FROM COMBAT TO CLASSROOM:
CANADIAN SOLDIERS IN TRANSITION

by

Jane A. Etherington

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Education
in conformity with the requirements for
the degree of Master of Education

Queen’s University
Kingston, Ontario, Canada
(April, 2012)

Copyright © Jane A. Etherington, 2012
ABSTRACT

The conflict in Afghanistan which has predominated much of the first decade of the new millennium has resulted in the creation of a new generation of Canadian war veterans. This veteran culture will include Canadian military personnel who were either directly or indirectly involved in active peacekeeping duty during their careers. Some of these men and women choose retirement to pursue other interests or second careers in the civilian world. Others are facing involuntary early retirement due to permanent medical or combat-related stress factors, such as post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Medical release, in combination with age and socioeconomic circumstances can result in adjustment difficulties (Sweet, Stoler, Kelter, & Thurrell, 1989; Westwood, Black & McLean, 2002).

A qualitative study of the experiences of ten Canadian soldiers in transition from military life to civilian education environments over a three-month period from November, 2011 to February, 2012 was carried out. The following themes emerged as major areas of discussion: transition issues, unanticipated transitions and non-events, camaraderie and the veteran identity, transferable skills, and support and resources. The transition model developed by Schlossberg and presented by Goodman, Schlossberg, and Anderson (2006) was used as a guiding theory to develop an understanding of the transition experience in reference to this new population of Canadian military veterans. Theories of cross-cultural transition were used as a framework for discussion. Recommendations for facilitating transition through education for Canadian soldiers are included.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Marie Myers, for her encouragement, support, expertise, and advice throughout all stages of this thesis. Thanks, also, to my committee member, Dr. Susan Wilcox, for her insight and accommodation. I extend my thanks to Dr. Shehla Burney for supervising my program of study and for sharing her interest in this topic with me. Thank you to Mr. Mark AuCoin and Ms. Sandra Holloway, Integrated Personnel Support Unit in Kingston, Ontario, for their ongoing assistance throughout each phase of this study. Thank you to Major Jo-Anne Flawn-Laforge, Director Casualty Support management/ Joint Personnel Support Unit, Ottawa, Ontario for recognizing the importance of this research. Finally, thank you to the participants of this study for their time and input.
DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the men and women of the Canadian Forces in transition to civilian life. In particular, it is dedicated to the participants of this study for their willingness to share their narratives, and in loving memory of my father, Vernon Etherington, RAF.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Research Design</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Sampling and Recruitment</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Participants</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Data Collection</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Data Analysis</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 Ethical Clearance and Trustworthiness</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7 Summary</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4 Findings</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Comparing Cultures</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Academic Programs and Schedules</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Transferable Skills</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Culture Shock</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Communication and Interaction</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 Adjustments</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7 Social Engagement</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8 Life Changes</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9 The Veteran Identity</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10 Summary</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5 Discussion and Recommendations</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Transferable Skills</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Factors as Barriers or Facilitators</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.1 Transition issues, unanticipated transitions and non-events</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.1.1 Lessening of pain</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E Post-Interview Consent Form................................................................. 126
Appendix F Semi-Structured Interview #1............................................................... 129
Appendix G Semi-Structured Interview #2.............................................................. 130
Appendix H Coded Transcript.................................................................................. 131
Appendix I Coded Transcript.................................................................................. 132
LIST OF TABLES

Table A. Participants.................................................................29
Table B. Coding System.............................................................33
Table C. Comparing Cultures.......................................................38
Table D. Comparing Cultures: Summary of Points.........................47
Table E. Transferable Skills.........................................................51
Table F. Culture Shock Descriptors.............................................55
Table G. Communication and Interaction.....................................57
Table H. Adjustments.................................................................60
Table I. Adjustments: Summary of Points....................................63
Table J. Social Engagement........................................................65
Table K. Life Changes.................................................................67
Table L. The Veteran Identity.......................................................71
Table M. Barriers to Transition and Factors Facilitating Transition.....74
Table N. Recommendations for Facilitating Transition.....................102
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Transition from military to civilian life happens after any period of service in a soldier’s career and it may occur at any age (Pranger, Murphy, & Thompson, 2009). As the combat mission in Afghanistan came to an end in 2011, many Canadians soldiers – whether directly or indirectly involved in this mission – released from the military of their own accord (voluntary release), or involuntarily for medical reasons. Military to civilian transition usually brings about significant changes to lifestyle, including changes to occupation, residence, income, routine, and social connections. Many soldiers adapt well to these changes, which can take place over a period of months, accustomed to change as an integral part of their military career. For many others there is a ‘reverse culture shock’ as re-entry into the previously-known civilian world is met with unexpected disappointment and confusion (Westwood et al., 2002). Soldiers in transition are not unlike sojourners experiencing ‘cross-cultural transition’ (Black, Westwood, & Sorsdahl, 2007) and must develop new skills in order to adapt to life as civilians (Ray & Heaslip, 2010; Westwood et al., 2002). Adaptation may be affected by several factors including physical injury or ‘operational stress injury’ (OSI) (Veterans Affairs Canada, 2009), a term used to describe a broad range of psychological injuries suffered by combat and non-combat related military activity.

Ray and Heaslip (2010) identify several needs of the transitioning soldier including “interpersonal readjustment”, “mental health, social needs and school needs”(p. 2). Black and Papile (2010) contend that transitioning soldiers must learn how to work
with others in civilian environments. Returning to school may be an important part of the reintegration process as it may help the former soldier develop new academic skills and interests in preparation for a second career or for higher education. The social environment of the school and peer support may be integral to the reintegration of former Canadian soldiers. A sense of belonging and camaraderie are central to the military experience (Black & Papile, 2010), and may be rediscovered in academic environments: Developing a new sense of belonging may be a pathway to transition.

1.1 Definition of Terms

For clarity, it is useful to define a number of key constructs employed throughout this study. The term ‘soldiers’ refers to both Regular and Reserve Force members of any rank or branch of the Canadian military. ‘Veterans’ are former soldiers who “meet [the Department of National Defence’s] military occupational classification requirements; and have been released from the Forces with an honourable discharge” (Veterans Affairs Canada, 2011). Soldiers in transition are those members who have been recently released, or are in the process of being released, either voluntarily or involuntarily for medical reasons, and are re-entering civilian life. Goodman, Schlossberg, and Anderson (2006) define transition as “any event or non-event that results in changed relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles” (p. 33). As Canadian soldiers transition from one culture to another they may face barriers which impede this process or, conversely, they may discover factors which ease this advancement. The expertise individuals use in negotiating change from one situation to another can be referred to as transferable skills. Patterns of cross-cultural transition have both psychological and sociocultural elements (Ward et al., 1998) and transferable skills fall into these two
domains. Psychological skills include stress management and coping. Sociocultural skills include skills tied to culture learning, such as cultural intelligence, leadership and adaptation.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this study was twofold: first, to explore the use of transferable skills in an adult education setting as a measure to effect successful transition of Canadian soldiers from military to civilian life; second, to seek an answer to the following question: What are the barriers to transition and factors facilitating successful transition for Canadian soldiers to adult education settings?

1.3 Significance of the Study

To date, much of the literature on Canadian soldiers’ transition comes from the perspectives of nursing, social work, psychiatry or psychology with an emphasis on PTSD and rehabilitation through mental health programs. Black and Papile (2010) argue that there is a lack of research in the area of Canadian soldiers’ transition to civilian environments. There is limited empirical research exploring the role of education in the transition experience of Canadian soldiers. Moreover, very little research has been carried out on the Canadian soldier transitioning to academic environments. In addition, as a new generation of soldiers emerges from the contemporary theatre of war, the role of adult education in identifying transferable skills as a measure to effect successful transition needs to be examined.

As an educator who has lived and worked abroad, I have experienced, firsthand, the paralyzing effects of reverse culture shock. After residing in Lahr, Germany for close to five years (1988 – 1993), experiencing the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and the
dawn of the post-Cold War era in Europe, my re-entry into the Canadian culture brought me unanticipated discouragement: I felt lost in my own country. For months I lived surrounded by moving boxes, unable to unpack my suitcase, crippled by the impact of reintegration. I was motivated, by my own experience, to explore the strategies individuals use to cope with cross-cultural transition and to better understand the adaptation process.

For the past several years I have taught at an adult education facility in Ontario and have had soldiers and veterans as students in my classes. My personal experience with cross-cultural transition and my personal and professional knowledge of Canadian military culture had the potential to bias my findings, but were also an advantage. I used my own experiences to help shape my understanding of the issues facing soldiers in transition while maintaining an outsider’s perspective. I hope this research will help adult education personnel begin to understand the issues facing soldiers as they negotiate the transition from military to civilian life. In particular, as it identifies existing transition strategies and makes recommendations for new ones, I hope this research demonstrates how adult education provides a cultural bridge between the military and civilian environments.

1.4 Thesis Overview

This chapter outlined my interest in this topic, the purpose of the study, and the significance of research in this area. The remainder of the thesis is divided into five chapters. In Chapter 2 I outline the literature with reference to various theories on cross-cultural transition. I present the transition model as put forth by Goodman et al. (2006) as the theoretical framework for this study. In Chapter 3 I discuss the research design and
methods, including participants, sampling and recruitment, data collection, and data analysis. I present my findings in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5 I discuss barriers to transition and factors facilitating transition emerging from the data and make recommendations for facilitating academic, social, and personal transition for Canadian soldiers. Implications for future research, limitations, and closing remarks are included in Chapter 6.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter considers the intersection of the military, civilian, and veteran cultures through various cross-cultural perspectives. I present the transition theory as the theoretical framework for this study. I examine cultural intelligence and stress and coping as significant transferable skills in the transition process.

2.1 Military Culture and the Contemporary Operating Environment

The events of September 11, 2001, symbolically marking the ‘Era of Terrorism’ had a profound and irreversible influence on Canada’s military role on the international stage, marking a turning point for Canada’s reputation as the world’s pre-eminent peacekeeping nation. In February, 2002, Canadian soldiers were cast in major roles in a new theatre of war in Afghanistan and soon took centre stage in a counter-insurgency campaign which had predominantly characterized the history of the mission which ended in 2011. This new theatre of war, explained Mackenzie (2008), had been marked by civil war, genocide, slaughter of innocents, suicide bombers, roadside bombs, kidnapping, torture, improvised explosive devices, and strengthening insurgency. Brutal violence, extreme stress, more dangerous, complex and unstable situations, and higher number of peacekeeper casualties are reasons, explained Dallaire (2004), why the face of peacekeeping changed as we entered the new millennium. Canadian soldiers, either directly or indirectly, as soldiers in combat or in supportive roles both in Canada and abroad, had been part of this “contemporary operating environment [which was]
extremely complex, ambiguous, volatile, dynamic, and exponentially more dangerous than previous periods” (Spencer, 2010, p. 17).

Quick, and sometimes violent, responses to danger are often necessary in a theatre of war and difficult to turn off when the battle is over. Cemented in the minds of soldiers is the feeling of responsibility for the lives of one’s comrades (Black & Papile, 2010). Canadian soldiers in transition to civilian life from this new theatre of war, and toting the baggage of the military culture with them, may be challenged by physical or mental health barriers, such as post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), making adaptation a much more difficult experience (Pranger et al., 2009). Exposure to the atrocities of war may result in post-deployment stress which may have a long-lasting negative impact on successful reintegration into civilian life (Westwood, Black, & McLean, 2002; Westwood, McLean, Cave, Borgen, & Slakov, 2010).

2.2 A Tale of Two Cultures

Many authors have written about the differences between the military and civilian cultures. Zapf (1991) defines culture as a collection of behaviours and customs and a “network of shared meanings that are taken for granted as reality by those interacting within the network” (p. 105). Katz (1990) argues that military culture is “a unique organizational culture, with specialized goals, language, and technology” (p. 459). It is “the culture of the warrior” (Church, 2009, p. 43). Military basic training teaches avoidance of emotions (Katz, 1990) and attempts to depersonalize and deindividualize (Baechtold & De Sawal, 2009; Katz, 1990). Duncanson (2009) explores the notion of masculinity within a military context, noting that westernized military masculinities are
“associated with practices of strength, toughness and aggressive heterosexuality” (p. 63). Rosen, Knudson, and Fancher (2003) propose that there is a connection between military culture and hypermasculinity: “expressions of extreme, exaggerated, or stereotypic masculine attributes and behaviours” (p. 326). Even if soldiers do not fit this profile, their compliance with it will give them cultural membership.

Weathers, Litz, and Keane (1995) contend that the broad range of hardships and stressors in war (physical, emotional, and social), and their frequency and duration, impact the experiences of soldiers in a variety of ways. Climate, terrain, weaponry, location, branch of service, and specific duties are factors in these experiences. In addition to the obvious physical, emotional and social stressors of war (e.g. deprivation, witnessing/ perpetrating violence, harsh environments, traditional combat events, loss of morale), there are additional psychological stressors such as loss of meaning and control and perceived threat, and stressors specific to female soldiers such as discriminatory experiences and quality of care.

Pranger et al. (2009) suggest that there exists a stark difference between military and civilian life, referring to the military culture as “highly structured” (p. 159). Black and Papile (2010) contend that military culture is a “distinct role-based subculture” (p. 384) in which members’ experiences are uniquely different from those in civilian life. Soldiers operate within a framework of rules and relinquished individuality: “The issues of power, rank, responsibility, compliance, and camaraderie are central to the military organization, and strong feelings of discipline and loyalty are instilled” (Black & Papile, 2010, p. 384). Indeed, many Canadian soldiers consider the military culture to be a
“family” of sorts (Pranger et al., 2009, p. 159) and thus may experience anxiety and stress upon leaving it.

In contrast to the structure, rank, power, and conformity embedded in the military culture, the culture of the adult education facility is often characterized by informality, flexibility, equality, individuality, and diversity. All students have the same rank, regardless of age, gender, language, ethnicity, or experience. Teachers and instructors are often referred to on a first-name basis. The structure of adult education programs is open, as opposed to rigid, allowing for variances in students’ schedules, accommodating the employment, family, and personal needs of the adult learner. As soldiers reintegrate, they will encounter, within this adult education environment, such above-mentioned cultural norms and codes of behavior, which differ significantly from those in the military world. As such, the process of adaptation to the culture of the adult education centre may pose certain limitations, or provide new opportunities, to soldiers coping with transition issues.

Few studies have been conducted on Canadian soldiers transitioning to education. Much of the research focuses on the American perspective. Several studies on American military personnel in transition to higher education were reviewed (Baechtold & De Sawal, 2009; Church, 2009; Covert, 2002; DiRamio, Ackerman, & Mitchell, 2008; Ford, Northrup, & Wiley, 2009; Johnson, 2009; Rumann & Hamrick, 2009; and Wise, 2011) to discern ideas about prevalent issues which might also exist in Canadian military to education transition. Relevant areas included academic, personal, and social transition issues. In addition to the transition model, cross-cultural theory put forth by Kim (2001)
looking at individual, group, and social interaction contributed to the identification of focus areas for comparing cultures.

2.3 The Veteran Culture

Hobbs (2008) writes about the struggles of soldiers transitioning to civilian life: “No longer true civilians, ex-soldiers enter the culture of veterans”. Hobbs’ statement reflects the influence military culture has on the mindset, values, norms, and codes of behavior of its members. When soldiers leave the military, they can never really leave; they will never again be true civilians. Instead, they become veterans: “Veterans have their own language, symbols, and gathering places” (p. 337). Veteran culture develops out of shared experiences. As a new generation of veterans emerges from recent global conflicts, the specialized needs of this culture must be acknowledged by social systems such as health care and education. Services must be individualized and knowledge of this population enhanced.

2.4 Cross-Cultural Transition

While often used as a theoretical framework for studying the experiences of business people or students studying abroad, cross-cultural adaptation, as advanced by Lysgaard (1955) and later, Oberg (1960), suggests that adaptation to new cultures follows a ‘U-curve’ pattern involving a period of successful adjustment, followed by crisis, and then readjustment. In his research of Norwegian Fulbright scholars in the United States, Lysgaard (1955) found that adjustment comes in three stages. In the busy introductory stage, contact with others is on a superficial level and psychological distress is minimal as new routines are put into place. Over time, as the reality of change sets in, feelings of
dissatisfaction, loneliness, and unhappiness begin to emerge. Eventually these feelings dissipate as the individual learns to adapt. Oberg (1960) described these periods as highs and lows in the stages of “culture shock” (p. 177).

Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) furthered Lysgaard’s (1955) findings by suggesting a ‘W-curve’ pattern to transition: initial adjustment, crisis, readjustment, crisis, readjustment. Such adjustment has both psychological and sociocultural elements. Psychological adjustment refers to emotional well-being and is strongly “influenced by personality, social support and life change” (Ward, Okura, Kennedy, and Kojima, 1998, p. 279); sociocultural adjustment refers to positive interaction with others and is “affected by cultural distance, amount of contact with host nationals and cultural knowledge” (Ward et al., 1998, p. 279).

Critics of Lysgaard’s theory put forth that a number of factors can elevate psychological distress and sociocultural difficulties at the onset of transition and that adjustment may not necessarily follow a U-curve pattern or even W-curve pattern (Ward et al., 1998). For Canadian soldiers returning to a civilian school in Canada, it is a type of ‘reverse culture shock’ involving unanticipated adjustment problems to what would appear to be a familiar environment (Westwood et al., 2002). The case of soldiers transitioning from the contemporary operating environment, post-deployment stress and PTSD could mean that transition more closely resembles an N-pattern of adjustment (low, high, low, high) or, perhaps, another pattern altogether. The presence of operational stress injury (OSI) could mean that the pattern of adjustment for soldiers may not follow the same patterns experienced by foreign students, business people, or other sojourners. The pattern of
adjustment for soldiers may depend, to a great extent, on the use of transferable skills.

Zapf (1991) considers cross-cultural transition through a U-curve lens, building on the theories developed by Lysgaard (1955), Oberg (1960), and Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963). He argues that when different cultures come into contact they will see things differently; their realities may not be shared, resulting in disorientation and misinterpretation. Conflicts will arise ‘related to differences in rules, meanings, and values” (p. 106). Zapf proposes that cross-cultural transition follows a U-curve pattern over time. At first, feelings of fascination and hope (high) are crushed by “culture shock”–a state of unfamiliarity with the new environment or culture (Westwood et al., 1986; Zapf, 1991)–which leads to an initial phase of negativity (low). As differences are resolved and new meanings develop, a period of recovery eventually ensues, giving way to positive feelings of adjustment (high). Failure to resolve conflicts could result in an extended period of anxiety or a decision to abandon transition to the new culture.

Zapf (1991) outlines a number of descriptors individuals have used to describe their experiences of culture shock, including “lonely”, “exhausted”, “angry”, and “overwhelmed” (p. 111) as individuals move into and through change. Because the experience of culture shock varies from individual to individual, the words people use to describe their feelings through the initial U-curve phase will also vary. Zapf outlines positive descriptors such as “confident”, “challenge” and “satisfaction” (p. 111) used to describe the experiences of individuals moving out of change.

Re-entry is the process of adjustment to the place of origin after immersion in another social environment “for a period of time sufficient to cause some degree of
mental and emotional adjustment prior to optimal functioning in the ‘new’ environment” (Westwood et al., 1986, p. 223). After time away the individual has developed new values and new ways of thinking, influenced by the patterns of the new culture. Often, aspects of the home environment have changed without the individual’s knowledge. These aspects can range from tangible and visible changes to the physical environment, people and things, to intangible and invisible changes to social attitudes, behaviours, and relationships. This intersection of unanticipated change creates adjustment difficulties. Culture shock exists when expectations about entering a new social environment are not met and the individual is not prepared “to interpret a new set of unwritten social norms” (Westwood et al., 1986, p. 222). Affected, to a great extent, by his or her own set of cultural norms and values, the individual misinterprets cues and can begin to feel anxious, isolated, frustrated, or rejected. This culture shock is a necessary component of adjustment as it leads to the development of coping mechanisms. The reaction of the host culture to the individual can impact the adjustment. Often, the host culture denies feedback to the individual, which can impair new learning. Several other social and personal factors, such as the amount of time spent in the new culture and preparations for transition, can impact adjustment and re-entry experiences.

