

## APPENDICES

<b>A</b>	<b>JOHN'S PERMISSION TO USE DATA.....</b>	<b>A-197</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>FIRST FOUR STEPS OF INDUCTIVE DATA ANALYSIS (3.8.1 TO 3.8.4) .....</b>	<b>B-198</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>NATURAL MEANING UNITS.....</b>	<b>C-301</b>

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>A</b>	<b>JOHN'S PERMISSION TO USE DATA.....</b>	<b>A-197</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>FIRST FOUR STEPS OF INDUCTIVE DATA ANALYSIS (3.8.1 TO 3.8.4).....</b>	<b>B-198</b>
	B.1 TIME SPENT WITH THE GIRL .....	B-198
	B.1.1 Natural meaning units .....	B-198
	B.1.2 Reduction and linguistic transformation: Time spent with the girl.....	B-200
	B.1.3 Elimination of statements not explicating the meaning of 'crimes of passion' ...	B-200
	B.1.4 Application .....	B-201
	B.2 THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE MURDER (10 DECEMBER 1996) AND THE SENTENCING (10 JUNE 1998). .....	B-201
	B.2.1 Natural meaning units .....	B-201
	B.2.2 Reduction and linguistic transformation: The period between the murder (10 December 1996) and the sentencing (10 June 1998). .....	B-212
	B.2.3 Elimination of statements not explicating the meaning of 'crimes of passion' ...	B-215
	B.2.4 Application .....	B-218
	B.3 THE PERIOD WHILE IN PRISON AND IN THERAPY (THEMES THAT EMERGED IN THERAPY, MEANING UNITS OF SPECIFIC RELEVANCE TO JOHN'S EXPRESSIONS):.....	B-218
	B.3.1 Natural meaning units .....	B-218
	B.3.2 Reduction and linguistic transformation: The period while in prison and in therapy (themes that emerged in therapy, meaning units of specific relevance to John's expressions): .....	B-236
	B.3.3 Elimination of statements not explicating the meaning of 'crimes of passion' ...	B-244
	B.3.4 Application .....	B-252
	B.4 SELECTION FROM HIS SHORT ESSAYS SPECIFICALLY RELEVANT TO THE TOPIC OF THIS STUDY. ....	B-252
	B.4.1 Natural meaning units .....	B-252
	B.4.2 Reduction and linguistic transformation: Selection from his short essays specifically relevant to the topic of this study. ....	B-257
	B.4.3 Elimination of statements not inherent in explicating the meaning of 'crimes of passion' .....	B-261
	B.4.4 Application .....	B-265
	B.5 SUMMARY OF REDUCED STATEMENTS FROM JOHN'S STORY AS IT RELATES TO THE MEANING OF 'CRIMES OF PASSION' .....	B-266
	B.5.1 Establishing rapport .....	B-269
	B.5.2 Prison issues.....	B-271
	B.5.3 Family issues .....	B-273
	B.5.4 Emotional expressions .....	B-273
	B.5.5 Fiancée's parents.....	B-274
	B.5.6 Repentance and compensation.....	B-274
	B.5.7 Relationships .....	B-275
	B.5.8 Adjusting to society after release and possible work context .....	B-276
	B.5.9 Parole and/or correctional supervision .....	B-277
	B.5.10 Search for safe context .....	B-277
	B.6 JOHN'S COMMENTS AFTER READING THE SUMMARY OF HIS STORY AS PRESENTED UNDER 1.6 B-282	
	B.6.1 My impression.....	B-282
	B.7 PRESENTATION OF JOHN'S STORY ACCORDING TO PRELIMINARY CATEGORIES .....	B-283
	B.7.1 The context of psychotherapy with John .....	B-283
	B.7.2 John's story – context and background .....	B-284
	B.7.3 John's story as reflected in his diary.....	B-284
	B.7.4 Preliminary interpretations of John's story.....	B-293

<b>C</b>	<b>NATURAL MEANING UNITS</b> .....	<b>C-301</b>
C.1	REPETITION WITHIN AND ACROSS DIARY ENTRIES AND OTHER WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS	C-301
C.2	EXPRESSIONS OF EMOTION .....	C-304
C.3	HISTORICAL EXPLANATIONS, DESCRIPTIONS, AND INTERPRETATIONS .....	C-309
C.4	EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT INTERPRETATIONS .....	C-311

## A JOHN'S PERMISSION TO USE DATA

To: The head of social and psychological services From: **John**

**Any** person

Med C  
27/01/2000

*Received 2000/01/28*

**Any** person

Med C  
C single section Rehab.

Re: Permission to use information.

Dear Sir,

I **John** hereby give my permission and full cooperation for Mr Arnold Muller my psychologist to use information regarding myself and my case and any thing he may need to use in his thesis I call it the project for a lack of name. Mr Muller will be able to give the details regarding this project. I have only one request that my name will not be used in order to protect the victims family as well as my own family. This information is entirely personal of nature and no information regarding prison is involved.

Mr Muller is helping me to overcome my personal and mental problems and I have and still will give my full cooperation to help myself to be a normal person and I feel that in working together with Mr Muller I can recover 100% and in this process I can help others.

I thank you for your time and trouble  
Yours sincerely

*John* 27/01/2000

## B First four steps of Inductive Data Analysis (3.8.1 to 3.8.4)

### Transcript and background of selected data

All transcripts in the appendix directly made from the diary or other texts written by John, the person who committed the murder, will be typed in italics to distinguish it from interpreted texts or comments. In the direct transcripts no spelling or language errors will be corrected, due to the fact that it may have a significant meaning that can be brought forward during a later phase of data analysis. Some introductory comments will be made in normal typed letters to provide some necessary context and background information for the direct transcripts.

#### B.1 Time spent with the girl

This section entails a period of approximately seven months. John's emotional experiences during the processes of getting to know the girl, becoming engaged and up to when he killed her are the first logical units in terms of chronological time as well as thematic development. He described it in paragraph format with strong adjectives, but very few metaphors and versus or poems. Themes related to so-called "experiences of first time" are repetitively mentioned. During this period John wrote at least six lines in his diary (A4 size with approximately thirty 1cm printed lines) nearly every day except during the period directly before the murder. The longest entry during this time is approximately 75 lines. He stopped writing more or less two months before the murder, then made one entry approximately two weeks before the murder and stopped writing again until shortly after the murder. The natural meaning unit categories in the section below appeared to flow spontaneously from the text during the process of forming a holistic grasp of the data by reading and re-reading it.

