but involves envious, destructive attacks on the other whom we are usually very dependent on (Stein, 2000). It is one of the key phenomena in Klein's work and is recognised for hindering love [in this case friendship love] "by destroying all that is good" (Clarke, 2004, p.105). According to Klein (1986, p.212) it is often unconscious and involves

> the angry feeling that another person possesses and enjoys something desirable - the envious impulse being to take it away or to spoil it. Moreover, envy implies the subject's relation to one person only and goes back to the earliest exclusive relation with the mother. Jealousy is based on envy, but it involves the subject's relation to at least two people.

Furthermore, when envy is "excessively" present in conscious or unconscious thoughts, we can trace strong "paranoid and schizoid features" reflected in one's actions (Klein [1956] 1986, p.213). The first such defence is splitting and seeing only bad features in someone, whilst perceiving them as persecutors through "persecutory transference" (Kets de Vries and Miller, 1984, p.88). The psychoanalytic concept of 'transference' is used often in organisational literature to analyse behaviours between line managers and subordinates as those in authority often awaken "thoughts, feelings and ideas" that one used to have towards strong figures in the past (Kets de Vries and Associates, 1991, p.124). It is not the manifestation of transference but the evidence of destructive

envious attacks that could indeed be a result of such transference that I will now look at.

Tracing the emotional in the accounts at The Friendly Organisation I listened again and again to Lucy, who, when transferred into a new role, recollected being let down by F5 during an Easter Egg Hunt competition at work. Her discourse had strong emotional undertones, using words such as "disaster", "ruined", "horrible", "put me off" (s.266). Lilly's work promotion was also accompanied by friendship envy when a person who she once "considered a friend um clearly turned out not to be a friend" (s.101), as "they didn't have any respect for [her] in [her] new role↓" (s.353). In her own words this experience had made her consciously "paranoid" (s.136) and "isolated" at work (s.140). Both of these participants managed to overcome their negative emotions and have successfully 'recovered' from the friendship breakdowns whilst remaining in their respective roles. Sam's experience, however, has led him to reconsider his position of a line manager and his career direction (s.195). It is his story that I will now present in more detail to demonstrate how gaining a promotion, or changing position in the company has led to occurrence of envy in friendship relations, reflected in the workplace actions and thought patterns of respective friends, and disturbances at work.

Competition is rife in organisational life, and friendship love remaining unaffected by it would be an idealistic proposition. The inequality in workplace relations as a result of for example promotion can not only result in "strained egalitarianism" (Bridge and Baxter, 1992, p.216) but also in a friendship breakdown. The breakdown in the relation, for example through betrayal, has been thought of as "an inevitable part of human experience – [that] may even contribute to the moment at which our sense of 'I' begins" (French, Gosling and Case, 2009, p.10). And in this way friendship causing distress may be seen as "an occasional, reparative gift" for an individual (French, Gosling and Case, 2009, p.10). However, in Sam's case, friendship breakdown once he became a line manager of F3 wasn't thought of as a reparative gift, but as a burden to him personally and professionally. His friend F3 throughout his discourse was presented at first as a teacher and a good friend, but later on became an aggressor, a villain.

Sam had identified with his friend F3 through family relations. He felt that at the beginning of their relation he was treated by F3 as "his little brother in a sense" (s.107). He used the word 'brother' four times when describing their friendship, which can be interpreted as a strong friendship attachment. F3 took him under his wing as a 17 year old apprentice (s.116), and has helped him to progress as a person as well as a tradesman (s.116; s.137). This transition was accompanied by positive emotions released by "typical trade humour", when

they had "really good laughs" together on days out or at work (s.116). Sam recollected with delight several humorous stories from the past.

However, in this present time F3 has become more of "an acquaintance" (s.196), and this all happened when Sam started line managing him (s.110) and coincided with F3's personal problems (s.109). F3, as Sam believed, became "quite selfish, self-absorbed" rather than a team player. Sam described an occasion when he asked F3 to help out a team member as he finished his task earlier than planned, and F3 refused (s.135).

These actions have led Sam having to have to separate their friendship from the management, "I kinda took him for a coffee and started chatting to him as a manager rather than a friend sort of thing" (s.131). F3 'forced' Sam to be strict at work with him because of his resistance to following orders (s.158). He started to be argumentative and "verbally aggressive" (s.159) towards Sam. As he notes, he used to be F3's apprentice, and this caused frictions at times in their relations, especially when F3 had always been "adamant that he is right" (s.159). Sam (s.159), because of this behaviour, felt betrayed by their friendship:

> Cause mates don't do that. Whether you are work colleagues and mates, or whether you are just work colleagues or whether you are just mates. You don't generally become verbally aggressive or anything like that with a mate, do you? Generally speaking. Not really.

He certainly did not see what French, Gosling and Case (2009) claimed of betrayal - as always coexisting with friendship, intrinsic to friendship experience, "so that if one is dominant, the other is always present as a 'shadow' (p.7). However looking further than just betrayal in this case, applying psychoanalytic lenses and Kleinian theory, one can see that in this story paranoid-schizoid defences are engaged as follows.

F3 appears to have 'split' his friendship feelings towards Sam, and "externalise[d] disturbing feelings, particularly aggression and envy" (Krantz, 2006, p.228), seeing Sam as a persecutor, as an attacker. Rather than following his orders, through claiming to be always in the know, F3 appeared to be engaged in what Krantz (2006, p.228) describes as acting out of "blame, self-idealisation, persecution and other distorted perceptions". All these are signs of a person acting out of the 'paranoid schizoid mode' (Krantz, 2006, p.227) and accompanied by envy, this has negative consequences for workplace behaviour as follows.

Envy in organisations has been recognised by Obholzer (1994b, p.44) as an emotion resulting "in a destructive attack on the person in authority". It is different from anxiety in that it doesn't involve defensive responses but "unwarranted attacks instead" (Stein, 2000, p.193). In this story 'the envious attacks' have taken the form of undermining Sam. He (s.159) had expressed difficulties with carrying the role of F3's line manager: "You know so I struggle

with him the most, trying to get him to do things. Because he can become quite confrontational."

The key to envy is "the active desire to damage or witness damage being done to another" (Stein, 2000, p.199), to have destructive wishes towards them that drive our actions. Stein (2000, p.199) highlights that envious attacks are made on persons whom we are dependent on the most, thus hurting not only the other but also ourselves and envy is not concerned with "self-preservation" as anxiety is. Thus attacks are made on those who we perceive as "good or desirable" (Stein, 2000, p.202) such as doctors in patient-doctor relation (Fotaki, 2006, p.1731). Leaders are also subjected to envy because they arouse

> feelings of excessive dependence and envy of those who may be seen to be in a superior position and whose work is essential for the social system's survival: leadership is thus enviously attacked and undermined (Stein, 2000, p.203).

Envious attacks have significantly disturbed Sam's (s.195) attitude towards his leadership position, to the point he considered leaving The Friendly Organisation. Sam had been reconsidering his own line management career and his friendship with F3 has played a significant role in this decision. Krantz (2006, p.228) describes managers acting out of the paranoid-schizoid position, being known for their "persecutory perceptions and inflexible thinking", rather

than be willing to cooperate, or to accept new perspectives. The story of Sam and F3 demonstrates friends rather than managers acting out of this position can significantly affect those in leadership and thus become harmful not only to the leader but also to the organisation.

Furthermore, if there are several envious attacks on persons in authority by various others, envy can become an intrinsic part of the social system. According to Stein (2000, p.203) this can happen if

> there is an ongoing process of recruitment of new members into certain parts of the [social] system, and these new members are consciously or unconsciously tasked with the role of engaging in new envious attacks on others.

I have found 3 stories in the same organisation of friendship breakdown due to promotion where friends were engaged in sabotaging the roles of their friendly colleagues. It would therefore be possible to carry out analysis of the social system of competition in the whole organisation, but there is no space in this thesis to do this. Here though friendship relations at work are determined not only by love for a friend but also simultaneously intertwined with envy and aggression.

6.4.2 Hurt by Friendship Loyalty

Workplace friendship can feel divisive within workplaces through the operation of friendship groups or cliques, as highlighted by Costas (2012). Her research focused on observation of organisational normative control within so called 'friendship cultures'. She found out that these types of organisations promote "openness" and "diversity" through encouraging friendships, but in reality this is just another way in which individuals self-manage their identities, adapt their behaviour in order to be a part of friendship cliques, especially if these are regarded as influential within the company, "the inner circles" (Costas, 2012, p.389).

The experiences of divisive attitudes in connection with workplace friendship were mentioned on 5 occasions by 5 of my participants in a variety of settings and scenarios. Taking individual defence mechanisms of splitting, projection and idealisation from the Kleinian paranoid-schizoid position into consideration alongside the social defence theory in organisations, it is possible to further interpret this divisive influence of friendship at work. The example that can illustrate this friendship property the most from my data is a story of friends Martha and Lucy who encountered great behavioural difficulties in their team members at The Friendly Organisation.

As highlighted by Mnguni (2010, p.122) social defence theory enables us to trace collective splitting behaviour in organisations in situations where relations are perceived "as psychically painful or threatening". Individual defences that would surface lead to 'me and them' mindsets and can easily result in scapegoating behaviour and projection of the negative characteristics into the 'other' (Mnguni, 2010, p.122).

For example, in emotionally challenging situations of disciplinary and grievance processes, splitting through friendship at The Friendly Organisation manifested itself in the story of such scapegoating or victimisation. In section on <u>Process of Imagination, Self-integrity and Authenticity</u>, I presented the story of Martha. When she raised a grievance against a team member working in the same small area office, she became the target of negative office attitudes. As a consequence of friendship loyalty, the area office split into two "camps" (Lucy, s.224), those siding with the aggrieved Martha (referred to as 'camp A' henceforth), and those siding with the alleged aggressor (referred to as 'camp B' henceforth). Lucy, a friend of Martha's, recollected:

> That was an awful time in the office, that was <u>really</u> horrible, because it was really (.) you know I, I think, you know I felt like, because I was a friend of Martha, people assumed that I had said something, and I think, um, the people that weren't being very nice to Martha, I mean one wasn't there at the time, but the other one, I don't know, <I just, I just>, it's just <u>horrible</u> when something

happens like that in the office. Because your work family suddenly becomes really divided, and there's like this camp and that camp, and then you try and sit, you don't really want to be in either camp, but, it's almost like you, you are forced into, because, you know↑, it's a really, [really awful place] (s.224).

Thus it was not only Martha herself, but also Lucy who experienced the hostile attitudes of camp B. Drawing on Jaques (1955) this experience could be interpreted as Martha and Lucy becoming the targets of camp B's destructive impulses and bad objects at the phantasy level which were then reflected in the system of split social relations in day to day office life.

According to Lucy's statement above, because of her friendship with Martha she was disowned by her colleagues: she was perceived too as an enemy, as a traitor, who was presumed to have "said something" negative on the matter, irrespective of her personal position or opinion.

However, later on in the interview (s.310) Lucy explained how she was struggling with friendship loyalty towards Martha at the time and did not further the complaint about the office aggressor. She sounded almost apologetic for not being able to provide full support, and when telling the story, her body language was so intense that she broke a pen that she had in her hand (s.316).

To me these were the signs of long lasting internal struggles with friendship loyalty, akin to friendship ambivalence, the effects of which will be explored in the next section. Her personal defence in this situation was that of emotional

detachment, as appeared in nursing services as well as a day nursery described by Menzies Lyth (2009, loc.1580) where staff members struggled with not being able to be attentive to their primary instincts connected to providing continuous support, care and attention to all of their patients or children. Lucy, in the situation of office splitting, couldn't be supportive of Martha at all costs, and this was causing her great difficulty. She struggled with this reality not because she disagreed with the situation, but because such workplace relation conflict was for her too much to bear (s.314).

So the attitudes of camp B because of friendship loyalty were not justified, instead they "forced" her into one side, and affected her day to day work negatively. To evidence this, she was using words such as "dreaded going to the office", "DIDN'T feel happy", "it makes me feel very uneasy", "whispering in the offi::ce" (s.316).

According to Jaques (1955, p.483) "objective fear may be more readily coped with than phantasy persecution". Therefore this behaviour can be explained as individuals being better equipped to deal with their phantasy, (unconscious) persecutory anxiety once they externalised this into identifiable objects, such as Martha and her friends. These processes, however useful in enabling other team members to 'free themselves' from anxiety, resulted unfortunately in both Martha and Lucy carrying strong negative attitudes about working in the office at the time.

Even more, friendship loyalty resulting in such a strong split within this office into 'good' and 'bad' as a reaction to the grievance against a staff member is one way of tracing problems that this workplace has been struggling with for a long time and failing to recognize – idealisation of some team members as more valuable than others. This has resulted in blind followership and risked clouded judgements. As Martha expanded on a couple of occasions on her negative grievance experience:

> But raising a grievance against {Person 1}, because she is quite a-, important person in the office, runs a risk, if, if you upset her, you upset everybody, and you can become (0.1), it's almost like, it's worse than school! (s.72)

> Whereas in terms of work, nothing's changed; she still doesn't do her job, she still is an absolute pain and a tyrant over the offi-, is in terms of her opinion goes, um, and the grievance was just awful. (s.90)

The alleged aggressor – Person 1 – who was not in a managerial position, according to Martha's statements possessed a significant amount of power in terms of influencing and controlling opinions of that particular office. She used a very strong metaphor of tyrannical leadership, which has been understood as exercising power instilling fear through psychological pressure, and working against the public good (Kets de Vries, 2006, p.197). This followership is akin to what Kets de Vries and Miller (1984, p.80) describe as "idealising transference" with regards to subordinates' behaviour in the workplace:

All satisfaction is derived from this idealised person, so that one feels empty and powerless without her. The idealised figure may be admired for her power, beauty, intelligence, or moral stance. There is a strong tendency, in the process of idealisation, to ignore this figure's bad features and exaggerate the good ones.

It is possible to make assumptions about such idealisation being an unconscious defence of team members in this office. As already explained in the chapter on the Kleinian paranoid-schizoid position, if internal objects are split into 'good' and 'bad, this splitting would be followed by the good objects being idealised and the bad projected out (Jaques, 1953, p.5). This appears to be happening with the rest of the office following Person 1.

The dangers with idealising persons lies with high dependency on them, potentially leading to "a need to appeal to, support, and ingratiate themselves" with this figure (Kets de Vries and Miller, 1984, p.80). The alarming consequence for the company is then the loss of staff members' ability to make their own judgements and decisions (Kets de Vries and Miller, 1984, p.81). I suggest therefore that this idealisation has led to the staff members operating from the "paranoid-schizoid mode", the term that organisational scholars Diamond, Allcorn and Stein (2004,p.38) use to describe employees that are unable to see themselves as individuals capable of making their own decisions,

having "one`s own thoughts, and feeling one`s own feelings" and also respecting others for their individualism and independence.

It is not only idealisation per se that is in operation here, but idealisation in combination with friendship loyalty too, causing what I call 'blind followership' and strong disagreements in the office, as Martha (s.78) puts it:

> …a lot of them, to make life easier, you just go with the majority, don't you, and that's what some of them did who are not as close friends with, they stuck with {Person 1}, because they are friends with [them], it almost became a pick a side situation .

Looking at friendship loyalty with the psychoanalytic concepts of splitting, projection and idealisation at hand therefore enables the identification of such maladaptive behavioural tendencies as they are becoming detrimental to individuals and the company itself.

This interpretation then invites further analysis into understanding of organisational factors that could have contributed to such collective defensive behaviour. The pioneers of social defence theory such as Menzies (1964), or Jaques (1953; 1955) looked behind organisational structures to seek explanations. Although I don't have data about psychodynamic attitudes and feelings of the rest of the staff in relation to the grievance process, I turned to the rest of the interview statements to try to understand further Martha's and Lucy's experiences.

Apart from individual characteristics and the operation of persecutory anxieties at the unconscious individual level, such splitting, projection and idealisation behaviour walking hand in hand with friendship loyalty could partly be a way of avoiding anxiety linked to existential uncertainties as follows.

