

MASTERS OF RESEARCH THESIS

SHAKING SHANGRI-LA: THE TIBETAN MENTORING CASE STUDY



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Declaration

I declare this work is substantially my own, and where any part of this work is not mine I have acknowledged the source of that part of the work. It has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution. My ethics approval is Reference No: 5201300830, dated 05 March 2014

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Abbreviations

LGA	Local Government Area
NSI TAFE	Northern Sydney Institute of Technical and Further Education
RCOA	Refugee Council of Australia
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TCA	Tibetan Community of Australia (NSW)
TMP	Tibetan Mentoring Program
STARTTS	NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Terminology

In this thesis the term *refugees* encompasses refugees, on-shore asylum seekers and humanitarian entrants. Discourses referring to the local community as the *host* community implies benevolence and that refugees are temporary guests not equal in status to the dominant community. Sayad argues in relation to “loaded” notions of integration that we need to recognise rights rather than as acts of duty of “largesse” (Sayad, 2004, p. 224). Consequently I refer to the *receiving* community rather than the *host* community in the thesis.

Abstract

The relationship between refugees and their receiving community is an area requiring further investigation and research. This thesis examines refugee mentoring through a case study of the Tibetan Mentoring Program, based in the Northern Beaches of Sydney. My research question is “How might mentoring assist integration of refugees in Australia?” The study has two aims: firstly, to better understand what contributes to good mentoring relationships and why they sometimes fail; and secondly to understand what mentoring brings to the refugee resettlement experience. A qualitative research methodology was used, including interviews with mentors and mentees, a focus group, and ethnography.

The research aims to add to limited literature on how the receiving community can assist refugee settlement. A key hook is exploring and interrogating the role of the receiving community and possibilities of welcome or unwelcome thrown open by refugee mentoring programs. I argue care must be taken to unpack the romantic notions attributed to mentoring and I contend there is a need for theoretical development of refugee mentoring.

Everyday social connections and ontological security enable a sense of belonging, and the forging of these emotional connections are examined. Also explored, the nature of the bonds formed in the mentoring relationship and how mentors and mentees interplay, symbolise and construct their cultural identity. In other words, how the mentoring relationship is constructed, shaken and contested between mentors and mentees.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

Introduction

A fundamental question for Australia is how we welcome refugees. We live in an “Age of Migration” (Castles & Miller, 2009) and Australia is considered a “settlement nation” (Fozdar & Hartley, 2013, p. 23). It is a multicultural, super-diverse (Vertovec, 2007) country where we share spaces with people from over 200 countries. Refugees numbers are increasing globally and Australia is committed to receiving 13,750 refugee and humanitarian entrants each year: a reduction from 20,000 in 2012-13 (Refugee Council of Australia, 2014). But a key issue that remains is how newcomers are imagined and welcomed by the Australian receiving community amid persistent accounts of racism in Australia. This thesis aims to look at what might be possible through a refugee mentoring program. It embodies the potential of what Amin terms “elective affinities” between the receiving community and the newcomers which he argues requires an affective link with openness and “fruitful exchange” where people imagine new possibilities for relating with each other (Amin, 2012, p. 29).

My research question is “How might mentoring assist integration of refugees in Australia?” The Tibetan Mentoring Program is used as an in-depth case study (Yin, 2014) to explore this. The study has two aims: firstly, to better understand what contributes to good mentoring relationships and why they sometimes fail; secondly to understand what mentoring brings to the refugee resettlement experience.

This introductory chapter gives background on Tibetans living on the northern beaches of Sydney and challenges they face in resettlement. Next, it outlines the Tibetan Mentoring Program. In addition, this chapter aims to situate refugee mentoring and validate the need for this research in the context of literature on refugees, resettlement, everyday multiculturalism and identity and belonging.

Tibet

An estimated six million Tibetans live in Tibet (CTA, 2014). Geographically renowned as the “roof of the world”, located northeast of the Himalayas Tibet is famous for its pristine environment and Himalayan snow-capped mountains. It was invaded by China in 1949 and in 1959, His Holiness the Dalai Lama [Dalai Lama]

fled Tibet and formed an exile community in Dharamsala in northern India. Since then, fleeing cultural, religious and linguistic repression Tibetans have crossed the Himalayas in a perilous journey to join the Dalai Lama and live as stateless people in India (Butler et al., 2008, p. 55). In 2012 it was estimated 94,203 Tibetans live in exile in Dharamsala with approximately 20,000 in other parts of the world (Central Tibetan Administration, 2014) [CTA]. Tibetans are accepted into Australia as humanitarian entrants.

Tibetan Community on the Northern Beaches

Of an estimated 1000 Tibetans in Australia (Tibetan Information Office, 2014) the largest community live in Dee Why, on the northern beaches of Sydney (Warringah Council, 2014). An estimated 700 Tibetans live in Dee Why; with 130 Tibetans arriving between June-October 2014 and more expected in 2015. The Tibetan Community of Australia (NSW) [TCA] acts as a sponsor for Tibetan humanitarian entrants and organises accommodation in the first weeks of settlement.

Dee Why is a high-density beachside suburb, 19 kilometres from Sydney's centre. Walking around the suburb you see a mixture of older red-bricked walk-up flats and newer high-rise units. There are several Christian churches but no Buddhist temples in the area. This absence is felt particularly by older Tibetans who are used to daily community contact through visiting temples in India and Tibet. The shopping strip on the main road does not reflect the footprint of the emerging Tibetan population with no Tibetan shops or signs in Tibetan unlike suburbs such as Eastwood that have shop signs in Chinese (Noble, 2014). There are no Tibetan cafes or restaurants in Dee Why. The Warringah local government area (LGA) has a high proportion of Anglo-Celtic Australians with 67.7% of the population born in Australia while Dee Why is more diverse (see Appendix 1).

The first Tibetan settled in Dee Why in 1972 and since 1997 Tibetan humanitarian entrants have chosen Dee Why to join other Tibetans despite high rents and attempts to settle them in the western suburbs of Sydney (Butler et al., 2008, p. 69). My Tibetan co-facilitator jokes that when Tibetans register their interest to move to Australia they say "No, not Sydney, Dee Why!"

This emerging community is heterogeneous, consisting of nuns and monks, nomads, single people, couples and families. Tibetans coming to Australia were born in either Tibet or India. Tibetans who have lived in both places have experienced the

upheaval of “double” migration (Thomas, 1999). English language skills vary enormously with many possessing low English skills, some are not literate in Tibetan and many older Tibetans speaking no English at all (Butler et al., 2008, p. 71). A unifying feature of most Tibetans, however is their practice of the Buddhist religion. In my experience most homes will have a Buddhist altar with seven silver water bowls, offerings of fruit and food and a photo of the Dalai Lama.

A central source of social capital (Putnam, 2000) for new settlers are local ethnic organisations and communities who offer practical, social and psychological support (Ager & Strang, 2008; Castles and Miller, 2009, p.263, RCOA, 2014, p. 4). As highlighted in research by Galligan, Boese and Phillips (2014, p. 48) the most important community for refugee settlers is their own ethnic community. The TCA represents and assists Tibetans in Dee Why (TCA, 2014). Established in 1992 it provides a strong support network although is constrained by a lack of physical and financial resources, does not have an office and conducts meetings in community halls. Recently it struggled to find a venue for the Tibetan Learning Centre, a Saturday school for children teaching Tibetan language, culture and music/dance (TCA, 2014). Eventually they found a new venue at Narrabeen, some kilometres from Dee Why.

Building TCA management capacity is hampered by turnover of the management committee due to bi-annual elections where a new President is elected. Hugo (2011, p. 48) noted the importance of community leaders as a bridge between the humanitarian community and the broader community (including services). The turnover of the President means the social links between individual and structures of the state (Ager & Strang, 2010) are constantly forged and broken. This creates an imbalance between the TCA and long-term stable community service workers. A recent report by the Refugee Council of Australia [RCOA] highlights the importance of building capacity of refugee community organisations for successful integration and reducing the potential for misunderstanding (RCOA, 2014).

Warringah Council supports the community and Warringah is recognised as a Refugee Welcome Zone (Warringah Council, 2014). It gives money for Losar New Year festival acknowledging the contribution of Tibetans to the social fabric of the community (RCOA, 2013, p. 7).

There are a number of issues faced by Tibetan refugees that create a more challenging settlement experience. Torture and trauma experiences are not left

behind when a refugee emigrates to a new country. Preference is given to Tibetan political prisoners in choosing who can settle in Australia and some have experienced long-term imprisonment, torture and abuse (Butler et al, 2008). There are conflicting approaches to the representation of torture and trauma. One approach is where refugees are portrayed as victims and lacking resilience. Westoby and Ingamells (2010) argue a trauma discourse operates in order to get funding for programs but this also creates precarious agency for refugees (p. 1769). Another approach views refugees as resilient and resourceful (Correa-Velez, Gifford, & Barnett, 2010). This thesis positions Tibetans as having agency although clearly they face many challenges. As with any community domestic and family violence exists in the Tibetan community. It is a difficult issue for emerging communities and exacerbated by lack of support, language difficulties, a low awareness of their rights and laws in Australia (Department of Social Services, 2013, p. 5). There is a risk that romantic imaginings of Tibetans turning into cultural incarceration (Malkki, 1992 p. 29) by well-meaning locals and unaware mentors.

Many everyday practicalities face new arrivals. Housing for many Tibetans is problematic with overcrowding and high rents necessitating that they work two jobs. Unemployment is low in Dee Why and Tibetans work in low paid positions as cleaners and assistant nurses in aged care. It is clear that the refugees need advice and help in a number of everyday matters, a need that this study will examine.

The Tibetan Mentoring Program

The Tibetan Mentoring Program (TMP) is one of the longest running refugee mentoring programs in Australia, having been established in 2007 after Northern Sydney Multicultural Health undertook a consultation with Tibetans in Dee Why on their settlement needs. Tibetans identified they wanted more connection with the local community through “an Australian friend”. Since 2007 seven training programs have been conducted with approximately 120 Tibetans matched to 100 Australian volunteers. I have worked as a teacher and co-ordinator of the program for eight years alongside a Tibetan community teacher.

The aim of the program is to train a group of mentors to offer one-on-one assistance for a minimum of six months to Tibetan refugees in:

- Developing positive relationships within the community
- Experiencing cultural exchange

- Practising and developing English language skills
- Learning about Australian customs and culture
- Extending their knowledge of local community services (Tibetan Mentoring Program, 2014)

Mentors are trained one day a week for six weeks at TAFE (See Appendix 2 for the Training outline), and can attend monthly debriefings (for an hour and a half) for a one-year period where each mentor is given an opportunity to discuss progress and concerns. The program requests a six-month commitment and at six and 12 months mentors and mentees are asked whether they wish to continue. At information briefings for mentors and mentees the issue of making a commitment and having time is stressed.

Many mentors and mentees choose to continue their relationship beyond 12 months, suggesting that the mentor/mentee relations are friendly, trusting, interactive ones, and mentoring should be seen as a continuing process. The program is co-facilitated by a TAFE teacher and a Tibetan community teacher. Mentees are informed through a briefing session with the Tibetan co-facilitator and given translated information about the program. Mentors are recruited through a story in the local paper, the *Manly Daily* (See Appendix 3). A typical mentor profile is a middle-aged woman who works part-time or is retired who is interested in but not knowledgeable about Tibetan culture and lives on the northern beaches of Sydney.

Overview of the literature

In the next section an overview of literature contextualises refugee mentoring and highlights gaps substantiating the need for further research. Four pillars or themes guided my review of key texts and readings in relation to refugee mentoring. They are:

- Refugee Mentoring
- Refugee Resettlement
- Identity and belonging
- (Post) Multiculturalism and Everyday Multiculturalism

An outline of key literature in each pillar will be outlined and critically assessed.

Refugee mentoring

Mentoring developed in America in the late 1980's as a response to youth alienation where middle class mentors assisted "at risk" youth (Freedman, 1993, p. 2). It was adopted as a strategy to assist refugees integrating into communities from 2002 when the *Time Together* program commenced in Britain (Esterhuizen & Murphy, 2007) and a similar model was implemented in Australia around the same time by community based organisations such as the Brotherhood of St Lawrence (Bond, 2010; Carr, 2004). Since 2002 organisations such as Macquarie University and faith based groups such as St Vincent de Paul and MercyWorks have developed refugee youth mentoring programs.

Refugee mentoring is where refugees are linked with volunteer members of the local receiving community to assist settlement and integration and enable cross-cultural learning and reciprocal relationships (Esterhuizen & Murphy, 2007; Wise & Sait, 2008). The program's emphasis is on sharing cultures rather than imposing the receiving community's culture. For refugees who are resettling, often after traumatic experiences, mentoring, through formal programs, has the potential to assist refugee communities transitioning into a new country (Wise & Sait, 2008, p. 118). Mentoring is usually regarded as a one-on-one relationship although there are calls to consider involving family members to enable culturally appropriate mentoring (Griffith, Sawrikar, & Muir, 2009, p. 82).

The Tibetan Mentoring program was favourably evaluated by Wise & Sait (2008) although a weakness of the evaluation was its limited four-month time-span and that it only measured the success of one program group. Wise and Sait (2008, p.118) cautioned that mentoring should not be viewed as a substitute for traditional settlement programs. An evaluation of Melbourne-based *Give Them a Chance* refugee mentoring program reported it constituted the difference between successful settlement or social exclusion (Mestan, 2008, p. 46). An eighteen month longitudinal evaluation of the British *Time Together* refugee mentoring program similarly concluded the program could be "life-changing (Esterhuizen & Murphy, 2007, p. 6). The Refugee Council of Australia reported on the potential of refugee mentoring to enhance settlement outcomes. It stressed the close relational aspects of the mentoring relationship which distinguishes it from other forms of volunteer mentoring (Refugee Council of Australia, 2005, p. 2).

In contrast to growing scholarly literature on youth mentoring there is a serious gap in the research literature with little scholarly research on adult refugee mentoring. My research to date has not discovered any doctoral theses or books on refugee mentoring and there are few scholarly articles on the topic.

In Australia the mentoring refugee literature exists in the form of program evaluations, usually only covering the first year of operation (Bond, 2010; Bradford & King, 2011; Mestan, 2008; Wise & Sait, 2008). The evaluations recommend continuation of the programs and emphasise positive rather than challenging aspects. They do not investigate in detail the impact of the mentoring on the mentor and given the repeated goal of “reciprocal relationships” there is space in research to delve into this more. The evaluations on refugee mentoring are not framed by particular theoretical approaches although the *Time Together* evaluation used the Ager and Strang’s (2008) settlement outcome framework to measure mentoring outcomes. In addition, the question of why some mentoring relationships succeed while others fail is a relatively untapped area of research.

There may be lessons that can be transferred from youth mentoring to adult and family refugee mentoring research, for instance, in the rigorous research of Colley (2003), who conducted qualitative research in England on youth mentoring highlighting gaps in research and theory and warning of the romanticisation of mentoring. Colley looked at the question of empowerment or control in mentoring and drew attention to the lack of a sociological theoretical framework underpinning mentoring and the need for more qualitative and interpretive research. Sawrikar, Griffiths, and Muir (2008, p. 63) stress the complexity of the refugee experience, which requires high levels of cultural competence and training. Caution therefore is needed before applying youth mentoring concepts to the more complex area of adult refugee mentoring where age, ethnicity and trauma must be taken into account.

There is a marked absence of mentoring theory in Australia and a dearth of best practice models specific to refugees to underpin refugee mentoring. While youth mentoring has a strong body of standards and best practices it is not strong on theory. I will argue refugee mentoring requires serious theoretical development. The continued romanticisation of mentoring and lack of theoretical rigour require more scholarship.

Historical views on assimilation and refugee integration

In this section the Good Neighbour Council and the research of Australian sociologist Jean Martin will be briefly reviewed to set a historical context for integration programs in Australia. Neumann, Gifford, Lems, and Scherr (2014, p. 12) note refugee scholarship in Australia rarely compare the present to the past. It will be argued lessons from the past must be considered in planning programs linking refugees and receiving communities.