##### B.1.1 Natural meaning units

The following entries were identified as the most meaningful for the purposes of this study:

###### First available entry and first kiss: Monday 5 May, 1996

*Today was a very important day in my life. I kissed the lady of my life for the first time. She sent a chill down my spine, make my hair stand on end and make me lame in the knees, by just kissing her. Well her name is Mary, Patricia Broderick. A very beautiful lady she is, Blond hair blue eyes, a stunning lady, but the most beautiful part of her is the person inside of her, a kind hearted, gentle, understanding, caring and loving lady.*

*I can't help falling in love with her, and I pray to the lord that I will be able to make her a happy woman for the rest of my life. I think I can spend the rest of my life with her.*

###### First sexual intercourse: Saturday 15 June 1996

*We slept at the train last night because we got too frot to drive, and that was a lovely night. We made love and then just fell asleep into one another's arms.*

*We have met Jerry and Lisa Brent & Shelly and we had a Braai at their place. On our way there we saw a huge porcupine, well I just lost my one pen, I am using another one we also saw a owl and a duiker in the forrest. Jerry and friends live in the middle of a forrest it is so peaceful there.*

###### Moving in together: Tuesday 2 July 1996

*Spend the day moving into our flat. We are so exited about a place of our own that I cannot wait to have that first cup of tea from our kitchen. I hope and pray that this will work out for us. I love my Teddybear totally.*

*We spend our first night together in one another's arms.*

Company closes down: Friday 12 July 1996

*What a day. We closed the company down today. I heard Gerhard has shot himself and he left a note saying why. He and Wesley manage 14 mil out of the company's accounts somehow the result everybody is looking for work now. I went home with a heavy heart not knowing what to tell Mary. I decided I am going to tell her the truth and if she loves me the way I love her she will understand.*

About space, work and jealousy: Wednesday 24 July 1996

*Well what a long day it was. I missed Mary a lot. I wrote her two poems and a letter to apologise (he did not attend the netball league match she played the day before). I also bought her a gift and card. I do not want to loose her love, it is something I have to earn and believe me I will it just will take time. We talked last night and I am more understanding now. She has not got enough space in her heart to love me fully, I can understand now why First she got the love for her puppy that is good and secondly Geoff and Jim is still in her heart, I am a little upset about it, but not jealous. I said to her I will give her all the time she needs. The good thing is I trust her 110% and that is something that makes it easier for me to accept. The word to describe the way I love her I finally got it is an ace an it is getting stronger by the day.*

*I also told her about my second problem (premature ejaculation) and I think we found the solution. It just going to take time. We slept reasonably good last night and I feel much more at ease, now that I know how she feels as well. I just won't be able to live without Mary in my life. She is my lover, best friend, companion, soulmate and partner in everything I do, and I love her very much. Tomorrow I am going to interview another trend of companies.*

The entry between the longest "time gaps" in the diary: Thursday 10 October 1996

*Let me start from the beginning, Saturday the 5<sup>th</sup> October Peter and Susan had their wedding*

*that was quit a party. My teddybear's finger is still sore and I wish that I can take that pain away for her. We had or shall I say I had a very stupid argument with my Beloved Mary. Main reason. Jealousy. What started it of was she was upset about Geoff saying good bye to us. Well I was pissed of because she was pissed of. On our way home I asked her whether I can undress her when we get home and she said yes. She asked me whether I want to make love to her and I said yes. When we got home I undress her and put her to bed when I wanted to make love to her, she did not want to. And instead of accepting it, I stupidly lost my temper and I regret it Till today. I said things to her that was totally nonsense and she told me a few facts that I knew, but was ignoring. I name them now. 1 When I want to make love and she don't I get the moer in and demand it from her. 2) Geoff is only a friend of her now and nothing more. 3) I am handling her too rough.*

*She lost her cool with me and stripped Naked and lie down on the bed saying to me "do with me whatever you want" well well I though before I can just take a woman the way and where I wanted. With Mary I could not and I wanted to make love to her but noways will I make love to her if she don't want to and last night was the first time we made love and it was wonderfull and beautiful something I treasure now and always will. She is close to that time of the month and as a result of that she became very tender. I very gently massage her boobies very much aware that they are sensitive. From now on I will treasure her like I should.*

Last entry before the murder: Sunday 17 November 1996

*My friend a lot of things happened since the last time we spoke. I think first the bad news and then the good news. Firstly I am retrenched again lost my car got no money.*

*Good news. I am totally in love with Mary. And I will do anything for her even will kill for her. I love here so much. This love I got for her is so total I haven't got space for anyone or anything else. Yes it hurt at times sometimes it feels like my heart is bursting for her. I am so proud of her she do so many things for me and I wish I can tell her I love her and at the same time convey that feeling. We got engaged officially on the 16<sup>th</sup> November.*

### **B.1.2 Reduction and linguistic transformation: Time spent with the girl**

The day that he first kissed Mary, Monday 5 May 1996 was really important for John. She was very beautiful for him in appearance, but especially in terms of personality. He completely fell in love with her and, although he sometimes doubted his own ability to do so, yearned to spend the rest of his life with her.

During the weekend of Saturday 15 June 1996 they went to a forest-like place where they met some new friends and saw several wild animals and birds. They slept on the train during the first night of the weekend because they drank too much alcohol to drive. For John that was also a lovely night because they made love for the first time and then just fell asleep in one another's arms.

On Tuesday 2 July 1996 John and Mary moved into their own apartment. John was very excited about it and prayed that it would work out for them. He remembers this as their first night together in one another's arms.

Friday 12 July 1996 was a bad day for him. Their company closed down due to fraud of one of the managers, who committed suicide. At first he was uncertain about whether he should tell Mary about it, but he decided that he should because he believed her love for him would make her understand.

John reflected on many problems affecting their relationship on Wednesday 24 July 1996. He apologised to Mary for the fact that he did not attend her Netball league matches the day before by writing two poems for her and buying her a gift and a card. He was afraid of losing her and felt that he had to earn her love. They had a talk the previous night and he felt that it helped him to understand her better. She told him that she does not have enough space in her heart to love him completely due to the fact that two of her ex-boyfriends and her puppy still occupy some space in her heart. John felt upset about this, but did not feel it was jealousy. He trusted her and decided that the best word to describe his love for her was an "ace". He also spoke to her about a sexual problem he experienced and afterwards he felt more at ease and they slept well. He expressed some anxiety about himself not being able to live without her, because she was fulfilling many of his desires. He also felt insecure because he was in the process of looking for a new job.

For nearly two months John stopped writing in his diary. On Thursday 10 October 1996 he started by writing about his regret about an injury to Mary's finger. He reported that they attended a wedding on 5 October and had an argument after an ex-boyfriend of hers said good bye to her. They were both upset and on their way back home he made some sexual gestures towards her. After he undressed her at home, she did not want to have sex with him. He then lost his temper and said some things to her that he regrets. She replied by pointing out to him that he gets angry when she is not ready for sex and demands it from her, that her ex-boyfriend is nothing more than a friend and that he handles her too rough. She went on to undress and challenged him to do with her whatever he wanted to. He was taken aback and could not have sex with her then because he realised that it was not right if she does not agree to it. The first time when they had sex again was 4 days later. He experienced that as a very significant change in his approach towards the intimate part of their relationship because she was close to menstruation and very sensitive. He learned to treasure her more and handle her more tenderly.

After more than a month John made his next entry in his diary, which turned out to be his last entry before the murder. He has been retrenched and had serious financial problems. However, he was now more convinced than ever before that he is totally in love with Mary. He even wrote: "I will do anything for her – even kill for her". He mentioned that he did not have space for anything or anyone else and that the love was hurting him. He expressed his pride about her and a feeling of inability to convey his feelings to her. He lastly mentioned that they were engaged the previous day.

