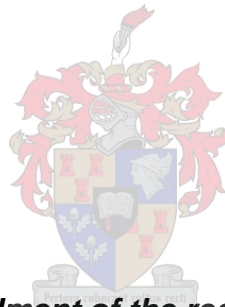


# **Animal-assisted activities in a halfway facility: A case study**

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***Thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts (Psychology)  
in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Stellenbosch University***

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## DECLARATION

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## ABSTRACT

The female correctional population has increased dramatically over the last decade and continues to grow annually. Females on parole, including those in halfway facilities, face a variety of socio-economic, -environmental, and –political issues that have the potential to severely inhibit successful reintegration. High recidivism rates signal a lack of post-incarceration support and transitional services, which indicate that rehabilitative needs are not being met. Despite this, offender rehabilitation receives little public attention or interest in South Africa. This necessitates the development and implementation of low-cost, practical, and innovative approaches to offender rehabilitation, thus facilitating this critical period of re-adjustment. Human-animal interaction (HAI) may be a case in point. Over the past several decades, a widespread awareness of the beneficial effects of HAI, including that which takes place in the context of animal-assisted activity (AAA), has emerged. Based on this growing interest, there is an increasing collection of literature that suggests that animal contact and interaction can provide significant physical, psychological, and social benefits for human well-being and functioning.

The present research set out to explore the experience of AAA within the context of a halfway facility, with an emphasis on the female parolee's experience. It was designed to explore the female parolee's experience of the activity from three participant perspectives: (a) the female parolee's, (b) the house parent's, and (c) the Pets as Therapy volunteer's.

A qualitative case-study design was implemented in order to achieve this aim. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with four female parolees currently residing within a halfway facility located in a suburb of Cape Town. The two house parents employed by said halfway facility and a Pets as Therapy volunteer, who supervised AAA sessions held at the halfway facility, were also interviewed as supplementary sources of data.

Upon completion of the interviews, the data was transcribed and analysed according to the principles of thematic analysis. Following thematic analysis, four themes emerged: the perceived benefits of AAA, participants' personal experiences of AAA, participants' reactions towards the visiting AAA dog, and the participant's perceptions

of the visiting AAA dog. These findings are largely supported by the existing literature surrounding this topic of investigation. The findings, however, also address a gap in the existing literature regarding the use of AAA as a support measure conducive to the successful reintegration of female parolees in South Africa.

**Key words:** Human-animal interaction; animal-assisted activity; female parolee; halfway facility; rehabilitation; reintegration; recidivism; qualitative research; case-study design; thematic analysis

## OPSOMMING

Die vroulike korrektiewe bevolking het dramaties oor die afgelope dekade toegeneem en gaan voort om jaarliks te groei. Vroue op parool, insluitende dié in halfweg-fasiliteite, staar 'n verskeidenheid van sosio-ekonomiese, -omgewings-, en -politieke kwessies in die gesig wat die potensiaal het om afsonderlik suksesvolle herintegrasie te voorkom. Hoë heroortredingberamings dui op 'n gebrek aan na-gevangenskap ondersteuning en oorgangsdienste wat beteken dat rehabilitasie-behoeftes nie bevredig word nie. Ten spyte hiervan ontvang oortrederrehabilitasie min openbare aandag of belangstelling in Suid-Afrika. Dit vereis die ontwikkeling en implementering van lae-koste, praktiese, en innoverende benaderings tot oortrederrehabilitasie, wat hierdie kritieke tydperk van aanpassing fasiliteer. Mens-dierinteraksie kan 'n goeie voorbeeld hiervan wees. Oor die afgelope paar dekades het 'n wydverspreide bewustheid van die voordelige uitwerking van mens-dierinteraksie, insluitende dié wat in die konteks van troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteite (TOA) plaasvind, na vore gekom. Op grond van hierdie groeiende belangstelling, is daar 'n toenemende versameling literatuur wat daarop dui dat dierekontak en -interaksie beduidende fisieke, sielkundige, en sosiale voordele vir menslike welstand en funksionering kan voorsien.

Die huidige navorsing ondersoek die ervaring van TOA binne die konteks van 'n halfweg-fasiliteit, met die klem op die ervaring van die vroue op parool. Dit is ontwerp om die vroue op parool se ervaring van die aktiwiteit te verken uit drie deelnemerperspektiewe: (a) die vroue op parool, (B) die huisouers, en (c) die Pets as Therapy-vrywilliger.

'n Kwalitatiewe gevallestudie-ontwerp is geïmplementeer om hierdie doel te bereik. Semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude is gevoer met vier vroue op parool tans woonagtig binne 'n halfweg-fasiliteit geleë in 'n voorstad van Kaapstad. Onderhoude is ook gevoer met die twee huisouers in diens van genoemde halfweg-fasiliteit en die Pets as Therapy-vrywilliger, wat oor TOA-sessies toesig gehou het by die halfweg-fasiliteit, as aanvullende databronne.

Na voltooiing van die onderhoude is die data getranskribeer en geanaliseer volgens die beginsels van tematiese analise. Na aanleiding van tematiese analise, het vier

temas na vore gekom: die waargenome voordele van TOA, deelnemers se persoonlike ervarings van TOA, deelnemers se reaksies teenoor die besoekende TOA-hond, en die deelnemer se persepsies van die besoekende TOA-hond. Hierdie bevindings is grootliks ondersteun deur die bestaande literatuur rondom hierdie onderwerp van ondersoak. Die bevindings het egter ook 'n gaping in die bestaande literatuur uitgewys met betrekking tot die gebruik van TOA as 'n ondersteuningsmaatstaf wat bevorderlik is vir die suksesvolle herintegrasië van vroue op parool in Suid-Afrika.

**Trefwoorde:** Mens-dierinteraksië; troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteite; vroue op parool; halfweg-fasiliteit, rehabilitasië; herintegrasië; heroortreding; kwalitatiewe ervarings; gevallestudie-ontwerp; tematiese analise

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AAA	Animal-Assisted Activity
AAT	Animal-Assisted Therapy
APA	American Psychological Association
ASPCA	American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
AVMA	American Veterinary Medical Association
BPS	British Psychological Society
CSA	Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998
DCS	Department of Correctional Services
HAI	Human Animal Interaction
OSF-SA	Open Society Foundation for South Africa
PAT	Pets as Therapy
PRI	Penal Reform International
UNDAW	United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women
UNODC	United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION

#### 1.1 BACKGROUND

The female parolee occupies a space on the outskirts of mainstream society, as a form of 'other', which can often be an isolating and alienating experience (Cilliers & Smit, 2007). Female parolees, who were previously marginalised from mainstream society and housed in the often de-humanising conditions of prison life, are now expected to re-adjust to the norms of society, whilst still being viewed in a way that segregates them. Despite this, offender rehabilitation within the correctional context receives little public attention or interest in South Africa (Jules-Macquet, 2014). Rather, the current public and political opinion in South Africa regarding offender rehabilitation is strongly turned against innovative and constructive approaches towards female offenders (Muntingh, 2008). Given the social costs and the financial burden linked to an ever-increasing correctional population (Penal Reform International [PRI], 2015), the societal belief that offenders must be punished with little regard to rehabilitation must be kept under review (Cilliers & Smit, 2007).

South Africa's weak economy and high crime rate have left the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) with massive issues of overcrowding and a lack of resources, leaving thousands within the correctional system subject to human rights violations (McAree, 2011). As South Africa struggles to afford the basic rights promised to its citizens in the country's progressive Constitution, the needs of offenders on parole are displaced by other priority needs (McAree, 2011). In South Africa, there are currently an estimated 3 915 incarcerated female offenders within correctional facilities and further 1 336 female offenders on parole within the system of community corrections (DCS, 2016). This equates to approximately 2,65% of the overall correctional population, which currently stands at 211 730 (DCS, 2016). Despite this seemingly low percentage of female offenders, research reveals that the female correctional population has increased dramatically over the last decade (PRI, 2015) and has been growing at a rate faster than that of the male correctional population (Belknap, 2015; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005). According to an analysis conducted by the International Centre for Prison Studies (2014), the number of female

offenders, both incarcerated and on parole, increased by over 40% between 2000 and 2013. This growing female correctional population has come at a vast cost to the social cohesiveness within communities, as well as placed an enormous financial burden on society (PRI, 2015).

As the population of female offenders has risen, the number of individuals who require support services post-incarceration has also increased (PRI, 2015). South Africa, including the Western Cape, is no exception to this global correctional trend (Cilliers & Smit, 2007). Within the South African correctional context, there are various rehabilitation and reintegration services available. However, they are fairly isolated and most often do not provide a comprehensive rehabilitation service that begins within the context of the correctional facility and continues post-incarceration (Muntingh, 2012). In fact, Khwela (2014) maintains that there is still little difference between incarceration and rehabilitation in South Africa owing to the correctional environment. As such, more emphasis must be placed on post-incarceration offender rehabilitation (Sekhonyane, 2004). In this regard, non-profit and public benefit organisations are making valuable contributions providing substantive, reintegration promoting interventions (Muntingh, 2012; Sekhonyane, 2004). This includes organisations such as halfway facilities.

The reintegration of female parolees back into the community is a highly complex and oftentimes challenging process (Khwela, 2014). Post-incarceration, females on parole, including those residing in halfway facilities, face a variety of circumstantial and personal issues that can have a dire effect on their ability to successfully reintegrate (Khwela, 2014). Impoverished background, inadequate education, unemployment, and homelessness are cited as some of the most recurring issues faced by females on parole (Langa & Masuku, 2015; Muntingh, 2008). Severed social ties, as well as a lack of support systems, have also been found to strongly influence this progression (Brennan, Breitenbach, Dieterich, Salisbury, & Van Voorhis, 2012). According to Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979), an individual's well-being is dependent on and interlinked with the various social systems that surround them. However, the implications of incarceration, and subsequently parole, significantly affect the female parolee's familial relationships, as well as social ties within the community (Bahr, Harris, Fisher, & Armstrong, 2010). Moreover, the economic and

social disabilities faced by females on parole are further exacerbated by issues of discrimination and stigmatisation (Bruyns & Cilliers, 2009).

The fundamental core of the issue is that females on parole comprise a vulnerable and growing subset of the correctional population (PRI, 2015). Various reintegration-related, including socio-economic, -environmental, and -political factors, place the quality of life of female parolees largely at risk (McAree, 2011). Furthermore, while it is hoped that upon release many desist from criminal activities, these various factors lead countless female offenders to re-offend and return to correctional facilities (Albertus, 2010). South African statistics and trends indicate that the recidivism rate is approximately between 85% and 94% (Dissel, 2002; Jules-Macquet, 2014; Schoeman, 2002). High recidivism rates signal a lack of post-incarceration support and transitional services; that rehabilitative needs not being met both within correctional facilities and post-incarceration (United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2009). This warrants the development and implementation of low-cost, practical, and innovative approaches to offender rehabilitation, helping these women through this critical period of readjustment. Human-animal interaction (HAI) may be a case in point (Currie, 2008; Davis, 2007).

Over the past several decades, a widespread awareness acknowledging the beneficial effects of HAI, including that which takes place in the context of animal-assisted activity (AAA), has emerged (Halm, 2008; Handlin, 2011; Johnson, Odendaal, & Meadows, 2002). Based on this growing interest, there is an increasing collection of literature that suggests that the bond formed between humans and animals can provide significant benefits to human well-being and functioning (Evans & Gray, 2012; Johnson et al., 2002; Kruger & Serpell, 2010). Such literature describes interactions between the two species as being mutually beneficial, with numerous physical, psychological, and social benefits being linked to HAI (Odendaal, 2000).

Due to the mutually beneficial, dynamic bond that can occur within the context of HAI, AAAs have been used effectively in a variety of contexts, especially those aimed at working with marginalised sectors of the community (Kruger & Serpell, 2010). AAA programmes have thus become a firm fixture within a variety of institutional settings with a wide range of beneficial outcomes (Kruger & Serpell, 2010). Following this



trend, the number of programmes that utilise AAA as a supportive measure to offender rehabilitation and reintegration have also increased significantly (Handlin, 2011).

Numerous anecdotal and personal narratives supporting the value of HAI in the context of offender rehabilitation are available; however, there is a dearth of high-quality, robust research conducted within this field (Britton & Button, 2005; Demyan, 2007; Fournier, Geller, & Fortney, 2007). Preliminary research, thus far, suggests offenders experience improved social behaviour and psychological states, particularly increased interpersonal trust, responsibility, patience, coping skills, self-esteem, and empathy, as a result of interacting with animals (Frust, 2006). There is also an indication that AAA programmes within the correctional context have the potential to favourably affect community perceptions of offenders (Strimple, 2003), lower recidivism rates (Harkrader, Burke, & Owen, 2004), and, as a consequence, decrease financial costs to the government (Cilliers & Smit, 2007). As such, it is argued that these benefits could be potentially applicable to the female parolee in the context of a halfway facility. The following section provides a rationale for the present research.

## **1.2 RATIONALE**

The female parolee represents a deserving target group for interventions that focus on benefiting the physical, psychological, and social well-being of these individuals (McAree, 2011). At present, there is an increasing number of AAA programmes that have been implemented within the context of offender rehabilitation, both internationally and in South Africa (Gray-Kilfoil, 2007). Preliminary evidence, thus far, suggests that these programmes result in favourable rehabilitative outcomes for participating offenders (Butz, 2010; Frust, 2006; Harbolt & Ward, 2001).

However, recent years have witnessed the emergence of concerns regarding the extent to which the potential benefits of HAI can be adequately supported by high-quality, trustworthy research (Matuszek, 2010). In particular, this is the case in regards to the use of AAA within the context of offender rehabilitation and even more so within the halfway facility setting (Butz, 2010; Eggers, Munoz, Sciulli, & Hickerson Crist, 2006). This is due, in part, to the fact that among the AAA programmes that have been implemented within correctional and halfway facilities, there is a severe lack of research that has been conducted regarding these programmes, particularly in the

South African context (Butz, 2010; Lubbe & Scholtz, 2013). As such, much of the current evidence-base within this field is comprised of anecdotal data (Chur-Hansen, Stern, & Winefield, 2010; Lutwack-Bloom, Wijewickrama, & Smith, 2005). In fact, Deaton (2005) contends that more anecdotal accounts than actual research have been written. While Kruger and Serpell (2010) are of the opinion that despite HAI having a long and fruitful history, it can be best described as a promising complementary practice that is still struggling to establish its validity and efficacy within the scientific community.

This research gap is compounded by a lack of studies having been conducted on supportive measures to offender rehabilitation and their effect on offender well-being and functioning (McAree, 2011). Rather, much of the research conducted amongst the correctional population has its roots in the societal causes and implications of incarceration and fails to explore the real, lived experience of the offender (Agboola, 2014). As such, the literature surrounding offender rehabilitation has urged that a greater emphasis be placed on the lived experience, with a particular focus on the ways in which offenders can be supported during and post-incarceration (Williams-Queen, 2014).

Moreover, there is a paucity of research in South Africa regarding the female correctional population, both incarcerated and on parole (Jefthas & Artz, 2007; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005; Vetten, 2008; White & Haines, 2001). This is compounded by the fact that in much of the research surrounding this topic of investigation, female offenders are not provided with a voice and when a voice is granted, it is an overwhelmingly 'male' voice (Belknap, 2015). Belknap (2015) notes that historically, female offenders have always been left out of studies or, if included, have been typically portrayed in stereotypic and sexist ways. The scarcity of research regarding offender rehabilitation among this population is largely due to the fact that researchers oftentimes find it difficult to get funding due to the stigma attached to the female parolee (McAree, 2011). Non-government programmes play an integral role in the lives of thousands of females on parole, however more information on offender rehabilitation and reintegration is required so that programmes can carry out their work more effectively and so that they can receive more public exposure and support (McAree, 2011).

The above information warrants the present research, which seeks to address the aforementioned gaps in the literature by contributing to a dialogue within the field of HAI regarding the use of AAA as a meaningful, albeit alternative, supportive measure to offender rehabilitation (Arkow, 2010). Thus, the present research will assume a qualitative approach in order to effectively investigate the lived experience of AAA within the context of a halfway facility. By enabling the participants in the present research to tell their stories in their own voices, it is hoped that an insightful understanding of their social reality as it relates to AAA within a halfway facility will be attained. What is more, this approach may be most appropriate in the context of HAI, as it has been argued that a positivist, quantitative research design may not capture results from HAI sufficiently (Odendaal, 2005). As according to Odendaal (2005) in reference to conducting research within the field of HAI, “the positivistic approach that only things that can be measured convince, or even worse exist, may be the wrong one in this field” (p. 72).

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION**

Bryman (2012) argues that a formal formulation of the research question is required in order to better define the focus of a research study. The research question for the present research was formulated as follows:

*What is the experience of animal-assisted activities within the context of a halfway facility, particularly the female parolee’s experience of this activity?*

### **1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

According to Fouché and Delport (2011), the aim or purpose of a study refers to why something exists or why something is done. The overall aim of the present research was to explore and describe the experience of AAA within the context of a halfway facility, with emphasis on the female parolee’s experience. In effect, this aim subsumed two central objectives of the present research.

Firstly, the present research sought to gain insight into the female parolee’s experience of AAA from three participant perspectives: (a) the female parolee’s, (b) the house parent’s, and (c) the Pets as Therapy (PAT) volunteer’s. In order to obtain a holistic and in-depth account of the lived experience of AAA within a halfway facility,

gathering multiple participant perspectives was necessitated as it allowed for wider interpretations of meaning that could be contrasted and compared against one another (Mertens, 2005).

Secondly, in order to accomplish the before-mentioned objective, the present research focused on generating rich data through the utilisation of a qualitative research strategy, emphasising in-depth discovery, description, and meaning (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). Moreover, the present research prioritised the collection of vivid and detailed descriptions of the phenomenon under investigation through the utilisation of a case study design, which enabled the researcher with the opportunity to interact with a small number of individuals on an in-depth level (Bryman, 2012; Stake, 2000).

## **1.5 DEFINITION AND CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS**

The following concepts are referred to throughout the present research. In order to ensure a thorough and complete understanding of the context in which the present research takes place, as well as the research process and the research findings, these concepts will be defined.

### **1.5.1 Female parolee**

The *female parolee* is an offender who was previously incarcerated and has been subsequently released (Mujuzi, 2011). However, despite being released, the female offender remains under the supervision and structure of correctional officials, serving the remainder of their sentence on *parole* within the system of community corrections (DCS, 2012).

In this way, parole, referred to as a placement option in South Africa, can be viewed as a mechanism that allows the continuation of the offender's sentence outside of the correctional facility (DCS, 2012). Furthermore, parole is viewed as an integral part of the sentencing procedure in South Africa as it encourages rehabilitation by enabling the offender a period of gradual reintegration into mainstream society and normal community life (Mujuzi, 2011).

### 1.5.2 Halfway facility

There are various approaches to supporting offenders' post-incarceration and facilitating the transition from the correctional facility back into the community (Costanza, Cox, & Kilburn, 2015). Most effectively, this is achieved through the means of *halfway facilities*.

The DCS (2016) defines halfway facilities as an opportunity for offenders, who do not have fixed addresses but meet all the requirements for parole, to be placed within a fixed location where they can return to the community and be monitored. Halfway facilities are considered the final part of an offender's rehabilitation process as they play a vital role in reducing such offenders' potential to re-offend by offering them a second chance to experience a home-like, nurturing environment (Tibane & Honwane, 2015).

### 1.5.3 Rehabilitation

*Rehabilitation*, in the context of the correctional services, refers to the re-training of an offender in terms of maladaptive patterns of thought and attitudes that lead to anti-social behaviour (Williams-Queen, 2014). More specifically, the South African Correctional Services defines rehabilitation in the White Paper as the result of a process, which combines the correction of offending behaviour, human development, and the promotion of social responsibility and values (DCS, 2005). It is a desired outcome of numerous processes, which involve the departmental responsibilities of Government, as well as social responsibilities of the community (DCS, 2005).

### 1.5.4 Reintegration

According to Muntingh (2012), the primary goal of rehabilitation is the *reintegration* of offenders back into the community. The DCS (2012) defines reintegration as a process of facilitating acceptance and effective readjustment of offenders back into mainstream society. Reintegration involves not only life-skills training, education, and self-control, but also employment, housing, family relationships, and mental and physical health (DCS, 2012). If a supportive framework cannot be provided to an offender post-incarceration, the offender may re-offend, which, in turn, inhibits any progress that has been made during the rehabilitation process. As such, without setting a clear path

towards reintegration, rehabilitation can do little more than provide temporary comfort to offenders (Muntingh, 2012).

### **1.5.5 Recidivism**

One of the key goals of the South African correctional system is to rehabilitate and reintegrate offenders in the hope that they will not continue a life of crime (DCS, 2016). Unfortunately, some offenders do return to their former criminal life. This is known as *recidivism*, which is the recurrence of criminal activity (DCS, 2016). As such, it can be viewed as a measurement of an individual's return to criminal life, or of repeated incarceration (DCS, 2016). Specifically, recidivism is measured by criminal acts that result in re-arrest, reconviction, or re-incarceration with or without a new sentence during the three-year period following an offender's release (DCS, 2016).

### **1.5.6 Department of Correctional Services (DCS)**

The *Department of Correctional Services* (DCS, 2016) is the South African governing body that oversees the detainment, trial, incarceration, and parole of offenders. Moreover, the DCS, a sub-department of the South African Government, is the guiding body that administers the management and running of South African correctional and halfway facilities, including the medical, educational, and rehabilitative services offered to offenders (DCS, 2016).

*Community corrections*, a sub-division of the DCS, is the central body directly involved in the supervision and management of offenders on parole within the community. According to the DCS (2012), the purpose of community corrections is to assist and support offenders during the reintegration process, while providing those offenders with the necessary structure they require through the use of supervision and control.

### **1.5.7 The Halfway House**

In order to protect the anonymity of the participants that took part in the present research, the name of the halfway facility under investigation will not be disclosed in this thesis and will rather be merely referred to as *The Halfway House*.

The Halfway House, located in a suburb of Cape Town, is a registered non-profit organisation that was opened in 2003 for females coming out of Pollsmoor

Correctional Facility under parole conditions with the aim of easing the reintegration process (The Halfway House, 2011). Under the guidance of The Halfway House, together with the DCS and several other supporting organisations, the female parolees are encouraged to participate in life-skills, restoration, and spiritual programmes, skill-development workshops, and individual and group counselling (The Halfway House, 2011). Through placement in The Halfway House, it is further envisioned that female parolees will be given the chance to reunite successfully with family members, gain educational skills, and employment (The Halfway House, 2011).

### **1.5.8 Companion animal**

The term *companion animal* is defined by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA, 2015) as a domesticated animal whose physical, social, emotional, and behavioural needs can be readily met in close, daily relationships with a human or humans, or as companions in the home.

The fundamental idea is that a companion animal refers to any non-human animal that provides companionship to their human caregiver (Chur-Hansen et al., 2010). As such, the term companion animal features heavily in the literature as an interchangeable term for pet. Suitable companion animals include dogs, cats, rabbits, mice, guinea pigs, ferrets, birds, small reptiles, fish, horses, and domestic-bred farm animals (Kruger & Serpell, 2010).

### **1.5.9 Human-animal bond**

The *human-animal bond* refers to the emotional, mental, social, and physical interest humans have in animals (American Veterinary Medical Association [AVMA], 2016). It can be defined as a dynamic and mutually beneficial relationship between humans and animals, which is influenced by behaviours considered essential to the well-being and health of both (AVMA, 2016).

### **1.5.10 Human-animal interaction (HAI)**

The AVMA (2016) defines *human-animal interaction* (HAI) as any situation where there is interchange at an individual or cultural level between humans and animals. In other words, HAI refers to any intervention, general or formalised, that incorporates an



animal as the impetus that enriches interactions between humans and animals (Evans & Gray, 2012). These interactions are diverse and idiosyncratic, and may be fleeting or profound (Kruger & Serpell, 2010).

In the context of the present research, it should be accepted that the animal referred to in the term HAI is a companion animal, as opposed to a wild animal, and primarily refers to interactions between humans and animals that take place in the context of AAAs.

#### **1.5.11 Animal-assisted activity and animal-assisted therapy (AAA/AAT)**

A definitive distinction exists between the terms *animal-assisted activity* (AAA) and *animal-assisted therapy* (AAT). However, within the practical implementation of AAA and AAT, an overlap still exists between these two terms, thus causing confusion within the field of HAI. The present research aims to explore the experience of AAA, not AAT. As such, both AAA and AAT will be defined in detail in order to highlight the distinction that exists between the two terms (see Appendix A).

AAAs refer to casual, support based encounters that are offered in a variety settings to numerous individuals and that explicitly and intentionally includes animal contact in order to encourage a variety of benefits (Kruger & Serpell, 2010). These benefits have been noted as motivational, recreational, educational, and/or supportive in nature, as well as to enhance an individual's quality of life (Evans & Gray, 2012; Pet Partners, 2012). Moreover, according to Kruger and Serpell (2010), AAAs are not deliberate and goal-orientated in focus and do not require the associated responsibilities of supervision and detailed note-taking by treatment professionals or volunteer animal handlers. AAAs are rather primarily informal, social, and spontaneous in nature (Evans & Gray, 2012).

In contrast, AAT refers to a more formalised, deliberate, goal-orientated, and progress-monitored intervention that employs animals as a fundamental part of the therapeutic treatment process (Kruger & Serpell, 2010). According to Kruger and Serpell (2010), AAT is aimed at improving human emotional, cognitive, social, and/or physical functioning through the premise that HAI is potentially therapeutic to the individuals involved. As such, AAT should always be directed and/or administered by a trained



health service professional with specialised expertise and within the scope of their practise (Kruger & Serpell, 2010; Pet Partners, 2012).

From the above definitions, it can be ascertained that the fundamental distinction between these two terms is that AAAs utilise animals recreationally as social tools that have the potential to initiate a range of beneficial effects, while AAT utilise animals as beneficial adjuncts to the therapeutic process in progress-monitored and goal-directed interventions. Importantly, even though AAAs may have some potential therapeutically beneficial effects, AAAs must not be mistaken as a type of therapy.

#### **1.5.12 Pets as Therapy (PAT)**

*Pets as Therapy* (PAT), is a registered non-profit and public benefit organisation in South Africa that aims to encourage the recognition of HAI as a beneficial tool that enriches the lives of a variety of individuals (see Appendix B). PAT organises AAA sessions by pet owners who volunteer to take their pets (mostly dogs) to visit individuals in a variety of contexts, such as retirement facilities, frail-care facilities, hospitals, hospices, and special-needs schools, among other settings (PAT, 2012). These visits offer participating individuals the chance for regular recreational interaction, support, and comfort from a companion animal through the use of AAA (PAT, 2012). The AAA sessions held at The Halfway House under investigation were delivered and supervised by a PAT volunteer and her pet dog.

### **1.6 STRUCTURE OF THESIS**

**Chapter 1** provides the background, rationale, research question, and aim and objectives of the present research. Key concepts are also defined in this chapter.

**Chapter 2** includes an extensive, yet not exhaustive, discussion on the available literature surrounding the female parolee and offender rehabilitation, as well as HAI and AAA. The chapter further aims to report on the existing literature regarding the use of AAA within the context of offender rehabilitation in order to showcase its potential benefits.

**Chapter 3** aims to describe the theoretical framework within which the present research is located, namely Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979). This

will be done in order to better understand and categorise the female parolee's experience and perception of AAA.

**Chapter 4** outlines and explains the methodology utilised in the present research. Aspects relating to the research strategy and design, the participants, and the data collection and analysis will be covered. The trustworthiness of the present research and ethical considerations will also be discussed.

**Chapter 5** will present the findings of the data collection and analysis. Each theme and sub-theme will be reported on and highlighted by direct quotations from the collected data.

**Chapter 6** will reflect on the findings of the data collection. This will include a brief discussion surrounding the research participants and the guiding theoretical framework. The findings will then be discussed in relation to the existing literature surrounding this topic of investigation.

**Chapter 7** provides an overview of the present research. This will include an elaboration on the limitations and strengths of the present research, as well as offer recommendations for future research. This chapter will conclude the research.

## **1.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The current chapter presented an introduction to the present research. It provided the background to the topic under investigation and the rationale for the present research. The research question, as well as the aims and objectives of the present research were put forward and key concepts were defined. The chapter concluded with an overview of the structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2 presents a brief discussion surrounding the female parolee and offender rehabilitation. This will be followed by an overview of the current literature regarding HAI, with a specific emphasis on AAA. Finally, the ensuing chapter will focus on AAA and the effect it has on offender rehabilitation.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The present research aimed to explore and describe the experience of AAA within the context of a halfway facility, with a particular emphasis on the female parolee's experience. The following chapter will, therefore, provide a brief overview of the female parolee, including common issues faced by females on parole and the reintegration-related consequences of these issues. This will be followed by a discussion of offender rehabilitation, which will include the need for post-incarceration offender rehabilitation in South Africa and halfway facilities as an option for offender rehabilitation. Organisations that provide post-incarceration offender rehabilitation in South Africa will also be discussed.

Following this, the current literature within the field of HAI, with specific reference to AAAs, will be reviewed. The history of HAI will be summarised briefly, followed by a delineation of the various benefits of HAI. Elements regarding the practical implementation of AAAs and the research on and uses of AAAs in South Africa will also be discussed and organisations that provide AAAs in South Africa will be mentioned.

In concluding this discussion, the existing literature surrounding AAA and its effect on offender rehabilitation will be discussed. This will include a summary of the use of AAAs within correctional facilities and halfway facilities.

#### 2.2 THE FEMALE PAROLEE AND OFFENDER REHABILITATION

The female correctional population has increased dramatically over the last decade and continues to grow annually (PRI, 2015). As the population of female offenders rises, coupled with high rates of recidivism, post-incarceration support measures and transitional services are increasingly required (PRI, 2015). Females on parole, including those in halfway facilities, face a variety of issues that are unique to the female correctional population and that have the potential to severely inhibit successful reintegration (Muntingh, 2008). Moreover, it must be noted that females within the

correctional context have very different emotional and psychological needs from their male counterparts and are considered a vulnerable group due to the many social injustices that this population group faces (Williams-Queen, 2014).

This is demonstrated, in part, by the fact that offence dynamics between female and male offenders differ significantly (DCS, 2016). The vast majority of female offenders serve sentences for economic crimes, such as burglary, house-breaking, car theft, and fraud, among others (DCS, 2016). While, in contrast, the majority of male offenders are sentenced for aggressive crimes, such as assault, culpable homicide, and murder, among others (DCS, 2016). Furthermore, of the female offenders that are sentenced for aggressive crimes, the majority are usually committed in response to prolonged abuse by a male (Agboola, 2014; Henriques & Manatu-Rupert, 2004; Muntingh, 2008).

Rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, therefore, need to be mindful of the pathways that lead females into committing crimes, as well as an understanding of the specific needs and characteristics of female offenders. This is imperative if these programmes wish to help female parolees successfully rebuild their lives post-release. The following section discusses common issues faced by females on parole and the reintegration-related consequences of these issues.

### **2.2.1 Issues among females on parole and the reintegration-related consequences**

The period of transition from incarceration back into community life can be difficult (Bahr et al., 2010). Females on parole face numerous practical challenges and reintegration issues caused by an interplay of various factors (Bahr et al., 2010). Economic and social challenges have been identified as the most prevalent factors in hindering successful reintegration, namely impoverished background, inadequate education, unemployment, homelessness, family issues, physical and/or sexual abuse, substance abuse, mental health issues, and diminished or inadequate social support (Agboola, 2014). Moreover, the economic and social disabilities faced by females on parole are further exacerbated by issues of discrimination and stigmatisation (Bruyns & Cilliers, 2009). All these factors/issues need to be taken into account when developing and implementing post-incarceration support services for

female parolees and, as such, each issue will be delineated and expounded upon in this section.

#### *2.2.1.1 Impoverished background*

The female offender population group most often constitutes the poorest strata of society (PRI, 2015). According to Artz, Hoffman-Wanderer, and Moulton (2012), female offenders, in contrast to their male counterparts, are more likely to experience issues of economic and political exclusion, both prior to incarceration and post-incarceration. The Open Society Justice Initiative (2015) reported that a disproportionate number of females on parole are also the most poor and excluded members of society. This finding was reiterated by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, claiming that the majority of female offenders are economically marginalised (Human Rights Council, 2016).

Economic marginalization, often shaped by disconnections from conventional institutions, such as education, employment, and the family, further increases the likelihood of recidivism (McAree, 2011). Post-incarceration, many female offenders on the economic margins struggle to survive outside legitimate enterprises, which often brings them back into contact with the South African correctional system (Artz et al., 2012; Gaum, Hoffman, & Venter, 2006). The literature proposes that a combination of factors, all relating to issues of poverty, collude to trap offenders into a cycle of deviant behaviour (Cheliotis, 2008). Not being financially stable, especially during the first few weeks after release, substantially increases the risk of offenders to re-offend and this effects successful reintegration (McAree, 2011).

#### *2.2.1.2 Inadequate education*

The majority of female offenders in South Africa have had either none, limited, or a severely disrupted education (McAree, 2011). Research conducted by the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (UNDAW, 2000) has shown that marginalisation and poverty play a specific role in the lives of female offenders regarding education. Specifically, the educational profile for female offenders represents discrimination against many females in South African society (UNODC, 2009; Walmsley, 2014). As such, a significant proportion of the female parolee population in South Africa have little education or work experience, with one half

having never completed their schooling past grade six (Artz et al., 2012; Muntingh, 2008).

According to McAree (2011), 60% to 80% of female offenders cannot read or write proficiently enough to get along in society and hold employment post-incarceration. This is exacerbated by the fact that only 10% to 15% of female offenders participate in education or skill-development programmes while incarcerated (Jules-Macquet, 2014). Low education and a lack of skills-development training means that female offenders, upon release from incarceration, struggle to become self-supporting members of society (Brennan et al., 2012; Gaum et al., 2006).

#### *2.2.1.3 Unemployment*

One of the major challenges facing female offenders post-incarceration in South Africa is a lack of employment opportunities (Langa & Masuku, 2015). Unemployment in South Africa among female offenders post-incarceration is rife due to the stigma attached to being an offender, as well as inadequate education and vocational skills (Langa & Masuku, 2015). Research conducted amongst the female offender population in South Africa highlights that a vast majority never experienced formal, fixed employment (McAree, 2011). Moreover, many female offenders from disadvantaged family backgrounds have had limited opportunities to develop the life-skills and work-related skills required for them to function in society (Artz et al., 2012).

Albertus (2010) and Uggen and Staff (2001) maintain that creating job opportunities for female offenders on parole may be an effective strategy to ensure that they do not re-offend. This is reiterated by the fact that crime statistics highlight that the majority of crimes committed by female offenders are economic in nature (DCS, 2016). Thus, if female offenders were able to obtain and maintain sufficient employment, this would, in turn, promote the reintegration process (Brennan et al., 2012).

#### *2.2.1.4 Homelessness*

Up to a third of female offenders become homeless upon release from correctional facilities (Walmsley, 2014; Williams-Queen, 2014). This is due to a variety of reasons, including the fact that many female offenders in South Africa are unable to return home post-release due to the stigma and shame attached to them being an offender, as well

as community anger over the crime they committed (Walmsley, 2014). Furthermore, due to issues of poverty and unemployment, many female offenders are often unable to afford their own accommodation post-incarceration (McAree, 2011).

Female offenders are thus often released into unstable housing, which can pose a threat to maintaining their freedom (Makarios, Steiner, & Travis, 2010). The female offenders that are not placed in supportive halfway facilities or group homes, often end up in boarding houses or homeless shelters and lack the necessary support needed for successful reintegration (Williams-Queen, 2014). According to Makarios et al. (2010), this lack of stable housing among female ex-offenders perpetuates the cycle of criminal behaviour. Female offenders who are homeless are more likely to re-offend and be reconvicted (Walmsley, 2014).

#### *2.2.1.5 Family issues*

A comparative study of female offenders in South Africa found that the majority came from broken homes and had experienced abandonment within their family history (Muntingh, 2008). Agnew (2005) contends that a significant proportion of female offenders come from un-nurturing and disruptive home environments, with a high likelihood of domestic violence. In addition, a large percentage of female offenders are mothers, and most often, the sole or primary caretakers within a household prior to and post-incarceration (PRI, 2015). Removal from the home environment, due to incarceration and subsequent parole, strongly effects the quality of familial relationships, as well as often leads to family breakdown as the female offender can no longer financially and emotionally provide for their families (Bahr et al., 2010).

Research has further found that female parolees, in comparison to their male counterparts, have less support from their family and social units and few community resources are available to them upon release from incarceration (Seiter & Kadela, 2003). Reintegration into this type of environment places an added burden onto the released offender and increases the chance of recidivism (Bellair & Kowalski, 2011). Compounding this issue is the fact that, while families can play a critical role in preventing re-offending, often they are not properly prepared or made part of the release of a family member from incarceration (McAree, 2011).

### *2.2.1.6 Physical and/or sexual abuse*

Across the board, a disproportionate number of female offenders have experienced high rates of victimisation, especially incest, rape, and battering (Belknap, 2015; Zaplin, 2008). Often, this cycle of violence continues within the correctional context and post-incarceration (PRI, 2015). South Africa, in particular, has a high prevalence of female parolees having experienced some form of physical and/or sexual abuse due to high rates of gender-based violence (Manjoo, 2013). South African researchers Haffejee, Vetten, and Greyling (2005) found that the female offender population has experienced significantly higher rates of childhood rape and violence in their intimate relationships when compared to females in the wider society. In fact, according to Haffejee et al., female offenders are seven times more likely to have been victims of rape as compared to females in the general population. Additionally, Haffejee et al. reported that a high level of female offenders had witnessed violence in their family life while growing up.

Recent research has suggested that among female offenders, prostitution, petty crimes, and drug abuse are often used as coping mechanisms in order to survive abuse in the home (Manjoo, 2013). However, the “escape” options that are available to females who are experiencing or have experienced physical and/or sexual victimisation are generally illegal in nature (Agboola, 2014, p.60). Thus, female parolees who have past experiences of or are currently experiencing abuse are more likely to re-engage in criminal acts, thereby hindering the reintegration process (Manjoo, 2013).

### *2.2.1.7 Substance abuse*

Research conducted amongst the female offender population indicates an alarmingly high prevalence of substance dependency (UNODC, 2014). According to the Open Society Foundation for South Africa (OSF-SA, 2008), two-thirds of the female offender population are victims of substance abuse. Rates of drug and alcohol abuse amongst female offenders are substantially higher than for the general population (McAree, 2011). This trend is particularly prevalent in South African society among low socio-economic communities and most often stems from a family history of drug and/or alcohol abuse (DCS, 2016).



The OSF-SA (2008) contends that substance abuse plays a consistent role in and, as such, has a devastating effect on a female offender's ability to successfully reintegrate. This is due to the fact that substance abuse fuels crime on a number of levels. In particular, individuals partake in economic crimes, such as theft, house breaking, and burglary in order to pay for their habit (UNODC, 2014). Moreover, petty theft and burglary can easily escalate to more serious offences, including aggressive crimes (OSF-SA, 2008).

#### *2.2.1.8 Mental health issues*

The South African female offender population demonstrates high incidences of mental health issues and a greater susceptibility to self-harm and suicide (Naidoo & Mkize, 2012; UNDAW, 2000). Research conducted by PRI (2015) indicates increased rates of insomnia, depression, psychosis, bipolar disorders, and anxiety disorders amongst a significant percentage of the female offender population. In fact, research has found that mental ill-health among female offenders is greater than that among the general population (Haffejee et al., 2005; McAree, 2011).

Exacerbating mental ill-health among the female offender population is the psychological strain and psycho-social deficits potentially caused as a result of being incarcerated (Bruyns & Cilliers, 2009; UNDAW, 2000). For vulnerable categories of offenders, such as females and those coming from disadvantaged backgrounds and broken homes, the experience of incarceration can impose an additional burden to and complicates the reintegration process (UNODC, 2014). Unfortunately, however, for the most part, the psychological strain of incarceration is rarely addressed by correctional officials and clinical disorders go undetected and untreated amongst the majority of female offenders (PRI, 2015).

#### *2.2.1.9 Diminished or inadequate social support*

The social environment in which an individual is released back into post-incarceration, as well as the provision of social support, or lack thereof, strongly influences the female parolee's ability to reintegrate back into the community (Tillyer & Vose, 2010). Social support, especially that which can be provided by the family, is a key factor in promoting the successful reintegration of female parolees (Khwela, 2014). This is due to the fact that social support is a necessary buffer to combat the negative

consequences that accompany stressful life situations, such as incarceration and parole, as well as reduces the opportunity for and likelihood of an individual to engage in criminal activity (Bahr et al., 2010). Moreover, social support plays an important role in mitigating feelings of hostility among female offenders, as well as diminishes the effects of potential mental health issues (Hochstetler, DeLisi, & Pratt, 2010).

According to a study conducted by Van Voorhis, Spruance, Ritchey, Listwan, and Seabrook (2004), post-incarceration rehabilitation programmes that emphasise social support are increasingly essential in order to lower recidivism rates. However, recent research has demonstrated that there is a lack of social support being offered to female parolees when re-entering into society (Williams-Queen 2014). This is reflected in the fact that many female offenders are not accepted by their family or community group post-incarceration (PRI, 2015). In fact, it is very common within South African communities for women to be unable to return to their communities post-incarceration due to fear of assault, abuse, or even death by fellow community members (PRI, 2015).

#### *2.2.1.10 Discrimination and stigmatisation*

Post-incarceration, female offenders experience greater levels of discrimination and stigmatisation as compared to their male counterparts (UNDAW, 2000). Research has shown that, due to discrimination and stigmatisation, the typical female offender struggles to feel part of or reintegrate back into society (Borzycki & Baldry, 2003). In particular, issues of discrimination and stigmatisation often causes the female parolee to be shunned from the family and the community, as well as impacts the resources, education, employment, and housing opportunities available to them, thus exacerbating the already prevalent social and economic challenges the female parolee faces (Bahr et al., 2010).

According to a study conducted by Langa and Masuku (2015), ex-offenders assert that a lack of acceptance by community members, including parents and relatives, as one of the major challenges they encounter during reintegration. Albertus (2010) contends that unacceptance by the community and discrimination by potential employers oftentimes forces female parolees to invent new ways of making a living without any help from society. Moreover, general unacceptance by the family and

community, as well as not feeling a part of society leads to increases in deviant and anti-social behaviour as the offender feels as if they have nothing to lose (Albertus, 2010).

This section briefly discussed some of the common issues found among females on parole and the reintegration related consequences of these issues. The following section will provide an overview of offender rehabilitation.