The organisational structure of The Friendly Organisation appeared to be ever changing, partly due to governmental funding cuts resulting in frequent organisational change. Funding cuts concerns resulting in job insecurity were mentioned on 4 occasions by 3 of my interview participants from The Friendly Organisation; frequent restructures resulting in job changes were brought up on 8 occasions, bringing up feelings of "unsettledness" (Dudley, s.474) and fear (Leslie, s.246). As metaphorically summarised by Leslie (s.246):

> There was A TERRIBLE FEAR THERE! Of, ehm, when is the axe gonna come. And that was from several restructures I think that`s what did it for people. And I think that created a massive insecurity in people, ehm, because you never knew when the next restructure was coming.

Leslie's account represents strong aversion towards organisational change, dreading death and panic as interpreted through her metaphorical use of 'the axe gonna come' representing 'several restructures'.

Organisational change is often met with resistant workers and is also connected to their arising conscious or unconscious anxieties (Obholzer, 1994, p.206). One explanation of such resistance is put forward by Jaques (1955).

He argues that any change to the existing social structures and relations, such as through the restructures or grievances above, will be perceived by workers as dangerous to the "social defences against anxieties" that have already been in place (Jaques, 1955, p.479). Therefore "groups of people" become resistant, "unconsciously clinging to the institutions that they have" (ibid.). I suggest that the manifested splitting, projection and idealisation in the office that accompanied friendship loyalty in both 'camps' represented actions of such resistance. These manifestations have however been magnified by the grievance process itself, and also by numerous organisational changes, both threatening the existing relations in place, and thus evoking the feelings of strong "unsettledness" in the organisation.

Furthermore, if the internal impulses are stronger, they evoke stronger internal perception of persecution and thus the defence mechanisms of splitting, idealisation and projection could be more intense (Jaques, 1953, p.3). Showing strong friendship loyalty in the workplace can therefore be thought of as one of the symptoms of resistance that exacerbated the manifestations of splitting the office into two camps and disturbing workplace relations through projection and idealisation.

Furthermore organisational friendship culture that is characterised by strong clique formations suggests indirect identity regulation as a form of normative organisational control as identified by Costas (2012). In her research

consultants felt pressured to create and maintain friendships with the "right people" in the offices (Costas, 2012, p.384). Such control then subtly pressurises each employee to self-manage/ self-monitor themselves resulting in the employee "who is almost unable to achieve any political, critical, or moral detachment from his/her employer's power practices" (Gabriel, 1999, p.180). As for The Friendly Organisation and the area office where Martha and Lucy worked, siding with the strongest person identified by Martha as the aggressor, can also be interpreted as a form of such identity regulation where individuals are no longer able to be such critical thinkers.

6.4.3 Torn by Friendship Ambivalence

It is not only idealisation that can bring on personal struggles and frustrations, clouded judgements in staff, and strip them of, as Gabriel (1999, p.180) puts it referencing normative control, their "political critical, or moral detachment". The same could be brought up by feelings of *ambivalence* which can also consciously or unconsciously manifest themselves in friendship at work. Throughout my data four examples of ambivalent relations stood out for me, where individuals appeared to be, using Parker's (2005) terminology, 'torn into two' by friendship at work.

At The Friendly Organisation these were the case of Leslie and her former line manager, Martha's and Lucy's feelings towards their joint friend's underperformance, Lucy's attitude during the grievance process described above, and Jeff's position towards Roger's abrupt behaviour at work. All these experiences although different from each other showed that friendship at work provides fruitful grounds for ambivalent feelings since friends do not only hold deep sincere positive feelings towards each other, but can also experience frustrations and challenging situations in connection to working within the same workplace. Whilst both love and hate are rooted in the unconscious, as already pointed out by Freud, it is love that is easily manifested in consciousness, whereas hate often stays behind, unacknowledged (Parker, 2005, p.6). Indeed all the interviewees stressed their love for their friends, whereas frustrations were mentioned more subtly. Nevertheless, drawing on Parker's (2005, p.7) findings of motherhood, friendship experiences can also produce a variety of "the intensity of feeling within ambivalence".

In this subsection I would like to present ambivalence as one of the ways of personally struggling with workplace friendship challenges, and at the same time to highlight potential pitfalls of this relation for organisations in terms of 'clouded' judgements. To demonstrate these properties of workplace friendship I have chosen to analyse Leslie's experience.

Leslie opened up about a story of her relation breakdown with a friend, who was at one time a very close friend to her. Their relation broke down just after she left the organisation – The Friendly Organisation - to progress her career elsewhere. During our interview she joyously recollected memories of her friendship love for this colleague who used to be her line manager too. Their relation in her description was almost akin to a romantic partnership (Leslie, s.326). They were buying each other Christmas and birthday presents (s.323). They often conversed after work over the phone, their banter was unique, they appeared very close in public and complemented each other with their humor so much that they looked like an inseparable couple, "Laurel and Hardy with each other" (s.326).

Unexpectedly, after listening to these 'loving' recollections of workplace friendship experiences, hurtful feelings poured out of Leslie's (s.327) discourse:

> He BULLIED ME as a manager!" … He was NASTY, he liked to keep you down. And you, I got the impression he was knocking me down to Bert to keep me in my place, ehm.

In this example the feelings of ambivalence are linked to workplace friendship at work very explicitly. The love for this friend co-exists with very strong negative feelings that I would like to interpret as akin to hate.

Some time had passed since Leslie left the company and gave me this interview, but it was only once she left that she was able to start working

through her conflicting feelings, and through this interview she admitted these feelings to me. "I look back now and he was just horrible to me!", said Leslie as she recollected an evening out after she left The Friendly Organisation when her friend suddenly, without giving any reason, started to withdraw from their friendship (Leslie, s.330). The timeline of her recollections therefore invites the interpretation that ambivalent feelings for this friend were held unconsciously, not explicitly acknowledged at whilst working at The Friendly Organisation. As it is love that comes easily to the forefront from the unconscious to the consciousness (Parker, 2005, p.6), she consciously cherished their friendship whilst working under the line management of her friend.

Where it is becoming problematic is that a type of organisational misbehaviour – bullying – appeared to be blocked out of her consciousness at the time. As if she was unable to think about it at the time. In her own words, looking back, this reaction was Leslie's (s.327) own survival mechanism:

> You know, and ehm, but we had, when you have that survival thing and your line manager that you're kind of going along with it, because you need them, you know? They are your life line.

And through her inaction, it was covered up from the organisational eye too. Workplace friendship had therefore forced her to rationalise the friend's inappropriateness, maybe even lightened it through humorous stories of Laurel and Hardy above. Such actions of humour and rationalisations are explained

by organisational scholars Diamond, Allcorn and Stein (2004, p.41) as "less regressive defens[ive]" behaviour manifested negatively at the organisational level.

Parker's (2005) stance on maternal ambivalence provides a useful framework of looking further into the personal costs of such ambivalent feelings. She argues that acknowledgement and reflections on positive and negative emotions such as love and hate for the same object, rather than their denial, can lead to personal growth through increased "capacity to think" about the relation with the object – in her case the child (Parker, 2005, p.8). She concludes that ambivalence as such is not problematic, but it becomes so when the guilt and anxiety it provokes become unmanageable, the defensive reactions unhelpful, and as a result creativity in how to handle these conflicting feelings will become impaired (Parker, 2005).

Leslie's reaction to this relation was surprising for me. She was a manager herself whilst working in The Friendly Organisation, and through the interview she indeed appeared of a strong character. Yet instead of acknowledging these conflicting feelings and explicitly showing anger or aggression, disappointment or hurt, she adopted a complacency stance, "kind of going along with it". Experiences that would have been painful and conflicting with friendship love were not engaged with whilst she worked at The Friendly Organisation. They were not worked through at the time, affecting her as a subject. In Parker's

(2005, p.10) words such ambivalent feelings that were denied "cannot provide a spur to thought", and therefore instead of leading to "creative … possibilities" of working through this relation, they resulted in her personal disappointment and anger:

> Actually I didn`t put him [down on a list of friends], but I AM ANGRY AT HIM, so I have written him out of my life now so I don`t think about him (Leslie, s.323).

> And I AM ANGRY NOW on the way he line managed me as well, because I put up with it. I am angry at myself for putting up with it (Leslie, s.335).

Workplace friendship therefore can lead to ambivalent attitudes and regressive behaviour, with the strong efforts of trying to erase a relation out of one's consciousness, which can be harmful not only to individuals, but also to organisations. It is so because as Bott Spillus et al. (2011, loc.2799) highlight from Klein's (1940) work, the cost of ambivalence could be the loss of trust, hope and judgement. In this case it applies to not only a friend, but also a colleague, a line manager, a leader, and ultimately the organisation itself. Organisational misbehaviour, such as bullying in this case, could be allowed to carry on, if unchallenged because of one's inability to work through the intensity of ambivalent feelings.

I will now link the empirical findings to insights from the literature, distilling the originality of the contributions to workplace friendship and organisational literature.

Chapter seven: Discussion

7.1 Introduction

Chapters five and six have examined through psycho-social methodology, the lived experiences of friendship relations in a highly regulated organisational context. I will now integrate the key themes that have emerged across these chapters and build on the existing workplace friendship and organisational literature. I will explain how the pathology of the organisation can be carried out by tracing workplace relations, and I will present the opportunities and challenges of workplace friendships in terms of forming attachments within organisational boundaries. These sections will be concluded by a succinct response to each of the research questions. Finally, I will present the key contributions of this study to the literature.

Whilst staying true to the sociology literature on friendship (e.g. Adams and Allan, 1998; Blieszner and Adams, 1992; Spencer and Pahl, 2006; Pahl, 2000; Roseneil and Budgeon, 2004); anthropology studies (Bell and Coleman, 1999); communication studies and psychology (Duck, 2011; Sias et al., 2012; Sias and Perry, 2004; Sias, 2006; Sias et al., 2004; Argyle, 1967), and psychoanalytic Object Relations literature has significantly progressed the

understanding of friendship in general life (Zimmermann, 2004; Rangell, 1963, 2009; Little, 1993; Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991).

With regards to research into workplace relations and friendships in particular, it is however attachment theory (Bowlby, 1979) that is thought of and applied by researchers most often. Harms (2011) through his literature review of attachment styles in the workplace claimed that most of the organisational studies have centred around the relation between leader and follower, bearing a similarity with parent and child relation, and the organisational outcomes (e.g. Wu and Parker, 2014).

Whilst acknowledging the importance of the attachment orientation, this thesis differs from the psychoanalytically oriented organisational studies in that it explores workplace friendships as object relations that attract the complexity of affects, both positive and negative. The nature of friendship naturally lends itself to the challenges arising from for example (i) individual characteristics in terms of psychological apparatus, conscious and unconscious forces affecting attachment orientation, socio-economic background; (ii) efforts to act with fairness and equality across organisational hierarchy whether dealing with a friend or a colleague; (iii) management of these relations in the intra-organisational domain, with cultures supportive of or dismissive of personal workplace relations. In this thesis workplace friendship relations have therefore been explored through defensive emotional reactions that can rise in

individuals in order to protect them from psychological conflicts that are "socially induced" (Sievers, 2006, p.297). In doing so, I have been able to identify the organisational pathology as follows.

7.2 On Organisational Pathology

Part One (see chapter five) of the data analysis draws on the social defence mechanisms approach, pioneers of which are Trist and Bamforth (1951), Jaques (1953, 1955) and Menzies Lyth (1960). Here the analysis of organisational pathology and its social defence mechanism of friendship policy and behavioural norms of professionalism were presented. On the basis of the empirical evidence presented I interpreted that the studied organisation was diagnosed as displaying neurotic traits in terms of the defensive collective mode of functioning surrounding workplace friendship relations.

When psychoanalyzing organisations assumptions are being made that unconscious processes, anxieties and respective defences in individuals affect the functioning of organisations (Hinshelwood, 2001, p.41). They affect the experiences of organisational life, behaviour and thought patterns of individuals (Krantz, 1997, 2006) as well as organisational dynamics (Sievers, 2006, p.108); thus the organisational identity overall as defined by Diamond (1988, 1993, 2017).

The key is to understand that these unconscious reactions that are manifested in thought patterns, behaviour, or even organisational policies and procedures, are "socially induced" (Sievers, 2006, p.108). That is, they are not only based on individual's personality characteristics, and the influence of their own socio-economic background and private life environment.

For example, job roles and the nature of the work connected to them (Obholzer, 1994, p.207), and/ or external environmental pressures, affect how the organisations are run. And these factors, particles of organisational life, are able to evoke "unconscious phantasies and anxieties" of the staff (Sievers, 2006, p.108). They have led organisational psychoanalysts and consultants (e.g. Sievers, 2006; Krantz, 1998, 2006; Diamond, Allcorn and Stein, 2004) to the categorisation of organisational behaviour and thinking, as inspired by the Kleinian thesis, into the 'paranoid-schizoid' mode and/or originating from the 'depressive' position.

In this thesis, functioning from the 'depressive' position is regarded as a 'mature mode' of relating. As Krantz (1997, p.4) explains, this refers to organisational members being able to

> learn from experience, to be vulnerable without feeling persecuted so that one can learn from experience, to be curious about, rather than fearful of, the unknown, to be able to link with others across important differences, and to be realistically connected to the genuine opportunities and challenges they face.

In his subsequent paper Krantz (2006, p.228) expands on the depressive positioning further and summarises it as individuals being able to "integrate experience, think, collaborate, tolerate complexity, and assess reality from multiple perspectives". According to Diamond (1998) it is through promoting learning within the organisation, and reflective problem-solving when individuals are becoming able to adopt effective individual or group defensive processes before they become conflicting for organisations themselves. For the purposes of this thesis, psychological functioning from the depressive position when relating to workplace friends was understood as being able to be interested in others, inquisitive rather than fearful of initiating and maintaining meaningful relations, able to manage rather than being avoidant of conflict, able to display the emotional states of "guilt, the desire for love, mourning or reparation" (Sievers, 2006, p.112), and minimizing defensive reactions from the 'paranoid-schizoid position' such as splitting, projections, and projective identification.

However, in the case study context, the emotional impact of the risk management efforts to 'manage' intra-organisational relating in order to eradicate favouritism, have been found to mostly mirror the 'paranoid-schizoid' unconscious defensive mechanisms, such as "splitting, hostility, suspicion and other forms of maladaptive behaviour" (Mnguni, 2010, p.122).

Careful observation of any defence mechanisms displayed in the thought patterns of staff members and organisational behaviour, leads a researcher to be able to interpret organisational pathology and to see organisations as "psychotic" (Sievers, 2006, p.112) in a general sense. This means acknowledging that organisations are able to cause "psychotic reactions in its role holders either temporarily or permanently" (Sievers, 2006, p.112). I adopt the view of Jaques (1955, p.479) that organisations are not psychotic as such. It is that through the psychodynamic exploration of social relating of individuals in groups we can observe collective psychological reactions that remind us of the functioning of the unconscious defensive mechanisms, whether this is from 'the paranoid-schizoid' position or the 'depressive' position. In this sense, should 'the paranoid-schizoid' type of thoughts and behaviours prevail in the collective, the organisation can be metaphorically regarded as displaying psychological and emotional ill health, neurotic traits. And this is what I have identified to be happening in the chosen case study organisation when tracing friendship relations.

I considered thoughts and behavioural patterns of organisational members as being rooted in the 'paranoid anxiety'. This was not only the case in relation to workplace friendship but in relation to organisational relating more generally, as considerations were given to staff acting in an overly friendly manner or

being fearful of fitting in. An intense fear had therefore surrounded all of the workplace relating.

And as the fear is a predominant emotion in the paranoid-schizoid position (Hinshelwood, 1994, p.106), in line with Krantz (1997; 2006, pp.227-228) these thought patterns and behaviours were only some of the signs of the 'paranoid-schizoid mode' of thinking within The Friendly Organisation. Organisational fragmentation (Halton, 2004) and the culture of heavy compliance (Kets de Vries and Associates, 1991, p.248) were also aspects of the 'paranoid-schizoid' organisational mode of thinking. In line with Diamond (1985, p.663) I also interpret that the organisation suffered from "anxiety over losing control", stemming from organisational members themselves.