### **B.1.3 Elimination of statements not explicating the meaning of 'crimes of passion'**

The day that John first kissed Mary, Monday 5 May 1996 was unforgettable. She was very beautiful for him in appearance, but especially in terms of personality. He completely fell in love with her and, although he sometimes doubted his own ability to do so, yearned to spend the rest of his life with her. Ten days later they went to a forest-like place where they met some new friends and saw several wild animals and birds. They slept on the train during the first night of the weekend because they drank too much alcohol to drive. For John that was also a lovely night because they made love for the first time and then just fell asleep in one another's arms.

Two weeks later John and Mary moved into their own flat. John was very excited about it and prayed that it would work out for them. That night again felt like their first night together in one another's arms.

Ten days later John's workplace closed down due to fraud of one of the managers, who committed suicide. John felt very bad. At first he was uncertain about whether he should tell Mary about it, but he decided that he should because her love for him would make her understand.

On Wednesday 24 July 1996 John felt a need to apologise to Mary for the fact that he did not attend her Netball league matches the day before by writing two poems for her and buying her a gift and a card. He was afraid of losing her and felt that he had to earn her love. They had a talk the previous night and he felt that it helped him to understand her better. She told him that she does not have enough space in her heart to love him completely due to the fact that two of her ex-boyfriends and her puppy still occupy some space in her heart. John felt upset about this, but did not interpret as jealousy. He trusted her and decided that the best word to describe his love for her was an "ace". He also spoke to her about a sexual problem he experienced and afterwards he felt more at ease and they slept well. He expressed some anxiety about himself not being able to live without her, because she was fulfilling many of his desires. He also felt insecure because he was in the process of looking for a new job.

For nearly two months John stopped writing in his diary. On Thursday 10 October 1996 he started by writing about his regret about an injury to Mary's finger. He reported that they attended a wedding on 5 October and had an argument after an ex-boyfriend of hers said good bye to her. They were both upset and on their way back home he made some sexual gestures towards her. After he undressed her at home, she did not want to have sex with him. He then lost his temper and said some things to her that he regrets. She replied by pointing out to him that he gets angry when she is not ready for sex and demands it from her, that her ex-boyfriend is nothing more than a friend and that he handles her too rough. She went on to undress and challenged him to do with her whatever he wanted to. He was taken aback and could not have sex with her then because he realised that it was not right if she does not agree to it. The first time when they had sex again was 4 days later. He experienced that as a very significant change in his approach towards the intimate part of their relationship because she was close to menstruation and very sensitive. He learned to treasure her more and handle her more tenderly.

After more than a month John made his next entry in his diary, which turned out to be his last entry before the murder. He has been retrenched and had serious financial problems. However, he was now more convinced than ever before that he is totally in love with Mary. He expressed very strong feelings of an overwhelming and possessive love<sup>1</sup> for her that could sometimes push him towards violent deeds, as well as a feeling of inability to convey his feelings to her. He lastly mentioned that they were engaged the previous day.

#### **B.1.4 Application**

When the reduced paragraph or the hypothetical application is randomly compared with different sections of the original text it proves to contain all the necessary, but also only the necessary elements of the experience described in the relevant section of the diary. During this phase of the study the processed data thus still proves to be valid because it is an accurate description of what John tried to express regarding his experiences.

### **B.2 The period between the murder (10 December 1996) and the sentencing (10 June 1998).**

This section entails a period of approximately eighteen months. During this period John wrote at least ten lines in his diary (A4 size with 1cm printed lines) nearly every day. Some of the entries during this time are more than ten pages long.

His emotional experiences during the processes of realising what he did, confessing, trying to deal with it on an emotional level, and awaiting his trial and conviction in the police and prison cells are described here. Much more metaphors and versus or poems are used in this section of the diary. Themes related to grief, regret and guilt are predominant.

#### **B.2.1 Natural meaning units**

The following entries were identified as the most meaningful for the purposes of this study:

---

<sup>1</sup> John's comment on 31 October 2002: "Total love Possessive and Protected"



Entry on the day of the murder: Tuesday 10 December 1996

*My friend I am so empty, broken in pieces dead inside my soul and my whole being cries out why, what have I done. I have destroyed something very special and some one I love, someone that is part of me as I was part of her we live for each other and I killed my Beloved and dearest Mary. My Teddybear I love you so much I have broken a promise I made to you and that is I I hurt you physical and emotional. I don't know why I killed you I don't believe I did it to you. We had difference of opinion before and we were always able to talk it out we never ever leave it to get to big too handle if we did not agree we compromised on that specific problem. My Babe you know how much I wish I can undo what I did to you to us. I have destroyed a love so big so special that there is nothing I can Compare it to. We were for each other we were special. My beloved Teddybear I thank you for telling me to come back and give myself up because what I did to you I must pay for if it (is – scratched out) with my life I have to do it. Teddybear I love you how can I done this to you I am not violent you know me maybe better than what I know myself. You read me to well at times, sometimes we didn't need to speak and we know what each other was going to say or do. Mary thank you for forgiving me for what I have done my Babe it doesn't mean I am not guilty but it give me more reason to pay for what I have done.*

The day after – formal confession: Wednesday 11 December 1996

*I don't remember much of today I am to heartbroken and sorry for what I have done I have given my statement to Cobus Brown and to Peter White and I have been at court. I have asked for a attorney and now is a wait and see situation. What worries me is that I don't remember if we had an argument and about what and what happened that night. I just want to undo everything I done that night and I regret it deeply.*

The day of the funeral: Saturday 14 December 1996

*Oh I am broken and dead inside my Teddybear I so much want to be at the funeral Today but it is impossible for me to attend and Mary I hope you will understand. My Teddybear Mom and Julie (his sister) will be there for me so in spirit I am there by your funeral today my love of my life. Mary my babe I just want to give dad Dough (her father) a hug and talk to him he is the only person that will understand what special relationship we had and how much we love and care for each other and you know I know he approved of us fully. My babe I will always remember the happy and good times we had. Mary I promise you and to God in heaven today when I came out of prison I will put 12 Pink roses wherever your ashes is and If I can't I will go to our special place in Green Valley and give them to Peter at the Sunshine Inn.*

Start of recurrent dream: Monday 16 December 1996

*I am getting very withdrawn and I can't stop thinking about my Teddybear and I had a bad nightmare or Vision and I think it was the later. I saw Mary standing in my cell in the corner and she just stood there she didn't say anything or do anything but she was real even the nighty she had on that night was the same I could not make out her hands, feet and her face was very faint and obscure could see her face clearly. She is trying to say something to me I am sure.*

Dealing with emotions – first available poem: Wednesday 18 December 1996

*They draw blood from me for some tests I feel heartsore and upset this morning lunchtime I was like in a trance and didn't take in much around me tonight I feel very depressed, angry upset and hate for myself I am starting to think about being with her instead of facing whatever I have to face. But because I love her I will not comit suicide I will push through and hold on.*