Early host-migrant organisations such as the *Good Neighbour Council* established in the 1950's placed control firmly in the hands of the white Australian hosts where transmission of "the Australian Way" was enacted through well-meaning activities such as morning teas and cooking classes (Tavan, 1997). The new migrants resisted cultural colonisation and assimilation and "failed to conform as expected," demanding migrants have more active roles (p.379). This led to the demise of the Good Neighbour movement after recommendations of the 1978 Galbally Report were implemented and led to establishment of Migrant Resource Centres (Ho & Jakubowicz, 2014, p. 8).

The implementation of the Galbally Report marked less responsibility by the receiving community in settlement of immigrants. Lessons from the Good Neighbour Council include the need to examine the power dynamics in the mentoring relationship and to ensure mentoring is not another form of cultural colonisation.

One of the earliest and most thorough accounts of refugee settlement in Australia was by Australian sociologist Jean Martin. She conducted ethnographic and qualitative research on refugee settlement experiences in the 1950's (Martin, 1965). Her detailed research of 200 post-war immigrants, "displaced people" in a small country town provides an insight into the challenges of settlement. Her findings echo the experiences of immigrants today. For instance, she found the receiving community made token efforts to mix with the refugees, but these quickly petered out leaving the refugees feeling very much the stranger. She reported that friendships "based on mutual trust, common interests and shared activities" (p. 32) were initially "non-existent" and difficult to establish although she recognised the refugees' attitudes were ambivalent towards the Australian community.

The well-meaning but flawed activities of the *Good Neighbour Council* constitute a cautionary tale for programs assisting refugees. The research of Jean

Martin suggests a need to examine underlying values of the Australian community and highlights that integration is a complex process. Meaningfully involving the receiving community in the lives of refugees in a “two-way” process that may not be a natural process and requires thoughtful intervention.

Refugee Resettlement

Resettlement refers to the process of settling into a new country. The UNHCR views resettlement as a three stage related “complex and gradual process” (UNHCR, 2011). They identify the stages as separate although inter-related: legal, economic, and socio-cultural and it states the settlement process ends with citizenship of the refugee. Arguably the resettlement process cannot be broken down into discrete stages and perhaps the process never ends (Fozdar & Hartley, 2013).

Since 1945 Australia has conducted an active refugee settlement program and during this time increased services offered to new settlers. Services are provided by government and non-government organisations and include English language classes, cultural orientation, assistance with finding housing and employment (Galligan et al., 2014, p. 86). While Australia’s settlement services are regarded as world-class, Fozdar and Hartley note there is “room for improvement to ensure social inclusion” and suggest using community based volunteers to develop more natural networks between refugees and the community (Fozdar & Hartley, 2013, p. 23). Galligan et al. (2014, p. 88) note there is a “complex mosaic” of services who often compete with each other.

Despite the super-diversity (Vertovec, 2007) of Australia, concerns linger about the willingness of the community to reach out and embrace newcomers. There are continued reports of the racism, both of immigrants and refugees with a significant proportion of the Australian community expressing unease at the level of Australia’s immigration program (Markus, 2013).

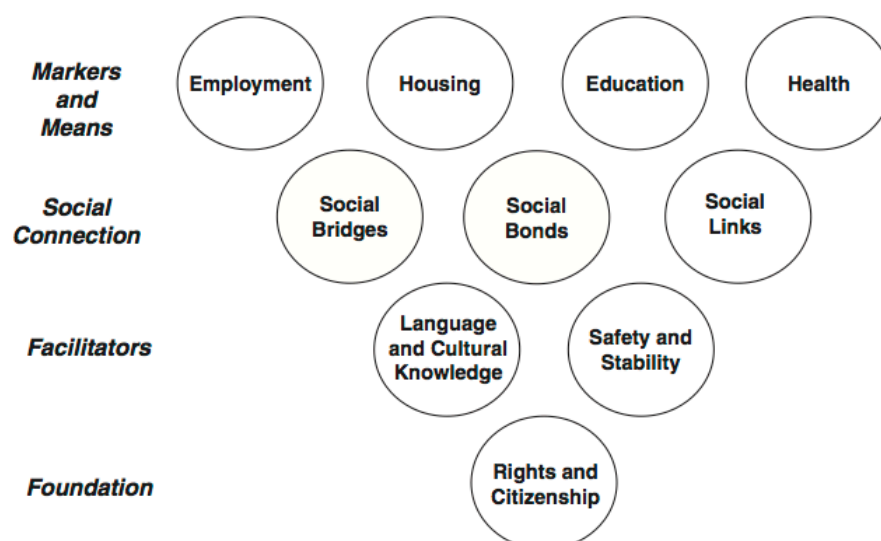
Much refugee literature employs a deficit lens on refugees (Correa-Velez et al., 2010; Fozdar & Hartley, 2013). The individualistic orientation is criticised by anthropological scholars such as Malkki as essentialising “the refugee”, pathologising and problematizing refugees (Malkki, 1995). She challenges researchers to review “taken for granted” views, which can dehumanise refugees. Hugo notes, in relation to English language use, a significant proportion of humanitarian entrants were struggling (Hugo, 2011, p. 23). His research found these

entrants experienced more difficulties than other immigrants in gaining employment and recognition of qualifications (p.22).

Neumann observes most refugee settlement literature does not examine the impact of refugees on Australian identity (Neumann, 2013). A young refugee reflects “I am a refugee and I am going to school with non-refugee students. I learnt more, a lot, from them how they behaved. I don’t know if they learnt from me or not” (Anforth & Riske, 2012, p. 63).

In a move to broaden the markers and means of refugee settlement Ager and Strang (2008, p.170) developed a framework to measure integration and they identify citizenship as well as rights as the foundation domain. See their framework below. The three other domains identified are facilitators - language and cultural knowledge, social connection – social bridges, social bonds and social links and markers and means where they identify employment, housing, education and health. Their framework is comprehensive and embraced by refugee studies scholars such as Fodzar and Hartley and Phillimore (Fozdar & Hartley, 2013; Phillimore, 2010). The terminology of social bonds and bridges has been particularly useful for my case study.

Figure 1: A Conceptual Framework Defining Core Domains of Integration (Ager & Strang, 2008: 170)



However, it may be the case that Ager and Strang’s theory does not entirely hit the mark. While the conceptual framework of Ager and Strang is comprehensive, it does not account for the heterogeneity of refugees. It applies normative

expectations of settlement to diverse experiences. Their framework suggests a linear operation rather than a capacity for an iterative structure. Diverse factors impact on the refugee experience and include age and life course, education, the impact of trauma and trauma, language and literacy. The Ager and Strang framework still shifts the main responsibility to the refugee proving they have “settled”. Unlike other immigrants, refugees have not chosen to leave their homeland, and the difficulties associated with settling in a new country are not always acknowledged. Another realm not acknowledged in Strang and Ager’s framework is pre-immigration experiences and the transnational nature of refugee immigration. As Gardner highlights in her study of Tibetan refugees in Montreal ongoing links to India and Tibet are enabled through technology and home is still imagined as Tibet: they retain extremely strong allegiance to the Dalai Lama (Gardner, 1999).

More recently Strang and Ager have identified the interaction between the receiving community and refugees as one of four remaining agendas to explore (Strang & Ager, 2010). They argue that “...greater attention is paid to the manner in which bonds, bridges and links establish forms of reciprocity and trust in social relations” (p.589) and they discuss the impacts of “including” and “excluding” neighbourhoods on the refugees sense of trust (p. 598). Clearly, the role of the local community in building social capital is a key issue. However, as the next section reveals there is ambivalence around multiculturalism, which distorts focus away responsibilities of the receiving country for new settlers.

(Post) Multiculturalism and Everyday Multiculturalism

The term multiculturalism is contested and has multiple meanings. To some multiculturalism means immigrants participate as equal members of society while retaining their culture, language and religion (Castles & Miller, 2009). Recent decades has witnessed a “retreat from multiculturalism” in many western countries (Castles & Miller, 2009; Ho & Jakubowicz, 2014). In the United Kingdom there are moves to replace multiculturalism with social cohesion and interculturalism framework for integration (Cantle, 2012). In Australia, concerns persist that immigrants do not share Australian values, are not integrating or embracing national identity (Vasta, 2013, p. 197). It is also contended that while much discussion about Australian multiculturalism is positioned around European or North American debates, the situation in Australia is different because Australia has immigration

firmly embedded in its political economy and in its society (Jakubowicz, 2014, p. 28). In Australia, a retreat from multiculturalism has resulted policy encouraging social cohesion and identification with Australian values (Fozdar & Hartley, 2013), a position this thesis does not generally support.

There are varying responses to the debate about multiculturalism. British academic Werbner (2012) argues multiculturalism must be understood as a political discourse and she distinguishes between top down and bottom up multiculturalism and emphasises the hybrid and permeable nature of culture (Werbner, 2012, p. 198). American scholar Putnam has been influential in his call for social capital, social bonds and social cohesion (Putnam, 2000) although other scholars are sceptical of this approach fearing it reflects dominant Anglo-Saxon values rather than shared meanings (Harris, 2013, p. 33) and is an attempt to control difference (Vasta, 2013). Polemically Putnam (2000, p.294) contended that diverse communities experience weakening of social capital although he highlighted the need for more research around this. Portes and Vickstrom (2011) dispute Putnam's claim and argue that interpersonal networks and trust are not the basis of modern society (p. 476).

Meer and Modood and Vertovec argue we have moved from multiculturalism into post-multiculturalism and the multicultural silos of separate ethnic categories are replaced a society which is super-diverse, hybrid and where ethnic identities are not fixed (Meer & Modood, 2012; Vertovec, 2010).

Shying away from notions of cultural harmony and social cohesion Harris in her work with young people asserts living with diversity involves negotiation, contested spaces and messy encounters (Harris, 2013, p. 142). As Wise observes in her ethnographic study in Ashfield of relationships between older Anglo-Celtic women and older migrants in a Sydney suburb there may be a need for established residents to embody new ways to enable "diverse contact zones" (Wise, 2010, p. 935). Everyday multiculturalism gives a different perspective on living with difference and is sympathetic to everyday practicalities of refugee mentoring explored in this thesis. It is critical to refugee mentoring because it acknowledges on the ground everyday practices and how central they are to settlement. In addition the changing nature of refugee communities is key element in cultural awareness.

Identity and belonging

Developing a sense of identity and belonging is crucial for refugees to anchor in their new home. This section will argue a number of factors impact on identity and belonging including ontological security, imagined community, the national imaginary and myths of intercultural contact.

The concept of ontological security is a useful one in relation to resettlement. It encompasses the ability to be yourself but also to be in relationship with other people. Giddens notes the importance of the social interaction "...It is faith in the reliability and integrity of others which is at stake (Giddens, 1991, p. 51). Noble (2013) describes how immigrants can experience being at home but still not feel unconditional belonging at home. He examines the new embodied routines that immigrants must learn and absorb in order to feel at home, for instance in the local area as well as the nation (Noble, 2014). Cain, Meares, and Read (2014, p. 11) emphasise in their study of South African migrants in New Zealand the multifaceted nature of belonging: "Belonging is a complex, iterative dance between those who arrive, those they have left behind and those they encounter on arrival".

While government policies encourage immigrants to adopt Australian values in reality refugees have multiple identities and allegiances. When refugees immigrate to another country they may retain strong links to their homeland, both physically and symbolically (Thomas, 1998). Benedict Anderson's seminal work on imagined communities has relevance for the refugee experience (Anderson, 2006). He argues about the symbolic nature of belonging where even members of the smallest nations "will never know most of their fellow-members,yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (p. 6). Arguably, these views of "imagined community" apply to the Tibetan diaspora where what it means to be Tibetan is often cultivated and projected as a common narrative (Gardner, 1999). The imagined community impacts on both the refugees and their new community. Tibetans are a diverse community. For instance, Lau's (2012) ethnographic study of Tibetans in India found older Tibetans hold strong attachments to traditional values while younger people are more strategic and hybrid in how these values are applied. Yet, the image of the Dalai Lama and Tibetans as a homogeneous, spiritual and peaceful people is one projected widely and applied (Gardner, 1999). In this thesis, the imaginings of Tibetans envisaged by both mentees and mentors versus the realities of day-to-day

life will be explored. It will be contended the ordinary lives of Tibetans conflict with the imagined and romanticised images of “Tibetanness”.

Australia projects a national imaginary of as a hospitable and welcoming country but as Hage argues this is not the case and the imaginary nation exerts control and demands passive homely belonging by immigrants (Hage, 1998, p. 108). Some naively argue that if people just mixed with each other more that there would be more harmony (Cantle, 2012, p. 145). This viewpoint was initially developed into a theory called *Contact Hypothesis Theory* by Allport in 1954 and proposes people will get along if they have contact and occupy the same spaces (Cantle, 2012; Matejskova & Leitner, 2011). Matejskova and Leitner reported mixed outcomes of contact between immigrants and the local community and concluded that contact hypothesis theory does not address the complexity of the refugee experience (Matejskova & Leitner, 2011). The disputation of contact theory is important in programs like refugee mentoring because the theory is based on a premise that people will be friendly to people they are in close contact with. Martin’s study of refugee settlement provides contrary evidence to Allport’s theory as do the experiences of the *Good Neighbour Council*. A more nuanced and informed approach needs to underpin theories of social connectedness between newcomers and the more established community.

In summary, identity and belonging involves a number of dimensions. Resettlement involves a re-anchoring through ontological security, which hinges on developing practical and embodied senses but also encompasses symbolic forms of inclusion. Identity and belonging are symbolic as argued by Anderson. Tibetan imaginings of identity intersect and sometimes conflict with the receiving community’s national imagining.

Conclusion

In this thesis I am keen to explore aspects of everyday multiculturalism to assess the impact of refugee mentoring on settlement and how social capital can be expanded through mentoring. A review of scholarly literature reveals a gap in scholarship and the need for more research into refugee mentoring, particularly about the mentoring relationship. There are calls for the receiving community to interact more with refugees. In Australia, research continues to report racism and the consequent negative impact on the sense of belonging experienced by refugees.

Acceptance by their new community is integral to refugees' sense of settlement and increased two-way engagement enables respectful relationships.

Not all communities of refugees are as easily '*settled*' as some scholars suggest they should be. Some literature challenges "taken for granted" notions of settlement as an outcome rather than a process and criticises attention paid to employment as a settlement "success". The persistent problematizing of refugees rather than a focus on the responsibilities and possibilities of receiving communities is of concern. Benedict Anderson's seminal work on *imagined communities* (Anderson, 2006) is an important concept for my thesis. This is played out in the romanticisation of Tibetan exile and diaspora and my research explores how this is constructed, contested between mentor and mentee relationships - how they shake assumptions – hence the title of this thesis *Shaking Shangri-La*.

Structure of this thesis

The thesis is structured into five Chapters. This first Chapter gives background and context to Tibetan Mentoring Program, providing insights from the literature. Chapter two describes the methodology used and issues arising from the fieldwork. Chapter three outlines the everyday practices performed by mentors and mentees. Mentoring bonds are emphasised and a mentoring typology is proposed in Chapter four. In Chapter five, fractures, limitations and challenges of mentoring and its relationships to other actors are explored. The concluding chapter outlines four main findings of the thesis and considers directions for further research.

Chapter 2 - Research Methodology

Vignette: Unexpected interruption

Despite the best efforts of my interpreter a Tibetan mentee scheduled to be interviewed yesterday for this research is here today and accompanying him is a Tibetan I have never seen before. Both Tibetans speak with the interpreter who tells me his family wants a mentor. There is a sense of urgency; he has come to TAFE to doorstep me. His English is poor and he says he no longer attends TAFE because Job Services have arranged a part-time job for him (I internally groan...the focus on job outcomes at the expense of everything else). He tells me he has been in Australia 16 months. I wonder how his family hadn't come to my attention before. The situation is symptomatic of Tibetans who sit in the shadows while others in less need assertively stake their mentor. I choose to help.

The next afternoon my co-facilitator, the mentor and I arrive at the unit, take our shoes off and knock on the door. The unit is small and across one wall is a dark wooden cabinet with one shelf holding seven small silver water offering bowls and on another a picture of the Dalai Lama. On the wall hangs a small colourful embroidered thangka. Looking around it's hard to imagine how two adults and four small children share this small space yet the atmosphere is harmonious. After explaining the program we leave the family with their new mentor.