In the organisational consultancy literature it is mainly the leadership style that is being explored as indicative of neuroticism. Specifically, organisations have been categorised as being "paranoid, depressive, dramatic, compulsive, schizoid" as shown in the table below, and thus 'treated' as 'neurotic' (Kets de Vries and Associates, 1991, p.246; also Kets De Vries, 1984; 2004). In this type of work, the reference to a 'neurotic' organisation, and hence the psychological conditions of 'depressive' or 'paranoid' are used differently to the above explained and applied interpretation of the 'paranoid-schizoid' and 'depressive' mode of functioning. This thesis stays close to Kleinian's understanding and interpretation of ego development, the typology of anxiety and the defence

mechanisms deployed specifically for the developmental stages of ego - the 'paranoid-schizoid' and the 'depressive' position, see the chapter on <u>Kleinian Developmental Positions in Organisations</u>.

Whereas for Kets de Vries (1984; 1991; 2004), for example, the metaphor of a 'depressive' organisation bears characteristics of suffering from depression as a type of neurotic personality disorders. The behaviour of such depressive organisation is marked by "[i]nactivity, lack of confidence, extreme conservatism, and a bureaucratically motivated insularity", that is as if the whole organisation was running on an auto-pilot (Kets de Vries, 1984, p.34). This is based on an understanding that a person who suffers from depression not only experiences guilt, one of the major defences in Kleinian 'depressive' positioning, but also feels

> self-reproach, inadequacy, sense of helplessness and hopelessness - of being at the mercy of events; diminished ability to think clearly; loss of interest and motivation; inability to experience pleasure (Kets de Vries, 1984, p.24).

Whereas in the Kleinian research, the affects such as "guilt, the desire for love, mourning or reparation" (Sievers, 2006, p.112), coming from the 'depressive' mode of thinking, are seen as valuable to organisational functioning.

Table 1. Typology of organisational culture and identity based on the leadership style

Fantasy	Style	Culture	Organisation
Persecution	Suspicious	Paranoid	Paranoid
Helplessness	Depressive/ Dependent	Avoidant	Depressive
Grandiosity	Dramatic, Histrionic/ Narcissistic	Charismatic	Dramatic
Control	Compulsive	Bureaucratic	Compulsive
Detachment	Detached Schizoid/ Avoidant	Politicized	Schizoid

Source: Kets de Vries and Associates (1991, p.246)

The categorisation of behaviour in the table no.1 is based on the leadership style affecting organisational culture. Whereas if we consider the defensive reactions that arise in organisational members, they can equally be thought of as the indicators of psychological pain or threat experienced by individual members (Mnguni, 2010, p.122), but they can also be a sign of maturity and the 'good enough' psychological functioning. And therefore when looking deeper into the defences being used collectively one can gain further understanding of some of the challenges of interpersonal relating the staff would be facing, and exposing these defensive patterns can further group/ organisational development (Boydell, 2005).

7.2.1 System of Defences surrounding the Policy

In this section the persecutory perceptions and intense fear linked to the unconscious 'paranoid-schizoid' psychological functioning will be discussed, also series of intra-organisational splitting and projections that are typical for the 'paranoid-schizoid' mode of thinking.

Firstly, some aspects of bureaucracy have already been investigated as functioning as social defence systems. For example, the excessive use of checklists for simple tasks in the UK nursing service (Menzies Lyth, 1960), equally medical appraisals (McGivern and Ferlie, 2007) and Health and Safety policies (Kets de Vries and Associates, 1991, p.227) have been considered as serving a defensive function against anxieties in organisations. Furthermore, the actions of partnership working looking after the needs of Travellers in Northern Ireland (Boydell, 2005), the organisational processes of sustainability consortiums (Mnguni, 2010), or the recruitment processes within the project teams of the New Zealand film industry (Handy and Rowlands, 2016) have all been perceived at first as aiding the management of organisational anxieties, yet their actions not only failed to defend against these anxieties, but ended up being detrimental to organisational effective functioning.

The protective efforts of organisations and groups within them are good as long as they serve as such (Menzies Lyth, 1960). More than often however, the

'social defence systems' fail to do so and can arouse in organisational members, for example, "primary anxieties" connected to the nature of their work, and/or "secondary anxieties" resulting from the organisation being unable to offer support, help, assistance in dealing with these anxieties (Menzies Lyth, 1960, p.110). Obholzer (1994a, p.206) adds to this classification of anxieties the kinds of "primitive anxieties" and "personal anxieties" that organisational members are faced with on a day to day basis.

At The Friendly Organisation, the bureaucratic procedure that guarded close friendships seemed at first to be serving a protective function for the organisation against real and/or imaginary accusations of favouritism, in order to maintain a fair and equitable workplace. It was introduced therefore in line with risk management.

The pressure to do so was stemming from external regulations that were adapted to the organisational functioning and applied to friendship. No conflicts of interests of employees are especially important in public and voluntary sector organisations as they carry the responsibility for the management of public and government funding. In these sectors it is not competition that matters the most, as it is in the private sector.

Private sector corporations at times own the prevalence of the consumer market appear, yet they still appear to be acting defensively, even aggressively, from possible "threat and persecution" caused by competition and external

organisational environments (Sievers, 2006, p.112). Such organisations are referred to metaphorically as operating from the 'paranoid-schizoid' organisational mode of thinking, with their operations affected by "a high degree of aggression, sadism and destructiveness", without the emotional states linked to the 'depressive' mode of thinking such as "guilt, the desire for love, mourning or reparation" (Sievers, 2006, p.112).

In public sector organisations, it is not the struggle for survival that matters the most to members, but the wider organisational purpose, moral and ethical dilemmas and organisational values such as those of fairness and equality (Hoggett, 2006). Therefore, metaphorically speaking the purpose of public sector organisations naturally lends itself to collective thoughts and behaviours that are akin to the 'depressive position'.

Individuals, especially in helping professions, are also prone to choose organisations, work settings, patients or customers that would help them to work through their own emotional struggles (Roberts, 1994). And thus it could be said that the fit between organisations and individuals is strengthened by their own defensive mechanisms that should run parallel with the collective defensive mechanisms (Mnguni, 2010, p.123). But if they collude, for example, when experts on the quest of fighting for a good cause are snowed under by aimless bureaucratic rules, they either "symbolically withdraw from the system and its task, put up with alienating relations, or leave" (Mnguni, 2010, p.124).

Similar collusions amongst public sector employees are caused when their own and organisational universalist values of equity, fairness, impartiality clash with their day to day work in multicultural, diverse, pluralist societies (Hoggett, 2006, p.176). Fairness and equality for all are the key principles of universalism, but equality for some may mean discriminating against other groups (Hoggett, 2006, p.176), and this is where individual defence mechanisms can come into clash with day to day organisational reality. As Hoggett (2006, p.189) puts it, when workers lose "a sense of value" meaning working for a place "that can contribute to the development of the ethical and moral capacities of the communities that it serves", they become "de-moralised".

The questioning of personal and organisational values does not have to be caused by working within communities but also when swimming through the waters of day to day organisational life. The conscious and unconscious anxieties where universalism meets pluralism therefore also drip feed into the workplace, where in the case of friendship, the principles of impartiality go against the inner energy of emotions (Illouz, 2007, p.2) and the impulses of affect are at times "pre-reflexively" experienced (Fotaki, Kenny and Vachhani, 2017, p.7).

Furthermore, as shown in the above analysis (Part Two), workplace friendship has positives for organisations but equally it can be disruptive in terms of the defences and maladaptive behaviour that it attracts individually but also

collectively. Thus it is not surprising that a voluntary organisation such as The Friendly Organisation had tried to put measures in place to defend from these emotionally complex relations, perceived as conflicting relations. However, instead of managing the issues effectively, helping individuals to deal with conflicting situations, they proactively imposed upon staff a 'rational' and objective measure as a way of dealing with relations, including friendships, which as lived experiences are not so black and white (Duck, 2011). Duck (2011, p.21) presents relations as "always *incomplete* and never really ending – unfinished business" [author's italics].

By introducing the DofI The Friendly Organisation had evidently positioned close friendships as relations clashing with its values of fairness and equality. They were considered by the management as 'impulsive' and messy, soaked with animalistic impulses, akin to the actions of the 'id', from Freudian structural theory. On the basis of some vivid metaphors, I interpreted that this relation was regarded by the organisation as 'dirty', as an unwelcome act within The Friendly Organisation, conflicting or confrontational. Any such emotional relations were strongly associated with favouritism, and because they were managed by a 'rational' procedure, this type of management effort was contributing to already heightened organisational tensions.

Such a black and white organisational stance resulted in my interpretations of workplace friendship symbolically being the carrier of managerial paranoid

anxieties, their intense fears connected to flawing the organisational public image. This relation was consciously and unconsciously experienced as threatening.

Firstly, because the existence of the policy had been endorsed publicly by the Senior Management Team since its implementation in 2012, workplace relations were consciously, although indirectly, being defended against. There were also routine checks in place, performed via the HR department, to 'verify' friendships on the DofI and the Management had put their views across to staff informally as it transpired through certain stories.

Secondly, the relations were almost demonized implicitly, not fitting with the idealised organisational image. For example, the metaphor of feral in connection with scapegoating area offices implies neurotic qualities and underlying anxiety running through the organisation, akin to the "anxiety over losing control" as identified by Diamond in connection to "ritualistic bureaucratic activity" (1985, p.663). Bion (1961) in his work referred to unconscious shared assumptions held collectively by the group (Gabriel, 2008, p.125), and the findings point towards shared group anxieties (De Board, 1978, p.46) surrounding workplace friendships. The shared assumption here was that friendship belonged to 'the bad objects' that should be controlled or protected by the DofI policy, whilst idealising either the management or the organisation as being professional, objective, impartial, and rational.

Illouz (2007, p.33) notes that when emotions are written down, or in her words "locked into literacy" they "become objects to be observed and manipulated", and indeed this appeared at The Friendly Organisation in relation to affective acts of friendship having to be declared, written down, and thus becoming observable, under scrutiny of the 'rational' organisation. This practice is therefore regarded as a disturbance of the natural order of friendship affectivity, where the 'love' of a friend comes before 'being loved', and the knowledge of 'being loved'. If a friend "had to choose between knowing and being known, he would choose knowing, rather than being known" (Derrida, 1994, p.11, drawing on Aristotle).

The organisational policy had thus been unconsciously mobilised to become one of the collective defensive mechanisms, going against the natural order of friendship. Desperately grasping the 'reins' over 'wild' friendships in order to control them, the organisation appears to be displaying neurotic traits of "obsessional thinking and compulsive action" as interpreted by Diamond (1985, p.663).

The policy became an internalised symbol of morality, guarding The Friendly Organisation like the organisational super-ego against these relational tensions. It was believed by some that if one declared a close friendship, they would be protected against potential dangers of false accusations, and the organisation would be satisfied that "nothing untoward [was] going on" (Jeff,

s.238). Thus it could claim a fair and equitable status to a variety of stakeholders. However, the policy had failed to be an effective defence mechanism as in serving its protective functioning.

I saw this failure in the negative emotions it aroused, conscious and unconscious in the organisational members, and also in how it highlighted the paradoxical nature of organisational relations and stimulated intra-organisational systems of splitting and projections.

Kets de Vries and Associates highlight (1991, p.227) that the benefits of having, for example, strong Health and Safety procedures at work are that organisational members do not have to relentlessly think about potential dangers waiting around the next corner. In this way, such procedures would serve as a protective mechanism against anxiety and belong to the social defence system. But this only applies if organisational members are able to "apply procedures rationally", otherwise they may become entangled in "a more irrational system of social splits" (Kets de Vries and Associates, 1991, p.227). This may occur when organisational members are not able to exercise these procedures with enough understanding of why they are doing so. This then could result in claims of organisations being perceived as "snowed under by the rules" and others (Kets de Vries and Associates, 1991, p.227), thus preventing "rational behaviour" (p.228) in the workplace in favour of blind rule following.

The culture at The Friendly Organisation was that of 'yes men', using Tyler's own words (s.58). Staff did not openly question the DofI policy, nor managerial decision making more generally, and blind following seemed to prevail. Voicing their own opinions, or displaying emotions in terms of disappointment or critique was not something that was encouraged either. Yet the policy was perceived by some as a form of overbearing control, and by others it served to strengthen their own defensive mechanisms in relation to friendship relations under the umbrella of professionalism.

Furthermore, there was no clarity in understanding the organisational motives in terms of the perceived conflict surrounding workplace friendship, and what was happening to this information afterwards. The compliance and understanding of the policy itself in terms of friendship varied greatly amongst my participants and the consequences of declaring close friends were left to individuals' interpretation. Therefore, in some, fear of punishment was guiding their day to day thoughts and behaviour. This was not surprising as the organisation valued methods of maintaining close control over organisational relating and in the written guidance on DofI it detailed that not declaring close friendships was perceived as an act of insubordination that might have resulted in a disciplinary action.

Following Kets de Vries and Associates (1991, pp.227-228), the 'rational behaviour' of organisational members in relation to this 'protective tool' was

missing too. Instead the policy was perceived by some as invasive and overwhelming. I even identified the beliefs that the originators of this policy and of other bureaucratic procedures would have acted with fear and insecurity when putting these procedures into practice, suggesting that the organisation was perceived by its members as "snowed under by the [irrational] rules" (Kets de Vries and Associates, 1991, p.227).

This had resulted in the organisation suffering with splits and projections (Kets de Vries and Associates, 1991, p.227). It is also Mnguni (2010, p.122) who highlights splitting and projective behaviour as maladaptive behaviour in organisations and organised groupings that arises when elements of work assignments or relations "are experienced as psychically painful or threatening". In this case workplace friendship relations were causing considerable tensions. And indeed, in the data analysis I have presented several examples of splitting thought patterns and behaviours when identifying the organisational position on the policy and workplace friendship more generally as follows.

I used the concept of the 'paranoid-schizoid' position to interpret the evidence of the intra-organisational split and projection of mistrust onto the 'other' as existing between the decision-makers who designed the DofI and organisational members who were expected to follow it. I compared this split to a "fragmentation" where "[e]ach side [saw] the other side as a dangerous threat

to the welfare and values of the organisation" (Halton, 2004, loc.1995). In the case of The Friendly Organisation I identified these to be the values of fairness and equality.

And indeed these values were being unconsciously threatened by further splits into 'us and them' between management and staff in terms of the application of the implicit rule of 'no friendships' and also in terms of declaring – thus openly admitting to these relations on the DofI form. I identified the existence of what I called 'double standards' applied by management and some signs of favouritism already existing in the organisation.

Splitting also occurred in respect of area offices. I interpreted the perceptions and the actions of management towards these organisational 'in-groups' as unconscious scapegoating. It is because they became the targets of negativity because of their close workplace friendship relations, blamed for the 'real or imagined' causes of organisational underperformance and a flawed organisational image. This had led to instigating close managerial scrutiny of emotional relating in these offices which had been met by some with feelings akin to paranoia, accusing management of being overly controlling.

However, Mnguni (2010, p.122) reminds us that in cases of projections through scapegoating in groups, these "defenses involve unconsciously creating artificial us/them subgroups" leading to "mask[ing] similarities and mak[ing] it easier to mobilise the different 'other', whether real or imagined".

Thus such similarities are evident from the above. The 'double standards' applied by management were only some of the threats to the universalist values that I identified, the very values that they tried to protect through for example the DofI, the values that 'others' were accused of breaking, and this separation was exacerbated by acts of scapegoating.

It is De Board (1978, p.47) who foremost points out that if the group wishes to tackle its own anxieties it has to realise that "the good and the bad group is one and the same, and that ultimately the goodness and the badness is located within each individual". This statement is in line with the Kleinian stance of the developmental 'depressive' positioning, see Defences in the 'Depressive Position'.Thus the values and principles of universalism might not be threatened by one and only one group – whether it is the Senior Management, as seen by the staff; or the staff as presented by the Senior Management. The efforts to maintain a fair and equitable workplace are shared, and as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, public and also non-profit sector employees are attracted to this sector because of the shared values.

7.2.2 Professionalism and Related Defences

Another form of intensified splitting that I found in a proportion of staff was in the considerations of friendship being incommensurate with work if one wanted to be acknowledged, recognized as a 'professional' within this organisation.