### **2.2.2 Offender rehabilitation as a process**

Offender rehabilitation is based on the premise that one needs to first understand the central cause of an individual's involvement in crime in order to reduce engagement in persistent criminal behaviour (Polaschek, 2012). Following this premise, offender rehabilitation is a necessarily collaborative, compassionate, and dignified process that targets and changes predictors of criminal behaviour and subject-positions with which the individual identifies (Hook, 2004). Predictors of criminal behaviour include current attributes, an individual's attitude and belief system, and any incidences of previous criminal behaviour (Polaschek, 2012). According to Polaschek (2012), one of the main aims of offender rehabilitation is to ameliorate an individual's inability to fulfil their expected role within society. As such, the fundamental task of rehabilitation is to eliminate social, behavioural, and psychological deviances by encouraging normalising subject-positions to fit in with socially accepted beliefs and behaviours (Hook, 2004).

Rehabilitation programmes generally include continued sessions of retraining over the course of a significant period of time, including both short-term and long-term goals as part of the treatment process (Polaschek, 2012). Short-term goals are set to help individuals achieve immediate, achievable targets, while long-term goals are set to provide individuals' understanding in regards to what they should expect from the rehabilitation process and where they could expect to be by the end of the programme (Williams-Queen, 2014). Regardless of the perceived effectiveness of the rehabilitative programme, the outcome is dependent on the individual's motivation to change and progress (Williams-Queen, 2014).

In this way, offender rehabilitation refers to a process, rather than a once-off intervention, which brings about change within an offender's specific history of criminal

behaviour, specifically with regards to anti-social attitudes and behaviour (Cilliers & Smit, 2007). Moreover, previous interventions need to be supported by subsequent interventions in a sustained and linked manner (McAree, 2011). Successful rehabilitation and reintegration is therefore associated with a process of support that starts during incarceration and continues thereafter (McAree, 2011). The following section will discuss offender rehabilitation specifically within the South African context.

### **2.2.3 Offender rehabilitation in South Africa**

During the apartheid era in South Africa, offender rehabilitation was not deemed as a national priority and thus was not considered as a valid strategy to fighting crime (OSF-SA, 2008). Muntingh (2012) notes that during this period in South Africa, law enforcement measures focused mainly on the attainment of short-term and immediate goals and were largely reactive and punitive in nature. This highlights a traditional approach to offender rehabilitation, which overwhelmingly favours retribution and the detainment of offenders, while giving little regard to reformation and rehabilitation (Albertus, 2010). According to Cilliers and Smit (2007), this approach is often favoured due to the overwhelming societal belief that individuals who commit acts of crime should be removed indefinitely from mainstream society instead of cultivating functioning and contributing members of society.

As a result, the female parolee population has significantly increased over the past several decades as rehabilitation and reintegration intervention services have been replaced with punitive and retributive approaches (PRI, 2015; Pratt & Cullen, 2005). Gradually, however, this mentality is beginning to change and a paradigm shift is occurring which places a greater focus on offender rehabilitation (Deaton, 2005). This is due to the growing collection of research that emphasises the value of supportive rehabilitation and reintegration programmes in reducing recidivism (Villettaz, Killias, & Zoder, 2006). Moreover, since the coming of democracy in South Africa in 1994, concerted efforts have been made to move away from a primarily punitive approach in favor of a rehabilitative approach (Albertus, 2010; Muntingh, 2008). The following section highlights why post-incarceration offender rehabilitation is necessitated within the context of South Africa.

### *2.2.3.1 The need for post-incarceration offender rehabilitation*

Rehabilitation services within correctional facilities in South Africa are only available to female offenders serving sentences of 2 years or longer (Jules-Macquet, 2014). However, despite the fact that a large percentage of the female offenders in South African correctional centres have sentences lasting 2 years or more, only 10% to 15% of them actually have regular access to and/or utilise these services (Jules-Macquet, 2014). Moreover, the global economic crisis and South Africa's weak economy has effected offender rehabilitation in a disastrous manner (PRI, 2015). Within the correctional system, large financial cuts have been made, meaning fewer rehabilitation resources, services, and facilities available to the female offender within the correctional facility (Muntingh, 2012). Currently, there are too few staff members to offer constructive rehabilitation programmes and activities conducive to successful reintegration (Walmsley, 2014). South African statistics reveal an estimate ratio of one psychologist for every 4 163 offenders (Jules-Macquet, 2014).

In addition to a lack of rehabilitation services being offered to female offenders, the expectation that offenders should display improved behaviour and functioning upon release from a correctional facility is problematic in and of itself (McAree, 2011). This is due to the social phenomenon of "prisonisation" (Papp, 2010, p.47). According to Papp (2010), rehabilitation within the correctional facility is complicated by the process of prisonisation, whereby incarcerated offenders take on the habits, customs, and general culture of a correctional facility. This includes adopting an offender code, whereby incarcerated offenders seek alliance with fellow offenders and perceive the correctional administration, personnel, and policies as the enemy (Papp, 2010). In this socialisation process, offenders adopt a new mentality, which includes the rejection of societal norms (Papp, 2010). While prisonisation can be an adaptive socialisation process for the incarcerated offender, lowering offender-to-offender violence, it is maladaptive in terms of the offender's rehabilitation and eventual ability to successfully reintegrate back into the community (Papp, 2010). Prisonisation, and the subsequent rejection of social norms, has led offenders to be released without the necessary interpersonal skills needed to maintain social relationships and employment, as well as to live a fully functioning and fulfilling life (McAree, 2011).

Following this reasoning, Walmsley (2003) argues that correctional facilities have become “universities of crime”, whereby incarceration has become a costly way of making bad individuals worse (p. 4). The complexity of the problems currently facing female offenders, as such, have manifested themselves in the form of anaemic support systems and inadequate offender rehabilitation programmes within the context of the correctional facility (Sekhonyane, 2004). As the National Planning Commission (2011) contends, the failure of these services is due to the fact that most are not fully institutionalised as comprehensive and holistic programmes to deal with all the factors that produce crime. This has thereby placed an added burden on community corrections, with the majority of offenders entering rehabilitation and reintegration programmes only upon release from correctional facilities (Jules-Macquet, 2014). Thus, more emphasis must be placed on the rehabilitation of offenders post-incarceration, rather than within the context of the correctional facility (Sekhonyane, 2004). The following section discusses halfway facilities as an option for post-incarceration offender rehabilitation.

#### *2.2.3.2 Halfway facilities as an option*

According to the South African Correctional Services Act (CSA, 1998), a sentenced offender must serve their entire sentence. However, the CSA further stipulates that a sentenced offender can serve part of their sentence within the system of community corrections under parole, as an alternative to incarceration. Allowing offenders to serve part of their sentence within the system of community corrections, away from the psychological stress and deplorable conditions of prison life, enables offenders to jump-start and accelerate the rehabilitation and reintegration process within a practical setting (Bruyns & Cilliers, 2009).

Ideally, offenders, upon entering the community post-incarceration, are placed in halfway facilities. The UNODC (2014) notes that halfway facilities allow offenders substantial interactions with the community and outside world, as well as contacts with their families, friends, and potential employers. Importantly, aftercare and reintegration assistance programmes offered through halfway facilities are based on a supervisory case management approach (Bahr et al., 2010). Upon admission, parolees are generally categorised as at-risk residents and are placed under strict supervision, including increased psychological services and early curfew (Sekhonyane, 2004). This

includes a range of interventions, which are designed to assist offenders on parole in addressing personal challenges and factors associated with their criminal behaviour, helping them to resolve the practical challenges related to employment, accommodation, and establishing the necessary relationships within the community (Bahr et al., 2010). In addition, halfway facilities aim to offer offenders the necessary social skill set integral to successful reintegration through a variety of services that aim to stimulate growth and development (Costanza et al., 2015; Piat, 2000). These services include social work, counselling and psychological services, educational and vocational opportunities, spiritual services, and specialised supportive services, such as HAI programmes, among others (Muntingh, 2012). As the parolee develops within the programme, supervision is relaxed and their dependency on support services is decreased until they are finally deemed ready to be released back into the community (Piat, 2000). Through the means of monitoring and support, the long-term risk of recidivism is reduced when compared to a release directly into society (Costanza et al., 2015; Sekhonyane, 2004).

Only a small percentage, however, of the female correctional population is released into halfway facilities due to overwhelming numbers of offenders within the system of community corrections, as well as a lack of governmental and private funding (PRI, 2015). South African researchers Gaum et al. (2006), in exploring the factors that influence recidivism in South Africa, note a lack of halfway facilities in South Africa and that more must be established in order to reduce recidivism rates. Moreover, in a study exploring the perceived needs of offenders on parole, Williams-Queen (2014) found that there was a lack of rehabilitation programmes and transitional services currently being rendered to female offenders. As a result, most offenders on parole often only receive a few hours of orientation by parole supervision officers upon release or are placed in homeless shelters or boarding houses with only once-weekly to once-monthly mandatory supervision sessions (Seiter & Kadela, 2003). However, the importance of rehabilitation programmes post-release, particularly in the form of halfway facilities, is reiterated when considering that individuals re-entering society post-incarceration have a lifetime of struggles that can only be addressed with the correct supportive measures (Williams-Queen, 2014). The following section will discuss organisations in South Africa that provide post-incarceration offender rehabilitation services.



## **2.2.4 Organisations that provide post-incarceration offender rehabilitation in South Africa**

In South Africa, there are various organisations that provide post-incarceration offender rehabilitation and reintegration services and programmes. The South African Correctional Services oversees the management and administration of these various services and programmes (OSF-SA, 2008). In many cases, however, offenders on parole are also referred to non-governmental, non-profit, and civil society organisations to participate in rehabilitation and reintegration programmes (OSF-SA, 2008). The DCS and The Halfway House and their role in the rehabilitation and reintegration process will now be discussed.

### *2.2.4.1 Department of Correctional Services (DCS)*

The DCS, a sub-department of the South African Government, is the governing body that oversees the arrest, trial, incarceration, and parole of offenders (DCS, 2016). The DCS is mandated to contribute to the maintenance and promotion of a peaceful, safe, and just society by correcting offending behaviour in a secure and humane environment, thereby facilitating and encouraging rehabilitation and reducing repeat offending (OSF-SA, 2008). This obligation emphasises the DCS's role in supporting offenders incarcerated and on parole through the utilisation of offender management and rehabilitation services both within correctional facilities and halfway facilities (DCS, 2016; OSF-SA, 2008).

Currently, the DCS administers various offender rehabilitation programmes, which focus on restorative justice, education, including reading and writing, skills training, and vocational training (DCS, 2016). Additionally, the DCS works in partnership with a number of non-governmental, non-profit, and civil society organisations and refers offenders on parole to these organisations for assistance (OSF-SA, 2008). Some of the organisations that the DCS is currently in partnership with include the National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO), Khulisa Crime Prevention Initiative, and The Halfway House. The Halfway House will be discussed in more depth in the following section.



#### 2.2.4.2 *The Halfway House*

The Halfway House, a registered non-profit organisation, was established in 2003 for females being released from Pollsmoor Correctional Facility under parole conditions (The Halfway House, 2011). The Halfway House liaises with the offender, as well as social workers at Pollsmoor Correctional Facility, in order to establish where The Halfway House can assist upon the release of an offender (The Halfway House, 2011). Many female offenders cannot return to their communities post-incarceration for a variety of reasons (The Halfway House, 2011). However, they could be released earlier if they had a permanent and safe residence in which to stay (The Halfway House, 2011). Thus, The Halfway House sponsors females leaving Pollsmoor Correctional Facility on parole (The Halfway House, 2011).

The Halfway House currently occupies two homes, both located in a suburb of Cape Town. The homes are situated no more than a block apart and are in short walking distance from one another. The first home is for newly released female offenders and the second home houses females in their last stages of parole before re-entering the community. Each home has space for five female parolee residents, with The Halfway House catering for 10 female parolees in total. However, this number fluctuates. Specifically, at the time of data collection of the present research, there were only four female parolees residing between both the homes of The Halfway House. A house mother also resides in each home in order to supervise the day-to-day running of The Halfway House and the female offenders residing at each home.

The main function of The Halfway House is to provide female offenders the support, services, and teaching needed in order to encourage and facilitate their reintegration back into the community (The Halfway House, 2011). Under the guidance of The Halfway House, alongside the DCS and supporting organisations, female parolees are encouraged to participate in various activities, such as life-skills, spiritual, restoration, and counselling programmes, as well as to interact socially on various levels with fellow parolees, family, and friends (The Halfway House, 2011). Regarding the assistance of female residents with the challenges of re-entering society post-incarceration, The Halfway House (2011) states its mission as:

- providing education and training in order to procure meaningful work;

- addressing emotional, psychological, and physical needs;
- negotiating family reunification in order to prevent recidivism.

Many female offenders so far have been released on parole into the care of The Halfway House. Upon acceptance, female parolees must agree to remain a resident for the period of one year. However, The Halfway House cannot prevent the female residents from leaving the care of the facility before this one year period has finished. While many female residents do remain for the entirety of this period, others have been known to abscond and some re-offend and are sent back to Pollsmoor Correctional Facility. Approximately 80 female offenders have been resident at The Halfway House since its establishment (The Halfway House, 2011).

In this section, issues among females on parole and the reintegration-related consequences of these issues were briefly described. The need for post-incarceration rehabilitation in South Africa and halfway facilities as an option for rehabilitation were elaborated on. Following this, organisations in South Africa that provide post-incarceration offender rehabilitation were outlined and described. The following section will discuss the existing literature surrounding HAI, with an emphasis on AAA.

### **2.3 HUMAN-ANIMAL INTERACTION AND ANIMAL-ASSISTED ACTIVITIES**

The bond that exists between humans and animals has always been a close one (O'Haire, 2010). This is reflected in the fact that historical depictions of animals as being beneficial adjuncts to human functioning date back as far as the 18th century (Hines, 2003). However, despite evidence that highlights HAI as having a long and fruitful history, the use of HAI only gained true momentum in the last few decades and is thus still considered a relatively new field (Hooker, Freeman, & Stewart, 2002).

The increased attention awarded to HAI in the past several decades was due to a mounting appreciation that animal contact may result in the positive fulfilment of significant beneficial effects, namely physical, psychological, and social benefits (Kruger & Serpell, 2010; Maujean, Pepping, & Kendall, 2015). Since then, the literature on HAI has grown consistently and with this expansion, increased acknowledgement of the value of HAI has been given by numerous health providers and professionals (Handlin, 2011). As such, HAI programs have become a familiar fixture in a multitude of contexts, from people interacting with their own pets to programmes that introduce

animals to schools, hospitals, old-age facilities, correctional facilities, and rehabilitation settings (Johnson et al., 2002; Lefebvre et al., 2008; Matuszek, 2010). The following section will briefly outline the history of HAI.

### 2.3.1 History of HAI

For centuries animals have been incorporated in the treatment of mentally and physically impaired individuals (Morrison, 2007). In fact, there is evidence of the ancient Greeks using animals, such as dogs and horses, in the treatment of various ailments and illnesses (Beck & Katcher, 2003). However, the earliest recorded instance where animals were utilised in the treatment of mentally-ill patients took place in the 1790s at the York Retreat, a mental institution in England (Hooker et al., 2002). York Retreat prioritised the utilisation of animals as an alternative to drugs and restraints and encouraged patients to walk through the internal courtyards and gardens of the facility and interact freely with the various small domestic animals that were housed there (Palley, O'Rourke, & Niemi, 2010). Personnel at the institution noted that through interacting with the animals, patients demonstrated improved social functioning and displayed increased emotional well-being (Palley et al., 2010).

By the 1800s, institutional care facilities stocking their grounds with domestic or social animals became routine as a means to combat poor living conditions (Serpell, 2010). It was also during the 1800s that Florence Nightingale wrote about the beneficial effects, as well as the pleasure and companionship, animals could provide chronically sick patients and individuals living within confined settings (Beck & Katcher, 2003). However, the advent of scientific medicine displaced the use of animals as treatment tools from the public health sphere in the end of the nineteenth century (Serpell, 2010). As such, this field received minimal recognition and by default, little empirically sound scientific research was conducted for several decades (Evans & Gray, 2012).

In the 1960s, however, ideas regarding the value of animals as being beneficial adjuncts to the therapeutic process resurfaced due to the work of child psychotherapist, Boris Levinson (Kruger & Serpell, 2010). In his paper, *The dog as co-therapist* (1962) Levinson outlined, in an anecdotal manner, the favourable benefits he observed using his dog, Jingles, in therapy sessions with children. Levinson suggested that animals broke down psychological barriers of his patients, as well as

helped to facilitate communication and rapport-building between himself and the children with whom he was working (Matuszek, 2010).

Following Levinson's pioneering work, increased recognition and attention was given to this field, resulting in a proliferation of HAI being undertaken worldwide (Johnson et al., 2002). In the mid-1970s research regarding the beneficial effects of HAI became more scientific. This was, in part, due to ground-breaking research conducted by Corson, Corson, Gwynne, and Arnold (1975), who found empirical evidence that animals (particularly dogs) aid in the therapeutic process with psychiatric patients due to decreases in emotional stress and increased social behaviour. Ensuing this research, in the 1980s, Friedmann, Katcher, Lynch, and Thomas (1980) completed a study, which found that the mortality rates of pet owners were significantly lower than that of those of non pet-owners one year after being discharged from a coronary care unit.

Corson et al. (1975) and Friedmann et al. (1980) were some of the first researchers within this field of study to exemplify, in a scientifically robust manner, the ability of companion animals to enhance human well-being and functioning. Today, this pioneering research is regarded as the benchmark that gave rise to a mounting appreciation of HAI and the proliferation of research on the various benefits of HAI over the past 40 years (O'Haire, 2010). Research findings on the benefits of HAI will be discussed in the following section.

### **2.3.2 The benefits of HAI**

As the field of research surrounding HAI has flourished over the past few decades, evidence supporting the idea that humans benefit from animal contact and interaction has become more established (Kruger & Serpell, 2010; Maujean et al., 2015). Companion animals benefiting human functioning and well-being has also been observed in the context of AAAs, which can be applied successfully across a wide range of populations and cultures (O'Haire, 2010). The range of beneficial effects that HAI and AAAs possibly have for humans is vast and notable. Research evidence, thus far, shows that animal interaction has favourable effects on our physical, psychological, and social health (Walsh, 2009).

In the following sections, the potential beneficial effects of HAI are reviewed. Most of the reported research pertains to dogs as they are most typically used in AAAs (Kruger & Serpell, 2010). Moreover, although the research reviewed below takes place almost exclusively in institutional settings, such as hospitals, care facilities, and nursing-homes, the findings are relevant for the present research. This is due to the fact that residents within these institutional settings face similar difficulties as parolees within the context of halfway facilities, namely boredom, loneliness, low self-esteem, and dependence due to a low sense of self-control (Agboola, 2014).

### *2.3.2.1 Physical benefits*

Research has repeatedly demonstrated HAI as producing calming and relaxing effects in humans (Friedmann, Son, & Tsai, 2010). Odendaal (2000) and Odendaal and Meintjies (2003) found that between 5 and 24 minutes of friendly interaction between humans and dogs leads to increases in oxytocin (a hormone that has calming effects) and decreases in cortisol (a stress hormone) in humans. The oxytocin levels of the dogs was also found to increase after interaction with a human. Various other studies have also reported increased levels of oxytocin in humans during and after HAI (Handlin, 2011; Heinrichs, Von Dawans, & Domes, 2009; Kosfeld, Heinrichs, Zak, Fischbacher, & Fehr, 2005; Miller et al., 2009; Nagasawa, Kikusui, Onaka, & Ohta, 2008). Many of the advocates for HAI believe that due to this marked increase in oxytocin, we can scientifically explain some of the benefits linked to HAI (Hardiman, 2010; Shallcross, 2011).

HAI has also been linked to substantial reductions in the epinephrine and norepinephrine levels of humans during and after animal interaction (Beetz, Uvnäs-Moberg, Julius, & Kotrschal, 2012; Johnson et al., 2002). Cole, Gawlinski, Steers, and Kotlerman (2007) conducted an experiment amongst heart failure patients ( $N = 76$ ) in a cardiac care unit whereby participants were randomly assigned to one of three groups: (a) one group received a 12-minute visit from a volunteer with a dog, (b) one group received a 12-minute visit from a volunteer only, and (c) the control group received the usual care. Cole et al. found that the volunteer-dog group had significantly lower levels of epinephrine and norepinephrine before and after the intervention as compared to the volunteer-only group.

Interacting with companion animals can also decrease an individual's heart rate and/or blood pressure (Odendaal & Meintjies, 2003; Shiloh, Sorek, & Terkel, 2003; Wells, 2009). In particular, research on AAA has shown that these decreases in blood pressure and heart rate arise directly from talking to and/or petting a dog (Shiloh et al., 2003; Wells, 2009). In a study conducted with male and female participants ( $N = 60$ ), that held either positive or neutral attitudes towards dogs, results revealed that (a) participants' blood pressure levels were lowest during dog petting, high while talking to the dog, and highest during human conversation, and (b) participants' heart rates were lower while petting or talking to a dog and highest during human conversation (Wells, 2009). Another study by Allen, Blascovich, and Mendes (2002) measured the blood pressure and heart rate of married couples ( $N = 240$ ), half of which were pet owners, during exposure to anxiety-provoking situations in the presence of: (a) no-one, (b) an animal or a friend (friend utilised in the case of non-pet owners), (c) a spouse, and (d) a spouse and an animal or friend. Allen et al. found that the mere presence of an animal, and not the presence of a friend, lowered participants' blood pressure and heart rate while exposed to anxiety-provoking situations.

Several studies have also reported the pain-relieving effects of HAI in both in-patient and out-patient settings (Braun, Stangler, Narveson, & Pettingell, 2009; Marcus et al., 2012). Qualitative research conducted by Engelman (2013), as outlined in an anecdotal clinical vignette, suggests AAAs can play an important role in reducing pain among palliative care patients. The patients reported that the presence of the dog lightened the atmosphere in the hospital room and created a sense of "normalcy" and "home" (Engelman, 2013, p. 66).

### *2.3.2.2 Psychological benefits*

Various researchers have also investigated the effects of HAI on human psychological health (Matuszek, 2010). From this research, it is apparent that HAI holds a variety of psychological benefits, namely lowered depression, stress, anxiety, and loneliness, as well as increased self-confidence, self-esteem, and empathy for a wide range of individuals within a variety of contexts (Johnson et al., 2002).

Studies conducted by Dietz, Davis, and Pennings (2012), Ketelaars, Baars, and Kroon (2001), and Nepps, Stewart, and Bruckno (2014), all found that animal companionship

and interaction is strongly linked to lower depression levels among a wide range of populations. Similarly, Marr et al. (2000) and Souter and Miller (2007) both reported AAA as being beneficial in lowering depressive symptoms in individuals, as well as arousing feelings of happiness and improving mood. Furthermore, research studies conducted by Colombo, Buono, Smania, Raviola, and De Leo (2006) and Le Roux and Kemp (2009), both demonstrated that exposure to companion animals significantly reduced levels of depression amongst individuals resident in institutional facilities and old-age homes. Colombo et al. (2006) further found that animal interaction and contact had a significant beneficial effect on participant's perceived quality of life.

Exposure to and Interaction with companion animals has further been linked to lowering stress and anxiety levels in individuals (Matuszek, 2010; Maujean et al., 2015). In studies conducted by Berget, Ekeberg, Pedersen, and Braastad (2011) and Pedersen, Martinsen, Berget, and Braastad (2012) it was found that individuals experienced a decline in anxiety and stress levels after working and interacting with farm animals. Moreover, Hoffman et al. (2009) found that individuals with acute depression ( $N = 12$ ) exhibited significantly decreased anxiety after spending 30 minutes playing and interacting with a dog. However, it should be further noted that beneficial effects on anxiety and stress is directly related to an individual's perception of animals prior to the HAI; whether they have favourable views of animals or are frightened of animals (Johnson et al., 2002; Kruger & Serpell, 2010).

Apart from decreasing depression, anxiety, and stress, researchers have further shown that HAI lowers feelings of loneliness amongst patients and residents living within institutional and confined settings (Banks & Banks, 2005; Banks, Willoughby, & Banks, 2008). Wells (2009) asserts that within the institutional context the mere presence of an animal can help to break the cycle of loneliness that many individuals experience in this setting. Furthermore, Banks and Banks (2002) found that one to three individual AAA sessions, lasting approximately 30 minutes each, per week considerably reduced feelings of loneliness amongst a sample of elderly individuals ( $N = 45$ ) living in residential care. Interestingly, Banks and Banks further found that one AAA session per week lowered loneliness levels just as much as three AAA sessions per week.



Research has also demonstrated that AAA may potentially be associated with increased self-confidence and self-esteem (Bierer, 2001; O'Callaghan & Chandler, 2011). Specifically, according to Odendaal (2000), due to animal's intrinsic characteristic of allowing their human counter-part to feel in control of the situation, their presence has been linked to building self-confidence in individuals. Research conducted by Bierer (2001) and Hecht, McMillin, and Silverman (2001) studying the relationship between AAA and self-esteem, both showed increased self-esteem, as well as improved life satisfaction, as resulting from animal companionship and interaction. Moreover, research has further found a strong correlation between HAI and the development of empathy in a range of individuals; including children, adolescents, adults, and older people (Beck & Madresh, 2008; Khalid & Naqvi, 2016; Kurdek, 2009). Empathy refers to the ability of an individual to pay attention to and understand others, as well as to understand the suffering and emotional feelings of others (Khalid & Naqvi, 2016). In particular, in a research study conducted by Daly and Morton (2006) among a group of junior school students ( $N = 155$ ), it was found that animal companionship and interaction, as well as merely holding favourable views of animals, can lead to increased empathy amongst individuals. Moreover, in a qualitative study conducted by Wisdom, Saedi, and Green (2009) among adults with serious mental illness ( $N = 177$ ), participants reported that animals assisted in the recovery of severe mental illness due to their ability to provide a source of empathy and therapy, which, in turn, enhanced self-efficacy and a sense of empowerment.

#### *2.3.2.3 Social benefits*

Research conducted within the field of HAI has further been linked to animals as providing a form of social support to their human counterparts (Banks & Banks, 2005; Matuszek, 2010; Staats, Wallace, & Anderson, 2008). Social support includes the provision of resources, both emotional and instrumental, from significant others, which leads an individual to believe that they are cared for, unconditionally accepted, esteemed, loved, and a member of a network of mutual obligations (Arluke, 2010). Research on social support suggests that the message communicated about the relationship, rather than what is actually performed, is the key beneficial factor with all supportive transactions (Arluke, 2010). Despite animals' inability to provide instrumental support, such as advice or material resources, they are able to



communicate the same basic message of support through their ability to provide unconditional love and acceptance (Evans & Gray, 2012; Johnson et al., 2002).

Research conducted by Hunt, Hart, and Gomulkiewicz (2001) and Staats et al. (2008) both found that animals could become substitutes for human support, comfort, and companionship for a variety of age groups. In a study researching the effects of an AAA programme amongst elderly schizophrenic patients ( $N = 20$ ) Barak, Savorai, Mavashev, and Beni (2001) found that social functioning was significantly improved. Barak et al. noted that these improvements in social functioning related to increased instrumental social skills, conversational skills, communication skills, social engagement, social appropriateness, politeness, friendships, recreation, and participation in programmes held by the hospital.

Within the context of HAI and AAA, companion can act as social support in and of themselves, however they can also serve as social icebreakers or catalysts that encourage and facilitate social interactions between individuals. In a qualitative study conducted by Wisdom et al. (2009) animals were found to have a social supportive role among adults recovering from serious mental illnesses ( $N = 177$ ). Wisdom et al. found that participants perceived animals as (a) providing connections that could support in re-developing social avenues and (b) serving as a form of family in the absence of adequate social support or in addition to existing sources of social support.

AAAs in institutional settings and residential facilities have also been found to increase social responsiveness and socialisation among residents (Bernabei et al., 2013; Berry et al., 2012; Le Roux & Kemp, 2009; O'Haire, 2010). According to Hart (2010) and Wells (2004), animal interaction, as well as the mere presence of animals, can stimulate interaction and communication between people, thus increasing an individual's social behaviour. Research has also documented increased interaction and communication amongst pedestrians in the community due to the presence of an animal (Wells, 2004). Le Roux and Kemp (2009) noted that interaction with a visiting animal in a residential facility provided residents increased opportunities for social discussions and interactions. Similarly, Banks and Banks (2002) reported that during visits with the animal, residents would spontaneously begin talking about past events with their pets to the animal.

The information provided in this section clearly demonstrates the numerous beneficial effects that animals, particularly dogs, can potentially have on the physical health, as well as the psychological and social well-being of people. The following section will deal with some of the elements related to the practical implementation of AAAs.

### **2.3.3 The practical implementation of AAAs**

Due to the potential benefits that have been linked to HAI, there has been a developing interest in establishing AAA programmes, both world-wide and in South Africa (Evans & Gray, 2012). These AAA programmes have been implemented across a wide range of settings and amongst numerous populations, as well as include a variety of different animals and are administered by various individuals (Matuszek, 2010). With the practical implementation of AAAs risks and safety issues are also of paramount concern and need to be carefully considered when planning and delivering AAA. All these various issues will now be discussed in more depth.

#### *2.3.3.1 Settings where AAAs are implemented*

AAA programmes are implemented across a diverse and wide range of contexts with various beneficial outcomes (Lutwack-Bloom et al., 2005). In particular, however, AAAs have most commonly been employed within institutional settings; including general hospitals, hospice centres, old-aged facilities, facilitated-living homes, rehabilitation centres, institutions for psychiatric patients, group homes for people with disabilities, and correctional facilities (Lutwack-Bloom et al., 2005).

Within these various institutional settings, animals serve different purposes (Kruger & Serpell, 2010; Van Pelt, 2010). This includes animals as (a) social visitors, whereby an animal visits for a pre-determined amount of time in order to interact with an individual or a group, (b) individual companions, in which residents keep an animal as their personal pet, (c) ward mascots, whereby an animal is considered the pet of all the residents and lives on the ward; and lastly, (d) therapy facilitators, whereby the animal is present as an adjunct to the therapeutic process (Kruger & Serpell, 2010).

### 2.3.3.2 *Beneficiaries of AAAs*

While AAAs has been applied within numerous contexts, the types of populations targeted have also been vast (Kruger & Serpell, 2010). AAAs can be applied with individuals across the lifespan; including children, adolescents, adults, and older people (Lutwack-Bloom et al., 2005). Moreover, AAAs target a multitude of problems, including autistic spectrum symptoms, developmental disorders, compromised mental functioning, medical conditions, physical disabilities, emotional disabilities, mental ill-health, substance abuse, undesirable behaviours, and pervasive criminal behaviour (Marcus, 2013). Researchers have also largely focussed on the value of AAAs in treating clinical disorders and alleviating social and psychological suffering in terms of depression, loneliness, stress, and anxiety, while also improving mood and quality of life.

### 2.3.3.3 *Types of animals utilised in AAAs*

Programmes that utilise AAA incorporate a variety of animals. Within the institutional context, AAAs generally include small, domesticated animals, which offer physical comfort to the individuals interacting with them, as well as enable a variety of opportunities to practise responsibility and nurturance (Cirulli, Borgi, Berry, Francia, & Alleva, 2011). Most commonly, however, AAAs within the institutional setting are undertaken with dogs (Marcus, 2013). This is due to their largely friendly nature, strong play drive, trainability, accessibility, and willingness to engage in different activities (Van Fleet, 2008).

Additionally, the social and behavioural characteristics of dogs makes them particularly beneficial in the context of AAAs (Savolainen, 2007). This includes the perception of dogs as listening to and being able to sense emotions in their human-counterparts (Miklósi, Topál, & Csányi, 2007). Specifically, the calming presence of a dog creates a safe space whereby individuals feel comfortable enough to share their feelings without fear of being disagreed with or judged (O’Haire, 2010). A variety of studies have also indicated that dogs can differentiate between human emotions from cues, such as facial expressions, which makes them receptive to humans needs and promotes feelings of comfort and security (Albuquerque et al., 2016; Van Heerden, 2001). Moreover, the dog’s constant availability, unconditional love, attention-seeking,

and non-critical nature creates the impression that they are concerned about us, care for us, and have an overall favourable regard for us (Wells, 2009). Such a display of unconditional acceptance may foster a sense of belonging in a person and reaffirm said person's self-worth, self-esteem, and self-confidence (Wells, 2009). These various characteristics highlight why dogs are such an appealing choice within the practical implementation of AAA programmes, as well as explains its status as "man's best friend" (Savolainen, 2007, p. 22).

While dogs are most commonly utilised within AAAs, there are reports in the literature suggesting that a variety of other animals can also be used to elicit favourable human benefits. This includes cats (Allen et al., 2002), rabbits (Nimer & Lundahl, 2007), hamsters (Lefebvre et al., 2008), rats (Panksepp & Panksepp, 2013), birds (Colombo et al., 2006), horses (Selby & Smith-Osborne, 2013), farm animals (Berget et al., 2011), elephants (Satiensukpong, Pongsaksri, & Sasat, 2016), dolphins (Breitenbach, Stumpf, Von Fersen, & Ebert, 2009), and fish (Edwards & Beck, 2002).

#### *2.3.3.4 Individuals providing AAAs*

Various individuals are known to administer AAAs; including health care practitioners, such as psychologists, counsellors, and social workers (Lutwack-Bloom et al., 2005). However, most frequently, AAAs, such as the AAA programme under investigation in the present research, are provided by volunteers who bring their pets to visit individuals in various settings (Lutwack-Bloom et al., 2005). Similarly to health care providers who are registered and insured as part of their scope of practise, volunteers who administer AAAs have to be members of a registered organisation that provides AAAs and are generally required to pay a small yearly membership fee that covers public liability insurance (AVMA, 2011)

#### *2.3.3.5 Risks and safety issues in AAAs*

All AAAs involve certain inherent risks (Mallon, Ross, Klee, & Ross, 2010). Kruger and Serpell (2010) caution that ill-administered and inappropriately applied AAA programmes could result in poor outcomes. This is particularly the case where the health care practitioner or volunteer administering the AAA programme does not have adequate training (Mallon et al., 2010). Not only could this effect the outcome of the AAA, including any potential benefits that may occur from such interaction, they may,

in fact, cause harm to the participant (Mallon et al., 2010). As such, there are various risks and safety issues that need to be considered and minimised in order for AAA to be effective. These risks and safety issues include health risks, physical risks, and emotional risks. Additionally, harm may be caused if cultural norms and beliefs regarding animals or animal phobias are not taken into account when administering AAA (Lubbe & Scholtz, 2013).

The proliferation of AAA programmes in numerous settings has highlighted the possible health risks attached to interacting with animals, such as zoonotic diseases being transmitted between humans and animals (Hooker et al., 2002). In order to prevent zoonosis, it is imperative to develop and follow rigid protocols and guidelines when working with animals (Kruger & Serpell, 2010). This includes the individual administering the AAA, prior to any and all AAA sessions, ensuring that their pet is healthy, hygienic, and properly groomed (Lutwack-Bloom et al., 2005). However, it should also be noted that in a study conducted by Yamauchi and Pipkin (2008), which took place over a six year period and worked with 4 000 children, not a single infection or adverse reaction occurred between the children and the dogs utilised in the programme. As such, researchers within the field of AAA argue that animal contact as a modality beneficial to human well-being and functioning greatly outweighs the health risks linked to AAA programmes (Hooker et al., 2002).

It is pertinent that the physical risks linked to HAI also be thoroughly considered prior to and during AAA, specifically in regards to the safety needs of both the participants and the animals (Kruger & Serpell, 2010). The animals utilised must meet certain criteria, such as a gentle temperament, and be trained to ensure they do not pose a physical safety risk to the participants (AVMA, 2011). Moreover, during the AAA session, the individual providing the AAA must maintain direct physical control of the animal, monitor and tend to its needs, and answer any questions participants may have about the animal (Marcus, 2013). Similarly, the participants need to be educated by the individual administering the AAA in terms of how to approach and interact with the animal to ensure favourable interaction occurs (Lutwack-Bloom et al., 2005). This is of particular importance as it is possible that participants, which have had little previous contact with animals or have been taught to be abusive towards animals,

may be too forceful with and tease and provoke the animal (Lutwack-Bloom et al., 2005).

Alongside the possible health risks and physical risks of AAA, the emotional risks of interacting with animals must further be considered. This includes safe-guarding the emotional needs of the participant to ensure optimal outcomes from AAA (Lutwack-Bloom et al., 2005). In particular, participants may hold unrealistic expectations of how an animal should behave towards them, which can potentially lead to perceived feelings of rejection and intensify feelings of low self-esteem if these expectations are not fulfilled (AVMA, 2011). The individual administering the AAA must be cognisant of possible emotional risks and take appropriate action, should the need arise (Lutwack-Bloom et al., 2005).

Due to the prevalence of unfavourable cultural norms and beliefs regarding animals, as well as animal phobias, interactions between the participants and the animal can also be potentially harmful (AVMA, 2011). This is particularly the case in regards AAA programmes implemented in the context of South Africa due to cultural norms and beliefs regarding animals (Lubbe & Scholtz, 2013). Animal phobias are rife in certain cultures in South Africa due to a lack of favourable interactions with animals, as well as many cases of animal attacks, especially by dogs (Lubbe & Scholtz, 2013). Moreover, in some cultures, dogs are perceived as unclean and, as such, close interaction between individuals and these animals is strongly dissuaded (AVMA, 2011). Therefore, when undertaking AAA within these circumstances, the individual administering the AAA must be aware of this possibility and should ease each participant into the process (AVMA, 2011). This thereby allows the participant a chance to slowly and more effectively develop a rapport and trusting bond with the animal (Lubbe & Scholtz, 2013).

This section outlined various issues prevalent to the practical implementation of AAAs, including the settings where AAAs are implemented, the beneficiaries of AAAs, the types of animals utilised in AAAs, individuals providing AAAs, and the risks and safety issues inherent in all AAAs. The following section will briefly summarise some of the research surrounding and uses of AAAs in South Africa.

### 2.3.4 Research and uses of AAAs in South Africa

Within the South African context, various researchers have conducted investigations surrounding the uses and value of AAA among numerous populations and across all age ranges (Le Roux, 2013; Lubbe & Scholtz, 2013). The following section reviews a selection of the research that has been conducted in South Africa, giving an indication to the various uses of AAA among South African samples.

One of the first research studies investigating AAAs in South Africa was conducted by Odendaal (2000). Odendaal investigated, through quantitative means, the effect of interacting with animals, particularly dogs, on the neurophysiological parameters associated with blood pressure in individuals. In particular, Odendaal found that the neurochemicals involved in attention-seeking behaviour increased after AAA in both the human and dog participants. In a systematic analysis, Hetteema (2002) provided a comprehensive review of the existing literature surrounding the field of AAT and concluded that AAT demonstrates excellent promise, but requires further high-quality, robust research to be undertaken within this field. Following this, Odendaal and Meintjies (2003) conducted a study researching the neurophysiological correlates of affiliative behaviour between humans and dogs. As a result of this research, Odendaal and Meintjies demonstrated the beneficial effect of AAA in increasing oxytocin and lowering cortisol levels in individuals.

Sentoo (2003) conducted a mixed methods study, which found that animal-assisted play therapy favourably enhanced the self-esteem of adolescents with special needs. A qualitative investigation conducted by De Villiers (2004) found that the use of therapeutic horse riding among children with foetal alcohol syndrome increased the awareness levels of the participating children. Ensuing this research, in another qualitative study, Rinquest (2005) found that animal-assisted play therapy has the potential to increase the awareness levels of autistic children; which, in turn, promoted improved sensory contact with the environment among the participating children.

Bronkhorst (2006) utilised a case study approach to explore the use of equine-assisted therapy (EAT) with a young male child who displayed aggressive behaviour. Bronkhorst concluded from the results of this research that EAT was a viable technique in breaking the cycle of aggressive behaviour in the male youth. Helfer



(2006) qualitatively investigated the use of a therapeutic horse-riding programme on the psycho-social functioning of primary school children with physical disabilities. Helfer found that therapeutic horse-riding favourably affected the confidence, social-participation, emotional control, discipline, self-image, and cognitive and educational stimulation of the children. Similarly, Weideman (2007) demonstrated therapeutic horse-riding as having the same beneficial effects in adolescents with physical disabilities.

In a quantitative study, Le Roux and Kemp (2009) found that AAA can significantly reduce depression amongst elderly participants residing within a residential facility. However, Le Roux and Kemp also found that the AAA had no significant impact on the anxiety levels of participating individuals. Through the means of a case study design, Scholtz (2010) investigated the utilisation of AAA within the field of educational psychology. From the results of this research, Scholtz found that AAA has the potential improve communication, socialisation, participation, and interaction among children. Moreover, a qualitative exploration conducted by Coetzee (2012) found that eight weeks of AAA sessions with a Grade R class decreased the aggressive behaviours of the children. Van Heerden (2012), through the use of a phenomenological approach, demonstrated the potential of EAT in enabling a child victim of sexual abuse to express emotions and feel empowered. Likewise, in another qualitative investigation conducted by Garland (2013), social workers described their perception of EAT as providing psycho-social support and empowering participating individuals.

Le Roux (2013) conducted a randomised control study among Grade 3 learners in an Afrikaans-medium primary school in the Western Cape to determine the effect of an animal-assisted reading programme on the reading skills and ability of the participating learners. Le Roux found that the presence of a dog significantly improved the reading comprehension and word recognition of the children. Following this, through the utilisation of a qualitative case study design, Thompson (2013) explored best practises in the field of AAT. Based on data obtained from mental health professionals that offered AAT to children, Thompson was able to give recommendations for best practise in AAT with children in the Western Cape. Simon (2014) conducted a qualitative study, based on a phenomenological design, exploring the experiences of participation and control during AAAs by children hospitalised with cancer. Based on



the results of this study, the participants experienced an enhanced sense of participation and control, factors that are often lacking in children who are diagnosed, treated, and hospitalised with cancer. Boshoff (2014), through quantitative means, investigated the use of EAT among boys in a school of industry in terms of their psychological well-being. Boshoff found that the EAT significantly improved the participants' dysfunctional coping, emotion-focussed coping, problem-focused coping, and well-being.

In a qualitative study, Boyd (2015) explored parents' perceptions of therapeutic horseback riding as an activity for their children with multiple disabilities. Through this research, Boyd demonstrated therapeutic horseback riding as providing significant physical, psychological, and social benefits for children with mental and physical disabilities. Following this, Buckle (2015) conducted a randomised control study on the effects of an animal visitation on the depression, loneliness, and quality of life of older people. As according to the results of this research, Buckle found no significant changes in the depression, loneliness, and quality of life of older people residing within the care facility setting. Finally, through the use of a quantitative research strategy, Gerber (2016) investigated the relationship between quality of life and attachment to companion animals among tertiary students at a South African University. While the results revealed no significant relationship between attachment to a companion animal and quality of life, significant correlations were found between attachment to a companion animal and improved social relationships and psychological health.

The above discussion mentions just some of the research surrounding AAAs that have been conducted in South Africa up until now. While the research outlined demonstrates that AAAs have been utilised extensively among various populations and within diverse settings, there is a paucity of research that has been conducted on AAA amongst the offender population in South Africa. The following section highlights organisations that provide AAAs in South Africa, including a discussion of PAT.