This re-entry experience is applicable to Canadian soldiers returning to civilian environments. Westwood et al. (1986) contend that re-entry “demands a type and degree of re-organization of cognitive, affective and behavioural patterns similar to those required by initial departure and acculturation” (p. 223) into a new environment. For Canadian soldiers releasing from the military, re-entry is twofold: re-entry to civilian life,
coupled with re-entry along a number of pathways (e.g. employment, education) as veterans. Recognition and acknowledgement, by the individual, of the need to embrace change can help to ensure the success of re-entry. Re-entry responses can vary from holding onto “patterns learned in the host culture” (Westwood et al., 1986, p. 224) to attempting to return to patterns in place before initial departure.

Soldier cross-cultural transition is multi-faceted. It begins when a new recruit is inducted into military culture during basic training. Years, often decades, later that same individual faces the return to civilian life which is a two-fold process: first, transition to the veteran culture; second, transition to the civilian world. Depending on the pathway the individual takes, there may be a third level of transition to the culture of a civilian workplace or school. Often these transitions take place simultaneously and present unique challenges to the individual juggling the various identities—veteran, civilian, student, employee— that come with these new cultures. When Canadian soldiers transition to new civilian environments, they take their cultural baggage with them. This process is, in fact, a type of cross-cultural transition.

Various theories of cross-cultural transition (Berry, 2005; Kim, 2001; Westwood, Lawrence & Paul, 1986; Zapf, 1991) contribute to the discussion of Canadian soldiers in transition to civilian environments. Kim (2001) argues that the field of cross-cultural adaptation is characterized by a plethora of various terms – acculturation, adjustment, intergroup relations – to name a few. Berry (2005) defines acculturation as a process in which groups and individuals of different cultures interact: “Acculturation is the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact.
between two or more cultural groups and their individual members” (p. 698). Berry defines four acculturation strategies: assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization. Assimilation takes place when individuals actively seek to lose their cultural identity and want to be “absorbed into the dominant society” (p. 705). In contrast, the separation strategy is defined when individuals actively seek to hold on to their cultural identity and do so by avoiding interaction with the other culture(s). Integration is defined when individuals wish to interact with other cultures while maintaining their own culture. In this situation, there is social participation while maintaining some degree of cultural heritage. Marginalization occurs when there is little hope of maintaining one’s own cultural heritage and little interest in social interaction with other cultures (often due to enforced cultural loss, exclusion, or discrimination).

Berry argues that groups and individuals pursuing the integration strategy are the least stressed and adapt better than those using other strategies. This strategy requires a great deal of negotiation, but results in the least amount of conflict.

Much of the research separates cross-cultural adaptation into two separate realms: psychological, on the one hand, and societal, on the other. Kim (2001) argues that cross-cultural adaptation needs to be examined as a whole, that both psychological and social realms are interconnected. Kim’s “systems-communication approach” (Kim, 2001, p. xii) considers the consolidation of the individual, the group, and society. For Canadian soldiers transitioning to civilian environments, psychological, group, and social skills are interconnected in the transition process. Kim’s (2001) theory of cross-cultural adaptation builds on existing concepts and models with a particular focus on the role of
communication and psychological and social engagement between an individual and a host environment. Kim questions how the internal conditions of those making the cross-cultural transition change over time. She considers the ethnicity and personal backgrounds of individuals and the conditions of the host environment as important contributing factors in the process.

There are three underlying principal features of Kim’s (2001) cross-cultural theory. The first feature puts forth that transitioning individuals are “strangers” (Kim, 2001, p. 204) moving from one culture or subculture to a different or unfamiliar culture. Central to this point is that primary socialization has taken place in one culture prior to the transition. A second feature is that “strangers are at least minimally dependent on the host environment for meeting their personal and social needs” (p. 204). The third feature is that “strangers are at least minimally engaged in firsthand communication experiences with that environment” (p. 204). Kim’s theory is grounded in three assumptions: a) all humans experience cross-cultural adaptation as a life activity, inherent in a person’s will to balance internal and external conditions; b) the process driving this activity is communication; and c) this communication gradually leads to the psychic maturity of an individual.

Kim (2001) proposes that cross-cultural adaptation can lead to the development of such skills as “communication competence or social competence” (p. 48), “functional fitness” (p. 49), and “cultural identity” (p. 49), and results in “social efficacy” (p. 50). Communication or social competence allows individuals to organize themselves and their activities with others in the environment. Functional fitness is the linking of an
individual’s social existence to the community and requires an individual’s communication symbols and meanings to match those of the community. Functional fitness helps the individual to develop “understanding and empathy” (p. 49). It paves the way for mediation between the individual and others, eventually leading to autonomy, and ultimately healthy perceptions of others, healthy self-perceptions, and positive psychological health. Cultural identity happens as individuals internalize the cultural patterns, beliefs, values, and norms of the environment. The process of cross-cultural adaptation leads to an emergence of an “intercultural identity” (p. 190), referring to an acquired identity constructed through the process of communication with the host culture.

Zapf (1991) argues that adaptation relies on successful resolution of conflict. This happens when there are clear transition cues, presumably from the host culture to the newcomers. This idea connects to Kim’s (2001) approach and the importance of the conditions of the host environment (i.e. the host environment’s ability and/or willingness to provide predictable and unambiguous communication cues). For Canadian soldiers in transition to civilian environments, transition cues are important considerations.

2.5 The Transition Model

The transition model developed by Schlossberg and presented by Goodman et al. (2006) has been referenced by many researchers of cross-cultural transition and provides a sound theoretical framework for examining Canadian soldiers in transition. Central to this theory is the notion that there are three types of transitions: anticipated transitions, unanticipated transitions, and non-event transitions. Each type has its own set of characteristics, and meanings, unique to the individual. “It is not the transition itself that
determines its meanings for the individual; rather it is whether the transition is expected, unexpected, or never occurring” (Goodman et al., 2006, p. 35). Goodman et al. (2006) define transition as “any event or non-event that results in changed relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles” (p. 33). It can be any life event which results in a gain or a loss. It can be obvious or subtle. It relies on the perception of the individual experiencing it. For an event or non-event to be a transition, it must be defined by the individual as a transition. They argue that transitions “often require new patterns of behavior”.

The first phase of the transition model defines the type of transition and considers the best possible strategy for dealing with it. The questions asked at this stage are: What is the transition? What type of transition is it? In the case of Canadian soldiers in transition from military to civilian environments, the transition could be identified as either anticipated (e.g. voluntary retirement) or unanticipated (e.g. medical releases). In addition to identifying the transition, it is important to evaluate the degree of change to an individual’s life it brings. “Three people describing a similar transition, for example, job loss, are not talking about the same event” (Goodman et al., 2006, p.32). The significance of a transition depends on how it has changed an “individual’s roles, relationships, routines, and assumptions” (Goodman et al., 2006, p. 32). The Transition Process pinpoints where, on a timeline, the individual is with the change: the beginning (“moving in”), the middle (“moving through”), or the end (“moving out of”) of the transition (Goodman et al., 2006, p. 32). Reactions to change vary over the course of this timeline. Phase two of the transition model looks at coping resources in four categories: Situation,
Self, Support, and Strategies. Each of these strategies can impact the reaction to transition in different ways. Phase three focuses on integrating new strategies and encourages the individual to take ownership of the change and become empowered by new ideas. The transition model formed the basis for the interview questions for this research.

In addition to anticipated and unanticipated transitions, Goodman et al. (2006) identify four types of non-event transitions: “personal, ripple, resultant, and delayed” (p. 282). While these events do not result in external change, there may be internal changes taking place in the person’s relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles. Personal non-events pertain to the aspirations of the individual. For a Canadian soldier transitioning to civilian life, a personal non-event might include not reaching a certain rank in his or her career before retirement. Ripple non-events pertain to the unfulfilled expectations of those closest to us; their non-events can impact our lives. A Canadian soldier may be affected by the death of a fellow soldier and the life that person never had the opportunity to live. Resultant non-events pertain to events leading to non-events. A political change in a combat zone could result in the withdrawal of troops and the cancellation of participation in a military mission. This non-event for the Canadian soldier could mean a decision to change careers. Delayed events are events that may seem like they are never going to happen. As we get older, delayed events may become non-events. A Canadian soldier may aspire to one day earn a high school diploma. With time, if this aspiration doesn’t come to fruition, the soldier may feel like it is a non-event.

According to the transition model, the “relativity, context, and impact” (Goodman et al., 2006, p. 35) of the transition are important to understanding its effects. Because
transitions are different for each person, self-assessment of the transition is important. Ability to cope depends on whether or not the transition is perceived as “positive, negative, or benign” (Goodman et al., 2006, p. 36). One soldier might view a cancelled posting to a combat zone as a blessing; another might view it as a missed opportunity. Transitions are relative to the individual’s appraisal of it. The individual’s position within the context of the event is significant. The event may originate with the individual, or with some other person. It may involve only the individual, or it may involve a community. If the transition is happening to oneself, help may be available. If the transition is happening to another person, one may feel helpless and unable to do anything. Finally, the impact of the transition on the individual is an important consideration: What is the damage? While dealing with one transition, it is possible to experience additional transitions. A Canadian soldier returning to Canada after a combat mission (anticipated transition) may face involuntary early retirement due to combat-related stress factors (unanticipated transition). The individual realizes that he or she will not achieve a higher rank before retirement (non-event). At the same time, the individual may discover that his or her spouse wants to end their marriage (unanticipated transition). It is important to consider the cumulative effect and the impact these changes are having on the individual’s daily life and ability to cope.

2.6 Cultural Intelligence

Central to the cross-cultural adaptation theory is the importance of contact with the community in effecting change over time. In their study of Japanese students in New Zealand, Ward et al. (1998) found that the relationship between psychological and
sociocultural adjustment domains depended on frequent interaction with the host culture. The authors noted that the more integration with the host culture, the stronger the correlation between emotional well-being and positive interaction with others. As soldiers negotiate the transition from military to the civilian world, the community into which they transition must also negotiate change. Spencer (2010) defines cultural intelligence [as] “the ability to recognize the shared beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviours of a group of people and, most importantly, to apply that knowledge toward a specific goal” (p. 11). In this case, the group of people is soldiers; the goal is transition through education. Successful psychological and sociocultural adaptation may depend not only on the extent of sojourners’ (soldiers’) knowledge and understanding of the academic culture, but on the extent of the host nationals’ (school staff and peers) knowledge and understanding of the military culture. Successful adaptation may also depend on an adult education program design that is capable of identifying and developing transferable skills necessary to this end.

Underpinning this research is the notion that patterns of cross-cultural transition have both psychological and sociocultural elements (Ward et al., 1998) and that transferable skills fall into these two domains. A review of the literature helped to determine a number of skills such as adaptation, stress and coping, self-efficacy, and cultural intelligence which are sometimes employed in cross-cultural transition experiences. Stress management and coping skills, for example, can lead to psychological adaptation; sociocultural adjustment relies on “culture learning” skills (Ward et al., 1998, p. 279). Research by Keats (2010) suggests that the use of certain transferable skills in cross-cultural transition may be inhibited by the impact of masculinity of the military
culture and OSI. “Military culture is oriented toward creating exaggerated masculine males by encouraging and rewarding competitive, aggressive, independent and highly restrained unemotional behavior” (Keats, 2010, p. 294). Sociocultural skills such as “adaptive emotional resilience”, “behavioral flexibility”, “self-efficacy”, and “cultural intelligence” (Keats, 2010, p. 290-291) may be suppressed by “hypermasculine behaviors” (Keats, 210, p.291) such as non-verbalization of emotions and discouraged introspection. The symbols, customs, jargon, and codes of behavior of “the hypermasculine milieu” (Keats, 2010, p. 294) can have a direct impact on adaptation.

2.7 Stress and Coping

In an attempt to define the term ‘stress’ and discuss it in the context of soldiers’ transition it is useful to consider Lazarus and Folkman’s (1984) idea that “stress depends in part on the social and physical demands of the environment” (p. 11). Transition within a person’s social and physical environments can create stress. This idea ties into Schlossberg’s transition theory (Goodman et al., 2006), linking transitions to social, physical, and even emotional or psychological contexts. Coping with stress depends on one’s appraisal of it. Even when people are experiencing similar social, physical, emotional, or psychological transitions, there are individual and group differences in the degree of stress experienced and reactions or responses to it. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) suggest that cognitive processes have a role to play in this variation. It is important to consider the “psychological situation, which is a product of the interplay of both environment and person factors” (p. 23). For example, two Canadian soldiers suffering permanent injuries from a combat-related incident and facing involuntary early retirement: one might respond with anger, another with depression, depending on the
environmental and personal factors. Drawing on Schlossberg’s transition theory it would be important to look at the context of the transition to explain this variation.

Primary appraisal of transition and stress is a necessary step in the coping process. Coping depends on an individual’s assessment of the situation as eventful or noneventful: a determination of whether or not gains or losses will result. Another important factor in coping with stress is “timing” (p. 108). Paralleling Goodman et al.’s (2006) notion of moving in, moving through, and moving out of transition, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) argue that events causing stress occur “in the context of the individual’s life cycle and in relation to other events, be they distant, recent, or concurrent” (p. 108). The context of the event defines its timing. When events occur ‘off-time’, stress can develop. Off-time events are perceived as happening at unexpected times in one’s life. These unanticipated events in the human life cycle, along with non-events—events that don’t materialize at certain expected stages—can create stress. Off-time or non-events can deprive an individual of such things as peer support, pride, satisfaction, or ability to perform a particular social role. Consider again the two Canadian soldiers suffering permanent injuries and facing involuntary early retirement: one might be nearing the end of his or her military career and may accept the news more readily; the other may be somewhat younger and may feel deprived of the opportunity to move ahead in his or her military career.

After primary appraisal of an event as eventful or noneventful, coping requires secondary appraisal, in which the individual asks “What can I do?” (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p.157). Along with features of the physical, social, and psychological
environments, the resources available to an individual are significant to the coping process. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) consider resources as things that people draw upon as well as “competencies for finding resources” (p. 158). Resources can be physical (e.g. one’s health and energy), psychological (e.g. positive thinking), social (e.g. support network of loved ones, friends, advisors, caregivers), environmental (e.g. material resources such as money, goods and services), or involve competencies such as problem-solving and social skills. Schlossberg’s transition theory (Goodman et al., 2006) looks at similar categories of resources: situation, self, support, and strategies. In the adult education environment, soldiers have the opportunity to find social resources and develop a number of competencies such as cultural intelligence and social skills through group interaction and social engagement in the school community.

Another consideration in the coping process is the role of “constraints” (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 165), or restrictions, on the use of resources. Sometimes using particular resources can create additional stress for an individual. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) label these constraints as personal and environmental. “Personal constraints refer to internalized cultural values and beliefs that proscribe certain types of action or feeling, and psychological deficits that are a product of the person’s unique development” (p. 165). Canadian soldiers, inculcated, through military training, to hide fear or weakness, may not use social resources because of this personal constraint. Environmental constraints might include “competing demands for the same resources” (p. 166). For example, injured soldiers applying for participation in certain social programs may have to compete with others due to limited funds available. At other times, constraints can
facilitate coping. Soldiers, trained to believe that showing fear is a sign of weakness, may use this personal constraint in combat situations to confront the enemy and cope with the event. Lazarus and Folkman’s (1984) work in the area of stress, appraisal, and coping is helpful in studying the transition experiences of Canadian soldiers. Successful transition may be dependent on the timing of the transition, the resources available to the individual, and the constraints on these resources.

2.8 Summary

Cross-cultural transition for the military population is complicated by several factors pertaining to the contemporary operating environment and issues related to invisible injuries such as PTSD. The transition model as a guiding theory considers transition in terms of definition and appraisal and determination of one’s place on the transition timeline. The interplay of stress and coping skills and cultural intelligence are important in this process. The following chapter looks at the methodological approach for this study, research methods and analysis.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines my methodological approach and research methods including: research design, sampling and recruitment, participants, data collection, and data analysis. I also explain the procedures I followed for ethical clearance and the measures taken to ensure trustworthiness.

3.1 Research Design

I elected to use a qualitative methodology to explore transferable skills, the barriers to transition and factors facilitating transition for Canadian soldiers. My goal was to develop an understanding of the personal experiences of soldiers as they moved from military life to the civilian world. Through one-on-one interviews over a period of three months I was able to construct knowledge about this population and garner rich data through participant narratives. Others in the academic environment were not part of the interview process due to limitations imposed by ethical considerations and to protect the identity of participants. Qualitative analysis of interview data resulted in the emergence of themes which tie into the relevant theoretical framework presented here.

3.2 Sampling and Recruitment

Participants were selected purposively through homogeneous sampling. Glesne (2011) writes that homogeneous sampling allows for in-depth, textured analysis of a group and was particularly well-suited to this study which had a narrower spectrum of participants. Participants were recruited in a two-step process. Letters of information
(Appendix A) were distributed to soldiers in transition through education with the assistance of the Integrated Personnel Support Unit (IPSC), Kingston, Ontario. Individuals were then invited to contact the researcher if interested in participating in the study. Letters of invitation to participate outlining demographic criteria for this study (Appendix B) were issued to interested individuals. Prior to participation in the study, all participants were given a list of Canadian Forces Contact Numbers (Appendix C) should their participation in the study require that they seek resources and support. All participants were asked to read and sign an interview consent form (Appendix D) prior to participation and a post-interview consent form after participation in the study (Appendix E).

### 3.3 Participants

Participants in this study were eight men and two women enrolled on a full- or part-time basis at one of five different adult education centres in a small city in eastern Ontario (a publicly-funded adult education centre, two privately-funded adult learning centres, a college, and a distance education centre). All participants were recently retired or in the process of retirement from the Canadian Forces at the time of this study. Nine of the ten participants had released involuntarily from the military for medical reasons. Six of the participants were members of the Canadian Army; one was Navy; and three were in logistical trades serving all three elements (Army, Navy, and Air Force). All participants in this study had been part of the contemporary operating environment, the majority involved in foreign deployments over the past decade. Participants ranged in age from 35 to 51, with the average age being 43.4 years. Half of the participants held the rank of Master Corporal just prior to releasing from the military, with others holding
ranks ranging from Private to Master Warrant Officer. The average number of years of regular force service was 20.4 years; service ranged from six years to 27.5 years. Participants joined the Canadian military between the ages of 17 and 33. Six of the ten participants did not have a Grade 12 diploma at the time of this study. The remaining four had graduated from high school from various Canadian provinces.

Because the focus of this study was on the transition experiences of soldiers returning to adult education the subject sample was limited to the relatively small number of such students registered in programs over the three-month research period in the research setting. As a result, the invitation to participate was extended to military students enrolled in a variety of adult education centres. The transition experiences of Regular Force and Class C Reserve Force soldiers were particularly important to this study because these individuals had ‘unlimited liability’ as put forth by the Department of National Defence (1997):

Nothing distinguishes the soldier from the civilian more strikingly than the acceptance that one of the basic rights that may have to be forgone in the national interest is the right to life. This requirement to give up one's life for one's country is spoken of in the military literature as the clause of 'unlimited liability'. This is the essential defining or differentiating characteristic separating soldiers from their fellow citizens. (Vol. 5)

The Department of National Defence (2008) defines a Class C Reserve Force soldier as:

A member…on voluntary full-time service related to deployments and subject to the same obligations as Regular Force members. For example, Reservists serving in Afghanistan, or training for deployment there, are on Class C Reserve Service. They receive the same pay as Regular Force members. (Para. 6)

Ray and Heaslip (2011) refer to “multiple intersecting identities” (p. 199) as the roles of soldiers are dropped for the roles of civilians. Because cross-cultural transition issues are
often linked to time spent in a particular culture it was important to consider the
experiences of individuals who had spent a significant amount of time entrenched in the
military culture. This study explored the experiences of individuals with a minimum of
five years full-time military service. All participants in this study had returned to school
for one of three reasons: to upgrade their academic skills in preparation for post-
secondary education; to complete the qualifications for their Ontario Secondary School
Diploma (Grade 12); or to pursue academic training for a new career (Table A).