*Teddybear tonight a strange thing has overcome me I don't really think I could be so compassionate to somebody I don't even know. I gave a black man a packet of smokes and bread and a mango because I feel I have to do something for him, Babe and I am sure your hand was in this I was so heartsore for him because everybody bully him and I could not handle it I have to do something and you helped me my Babe and I thank you. Tomorrow I will see the doctor for the first time and I hope I will be able to face it I am so scared and nervous but I will do it for you Teddybear.*

*I wrote a poem for my Beloved Mary on the 16 December.*

*This is for my Teddybear with all my love*

*From John*

"Mary"

*You know a dream is like a river,  
 Ever changing as it flows.  
 And a dreamer is just a vessel,  
 That must flow where it goes.  
 Trying to learn from what is behind us,  
 And never knowing what is in store.  
 Makes every day a constant battle,  
 Just to stay between the shores.*

*Rush headlong and hard at life,  
 or just sit at home and wait.  
 All things good and all the wrong,  
 will come right to you, it is fate  
 Hear the music, dance if you can.  
 Dress in rags, or wear your jewels.  
 Drink your choice, nurse your fear,  
 In this old honkeytonk world of ours.*

*So if you are on this river  
 Never fear  
 Just go with the flow and bear.  
 Learn from what is behind us.  
 But you never know what  
 Is in front of you  
 Just fight the constant battle  
 To stay between the shores*

19/12/1996 Babyface 12h10

*Teddybear this is for us and remember I love you from your Babylove*

Recurrent dream and associations: Saturday 21 December 1996

*I woke up at 07h00 feeling not well. My Teddybear was here last night standing at the footend of my bed this time – I saw her clearly and she was smiling and she said “I love you very much” but it was not verbal it was if I hear her but inside of me I can not explain this has never happened before to me but it was her alright it was her voice.*

*She had her nighty on that she wore that night and she were holding a bundle in her right arm that look very much like a baby wrapped up her other arm was stretched out to me the way she usually do when she needs me to give her a hug and to hold her she smiled at me and I wanted to touche her then she was gone. I miss my teddybear very much if I can only touch her hold her kiss her and to undo what I have done I feel empty and very sad and angry for myself because of what I done.*

*21h50 Feeling very down and depressed and very regretfull crying again. I lost count how many times this has happened every day since my Teddybear death I just can't accept the fact that I could have lift my hand for her ever. I love that lady of mine so much My sister told me I hit Teddybear with a pipe*

and I fainted and I am still badly shaken by it where the pipe came from I don't know must have been somewhere in the house I don't remember holding a pipe on home only pipe I can think of must Be the umbrella pipe and the Pipe for the Keepnet I am so pissed of with myself about stuffing everything up with Lies to my Teddybear Come to think of it we have been snapping at each other for a while now especially in the kitchen about cooking who is doing what. It started when I could find a job at flendor or Envirotech ± 3 months ago that is when we both got snappy with each other over small things in the house, God knows how I regret hurting my Beloved Teddybear. My headache just won't go away and I am very tense and short tempered and just feel like giving it all up but I will bite on for my Teddybears sake not my own and I am going to tell the truth.

Christmas period – longing: Tuesday 24 December 1996 to Wednesday 25 December 1996

07h00 Did sleep only for ± 1 hour the new oke kept us awake most of the night making noise and walking around feeling very upset and agro got a headache no appetite. I just want to hold Teddybear in my arms and cuddle like we always do in the mornings. I miss her so much If I only could undo what I have done. I am waiting now for the staff to open up so that I can go shower maybe I may feel better. I think a lot about just being at Mom home for a couple of days just trying to settle down get a lawyer that can communicate not like the one I had 13/11/96. He is a ok fellow but we have difficulty communicating and I think it is better if I can get someone else I don't know who I must speak to get another lawyer.

07h55 had a shower and feeling more awake now but still need some sleep a bit of a headache but not so bad.

Teddybear I was thinking now how I always run your water in the morning how I spoiled you by putting bath salts in the water wash your back sometimes my hands slips a bit to special places. Babe there is so many things we did together but hey all very special to me how you wanted to know whether it is hot or cold outside. Sometimes I placed the wrong undies for you and how we joked about it and the way you look, the most beautiful body in this world How you let me spy at times when we dressed sometimes you won't let me spy then I used to tickle you till you asked for mercy. Our morning cuddle just before we had to get up. At night how you put your head on my chest how you played with my hair till you fast asleep how I tucked you in that was the best part of my life. How we just held each other how we cried about a soppy movie How tender we were with each other when we made love Remember the time we had problems with our sexual side how shy we were to talk about it and how we sorted it out the first time you let me look at you from head to toe and you did the same. My Babe when I looked at your beautiful body it was so special so tender and when you said to me no one else has looked at you the way I looked at you it is very special to me My Teddybear you are so perfect so beautiful every part of your body is just so perfect I could wanted anything else and what do I do? I stuff everything we had up for us All our good times bad times plans we had things we did Oh why have I done this to us!?!

10h00 Babe I am breaking apart. I have been fighting it now for two weeks I am on the point of giving up please help me to hold on I want to hold on for you I really do is just everything is getting to me all the whys I haven't got answers to.

I want to speak to Dad Dough so badly I am very nervous about it. But he is the person that can understand and he knows me I mean he was and still is a dad for me. I just want to say to him how sorry i am to take his daughter away from him Teddybear you know how I feel inside of me. How you must please help me. I trying not to show the people how upset how angry and how I miss you babe my insides is torn apart. I am empty inside OH OH I wish I can Undo all the wrong /// You the only person I want to live for We had everything going for us we were so happy. I can't accept the fact that I have hurt you to lift my hand for you (handwriting big and untidy) NO IT IS NOT ME.

He continues with approximately one more page (32 lines) of memories about things they did and cherished together e.g. Disney Movies and songs. He describes how he would have liked to give her a small teddybear with a pouch and inside that pouch a diamond and sapphire pendant you could wear with your chain and glitterball I bought you before and inside that teddybear all my love so whenever you hold that teddybear the love would flow out into your heart

and he recalls how she taught him some wonderful things in nature and some precious things in life. He then exclaims in big untidy letters

*I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY I KILLED YOU MY LOVE OF MY LIFE. SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED THAT NIGHT BUT WHY (Ends with a big scribble).*

*My soul my very Being cries out WHY WHY WHY*

*Mary WHY WHY you What have you done to deserve this.*

*I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU I LOVE YOU I CARE FOR YOU I TREASURE YOU YOUR SPECIAL TO ME VERY SPECIAL WHY OH WHY RR PLOMP.*

*For a lady of good looks and a heart of gold.*

*Mary thank you for you. I love you for ever and ever John*

*Babe*

*I need you Babe*

*When I am down.*

*I need you Babe*

*In this dark hour.*

*I need you Babe*

*To smell your hair.*

*I need you Babe*

*To hold you Oh so close.*

*I need you Babe*

*To love you oh so tender.*

*I need you Babe*

*I need you oh so bad.*

*I need you Babe*

*just to be with you.*

*I need you Babe*

*to take the pain away.*

*I need you Babe*

*to lead me far away.*

*I need you Babe*

*to ease the sorrows away.*

*I need you Babe*

*to put the pieces together*

*I need you Babe*

*more than words can say*

*I need you Babe*

*More and more each day.*

*I need you Babe*

*your love oh so great.*

*24/12/1996 Babylove 11h15*

12h45 Babe I am in the deep down end again. I just can't grasp or accept what I have done and the fact that I can't remember what we must have said to each other 9 (anger?) or what we (done)?