### **2.3.5 Organisations that provide AAAs in South Africa**

A number of organisations in South Africa currently offer various forms of HAI, including AAAs. These organisations include PAT, Touch Our Pets – Therapy Dogs (TOP Dogs), and Paws for People Therapy Dogs, among others. The main aim of

these organisations is to offer individuals, within a variety of settings, meaningful stimulation and interaction with animals. The present research is based on a PAT volunteer and her dog delivering AAA sessions at the participating Halfway House. PAT will now be discussed further.

### **2.3.5.1 Pets as Therapy (PAT)**

PAT, a registered non-profit and public benefit organisation, was established in South Africa in 2001. PAT aims to encourage the recognition of HAI as a beneficial tool that enriches the lives of a variety of individuals. As such, PAT organises visits by pet owners who volunteer to take their pets, mostly dogs, to visit individuals within various contexts, such as retirement facilities, care facilities, residential centres for disabled persons, hospitals, hospices, special needs schools, and The Halfway House, among other settings (PAT, 2012). These visits offer participants the chance for regular recreational interaction, support, and comfort from a companion animal through the use of AAA, namely playing, talking to, grooming, walking, or caring for an animal (PAT, 2012).

The individuals and their pets that volunteer for PAT undergo an extensive and thorough evaluation and assessment process prior to being chosen to conduct and administer AAA. Once they have completed an application form with PAT, volunteers and their pets are evaluated according to their performance during a range of assessments (Le Roux, 2013). If successful in the evaluation stage, as well as if the pet owner can provide proof their pet is healthy, they will be accepted for conducting PAT visits and their pet will be registered with the organisation (PAT, 2012).

The health and safety of the animals that pay visits to these various institutions and facilities, as well as the safety of participants that take part in these visits, are of paramount importance to PAT (PAT, 2012). As such, PAT operates according to a strict set of procedures and regulations. The pet owner must ensure that their pets are bathed and brushed regularly, as well as taken for regular check-ups and vaccinations (Le Roux, 2013). Furthermore, PAT volunteers are responsible for the safety of their pets when travelling to and from visitations, as well as during the visits (PAT, 2012). During the visits, the pet owner must monitor their pet for any signs of behavioural changes, fatigue, restlessness, anxiety, or fear. If the pet does exhibit any of these

behavioural changes, the pet owner must give the pet a break by removing it outside, and/or terminate the animal-assisted visitation for that day.

The preceding section discussed HAI, with an emphasis on AAA; it outlined the history and benefits of HAI, as well as the practical implementation of AAAs and the research and uses of AAAs in South Africa. The following section outlines the research and anecdotal data that is currently available on the use of AAAs in the context of offender rehabilitation.

## **2.4 OFFENDER REHABILITATION AND ANIMAL-ASSISTED ACTIVITIES**

Over the past decade, increasing attention has been given to establishing AAA programmes within the context of offender rehabilitation (Britton & Button, 2005; Demyan, 2007; Frust, 2006). Preliminary evidence, thus far, suggests that these programmes result in favourable outcomes for participating offenders (Frust, 2006; Strimple, 2003). However, there is still a lack of high-quality, robust research that has been conducted within this field (Fournier et al., 2007; Frust, 2006; Turner, 2007). While comprehensive data is not available regarding the number of fully implemented AAA programmes in correctional and halfway facilities (Britton & Button, 2005; Strimple, 2003), limited current information outlines the existence of such programmes in America, Australia, Canada, England, New Zealand, Scotland, and South Africa (Britton & Button, 2005).

### **2.4.1 AAAs in correctional facilities**

Within the correctional context, AAA programmes most often include dogs due to their amenability and trainability, however, other animals as diverse as horses, fish, cats, and birds are also utilised (Strimple, 2003; Turner, 2007). These programmes generally take one of three key forms: (1) AAA sessions that utilise visiting animals, (2) animal training programmes, and (3) AAA programmes that include live-in animals (Frust, 2006). Regardless of the type of programme, however, offenders are provided with on the mark opportunities to interact with and care for animals in the hope that it will lead to development and growth in the offender, as well as favourable rehabilitative outcomes (Britton & Button, 2005; Turner, 2007).

In studies conducted by Currie (2008), Davis (2007), and Merriam-Arduini (2000), all investigating the value of AAA among incarcerated male youth offenders, it was found that animal interaction within the isolated correctional context reduced levels of violence, decreased feelings of depression, loneliness, and anxiety, as well as had a calming effect on the participating offenders. Moreover, quasi-experimental field research conducted by Fournier et al. (2007) and Suthers-McCabe, Van Voorhees, and Fournier (2004), both found improved social interaction and increased social skills among male offenders as a result of participating in AAA programmes. Fournier et al. (2007) further reported participating male offenders experiencing significantly higher levels of treatment progress and decreases in instances of criminal behaviour.

Another AAA based programme, which utilised rescue dogs in a correctional facility for female offenders, highlighted a variety of benefits for offenders (Strimple, 2003). Specifically, according to Strimple (2003), the female offenders experienced increased self-esteem, lowered aggression levels, and developed marketable skills. Moreover, in evaluating an AAA programme that included female offenders ( $N = 42$ ) training service dogs, Richardson-Taylor and Blanchette (2001), found that: (a) female offenders felt they made a contribution to society, (b) the offenders gained personal insight, (c) offenders developed an unconditional bond with the dogs, (d) feelings of isolation and loneliness were reduced, (e) morale in the facility improved, and (f) the offenders learned a sense of responsibility, empathy, patience, and how to share with others. Research conducted in correctional settings has further emphasised female offenders learning animal-related vocational skills, gaining life-enhancing skills and traits, and resulting in long-term reductions in recidivism rates post-incarceration (Strimple, 2003).

In a qualitative study conducted by Britton and Button (2005), in-depth interviews were used to explore participants' ( $N = 38$ ) perceptions of the benefits of an AAA programme. These interviews were conducted with both the participating offenders, male and female, and the staff of the correctional facility. Britton and Button found that participants experienced a favourable change in attitude and emotions, which helped them better deal with anger. Participants also reported learning responsibility, receiving unconditional love, and that the AAA sessions made time go faster. Britton and Button further indicated that dog-training programmes have the potential to

transform the lives of the offenders and the correctional facility culture. Similarly, Turner (2007) conducted a qualitative study as a means to gain first-hand insight into an AAA programme from the perspective of incarcerated male and female juvenile offenders ( $N = 6$ ). Data was collected in the form of in-depth interviews. Three areas were focused on in the study: (a) the experiences of the offenders who participated in the programme, (b) the benefits that offenders perceived by their participation, and (c) the manner in which the offenders felt the experience had affected them. From the findings of the research, Turner found significant improvements in self-esteem, self-responsibility, and confidence as a result of a sense of accomplishment, as well as offenders experiencing improved patience, increased happiness and a sense of enjoyment, improved social skills, and a normalisation of the correctional setting.

As the benefits of AAA have become increasingly recognised world-wide, AAA programmes have also a more viable feature of South African offender rehabilitation (Anderson, 2003; Gray-Kilfoil, 2007). A variety of AAA rehabilitation programmes have been instituted in correctional facilities in South Africa, such as Pollsmoor Correctional Facility. Pollsmoor Correctional Facility currently has a bird programme for long-term male offenders and runs cat programme, whereby male and female offenders are given the chance to adopt a stray cat that becomes their own personal pet (Anderson, 2003; Gray-Kilfoil, 2007). While there is a lack of research regarding the cat project at Pollsmoor Correctional facility, Anderson (2003) notes that the bird AAA programme has had preliminary success; teaching offenders' responsibility, as well as leading to lower levels of aggression and having an overall favourable effect amongst the participating offenders.

Pollsmoor Correctional Facility also previously sponsored a dog programme whereby female offenders were taught general skills in how to care for a dog, as well as how to handle and train dogs (Gray-Kilfoil, 2007). The course included practical skills, written tasks and worksheets, and an attitude assessment and each female offender was awarded a certificate of completion upon completing the course successfully (Gray-Kilfoil, 2007). Gray-Kilfoil (2007) reported, in an anecdotal manner, that participating female offenders that took part in the dog programme experienced numerous physical, psychological, and social benefits; including increased pro-social behaviours, enhanced empathy, improved self-confidence and self-esteem, and increased social

behaviours and communication skills. Gray-Kilfoil (2007) further noted that the participating female offenders, who at the beginning of the course were reserved and angry in nature, became more outgoing, better able to express their feelings, and developed deep bonds with the dogs.

Strimple (2003) argues that the effectiveness of AAA programmes in the correctional context is that for some participants it is the first time they are held accountable for the welfare of another living thing, as well as that it is often the first time another living thing has been dependent on them. According to Harkrader et al. (2004), these findings highlight the humanising role animal interaction can play in the context of offender rehabilitation. Due to the similarities that exist between correctional facility and halfway facility populations, as well as environments within which they reside, it is argued that these benefits would possibly also be applicable to female parolees residing within The Halfway House. The following section will discuss the use of AAAs within the halfway facility context.

#### **2.4.2 AAAs in halfway facilities**

Despite the wide and varied use of AAA across a diverse range of settings and populations, within both the international and South African context (Lubbe & Scholtz, 2013), there is a lack of AAA programmes that have been set specifically within halfway facilities or amongst parolees. In addition, of the AAA programmes that have been implemented within halfway facilities in South Africa, there is a paucity of research that has been conducted on these programmes.

However, anecdotal evidence, thus far, regarding the use of AAA programmes within halfway facilities, has shown these programmes to be necessary in terms of enabling parolees to re-establish their roles as productive and healthy members of the community that contribute to society at large (Butz, 2010). This anecdotal documentation suggests that through the structured interaction with dogs, female parolees may experience increased self-esteem, empathy, and interpersonal trust, as well as decreased maladaptive behavioural patterns (Strimple, 2003). AAA programmes amongst the parolee population have further been found to potentially benefit the female parolee's outlook on life, in particular increasing optimism (Carver & Scheier, 2001). Optimism, the general expectation of an individual that they will

experience positive outcomes in life, is influenced and developed by the perceived discrepancy between an individual's desired outcomes, or goals, and actual outcomes (Carver & Scheier, 2001). When an individual is able to consistently achieve their goals, an expectation of good outcomes is expected and therefore an optimistic outlook is developed within the individual (Carver & Scheier, 2001). AAA programmes within halfway facilities provide offenders with meaningful and obtainable goals to achieve, namely the successful interaction and care of a dog (Carver & Scheier, 2001). Through this goal achievement, parolees are thus able to develop an optimistic outlook on life in general and improved mood due to feelings of accomplishment (Carver & Scheier, 2001; Turner, 2007).

In order to help female parolees reintegrate successfully into society, their specific need-set must be met within the rehabilitative process (Williams-Queen, 2014). Rehabilitative programmes that affect behavioural issues and focus on social skills development, such as those that utilise AAAs, have been found to be the most effective rehabilitation programmes for offenders on parole (Pearson, Lipton, Cleland, & Yee, 2002). Central to the offender rehabilitation process is a sense of belongingness, which can only be derived from adequate social support (Pearson et al., 2002). Moreover, in terms of offender rehabilitation of the female parolee, social support has been described as the primary method for facilitating social and psychological change in individuals (Pearson et al., 2002). In a study conducted by Eggers et al., (2006), investigating the effects of community reintegration projects, found that the development of support, such as that offered through AAA, to be integral to the successful reintegration of parolees back into the community. This links with research within the field of AAA that suggests that the presence of animals can provide a form of social support and comfort to their human counterparts (Banks & Banks, 2005; Staats et al., 2008). In addition to potentially providing social support through companionship, Hart (2010) suggests animals stimulate and facilitate interaction and communication between individuals.

Animals as a potential form of social support for female parolees is further reflected in the literature surrounding offender rehabilitation and AAA. Specifically, research investigating the effects of AAA within offender rehabilitation have found favourable rehabilitative outcomes, namely improved social functioning and pro-social behaviours



(Butz, 2010; Harbolt & Ward, 2001; Suthers-McCabe et al., 2004). Moreover, AAA programmes have been found to be useful in assisting offenders to create support networks and develop independence, both necessary in aiding the reintegration process (Butz, 2010). These improvements have been shown as leading to decreased rule-breaking behaviour and lowering the likelihood of offenders engaging in criminal activity post-incarceration (Strimple, 2003; Suber, 2002). As such, this source of potential social support has important implications for the female parolee's ability to successfully and smoothly reintegrate into mainstream society.

## **2.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Chapter 2 provided an outline of the existing literature surrounding the female parolee and offender rehabilitation, as well as the field of HAI and AAAs. This was followed by a discussion of the use of AAA within the context of offender rehabilitation.

In Chapter 3, the theoretical perspective upon which the present research is based will be discussed.



## CHAPTER 3

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

A theory is a system of ideas or principles, which can be utilised in order to understand, explain, justify, or predict phenomena; why it occurs and how it works (Bryman, 2012). Theory provides the rationale and a backdrop for the research that is being conducted, as well as a framework within which social phenomena can be better understood and research findings can be interpreted (Bryman, 2012).

The literature surrounding the field of HAI outlines a variety of theories aiming to explain, categorise, and understand the underlying mechanisms of AAA in a more meaningful way (Kruger & Serpell, 2010). These theories allude to why animal contact and the relationships formed between humans and animals are potentially so beneficial (Kruger & Serpell, 2010). One such theoretical explanation is that of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979), which emphasises placing the individual in-context in order to understand their experiences, behaviour, and perceptions. By looking at the development of human-animal relationships from this theoretical perspective, we can gain a more in-depth and holistic perspective on how these interactions can benefit the human psyche (Kruger & Serpell, 2010).

This chapter aims to discuss Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979), the theoretical framework that guided the present research. This discussion will be developed in reference to the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House, with an emphasis on the female parolee and the challenges that they face during the rehabilitation and reintegration process.

#### 3.2 ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY

Bronfenbrenner (1979) argues the importance of considering an individual's entire ecological system in order to understand, as well as guide and support, human growth and development. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) highlights the significance of individual's actual surrounding environment, both immediate and extended, as a major influence in an individual's lifelong development. As such, this theory is premised on the notion that in order to understand individuals, their behaviour

and experiences, their entire social context and the interactions that occur within this context must be taken into consideration (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). This places the individual in-context as a single functioning aspect of a wider, inter-related, and inter-dependent system.

In order to gain a better understanding of this ecological framework, two key propositions are emphasised. The first proposition highlights the fact that human development is initiated through increasingly more complex, regular, and enduring reciprocal interactions between the ever-evolving individual and objects, symbols, and other individuals in their immediate environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). These regular and enduring forms of interaction are labelled proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The second proposition linked to this theoretical framework includes the fact that the proximal processes content, direction, form, and power range systematically (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Specifically, they vary in terms of the individual's characteristics, their immediate and extended environment, and the nature of their developmental outcomes (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Regarding the present research, this ecological paradigm can be viewed as a useful way in which to gain more insight and an in-depth understanding of the effect of the female parolee's relationships within their immediate and extended environment on the experience and perception of AAA. Through the use of a layered systems approach (as demonstrated in Figure 3.1) Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) can be utilised to illustrate the effects of AAA at each sub-system level and how each of those levels interact to either foster or inhibit growth and development within the female parolee. As such, this framework is important in demonstrating how aspects in each of these sub-systems can affect the female parolee's rehabilitation and reintegration process and how they work as a whole in order to produce a moral citizen. This is due to the fact that this ecological systems paradigm places the female parolee, their experiences, behaviours, and interactions, within the social context in which they exist, thereby enabling a better understanding of their pathways to crime and their rehabilitative needs.

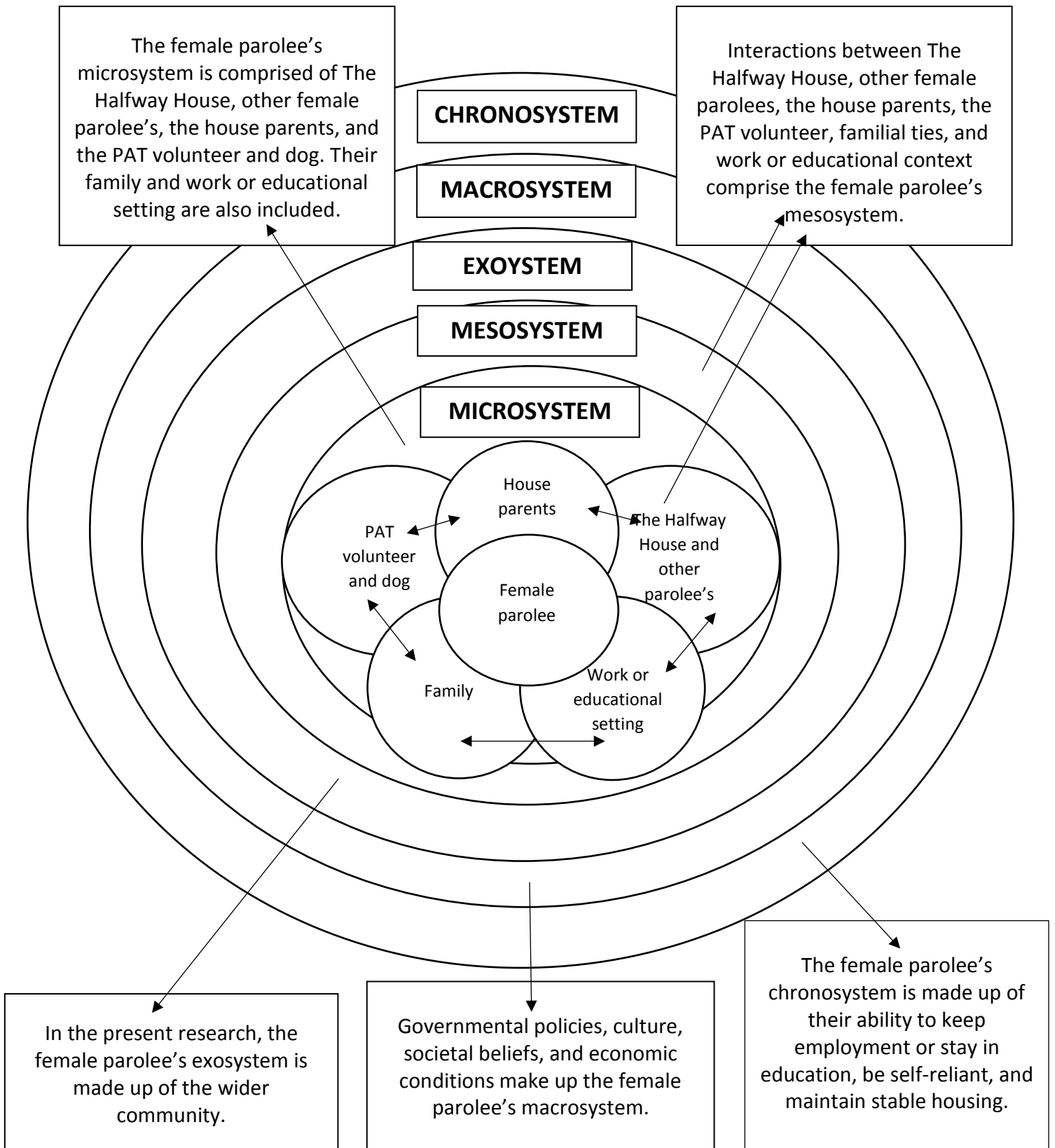


Figure 3.1: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model showing the five systems that influence the female parolees' experiences of animal-assisted activities in The Halfway House. Adapted from "Community psychology: A common sense approach to mental health" by J. A. Scileppi, E. L. Teed, and R. D. Torres, 2000, p. 46. Copyright 2000 by Prentice-Hall.

### 3.2.1 The microsystem

The *microsystem* is the “smallest unit of analysis” (Scileppi, Teed, & Torres, 2000, p. 45) and comprises the people and settings that an individual interacts with directly and on a regular basis (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Duncan, Bowman, Naidoo, Pillay, & Roos, 2007). This includes the individual’s roles, activities, and interpersonal relationships (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). In relation to the present research, the female parolee’s microsystem includes The Halfway House setting, fellow resident female parolees, the house parents, the PAT volunteer and visiting AAA dog, and the female parolee’s familial ties and work or educational context (see Figure 3.1).

As a resident within The Halfway House, the female parolee has daily and direct interactions with fellow resident female parolees and the house parents, making them both an important aspect of the female parolee’s microsystem and a potential source of social support and interaction (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Duncan et al., 2007). As such, each of these aspects can potentially play an important role in how the female parolee perceives and experiences the AAA sessions, as well as inform the value and meaning the female parolee attaches to the activity (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The PAT volunteer and visiting AAA dog also forms a part of the female parolee’s microsystem as through once-fortnightly visits, regular and direct interactions between these entities occur (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). As such, the house parents and the PAT volunteer, key aspects within the female parolee’s microsystem, can be viewed as valuable informants regarding the effects that the AAA had on the female parolee participants.

In particular, due to the house parents’ in-depth understanding of each of the female parolees and the challenges that they face, they can be viewed as an important source of information in terms of noticing changes and improvements in the female parolees as a result of the AAA. The PAT volunteer could also offer significant insights into the utilisation of AAA in The Halfway House due to her role supervising each of the AAA sessions, as well as her pre-existing knowledge of AAA and practical experience supervising AAA sessions in a variety of institutional contexts. This is imperative to the present research, as in order to gain insight into the experience of AAA in The Halfway House, part of the aim of the present research was to explore the house parents and PAT volunteers perceptions of the female parolee’s experience of the activity. Moreover, it is vital that both the house parents and the PAT volunteer to observe the

improvements and favourable changes and effects the activity has on the female parolee's as they influence whether the AAA sessions will continue at The Halfway House; the house parents provide feedback to The Halfway House, which determines whether or not they will continue to host the AAA sessions, and the PAT volunteer, depending on the effectiveness of the AAA, has the option to either continue or discontinue her involvement in the programme.

Familial ties and the work or educational setting are also part of the female parolee's microsystem as they both form an important aspect of the female parolee's day-to-day life and the female parolee has direct contact with each of them (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Duncan et al., 2007). Moreover, the female parolee's familial relationships and individuals within the female parolee's work or educational context form a further important source of social support and interaction. However, due to issues of severed social ties, rejection by the family and community, and an inability to find work or access institutions of learning many female parolees are unable to access this important source of social support (Bahr et al., 2010; Borzycki & Baldry, 2003; Hochstetler et al., 2010). Despite this, however, the AAA sessions have the potential to favourably affect the female parolee's relationships with individuals within the work or educational context and the family due to the social facilitative role animals can play (Frustr, 2006; Strimple, 2003).

### **3.2.2 The mesosystem**

The second sub-system refers to the *mesosystem*, which includes processes and linkages that occur between two or more of the settings within the individual's immediate environment, the microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). When there is congruency between the values within each of the microsystems, synergy between the systems is heightened and the favourable effects that occur within these settings are enhanced (Scileppi et al., 2000).

The mesosystem of the female parolee comprises linkages between The Halfway House, other female parolees, the house parents, the PAT volunteer and visiting AAA dog, the female parolee's familial ties, and work or educational context (see Figure 3.1). Each of these linkages within the mesosystem have the potential to influence the female parolee's perceptions regarding the AAA sessions, and therefore dictates the

manner of experience and interaction that can occur during these sessions, as well as once they have finished. Moreover, linkages between The Halfway House, the house parents, and the PAT volunteer can influence the female parolee's access to receiving the AAA sessions. As such, it is important that there is synergy in terms of interests between each of these linkages as a lack of congruency could prevent the AAA sessions from taking place, as well as causing the female parolee participants to gain a negative perception of the AAA sessions and become disinterested in the process. A lack of congruency may further lead to a conflict of interest within the female parolee, therefore inhibiting personal, emotional, and behavioural growth and development and, thus, hindering the reintegration process (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

### **3.2.3 The exosystem**

The third sub-system is the *exosystem*, which, similarly to the mesosystem, includes processes and linkages that occur between two or more settings (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). However, in contrast, at least one of which does not relate to or interacts with the individual directly, but rather includes an event that indirectly influences the individual's immediate environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). In other words, while the settings within the exosystem influence the individual's life, functioning, and well-being, the individual does not have direct contact and does not actively participate within these settings (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Duncan et al., 2007).

In terms of the female parolee, the exosystem includes the wider community within which the female parolee is released into (see Figure 3.1). Acceptance by the wider community favourably effects the perceptions and manner of interactions that occurs between the female parolee and other aspects within their microsystem. The wider community, however, has been found to be generally unaccepting of female parolees' and reject the arrival of halfway facilities within the community (Piat, 2000). This phenomenon is referred to as "not in my back yard" and is due to the stigmatisation that surrounds the female correctional population (Piat, 2000, p. 127). General unacceptance by the wider community greatly influences the optimal functioning and well-being of the female parolee. This is due to the fact that the "not in my back yard" phenomenon has led female parolees' to experience a lack of understanding, and as such support, by the wider community in terms of their life situation and the particular set of challenges that they face. Research conducted on the use of AAA among

offenders, however, has been found to favourably affect community perceptions of offenders (Frust, 2006; Harkrader et al., 2004; Strimple, 2003). As such, the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House have the potential to favourably affect the reintegration process by strengthening community ties between the female parolee residents and the wider community.

### **3.2.4 The macrosystem**

The fourth subsystem is the *macrosystem*, which includes large-scale societal aspects that directly influence an individual's life (Duncan et al., 2007). These aspects, according to Bronfenbrenner (1994), include governmental policies and the individual's "institutional patterns of culture" (p. 37). More specifically, this includes the belief systems, economic conditions, customs, opportunity structures, and bodies of knowledge that are entrenched in the wider social and cultural systems that surround the individual (Scileppi et al., 2000).

In the context of the present research, the macrosystem of the female parolee includes the economic conditions, governmental policies surrounding the correctional services, and societal beliefs regarding female parolees, as well as the cultural beliefs that dictate the female parolee's perceptions of animals (see Figure 3.1). Each of these structures within the macrosystem impacts upon the female parolee's potential and availability for reintegration back into society, as well as the female parolee's experience and perception of the AAA sessions. Thus, each of these linked sub-systems within the macrosystem has the potential to either encourage or inhibit the female parolee's interaction with aspects of their immediate environment.

### **3.2.5 The chronosystem**

The last sub-system is the *chronosystem*, which links the environment with the notion of time (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). This notion of time however, does not merely refer to development in terms of chronological age, but includes changes and consistencies in the real-life environment of the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

In terms of the present research, factors within the chronosystem include the individual's employment, socio-economic status, family structure, place of residence, and ability to function optimally in everyday life (see Figure 3.1). Favourable outcomes

within the chronosystem leads to increased feelings of self-esteem, self-reliance, and an optimistic outlook on life, all aspects important to the successful rehabilitation and reintegration of female offenders (Carver & Scheier, 2001). However, undesirable outcomes within the chronosystem can lead to further patterns of maladaptive behaviour, thus increasing the chances of recidivism within the female-parolee population. Importantly, research conducted on the use of AAA amongst female offenders suggest participants gaining life-enhancing traits, which promote every-day optimal functioning and well-being (Strimple, 2003). Thus, participation in the AAA sessions, could lead to favourable outcomes within the female parolee's chronosystem.

### **3.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Currently there is no single theory that explains all of the various aspects of HAI (Le Roux, 2013). This chapter dealt with one theory, namely Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979), which can potentially help explain the beneficial effects of AAA that took place in the context of The Halfway House, as well as enable a better understanding of the particular set of challenges females on parole face during the reintegration process.

In the following chapter, Chapter 4, an in-depth account of the research methodology utilised within the present research will be undertaken.



## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The present research sought to explore and describe the experience of AAA within the context of The Halfway House. It intended to gain insight into the female parolee's experiences of the activity, as well as the supervising house parents' and the PAT volunteer's perceptions of the female parolee's experience.

Given the aforementioned aims and intentions, it will be made evident within this chapter as to why a qualitative case study design was purposefully chosen as most suitable for the purposes of the present research. Details of the processes followed in order to answer the research question will also be highlighted as a means to create a clear framework of what the present research hoped to achieve.

The following chapter intends to clarify the practical, research-related aspects of the present research. This will include a detailed delineation of the chosen research strategy and design, followed by a discussion regarding the participants that were invited to partake in the present research. A thorough account of the data collection and data analysis methods employed to meet the aims of the present research will also be given. This chapter will conclude with a comprehensive application of the key principles of trustworthiness and a discussion of the ethical considerations relevant to the present research.

#### 4.2 RESEARCH STRATEGY

The research strategy focuses on how the researcher attempts to make the unknown knowable and the processes undertaken in the acquisition of knowledge (Mertens, 2005). It involves the theory of knowledge and the framework guiding a specific research study (Bryman, 2012). The exploratory nature of the present research necessitated a qualitative research strategy within which the researcher could adequately explore and depict, in an open and flexible manner, the experiences and associated meanings of the participants involved.

Qualitative research includes the collection of descriptive, rich data with the intention of developing an understanding of what is being studied or observed (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007). Fouché and Delport (2011) note that the qualitative research strategy, in its most general sense, refers to any research that prompts or draws out participant accounts of meaning, experiences, and perceptions. As such, the researcher was actively engaged in a dynamic process, in which different perspectives and voices were obtained through observing and interacting with the participants in their natural environment (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007). Following this logic, the qualitative research strategy can be viewed as an inductive approach, whereby the researcher attempts to make sense of a situation without imposing pre-existing expectations on the phenomenon under investigation (Mertens, 2005).

It was felt that the research question proposed by the present research could best be addressed within a qualitative framework. According to Patton (2002), and relevant to the present research, qualitative methods are best suited to situations where research is focused on the process of a programme; in this case, AAA sessions held at The Halfway House. In-depth, detailed information is required about both the programme and those participating, with the intent to better understand the participants' experiences and perceptions of AAA sessions. This approach allowed the researcher to gain in-depth knowledge regarding the research topic in order to solve the problem at hand (Bryman, 2012).

The utilisation of a qualitative research strategy was also practical as, through intimate contact, personal data could be obtained within the boundaries of a comfortable and safe relationship. It was assumed that this would enable participants to talk more openly and freely, and thus their viewpoints and voices could be more accurately depicted. In the present research, the participants were thought of as the experts of their experiences; only they could truly describe the social reality and lived experience of AAA within The Halfway House (Bryman, 2012). This thereby enabled a more flexible, detailed, and authentic exploration of the phenomenon of AAA and provided a more meaningful and sensitive account of the human experience (Bless, Higson-Smith, & Sithole, 2013). In considering the backgrounds and current contexts of the participants involved, this was particularly important.

### **4.2.1 Underlying assumptions of research strategy**

The chosen research strategy encapsulates the researcher's assumptions regarding the nature of the world, the individual's place in the world, and the possible relationships with or within that world (Mertens, 2005). In other words, it describes the ontological, epistemological, axiological, rhetorical, and methodological nature of the research enquiry (Creswell, 2014). A thorough understanding of these underlying assumptions was necessitated in order to guide the effective utilisation of a qualitative approach in the course of conducting the present research.

#### *4.2.1.1 Ontological assumption*

The ontological assumption focuses on the nature of reality and its characteristics; that which can be or is known (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007). The qualitative research strategy rests on constructivist principles, and thus highlights the subjectivity and socially constructed nature of the research participants' reality (Creswell, 2014). In other words, a qualitative researcher is interested in understanding the meaning individuals have constructed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). There is no single, observable truth or reality, but rather there are various interpretations and multiple realities of a single event (Merriam, 2009).

Within the present research, the researcher hoped to obtain the individual viewpoints of each of the participants. Despite having participated in the same AAA sessions, as a group, it was assumed that each would have had unique experiences, as well as different interpretations of those shared experiences. Each individual originated from a different background, context, and culture, as well as possessed their own set of values and beliefs. Personal frames of reference have thus been formed, from which participants make sense of their experiences. According to a qualitative research strategy, these multiple realities are acknowledged and appreciated.

#### *4.2.1.2 Epistemological assumption*

The epistemological assumption can be defined as the process whereby the researcher comes to uncover knowledge and know reality (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007). Epistemology refers to the theory of knowledge; what knowledge is, what counts as good knowledge, and how we get to know what we know (Creswell,

2014). Moreover, it has a specific focus on the relationship between the researcher and the participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Within a qualitative approach, personal interaction between the researcher and participants is required, as it allows for individual subjective experiences to be obtained and explored (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007). Through the researcher's participation as a volunteer during the AAA sessions, the researcher was able to develop rapport with each of the participants. Within the context of working with female parolee's, many of whom have developed a significant mistrust of other people, this established rapport was particularly important. It was hoped that it would enable the participants to feel more comfortable and therefore speak openly and honestly, allowing for accurate, rich data to be obtained.

#### *4.2.1.3 Axiological assumption*

The axiological assumption highlights the fact that research is undoubtedly value laden (Creswell, 2014). Thus, throughout the research process the researcher remained cognisant of how her own presumptions and preconceptions regarding AAA and the female parolee could potentially negatively impact the accuracy of the present research (Creswell, 2014). The researcher actively reported, through the use of reflexive notes, her own values and biases and how they influenced the data collection, as well as the final interpretation of data.

#### *4.2.1.4 Rhetorical assumption*

The rhetorical assumption necessitates that personal and literary language be utilized by the researcher, based on the present research's "Concept Definitions", as outlined in Chapter 1 (Creswell, 2014). According to the present research, the most appropriate language to be used in reporting the findings of this research included terminology such as, "female parolee", "halfway facility", "rehabilitation", "reintegration", "recidivism", "companion animal", "human-animal bond", "human-animal interaction", and "animal-assisted activities", among others.

#### *4.2.1.5 Methodological assumption*

The fifth domain, the methodological assumption, focuses on how knowledge is gained and the processes, procedures, and tools, utilised by the researcher to acquire knowledge (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The methodological question is: which research techniques would best serve the researcher in uncovering what can be known?

Interviews were believed to be the most suitable method of data collection as according to this exploratory approach. Interviews allowed for the female parolee participants to share their own subjective thoughts, opinions, and feelings regarding their experience of AAA, as well as for the house parents and PAT volunteer to share their perceptions of the female parolees' experience. Triangulation was important to ensure the credibility and accuracy of the present research and, thus, questionnaires, in addition to the interviews, were further gathered as supplementary methods of data collection (Bryman, 2012).

### **4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The research design selected provided a specific framework to guide the research process, one which was believed to be most appropriate in order to answer the problem at hand (Flick, 2011). As such, the purpose of the research, as well as the context in which the research takes place, needs to be considered and accommodated within the chosen research design (Bryman, 2012).

For the purposes of the present research, a case-study design was deemed as most appropriate. A case study refers to an in-depth investigation into a specific case in the interests of gaining insight into a particular issue or theory; in this instance, the experience of AAA within the context of The Halfway House (Bryman, 2012). It is not defined by any particular methodology, but rather by the object of a study, namely a specific, bounded, and unique system (Stake, 2000). Importantly, through the case study design, the integrity and wholeness of the case can be preserved as the researcher aims to provide as precise a reconstruction or description of the specific phenomenon or unit of analysis as possible (Bryman, 2012).

A case study design was in line with the intention of the present research to concentrate solely on a specific bounded system, namely a group of participants taking

part in an AAA programme at a specific halfway facility site (Stake, 2000). By focusing on one specific application, useful insights could still be obtained into this phenomenon. Moreover, case studies can be of particular value in instances, such as in the present research, when it is desirable to determine a change in behaviour over time or intervention outcomes (DePoy & Gitlin, 2011).

Through the use of a case study design, the present research aimed to portray the experiences of the participants in a similar fashion to that of a story. By providing a rich description of the context in which these individuals are placed, as well as of the troubled pasts from which they have come, it facilitates a clearer understanding of how the AAA programme fits into their lives, and the meanings and value it has for them. Moreover, the case-study design provided their researcher with the opportunity to interact with a small number of individuals, so as to look for patterns in the participants' words, experiences, and actions (Fouché & Schurink, 2011). The utilisation of a small sample group was further necessitated as according to Creswell (2014), a study that focuses on a number of cases often lacks the depth that a smaller sized sample group offers.

#### **4.4 PARTICIPANTS**

The present research included three separate participant perspectives. The sample firstly included all four of the female parolees resident at The Halfway House at the time of data collection (see Section 2.2.4.2). More female parolee participants participated in the AAA sessions since they began in April 2015 at The Halfway House, however at the time of data collection they had either exited the programme run by The Halfway House or had absconded from the facility and were unreachable. In addition to the female parolee participants, the two house parents employed by said Halfway House, who had taken part in the AAA sessions, and the PAT volunteer, who supervised the AAA sessions, also participated in the present research as supplementary sources of data.

Obtaining multiple participant perspectives is encouraged within qualitative research in order to yield better interpretations of experiences and meanings that can be contrasted and compared through a dialectical interchange (Mertens, 2005). In this way, a more detailed and vivid exploration of the research questions could occur.

Moreover, the house parents and the PAT volunteer were further included as supplementary sources of data as it was hoped that they could offer significant insights; the house parents due to their in-depth understanding of each of the female parolees and the challenges they face and the PAT volunteer due to her pre-existing knowledge of AAA and practical experience supervising AAA sessions within a variety of institutional contexts. Through their participation in the AAA sessions, their perspectives were valuable not only to verify the female parolees' stories, but also to add to them as outsider witnesses (Carey & Russell, 2003).

#### **4.4.1 Sampling strategy**

Sampling refers to the decision-making process used by the researcher to select the participants for a research study from the broad population (Bryman, 2012). According to a qualitative research strategy, participants are chosen in terms of their relevance to the research question, rather than to construct a statistically representative sample of a wider population (Flick, 2011). Moreover, a case study design requires the careful consideration and selection of a case, which will allow for the greatest understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Bryman, 2012). Purposive sampling is thus necessary, as it enables the selection of information rich cases for in-depth exploration, from a setting that best fits the purposes of the research (Patton, 2002).

Purposive sampling was utilised in the selection of the *location* from which to conduct the present research. The researcher was actively involved in seeking out a location where the AAA process could be studied amongst females on parole. This was vital as finding a group of easily accessible and willing female parolees is problematic as generally they do not like disclosing their offender status to third parties. Moreover, due to practical issues, such as time and financial constraints, it is tricky to find a group of female parolees willing to travel to a single location or take time off work. The residents of The Halfway House, however, were a known group of females on parole and as they have to be present at the facility on a Saturday afternoon due to their 2p.m. curfew, the researcher was given easy and manageable access to female parolees who regularly congregated together. This was also imperative for PAT, when implementing the AAA programme, as well as for the data collection required by the present research. For these reasons, convenient sampling was also utilised as



participants were selected on the basis of convenience; they were easily and conveniently available (Maree & Pietersen, 2007).

The specific sample group was determined by the individuals participating in an AAA programme (as outlined below in section 4.4.1.1) at the purposively and conveniently selected location. Specifically, all four of the female parolees currently residing within the Halfway House, the two house parents employed by The Halfway House, and the PAT volunteer who supervised and administered the AAA sessions at The Halfway House, were all invited to participate in the present research.

#### *4.4.1.1 The AAA programme held at The Halfway House*

From April 2015 until September 2016, The Halfway House under investigation held AAA sessions for the female parolee residents. These AAA sessions were administered by the PAT organisation and included a PAT volunteer bringing her pet dog to visit The Halfway House on a once-fortnightly basis. As The Halfway House occupies two homes, the PAT volunteer would alternate between each of the homes within each visit. The AAA sessions were held on Saturday afternoons at 3pm and lasted approximately 45 minutes. This was chosen as the most suitable day and time as Saturday was the female parolee residents only free day and they were all generally present at The Halfway House at 3pm due to their Saturday 2pm curfew.

The visits were delivered in group format to maximise the potential of social interaction between participants (Lutwack-Bloom et al., 2005). Moreover, the AAA sessions were not compulsory and the female parolee residents were allowed to come and go from the AAA sessions as they wanted in order to maximise the informal, recreational nature of the visits. During the AAA sessions, the participants would gather together in a lounge area, which was made available for the AAA sessions to take place in. Both homes of The Halfway House had a suitably large lounge area. These visits would then involve the resident female parolees and the house parents of the Halfway House, under the supervision of the PAT volunteer, interacting with the visiting AAA dog by playing, walking, grooming, and being shown generally how to care for the dog. The PAT volunteer, upon each visit, would bring treats for the participants to give to the visiting AAA dog and taught the participants how to get the dog to do tricks for these treats.



#### **4.4.2 Recruitment of participants**

The participants for the present research were recruited on a voluntary basis. All the participants involved in the AAA sessions, including the female parolees, the house parents, and the PAT volunteer, were personally invited to participate in the present research at the end of an AAA session. Alongside this verbal invitation, each participant was provided with an introductory letter in their home language (see Appendices C, D, & E) that briefly described the research aims and objectives, as well as highlighted the nature of their involvement.

They were given a week to deliberate as to whether they would like to participate in the present research. In order to minimise coercion or group pressure to participate, after the duration of a week, the researcher contacted each possible participant individually to ascertain whether they would like to participate, answer any remaining questions they had regarding the research, and set up a suitable date, time, and location to conduct the interview.

#### **4.4.3 Description of participants**

The following section provides more information regarding each participant's background, current circumstances, and pet history information. Table 4.1 offers a summary of the demographic information of each research participant. Following this, a descriptive, yet succinct, outline of each of the research participants is provided. These descriptions aim to provide the reader with a broader and more detailed understanding of each of the participants, in order to contextualise the present research. In order to protect the identities of the research participants and maintain confidentiality, each participant was given the opportunity to choose a pseudonym in lieu of their name.

Table 4.1

*Overview of Research Participant's Demographic Information*

	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Home language</b>	<b>Other languages</b>	<b>Place of residence prior to imprisonment</b>	<b>Current Employment</b>	<b>Length of prison sentence</b>	<b>Length of time at Halfway House</b>
<b>Female Parolee</b>									
<b>Nicole*</b>	Female	21	Coloured	Afrikaans	English	Vredenburg	Student	13 months	5 months
<b>Candice*</b>	Female	24	Coloured	Afrikaans	English, isiXhosa	Atlantis	Unemployed	3 years	7 months
<b>Yanela*</b>	Female	32	Black	isiXhosa	English	Gugulethu	Unemployed	2 years	9 months
<b>Thato*</b>	Female	23	Black	isiXhosa	Sotho, English	Khayelitsha	student	8 months	3 years
<b>House Parent</b>									
<b>Mary*</b>	Female	60	Coloured	Afrikaans	English	N/A	House parent	N/A	N/A
<b>Karen*</b>	Female	58	White	English	Afrikaans	N/A	House parent	N/A	N/A
<b>PAT Volunteer</b>									
<b>Lorna*</b>	Female	62	White	English	Afrikaans	N/A	Volunteer	N/A	N/A

Note: \*Pseudonym

*Nicole* is on parole after serving a 13 month sentence at Pollsmoor Correctional Facility. She grew up in a low income household in a socio-economically deprived area of Cape Town. Nicole noted coming from a broken home and having issues of abuse in her childhood. She reported having a history of drug abuse, which led to her imprisonment. Prior to her imprisonment, Nicole only had a low level of education. Nicole has been residing in the first house of the Halfway House for the past five months. She is enrolled as a full-time student, aiming to obtain her Matric. Since her imprisonment and subsequent release into The Halfway House, she has not seen her family, except for her aunt who visits her occasionally. Nicole reported that she had pets while growing up. Her family owned two dogs, an Alsatian and a Staffy. However, she mentioned that she often abused and mistreated them due to her drug abuse, which she now feels guilty about.