Table A

Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code/ Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Trade</th>
<th>Age Joined</th>
<th>Years of Service</th>
<th>Date of Retirement/ Voluntary Release (VOL) or Involuntary Release (INV)</th>
<th>Grade 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/ F</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Army</td>
<td>Medical Technician</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2012 INV</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KI/ M</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Corporal</td>
<td>Army</td>
<td>Infantry</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2012 INV</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S/ F</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Master Corporal</td>
<td>Army</td>
<td>Finance Clerk</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2011 INV</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BR/ M</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Petty Officer 1st Class</td>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>Bosun</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2011 VOL</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR/ M</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Master Corporal</td>
<td>Army</td>
<td>Infantry</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2011 INV</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H/ M</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Master Corporal</td>
<td>Army</td>
<td>Supply Technician</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2012 INV</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BO/ M</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Corporal</td>
<td>Army</td>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2008 INV</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V/ M</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Master Corporal</td>
<td>A/N/AF</td>
<td>Logistics</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2012 INV</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.4 Data Collection

Attendance and length of program at an adult education facility (i.e. number of hours per week; number of weeks in total) varies according to the needs and goals of the individual learner. For the purpose of this research, nine of the participants were interviewed twice over a two to three-month period: once, at the beginning of their training, and once again, one to two months later. One participant was not available for a second interview due to health reasons. The time frame allowed me to develop an understanding of the issues facing soldiers in transition and to track a pattern of transition over time from the point of entry to several weeks into the schooling experience. The dual interview process and one-on-one interviews provided the means to collect the richest data possible.

Participants were scheduled for up to two thirty-to-sixty minute private semi-structured English-language interviews (Appendices F and G) at an adult education centre or at the IPSC between November, 2011 and February, 2012. These interviews served as the instruments of data collection. The semi-structured format helped to establish a level of authenticity as it allowed the researcher to reorder questions and explore beyond the answers for clarification. The flexibility of this approach, in combination with open-ended questions, paved the way for participants to share their narratives, contributing to the richness of the data. The transition model (Goodman et al.,
2006) served as the theoretical framework for exploring changes in the relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles of Canadian soldiers, for examining the perceptions of participants on the positive or negative factors in their transition from military to civilian life, and for considering the role of transferable skills in the transition process. This model and the research on cross-cultural transition and the U-curve pattern (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963; Lysgaard, 1955; Oberg, 1960; Ward et al., 1998; Zapf, 1991) guided the formulation of my interview questions. During these semi-structured interviews participants were asked a number of predetermined questions on specific topics, such as:

- In what ways is the culture of the adult education centre different or similar to the military culture (e.g. hours of operation, program structure, instructional staff, camaraderie, social life, expectations, discipline, classroom size, student population, peer groups, curriculum)?
- In what program/course(s) did you first register at this school?
- How often do you attend school? What factors contribute to this schedule?
- What skills are transferable from military to civilian life (e.g. adaptation skills, stress and coping skills, self-efficacy, cultural intelligence)?
- Describe how you felt emotionally during your first week of school. What words would you use to describe how you felt?
- Describe your interaction and communication with others (teachers, support staff, students) during your first week of school.
- What life changes have you experienced as a returning student with respect to: (a) family, (b) peers, (c) social connections, and (d) feelings of satisfaction?
- What has been the most difficult adjustment for you in returning to school?
• What has been the least difficult adjustment for you in returning to school?
• What program/course(s) are you presently taking?
• How would you describe this school experience in contributing to your transition to civilian life?
• In what school activities or events have you participated? Why or why not?
• What words would you use to describe how you now feel emotionally?
• Describe your interaction and communication with others at the school (teachers, support staff, students) now.
• What have you learned about the features of the adult education centre (e.g. instructional staff, classroom size, student population, hours of operation, curriculum, program structure) in the period you have been attending?

3.5 Data Analysis

The data collected through participant interviews were coded based on themes and patterns emerging from the data. The meanings embedded in these soldiers’ experiences and how soldiers made sense of their own transition were examined. Glesne (2011) writes, “Qualitative researchers code to discern themes, patterns, processes, and to make comparisons and build theoretical explanations” (p. 194). Data from interview transcripts were cross-referenced with data from relevant literature to establish a coding scheme relevant to the purpose of this study. Both emic and etic codes were established through this process. The etic view, writes Berg (2009), develops from meanings derived from existing literature and theoretical frameworks. Etic codes emerged from the literature on cross-cultural transition and the transition model. Emic codes emerge from
the perception of the insider (Berg, 2009) and are tied to the attitudes, language, beliefs, and values of the participants. Emic codes emerged, in this study, from a review of interview transcripts. Codes were differentiated by colour. Participants were given a code based on their pseudonym. Interviews were coded A and B to reflect first (Interview One) or second (Interview Two) interview. Each line in the interview text was numbered. After several readings of interview transcripts, general codes were developed to correspond to emergent themes and patterns. These general codes were condensed and recoded to make comparisons between the military culture (MC) and the school culture (SC) and to correspond to five major categories: transition issues (TI), unanticipated transitions and non-events (UT/NE), camaraderie and the veteran identity (C/VI), transferable skills (TS), and support and resources (SR). In the discussion, topics were defined as barriers to transition, factors facilitating transition, or, in some cases, were defined as both. Codes were added next to each quote taken from the data. For example, MC/N/A/L2 refers to Military Culture, participant N, Interview A, Line 2 of the transcript. Table B reflects initial etic and emic codes and shows how they were recoded to make comparisons between cultures and to correspond to the emergent themes noted above.

Table B
Coding System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Etic Codes</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camaraderie (C)</td>
<td>Camaraderie and the Veteran Identity (C/VI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Intelligence (CI)</td>
<td>Transferable Skills (TS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication (Comm)</td>
<td>Support and Resources (SR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs of the Adult Learner (NAL)</td>
<td>Support and Resources (SR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Engagement (SE)</td>
<td>Camaraderie and the Veteran Identity (C/VI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress and Coping (SC)</td>
<td>Transition Issues (TI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transferable Skills (TS)</td>
<td>Transferable Skills (TS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U-Curve (UC)</td>
<td>Unanticipated Transitions (UT) and Non-events (NE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran Identity (VI)</td>
<td>Camaraderie and the Veteran Identity (C/VI)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emic Codes</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Support (F)</td>
<td>Support and Resources (SR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends/Peers (P)</td>
<td>Support and Resources (SR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maturity (M)</td>
<td>Transferable Skills (TS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect (R)</td>
<td>Support and Resources (SR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Ethic (WE)</td>
<td>Transferable Skills (TS)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**3.6 Ethical Clearance and Trustworthiness**

I obtained ethical clearance for this study from both the General Research Ethics Board (GREB) and the Education Research Ethics Board (EREB) at Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario. Because my participants were both students and, in some cases, were still under the umbrella of the Canadian Forces, I was required to seek ethical approval from the Social Science Research Review Board (SSRRB), Department of National Defence, Ottawa, Ontario. Because many of my participants were also public education students, this study was also given ethical approval by the Limestone District School Board, Kingston, Ontario. Interview questions were thoroughly reviewed by these
committees. Recommendations were made and reflected in the final drafts of questions (Appendices F and G). A List of Canadian Forces Contact Numbers ( Appendix C) was added as a measure to comply with ethical considerations and for transparency.

To ensure trustworthiness of data, interviews were audio recorded. Audio recordings were transcribed by the researcher and served as the data for this research. Transcripts were emailed or posted to individual participants for review to ensure accuracy of the data. Coding was reviewed by my thesis supervisor for accuracy and perspective.

In addition, as a measure to distance myself enough for greater objectivity and to ensure trustworthiness of the data, I did not invite participation by military students who were actively engaged in programs I was teaching during the study period.

3.7 Summary

In this chapter I have outlined my methodological approach and discussed my data collection and analysis methods. I also provided details about obtaining ethical clearance from various boards and discussed measures taken to establish validity and trust. In the following chapter I present the findings from my data analysis.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

In this chapter I present the findings from my analysis of the interview data. Six of the ten participants did not have a Grade 12 diploma at the time of this study. The four remaining participants were returning to school to upgrade their skills and take additional courses and programs in preparation for further education and for second careers. The majority of participants did not embrace retirement and were focused on future employment. I separate the findings from the data collection into headings that correspond directly to questions from interviews # 1 and #2: 1) comparing cultures (“In what ways is the culture of the adult education centre different or similar to the military culture, e.g. hours of operation, program structure, instructional staff, camaraderie, social life, expectations, discipline, classroom size, student population, peer groups, curriculum? What have you learned about the features of the adult education centre (e.g. instructional staff, classroom size, student population, hours of operation, curriculum, program structure) in the period you have been attending?”); 2) academic programs and schedules (“In what program/course(s) did you first register at this school? How often do you attend school? What factors contribute to this schedule? What program/course(s) are you presently taking?”); 3) transferable skills (“What skills are transferable from military to civilian life, e.g. adaptation skills, stress and coping skills, self-efficacy, cultural intelligence?”); 4) culture shock (“Describe how you felt emotionally during your first week of school. What words would you use to describe how you felt? What words would you use to describe how you now feel emotionally?”); 5) communication and interaction (“Describe your interaction and communication with others (teachers, support staff,
students) during your first week of school. Describe your interaction and communication with others at the school (teachers, support staff, students) now.”); 6) adjustments (“What has been the most difficult adjustment for you in returning to school? What has been the least difficult adjustment for you in returning to school? How would you describe this school experience in contributing to your transition to civilian life?”); 7) social engagement (“In what school activities or events have you participated? Why or why not?”); 8) life changes (“What life changes have you experienced as a returning student with respect to: (a) family, (b) peers, (c) social connections, and (d) feelings of satisfaction?”). During the second interview, as a connection to the question on life changes, participants were asked to comment on their identification with the veteran culture. Findings are presented for this question under the heading ‘the veteran identity’.

4.1 Comparing Cultures

In both the first and second interviews – respectively, the ‘moving in’ and ‘moving through’ stages of the Transition Process (Goodman et al., 2006, p. 32) – participants were asked to make comparisons between the military culture and the culture of adult education by commenting on differences or similarities in the following areas: academic (hours of operation/routine, program structure, instructional staff, discipline, classroom size, curriculum, student population), personal (expectations), and social (camaraderie, social life, peer groups). Further to this question, in the second interview participants were asked to comment on what they had learned about the features of the adult education environment in the period they had been attending school. Participant responses are shown in Table C. A selection of comments is presented in the table to
reflect similar responses by participants. Interview #2 responses reflect new ideas only that were not reflected in responses given during Interview #1.

Table C

Comparing Cultures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Military Culture</th>
<th>Culture of Adult Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACADEMIC</strong></td>
<td>Interview # 1</td>
<td>Interview # 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of Operation/Routine</td>
<td>“7 am - 3 pm” MC/N/A/L2</td>
<td>“More flexible.&quot; SC/BR/A/L45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“7:30 am - 4 pm” MC/BO/A/L7</td>
<td>“You’re left to schedule that yourself.” SC/KE/A/L9-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“always on call” MC/BR/A/L18</td>
<td>“For myself, I’m trying to maintain the same structure, start first thing in the morning, go through the full day that I’m slated for in here….I’m still following the military structure….It keeps you focused.” SC/FL/A/L9-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Mandatory scheduled PT [physical training] sessions” MC/BR/A/L22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“deployment training” MC/N/A/L12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“The Army wouldn’t care if they kept you past four o’clock. They wouldn’t care if they kept you ’till 9:30 at night….Field time…that’s twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week…yeah, that played ninety percent of my life….&quot; MC/FR/A/L34-56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“In the military, at any time, they can call you; you leave your family behind. There’s no ‘I can’t make it today’: they decide whether you can make it or not.” MC/N/A/L31-33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Interview # 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Regimentation….More hard core.” MC/FL/B/L1</td>
<td>“[I attend] in the mornings….I have medical appointments.” SC/KI/A/L14-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I need a kick in the ass sometimes….Coming back from Afghanistan…I’m not the same person….I find myself, at times, that I need to physically get out….So if I sit at home I get so distracted….so by coming here it gives me that little bit of a push to get something started.” SC/KI/A/L124-129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Interview # 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I am planning on returning to school this Wednesday evening to continue with my studies.” SC/BR/B/L2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Structure</td>
<td>Interview # 1</td>
<td>Interview # 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“More structured.”</td>
<td>“Military says we have a mission to do. You have to do this course right now, it starts on this date, it ends on that date. You either make it or break it.” MC/FL/A/L67-69</td>
<td>“It’s a far more casual approach.” SC/KE/A/L72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Military says we have a mission to do. You have to do this course right now, it starts on this date, it ends on that date. You either make it or break it.” MC/FL/A/L67-69</td>
<td></td>
<td>“The learning environment is fresh and relaxed.” SC/BR/A/L101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview # 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>“It’s not as defined, but sometimes that’s scary because for over a decade I’ve had a highly regimented classroom and it has strict structure in terms of how they teach things. So, it’s a little bit unnerving to be completely on my own.” SC/N/A/L27-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The military is not just a culture, it’s a lifestyle....It’s complete night and day.” MC/KI/B/L1-4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“It’s two different mindsets.” MC/BO/B/L3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Army, you get two strikes and you’re out kind of thing.” MC/FR/B/L2-3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview # 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Here you have the opportunity to make mistakes and learn from your mistakes.” SC/FR/B/L3-4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Because I’ve been medically released with PTSD, things have become really hard, really…I don’t know how to say it, but things are really…I need that slowness right now.” SC/FR/B/L5-7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You move along more at your own pace.” SC/FL/B/L3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Everything is individualized....You’re left on your own to work on your own, so it’s a lot more flexible that way, but you lose some interaction that way as well.” SC/KE/B/L83-86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instructional Staff | Interview # 1 | Interview # 1
“Very strict, demanding.”
MC/BR/A/L48

“More experienced than the students.” MC/BR/A/L58-59

“In the military it’s more like an ‘empire’....If I want to talk to senior staff, I’d have to go through my chain of command to work my way into that office.” MC/FL/A/L25-29

“It’s two different worlds.” MC/N/A/L35

“In the Army, to teach is to scream at you, and it’s all drilled and it’s just pumped into you, and a lot of people feel as if the more yelling that goes on, the quicker you get it....”MC/FR/A/L65-67

“The Army would take off for coffee. That forty-five minute lecture’s done that teacher ain’t stickin’ around if his life depends on it. He’s gone.” MC/FR/A/L144-145

“A very narrow-minded way of teaching....there’s nothing to talk about. This is what it is and that’s the way it’s going to be....They are very military-oriented. It’s follow the rules and don’t deviate.”MC/N/A/L56-61

“One-on-one wouldn’t be through education, it would be through daily working. You wouldn’t go up to an instructor afterwards, ‘Can you help me out?’ It would happen very, very rarely, because of their teaching style. This is how it is, carry on, carry on....” MC/V/A/L162-165

“With the rank structure, uniform...

“Fair; accommodating.”
SC/N/A/L172

“I got a lot of support from the teachers, yeah, which was unfamiliar for me.” SC/FR/A/L85

“They’ve already broken down a barrier by using first names.” SC/BR/A/L108

“They’re very helpful and they’re very knowledgeable, and that’s not necessarily so in the military.” SC/N/A/L38-39

“They show a lot more passion to teach.”SC/FR/A/L64-65

“They are a lot more flexible.” SC/V/A/L68-69

“More personal, one-on-one, first-name basis....” SC/KI/A/L3-5

Interview # 2

“friendly, very relaxed”
SC/KI/B/L5
### Discipline

**Interview # 1**

“Discipline was… more important than always worrying about the content of the course….They would rather have people be disciplined and acting accordingly that just working on their studies. It depends on the situation, but sometimes they focused on the wrong things rather than just the content of the course.”

MC/BR/A/L48-52

“In the military it would be more aggressive and you wouldn’t be saying anything. You’d be listening and the instructor or staff would be talking, or even yelling or raising their voices…."

MC/BR/A/L145-147

“Discipline in the military is cut and dry. You step outside the line you get punished. There’s rules cutting your hair, clothes you have to wear….Everything from how you shine your boots…what’s allowed with a moustache…."

MC/V/A/L127-130

“You salute an officer, you don’t salute the person, you salute the commission, the crown. There’s a lot of people who don’t respect a lot of people, but have to because of discipline.”

MC/KI/A/L60-62

**Interview # 1**

“I think there is discipline here in the school, just…it’s different…it’s more passive….You could turn people off really easily if you’re just disciplining them to death.”

SC/BR/A/L143-152

“You don’t have to wait for permission."SC/N/A/L97

“I guess discipline in the civilian environment…it’s more shown as concern and…encouragement.”

SC/BO/A/L52-53

“Much more lenient at the school; much more forgiving.”SC/FR/A/L64

“The military, it’s all about discipline….In the school here…there’s respect…..”

SC/KI/A/L49-51

**Interview # 2**

“Being here is more self-discipline as opposed to a…structured discipline that you have to follow.”

SC/KI/B/L11-12

### Classroom Size

**Interview # 1**

“Now it didn’t necessarily have to be a classroom, we could be out in the field learning something, and there could only be four of us

Smaller; fewer people"

SC/N/A/L99

“It’s probably more beneficial with
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning, or as much as thirty, or as many as a hundred and twenty. Depending on what they’re trying to teach, how they’re trying to teach it.</th>
<th>fewer [people]. I mean there’s more chance for one-on-one; more chance of getting questions answered.</th>
<th>Learning, or as much as thirty, or as many as a hundred and twenty. Depending on what they’re trying to teach, how they’re trying to teach it.</th>
<th>fewer [people]. I mean there’s more chance for one-on-one; more chance of getting questions answered.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“The instructors are more available to you.”</td>
<td>“The instructors are more available to you.”</td>
<td>“The instructors are more available to you.”</td>
<td>“The instructors are more available to you.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>Interview # 1</th>
<th>Interview # 1</th>
<th>Interview # 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“trade specific, or soldier specific”</td>
<td>“More academic; English; mathematics....”</td>
<td>“trade specific, or soldier specific”</td>
<td>“More academic; English; mathematics....”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“strictly trade-related”</td>
<td>“I’m taking the Navigating the Workplace course and also a parenting course....[There is] an option to do a co-op [for credit], so that interests me.”</td>
<td>“leadership courses”</td>
<td>“Business courses...Statistics...Marketing...Basic Accounting...Managerial Accounting....”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“In the military you’re either taking first aid training, or a safety course, or a management course, or your trades training...it’s more specific to your trade.”</td>
<td>“Well, military life you wouldn’t get your Grade 12.”</td>
<td>“Many of the courses that you take in the Army belong only to the Army.”</td>
<td>“Well, military life you wouldn’t get your Grade 12....Here you could do your basic high school.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Well, military life you wouldn’t get your Grade 12.”</td>
<td>“What I’m learning now is specifically to work with troubled children.”</td>
<td>“There’s how to fire a weapon, there’s first aid....”</td>
<td>“What I’m learning now is specifically to work with troubled children.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Things you’ll do here in the classroom just to get the credits you need to graduate, whatever, is...to be honest with you, sixty percent of it you’ll never use, you’ll never see it for the rest of your life.”</td>
<td>“Things you’ll do here in the classroom just to get the credits you need to graduate, whatever, is...to be honest with you, sixty percent of it you’ll never use, you’ll never see it for the rest of your life.”</td>
<td>“You’re learning stuff that you’re going to need, and going to need to do....It’s got to be practical if you ever have to use it.”</td>
<td>“You’re learning stuff that you’re going to need, and going to need to do....It’s got to be practical if you ever have to use it.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Population</th>
<th>Interview # 1</th>
<th>Interview # 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“younger white males”</td>
<td>“younger white males”</td>
<td>“younger white males”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“With the military you’ve got the whole spectrum...from twenty years old up to...sixty.... More male than female....In the military there’s quite an assortment of cultural backgrounds.”
MC/BO/A/L61-66

“There isn’t hardly as much diversity in the Army. It’s pretty much small-town white.”
MC/FR/A/L163-164

“The military...is a full mix. I’ve experienced working with everybody, women, other nationalities...all ages.”
MC/FL/A/L83-85

“When I first joined there was mostly people from the East Coast...people from Quebec were a large amount as well, or from smaller communities....In the twenty-seven years I’ve been here, I’ve seen a lot....more of visible minorities....When I first joined there were very, very few women in the field where I was – we were out in the field – but now they’re everywhere....”
MC/N/A/L173-179

“Being in the military you come from all parts of Canada, you know different colour, different race, different religion....”
MC/KI/A/L67-68

“In the military we are going to do all the same thing....We have to follow all the same order, then it become almost the same mentality for everyone.”
MC/H/A/L114-116

“Age and gender, same diversity as the military, but more cultural diversity.”
SC/N/A/L101-102

“Age is about the same. It runs all over the scale....You see everything, from A to Z.”
SC/FR/A/L162-166

“There’s young kids...and then there’s people my age....”
SC/FL/A/L86-87

“In the civilian, if you have a mentality, you can keep your mentality.”
SC/H/A/L116-117