Introduction

Researching a refugee community can be challenging and messy and requires researchers to be rigorous and ethical (Jacobensen & Landau, 2003, p. 201). Despite my intention to be ordered there were practical difficulties and dilemmas in my research. This chapter outlines the research methods used for my thesis. To begin, I argue why a case study approach was adopted. Then I outline my methodology, research methods and how the data was analysed. Next, ethical considerations for the project are examined. Finally, I examine the limitations of the methodologies chosen for this research.

Case study approach

A case study approach was selected for my thesis. Yin (2014, p.14) asserts a case study approach is appropriate when research questions are focussed on the how and why; contemporary events are being examined and the researcher has little or no control over behavioural events. The TMP meets these requirements and I have conducted “in-depth” study of the program (Yin, 2014, p.4).

My epistemological approach is from an interpretivist paradigm where “the human world is a world of meaning in which our actions take place on the basis of shared understandings” (Walter, 2010, p. 21). A qualitative approach was chosen for the research. The research methods included semi-structured interviews with seven mentors and four mentees, a small focus group of three mentors and my own ethnography. After interrogating the literature I decided to use some aspects of grounded theory approach which privileges the experiences of the interviewees rather than squeezing them in a theoretical box (Bryman, 2012). Ager and Strang’s (2008, p.170) markers of the refugee settlement framework were applied to the data to code initial themes. While their framework applies normative outcomes it has value in identifying the different ways integration can be conceptualised.

The TMP was chosen to study because my access to interviewees and program information. I have worked as a co-facilitator/ teacher on the program for eight years, over which time I have developed the trust of the community. I also have comprehensive knowledge of the program, the local Tibetan community and the TAFE environment, which allowed me to contextualise my analysis.

Interviews

Thirteen interviews were undertaken between April 2014 and July 2014. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven Tibetan mentors and four Tibetan mentees, all over 18 years of age. Participants were selected using a purposeful sampling method, where participants were strategically selected to reflect the range of people involved in the program (Bryman, 2012, p. 418). A requirement was that mentors had participated in a mentoring relationship for at least 12 months.

To ensure informed consent before each interview the mentors were sent an email attaching a participant information sheet and consent form and asked to read the information before the interview. Mentees were given this information at the actual interview and asked to read translated information before being interviewed.

At the completion of the interview participants signed a consent form and were given one to keep. All participants were given the names of counselling services to contact in case of distress caused by the interview. At the start of each interview it was emphasised that participation was voluntary and they could stop at any time and that participants would be de-identified in the research thesis.

A semi-structured approach allowed an interpretive style of interviewing (Walter, 2010) with flexibility to follow the themes of the interviewee rather than applying a rigid set of fixed questions. The interviews were taped and transcribed by me after each interview. Interviews took between 45 minutes to an hour and ten minutes. The mentor interviews were twice the length of the mentee interviews reflecting my stronger relationship with the mentors and highlighting the challenges of interviewing people with English as a second language who may have issues stemming from experiences of torture and trauma.

Mentor interviews

The experience of arranging and conducting mentor interviews was straightforward and all mentors contacted were willing to be interviewed. One mentor prepared three pages of written notes. Two male and five female mentors were interviewed which reflected the gender make-up of most mentor groups. All mentors interviewed were middle-aged reflecting the older demographics of the mentor population. Mentors interviewed represented a variety of mentoring relationships with some mentoring individuals while other mentors were linked with a couple or family. See Appendix 4 for the interview schedule and Appendix 5 for interview questions for mentors.

Most interviews were conducted at Northern Beaches TAFE library in a meeting room. Three interviews were conducted at mentors' homes, as they did not live close to TAFE. This allowed for further insights, for example, in the case of one mentor to observe how intricately Tibetan artefacts were woven into her home. Because I have worked closely with the mentors, mentor interviews were relaxed and involved laughter and reminiscence. The stress-free experience of mentor interviews was a contrast to interviewing the mentees.

Mentee interviews

Organising and conducting the mentee interviews was the most challenging aspect of the fieldwork. As Patton (2002) observes “Cross-cultural inquiries add layers of complexity to the already-complex interactions of an interview” (Patton, 2002, p. 391). The unexpected interruption described at the start of the Chapter mirrors the unpredictable experiences of conducting the interviews.

A trained Tibetan interpreter organised and interpreted at mentee interviews. The interpreter had difficulties in recruiting several mentees who did not answer their mobile or return calls. One mentee was overseas and another could not attend because of family health issues. Possibly some Tibetans were suspicious about the research or they may have not understood what this kind of research entails. Still, I was surprised, particularly when one mentee I had known for some years asked the interpreter “Do I have to do this?” suggesting he felt pressure to participate. This mentee was told it was voluntary and he chose not to participate. Another mentee came with his ten-year-old son and I decided to conduct the interview and I was mindful not to probe emotional topics with the mentee. The interpreter’s availability was difficult due to a large influx of new Tibetan refugees from June to October. She was busy with urgent interpreting duties and could not organise two outstanding interviews. Consequently only four mentee interviews were conducted (See Appendix 4 for the interview schedule).

Three of the mentees interviewed were male and one was female. They reflected the diversity of the Tibetan community with an ex-monk, a single male and two Tibetan mentees with children. Their ages ranged from early 20’s to late forties. Informed consent (Kvale, 2007, p. 27) was particularly important for Tibetan mentees who, with the exception of one interviewee, had low level English. An information sheet and consent form translated into Tibetan about the research was given to mentees at the start of the interview. The material was translated by a professional translation service. Some Tibetans are not literate in Tibetan and thus I could not assume they fully understood the purpose of the interview, confidentiality and privacy so I asked the interpreter to restate these aspects at the start. It was stressed that the interview was voluntary and they could stop at any time. Permission was asked to tape the interview and all mentees interviewed agreed to this. Mentees were given \$25 Coles voucher as a token of appreciation for their time.

Due to cultural norms about the importance of harmony (“champ po”) and the avoidance of open conflict in the Tibetan community (Lau, 2012) I was concerned Tibetan mentees might be reluctant to criticise the program. The interpreter asked mentees to be as open and honest as they could be and emphasised their insights would offer benefit to the mentoring program. A semi-structured interviewing approach allowed me to probe their mentoring experiences and draw out what they liked and their suggestions for program improvement. See Appendix 4 for the interview schedule and Appendix 6 for interview questions for mentees.

Focus Group

A mentor focus group was conducted on Friday 13 June 2014 at Northern Beaches TAFE library in a private room for one and a half hours. Three experienced female mentors attended. Two had mentored for two years and the other for five years. A fourth mentor not able to attend was interviewed separately. The focus group numbers were under the seven to 10 participants usually recommended for focus groups (Patton, 2002, p. 385) to allow in-depth discussion and comparison between their mentoring relationships. None of the participants knew each other prior to the focus group and they were not interviewed individually. The focus group was taped and care taken to ensure one person did not dominate the discussion. Participants were emailed prior information about the focus group including questions, to give them time to consider and reflect. After the focus group I transcribed the focus group and de-identified the participants.

Ethnography

I have been the Tibetan Mentoring Co-ordinator for eight years and some of my ethnography is “retrospective” (Bryman, 2012, p. 279). In this thesis I draw on my memories and experiences. Between February and October 2014 I took field notes at the mentor debriefs and I draw upon these notes in describing everyday mentor activities in the next Chapter. I used participant observation (Habibis, 2010, p.103) and observed Tibetans at TAFE campus. These ethnographic observations and reflections are woven into the thesis. I use vignettes and reflections to highlight key mentoring insights.

Data analysis

As a qualitative research methodology the nature of the analysis is inductive “...which means categories, themes, and patterns come from the data” (Janesick, 1998, p. 47). Thematic data analysis was used in this research. The data was first analysed for word or short phrase codes, which captured the essence of the meaning (Richards, 2009, p. 173). It was then put into broader themes and then further refined into three themes. The three themes, which inform the next three chapters of this thesis are: everyday practicalities and benefits, fractured bridges; and mentoring bonds.

Ethical considerations

Ethics approval was obtained in March 2014 from Macquarie University Human Ethics Committee (See Appendix 8 for a copy of the ethics approval letter). This research was considered high risk because it involved interviewing refugees. Refugees are a vulnerable group requiring careful ethical consideration (Pittaway, Bartolomei & Hugman, 2010; Habibis, 2010, p.105). Respectful engagement with the Tibetan community has been central to the research. The Ethics Committee required the President of the Tibetan Community of Australia (NSW) and the Faculty Director, Foundation Studies from NSI TAFE to give written approval and this was obtained.

Because of my position as Co-ordinator and an “insider” (Guba & Lincoln, 1998, p. 198) I was mindful of bias and rigorous in my interpretation of results. Care was taken that participants are not identifiable because of the small size of the Tibetan community in Dee Why. Individuals are not identified in any publication of the results. Pseudonyms were used to protect confidentiality and privacy and in some cases the gender, age and family composition were altered to protect the identity of the interviewee. A summary of the findings will be emailed to participants in late October 2014 and to the President of the TCA and the NSI TAFE Faculty Director. The research summary will report on the broad findings and no individual stories or quotes will be used.

Limitations of the methodology

The short time-frame of the MRES thesis created several limitations. The number of interviews conducted was limited and I was not able to conduct

respondent validation (Bryman, 2012, p. 391). Other stakeholders such as local community service workers and government key informants were not interviewed. A bottom-up rather than a top-down approach was chosen and consequently I have not analysed government policies on resettlement and multiculturalism, choosing at this point to privilege the lived experiences of mentors and mentees. Broader social and political forces impact on mentoring programs however there was not scope to discuss these issues in detail in this thesis.

A case study such as this cannot be generalised to all refugee mentoring programs (Bryman, 2012, p. 391). Despite the limited scope of the research I believe valuable insights have been gained about the lived nature of mentoring relationships and through analysis of primary data key themes have emerged for further research.

Conclusion

The Tibetan Mentoring Program case study aims to illuminate and extend understanding of refugee mentoring. A case study approach with a qualitative research design was used. Methods included interviews, a focus group and ethnography. Ethical considerations because of the refugee vulnerability were reviewed and issues explored that were experienced in mentee interviews. Finally, limitations of the methodologies were identified. The research process revealed the unpredictable nature of researching a refugee community. This messiness is also a theme in the next Chapter, which explores the ways mentors and mentees engage in everyday practices and the benefits of these practices.

Chapter 3 - Everyday activities, benefits and practices

Vignette: The lift

A few years ago I gave a newly arrived Tibetan nun a lift to the domestic airport for the second flight of her life. She wanted to visit an interstate friend but was terrified of getting to the airport and on the actual flight so I offered to give her a lift and guide her to the plane. I vividly recall parking and walking to the lift to take us to the departure area. As I pressed the lift button she asked me what it was and I explained we were getting into a lift. Puzzled and aware she was learning English at TAFE I asked whether she used the lift at TAFE and she replied she had seen the lift but didn't know what it was and was scared to use it, so took the stairs instead. She had never been in a lift before. My ordinary was quite extraordinary to her and at that moment I grasped the magnitude for refugees learning thousands of minute everyday tasks that I take for granted.

Mentors and mentees spend time practicing everyday “mundane” and taken for granted tasks. While mentoring is a noun, it is also a verb and mentoring is as much about the process of *doing* as it is on outcomes. The sheer range of the mundane complexities of life in a new place is immense (Hoffman, 1989). New settlers must learn about English language, find housing and employment, learn about new foods, and learn how to shop and buy clothing and how to manage money. In addition they discover leisure activities, transport paths, health and medical, services education, customs and celebrations and community services. Giddens (1991, p.61) observes “going on” in daily social life is unrelenting work for everyone in social interaction. There is much to learn and mentors are ideally placed with knowledge and time to help the mentees learn about their new environment.

Teaching and exploring ordinary day-to-day living tasks are valued elements of the mentoring relationship and provide stitching to help mentees settle in and feel a sense of belonging. This everyday stitching extends to affective components through the comfort of relational bonds where a sense of “faithfulness”; or what Simmel terms the “preservation of the relationship to the other” (Simmel (1950, p. 42) is engendered through strong mentoring bonds. Bridges are built between

refugees and the receiving community creating social capital (Putnam, 2000), which in turn increases trust and reciprocity (Strang & Ager, 2010,).

This chapter starts by considering everyday sociology and multiculturalism and the insight it can provide for this research through shifting focus from large to everyday markers of settlement. It then moves to discuss the everyday activities, benefits and practices of mentoring including acts of reciprocity expressing the gratitude of Tibetan mentees. Finally, it will argue for inclusion of everyday practices in Ager & Strang's (2008) conceptualisation of settlement.

Everyday multiculturalism

Productive insights can be drawn from the scholarship on the sociology of everyday life. This sociology delves into the everyday, mundane, "pedestrian" activities of people to provide insight into their lives. It is important to understand that everyday life is complex. The study of everyday life gives importance the ordinary as an important tool for analysis of our world. It requires systematic examination and Schutz claims the subject matter can be more complex and dynamic than that of natural sciences (Overgaard & Zahavi, 2009). Jean Martin conducted detailed research examining everyday life for refugees settling in Australia. Neumann praised the work of the late Jean Martin as "...path-breaking because of its focus on intimacies and complexities of everyday life in the settlement context" (Neumann et al., 2014, p. 5). Her work in everyday life has been built upon by sociologists and other interdisciplinary scholars in Australia.

Everyday multiculturalism (Wise & Velayutham, 2009, p. 4) builds on the foundations of everyday sociology. Everyday multicultural sociologists rattle traditional social science methodologies by paying closer attention to lived "banal" experiences, using "micro-ethnographic techniques" (Ho & Jakubowicz, 2014, p.11). It seeks to uncover what Schutz describes as "typifications", natural ways of doing things that by and large we are unaware of (Overgaard & Zahavi, 2009). This uncovering leads to more understanding of wider complexities of our social world. As well, everyday multiculturalism explores concepts such as space, sensory experiences and embodiment (Wise, 2010). It is an interdisciplinary endeavour. In Australia, interdisciplinary scholars engage in the real world lives of people of immigrant diversity, exploring how super-diverse communities contest, negotiate and live with their differences (Wise, 2010). Everyday multiculturalism focusses on the

messiness as well as “hopeful intercultural encounters” (Wise, 2005, p. 172). Wise argues hopeful encounters are as important as documenting racism because they acknowledge the agency of actors in creating forms of neighbourly relations (Wise, 2005, p.185). As a field (for example Noble, Wilson, Neal and Wessendorf) there is a core concern with how people develop capacities to accommodate difference and navigate diversity.

The field of everyday multiculturalism is important on two fronts. Firstly, it gives a practical sense to underpin conditions that develop a sense of ontological security by anchoring an orientation in daily life and the feelings of belonging that this produces. As Garfinkel observes “...we are all busy constructing a world in which we feel at home” and we use various routines to achieve this (Overgaard & Zahavi, 2009). The attention to the minutiae of everyday practice highlights how significant and cumulative these everyday challenges are in forming not just a sense of self, but also about the everyday symbolic, discursive and communicative environment. Secondly, the everyday perspective highlights the dimension of negotiating everyday differences when different cultural life-worlds are brought into contact as in the mentoring relationship itself. What follows are experiences of everyday practises and their impact on both mentors and mentees.

Everyday needs – “little aspects you and I never even think about...”

... it's a bit like if I am off travelling go for a trek up remote areas and some local villager comes along and says do you want a guide and they speak English it just gives a little bit of comfort that the guide knows the way and you can talk to a personmaybe I was a bit like that guide. ...I know the place and know what goes on here and I'm here to have a chat if you want.
Geoff, Mentor

Enormous amounts of micro-learning face new arrivals. The taken for granted learning tasks are often overlooked and yet the tiny cracks in everyday knowledge can develop into crevasses if not addressed. Everyday practicalities are not reflected in Ager and Strang's (2008) conceptual framework, which privileges larger and more visible markers of settlement although they do emphasise the important of social connections with the local community. The importance of everyday learning is an under-researched area of refugee settlement.