I know my sister said I hit you with a pipe But I can't ever imagine lifting my hand for you ever and ever. I would not do it you know why as well because all that my dad has done to mom and me I have got a absolute block and massive hate for violence (big and untidy handwriting) against a woman and a child I can't do it I'm sorry to say I don't know how I could have done it Not ME No No No. I just saw a o/- Plomp and I am so upset about this thing I have done I wish I could undo it and Babe believe me I truly truly mean what I say when I say I want to undo it. I regret this so much I cannot even explain it to myself how much. I got no words for it.

18h00: John mentions that he slept for two hours and that it helped him to feel better. It is the **first** time in two days that he has no headache. He then recalls some of the **firsts** they had together, such as the first game of Pool she played at Blackball that led to their first romantic encounter. He continues his nostalgic writing about his appreciation for her as well as his deep regret, shock and self – blame. He makes an entry in his diary approximately every hour. During his 22h00 entry he thanks her that she inspired him to give all of his roommates some of his cookies. He continues:

*everybody is so happy they are dancing around and you just see smiles wherever you look that has given me a boost for what lies ahead just wish you were here to join us but I know you are watching over us. "Mary Sandy Ben" (the latter two are the names they wanted to give their children) I love you so much and you know how nice it will be if I can hold you in my arms speak to you kiss you smell you oh Babe you alone know how much I Pine for you I just want to be with you. You are one hell of a lady my Teddybear.*

24h00 *Mary my Babe I wish you a merry Christmas, God I wish you were here or I was with you my Teddybear. I miss you Babe. Dough I would like to speak to you as soon as possible. I need to talk to comfort you. Hug you,*

John then drew a picture of male and female figures with hearts for bodies, holding hands and smiling. There are also some smaller hearts between them.

He continued:

*Mary I love you and the only thing I can give you is my love. You have given me a gift of greatness and thank you for forgiving me. Teddybear I am going to pay for what I have done and I don't do it for anyone else but for Mary Sandy Ben and nobody else. Teddybear Remember me my love and there is 3 little words specially for you "I love you" from your one and only*

*Babylove.*

The origin of his poetry alias: Sunday, 29 December 1996

9h00. John wrote a short paragraph describing his melancholic feelings, "heartsore" and longing for his beloved.

*12.00. I am angry again nothing new to that. depressed down in the dumps cannot accept What I have done to my Teddybear Cant believe it I am Trying very hard to remember what we said and what we did that night it is so frustrating Not knowing why, I cant Remember it only patches like phoning her mom Some word Bear said to me " I don't want you any more I don't love you no more You must pack you stuff and go now" those word realy killed me inside and I cant believe Bear has said them it is total... (unreadable) not her at all she was very upset inside I think She did realy show her emotions readily but sometimes she will unpack all her feeling for me for us and when she do she realy mean it she was so tender and gentle so loving and I didn't hear her words or the way she speak with my ears it was going stryt into my soul and heart and I will store them there forever.*

*I remember one insident so well. She had a bath and when she got out into the bedroom I was spying her body out when she said to me what am I looking at. I said I cant keep my eyes of her beutifull body. She asked me what is so beutifull and I said let me look she then lay down on the bed totally naked and I was allowed to touch fondle explore and look where ever I wanted to. It has touched something deep in my soul, that she allowed me to look as much as I wanted to. She allowed me to have a good look at Bonita and when I was finished looking I just hold her in my arms and said Princess you got the most beatifull body I ever has seen Bonita look so fragile so pure so soft so holy*

and sacred you allowed me to see beauty that I never has seen before so innocent. **Her words to me was "Babylove you see with a eye of beauty and tenderness something I never have seen or experienced Before from this day forth I will always treasure what you have said and done to me tonight I truly know that your love for me is pure and gentle and you can look and touch as much as you wanted to I belong to you now!!** (My emphasis) We were both in tears it was the tenderest moment in our lives I don't even think by having children could have bring out the tenderness we shared that night.

Mary is such a special lady to me in so many very intimate ways not just the way she walks talks and do things something much deeper than that it was like touching her soul something very sacred. something just the two of us shared and from that day forward our love for each other was so intense sometimes when we said I love you we were in tears it was so special. You know Dad Dough you are the only person in this world she loved as much as she loved me you will know you knew her so well Dad I just cant understand why we both have to lose a woman so special in our lifes why I don't know. I regret it so much I pray every night that this taking can be undone that it never happene and that she was still here with us. I am so sorry Dad. Now I got only you to share this memories with because you understand the love am talking about.

He took a break from writing and continued writing at 15.00 the same day. However, due to the length of this entry and the fact that little new themes are introduced the remainder of this day's entry is not quoted here.

#### 1997 and the first half of 1998: A year and a half of retrospection, introspection and anticipation

During the year of 1997 and also in the first half of 1998 John kept writing extensively in his diary. However, he did not really introduce major new themes or insights, apart from revealing some more feelings about his father. The dream about Mary appearing to him, wanting to tell him something, kept haunting him. He made it out for himself that she may have been pregnant with their first child during the time of the murder and she wanted to tell him about that. This interpretation triggered new visions of having a happy family life with her as well as renewed regret and self-blame because he destroyed this possibility. He also started dreaming of publishing a poetry collection when he is released from prison, dedicated to his beloved. For this reason the style of his writing often took the form of verses with metaphors and other literary forms often found in poems. Because he was awaiting his trial and sentence during all of this time, he also often wrote about what he anticipated in this regard, but usually not in poetry form. He kept to normal "report" and "essay" styles when he wrote about this.

The following selection of five phrases from his diary was chosen to reflect his experiences during this period of time:

To dad with love: Friday 10 January 1997

"Dad"

*You are the one*

*That gave me life*

*You are the one*

*That left me alone*

*You are the one*

*I hate*

*You are the one*

*I needed when I was so young*

*Then came the split*

*I could not take no more*

*Then a sad thing happened in my life*

*I lost my love of my life*

*You and I made peace*

*Oh day why!!? Oh why!!?*

*Why didn't we do it  
So long ago  
When we had the choice  
To learn and enjoy  
Now all I got is you  
And a lot of sorrow  
Dad I pray  
That this fragile peace  
May last to the end  
I just wish  
She was still here  
She would have been so glad  
To see all of us in peace  
How much it would have pleased  
But deep inside of me  
I know she can see.  
19h00 10/01/1997 Babylove  
Babe I know the feeling of love that we have*

*His self-perception: Wednesday 15 January 1997*

*"My sick life"  
This time my heart is unmoved  
Like others it ceased to be  
Yes I cannot be loved  
But I still love you.  
My days are in autumn now  
The flowers the fruit all gone.  
The pain, the sorrow and grief.  
All mine alone  
The fire that was in me  
is as dead as ash  
No flame cant kindle me  
The hope the fear  
The jealous care  
The portion of love  
I can no longer share  
I wear the chain of pain  
But there is here  
and there is  
Sad though*