*Candice* is on parole after serving a three year sentence at Pollsmoor Correctional Facility. Candice was raised in a low income household in a socio-economically deprived area of Cape Town and noted issues of abuse at home and substance abuse by family members. She reported having a history of drug abuse and theft, which led to her imprisonment. Prior to her imprisonment, Candice had a severely disrupted education and left school before finishing her Matric. Candice resides in the second house of The Halfway House. She has been resident there for the past seven months. Upon release into The Halfway House, Candice completed training as a home-based carer and is currently looking for employment. She sometimes receives casual work organised by The Halfway House and one of its supporting partners. Candice noted that she did not have an opportunity to spend time with animals growing up, although her family did own a cat. However, she stated that the cat was unfriendly and grumpy and so she never developed a close bond with it or felt the need to interact with it.

*Yanela* is on parole after serving a two year sentence at Pollsmoor Correctional Facility. Yanela comes from a socio-economically deprived area of Cape Town and grew up in a low income household. She noted coming from a broken home and issues of abuse in her childhood. Yanela mentioned having a history of drug abuse and theft, which led to her imprisonment. She reported that she only had a low level of education, having only completed grade 7. Yanela has been residing in the first house of The Halfway House for the past nine months. She is currently looking for employment,

however she sometimes receives casual work organised by The Halfway House and one of its supporting partners. Yanela reported having a history of pets at home while growing up; her father had several dogs. She reported that while she enjoyed them, she never formed a close relationship with any of the dogs.

*Thato* is on parole after serving an eight month sentence at Pollsmoor Correctional Facility. She grew up in a socio-economically deprived area of Cape Town and reported coming from a low income household. She noted family issues in her upbringing, coming from a broken home, and reported issues of prolonged abuse by a male, which led to a conviction of culpable homicide. Despite a conviction of culpable homicide, *Thato* was released early due to good behaviour. Currently, *Thato* resides in the second house of The Halfway House. She has been there for the past three years. She is enrolled as a full-time student, in her final year of study towards a Diploma in Childhood Developmental Psychology. Due to the nature of her crime, *Thato* was unable to visit her family until recently for fear of reprisal from her community. As such, over the past three years she has had to slowly re-build trust with her community. She still, however, is unable to move back home. *Thato* reported having a history of pets at home while growing up, two dogs and a cat. *Thato* noted that she did not form a close bond with any of the dogs as they were just “there” but she did have a close relationship with the cat as it was her own special pet.

*Mary* is a house parent at the Halfway House. She grew up in a low income household in a socio-economically deprived area of Cape Town and reported having a history of drug abuse, theft, and burglary. This led to her serving several sentences at Pollsmoor Correctional Facility. In total she spent approximately eight years over a twenty year span within the correctional system. She noted that her own experience of the correctional system has allowed her to have a deeper understanding of the issues faced by the female residents of The Halfway House. Currently, *Mary* supervises the day-to-day running of and the female parolees that reside in the first home of The Halfway House, which caters for newly released female offenders. She has been employed by The Halfway House for the past 11 years and resides on-site. *Mary* reported having pets while growing up. Specifically, she grew up with several family dogs, with which she developed a close bond. *Mary* further mentioned that she would love to have her own dog but does not feel she could adequately care for one.

*Karen* is a house parent at the Halfway House. She grew up in a middle to high income household in Kenya and prior to her employment by The Halfway House, she lived on a farm in the Eastern Cape. Karen noted that she had previously studied Anthropology at University. Currently, Karen supervises the day-to-day running of and the female parolees that reside in the second home of The Halfway House, which caters for female offenders that are in their final stages of parole as they are about to re-enter the community. She has been employed by The Halfway House for the past five months and resides on-site. Karen reported having a long history of owning and caring for animals. Specifically, she noted having a wide variety of pets, including dogs and cats, as well as taking in rescue animals, such as a baby baboon and several lynxes. Upon completion of the AAA sessions in September 2016, she adopted a dog, which lives with her and the female parolee residents at the second home of The Halfway House.

*Lorna* is an experienced animal handler and PAT volunteer. She comes from a middle to high income household and is currently retired. Despite being retired, Lorna has volunteered for the PAT organisation for many years, with two of her dogs, both bull terriers named Morris and Molly. Through her role as a PAT volunteer, she has volunteered for various initiatives in numerous settings, such as old age homes and residential facilities. From April 2015 to September 2016, Lorna visited The Halfway House once-fortnightly on a Saturday with her pet dog, Morris. During these visits, Lorna encouraged the women to interact and play with Morris by teaching the women how to do tricks with Morris, letting them walk Morris, and showing them how to properly groom and pet Morris. Lorna has a long history of having and working with animals and helps to re-home rescued bull terriers.

#### **4.5 DATA COLLECTION**

Data collection forms an integral component of the research process. Selected strategies should be sufficient and relevant to answer a specific research question (DePoy & Gitlin, 2011), as well as suitable to the topic under investigation and the framework guiding the research (Silverman, 2010). Moreover, according to Bryman (2012), the following factors are essential to consider when selecting data collection methods: the nature of the research problem, the research strategy, the type of research design, and the practical limitations or resources available to the investigator.

In the context of the present research, the above translated into the selection of methods which were congruent with a qualitative case-study research design. Within such a framework, the chosen methods needed to allow for the capturing of individual experiences, feelings, and opinions (Bryman, 2012). Through the gathering and analysis of rich data conveying the subjective stories of the participants, the research questions could be appropriately explored. It was hoped that through the use of multifarious means for data collection, namely questionnaires and interviews, as well as the utilisation of field notes and reflexive notes in aiding the research process, insight into the experience of AAA within The Halfway House and its meaning for those involved could be obtained. Moreover, the utilisation of various methods of data collection allowed for an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation to be obtained (Flick, 2011). As argued by Denzin and Lincoln (2005), a multi-method approach adds rigour, complexity, breadth, depth, and richness to any inquiry. Triangulation, or the use of multiple methods of data collection, is helpful for increasing the accuracy of the data acquired (DePoy & Gitlin, 2011).

#### **4.5.1 Questionnaires**

Prior to the commencement of the interviews, biographical and pet history questionnaires were distributed amongst each of the female parolee, house parent, and PAT volunteer participants. These questionnaires (see Appendices F, G, & H) aimed to gather the necessary information pertaining to each participant's key demographic information and solicited information relating to their history with pets and liking of animals. As such, these questionnaires enabled the researcher to gain a better picture and broader understanding of each of the participants in order to contextualise their experiences (Bryman, 2012), as well as to ascertain their perception of animals, particularly dogs, and how this may affect their response to the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House.

#### **4.5.2 Interviews**

All the participants were interviewed face-to-face and on a one-on-one basis. The interviews lasted approximately 30 to 40 minutes in length and took place in a setting of the participants' own choice. This was imperative as individuals generally feel most comfortable in a setting they are familiar with, thereby resulting in more honest and

effective data collection (Bryman, 2012). The female parolees and house-parent participants were all interviewed in a private, secluded room in the home of The Halfway House that they were currently residing in. The interview with the PAT volunteer was conducted in a private corner of a public coffee shop she regularly visited.

Interviews, as a means for data collection, were chosen as most appropriate for the purposes of a qualitative case study design as they follow an open-ended, discovery method (Guion, Duhl, & MacDonald, 2011). According to Rubin and Rubin (2012), in-depth qualitative interviews involve the efforts of the researcher to gather detailed and rich information, relevant to the research question, which may include experiences, examples, narratives, and stories. Talking to others and listening to their opinions and experiences enables the researcher to see the world through the participant's eyes, gaining new perspectives other than their own (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

#### *4.5.2.1 Semi-structured nature of interviews*

Semi-structured interviews serve as one of the most common and principal forms of in-depth qualitative interviews (Bryman, 2012). This is due to the fact that, as by the nature of this type of interviewing, the researcher was given the flexibility to cover topics fully, whilst also gaining a detailed account of the participants' experiences and perceptions of AAA, in order to produce a richer data set (Greeff, 2011). This technique allowed for the researcher to find out specific information, which could then be contrasted and compared with information gained in other interviews where the same questions are asked (Dawson, 2009).

A further key to this type of data collection, semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to engage in dialogue with each participant, as well as enabled rapport-building between the research participant and researcher (Bryman, 2012). This, in turn, served to facilitate the researcher in following the participant's concerns and interests, as well as in probing for further information when important or interesting topics arose (Bryman, 2012). According to Wisker (2008), semi-structured, open-ended interviewing allows space for some divergence, thereby enriching the data gathered.

#### 4.5.2.2 Interview schedule

Due to the semi-structured nature of the interviews, interview schedules were required. As such, interview schedules were devised for the female parolee, house parent, and PAT volunteer participants (see Appendix I, J, & K). The interview schedules were motivated by the research question that the researcher aimed to answer and were inspired by the available literature on the female parolee, AAA, and the use of AAA within offender rehabilitation. An expert in the field of HAI was consulted and provided feedback on the interview schedules.

All the interview schedules contained specific instructions, transition phrases, and pre-determined questions organised around the area of interest to act as a guide for the researcher (Greeff, 2011). In order to collect rich, descriptive data, “yes” or “no” questions were avoided (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The use of open-ended phrases during the interviews, such as “*what do you think about...*” or “*could tell me a little bit more about...*” provided the participants with an opportunity to reflect on their own experiences of the AAA sessions. Although the interviews contained predetermined questions, the questions did not have to be strictly adhered to; rather they merely served as a guideline for the researcher (Bryman, 2012). Therefore, a conversational, free-flowing dialogue between the researcher and participant was encouraged. This enabled the researcher, in gauging the responses of the participant, to be able to guide the interview process in a way that catered sensitively to the needs of the participant.

The interviews were conducted in the language of the participant’s choice. The main languages spoken by female parolee residents of The Halfway House included Afrikaans and isiXhosa. However, all the women could converse in English to varying degrees of proficiency as the main language of instruction in The Halfway House is English and all the teaching is done in English. As such, the interviews were conducted in Afrikaans or English, depending on the individual choice of the participant. Furthermore, if the participant chose, a translator was available for isiXhosa speakers. However, none of the female parolees interviewed, however, requested the translator. Regarding the house parents and the PAT volunteer, they all spoke English and Afrikaans. However, they all selected to have the interview conducted in English as they reported feeling most comfortable conversing in English.



#### 4.5.2.3 *Communication techniques utilized in the interview process*

In order to maximise the effectiveness of the interview as a tool for data collection, the researcher employed several communication techniques during the interview process as stipulated by Greeff (2011):

- The first technique included the researcher establishing a balance between being both attentive and offering minimal verbal responses to the participant.
- The second technique involved the researcher ensuring that a high level of clarity and understanding existed between the researcher and participant at all times. As such, in instances of ambiguity and where the researcher was unsure as to what the participant meant, the researcher sought clarity. This was done by merely asking the participant to clarify what they meant.
- The third technique included the researcher continuously paraphrasing, in the researcher's own language, what the participant stated in order to ensure the meaning of the participant's story was accurately conveyed. This was further helpful in acknowledging the participants story and enabling them to feel heard.
- The fourth technique utilised included the technique of reflection, or more specifically, offering the participant a reflective summary of what they had previously stated. The technique of reflection was useful when the researcher required the participant to further expand on a statement, as well as to determine if the researcher understood correctly.
- The final technique utilised by the researcher, in order to improve communication in the interview context, included the researcher using probing techniques when more information was required in response to a question. As such, the researcher was able to elicit richer information from the participant.

Based on these guidelines, the researcher was able to immerse herself in the interview context and, as such, suspend any former knowledge or preconceptions regarding AAA (Greeff, 2011). This allowed the research participant control of emerging information, as well as challenge any lingering attitudes that the researcher may have inadvertently introduced into the interview context (Bryman, 2012; Greeff, 2011).

#### 4.5.2.4 *Audio-recording of interviews*

The interviews were audio-recorded, with prior permission from each of the participants, in order to allow for verbatim transcription and subsequent analysis. The rationale for recording the interviews is that qualitative research is fine-grained in nature and therefore necessitates the use of verbatim data in order for the interpretation of data to take place (Bryman, 2012). Audio-recording the interviews enabled the researcher to collect a more detailed, accurate, and complete account of each of the interviews (Greeff, 2011). Moreover, the utilisation of audio-recording allows the researcher to focus more effectively on the participant and the interview, without distraction from continuous note-taking (Bryman, 2012).

#### 4.5.2.5 *Note-taking pre- and post-interview*

In circumstances where the participant's divulged information relating to their experiences and perceptions of the AAA sessions when they were not being audio-recorded, the researcher recorded their statements through the use of note-taking. Instances such as these occurred during the completion of the biographical and pet history questionnaires prior to the commencement of the interviews and after the interview had finished. Information gathered through the use of note-taking pre- and post-interview mostly pertained to the participants perceptions and experiences of animals, mostly dogs, as well as additional background information. This additional information provided context to the data obtained from the participants through their interviews and thereby added to the richness of the case study (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006).

### **4.5.3 Field notes**

Upon completion of each interview, field notes were made. Field notes, according to Bogdan and Biklen (2006), refer to the written account of what the researcher hears, sees, thinks, and experiences in the course of data collection. Bogdan and Biklen (2006) suggests two practical guidelines for the production of field notes, both of which were utilised in the present research: (a) the researcher recorded exactly what was seen and heard, and (b) expanded further on these immediate observations. As such, the field notes enabled the researcher to remember what took place, how the participants conducted themselves, the relational dynamics that developed, and any

note-worthy incident that took place during the interview (Bryman, 2012). In this way, the field notes offered the researcher an invaluable opportunity to process the interviews shortly after their completion.

#### **4.5.4 Reflective notes**

The researcher's initial involvement with the participants of the present research was as a volunteer during the AAA sessions at The Halfway House. It was her aim, during this time, to come to better understand the subject of the present research, AAA within The Halfway House, as well as develop a rapport with the participants. In essence, as her role as both a volunteer and a researcher, she filled the part of being a participant observer, whereby the researcher becomes a participant in the situation being observed; immersing herself in the chosen setting to get an insider perspective (Carey & Russell, 2003; Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

Reflective notes were utilised as a means to record her own personal experiences, deliberations, reflections, and general thoughts as a volunteer during the AAA sessions, as well as during the data collection phase of the present research (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). According to Bryman (2012), journal entries can be useful in observing themes, patterns, and connections, analysing events, interpreting information, and making tentative conclusions. It was the researcher's specific intention to utilise the data obtained from these reflexive notes to add to the background stories of the participants, thus providing context for the present research and enriching the case presented.

These reflective notes were further important as a tool in limiting researcher bias as they enabled her to identify and reflect on her beliefs and attitudes regarding the female parolee and AAA. This was imperative as despite her attempts to dispel any preconceived notions, attitudes, and beliefs prior to entering the research field, it is impossible to separate oneself entirely (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006).

## **4.6 DATA ANALYSIS**

Data analysis refers to the process of systematically searching through and organising the data collected in a manner that increases the researcher's understanding of it and enables them to present to others what they have discovered (Boeije, 2010). It seeks

to reduce a large amount of raw data through the means of filtering significant data from trivial data, identifying any noteworthy patterns, and constructing a framework in order to convey the essence of what the data revealed (Schurink, Fouché, & De Vos, 2011). For the purposes of the present research, the interviews were transcribed, and then analysed according to thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Key to this flexible and easily accessible qualitative analytic method was searching for, identifying and reporting on emerging patterns, concepts, and themes within the participants' transcript data in order to find wider meanings related to the experience of AAA (Clarke & Braun, 2013). Furthermore, thematic analysis, through the use of an inductive method, seeks to identify themes and patterns that directly emerge from the data itself; those which are not linked to the researcher's theoretical preconceptions of the topic under investigation (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Thematic analysis was chosen as the most suitable method of data collection in relation to the present research due to its ability to provide the researcher with an in-depth thematic description, as well as a detailed interpretation that accurately reflected the content of the entire data set (Clarke & Braun, 2013). According to Braun and Clarke (2006), this was necessary in order to give the reader a greater sense of the predominant themes that emerged. In obtaining an accurate reflection of the entire data set however, some of the depth and complexity of the data was lost, although a rich overall description was maintained (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach is particularly useful when investigating an under-researched area such as this one, whereby there is uncertainty regarding participants' experiences and opinions regarding the research topic (Clarke & Braun, 2013). Furthermore, thematic analysis enables a rigorous exploration of each participant's subjective experience from their own worldview (Bryman, 2012). As such, it was felt that thematic analysis would best provide a comprehensive examination of the female parolees' experience of AAA and the participants' view of the applicability of AAAs in the context of The Halfway House.

Thematic analysis includes six key phases of analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Each of the different phases are outlined and discussed below.

#### **4.6.1 Familiarising oneself with the data**

This analytic method firstly involved a reading and re-reading of each interview in order to familiarise the researcher with the structure, nature, and overall content of the interview data (Clarke & Braun, 2013). This reading and re-reading was an important initial stage, as according to Braun and Clarke (2006), it enables the researcher to begin to search for “patterns of meaning” and potential areas of interest in the data (p.86). This stage further included writing down any initial ideas on potential themes, patterns, and coding schemes to help inform the subsequent phases of analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

#### **4.6.2 Generating initial codes**

The second phase involved the generation and production of preliminary codes, which were then used to code the data in a meaningful and significant manner (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This involved systematically selecting and organising significant features of the entire data set into meaningful and interesting groups (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Notably, Atlas.ti was utilised within the initial stages of this process of analysis as a means to systematically draw out key themes and categories from the raw data.

#### **4.6.3 Searching for themes**

The third phase included searching for potential themes and patterns by organising and assembling codes into key emerging themes and gathering all the data linked to each of those emerging themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A theme, according to Braun and Clarke (2006), refers to an emerging aspect of the research data that can be viewed as significant in relation to the research question and is representative of a continuously occurring patterned meaning or response within the data set. This highlighted the importance of the thematic analytic process being driven by the research question under investigation (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

#### **4.6.4 Reviewing the themes**

The fourth phase involved reviewing the emergent themes in terms of their relevance to the entire data set, as well as the chosen coded extracts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This further involved selecting which coded themes were most prevalent across the

data set in order to choose overall themes, which accurately represented the female parolee's experiences of AAA. The prevalence of themes were then judged according to which themes were most supported by the evidence found in the data set and in terms of flexible, but consistent, rules of interpretation (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

#### **4.6.5 Defining and naming themes**

The fifth phase involved refining the emergent themes and their specifics, as well as producing clear and meaningful names and definitions for each of the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). During this stage, it was important not to try and get a theme to do too much, or be too diverse and complex (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Moreover, it was necessary that each theme should tell a story that fits into the broader overall "story" that the researcher is trying to tell about the collected data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82).

#### **4.6.6 Producing the report**

The final phase included reporting on the analysis of the content and meaning of the emergent themes in the form of a scholarly report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Important to the production of the overall report is the fact that this phase offered the researcher a final chance for analysis of the entire data set, as well as the selected extracts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Further key to this final phase was relating the analysis explicitly to the research question and literature surrounding the topic under investigation, as well as ensuring the selected extracts were compelling and relevant examples of what they wished to highlight (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

### **4.7 ENSURING THE TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE RESEARCH**

Validity and reliability are important criteria in the assessment of the quality of research (Bryman, 2012). However, due to the nature of qualitative research alterations needed to be made to these terms in order to ensure the trustworthiness and robustness of the present research. Shenton (2004) stipulated four key constructs necessary to assist in determining the soundness of research, namely credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. The key principle of reflexivity was added as an additional measure (Bryman, 2012).

### **4.7.1 Credibility**

A key issue with regards to the robustness of social research is that of internal validity (Shenton, 2004). Internal validity refers to the accuracy with which an indicator truthfully measures the concept it purports to measure (Bryman, 2012). The credibility of research, in contrast, refers to whether the findings were congruent with reality (Shenton, 2004). In other words, credibility necessitates that the views expressed by the participants corresponded with the researcher's demonstration and reconstruction of those views (Schurink et al., 2011).

There are multiple accounts that can be given in explaining an aspect of social reality, therefore in order to ensure credibility, triangulation of evidence must occur (Creswell, 2014). Triangulation refers to the utilisation of more than one source of data in the analysis of social phenomena. This highlights the importance of using evidence from the whole context in order to produce well-rounded and rich interpretations (Wilson & Maclean, 2011). In the context of the present research, questionnaires and interviews, were utilised as multifarious means of data collection.

Various other strategies were also utilised in order to ensure the credibility of the present research. For instance, the researcher had a thorough knowledge of previous research findings surrounding the topic under investigation and rich, in-depth descriptions were included in the reporting of findings (Shenton, 2004). Certain tactics were further utilised in order to ensure the honesty of participants during the interviews. This included ensuring that the participants understood that participation was entirely voluntary, as well as encouraging participants to answer questions as openly as possible (Shenton, 2004). Iterative questioning was also used as a measure by uncovering contradictions and discrepancies in the participants dialogue (Shenton, 2004). Another method of ensuring the credibility involved using different measures to check the truthfulness of the data collected and the interpretations made (Shenton, 2004). These measures included regular debriefing sessions with the research supervisor, and using the researcher's own reflexivity to evaluate the research project.

### **4.7.2 Transferability**

Another criterion key to ensuring the trustworthiness of qualitative research, is that of transferability. In terms of social research, transferability can be compared to the

quantitative research principal of external validity, namely the generalisability or applicability of findings to other comparable situations or settings (Shenton, 2004). However, due to the small scale nature of qualitative social research, findings cannot be generalised to wider populations (Bryman, 2012). Rather, in-depth interpretations should be orientated to the uniqueness of the context and the individual, offering rich accounts that can possibly be transferred, or offer a base understanding, to assist in the production of further social research (Creswell, 2014).

Moreover, adequate contextual information regarding the participants and the fieldwork site should be included to ensure the reader has a proper understanding of the research and to enable the transference of results where applicable (Shenton, 2004). For example, it should be noted that the research took place in the Western Cape and as such, the findings are limited only to the Western Cape.

#### **4.7.3 Dependability**

Reliability, namely the consistency, stability, and repeatability of the measure of a concept, is a further key criterion in the case of social research (Bryman, 2012). This definition, however, according to a qualitative case study approach is incorrect, as it presumes that meanings are able to be controlled and can be repeated identically in a variety of situations (Wilson & Maclean, 2011). Rather, according to the present research, the concept of dependability is more applicable to this context (Shenton, 2004).

According to the concept of dependability, meanings are unique to a person and a relational encounter, as well as shared between persons and situations (Wilson & Maclean, 2011). As such, key to dependability is the replicability of the research and the notion that research must be logical, traceable, and documented in order to serve as a true depiction of reality (Shenton, 2004). Therefore, all steps undertaken, especially regarding the research methodology, were carefully documented in detail in a structured, traceable, and orderly manner in order to ensure its replicability for future researchers (Shenton, 2004).



#### **4.7.4 Confirmability**

Another key criterion of social research is that of objectivity; the extent to which an instrument is independent of human perception and skill (Shenton, 2004). However, in terms of qualitative research and the investigative methods utilised within the present research, the researchers own biases are unavoidable (Shenton, 2004). Therefore, the concept of confirmability should rather be utilised (Shenton, 2004).

Confirmability, in this context, refers to the assurance that the interpretations and inferences made accurately reflect the experiences of the participants (Shenton, 2004). Furthermore, the confirmability of the research serves to promote the accuracy of the research by eliminating research bias (Shenton, 2004). As such, confirmability asks the question whether another researcher could replicate and confirm the findings and results of the present research (Shenton, 2004). In terms of the present research, an audit trail was conducted through the use of audio-recordings, typed transcripts, and the development of themes, as well as field notes, reflexive notes, and notes taken prior- and post-interview. The present research has been explained in detail, enabling other researchers to re-create it and confirm the findings (Schurink et al., 2011).

#### **4.7.5 Reflexivity**

The final key criterion in ensuring the trustworthiness of the present research includes reflexivity. Reflexivity is a key notion within the analytic task as a way of allowing the researcher to assess their own input into the relational dynamics between researcher and participant, as well as to evaluate the overall research process (Bryman, 2012). This includes the transference and counter-transference that unfolded during the interview context, as gathered from the researcher's reflective notes and field notes. As such, reflexivity was utilised within the present research as an important guard against loose and incorrect interpretations. This is due to the fact that it enabled the researcher to realise her own subject positioning and how this affected her outlook, thereby minimising her own subjective influence regarding interpretations.

The importance of the notion of reflexivity was re-affirmed to the researcher in the context of the present research when upon entering The Halfway House and meeting the women that reside there, she realised that she had a pre-conceived notion of who

they should be, how they should act, and the life circumstance that they should come from. In fact, many of the women were completely not what she expected and had she not been within the confines of The Halfway House, she would never have guessed that they were parolees. She had previously volunteered with male juvenile offenders at Pollsmoor Correctional Facility, Cape Town and according to her experiences of this volunteering programme, she had developed an image of an offender in her mind without taking into account that there are vast differences between the male and female correctional population.

This experience made her realise the importance of assessing her own background and life experiences in order to dispel any pre-conceived notions of the female parolee, offender rehabilitation, and the effects of AAA. Specifically, she is a young, white female and grew up in a single-mother headed household. She has had numerous educational opportunities; she was able to attend a good primary and high school and continued to get a university level education.

Growing up, her family owned several dogs, as well as other pets. Following this, she came to acknowledge the beneficial effect animals can have on human functioning from an early age. This belief was further strengthened during the course of the present research. Through accompanying the PAT volunteer on visits to The Halfway House, she experienced first-hand the effect the visiting AAA dog, Morris, had on the participants, particularly those who were initially terrified at the mere presence of Morris. Furthermore, before the interviews were conducted, she had completed her literature review and had done extensive reading on the topic, thus making her aware of the possible outcomes of AAA.

Through her interaction with the literature pertaining to AAA and from her experience of AAA at The Halfway House, she had to remain mindfully cognisant of her own values, attitudes, and biases and their effect on the interpretations made and on the research process in general. The societal beliefs and value structures that she has developed in relation to her upbringing have caused her to have certain ideas, beliefs and values that do influence the way she views others and interprets events. This necessitated gaining rich dialogues within the interview process that spoke for themselves, as well as ensuring that she continuously sought clarity when interviewing the participants. In order to ensure unbiased results, she approached the present

research without any expectations, except to highlight the paucity in the literature regarding the use of AAA within the context of offender rehabilitation, as well as the desperate need in South Africa for further research to be conducted on and more supportive rehabilitation programmes implemented among female offenders.

#### **4.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PROCEDURES**

According to the British Psychological Society (BPS, 2009), the interests, which encompass both the rights and the welfare, of participants should be upheld at all times. In order to guarantee the safeguarding of participants' proper interests, the researcher ensured that certain ethical precautions were undertaken prior, during, and post data collection. Moreover, the present research was conducted in deliberation of the fact that research with females on parole can hold unique challenges and require a special consideration of ethical issues. Thus, the present research was conducted whilst holding the values of beneficence and non-maleficence, justice, fidelity, autonomy, and respect for participants' dignity and rights in mind (Bless et al., 2013).

##### **4.8.1 Permission from relevant gate-keepers**

In order to ensure that the rights and welfare of the participants were upheld, permission from certain gate-keepers was obtained prior to the commencement of the present research. The present research was initially screened by the Department of Psychology at Stellenbosch University for approval (see Appendix L). Following this, permission and clearance to conduct the present research was obtained from the Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee (REC), proposal number: SU-HSD-000889 (see Appendix M & N).

As female offenders on parole, including those resident at The Halfway House, remain under the jurisdiction of the DCS as stipulated by their parole conditions, permission was formally obtained from the DCS prior to data collection (see Appendix O). Upon completion of the present research, a copy of the final thesis is to be sent to the DCS.

Permission was further sought from the Executive Director of The Halfway House to conduct the present research by means of a formal letter of request (Appendix P). The Executive Director of the participating Halfway House provided verbal and written consent to interview the female parolee residents and the house parents (see

Appendices Q). A copy of the final thesis is to be sent to the Executive Director of The Halfway House. Although formal permission was not sought from PAT, the Chair of PAT gave verbal permission to interview the PAT volunteer.

#### **4.8.2 Voluntary participation**

Participation was entirely voluntary, which means that all participants were granted an autonomous and informed opportunity to decide whether or not they wished to partake in the present research. No participants were bribed or forced to participate and they were not remunerated in exchange for their willingness to participate. Participants were informed, prior to consent, of their right to withdraw their participation at any time during the present research without consequence to themselves or anyone else.

The voluntarily participation of participants was carefully considered, particularly regarding to the female parolees and house parent participants. The position of power an institution, such as The Halfway House, holds over its subjects undermines free choice, therefore casting doubt on the voluntary nature of consent (American Psychological Association [APA], 2014). Individuals often feel obliged to participate when asked by a larger establishment, which offers them housing and/or employment. However, these factors were counterbalanced by the fact that: (a) there was no disadvantage to participants who did not wish to partake in the interviews, (b) the interview process is extremely time consuming and arduous in nature, and (c) the researcher was in no way affiliated with the institutional structures of The Halfway House and so did not hold any sway or authoritative power.

#### **4.8.3 Informed consent**

Research participants have the right to know the details of a study, namely the purpose, the benefits, and risks, as well as their right to withdraw from the research at any time (Strydom, 2011). This information was clearly explained to each participant prior to their involvement in the present research.

In particular, this was done by ensuring informed consent was obtained from each participant prior to the commencement of the interviews. All participants who wished to partake in the present research were required to provide consent for participation by completing an informed consent form, which stated that they understood the details

of the present research and gave their permission to be included in the present research (see Appendices R, S, & T). The informed consent forms were made available to the participants in their home language, namely either English, Afrikaans, or isiXhosa. All the participants had the ability to read, write, and speak fluently in one of these languages and thus the researcher was confident that each research participant fully understood the consent form. Each participant received a copy of the informed consent to keep for their own records.

#### **4.8.4 Harm to participants**

In the course of social research, no harm should come to research participants, either indirectly or directly (BPS, 2009). However, the qualitative research design by its very nature creates a situation that has the potential to cause discomfort to participants due to the subjective nature of the qualitative exploration (APA, 2014). As such, prior to the commencement of the interview, the research participants were informed that if they encounter any feelings of discomfort during the interview, they had the right to cease participation immediately. They were further informed that if they do encounter discomfort during or post interview, there were support structures available for them to access. Specifically, they were provided with referral information, provided in the informed consent form distributed to participants, to access support structures, such as counselling services, already in place for the participants. The researcher is not aware of any participant who felt the need to use any of these services. Thus, she presumes that no participant suffered any psychological, emotional, or physical harm as a consequence of the present research (Bless et al., 2013).

#### **4.8.5 Deception of participants**

In the context of social research, deception most commonly refers to withholding the true nature of a study in order to prevent participants from changing their natural behaviour, thereby altering the results of the research (Bless et al., 2013; Bryman, 2012). Any untruth in the context of research could be classed as deception. In the course of the present research, the researcher was committed to being honest with the participants at all times and to the researcher's knowledge, the present research did not involve any deception.

#### **4.8.6 Confidentiality and violation of privacy**

Through the process of data collection, the researcher was entrusted with personal information (Strydom, 2011). In order to ensure the confidentiality and privacy of the participants, the digital audio-recordings and the subsequent verbatim transcripts have been stored in a private and secure password encrypted device, with only the researcher having access to them. These will be kept for the mandatory five years. Furthermore, in creating and using verbatim transcriptions in social research the potential for identification of the participants poses a particular set of ethical dilemmas (Bless et al., 2013). As such, all identifying information has been omitted or altered. The participants' names have been masked in the data by assigning each participant a pseudonym, as chosen by the participant, in the writing up of the present research.

#### **4.8.7 Feedback to participants**

Research participants have the right to be informed about the results of a study to which they contributed (Bless et al., 2013). Each participant that took part in the present research was to be given access to the research findings and conclusions. Furthermore, where possible, the participants were given direct feedback regarding the results of the present research, as well as the opportunity to comment on the findings (Bryman, 2012). This served to ensure that the research findings and conclusions were accurate in their account of the participants' experiences.

#### **4.8.8 Release or publication of findings**

In order to share the findings of a study with the greater scientific community, research findings are often published. Prior to participation in the present research, participants were informed of the reason for conducting the interviews and that the results of the research would possibly be published. The participants were further informed that the present research would be submitted as a thesis to Stellenbosch University as part of a master's degree in psychology.

#### **4.8.9 Ethics in analysing and reporting**

Any technical shortcomings, failures, and limitations of a study, as well as negative findings and methodological constraints that emerge during the course of a research

study, should all be reported and discussed during the write up of that research (Bless et al., 2013). The findings presented as part of the present research are, to the researcher's knowledge, an accurate reflection of the data collected.

#### **4.8.10 Action and competence of the researcher**

The competence of the researcher refers to the researcher's professional training by an accredited institution to be proficient enough to perform quality research (Bless et al., 2013). The researcher had sufficient skills through studies in psychology and previous qualitative research experience. Moreover, the researcher received adequate supervision throughout the process in order to ensure that the present research was of a high standard. Bless et al. (2013) further state the importance of the researcher's behaviour being ethically accountable. In terms of the present research, the researcher's behaviour and actions were guided by the ethical procedures stipulated by the Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee (REC) prior to the commencement of the present research.

### **4.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Chapter 4 served to provide an in-depth discussion regarding the process of inquiry. This discussion included an overview of the chosen research strategy and design, as well as detailed discussion and description of the research participants. The methods of data collection and analysis utilised in the course of the present research were further summarised and explained. Lastly, the quality criteria ensuring trustworthiness and ethical considerations that pertained to the present research were discussed.

The research findings obtained as a result of the research process described above are presented in the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **FINDINGS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The present research aimed to address the following research question: What is the experience of AAA within the context of The Halfway House, particularly the female parolee's experience of this activity? In answering this question, it intended to gain insight into the lived experience of AAA as recounted by the female parolee participants, as well as gather supplementary data regarding the house parent's and the PAT volunteer's perceptions of the female parolees' experience.

Chapter 5 presents an overview of the findings of the present research in an attempt to answer the before-mentioned research question. This includes the findings obtained through the thematic analysis and interpretation of the semi-structured interviews conducted with each of the research participants. The findings are categorised into themes and sub-themes, each of which will be substantiated through the means of direct quotations from the raw data.

#### **5.2 FINDINGS OF THE THEMATIC ANALYSIS**

Four main themes relating to the experience of AAA within the context of The Halfway House were identified during the thematic analysis and interpretation of the collected data. These themes and their relating sub-themes are displayed in Table 5.1 below and will be reported in this section.



Table 5.1

*Overview of Themes and Sub-Themes that Emerged from the Data*

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>
<b>1. Perceived benefits of AAA</b>	1.1 Physical benefits 1.2 Psychological benefits 1.3 Social benefits 1.4 Other benefits
<b>2. Participants' personal experiences of AAA</b>	2.1 Fun and entertaining 2.2 Shared connections 2.3 Reminder of home 2.4 Feedback
<b>3. Participants' reactions towards the visiting AAA dog</b>	3.1 Initial reactions 3.2 Subsequent reactions
<b>4. Participants' perceptions of the visiting AAA dog</b>	4.1 Caring 4.2 Accepting 4.3 Senses emotions 4.4 Good listener

### **5.2.1 Perceived benefits of AAA**

The initial theme that emerged from the collected data included the perceived benefits of interacting with the visiting AAA dog within the context of The Halfway House. Many of the participants spoke about the AAA sessions as an activity that brings about physical, psychological, and social benefits for participating individuals. Various other benefits were also reported by the participants' including the AAA sessions fostering

the development of patience and empathy, as well as promoting the development of pro-social behaviours. These sub-themes will now be reported further.

#### *5.2.1.1 Physical benefits*

Many of the participants described physical benefits as being one of the most noticeable effects of the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House. The most prominent and recurring physical effect reported by the participants, specifically female parolee participants, included becoming physically more relaxed and visibly calmer. These physical benefits were spoken about as occurring both during the AAA sessions, as well as after the AAA sessions, once the visiting AAA dog had left for the day.

All four of the female parolee participants' reported that they felt physically calmer during the AAA sessions. According to them, this occurrence was particularly apparent as a result of playing with and stroking the visiting AAA dog.

*He, um, how can I say, [pause] makes me relaxed ... he relaxes me playing with him. (Nicole)*

*And with a pet around you is, like, very nice for me also ... just keep me calm ... just stroking him and being with him calms me. (Thato)*

When speaking about the AAA sessions, the house parents and the PAT volunteer also reported the visiting AAA dog having a observable relaxing effect on the female parolee participants' during the AAA sessions.

*They seem more relaxed because, you know, why because, like, he has a calming presence ... the ladies all seem calmer when he is here ... (Mary)*

*... they are visibly calmer ... you know, and that the girls seemed to relax ... the girls are, like, quite relaxed and easy. (Karen)*

*I think it came from them being more relaxed ... you could see as the sessions went on [pause] you can see they relax around him, like when they pat him and stroke him, they look physically relaxed. (Lorna)*

The female parolee participants further noted feeling physically more relaxed after the AAA sessions had ended for the day. They reported that they felt less uptight and their bodies felt less tense as a result of the AAA sessions and interacting with the visiting AAA dog.

*After he's been, when you've been, I feel calmer ... like, in my body and all, I feel more relaxed. (Thato)*

*... and I, after Morris, I felt more relaxed, like, I could just chill. (Candice)*

In relation to the relaxing effects of the visiting AAA dog, one of the house parents spoke about the difference in how the female parolee participants normally behave on a Saturday and how they behave after they have spent time with the visiting AAA dog. According to her, the AAA sessions had an obvious physical effect on the female parolees, whereby they do not need nicotine to calm themselves'.

*No, because on a Saturday ... it's hard, you know ... they've got to be in by 2:00, they only have free time from 9 o'clock to 2:00, during the week, they don't have any free time ... so they, I think they feel it, you know, like ... on the, over the weekend, specially Saturday ... but after you've come, once you've been here ... they just seem more relaxed, you know, then they get their blanket and lie on the couch and they just not all 'grrrr', smoking a hundred cigarettes, you know, they more relaxed. (Karen)*

#### 5.2.1.2 Psychological benefits

The second domain in which benefits were seen in the participants, included the psychological benefits that arose from the AAA sessions and interacting with the visiting AAA dog. In particular, the conversation revolved around two main aspects: the female parolee participants finding the presence of the visiting AAA dog beneficial to their emotional and mental well-being, as well as the female parolee participants displaying increased confidence and self-esteem resulting from personal achievement.

Improved emotional well-being was echoed by many of the female parolee participants as having resulted from the AAA sessions. During the interviews, the female parolee participants reported feelings of excitement in anticipation of the AAA sessions,

knowing that the visiting AAA dog was about to come visit at The Halfway House, as well as feelings of happiness and enjoyment as resulting from the AAA sessions.

*I am happy when I know Morris is coming, I get excited [laughs] ... I like the time I get to spend with him because he makes me happy [pause] I feel happy when he visits ... I enjoy them. (Thato)*

*I like him, yoh, I like him, I do, I do, every time I see him, he's just happy to see me, I like that ja ... he makes me happy, I feel happy when he is here. (Yanela)*

*Morris made me feel good actually, when Morris was here [laughs] ... I feel good when I see Morris come, I say, oh, Morris is here, in the car, when I look at the door, say, oh, it's Morris that is here. (Nicole)*

In addition to feelings of happiness and joy, the female parolee participants reported that the visiting AAA dog made them feel good about themselves. This was spoken in relation to spending time with the visiting AAA dog, as a distraction from their boredom and a welcome source of company for the female parolees. Similarly, one of the house parents described the AAA sessions as being a form of therapy for the female parolee participants; that it makes them feel good about themselves.

*You know, I think, um, I think the visits, I, I enjoyed them, cause I, the reason they good for me, you see I get bored, I am often here alone but Morris, Morris is good, he makes me feel good inside, about myself ... he makes me feel happy, happy and good. (Candice)*

*I like to spend, I like spending time with Morris, with animals, you see, he makes me feel good about myself, he gives me, you know, [laughs] he makes me happy spending time with him. (Nicole)*

*It was nice having Morris here, it's good having him here ... because it's a therapy ... for the ladies, ja, it helped the ladies ... makes them feel good about themselves. (Mary)*

One of the female parolee participants further spoke about how, in interacting with the visiting AAA dog and receiving love from him, she has been able to start loving herself and just be herself, despite issues of family substance abuse and disturbance.

*So my, for my whole life, I didn't have that opportunity to be with animals because in my, [pause] um, childhood there was just my mother drinking and stuff like that and my father chasing us around and all that stuff so, [pause] I was grown up with that attitude ... of never finding love so but now, but now, with Morris, I'm, I'm having this kind of ways, like, I can start loving myself, like, I can be myself for once in a while. (Candice)*

The AAA sessions were further spoken about as favourably affecting the female parolees' mental well-being. According to the female parolee participants, through spending time with the visiting AAA dog, they were able to forget about any negative issues they had in their life and de-stress. In particular, one of the female parolees noted that she was able to calm her thought pattern as a result of the AAA sessions. This was reiterated by one house parent who reported diminished bad moods and stress levels among the female parolee participants.

*... playing with [Morris], forgetting about the other stuff, negative stuff, and to just focus now, like, playing with the, playing with the dog, it's, like, it spoke a lot to me ... (Thato)*

*Sometimes I can get a little bit of a hyper because normally, my brain ... every time I'm thinking too fast ... or I'm, I'm working myself up to a level, I'm getting sick ... so I must, my mind must relax and I mustn't stress and I'm thinking so much, so Morris helps with that. (Candice)*

*Ja, well, like, I say, they normally tense, like, bad mood ... on a Saturday especially and then ... after you have been ... they're much better ... they're happier, less stressed. (Karen)*

Alongside benefits to the participants' emotional and mental well-being, the AAA sessions were further described as boosting the female parolee participants' confidence and self-esteem. For the female parolee participants, increased confidence resulted from feelings of pride in personal achievement when they were

able to successfully conduct tricks with the visiting AAA dog, particularly the harder tricks.

*And when I got him to roll-over, you know, that first time I got him to fully roll-over and everyone said well-done ... I started thinking I could do this man, I can get him to do what I want ... it made me feel proud of myself. (Candice)*

*I think it helped me ... I began to feel more [pause] confident cause [um] I began to, like, I saw that I could do it, I could get him to do the tricks I wanted ... specially the hard tricks. (Thato)*

The female parolee participants further reported increases in confidence and self-esteem in other areas of their lives as a result of the AAA sessions. In particular, several of the female parolee participants noted feeling more confident in their day-to-day interactions.

*... sometimes I'm shy [pause] with people I don't know ... I feel more, you know, like confident. (Nicole)*

The PAT volunteer and the house parent participants further noted improvements in the female parolee participants' confidence and self-esteem. The PAT volunteer mentioned that increased confidence and self-esteem amongst the female parolee participants was demonstrated in the way they carried and conducted themselves as the sessions progressed.