Interview # 2

“You see a lot of people from different countries, different religions, different age groups.”
SC/KI/A/69-70

“All the students that came from overseas want a lot more study than the people that are here already....They are there to do something right now, they don’t want to wait. Some people that come from here...are a little bit more lazy.”
SC/H/B/L6-9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONAL</th>
<th>Interview # 1</th>
<th>Interview # 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

43
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Expectations</strong></th>
<th><strong>Interview # 1</strong></th>
<th><strong>Interview # 2</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“The military...you never even thought about not doing stuff.” MC/S/A/L92-93</td>
<td>“It’s what your goal is as a person....I think it’s on the individual.” SC/BR/A/L127-129</td>
<td>“No room for failure.” MC/BO/A/L48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Army set a lot of expectation....In the Army, if you do a course and you don’t pass the course you can be penalized.” MC/H/A/L87-90</td>
<td>“It’s kind of more your personal growth.” SC/S/A/L91-92</td>
<td>“It’s what your goal is as a person....I think it’s on the individual.” SC/BR/A/L127-129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I already had the foundation that you show up on time, you come to school, and you come to work kind of thing....” SC/FR/A/L133-134</td>
<td>“I already had the foundation that you show up on time, you come to school, and you come to work kind of thing....” SC/FR/A/L133-134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>SOCIAL</strong></th>
<th><strong>Camaraderie</strong></th>
<th><strong>Camaraderie</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview # 1</strong></td>
<td>“Strong bond.” C/BR/A/L63</td>
<td>“Strong bond.” C/BR/A/L63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“In the military you work together, you play together...you’re involved in everything together because you’re usually away on deployments together....You have to depend on those people, maybe, to keep you safe, save your life one day, you know. You have to depend on them, so you trust them....” C/BR/A/L75-81</td>
<td>“In the military you work together, you play together...you’re involved in everything together because you’re usually away on deployments together....You have to depend on those people, maybe, to keep you safe, save your life one day, you know. You have to depend on them, so you trust them....” C/BR/A/L75-81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“If you’re standing in town waiting for a bus in uniform...or if you’re in an airport and you get lost...anyone in uniform, even if you’ve never met them in your life before, they will stop and have coffee with you, and talk to you about things, make sure you get to where you need to go or vice versa.” C/N/A/L68-73</td>
<td>“If you’re standing in town waiting for a bus in uniform...or if you’re in an airport and you get lost...anyone in uniform, even if you’ve never met them in your life before, they will stop and have coffee with you, and talk to you about things, make sure you get to where you need to go or vice versa.” C/N/A/L68-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“In school, you don’t really have to have that same kind of trust.” C/FR/A/L82</td>
<td>“In school, you don’t really have to have that same kind of trust.” C/FR/A/L82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I would say... there’s considerably less.” C/N/A/L83</td>
<td>“I would say... there’s considerably less.” C/N/A/L83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“There is none....I know a lot of these people are in their early twenties....The majority of people respect the soldiers and they know that if I am here doing this there must be a reason....I really don’t hang out with anybody here, so I couldn’t tell you.” C/KI/A/L18-25</td>
<td>“There is none....I know a lot of these people are in their early twenties....The majority of people respect the soldiers and they know that if I am here doing this there must be a reason....I really don’t hang out with anybody here, so I couldn’t tell you.” C/KI/A/L18-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“The school environment, you really don’t get that family</td>
<td>“The school environment, you really don’t get that family...”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“My experience in the military is whether you know somebody or whether you don’t, you’re really left with the feeling that that person has your back. It’s just a common thread that’s never really discussed.”
C/KE/A/L86-88

“[We speak] a different kind of language….We have different acronyms for everything.” C/S/A/L116-118

“I don’t think there’s much similarity in the two…because in the Army…you put so much on the other person.” C/FR/A/L77-80

“There’s a guy on your left side, there’s a guy on your right side, and when you’re in uniform, he’s your buddy, period.” C/V/A/L79-80

“In the military you train to do a God-awful job…and things do happen, you become… even closer than family….That is something that is built through time.” C/KI/A/L81-84

Interview # 2

“When you’re so close with people for so long and go through so many traumatic events, you know, there’s a bond that can’t even be described.”
C/KI/B/L51-52

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Life</th>
<th>Interview # 1</th>
<th>Interview # 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“professional development”</td>
<td>“After hours.”</td>
<td>“A lot less than I have in the Army….At school, because of the difference with the age, it’s a lot harder. The student that are a lot younger doesn’t think the same thing.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC/KE/A/L99</td>
<td>MC/BO/A/L32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C/KI/A/L84-89

“camaraderie, if you want to use the word….You can’t compare, you can’t even go close.”

“Interview # 2”

“Social Life”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peer Groups</th>
<th>Interview # 1</th>
<th>Interview # 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“by rank structure” MC/FL/A/L88</td>
<td>“Cliques” SC/V/A/L83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Like, I couldn’t just go hang out with majors...nor could they just come and hang out with privates and corporals.” MC/N/A/L106-107</td>
<td>“Peer groups form out of things in common such as education goals and personal struggles.” SC/FL/A/L96-97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Rank is very important in the military. A lot of times you are forced to...when they say peers, a peer to them is rank.” MC/V/A/L183-184</td>
<td>“The younger ones tend to stick together. The older students tend to be a little more flexible, just from life experiences I guess.” SC/FL/A/L96-97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“For the most part it would be people in your own trade.” MC/BR/A/L168</td>
<td>“When I think of a peer in civilian life, a peer would be someone with the same interests, someone with maybe the same age kids...” SC/V/A/L184-185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I think I have more in common with the teaching staff.” SC/KE/A/L348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Because of my age it’s a little bit harder to join these groups.” SC/H/A/L118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data collected from the comparison exercise found that participants reported significant differences between the military and school cultures in each of the academic, personal, and social domains, indicative of a polarization of the two cultures and evidence of the potential for cross-cultural transition issues. A common thread tying each
area of comparison together was an agreement among all participants that differences between the military culture and the civilian adult education environment are sharply evident. Participants used an array of terms and phrases to express their interpretation of these differences: “The military is not just a culture, it’s a lifestyle….It’s complete night and day” (MC/KI/B/L1-4); “It’s two different mindsets” (MC/BO/B/L3); It’s two different worlds” (MC/N/A/L35); “[We speak] a different kind of language….We have different acronyms for everything” (C/S/A/L116-118); “It’s a world of difference” (MC/FR/B/L1). Key points of consideration for each of the focus areas are summarized in Table D.

Table D

Comparing Cultures: Summary of Points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Military Culture</th>
<th>Culture of Adult Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACADEMIC</td>
<td>• mandatory training</td>
<td>• flexible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of Operation/Routine</td>
<td>• 24/7</td>
<td>• self-determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• highly structured</td>
<td>• day/ evening options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Structure</td>
<td>• strict rules</td>
<td>• independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• relaxed</td>
<td>• not as defined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Staff</td>
<td>• demanding</td>
<td>• knowledgeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• formal</td>
<td>• informal/ casual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• chain of command/ rank structure</td>
<td>• supportive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discipline</strong></td>
<td>• aggressive</td>
<td>• passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• punishment</td>
<td>• self-discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• respect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Classroom Size** | • variations; mostly larger | • smaller |
| (Number of Students) |                           |           |

| **Curriculum** | • trade specific | • more academic |
|               | • soldier specific | • secondary school curriculum |
|               |                   | • civilian career preparation |

| **Student Population** | • less diversity | • more cultural diversity |
|                       | • more white males | • more individualism |
|                       | • same mentality | |

| **PERSONAL** | • pressure to excel | • self-guided |
| Expectations | • common goals | • personal goals |

| **SOCIAL** | • family | • friendship |
| Camaraderie | • bonds | • less trust |
|            | • trust | |

<p>| <strong>Social Life</strong> | • planned | • more spontaneous |
|                | • tied to professional development | • less frequent |
|                | • linked to recognition and | • less important |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>morale</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peer Groups</td>
<td>trade-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rank structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>age-related</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>life experiences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The questions which garnered particular detailed responses were those comparing instructional staff and camaraderie between the military and academic settings. Participants praised the support, personal attention and friendship of instructional staff, indicating that these qualities were important to their transition experience. The descriptors participants chose to describe camaraderie in the military setting included “strong bond” (C/BR/A/L63), “trust” (C/BR/A/L75-81), “depend” (C/BR/A/L75-81), and “family” (C/KI/A/L81-84). Participants felt these elements were missing in the academic experience.

4.2 Academic Programs and Schedules

In the first interview participants were asked about their academic programs and the factors contributing to their school schedules. Six of the ten participants did not have a Grade 12 diploma at the time of this study and had returned to school to complete the requirements for their secondary school diploma in Ontario. The majority of these six were taking compulsory credits such as senior English and math at a publicly-funded adult education centre. Three of the ten participants were preparing for second careers and had enrolled in business courses at three different centres: a privately-funded adult learning centre, a local community college, and a distance education centre. One of the ten participants had enrolled in a Child and Youth Worker program at a privately-funded
adult learning centre. Nine of the ten participants had been released from the military for medical reasons. One participant had retired voluntarily after over twenty years of service. All participants were pursuing daytime academic programs. The majority of participants identified as medical releases reported taking advantage of disability insurance funding for education and retraining.

In the second interview, participants were asked about changes to their programs or schedules. Six of the ten participants were still enrolled in their respective programs and following the same schedules. Three of these six were nearing completion of their programs. Two of the ten participants had dropped out of their programs for medical reasons. One participant reported having to put her studies on hold for several months to accommodate a move to another province. One participant reported that he had switched to a part-time evening program to accommodate a new full-time job.

4.3 Transferable Skills

Participants were asked to identify transferable skills they felt they possessed and were invited to add other skills to the list. Table E shows the list of transferable skills, the relevance of each skill in the military culture, and how each of these skills might be useful in the context of an adult education environment. A selection of comments is presented in the table to reflect similar responses by participants.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transferable Skill</th>
<th>Military Culture</th>
<th>How This Skill Transfers to the Culture of Adult Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adaptation</td>
<td>“In the military everything can change at the last minute and you have to be able to adapt.” TS/BR/A/L211-212</td>
<td>“Even just changing from class to class you have to be able to adapt….You have to be able to change your way of thinking.” TS/BR/A/L214-217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“In the military, often you moved, thrown in with a bunch of guys you don’t know and you’re expected to survive, get along.” TS/V/A/L251-252</td>
<td>“I found it very, very useful, knowing that I could be thrown in here and, almost immediately, your interpersonal skills start working, you start to figure everybody out and how they work.” TS/V/A/L252-255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“When you’re Regular force…you have to be adaptable because you have to move around and go to different places.” TS/S/A/L97-98</td>
<td>“to adapt to all the different teachers” TS/H/B/L15-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“When you’re on patrol, you need to be able to react instantaneously to whichever event can occur….” TS/N/A/L128-129</td>
<td>“It just gives me flexibility. I’m not sketched out if something changes.” TS/KE/A/L251-254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress and Coping</td>
<td>“I think they’re forced on you. You either do or you don’t [cope].” TS/S/A/L136</td>
<td>“I was more stressed out about passing my tests than I’ve ever been in the military….I put more pressure on myself.” TS/S/A/L144-146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Over the years you develop different ways of coping with stress….It depends on what the stress is….It could be physical, mental….The awareness of how to get help…has been a big thing in the military. There’s more support…the availability is more. ” TS/BR/A/L221-228</td>
<td>“Right now there’s so many things being thrown at me.” TS/V/A/L266-267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“There’s a lot of mentorship that goes on in the”</td>
<td>“That’s diminished, big time, for me, and that’s because of life experiences on tour…..” TS/KI/A/L 163-164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table E

Transferable Skills
| Self-efficacy | “A lot of the training is physical…but your mental toughness and training through the military will make you stronger as well, which will develop different values in yourself and confidence is a big one.” TS/BR/A/L229-232 | “Competency…it could be anything from doing a good job and proving yourself to someone, or just in a group setting, being confident kind of thing….Even just starting with your appearance, the way you act, the way you look….Sometimes you only get one chance to make a first impression.” TS/BR/A/L233-236 |
| Cultural Intelligence | “I think to a limited degree. It’s not something we discuss a lot of.” TS/KE/A/L278 | “That’s a work in progress.” TS/N/A/L141 |
| | “Specific training about certain situations, or certain groups, that could be a sensitive matter if dealt with incorrectly.” TS/BR/A/L240-242 | “This environment is the one that is teaching me diversity. The Army took it away from me in that sense. Just because it isn’t as diversified as this….“ TS/FR/B/L48-49 |
| | “I know that being overseas, seeing different cultures, different people… I’m more apt to be more laid back about somebody’s culture in reference to our society.” TS/V/A/L279-282 | “Awareness. You’re more aware that there are those different situations…and you should be able to deal with them accordingly.” TS/BR/A/L243-245 |
| | “I’ve seen the world through the eyes of the Army. They’ve helped them with problems.” TS/V/A/L288-289 | “If you’re respectful to other people they’re going to respect you back. Being polite…just smiling or saying...” |
| Forces….There’s lots of places to go to seek help for any additional mental stress you may have.” TS/KE/A/L261-268 | “I’ve had some experiences that were…not the nicest, let’s say….seeing what’s happened to other people…a couple of neighbours being killed…my own son being hit by an IED.” TS/FL/A/L137-140 | “I’m considering myself a mentor [to] some of the younger students here….I’m taking more of a listening role in it, rather than a guidance role.” TS/FL/B/L61-67 |
| Work Ethic/ Self-Discipline | “a high work ethic”
TS/N/A/L124 | “Put your best foot forward.”
TS/BR/A/L237 |
|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
|                            | “The military put me more on the straight and narrow.”
TS/FL/B/L6-7               | “I think I’m more dedicated.”
TS/FL/B/L122               |
| Observation                | “I just think for my training in the military and experience I’ve learned to slow down…rather than just react all the time, and that can be positive….”
TS/BR/A/L183-185           | “You just collect information and use as much information to make a decision rather than just getting in there.”
TS/BR/A/L187-189           |
| Leadership                 | “The leadership stuff we learn in the Forces….There’s the expectation that if something happens, take care of it….Use your resources….Move forward and get on with it….Take charge of things and do things.”
TS/KE/B/L145-153           | “Getting everyone – different demographics – to work as a group for one cause.”
TS/BR/A/L305-306           |
|                            | “That’s not always in your favour, when you shouldn’t be taking charge of stuff. I have to be mindful not to butt my nose in.”
TS/KE/B/L153-154           | “Very often when a student will see that you have a lot of experience on different things they will come up to you to be in their team, to work together, because you can bring a lot more knowledge and a lot more experience.”
TS/H/B/L61-63              |
|                            | “I had to do a presentation in a group….They were so amazed by what I was doing during a meeting by taking all the notes on the blackboard and making all the point and...” |
Transferrable skills identified as strengths included adaptation, self-efficacy, self-discipline, observation, leadership, and learning strategy skills. Some participants reported struggling with stress and coping and cultural intelligence skills. Leadership was interpreted as a limitation in some cases. Ward et al. (1998) put forth that transferrable skills have both psychological and sociocultural elements: stress management and coping can lead to psychological adaptation; cultural intelligence is important to sociocultural adjustment. Leadership skills are important to both domains. If any of these skills are weak they can negatively impact adaptation in these areas.

### 4.4 Culture Shock

Several participants in this study were confused about expectations, discipline and formality in the education environment. One participant reported feeling like a “freak” (UT/FB/L55), believing that others in the school viewed him that way. The lack of communication with fellow students in the initial phase limited the amount of feedback and social cues. Over time, as military students moved through the transition, they
reported feeling more confident, secure and grounded (Table F) as communication with others increased. After experiencing lengthy military careers, several participants reported encountering unanticipated norms and codes of behavior in the school environment. The flexibility of the schedule and the lack of discipline were noted as not only significantly different from the military culture, but also significantly different from what they remembered from their pre-military civilian school experiences.

Participants in this study were asked to give feedback on their emotional well-being at the beginning of their schooling experience (initial phase) and then, again, after a period of time. Descriptors used by participants are shown in Table F.

Table F
Culture Shock Descriptors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Phase</th>
<th>Several Weeks Later</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“It’s really exciting, but it also creates a bit of anxiety” UT/N/A/L145</td>
<td>“I have had to learn how to adapt to the civilian way of life.” UT/S/B/L4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Curious” UT/FL/A/L184</td>
<td>“Now I’m on the upswing…The more that upswing’s happening, the further I’m distancing myself from the Forces.” UT/KE/B/L219-220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Out of place… I don’t remember what it is like to be ‘normal’… I feel like I’m right out to lunch.” UT/N/A/L149-152</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“In regards to the students…I feel…really on the outside of the box.” UT/FR/A/L86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Overwhelming” UT/BR/A/L250</td>
<td>“Positive.” UT/KI/B/L94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Kind of lost…I’m not a part of something.” UT/KE/B/L115</td>
<td>“Emotionally things are better. I’m a much stronger person now. I’m more able to deal with the lower points.” UT/BO/B/L30-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Afraid…terrified…very nervous…and very unsure.” UT/V/A/L283-286</td>
<td>“hopeful, optimistic” UT/BO/B/L125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I feel a lot more secure about what I am able to do and what they are asking.” UT/H/B/L33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“stressed...nervous...fear of failure”</td>
<td>“more confident”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UT/S/A/L147</td>
<td>UT/H/B/L81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Disappointment because I am starting all over again.”</td>
<td>“Emotionally grounded....Two feet on the ground.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UT/KI/A/L178</td>
<td>UT/FL/B/L148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Depressing.”</td>
<td>“I have found the transition to be a bit tougher than I thought it would be.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UT/KE/A/L170</td>
<td>UT/BR/B/L3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I feel a lot of shame.”</td>
<td>UT/FR/B/L11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Descriptors such as “exciting” and “curious” reflect point of entry feelings in the initial phase, equating to the high point of the beginning of the U-curve pattern (Lysgaard, 1955; Oberg, 1960; Zapf, 1991). As participants experienced culture shock, they chose descriptors such as “lost” (UT/KE/B/L115), “afraid” (UT/V/A/L283-286), “stressed” (UT/S/A/L147) and “nervous” (UT/V/A/L283-286) to express negative feelings, reflecting the low point of the U-curve pattern. Over time, as integration took place, descriptors became more positive. Participants used words such as “hopeful” (UT/BO/B/L125), “optimistic” (UT/BO/B/L125), and “confident” (UT/H/B/L81) to reflect the high point moving out of the U-curve pattern. Some participants did not follow this U-curve pattern exactly. At the end of the interview period for this study, two participants had dropped out of their programs for medical reasons. Another participant reported having to put her studies on hold to accommodate a move to another province, and another had to switch academic programs to accommodate a new job. Adjustment conflicts for these individuals were ongoing as new patterns of adjustment began and as new unanticipated transitions and transition issues emerged due to interruptions in the transition process. In these cases, a prolonged “low” period was evidenced by phrases such as “I have found the transition to be tougher than I thought it would be”
and “I feel a lot of shame” (UT/FR/B/L11). The extended low period of this U-curve pattern was indicative of a possible abandonment of transition to the new culture. For these individuals, adjustment was reflective of what I would call an ‘L pattern’, or incomplete transition. Further study of these participants would be required to determine when or whether they would complete the U-curve.

### 4.5 Communication and Interaction

Participants in this study were asked to describe their communication and interaction with others (teachers, support staff, students) during their first week of school and then, again, after several weeks in the academic environment (Table G). A selection of comments is presented in the table to reflect similar responses by participants. Interview #2 responses reflect new ideas only that were not reflected in responses given during Interview #1.