At The Friendly Organisation conscious efforts were made by HR professionals and some of the management team to avoid emotional contact that could have led to close friendship attachments. This is not to argue against the fact that professionals who work with people have to consciously think about their actions, and should learn to recognise their unconscious defences affecting their day to day work. Or as Menzies Lyth (1960, p.445) puts it, they should be able to

> to control feelings, refrain from excessive involvement, avoid disturbing identification and maintain professional independence against manipulation and demands for unprofessional behaviour.

But excessive splitting off unconsciously and regarding workplace friendship as the 'bad object', as something to be defended against at all times, is a sign of 'paranoid-schizoid' positioning, rather than adopting 'depressive positioning', when one should be able to "learn from experience, to be vulnerable without feeling persecuted, to be curious about, rather than fearful of, the unknown" (Krantz, 1997, p.4).

Detachment behaviour where friendships were split off as 'bad objects' was not only reinforced by the HR Code of Conduct from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, or the organisational DofI policy, but also by the implicit organisational recognition of what being a professional meant. It was as if The Friendly Organisation followed a set of unwritten rules: (i) 'a

professional should not openly display friendship behaviour or engage in any such activities publically', (ii) 'friendship behaviour on the display in the offices is childish, not mature relating'.

The implicit messages here were similar to those given to the student nurses in a public hospital studied by Menzies Lyth (1960, p.445-446). Those who wanted to be recognised as professionals should "learn to be detached psychologically" (Menzies Lyth, p.1960, p.445) even if it meant changing their personality in order to fit in, leading to 'dis-identification' of the selves from the work they were doing (Costas and Fleming, 2009, p.365; Hochschild 1983).

Thus detachment was not only an individual defence mechanism as it was often portrayed by my participants, but a collective one, affecting behaviour and thought patterns across the organisation.

The 'invisible line' between professionalism and emotional relating shaped not only the way my interviewees made sense of their friendships and friendly interactions, but also shaped their own self-images of professionalism that would 'fit' the company's corporate image. Similarly to the DofI however, such defensive behaviour had resulted in maladaptive organisational behaviour, confirming again the statement of Mnguni (2010, p.122, drawing on Jaques, 1955), "Splitting and projection often occur when aspects of the task or of relation(s) are experienced as psychically painful or threatening".

Workplace friendship was not only a challenging relation personally, but was experienced as 'psychically painful and threatening' collectively. This was not only because of its complex emotional properties experienced by friendship dyads. It is because the organisation had implicitly tried to control these relations under the cover of risk management, and such behaviour led to the culture of treacherous behaviour of reporting back on each other, friendship betrayal in the name of guarding organisational integrity. This had led to paranoid perceptions in some organisational members about the genuine nature of intra-organisational relating, not only friendships. An ongoing process of deception, a violation of moral standards by those in the position of power resulted further in an infringement of trust, and belief in the HR and the management team.

Social defence theory is built on the premise that the role of organisations is to pay attention to the unconscious processes of their members and to help them with "bearing the unbearable" (Hinshelwood, 2001, p.45). It was Jaques (1953) who initially highlighted the important role of organisations in guarding staff against anxiety through organisational structures, referring to job tasks, culture, hierarchy and internal procedures. The organisational culture, and the internal procedures that The Friendly Organisation had in place, together with the discourse of professionalism was not having a protective effect, but rather a detrimental one on the psychological functioning, thoughts and behaviours of

some of the organisational members, thus affecting their emotional well-being overall.

7.2.3 The Source of Intra-organisational Tensions

The findings point out that the intra-organisational tensions that would have led to persecutory perceptions and the 'paranoid-schizoid' mode of thinking and behaviour were derived from firstly clashes of personal and collective defensive mechanisms in relation to friendship relating.

Workplace friendship was conceptualised as a carrier of organisational anxieties, threatening the very values of fairness and equality that the organisation strove to protect. Friendship discourse was saturated with the psychological threat of airing dirty laundry secrets to superiors. The HR function had become the carrier of the impossible organisational goals and hoped to be "in Weber's terms, a particular kind of moral institution in which principles of impartiality and fairness [were] paramount" (Hoggett, 2006, p.178).

These values would have initially attracted the organisational members to The Friendly Organisation (based on Hoggett, 2006) and were now being threatened, not strengthened by the likes of the DofI policy on friendships. The management was suspected of displaying dubious practices in terms of favouring friends, friendship betrayal was an accepted norm of behaviour in

order to progress within the organisation, and punishment for having friendships differed across the hierarchy. It is not considered here important to ascertain whether this favouritism existed in reality, but to acknowledge these perceptions as a result of splits and projections identified within the organisation, leading to demonising workplace relating and exacerbating tensions of already complex relations.

Secondly, the intra-organisational tensions are also seen as deriving from the paradoxical nature of this organisation. Although The Friendly Organisation was not a friendship culture where individuals interact informally, and the feelings of "closeness, and intimacy" alongside "individualism, egalitarianism" (Costas, 2012, p.378), and "greater dependency" on others (Costas, p.391) were displayed, it was, however, promoting integrity, teamwork, and support, at times also evoking a family-like feeling amongst participants. On the other hand individuals felt unrecognised, that their feelings were being dismissed. Whether it was when their colleagues were leaving (Lucy) or critiquing decisions (Alan), people did not feel treated like a 'valued family member'. Especially during organisational change, the HR function appeared to be not fulfilling its promise to look after the wellbeing of organisational members but instead contributed to the rise of 'primitive anxieties' (Obholzer, 1994, pp.206-207) resulting in people feeling not "protect[ed by The Friendly Organisation] from personal and social breakdown". They felt treated like "number[s]"

(Lucius), and 'watched' by internal 'spies' (Francis, Dean), compelled to report on their misbehaviour rather than having a friendly word of caution (Lucius, Sam, Sally).

I was able to make these interpretations not only through thematising the discourse, but also by paying attention to my own interactions with the interviewees. I identified our "intersubjective dynamics" that "shape[d] the structure and pattern of organisational identity" (Diamond, 2017, p.305).

In summary, this thesis has demonstrated the failure of social defence mechanisms, diagnosing this organisation as metaphorically suffering from neurotic traits with regards to its bureaucratic efforts and preoccupation with professional detachment behaviour.

At the same time, whilst some organisational scholars (e.g. Diamond, 2013) have succeeded in identifying defensive behavioural patterns across the organisation, and thus have been able to design their diagnosis for the organisation as a whole, this thesis has provided a variety of perspectives and has shown that the organisational identity is much more fragmented. I do not wish to claim uniformity that all organisational members, if interviewed, would have felt the same way towards The Friendly Organisation. However, amongst those that I have spoken to in my capacity as a researcher, I have identified problematic patterns of thought and behaviour.

It is therefore believed that if The Friendly Organisation, and organisations with similar outlook on friendship relations reassessed their 'containing' function of anxieties induced by organisational reality, and repositioned workplace friends as contributors to the 'holding environment' rather than a threat, establishing trust and reliability, instead of suppressing spontaneity and emotionality of the workplace, the social defence system would 'readjust' over time (Menzies Lyth, 1960). This would support rather than fight the organisational welfare. I will now present the significance of friendships as 'transitional' and 'containing' relations, and outline the significance of the challenges that they bring to individuals and organisations.

7.3 Opportunities of Workplace Friendship

In searching to understand the opportunities that friendships as affective and intimate relations in the workplace provide to individuals and organisations, I have interpreted my empirical data, as presented in Part Two of the data analysis section, through psychoanalytic concepts of transitional space (Winnicott, 1953; 1971), and that of container-contained (Bion, 1962).

It showed how these concepts could be used to understand the complex nature of these relations in various workplace settings. Whilst Sias (2009, p.91) already acknowledged the contribution of workplace friendship to

organisational "creativity and innovation" most likely through social networks, this research combined the individual and organisational perspectives as suggested by Grey and Sturdy (2007) and considered the benefits of transitional spaces to individuals and organisations where such creativity could arise. Amongst other benefits of friendship at work were highlighted human spontaneity, independence, autonomy, imagination, self-integrity and relative authenticity as follows.

7.3.1 Contributors to the 'Good Enough' Organizational Environment

In order to explore the opportunities that workplace friendships offer to individuals as complex affective attachments shaped by organisational boundaries, the data analysis in the Part Two was built on the psychoanalytic work of Little (1993), examining emotional thinking through the Winnicott's (1953; 1971) transitional spaces and Bion's (1962) concept of container-contained.

Drawing on Winnicott (1953; 1971) it has been theorised that general life friendships are in fact 'transitional' relations and that through these relations it is possible to become a "part of each other" (Little, 1993, p.47). I indeed identified the properties of a potential transitional space existing between friends at work, firstly by tracing how trust and confidence in the friends'

reliability occurred in my data. As it has been advocated, trust should be experienced first, before one is able to become self-reliant, separated from the Other, thus the presence of trust in any relations influences heavily the formation of the identity (Stapley, 1997, p.143). In addition, my participants were also referring to their friends as reliable sources of work related knowledge, and they stressed the confidence in their friendship relations able to provide support when needed, they evoked a sense of safety within the workplace and influenced a positive construction of the self within the workplace.

I emphasised that workplace friends are able to see the potential in us that other colleagues perhaps could not, to see ourselves beyond the mere role components of our workplace identities. In this sense I continue in the footsteps of Harding (2013), who studied archaeologists as friends at work, and was able to provide examples of passing recognition to each other, to the selves that would have been otherwise 'murdered' by the organisations, with only a "shadow of the dreamed-of, aspired-to self" left in the workplace (Harding, 2013, p.176).

Once I traced trust and confidence in the reliability of workplace friends, I was then able to evidence how one friends can evoke a type of thinking that Hollway (2011, p.50) drawing on Winnicott (1953; 1971) defines as "based on emotional experience and imagination" and is located in "an intermediate area between

inner reality and external life". The statement of Alan showed how he could have imagined his possible 'self-that-could have been' as Harding (2013) would put it, through his friendship. I have also shown an example within Martha's story where her inner self, soaked with anxiety and feelings of organisational persecution, was able to connect to a more authentic part of the self in the workplace through friends. In this case, aside from imagination, I have demonstrated the process of gaining self-integrity and authenticity. In doing so, I applied Ogden's (1994) understanding of Winnicott's (1953; 1971) transitional space as the 'in-between' space enabling one to function independently of, but also as an extension of, their friends.

It is Hollway (2011) who connects Winnicott's (1953; 1971) transitional space with the container-contained concept (Bion, 1962). This is to stress that it is not only what we think that matters, but we also need to pay attention to how our thinking is shaped by the emotional experiences of our inner self in relation to the external reality. When tracing the 'containing' function of friendship relations, I focused on the situations where organisations have been going through change and have been ineffective in containing personal and organisationally evoked anxieties. Here a psychoanalytic perspective is particularly suited to further workplace friendship scholarship by focusing on the emotional dimension of intimacy at an interpersonal level.

The stories of Sally and F4; Martha and Lucy or Alan and F10 in the empirical section have demonstrated the potential of friendships as intimate relations in assisting organisations and individuals to process emotional and workplace experiences which can be often overwhelming, arousing for example anxieties connected with loss and isolation at times of organisational restructures, and during/after disciplinary proceedings.

Through exploring the 'containing' capacity of friendship relations, in addition to transitional spaces, I was able to further the understanding of how a new sense of self can emerge through thinking in the 'in between' space in the context of changing organisation and the emergence of Ogden's (1992, p.619; 1994) new 'analytic subject'.

Whilst acknowledging the 'containing' capacity of friendships, the stories of Sally and F4; Martha and Lucy or Alan and F10 could also be interpreted metaphorically through having some properties of transitional objects (Winnicott, 1953; 1971). A transitional object is defined as a "first 'not-me' possession, that arises in the 'in between' space between the inner world and external reality of an infant (Winnicott, 1953, p.89), "a space that separates and connects" (Ogden, 1994, loc.896, p.75, ch.4), see section 3.6 on Holding Environments. We could see how the boundaries of 'me-not me' in these participants are being formed as a result of their friendship interaction. Van Buskirk and McGrath (1999) used the Community Women's Education Project

in Philadelphia to explain how organisational cultures serve as 'good' holding environments, through their "practices, symbols, structures" (p.814). They interpreted that individuality and the separateness of 'me from not-me' was demonstrated through students' ability to say "no" to oppressive structures, students being encouraged to say what they felt, and to own any negative feedback and be reflective about it. The above examples of Sally and Martha in particular also enable to see how their individuality, their 'more authentic' selves are preserved, and instead of remaining conformist, or silent, uncritical of the status quo, they were able to say "no" in the presence of friends.

From an organisational point of view, the presence of friends acting as 'containers', or 'transitional' relations may be seen as contributing to gossip, as it involves intimacy and personal self-disclosures. However, if their capacity is approached from the point of view of enabling Others to stay 'true to themselves', being spontaneous, and think separately, differently from the organisation, then such separation can bring creativity and innovation, rather than conformity.

By tracing the key themes running through both sections on Transitional Relations and Containing Relations I foreground a psycho-social explanation of shifting and shaping subjectivity and intersubjectivity that is possible through friendship at work. In this way, these themes build on the workplace friendship literature, such as research influenced by feminist perspectives (Andrew and

Montague, 1998), queer theory (Rumens, 2008; 2009; 2011) and sociology of friendship (Spencer and Pahl, 2006). Notably, researching friendship relations psycho-socially provides a different conceptual angle to the exploration of the emotional dimension of how one is developing different parts of subjectivity through workplace friendship, as foregrounded by Rumens (2011).

I refer to the personal shift in subjectivity and intersubjectivity that can lead to an emergence of an "authentic and resilient" self (based on Diamond, 2017, p.300), the self that doesn't "[lack] passion and originality" (Carr and Downs, 2004, p.354). In these terms, Stapley (1996, p.138) referred to the capacity to be free from "social controls" without experiencing "guilt" (Stapley, 1996, p.138), whether it is the rise of new ideas, or the ability to think for oneself and challenge the status quo. These are not only personal qualities that contribute to the healthy emotional development of individuals, but also from an organisational point of view, these may lead to positive organisational outcomes, such as increased creativity and innovation in the workplace.

Firstly, it is Winnicott (1953) who stated that a transitional space can lead to "the creative playing that arises naturally out of the relaxed state" in individuals (ibid., 1971, p.146). In the transitional space it is not the genetics that are of importance, but foremost "lived experiences" (Stapley, 1996, p.132; see also Winnicott, 1953; 1971). Therefore workplace experiences are also crucial in

adding to the rise of transitional spaces, whether it is through supporting friendship relations or other means.

Applying this theorising to the study of organisations, when individuals are able to be imaginative or creative at work, or even "free to play at work", this, according to Diamond (2017, p.293) signifies the type of organisational identity that is respectful, trusting, open and consulting towards its employees. Individuals are then "treated as competent and well-informed adults, not as dependent and powerless children", summarises Diamond (2017, p.293).

Therefore, what we can learn from transitional spaces and containing of organisational anxieties, whether contributed to by friendships or other relations, is as follows. The presence of trust and reliability, instead of close supervision and intimidation in the workplace, also the ability to process the inner anxieties in relation to, often hostile, external organisational reality, can instigate imagination, self-integrity and authenticity, the free-flow of ideas and reflection, rather than conflicting behaviour at work. In this way I believe friends contribute to what Rumens (2009, p.136) describes as "negotiating a sense of self in the workplace", and individual psychological flourishing (Rumens, 2017).

By looking at individual and organisational benefits at the same time, whether this is through the study of the collective defence mechanisms and transitional spaces or containing relations, I have acknowledged and demonstrated the "embeddedness" of these relations within institutions. I therefore agree with

Grey and Sturdy (2007, p.164) who warns against focusing solely on either the individuals or organisations when researching friendships at work as this would limit understanding how organisations and individuals influence each other.