*Their self-esteem, I think it did, I think it, it boosted their self-esteem, because, uh, most of those girls have very low self-esteem, and I think that, um, they had, like, a feel good feeling from him you ... you could, you could judge it by, by their reaction, the way they giggled sometimes, you know ... (Lorna)*

*I noticed from the visits, it boosted their confidence ... it helped with their self-esteem, you know, you could see they felt good about themselves ... it's given them a little bit more confidence ... (Karen)*

### 5.2.1.3 Social benefits

When speaking about the AAA sessions in the context of The Halfway House, the participants further reported certain social benefits as resulting from interacting with the visiting AAA dog. In particular, the participants described the development of communication between the female parolees, house parents, and volunteers as the primary social benefit of the AAA sessions, resulting in increased interaction between all these parties.

Through participation in the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House, communication between the female parolees developed. In enabling a space whereby the female parolee participants felt comfortable to open up about themselves and express their feelings, they noted that it became easier for them to talk amongst each other, as well as with the house parents and the volunteers.

*Uh, I'm not a talkative person but if there is a pet around me I feel very comfortable and to, like, to express my feelings ... (Thato)*

*The dog, he got us to speak together ... I was able to open up with the others ... (Nicole)*

The PAT volunteer and the house parents also described the AAA sessions as providing a social environment for the female parolees. In particular, the PAT volunteer noted that as the AAA sessions progressed, the female parolees became more social, which prompted them to open up about themselves more readily and joke around with each other.

*Communication did develop, they definitely started opening up more about themselves ... that was, that was very interesting to see because initially they were, they were shy ... the girls were quite shy, but I, I did find them coming out of themselves and, [pause] and also, um, showing a little bit of humour as well. (Lorna)*

*They all talk to each other, he definitely gets communication going. (Karen)*

Interacting with the visiting AAA dog further promoted communication and socialising once the sessions had finished for the day. The female parolee participants described

speaking amongst each other regarding the visiting AAA dog after he and the volunteers had left The Halfway House. One female parolee participant noted that she found it easier to talk to the other female parolees as she had a common topic of discussion.

*It helped me talk to the other ladies and stuff ... specially after they ended ... it gave me something to talk about with the other ladies ... (Thato)*

*You know we spoke about him we, we spoke after about him and we spoke to other people you know ... so he gave me, he gave us something to talk about. (Nicole)*

The house parents mentioned that they also observed the female parolees talking about and discussing the visiting AAA dog amongst themselves after the AAA sessions had finished and the volunteers had left for the day.

*And they laugh, and they talk about him, after you've gone ... they stand out here and have a cigarette and they'll laugh and talk about him. (Karen)*

*They will talk about it after it was here ... they would talk about him together. (Mary)*

Not only did the AAA sessions increase communication between the female parolee participants, but they also gave the female parolee participants something to talk about to their family and friends. One of the female parolee participants mentioned that she would always speak to her mom about the AAA sessions and the visiting AAA dog, as well as the possibility of the female parolees getting a dog for The Halfway House.

*We spoke about the visits afterwards ... I would speak to ma about the visits always ... I mean, like, I always told Ma, when you're gone, I say to her she must give us a dog like Morris [laughs] ... I just talk about him, normally I talk to her and always talk about Morris and when are we seeing him again. (Candice)*

Importantly, the visiting AAA dog was described as being the catalyst or icebreaker in order for the participants to speak amongst each other and subsequently, develop rapport with each other. The female parolee participants, as well as the house parents



and the PAT volunteer, all spoke about the visiting AAA dog as fostering communication between the participants; that his presence facilitated the social nature of the AAA sessions.

*It really did help me talk to the other women and you because I often do my own thing but like when he was here, I spoke about him, I spoke to others about him, almost like over him, you know. (Thato)*

*I think it, it's the dog because the dog is the catalyst in getting [communication] going ... the dog's definitely the catalyst, cause he opens the door for you ... (Lorna)*

*... he was the icebreaker ... with him there you could see that he got them talking and interacting [pause] with each other but also with us ... he broke the ice, they started talking because of the dog but afterwards it just became more natural ... (Karen)*

AAA as a proponent in the development of the female parolee participants' communication abilities is reiterated by the one house parent mentioning that the participating female parolees refuse to talk to other outside volunteers. She noted that despite a wide variety of volunteer initiatives that have been held at The Halfway House, it is only during the AAA sessions that the female parolee participants have interacted with, spoken to, and laughed with volunteers holding sessions at The Halfway House.

*Whereas when other people come ... they don't open their mouths ... I promise you, you can sit and they will not open their mouth, they will sit and, like, people will come for bible study ... or Cornerstone come ... they did a big thing, they never opened their mouth [pause] they just looked at them and they said, "do you want to talk" and then no, they didn't want to talk... ja, but when you're here, they talk, they laugh ... talk between each other, ja. (Karen)*

Moreover, according to the house parent participants, in the participants' interacting and communicating with the visiting AAA dog during the AAA sessions, they learnt communication skills for interacting with other individuals outside of the AAA sessions. One house parent noted that in aiding in the development of communication skills, the

female parolee participants are able to become more connected with other human beings.

*The sessions are good cause there was communication between people ... Morris showed them that you can have communication with an animal, so there, it, so it teaches you ... to become more connected with a human, with your own, your own kind. (Mary)*

#### 5.2.1.4 Other benefits

Alongside the physical, psychological, and social benefits of AAA, the participants further noted various other benefits as resulting from the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House. These additional beneficial effects included developed patience, enhanced empathy, and an increase of pro-social behaviours among the female parolee participants'.

During the course of the data collection, the participants' noted that through interacting with the visiting AAA dog, they developed increased patience. In particular, all four of the female parolee participants described that in order to positively interact with the visiting AAA dog; to get him to play and do tricks with them, it became necessary for them to be patient.

*With Morris, it was important to just be patient with him, when you wanted him to do something or in the beginning when we were learning how to do tricks with him, it was important to be patient ... He showed me to be patient, he showed me I need to be patient with him. (Thato)*

*Um I learnt, I learnt that with the dog you need to wait, you must give the dog time to get used to you, your presence, so he knows what you want him to do, tricks you want him to do, cause if you go to quickly he get confused, he didn't know what you're doing, so, ja, I just learnt that I need to, um, what's it called, I just needed to be ... patient, ja, mmm, patient ... (Nicole)*

The female parolees displaying improved patience was further witnessed by the house parent participants and was described by them in the interviews. Both house parent participants reported that the female parolees, who are not always patient by nature,

having to learn to wait, go slow, and be patient in order to get the visiting AAA dog to perform the way they wanted him to.

*... they had to learn how to act with him ... they learnt to go slow, to be patient with him, only then would he do what they wanted. (Mary)*

*It was interesting, it was interesting because [pause] they had to learn to wait, to be patient, at first they wanted Morris to, they are often impatient ... they want things to happen straight away, but they had to learn with Morris, if they wanted him to do something [pause] they had to ... wait, be patient, and then slowly he would start interacting with them, then he would do the tricks. (Karen)*

The female parolee participants further noted the importance of having patience in their day-to-day interactions. One of the female parolee participants described coming to the realisation that in learning to have patience with the visiting AAA dog, she could just as easily be patient with other people as well.

*And I think if we have patience with dogs ... like learning that with Morris ... I think that we can also have patience with other people, if you have that patience, I can have it with other people you know, when you see them. (Nicole)*

When speaking about the AAA sessions, the participants also described developing feelings of empathy and sympathy for other living things. In particular, the female parolees' began to re-think how they behaved towards and treated animals as opposed to how they treated their pets in the past. One female parolee participant noted that although in the past she would not even deal with her pet cat because it scratched her, she now realises that animals re-act to how you treat them. Similarly, another female parolee participant, who reported being abusive to her pet dogs while growing up, mentioned that she is no longer abusive towards animals as she doesn't like seeing the visiting AAA dog going through pain.

*I only had a cat growing up at home, we had a cat but it, it wasn't nice, when I went to say hi it would scratch me, man, you know, so after that I wouldn't even deal with it, I just left it ... But with Morris ... it made me think, mmm, it*

*made me think how to treat him, so, I, I think it's how to treat animals, how to play with them and talk to them ... (Candice)*

*Um [pause] it [clears throat] like [pause] I was sometimes ... I was abusive to my, to my animals ... when I, when maybe I get cross ... and stuff like that, but wha- with Morris I felt that I, I don't have that anymore ... it's different now, I don't like him going through pain. (Nicole)*

The house parent participants re-affirmed this development. They described the female parolee participants as gaining a new perspective on animals, namely that animals also have feelings, just like people.

*One thing that I noticed was that a lot of them had pets growing up, but they were maybe quite abusive to their pets ... tied them up, and of course their dads used to whack them ... I think that they, they didn't realise that animals have feelings ... like we feel, like they actually feel pain, they just think ... it's a dog, it's a sheep, so we strap it to the top of the bus, you know ... Or put it in the boot or whatever, it doesn't feel ... but with Morris that changed, they started feeling sorry for other animals if they were in pain and even people, they seemed to sympathise more ... (Karen)*

*They learnt that, um, [pause] that, that the animals have feelings ... um, [pause] the type of person that does love animals ... what kind of person that is ... that loves animals ... that they should be that person. (Mary)*

Another benefit that emerged during the course of the interviews included the development of pro-social behaviours. Many of the participants noted that through interacting with the visiting AAA dog, they became more inclined to help, love, and care for others. In other words, the interaction they experienced with the visiting AAA dog offered them a template as to how to treat others in their day-to-day lives. One of the female parolee participants noted that the visiting AAA dog taught them to be friendly with others, even strangers, while another female parolee reported that she would like to make others feel good, just as the visiting AAA dog had made her feel.

*With Morris ... we learnt to be friendly with other people, even when we don't know them. (Nicole)*

*It made me feel good inside, so now I'm doing that with others, so when they see me, they also feel good inside. (Yanela)*

*I think, um, Morris showed me [pause] he showed me ho- I saw how I wanted to treat others, like he treats me. (Thato)*

*And it also make them think that ... if I can treat Morris like that, I can also be that with other people ... cause if treat them, if you treat an animal, you will know how to treat a person ... Ja, you will know how to treat person ... (Candice)*

In the participants developing a loving bond with the visiting AAA dog, they realised they could afford the same love to other people. Several of the female parolee participants mentioned that through interacting with and showing love to the visiting AAA dog, it made them realise how easy and simple it would be to give back and look after other individuals.

*I do love Morris now and it even made me think more, so, ja, [pause] to be there for the people, ja, to be there for other people like I am for him, you know ... if I can love him, then I should love others easier. (Candice)*

*Now I love Morris and I see all animals can give to you I think we must give back, we must look after animals and people, if a dog can love you, you can love others, it's simple. (Thato)*

*If I have love for him, then I can have love for other dogs, other people. (Nicole)*

Alongside providing love for others, the participants also spoke about caring for others. One female parolee participant noted that if you can show care for the visiting AAA dog, you should be able to show care for others, while one of the house parent participants reported that you should be there for animal just as you would be for another individual.

*You know, when you can show care for him, show care for the dog, you can care for a human, you know, how to care for a human you know, it shows you how to care for others ... (Candice)*

*... Morris, I think I think an animal should be with someone ... someone is caring for the dog ... it's like a human, you should care for a human ... You know, a, like, um, just caring for them ... be there for the animal, like you would be there for someone. (Mary)*

## **5.2.2 Participants' personal experiences of AAA**

When speaking about the AAA sessions that took place at The Halfway House, the participants interviewed not only mentioned the benefits they received from interacting with the visiting AAA dog, but also their own personal experiences of the AAA sessions. The four sub-themes of discussion included: the AAA sessions being a fun and entertaining activity for the participants to engage in, the AAA sessions facilitating shared connections to occur between participants, the participants' experiencing the AAA sessions as a reminder of home, and lastly, feedback from the participants' regarding the AAA sessions. The sub-themes will now be discussed.

### *5.2.2.1 Fun and entertaining*

The participants, when speaking about their own personal experiences of the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House, described the fun and entertaining nature of the AAA sessions. This was spoken about in relation to the visiting AAA dog providing the participants with a source of playful interaction, as well as stemming from the camaraderie they experienced as a result of the AAA sessions.

All four of the female parolee participants' spoke about the AAA sessions as being enjoyable and fun. One female parolee participant noted that the AAA sessions offered her something to do, while another female parolee mentioned that the AAA sessions helped in keeping her mind busy.

*I enjoy Morris, I enjoy when he comes, it's something to do, it's fun ... It's fun when Morris comes and visits ... (Nicole)*

*When Morris comes it's good, it's fun with him, I enjoy time with him cause he, like, keeps my mind busy. (Thato)*

According to the female parolee participants, the pleasurable nature of the AAA sessions stemmed, in part, from the playful interaction they received from interacting

with the visiting AAA dog. In particular, playing and doing tricks with the visiting AAA dog, as well as watching him do tricks were described by the female parolee participants as the main source of entertainment during the AAAs.

*Um [pause] that, that play with the dog, I liked that, that was fun, doing the tricks you know, learning how, um, to do, um, to do tricks with the dog was fun, ja, I enjoyed that. (Candice)*

*I learnt tricks too, that was fun, I liked watching the dog do the tricks, I liked when he would roll over and sit on his bum ... you must know that was fun for me. (Yanela)*

This fits in with the PAT volunteer's main goal of what she hoped to achieve through the AAA sessions, namely to offer a fun activity to engage in. The PAT volunteer described showing the participants' tricks to do with the visiting AAA dog and bringing treats for them to give to him, all in the aim of making sure the visits were enjoyable.

*I think it's also about making the visits fun, bringing different treats for Morry, that the girls can give, showing them different tricks ... you know, just making sure the visit is fun that ... they all enjoy the visits ... and what's nice is now ... there's a feeling of warmth ... this feeling of warmth and homeliness. (Lorna)*

Alongside the female parolee participants experiencing the AAA sessions as an entertaining activity, they also described the AAA sessions as taking place in a fun environment. As noted by the female parolee participants, they laughed and joked amongst each other during the AAA sessions, even when they weren't interacting with the visiting AAA dog.

*It was nice having him ... it was nice having Morris here [pause] but also, like, we all had fun together, even when I wasn't playing with him it was fun. (Thato)*

*I did enjoy Morris, it was nice when he came but I also liked the visits cause I got to have, you know, we all sat around together and joked and stuff ... they were just fun man. (Candice)*



The AAA sessions promoting a sense of camaraderie amongst the participating female parolees was reiterated by the house parents. According to them, as the AAA sessions progressed, the focus shifted from solely interacting with the visiting AAA dog to the female parolee participants just having fun together and enjoying each other.

*The ladies enjoyed the sessions ... you could see they had fun ... not just cause of Morris [pause] I think he started it [pause] but by the end it was just a fun place to be in. (Karen)*

*... you know, one thing, one thing I saw was the more you visit [pause] they changed ... at, at first they would just play with Morris ... but the more you visited they started having fun together, not just with Morris. (Mary)*

#### 5.2.2.2 Shared connections

During the course of the interviews, it emerged that many of the participants' viewed the AAA sessions as offering them a chance to come together as a group. In bringing the participants' together, the AAA sessions facilitated the occurrence of various connections between the female parolees, as well as between the female parolees and the house parents and PAT volunteer.

The participants making shared connections with one another was a prominent aspect of the AAA sessions. All of the female parolee participants spoke about the AAA sessions as giving them a space to talk amongst each other and spend time together. The female parolee participants noted feeling closer with one another as a result of the AAA sessions.

*We all sit around and talk and just spend time together. (Nicole)*

*From the visits ... we close together now, closer with each other ... (Yanela)*

*It brought us together, I feel closer with the others now ... like, I feel like I know them better now ... (Thato)*

The AAA sessions offering the female participants a space to develop shared experiences with one another was important as only they can truly relate with each other regarding the struggles and life challenges that they have been through. While



the female parolees have external supports in the form of family and friends, they cannot always discuss the issues they go through with them.

*... I go to college and, um, I, like, [pause] I don't really like telling people about my past ... I can't tell them cause they'll view me differently ... but Morris helped with that cause I started to feel more comfortable, like, to express my feelings ... (Thato)*

*I speak to Ma, she worries about me, she doesn't like me being on my own here ... but somethings I can't talk to Ma about ... so I enjoy the visits, just talking to the others and stuff, you know. (Candice)*

The house parents and the PAT volunteer also noted feeling closer with the female parolee participants as a result of the AAA sessions. According to them, the AAA sessions being informal and feeling like a normal family home, promoted rapport between all the participants'.

*It also brings us together ... we all sit together and spend some quality time together ... we do chat together also but when Morris is here it's better ... it just made me more to think to spend time with the ladies and just chat with them. (Mary)*

*I think the informal thing ... you know, and that they were able to talk and just spend time together ... they talk with each other ... even with us they talk more, they interact with us more ... and they laugh and they, feel they can get up and go pour a glass of water and then come back. (Karen)*

*We all chat as ordinary people, sitting in the, in the lounge, having coffee and cake, chatting about all sorts of things, it, it feels more normal to them ... it's just like a normal family home ... and I think that's helped a lot. (Lorna)*

A practical example of the AAA sessions enabling shared connections to occur between the participants' included two participants, a female parolee and the PAT volunteer, each re-counting a story whereby they came to the realisation that the PAT volunteer knew where the female parolee participant grew up and worked. The female parolee participant noted that it was the visiting AAA dog that initiated this conversation

and gave them a starting point upon which to make this connection, while the PAT volunteer spoke about this realisation as being a nice breakthrough.

*... I spoke to that lady ... I spoke to her and she knows where I come from, she knows Vredenburg, um, Langebaan, and where I worked and all that, [pause] so she gave me, she gave us something to talk about. (Nicole)*

*A nice breakthrough was with Nicole ... you know, when I said to her, oh, you worked at that little fish and chip shop, that's right ... and I said, oh, I know where it is, ja ... that little girl from Langebaan ... that was rather sweet, because she was so quiet and shy when we arrived, and then she was talking and laughing by the time we left ... which was very nice. (Lorna)*

### 5.2.2.3 Reminder of home

Many of the participants interviewed expressed the importance of the AAA sessions as providing them with a reminder of home. All the participants noted having pets growing up. While several of them reported having a troubled relationship with their pets at home, all of them spoke about the AAA sessions as reminding them of their past and their family.

During the interviews, the female parolee participants reported that the AAA sessions and the visiting AAA dog brought up memories of their home life growing up and their pets. One of the female parolee participants mentioned that in playing with the visiting AAA dog, this reminder became more apparent, while another female parolee participant stated that the AAA sessions reminded her of spending time with her father when she was young.

*It reminded me of my dog that I had, my two dogs ... With Morris ... I was kinda missing my, my dogs ... yes, it did remind me of home [pause] it remind me of home like it remind me of when I was younger, you know... (Nicole)*

*That time I was young, my father, he used to have dogs, big dogs, [pause] Morris reminds me of spending time with my father and his dogs, he's like them ... he doesn't look like them but he reminds me of home ... (Yanela)*

*I wasn't very close with my dogs at home, they were just there, you know ... with Morris, when I started playing with him, it just brought back a lot of memories of home ... it made me miss home. (Thato)*

The female parolee participants further mentioned that the reminder of home that they received from the AAA sessions was important as many of them have not seen their families for an extended period of time. One of the female parolee participants reported that although her aunt sometimes visits her, the visiting AAA dog helps her ease the uncertainty of when she will see her family and dogs at home again.

*My family lives in Vredenburg, but it's far, it's tricky, my family don't visit me, only my aunt [pause] so the visits help, Morris is good ... it helps cause I don't know when I will when I will see my dogs again [pause] I don't know when I will see them, when I will see my family, you know, [pause] my family hasn't, my family doesn't really visit me, it's far ... (Nicole)*

*The visits, [pause] Morris reminded me of home ... it made me sad but it was also good cause I couldn't go home for a long time [pause] I was scared of the community ... cause they were angry at me for what I did, I was scared they might hurt me or attack me ... so having that, Morris reminding me of my family, was good for me ... (Thato)*

#### 5.2.2.4 Feedback

Throughout the interviews, the participants also gave feedback regarding the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House. This feedback included whether they thought the AAA sessions were helpful or not, if any aspects should be changed or could be improved upon, and how often the AAA sessions should occur.

When giving feedback on the AAA sessions, the participants spoke about the AAA sessions being as a useful and valuable activity. The female parolee participants interviewed described the AAA sessions as being helpful to them and expressed a desire for the AAA sessions to continue indefinitely. One of the house parent participants also noted the AAA sessions as benefiting the participating female parolees.

*I found them helpful ... I want them to carry on, I hope they carry on ...*

(Nicole)

*Yoh, I enjoyed the visit, I enjoyed when he came to visit ... cause [pause]*

*cause they helped ... ja, I think they helped me. (Yanela)*

*... I could see that the ladies also enjoyed the sessions ... also, you know, I*

*think they help them, thinking back you can see how they benefit the ladies*

*... there's just been big improvements in their behaviour... (Karen)*

Feedback was also given regarding whether the AAA sessions should be changed or could be improved in any way. The female parolee participants reported, for the most part, that they would like the AAA sessions to remain the same, that there was no way in which they thought that the AAA sessions could be improved upon. However, one of the female parolee participants did mention that she would like them to be slightly longer in duration.

*... I don't think they need to change, there was nothing I didn't like about*

*them ... no, they should stay the same. (Nicole)*

*Nothing [pause] there was nothing that I thought could be improved upon*

*[pause] I mean, maybe they could be here a bit longer but that's all, no,*

*nothing ... (Thato)*

Many of the participants interviewed also mentioned that they would prefer if the visiting AAA dog visited once a week as opposed to the fortnightly programme that the volunteers were following at the time. One of the female parolees and a house parent participant reported that they felt that it would be more beneficial for those participating if the AAA sessions were held on a once-weekly basis.

*You know, I enjoyed the visits ... I always want Morris around, he helps me,*

*he should come every week ... I would like him to visit us every week.*

(Candice)

*... I think the visits are good ... I think they love it ... I mean, it's good how*

*we doing it now ... every second week or so ... But I think it would be better,*

*it would help the ladies more if it was every week ... (Mary)*

### 5.2.3 Participants' reactions towards the visiting AAA dog

The participants, when speaking about their experiences of the AAA sessions, often spoke about their reactions towards the visiting AAA dog. The two main areas of discussion surrounded the participants' initial reactions when first meeting the visiting AAA dog, as well as their subsequent reactions as the AAA sessions progressed and they developed a bond with the visiting AAA dog. These sub-themes will now be discussed in more depth.

#### 5.2.3.1 Initial reactions

Many of the participants, when speaking about their experiences of the AAA sessions, described their original responses towards the visiting AAA dog. This discussion revolved around the participants describing how they perceived the visiting AAA dog, as well as the emotions that he elicited in their response towards him.

For the female parolee participants, upon first meeting the visiting AAA dog, they initially felt weary of him. One of the female parolee participants mentioned being hesitant to interact with the visiting AAA dog as she was worried that he may bite her. In the female parolees' own words, they described their initial reactions towards the visiting AAA dog as being "nervous" or "scared".

*He scared me ... I didn't want to stroke him, I thought he might bite me. (Thato)*

*I was a little nervous at first, I was little scared of him. (Nicole)*

*When I first saw him he gave me a fright. (Candice)*

The house parents and the PAT volunteer who supervised the AAA sessions also noted the female parolees' initial uneasiness towards the visiting AAA dog. One of the house parents recounted a story whereby she witnessed one of the female parolees, who had never previously met the visiting AAA dog, getting a shock when he excitedly ran to greet this new person.

*Candice too, when she came home the one day ... and she came in [laughs] and Morris ... went running down the passage to greet her and she*

*screamed and she ran in here and slammed the door ... and she's screaming ... saying this dog is going to kill me ... (Karen)*

*The one that sticks in my mind the most is Thato ... she was [pause] so withdrawn and shy ... and when she came out, she was so scared of Morry ... and that tall lady, very tall, thin lady ... she was so scared of Morry in the beginning ... she was terrified of him. (Lorna)*

These initial reactions stemmed, in part, from the breed of the visiting AAA dog, namely that he was a bull terrier. This apprehension due to the breed of the visiting AAA dog was described by a female parolee participant and one of the house parent participants.

*No, I was scared because Morris, I used to know those dogs like, dogs like Morris ... they like to bite, yoh ... I was very scared. (Yanela)*

*At first, when I saw him, I thought ... you know, those kind of dogs ... bad mooded ... like, aloof, you know ... not really interested in people. (Karen)*

Alongside participants speaking about feeling uneasy at the outset of the AAA sessions, the female parolee participants displayed disinterest towards the visiting AAA dog. One of the female parolee participants reported not being interested in taking part in the AAA sessions initially as she did not like animals. This links with the PAT volunteer who stated that several of the female parolees originally were uninterested in the visiting AAA dog.

*The first time I see Morris I was, like, thinking [pause] I'm not, I'm not into this dog, man ... At first I didn't like animals. (Candice)*

*Initially ... some of them didn't show much interest. (Lorna)*

### 5.2.3.2 Subsequent reactions

As the sessions progressed and the participants spent more time with the visiting AAA dog, their initial reactions began to change. This change was highlighted by many of the participants speaking about their subsequent perceptions of the visiting AAA dog and how they began to view him more favourably as they developed a bond with him.

When speaking about their reactions towards the visiting AAA dog, the participants described a process whereby they began to warm up to him. In particular, the PAT volunteer reported that through explaining to the female parolees that the visiting AAA dog was a specially trained therapy dog and giving them instructions how to interact with, play with, and do tricks with him, they felt more settled and started to interact with him.

*You start off very slowly ... you explain that he is a little therapy dog, that he wouldn't be there if he wasn't properly trained and qualified ... you chat to them and just say, would you like to touch the dog ... slowly start interacting with them, and those who are nervous, you say to them, would you like to give him a treat, and then you show them how it's done. (Lorna)*

Gradually, the female parolees began to feel more comfortable in the visiting AAA dog's presence as he won their trust. All four of the female parolee participants noted that as they started to get to know him better through interacting with him, they began to realise he did not pose a threat towards them, that he was properly trained. Through increased interaction, one of the female parolee participants described started falling in love with him.

*So afterwards when I try to know, to know him better, I'm, like ... I kind of like this dog, he, he's so sweet and he's trained well and he can do stuff and [pause] he's a nice dog so for, for my side, I'm starting to fall in love with him ... (Candice)*

*The more I spent time with him, did tricks, play with him, I wasn't afraid anymore ... I don't think he will bite me anymore, I felt safe around him cause I trusted him. (Thato)*

The house parents also noted observing this progression. According to them, the more the female parolees spent time with the visiting AAA dog, the more comfortable and at ease they became interacting with, stroking, and petting him.

*The more he interacted with them and they began to realise that he did not pose a threat to them ... slowly you started to see this progression where they began to feel more comfortable around him ... at ease with him. (Karen)*

*First, you could see, they were so scared of him ... the one lady didn't even want to be in the same room as him ... but after time she came and sat on the couch with us ... and she actually touched him, she stroked him ... that was sweet to watch ... now they all love him. (Mary)*

Following this change in perception, the female parolee participants began viewing the visiting AAA dog in a more favourable manner. This led to the female parolee participants becoming attached to the visiting AAA dog and developing what they described as a close and loving bond with him.

*The more I spent time with Morris, um, like, I got attached to him. (Thato)*

*I wasn't so scared of him anymore ... cause, you know, that love and understanding that they give you ... the bond that I have with him. (Nicole)*

The PAT volunteer and house parent participants' also witnessed this transition whereby the female parolee's developed warm feelings towards the visiting AAA dog. They described the female parolee's delight when the visiting AAA dog came to visit, as well as the enjoyment that they personally received from watching the female parolees develop a bond with the visiting AAA dog.

*But they warmed up to him the, the more we visited, the more they warmed up and, um, it was quite nice to see their response, that, you know, at the latter part of our visits, when it would be, hello Morry ... Morry's come to visit us ... (Lorna)*

*The girls love him ... you can see the bond they have with him now, it's just lovely to watch ... you know, I think Candice even got ... a photograph, um, of her and Morris ... Ja, they do love him. (Karen)*

*I think the ladies were chuffed with Morris ... we had a lady here ... she was so looking out if Morris comes, she will still sit flat on her backside ... she would just enjoy Morris ... Morris would come to near her and she would play with Morris ... (Mary)*



## 5.2.4 Participants' perceptions of the visiting AAA dog

The fourth and final theme that emerged from the data included the participants' perceptions of the visiting AAA dog. When speaking about the AAA sessions, the participants interviewed undoubtedly mentioned their own personal thoughts regarding the visiting AAA dog. In particular, this conversation surrounded the participants perceiving the visiting AAA dog as being caring towards them, being accepting of them, able to sense their emotions, and being a good listener to them. These sub-themes will now be reported further.

### 5.2.4.1 Caring

Many of the participants, when speaking about their own personal perceptions of the visiting AAA dog, mentioned their perceptions of him as being caring towards them. This conversation revolved around several of the participants, particularly the female parolee participants, speaking about what they felt they received from the visiting AAA dog in terms of support.

During the interviews, the female parolee participants described the visiting AAA dog as providing them with a source of compassion; they felt that he cared for and loved them. One of the female parolee participants likened this support given to her by the visiting AAA dog to that of a human.

*What I saw was, like, Morris shows me care ... like a human, he cares for you and loves you ... (Candice)*

*With Morris, what he does, I think he's good, he's good to me, I think animals help people, just to be there, care, and love ... (Nicole)*

This assertion was supported by the PAT volunteer and the house parent participants. According to them, the visiting AAA dog's ability to show the female parolees care and interest in them was vastly important to their well-being.

*I think those girls have deep hidden feelings and it's just to, to let it come out in the right way because ... they probably don't know for themselves ... but just to have someone care about them and be interested in them, I think that's what Morry gave them, just to show interest in them. (Lorna)*

*I think that's the important thing, just for them to know someone cares, even if it's from a dog ... cause that's what he does, he just cares for them and lets them know that ... (Karen)*

#### 5.2.4.2 Accepting

Alongside the participants viewing the visiting AAA dog as a source of care, they further perceived him as being accepting of them; a source of unconditional acceptance and love. The visiting AAA dog offering the participants acceptance was spoken about in relation to the reassurance and comfort that the visiting AAA dog was able to provide them.

The visiting AAA dog was perceived by certain of the female parolee participants as offering them non-judgemental approval. One of the female parolee participants mentioned that she could be herself around the visiting AAA dog, while another female parolee participant noted how refreshing it was that visiting AAA dog did not judge her negatively due to her past crime.

*I like the way he just liked me for me ... I didn't have to, I didn't have to, you know, be someone else ... he just liked me for me. (Thato)*

*He was happy with me, normal ... you know how some people are, he wasn't like that you know ... sometimes people think you're bad cause what you done. (Yanela)*

Through this, the visiting AAA dog gave the female parolee participants unconditional love. The PAT volunteer participant described this as the visiting AAA dog showing the female parolees love regardless of who they are or what they had done.

*They, they did learn ... they learnt about ... unconditional love from the dog ... totally non-judgemental, he liked them for who they were ... (Lorna)*

Alongside unconditional acceptance and love, the visiting AAA dog gave the female parolee participants comfort, offering them reassurance that everything will be fine, that the visiting AAA dog would never turn his back on them.

*I enjoyed him cause, cause in the way that he lets you know it will be ok even when you done wrong, he still let you know it will be ok you know [pause] like let you know everything is alright ... (Nicole)*

*He lets you know everything is fine, nothing bad is going to happen and if something bad happens he will still be there ... (Thato)*

#### 5.2.4.3 Senses emotions

The visiting AAA dog was perceived by many of the participants as being able to sense emotions. This discussion surrounded the notion that the visiting AAA dog could understand his human-counterparts implicitly, thereby offering the participants a space to be understood without the need to speak.

For the female parolee participants, the visiting AAA dog held a capability to intuit moods and sense how an individual is feeling. The female parolee participants described this as the visiting AAA dog's ability to know what is in their hearts.

*He gives something else, he gives you what some humans don't ... ja, he know what's in your heart, ja. (Nicole)*

*But the dog feels you, yoh he understands what's in your heart, in your heart, yes ... you don't need to tell him, he just know. (Yanela)*

The visiting AAA dog's ability to sense emotions in the participants was further reported by the house parent participants. One house parent noted the visiting AAA dog's skill for picking up moods; knowing subliminally if his human counterparts either needed space or comfort.

*I think Morris helped them, I mean I think they found it easy to be with him cause [um] he could sense what they were feeling ... you know, like, pick up moods ... he played with them when they were happy, left them alone when they were bad mooded, you know, like tense [pause], comforted them when they were sad ... so ja, he sensed them and I think that helped them ... (Karen)*

*Morris, I think ... is actually more like a human, because why, they understand ... when you have a good relationship with animals, they can feel*

*it, they have the touch of you, they can feel that there is something here.*

(Mary)

#### 5.2.4.4 Good listener

During the interviews, not only did the participants perceive the visiting AAA dog as being able to implicitly intuit emotions, but it further emerged that the participants perceived the visiting AAA dog as being a good listener. Many of the participants described the visiting AAA dog as listening to them, an occurrence that is not always afforded to them in their day-to-day lives.

Through the female parolees' dialogue, it was noted that the visiting AAA dog offered them a space to talk freely regarding their stories, their issues, or just general conversation. One of the female parolee participants mentioned that she felt better once she had confided in the visiting AAA dog.

*I think he's a good listener ... I think that too ... when we talked, he listened ... that dog listened ... (Yanela)*

*I like that he listens to me ... I can talk to him and he will listen ... after I feel good, it makes me feel better. (Candice)*

The visiting AAA dog was further described as being a good listener due to his ability to respond to instructions given by the female parolee participants, even though he was not trained by them. Two of the female parolee participants mentioned the satisfaction they felt when the visiting AAA dog responded to instructions set by them, such as sitting and rolling over.

*He listens, I like that he listens to me, so I can do tricks with him, when I say come, he comes, when I say roll-over, he does, so, ja, I like that. (Thato)*

*I was thinking, no, but why will he listen to me ... but afterwards I see, oh ... I like it when he's doing the stuff I want him to do. (Candice)*

In line with the female parolee participants describing the visiting AAA dog as following instructions given to him by them, the house parent participants also reported this occurrence.

*Um, he will listen when you say, first sit, you don't just feed him ... you first say, sit Morris, and then he will go sit. (Mary)*

*It's sweet hey, it's lovely to watch, when they tell him to do something, like sit or whatever, he does it and you can see how chuffed they are with that. (Karen)*

The importance of the visiting AAA dog being good listener was highlighted by the fact that certain participants noted that not everyone listens to them. One of the female parolee participants noted that she enjoyed having the visiting AAA dog listen to her without the need to shout or repeat herself. Similarly, one of the house parent participants mentioned that they sometimes felt that an animal, like the visiting AAA dog, listens more than human beings.

*It's nice cause he listens, he listens to me [pause] not everyone listens, you know, you have to shout, shout so people will listen sometimes ... (Candice)*

*He listens and he, and sometimes you think that animal even listen more than the human. You know, sometimes you will talk 10 times with the human, [laughs] and you don't talk so much with the animal ... (Mary)*

### **5.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The thematic analysis and interpretation of the semi-structured interviews revealed four main themes with regard to AAA within the context of The Halfway House. These themes included the perceived benefits of the AAA, participants' personal experiences of the AAA sessions, participants' reactions towards the visiting AAA dog, and lastly, participants' perceptions of the visiting AAA dog. Each of these themes, and their relating sub-themes, have been outlined and substantiated through the means of direct quotations from the collected data.

Chapter 6 will reflect on the findings of the present research. This will include a discussion of the research participants and the theoretical framework guiding the present research. The findings will then be discussed in relation to the existing literature surrounding this topic of investigation.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

Previous investigations have explored the use of AAAs amongst numerous populations and within a wide range of institutional, correctional, and rehabilitation settings. The focus of the present research was on the experience of AAA within the context of a halfway facility. It intended to gain insight into the female parolee's experience of the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House from three participant perspectives: (a) the female parolee's, (b) the house parent's, and (c) the PAT volunteer's.

In Chapter 5, the findings of the present research were reported. Four main themes emerged during the thematic analysis and interpretation phase of the present research: the perceived benefits of AAA, the participants' personal experiences of AAA, the participants' reactions towards the visiting AAA dog, and the participants' perceptions of the visiting AAA dog.

The present chapter will reflect on the findings of the present research. It will provide a discussion of the participants', specifically the female parolee participants, in light of the literature surrounding issues commonly faced by female offenders. Following this, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) will be highlighted and examples from the present research will be provided to illustrate how the principles of this theoretical framework were implicit within the AAA programme held at The Halfway House. Finally, the four key themes and their relating sub-themes that were identified from the collected data will be verified against and supported by the existing literature.

#### **6.2 DISCUSSION OF THE PARTICIPANTS**

The present research included a sample of seven participants; four of which were females on parole. Despite each of the female parolee participants originating from different contextual backgrounds, they each possess certain characteristics and face various challenges that are inherent among female offenders within the South African context (Artz et al., 2012; Cilliers & Smit, 2007; Muntingh, 2012). The following section

will briefly outline the similarities present between the female parolee participants and the South African female correctional population group.

Each of the female parolee participants highlighted numerous practical challenges and reintegration issues commonly faced by females on parole in South Africa (Artz et al., 2012; Cilliers & Smit, 2007; Muntingh, 2012; PRI, 2015; Walmsley, 2014; Williams-Queen, 2014). This is initially demonstrated in the fact that the offence dynamics for each of the female parolee participants are consistent with those outlined by the DCS (2016). Specifically, three of them served sentences for economic crimes, petty theft, fraud, and house-breaking, resulting from drug abuse (DCS, 2016). In addition, one of the female parolee participants served a sentence for an aggressive crime, culpable homicide, as a response to continued abuse by a male (Agboola, 2014; Muntingh, 2008).

All of the female parolees reported coming from impoverished backgrounds, growing up in low-socio-economic areas, and having a low level of education. They also reported concerns regarding their employment opportunities; two were currently struggling to find work and the other two were unsure if they would be able to find work once they had completed their studies. These issues of poverty, unemployment, and inadequate education are consistent with the literature surrounding female offenders (Artz et al., 2012; Cilliers & Smit, 2007; McAree, 2011; Muntingh, 2012; Walmsley, 2014).

Several of the female parolee participants also reported not being able to see their families for extended periods of time, as well as an inability and/or weariness to return home due to fear of community backlash. Diminished and inadequate social support, as well as general unacceptance by the family system and the wider community are consistently reported within the literature as common issues faced among females on parole (Albertus, 2010; Langa & Masuku, 2015). This inability to return home led several of the female parolee participants to express concerns about accommodation once they would have to leave the safety and support of The Halfway House. Post-incarceration, a large percentage of the female correctional population faces homelessness due to severed ties with the family and an inability to adequately support themselves financially (Makarios et al., 2010; Walmsley, 2014; Williams-Queen, 2014). Regarding a lack of employment and housing opportunities, the female

parolees spoke about issues of stigmatisation and discrimination as being the most predominant factors causing issues of unemployment and homelessness. This is supported by the literature, which highlights that female offenders, in contrast to their male counterparts, face higher levels of stigmatisation and discrimination (Borzycki & Baldry, 2003; UNDAW, 2000). The literature reports that discrimination and stigmatisation of female offenders exacerbates the already prevalent economic and social disabilities faced by female offenders (Albertus, 2010; Langa & Masuku, 2015).

All of the female parolee participants further noted having family issues and a history of physical and/or sexual abuse in their home life, as well as coming from broken homes. The literature supports this claim as research has found a disproportionate number of female offenders having experience some form of sexual and/or physical abuse in their life time, as well as coming from a disruptive and un-nurturing family life and broken homes (Agnew, 2005; Bahr et al., 2010; Belknap, 2015; Haffejee et al., 2005; Manjoo, 2013).

Three of the female parolee participants also noted having a history of drug abuse and two reported having family members who had substance abuse issues. Among the female correctional population, substance abuse is rife (DCS, 2012; McAree, 2011; UNDAW, 2000). Research has found that the majority of female offenders have some form of substance dependency, which most often stems from escapism behaviour and/or a family history of drug and/or alcohol abuse (McAree, 2011; OSF-SA, 2008; UNODC, 2014).

### **6.3 DISCUSSION OF THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the female parolees' ecological system is comprised of five separate socially organised sub-systems; the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem, and the chronosystem (as outlined in Figure 3.1). These sub-systems, or structures, are nested within one another, ranging from the innermost level, which corresponds with the female parolee's most immediate environment, to the outermost level, which corresponds with the female parolee's most extended, exterior environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Through the utilisation of these various sub-systems, this theoretical perspective enables a deeper understanding of the effect AAA can potentially have on the female



parolee's immediate and wider environment, as well as on the female parolee's capacity for successful reintegration, including their personal and emotional development and behaviour. Moreover, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) provides a more in-depth explanation as to how aspects within these systems, individually and collectively, have the potential to affect the female parolees' experience, as well as their perception, of the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House. These sub-systems, as they relate to the female parolee and the female parolee's experience of AAA within The Halfway House, will now be discussed.

### **6.3.1 The microsystem**

The female parolee's *microsystem* (see Figure 3.1) is comprised of The Halfway House setting, fellow female parolees residing within The Halfway House, the house parents employed by The Halfway House, and the PAT volunteer and visiting AAA dog. The female parolee's work or educational context and familial ties are also comprised within the microsystem.

Each aspect of the female parolee's microsystem forms an important source of social support and interaction and as such, has the ability to either encourage or inhibit engagement with the immediate environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Notably, as reported in the findings of the present research, the AAA sessions at The Halfway House promoted social interactions to occur between all the aspects of the female parolee's microsystem. Specifically, it brought the female parolee's, house parents, and PAT volunteer closer together through increased communication, interaction, and the formation of shared connections. In addition, several of the female parolee's also reported talking and sharing stories about the AAA sessions and the visiting AAA dog with family members, friends, and individuals within the educational or work setting. The AAA sessions as strengthening the female parolee's relationships with individuals within the microsystem has important implications on the reintegration process (Muntingh, 2008). In particular, the research surrounding offender rehabilitation repeatedly highlights the importance of adequate social support and strong social ties within an individual's immediate circle as being a key proponent in the rehabilitation and reintegration of female parolees (Langa & Masuku, 2015; Makarios et al., 2010; Walmsley, 2014; Williams-Queen, 2014).

### 6.3.2 The mesosystem

The *mesosystem* (see Figure 3.1) of the female parolee comprises linkages between The Halfway House, other female parolees, the house parents, the PAT volunteer and visiting AAA dog, their familial ties, and work or educational context.

Each of the linkages within the mesosystem have the potential to influence the female parolee's perceptions of AAA, and therefore dictates the manner of experience and interaction that can occur during these sessions. In terms of the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House, the female parolee's experience and perception of AAA was significantly impacted by linkages between the house parents and the PAT volunteer. If the house parent were welcoming of the PAT volunteer and visiting AAA dog and eager to participate in the AAA session, the female parolees were more likely to engage in the AAA session and with the visiting AAA dog. However, if the house parent was unwelcoming of the PAT volunteer and visiting AAA dog and disinterested in the AAA session, the female parolees gained a negative perception of the AAA sessions and become disinterested in the process.