#### Table G

**Communication and Interaction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication and Interaction with Staff</th>
<th>Initial Phase</th>
<th>Several Weeks Later</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“If I have any questions they don’t make me feel ridiculous….They don’t make me feel bad. If I need help, they help.” SR/N/A/L174-176</td>
<td>“Mostly the teachers because the age gap is less than myself with the students.” SR/KI/B/L99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Just because of my age, I guess. You have more things in common. You probably know more of the general news or daily events that are going on in the world….It’s first-name basis and they’re”</td>
<td>“Pretty good within the school because I can speak openly and freely.” SR/FR/B/L51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
making themselves available all the time to the students, whereas sometimes in the military they’re not because they’re dealing with the group at once.” SR/BR/A/L95-104

“Interaction was really easy….There wasn’t a lot of explaining to do, which I thought I had to do…they seemed to understand right off the bat who I was, what I was, and where I was coming from.” SR/KI/A/L183-186

“It’s all first-name basis….I think I had an expectation that there would be more formal headings for people.” SR/KE/A/L318-323

“I think it’s the maturity level. They’re all calm, they’re all relaxed….They’ve been trained how to deal with different people, emotionally, psychologically, etc. We’ve done the same thing in the military. I can sense that, you know.” SR/FL/A/L196-199

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication and Interaction with Students</th>
<th>“I don’t know how to talk to people….The military…has its own language and in the civilian world it’s entirely different….You kind of have to pause to figure out what you should say…. [In the military] there’s different levels of engagement….So that’s entirely different than walking down the hall….It’s just completely bizarre.” C/N/A/L152-160</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Awkward….I seem to freeze. I don’t know what to say.” C/N/A/L171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Our level of communication are not on the same level. We won’t talk about the same thing at all.” C/H/A/L279-280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“People are kind of in their own little bubble….” C/KE/B/L6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“It’s improved. I’m more open now. I’m more willing to chit chat.” C/BO/B/L33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“It’s more like mini-friendships.” C/FL/B/L115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the moving in phase of transition participants reported better communication and interaction with staff than with fellow students. Positive communication was attributed to the informal relationship with staff (first-name basis), the supportive environment (personal attention, understanding, and willingness to listen), knowledge and training of staff, and the maturity level of staff (age). Positive descriptors were used several weeks into the schooling experience, indicative of ongoing positive communication and interaction with staff. In some cases, the lack of formality (first-name basis) was reported as a transition issue during the initial phase. Participants reported less communication and interaction with fellow students during the initial phase of transition. Differences in age, language, experiences, world views, and interests were reported as limitations during this initial phase. Over time, participants reported somewhat better communication and interaction with students, linking the improvements to notions of respect and time spent in the culture, as reported in Table G, Communication and Interaction with Students, last column.
4.6 Adjustments

Participants were asked to identify the most and least difficult adjustments in returning to school. In the majority of cases, least difficult adjustments were expressed as a reflection of the role of the school experience in their transition to civilian life. Table H reflects responses given to these questions. A selection of comments is presented in the table to reflect similar responses by participants. Table I summarizes the key points.

Table H

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Difficult Adjustment To Culture of Adult Education</th>
<th>Role of Adult Education in Easing the Transition Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informality/ Lack of discipline:</td>
<td>Facilitates completion of Grade 12:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I’m used to everything being strict around me.” NE/FL/B/L6</td>
<td>“Coming to school and getting my diploma is probably the vital key to any kind of success I want in the rest of my transition.” SR/N/A/L194-195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less defined routine and structure:</td>
<td>Pre-employment and life skills training:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Now it’s…open….but taking the steps out is sometimes challenging ‘cause you’re still waiting for the military to come in and take care of the finer details.” TI/N/A/L46-49</td>
<td>“The school’s helped quite a bit….The guidance they provide at the school is very good and they’re an open door policy, so you can see anyone in the school and discuss anything you like, so this is really a positive thing. And they have a resume person on staff, so there’s a resource above and beyond what I am doing for my diploma.” SR/KE/B/L129-133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Some people just aren’t mentally there to leave [the military], ’cause it’s a safe world.” TI/S/A/L199-200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Going to work every day in uniform and then all of a sudden I was done….I wasn’t a part of school at the beginning….I didn’t have time to line all of that up before my retirement, so I was delayed.” UT/KE/B/L10-14</td>
<td>“The schooling is probably re-integrating me.” SR/S/A/L255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“For me it’s still go to bed at ten o’clock, no”</td>
<td>“Because of my mental health issues, I wouldn’t have been able to go directly into a job.” SR/BO/B/L22-23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Freedom and choice:**

“**It was more the unknown right away, because you’re so structured.** Your day-to-day activities are usually planned out for you…I had to figure out what I wanted to do and come here and pick courses…Here, it’s a lot of…more choices.” UT/BR/A/L110-117

“In the military you’re very… ‘coddled’... very directed and not free thinking….There should be something… somebody…I mean I had to do everything on my own.” UT/S/A/L183-187

“I’ve been so structured...so made to do things this way, all the time, and never had the right, you know...to really speak your mind….I’m just learning....You know, I look at [the students] and realize, holy jumpins, geez, he can come in with a ripped pair of jeans and you know he doesn’t have to shave and he can still walk over to the mall and people treat him with the same respect they treat me with, you know, and it’s so different.” UT/FR/A/L87-94

“I present myself a little different....I feel I don’t have the freedom to...like to express yourself. Like, if I wanted to wear a shirt that said ‘Do this’ or ‘Do that’, or wear a pair of cut-off jeans, I just couldn’t do it....Like I’d like to come in here, just once, and have a...three-day beard kind of thing....” TI/FR/B/L93-101

**Reconnection with the civilian world/diversification:**

“I think the best thing about it is to be around people who are not [military], because it gives myself then a better transition period....You’re doing something totally different in a totally different environment with totally different people....It does help the transition.” SR/KI/B/L39-46

“It’s giving me a little bit...away from the military lifestyle and coming into the civilian world again, it’s giving me a taste.” SR/KI/B/L141-142

“It’s been good...just to get an introduction back into the real world again. Not necessarily if they need the courses or not, but just to get diversified again.” SR/FR/B/L145-149

“I got an introduction to a whole new generation, so I can relate to my own kids and what they’re going through.” SR/FR/B/L141-142

**Non-transferable training:**

“None of my military training is transferable” TI/FR/B/L73-76

**Sense of pride and purpose/sense of belonging:**

“I think that there should be something to take, if it’s even just a life skill...but at least something just to encourage people that they have the potential.” SR/S/A/L179-181

“I’m exposed to a lot of people that come from different backgrounds in the work world.... There’s people from all walks of life....It’s interesting...to find out what is going on out there.” SR/KE/B/L66-72
and I had kind of counted on that....”  
UT/N/A/L43-44

“I thought a lot of the training in the military exceeded, maybe, high school training....Your training in the military isn’t transferable all the time.”  UT/BR/A/L290-297

“I see this as...my step back to the real world.... It gave me a sense of pride. Now maybe I wasn’t going to work for an income, but I was going to better myself...by being a member of society...instead of feeling like I was a burden.” SR/FR/B/L26-31

“I need to be part of something; I need to be focused on something.” SR/KE/A/L166-167

“I think the school played a huge role. At the very beginning the school recognizes that you come from the Forces....Like most Canadian people, nowadays, they’re appreciative of your service. But then when you’re in there it’s not like they would treat me, as a retired servicemen, any different than they’re treating any other student. So, right away, I felt like part of the group anyway. Because even though they respected where I came from, you’re part of the group. I think that was very beneficial.” SR/KE/B/L245-252

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age gap/ life experience gap:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Well, thirty-eight, life experience, and you’ve got people that...they’ll sit in class and listen to their walkman, jammin’ away, and you can hear their music and it’s very difficult at times when you’re trying to change back to a culture that you’re not used to anymore....Less self-discipline. I find that...the youth of today, they’re all technology bound....I always make a joke when I say, ‘Well, I can make a wicked snow fort. Can you?’ So there’s a big culture gap, there’s a big education gap, there’s a big life experience gap.” UT/KI/B/L21-30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-discovery:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“It’s giving me the opportunity to explore parts of me that I’ve never seen before, that I’ve never really noticed.” SR/KI/B/L72-73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture gap:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I felt like everybody looked at me like I was a freak....I was the only one with short hair....It was me and a guy in a business suit and the rest of the class was in jeans....I don’t know how to explain it, it was just so different.” UT/FR/A/L302-306</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Language barriers:

“To study in a second language was one of the biggest parts….I worked for the fourteen first years of my career only in French.”

Table I
Adjustments: Summary of Points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Difficult Adjustment To Culture of Adult Education</th>
<th>Role of Adult Education in Easing the Transition Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• informality/ lack of discipline</td>
<td>• facilitates completion of Grade 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• less defined routine and structure</td>
<td>• pre-employment and life skills training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• freedom and choice</td>
<td>• reconnection with the civilian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• non-transferable training</td>
<td>world/diversification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• age gap/ life experience gap</td>
<td>• sense of pride and purpose/ sense of belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• culture gap</td>
<td>self-discovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• language barriers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants reported a number of factors contributing to adjustment difficulties to the culture of adult education. Several participants in this study perceived their medical releases as off-time events, depriving them of the opportunity to perform their roles as soldiers, affecting their pride and life satisfaction, and creating a loss of military peer support. Participants reported disappointment in discovering that years of military
training were not always transferable for credit in civilian academic environments (non-event transition). The perceived lack of self-discipline in the younger student population was unanticipated. Many participants reported higher maturity levels and a greater sense of responsibility and work ethic among younger people in the military than those in the civilian population. Participants reported unanticipated anxiety due to increased levels of independence and choice, and a less defined structure. Some participants reported feeling overwhelmed by having the freedom to express their personal opinions and individuality. Unanticipated informality (first-name basis and lack of discipline) was reported as an adjustment difficulty in the initial phase of transition as some participants linked informality to disrespect. Although anticipated, Francophone participants reported instruction in the English language as an adjustment difficulty. Another unanticipated transition was adjustment to communicating with civilians of all ages. Some participants reported adjustment difficulties in communicating with others, particularly other students, due to their own use of military language. Other difficulties included unanticipated adjustments to the absence of rank structures, chains of command, and differences in world views.

Participants identified several factors suggestive of adult education’s positive contribution to the transition process. The anticipated possibility of earning a high school diploma was cited by the majority of participants to be a positive factor in their transition to civilian life. Several participants reported circumstances in their military careers (deployments, military training, work responsibilities, shift work, family commitments) which often prevented them from earning their secondary school credentials prior to
leaving the military. The availability of day or evening courses in adult education was an unanticipated positive factor, accommodating the needs of the adult learner and the specialized needs of this population, with many reporting the need for flexibility to attend ongoing medical and personal appointments. Pre-employment and life skills training were reported by some as an extremely beneficial part of their academic programs in helping them prepare for civilian work and life. The majority of participants reflected on the role of the school in helping them redevelop a sense of pride, purpose, and belonging and helping them to reconnect with the diversity of the civilian world. An unanticipated transition for some was the role of the school in helping them to discover new things about themselves. After lengthy military careers, some participants reported the need to reconnect with themselves and to explore their own interests, strengths, and needs, apart from the military culture. Adult education gave them opportunities to explore new directions.

4.7 Social Engagement

Participants in this study were asked about their involvement in social activities hosted by the school as a measure to determine their sense of community. Outcomes from their participation in these activities are recorded in Table J.

Table J

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Activity</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Pot Luck Dinner</td>
<td>“It gives you a chance to shut off your thinking cap for a little bit and just relax. It’s very...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Participant Quotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remembrance Day</td>
<td>“It’s a rough day for me to be in the uniform to go through all of this mentally in my head.” VI/KI/B/L64-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“At one point I didn’t want the acknowledgement because Remembrance Day was a bad time of year for me....I think it is very nice to be acknowledged, that people appreciate what you do or have done for their country.” VI/BO/B/L94-102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“When I stood on Remembrance Day...that was really stepping out of a shell to say to the school, ‘Yeah, I’ve been in the Army....’” VI/FR/B/L113-114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movies</td>
<td>“I think, sometimes, if I felt I had to get my work done then I would do my work rather than participate.” C/BO/B/L28-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outings</td>
<td>“It’s so hard, at times, being in public, so I had to draw the line at certain things...that I was wanting to take part in, but couldn’t take part in.” C/F/FR/B/L33-36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luncheon/Winter Carnival</td>
<td>“I went out to a luncheon with the staff and students. I didn’t fully participate in the winter carnival, however I enjoyed the events that were going on around me.” C/FL/B/L143-144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of participants reported minimal engagement in spontaneous social activities, preferring activities that were planned and centred around specific occasions. Participants reported more interest in activities that held purpose and meaning for them, such as Remembrance Day ceremonies or group meals.
4.8 Life Changes

Participants were asked about anticipated, unanticipated, and non-event transitions with respect to family, peers (including former colleagues or other military acquaintances and fellow veterans), and social connections, and to comment on their own level of satisfaction as a result of returning to school. (Table K).

Table K

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life Changes</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent/child relationships</td>
<td>“My son lives in a different city so it will mean that there will be less times with him….He thinks it’s a bit weird, but he thinks it’s good.”</td>
<td>SR/N/A/L182-187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spousal relationship</td>
<td>“I think they’re proud of me, just because it’s been so long and I’m still working towards a goal….My kids see me going back to school and see me completing something…and that’s probably more important than anything.”</td>
<td>SR/BR/A/L282-323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I have two kids…and I think they’re seeing their mom going to school and…that’s pretty cool.”</td>
<td>SR/S/A/L171-174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers (including former colleagues, other military acquaintances, and fellow veterans)</td>
<td>“A little bit with my wife….My wife is afraid because I won’t get as much money after I’m retired….I still don’t know exactly the reason, but a lot of things have changed with my wife.”</td>
<td>SR/H/B/L66-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“They think it’s really amazing.”</td>
<td>SR/N/A/L191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I think a lot of people were surprised that I didn’t have my Grade Twelve. People assume once you get to a certain position, or a certain age, that you have your diploma, you’re working above that level.”</td>
<td>SR/BR/A/L309-311</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Not being on the base, you lose a lot of connection. No matter how friendly you were with someone, if you’re not there to see them they forget about you pretty quick…..I will keep in touch with some of them, but not the military life in general.”
SR/H/B/L39-42

“It’s like I fell off the map….In my group of people I work with I don’t think I’ve had one phone call from them. Their nose is still into the military way of life, go, go, go, do, do, do, mission to accomplish….I’m not there anymore and it’s like I’m invisible….All those people – your peers that you’ve been working with at a said unit over the last few years, the ones you’ve had camaraderie with – are now completely out of the picture.” SR/FL/A/L220-259

“I think what I had in the military – the teamwork – that’s kind of gone. You expect the phone calls or the emails, another task to come down the line….I just find myself sitting on the couch sometimes and expecting the phone to ring, but it’s not ringing….I’m not turning my back on them, but at the same time I’m not going out of my way to push it. I’m kind of focused on my transition right now.”
SR/FL/B/L86-96

“I don’t go and hang out with anyone, really, from there.”
SR/KI/B/L54

| Social connections | “I think they’re finding it a bit difficult that I’m not as available as I was recently.”’
SR/N/A/L188-189 |

| “Now I have to study so late at night…I can’t see them very often. When I see them they will tell me it’s the very best thing I can do for my own career.”
SR/H/A/L337-339 |

| Personal feelings of satisfaction | “I try to seek good feelings from each little kind of movement forward.”
SR/N/A/L202-203 |
Participants identified several anticipated, unanticipated and non-event transitions affecting their relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles as a result of returning to civilian academic environments. With respect to family, participants reported receiving a certain amount of unanticipated, but welcome support from their children. Participants reported a type of parent-child role reversal as they apprised their children on their most recent academic grades and achievements. Some unanticipated difficulties were reported with spousal relationships and financial situations as a result of leaving the military.

With respect to peers, participants noted the lack of contact with former colleagues as a type of resultant non-event and a significant adjustment difficulty in the initial phase of transition. Participants reported feelings of loss, rejection and resentment at the lack of contact from former colleagues. This unanticipated disappointment was tied to confusion about perceived changes to camaraderie. Several weeks into the schooling experience, this severed contact resulted in the decision to move closer to a civilian identity and was perceived as helpful to the transition. Some participants reported
unanticipated surprise by colleagues who had assumed they had graduated from high school based on their success in their military careers. Disclosing to colleagues and acquaintances that they did not have a high school diploma was reported as difficult. Relationships with friends were reported to be affected by unanticipated time restraints as students focused on their studies during the evening and on weekends.

The majority of participants felt positive about their decision to return to school and about the progress they were making in their programs; some participants reported delayed event transitions. Two of the ten participants had dropped out of their programs for medical reasons and hoped to return to school at a later date. At the time of this study these participants had not returned to their programs. These delayed events could become non-events if the participants do not return to school. One participant reported having to put her studies on hold for several months to accommodate a move to another province. This delayed event transition could also impact program completion. One participant reported that he had switched to a part-time evening program to accommodate a new full-time job. While not a delayed event, it could become one if the participant’s employment prevents him from program completion.

4.9 The Veteran Identity

During the second interview, as a connection to the question on life changes, participants were asked to reflect on their own definitions of themselves at this point in their transition, after a period of time in school. Specifically, participants were asked what label they would use to describe themselves, if they identified with the label
“veteran” and if they felt they were part of the veteran culture. Table L reflects responses to this question.

Table L

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Thoughts on the Veteran Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Veteran</td>
<td>“I am a Veteran and I’ll always be a Veteran, but I don’t particularly care what goes on day-&lt;br&gt;to-day in the Forces.” VI/KE/B/L221-222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I joined the Veterans….It’s all the people who have taken their retirement already, that I go&lt;br&gt;and chat with them. It’s just nice to see someone that we knew before. Some of them I didn’t know before, but because we passed through the same thing in the Army, it’s just good to talk about it.” VI/H/B/L43-46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>“Mainly student. Sometimes, if pushed, I will say I’m retired military, but it’s kind of a label&lt;br&gt;I don’t want. I don’t want to admit that I was in the military….I don’t use the term ‘Veteran’.” VI/BO/B/L42-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Student. They can call me a Veteran because I went overseas and I served my country, but not as&lt;br&gt;much as the people who went, like in Afghanistan, three, four, five, six times. They own, a lot more, the honour to be called Veterans.” VI/H/B/L50-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I think right now I’m considering myself a student.” VI/FL/B/L61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|          | “I identify as a student for the time being….I would identify as a student….I consider myself a<br>Veteran, of course, but I’m not involved with the Veteran’s Association, or the Legion, or any other Veteran organization. I’m not involved with the Veterans. However, when I cross paths with people….right away there’s a common bond, before we even chit chat about
After several weeks into the schooling experience, as they moved through transition, the majority of participants identified with the labels “student”, “retired military” or “ex-soldier”, preferring not to use the term “veteran”. For the majority who faced involuntary early retirement due to permanent medical or combat-related stress factors, the notion of veteran was tied to age, retirement, and overseas deployment experiences. Some participants expressed feelings of resentment at forced early retirement and resulting personal non-events such as cancelled deployments or promotions to a higher rank and were not yet ready to embrace the veteran status. Connections to the veteran culture were impacted more by the idea of camaraderie rather than identifying with the veteran label itself. Although the majority of participants expressed an appreciation to the school community for acknowledging their military service and for recognizing their leadership qualities, they preferred to blend in with the other students and felt uncomfortable with public attention to their veteran status such as at Remembrance Day ceremonies. Avoidance of such events was reported by some participants as linked to PTSD and a desire to bury memories of trauma related to the military experiences. In the initial phase of transition, some participants reported feeling

| Ex-soldier | “I don’t know what it’s like to be a Veteran. I don’t feel like I’m justified. I still feel too young to be out of the Army. A Veteran is someone who’s old at the Legion....I can’t put it on my car as a license plate. I couldn’t dream of doing that until I’m over the age of sixty-five, just couldn’t do it. I don’t like to be called a Veteran from the Army. You’re retired from the Army. I’m just an ex-soldier.” |

| VI/FR/B/L57-66 | VI/KE/B/L103-110 |
like an outsider due to such factors as appearance, clothing choice, and formality. The willingness of staff to show understanding and to treat them as they would any other student was valued.

4.10 **Summary**

The findings in this chapter can be separated into three domains in line with the findings in the literature: a) academic (comparing cultures/academic programs and schedules); b) social (communication and interaction/ social engagement); and c) personal (transferable skills/ culture shock/ adjustments/ life changes/ the veteran identity). Camaraderie, social engagement, and cultural intelligence were intertwined within these domains and showed evidence of being both barriers to transition and factors facilitating transition. (Table M). The issue of camaraderie was important to soldiers on all three levels: the absence of it in the education and social settings, expressed as difficulties with communication and interaction; and the loss of it in personal life. Social engagement was also a predominant issue. Soldiers questioned the meaning and purpose of social engagement in the academic setting and remarked on the absence and loss of it from a personal standpoint as noted in responses about life changes. Cultural intelligence was deemed to be missing in the academic environment. As participants entered the academic environment they reported that they did not feel equipped with the cultural intelligence baggage necessary to understand the cultural norms and codes of behavior of the new culture as a pathway to transition, as noted in descriptions of culture shock and adjustment challenges. In addition, they felt that civilian students in the academic environment were also lacking in cultural intelligence about the military culture.
Participants felt instructional staff had higher cultural intelligence based on their knowledge and understanding of their military service. An absence of cultural intelligence in the social domain was evidenced as soldiers avoided social engagement. As soldiers transitioned from military life to the civilian world they also became veterans. The avoidance of contact with the veteran culture could point to an absence of cultural intelligence about the norms and codes of behavior of this veteran culture.