Overall, this thesis foregrounds those organisational environments that encourage emotions rather than suppress them in favour of rationality. Organisational psychoanalysts and consultants (Jaques, 1953; Menzies Lyth, 1960; Kets de Vries and Associates, 1991; Diamond, 1993; Kets De Vries, 2004; Armstrong, 2005), notably those of the Tavistock tradition and human services specialists (e.g. Obholzer and Zagier Roberts, 1994), remind us strongly of the responsibility of organisations to find means of containing anxiety of their staff, especially during organisational change (Obholzer, 1994a). When they are able to do so, whether it is through effective leadership or a 'containing' organisational culture supportive of friendship relations, organisations could then be considered in symbolic terms as " '*good enough*' *holding environments"* as stressed by Diamond (1998, p.319; emphasis author's own) drawing on Winnicott (1965). In these environments, as Diamond (1998, p.319; emphasis author's own) continues to argue, staff are able to experience not the idealised safe and secure environment but the

> *transitional space* in which members can explore their organisational identities, painful and anxiety provoking processes of change, counter-productive and destructive managerial practices, and the like.

As demonstrated in the empirical section, friendship relations are 'transitional' relations, able to contribute to creating such transitional spaces, and to containing anxieties. Their existence in organisations is therefore considered here as a sign of such "good enough" holding environments.

It is Hoggett (2006, p.189) who highlights that especially public sector organisations should be striving to provide 'a facilitating environment' to support organisational members' development, their "sense of what is good and bad, right and wrong for me/my organisation to be doing". This is because their primary purpose is bringing "value" to the public, and this is how they retain their "legitimacy" (Hoggett, 2006, p.189). The same could be claimed of third sector organisations. Conceptualising friendships as beneficial to such environments, this study foregrounds their value to both organisations and individuals. By the term 'beneficial' I also mean a recognition that workplace friendships comprise of both 'opportunities' and 'challenges' to individuals.

7.4 Challenges of Workplace Friendship

Workplace friendships are not easy to initiate and maintain in workplace settings, they are intricate relations and thus it is not helpful to consider these only in positive terms. Therefore, with the embeddedness in mind, linking the organisational with the individual view, I also studied workplace friendship challenges.

There is already a growing body of literature that is concerned with harmful aspects of workplace friendships both for individuals and organisations, with a common understanding that "deterioration of relations means deterioration of organisational functioning" (Sias, 2006, p.70). The price that individuals pay from negative encounters is not only the deterioration of their psychological well-being (Rook, 1984), but also their inability to perform well on the job (Morrison and Nolan, 2007, p.213). Organisations are then affected in terms of decreased effective functioning as well as employee turnover, as pointed out by Sias (2006, p.77).

It was not my intention to trace all of the difficulties that there were in terms of initiating and maintaining workplace friendship, but to concentrate on the illustration of defence mechanisms and unconscious emotions such as envy that can help to illuminate what I called emotionally harmful aspects of workplace friendship. Through such analysis I also wished to uncover some of

the signs of organisational malfunctioning behaviour as affected by these relations.

At first I looked at tracing *workplace envy* as a challenge of this relation that has already been noted as being problematic for friends at work (e.g. Berman, West and Richter, 2002; Morrison and Nolan, 2007). However, I did not just simply look at the discourse of envious attacks between individuals but through the story of Sam and F3 I also attempted to show the intricacies of workings of envy, how it underpins friendship at work when one friend is promoted over another, also the negative impact of it on leadership and thus showing how it affects organisations in general.

Hierarchy can be problematic in the formation and maintenance of friendship (e.g. Rumens, 2011, p.10). Sias *et al.* (2004) investigated in more detail five promotional narratives of friends at work showing that formal authority of one friend over the other has led in all five cases to friendship deterioration although they did not mention envious attacks. This is because friendship at work can cause a variety of dialectic strains, such as an impaired sense of equality, the efforts of keeping information confidential, maintaining autonomy, ability to reach consensus, ability to accept negative feedback and ability to display friendship without envious attacks of others (Bridge and Baxter, 1992, p.216). The psychoanalytical interpretative approach to envy in workplace friendship adds to the above discourse and narrative studies by expanding on the

unconscious dimension of its mechanisms and this research shows its presence in promotional experiences.

Kets de Vries and Miller (1984, pp.88-93), on the basis of their psychoanalytically informed management consultancy experience, stressed that the presence of envy in interpersonal relations can be a sign of "persecutory transference", meaning unconsciously perceiving authoritative figures as persecutory whilst reliving past unpleasant experiences and feelings. Envy is then presented as a strong wish to destroy or upset others whilst maintaining the perception that one is treated badly (Kets de Vries and Miller, 1984, p.92). This powerful emotion has been recognised as one of the prime damaging phenomena occurring in relations between leaders and their subordinates (Obholzer, 1994b, p.44).

Through the story of F3 and Sam I illustrated forms of unconscious and conscious envious attacks showing how friendship betrayal manifested itself through the lack of cooperative behaviour, acts of selfishness, aggressive outbursts and insubordination. F3 was presented as a villain and Sam as the recipient of the envious acts, showing signs of disbelief and surprise with his behaviour.

Based on Kets de Vries and Miller (1984) workplace friendship is not immune to persecutory transference, and therefore friends in leadership positions can awaken persecutory feelings towards authoritative figures from the past. In their

own words, " [o]ne should never underestimate the symbolic role that they fulfill for the people with whom they interact" (Kets de Vries and Miller, 1984, p.93). Transference has been recognised as a phenomenon residing "in all meaningful relations" (Kets de Vries and Miller, 1984, p.74), but superior-subordinate relations especially are prone to the unconscious efforts of "reliv[ing]" and "rework[ing]" of "emotional experiences" resulting in defensive behaviours at work (Krantz, 1993, p.4).

French, Gosling and Case (2009) based on Klein's and Bion's work theorised that betrayal will always be not the outcome of, but coexisting with friendship. I would like to argue that envy, which can occur as a result of 'persecutory transference' and arise when feeling betrayed by a friend, is also not the result of but intrinsic to workplace friendship promotional experiences, always present in the background. It is Klein who believed that envy is present in our lives from the beginning, it gets worse when we are faced with hardship in our lives, and it intensifies the feelings of being persecuted and feelings of guilt (Bott Spllius *et al.*, 2011, loc.4685). With regards to workplaces, the scarcity of resources, including promotional opportunities, create a natural environment for occurrence of envy, not only as a possibility but more as an inevitable outcome (Morrison and Nolan, 2007, p.205). Therefore, workplace friendship appears to be its inevitable carrier.

As such, envy in friendship could become not only harmful to the recipient in terms of affecting their well-being, or affecting their performance as mentioned in the studies above, but also act as an incentive to many types of malicious behaviour in the workplace that could easily spread from an individual to the group. And if there are several envious attacks, for example, on persons in authority by various others, driven by for example F3 in Sam's case, envy can then become an intrinsic part of the social system (Stein, 2000, p.203). Any new members joining the organisation would be consciously or unconsciously influenced to carry on with "new envious attacks on others" (Stein, 2000, p.203), and there is a danger that envy would become ingrained in the whole functioning of an organisation. It is Stein (2000, p.193) who calls on psychoanalytically oriented organisational scholars to study "social systems as an envious attack".

I therefore propose, in line with Stein (2000), that further studies could be carried out into workplace friendship envy from a psychodynamic perspective, to study organisational collective responses as mechanisms for dealing with this strong emotion. These responses could be conscious or unconscious and in time can become an inseparable part of norms, policies and procedures of organisations, as shown in the first studies of social defence systems by Menzies Lyth (1964) and Jaques (1953). In friendship cultures, in particular, workplace envy, if not guarded against, can become a dangerous part of

promotional procedures and shade not only the fairness and equality of promotional pathways, but also sabotage the day to day smooth running of operations.

Friendship in the workplace should therefore never be looked at from solely positive lenses as it also attracts an array of negative experiences inherent to it. It could even become one of the drives for envious attacks spreading through the veins of organisations and thus the study of friendship could serve as a starting point to uncover social systems, not as defences only but also as envious attacks.

With this in mind through social defence theory and the symptoms of individual defence mechanisms, or their "social counterpart" (Jaques, 1955, p.479) I attempted to trace further negative emotions connected this time to *friendship loyalty*. I highlighted collective defensive behaviour in an area office of The Friendly Organisation where two friends Martha and Lucy felt ostracised because of their friendship. Splitting and projections were identified in behaviour at the group level as the first signs of organisational malfunctioning, leading to a third collective defence mechanism – 'idealisation' of a team member.

I suggested that this idealisation in combination with friendship loyalty had led to 'blind followership' on the part of some within the office, and thus blocking their individuality, critical thinking and decision-making. I argued that such

behaviour is only a symptom and that looking further into organisational structures can offer further diagnosis, following the pioneers of social defence theory Menzies Lyth (1964) and Jaques (1953; 1955).

Searching through the data of participants other than Martha and Lucy, I traced the pressure of frequent organisational change leading to feelings of fear and distress. I therefore suggested that such strong friendship ties, polarisation, idealisation and friendship loyalty on one hand appeared to be connected to survival mechanisms at times of organisational restructures and redundancies when one's existence within the organisation has been threatened in the battle of 'survival of the fittest'. This interpretation is possible as siding with strong figures in the workplace, holding onto friendship loyalty, whether truthful or false, can give rise to a sense of certain security at times of change.

Observation of manifested projection, splitting and idealisation on the social level, in the name of friendship loyalty, evoking a sense of security, kinship, support at times of change, can therefore be interpreted as symptoms of diagnosis for the whole organisation. Such defensive reactions in connection with friendship loyalty, drawing on Costas (2012), are considered here as an effect of normative organisational control.

As a third challenge of friendship at work *friendship ambivalence* has been explored, that I defined as holding conflicting feelings towards a friend. Through the story of Leslie and her line manager whom she befriended whilst working

at The Friendly Organisation, and later on developed a strong friendship bond with, I have demonstrated how workplace friendship can not only 'tear an individual' and become personally challenging. It can also lead to 'clouded judgements' in this case manifested through covering a type of organisational malbehaviour – workplace bullying. I identified Leslie's humorous friendship experiences and rationalisations of the bullying as "less regressive defens[ive]" behaviour, explained by organisational scholars Diamond, Allcorn and Stein (2004, p.41).

As her experiences of ambivalence were not worked through properly whilst working at The Friendly Organisation, using Parker's (2005, p.10) research on maternal ambivalence, Leslie has not worked through this relation, it did not lead for her to any "creative … possibilities" of dealing with it whilst working together. Instead it resulted in her personal disappointment and anger. As Bott Spillus et al. (2011, loc.2799, ch.5, p.96) point out from Klein's (1940) work, the cost of ambivalence is the loss of trust, hope and judgement.

Therefore a further challenge of friendship at the individual level as a result of ambivalent experiences not worked through could be losing trust, hope and judgement not only in friendship, but also towards a colleague, a line manager, a leader, and ultimately the organisation itself for allowing this behaviour to carry on. Ultimately, organisational misbehaviour, such as bullying in this case,

would stay unchallenged because of someone's inability to work through the intensity of ambivalent friendship feelings.

By outlining friendship challenges I aimed to foreground that friendship relations are by their very nature facilitators of both opportunities and challenges for individuals. By integrating both of these perspectives, and by being able to work though, rather than avoiding potential relational difficulties, I argue that individuals could benefit in the sense of psychologically moving from "part-to-whole object relating", the ego-relatedness as outlined by Klein's theory (Bott Spillius et al., 2011, loc. 2242, p.75, ch.4).

Research questions

As outlined in the <u>Synopsis,</u> the first three research questions that this thesis sought an answer to were in relation to the collective experiences of friendship, as occurring in particular organisational settings. I had an opportunity to study psycho-social dynamics of workplace friendship in a highly regulated organisational environment, which shaped my answers to the research questions as follows.

With regards to intersubjective collective emotional properties of workplace friendship (RQ1), I focused on exploring the facets of persecutory anxiety, irrational fear and series of related defences in terms of organisational

projections, splittings and idealisations. I identified that once workplace friendships, already complex relations that attract a myriad of positive and negative affects, are subjected to organisational control measures and rituals, they are likely to attract intense emotional relations of persecutory perceptions, to be perceived as 'bad objects' avoided at all costs, regarded as relations that are dangerous to the welfare of organisations, and questioning the values of fairness and equality.

They will attract the Kleinian 'paranoid-schizoid' type of thinking and behaviour, meaning that individuals will be unable to form healthy relations, and distinguish "between good and bad parts of the self, between the good and bad object[s], and between external and internal reality" (Klein, 1963, p.304). This is regarded as the opposite from a more mature relating from Kleinian 'depressive' position, meaning the integration of the 'good' and 'bad' in the self and the Other, trusting oneself and the Other, being open to possible conflicts and challenges, being vulnerable in the presence of the Other, and so on.

In observing this type of relating, I identified that the collective anxieties/frustrations/ fears in relation to workplace friendship were indeed exacerbated by organisational policies and practices (RQ2). This is because I traced the facets of 'paranoid-schizoid' anxiety in the organisation as a whole, running in parallel with complacency culture, ritualistic practices of declaring at

times even small acts of relating, examples of deceptive behaviour in the name of organisational fairness, all being the unintentional consequences in terms of disturbing the natural flow of friendship affects, the ability and willingness to initiate and/ or to maintain friendship relations.

As for the nature of collective defence mechanisms surrounding workplace friendships (RQ3), I conceptualised and examined the friendship policy and the discourse of professionalism as extreme organisational defences against relational anxieties, and as an organisational extreme response to external regulatory pressures to demonstrate fairness and equality in organisational behaviour. I found out that a bureaucratic policy can function as not only a response to favoritism, or managerial mistrust in people, but also as an internalised symbol of morality, a guardian of moral principles and attract ritualistic type of organisational behaviour. the discourse of professionalism signified a strong sense of emotional detachment from personal relating, shaping also the self-images of employees to fit the corporate ideals.

In answer to my final research question (RQ4) on opportunities and challenges of friendship attachments within organisational boundaries, I identified the potential of friendship relating to create a transitional space, that is a space between the inner world and the external reality (Winnicott, 1953; 1971) where subjectivity and intersubjectivity is formed and shaped by trust confidence in

reliability, imagination, self-integrity and authenticity. With the same intention I also explored the capacity of friends to act as 'containers' of workplace anxieties. As for the challenges of friendship relating, I highlighted the workings of friendship envy, loyalty and also ambivalence. I showed how these challenges of individuals do not only impact negatively on psychological wellbeing of individuals, but can also be translated into types of organisational misbehaviour.

Key Contributions to the Literature

This thesis' main theoretical contributions are threefold as follows. Firstly, it contributes to the workplace friendship scholarship conceptually, in terms of adopting psychodynamic lenses when approaching the experiences of these intricate relations. I have evidenced the value that psychoanalysis brings to the study of workplace friendships as highly affective and intimate relations. I examined the facets of anxiety that is induced by organisational regulations in relation to friendship. I introduced the concept of transitional space (Winnicott, 1953; 1971) between friends to explore the process of imagination and a possibility of friends existing as an extension to the self whilst being independent of each other (Ogden, 1994). I also offered rich examples to evidence the process of thinking based on internal conflicts and organisational

reality, on the basis of a container-contained relations. I examined the workings of friendship envy, friendship loyalty and ambivalence with regards to the impact on the psychological functioning and behaviour of individuals but also collectives.

In doing so, I developed an understanding of challenges and opportunities that workplace friendship offers to us, so that we are able to lead meaningful and creative lives, in the sense of being connected to more "authentic and resilient" selves in the workplace (Diamond, 2017, p.300). My work therefore adds to the scarce evidence base of qualitative studies on workplace relations that show the potential of workplace friendship in "helping individuals to pursue a meaningful existence along different pre-established and new pathways" (Rumens, 2017, p.1151; see also Fritz, 2014). This study can also enrich our understanding of the facets of anxiety that arise between workplace friends, as already noted by Morrison and Nolan (2007a) in the case of workplace reprimands and Sias (2006) in the case of friendship breakdowns.

Furthermore, by acknowledging workplace friendships as "embedded" in organisations (Grey and Sturdy, 2007, p.164), my research has implications for academia in terms of opening new possibilities to study these relations "as both organisational phenomena and lived experience[s]" (ibid), rather than focusing on individuals' and/or organisational sides separately. I have shown how a psychodynamic conception of organisations and workplace friendships enable

to progress analysis from the intra-personal level, to the interpersonal and organisational level. This extends our understanding of relational dynamics in workplaces on the conscious, but also the unconscious level.