Moreover, linkages between The Halfway House, the house parents, and the PAT volunteer can also influence the female parolee's access to receiving the AAA sessions, how often they occur, and their length. In the feedback given by participants during the interviews, several noted that they would want the AAA sessions to be held at The Halfway House more regularly and to last for a longer period of time. However, these factors could only be determined through a joint decision made by the PAT volunteer, the house parents, and The Halfway House. As such, it is important that there is synergy in terms of interests between each of these linkages as a lack of congruency could prevent the AAA sessions from taking place.

### 6.3.3 The exosystem

The wider community in which the female parolee is released into is included in the female parolees' *exosystem* (see Figure 3.1). Acceptance or unacceptance by the wider community influences the perceptions and manner of interactions that occurs between the female parolee and other aspects within their microsystem.

Female offenders, including those residing within halfway facilities, often face stigmatisation, discrimination, and general unacceptance by the wider community, which has a great influence on the optimal functioning and well-being of the female parolee. This is due to the fact that the “not in my back yard” phenomenon has led female parolees to experience a lack of understanding, and as such diminished social support and available resources, by the wider community in terms of their life situation and the challenges they face (Piat, 2000, p. 127). AAA, however, has been found to favourably affect community perceptions of offenders (Frust, 2006; Harkrader et al., 2004). In particular, research has found that through participation in AAA programmes, offenders display decreased ant-social behaviours, as well as increased empathy, patience, and pro-social behaviours, as demonstrated in the findings of the present research. Importantly, all these various characteristics leads community members to develop more favourable views of the participating offenders and become more accepting of them (Strimple, 2003). As such, the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House have the potential to favourably affect the reintegration process by strengthening community ties between the female parolee residents and the wider community.

#### **6.3.4 The macrosystem**

In the context of the present research, the *macrosystem* (see Figure 3.1) of the female parolee includes large-scale societal beliefs regarding female offenders, the economic and governmental policies of the South African correctional services, and dominant cultural views and societal beliefs regarding animals.

Large-scale societal beliefs, as well as the economic conditions and governmental policies surrounding the correctional services, dictates quality and quantity of the rehabilitation programmes and transitional services available to female offenders, including those residing within The Halfway House. In particular, societal beliefs that advocate punitive measures when dealing with offenders, a lack of funding within the correctional services, and mismanagement of governmental policies within the DCS, all have a negative effect on the provision of supportive measures to rehabilitation, such as the use of AAA (Cilliers & Smit, 2007). The Halfway House, however, maintains some autonomy in regards to the supervision and rehabilitation the female parolees residing in The Halfway House. Through private funding and volunteers, The

Halfway House is able to provide a variety of quality rehabilitation services and resources, including AAA sessions for the female parolee residents.

Societal beliefs regarding female offenders further have the potential to influence the way in which the female parolee constructs themselves as an individual. As such, societal beliefs can potentially have a profound effect, often hindering or obstructing, the female parolee's growth and development. This is due to the fact that female offenders experience high levels of stigmatisation and discrimination, as well as rejection and unacceptance by family members, friends, and the wider community (Muntingh, 2008; UNDAW, 2000). This highlights the importance of the unconditional acceptance and love that the female parolee participants reportedly received from the visiting AAA dog in the present research. Research emphasises that through the provision of unconditional acceptance and love, such as that received from animal interaction, offenders are more likely to feel adequately supported and, thus, desist in engaging in criminal activity (Britton & Button, 2005; Richardson-Taylor & Blanchette, 2001; Strimple, 2003).

Dominant societal and cultural beliefs in South Africa regarding animals potentially also effect the female parolee's experience and perception of the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House. Animal phobias and negative animal beliefs are rife in certain cultures in South Africa due to a lack of positive interactions with animals, as well as may cases of animal, especially dog, attacks (Lubbe & Scholtz, 2013). Societal beliefs regarding dogs as impacting the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House was demonstrated in the initial weariness displayed by some of the female parolee participants in regards to the visiting AAA dog, a bull terrier. Bull terriers are known for being bred as fighting dogs in South Africa and among certain communities, such as those that the female parolees are originally from, they are known for being aggressive. Due to these dominant societal and cultural beliefs regarding dogs, including bull terriers, several of the female parolee's hesitated in engaging with the visiting AAA dog initially. This was only rectified through the presence of the PAT volunteer who had to reassure the female parolees that the visiting AAA dog was not aggressive and demonstrate to them that he would not hurt them.

### **6.3.5 The chronosystem**

The final sub-system includes the *chronosystem* (see Figure 3.1), which is comprised of the female parolees' socio-economic status, employability, family structure, place of residence, and the ability to function optimally in everyday life (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

In terms of the present research, factors within the chronosystem include the individual's employment, socio-economic status, social relationships, place of residence, and ability to function optimally in everyday life (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Favourable outcomes within the chronosystem leads to increased feelings of self-esteem, self-reliance, and an optimistic outlook on life (Carver & Scheier, 2001). However, undesirable outcomes within the chronosystem can lead to further patterns of maladaptive behaviour, thus increasing the chances of recidivism within the female parolee population. Importantly, research conducted on the use of AAA amongst female offenders suggest participants gaining life-enhancing traits and improved quality of life, which promote every-day optimal functioning and well-being (Strimple, 2003). Moreover, while the AAA sessions did not directly affect the female parolee's employability, socio-economic status, and ability to find accommodation, it was found to have various social benefits that could potentially affect functioning within the social relationships and employability aspects of the female parolee's chronosystem. In particular, the participants reported that the AAA effected their social functioning and behaviours, as well as facilitated and encouraged communication and interaction between themselves and other individuals within their microsystem. Thus, participation in the AAA sessions, could lead to favourable outcomes within the female parolee's chronosystem.

## **6.4 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

The four themes and their respective sub-themes that were identified during the thematic analysis and interpretation will be discussed below in relation to the existing literature surrounding the topic of investigation. Congruencies within the literature will be identified and unique findings will be presented. This was deemed imperative as a need has been identified for further research into the use of AAA within the context of offender rehabilitation (Arkow, 2010). Subsequently, the present research aims to

contribute to a dialogue within the field of HAI regarding the use of AAA as a supportive measure conducive to the successful reintegration of the female parolee.

#### **6.4.1 Perceived benefits of AAA**

The initial theme that emerged from the analysis of the collected data included the perceived benefits of the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House. Throughout the interviews, the participants spoke about the beneficial effects that the activity had on the female parolees' resident at The Halfway House. These benefits were spoken about in relation to four sub-themes: physical benefits, psychological benefits, social benefits, and other benefits, which included developed patience, enhanced empathy, and increased pro-social behaviours.

Throughout the literature surrounding HAI, AAAs are noted as having a favourable effect on human functioning and well-being (Kruger & Serpell, 2010; Lubbe & Scholtz, 2013). In particular, these favourable effects are grouped into one of three key areas of development: physical, psychological, and social (Walsh, 2009). Moreover, research conducted on use of AAA within the context of offender rehabilitation repeatedly emphasises offenders developing patience, empathy, and pro-social behaviours as resulting from animal contact and interaction (Fournier et al., 2007; Frust, 2006; Strimple, 2003). These sub-themes will now be discussed further in relation to existing literature.

##### *6.4.1.1 Physical benefits*

All four of the female parolee participants reported feeling physically more relaxed as a result of interacting with the visiting AAA dog. In particular, they attributed this relaxing effect to stroking and petting the visiting AAA dog. The female parolee participants also described feeling calmer after the AAA sessions, once the visiting AAA dog had left for the day. The house parents and the PAT volunteer also reported the visiting AAA dog having an observable relaxing and calming effect on the female parolee participants, both during and after the AAA sessions. According to Frust (2006), the presence of animals has long been recognised as having a calming and de-arousing effect on individuals. AAAs as resulting in relaxing and calming effects for those participating is supported by studies conducted by Berget and Ihlebaek (2011), Friedmann et al. (2010), Odendaal (2000), Odendaal and Meintjies (2003), and Van

Pelt (2010). Moreover, research conducted on the beneficial effects of AAAs has also demonstrated that these relaxing effects can arise directly from petting a dog (Shiloh et al., 2003; Wells, 2009). The relaxing and calming effects of AAA is further supported by research conducted within the context of offender rehabilitation and the correctional facility (Fournier et al., 2007; Frust, 2006; Strimple, 2003). In studies conducted by Currie (2008), Davis (2007), and Merriam-Arduni (2000), which all investigated the effect of AAA on offender rehabilitation within the correctional facility, it was found that animal interaction within the isolated correctional context had a calming effect on those participating.

Although not measured by the present research, the literature attributes these relaxing and calming effects, in part, to favourable neurochemical changes that are produced in both humans and animals after AAA (Hardiman, 2010; Johnson et al., 2002; Shallcross, 2011). Numerous studies have reported significant increases in the production of oxytocin, epinephrine, norepinephrine, endorphins, and dopamine, among other chemicals related to relaxing effects, in individuals as a result of animal interaction and contact (Beetz et al., 2012; Handlin, 2011; Heinrichs et al., 2009; Kosfeld et al., 2005; Miller et al., 2009; Nagasawa et al., 2008; Odendaal, 2005; Odendaal & Meintjies, 2003). Research has also demonstrated decreases in cortisol, a stress hormone, after favourable interactions between humans and animals (Odendaal, 2005; Odendaal & Meintjies, 2003). This relaxing effect can be further linked to physiological changes in the human body, such as lowered blood pressure and/or heart rate (Allen et al., 2002; Berget & Ihlebaek, 2011; Johnson et al., 2002; Shiloh et al., 2003; Van Pelt, 2010; Wells, 2009).

#### *6.4.1.2 Psychological benefits*

Improved emotional well-being was echoed by many of the female parolee participants as having resulted from the AAA sessions. During the interviews, the female parolee participants reported feelings of excitement in anticipation of the AAA sessions, knowing that the visiting AAA dog was about to come visit at The Halfway House. The female parolee participants further noted feelings of happiness and enjoyment as resulting from the AAA sessions. Numerous studies have found animal companionship and interaction to promote favourable affective states, including happiness, enjoyment, pleasure, and other emotional fulfilment (Friedmann et al., 2010; Stasi et



al., 2004; Walsh, 2009; Wells, 2009). Research has shown the potential for domesticated animals, such as dogs, providing emotional opportunities to enrich the lives of individuals confined within the institutional facility and the correctional facility (Britton & Button, 2005; Cirulli et al., 2011). According to the results of a study investigating the rehabilitative value of AAA among psychiatric in-patients, post AAA participants seemed happier (Marr et al., 2000).

The AAA sessions were further spoken about as favourably affecting the female parolees' mental well-being. Through spending time with the visiting AAA dog, they were able to forget about any negative issues they had in their life and de-stress. This was reiterated by one house parent who reported lowered tension and stress levels among the female parolee participants. Research has highlighted AAA as lowering stress and anxiety levels in individuals (Hoffman, et al., 2009; Matuszek, 2010). In studies conducted by Berget et al. (2011) and Pedersen et al. (2012) it was found that individuals experienced a decline in anxiety and stress levels after working and interacting with animals. In the context of offender rehabilitation numerous studies have also linked the use of AAA with reduced feelings of anxiety and stress (Currie, 2008; Davis, 2007; Harkrader et al., 2004; Strimple, 2003).

The AAA sessions were also described as boosting the female parolee participants' confidence and self-esteem. For the female parolee participants, increased confidence resulted from feelings of pride in personal achievement. The PAT volunteer and the house parent participants also noted improvements in the female parolee participants' confidence and self-esteem. This is supported by the literature, which has shown that AAA may be associated with increased self-esteem, self-concept, and confidence (O'Callaghan & Chandler, 2011). Specifically, according to Odendaal (2000), due to animals' intrinsic characteristic of allowing their human counter-part to feel in control of the situation, their presence has been linked to building self-confidence in individuals. Female offenders experiencing increased self-esteem has also been documented in various research studies (Frust, 2006; Merriam-Arduini, 2000; Strimple, 2003). Turner (2007), whilst investigating the use of AAA with offenders within the correctional facility context, found significant improvements in self-esteem and confidence occurred for the offenders as a result of a sense of accomplishment.



#### 6.4.1.3 *Social benefits*

Through participation in the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House, communication between the female parolees developed; it became easier for them to talk amongst each other, as well as with the house parents and the volunteers. The house parents and the PAT volunteer also described the AAA sessions as providing a social environment for the female parolees. The literature suggests that AAA promotes interpersonal communication between people (Hart, 2010; Wells, 2004). According to Wells (2004), animal interaction, as well as the mere presence of animals, can stimulate human-human interaction, thus increasing an individual's social behaviour. This premise is similarly supported by research conducted by Hart (2010) who documented increased human-human interaction due to the presence of an animal. According to Currie (2008), the presence of an animal can help provide a comfortable environment for disclosure to occur between individuals. Stemming from this, AAA as increasing social behaviour has been documented within a variety of AAA programmes implemented in institutional and correctional settings (Arluke, 2010; Beck & Katcher, 2003; Lutwack-Bloom et al., 2005; Wells, 2009). Moreover, AAAs in residential care facilities have been found to increase social responsiveness and socialisation among residents (Bernabei et al., 2013; Berry et al., 2012; O'Haire, 2010). Le Roux and Kemp (2009) noted that animal interaction and contact within a residential facility facilitates and encourages social interactions to occur between residents, as well as provides an opportunity for discussions to take place. Studies conducted by Fournier et al. (2007), Merriam-Arduini (2000), and Suthers-McCabe et al. (2004), all investigating the effectiveness of offender rehabilitation programmes that utilised AAA, found increased social skills and improved social interaction amongst the participating offenders.

Importantly, the visiting AAA dog was described as being the catalyst in order for the participants to speak amongst each other and subsequently, develop rapport with each other. The female parolee participants, as well as the house parents and the PAT volunteer, all spoke about the visiting AAA dog as fostering communication between the participants and that his presence facilitated the social nature of the AAA sessions. This assertion is supported by the literature, which highlights that the beneficial effects as stemming from AAA may be owing to the social facilitative role(s) of companion

animals, in particular dogs (Arluke, 2010; Kruger & Serpell, 2010; O’Haire, 2010). In other words, companion animals can act as a form of social support in and of themselves, and they can further serve as social catalysts that encourage and facilitate social interactions between humans. They enhance provisions of social support in that they act as social lubricants or icebreakers; facilitating interactions to occur between humans and accelerating the rapport-building process (Fine et al., 2010; McNicholas & Collis, 2000). Thus, companion animals are indirect providers of social interaction and support (McNicholas & Collis, 2000).

As a result of the AAA sessions, the female parolee participants learnt vital communication skills for interacting with other individuals outside of the AAA sessions. This is supported by the literature, which highlights the indirect effect of companion animals in favourably affecting social functioning, as well as improved communication skills, conversational skills, social engagement, and participation in programmes (Barak et al., 2001; Hart, 2010; Wells, 2004). AAA as a tool to encourage the development of communication and social skills has also been documented within the context of the correctional facility and offender rehabilitation (Currie, 2008; Harkrader et al., 2004; Strimple, 2003; Turner, 2007).

#### *6.4.1.4 Other benefits*

During the course of the data collection, the participants noted that through interacting with the visiting AAA dog, they developed increased patience. The female parolees displaying improved patience was further witnessed by the house parent participants and was described by them in the interviews. Increased patience as a result of AAA is supported by the literature surrounding offender rehabilitation, as well as in the use of AAA as beneficial tool within the correctional facility (Frust, 2006; Strimple, 2003). In a study conducted by Turner (2007), which utilised a qualitative methodology to document the effect of an AAA programme amongst incarcerated offenders, animal interaction led to improved patience. This improved patience related to increased patience with animals in general, as well as other individuals, including the staff and fellow offenders (Turner, 2007).

When speaking about the AAA sessions, the participants described developing feelings of empathy and sympathy for other living things. In particular, the female

parolees began to re-think how they behaved towards and treated animals. The house parent participants also witnessed this development, noting that the female parolee participants gained a new perspective on animals. Research has shown that AAA may be associated with increased social sensitivity and empathy for others (O'Callaghan & Chandler, 2011). Research conducted by Bierer (2001) and Daly and Morton (2006) both found a high correlation between animal interaction and empathy, as well as increased interpersonal social sensitivity as stemming from human interaction with animals, particularly dogs (Daly & Morton, 2006; Khalid & Naqvi, 2016). Studies documenting the effects of AAA within the context of offender rehabilitation have also demonstrated offenders developing empathy for the animals that they interacted with, as well as displaying increased empathy, including acts of love, care, and compassion, towards other individuals (Deaton, 2005; Frust, 2006; Harbolt & Ward, 2001; Merriam-Arduini, 2000). Similarly, research conducted by Fournier et al. (2007), which documented the benefits of an AAA programme within the context of a correctional facility, indicated that participating offenders demonstrated improved social sensitivity and empathy for their fellow offenders and staff.

Another benefit that emerged during the course of the interviews included the development of pro-social behaviours. Many of the participants noted that through interacting with the visiting AAA dog, they became more inclined to help, love, and care for others. In other words, the interaction they experienced with the visiting AAA dog offered them a template as to how to treat others in their day-to-day lives. Research conducted within the context of offender rehabilitation has emphasised offenders learning pro-social behaviours, including the desire to care for and help others (Strimple, 2003; Suber, 2002). According to a study conducted by Harkrader et al. (2004), these findings highlight the humanising and beneficial role animal interaction can play in the context of offender rehabilitation. Anecdotal evidence within the South African correctional context further suggests that AAA leads to increased pro-social behaviours (Gray-Kilfoil, 2007).

Importantly, these various benefits are necessary outcomes of rehabilitation intervention among female offenders (Artz et al., 2012; Muntingh, 2012; Walmsley, 2014; Williams-Queen, 2014). Moreover, the development of patience, empathy, and

pro-social behaviours are vital components of the rehabilitation process as a means to ensure successful reintegration (Deaton, 2005; Frust, 2006; Harbolt & Ward, 2001).

#### **6.4.2 Participants' personal experiences of AAA**

When speaking about the AAA sessions that took place at The Halfway House, the participants interviewed often spoke about their own personal experiences of the AAA sessions. Participants' experiences revolved around the AAA sessions being a fun and entertaining activity for the participants to engage in, the AAA sessions promoting shared connections to occur between participants, the participants experiencing the AAA sessions as a reminder of home, and lastly, feedback from the participants regarding the AAA sessions.

While there is some literature that outlines the experience of AAA within the context of the correctional facility that upholds these findings, there is a dearth of literature regarding the experience of AAA within the context of The Halfway House, as well as the female parolees' experience of AAA. These findings will now be discussed in more depth.

##### *6.4.2.1 Fun and entertaining*

For all four of the female parolee participants, the AAA sessions were spoken about as being fun and entertaining. According to the female parolee participants, the pleasurable nature of the AAA sessions stemmed, in part, from the playful interaction that they received from interacting with the visiting AAA dog. This fits in with one of the main aims of AAA, namely to provide individuals with fun and enjoyable recreational activities that provide companionship, as well as to enhance an individual's well-being and quality of life (Evans & Gray, 2012; Kruger & Serpell, 2010; Pet Partners, 2012). AAAs are primarily casual, support-based, and spontaneous in nature; they provide less formal activities that explicitly and intentionally includes animal contact in order to encourage a variety of benefits (Evans & Gray, 2012; Kruger & Serpell, 2010).

##### *6.4.2.2 Shared connections*

The participants making shared connections with one another was a prominent aspect of the AAA sessions. All of the female parolee participants noted feeling closer with

one another as a result of the AAA sessions. The house parents and the PAT volunteer also noted feeling closer with the female parolee participants as a result of the AAA sessions. AAA has been found to promote the development of interpersonal relationships (Hart, 2010; Wells, 2004). This is due to the contention that the mere presence of an animal, particularly dogs, can stimulate and foster human-human interaction, which in turn increases the likelihood of participants developing close bonds with one another (Hart, 2010, Wells, 2004). Research conducted within the context of offender rehabilitation and the correctional facility supports this premise (Frust, 2006; Strimple, 2003; Suber, 2002). In particular, studies conducted by Fournier et al. (2007) and Suthers-McCabe et al. (2004), which both investigated the effectiveness of AAA within the context of offender rehabilitation, found offenders had developed close bonds with each other as a result of their shared experiences of the AAA programme. Similar findings were documented in a study conducted by Richardson-Taylor and Blanchette (2001) evaluating the effectiveness of an AAA programme amongst incarcerated female offenders.

The AAA sessions offering the female participants a space to develop shared experiences with one another was important as only they can truly relate with each other regarding the struggles and life challenges that they have been through. While the female parolees have external supports in the form of family and friends, they cannot always discuss the issues they go through with them. According to studies conducted by Van Voorhis et al. (2004) and Williams-Queen (2014), female offenders oftentimes experience a lack of social support post-incarceration. The literature highlights social support is a necessary buffer to combat the negative consequences that accompany stressful life situations (Hart, 2010), such as incarceration, rehabilitation, and reintegration (Bahr et al., 2010). According to research conducted by Bahr et al. (2010) and Bellair and Kowalski (2011), the more social support an ex-offender has, the greater the likelihood that they will successfully reintegrate into society. As such, this highlights the importance of the development of these relationships within the context of the present research, as important social structures to help ease their reintegration.

#### 6.4.2.3 *Reminder of home*

During the interviews, the female parolee participants reported that the AAA sessions and the visiting AAA dog brought up memories of their home life growing up and their pets. The female parolee participants mentioned that the reminder of home that they received from the AAA sessions was important as many of them have not seen their families for an extended period of time. Several of the female parolee participants noted that they were unable to return home due to a lack of community acceptance. This links with the literature which highlights that many female offenders are not accepted by their family or community group post-incarceration due to the stigmatisation of the female correctional population (PRI, 2015). It is very common within South African communities for women to be unable to return to their communities post-incarceration due to fear of assault, abuse, or even death by fellow community members (PRI, 2015). According to a study conducted by Langa and Masuku (2015), ex-offenders assert that a lack of acceptance by community members, including relatives and parents, is one of the major challenges they encounter during reintegration. Similarly, Albertus (2010) contends that communities often find it hard to accept offenders back into community life and that potential employers discriminate against them. Albertus (2010) asserts that this lack of acceptance is one of the major factors pushing ex-offenders to re-offend.

#### 6.4.2.4 *Feedback*

Throughout the interviews, the participants gave feedback regarding the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House. In general the feedback about the effectiveness of the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House was very affirmative. The female parolee participants reported, for the most part, that they would like the AAA sessions to remain the same, that there was no way in which they thought that the AAA sessions could be improved upon. However, one of the female parolee participants did mention that she would like them to be slightly longer in duration. Many of the participants interviewed also mentioned that they would prefer it if the visiting AAA dog visited once a week as opposed to the fortnightly programme that the volunteers were following at the time.

When giving feedback on the AAA sessions, the participants also spoke about the AAA sessions being as being a useful and valuable activity. The house parent participants also noted the AAA sessions as benefiting the participating female parolees. Based on the growing interest in AAAs, there has been a proliferation of research establishing the beneficial nature of HAI in terms of human well-being functioning (Evans & Gray, 2012; Kruger & Serpell, 2010). The effectiveness of AAA programmes within a multitude of settings, including institutional, residential, rehabilitation, and correctional contexts, features strongly in the literature (Fine & Beck, 2010; Lubbe & Scholtz, 2013; O’Haire, 2010; Walsh, 2009; Wells, 2009). Moreover, research evidence demonstrates that favourable interactions with companion animals can improve our physical, psychological, and social health (O’Haire, 2010; Walsh, 2009).

### **6.4.3 Participants’ reactions towards the visiting AAA dog**

The participants, when speaking about their experiences of the AAA sessions, often spoke about their reactions towards the visiting AAA dog. For the participants, the two main areas of discussion surrounded the participants’ initial reactions when first meeting the visiting AAA dog, as well as their subsequent reactions as the AAA sessions progressed and they developed a bond with the visiting AAA dog. Each of these sub-themes will now be reported on further in relation to the existing literature.

#### *6.4.3.1 Initial reactions*

For the female parolee participants, upon first meeting the visiting AAA dog, they initially felt disinterested, weary, or hesitant to interact with the visiting AAA dog, particularly due to the thought that he may bite. The house parents and the PAT volunteer who supervised the AAA sessions also noted the female parolees’ initial uneasiness and/or disinterest towards the visiting AAA dog. These initial reactions stemmed, in part, from large-scale societal beliefs regarding dogs in South Africa. In particular, the breed of the visiting AAA dog, a bull terrier, is known for being bred as a fighting dog within the lower socio-economic areas of Cape Town. Moreover, among certain communities, such as those the female parolees’ grew up in, they are known for being aggressive.



Animal phobias are therefore rife in certain cultures in South Africa due to a lack of positive interactions with animals, as well as many cases of animal attacks, especially by dogs (Lubbe & Scholtz, 2013). Thus, certain precautions must be undertaken within AAA programmes, such as the one held at The Halfway House (Lubbe & Scholtz, 2013). When undertaking AAA within these circumstances, the PAT volunteer administering the AAA was aware of this possibility and as such eased each participant into the process (AVMA, 2011). This allowed the female parolee participants a chance to slowly and more effectively develop a rapport and trusting bond with the visiting AAA dog (Lubbe & Scholtz, 2013).

#### *6.4.3.2 Subsequent reactions*

When speaking about their reactions towards the visiting AAA dog, the participants described a process whereby they began to warm up to him. The female parolee participants began viewing the visiting AAA dog in a more favourable manner. This led to the female parolee participants becoming attached to the visiting AAA dog and developing what they described as a close and loving bond with him. The PAT volunteer and house parent participants also witnessed this transition whereby the female parolees developed warm feelings towards the visiting AAA dog. In an evaluation of an AAA programme amongst female offenders, Richardson-Taylor and Blanchette (2001), found that the female offenders developed an unconditional bond with the animals they interacted with. According to Frust (2006) and Staats et al. (2008), the efficacy of using animals within offender rehabilitation is intrinsically linked with humans developing a bond with the animals they work with and/or interact with. Many reasons have been cited for the development of reciprocal attachment between humans and animals in the literature (Kruger & Serpell, 2010). Most notably, this attachment can be interpreted as a friendly, affectionate, companionable interaction between humans and animals (Kruger & Serpell, 2010). Kruger and Serpell (2010) contend that attachment is one of the social provisions that is vital for the maintenance of well-being in individuals.

#### **6.4.4 Participants' perceptions of the visiting AAA dog**

The participants' perceptions of the visiting AAA dog was the fourth and final theme that emerged from the analysis and interpretation of the collected data. In particular,



this conversation surrounded the participants, particularly the female parolee participants, as perceiving the visiting AAA dog as being caring towards them, offering them unconditional acceptance, as being able to sense their emotions, and as listening to them. These sub-themes will now be discussed further in relation to the existing literature surrounding this topic of investigation.

#### *6.4.4.1 Caring*

During the interviews, the female parolee participants described the visiting AAA dog as providing them with a source of compassion; they felt that he cared for and loved them. This assertion was supported by the PAT volunteer and the house parent participants. The perception of animals, generally dogs, being a source of care towards their human-counterparts is supported by the literature surrounding the use of AAA as a tool within offender rehabilitation (Frust, 2006; Strimple, 2003). In a research study conducted by Britton and Button (2005), it was found that offenders in the correctional context experienced the animals as providing them with compassion and care and overall felt more loved as a consequence. Moreover, the visiting AAA dog being perceived by the female parolee participants as offering them a source of care and love is highlighted in the literature as a form of social support (Arluke, 2010).

Within the literature, social support relates to beneficial interpersonal provisions and transactions that occur within social relationships and that lead the individual to believe that they are cared for and loved (Arluke, 2010). As a form of social support in and of themselves, companion animals (particularly dogs) offer emotional support through their constant availability, attention-seeking, and non-judgemental nature (O'Haire, 2010). The zealous behaviours generally displayed by companion animals towards humans (Wells, 2009) create the impression that they are concerned about us, care for us, and have an overall favourable regard for us. Such a display of unconditional acceptance may foster a sense of belonging in an individual and reaffirm feelings of self-esteem, self-worth, and confidence (Arluke, 2010; O'Haire, 2010; Wells, 2009).

#### *6.4.4.2 Accepting*

The visiting AAA dog was perceived by certain of the female parolee participants as offering them non-judgemental approval. Through this, the visiting AAA dog gave the female parolee participants unconditional acceptance and love. The house parent

participants and the PAT volunteer described this as the visiting AAA dog showing the female parolees love regardless of who they are or what they had done. This is supported by the literature surrounding AAA which notes that animals have the ability to show unconditional acceptance by their wagging tails and happy faces, regardless of who the individual is or what they have done, namely participated in past criminal or deviant behaviour (Evans & Gray, 2012; Johnson et al., 2002; Kruger & Serpell, 2010; Van Heerden, 2001). Animals, particularly dogs, as a source of unconditional acceptance and love is also supported by the literature surrounding the use of AAA as a tool for offender rehabilitation (Britton & Button, 2005; Frust, 2006; Harkrader et al., 2004).

#### *6.4.4.3 Senses emotions*

For the female parolee participants, the visiting AAA dog held a capability to intuit moods and sense how an individual is feeling. The visiting AAA dog's ability to sense emotions in the participants was further reported by the house parent participants. The literature surrounding the beneficial characteristics of animals to human well-being and functioning highlights their ability to sense and understand human emotion (Evans & Gray, 2012; Miklósi, et al., 2007; O'Haire, 2010). Studies indicate that dogs can differentiate between human emotions from cues such as facial expressions (O'Haire, 2010; Van Heerden, 2001). According to the literature, dogs abilities to sense emotions makes them receptive to human needs and desires and as such, makes them an unprecedented source of animal companionship (Johnson et al., 2002; Miklósi et al., 2007). Moreover, in a recent research study conducted by Albuquerque et al. (2016) it was found that dogs can recognise emotions in humans and respond accordingly by combining information from different senses. According to Albuquerque et al., dogs are the only creatures outside of humans who have been observed to have that ability.

#### *6.4.4.4 Good listener*

Through the female parolees' dialogue, it was noted that they were able to confide in the visiting AAA dog as he offered them a space to talk freely regarding their stories, their issues, or just general conversation. Animals, particularly dogs, have long been described as being good listeners to their human-counterparts (Currie, 2008; Johnson

et al., 2002). While much of literature surrounding dogs as being good listeners is anecdotal in nature, Kruger and Serpell (2010) contend that the calming presence of a dog enables a safe space whereby the individual is prompted to disclose their feelings with the dog. Furthermore, the literature highlights dogs as being good listeners due to the fact that they do not have an opinion as to what is being discussed and therefore create an opportunity whereby an individual can talk uninterrupted without the fear of being judged or disagreed with (Currie, 2008; Evans & Gray, 2012; O'Haire, 2010).

#### **6.4.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The research participants, the guiding theoretical framework, and the four main themes and their respective sub-themes that emerged from the collected data were discussed in this chapter in relation to the existing literature. Aspects of all the themes and sub-themes were supported by the existing literature. It is however shown by this discussion that there is a dearth of literature focussing on the experience of AAA within the context of The Halfway House and the beneficial effects that may arise from such activity. The present research has therefore begun to address a gap in the existing literature on the use of AAA among females on parole.

Chapter 7, the final chapter, concludes the present research. This will include an evaluation of the research process, as well as a discussion of limitations and strengths of the present research and suggestions for future studies on this topic.

## CHAPTER 7

### OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH, LIMITATIONS, STRENGTHS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

#### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

The following chapter provides an overview of the present research. This overview addresses the aim of the present research, the methodology employed, and the findings. A discussion regarding the strengths and limitations of the present research, as well as recommendations for future studies will also be offered. The chapter ends with conclusions drawn from the discussion in Chapter 5 and reiterates the importance of AAA as a supportive tool conducive to the successful rehabilitation and reintegration of females on parole.

#### 7.2 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

Recent years have witnessed a proliferation in the use of AAAs across a variety of settings and among numerous diverse populations (Maujean et al., 2015). AAAs show promise in improving the health and well-being of individuals, in terms of their physical, psychological, and social health (Matuszek, 2010; Wells, 2009). Researchers have further recognised AAAs as a potential approach to enhance the mental, emotional, and social well-being of individuals residing within institutional contexts, as well as a means for offender rehabilitation. However, research on the actual beneficial effects of AAAs within the context of offender rehabilitation is sparse, particularly in the South African context, causing AAA practitioners to mainly rely on anecdotal evidence (Gray-Kilfoil, 2007; Lubbe & Scholtz, 2013). Moreover, at present there is a dearth of literature on participants' perceptions of AAA within the context of halfway facilities and the general effect that it has on the lives of female parolees. This has led researchers to call for more research to be conducted in the field (Chur-Hansen et al., 2010; Kazdin, 2010).

The present research explored the experience of AAA within the context of The Halfway House, with an emphasis on the female parolee's experience of this activity. In order to answer the research question at hand, as well as achieve the aim and objectives set out by the present research, the researcher employed a qualitative case

study research design. This was done as a means to explore participants' personal accounts of AAA within The Halfway House; to describe and understand the phenomenon under investigation (Fouché & Delport, 2011). Importantly, the explorative nature of qualitative research enabled the researcher to gain an understanding of the participants' lived experience and subjective perceptions of AAA in the context of the halfway facility (Bryman, 2012). Through the use of a semi-structured interview, the researcher was able to obtain descriptive reports from each of the participants about their perceptions of AAA, as well as the meaning that they attach to the activity.

Participants of the present research included four females on parole residing in The Halfway House, the two house parents employed by The Halfway House, and the PAT volunteer who supervised the AAA sessions. The participants were all female and had participated in AAA sessions held at The Halfway House. The female parolees ranged between the ages of 21 and 32 years and the house parents and PAT volunteer were between 58 and 62 years of age. All seven of the participants' completed a biographical and pet history questionnaire and participated in a semi-structured interview. The interviews were audio-recorded with permission from the participants.

Upon completion of the interviews, the data was transcribed and then analysed using thematic analysis. Four main themes emerged from this analysis: the perceived benefits of AAA, participants' personal experiences of AAA, participants' reactions towards the visiting AAA dog, and participants' perceptions of the visiting AAA dog. These findings, individually and collectively, highlight the experience of AAA within the context of a halfway facility, particularly the female parolee's experience of the activity. As such, the researcher is of the opinion that the research question was answered by the research findings.

### **7.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

There are some limitations to the present study that should be noted as they may have had an influence on the findings of the research. These limitations are stated and briefly discussed in this section. It is hoped that the acknowledgement of the limitations of the present research will aid and guide future research within this field.

### **7.3.1 Fluctuating number of residents at The Halfway House**

Upon acceptance to The Halfway House, female parolees must agree to remain a resident for the period of 1 year. However, The Halfway House cannot prevent the female residents from leaving prior to the expiry of this period. Since the PAT volunteer and the visiting AAA dog started the AAA sessions in April 2015, approximately 10 of the female residents absconded and one was re-incarcerated. Although more female parolees were accepted into The Halfway House, the constant coming and going of residents led to a certain measure of uncertainty as to how many female parolees would be available to be interviewed at the time of data collection. This made it necessary to include the house parents and PAT volunteer as supplementary sources of data.

### **7.3.2 Inability to locate female parolee participants**

The sample consisted of only seven participants; four female parolees, two house parents and the PAT volunteer. The small sample size of female parolee participants was due to the limited number of female parolees residing at The Halfway House at the time of data collection. While more than four female parolees had participated in the AAA sessions, once they left The Halfway House they were impossible to locate or track down.

### **7.3.3 Delayed access to participants**

In order to undertake the present research, approval from certain gate-keepers was mandated. Permission was sought and obtained from the Department of Psychology at Stellenbosch University; Stellenbosch University REC; the DCS REC; and The Halfway House Board of Directors. While gaining permission from various gate-keepers is part of the course when conducting social research, particularly research conducted amongst vulnerable populations like the female parolee, several issues did arise making it hard to gain access to the required participants.

Due to miscommunications with the DCS and logistical issues, gaining access to the female parolee participants was delayed. Initial enquiries to and email correspondence with the DCS confirmed that there was no need to undergo the extensive application process as the female offenders resided within a privately run halfway facility. However, prior to the beginning of data collection, the researcher was informed that

explicit permission would in fact be required and an application to the DCS REC would need to be completed. DCS REC meetings are only held four times a year and, as such, data collection was delayed by several months. Moreover, following approval by the DCS REC, the researcher was required to find a researcher supervisor within the DCS and arrange an on-site visit with a representative of the DCS Community Corrections. Finding an appropriate research supervisor and a representative to make the on-site visit required repeated communication with various employees of the DCS and, thus, further delayed access to the research participants.

#### **7.4 STRENGTHS OF THE RESEARCH**

Even though the present research has limitations, the findings of the present research are relatively trustworthy and robust, considering the following methodological strengths of the study:

- Data was collected from three separate participant perspectives: that of the female parolees, the house parents, and the PAT volunteer. This enabled a more in-depth and holistic account of the experience of AAA within The Halfway House. Moreover, according to Mertens (2005), obtaining multiple participant perspectives is encouraged within qualitative research as a means to yield better interpretations of meanings that can be contrasted and compared through a dialectical interchange.
- A qualitative case study research design was implemented as a means of capturing in-depth data relating to individual opinions, feelings, and experiences (Bryman, 2012; Stake, 2000). Through the gathering and analysis of rich data conveying the subjective stories of the participants, the research questions could be appropriately explored. Moreover, the exploratory nature of qualitative research was invaluable as there is a dearth of research, internationally and particularly in the South African context, regarding the experience of AAA within a halfway facility.
- The present research used multifarious means for data collection. Semi-structured one-on-one interviews were conducted with each of the participants and biographical and pet history questionnaires were collected as a form of supplementary data. Triangulation or the use of multiple data collection

techniques is useful for increasing the accuracy of the data acquired (Bryman, 2012).

- The choice of semi-structured interviews served to build rapport between the researcher and the participants and generally contributed to the rich and detailed descriptions given by the participants.
- The researcher kept a reflexive journal throughout her time as a volunteer during the AAA sessions held at The Halfway House, as well as during the interview process. This was done as a means to reduce researcher bias.
- Through her participation as a volunteer during the AAA sessions, the researcher was able to develop rapport with the female parolees' prior to the formal data collection period. Within the context of working with female parolees, many of whom have developed a significant mistrust of other people, this established relationship was particularly important.
- The Pets as Therapy volunteer who offered and supervised the AAA sessions had past experience working in a range of contexts with various populations. Moreover, the visiting AAA dog was registered as a visiting dog with the organisation Pets as Therapy, which specialises in the provision of AAA sessions.
- Finally, the key principles of credibility, transferability, dependability, conformability, and reflexivity were applied throughout the research process as a means to ensure the trustworthiness of the present research.

## 7.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In the preceding section, the strengths of the present research were briefly outlined and discussed. This section will provide key recommendations for further research in relation to the use of AAAs as a supportive measure conducive to successful reintegration of offenders and ex-offenders.

- *Gender:* Researchers may wish to include a more heterogeneous sample, particularly in terms of gender. Future studies could either include both genders or utilise a solely male sample.
- *Biographical and pet history information:* Further data regarding participants' biographical and pet history information would be valuable to future studies. Specifically, biographical information regarding participants' mental health



issues, involvement in other rehabilitation programmes, and family history of incarceration and/or criminal involvement. Additionally, pet history information relating to participants' cultural beliefs regarding animals, their families' perceptions of animals, and how they were taught to behave towards animals growing up should be collected. Such data would ensure a better description of sample characteristics, as well as participants' prior perceptions of animals.

- *Qualitative data:* In addition to semi-structured interviews, the use of focus groups could add significant insight into the experience of AAA within a halfway facility. Moreover, future studies should consider exploring the experience of AAA within other halfway facilities in addition to The Halfway House in order to improve generalisability of findings. Moreover, researchers should consider exploring the experience of and perceptions relating to AAA among offenders on parole that do not reside within the context of The Halfway House.
- *Quantitative data:* In addition to the collection of qualitative data, future studies could collect more scientifically robust quantitative data in order to measure the effects of AAA on female parolees. The use of a mixed method research strategy could be particularly useful in this context.
- *Review studies:* Research is required to explore the optimal application of AAAs amongst female parolees residing within halfway facilities. Review studies need to be conducted that focus on reporting (a) what methods work best, (b) what types or sizes of animals are most suitable (Johnson et al., 2002; Maujean et al., 2015), (c) whether group format or individual format AAAs work best, (d) the optimal size of groups in group format, (e) how many animals are needed in group format AAAs, and (f) the most appropriate length and intensity of the AAA in individual and group format AAAs.
- *Longitudinal studies:* A longitudinal study of female participants who are participating in AAA sessions for more than one year is advised in order to document the use of AAA and its effect on recidivism. Furthermore, a long-term study would be invaluable in documenting if any long term effects of AAA persist amongst the female parolee participants.

## 7.6 CONCLUSION

AAAs have been successfully implemented among a variety of individuals with diverse needs. The beneficial effects of AAA within the context of offender rehabilitation have been demonstrated for both offenders incarcerated and on parole within the system of community corrections. However, high-quality, trustworthy research regarding the experience of AAA within the correctional context and particularly halfway facilities is sparse, as much of the literature surrounding this field of study is anecdotal in nature. The present research aimed to explore the experience of AAA within the context of The Halfway House, with an emphasis on the female parolees' experience.

As according to the findings of the present research, AAAs have the potential to play an important role in the lives of females on parole residing within The Halfway House. The present research demonstrates that female parolees' gain favourable benefits in the physical, psychological, and social domains of development, as well as in various other areas of benefit, including developed patience, enhanced empathy, and increased pro-social behaviours. These benefits are highlighted within the literature as necessary for the successful rehabilitation and reintegration of female offenders back into the community and are greatly supported by the existing literature surrounding the use of AAA within offender rehabilitation. These findings, in highlighting participants' personal experiences of AAA, also address an existing gap in the literature by offering insights into the lived experience of AAA within the context of offender rehabilitation, as well as by affording female offenders with a voice. Participants, particularly the female parolee participants, further offered important insight into their reactions towards the visiting AAA dog, as well as their perceptions of the visiting AAA dog. These reactions and perceptions were largely supported by the current literature surrounding the field of AAA and offender rehabilitation. However, it is important to establish these experiences and perceptions as the female parolee's, as well as the house parent's and the PAT volunteer, can offer substantial information regarding the practicalities of the AAA programme, what they found to be useful and helpful to their well-being, as well as which areas have the potential for improvement. Their belief in the effectiveness of the AAA sessions is especially important in order to highlight the use of AAA as a beneficial, albeit alternative, support measure conducive to the successful reintegration of females on parole.