Throughout the interview process, participants reflected on the extent to which differences and changes were anticipated or unanticipated, whether or not the perceived gains or losses that resulted from these differences and changes had any bearing on relationships, routines, assumptions, or roles of the individuals, and whether or not the outcomes of these differences and changes were interpreted as limitations or new opportunities.

Table M

Barriers to Transition and Factors Facilitating Transition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Barriers to Transition</th>
<th>Both Barriers to and Factors Facilitating Transition</th>
<th>Factors Facilitating Transition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>• lack of structure/routine</td>
<td>• informality</td>
<td>• flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• lack of discipline</td>
<td></td>
<td>• relaxed environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• fewer imposed expectations</td>
<td></td>
<td>• smaller classrooms/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• non-transferable</td>
<td></td>
<td>personal attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• lack of pre-transition planning for education</td>
<td>• age gap</td>
<td>• language barriers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• life experience gap</td>
<td>• leadership skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• culture gap</td>
<td>• stress and coping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• less trust</td>
<td>• adaptation skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• less camaraderie</td>
<td>• self-efficacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• curriculum (pre-employment/ life skills training/ emphasis on technology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• opportunities for self-discovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• knowledge and training of staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• communication with staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Peer connections based on age and life experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reconnection with the civilian world/ diversification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Support of family and friends</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social:
- age gap
- life experience gap
- culture gap
- less trust
- less camaraderie

Personal:
- language barriers
- leadership skills
- stress and coping
- adaptation skills
- self-efficacy
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>skills</th>
<th>skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cultural intelligence skills</td>
<td>self-discipline skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freedom and choice</td>
<td>observation skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>veteran identity</td>
<td>learning strategy skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time spent in culture</td>
<td>sense of purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feeling of belonging</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

In this chapter I discuss the findings as they relate to the literature and theoretical framework.

The purpose of this study was twofold: first, to explore the use of transferable skills in an adult education setting as a measure to effect successful transition of Canadian soldiers from military to civilian life; second, to seek an answer to the following question: What are the barriers to transition and factors facilitating successful transition for Canadian soldiers to adult education settings?

In the discussion below I will first examine the question of transferable skills, and then the barriers to transition and factors facilitating transition: transition issues; unanticipated transitions and non-events; camaraderie and the veteran identity; and support and resources. I also discuss the needs of the adult learner as it pertains to this population and make recommendations for facilitating transition.

5.1 Transferable Skills

Participants identified several skills developed through their years of military service that they could transfer to the academic context, with both positive and negative outcomes. Among these, adaptation, self-efficacy, self-discipline, observation, leadership, and learning strategy skills were reported as facilitating transition. Adaptation skills enabled participants to adapt readily to changes in classrooms, teachers, and new students. Self-efficacy was described as having confidence in a group setting, reaching
goals, and making a good first impression. Observation skills were described as taking the time to get all the facts before acting hastily. Learning strategy skills involved setting priorities, time management, and appreciating the value of continuous learning.

A highly-established work ethic and self-discipline in the military culture transferred to high expectations of oneself in the adult education environment. Participants reported showing dedication and commitment, avoiding procrastination, and demonstrating punctuality. They reported feelings of guilt and disappointment in themselves if they had to take time off. Social events in the school environment were considered to be unnecessary if they interfered with school work. Expectations to succeed were defined by the individual and related to one’s own personal goals, not necessarily dictated by the school. A foundation of structure and self-discipline from their military experience helped them in the absence of expectations from others.

Leadership skills were reported as facilitating transition in the majority of cases. Participants described their leadership experiences in the academic environment as positive. Among these experiences were opportunities to lead teams and discussions, and to share their knowledge and expertise with others.

Perceived weaknesses or conflicts in certain skill sets were thought to negatively impact transition. Leadership was interpreted as a possible barrier to transition when it interfered with the role of the teacher or when it had the potential to come across as arrogance. Leadership as a barrier to transition may be connected to Keats’ (2010) notion that ties military hypermasculine behaviours to certain transferable skills.
Stress and coping skills were reported by some participants as sufficient to allow them to mentor younger students in the school. Other participants described weaknesses in this area resulting in a barrier to psychological adaptation. While praising the resources and support offered by the military environment, some participants admitted they did not handle stress well and worried about the impact on their transition to education. They felt overwhelmed by their own self-imposed expectations and felt they brought the cultural baggage of their military experiences with them to the academic environment. Some participants in this study reported environmental constraints such as limited vacancies in desired programs due to the absence of adequate pre-transition planning for education as a source of stress.

Cultural intelligence skills were also thought to be weak by some participants who felt that the academic environment was better equipped to teach diversity. While most participants noted cultural diversity training was part of their military training, they felt the diversity of the adult education environment was more pronounced and offered better opportunities for developing cultural awareness. Participants reported better communication with staff than with students, possibly connected to the belief that staff had a higher cultural intelligence with regard to their knowledge and understanding of the military culture. Less frequent interaction with other students due to lower cultural intelligence may have negatively impacted the sociocultural adjustment of participants in the new setting. There was no evidence to suggest that hypermasculinity, as suggested by Keats (2010), suppressed cultural intelligence, self-efficacy, or other sociocultural skills such as adaptation. Participants openly verbalized their emotional states as they entered
and moved through change (Table F) and were surprisingly introspective. Adult education program design which fosters knowledge and understanding of the civilian, academic and military cultures, and which identifies and develops purposeful and positive transferable skills may be helpful to the transition process.

5.2 Factors as Barriers or Facilitators

5.2.1 Transition Issues, Unanticipated Transitions, and Non-Events

5.2.1.1 Lessening of pain

In the initial phase of transition negative descriptors used by participants (Table F) were possibly a reflection of a heightened perception of discomfort and pain. As participants moved through transition the discomfort and pain may have lessened, evidenced by the use of more positive descriptors.

Church (2009) highlighted the challenges faced by American war veterans returning to postsecondary education. He gave particular attention to the struggles faced by combat veterans with invisible injury, such as PTSD and depression. He pointed out that many veterans do not use existing traditional services for students with disabilities and are not self-disclosing about their invisible injuries. He contended that exposure to combat and repeated combat-related deployments raises anxiety and depression rates among veterans, and that, often, individual veterans have more than one depressive or anxiety disorder at the same time. Veterans with PTSD also experience high rates of substance abuse, alcoholism, and problems with unemployment. The author defines PTSD as a condition in which:
the person experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event, or events that involved actual or certain death, serious injury, or injury to the physical integrity of self and others, and the person’s response included intense fear, helplessness, or horror. This experience results in re-experiencing the trauma through recurring thoughts, dreams, feelings; efforts to avoid the stimulus associated with the trauma such as feelings of detachment; a sense of a shortened future; efforts to control thoughts, feelings and activities associated with the trauma; and avoiding people, places, and activities that recall the trauma (p. 47).

Symptoms of PTSD may include: insomnia, emotional numbness, anxiety, irritability, anger, hyper vigilance, concentration problems, and social problems. Church argued that personal, family, and/or community resources, including education, can be mitigating factors in individual experiences.

Writing about war veterans at the end of the Second World War, Kraines (1945) discussed the negative impact of emotional handicaps – now referred to as combat-related stress injuries – on adjustment. He suggested that many veterans emerge from war healthier and physically stronger, and with maturity, self-reliance, and self-discipline, while many others emerge from war with “a chronic nervousness and restlessness” (p. 292) which can seriously impact adjustment to society. Individuals might have difficulty staying on task, may often feel fatigued, dissatisfied, show irritability or display violent behavior. In a classroom setting, these students would have difficulty concentrating, and would have trouble accepting instruction or criticism of their work.

The impact of pain and trauma on individuals in transition is necessary to this discussion. Melzack’s examination of pain (1961) is worthy of consideration in looking at Canadian soldiers in transition to the civilian world. Melzack argues that that pain is connected to culture, past experiences, and psychological processes. For soldiers facing involuntary early retirement due to medical reasons, there might be real pain associated
with physical injuries to the body. There may also be combat-related stress injuries which are invisible to the public, but which may be as painful to the soldiers as open wounds. The process of returning to civilian life, if perceived as negative, can create a perception of overall discomfort, can increase any existing pain, and can create a perception of new pain. If perceived as a positive experience, and something not to be feared, returning to civilian life may create a perception of comfort and may ease any existing pain, thereby facilitating transition.

In this study of Canadian military personnel, the majority of participants with invisible injuries such as PTSD were willing to share how their diagnoses impacted their daily lives and learning functions as they transitioned to the adult education environment. Among the problems reported by participants were anxiety, depression, high levels of stress, distraction, poor concentration, poor coping skills, fear, distrust, and social problems such as difficulty communicating with others and difficulty being in public places. The challenges faced in the cross-cultural transition experience were heightened by these problems.

5.2.1.2 Embracing the experience

A number of transition issues emerged from the data as either gains or losses – barriers or facilitators – in the transition experience (see Table M). In comparing cultures, the majority of participants embraced the flexibility and relaxed approach of adult education. Participants who had been medically released reported needing this flexibility to accommodate regularly-scheduled medical and personal appointments. Freedom to set their own schedules was described as meeting the employment, personal and family
needs of the adult learner. Working at one’s own pace was described as a necessary component of the schooling experience for one individual with PTSD. While flexibility was perceived to be a gain in the transition experience, it was also perceived by some as a barrier to transition. Some participants reported difficulty transitioning to new routines and new hours of operation. Most participants had spent an average of twenty years immersed in a highly-structured, controlled environment, adhering to a prescribed routine. The adult education environment was considered to be less defined, resulting in feelings of insecurity and confusion in the initial phase of transition (Table F). For some, maintaining the same structure at the beginning of the schooling experience helped to keep the participant on track and to stay focused. Some participants reported that even when they had the flexibility to set their own schedules, they chose to report to school at the same time each morning and to commit to a regular routine. Working in a classroom environment, as opposed to working independently at home, gave them routine, a place to go on a daily basis, a sense of inclusion, and purpose. Smaller classroom sizes (fewer students) was considered by the majority to be beneficial to transition as it allowed for greater personal attention.

Compared to the military culture, discipline in the adult education environment was deemed to be non-existent and an unanticipated transition issue. Participants identified self-discipline as the predominant feature. Staff and administration adopted a more passive approach to discipline with a focus on mutual respect. Participants described instructional staff as supportive and encouraging, but lenient. This support was described by one participant as unfamiliar and an unanticipated feature in his transition to
school. One non-event transition identified as problematic was the absence of clear expectations by the school. The lack of self-discipline in the younger student population was frustrating for some participants who found it difficult to accept. Some participants discovered they had more in common with the foreign and mature student populations at the school based on similar strong work ethics and dedication. Some described the difference in mentality between them and the younger student population as a life experience gap and a barrier to communication. Most participants in this study reported peer connections with other known military students, mature students, foreign students, and staff, based on mutual interests, life experiences, world views, mentalities, and work ethic.

Kraines (1945) put forth that veterans differ from average students in their attitudes toward education. The author claimed that most veterans pursue education with specific purpose and focus, unlike many students who lack appreciation or awareness of the functions of education. He argued that conflict gives veterans a clearer sense “of the true nature of man and society” (p. 291). Men and women emerge from war having lost their adolescent idealism; instead, theirs is a “sober, realistic idealism, tempered by experience” (p. 291). This realism gives the veteran an appreciation for reaching new goals. At the same time, the experience of war will burden veterans with deep resentments and will impact adjustment to school and society. These resentments will stem from the contrast between the war experiences of the veterans and the complacency or indifference of civilian society.
DiRamo et al. (2008) suggest that “military service shapes the disposition of veterans who are students” (p. 81). Military personnel who transition to higher education are more mature than average civilian students due to the events of wartime which have shaped their lives. The maturity that comes from responsibility and leadership can lead to a peer gap between veterans and civilian students. Veterans may feel irritation and impatience with their civilian counterparts. The authors found that connection with other student-veterans could be helpful in transition to higher education as veterans could share a camaraderie and similar motivations. They stressed the importance of communication with others and peer connections in the transition process.

The adult education environment was considered to be more culturally diverse than the military culture. Although most participants reported variations in their cultural diversity experiences in the military, with some reporting a predominance of younger white males in that culture, the definition of diversity was often tied to notions of individualism. Participants noted the major difference between the populations of each culture had more to do with mentality than with ethnicity, age, or gender. In the civilian environment individualism was celebrated, as opposed to the military, where there was uniformity and a cohesiveness of thought, goal, and purpose: a ‘melting pot’ mentality. Participants reported some difficulty adjusting to the freedom of thought and freedom of expression they found in the adult education environment.

5.3 The Needs of the Adult Learner

The discussion of soldiers in transition to education would not be complete without looking at the needs of the adult learner, namely goal orientation and reverse
culture shock. Barriers to transition for this population include age differences with peers, life experiences, family and employment commitments, styles of learning, and motivations for learning.

5.3.1 Goal orientation

Participants found the curriculum of adult education, including opportunities for life skills and pre-employment training, skills upgrading, and credit courses accommodated their needs as they transitioned back to civilian life. The majority of participants felt that the adult education curriculum prepared them for a specific goal. The variety of program options and choice of schools were considered to be facilitating factors. Several participants were concerned by the absence of preparation for school prior to leaving the military. They expressed regret at not taking required prerequisite credit courses or upgrading their academic skills in the months preceding their release. Many military personnel who face involuntary medical release can receive financial support from their military insurance for education and training purposes for up to two years. In some cases, the absence of prerequisite courses meant participants had to delay the start dates of their education, while the two-year insurance clock continued to tick. Poor preparation in advance sometimes meant that participants missed important registration deadlines or did not secure a space in a program that was full. In some cases, participants enrolled in courses that were not necessarily their first choice due to these circumstances. DiRamio et al. (2008) noted how adult continuing education can be a stepping stone to higher education. Adult education centres can provide refresher courses for diminished skills in certain subject areas and offer academic preparation for college.
Adult continuing education could facilitate the adjustment period for military personnel in transition.

5.3.2 Reverse culture-shock

Soldiers in this study reported holding onto patterns of military structure, routine and discipline, particularly in the initial phase of transition. Successful adjustment requires an integration and transformation of existing practices and preparation for these changes.

Adult learners are, in fact, affected by reverse culture shock when their expectations and memories of school do not match their new experiences and adjustment problems are not anticipated. Rogers (2007) points out that conflict can arise in adult learning through anxiety, memories of school, and challenge to beliefs. Adults can experience self-doubt about their abilities and gaps in learning. Returning to school “seems to revive memories of …all the associated subservient status” (p. 7). As adults, our mature social status and self-esteem might be threatened by the status we adopt as learners. We take our previous memories of school—including humiliations, disappointments, or fears—with us to the adult classroom. Adults bring the cultural baggage of adults with them to school. Included are well-established systems, beliefs, norms, and values. Adults may be reluctant to accept changes in relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles (Goodman et al., 2006) as a result of this transition. Acceptance of these changes is an admission that there is a need to acquire new skills.
Rogers (2007) suggests that adult learners experience eight stages of change: anxiety, happiness, fear, threat, guilt, depression, gradual acceptance, and moving forward. Her stages of change mirror Goodman et al.’s (2006) moving in, through, and out of change and the U-curve pattern of transition discussed by Zapf (1991). Supporting adult learners through these eight stages of change can facilitate the transition process. Williams (1996) suggests four components of successful adult learning experiences: 1) a positive learning environment; 2) good communication, group, and conflict management strategies; 3) use of resources and learning aids; and 4) customizing the learning experience to the population.

Preparation for future change sensitizes individuals to the experience and lessens negative outcomes. Westwood et al. (1986) contend that social interventions (e.g. assistance programs, communication, orientation) made by re-entry institutions could help minimize the negative effects of re-entry.

Kraines (1945) discussed how army training uses visual aids and varied training techniques and how standard methods of college instruction generally lack these supports, thereby contributing to the dissatisfaction of veteran-students. Kraines suggested three measures to assist veterans with problems of intellectual concentration: a) time to “gradually heal the nerves” (p. 296); b) “an inculcated attitude within the soldier that he will make every effort to adjust” (p. 296); and c) “presentation of subject-matter not only through reading but with well-planned charts, models, and motion pictures” (p. 296). Kraines wrote in 1945: “It is my opinion that the training-aids technique, especially the use of motion pictures, will revolutionize all teaching within the next decade” (p.
Some participants in this study described an education gap when comparing their skills with those of younger students whom they considered to be more advanced technologically. One participant doubted the usefulness of the adult education curriculum in his daily life, making a comparison to military training which he felt was purposeful and had very clear applications.

In addition to recognizing the needs of the adult learner, recognizing the specialized needs of the military population is necessary to providing a supportive learning environment. Johnson (2009) examined the experiences of US military students at Appalachian State University (ASU) (North Carolina) and the attempts made by this school to assist these students through disruptions resulting from deployment. In the 1990’s, ASU began implementing procedures to assist military students before and after active duty, recognizing the academic, financial, and emotional needs of this population. Among the initiatives introduced by ASU was a transition plan for students who became deployed soldiers. Students called to active duty could arrange for early final exams, full refunds of tuition and fees, or to complete coursework off-campus using standard post, email and Internet options. Faculty worked creatively with military students to show support and decrease anxiety.

For the military students in this study, where there was no possibility of deployment, disruptions and absences were due to issues pertaining to their medical release status, family commitments, and personal matters. The majority of participants were satisfied with the guidance and support they received from school staff. They valued the flexibility of the programs which often allowed them to work at their own pace, to
study during the day or evening, and to temporarily put their studies on hold, if required, without academic penalty.

5.4 Camaraderie

Participants described camaraderie as a type of family bond built on mutual trust, dependence, and unconditional support that is strengthened with common experience and time. Participants agreed that there was an absence of camaraderie in the school environment. Contributing factors included the age gap and a lack of trust. Less social interaction, individual learning, and the transient nature of adult education may have contributed to this interpretation.

Kraines (1945) argued that, while some veterans will enrol in school as a measure to keep active until they find employment, many do so with serious intent, appreciating the values of higher education while disregarding “the superficialities of college life” (p. 290). He argued that veterans have a greater need for reorientation to society and for emotional stability and that schools can help in this process. Kraines described social conflict due to age gaps and “differences in values and standards” (p. 293) between veterans and other civilian students. He insisted that higher education programming for veterans must be comprehensive: it must not only cater to the academic needs of the veteran-student, but also to the individual’s social and emotional needs. Although military and wartime service can result in the maturity of individuals, it can also create social handicaps if the individual “matured in the army without benefit of normal social contacts” (p. 295). Kraines recommended social education or re-education through small-group human-relations classes. He advised that veterans should try to fit into the social
Part of the school: “The veterans should not be treated as a separate group; they should be in every way encouraged and stimulated to take their normal place in a normal society” (p. 296). The participants in this study expressed feelings concurring with the statements made in Kraines' study.

Participants reported less social engagement in the adult education environment than they experienced in the military culture, describing social engagement in the school as often rough or difficult. Participants cited factors pertaining to PTSD, the independent nature of their programs, and a strong work ethic as limiting their involvement in social activities. Social events in the military were often mandated and planned, tied to notions of professional development, and linked to recognition, morale, and camaraderie. Military peer groups were trade-based and formed according to rank structures. Unlike the military culture, social engagement in the adult education environment was perceived to be more spontaneous, less important, and involved connections based on age or life experiences. Participants reported a link between social activity and camaraderie. In the absence of social engagement in the academic environment, it was difficult for new social bonds of trust and support to form, creating a barrier to transition.

Herman (1992) contends that psychological trauma results in disempowerment and disconnection of the individual from society. Recovery, she argues, is based on empowerment of the survivor and the creation of new bonds with others. Recovery is only possible within the context of relationships. Renewed connections with others allow the survivors of trauma to reform “capacities for trust, autonomy, initiative, competence, identity, and intimacy” (p. 133). Since these capacities were originally created in
relationships with others, such relationships are necessary to allow them to take root once again. Recovery cannot take place in solitude. In the context of Canadian soldiers in transition to civilian environments, social relationships can be instrumental in building the above capacities which was the case according to my findings.