*I have to shake my soul  
 I want it to be free of me  
 Awake Awake I am  
 But to what purpose in life  
 Unworthy to be.  
 Unworthy to love to care.  
 That what was clear to me.  
 is no more.  
 So I will choose the ground  
 Where they can bury me.  
 11h20 15/1/1997 Babylove  
 I feel very down and very angry here  
 I do regret it so much.*

Looking for certainty and support – the day before court appearance: Monday 3 March 1997

*Did not sleep well at all last night and I am very tired. I just finished another letter for Mom still has to write to dad but I don't know what to say but I will try. Now I am going to shave and shower then I will talk to you again my friend.*

*Well my friend here I am I shaved this morning cut my moustache by accident result I had to shave it off I feel naked now and cold. I have just cleaned my shoes and tomorrow I will wear my suit. I am very nervous and my tummy is full of butterflies very very nervous indeed. I don't know what to expect and what is in store for me but I hope I can sleep tonight last night I did sleep very badly and it is this case that makes me so sad. I have to write to dad but I don't know what to say. I don't know how he feels or what he thinks maybe I should write to Sus about it first then maybe I will know what to say. I don't know if George (psychologist) is going to say anything tomorrow or if he is going to ask for a postponement for a later date. Maybe tomorrow I will be asked to plead. I don't know if my lawyer is not like I am saying nothing at all apart for pleading not guilty. I still got some doubt in my mind about that evening I don't know for sure if I have done that thing although who else could have done it there was nobody else there to do it.*

His Birthday: 4 April 1997

*Good day my friend well another year gone in my life. How many more I do not know but not too many I think I just can't face up to what lies ahead and I don't really care about it anyway I am going to fuck the people up today I don't feel sorry for their shit and this lice led next to me well I am going to give them shit wait till tonight my friend wait you are going to see shit.*

On the verge of despair: Tuesday 8 July 1997

*Another day in this place and things still unchanged in here. 280 days in this cage 8 months what a joke it must be for the people outside. Yes my friend I do not know what is happening outside at all it is too quiet. Something is breeding that is for sure but what I do not know and it makes me feel so frustrated and angry.*

*Thinking about Mary upsets me so much and I refrain from writing about her or to her or try to talk to her it hurts so much my friend and there is nothing for the pain nothing is going to take it away and no I do not want to forget her there is so many good memories from her and yes it will be for the rest of my life and yes I treasure them a hell of a lot and it is in my heart and soul for life.*

*I am to see Mrs Douglas tomorrow hopefully and I hope to get some results from our meeting. Today I am waiting for Sus to arrive for visit and I am looking forward to it but at the same time I feel so guilty about them coming to visit me in this place and ashamed I feel like making an end to it all for good and yes it scares me a hell of a lot at times. We will talk later again today. Well Sus was here and she is fine so is the little ones I so wish I can be with them just to hold to say thank you. This place and its head treat us like slime Now we can't even have a magazine .....(unreadable) because it is not on*



*the list so much for new S.A. go my friend when I get out here one day I will just find a place of my own to hide and be myself. What is so wrong with having a magazine to read the You Personality and the newspaper. We are already cut off from the outside world. Now this I for one is going to go Nuts it is the crosswords that keeps me sane No what I don't know might as well die and get it over and done with.*

### **The feel in Me**

*It is bad*

*It smells*

*It hurts*

*It want to come out*

*I don't know how*

*I blame myself*

*I hate myself*

### Second Christmas in Captivity: Thursday 25 December 1997

*Xmasday 381/125*

*You ask me how it feels, well it is just like any other day no diffs same old routine i feel nothing special about today but that is how this place shape you emotionaly you just cruise on in automatic mode it is the easiest that way and yes i hate it very very much.*

### **When i fell in Love**

*The ground opened up underneath me*

*The heavens fell down*

*Stop!! what was that sound*

*Hey Babe what on earth was that*

*My eys hang on their stalks*

*My Brain went on a strike*

*My heart went doef doef de doef*

*And you!! you just stand there*

*In a doorway of nights light*

*Never did I know this day would be*

*I knew Then you would be my wife*

*Why and how. I can't explain*

*I just know it was , you and only you*

*I was on a high*

*On cloud nine*

*My happiness was so intense imense*

*Very good for Romance and you know what*

*Now I am all allone*

*But that memory of you standing in the light of the night*

*You were my light of my life*

*Then also, now and eternity*

*As long as I live*

*I will love you so*

*OH so much*

*25/12/97 Babylove*

*My friend i am so confused i don't even know how i must write Well it was the day then it is 18h00.*

He then continues to write about his headache, his depression and the nice food he had on Christmas day.

Final hearing: Monday 8 June 1998

*545/40 (probably count of days in police cells and in awaiting trial prison) – Mig bad/ 1 migral + 4 paramed (notes about Migraine headaches and medication. It may be significant that he started using lower case for "l")*

*Well my friend: i spend the whole day in court and yes i have been remanded till 10/06/98 for final sentencing i am very very edgy and very nervous indeed. The probation officer has testified heavy for me for a 5 year probation of corectional supervision with a tigh control on my doings witch will help me as well as psycological treatment for which i must pay. George (assessing psychologist) said treatment will be more efective outside than inside and yes dad has got terminal lung cancer which is upsetting me very much more than what i have expected yes my friend I just so wish I could hug him and tell him I love him for many a year we were far apart but yes I am glad to say we have become closer after this thing than ever before and I have forgiven him totally and yes he is my pa as it should have been i don't want dad to die while i am in prison there is so much we need to say to each other and time can be so short i am glad to say that 18 months ago we made peace but i said then i don't trust the peace well my friend I have to draw those words back now as i feel the peace we made will last forever i have no grudge against him whatsoever and i so want to be there for dad and mom Mom thinks she hopes and have put everything on the fact that I will come out and my friend it is going to rock her because i got a feeling that i might have to sit in jail for at least 8 – 15 years i feel the judge is going to feel he have to punish me for what happened because Bears mom is so anti me and want me to sit in jail. My friend i see her point of view and i understand how she feels Bear is also part of me but no mother how much revenge we want it is not going to bring Bear back to live. Why ruin another few lifes and cause even more misery.*

Last day before conviction - bodily sensations and anxiety: Tuesday 9 June 1998

*564/41 (Mig) 1 Migril 2xParamed*

*Well my friend I am very distressed about all the emotions that go on in my being I don't know how to cope I still got this headache migrain from las night and yes my migral is finished. I notice the las few days I have become intolerable of dagga smoke and I was forced to sleep in a cell with a lot of dagga smoke My eyes were burning my nose running and a hell of a headache. Also when I have these migraines I notice I don't smoke at all it makes it feel worse. Last night I had one of those pins and needle feelings in my right side of my body again and I don't see so well with my right eye today it is if everything is a bit blurry I don't know why I feel very shaky as well today.*

*Yes my friend if I do get jail sentence it will destroy my life Moms as well as dad and yes even Ben (bother) indirect I know I won't cope especially with the jail system as it is now and my change to be treated is very minimal indeed I might as well be dead it will be better of for mom and dad it will take away all the worries but my friend I promised bear I wil not kill myself I rather pay for it.*

*Tomorrow we will all know where we stand*

*And I will take it from there*

*Julie's no (wrote down his sister's cell phone number)*

Conviction: Wednesday 10 June 1998

547/42 – 2880 (probably amount of days expected to spend in prison) *Mig heavy*

*Well my friend I slept very badly and are very nervous I have picked up 8 years yes my friend 8 years. Now I know how long Now I can begin to organise my life and build it up. We will talk later again.*

A few calculations of how many days he may spend in prison follows with some reminders about arrangements with money and bedding.