Mundane tasks mentors assist with range from catching a bus to TAFE, locating key places such as shops, attending appointments with doctors to explaining the difference between a Medicare and credit card. Because many Tibetans come from monastic, nomadic and farming backgrounds the scope of practical skills and knowledge demanded by the new environment is enormous and at times overwhelming and frightening. What seems insignificant to a non-refugee can take on enormous proportions for newly arrived refugees.

Mentoring often extends to more complex matters such as renting, buying home units, making application for social housing, finding employment and navigating the web of community services and government departments. Mentoring activities are negotiated. Because of the low level of English conveying information involve pantomime. Margie has mentored a family for nearly two years:

...lots of sign language, lots of laughing, lots of animal noises...because they had a farm in Tibet, so just lots of spending time together, communicating in alternative sorts of ways, but lots of picnics, lots of outings and lots of walks

Another taken for granted knowledge is public holidays. Geoff recounts his mentee family's first Anzac Day:

....fronted up to their place one day on Anzac Day and here they are ferociously looking through the street directory going: What suburb is Gallipoli in?

While humorous, the anecdote it exemplifies how easily new settler can become lost in the intricacies of a new culture.

Some mentees display assertive agency; far from the passive image some people imagine of Tibetans. Trisha recounts her mentee's clear ideas about what she needs assistance with and says:

...sometimes when I get slack she's actually quite assertive and rings me up a lot, which I think is unusual. She makes sure I don't disappear...

Tony concentrates on English language. He said:

because I have some ESL training at first I said what do you want me to do with you and they said English.

Unlike most mentors Geoff responds to calls for assistance rather regular meetings. Geoff taught members of his mentee family to drive. He helps with "little things":

Even just little things. Early days they got an electricity bill. They said Geoff is this for real and why is it so high? I pointed out where the meter was and I

said the heater that's running all day... little aspects you and I never even think about which came up and why is it so and nothing to me but to them – just helped out.

Refugees who are more settled still require support as recounted by Trisha whose mentees have lived in Australia for over five years, gained local full-time employment and recently became Australian citizens. Trisha has visited them at least weekly since they arrived:

They don't understand their mail so they save it up for me...I'm trying to get them to read more... some of the mail says important and it's still junk mail and it even has the government crest.

Navigating around the local area is critical to belonging in a place and cognitively mapping locality (Collins, 2013; Harris, 2013; Wise, 2010). Mentors sometimes assist their mentee with the driving test and driving lessons. Driving opens opportunities for jobs such as aged care and cleaning, which operate on shifts, requiring very early starts. Trisha relates her experience:

I also taught Tenzin to drive as well which was quite hair-raising (laughing) they have an Indian licence but you realise Indian licence doesn't mean they can actually drive so I taught him to drive to start with. A Tibetan helped him later on - at the beginning that took a lot of time

There is much comfort for mentees knowing a local is there for them and that they can “count on” the mentors. As George reflects:

I think just being there for them. Just in case. Knowing there is someone there is you need them. Yeah, make them feel comfortable that you are only a phone call away if something drastic happens.

Similarly, Margie comments:

I like to think that they know they can count on me if they get in a jam.

The sense of having someone who cares and is there for them provides a valued safety net for mentees settling in a new environment.

The sheer scope of what mentors assist mentees' with in everyday activities is quite extraordinary. See Table 1 on the next page for a list of the range of everyday tasks described by mentors and mentees interviewed for this thesis and from my own knowledge of mentoring activity.

Table 1: Typical Examples of Everyday Mentoring Activities

Benefit	Micro-activities
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English conversation • Writing • Reading • Diary and journal writing • Reading signs • Reading mail and utility correspondence • Sorting real from junk mail • Filling in forms • Contact with TAFE ESOL about mentee progress • Practicing everyday language e.g. name, address, asking for a bus ticket, emergency call 000
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accompanying mentee to dental, doctor (GP and specialist) and hospital appointments • Advocating for further tests/change of medication with doctor • Visiting when in hospital • Getting prescription glasses • Mediating in reducing fee payments e.g. bulk billing at specialist
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping apply for jobs e.g. resume preparation • Driving to job interview or prior practise on public transport about travelling there • Using networks to obtain work for mentee
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buying a house: looking for house, solicitors, bank loans • Renting e.g. looking for a home, acting as guarantor • Moving • Buying a unit and dealing with a solicitor
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining school systems e.g. Voluntary parent contribution, school uniform, where to buy second hand uniforms • Advocating for placement at preferred school • Helping with homework, assignments and study • Helping understand notes and school newsletters
Immigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing age on passport • Pull together documentation • Work with community workers to bring family to Australia
Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using a Pin to withdraw money • Explaining difference between credit and debit cards • Teaching about different coins and notes • Tips on how to save on electricity • Paying bills online
Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practicse citizenship questions • Attend citizenship ceremony

Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buying tickets • Bike safety and use of helmets • Public transport • Phone apps for transport information • Learning how to drive • Looking up maps • Safe pedestrian crossing • Using a seat belt and sitting in a car
Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centrelink for issues in benefits • Department of Housing, assist with social housing application • STARTTS for counselling • St Vincent de Paul for emergency relief, clothes and furniture • Join Warringah Library and borrow books • Arranging volunteer placements for mentees
Leisure and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outings to city, zoo, Opera House, Chinese gardens • Outings in local area e.g. Manly beach, Manly Dam • Access to cheap ballet, gymnastics, school holiday programs • Teaching how to swim and accessing free swimming lessons • Beach safety
Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public holiday celebration e.g. Christmas, Easter, Anzac Day
Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Free” shopping at Council junk collections • Cheap food at charity stores • Organisation of supermarket • Where to buy sanitary products • Sourcing second hand clothes and bedding

English language

Due to the low level English skills of many Tibetans, English language practise is a key activity. For reasons such as torture and trauma experiences, low literacy in their own language, the English level of Tibetans can remain low and not improve even after many years. Susan meets her mentee every week to practise English and of late twice weekly to assist with the citizenship test. Despite a lack of progress she is determined to continue:

I find this quite frustrating...that we haven't had the "breakthrough" but having said that maybe I will have a breakthrough in six months...I feel like if I stop I will have let him down...Australia's let him down in a way.

English practice can take a variety of forms including spoken, conversational and written. Some mentors point out signs and objects to assist their mentees to learn basic everyday language. Others go to shops and chemists to practise everyday language. Some mentors keep a journal with photos to document their relationship and use it to reminisce on the mentoring journey.

For some Tibetans the contact with an Australian mentor is their only contact with the Australian community. Tony commented:

I think he's adapted well although they still hang out with Tibetans, still hang out with friends. I don't think he has any other English speaking people he comes in contact with, just general shops and so on or teachers.

Activities change as the mentoring progresses. Dominic described how the activities in the mentoring relationship have changed over the 18 months she has known Tenzin from outings to more serious concentration on English:

... so different parks, different environments then slowly you know each other's homes, that's pretty much what we did. Nowadays Tenzin asked me three quarters of a year into the relationship ... to help her with her English so really written English ...we started really slowly ... when I've realised she is progressing in that we concentrated on also doing, looking into the citizenship test which I thought would be fantastic for her to have Australian citizenship.

Assistance in English is highly valued by mentees and mentor as the next section highlights when English proficiency is low mentors act as mediators in accessing community services.

Social links: Community services and government departments

Even for experienced professionals the myriad of community services and government departments are difficult to navigate. For new arrivals limited English can exacerbate the task of dealing with community services. The social links between refugees and state structures are critical (Watson, 2011, p.3; Ager and Strang, 2008, p. 181). Mentors assist mentees to establish what service is most appropriate. During mentor training and debriefs mentors are given information about services. Lydia described taking her mentees to St Vincent de Paul for financial help with bills and the importance of attending the first visit with them.

They might have known they were there initially but I think they needed someone to help them go there because it was a bit frightening for them, a bit daunting... because they don't know how the system works nor did I to a degree but they seemed hesitant to ask questions to whoever was the officer we were speaking to in each situation.

The mentee needs vary enormously and mentors often draw on the expertise of local community service workers. As Phorbu explains:

I am still getting help from my mentor and the community worker to fix that up through the legal system because in my passport they have put me 10 years younger than I actually am so until I fix that up I can't take up citizenship.

There is a stable cohort of community workers on the Northern Beaches including Manly Community Centre, Centrelink, NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors, and NSW Multicultural Health. The same community speakers have spoken at Tibetan Mentoring training for the past eight years. Ager and Strang (2008, p. 181) highlight the benefits of established refugee services for refugees feeling their needs are supported.

Fozdar and Hartley (2013, p. 49) suggest community volunteers may remove the need to extend settlement services and promote more natural networks. This argument does not acknowledge the “peeling back” of service provision, for instance, reduced time in government sponsored housing at the start of settlement (Westoby & Ingamells, 2010, p. 1761). I argue the complexity of mentee needs in this program challenges Fozdar and Hartley’s proposal. The mentor often acts as the glue between the mentee and the community services to enable access to services.

A network of community service providers liaise with mentors about matters such as domestic violence, immigration and child protection. To expect mentors with limited mentoring training to deal with complex issues with no support would be unrealistic.

Romancing the Other – Reciprocity

A gift is a symbol of many things and different perspectives on gifts have been the focus of study by scholars including Mauss, Malinowski, Cheal and Goffman. Gifts can be a signal of reciprocity, a token of appreciation and can provide symbolic nourishment of the relationship (Komter, 1996, p. 3). In this context I will be looking at the practice of gift-giving by Tibetans as a way for mentees to equalise their relationship with mentors as well as fulfilling a symbolic role.

Mentors and mentees are asked to only give small gifts and are discouraged from giving money or expensive gifts as part of the Tibetan mentoring Code of Conduct. Most mentors interviewed described being given gifts. Susan described the gift of alcohol from her mentee:

Susan: Tibetan New Year he'd give me a lovely bottle of wine and I'd think if only he knew I don't drink. I am the one who would be wanting to give him things and I think that can be misconstrued. I gave him one of my kid's t-shirts and I notice he'll often have that t-shirt on, cleaned and ironed and I think God...

Phillipa: Do you think it might be like you and the wine? That's whether he liked the t-shirt or not he'd be wearing it?

Susan: He'd be wearing it (laughs) that's right.

Trisha describes how difficult it is to avoid being given gifts.

... although I vehemently resist, Dolma always tries to give me gifts. Mostly it is food and if she hasn't cooked anything it is often fruit.... At the last Tibetan event she insisted I wear one [chuba] and keep it so I still have it. I'm not sure why she feels I should wear it. Possibly because it is a Tibetan event and part of their culture.

Margie was touched to receive a chuba from her mentee family.

They put it on and they fired it all up and fixed it up for me. Then when I went to give it back afterwards she said “No, no keep it”. I only get to wear it once a year for Losar. It’s a very beautiful, a silk outfit.

I saw Margie at Losar Tibetan New Year in her beautiful long chuba, with an apron tied around her waist with brightly coloured horizontal lines indicating she is married. I asked a friend of Margie’s mentee why she gave her mentor a chuba.

....she feels a sister relationship ... so she brings one of her nice chubas and gives to Margie.... in our Tibetan tradition at the New Year festival lots of people wear a brand-new dress.

I have noticed other mentors dressed in chubas at occasions such as His Holiness Birthday celebration. The gift of a chuba is a symbolic honouring of the mentor and possibly a way of equalising the relationship.

Mentees grateful for the assistance given by mentors in 2010 held a large lunch for 80 people at Manly Community Centre where they demonstrated their gratitude for the mentors’ assistance.



Figure 1: Photo of a Thank You Mentors cake from a lunch organised by mentees and TCA for mentors in October, 2010.

At the thank-you lunch there was a speech of thanks given by a mentee, interpreted by a Tibetan community worker.

The gift of contact

Some scholars have identified a lack of research about the impact of refugees on the receiving community (Neumann, 2013, p. 4; Fodzar & Hartley, 2013).

Through mentoring the local community has convivial contact with Tibetans or what Wise (2005) terms “hopeful intercultural encounters” (p. 171). The intercultural contact has increased understanding of refugees in a community renowned as the “insular peninsula”. Susan describes the impact of her contact:

I think it has added a whole new dimension to my life. Yes, definitely. My friends say “you’re half Tibetan or turning Tibetan” (laughing)

Refugee mentoring evaluations report mentors’ increased cultural awareness and understanding of refugee experience as a benefit of mentoring (Bond, 2010, Sawrikar, Griffiths and Muir, 2008). For several mentors contact with their Tibetan mentees was also their first direct contact with a refugee. As Margie reflects on her contact with her mentee family:

I suppose it’s more personal now because I never knew refugees. Instead of seeing them on the news I know a personal family and I know what they’ve gone through and I probably just feel more strong about my views....

Geoff too has become more empathic and now challenges his friends about their views:

I think I’m certainly more open and understanding ... only with Australian friends and their comments “oh these bloody boat people come here and we should bomb them” or something like that. Well, hang on no, they’re people... “All those refugees they just can’t wait to get onto the dole” I say that’s not right they can’t wait to get off the dole because many of them have two or three jobs. They say “Really?”

Trisha and her mentee gave a talk to a local community group:

I remember when she told them she sold her clothes when they arrived in Nepal they had nothing left and they had to sell their clothes for food they were all absolutely amazed so I think it is really good to get out there and tell people. People can’t believe some of the things they have been through.

Mentors discussed the impact of contact and putting their lives and “small problems” into perspective. As Tony reflected:

Having these Tibetan mentees is like a reminder every week of that and it's the same as you were saying that small problems in my life. They have recently moved from a very ordinary unit in Dee Why into a really shitty room with a shared awful bathroom and kitchen but I am sure they just reflect on worse times ... so every week I walk into a shitty room with two smiling faces and that's my lesson for the week.

Margie agreed:

... anytime anything would I think would be bad in my life I would just think of them and think OK nothing, I didn't have to travel, come through the Himalayas in the winter, so it did put a lot of things in perspective.

Susan said she learnt from the Dalia Lama to treat people like your family. She reflected:

Australians are so lucky – everything goes so smoothly for us. Things don't for other cultures and see any show on Tibet and you see the nuns being shot as they are going over the mountains. We don't have that. It reinforces to me how lucky we are and I pass that on to people I know, family and everybody.

Lydia described her learning about Tibetan culture and rituals and said she felt the relationship was reciprocal. She also added:

I don't think they realised what they gave to me as an experience but no, it was very interesting from my point of view and I think I helped them in ways that were good.

Clearly mentors reconsider their own lives through their contact with mentees, expressing gratitude for their situation and enabling some to pass their increased cultural and life awareness to their extended networks of family and friends.

Conclusion

The benefits of mentoring are considerable. Mentors support their mentees to learn a wide range of everyday skills. Yet mundane knowledge and skills are overlooked in favour of bigger markers of settlement. This chapter captured numerous little everyday interactions, the warmth of the bonds, the comfort of knowing a mentor cares and can be “counted” on. It revealed the agency of mentees comfortable enough to ask for assistance for all manner of things from catching a bus to buying a home. The openness of the receiving community can greatly assist

refugees to flourish despite traumatic pre-migration experiences (Gifford & Barnett, 2010: 1406).

The value of a mentor can be powerful as evidenced by Geoff who taught his mentees to drive, and by Margie who leveraged her contacts to get her mentees jobs and Trisha who assisted with language and reading correspondence. In addition, the impact of the relationship on the mentors can be profound. Mentors described their sensitivity to refugees and increased gratitude for their own lives.

A unique aspect of the TMP is relationships often spans many years acknowledging that settlement can be a long-term process. This research reveals a rich web of relationships and mentee agency and challenges the discourse of refugee vulnerability (Westoby & Ingamells, 2010). A striking feature of time-intensive mentoring is that it would be impossible for a community service worker to provide. This must be tempered with understanding areas such as immigration and domestic violence are beyond the expertise of mentors.

As I write this chapter I am inundated with emails from mentors responding to a call to donate blankets for a wave of new Tibetan arrivals. This is the generosity of community more than the “kindness of strangers” (Freedman, 1993). The slow cooking of a “faithful” relationship (Simmel, 1950) not constrained by time or professional boundaries has many benefits. My research reveals numerous micro-moments of tender care and reciprocity, providing hope to refugees settling in a new community. I argue the interpersonal networks and trust are the foundation stones of effective mentoring and a myriad of everyday interactions form the glue of social capital. This is not to say all Tibetan mentors and mentees enjoy an idealised Shangri-La mentoring relationship. In the next chapter the nature of mentoring bonds will be explored in more detail.