Herman states that empowerment is the first principle of recovery. The survivor must have choice and become the “author and arbiter of her own recovery” (Herman, 1992, p. 133). The author points out that this principle is often overlooked by professionals helping in the recovery process. She also argues that recovery can be fostered by others outside the realm of therapist: “The relationship between survivor and therapist is one relationship among many. It is by no means the only or even the best relationship in which recovery is fostered” (p. 134). A variety of relationships developed in civilian environments, including those established in the school environment, can be helpful in the recovery process which the participants in this study acknowledged.

Studies by Jacobs and Archie (2008), Sweet et al. (1989), and Westwood et al. (1986) praised the benefits of social engagement and group interaction in the transition process. Jacobs and Archie (2008) examined the role of sense of community on retention of first-year college students in the U.S. The researchers found “that sense of community had a significant positive influence on intent to return” (p. 284). This sense of community was influenced by membership in fraternities and sororities, residence life, ethnicity, and campus clubs. Other factors included features of instruction (methods, types), educational setting, the active engagement of learners and the formation of relationships. Westwood
et al. (1986) contend that a group format helps to build a “climate of trust and inclusion” (p. 227) and allows members to share ideas and concerns.

Sweet et al. (1989) looked at the benefits of group participation by American veterans who were struggling with involuntarily early retirement due to medical reasons. Group participation was found to strengthen support networks and mitigate “the negative psychosocial consequences of involuntary early retirement, such as isolation, boredom, depression, and impaired social relationships” (p. 172). The study showed “improved social relationships, higher activity levels, and greater satisfaction with retirement” (p. 172). In this study, a group of nine participants met for biweekly 90-minute sessions over several months. The success of this group was attributed to “belonging to a supportive and caring community of peers” (Sweet et al., 1989, p. 173). Over the course of these sessions, participants gradually became more optimistic about their futures. They found new recreational activities, volunteer work, and reported conflict resolution in their home environments. Over time, acceptance of early retirement as “unavoidable and nonstigmatizing” (p. 173) resulted in better self-esteem. Participants showed support and pride for each other’s small steps and achievements. The results of this study show that a supportive network is the most important function of group participation. Participants experienced more life satisfaction, better mental health, better social relationships, and higher activity levels. The researchers believe that the group format fulfilled “a need to belong to a validating and trusting community” (Sweet et al., 1989, p.176) and this was evidenced by the results of this study.
5.4.1 Group interaction

The extent to which a mixed group of civilians and soldiers in transition can form a “validating and trusting community” is based, in part, on the commonality of the group and the shared needs and goals of its members. For the majority of participants in this study the shared goal with the civilian population at the school was completing the requirements for graduation. Group interaction in an education setting could be beneficial to both civilians and military personnel through a bartering of skills: soldiers could exercise their transferable skills (e.g. leadership, learning strategy skills) in group formats in ways that would be meaningful and purposeful to them and to others in the group; civilian participants could share cultural cues, norms, and codes of behavior in assisting the acculturation process of soldiers. Opportunities for social engagement and group interaction in an adult education environment could help to develop a type of civilian camaraderie contributing to a new sense of identity and belonging.

In their 2008 study, DiRamio et al. discussed a “blending in” (p. 88) socialization strategy sometimes employed by military personnel in transition. Blending in refers to taking measures to look like other students (e.g. growing one’s hair longer), being quiet and impartial in class, and protecting the anonymity of one’s service experience. Student-veterans sometimes fear being verbally attacked by other students, or even faculty, over possible differences in political views and often desire to move on past their military experiences while being acknowledged as veterans and have veteran status. This blending in strategy connects to Berry’s (2005) discussion of the integration strategy used during the acculturation process. Soldiers who use this strategy have a desire to interact with the
culture of adult education while maintaining ties to their own culture, allowing them to hold onto some degree of their military heritage. The data shows that while most participants in this study leaned toward integration as the preferred acculturation strategy over time, several struggled with blending in, in the initial phase of transition.

A number of studies support the argument for group-based programming for military students which concurs with my findings. Ewert, Van Puymbroeck, Frankel, and Overholt (2011) examined the US adventure-based Outward Bound Veteran Program (OBVP) designed to help veterans in transition develop “leadership, teamwork skills, communication, resilience, self-efficacy, and social and environmental responsibility” (p. 366). The small group format provided social support which helped to promote “positive attitudinal and behavioural changes” (p. 366).

Westwood et al. (2002) reviewed The Transition Program for Peacekeeping Soldiers (TPPS), an assistance program for Canadian military personnel returning from active peacekeeping duty. The program, supported by the Royal Canadian Legion and Veterans Affairs Canada, was based on several premises: a) Canadian military personnel often experience stress-related reactions after peacekeeping duty; b) re-entry into civilian life often means unexpected transition and social difficulties; and c) personal and career assistance is often needed for readjustment to civilian life. The TPPS used “group work, life review, therapeutic enactment, and career planning” (Westwood et al., 2002, p. 223) approaches with clients. Participants in the TPPS met in groups of six to eight on a weekly basis over a period of three to four months. Weekly sessions were three hours in length. Initial group work in the TPPS focused on building communication skills and
developing rapport. Subsequent sessions involved life review, guiding participants through self-disclosure and experience sharing. Following these sessions, participants engaged in therapeutic enactment in order to “work through some of their unresolved experiences” (Westwood et al., 2002, p. 224). Final sessions focused on goal-setting and career planning for the future.

In their 2010 study, Westwood, McLean, Cave, Borgen, and Slakov examined the Veterans Transition Program (VTP), a residential group-based re-entry program for Canadian military personnel experiencing combat-related trauma such as PTSD. The program’s mandate was to offer personal and career readjustment assistance. The VTP employed a small-group format with a focus on personal and career readjustment assistance, such as building communications skills and goal planning. Among the themes derived from the collection of qualitative data from this study were increased levels of self-awareness, trust, social interaction, and confidence. In group-based programs, identification of individual expectations is essential. Initial group-building activities are important to establishing an atmosphere of trust and confidence. A group re-entry program can help to sensitize individuals to the forthcoming re-entry experience through a series of visualization exercises and problem-solving discussions on anticipated events. The program can help to “concretize” (Westwood et al., 1986, p. 229) the abstract and normalize the experience as something that is not uncommon.

From the above we can gain the following insights. While the adult education environment might not be equipped to facilitate the types of programs suggested in the above examples, some of the key elements of these programs are worthy of consideration
for adult education settings. Goal and career planning sessions can help soldiers in transition identify their transferable skills, acquire job search, interview, and networking skills. Developing group cohesiveness and a sense of security in a group setting may be attractive to transitioning soldiers who may miss the camaraderie of the military unit. It is important that individuals experience a sense of belonging and being valued, unconditional acceptance, and support. Structured activities are important for building positive communication skills. These measures in place will lead to a sense of security and minimize anxiety. Group expectations and cues must also be clear and unambiguous to alleviate anxiety.

5.5 Support and Resources

5.5.1 Showing personal interest

Among the factors facilitating transition for the participants of this study was the personal attention afforded students by the instructional staff. Teachers were described as accommodating and supportive. The informal approach and first-name basis were reported as having both positive and negative effects on the transition experience. Many reported this informality as breaking down the barriers and facilitating communication, while others tied it to notions of disrespect in the initial phases of transition. Some participants reported confusion due to the lack of strictness and absence of formal headings. In some cases, participants opted to use the headings “Sir” and “Ma’am” when addressing staff, as a measure of courtesy, mirroring the rank structure of the military culture. In general, teaching styles and methods were considered to be instrumental in facilitating transition while moving in and moving through change. Several participants
noted that staff were knowledgeable, referring to knowledge of both the course content and knowledge of the military community and its participation in world events. This familiarity with the participants’ military service was thought to be beneficial as it created a sense of understanding and empathy.

5.5.2 Community support

The majority of participants reported positive family and friendship support networks. The absence of peer support from former military connections was considered to be a barrier to transition in the initial phase. Over time, participants reported distance from the military community as a factor facilitating transition. Peer support networks based on mutual interests and life experiences were created in the academic environment over time and were perceived as positive to the transition experience.

This finding is supported by the research that personal, family, and/or community resources can be mitigating factors in individual experiences. Sweet et al. (1989) found that one of the main causes of adjustment difficulties in the veteran population was separation “from the primary community that lent meaning to their lives—the workplace—and [they] had not developed other interests or coping resources to enable them to easily find a substitute” (p. 173). The participants’ identities were strongly tied to their work and “equated the loss of employment with personal failure” (p. 173). The loss of their work roles and social contacts in the work environment also impacted their social roles as breadwinners and impacted family relationships and family financial stability.
5.6 Recommendations for Facilitating Transition

As Canadian soldiers navigate the transition from the military culture to the culture of adult education, developing an understanding of the academic, social, and personal factors facilitating this transition is helpful, not only to civilian environments involved in this process, but also to the soldiers themselves. Several recommendations for facilitating transition are presented in Table N.

5.6.1 Academic facilitation

Educators, administrators, and support staff in academic environments can provide academic facilitation in a number of ways. Pre-transition orientation can be instrumental in helping transitioning soldiers prepare for transition to the new environment and alleviate the culture shock attributed to feelings of confusion and uncertainty. Orientation can include both on-site and off-site pre-transition information sessions, brochures, or DVD’s and pre-transition site visits or tours. Pre-transition orientation could include information on the culture and existing practices of the adult education centre, including hours of operation, routine, program structure, instructional staff, discipline, classroom size, curriculum, student population, expectations, and social activities. Schools can help military students design personal transition plans for education in the pre-transition period. Orientation should begin as early as possible in the months preceding release to allow the transitioning soldier the opportunity to prepare mentally and socially for returning to school. In this pre-transition period soldiers can consider school choices, program and course choices and determine prerequisites for programs.
Schools should consider transferring military training as credit toward a secondary school diploma. DiRamio et al. (2008) suggest that “veterans ought to receive educational credit, perhaps beyond health and physical education, for knowledge gained because of their service” (p. 84). Programming should include life skills and pre-employment training and secondary credit courses with a focus on technology. Schools should empower military students by giving them choices and opportunities to explore new areas of learning, and facilitating leadership opportunities.

Adult education should be flexible and individualized to accommodate the invisible injuries of transitioning soldiers and the needs of the adult learner. On-site stress and coping workshops and strategies could be built into the curriculum. In the initial phase of transition, staff should recognize the importance of routine and structure for the transitioning soldier and accommodate this need with cues from the individual. Smaller classroom sizes will afford more opportunities for personal attention. Staff should create a positive, supportive learning environment by defining clear expectations and helping military students establish specific goals.

5.6.2 Social facilitation

Social facilitation involves providing ongoing opportunities for social engagement in the school environment. Instructors should provide opportunities for small group sessions and design culturally diverse work groups to help soldiers connect with the fabric of civilian life and develop trust in others. Staff and students should recognize and respect the military service and veteran status of transitioning soldiers, while focusing on their new roles as students and helping them blend in with the student population.
Instructors should acknowledge the values, meanings, and cultural identities of the military population and find ways to use their cultural skills as transition tools. Soldiers should be given the opportunity to exercise leadership, adaptation, self-efficacy, self-discipline, and learning strategy skills in purposeful and meaningful ways. Calling upon soldiers to act as peer tutors or mentors to younger students can allow them to exercise their transferable skills while building social connections. Instructors should provide an atmosphere of acceptance in early transition as military students adapt to the relaxed formality and structure of the new culture. Important to social facilitation is recognition of achievement and success of individuals in transition to build morale and confidence.

5.6.3 Personal facilitation

Transitioning soldiers can take a number of measures to ease their transition to civilian education environments: Taking ownership and responsibility for their own transition is a first step in moving away from the shelter of military life. Soldiers can begin by assessing the gains and losses to their relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles as a result of the transition. They should examine the support and resources they have in their personal lives and assess their own coping resources and competencies, seeking help from community and military agencies if necessary. Reconnecting with society and establishing social relationships outside the culture of the military will help soldiers break down communication and socialization barriers. Soldiers should begin to prepare for and rehearse transition to education as early as possible before release by researching programs, visiting schools, speaking with representatives about the culture of the school, and designing a personal transition plan for education. Goodman et al. (2006)
propose that rehearsing, either mentally, or in actuality, impending changes can help to ease the burden of the transition. In their examination of cross-cultural transition, Westwood et al. (1986) discuss a similar strategy in preparing for the re-entry experience from a host culture to a home culture. They argue that visualization and rehearsal can help to normalize the experience and sensitize the individual to the forthcoming change. Soldiers should give themselves time to gradually adjust to the informality and new routine of the adult education culture.

Table N

Recommendations for Facilitating Transition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• pre-transition orientation (e.g. information sessions/brochures/DVD’s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• pre-transition site visits/tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• helping the military student design a personal transition plan for education in the pre-transition period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• flexibility/ accommodating invisible injuries/catering to the individualized needs of the adult learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• routine and structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• small classroom sizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• transferring military training as credit toward a secondary school diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• life skills and pre-employment resources and training, secondary credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>courses, focus on technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- providing choice and opportunities for new areas of learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- facilitating leadership opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- defining clear expectations and helping to set specific goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- providing personal attention and creating a positive, supportive environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- offering on-site stress and coping workshops and strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- opportunities for small group sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- culturally diverse group work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- opportunities for peer tutoring/ mentoring others/ exercising leadership skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- fostering integration as an acculturation strategy: recognition and respect of military service and veteran status but focus on new role as student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- acceptance of formality/ structure of military students in early transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- encouraging and providing opportunities for social engagement in the school environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- recognition of achievement and success of individuals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- gradual reintegration to allow time to adjust to informality, new routine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- self-assessment of the gains and losses to relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles as a result of the transition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• self-assessment of coping resources and competencies
• developing communication and socialization skills
• developing reconnections with society and social relationships
• preparing for and rehearsing the transition
• designing a personal transition plan for education in the pre-transition period

5.7 Summary

In this chapter I identified transferable skills and other factors as either barriers to or factors facilitating transition for Canadian soldiers. (see Table M). I looked at the needs of the adult learner in reference to this population and made recommendations for accommodating the transition process. The final chapter will conclude this discussion with a look at implications for future research, a review of the limitations of this study, and closing remarks.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In this study I examined the transition experiences of ten Canadian soldiers from military to civilian academic life. Through interviews over a three-month period, participants shared their narratives to help determine the barriers to transition and factors facilitating transition. In this chapter I look at implications for future research, consider the limitations of this study, and provide closing remarks.

6.1 Implications for Future Research

Understanding one’s own needs is an essential component of the transition process. Through participation in this study, soldiers had the opportunity to reflect on the strategies and skills that helped them move forward through change, possibly using it as a platform to have their voices heard and to validate their experiences. Providing opportunities for soldiers to share their narratives in academic and other civilian settings may contribute to successful transition if it leads to self-reflection and self-assessment. The barriers and factors facilitating transition to an academic setting may mirror barrier and factors facilitating transition to other civilian environments. The findings and recommendations of this study may have implications for other civilian agencies and individuals working with soldiers in transition to employment, volunteerism, or other community activities.

Over the course of this study participants worked through the phases of the Transition Process: defining and identifying transitions as anticipated, unanticipated, or
non-events and evaluating them according to facilitators and barriers; examining support and resources; and integrating new strategies in moving through change. Camaraderie, social engagement, and the development of cultural intelligence emerged from this study as among the principal factors in developing a civilian identity, sense of purpose and place of belonging. Group interaction in any civilian environment could allow transitioning soldiers to barter their skills with non-military populations: the leadership and adaptability of soldiers could be traded for cultural cues and codes of behavior and the development of camaraderie in the civilian world. Further research in the area of Canadian soldiers transitioning to a variety of employment sectors and community settings could highlight other transition issues that were not addressed in this study. This research did not look at the issues specific to female soldiers in transition. Further investigation is recommended to examine changes in the relationships, routines, assumptions and roles of Canadian women veterans as they transition to civilian environments. Future research looking at the role of military hypermasculinity in the adaptation process is recommended to determine its effects on sociocultural skills. Data collection methods might include an observation of the symbols, customs, and jargon of military members in transition to civilian cultures.

6.2 Limitations

This study was limited by a number of logistical factors which impacted the length of engagement with participants. Because my participants were both students and, in some cases, were still under the umbrella of the Canadian Forces, I was required to seek ethical approval from more than one committee. Time constraints meant that my
interview process was shortened to three months. A longer interview process may have helped to determine a more discernible pattern of adjustment and may have allowed me to track participant experiences as they moved out of change. As the interview process ended, several students were still in their programs of study, allowing me to track their transition only to that point of moving through change. Several other students were no longer in their programs of study as a result of medical, family, and employment situations. In my opinion these individuals reflected what I would call an ‘L pattern’ of adjustment, or incomplete transition. Data collection over a longer period of time may have allowed me to further track their experiences to see if this pattern changed.

This study was limited, also, to the number of military personnel who met the eligibility criteria established in the letter of invitation, who volunteered to participate, and who were available for in-person interviews over the course of the study. Other methods of data collection (e.g. surveys) might have yielded greater participation, but may not have allowed me to reap the rich data afforded by participant narratives.

6.3 Closing Remarks

As an educator I now have a better understanding of the issues facing Canadian military personnel returning to school. In order to avoid bias and to allow for more objectivity I attempted to distance myself from my own personal experiences. I approached this study objectively, with an agenda to establish trustworthiness through several measures: transparency about my role and interest in this topic and in this population; prolonged engagement with study participants over a three-month period; a literature review of a variety of perspectives on cross-cultural and military to civilian transition; sharing transcripts with participants to ensure accuracy of the data; developing
authenticity through the use of thick description and participant narratives. The dual interview process was beneficial in two ways: it allowed me to develop a rapport with the participants over several weeks; it gave participants time to reflect on their responses from the first interview before participating in the second, allowing for greater depth of thought on certain points.

It is my hope that this study helps to promote an understanding of soldiers’ experiences in transition to education and highlights areas for program improvement. As Canadian soldiers exit military life it is important that the civilian community recognizes the unique contributions, issues, and challenges faced by these men and women. Adjustment requires time and flexibility and the support of civilian environments in facilitating transition for our new generation of veterans.
REFERENCES


Department of National Defence (2008, April 3). Types of service. Retrieved April 2,


Pranger, T., Murphy, K., & Thompson, J. M. (2009). Shaken world: Coping with transition to civilian life. Canadian Family Physician, 55, 159-161.


Williams, E. (1996). *So...You Want to Teach Adults?* Scarborough, ON: Pippin.


APPENDIX A

LETTER OF INFORMATION

From Combat to Classroom: Canadian Soldiers in Transition

Dear (name of student):

My name is Jane Etherington and I am writing to ask if you will participate in a qualitative study on cross-cultural transition. I am undertaking this study as part of my Master’s of Education at Queen’s University.

**Purpose of the Study:**

The purpose of the research is to explore, through interviews, the use of transferable skills in an adult education setting as a measure to effect successful transition of Canadians soldiers from military to civilian life. In essence, to seek an answer to the following question: What transferable skills are used, or could be used, in an adult education setting to effect successful transition of military students?

**SSRRB Coordination Number**

This research has been coordinated through the DGMPRA Social Science Research Review Board, in accordance with CANFORGEN 198/08. Coordination # 1026/11-F. This research has the support of both the Limestone District School Board (Norah Marsh, Superintendent of Education) and the Director Casualty Support Management/Joint Personnel Support Unit in Ottawa (Major Jo-Anne Flawn-Laforge, Continuous Improvement Cell), and has been cleared by the General Research Ethics Board at Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario.

**Participation**

Your participation is completely voluntary and you have a choice at any time of the research to end your participation without reprisal or career repercussions. The researcher(s) will keep your responses confidential and will protect your anonymity in any reports or publications.

You will participate in two one-on-one English-language interviews with me. Interviews will run between thirty and sixty minutes. Interview questions will pertain to the use of transferable skills in cross-cultural transition, from the military to civilian culture, in the context of adult continuing education. Your participation in this research may require a
voice recording. If you wish to opt-out of voice recording you may indicate this on the consent form.