I make a second theoretical contribution to the organisational literature that adopts psychoanalytic lenses. As Gabriel (2008, p.75) points out, individual psychic defence mechanisms can be either collectively deployed by organisational members and studied as such; or the organisation itself can take on characteristics of such defence mechanisms. In the latter case, the organisation uses a number of "socially structured defence mechanisms" that serve to 'protect' its members from the experiences of anxiety (Menzies Lyth, 1960, p.109). In this thesis I identified organisational pathologies by tracing the lived experiences of workplace friendship relations and in this way I opened up new avenues of exploring the workings of collective psychological defences. Metaphorically speaking, I evidenced the signs of organisational 'neuroticism' (Kets de Vries and Associates, 1991; Krantz, 1997, 2006) that run through the organisational identity as defined by Diamond (1988, 1993, 2017).

Thirdly, this study has also the implications to organisational behaviour by using friendship as a method of inquiry. It has been shown in this thesis that through the application of the psychodynamic lenses on friendship relating that it is possible to uncover the signs of organisational misbehaviour, or as some authors would argue - the dark side of organisational behaviour, namely

workplace bullying, insubordination, inconsistencies in followership of policies, mistrust and betrayal. Rumens (2017, p.1157) highlights the need to study workplace friendships as practices to understand more about friendship experiences and how they "overlap" with other relations within and outside of the workplace. What he does not highlight though is how such study of workplace friendship practices can help to illuminate those parts of organisational behaviour or misbehaviour that might have otherwise remained dormant. This is where a psychodynamic conception of relations and organisations is most helpful.

Chapter eight: Conclusion

The following chapter will provide a summary of the thesis as a whole. An account of the contributions will be made, the limitations of the study will be acknowledged, recommendations to the future directions of research and practice will be outlined.

My overall argument running though this thesis is that if workplace friendships are automatically labelled with favouritism, considered as sentimental, childish, impulsive or disobedient relations in the need of managerial control, we are very likely to detect very intense emotional reactions and defence mechanisms amongst organisational members, specifically of a 'paranoid-schizoid' nature.

I foreground an argument that friendship relations contain complex affects, and offer both opportunities and challenges that can aid individuals' emotional processing of their inner anxieties and organisational experiences. Therefore, rather than fostering organisational view of splitting these relations into a 'good' and a 'bad' category, they should be considered as a whole, as a necessary ingredient of the relational landscape of organisations and their healthy psychological functioning. This is because the ability to consider the self and relate to the Other as a whole object, rather than perceiving only a part of the self, and/ or a friend-object, is considered here a mature form of psychological development.

Chapter one of this thesis, through the review of literature (see <u>Understanding Friendship at Work</u>) established that friendships are highly affective relations, with affect encompassing desires, drives, feelings, emotions, as well as bodily experiences. Friendship intimacy (see section on <u>Intimate Dimensions of Friendship in the Workplace)</u> has been understood here as a holistic concept encompassing psychological closeness but also distance, ability to be spontaneous, vulnerable, trusting, even if it is accompanied by risk, vulnerability and uncertainty. It has also been advocated that first "awareness" of relational affection comes from friendship "subjects", as opposed to "objects of love", based on Derrida's (1994, p.10) thesis on the politics of friendship.

Chapter two engaged with the literature on rational thinking and behaviour in organisations, and discussed friendship relating as emotional relating. This chapter acknowledged the existence of bureaucratic efforts to rationalise private relations (e.g. Ashcraft, 2000) and argued that friendships can lead to moral actions in organisations, and should not be equated with sentiments and eliminated from organisational life.

Chapter three provided an overview of psychoanalysis and Object Relations school in relation to organisational literature, focusing on the contribution of Klein (1935, 1940, 1946, 1963, 1986), Winnicott (1953, 1965, 1971, 1989) and Bion (1961, 1962). It clarified the understanding of organisational members as 'psychosocial subjects' (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000), reacting psychologically

as well as socially with the web of workplace relations and social structures. Individuals were therefore also regarded as 'defended subjects' (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000; 2005) with their inner conflicts mediated by the ego through the deployment of a range of individual defences.

This chapter also clarified the meaning behind being able to psychologically function from the 'depressive position', that is according to the Kleinian thesis a 'mature mode' of relating. In organisational literature it has been interpreted as individuals being able to, for example, "integrate experience, think, collaborate, tolerate complexity, and assess reality from multiple perspectives" (Krantz, 2006, p.228). Therefore, in the case of workplace friendship, it means that individuals should be naturally interested in others, inquisitive rather than fearful of initiating and maintaining meaningful relations, able to manage rather than being avoidant of conflict, able to display the emotional states of "guilt, the desire for love, mourning or reparation" (Sievers, 2006, p.112), and minimizing defensive reactions from the 'paranoid-schizoid position' such as splitting, projections, and projective identification.

Chapter four focused on methodological approaches in psychoanalytically informed social research, and have introduced the methods of data collection used in this thesis. The sources of data were written documents, semi-structured interviews, and autoethnographic elements based on my own experiences of the relationship policy.

The data analysis chapters five and six at first examined the collective emotional impact of bureaucratic measures and discourse of professionalism, and conceptualised these as collective defence mechanisms. In doing so, I focused on answering first three research questions, aimed at collective emotional experiences of workplace friendships within a regulated organisational environment. The data analysis followed by a close examination of workplace friendship experiences as 'transitional' relations and 'containing' relations, drawing on Object Relations theorists Winnicott (1953; 1971) and Bion (1962). Challenges of workplace friendship emotional relating were also considered by tracing friendship envy, loyalty and ambivalence. This section therefore engaged in particular with the last research question of this thesis regarding the exploration of the benefits and challenges of workplace friendship relating in terms of forming close attachments within professional boundaries. A succinct answer to all the research questions can be found at the end of the following discussion chapter.

Chapter seven provided a theoretical discussion of key themes running through the data analysis in relation to literature. It presented organisational pathology as the study of social defences surrounding bureaucratic measures and the discourse of professionalism. It explained the meaning behind analysing organisations as metaphorically suffering from neurotic traits, such as displaying "anxiety over losing control" (Diamond, 1985, p.663), and displaying

'paranoid-schizoid' thought and behavioural patterns. It also argued for the importance to reposition workplace friendships as 'containing', 'transitional' and challenging relations, rather than labeling them as oppositions to organisational rationality.

Repression of the emotional side in favour of organisational rationality, avoidance of conflict, challenges of intra-organisational relating, and discouragement of spontaneity, all have their toll on healthy functioning in organisations. Workplaces should not be considered as places where only rationality governs, because it could lead to, as practitioners would put it, the loss of authenticity of organisational members (Thompson, 2016, p.24). Subjecting emotions and emotional relating to rational outlook might, as Ten Bos and Willmott (2001, p.770) argue, "undermine rather than contribute to moral action" in organisations. It could also lead to a form of "institutional alienation", when organisations with their excessive bureaucratic burdens are felt to be "alien, split from the individuals who make it up" (Hinshelwood, 2001, p.147). Or even worse, when the so called 'authentic selves' in organisations are experienced as "self-alienated", that is "false and contrived" (Costas and Fleming, 2009, p.354) as the organisational members realise [perhaps too late] "that 'who they really are' is in fact the unwanted corporate sel[ves]" (p.355). As I argued above, this may also impair the ability of individuals to psychologically move from "part-to-whole object relating", interfering with the

ego-relatedness as outlined by Klein's theory (Bott Spillius et al., 2011, loc. 2242, p.75, ch.4).

Theoretical contributions of this thesis specifically to workplace friendship literature, literature on social defence systems, and implications for the study of organisational behaviour, are considered at the end of chapter seven. Throughout this study I wanted to convey the tremendous conceptual value that a psychodynamic study of organisational relating can bring, in order to be able to fully appreciate workplace friendships with all their affective complexity, their "embedded" nature (Grey and Sturdy, 2007), and to understand organisations as "emotional arenas" (Fineman, 1993) in depth. I have also shown how following patterns of behaviour and thought on workplace friendship can be used to diagnose not only organisational pathology, but also increased organisational tensions derived from the paradoxical nature of organisational behaviour, marked by friendship betrayal, double standards and mistrust.

Limitations of the Study

As a first limitation of this study I recognise that only one organisation had been studied in depth and therefore any generalisations made on this example have to be made with caution. I am not claiming that all public sector organisations

with workplace friendship policies would have suffered with neuroticism as shown above, but managing the emotionally complex relations with rational measures is likely to cause similar emotional reactions in other places.

The limitations of this study are also seen in having spoken to only a few friendship dyads. In order to fully appreciate the "dialectic tensions between subjectivity and intersubjectivity" as done in a clinical reflexive example of Ogden (1994, loc. 1001, ch.5) and his patient, there is a need to consider stories from both friends, rather than focusing on the emotional intensity in positioning the self and the Other in the story. Yet, researching friendship dyads has been seen in friendship research also as ethically interfering with friendship, that is 'confirming' affection, attachment bonds and so on which may be experienced and perceived differently by friendship dyads. However, interviewing friendship dyads is considered as adding an additional value to understanding fully the emotional dimension of shifting subjectivity and rising 'intersubjectivity' and the 'analytic third' (Ogden, 1994).

Recommendations for Friendship Scholars and Practitioners

An area worthy of further research is friendship's potential for "collective creation and innovation" Dubouloy (2004, p.476). In this thesis there was not a space to explore 'playfulness' through workplace friendship, as the focus has been on the part of imaginative thinking that can occur through this relation.

Winnicott's (1953; 1971) transitional space has however been studied mainly through play, rather than the presence of reliability and trust, imagination, self-integrity and authenticity, as I have shown in this thesis. It has also been already claimed that this space is "the location of images and metaphoric processes such as found in musical compositions, poetry, literature and culture and the construction of self and group identities" (Diamond, 2017, p.294).

Because my participants have also provided rich humorous stories in relation to playfulness at work, connected to their friendship beginnings or in relation to becoming closer to one another, I call for organisational researchers to explore further these playful properties of friendship transitional spaces. This is mainly because of the organisational benefits of these relations once creativity translates into organisational innovation, but foremost to understand healthy emotional flourishing in the workplace through workplace friendship, as Rumens (2017) calls for and highlights.

Furthermore, in Part two of the data analysis I have shown numerous examples of where my participants referred to their workplace friends via metaphors of family, motherly figures, brotherly figures and father figures. Although it was not the focus of this thesis to explore the meaning of these metaphors further, a study of attachment theory in relation to workplace friendship in a variety of workplace contexts would enhance our knowledge of the meaning making attached to this type of relation. Applying psychoanalytic understanding to

these metaphors, identification with the 'good object' such as a parent can have a prominent impact on the development and growing sense of wellbeing of an individual (Hinshelwood, 1994, pp.71-72). Therefore a growing sense of wellbeing through friendship could be further explored, using the sociology of friendship (Spencer and Pahl, 2006) as a starting point .

As for practitioners, they too often fall into the trap of rationalist thinking on the topic of organisational relations (Thompson, 2016, p.24). It is however not only rational beings, but also complex emotional beings that form organisations. Therefore a psychodynamic conception of organisational relating should be included in any range of factors taken into account in decision-making and introducing organisational policies and procedures.

Furthermore, organisations have not only a duty of care to their members, but also a moral duty to support individuals in dealing with challenges and opportunities of emotionally complex organisational life.

Firstly, organisations need to be aware that they themselves can induce intense emotional reactions in individuals. The nature of job roles, as well as the psychological stress and strains that one encounters through their work, can increase the level of individual's own psychic anxieties. The need to defend against them then becomes very strong and can lead to the development of harmful thought patterns, organisational 'maladaptive' behaviour and dysfunctional structures, as it was shown in throughout this thesis, following the

pioneering work of Menzies Lyth (1960, 1991) Jaques (1953, 1955) and Trist and Bamforth (1951).

Secondly, one of the reasons why individuals join organisations, and choose particular job roles is to help them to deal with "unresolved developmental issues from early infancy" (Mnguni, 2010, p.121; Obholzer and Zagier Roberts, 1994). It is important to recognise that "psychotic processes" of individuals' are part of healthy development of human beings (Jaques, 1953, p.3). However, as Hinshelwood (2001, p.45) puts it, in practice organisations are too often guilty of neglecting the unconscious emotional processing and forget their "job of bearing the unbearable" for their members. In other words, organisations need to be aware and embrace the opportunity of serving a defensive function for organisational members (Trist and Bamforth, 1951; Jaques, 1953; 1955; Menzies Lyth, 1960, 1991; Hinshelwood, 2001), and also a creative function (Mnguni, 2010).

This thesis therefore adds value to practitioners in terms of contributing to the evidence base on detecting social defences in the thought patterns and behaviours of organisational members. Much of the social behaviour in organisations becomes more understandable if we can look at it from the point of view of people defending against their anxieties, the origins of which cannot be managed consciously (Jaques, 1955, p.479).

Appendices

Appendix 1: Sample of Drawings
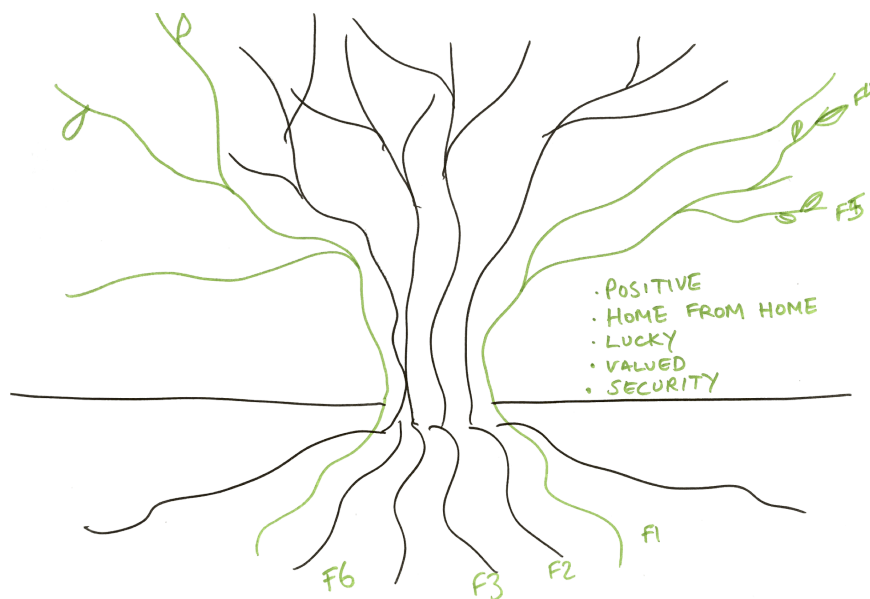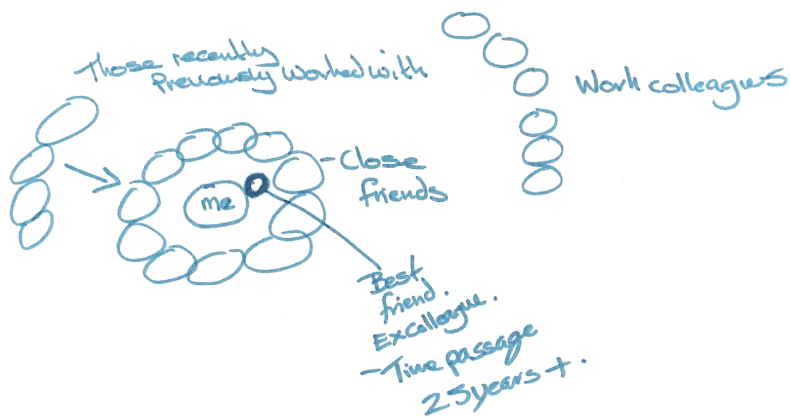
Appendix 2: Ethics

2.1 Pilot Study Ethics - approved Application Form

UNIVERSITY CAMPUS SUFFOLK

ETHICS APPROVAL APPLICATION FORM FOR NON CLINICAL RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMANS/ANIMAL

Please give an answer to ALL questions. Failure to do so will result in automatic voidance of application. You may use the term 'not applicable' where necessary.