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## APPENDIX A

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT ANIMAL-ASSISTED ACTIVITY AND ANIMAL-ASSISTED THERAPY

(Retrieved from [www.avma.org](http://www.avma.org))

#### **What is Animal-Assisted Activity (AAA)?**

AAAs provide opportunities for motivation, education, or recreation to enhance quality of life. AAAs are delivered in a variety of environments by specially trained professionals, paraprofessionals, or volunteers in association with animals that meet specific criteria. An AAA intervention is less goal-directed as specific objectives may not be planned. These interventions are more spontaneous, often no notes are taken nor records kept. AAA is provided in a more casual or leisure based way, in a variety of settings, may be group or individual in nature and may be implemented for persons of any age.

An example of AAA: an individual brings his or her dog to a long-term care facility to visit the residents. Although the staff is involved in the visits, no treatment goals have been set for the visit and, aside from signing in and out, no records are kept.

#### **What is Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT)?**

AAT is a goal directed intervention in which an animal meeting specific criteria is an integral part of the treatment process. AAT is delivered and/or directed by health or human service providers working within the scope of their profession. AAT is designed to promote improvement in human physical, social, emotional, or cognitive function. AAT is provided in a variety of settings, and may be group or individual in nature. The process is documented and evaluated.

An example of AAT: a patient recovering from a stroke has trouble walking. A physical therapist uses a therapy dog to motivate the patient to increase their ability to walk short distances while holding the leash. Records are kept outlining the patients progress.

### **Benefits of AAA and AAT**

Interactions with animals can provide emotional and physical health benefits for diverse human populations, including the elderly, children, physically disabled, deaf, blind, emotionally or physically ill, and the incarcerated. By serving as communication catalysts among residents, healthcare staff, and visitors, animals can socialize healthcare facilities. They also may serve as diversions during anxiety-provoking procedures, such as physical examinations.

With proper training, animals can be taught to reinforce rehabilitative behaviors in patients, such as throwing a ball, walking, or verbal responses. Hippotherapy (therapeutic horseback riding) has been reported to improve posture, balance, and coordination. Sense barriers may interfere with human-human interactions and tend to isolate affected individuals; however, verbal communication and sight are not necessary for positive interactions with animals and these interactions may facilitate communication with human handlers or health care providers. Animals can be included in behavior modification programs as a source of support and diversion during threatening situations, such as counselling.

Some therapists have suggested that animals provide a type of reality therapy (by empathizing with the animal's natural instincts, patients see their own lives more objectively). The training of animals provides troubled adolescents and the incarcerated with goals and an object of contact comfort. Residential pets provide opportunities for physical activity or rehabilitation through their need for routine care, such as the construction of habitats, feeding, grooming, and exercise. The responsibility of caring for animals may also provide residents with a sense of purpose and a perceived need to take better care of themselves.

### **Concerns related to AAA and AAT**

Occasionally program participants become so involved with the animals that they become possessive of those animals, and an atmosphere of competition rather than social cooperation develops. Patients may perceive that an animal has rejected them, usually because of unrealistic expectations of the animal's behavior toward them, and this can exacerbate low self-esteem. Death of an animal may generate intense feelings of grief and sometimes guilt in patients and staff. Human injury may result because of inappropriate animal selection, handling, or lack of supervision; likewise,

animals may be abused or accidentally injured. Zoonotic diseases may be transmitted if careful veterinary supervision and sound sanitation practices are not an integral part of the AAA or AAT program, and participants' potential allergic reactions to animal danger are always a concern.

### **Key Components for Successful Use of Animals in AAA and AAT Programs**

*Interdisciplinary cooperation*—Successful AAA and AAT programs are inherently interdisciplinary and present a wonderful opportunity for veterinarians, physicians, nursing staff, activity directors, therapists, and volunteers to work together toward a common goal.

*Planning*—Establish realistic goals and expectations. Anticipation of possible problems and development of solutions prior to their occurrence can avoid conflicts that cause program failure.

*Supervision*—Staff and administrative supervision of AAA and AAT programs are required to protect the welfare of human and animal participants. All personnel need to be made aware that the program is in place and that it is considered to play an integral role in patient care. If an animal becomes a permanent resident of a facility, one individual should be assigned primary responsibility for its care and management, including arrangements for weekend and holiday care.

*Animal selection*—Animals should be selected on the basis of type, breed, size, age, sex, and, particularly, natural behavior appropriate for the intended use. Only animals with known medical and behavioral histories should be used, and medical and behavioral assessments should be performed prior to placing animals in a program. Animals should have been, and should be, trained by use of positive reinforcement. Animals must be chosen with the target population in mind. A boisterous, overactive dog may be friendly, but inappropriate for a nursing home in which many patients are using walkers. A visiting calf or lamb may be more effective with patients who have rural backgrounds than would a caged rodent.

*Animal health, human health, and environmental concerns*—A wellness program should be instituted for animals participating in AAA and AAT programs to prevent or minimize human exposure to common zoonotic diseases such as rabies, psittacosis,

salmonellosis, toxoplasmosis, campylobacteriosis, and giardiasis. Need for specific screening tests should be cooperatively determined by the program's attending veterinarian(s) and physician(s). Animals should also be appropriately immunized and licensed. With respect to immunization for rabies, the current Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control (prepared by the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians and published annually in the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association) and/or state guidelines should be followed. If the animal is to reside at a facility, provisions must be made for its feeding, watering, housing, grooming, and exercise. Associated noise and waste disposal problems must also be solved.

*Human animal interactions and welfare*—During interactive sessions, the welfare of residents, animals, volunteers, staff, and visitors must be considered. Introductions of animals and human participants must be arranged and supervised, because some individuals may not enjoy interacting with animals or may have physical or emotional problems that contraindicate such interactions. Animals should be an integral part of a treatment program and not a reward for appropriate behavior on the part of the human participant. Animals should be monitored closely for clinical signs of stress and should have ample opportunity and space for solitude. Any problems or incidents that occur must be reported to appropriate supervisory staff.

## APPENDIX B

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PETS AS THERAPY

(Retrieved from [www.pat.org.za](http://www.pat.org.za))

#### **What is Pets as Therapy (PAT)?**

Pets as Therapy (PAT) was launched in South Africa in 2001. We are a registered Not for Profit Organisation (NPO), as well as a registered Public Benefit Organisation (PBO).

PAT organises therapeutic visits by pet owners who volunteer to take their pets (mainly dogs) to visit people in hospitals, hospices, retirement homes, frail care facilities, special needs schools residential centres, and a variety of other venues. PAT visits bring company, support, comfort, pleasure, stress relief and stimulation to those living either permanently or temporarily in these and other establishments.

There is a fortune of scientific evidence showing that the interaction between people and pets is therapeutic – physically, emotionally, psychologically and socially.

#### **Why take animals to facilities?**

Visiting with animals can help people feel less lonely, and less depressed. Visits from pets can provide a welcome change from routine, or the renewal of old friendships. People become more active and responsive both during and after visiting with animals.

An animal visit can offer entertainment or a welcome distraction from pain and infirmity. People often talk to the visiting pets, and share with them their thoughts and feelings and memories. Animal visits provide something to look forward to. Stroking a dog or cat can reduce a person's blood pressure, and petting encourages use of hands and arms, stretching and turning.

The visiting pet makes it easier for two strangers to talk. It gives people a common interest and provides a focus for conversation. Many people in hospitals or group homes have had to give up pet ownership and they miss the unconditional acceptance that a pet gives them. A dog pays little attention to age or physical ability, but accepts people just as they are. And the benefits continue long afterwards, leaving behind

memories not only of the visit, but of past experiences. It offers something for people to share.

### **People talk about animal assisted activities (AAA) and animal assisted therapy (AAT). What's the difference?**

PAT is involved in animal assisted activities which is the less formal of the two. Neither the human volunteer nor the visiting pet need specialised training. The interaction between animal and human is social and unstructured, but has therapeutic benefits - hence our name, "Pets as Therapy."

Animal assisted therapy is more formal. It usually involves one particular animal and handler assigned to a particular set of clients. There tend to be particular goals on which the team need to focus.

### **How does PAT operate?**

Most owners really love their pets and get so much pleasure from this relationship. Some feel that they want to share the joy and love of their animal companions with others. PAT's role is to help facilitate this process. Sometimes, it's really hard to phone an institution and say that you want to visit. There are also a whole range of issues that need to be considered such as:

- The suitability of the pet – its own temperament as well as the correct match between the pet and the clients. A docile elderly pooch will get overwhelmed in a children's home, and yet would be of great comfort in a frail care unit;
- The health of the pet – it wouldn't be appreciated if visiting pets caused a resident to get worms or started a flea epidemic! Nor would we want to stress any pet;
- The nature of the institution.

So PAT assesses you and your animal companion as a team. We match you with an institution where all will benefit. We support you to ensure that you feel confident on visits, and provide ongoing support to you.

### **Where do we currently visit?**

More than 45 institutions in and around Cape Town are regularly visited including the Red Cross Children's Hospital Rondebosch, Huis Lückhoff Retirement Village



Rosebank, St Dominic's School for the Deaf Tokai, Helen Keller Home for the Blind Pinelands, Alexandra Hospital and Includid Group Home Maitland, Huis Horizon Stellenbosch, Athlone School for the Blind, and House Hensie Vroom in Stickland, to name just a few.

We frequently review our list of facilities and will contact many more in the near future.

### **How much time is required?**

Any PAT interaction is better than none! As the impact of PAT depends on frequency of contact, fortnightly visits would be ideal. Many of us lead busy lives and can only manage fortnightly or monthly visits. Some people walk through the institutions spending a few minutes with many people for about an hour. We don't want to exhaust or stress the pets, so an hour is usually enough time for a visit. Others spend much more time with a few people and the pets develop really close relationships with their "clients."

### **What is the process of joining?**

Once volunteers have made contact, we assess the pet. Basically any animal that is not aggressive, not too excitable, friendly, and under the control of the owners will be accepted. We need proof that vaccinations are up to date, that there is a parasite (fleas and ticks) control programme in place, and that the animal is healthy. The next step is two or three mentorship visits with experienced visitors to get the "feel" of what it takes. Then we discuss the institutional vacancies and match up the volunteer team.

We arrange to introduce the new team to the institution, accompany them for a visit or two to gain confidence. The team is then left to visit according to the arrangement set up between the team and the institution. We provide ongoing support through regular meetings and there is a membership fee of R120 per year. This is used to contribute towards annual public liability insurance fees.

### **What about people without pets or who have unsuitable pets?**

Running an organization takes a lot of time and effort, so we do need volunteers whom we call Friends of Pets as Therapy. They help with arranging events, recruiting, marketing, fund raising etc. So, Friends are welcome and necessary members of PAT.

Friends have all the rights to PAT benefits which volunteers have, and can be elected to the executive.

### **What is regarded as an “unsuitable pet?”**

Due to the nature of the activities and the potential stress on the pets, we do not assess dogs less than 18 months old. There is no upper age limit, but if an animal is showing signs of frailty, and the assessors feel that PAT activities will be detrimental to his or her health, the pet will be deemed as being unsuitable. We cannot deem dogs that have been “guard-dog” trained as suitable; our public liability cover specifically excludes such animals.

Animals that are not current with their vaccinations, de-worming schedules and external parasite control are also regarded as unsuitable.

### **Are there other activities associated with Pets as Therapy?**

Recruitment drives, gaining exposure and raising funds are all critical to the ongoing success of PAT. We attend pet fairs, public events held by the SPCA, and have an annual book sale which raises the majority of our funds. We have informal links with animal welfare organisations, dog clubs, and organisations involved in human–animal interactions. There are great opportunities to develop closer relationships with these organisations. Like all Not for Profit Organisations, we are very short of funding and so donations are always gratefully accepted and acknowledged.

### **What about ongoing support for members?**

We hold several meetings a year to discuss organisational issues and talks about our experiences. More social get-togethers to support members are planned for the future, such as picnics along with our pets, and social suppers.

### **What about other pets?**

Evidence shows all pets have therapeutic impacts. PAT currently has two very elegant Siamese cats who love their therapeutic roles as visitors. However, they can occasionally cause allergic problems, so some institutions do not favour them.

Australians and certain American branches are quite big on white rats. We have had no experience with these, but are willing to give it a try as well as parrots, canaries, cockatiels, rabbits, miniature goats, miniature Shetland ponies, or pot-bellied pigs!

**What else does PAT have to do?**

We need to get the basics right – get our brand known, promote the concept to institutions and then recruit many more volunteers to visit. There are so many opportunities in Cape Town and the surrounding areas. There are also many relationships to build between organisations with overlapping interests. Once we have Cape Town working well, we would like to open branches in other cities and towns around South Africa. Stellenbosch and Polokwane are already up and running!

## APPENDIX C

### LETTER OF INVITATION – FEMALE PAROLEES

(English, Afrikaans, and isiXhosa)



UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY  
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

### STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY PARTICIPANT LETTER OF INVITATION

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**TITLE OF THE STUDY:** Animal-assisted activities in a halfway facility: A case study

**REFERENCE NUMBER:** SU-HSD-000889

**RESEARCHER:** Juliette R. van Besouw

**ADDRESS:** Psychology Department, Stellenbosch University

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 0724781652

Dear female resident

My name is Juliette van Besouw and I am a MA (Psychology) student from Stellenbosch University. I would like to invite you to participate in a research study that aims to investigate animal-assisted activities in a halfway facility.

This study is being supervised by Dr. Marieanna le Roux, a lecturer in the Department of Psychology at Stellenbosch University. The study was approved by the Humanities Research Ethics Committee at Stellenbosch University and the Department of Correctional Services Research Ethics Committee.

If you do volunteer to participate in this research you will be required to attend a once off individual interview, lasting approximately 30 minutes in length. In this interview I would like to know about your experience of animal-assisted activity in regards to the

Pets as Therapy visits that have been held at the halfway facility. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded.

All information obtained in this study will be kept strictly confidential and private. In order to ensure a high level of confidentiality and privacy, only I, the researcher, will have access to the interview audio-recording, which will be stored in a private, secure location. Furthermore, your identity will also be kept completely anonymous and no identifying information will be included in any write-up of this research.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part initially.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at [Juliette.besouw@gmail.com](mailto:Juliette.besouw@gmail.com) or on (072) 478 1652. Alternatively, you can contact my research supervisor, Dr. Marieanna le Roux, at [mclr@sun.ac.za](mailto:mclr@sun.ac.za) or on (021) 808 3444.

Yours sincerely,



**Juliette R. van Besouw**

072 478 1652

[Juliette.besouw@gmail.com](mailto:Juliette.besouw@gmail.com)



**Dr. Marieanna C. le Roux**

Research Supervisor

[mclr@sun.ac.za](mailto:mclr@sun.ac.za)



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DEELNEMER UITNODIGINGS BRIEF**

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**TITEL VAN DIE STUDIE:** Troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteite in 'n halfweg-fasiliteit:

'n Gevallestudie

**VERWYSINGSNOMMER:** SU-HSD-000889

**NAVORSER:** Juliette R. van Besouw

**ADRES:** Sielkunde Departement, Universiteit Stellenbosch

**KONTAKNOMMER:** 0724781652

Geagte vroulike inwoner

My naam is Juliette van Besouw en ek is 'n MA (Sielkunde) student aan die Universiteit Stellenbosch. Graag nooi ek u uit om deel te neem aan 'n navorsingsprojek wat beoog om troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteite in 'n halfweg-fasiliteit te ondersoek.

Hierdie studie word gedoen onder toesig van Dr. Marieanna le Roux, 'n dosent aan die Departement van Sielkunde by Universiteit Stellenbosch. Die studie is deur die Geesteswetenskappe-Navorsingsetiekkomitee by Universiteit Stellenbosch en die Departement van Korrektiewe Dienste se Navorsingsetiekkomitee goedgekeur.

Indien u vrywillig aan hierdie navorsingsprojek deelneem, sal daar van u verwag word om 'n eenmalige, individuele onderhoud by te woon wat omtrent 30 minute sal duur. In die onderhoud sal u gevra word oor u ervaring met die troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteit in verband met die 'Pets as Therapy'-besoeke wat by die halfweg-fasiliteit gehou is. Met u toestemming sal die onderhoud op oudio-band opgeneem word.

Alle informasie wat tydens die navorsing verkry word, word konfidensieel en privaat gehou. Om te verseker dat 'n hoë standaard van konfidensialiteit en privaatheid

gehandhaaf word, sal ek, die navorser, alleenlik toegang hê tot die opname van die onderhoud, en dit sal ook in 'n privaat en veilige plek geberg word. Verder sal u identiteit heeltmaal anoniem gehou word en geen uitkenbare informasie sal gebruik word in die beskrywing van die navorsing nie.

Deelname is geheel en al vrywillig en u mag hierdie uitnodiging van die hand wys. Indien u nee sê, sal dit u in geen manier negatief beïnvloed nie. U is ook geregtig om op enige tydstip van die studie te onttrek, al het u aanvanklik ingestem om deel te neem.

Indien u enige vrae of besorgdhede oor die navorsing het, kan u my gerus kontak by [Juliette.besouw@gmail.com](mailto:Juliette.besouw@gmail.com) of op (072) 478 1652 of tree in verbinding met my toesighouer, Dr. Marieanna le Roux, by [mclr@sun.ac.za](mailto:mclr@sun.ac.za) of op (021) 808 3444.

Die uwe,



**Juliette R. van Besouw**

072 478 1652

[Juliette.besouw@gmail.com](mailto:Juliette.besouw@gmail.com)



**Dr. Marieanna C. le Roux**

Toesighouer

[mclr@sun.ac.za](mailto:mclr@sun.ac.za)



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**ISIHLOKO SOPHANDO:** Ekusetyenzisweni kwezilwanyana kude kufuphi neziko lwezoncedo: Ikheyistadi

**INOMBOLO YOBHALISO:** SU-HSD-000889

**UMPHANDI:** Juliette R. van Besouw

**IDILESI:** Icandelo lezemfundo ngengqondo kwiDyunivesithi yaseStellenbosch

**UMNXEBA:** 0724781652

Wena Othandekayo umhlali abaumntu obhinqileyo

Igama lam ndinguJuliette van Besouw kwaye ndingumfundi owenza isigaba seMA (Bengqondo) kwiDyunivesithi yaseStellenbosch. Ndingathanda ukumeme ukuba uthathe inxaxheba kufundo phando olujolise ukufumana ulwazi kabanzi ekusetyenzisweni kwezilwanyana kude kufuphi neziko lwezoncedo.

Ophethe olu phando nguGqirha uMarieanna le Roux nokwa ngumhlohli kwicandelo lezolzazi ngengqondo kwiDyunivesithi yaseStellenbosch. Uphando olu luthunyelwe na kwi sigqeba esiphanda ngendlela uluntu oluziphatha ngayo iHumanities Research Ethics Committee kwiDyunivesithi yaseStellenbosch kwaye iDepartment Correctional Services Research Ethics Committee ukuze luphunyezwe.

Ukuba uyavuma ukuba ngumthathi-nxaxheba kolu phando kufanelekile ukuba ungenele ukuthatha inxaxheba kudliwano-ndlebe oluthatha ixesha elingalingana nama-30 emizuzu ubude. Kolu dliwano-ndlebe ndiza kuthanda ukwazi malunga namava onawo ngokusetyenziswa kwezilwanyana zasekhaya ekuphiliseni abo badandathekileyo emphemfulweni kwimiboniso okhe wandwendwela kuyo kwiziko elikufutshane nawe. Ngemvume yakho udliwano-ndlebe olo luya kushicilelwa.



Zonke iinkcukacha ezithe zafumaneka kolu phando ziya kugcinwa njengeziyimfihlo. Ukuqinisekisa ukuba iinkcukacha ezi zikhuselekile, ndim kuphela njengomphandi oyaba nelungelo lokukwazi ukufikelela kolushicilelo apho luzakube lufihlwe khona kwindawo ekhuselekileyo. Kwakhona akukho mntu uyakwazi ukuba olu phando belisenziwa nabani ngoba iinkcukacha ezinje ngamagama akho azizukuvezwa okanye zibandakanywe kumxholo woluphando.

Inxaxheba yakho iyakuthathwa njengephuma kuwe entliziyweni futhi wamkelekile uba ungangavumi ukuthabatha inxaxheba. Akukho nto imbi ozakuchaphazeleka ngayo ngokwala kwakho. Ukwavumelekile uba ungarhoxa noba kunini kolu phando noba ubusele uqalile na.

Ukuba unemibuzo okanye iinkxalabo ezithile malunga nolu phando, wamkelekile ukuba ungaqhagamshelana nomphandi oyintloko, uJuliette van Besouw kwa Juliette.besouw@gmail.com okanye unditsalele kwa (072) 478 1652. Kananjalo ungaqhagamshelana noGqirha uMarieanna le Roux kwa mclr@sun.ac.za okanye kwa (021) 808 3444 nekunguye ophethe olu phando.

Owenu Ozithobileyo,



**Juliette R. van Besouw**

072 478 1652

Juliette.besouw@gmail.com



**Dr. Marieanna C. le Roux**

Ungaqhagamshelana

mclr@sun.ac.za

## APPENDIX D

### LETTER OF INVITATION – HOUSE PARENTS

(English and Afrikaans)



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### STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY PARTICIPANT LETTER OF INVITATION

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**TITLE OF THE STUDY:** Animal-assisted activities in a halfway facility: A case study

**REFERENCE NUMBER:** SU-HSD-000889

**RESEARCHER:** Juliette R. van Besouw

**ADDRESS:** Psychology Department, Stellenbosch University

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 0724781652

Dear house parent

My name is Juliette van Besouw and I am a MA (Psychology) student from Stellenbosch University. I would like to invite you to participate in a research study that aims to investigate animal-assisted activities in a halfway facility.

This study is being supervised by Dr. Marieanna le Roux, a lecturer in the Department of Psychology at Stellenbosch University, and has been approved by the Humanities Research Ethics Committee at Stellenbosch University and the Department of Correctional Services Research Ethics Committee.

If you do volunteer to participate in this research you will be required to attend a once off individual interview, lasting approximately 30 minutes in length. In this interview I would like to know about your experience of animal-assisted activity in regards to the

Pets as Therapy visits that have been held at the halfway facility. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded.

All information obtained in this study will be kept strictly confidential and private. In order to ensure a high level of confidentiality and privacy, only I, the researcher, will have access to the interview audio-recording, which will be stored in a private, secure location. Furthermore, your identity will also be kept completely anonymous and no identifying information will be included in any write-up of this research.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part initially.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at [Juliette.besouw@gmail.com](mailto:Juliette.besouw@gmail.com) or on (072) 478 1652. Alternatively, you can contact my supervisor, Dr. Marieanna le Roux, at [mclr@sun.ac.za](mailto:mclr@sun.ac.za) or on (021) 808 3444.

Yours sincerely,



**Juliette R. van Besouw**

072 478 1652

[Juliette.besouw@gmail.com](mailto:Juliette.besouw@gmail.com)



**Dr. Marieanna C. le Roux**

Research Supervisor

[mclr@sun.ac.za](mailto:mclr@sun.ac.za)



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**TITEL VAN DIE STUDIE:** Troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteite in 'n halfweg-fasiliteit:

'n Gevallestudie

**VERWYSINGSNOMMER:** SU-HSD-000889

**NAVORSER:** Juliette R. van Besouw

**ADRES:** Sielkunde Departement, Universiteit Stellenbosch

**KONTAK NOMMER:** 0724781652

Geagte huisouer

My naam is Juliette van Besouw en ek is 'n MA (Sielkunde) student aan die Universiteit Stellenbosch. Graag nooi ek u uit om deel te neem aan 'n navorsingsprojek wat beoog om troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteite in 'n halfweg-fasiliteit te ondersoek.

Hierdie studie word gedoen onder toesig van Dr. Marieanna le Roux, 'n dosent aan die Departement Sielkunde by die Universiteit Stellenbosch. Die studie is deur die Geesteswetenskapp-Navorsingsetiekkomitee by die Universiteit Stellenbosch en die Departement van Korrektiewe Dienste se Navorsingsetiekkomitee goedgekeur.

Indien u vrywillig aan hierdie navorsingsprojek deelneem, sal daar van u verwag word om 'n eenmalige, individuele onderhoud by te woon wat omtrent een uur sal duur. In die onderhoud sal u gevra word oor u ervaring met die troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteit in verband met die 'Pets as Therapy'-besoeke wat by die halfweg-fasiliteit gehou is. Met u toestemming sal die onderhoud op oudio-band opgeneem word.

Alle informasie wat tydens die navorsing verkry word, word konfidensieel en privaat gehou. Om te verseker dat 'n hoë standaard van konfidensialiteit en privaatheid gehandhaaf word, sal ek, die navorser, alleenlik toegang hê tot die opname van die

onderhoud, en dit sal ook in 'n privaat en veilige plek geberg word. Verder sal u identiteit heeltemal anoniem gehou word en geen uitkenbare informasie sal gebruik word in die beskrywing van die navorsing nie.

Deelname is geheel en al vrywillig en u mag hierdie uitnodiging van die hand wys. Indien u nee sê, sal dit u in geen manier negatief beïnvloed nie. U is ook geregtig om op enige tydstip van die studie te onttrek, al het u aanvanklik ingestem om deel te neem.

Indien u enige vrae of besorgdhede oor die navorsing het, kan u my gerus kontak by Juliette.besouw@gmail.com of op (072) 478 1652 of met my toesighouer, Dr. Marieanna le Roux by, mclr@sun.ac.za of op (021) 808 3444 in verbinding tree.

Die uwe,



**Juliette R. van Besouw**

072 478 1652

Juliette.besouw@gmail.com



**Dr. Marieanna C. le Roux**

Toesighouer

mclr@sun.ac.za

**APPENDIX E****LETTER OF INVITATION – PETS AS THERAPY VOLUNTEER**

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**STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY  
PARTICIPANT LETTER OF INVITATION**

---

**TITLE OF THE STUDY:** Animal-assisted activities in a halfway facility: A case study

**REFERENCE NUMBER:** SU-HSD-000889

**RESEARCHER:** Juliette R. van Besouw

**ADDRESS:** Psychology Department, Stellenbosch University

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 0724781652

Dear PAT Volunteer

My name is Juliette van Besouw and I am a MA (Psychology) student from Stellenbosch University. I would like to invite you to participate in a research study that aims to investigate animal-assisted activities in a halfway facility.

This study is being supervised by Dr. Marieanna le Roux, a lecturer in the Department of Psychology at Stellenbosch University, and has been approved by the Humanities Research Ethics Committee at Stellenbosch University and the Department of Correctional Services Research Ethics Committee.

If you do volunteer to participate in this research you will be required to attend a once off individual interview, lasting approximately 30 minutes in length. In this interview I would like to know about your experience of the animal-assisted activity sessions that you have been supervising as a Pets as Therapy volunteer at the halfway facility. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded.

All information obtained in this study will be kept strictly confidential and private. In order to ensure a high level of confidentiality and privacy, only I, the researcher, will have access to the interview audio-recording, which will be stored in a private, secure location. Furthermore, your identity will also be kept completely anonymous and no identifying information will be included in any write-up of this research.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part initially.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at [Juliette.besouw@gmail.com](mailto:Juliette.besouw@gmail.com) or on (072) 478 1652. Alternatively, you can contact my supervisor, Dr. Marieannale Roux, at [mclr@sun.ac.za](mailto:mclr@sun.ac.za) or on (021) 808 3444.

Yours sincerely,



**Juliette R. van Besouw**

072 478 1652

[Juliette.besouw@gmail.com](mailto:Juliette.besouw@gmail.com)



**Dr. Marieanna C. le Roux**

Research Supervisor

[mclr@sun.ac.za](mailto:mclr@sun.ac.za)

**APPENDIX F****BIOGRAPHICAL AND PET HISTORY QUESTIONNAIRE – FEMALE PAROLEES****(English, Afrikaans, and isiXhosa)****Biographical and pet-history questionnaire**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can identify you will remain strictly confidential.

<b>BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION</b>	
<b>Gender</b>	
<b>Age</b>	
<b>Racial group</b>	
<b>Home language</b>	
<b>Other languages</b>	
<b>Prior area of residence</b>	
<b>Highest level of education</b>	
<b>Current employment</b>	
<b>How long were you in prison?</b>	
<b>How long have you been in the halfway facility?</b>	
<b>PET-HISTORY INFORMATION</b>	
<b>Do you like animals?</b>	
<b>Do you like dogs?</b>	
<b>Are you afraid of dogs?</b>	
<b>Have you ever had a pet?</b>	
<b>What kind of pet(s) have you had?</b>	
<b>Did you feel you had a close relationship with your pet(s)?</b>	



**Biografiese en troeteldiergeskiedenis-vraelys**

Enige informasie wat verkry word rakende hierdie studie en wat u kan identifiseer, sal streng vertroulik bly.

<b>BIOGRAFIESE INLIGTING</b>	
<b>Geslag</b>	
<b>Ouderdom</b>	
<b>Rassegroep</b>	
<b>Huistaal</b>	
<b>Ander tale</b>	
<b>Vorige woongebied</b>	
<b>Hoogste vlak van opvoeding</b>	
<b>Huidige werk</b>	
<b>Hoe lank was jy in die tronk?</b>	
<b>Hoe lank was jy in die halfweg-fasiliteit?</b>	
<b>TROETELDIERGESKIEDENISINLIGTING</b>	
<b>Hou jy van diere?</b>	
<b>Hou jy van honde?</b>	
<b>Is jy bang vir honde?</b>	
<b>Het jy al ooit 'n troeteldier gehad?</b>	
<b>Watter tipes troeteldier(e) het jy al gehad?</b>	
<b>Het jy gevoel jy het 'n noue verhouding met jou troeteldier(e)?</b>	

**Iphepha lemibuzo ngembali yesilo sasekhaya iinkcukacha**

Zonke iinkcukacha ezifumeneke mayela nolu phando ngawe ziza kuhlala zithathwa njengeziyimfihlo kwaye zingadandalaziswa nje kuphela xa wena ungakuvumela oko.

<b>IINKCUKACHA</b>	
<b>Isini</b>	
<b>Ubudala</b>	
<b>Uhlanga</b>	
<b>Ulwimi lwasekhaya</b>	
<b>Ulwimi ezinye</b>	
<b>Indawo phambi yokuzalwa</b>	
<b>Kwinqanaba eliphezulu lemfundo</b>	
<b>Wenza msebenzi mni</b>	
<b>Lingakanani ixesha usentolongweni?</b>	
<b>Lingakanani ixesha ukude kufuphi nendawo enokusetyenziswa?</b>	
<b>INKCUKACHA NGEMBALI NGESILO SASEKHAYA</b>	
<b>Uyazithanda izilwanyana?</b>	
<b>Uyazithanda izinja?</b>	
<b>Uyazoyika izinja?</b>	
<b>Wake wanaso isilo sasekhaya?</b>	
<b>Sesiphi isilwanyana sasekhaya owake wanaso?</b>	
<b>Va uzalwanovala isilo-qabane wena?</b>	

**APPENDIX G****BIOGRAPHICAL AND PET-HISTORY QUESTIONNAIRE – HOUSE PARENTS****(English and Afrikaans)****Biographical and pet-history questionnaire**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain strictly confidential.

<b>BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION</b>	
<b>Gender</b>	
<b>Age</b>	
<b>Racial group</b>	
<b>Home language</b>	
<b>Other languages</b>	
<b>How long have you been employed by the halfway facility?</b>	
<b>PET-HISTORY INFORMATION</b>	
<b>Do you like animals?</b>	
<b>Do you like dogs?</b>	
<b>Are you afraid of dogs?</b>	
<b>Have you ever had a pet?</b>	
<b>What kind of pet(s) have you had?</b>	
<b>What kind of relationship did you have with your pet(s)?</b>	

**Biografiese en troeteldiergeskiedenis-vraelys**

Enige informasie wat verkry word rakende hierdie studie en wat u kan identifiseer, sal streng vertroulik bly.

<b>BIOGRAFIESE INLIGTING</b>	
<b>Geslag</b>	
<b>Ouderdom</b>	
<b>Rassegroep</b>	
<b>Huistaal</b>	
<b>Ander tale</b>	
<b>Hoe lank was jy al in diens van die halfweg- fasiliteit?</b>	
<b>TROETELDIERGESKIEDENISINLIGTING</b>	
<b>Hou jy van diere?</b>	
<b>Hou jy van honde?</b>	
<b>Is jy bang vir honde?</b>	
<b>Het jy al ooit 'n troeteldier gehad?</b>	
<b>Watter tipes troeteldier(e) het jy al gehad?</b>	
<b>Het jy gevoel jy het 'n noue verhouding met jou troeteldier(e)?</b>	

**APPENDIX H****BIOGRAPHICAL AND PET-HISTORY QUESTIONNAIRE – PETS AS THERAPY  
VOLUNTEER****Biographical and pet-history questionnaire**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can identify you will remain strictly confidential.

<b>BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION</b>	
<b>Gender</b>	
<b>Age</b>	
<b>Racial group</b>	
<b>Home language</b>	
<b>Other languages</b>	
<b>Current area of residence</b>	
<b>Occupation</b>	
<b>PET-HISTORY INFORMATION</b>	
<b>How many pet(s) do you have?</b>	
<b>What type of pet(s) do you have?</b>	
<b>How long have you been volunteering for PAT?</b>	
<b>How long have you been visiting the halfway facility as a PAT volunteer?</b>	
<b>What other types of institutions have you volunteered at as a PAT volunteer?</b>	

## APPENDIX I

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE – FEMALE PAROLEES

#### (English, Afrikaans, and isiXhosa)

1. I have heard that there is a volunteer who visits the halfway facility with a dog. Could you tell me a little bit more about your experience of the dog visits? / Ek het gehoor daar is 'n vrywilliger wat by die halfweg- fasiliteit kuier met 'n hond. Kan jy my 'n bietjie meer vertel van jou ervaring met die hond se kuiers? / Ndivile likhona ivolontiya eliyindwendwelayo indawo enokusetyenziswa lihamba nenja. Ungandixelela kabanzi ngamava wakho otyelelo lwezinja?
2. Can you tell me any particular stories that you remember from your interaction with the dog (maybe how you played with the dog and how the dog reacted)? What did you like/what you did not like? / Kan jy my enige stories vertel van wat jy spesifiek onthou van jou interaksie met die hond (hoe jy miskien met die hond gespeel het en hoe die hond gereageer het)? Wat was vir jou lekker/wat was nie lekker nie? / Ungandixelela ngenkcukacha yamabali owakhumbulayo ngentsebenziswano nenja (mhlawumbi udlale njani nenja yayeinja iye yazibonakalisa njani)? Uthande ntoni/Yintoni ongayithandanga?
3. Have you learned anything from the dog? / Het jy enigiets by die hond geleer? / Ikhona into oyifundileyo enjeni?
  - If yes / Indien ja / Ukuba uthi ewe:
    - What have you learned from the dog? / Wat het jy by die hond geleer? / Ufunde ntoni enjeni?
    - What have you learned about yourself? / Wat het jy oor jouself geleer? / Ufunde ntoni ngesiqu sakho?
    - What have you learned about animals/working with animals? / Wat het jy oor diere/werk met diere geleer? / Ufunde ntoni ngezilwanyana/ukusebenza ngezilwanyana?

- If no / Indien nee / Ukuba uthi hayi:
  - How do you feel about animals in general? / Hoe voel jy oor die algemeen oor diere? / Uziva njani ngezilwanyana ngokuthe gabalala?
  - How did it affect your interaction with the dog? Did it have an influence on how you dealt with the dog? / Hoe het dit jou interaksie met die hond beïnvloed? Het dit 'n invloed gehad op hoe jy die hond hanteer het? / Ikuchaphazele njani intsebenziswano yakho nenja? Ingaba libenempembelelo enjani ilinge lakho nenja?
- 4. How was your interactions with the other women during the dog visits? Have your interactions changed from one session to the next? / Hoe was jou interaksie met die ander vroue toe die hond kom kuier het? Het julle interaksie verander van die een sessie tot die volgende? / Yayinjani intsebenziswano yakho namabhinqa ngelixa lotyelelo lwenja? Ingaba intsebenziswano yakho itshintshile ukusuka kwixesha lengxoxo lokuqala ukuya kwelilandelayo?

## APPENDIX J

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE – HOUSE PARENTS

#### (English and Afrikaans)

1. I have heard that there is a volunteer who visits the halfway facility with a dog. Could you tell me a little bit more about your experience of the dog's visits? / Ek het gehoor dat daar is 'n vrywilliger wat by die halfweg- fasiliteit kuier met 'n hond. Kan jy my 'n bietjie meer vertel van jou ervaring met die hond se kuiers?
2. Can you tell me any particular stories that you remember of the women and their interaction with the dog? / Kan jy my enige stories vertel van wat jy spesifiek onthou van die vroue en hulle interaksie met die hond?
3. Have you noticed a difference in the interactions between the women during or after the dog's visits? Did their interactions change from one session to the next? / Het jy enige verskillende interaksies opgemerk tussen die vroue, gedurende of na die hond se kuiers? Het hulle interaksie verander van een sessie to die volgende?
4. Have you noticed a difference in the interactions between you (the house parents) and the women, during or after the visits? / Het jy enige verskillende interaksies opgemerk tussen julle (die huisouers) en die vroue, gedurende of na die hond se kuiers?
5. Is there anything else that you have noticed since the dog's visits began? Any changes in the halfway facility or in the women? / Is daar nog iets wat jy opgemerk het vandat die hond se kuiers begin het? Enige veranderinge in die halfweg- fasiliteit of in die vroue?
6. Do you think the women learnt anything from the sessions? / Dink jy die vroue iets geleer het uit die sessies?
7. What do you think about the dog's visits? Why do you think that? / Wat dink jy van die hond se kuiers? Hoekom dink jy so?



## APPENDIX K

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE – PETS AS THERAPY VOLUNTEER

1. I have heard that you have been visiting the halfway facility as a volunteer with your dog, Morris. Could you tell me a little bit more about your experience of the sessions?
2. Can you tell me any particular stories that you remember of the women and their interactions with Morris?
3. How did the women react to Morris? How would you describe their interactions with Morris? Did their reactions to Morris change as the sessions progressed?
4. Have you noticed a difference in the interactions between the women from one session to the next?
5. Have you noticed a difference in the interactions between the house parents and the women from one section to the next?
6. Have you noticed a difference in how the women interact with you as the sessions have progressed?
7. Do you think the women learnt anything from the sessions and/or interacting with Morris?
8. What do you think about the sessions? Did you enjoy supervising them or not? Why do you think that?

## APPENDIX L

### APPROVAL LETTER FROM STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY



UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY  
jou kennisvenoot • your knowledge partner

21 August 2015

Dear Clarissa

DESC feedback regarding the proposal of MA (Psychology) student JR van Besouw (Student Nr. 15535533), with thesis title

#### **Female parolees experiences of animal-assisted activities**

All Ethical aspects have been adequately addressed. Due to the nature of the study population, this is a MEDIUM risk study.

Thanks



DESC Administrator: \_\_\_

Prof AP Greeff



Departement Sielkunde • Department of Psychology

**APPENDIX M****APPROVAL LETTER WITH STIPULATIONS FROM STELLENBOSCH  
UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE: HUMAN RESEARCH**

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**Approved with Stipulations****New Application**

02-Oct-2015

Van Besouw, Juliette JR

**Proposal #: SU-HSD-000889**

**Title: Female parolees experiences of animal-assisted activities.**

Dear Ms Juliette Van Besouw,

Your **New Application** received on **31-Aug-2015**, was reviewed by the Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities) via Committee Review procedures on **23-Sep-2015**.

Please note the following information about your approved research proposal:

Proposal Approval Period: **23-Sep-2015 -22-Sep-2016**

**Present Committee Members:**

Bengu, Sibusisiwe S  
Theron, Carl CC  
Viviers, Suzette S  
Fouche, Magdalena MG  
Hansen, Leonard LD  
Horn, Lynette LM  
Nell, Theodore TA  
Van Deventer, Karel KJ  
Hall, Susan SLC  
Beukes, Winston WA  
Graham, Clarissa CJ  
Toi, Jerall J  
Carolissen, Ronelle RL

The following stipulations are relevant to the approval of your project and must be adhered to:

**The researcher may proceed with the envisaged research provided that the following stipulations, relevant to the approval of your project are adhered to or addressed. Some of these stipulations may**

require your response. Where a response is required, you are encouraged to respond to the REC within six (6) months of the date of this letter.

If a response is required, please respond to the points raised in a separate cover letter titled “Response to REC stipulations” AND if requested, HIGHLIGHT or use the TRACK CHANGES function to indicate corrections / amendments of ATTACHED DOCUMENTATION, to allow rapid scrutiny and appraisal.

#### GENERAL COMMENTS:

In line with regulatory requirements, this proposal was discussed with Dr Sibusisiwe Bengu from the Department of Correctional Services, who joined the REC meeting via Skype. Dr Bengu’s comments are included below. Overall she expressed her support of the project.

#### 1. TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENTATION (recommendation)

Since the other documents such as informed consent forms, etc. have been translated in isiXhosa, the researcher may consider translating the interview schedule as well so that participants are able to respond to questions in a language they prefer.

#### 2. INSTITUTIONAL PERMISSION

2.1) The current permission letter of the Halfway House is ambiguous. It states that there has been provisional acceptance to conduct the interviews, but that the Board of Directors has the final say. This needs to be clarified before data collection may commence.

2.2) The researcher may still require permission from the Department of Correctional Services. It is therefore important that all gatekeepers be informed of the research and the terms of participation before the study may commence.

#### 3. INFORMED CONSENT PROCESS

3.1) The researcher should proofread the Afrikaans informed consent form for spelling errors.

3.2) The researcher should be mindful that these participants are considered a vulnerable population – despite being parolees at halfway houses, they may still feel that they are obliged to participate as part of their parole conditions. The researcher should therefore continuously remind the participants that their participation is completely voluntary and they have the right to decline participation without any negative consequence. Alternatively the researcher may consider selecting participants who have exited the halfway house, instead of those parolees still under the jurisdiction of the halfway house, as the former may be in a position to consent to participate without feeling obligated to do so.

#### 4. INTERACTION AND/OR USE OF ANIMALS

The researcher should confirm whether there will be immediate interaction with animals (i.e.) pets will be taken to halfway houses as part of the purpose of the study, the researcher should apply for ethics clearance from the REC: Animal Care and Use of Stellenbosch University before the study may commence.

Please provide a letter of response to all the points raised IN ADDITION to HIGHLIGHTING or using the TRACK CHANGES function to indicate ALL the corrections/amendments of ALL DOCUMENTS clearly in order to allow rapid scrutiny and appraisal.

Please take note of the general Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

Please remember to use your **proposal number (SU-HSD-000889)** on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your research proposal.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

Also note that a progress report should be submitted to the Committee before the approval period has expired if a continuation is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary).

This committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research, established by the Declaration of Helsinki and the Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes 2004 (Department of Health). Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) registration number REC-050411-032.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research.

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at 218089183.