**Risks**

There may be risks involved for participating in this study; they are assessed as low level. Due to the nature of the research, your participation in this study will require that you volunteer or share personal experiences and information which may cause you to experience some slight discomfort. Appropriate measures will be taken to minimize your discomfort and you have been provided a list of referrals for your personal use should you experience a degree of unease during or after the interview. You will not be required to respond to any question that you feel may cause discomfort and, should you choose not to respond, there will be no negative consequences for you.

**Information You Provide**

Any documentation will be securely archived upon completion of the study, and destroyed after five years, with the exception of the thesis, itself. In addition, all information derived from any transcription will be stored in a locked cabinet. The information collected will be kept strictly confidential, and will only be shared with members of the research team and DND. No information that will directly identify you as an individual participant will be collected in the interview or stored with the dataset. While there is the remote possibility that someone might be able to deduce your identity based on some combination of the demographic questions, all individual level information will be kept strictly confidential.

**ATIP Considerations**

You are aware that under the Access to Information Act, Canadian citizens are entitled to obtain copies of research reports and research information (including the database pertaining to this project) held in Federal government files. Similarly, under the Privacy Act, Canadian citizens are entitled to copies of all information concerning them that is held in Federal government files including research databases. Prior to releasing requested information, the Directorate of Access to Information and Privacy (DAIP) screens the information to ensure that individual identities are not disclosed.

**Questions/Concerns**

Any information about your rights as a research participant may be addressed to Jane Etherington at 613-542-7369 ext. 375. You may verify the authenticity of the research by contacting: Dr. Maria Myers at 613-533-6000 ext. 33032.

**What if You change Your Mind About Participating?**
You may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty – participation is completely voluntary. However, if you decide you no longer wish to take part after the information has been collected we will remove the information from consideration.

*If you are interested in participating in this research please contact the researcher, Jane Etherington, by phone at (613) 542-7369 ext. 375 or by email at etheringtoj@limestone.on.ca.*

Sincere thanks,

Jane Etherington, OCT, BA, BEd, MEd Candidate (Queen’s University)
APPENDIX B

LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

From Combat to Classroom: Canadian Soldiers in Transition

Dear (name of student):

My name is Jane Etherington and I am writing to ask if you will participate in a qualitative study on cross-cultural transition. I am undertaking this study as part of my Master’s of Education at Queen’s University.

**Purpose of the Study:**

The purpose of the research is to explore, through interviews, the use of transferable skills in an adult education setting as a measure to effect successful transition of Canadians soldiers from military to civilian life. In essence, to seek an answer to the following question: What transferable skills are used, or could be used, in an adult education setting to effect successful transition of military students?

**SSRRB Coordination Number**

This research has been coordinated through the DGMPRA Social Science Research Review Board, in accordance with CANFORGEN 198/08. Coordination # 1026/11-F. This research has the support of both the Limestone District School Board (Norah Marsh, Superintendent of Education) and the Director Casualty Support Management/Joint Personnel Support Unit in Ottawa (Major Jo-Anne Flawn-Laforge, Continuous Improvement Cell), and has been cleared by the General Research Ethics Board at Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario.

**Participation**

Participation is requested by volunteers, of any gender, who meet the following criteria:

- A minimum of five years’ Reg F Canadian Forces service in any environment (air, land, or sea);
- In the process of making the transition from military to civilian life;
- A registered student at the Limestone Education Centre and attending during the period October, 2011 – April, 2012 for one or more of the following reasons:
  - to upgrade skills;
  - to earn credits for a secondary school diploma in Ontario;
- to earn additional secondary school credits in preparation for post-secondary education.

Your participation is completely voluntary and you have a choice at any time of the research to end your participation without reprisal or career repercussions. The researcher(s) will keep your responses confidential and will protect your anonymity in any reports or publications.

You will participate in two one-on-one English-language interviews with me. Interviews will run between thirty and sixty minutes. Interview questions will pertain to the use of transferable skills in cross-cultural transition, from the military to civilian culture, in the context of adult continuing education. Your participation in this research may require a voice recording. If you wish to opt-out of voice recording you may indicate this on the consent form.

**Risks**

There may be risks involved for participating in this study; they are assessed as low level. Due to the nature of the research, your participation in this study will require that you volunteer or share personal experiences and information which may cause you to experience some slight discomfort. Appropriate measures will be taken to minimize your discomfort and you have been provided a list of referrals for your personal use should you experience a degree of unease during or after the interview. You will not be required to respond to any question that you feel may cause discomfort and, should you choose not to respond, there will be no negative consequences for you.

**Information You Provide**

Any documentation will be securely archived upon completion of the study, and destroyed after five years, with the exception of the thesis, itself. In addition, all information derived from any transcription will be stored in a locked cabinet. The information collected will be kept strictly confidential, and will only be shared with members of the research team and DND. No information that will directly identify you as an individual participant will be collected in the interview or stored with the dataset. While there is the remote possibility that someone might be able to deduce your identity based on some combination of the demographic questions, all individual level information will be kept strictly confidential.
**ATIP Considerations**

You are aware that under the Access to Information Act, Canadian citizens are entitled to obtain copies of research reports and research information (including the database pertaining to this project) held in Federal government files. Similarly, under the Privacy Act, Canadian citizens are entitled to copies of all information concerning them that is held in Federal government files including research databases. Prior to releasing requested information, the Directorate of Access to Information and Privacy (DAIP) screens the information to ensure that individual identities are not disclosed.

**Questions/Concerns**

Any information about your rights as a research participant may be addressed to Jane Etherington at 613-542-7369 ext. 375. You may verify the authenticity of the research by contacting: Dr. Maria Myers at 613-533-6000 ext. 33032.

**What if You change Your Mind About Participating?**

You may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty – participation is completely voluntary. However, if you decide you no longer wish to take part after the information has been collected we will remove the information from consideration.

*If you are interested in participating in this research please contact the researcher, Jane Etherington, by phone at (613) 542-7369 ext. 375 or by email at etheringtoj@limestone.on.ca.*

Sincere thanks,

Jane Etherington, OCT, BA, BEd, MEd Candidate (Queen’s University)
APPENDIX C

CANADIAN FORCES CONTACT NUMBERS

CANADIAN FORCES MEMBER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CFMAP)

1-800-268-7708

Hearing Impaired Line (Mon-Fri 7:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. E.T.) 1-800-567-5803

http://www.forces.gc.ca/health-sante/ps-map-pam/default-eng.asp

Call us for a confidential talk. If we can’t help, we know someone who can. 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The CFMAP is a voluntary and confidential service, initiated by the CF to help members and family members who have personal concerns that affect their personal well-being and/or work performance. We address concerns that affect or could affect personal well-being and/or work performance such as: marital, family, interpersonal, personal and emotional relations, stress and burn-out, harassment, sexual assault, alcohol, drugs and prescription drugs.

CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP) 613-992-1740

http://hr.ottawa-hull.mil.ca/hr/civ/dgcsp/ddwb/eap/en/home_e.asp

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a voluntary and confidential peer referral service to help individuals deal with personal or professional issues that might impact on their work performance. An individual may approach a referral agent to seek confidential help for any reason. The referral agent will direct the employee to an appropriate internal or external resource, depending on the nature of the issue.

THE CENTRE FOR CARE AND SUPPORT OF INJURED AND RETIRED SERVICE MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES 1-800-883-6094

(Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m to 17:00 p.m E.T)

http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/cen/index-eng.asp

The centre is designed to bring the joint efforts of both the Department of National Defence and Veterans Affairs Canada together in providing information and services to injured and retired military members and their families. It is an initial contact point and referral service. All calls are confidential and in addition to the original consultation and referral, follow-up calls are made to ensure that an individual’s concern has been resolved and all of the assistance has been provided. The aim of The Centre is to ensure the
provision of support services to all military members who were injured, medically released or became ill while serving, and to also support their families. Our services include a help line, referral programs, an advocacy team, disability benefits, financial assistance, and briefing presentations.

**DND/CF OMBUDSMAN** 1-888-828-3626

(Mon-Fri 8:30 a.m to 16:30 p.m E.T)

http://www.ombudsman.forces.gc.ca/

The office is a direct source of information, referral, and education for the men and women of the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces. Its role is to help individuals’ access existing channels of assistance or redress when they have a complaint or concern.

**CANADIAN FORCES HEALTH INFORMATION LINE** 1-877-633-3368

(Operated on a 24 hour/day, 7 day/week)

http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/pd/pi-ip/06-04-eng.asp

The Canadian Forces Health Information Line is a call centre designed to provide CF members with convenient telephone access to health care advice, general health information, and guidance on where and how to access health care services. The service is available to all eligible CF members.

**CANADIAN FORCES CHAPLAIN GENERAL** 1-866-502-2203

(Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m to 16:00 p.m E.T)

http://hr.ottawa-hull.mil.ca/chapgen/en/graph/home_e.asp

The Chaplain’s role is to enhance and protect the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of members and their families. They also ensure access to spiritual care and religious ministrations to all members and their families who desire such services, regardless of their religious or spiritual affiliation or beliefs.

**OPERATIONAL TRAUMA AND STRESS SUPPORT CENTRES**

(Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m to 17:00 p.m E.T)

Atlantic – Halifax 1-902-427-0550 ext 5703
Quebec – Valcartier 1-418-844-5000 ext 7373
Ontario – Ottawa 1-613-945-8062 ext 6644 OR 1-877-705-8880
Western – Edmonton 1-780-973-4011 ext 5332
Pacific – Victoria 1-250-363-4411

These centers will provide assistance to serving members of the CF and their families dealing with stresses arising from military operations, in particular, UN and NATO deployments abroad. This can cause a myriad of psychological, emotional, spiritual and relationship problems. Because these problems are multi-faceted, there is a need to address them from a holistic approach, with a multi-disciplinary team of caring professionals.

CANADIAN/MILITARY FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRES (C/MFRC)

Military Family Information Line 1-800-866-4546
Military Family Resource Centre- Ottawa 613-998-4888
http://www.familyforce.ca/splash.aspx

The Military Family Information Line is a bilingual telephone service for families of Canadian military personnel serving in operations outside Canada. The toll-free, 24-hour service features detailed reports about Canadian Forces missions and operations from around the world and provides the kind of assurance and support family members depend on.
APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

From Combat to Classroom: Canadian Soldiers in Transition

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of the research is to explore, through interviews, the use of transferable skills in an adult education setting as a measure to effect successful transition of Canadians soldiers from military to civilian life. In essence, to seek an answer to the following question: What transferable skills are used, or could be used, in an adult education setting to effect successful transition of military students?

SSRRB Coordination Number

This interview has been coordinated through the DGMPRA Social Science Research Review Board, in accordance with CANFORGEN 198/08. Coordination # 1026/11-F.

Participation

Your participation is completely voluntary and you have a choice at any time of the research to end your participation without reprisal or career repercussions. You will participate in two English-language interviews. Each interview will be thirty to sixty minutes duration. The researcher(s) will keep your responses confidential and will protect your anonymity in any reports or publications.

Risks

There may be risks involved for participating in this study; they are assessed as low level. Due to the nature of the research, your participation in this study will require that you volunteer or share personal experiences and information which may cause you to experience some slight discomfort. Appropriate measures will be taken to minimize your discomfort and you have been provided a list of referrals for your personal use should you experience a degree of unease during or after the interview.

You will not be required to respond to any question that you feel may cause discomfort and, should you choose not to respond, there will be no negative consequences for you.

Information You Provide
Any documentation will be securely archived upon completion of the study, and destroyed after five years, with the exception of the thesis, itself. In addition, all information derived from any transcription will be stored in a locked cabinet. Your participation in this interview may require voice recording. If you wish to opt-out of a voice recording please indicate by initialing:

A. You consent to voice recording. _________
B. You do not wish to be recorded. _________

The information collected will be kept strictly confidential, and will only be shared with members of the research team and DND. No information that will directly identify you as an individual participant will be collected in the interview or stored with the dataset. While there is the remote possibility that someone might be able to deduce your identity based on some combination of the demographic questions, all individual level information will be kept strictly confidential.

**ATIP Considerations**

You are aware that under the Access to Information Act, Canadian citizens are entitled to obtain copies of research reports and research information (including the database pertaining to this project) held in Federal government files. Similarly, under the Privacy Act, Canadian citizens are entitled to copies of all information concerning them that is held in Federal government files including research databases. Prior to releasing requested information, the Directorate of Access to Information and Privacy (DAIP) screens the information to ensure that individual identities are not disclosed.

**Questions/Concerns**

Any information about your rights as a research participant may be addressed to Jane Etherington at 613-542-7369 ext. 375. You may verify the authenticity of the research by contacting: Dr. Maria Myers at 613-533-6000 ext. 33032.

**What if You change Your Mind About Participating?**

You may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty – participation is completely voluntary. However, if you decide you no longer wish to take part after the information has been collected we will remove the information from consideration.

**Acceptance**
Your signature on this form indicates that you 1) understand to your satisfaction the information provided to you about your participation in this research project, and 2) agree to participate as a research subject.

In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researcher, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from this research project at any time. You should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Participant’s Name (please print): ____________________________________________

Participant’s Signature __________________________ Date: _________________

Researcher’s Name (please print): ___________________________________________

Researcher’s Signature __________________________ Date: _________________
APPENDIX E

POST-INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

From Combat to Classroom: Canadian Soldiers in Transition

**Purpose of the Study:**

The purpose of the research is to explore, through interviews, the use of transferable skills in an adult education setting as a measure to effect successful transition of Canadians soldiers from military to civilian life. In essence, to seek an answer to the following question: What transferable skills are used, or could be used, in an adult education setting to effect successful transition of military students?

**SSRRB Coordination Number**

This interview has been coordinated through the DGMPRA Social Science Research Review Board, in accordance with CANFORGEN 198/08. Coordination # 1026/11-F.

**Participation**

Your participation is completely voluntary and you have a choice at any time of the research to end your participation without reprisal or career repercussions. The researcher(s) will keep your responses confidential and will protect your anonymity in any reports or publications.

**Risks**

There may be risks involved for participating in this study; they are assessed as low level. Due to the nature of the research, your participation in this study will require that you volunteer or share personal experiences and information which may cause you to experience some slight discomfort. Appropriate measures will be taken to minimize your discomfort and you have been provided a list of referrals for your personal use should you experience a degree of unease during or after the interview.

You will not be required to respond to any question that you feel may cause discomfort and, should you choose not to respond, there will be no negative consequences for you.

**Information You Provide**

Any documentation, including interview recordings and interview transcripts, will be securely archived upon completion of the study, and destroyed after five years, with the exception of the thesis, itself. In addition, all information derived from any transcription will be stored in a locked cabinet.
The information collected will be kept strictly confidential, and will only be shared with members of the research team and DND. No information that will directly identify you as an individual participant will be collected in the interview or stored with the dataset. While there is the remote possibility that someone might be able to deduce your identity based on some combination of the demographic questions, all individual level information will be kept strictly confidential.

**ATIP Considerations**

You are aware that under the Access to Information Act, Canadian citizens are entitled to obtain copies of research reports and research information (including the database pertaining to this project) held in Federal government files. Similarly, under the Privacy Act, Canadian citizens are entitled to copies of all information concerning them that is held in Federal government files including research databases. Prior to releasing requested information, the Directorate of Access to Information and Privacy (DAIP) screens the information to ensure that individual identities are not disclosed.

**Questions/Concerns**

Any information about your rights as a research participant may be addressed to Jane Etherington at 613-542-7369 ext. 375. You may verify the authenticity of the research by contacting: Dr. Maria Myers at 613-533-6000 ext. 33032.

**What if You change Your Mind About Participating?**

You may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty – participation is completely voluntary. However, if you decide you no longer wish to take part after the information has been collected we will remove the information from consideration.

**Acceptance**

Your signature on this form indicates that you 1) understand to your satisfaction the information provided to you about your participation in this research project, and 2) agree to participate as a research subject.

In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researcher, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from this research project at any time. You should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.
Participant’s Name (please print): ________________________________
Participant’s Signature ___________________________ Date: ____________

Researcher’s Name (please print): ________________________________
Researcher’s Signature ___________________________ Date: ____________
APPENDIX F

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW #1

1. In what ways is the culture of the adult education centre different or similar to the military culture (e.g. hours of operation, program structure, instructional staff, camaraderie, social life, expectations, discipline, classroom size, student population, peer groups, curriculum)?

2. In what program/course(s) did you first register at this school?

3. How often do you attend school? What factors contribute to this schedule?

4. What skills are transferable from military to civilian life (e.g. adaptation skills, stress and coping skills, self-efficacy, cultural intelligence)?

5. Describe how you felt emotionally during your first week of school. What words would you use to describe how you felt?

6. Describe your interaction and communication with others (teachers, support staff, students) during your first week of school.

7. What life changes have you experienced as a returning student with respect to: (a) family, (b) peers, (c) social connections, and (d) feelings of satisfaction?
APPENDIX G

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW #2

1. In what ways is the culture of the adult education centre different or similar to the military culture (e.g. hours of operation, program structure, instructional staff, camaraderie, social life, expectations, discipline, classroom size, student population, peer groups, curriculum)?

2. What has been the most difficult adjustment for you in returning to school?

3. What has been the least difficult adjustment for you in returning to school?

4. What program/course(s) are you presently taking?

5. How would you describe this school experience in contributing to your transition to civilian life?

6. In what school activities or events have you participated? Why or why not?

7. What words would you use to describe how you now feel emotionally?

8. Describe your interaction and communication with others at the school (teachers, support staff, students) now.

9. What have you learned about the features of the adult education centre (e.g. instructional staff, classroom size, student population, hours of operation, curriculum, program structure) in the period you have been attending?
APPENDIX H

CODED TRANSCRIPT

Interview – Friday, November 4, 2011
9:40 am
“Fred”

I: If you compare camaraderie in your military experience to camaraderie in a school environment, what are the differences or similarities in the two?

F: I don’t think there’s…that gets tricky to be honest with you… ’cause I don’t think there’s much similarity in the two…Because in the Army, when you go away… I don’t know how to explain it, because you put so much on the other person…When you go to sleep at night, you’re hoping that buddy doesn’t go to sleep when he’s out there on shift. You know, and you really have to put a lot of trust in that. In school, you don’t have to really have that same kind of trust. (MC)/ (C)

I: So you wouldn’t necessarily describe it as camaraderie in the school, necessarily.

F: No, no…Maybe…words I don’t even know or understand, wholeheartedly, but in a sense I understand….

I: Okay, if you compare it to maybe friendship, support from other people that you know….Have you experienced that in the school environment?

F: I got a lot of support from the teachers, yeah, which was unfamiliar for me,(SR)/(UT) but in regards to the students and that, I feel, uh, uh, really on the outside of the box….(UT)

I: Is that…What would you say is the reason for that?

F: Just because I’ve been…so structured, (MC) if that makes any sense, so made to do things this way, all the time, and never had the right, you know…ever since you know…but you never have the right to really speak your mind, (MC) you really, you don’t…you know…you can voice your opinion in the Army, but really you can’t…
Second Interview – Thursday, January 26, 2012

“Ken”

I: So those skills that you learned in the Forces – those study skills and learning strategy skills – you feel those have been helpful to you in this experience?

K: They’ve been huge. Without them, I’m not so sure....You know I can’t compare because that’s I’ll I’ve done all my life. (TS) I know people I’ve befriended in the school who’ve had struggles getting back into the learning mode. I didn’t have the struggle getting into the learning mode. (TS) I’ve had some ins and outs about the type of things I am learning and some of the computer stuff...but the actual learning part of it, everyday you’re learning in the Forces, so that’s been a huge, huge plus, yeah.

I: How would you define yourself now?

K: I would use the word “Veteran”.... I identify as a student for the time being. I’ve been in school for a year and three months; I would identify as a student. If I had to use one word, I would use that word. (VI)

I: Do you identify with the Veteran culture? You mentioned the word “Veteran”. Do you think you’re part of the Veteran culture now?

K: A little bit. I consider myself a Veteran, of course, but I’m not involved with the Veteran’s Association, or the Legion, or any other Veteran organization. I’m not involved with the Veterans. However, when I cross paths with people...right away there’s a common bond, before we even chit chat about anything, you know.... (VI)

I: What changes have you experienced in your life since you left the military?

K: The biggest impact....When I retired everything’s about, oh, your release is coming up and everything’s around that. Then all of a sudden they’re planning a big retirement party, so everything’s focused on the party. Now, all of a sudden you’re at the party and the next day you get up and you’re not part of any organization. You’re kind of lost....I’m not a part of something. I didn’t realize the impact of that. (UT)