*Well I am sentenced now and hell 8 years is a long long time.*

### **B.2.2 Reduction and linguistic transformation: The period between the murder (10 December 1996) and the sentencing (10 June 1998).**

On 10 December 1996 John felt empty, broken and dead inside. His whole being cried for an explanation of the fact that he killed Mary whom he felt was so special for him that they were parts of one another. He despised of the fact that he broke his promise to himself that he would never hurt her physically or emotionally. It was difficult for him to believe what he did. In the past they were able to solve their differences of opinion by talking about it and compromising. He tried to tell her that he wanted to undo what he did. Their love was without equal for him. He experienced her telling him to come back and give himself up after he fled from the scene of the murder. He listened to her, thanked her and felt that he had to pay for it – even with his life – if necessary. He did not perceive himself as a violent person and was convinced that Mary could confirm that. He thought they could communicate without words and he sensed her forgiveness. However, he still felt very guilty and wanted to compensate for it. On the day after the murder he made a statement of confession to the police and appeared in court. He asked for an attorney. He was worried about the fact that he did not have a clear memory of what happened the previous night. He had deep regret and wished that could undo what he did.

On the day of Mary's funeral, 14 December 1996 John still felt heartbroken. He wished he could attend the funeral, but was not allowed to. It gave him some comfort to know that his mother and sister represented him there. He thought that her father would be the only person who would understand what special relationship they had and found more comfort in the fact that he approved of their relationship. John made a promise to God and Mary that when he was released from incarceration he would put 12 pink roses wherever her ashes were, or if not possible he would go to their favourite place and give them to the Innkeeper.

Two days later John started to feel very withdrawn. He had a dream which he was convinced was a real vision of Mary standing in the corner of his police cell without saying or doing anything. She was wearing the same nightgown as the night of the murder and he could not see her hands and feet. Her face was faint and obscure. He was sure that she was trying to say something to him. After another two days after some of his blood was drawn for tests he felt as if he was in a trance. He experienced some self-hatred, anger and depression and had suicidal thoughts, but his love for Mary kept him from committing suicide. Later that evening he showed some compassion for a black man that he did not know and who was bullied by others, by giving him fruit and cigarettes. This was a strange experience for him and he felt Mary made him do it. He felt scared and nervous and looked forward to see the doctor the following day for the first time after his arrest. He then wrote a poem, titled Mary wherein he compared his dreams with a river carrying all their experiences and battling to stay between the shores. He dedicated the poem the remembrance of their love. Three days later he had the same dream as before. This time he saw Mary clearly and she was smiling and telling him that she loved him very much. He heard her voice as if she was speaking inside of him. She was also holding a baby-like bundle in her one arm with her other arm stretched out towards him as she did in the past when she wanted him to hug her. She disappeared when he wanted to touch her. The emptiness, self-anger, sadness and desire to undo his crime then returned to him. Later that night he still felt that way and he cried in regret. These feelings were constant since the day of the murder and he could not accept what he did because he loved Mary so much. He remembered that his sister told him that he hit Mary with a pipe and then fainted. The only pipe-like objects that he could remember were the umbrella and the keep net that he just unpacked after returning from their weekend away. He had some remorse because he told some lies and remembered that they were sometimes snapping at each other recently. He had some constant headaches and felt tense and short tempered and tempted to give up. However, he was determined to push through for the sake of his beloved and to tell the truth.

On Christmas Eve 1996 John woke up tired because a new inmate made a lot of noise during the night and he slept only for one hour. He felt angry, had a headache and no appetite and still longed for his beloved. He was looking forward to be locked open in order to have a shower. He also thought about being at home with his mother, settling down and getting a lawyer who can communicate better than the first one he had, but did not know whom he could speak to about this. He recalled some intimate moments with his beloved and how beautiful she was. He blamed himself again for destroying their good and bad times and future plans. He felt very close to breaking point and had many unanswered “why’s” in his mind. He felt a need to speak to Mary’s father because he would understand and was like a father for him. He wanted to apologise towards him that he killed his daughter. He tried to hide his emotions, but still felt very torn apart. He then exclaimed many of his emotions and he concluded by stating that it was not him who committed the murder. He then recalled many memories about sentiments they had and shared such as nature, songs and Disney Movies. He wrote that he would like to give her a small teddy bear (he often called Her teddy bear) with a pouch inside and inside that pouch a diamond and sapphire pendant that she could wear with her chain and glitter ball that he bought you before. He wanted her to imagine all his love to be inside the teddy bear, and whenever she held that teddy bear the love would flow out into her heart. He ended this entry in his diary with many big “why’s” and then wrote a poem with the title “Babe”, his other nickname for his beloved. The theme of the poem seems to be his yearning for every part of her being. He then repeats some of his already expressed emotions, centering on his inner battle with the clash between how he perceived himself and their relationship to be and the irreconcilability of that with what he did.

He then was exhausted and after sleeping for two hours he continued his entries about nostalgic commemorative moments and “firsts” with his beloved. Amongst others he wrote about how and where they met and the pool and games they played together. He then briefly returns to his immediate surroundings and thanks her for her inspiration to give his roommates some cookies and describes how happy they are and how they are dancing. After that he fantasizes about the family he planned to have with Mary and how he joyfully experienced her with all his senses.

At midnight when Christmas started he wished Mary a merry Christmas and drew some pictures to commemorate their love. He promised her, as well as their boy and girl that they planned to have together that he would pay for what he did.

On 29 December 1996 he remembered some patches of what happened the night of the murder. He remembered that he phoned her mother after it happened. He also remembered that she told him that she did not love him any more and that he should pack his belongings and leave. He felt as if those words killed him inside and he could not believe that she said it. He recalled previous times when she said tender, loving and gentle words to him and he wrote that he did not hear it with his ears, but that it went straight to his soul and heart and that he would store it there forever. He also recalled the night when she first used the name “Babylove” for him. He later chose this as his poetry alias. It was during a very intimate moment after he admired her body and she told him that she was convinced of the gentleness and purity of his love for her. She gave him permission to freely explore her body then. After describing this moment in detail, he wrote about the sacredness and intensity of their relationship for him. He expressed his belief that her father was the only other person whom she loved as much as she loved him. Now he can only share the memories with him. He then expresses his regret again, especially towards her father because he made them both lose her. The refrain of him wanting to “undo” what he did is repeated again.