Chapter 4 - Mentoring bonds

Introduction

This chapter considers the nature of bonds between mentors and mentees. I develop a typology of mentor types which foregrounds the affective and relational qualities of the mentoring relationship.

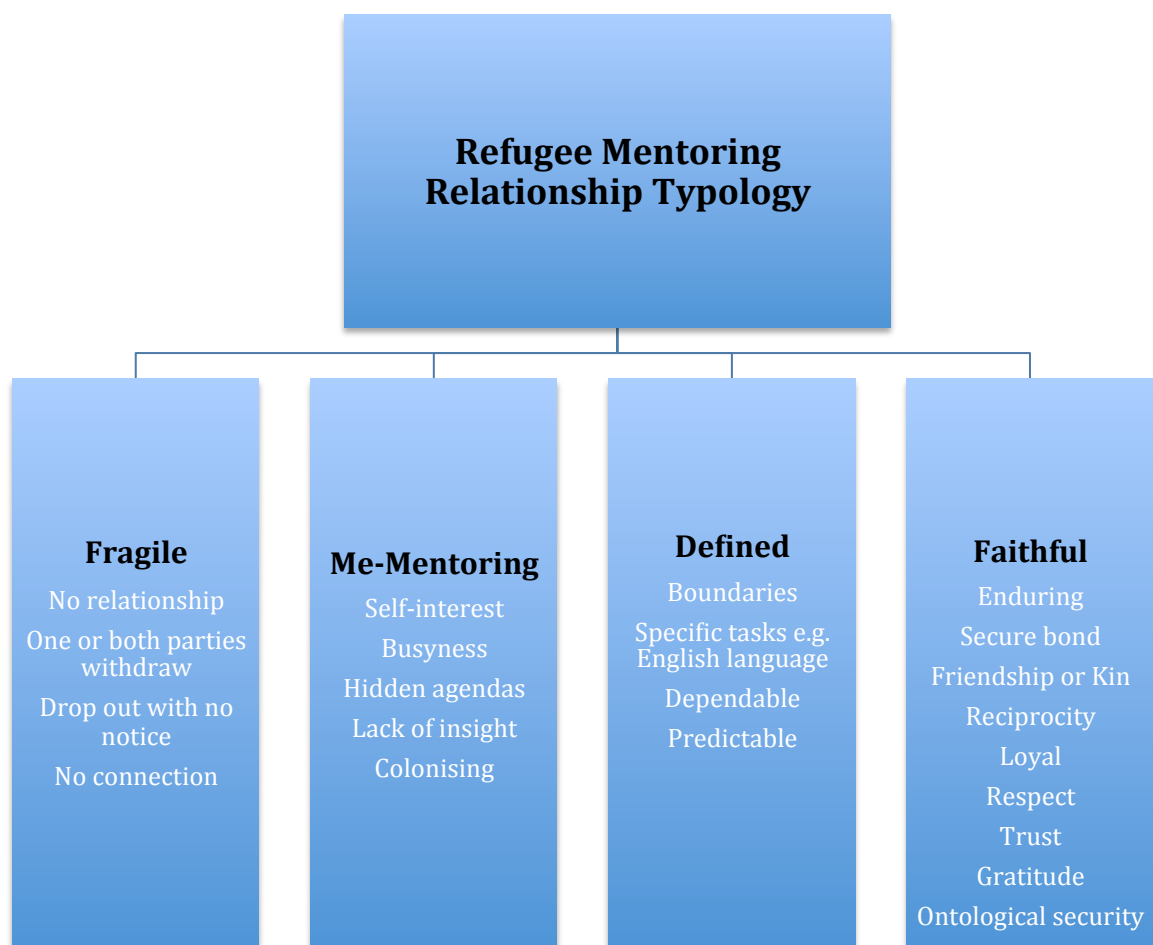
Numerous mentoring programs focus on the functional level of mentoring and privilege program success on markers such as employment and English language acquisition (Bond, 2010; Mestan, 2008; Esterhuizen & Murphy, 2007; Carr, 2004). Despite a growing body of research expressing refugees' desire to have contact and develop friendships with their local community (Galligan, Boese & Phillips, 2014:95; Correa-Velez, Gifford & Barnett, 2010; Colic-Peister, 2009; Fodzar & Hartley, 2013; Ager & Strang, 2010; Phillimore, 2010) few scholars have explored the affective elements of the refugee mentoring relationship. One exception is Askins (2014) who in a recent evaluation of a West End Refugee Be-Friending Scheme in London focussed on the emotional dynamics of the mentoring relationship.

Mentors and mentees vary in the style of relationship and intensity of the bonds they form. Freedman (1993, p.66) for example, identified three kinds of youth mentoring bonds; primary, secondary and no relationship. In primary bonds there is an intense and strong relationship, while secondary relationships are friendly but not committed to a longer-term relationship and a lesser emotional connection. In the third category a relationship does not form. Freedman's bonds align with the bonds outlined in this chapter.

My findings concur with Askins' (2014) conclusion that relationship bonds are central to mentoring. Askins identified trust, nuanced reciprocity, commitment and humour as key ingredients in forging positive relationships and friendships (p. 3). In this chapter I will explore the extent to which particular styles of mentoring foster these warm/close relationships. A typology will be proposed to cover four main bonds expressed along a continuum, and which broadly map onto the spread of mentoring styles. The chapter starts with a review of fragile mentoring bonds and moves to bonds based on self-interest, then to a more structured bond and finally to long-term familial bonds. See below for a diagram summary of the bonds.

These of course need to be understood as “ideal types” (Weber, cited in Harrington, 2005:322). Bonds in reality overlap and should not be viewed as unchanging and fixed. Mentors and mentees enter the relationship with different capacities and needs (Bond, 2010, p. vi). An emphasis on achieving outcomes can be at the expense of valuing the benefits of friendship, support and the ontological security (Giddens, 1991; Noble, 2005) that mentoring can provide.

Diagram 1: Refugee Mentoring Typology



Fragile relationship

In what I term a *fragile* relationship a mentoring relationship does not form, or peters out after a short period. Reasons for fragile relationships include situations impacting on mentors’ ability to continue such as mental illness, work commitments, unexpected family illness or bereavement, unrealistic imaginings of mentoring and

not enough time. A premature ending effects mentees as they bring hopes and emotional energy to the relationship. Phorbu described his disappointment when his mentor returned to university studies after a few months:

Yes, I was quite disappointed because we were trying to make a connection. Because I was new she was trying to show me how to count the money as well, which dollar, different dollars, showing me the different dollars and so when she had to stop the program I was quite sad.

Phorbu was re-matched to another mentor although usually it is difficult to re-match because there is a higher demand than supply of mentors. His experience again reaffirms the importance of small everyday assistance, in this case how to recognise differences between dollar values.

Tsering expressed her disappointment after two mentors withdrew, one because of a family illness and the other because the mentor was “too busy”.

Tsering: Some of the mentors I have seen or heard are people who seem to go out of their way to help with the household. And you get all this correspondence from various departments, being able to help with that sort of thing.

Phillipa: Are those things still a struggle for you?

Tsering: In the beginning it was very difficult but now it has become a lot better because my older son who is in high school is able to understand quite a bit so he helps out a bit.

Sadly, it is the children of refugees who often shoulder the burden of settlement and are left to interpret documents when alternative assistance is not available (Ager & Strang, 2010:597). This can limit young people’s abilities to participate in social activities and other key elements of settlement (Sawrikar, Griffiths & Muir, 2008, p.37). Tsering hoped his children might make Australian friends through mentoring.

...my daughter is interested in interaction with the mentors kids other than usually she is always with other Tibetan kids – it would be nice to have interaction with Australian age of her own group.

Tsering went on to reflect on important qualities in a mentor:

Ideally a mentor now for me having spoken about it would be someone who has time once a week and come and visit us and go out and make a conversation. That would be quite helpful.

Despite his negative experiences with mentors dropping out Tsering is interested in being linked again. Clearly Tsering sees the value of a mentor in easing the process of settling.

Sometimes mentees are also reluctant participants and withdraw from the program or do not respond to mentors' contact. Judith related her experience:

I was going weekly. Saturday seemed to be the day and then but it was always difficult for her. "I very busy" ... There were invitations that came from TAFE to go to functions and she would never come... While it's sad if I look at it objectively it's sad that I can't talk to her. You know it's like I just can't keep calling...

Judith's relationship with her mentee came to an end after fruitless attempts to establish a regular meeting time although she says there is warmth when she sees them at Tibetan functions.

There is no such thing as speed mentoring. In youth mentoring it well established that relationships of six months or less are of limited or no benefit and may even be detrimental (Rhodes & DuBois, 2008, p.255). Refugee mentoring schemes such as *Time Together* (2002) and *Given the Change* (Mestan, 2008) asked mentors and mentees to make a six to 12 month commitment although an evaluation of *Time Together* recommended more flexibility in the length and that there should be recognition of the needs of the mentee who may require less time. Bond's (2010) evaluation of *On the Move* recommended extending the six-month commitment to 12 months. The school-based refugee mentoring program conducted by Sydney's MercyWorks asks for a one-year commitment (MercyWorks, 2014). Askins (2014) stressed the importance of long-term relationships. It seems clear a longer time period will assist the bond to develop and cement.

A fragile relationship is problematic in mentoring and mentors need to be reliable with time to contribute to the relationship. Askins (2014) argues careful matching is a key element. Rhodes and DuBois (2008, p. 257) make an astounding claim that adhering to best practice protocols in youth mentoring results in benefits three times larger than programs not using the complete range of evidence based practice tools. I believe best practice protocols for refugee mentoring in Australia are needed. Following best practice would reduce the level of fragile mentoring relationships and proactively screen out the next mentor type – "Me mentors".

ME-mentoring: “I would like a little nun...”

On the continuum of mentoring styles, the mentoring type I describe as “Me-mentoring” emerged as one unlikely to foster the warm and trusting relationships identified by Askins (2014) as key to mentoring success. “Me-mentors” are typified by characteristics such as busyness, hidden agendas, lack of insight, self-interest in their approach, and sometimes colonising and overly romanticised views of the mentee community. Various positive motivations drive people to volunteer. Zappala (2000, p. 1) identifies mixed motivations for volunteering including altruism, gaining a sense of satisfaction and wanting to extend social networks. The darker motivations are less explored in the literature.

It is difficult to determine motivation particularly when mentors present an altruistic face. Mentors are asked to sign a Code of Conduct that outlines important elements of the program including confidentiality, gifts, appropriate activities etc. It is however, difficult to monitor transgressions.

The Me-mentor can be demanding asking to be linked with a particular type of Tibetan e.g. “I would like a little nun...” or “I want to mentor a Tibetan with OK English”. I believe those who request a nun view nuns as passive and compliant for their own personal gratification – a vicarious spiritual experience.

Some Me-mentors demands extend into the co-ordinators time. For instance, I have been asked to referee for work, assist with academic study, and distribute Tibetan political information to mentors. It takes time to consider these requests and respond appropriately. On one program I asked the mentors to limit emails sent to me because it interfered with time to manage the program. While the Me-mentor is a minority and care is taken to screen out such people through an application form and reference checks it is difficult to eliminate me-mentors who appear to have an altruistic face.

In my experience in each course there is a Me-mentor who lacks insight and self-awareness. Susan reflects on the status-driven motivations of some mentors:

Their motives would be that it's fashionable to help someone from a developing country, third world; it's fashionable to do it.... You can say I am helping Tibetans and Tibetans AKA trendy AKA Dalia Lama a bit different from the Northern Beaches.

Some mentors bring a romanticised idea of Tibetans. For instance, several mentors interviewed for the research echoed the following thoughts:

We're led to believe that Tibetan people are beautiful spiritual people and I thought yes I could help them in any way that would be wonderful.

Another mentor highlighted perceived intrinsic characteristics and said:

I am full of respect for the Tibetans demeanour, their happiness, and their instinctive happiness.

Me-mentors highlight the risks when mentoring takes place out of sight of the mentoring co-ordinator unlike structured mentoring that occurs in a community hall or school. The dark side of mentoring (Long, 1997) is rarely given serious attention in the mentoring evaluations whose writers seem keen to recoat mentoring folklore.

Defined mentoring

Some mentors develop a structured discrete relationship, usually revolving around English language teaching. Their meetings are held in a neutral venue such as TAFE or the library. Susan sees her mentee every week at a local community centre for up to two hours. She has met every week since November 2012 and will continue to do so if there is a need.

Now it's a friendship. Often we will be down together in Dee Why and there will be other Tibetans there and he will always introduce them to me and they will know who I am and they are all incredibly respectful to me so I know he perhaps, he is speaking to me in a positive, about me in a positive way.

Another mentor Tony visits his mentee's home each week where he teaches English conversation and assists with TAFE English homework. He is clear about the nature of the relationship:

Mine is still a mentor-mentee relationship; you know we don't hang out.

My professional observation is that some defined mentors retreat to the ground they are comfortable with (e.g. English language) rather than the space of just being with someone and sitting with uncertainty of not "doing". In their research of the large *Time Together* mentoring program Esterhuizen and Murphy, (2007, p. 22) observed mentors often undervalued less tangible outcomes such as friendship and that the scheme should consider home meetings and extending networks to friends and family.

Sometimes this need for boundary setting comes from issues around gender. Because of a shortage of male mentors sometimes women are matched with men. Karla described her reaction.

... he was male, he was single and I thought this could be a bit cringy for a moment ...which is why I decided the location was going to be at TAFE on my terms, my safe haven.

The program allows mentor and mentees to work out the best location for mentoring.

Faithful mentoring

Karen's home oozes warmth and welcome. Her home is full of Tibetan artefacts such as a beautiful thangka of a Buddhist goddess, golden Tibetan prayer bowls and various ornaments. Prayer flags blow colourfully on her verandah. She is a Buddhist and the prayer room she shows me has a small Buddhist altar and a photo of the Dalai Lama draped with a khata. It is no surprise to hear Karen describing the deep mutual affection for her mentee and his family and the multitude of ways she has assisted him. Karen has seen her mentee regularly since she began the program six years ago.

A number of mentors and mentees interviewed had forged long-term relationships. Of the 12 mentoring matches researched in this thesis five have been meeting for between five and seven years and attest to the determination of both parties to establish a deep and meaningful bond despite barriers such as language. I am aware of 12 other mentors not interviewed for this research who have met for a similar length of time and six others who have been meeting for two years.

When asked to describe her relationship with her mentee and his family Karen said:

Karen: I think it's really close. I always say I am his big sister and he is my little brother.

Phillipa. And is that the way he sees you?

Karen: Yes I do. He's always very respectful and very caring. He is an incredibly compassionate and gentle man and (choking up with tears) I get quite teary about because it is a lovely relationship.

There is strong sense of reciprocity in Karen's relationship and she is sensitive to the importance allowing her mentee to give back:

He shows his caring by asking how everyone is and always...always wants to do the right thing. So if we have had him over for a meal he would want to give us a meal or take us out and pay for it which I find really hard but it might be like the RSL at Dee Why. He insists on paying. He likes to do the right thing and feel he understands the Australian culture properly...

Simmel (1950) argued faithfulness was central to society's existence and considered the psychic and sociological condition of faithfulness "It keeps the soul on the path on which it started, even after the original occasion that led it to exist no longer exists" (pp. 39-40). Similarly in mentoring the relationship is developed for external reasons but when it is long-term and intense it forges a faithfulness - giving rise to deep affective states. Simmel stressed the faithful relationship is not about possession of the Other (p.42). I believe this is a key quality of an effective mentor who freely gives their time without wanting to colonise their mentee. When asked what mentoring meant to her mentee Susan said:

I think it is somebody who has been incredibly consistent and loyal and what can I say I don't know I don't ask anything of him. I'm just there. I'll listen, I'll teach. I'll just play it by ear accordingly and if he can't come he'll text me. So...I'm undemanding.