Please consult UCS Student Guide to the Ethics Approval Process, available on the intranet for guidance on completing this form

1.   APPLICANT DETAILS

1.1 Name of applicant   Jana Javorska

1.1 Student ID   S152158

1.3 School/Department/Centre   UCS School of Business Leadership and Enterprise

1.4 Course/Programme   PhD

1.5 Date of application   04 March 2015

2. I AM CARRYING THIS PROJECT OUT AS:

Staff Research Project		Postgraduate Masters Research		Postgraduate Doctoral Research	x
Externally Funded Project (State Funding Body)		Undergraduate (Degree or Diploma Dissertation)		Other please describe	

3. PROPOSED DURATION OF PROJECT

(dd/mm/yy)　　　　　　(dd/mm/yy)

From: [ANONYMISED]　To: [ANONYMISED]

The dates above are in relation of the pilot only, as the research project is for my PhD research purposes, with the programme ending in October 2016.

If you are unable to start and finish by these dates, please inform the relevant School/Centre Ethics Panel in writing.

4. RESEARCH STUDENTS. Please give details of your supervisor(s)

TITLE & SURNAME	FIRST NAME	PHONE	EMAIL (UCS e-mail address only)
Dr Thomas	Will		w.thomas@ucs.ac.uk

Prof Warren	Samantha		swarren@essex.ac.uk
Prof Hallsworth	Simon		s.hallsworth@ucs.ac.uk

5. STAFF RESEARCHERS. Please give full details of all researchers involved in the project

6.   TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT AND A BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Please consult the UCS Student Guide to the Ethics Approval Process (available on the intranet) for more information. Proposals that do not give sufficient information will be rejected by the School/Centre Ethics Panel and this will delay the start of your research.

I am seeking an ethical approval to conduct a preliminary research, consisting of interviews, observations of employee behaviour and organizational settings and textual analysis. This research will enable me to work towards the completion of my Doctoral Dissertation and Viva Voce.

Working title: Catch Me before I Fall: The Power of Social Relationships at Work

Thesis Rationale

This thesis supports thinking about the potential of friendship for becoming one of the most significant assets for individuals at work, and thus seeks to influence managerial thinking on the challenges this relationship creates in the working sphere.

The main objective is to investigate the extent to which workplace friendships shape people's personal and professional lives in 21st century, and thus potentially improving psychological wellbeing at work.

The research sub-questions are as follows:

· Is psychological closeness really important for the development of workplace friendship?

· Why are friendships formed at work?

· In what way workplace friendships shape perceptions of self as a human being and a working professional?

· What is the contribution of workplace friendship to self- development and self-worth at work

Methodology and methods:

As my research methodology is phenomenological, rather than positivistic, I will be starting with semi-structured narrative interviews in a chosen organisation as my pilot study. This organisation is [ANONYMISED] with a base in [ANONYMISED]. Next, I would like to adopt online research methods to supplement my research in the organisation. In particular, I would like to create a blog where people could post their stories, talk about stories and comment on them. For the research blog, I will be seeking a separate ethics approval.

[ANONYMISED] In addition I have to retain the confidentiality and anonymity of participants at all time.

7.   METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION   (Tick as many as apply)

	✓
Questionnaire (attach a copy)	
Interviews (attach a copy)	✓
Observation (Please attach an observation proforma)	
Audio-taping interviewees or events (with consent)	✓
Focus Groups	
Biometric measurement (Please attach a measurement proforma)	
Physiological measurement (Please attach a measurement proforma)	
Performance measurement (Please attach a measurement proforma)	
Physiological self-assessment (Please provide details)	
Psychological self-assessment (Please provide details)	
Psychological experimentation (Please provide details)	
Animal Feeding/Therapeutic trials (Please provide details)	

Adding to or changing an aspect of an animal's environment (including enforcing physical exercise) (Please provide details)	
Animal Breeding projects (Please provide details)	
Wild animal trapping – license will be required for some animal species (Please provide details)	
Other Please explain. Use no more than 50 words:	

8.   TARGET PARTICIPANT GROUP:

Please indicate those groups from which your participants may be drawn. You must ensure that your participant selection methods will prevent you from selecting participants from any other group not mentioned. You must have considered the appropriate actions and safeguards and be able to reassure the School/Centre Ethics Panels that you have considered the nature and abilities of the potential participants

Where a CRB check is required, this must be completed before approval for research is granted

(you should submit evidence with your application)

Students or staff of this University		People from non-English speaking backgrounds	
Adults (over 18 years old and competent to give consent)	✓	Vulnerable Adults (over 18 years old with learning disabilities, mental health difficulties, confusion, dementia physical	

		illness and other impairment preventing informed consent) *	
Children/legal minors (under 18 years old) *		Vulnerable Children with learning disabilities, mental health difficulties, confusion, and other impairment preventing informed consent)*	
Parental or Guardian consent			
Adult or youth offenders detained at Her Majesty's convenience		Other:	

* CRB check must be complete prior to approval

Number of Participants:	10 employees for a pilot study

9.   RECRUITMENT

Please state the method of recruitment of participants.

I have been given an access to conduct my interviews at [THE CASE STUDY ORGANISATION]. I am aware that the company keeps a register of declarations of interest. In this register there will be people who would have declared that they have friends in the organisation. I would like to interview five people from all parts of organizational hierarchy – shop floor, middle management, senior management and directors. Following on from these interviews, using snowballing sampling, I anticipate to interview 5 more employees in the organisation identified by the first group of interviews as workplace friends.

As I am interested in individuals only, not in the possible reciprocation of friendship, I will remain mindful of this when interviewing participants. All information about the quality of friendship or

meaning of friendship at work that I will be privileged to in an interview setting will be completely anonymous and confidential, with no parties other than my supervisors and myself having an access to the complete transcripts.

10. RELATIONSHIP WITH PARTICIPANTS: As the researcher do you have any relationship with the participant such as a familial friend, colleague, patient, client, student

[SECTION REMOVED DUE TO CONFIDENTIALITY]

To ensure their full understanding of the research and to obtain their informed consent about using the data, the nature of the research will be fully explained in the information sheet attached. It will clearly state that participation in this research is voluntary; also, an option to decline to answer a question will be recognized. Participants will be informed of anonymity and data confidentiality.

To maintain confidentiality, all data will be collated, analysed and stored on an electronic system separately from the [CASE STUDY ORGANISATION'S] network and I will be the only one who will have full access to the data collected during this part of the research process.

All staff participating in my research will be able to contact me with any questions they may have about the research process, as well as offered an informal discussion about the findings after the project completion.

They will also be informed that the Executive Team and the Head of HR will be provided with a separate report upon the completion of the research, in order to receive feedback on the current practice.

11. LOCATION OF RESEARCH

[ADDRESS OF A CASE STUDY ORGANISATION]

Is a risk assessment required for this location? If so, please attach.

The methods I am using are not intrusive and pose no harm to participants in the organizational settings.

12. DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS

Other than submitting your research project for assessment purposes, please state if you intend to communicate your findings elsewhere.

| YES | ✓ | NO | | (If YES, please state how you intend to communicate your findings) |

At the end of my PhD a separate report from my research findings will be provided to the Executive Team and the Head of HR.

The collated information will become a part of my thesis, and any possible journal publications or presentations at the conferences associated with my research.

I will ensure that a confidentiality and anonymity is adhered to at all times, and no member of staff or the organisation will be able to be identified.

13.   CONFIDENTIALITY

  How will you ensure information on participants remains confidential

The interview participants will be referred to in any written reports by pseudonyms assigned to them, to ensure that only I will be able to identify them. Should there be any possibility to identify an individual from the interview data collected, for example, one woman amongst 3 men, I will disguise any such characteristics, in this case their gender.

I will also be aware of the range of situations that might prompt me to consider to breach confidentiality. Such reason will be my duty of care, if I will be concerned that someone will be at risk of harm. This could happen if a member of staff will tell me as a researcher something that will cause a significant concern.

14.   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

With reference to the Key Principles of Ethical Research, please note the ethical considerations and how you intend to uphold them.

Key Principle of Ethical Research	How is the Key Principle upheld
The emotional well being, physical well being, rights, dignity and personal values of research participants should be secured;	My research participants will be aware of the purpose of my study from the beginning. The participants' beliefs, values and wellbeing will be attended to at all times.
Research participants and contributors should be fully informed regarding the purpose, methods and end use of the research. They should be clear on what their participation involves and any risks that are associated with the process. These risks should be clearly articulated and if possible quantified;	The respondents will be informed of the nature of the research. They will also be informed of the confidential and limited access to the data collated. They will be aware that the Executive Team, along with the Head of HR will have access to the separate report, once the research will be completed. The consent form will explain that the data will be used for the purposes of this study and any research work associated with it.

Research participants must participate in a voluntary way, free from coercion. Participants have the right to withdraw at any time;	Research participants will be informed that they are free to withdraw at any time. All research participants will be informed that their involvement in this research project is completely voluntary at all times.
Research must be independent and any conflicts of interest or partiality must be explicit;	There should not be any conflicts of interest at all, but if they did arise I would inform participants as soon as possible to enable them to decide upon their contribution to my research. Participants will be made aware explicitly that I am conducting these interviews as a researcher, and that there is no association made with [THE CASE STUDY ORGANISATION].
Normally information provided by the participants should be anonymous. At all times confidentiality must be assured.	Participants will not be able to be identified via their responses given. There is no anticipation of using any visual aids for participants.

Additional information – please attach to this form. Your application will not be able to be progressed until these documents are available for consideration. For undergraduate applications, please do not attach your research proposal. In addition to any elements indicated in sections 7 or 10 above, please indicate other additional information that is attached:

✓	Participant Information Sheet and Consent form

✓	Interview proforma for staff of the organisation used for pilot purposes

✓	Other (Please list) Consent OF [THE CASE STUDY ORGANISATION]

DECLARATION BY RESEARCHER

The information contained herein is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate.

I have attempted to identify all risks related to the research that may arise in conducting this research and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants.

I understand that my research work cannot commence until FULL ethical approval has been given by the School/Centre Ethics Panel.

	Signature	Date
Applicant	Jana Javorska	04 March 2015

DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR

I have reviewed this form and accompanying documentation and am satisfied that this application is appropriate for consideration for ethical approval by a UCS Ethics Panel.

	Signature	Date
Supervisor One*		04 March 2015

4 March 2015

Student: Jana Javorska

Student number: S152158

Dear Jana

Re: Research Ethics Application

As Chair of the Research Ethics Panel for Suffolk Business School, I am pleased to inform you that your application for ethical approval of your proposed research project has been approved, but with the following condition:

- Student to ensure that fully informed consent is received from all participants who are observed during the project.

You are however able to proceed with your research.

Please keep this letter and include it with a copy of your application form, within your final report.

Yours sincerely,

Professor David Gill
Chair of Research Ethics Panel
Suffolk Business School

University Campus Suffolk
Waterfront Building Neptune Quay Ipswich IP4 1QJ

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2.2 Main Study Ethics approved Application Form

UNIVERSITY CAMPUS SUFFOLK

ETHICS APPROVAL APPLICATION FORM FOR NON CLINICAL RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMANS/ANIMALS

Please give an answer to ALL questions. Failure to do so will result in automatic voidance of application. You may use the term 'not applicable' where necessary.

Please consult UCS Student Guide to the Ethics Approval Process, available on the intranet for guidance on completing this form

1.   APPLICANT DETAILS

1.1 Name of applicant   Jana Javorska

1.1 Student ID   S152158

1.3 School/Department/Centre   UCS School of Business Leadership and Enterprise

1.4 Course/Programme   PhD

1.5 Date of application   16 November 2015

2. I AM CARRYING THIS PROJECT OUT AS:

Staff Research Project			✓

	Postgraduate Masters Research		Postgraduate Doctoral Research	
Externally Funded Project (State Funding Body)		Undergraduate (Degree or Diploma Dissertation)		Other *please describe*

3. PROPOSED DURATION OF PROJECT

        (dd/mm/yy)   (dd/mm/yy)

From: | ANONYMISED | To: | ANONYMISED |

The dates above are in relation of my second round data collection. My intentions are to complete the PhD programme by September 2016.

If you are unable to start and finish by these dates, please inform the relevant School/Centre Ethics Panel in writing

4. RESEARCH STUDENTS. Please give details of your supervisor(s)

TITLE & SURNAME	FIRST NAME	PHONE	EMAIL (UCS e-mail address only)
Dr Thomas	Will		w.thomas@ucs.ac.uk
Dr Hoedemaekers	Casper		choedem@essex.ac.uk
Prof Hallsworth	Simon		s.hallsworth@ucs.ac.uk

5. STAFF RESEARCHERS. Please give full details of all researchers involved in the project

6. TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT AND A BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Please consult the UCS Student Guide to the Ethics Approval Process (available on the intranet) for more information. Proposals that do not give sufficient information will be rejected by the School/Centre Ethics Panel and this will delay the start of your research.

I am seeking an ethical approval to conduct the second round of my interviews and textual analysis of the organizational information in my case study. This research will enable me to work towards the completion of my Doctoral Dissertation and Viva Voce.

Working title: Catch Me before I Fall: The Power of Friendships at Work

Thesis Rationale

This thesis supports thinking about the potential of friendship for becoming one of the most significant assets for individuals at work, and thus seeks to influence managerial thinking on the challenges this relationship creates in the working sphere.

The main objective is to investigate the extent to which workplace friendships shape people's personal and professional lives, and thus potentially improving psychological wellbeing at work.

The research sub-questions are as follows:

·   Why some individuals seek friendships at work whilst others do not?

·   How are workplace friends experienced?

·   What is the meaning of psychological closeness in the development of workplace friendship?

·   In what way workplace friends influence the perceptions of self as a human being and a working professional, e.g. self-development and self-worth at work?

Methodology and methods:

As my research methodology is phenomenological, rather than positivistic, I will be starting with semi-structured narrative interviews in a chosen organisation as my pilot study.

[SECTION REMOVED DUE TO CONFIDENTIALITY]

The interviews will be transcribed using a confidential and trusted transcription source.

7.   METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION   *(Tick as many as apply)*

	✓
Questionnaire (attach a copy)	
Interviews (attach a copy)	✓
Observation (Please attach an observation proforma)	
Audio-taping interviewees or events (with consent)	✓

Focus Groups	
Biometric measurement (Please attach a measurement proforma)	
Physiological measurement (Please attach a measurement proforma)	
Performance measurement (Please attach a measurement proforma)	
Physiological self-assessment (Please provide details)	
Psychological self-assessment (Please provide details)	
Psychological experimentation (Please provide details)	
Animal Feeding/Therapeutic trials (Please provide details)	
Adding to or changing an aspect of an animal's environment (including enforcing physical exercise) (Please provide details)	
Animal Breeding projects (Please provide details)	
Wild animal trapping – license will be required for some animal species (Please provide details)	

8. TARGET PARTICIPANT GROUP:

Please indicate those groups from which your participants may be drawn. You must ensure that your participant selection methods will prevent you from selecting participants from any other group not mentioned. You must have considered the appropriate actions and safeguards

and be able to reassure the School/Centre Ethics Panels that you have considered the nature and abilities of the potential participants

Where a CRB check is required, this must be completed before approval for research is granted (you should submit evidence with your application)

Adults (over 18 years old and competent to give consent)

Number of participants: 15-20 employees

9. RECRUITMENT

Please state the method of recruitment of participants.

I have been given an access to conduct my interviews at [THE CASE STUDY]. I have already conducted a pilot study at this organization, therefore I am going to use snowballing sampling technique to identify the remaining participants. As I am interested in individuals only, not in the possible reciprocation of friendship, I will remain mindful of this when interviewing participants. All information about the quality of friendship or meaning of friendship at work that I will be privileged to in an interview setting will be completely anonymous and confidential, with no parties other than my supervisors and myself having an access to the complete transcripts.

10. RELATIONSHIP WITH PARTICIPANTS: As the researcher do you have any relationship with the participant such as a familial friend, colleague, patient, client, student?

I am conducting this research as a researcher who is an ex-employee of [THE CASE STUDY ORGANISATION]. To ensure my participants' full understanding of the research and to obtain their informed consent about using the data, the nature of the research will be fully explained in the information sheet attached. It will clearly state that participation in this research is voluntary; also, an option to decline to answer a question will be recognized. Participants will be informed of anonymity and data confidentiality.