**Included Documents:**

DESC Report - Greeff, Abraham

REC: Humanities New Application

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator

Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

## APPENDIX N

### APPROVAL NOTICE FROM STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE: HUMAN RESEARCH



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#### Approval Notice

##### Stipulated documents/requirements

03-Mar-2016

Van Besouw, Juliette JR

**Proposal #: SU-HSD-000889**

**Title: Female parolees experiences of animal-assisted activities.**

Dear Ms Juliette Van Besouw,

Your **Stipulated documents/requirements** received on **27-Feb-2016**, was reviewed by members of the **Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)** via Expedited review procedures on **03-Mar-2016** and was approved.

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator

Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

## APPENDIX O

APPROVAL LETTER FROM DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES  
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**correctional services**

Department:  
Correctional Services  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X136, PRETORIA, 0001 Poyntons Building, C/O WF Nkomo and Sophie De Bruyn Street, PRETORIA  
Tel (012) 307 2770, Fax 086 539 2693

**Ms JR Van Besouw**  
1 Orchards  
University Drive  
Pinelands  
7405

Dear Ms JR Van Besouw

**RE: APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES ON: "THE FEMALE PAROLEE'S EXPERIENCE OF ANIMAL ASSISTED ACTIVITIES."**

It is with pleasure to inform you that your request to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services on the above topic has been approved.

Your attention is drawn to the following:

- The relevant Regional and Area Commissioners where the research will be conducted will be informed of your proposed research project.
- Your internal guide will be **Regional Coordinator Social Reintegration, Mr S Monare, Western Cape.**
- You are requested to contact him at telephone number (021) 550 6066 before the commencement of your research.
- It is your responsibility to make arrangements for your interviewing times.
- Your identity document and this approval letter should be in your possession when visiting.
- You are required to use the terminology used in the White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (February 2005) e.g. "Offenders" not "Prisoners" and "Correctional Centres" not "Prisons".
- You are not allowed to use photographic or video equipment during your visits, however the audio recorder is allowed.
- You are required to submit your final report to the Department for approval by the Commissioner of Correctional Services before publication (including presentation at workshops, conferences, seminars, etc) of the report.
- Should you have any enquiries regarding this process, please contact the Directorate Research for assistance at telephone number (012) 307 2770 / (012) 305 8554.

Thank you for your application and interest to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services.

Yours faithfully

**ND SIHLEZANA**  
**DC: POLICY COORDINATION & RESEARCH**

DATE: 27/05/2016

**APPENDIX P****LETTER OF REQUEST TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE HALFWAY  
HOUSE**

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**STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY  
LETTER OF REQUEST**

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**TITLE OF THE STUDY:** Animal-assisted activities in a halfway facility: A case study

**REFERENCE NUMBER:** SU-HSD-000889

**RESEARCHER:** Juliette R. van Besouw

**ADDRESS:** Psychology Department, Stellenbosch University

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 0724781652

Dear Executive Director

**Re: Permission to interview female parolee residents and house parents of the halfway facility**

I am currently a MA (Psychology) student from Stellenbosch University and would like to conduct a research study at your halfway facility. This study would focus on the experience of animal-assisted activities in a halfway facility.

As part of my research I would like to interview all the individuals that have been participating in the animal-assisted activity sessions held at your halfway facility. This study is under the supervision of Dr. Marieanna le Roux, a lecturer in the Psychology Department at Stellenbosch University, and has been approved by the relevant ethics committees.

I would appreciate it if you would grant me permission to interview the female parolees currently residing in the halfway facility, as well as the house parents currently under your employment. This will be done in order to gather the data necessary for the



exploration of the experience of animal-assisted activity within the context of a halfway facility. Research of this nature, regarding the experience of animal-assisted activity in a halfway facility, is poorly researched and has never been previously undertaken in the context of your halfway facility. As such, this research could offer significant insights into this social phenomenon and the viability of animal-assisted activities within the rehabilitation and reintegration context, as well as could possibly guide future studies regarding this topic.

I can assure you that strict procedures will be followed throughout the duration of the study to ensure the emotional well-being of the residents and staff of the halfway facility. Attached is a copy of the research proposal that was submitted to the Stellenbosch University and Department of Correctional Services Research Ethics Committees for ethical clearance. Letters of approval from said Research Ethics Committees are also attached.

I sincerely hope that you are willing to grant me the needed permission to conduct my research at the halfway facility. I will contact you during the next few days to arrange a meeting wherein we can discuss the study more elaborately. You may contact my research supervisor, Dr. Marieanna le Roux, at [mclr@sun.ac.za](mailto:mclr@sun.ac.za) or on (021) 808 3444 for more information.

Kind regards,



**Juliette R Van Besouw**

072 478 1652

[Juliette.besouw@gmail.com](mailto:Juliette.besouw@gmail.com)



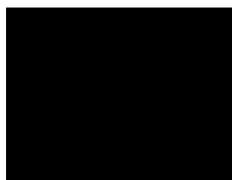
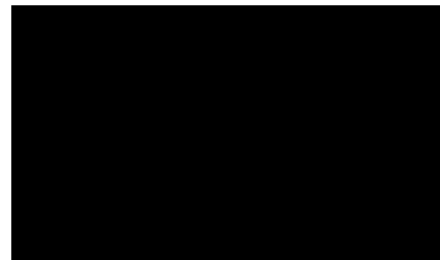
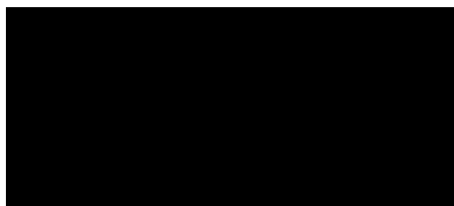
**Dr. Marieanna C. le Roux**

Research Supervisor / Chair of PAT

[mclr@sun.ac.za](mailto:mclr@sun.ac.za)

## APPENDIX Q

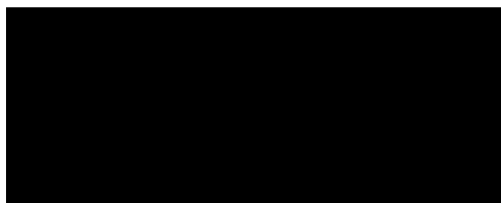
### APPROVAL LETTER FROM THE HALFWAY HOUSE



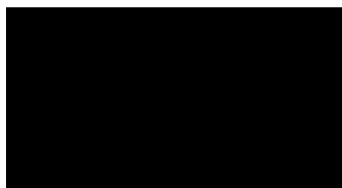
3/2/16

The Board of [REDACTED] gives permission to Juliette van Besouw to interview the residents at and the house parents currently employed by the [REDACTED] (RF) NPC halfway facilities as part of her research project. This is only if the residents and house parents agree, sign agreement forms, and precaution is taken to protect their identities. [REDACTED] understands that the research will be done in order to gather the data necessary for the exploration of female parolee's experience of animal-assisted activities.

Kind regards,



Executive Director



## APPENDIX R

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM – FEMALE PAROLEES

(English, Afrikaans, and isiXhosa)



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### STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

---

**TITLE OF THE STUDY:** Animal-assisted activities in a halfway facility: A case study

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Juliette van Besouw from the Department of Psychology at Stellenbosch University. I am currently enrolled as a Master's student at Stellenbosch University and I intend to report the results of this research in my thesis.

You have been invited to participate in this research because you are a female parolee currently residing in a halfway facility and you have been participating in regular animal-assisted activity sessions held at the halfway facility.

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to explore the experience of animal-assisted activities within the context of the halfway facility.

#### 2. PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this research, you would be asked to do the following things:

You will be asked to complete a biographical and pet-history questionnaire soliciting biographical data and your personal responses towards dogs. After that, you will be asked to participate in one individual interview lasting approximately 30 minutes in duration. The interview will take place in a private room in the halfway facility or in another setting of your choice. In this interview I would like to know about your experience of animal-assisted activity in regards to the Pets as Therapy visits that have been held at the halfway facility. With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded.

### **3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

There is no foreseeable risk or discomfort linked to your participation in this research. However, if you experience any psychological discomfort post interview we can inform Ms Stephanie van Wyk who supervises the running of the halfway facility. She will then direct you to the support structures and counselling services already in place at the halfway facility. You can contact Ms Stephanie van Wyk on (021) 689 2090.

### **4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

You will not directly benefit from participation in this research. However, there is a lack of research regarding the use of animal-assisted activities in halfway facilities. Moreover, research of this nature has never been previously undertaken in your halfway facility. As such, this research could offer significant insights into this social phenomenon, as well as could possibly guide future studies regarding this topic and the viability of animal-assisted activities within the rehabilitation context.

### **5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

There will be no payment for participation in this research.

### **6. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this research and that can identify you will remain strictly confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

In order to maintain a high level of confidentiality and privacy, only I, the researcher, will have access to the digital audio-recording and transcription of the interview, as well as the biographical and pet-history questionnaire. The digital audio-recording, transcribed interview, and questionnaire will further be stored in a private, secure, and password encrypted location. If you wish, you may review the transcribed interview in order to check its accuracy and truthfulness.

The report on this research may contain information about your personal experiences, attitudes, and behaviours. However, the report of this research shall not include individual names and will be designed in such a way that it will not be possible for you to be identified by the general reader. Your identity will be kept completely anonymous.

### **7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You can choose whether to be in this research or not. If you volunteer to be in this research, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the research.

## 8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please feel free to contact the principal investigator, Juliette van Besouw [juliette.besouw@gmail.com; (021) 531 3222]. Alternatively, you can contact Dr. Marieanna le Roux [mclr@sun.ac.za; (021) 808 3444] who is supervising this research.

## 9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; (021) 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

### SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

The information above was described to me by Juliette R. van Besouw in [English/Afrikaans/Xhosa] and I am in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to me. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this research. I have been given a copy of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to \_\_\_\_\_ [name of the participant]. She was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in [English/Afrikaans/Xhosa] and [no translator was used / this conversation was translated into \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_].

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



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## STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITEIT TOESTEMMING VIR DEELNAME AAN NAVORSING

---

**TITEL VAN DIE STUDIE:** Troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteite in 'n halfweg-fasiliteit: 'n Gevallestudie

U is gevra om deel te neem aan 'n navorsingsprojek deur Juliette van Besouw van die Departement Sielkunde aan die Universiteit Stellenbosch. Ek is tans 'n ingeskrewe Meestersstudent aan die Universiteit Stellenbosch en ek is van voorneme om die resultate van hierdie studie in my tesis te rapporteer.

U is uitgenooi om deel te neem in hierdie navorsingstudie omdat u 'n vroue op parool is wat tans in 'n halfweg-fasiliteit is en u is deel te neem aan gereelde troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteit sessies gehou by die halfweg-fasiliteit.

### 1. DOEL VAN DIE STUDIE

Die doel van hierdie navorsingstudie is om die ervaring van troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteite te verken binne die konteks van die halfweg-fasiliteit.

### 2. PROSEDURE

Indien u vrywillig is om aan hierdie navorsingstudie deel te neem, sal u gevra word om die volgende te doen:

U sal gevra word om 'n biografiese en troeteldiergeskiedenis vraelys te voltooi om biografiese inligting en besonderhede van u persoonlike reaksies teenoor honde te verkry. Daarna sal u gevra word om deel te neem aan 'n eenmalige, individuele onderhoud wat omtrent 30 minute sal duur. Die onderhoud sal plaasvind in 'n privaat kamer in die halfweg-fasiliteit of in 'n ander stel van jou keuse. In die onderhoud sal u gevra word oor u ervaring met die troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteite in verband met die 'Pets as Therapy' besoeke wat weekliks by u halfweg-fasiliteit gehou was. Met u toestemming sal die onderhoud op klank-band opgeneem word.

### 3. POTENSIËLE RISIKOS EN ONGEMAKLIKHEDE

Daar is geen afsienbare risiko of ongemaklikheid gekoppel aan u deelname aan hierdie navorsingstudie nie. Indien u wel enige psigologiese ongemaklikheid ervaar na die onderhoud kan Me. Stephanie van Wyk, wat die bestuur van die halfweg-fasiliteit toesig te lig. Sy sal u dan verwys na die ondersteunings netwerke en beradings dienste

wat reeds in plek is by die halfweg-fasiliteit. Kontak gerus vir Me. Stephanie van Wyk op (021) 689 2090.

#### **4. POTENSIËLE VOORDELE VIR PROEFPERSONE EN/OF VIR DIE SAMELEWING**

U sal nie direkte voordeel trek uit die deelname van hierdie navorsingstudie nie. Alhoewel daar is 'n gebrek aan navorsing oor die gebruik van troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteite in halfweg-fasiliteite. Verder het navorsing van hierdie aard is nog nooit voorheen gedoen in u halfweg-fasiliteit. Dit wil sê, hierdie navorsing kan uitnemende insig bied tot hierdie sosiale verskynsel, asook om moontlike riglyne te bied vir toekomstige studies rakende hierdie onderwerp en die doeltreffendheid daarvan troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteite in die rehabilitasie konteks.

#### **5. BETALING VIR DEELNEMERS**

Daar sal geen betaling vir deelnemers in hierdie navorsingstudie wees nie.

#### **6. VERTROULIKHEID**

Enige informasie wat verkry word rakende hierdie navorsingstudie en wat u kan identifiseer, sal streng vertroulik bly en sal slegs met u toestemming gedeel word, of as die wet dit vereis.

Om te verseker dat 'n hoë standaard van vertroulik en privaatheid gehandhaaf word, sal ek, die navorser, alleenlik toegang hê tot die opname en transkripsie van die onderhoud en die biografiese en troeteldiergeskiedenis-vraelys. Die digitale klank-opname, transkripsie, en vraelys sal verder in 'n privaat en veilige plek gestoor word met 'n gekodeerde wagwoord. Indien u wil, mag u die transkripsie van die onderhoud aanvra om die akkuraatheid en waarheid daarvan te verseker.

Die verslag oor die navorsingstudie mag inligting oor u persoonlike ervaring, houding, en gedrag bevat. Die verslag oor die navorsingstudie sal egter nie individuele name bevat nie en die ontwerp sal ook op so 'n manier wees dat dit nie vir die algemene leser moontlik sal wees om u te identifiseer nie. U identiteit sal totaal en al anoniem gehou word.

#### **7. DEELNAME EN ONTTREKING**

U kan kies of u in die navorsingstudie wil wees of nie. Deelname is geheel en al vrywillig en u is geregtig om op enige tydstip van die navorsingstudie te onttrek sonder enige nagevolge of boete. U mag ook weier om enige vrae te beantwoord wat u nie wil antwoord nie en steeds deel wees van die navorsingstudie.

## 8. IDENTIFIKASIE VAN NAVORSERS

Indien u enige vrae of besorgdhede oor die navorsingstudie het, kan u die hoof navorser, Juliette van Besouw, kontak [Juliette.besouw@gmail.com; (021) 531 3222]. Alternatiewelik kontak die toesighouer van die projek, Dr. Marieanna le Roux [mclr@sun.ac.za of op (021) 808 3444].

## 9. REGTE VAN DEELNEMERS

U mag u toestemming op enige tydstip onttrek en deelname sal gestaak word sonder nagevolge of boete. U kan geen opheffing of enige wetlike eise instel as gevolg van u deelname aan hierdie navorsing projek nie. Indien u enige vrae het aangaande u regte as 'n deelnemer, kontak Me. Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; (021) 808 4622] by die Afdeling van Navorsingsontwikkeling.

### HANDTEKENING VAN DEELNEMER

Die bogenoemde inligting is aan my verduidelik deur Juliette R. van Besouw in [Engels/Afrikaans/Xhosa] en ek is in beheer van die taal, of dit was voldoende aan my vertaal. Ek is die geleentheid gegee om vrae te vra en hierdie vrae was na wense beantwoord.

Hiermee gee ek vrywillig toestemming om deel te neem aan hierdie navorsingstudie. Ek het 'n afskrif van hierdie vorm ontvang.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Naam van Deelnemer**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Handtekening van Deelnemer**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Datum**

### HANDTEKENING VAN NAVORSER

Ek verklaar dat ek die bogenoemde inligting aan \_\_\_\_\_ [naam van deelnemer] na wense verduidelik het. Sy is aangemoedig, en geruime tyd gegee om enige vrae en besorgdhede aan my te rig. Hierdie gesprek was in [Engels/Afrikaans/Xhosa] gevoer [sonder 'n vertaler/en die gesprek was vertaal na \_\_\_\_\_ deur \_\_\_\_\_].

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Handtekening van Navorser**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Datum**





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## **IDYUNIVESITHI YASESTELLENBOSCH IMVUME YOKUTHATHA INXAXHEBA KUPHANDO**

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**ISIHLOKO SOPHANDO:** Ekusetyenzisweni kwezilwanyana kude kufuphi neziko lwezancedo: Ikheyistadi

Uyacelwa ukuba uthathe inxaxheba kuphando olwenziwa nguJuliette van Besouw okwicandelo lezenzululwazi kufundo ngezengqondo kwiDyunivesithi yaseStellenbosch. Mna obhalisele njengoko umfundi yeMasters kwiDyunivesithi yaseStellenbosch kwaye ndizimisele ingxelo iziphumo zolu phando lwethisisi yam.

Ukhethiwe ukuba ube nokuthatha inxaxheba kolu phando ngoba ungobhinqileyo owophulelwe isigwebo kwaye awuhlali kude kuyaphi neziko lezengqondo kwaye sele inxaxheba ekusetyenzisweni kwezilwanyana kude kufuphi neziko lwezancedo.

### **1. INJONGO YOLU PHANDO**

Olu phando lujoliswe ekufumaneni ulwazi nzulu luchaze nomsebenzi woncedo ekusetyenzisweni lwezilwanyana kumaziko ezancedo akufutshane.

### **2. INDLELA EKUZA KUQHUTYWA NGAYO**

Ukuba uyavuma ukuba ngumthathi-nxaxheba kolu phando uza kucelwa uba wenze ezi zinto zilandelayo:

Uya kucelwa ukuba bazalise iphepha lemibuzo ngembali yesilo sasekhaya iinkcukacha zomntu kwaye iimpendulo zakho buqu izinja. Emva koko, uya kucelwa ukuba bathathe inxaxheba ndlebe ngamnye elide nama-30 imizuzu. Olu dliwano-ndlebe luya kwenzelwa kwigumbi elisemfihlakalweni ngaphakathi kumasango eziko lezonyango okanye komnye olukhethileyo. Kolu dliwano-ndlebe ndiza kuthanda ukwazi malunga namava onawo ngokusetyenziswa kwezilwanyana zasekhaya ekuphiliseni abo badandathakileyo emphemfulweni kwimiboniso okhe wandwendwela kuyo kwiziko elikufutshane nawe. Ngemvume yakho udliwano-ndlebe olo luya kushicilelwa.

### **3. UMNGCIPHEKO ONGAKUWO NOKUNGAPHATHEKI KAKUHLE**

Akukho mngcipheko nakungaphatheki kakuhle ungaba kuko ngokuthabatha kwakho inxaxheba kolu phando. Kananjalo, ukuba ube nokungaphatheki kakuhle ngokwasengqondweni emva kolu dliwano-ndlebe oko kungaziswa ophetheyo kwelo

candelo lezempilo ukulo, uStephanie van Wyk. Yena ke uya kuthi akudlulisele kwisigqeba esiya kuthi sikuncede sikuphilise kwalapho kuloo mzi wonyango ukuwo. Ungaqhagamshela noNkosazana uStephanie van Wyk kwa-(021) 689 2090.

#### **4. OKUYA KUTHI KUXHANYULWE NGUMTHATHI-NXAXHEBA KUNYE/OKANYE NOLUNTU EKUHLALENI JIKELELE**

Akukho kuxhamla okuza kuwe ngqo oya kuthi ukufumane ngokuthabatha kwakho inxaxheba kolu phando. Kodwa ke, kukho ukunqongophala zophando malunga nokusetyenziswa imisebenzi isilwanyana oluncediswa kumaziko gabhu phakathi. Ngaphezu koko, uphando olu hlobo zange ngaphambili kwenziwa kwiziko lakho gabhu phakathi. Ngenxa yoku, olu phando lungavelisa ulwazi olubalulekileyo ngalo mxholo wentlalo, kwaye lungadlala indima enkulu ekubeni lube ngumhlaha-ndlela kwezinye inzame zophando eziya kuthi zenziwe kwilixa elizayo ngalo mxholo wolu phando nokubaluleka kwawo ekuphiliseni.

#### **5. INTLAWULO NGOKUTHABATHA INXAXHEBA**

Akukho ntlawulo ifunekayo ngokuthabatha inxaxheba kolu phando.

#### **6. IMFIHLO**

Zonke iinkcukacha ezimayela nolu phando nezingawe ziza kuhlala zithathwa njengeziyimfihlo kwaye zingadandalaziswa nje kuphela xa wena ungakuvumela oko okanye njengoko kufanelekile ngokomthetho.

Ukuqinisekisa umgangatho ophezulu wokhuseleko lwezi nkcukacha, ndim kuphela njengomphandi oya kuba nelungelo lokukwazi ukufikelela kolu shicilelo apho luza kube lufihlwe khona kwindawo ekhuselekileyo, kwakunye iphepha lemibuzo ngembali yesilo sasekhaya iinkcukacha. Konke okuthe kwashicilelwa kuya kugcinwa kwindawo enokhuseleko oluluqilima nekuza kufuneka umntu abe nenombolo yokungena ukuze afikelele kuyo. Ukuba uyathanda ungalhala phantsi ulumamele udliwano-ndlebe lwakho ukuba luchanekile kwaye luyinyani na.

Ingxelo malunga nale projekthi ingaquka iinkcukacha malunga namava akho, indlela ocinga ngayo kunye nemikhwa yakho. Kodwa ke, le ngxelo yolu phando ayizi kuquka amagama abantu nezinye iinkcukacha ezingomntu kwaye konke kuya kwenziwa ngendlela apha ethile eya kwenza kungenzeki ukuba nabani na oza kuba efunda abone ukuba kuthethwa ngabani. Iinkcukacha ngawe ziya kugcinwa ziyimfihlo.

#### **7. UKUTHABATHA INXAXHEBA NOKURHOXA**

Kuphuma kuwe ukuba uyafuna na ukuba yinxalenye yoluphando okanye hayi. Ukuba sowuziqqatsile njengomthathi nxaxheba kolu phando ungakwazi ukurhoxa nanini na ngaphandle kwamakhwiniba. Ungakwazi kananjalo ukwala ukuphendula nayiphi na imibuzo ongathandi ukuyiphendula kodwa uhlale usekhona kuphando.

## 8. IINKCUKACHA ZABAPHANDI

Ukuba unemibuzo okanye iinkxalabo ezithile malunga nolu phando, wamkelekile ukuba ungaqhagamshelana nomphandi oyintloko, uJuliette van Besouw [Juliette.besouw@gmail.com; (021) 531 3222]. Kananjalo ungaqhagamshelana noGqirha uMarieanna le Roux [mclr@sun.ca.za; (021) 808 3444] nekunguye ophethe olu phando.

## 9. AMALUNGELO ABO BATHATHA INXAXHEBA

Ungakwazi ukuyirhoxisa nanini na imvume yakho yokuthabatha inxaxheba kolu phando ngaphandle kwesohlwayo. Akukho mabango, amalungelo okanye uncedo lomthetho okukhuselayo oya kuthi uphulukane nalo ngenxa yokuthabatha inxaxheba kwakho kolu phando. Ukuba unemibuzo ethile onayo malunga namalungelo onawo njengomthathi-nxaxheba, qhagamshelana noNkosazana uMaléne Fouche' [mfouche@sun.ac.za; (012) 808 4622] kwiCandelo lezoPhuhliso loPhando.

### APHO ASAYINA KHONA UMTHATHI-NXAXHEBA

Ezi nkcukacha zingentla ndizicaciselwe nguJuliette R. van Besouw nge [isiNgesi/isiBhulu/isiXhosa] kwaye ulwimi olu ndiyalwazi kakuhle okanye ndizitolikelwe kakuhle. Ndilinikele ithuba lokubuza imibuzo kwaye imibuzo leyo iphendulekile ngendlela eye yandonelisa.

Ngako oko ndiyavuma ngaphandle kokunyanzeliswa ukuthabatha inxaxheba kolu phando. Ndilunikiwe nam olu xwebhu endilugcwalisileyo.

---

**Igama lomThathi-nxaxheba**

---

**Apho asayina khona umThathi-nxaxheba**

---

**Umhla**

### APHO ASAYINA KHONA UMPHANDI

Ndenza isifungo sokuba le ngcombolo ingentla apha kolu xwebhu ndimcacisele u \_\_\_\_\_ [igama nxaxheba]. Uye wakhuthazwa kwaye wanikwa nexesha elaneleyo lokuba andibuze imibuzo. Le ncoko ibisenziwa nge [isiNgesi/isiBhulu/isiXhosa] kwaye [akukho toliki iye yasetyenziswa/le ncoko iye yatolikelwa kwi \_\_\_\_\_ ngu \_\_\_\_\_].

---

**Apho umPhandi asayina khona**

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**Umhla**

**APPENDIX S**  
**INFORMED CONSENT FORM – HOUSE PARENTS**  
**(English and Afrikaans)**



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**STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY**  
**CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

---

**TITLE OF THE STUDY:** Animal-assisted activities in a halfway facility: A case study

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Juliette van Besouw from the Department of Psychology at Stellenbosch University. I am currently enrolled as a Master's student at Stellenbosch University and I intend to report the results of this research in my thesis.

You have been invited to participate in this research because you have been present during and/or involved in animal-assisted activity sessions held at the halfway facility. Moreover, due to your in-depth understanding of each of the female parolees and the challenges they face as a house parent employed by the halfway facility, it is thought you could offer significant insights into this phenomenon.

**1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this research is to explore the experience of animal-assisted activities within the context of the halfway facility.

**2. PROCEDURES**

If you volunteer to participate in this research, you would be asked to do the following things:

You will be asked to complete a biographical and pet-history questionnaire soliciting biographical data and your personal responses towards dogs. After that, you will be asked to participate in one individual interview lasting approximately 30 minutes in duration. The interview will take place in a private room in the halfway facility or in another setting of your choice. In this interview I would like to know about your experience of animal-assisted activity in regards to the Pets as Therapy visits that have been held at the halfway facility. With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded.

### **3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

There is no foreseeable risk or discomfort linked to your participation in this research. Even so, we take note of the fact that you may experience some psychological discomfort during or after the completion of the questionnaires and. In the event that you should experience such discomfort, you will be referred to a counselling service.

### **4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

You will not directly benefit from participation in this research. However, there is a lack of research regarding the use of animal-assisted activities in halfway facilities. Moreover, research of this nature has never been previously undertaken in your halfway facility. As such, this research could offer significant insights into this social phenomenon, as well as could possibly guide future studies regarding this topic and the viability of animal-assisted activities within the rehabilitation context.

### **5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

There will be no payment for participation in this research.

### **6. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this research and that can identify you will remain strictly confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

In order to maintain a high level of confidentiality and privacy, only I, the researcher, will have access to the digital audio-recording and transcription of the interview, as well as the biographical and pet-history questionnaire. The digital audio-recording, transcribed interview, and questionnaire will further be stored in a private, secure, and password encrypted location. If you wish, you may review the transcribed interview in order to check its accuracy and truthfulness.

The report on this research may contain information about your personal experiences, attitudes, and behaviours. However, the report of this research shall not include individual names and will be designed in such a way that it will not be possible for you to be identified by the general reader. Your identity will be kept completely anonymous.

### **7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You can choose whether to be in this research or not. If you volunteer to be in this research, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the research.

## 8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please feel free to contact the principal investigator, Juliette van Besouw [juliette.besouw@gmail.com; (021) 531 3222]. Alternatively, you can contact Dr. Marieanna le Roux [mclr@sun.ac.za; (021) 808 3444] who is supervising this research.

## 9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; (021) 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

### SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

The information above was described to me by Juliette R. van Besouw in [*English/Afrikaans/Xhosa*] and I am in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to me. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this research. I have been given a copy of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name of Participant**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Participant**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

### SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to \_\_\_\_\_ [*name of the participant*]. She was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in [*English/Afrikaans/Xhosa*] and [*no translator was used / this conversation was translated into \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_*].

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Investigator**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**



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## STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITEIT TOESTEMMING VIR DEELNAME AAN NAVORSING

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**TITEL VAN DIE STUDIE:** Troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteite in 'n halfweg-fasiliteit: 'n Gevallestudie

U is gevra om deel te neem aan 'n navorsingsprojek deur Juliette van Besouw van die Departement Sielkunde aan die Universiteit Stellenbosch. Ek is tans 'n ingeskrewe Meestersstudent aan die Universiteit Stellenbosch en ek is van voorneme om die resultate van hierdie studie in my tesis te rapporteer.

U is uitgenooi om deel te neem in hierdie navorsingstudie omdat u teenwoordig gewees het tydens en/of betrokke is by troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteit sessies gehou by die halfweg-fasiliteit. Verder, as gevolg van jou in-diepte begrip van elk van die vroue op parool en die uitdagings wat hulle in die gesig staar as 'n huisouer in diens van die halfweg-fasiliteit, is dit gedink jy kan aansienlike insig in hierdie verskynsel aan te bied.

### 1. DOEL VAN DIE STUDIE

Die doel van hierdie navorsingstudie is om die ervaring van troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteite te verken binne die konteks van die halfweg-fasiliteit.

### 2. PROSEDURE

Indien u vrywillig is om aan hierdie navorsingstudie deel te neem, sal u gevra word om die volgende te doen:

U sal gevra word om 'n biografiese en troeteldiergeskiedenis vraelys te voltooi om biografiese inligting en besonderhede van u persoonlike reaksies teenoor honde te verkry. Daarna sal u gevra word om deel te neem aan 'n eenmalige, individuele onderhoud wat omtrent 30 minute sal duur. Die onderhoud sal plaasvind in 'n privaat kamer in die halfweg-fasiliteit of in 'n ander stel van jou keuse. In die onderhoud sal u gevra word oor u ervaring met die troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteite in verband met die 'Pets as Therapy' besoeke wat weekliks by u halfweg-fasiliteit gehou was. Met u toestemming sal die onderhoud op klank-band opgeneem word.

### **3. POTENSIËLE RISIKOS EN ONGEMAKLIKHEDE**

Daar is geen afsienbare risiko of ongemaklikheid gekoppel aan u deelname aan hierdie navorsing nie. Ons is bewus daarvan dat u tydens of na die voltooiing van die vraelyste 'n mate van sielkundige ongemak mag ervaar. Sou u enige sodanige ongemak ervaar, sal u na 'n beradingsdiens verwys word.

### **4. POTENSIËLE VOORDELE VIR PROEFPERSONE EN/OF VIR DIE SAMELEWING**

U sal nie direkte voordeel trek uit die deelname van hierdie navorsingstudie nie. Alhoewel daar is 'n gebrek aan navorsing oor die gebruik van troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteite in halfweg-fasiliteite. Verder het navorsing van hierdie aard is nog nooit voorheen gedoen in u halfweg-fasiliteit. Dit wil sê, hierdie navorsing kan uitnemende insig bied tot hierdie sosiale verskynsel, asook om moontlike riglyne te bied vir toekomstige studies rakende hierdie onderwerp en die doeltreffendheid daarvan troeteldier-ondersteunde aktiwiteite in die rehabilitasie konteks.

### **5. BETALING VIR DEELNEMERS**

Daar sal geen betaling vir deelnemers in hierdie navorsingstudie wees nie.

### **6. VERTROULIKHEID**

Enige informasie wat verkry word rakende hierdie navorsingstudie en wat u kan identifiseer, sal streng vertroulik bly en sal slegs met u toestemming gedeel word, of as die wet dit vereis.

Om te verseker dat 'n hoë standaard van vertroulik en privaatheid gehandhaaf word, sal ek, die navorser, alleenlik toegang hê tot die opname en transkripsie van die onderhoud en die biografiese en troeteldiergeskiedenis-vraelys. Die digitale klank-opname, transkripsie, en vraelys sal verder in 'n privaat en veilige plek gestoor word met 'n gekodeerde wagwoord. Indien u wil, mag u die transkripsie van die onderhoud aanvra om die akkuraatheid en waarheid daarvan te verseker.

Die verslag oor die navorsingstudie mag inligting oor u persoonlike ervaring, houding, en gedrag bevat. Die verslag oor die navorsingstudie sal egter nie individuele name bevat nie en die ontwerp sal ook op so 'n manier wees dat dit nie vir die algemene leser moontlik sal wees om u te identifiseer nie. U identiteit sal totaal en al anoniem gehou word.

### **7. DEELNAME EN ONTTREKKING**

U kan kies of u in die navorsingstudie wil wees of nie. Deelname is geheel en al vrywillig en u is geregtig om op enige tydstop van die navorsingstudie te onttrek sonder



enige nagevolge of boete. U mag ook weier om enige vrae te beantwoord wat u nie wil antwoord nie en steeds deel wees van die navorsingstudie.

## 8. IDENTIFIKASIE VAN NAVORSERS

Indien u enige vrae of besorgdhede oor die navorsingstudie het, kan u die hoof navorser, Juliette van Besouw, kontak [Juliette.besouw@gmail.com; (021) 531 3222]. Alternatiewelik kontak die toesighouer van die projek, Dr. Marieanna le Roux [mclr@sun.ac.za of op (021) 808 3444].

## 9. REGTE VAN DEELNEMERS

U mag u toestemming op enige tydstip onttrek en deelname sal gestaak word sonder nagevolge of boete. U kan geen opheffing of enige wetlike eise instel as gevolg van u deelname aan hierdie navorsingstudie nie. Indien u enige vrae het aangaande u regte as 'n deelnemer, kontak Me. Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; (021) 808 4622] by die Afdeling van Navorsingsontwikkeling.

### HANDTEKENING VAN DEELNEMER

Die bogenoemde inligting is aan my verduidelik deur Juliette R. van Besouw in [Engels/Afrikaans/Xhosa] en ek is in beheer van die taal, of dit was voldoende aan my vertaal. Ek is die geleentheid gegee om vrae te vra en hierdie vrae was na wense beantwoord.

Hiermee gee ek vrywillig toestemming om deel te neem aan hierdie navorsingstudie. Ek het 'n afskrif van hierdie vorm ontvang.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Naam van Deelnemer**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Handtekening van Deelnemer**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Datum**

### HANDTEKENING VAN NAVORSER

Ek verklaar dat ek die bogenoemde inligting aan \_\_\_\_\_ [naam van deelnemer] na wense verduidelik het. Sy is aangemoedig, en geruime tyd gegee om enige vrae en besorgdhede aan my te rig. Hierdie gesprek was in [Engels/Afrikaans/Xhosa] gevoer [sonder 'n vertaler/en die gesprek was vertaal na \_\_\_\_\_ deur \_\_\_\_\_].

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Handtekening van Navorser**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Datum**

## APPENDIX T

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM – PETS AS THERAPY VOLUNTEER



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### STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

---

**TITLE OF THE STUDY:** Animal-assisted activities in a halfway facility: A case study

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Juliette van Besouw from the Department of Psychology at Stellenbosch University. I am currently enrolled as a Master's student at Stellenbosch University and I intend to report the results of this research in my thesis.

You have been invited to participate in this research because you have been present during and/or involved in animal-assisted activity sessions held at the halfway facility. Moreover, due to your pre-existing knowledge and practical experience of animal-assisted activities as a PAT volunteer, it is thought that you could offer significant insights into this phenomenon.

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to explore the experience of animal-assisted activities within the context of the halfway facility.

#### 2. PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this research, you would be asked to do the following things:

You will be asked to complete a biographical and pet-history questionnaire soliciting biographical data and your personal responses towards dogs. After that, you will be asked to participate in one individual interview lasting approximately 30 minutes in duration. The interview will take place in a private room in the halfway facility or in another setting of your choice. In this interview I would like to know about your experience of the animal-assisted activity sessions that you supervised as a PAT volunteer at the halfway facility. With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded.

### **3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

There is no foreseeable risk or discomfort linked to your participation in this research. Even so, we take note of the fact that you may experience some psychological discomfort during or after the completion of the questionnaires and. In the event that you should experience such discomfort, you will be referred to a counselling service.

### **4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

You will not directly benefit from participation in this research. However, there is a lack of research regarding the use of animal-assisted activities in halfway facilities. Moreover, research of this nature has never been previously undertaken in your halfway facility. As such, this research could offer significant insights into this social phenomenon, as well as could possibly guide future studies regarding this topic and the viability of animal-assisted activities within the rehabilitation context.

### **5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

There will be no payment for participation in this research.

### **6. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this research and that can identify you will remain strictly confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

In order to maintain a high level of confidentiality and privacy, only I, the researcher, will have access to the digital audio-recording and transcription of the interview, as well as the biographical and pet-history questionnaire. The digital audio-recording, transcribed interview, and questionnaire will further be stored in a private, secure, and password encrypted location. If you wish, you may review the transcribed interview in order to check its accuracy and truthfulness.

The report on this research may contain information about your personal experiences, attitudes, and behaviours. However, the report of this research shall not include individual names and will be designed in such a way that it will not be possible for you to be identified by the general reader. Your identity will be kept completely anonymous.

### **7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You can choose whether to be in this research or not. If you volunteer to be in this research, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the research.

## 8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please feel free to contact the principal investigator, Juliette van Besouw [juliette.besouw@gmail.com; (021) 531 3222]. Alternatively, you can contact Dr. Marieanna le Roux [mclr@sun.ac.za; (021) 808 3444] who is supervising this research.

## 9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

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### SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

The information above was described to me by Juliette R. van Besouw in [*English/Afrikaans/Xhosa*] and I am in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to me. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this research. I have been given a copy of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name of Participant**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Participant**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

### SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to \_\_\_\_\_ [*name of the participant*]. She was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in [*English/Afrikaans/Xhosa*] and [*no translator was used / this conversation was translated into \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_*].

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Investigator**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

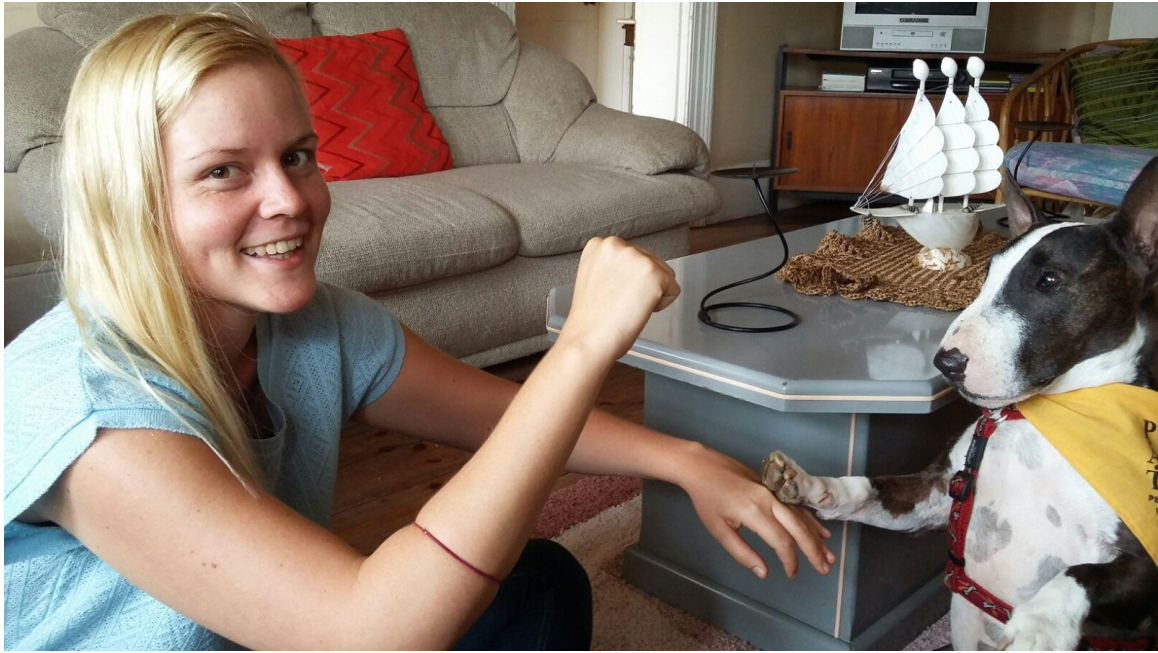
## APPENDIX U

### PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE DOG THAT TOOK PART IN THE ANIMAL-ASSISTED ACTIVITY SESSIONS AT THE HALFWAY HOUSE

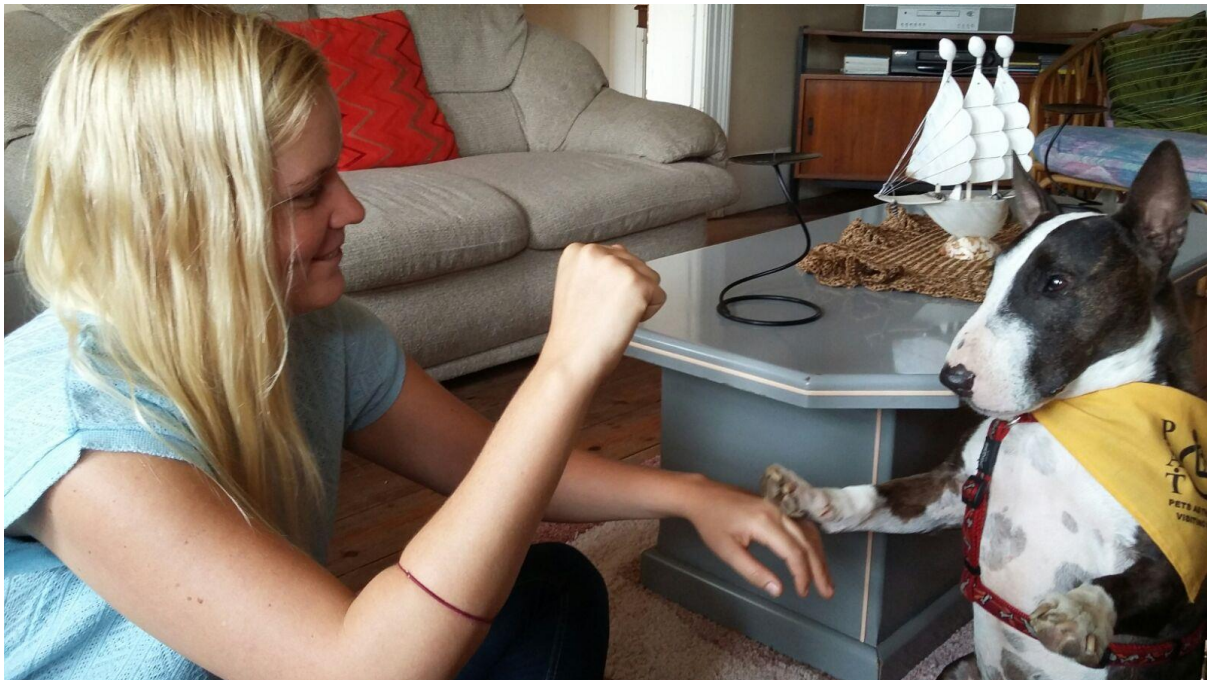


Morris posing for a photograph in his yellow Pets as Therapy bandanna.





The researcher and Morris posing for a photograph.



Morris showing the researcher one of his tricks.