Mentors who make an initial six-month commitment and then continue mentoring beyond this can be considered "faithful". The long-term mentors interviewed for this research revealed a strong affective component of the relationship. It is more than volunteering which Zappala (2000, p. 1) defines as "...an activity that is freely chosen, does not involve remuneration, and helps or benefits strangers". Mentoring is more because the benefit is two-way, and involves reciprocity. Mentees are considered newly arrived members of the community, not strangers. It is more than doing "things" for mentees and achieving goals.

Ngawang showed me a series of texts between he and his mentor to give an idea of the depth of their bond. It felt almost intrusive as it read as such tender exchanges. When I asked him about the biggest problems with settling in Australia he said:

The biggest hurdle has been not having your own members of the family around you. That's been very difficult.

Ngawang went onto discuss the bond and the reciprocal nature of their relationship

...she [mentor] is like a family member, like a mother. If she has issues or something is troubling her or she's feeling sad she confides in me and then when I have issues or I am bothered about something or worrying about something I confide in her, so there is that much trust.

Aware of issues of busyness with some mentors, Ngawang used agency in selecting a mentor who had time:

The trainer came and said look this is Annette, you are a single man, she is not working and she will have a lot of time on her hands to help you.

Another mentor, Trisha is also aware of the agency of her mentee who has a long list of tasks for them to achieve:

...sometimes when I get slack she's actually quite assertive and rings me up a lot, which I think is unusual. She makes sure I don't disappear.

Dominic is a self-aware mentor who gives thought and consideration to the nature of the relationship. She is clear theirs is a friendship.

...it's really a friendly relationship ... I tried from the beginning not have a dependent relationship. I just wanted it an independent relationship so she a friend. You know on the same level.

Phorbu reflected on the intensity of the sisterly relationship with her mentor who assisted her to bring family members left behind in India to Australia:

She would break down regarding them with worry and so if you are not that close like a sister or a member of a family you won't feel that kind of emotion.

As Margie comments:

... it's been amazing! I do quite a bit of volunteering in the community and this is by far I get the most enjoyment out of this program. It's the most hands on, it's the most throw it in the deep end and figure it out but that's also what makes it the most enjoying, most enjoyable.

For some mentors the bond is considered a friendship. As Trisha says

I think it's more of a friendship. My mentee keep introducing me as a mentor and I said don't use that because although we know what it means a lot of people don't understand it ... I feel we are really good friends.

Faithful mentors interviewed for this research demonstrated commitment exceeding the program aims. For them the relationship is fulfilling and worthwhile. It is clear

for some the mentoring relationship is familial, deep and involves more emotion than volunteer relationships where compassion is limited (Wilson, 2012).

Conclusion

Mentors and mentees engage in a relationship when they join the Tibetan Mentoring Program. Both parties bring dreams, hopes and expectations to the relationships. Some hopes, like Susan's are realised beyond expectations and for others, a fragile relationship results in disappointment and lost opportunities. Phorbu experienced the disappointment of forming an attachment with a mentor who subsequently dropped out and did not contact him. Still others like Tony take a matter of fact attitude to their relationship and some like Karla are strategic to minimise sexual tension in the relationship and meet in a neutral space.

While mentoring risks a power imbalance, mentees are not passive recipients. As demonstrated by Nwagang some mentees are savvy about choosing a mentor and Trisha was conscious of mentee agency with her mentee driving contact. When mentoring relationships are rich and long-term there is a sense of belonging and social connectedness. The Tibetan Mentoring Program actively seeks to extend relationship depth and this differentiates it from traditional volunteering.

Chapter 5: Fractured bonds, bridges and challenges

Introduction

This chapter considers the more challenging aspects of settlement for the Tibetan community and the impact of those challenges on the mentoring program. The areas I will explore fall under four broad clusters. The first are the extrinsic challenges associated with this particular refugee community e. Secondly, I examine homesickness and memories. Thirdly I explore the challenges brought about by the wider society, its institutions and social support services. Next, I explore challenges in attitudes mentors bring to the program. Finally I explore Tibetans' ontological security and it will be argued while the footprint of the Tibetans is light it is developing and that mentors can play a part in assisting a sense of place and security.

Extrinsic challenges

Volunteer members of ethnic organisations find it difficult to keep up with the needs of new settlers, particularly when committee members work one or two jobs and may themselves be still settling into Australia (Fodzar & Hartley, 2013, p. 27). Time to lend assistance to new community members is problematic as many Tibetans work two jobs. Ngawang described his need for mentoring:

As a new arrival it's very difficult to get your way around and you cannot rely on one particular Tibetan all the time because they don't have time, they are working as well so to solve that problem I got into the program.

Fractures experienced by refugees in their new communities are well documented, particularly in relation to small emerging communities and the demands on overstretched resourceful community members (RCOA, 2014, p.13). The load on time-poor committee members has been exacerbated by an estimated influx of 130 Tibetans in 2014 with more expected in 2015.

While a key support, the ethnic community organisation can be experienced unevenly and support should not be understood as automatic. Watson (2011, p. 19) reports refugee community members giving advice can sometimes increase refugee vulnerability, for example, giving incorrect advice about taxation. Mentors can provide a bridge to support individuals who do not feel a part of the Tibetan

community. Several mentors described their mentees' isolation from the local Tibetan community. As Dominic reveals:

Tenzin told me quite early in the beginning that she really hasn't got a friend.... I realise that the Tibetan community is pretty judgmental.

Support provided by paid settlement workers can ease the burden on volunteer ethnic organisations. A further challenge is the paucity of Tibetan-speaking community workers and interpreters (Butler et al, 2008). A Tibetan-speaking settlement worker is employed part-time for two days per week at Manly Community Centre and another part-time Tibetan support worker at Dee Why Public School. The impact on the TMP is that the settlement worker can only provide limited support for the Tibetan Mentoring Program.

Homesickness and memories

Transnational contact enabled by mobile phones and the Internet allows Tibetans to keep in communication with their family, friends and monasteries. While technology is a benefit in allowing relationships to continue it can mean ongoing distress for Tibetans who hear about ongoing disruptions in Tibet. Lydia related the impact of contact with Tibet on her mentee:

He could telephone his parents. He had photos on his phone, what was happening with all the festivals. He was very concerned about the monks immolating themselves because of what was happening over there. So, he really felt strongly and very upset ...he was suffering from what was happening.

Lydia believed the impact of ongoing contact with family in Tibet meant her mentee could not settle in his new community and also affected his ability to form a strong connection with her. Homesickness is a factor in mentees feeling of unrest. Such longing is ongoing, as poignantly expressed by Phorbu:

I don't particularly think about what's going to happen in the future very much because I just take one day at a time. My biggest wish is that I be able to visit Tibet and see my mother. If that happens then I would be very happy.

Such longing adds to the mentees' feelings of not being able to settle. Some mentors, particularly those who are immigrants themselves understand the loss of the familiar. As Judith shared:

There's an incredible longing for the familiarity you have, for that familiarity of running into somebody you went to school with or someone saying I knew you when you were a little girl.

Three mentors suspected their mentees had experienced torture and trauma however they were reluctant to ask further unless details volunteered by their mentee. The lack of English proficiency meant they were not able to discuss what had happened in Tibet. Susan expresses her frustration:

That's part of the frustration for me – if only I could have an understanding of why she is here and if she's been in prison.

One mentor, Dominic told of the impact of his mentees' time in prison:
...he has nightmares which of course we talked about it in the course that is very natural because a lot of them have been in prison and I think he has been heavily traumatised.

The impact of torture and trauma affects some Tibetans deeply. It would seem mentors may have a restorative impact through developing a trusting relationship.

English language difficulties

Mastering English is a key challenge for new settlers. English language proficiency is often used as a measure of settlement (Long, 1997) English proficiency and literacy levels are varied amongst Tibetans in Dee Why, particularly amongst older Tibetans and those from nomadic backgrounds.

One mentee interviewed had significantly improved his English and I commented on this. He said he couldn't concentrate when he first came to TAFE because he had left family members behind in India and that when they had come some years later his head felt clearer to learn English.

Susan explains her commitment to continue English practise with her mentee:

But I persist because I can see I am the only English speaker he has in the whole week.

Tony commented:

My take is almost that there is a lot of trauma that is stopping him and that he is in his 50's a certain age, some people really struggle and he is struggling with the fact there is a different script. He is fluent in Tibetan and Chinese...there are a whole lot of factors but I will persist with as long as he wants to

Mentors provide an important backup to TAFE English classes and several mentors said they are the only English speakers Tibetans encounter outside English classes. As Hugo (2011, p.23) has highlighted English language continues to be an issue for humanitarian entrants with 2006 Census data showing 36.5% of humanitarian entrants scale themselves as speaking English not well or not at all.

Mentor attitudes - With best intentions

There are tensions around how refugees are positioned; whether as resilient capable individuals with agency versus problematized, high risk and deficit in assets (Neumann, Gifford, Lems & Scherr, 2014, Malkki, 1995). When mentors adopt a deficit model (Hartley & Fodzar, 2013) the mentoring relationship is compromised and risks being paternalistic.

Cultural awareness and respect for Tibetan culture and the agency of mentees is a cornerstone of the TMP. The risks of providing help by culturally unaware and untrained locals is that they infantilise refugees rather treating them as adults with agency and are blind to the learning from a different religion and culture (Rodan & Lange, 2008). This was exemplified in the Australian documentary *Molly and Mobarek* where a young Hazara asylum seeker Mobarek interacted in everyday life with his new Australian friends including driving and cooking. He was also introduced to pubs, alcohol and dancing by well-meaning local residents Molly and her mother in contravention of his cultural practices (Zubrycki, 2004).

Mentors who romanticise and essentialise their mentees lose “rose coloured glasses” as the relationship develops. One mentor gave a cynical account of why some mentors engage in mentoring:

You can say I am helping Tibetans and Tibetans AKA trendy AKA Dalia Lama a bit different from the Northern Beaches.

At several debriefs some mentors raised the issue of diet and health of the Tibetans commenting that their mentees did not want to go for long walks. I suggested mentees might enjoy resting, especially those working in cleaning and aged care. We discussed the rights of Tibetans for their lifestyle choices. When mentors tell mentees what to do it echoes (Zubrycki, 2004) the idea “supervisory” nature of white Australian worriers. It is an area covered in training but is an issue as the relationship progresses. It highlights the need for ongoing monitoring to assist mentors in developing awareness rather than assuming initial training is sufficient.

As mentioned mentors often hold idealised views of Tibetans. At one mentor training when a settlement worker revealed domestic violence in the Tibetan community there was a loud intake of breath and immediate exclamation of “No!” from the mentors present. Another layer of mystique attributed to the Tibetan “imagined” community was thus removed and mentors were given information about services available. Trisha discloses losing her “rose coloured glasses”:

Trisha: another mentor ...supporting a person who hit his wife, beat her wife...

Phillipa: Do you think it's any different to any other community?

Trisha: Probably not, no. But I think people look at Tibetans with rose coloured glasses and I've lost those glasses I suppose.

Mentors recalibrate as they become more realistic about Tibetans as having similar issues to other communities. Another issue raised by three mentors is mentors not being able to see their mentee without the presence of their husband.

The challenge of “busyness”

Some mentors underestimate the commitment they are making and consequently find themselves “too busy” and this means the relationship ends or the quality of mentoring is compromised. As Ngawang ponders:

This person is so busy why would they put their hand up for mentoring program if they don't have sufficient time. I have wondered that myself but I don't know why.

Another mentee commented:

My mentor is a really good person, the only thing is we don't have much contact and also there's not really much time to sit down and have a chitchat because he is a very, very busy man.

A mentee described the mentor experiences of one of his friend:

*But one of my friend's mentor is a very busy person, must be working full-time job or something like that but very busy person so it depends on when she comes to see her mentee, it very much depends on **her** time, not so much when he needs her.*

Busyness also impacts on those resettling when they start full time employment

Simply we haven't been able to see each other very much because I started a full-time job so that takes up a lot of my time and weekends if I have time I

would like to see her but then she's really involved with her children now so it's not like the old days where we see a lot.

Margie describes the impact of working on her mentees' English acquisition:

They were doing all the English classes and it was definitely improving but they have lots of jobs and don't have time to come to English classes anymore. And their jobs are cleaning jobs and I don't think they get to talk to anyone very much and if they do they mostly speak to other Tibetans...

The importance of mentors with sufficient time to mentor was raised by mentees. The mentees interviewed voice how devastating it can be for the hopes and expectations of mentees when a mentor withdraws. Mentees also become busier when they start working and understanding by mentors is then necessary to accommodate the changing lives of mentees.

Judith shared her disappointment at the lack of activity with her mentee:

It has to be two ways. In any friendship whatever, wherever you are not being able to go to walks to Dee Why with her or that she wouldn't come to my house... it is my understanding she was constrained to stay at home by her husband.

Despite her disappointment Judith linked with another mentee which attests to the spirit of those who choose to mentor.

How mentoring relationships end is a critical element of mentoring (Rhodes & DuBois, 2008, p.5). In TMP mentors and mentees are asked to commit to a six-month relationship although many relationships go much longer. When a mentor ends a relationship unexpectedly it causes disappointment for mentees. On a few occasions I have been informed by email that a mentors wants to stop and mentees are mystified at the sudden departure of their mentor.

Challenges brought about by wider society

Fodzar and Hartley (2013, p. 25) note integration is impacted by the institutional environment of the receiving society together with the capacities of those settling. A critical issue for the TMP is funding. The two co-ordinators who are only paid for TAFE teaching time on the course plus attendance at three debriefs after the course has finished. There are no co-ordination hours paid after this. The program relies on the willingness of the co-ordinators, of which I am one, to put in significant amounts of voluntary time. Unpaid tasks include checking mentors'

referees, monthly debriefs after the first three months, trouble-shooting issues which can include large issues such as employment scams and child protection to everyday issues such as queries about TAFE courses. It causes confusion when people assume we are paid for all the work we do. An emotional tug is experienced when confronted by the face of need and dilemmas because of limited time and funding.

We live in a risk society (Beck, 1992) with increasing focus on risk management. Fears about safety are scaled up risking loss of human compassion and refugees being pathologised through regulation. In some community service programs, home visit guidelines include checking for emergency exits, not showing affection and not taking shoes off on entering a home; even when culturally appropriate (Department Human Services, 2012). I argue there are simple measures to manage risk e.g. meet in a neutral place like TAFE initially before progressing to a home visit. Requirements to report on mentoring focusses on outcomes rather than the quality of the relationship. In one program mentors used agency: and refused to submit fortnightly documentation arguing they were friends, not mentors (Bond, 2010, p. 33). The TMP allows mentors to visit homes and does not ask for documentation.

The program is vulnerable to funding cuts. The Mentoring Certificate is not on the vocational skills list “Smart and Skilled” (2014), a current reform changing the face of TAFE and impacting its Outreach community engagement programs (Aird & Branley, 2014). As part of TAFE’s new direction, programs such as mentoring are either run commercially or by the community sector. In future, a fee will be charged for mentor training.

Ontological security, visibility and emplacement

Ontological security and the freedom to be visible allow immigrants to emplace themselves. Dress is a signifier of security and cultural anchoring as Thomas observed in her research on Vietnamese community in Australia (Thomas, 1999, p. 37). Tibetans have distinctive traditional dresses and these clothes, jewellery and headwear is still worn in many parts of Tibet and Dharamasala in India. In Australia, most Tibetans dress modestly in dark colours, almost as though they want to blend into the scenery. An exception to this is when Tibetans are attending a festival such as Losar New Year or His Holiness’s Birthday celebration where colourful clothes are worn. It is rare to see monks and nuns in their robes and appears

to be part of “fitting in” and some mentors have expressed concern that they may not feel comfortable to wear their robes. While the monks and nuns used to wear their robes to Losar and the Dalai Lama’s birthday celebration, I have noticed over the past few years fewer nuns and monks are doing this.