To maintain confidentiality, all data will be collated, analysed and stored on an electronic system separately from the [CASE STUDY] network and I will be the only one who will have full access to the data collected during this part of the research process.

All staff participating in my research will be able to contact me with any questions they may have about the research process, as well as offered an informal discussion about the findings after the project completion.

They will also be informed that the Executive Team and the Head of HR will be provided with a separate report upon the completion of the research, in order to receive feedback on the current practice.

11. LOCATION OF RESEARCH

Address of the case study

Is a risk assessment required for this location? If so, please attach.

The methods I am using are not intrusive and pose no harm to participants in the organizational settings.

12.   DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS

Other than submitting your research project for assessment purposes, please state if you intend to communicate your findings elsewhere.

✓		(If YES, please state how you intend to communicate your findings)

At the end of my PhD a separate report from my research findings will be provided to the Executive Team and the Head of HR.

The collated information will become a part of my thesis, and any possible journal publications or presentations at the conferences associated with my research.

I will ensure that a confidentiality and anonymity is adhered to at all times, and no member of staff or the organisation will be able to be identified.

13.   CONFIDENTIALITY

How will you ensure information on participants remains confidential.

The interview participants will be referred to in any written reports by pseudonyms assigned to them, to ensure that only I will be able to identify them. Should there be any possibility to identify an individual from the interview data collected, for example, one woman amongst 3 men, I will disguise any such characteristics, in this case their gender.

I will also be aware of the range of situations that might prompt me to consider to breach confidentiality. Such reason will be my duty of care, if I will be concerned that someone will be at risk of harm. This could happen if a member of staff will tell me as a researcher something that will cause a significant concern.

14.   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

With reference to the Key Principles of Ethical Research, please note the ethical considerations and how you intend to uphold them.

Key Principle of Ethical Research	How is the Key Principle upheld

The emotional well being, physical well being, rights, dignity and personal values of research participants should be secured;	My research participants will be aware of the purpose of my study from the beginning. The participants' beliefs, values and wellbeing will be attended to at all times.
Research participants and contributors should be fully informed regarding the purpose, methods and end use of the research. They should be clear on what their participation involves and any risks that are associated with the process. These risks should be clearly articulated and if possible quantified;	The respondents will be informed of the nature of the research. They will also be informed of the confidential and limited access to the data collated. They will be aware that the Executive Team, along with the Head of HR will have access to the separate report, once the research will be completed. The consent form will explain that the data will be used for the purposes of this study and any research work associated with it.
Research participants must participate in a voluntary way, free from coercion. Participants have the right to withdraw at any time;	Research participants will be informed that they are free to withdraw at any time. All research participants will be informed that their involvement in this research project is completely voluntary at all times.
Research must be independent and any conflicts of interest or partiality must be explicit;	There should not be any conflicts of interest at all, but if they did arise I would inform participants as soon as possible to enable them to decide upon their contribution to my research. Participants will be made aware explicitly that I am conducting these interviews as a researcher, and that there is no association made with [THE CASE STUDY ORGANISATION].
Normally information provided by the participants should be anonymous. At all times confidentiality must be assured.	Participants will not be able to be identified via their responses given. There is no anticipation of using any visual aids for participants.

Additional information – please attach to this form. Your application will not be able to be progressed until these documents are available for consideration. For undergraduate applications, please do not attach your research proposal. In addition to any elements indicated in sections 7 or 10 above, please indicate other additional information that is attached:

| ✓ | Participant Information Sheet and Consent form |

| ✓ | Interview proforma |

| ✓ | Other *(Please list)* Consent of [THE CASE STUDY ORGANISATION] |

DECLARATION BY RESEARCHER

The information contained herein is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate.

I have attempted to identify all risks related to the research that may arise in conducting this research and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants.

I understand that my research work cannot commence until FULL ethical approval has been given by the School/Centre Ethics Panel.

	Signature	Date
Applicant	Jana Javorska	16 November 2015

DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR

I have reviewed this form and accompanying documentation and am satisfied that this application is appropriate for consideration for ethical approval by a UCS Ethics Panel.

	Signature	Date
Supervisor One*		16 November 2015

2.3 Informed Consent

Informed Consent Form

Title of Research Project:	The Power of Friendships at Work
Research Student details:	PhD Candidate, S152158
Name:	Jana Javorska
Contact Address:	7 Buccaneer Way, Hethersett
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UCS expects all student research to be carried out in accordance with the following principles:

- The emotional well being, physical well being, rights, dignity and personal values of research participants should be secured.
- Research participants and contributors should be fully informed regarding the purpose, methods and end use of the research. They should be clear on what their participation involves and any risks that are associated with the process. These risks should be clearly articulated and if possible quantified.
- Research participants must participate in a voluntary way, free from coercion. Participants have the right to withdraw at any time.

This research has been approved by a UCS Ethics Panel. Should you have any concerns about the Ethics of this research, please feel free to contact the Chair of the relevant School Ethics Panel.

Please read the following statement and sign below if you agree to it.

I have been provided with and understand an information sheet for the research project named above and have had an opportunity to ask questions. I understand that I do not have to be involved in this research and do so entirely voluntarily. I am aware that I am free to withdraw my participation at any point without having to give a reason for doing so.

Name of Participant

Date _____

Signature _____

Name of Researcher   Jana Javorska

Date _____

Signature _____

2.4 Information Sheet

Date

Private & Confidential

Via email

Dear NAME,

Re: Research into Friendships at work

I hope we can agree on a time and place to meet in [town] soon. In my email I have suggested a few dates. In the meantime, I would like to take this opportunity to tell you more about my research.

I am interested in workplace friendships and their impact on individuals' lives. Your participation is important in this study as it will help me to clarify the meaning and the value of these relations to you. My method is about collecting various stories of people's experiences.

Preparation for the interview

Prior to the interview, I would like you to think of people who you have worked with and are currently considering or had considered your friends. Make a list of their names in advance of the interview and bring it with you to our meeting.

Could you also think of situations, events *involving these people* as follows:

● beginnings/ and (endings if applicable) of these friendships,

● incidents that made you laugh/proud or sad/ angry that resonated with you,

● situations that had positively or negatively influenced your professional or personal development/ advancement of your potential,

● situations that had altered in any way what your job means to you, your feelings/ what is important to you at work.

The interview process

The interview will take between 1-1.5 hours, and to create a relaxed atmosphere, we will begin with simple drawings, after which we will proceed to reflections and open questions. Please do not worry, the drawing of a simple dot or a line will be sufficient as this is not an art exercise, but rather a reflexive tool.

The series of interviews are conducted for my thesis, and I intend to use the findings in possible academic journals, other research publications or research conferences associated with my workplace relations.

The interviews will be transcribed using a confidential and trusted transcription source. During the interview I will be using an audio recorder and any recording is for the research purposes only. You will have an opportunity to decline an audio recording of our interview, in which case I will take notes of our conversation. You will receive a copy of the transcript and/ or a copy of the recording if you wish so, to inform me if you would like to leave out certain sections or not.

Anonymity and confidentiality

My work is impartial to your current employer, and is not related to my former involvement as [x]. Our conversation will be anonymised. I will be using a pseudonym of your choice instead of your real name, and I will disguise any other possible identifiable data from any report produced afterwards. The employer will also be anonymised and referred to in any publication under a pseudonym, to protect the organisation as a whole.

I would like to inform you that a separate executive summary report will be provided to the Executive team and the Head of HR of this organisation at the end of this study, providing recommendations for improvement of the current organisational practice. Only I and my PhD supervisors will have access to full research interview transcripts whilst using pseudonyms at all times. I would like to highlight that any data shared with my supervisors will be anonymised.

I guarantee a complete confidentiality of the information you will give me. I will have to remain aware of a range of situations that might prompt me to consider breaching this confidentiality. Such reasons would be my duty of care towards you, if I will be concerned that you or someone else might be at risk of harm.

The data will be stored and analysed on the electronic system remotely from the workplace network. Should you be interested in the outcome of my research please contact me any time after the completion of the study period.

Please note that participation is this research is voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw at any time without giving me a reason to do so. I attach a UCS informed consent to this information sheet for your signature. Please could you bring the signed consent form to our interview.

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk to me,

Jana Javorska

Researcher

Encl. UCS Informed Consent Form

Appendix 3: Sample Interview Questions

Demographics

Name

Age

Gender

Length of service with the organisation

Length of service in active employment

Occupation & a brief description of the job role

Nationality

Type of the organisation

Work base – area

Introduction, **warm up**

Today we will be talking about your experiences of friendship at work, what's it like.

In the pre-interview preparation, you were asked to make a list of people you have worked with who you are considering or have considered to be your friends at work.

How did you find it?

Is there anybody who you would like to add?

Looking at your list, how do you see your friendships at work overall?

Have you noticed any differences between how you form friendships now and at the beginning of your employment?

Drawing

Please draw how you see yourself and your relation to your friends at work (looking at the list you prepared earlier), if you had to find a way to represent this on paper?

Draw what they represent to you, the most significant part of them, who they are for you, what they represent in your working life and how you see them relating to each other or to yourself and to the organisation as a whole.

You can work as quickly or take as long as you like.

Whilst looking at your drawing, write 5-10 words that come to your mind when you are looking at it, on the back of the drawing.

Let's talk about your picture.

Focus on thoughts, feelings and meanings of the life (Atkinson, 1998, p.42)

Is there anybody that is not included in this picture?

We can be coming back to this picture through the interview.

What is not included in this picture – we can expand at the end.

Personal Importance

We will start with talking about the most important person to you. Out of these people that you have drawn, who do you perceive to be the most personally important to you? Why?

Are they your best friend at work?

What's your friendship like with this person?

(*That is characterized by trust, security and comfort, Sable (2000)*

What do you value the most about this friendship? Do you recall an event?

What is the most difficult thing about this friendship? Or do you recall a difficult time when your friendship got in the way, could you tell me about the event?

Friendship beginnings

How did it start?

How long have you been friends?

Has it always been like this? What has changed/when? (time)

Support, Trust

If you received bad work-related news, who would be the first person you would talk to/ contact at work?

When do you contact your friends, what situations are most prevalent would you say? Tell me about these, what are you seeking in these situations

Tell me about difficult situation at work that they helped you to deal with? Why nobody else? What happened?

(*I am searching for secure base, about that listening therapist*)

How do you know that you can trust them and no one else?

Can you think of an incident that made you laugh/ or being sad/ proud or angry involving your workplace friend that resonated with you?

Can you tell me of a time when they supported you and how did that make you feel?

Emotions of Loss and separation

Imagine yourself in a situation that they were going to leave the organisation, or something was going to happen and you had to leave and never see them again. How would this affect you?

(these are emotions of loss… Sable, 2000)

Ex- employees, how did you feel when you left the organisation? – i.e. lost contact?

Have you recently lost touch with any workplace friends? How did it feel?

Have you ever been told explicitly or implicitly not to be a friend with someone? How did it make you feel? By this I mean a line manager, a policy or practice, an implied conversation with anyone?

Policy

What do you think of the local declaration policy – who are your friends at work?

Do you feel safe to disclose your workplace friendship at work?

Intimacy

What do you feel when you say you are close to your work friend? What does this closeness represent?

Do you think it is important in friendship at work?

Compare this closeness between friends at work and friends in personal life. Any difficulties, for example with opening up?

Do you think your work role affects this friendship in any way?

Identity WPF vs Other Fs vs Other colleagues & You

Do you think that your workplace friends see you any differently to your colleagues?

What about outside of work friends?

What would make them to describe you in that way?

How would you describe yourself at this moment in time?

("attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences")

How do you think your workplace friends helped or hindered you to develop your current understanding of yourself? How?

Self-development

Can you tell me of a time when your friends have influenced positively or negatively your professional or personal development/ advancement / your potential?

What do you feel you are getting out of the friendship? What does it help you/ enable and stop you to do in private life and at work?

Work

How did you ended up in this career path?

Are you satisfied with your job and with where you got at? If not what has been missing? Do you feel that you have been acknowledged as you always wanted to be? Threatened?

Do you think that friends have influenced in any shape or form how you see or feel towards you work?

Closure

Is there anything we have left out of your friendship story?

Do you feel this interview has enabled you to give me a fair picture of your workplace friendships? If not, what would you have changed/added?

How do you feel about me interviewing you, as I [once was associated with] this organisation?

Following on from this interview I would like to interview a person identified by you as a reflective person who has friends at work, or who you suspect has friends at work. Can you recommend me someone?

Appendix 4: Transcription Conventions

Interviewer:	IR
Interviewee:	[their pseudonym, e.g. Marilyn, Ariel, Dean, Megan]
(word)	unclear words spoken, best guess of the transcriber
( )	unclear words spoken, inaudible (empty bracket)
(( ))	transcriber's description if needed, such as participant is drawing, or waitress arriving
[word X	two speakers' (X and Y) talk overlaps at this point (start simultaneously)
[word Y	
[word X]	two speakers' (X and Y) talk overlaps at this point (talk simultaneously)
[word Y]	
=	no interval between turns (' latching')
?	interrogative intonation
(2.0)	pause timed in seconds
(.)	small untimed pause
we:: ll	prolonged syllable or sound
why	emphasis or stressed word or syllable

REALLY	word spoken noticeably louder than surrounding talk
° word°	words spoken noticeably softer than surrounding talk
< I have to go >	words spoken noticeably faster than surrounding talk
heh heh	laughter syllables
fun(h) ny	words spoken laughingly
.hhh	in-breath (usually if a question is found difficult)
hhh.	out-breath (usually if a question is found difficult)
↑	upward rise in intonation (other than a question mark)
↓	downward fall in intonation (other than a full stop)
wor- wor- word	part of the *word* missing, self interruptions, unfinished
{Anonymised}	parts of the interview transcript changed for confidentiality

Adapted from Roulston, Kathryn J. (2012). Reflective Interviewing: A Guide to Theory and Practice (Kindle Location 4041-4053). SAGE Publications. Kindle Edition.

<u>Paraverbal Utterances</u>

Affirmative: mm-hm, uh-huh, yeah, yup, yep, awh

Negation: huh-uh, nah, uh-uh, hm-mm

Noncommittal: hm, mm

Hesitations: ah, eh, em, er, oh, uh, um

Questioning: eh, huh, oh

Humor: ha, [heh heh], ho, hoho

Exclamation: ach, aha, ahh, bang, boom, ech, hey, kerbang, oh, ooh, oops, ow, pooh, pow, uch, ugh, wham, whew, whomp, whoo, whoops, whoosh, whop, wow

Adapted from Mergenthaler, E. And Stinson, C., (1992) Psychotherapy Transcription Standards. Psychotherapy Research, 2(2), pp.125-142.

Appendix 5: Example of Final Themes from Data Analysis

1. Loss of friends, mourning, linked to the 'depressive' positioning

2. How organisation presents itself

3. Aspects of the 'not good enough' holding environment

   'fun at work restricted', 'loss of trust and confidence in colleagues', 'silo working, cliquey teams, each to their own', 'nowhere to socialize', 'no recognition of individual', 'feelings of isolation', 'favouritism', 'confused organisation', 'gossip', 'complacent culture', 'us and them split', protective efforts of the organisation – discourse of professionalism; instilling bureaucracy'

4. Encounter with organisational injunction

   'you shouldn't be friends', 'scapegoating in action', 'control from within', 'confused about having friends', 'emotional pain incurred as a result', 'anxiety in line management relationship'

5. Individual defensive behaviour

   'splitting', 'denial', 'projection'

6. Opportunities of friendship

   'friends as transitional objects', 'friends as creators of transitional spaces', 'containers'

7. Harmful aspects of friendship

   'negative emotions accompanying the 'added role component'

8. Friendships as natural, spontaneous, inevitable – preserving the human side of the relationship

   'identification gradually growing to intimacy', 'definitions of closeness', 'space influence, proximity'

9. Sense-making of friendship

   'friends', 'colleagues', 'friendly'

10. Transference, countertransference

11. Presentation of the self – 'work me and private life me'

12. My influence through the interviews

13. Organisational anxiety projected onto the HR team

14. Case study – Organisational change; Uncertainty coming from the external environment; Primary anxieties connected to the job and other feelings

15. Collecting Data: Anxiety through drawings

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