The footprint of the Tibetans outside their homes is felt lightly and possibly risks that they will remain “invisible immigrants” (Fortier, 2000, p. 25). I regularly listen to the surprise when people learn there is a Tibetan community in Dee Why. Walking around the streets of Dee Why I have seen eight Australian flags hanging from balconies in contrast to two Tibetan prayer flags. The Australian flag has connotations of nationalism and detest for multiculturalism, and forms what Noble & Poynting call the “the little things of racism” (Noble & Poynting, 2008, p. 131). Dee Why is clearly not a homogenous community but the flags suggest a negative view of outsiders.



Figure 2: Photo of Australian flag and DO NOT ENTER sign outside a block of units in Dee Why opposite the community centre.

While Tibetans are becoming a more established community in Dee Why they are still developing their community capacity. Their emplacement is low-key.

While on the markers of Ager and Strang (2008) they are doing very well in employment, health, housing it would appear they are still emerging in making a footprint and becoming more visible in the community.

Conclusion

Challenges have been outlined, which highlight how fragile the mentoring relationship can be. Recommendations on how to address them include extending employment of Tibetan-speaking community workers. It is critical the voices of Tibetans are heard through further emphasis on them learning English. Mentors need to develop cultural awareness and avoid paternalistic attitudes towards mentees, including allowing expression of agency around mentoring activities and lifestyle choices. It is important adequate time is allowed for mentor/mentee encounters and resisting romanticisation of Tibet as “Shangri-la”. The degree of ontological security of Tibetans is developing and mentors can support this although care must be taken that their encouragement of expression is not compromised by paternalism.

While there are many challenges identified in this chapter the opening of awareness allows a realistic framing of what is possible rather than glossing over fractures and challenges. Clearly the strength of the relationship is a key factor in the success of mentoring. Care, however, must be taken to ensure mentors do not essentialise the mentees and are aware of potential power dynamics.

Chapter 6: Discussion, conclusion and recommendations

Vignette: The Picnic September 2014

It's our annual picnic at Dee Why Community Centre. Past picnics were held at "Wedding Park" (James Meehan Reserve) but possible inclement weather prompted a new venue. At the car park I speak with a Tibetan off to his second job. He has lived in Australia for ten years. He tells me some new arrivals are finding it difficult and want to return. He's optimistic that this will pass. "Australia is such a different culture" he says.

The picnic starts at 12 noon and at 12.30 people start dribbling in including a mentor with her mother. At 1pm a mentor arrives with three nuns, one dressed in her maroon nuns' robes. I am pleased to see this and she looks comfortable (later I find out a mentor has encouraged her to dress in her robes).

Several local residents interested in mentoring arrive, one with goods to donate. When I overhear a newcomer exclaiming how beautiful Tibetans are, I worry about the vulnerability of the newly settled nun who has attended, unaware of the processes in being matched with a trained mentor. Despite her poor English, she actively approaches people and I notice her exchanging details with a newcomer, a stranger to me. The next day a mentor contacts me who noticed the exchange of telephone numbers and is concerned.

I observe the goodwill of mentors, mentees, local residents, my Tibetan co-facilitator and a community worker attending in her free time. As one mentor leaves she tells me tomorrow she is learning to make momos with another mentor and her mentee. Today is messy, unexpected, at times worrying, fulfilling – an everyday mentoring experience.

The above vignette encapsulates common experiences on the TMP. It demonstrates the romanticisation of untrained community members opening doors for misunderstanding and possible exploitation of vulnerable refugees by well-meaning but culturally unaware community members. It also reveals the maturity of an experienced mentor and her concern about effective assistance. It highlights the messy realities of working in a refugee community and learning in unexpected and episodic ways.

This final chapter draws together key findings and outlines areas for further research. Four key findings from the research will be interrogated. These are:

1. Recognition that assisting refugees with everyday practicalities can build social capital and that these practicalities could usefully be incorporated into Ager and Strang's (2008) conceptual framework of integration;
2. The centrality of relational bonds to successful mentoring;
3. The significance of ontological security, reciprocity and respect for the establishment of a sense of belonging;
4. The need to further develop mentoring theory to strengthen practice and reduce romanticisation of the concept.

As a result of the key findings I propose changes to Ager & Strang's (2008) conceptual framework of resettlement and recommend further theorising of refugee mentoring. Finally, I identify areas requiring further research.

Everyday practicalities

Resettling in a new country requires immense amounts of new learning. As Hoffman (1998) poignantly details in her memoir, familiar anchors are shaken, supplanted by unfamiliar and strange sights, tastes, smells, climate and ways of being. Whilst some scholars argue the resilience of refugees is underestimated (Gifford, Lems & Scherr, 2014) the reality of resettlement is a mixed experience and dependent on factors such as age, gender, English proficiency amongst other things. As detailed in Chapter 5, fractures in social bonds (Putnam, 2000; Strang & Ager, 2010) can mean new arrivals lack a traditional source of support from their own ethnic community.

The research has revealed that numerous mundane tasks performed by mentors help new settlers to learn about their new environment. Much required learning takes place on a minute scale; as exemplified in my story of a Tibetan nun learning about what a lift is and how to operate it (Chapter 3). Despite language barriers mentors are able to create learning dialogues and opportunities to ease the settlement process.

The demands of everyday living, unrelenting for all of us, are particularly stressful for refugees. Through countless everyday micro-interactions, from using a pedestrian crossing to figuring out the difference between a one-dollar and a two-dollar coin, mentors are working with their mentees to transform everyday living

skills (Chapter 3). The everyday nature of resettlement defies the order of top-down government approaches and can be a less tidy process on the ground (Harris, 2013, p. 5). Conducting interviews for this research mirrored the messiness with the unexpected arrival of a Tibetan requesting a mentor (Chapter 2). This is the reality of working (and researching) with people resettling.

The value of the everyday practicalities is evidenced by the strong regard for the mentoring program by the Tibetan community. The Tibetans are not passive recipients; they use agency and actively seek mentors. They value mentoring to the extent that even when a mentoring relationship has broken down mentees are still keen to relink (Chapter 5).

Resettlement is a process and not a destination. My research reveals that even up to five years after settling some Tibetans continue to require assistance with daily practicalities. Larger practicalities such as renting can still be difficult, many years after settling. Mentors give time to assist mentees to navigate these everyday tasks – a spaciousness of time is not possible for workers in the community or sometimes more established members in the time poor Tibetan community.

Ager and Strang's (2008) conceptual framework acknowledges the importance of building social bridges between refugees and the receiving community. It however neglects to detail and acknowledge how such bridges are enabled through small everyday practices rather than larger more visible practices. I believe everyday practicalities require incorporation into the conceptual framework so that the importance of small as well as larger markers of settlement can be recognized, and so that it can be better understood how tiny learning gaps expand into crevasses if not addressed.

Centrality of relationships bonds

This research has revealed rich sustained connections opening up a myriad of possibilities and encounters. I have proposed a new typology of mentoring relationship acknowledging the importance of relationship bonds. The mentor types are fragile relationship, Me-mentoring, Defined mentoring and Faithful mentoring (Chapter 4).

Of these types, the faithful mentor who goes beyond the expectations of the program best assists the development of social capital and integration. "Faithful mentors" recognize the full humanity (Noble, 2005: 115; Sennett, 2003:4) of their

mentee. These mentors surpass the program's minimum requirements and recognize that they should move beyond essentialising of Tibetan culture. The journey to becoming a faithful mentor can involve a recalibration of imagined community. Mentors such as Trisha reveal her changed perspectives from a romanticised image of Tibetans to a realistic view of them or as she termed it "taking off the rose coloured glasses" (Chapter 5).

The impact of immersive faithful mentors was highly valued with mentees describing these mentors as kin: mother, aunt, sister, brother, or as a friend (Chapter 4); and clearly faithful mentors provide a sanctuary from the stresses of settlement. The mentoring relationship described in this research provides dramatic contrasts to professional and volunteer relationships, which stress distance through risk management policies, rules and documentation that cast an image of refugees as potentially dangerous beings. This focus on outcomes in some programs has sidelined the importance of the mentoring bond (Esterhuizen and Murphy, 2007; Askins, 2014).

Most mentoring schemes restrict the place for mentoring to neutral spaces while for faithful mentors on the TMP exchange visits each other's homes. Despite being a risk society (Beck, 1996) and a tendency to view the Other as a "hazard" (Furedi, 2002) there have been few issues of risk on the TMP. I believe community service guidelines and policies in the name of risk management "diminish humanity" (Furedi, 2002). Sennett (2003) highlights the importance of mutual respect in welfare relationships where the recipient of help has the right to remain autonomous.

Many relationships described in this research span years and attest to the strength of the bond. However, such bonds may become fragile when mentors come with unrealistic ideas about time commitment or bring romanticized expectations of being linked to a Tibetan. Some come with self-interest motivations that pollute the relationship and others seek vicarious spirituality by asking "for a little nun". Breaking the relationship leads to disappointment and fragmented hopes for mentees (Chapter 5). Sometimes, mentees too use agency not to continue the relationship.

My research opens a small window into a research gap in assessing the impact of refugees on receiving communities. While the mentoring bond transforms the lives of the mentee, at the same time it has potential to create new identities for receiving communities. Susan expressed her emerging hybridity "becoming Tibetan" through her "intense cross cultural encounters" (Wise & Velayutham, 2009),

expressed in the embedding of Tibetan symbolic objects throughout her home (Chapter 4). Another mentor, Geoff has formed a close bond with his mentees, attends cultural events and advocates on behalf of refugees amongst his social circle.

Mentoring is a mutually beneficial process and mentees are keen to ensure reciprocity through gifts and cultural exchange. Like mentors in Askins' evaluation in England (Askins, 2014), mentors in this research have revealed an increased sense of gratitude and have offered renewed perspectives on how they view their own lives through their contact with refugees.

What is important here is that the bonds are enabled by a training program and support situated in a TAFE with a strong pedagogy. It has not relied on natural forming of bonds or on goodwill of untrained volunteers. This was highlighted in the problems experienced in the Good Neighbour Council (Tavan, 1997) and in the documentary *Molly and Mobarek* (Zubrycki, 2004). Of concern is that the pendulum has swung from the parochial patronage of the *Good Neighbour Council's* efforts towards controlled programs lacking humanity and mystifying to refugees. As Westoby and Ingamells observe "The narrative of providing services equates poorly with the greater journey of working to build relations of mutual respect ..." (p. 1772). Similarly, Sennett is critical of the welfare state and how it establishes dependency. He argues mutual recognition must be negotiated and involves autonomy of the assisted and that this confers dignity on recipients while strengthening your own dignity (Sennett, 2003, p. 178). This sub-section has focused on the importance of relationship. Next I will consider another key anchor for new settlers: the issue of ontological security.

Ontological security

Ontological security emerged in this research as a playing a central role in resettlement. Ontological security revolves around what both Giddens (1992) and (Noble, 2005, p. 107) describe as a sense of trust and comfort in our human and non-human environment along with mutual recognition from those around them. As Sennett (2003, p. 207) observes "respect is an expressive performance" and in this context it is between the mentor and the mentee.

The myriad of everyday tasks, practised and routinised with the help of mentors leads mentees to have a sense of security and confidence through feelings of efficacy. But belonging is more than confidence with everyday practicalities. Noble

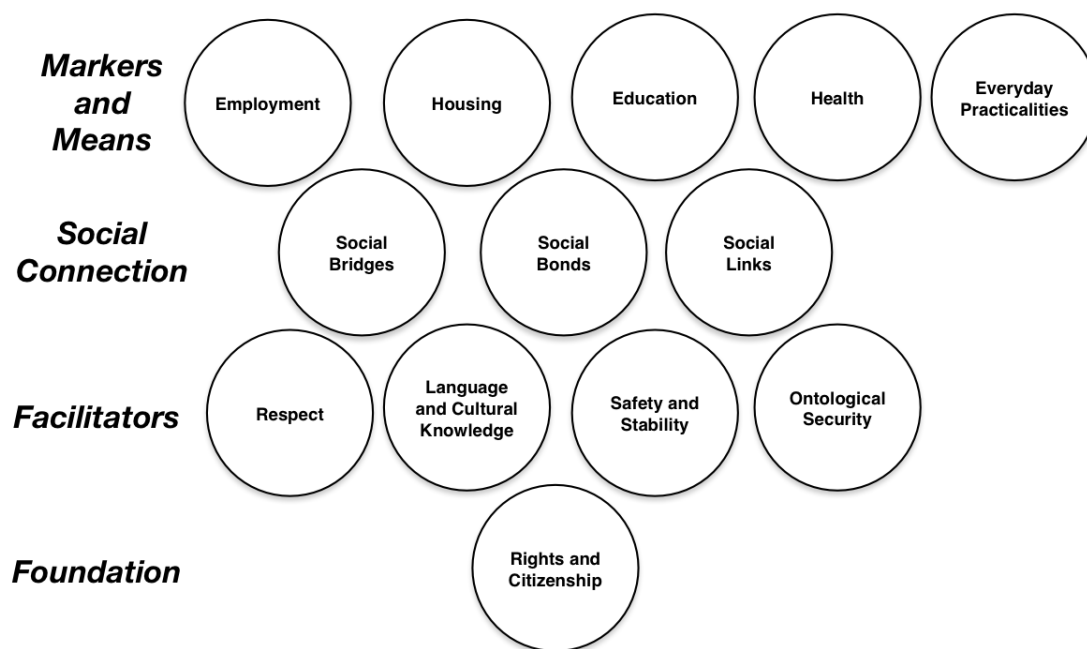
(2005, p.114) claims a sense of trust and comfort is not evenly experienced and that in order to feel comfortable in a public setting the immigrants needs to “be recognized as belonging”. This recognition is both everyday as well as embracing larger forms of recognition. I would argue that mentors stand in for both the local as well as the national community. So, while their relationship is on one level a practical one, on another level the relational quality is also a key to producing a deeper sense of recognition and acceptance – one argued by Noble as critical to ontological security.

Arguably because mentors represent the wider community they are an important factor in recognition and can play a key role in assisting Tibetans to feel more secure in themselves and their surroundings. While mentors in this research assist their mentees to belong some risk colonising Tibetans by imposing what belonging means in a romanticized view of Tibetans and this may stifle their mentees’ sense of belonging. However, most mentors in the research demonstrated assistance in helping mentees accumulate everyday tasks (Noble, 2014). This allowed mentees to develop a sense of belonging and secure identity through recognition and relationship with their mentors.

An adapted conceptual framework

As a result of the research findings highlighting the importance of respect and ontological security and how everyday practicalities are vital in resettlement I have adapted Ager and Strang’s (2008) conceptual framework. The framework on the next page now adds respect and ontological security to the Facilitators and Everyday practices to the markers and means of Ager and Strang’s conceptual framework (see page 17 for original framework).

Figure 1: Adapting Ager and Strang's (2008) Conceptual Framework Defining Core Domains of Integration



Shaking mentoring Shangri-la

Mentoring promises hope but as revealed in this case study, the concept is not a panacea; and requires further investigation, theorizing and unpacking. Mentoring is a contested concept with multiple meanings needing further serious theorization (Colley, 2003; Devos, 2005, p. 17).

The reality of mentoring is messy. The TPM like many mentoring programs relies heavily on the voluntary labour of overstretched co-ordinators (Bond, 2010). While the gendered nature of mentoring has not been explored in this thesis it is an area requiring more investigation as the majority of mentors are women.

This thesis aimed to contribute to the literature on refugee mentoring and illuminate the benefits of mentoring activities and highlight what mentoring brings to integration and the resettlement process. Its value has been that it adds to gaps in scholarship on refugee mentoring. Such omissions include the need for a clearer theoretical framework which might assist mentors better understand their role; clearer guidelines on how mentors may successfully bond with mentees, and mentees with them.

Four ‘pillars’ addressed at the beginning of this study included, first, a discussion of how mentoring is carried out; then how settlement of refugees may

occur and a refugee identity be found; finally the part played by everyday multicultural approaches or by Post Multiculturalism.

Bonding and building trust, and avoiding unbalanced, uneven, relations were key to solving the problems raised regarding the first issue. Amin (2012, p. 29) contemplates different forms of relating with the stranger. He raises a possibility where "...friendship allows new intimacies to be struck and sustained, new worlds to be imagined and desired, through a relational dynamic of co-cultivation, mutual regard, and affinity between unexpected allies". I believe my research findings provide a concrete example of the possibilities he contemplates.

'*Settlement*', the second theme, is a contested view, not only in the scholarly realm, and it was shown how many mentees and their mentors in the Dee Why community were time-poor and that settlement was a process and not an outcome. Clearer understanding by mentors of cultural differences was needed. The third issue, of identity, still needs research.

As the thesis proceeded, further themes and issues came into view, some negative ones being observed (see the 'dark side', Chapter 5). The research identified dangers when mentors essentialise and romanticise Tibetans and Tibetan culture. In addition, the research has highlighted the importance of time investment and breakdowns in relationships due to busyness. Colley (2003) looked at the question of *empowerment or control* in the relations involved in mentoring, an imbalance also perceived by the Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA, 2005).

The most positive achievement was 'everyday' multiculturalism, which in Dee Why could be seen in action. The Tibetan Mentoring Program is a unique program providing everyday "hopeful encounters" (Wise, 2008) using local community members to enhance the social capital and integration of Tibetan refugees. Mentors and mentees work in both banal and creative ways to construct knowledge of a new community. The research has revealed strengths of the program including building everyday social capital for Tibetans, but also for the mentors through increased cultural awareness and understanding of refugee issues. This everyday accumulation it was argued assists ontological security and a sense of identity and belonging. The importance of the relationship bond was emphasized and a typology developed.

While Australia has world-class settlement programs (Fodzar & Hartley, 2013), innovation in service provision is limited; particularly services involving the

local community. Evidence in Australia and Britain abounds with refugees' hopes to make friends with the receiving community (Ager & Strang, 2008; Strang & Ager, 2010) however few sustainable programs in Australia assist refugees to link with the local community. The Tibetan Mentoring Program is an exception to this.

Despite its success, the TMP is a precarious program relying on the voluntary labour of its co-ordinators and risks extinction because of new vocational reforms at TAFE. Numerous other mentoring programs have closed (for example, Britain's *Time Together*, Brotherhood of St Laurence's *Women on the Move*) despite positive evaluations. The decline in contact programs such as refugee mentoring needs to be seen in the context of a growth in professional services with high-risk sensibilities rather than a focus on relationship.

Recommendations for future research

As outlined in Chapter 1 this thesis has limitations because of the time-frame. In addition, because the program is small-scale, qualitative and about a specific ethnic community group it cannot be generalized in a totally successful way (Fozdar & Hartley, 2013, p. 30). The case study approach does however have the capacity to be repeated, with other refugee mentoring programs, for instance, by the use of comparative case studies (Yin, 2014, p. 21). Further studies could apply a modified model of Ager and Strang's (2008) conceptual framework incorporating everyday practices as a means and marker of social capital and integration; respect and ontological security as facilitators of integration. My future research will aim to extend the theoretical range presented in this thesis in order to encompass ideas of theorists such as Bourdieu and Levinas.

I hope to extend refugee mentoring research through a doctoral study. This would involve longitudinal research into the Tibetan Mentoring Program. In this thesis the voice of the mentee is not as strong as mentors. Specifically, further research would increase the voice of the mentees and to more fully hear their stories through techniques such as photovoice (Wise & Sait, 2008; Fodzar & Hartley, 2013) and a participatory action model where refugee populations are actively involved in, and benefit from the research. The experience of ontological security is an area to be explored further, as is the degree to which refugee mentoring can support refugees in developing a sense of trust in their neighbourhood.

In further research stakeholders and key informants would be interviewed acknowledging the complex web of people and organisations involved in settlement (Galligan, Boese & Phillips, 2014, p.95). This would include the Tibetan mentor co-ordinator, settlement and community workers, government agencies and peak bodies. While this research has focussed on lived everyday experiences a wider conceptualization incorporating societal and policy level factors could extend current understanding.

Given reforms in TAFE, research is needed to determine whether refugee mentoring programs in Australia are sustainable. I am keen to research whether refugee mentoring is transferable to super-diverse communities in the western suburbs of Sydney. Further research would provide insights into whether refugee mentoring can welcome refugees and promote enduring and meaningful relationships. As well as examining possibilities for building future successful mentoring programs in Australia, I would like to develop a theoretical approach that is coherent and builds on the work of theorists such as Ager and Strang, Amin, Sennett and Simmel. Theoretical development is required to move beyond romanticised notions of mentoring so that refugee mentoring programs are underpinned by solid theoretical foundations where respect, trust and ontological security are keystones.

Concluding Statement

There is humanity in refugee mentoring. It is not a “grand scheme” (Collins, 2009, p. 232) of integration. It is everyday and low-key. This study argues that there is value in programs that acknowledge that refugees have not chosen to leave their country of origin and that the receiving community is welcoming them to a new *shared* home, not to *our* home. This approach underlines the capacity of the receiving community to assist and the heart-warming impact for both new arrivals and their new neighbours. Continued research is required to explore how refugee mentoring aids social capital and builds welcoming bridges between the refugee and receiving community.

Glossary

Chuba: Traditional Tibetan dress.

Khata: A white silk or cotton Tibetan ceremonial scarf given on special occasions as a sign of respect.

Lama: A highly trained Buddhist practitioner who is a teacher to others.

Losar: Tibetan New Year

Momos: Steamed dumplings filled with vegetables or meat.

Prayer flag: Small colourful flags with auspicious symbols said to carry love and compassion by wind to sentient beings. Also known as “Lung-ta”.

Rinpoche: A high lama

Refugee: someone with well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country (UNHCR)

Thangka: A Buddhist religious painting on cloth.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Census Information on Warringah, Dee Why and Greater Sydney

	Warringah	Dee Why	Greater Sydney
Population	152,636	19,638	4,391,673
Population density	9.42 per hectare	63.88 per hectare	
Median weekly income	\$1,722	\$972	\$1,447
Median weekly rent	\$440	\$410	\$351
Households renting	25%	41.5%	30%
Median and high density housing	41%	82.1%	40%
Unemployment	2%	3.2%	6%
SEIFA Index of disadvantage	1077	n/a: measured only by LGA	1011
Australian born	67.7%	55.8%	59.9%
Non-English speaking background	14.6%	23.9	26%
Speaks a language other than English at home	16.1 %	28.3%	26%
Tibetan spoken at home	286	246	

Source: Warringah Council Area, 2011 Census Results

As the table demonstrates some key points about Dee Why and Warringah LGA:

- Dee Why is a very high-density suburb.
- Dee Why has a much lower median weekly income than Warringah or Greater Sydney
- Warringah LGA and Dee Why have a low unemployment rate, especially compared with Greater Sydney.

- While Warringah generally has a low proportion of residents who speak a language other than English at home Dee Why has a slightly higher proportion than Greater Sydney.
- Warringah LGA is more advantaged than Greater Sydney.
- Census information for Dee Why identified 246 people speaking Tibetan at home, which indicates under-reporting given numbers known by Council.

Appendix 2: Tibetan Mentoring Program Timetable

Fridays 10am-2.30pm at Northern Beaches TAFE Library Room 2.22

Week	Topic
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welcome, introduction, learning outcomes ▪ What is a mentor? ▪ The mentoring relationship ▪ Roles/responsibilities and attributes of a mentor ▪ The Tibetan community in Dee Why ▪ <i>Speakers: Mentor and mentee from previous program</i>
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mentor Job Description and Code of Conduct ▪ Goals of mentoring ▪ Tibetan and Australian culture ▪ Settlement Services. ▪ <i>Speaker: Settlement Worker, Manly Community Centre</i>
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Listening skills ▪ Cross cultural skills ▪ Experiences of Tibetan refugees ▪ Resources and community organisations ▪ Values and ethics ▪ Boundaries ▪ Communication skills ▪ <i>Speaker: District Manager, Multicultural Health Service, Northern Sydney Local Health District</i>
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confidentiality, building trust ▪ Working with people from other cultures ▪ Role of Buddhism in Tibetan everyday life ▪ English language issues. ▪ Lunch and matching with Tibetan mentees ▪ <i>Speaker: Head Teacher, English as a Second Language, TAFE</i>
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interpreting services ▪ Dealing with Trauma and Torture ▪ Mental health first aid and mental health services ▪ <i>Speaker: Clinical Psychologist, STARTTS</i>
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment issues ▪ <i>Speaker: Multicultural Service Officer, Department of Human Services</i> ▪ Child Protection ▪ Mentor self-care ▪ End of course lunch and Graduation certificate ceremony

Appendix 3: Manly Daily story about Tibetan Mentoring

Mentors needed to help newly arrived Tibetan refugees on the northern beaches

ANDREW PRIESTLEY MANLY DAILY AUGUST 12, 2013 12:56PM

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Helga Wagner and Tibetan refugee Dolma Kyi in Dee Why. Photo: Jeremy Piper

HELGA Wagner and Dolma Kyi arrived in Australia nearly three decades apart, and from different corners of the world.

Mrs Wagner, who works in advertising, arrived in Australia from Germany in 1982.

Mrs Kyi fled Tibet with her family as a child and, after 18 years in India, arrived in Australia in 2010. Now, Mrs Wagner is helping Mrs Kyi to build her new life in Australia.

The women meet regularly as part of a volunteer mentoring program to help Tibetan refugees on the northern beaches.

The program involves helping Tibetan people improve their English; understand Australian culture; find education and employment opportunities; and complete applications for citizenship.

The northern beaches has Australia's largest Tibetan community.

More mentors were needed for the program to support newly arrived refugees, program facilitator Phillipa Bellemore said.

"A mentor will really help them build confidence, and help them understand Australian ways," she said.

"When it works, it's very, very powerful. You have the opportunity to really help someone become part of the community and really make a difference in someone's life."

Mrs Kyi said Mrs Wagner had been a wonderful help to her after her move to Australia. She was now looking into study to become a nurse or aged care worker. "I'm so very happy. She is always so very kind."

Mrs Wagner said her work as a mentor was highly rewarding.

"You give them friendship. Maybe that's the most important thing that they have, a friend." People keen to become a mentor can call 9448 4426.

Appendix 4 - Interview schedule 2014

Mentors – April-June 2014

1. Mentor	Monday 14 th April 2014 10am Mentor home
2. Mentor	Tuesday 22 nd April 2014 11.30 Northern Beaches TAFE library
3. Mentor	Friday 2 nd May 2014 1.30pm Northern Beaches TAFE library
4. Mentor	Wednesday 30 th May 2014 4pm Northern Beaches TAFE library
5. Mentor	Thursday 1 May 2014 11am Mentor home
6. Mentor	Tuesday 3 June 2014 3pm Northern Beaches TAFE library
7. Mentor	Tuesday 17 th June 2014 2pm Mentor home

Mentees – June 2014

8. Mentee	Wednesday 2 nd June 2014 11am Northern Beaches TAFE library
9. Mentee	Wednesday 2 nd June 2014 12.30 Northern Beaches TAFE library
10. Mentee	Thursday 3 rd June 2014 11am Northern Beaches TAFE library
11. Mentee	Thursday 3 rd June 2014 1pm Northern Beaches TAFE library

Focus Group with three mentors

Friday 13 June 2014

1.30-3pm Northern Beaches TAFE library

Appendix 5 - Mentor Interview questions

1. How long have you been in a mentoring relationship with your mentee?
2. What kinds of things do you do with your mentee?
3. How would you describe your relationship with your mentee?
4. Has your relationship changed over time you have mentored?
5. Have there been any boundary issues?
6. Where do you see the mentoring relationship going in the future?
7. What are some of the positive outcomes you have seen during the mentoring relationship?
8. What are the challenges for you in mentoring?
9. What benefits have there been for you in the mentoring relationship? E.g. learning about Tibetan culture, making new friends
10. How has mentoring assisted your mentee to settle into Australia?

Appendix 6 - Mentee Interview questions

1. How long have you been in the mentoring relationship?
2. How would you describe your relationship with your mentor?
3. Has your relationship changed as time has gone on?
4. What level of trust is there between you?
5. Has your mentor assisted you with employment, housing, education or health issues?
6. What activities did you do and places did you visit with your mentor?
7. What did you enjoy most and find most useful? Anything you did not enjoy or find useful?
8. Have there been any challenging or difficult times?
9. Have you met more people through your mentor?
10. Do you feel like you belong in the community and Australia?
11. Were there any boundary issues e.g. mentor being pushy or feeling like you couldn't say no to a meeting or suggestion?
12. What benefits are there for the mentors in your relationship?
13. Has the mentor learnt things from you? e.g. Tibetan culture, Buddhism
14. Where do you see your mentoring relationship going in the future?
15. If you were advising a new mentor before they were matched, what kinds of things would you tell them a Tibetan mentee would find enjoyable and helpful for the mentoring?

Appendix 7 – Mentor Focus group questions

1. How long have you been involved with your mentee?
2. How often do you meet and what kinds of things do you do with your mentee?
3. Has the focus of what you do together changed over the time you have known them?
4. How would you describe your relationship with your Tibetan mentee now?
Has the nature of your bond changed as time has gone on?
5. What was it like at the beginning? Has your relationship changed as time has gone on? How has this been negotiated?
6. Has the cultural knowledge of your mentee improved as a result of the mentoring relationship?
7. What about English language skills of the mentee? Have they improved as a result of mentoring?
8. Have your networks assisted the mentee? In what ways?
9. Do you think your mentee has a sense of belonging and trust in their community and Australia?
10. What contact do you have with other mentors? Have you made friends or extended your social or work networks through the program?
11. How has the mentoring relationship impacted on your life?
12. How would describe the changes in your attitudes to refugees by your involvement on this program?

Appendix 8 – Macquarie University Ethics Approval



Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)
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05 March 2014

Associate Professor Amanda Wise
Department of Sociology
Faculty of Arts
Macquarie University
NSW 2109

Dear Associate Professor Wise

Re: Tibetan Mentoring Program Case Study

Thank you for your emails responding to the issues raised by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) (Human Sciences and Humanities) about your application. Your responses were reviewed by the Ethics Secretariat on behalf of the HREC (Human Sciences and Humanities).

This research meets the requirements set out in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007) and your application has been approved.

Details of this approval are as follows:

Reference No: 5201300830

Approval Date: 05 March 2014

This letter constitutes ethical approval only.

The following documentation has been reviewed and approved by the HREC (Human Sciences and Humanities):

Documents reviewed	Version no.	Date
Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Application	2.3	Jul 2013
Correspondence from Phillipa Bellemore addressing the HREC's feedback		20 Jan 2014 28 Feb 2014
Appendix D: Privacy and Access to Personal Information	No Version	Undated
Letter to Mr Kevin Fuller, Faculty Director, Foundation Studies, Northern Sydney Institute of TAFE	No Version	Undated
Letter to Mr Phurbu Tashi, Preseident of the Tibetan Community of Australia	No Version	Undated
Tibetan Mentor Participant Information and Consent Form	No Version	Undated

Interview questions: mentors	No Version	Undated
Tibetan Mentee participant Information and Consent Form	No Version	Undated
Interview questions: mentees	No Version	Undated
Tibetan Mentor Focus Group Participant Information and Consent Form	No Version	Undated
Tibetan Mentor Focus Group Questions	No Version	Undated
Tibetan Mentor Survey Participant Information Sheet	No Version	Undated
Tibetan Mentor Survey Email	No Version	Undated
Tibetan Mentor Survey Questions	No Version	Undated

Standard Conditions of Approval:

1. Continuing compliance with the requirements of the *National Statement*, which is available at the following website:

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/book/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research>

2. Approval is for five (5) years, subject to the submission of annual reports. Please submit your reports on the anniversary of the approval of this protocol.

3. All adverse events must be reported to the HREC within 72 hours.

4. Proposed changes to the protocol must be submitted to the Committee for approval before implementation.

It is the responsibility of the Chief investigator to retain a copy of all documentation related to this project and to forward a copy of this approval letter to all personnel listed on the project.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Secretariat should you have any questions regarding your ethics application.

The HREC (Human Sciences and Humanities) wishes you every success in your research.

Yours sincerely



Dr Karolyn White

Director, Research Ethics & Integrity

Chair, Human Research Ethics Committee (Human Sciences and Humanities)

This HREC is constituted and operates in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) (the National Statement) and the CPMP/ICH Note for Guidance on Good Clinical Practice.