During the year of 1997 and also in the first half of 1998 John kept writing extensively in his diary. However, he did not really introduce major new themes or insights, apart from revealing some more feelings about his father. The dream about Mary appearing to him, wanting to tell him something, kept haunting him. He made it out for himself that she may have been pregnant with their first child during the time of the murder and she wanted to tell him about that. This interpretation triggered new visions of having a happy family life with her as well as renewed regret and self-blame because he destroyed this possibility. He also started dreaming of publishing a poetry collection when he is released from prison, dedicated to his beloved. For this reason the style of his writing often took the form of verses with metaphors and other literary forms often found in poems. Because he was awaiting his trial and sentence during all of this time, he also often wrote about what he anticipated in this regard, but usually not in poetry form. He kept to normal “report” and “essay” styles when he wrote about this.

He also wrote many poems from which only a few that were regarded as the most relevant were transcribed among the natural meaning units in this thesis. On 10 January 1997 he wrote one with the title of “Dad”. He tried to express the emotional development between him and his father from the time that his father gave life to him, through the time when he started to experience him as absent and hate

his father and they completely drifted apart. Then ironically after his fiancé's death they reconciled. He experienced this reconciliation as very fragile and hoped it would last. He wished his beloved could witness it, because she always wanted it.

On 15 January 1997 he wrote "My sick life". He described his heart as unmoved and himself as someone who cannot be loved. His life was in autumn and grief and sorrow replaced all his fruits. He talks about his fire that changed into dead ash and his jealous care and love that he lost. He felt sad and wanted to shake his soul to free himself of his ugly part. He expressed his feelings of worthlessness and unable to see things as clear as before. He concluded with a death wish in which he could choose the ground to be buried in.

On Monday 3 March 1997, the day before his appearance in court he mentioned that he still slept badly. He just finished another letter to his mother and wanted to write to his father too, but did not know what to write. While doing his morning chores he accidentally cut his moustache and then shaved it off. It made him feel naked and cold. He prepared his best suit and outfit and felt very nervous. He did not know what to expect. He considered writing to his sister instead of to his father, because it would make it easier for him to express his feelings. He wondered whether his psychologist is going to have the opportunity to talk or whether he was going to be asked to plead. He anticipated a postponement of the hearing date and that his lawyer may say nothing else than pleading not guilty. He still experienced some doubt in his mind about what happened during the murder and even if it were him who did it.

His birthday, 4 April 1997 was another day of grief and anger for him. He felt careless and aware of the fact that his life expectancy was shortened considerably because he could not face what was lying ahead of him. He felt angry and aggressive towards his fellow inmates. Three months later, on Tuesday 8 July 1997 he was on the verge of despair and isolated from the world outside. He counted the days and mentioned that he already spent 280 days in the awaiting trial cells. He expected something bad, but did not know what. He started using lower case when he wrote "I" and wrote that thinking about Mary was upsetting and hurting him so much that he refrained from communicating with her in writing or speech. However, he still wanted to treasure the good memories about her because they were his heart and soul for life. He expected an interview with a Correctional Services social worker and a visit from his sister. He felt guilty of the fact that his sister had to visit him in such bad circumstances and was ashamed and afraid of his suicidal thoughts. After his sister visited him he was glad to hear that she and her children were well, but he longed to be with them. He was angry about the fact that their privilege to have magazines in prison has been terminated and it reminded him of how isolated he was. He expressed a death wish again and then wrote "The feel in Me". This short verse expressed his strong feelings of being isolated in a bad situation and his self-blame and self-hatred.

On Christmas day 1997 he wrote that it feels just like another day and that the place shaped him to "cruise on in automatic mode" and that he hated it. He continued to write a verse "When I fell in Love" expressing his sensation of being in another dimension when he first saw Mary. He immediately knew that he wanted to make her his wife and he felt very happy. He ends off by writing about his belief that he would, in spite of his current loneliness, remember that first impression of her forever and he will love her as long as he lives.<sup>2</sup> When he returns to normal writing style, he expresses some confusion and later writes about his headache, depression and his enjoyment of the special food on Christmas day.

By the time of his final hearing on Monday 8 June 1998 his day count stood at 545 and he added some daily notes about his migraines and medication next to the date of every entry in his diary. He hardly ever used a<sup>3</sup> capital I when he referred to himself now. He noted that he spent the whole day in court, that he was very edgy and that the final sentencing will take place within two days. He had some hope about the possibility of a five years sentence of Correctional Supervision, with psychotherapy sessions at his own cost as supported by the probation officer and his private psychologist. He thought about his father's lung cancer and their reconciliation and his mother's possible shock if he has to go to prison. He anticipated the possibility of a eight to fifteen years sentence of incarceration because the judge would feel responsible to punish him and Mary's mom

<sup>2</sup> John's comment on 31 October 2002: "I still tend to do it in my writing depending on how I feel or what my mood is. It is something I try to control but not with much success. It portrays in my writing the exact feeling at that very moment.

<sup>3</sup> John's comment on 31 October 2002: "I do now use capital I as I don't see myself worthless any more. This is not something I controlled. It just come out how I felt mental wise then".

was anti him. He expressed some understanding for her negative feelings towards him, but also stated his dismay about it because her revenge would not bring Mary back and could cause more misery. His entry on the next day expresses his intense emotional and physical pain as well as his intolerance for the marijuana smoke in prison. He also expressed an intense fear that a sentence of incarceration would ruin the lives of all the people in his immediate family circle. He thought that suicide would be better if that happens, but he would not do it because of his promise to his beloved. On the day of sentencing he made a short entry stating that he was sentenced for eight years and that it was a long time. He also expressed a sense of relief because he could start organising and building his life again and made a few calculations about the possible period of imprisonment if he gets a reduction for good behaviour credits.

### **B.2.3 Elimination of statements not explicating the meaning of ‘crimes of passion’**

On 10 December 1996 John's whole being cried for an explanation of the fact that he killed Mary whom he felt was so special for him that they were parts of one another. He despised of the fact that he broke his promise to himself that he would never hurt her physically or emotionally. It was difficult for him to believe that he killed Mary. In the past they were able to solve their differences of opinion by talking about it and compromising. He tried to tell her that he wanted to undo what he did. Their love was without equal for him. He sensed her telling him to come back and give himself up after he fled from the scene of the murder. He listened to her, thanked her and felt that he had to pay for it – even with his life – if necessary. He did not perceive himself as a violent person and was convinced that Mary could confirm that. He thought they could communicate without words and he sensed her forgiveness. However, he still felt very guilty and wanted to compensate for it. On the day after the murder he made a statement of confession to the police and appeared in court. He asked for an attorney. He did not have a clear memory of what happened the previous night. He had deep regret.

On the day of Mary's funeral, 14 December 1996 John still felt heartbroken. He wished he could attend the funeral, but was not allowed to. It gave him some comfort to know that his mother and sister represented him there. He thought that her father would be the only person who would understand what special relationship they had and found more comfort in the fact that he approved of their relationship. John made a promise to God and Mary that when he was released from incarceration he would put 12 pink roses wherever her ashes were, or if not possible he would go to their favourite place and give them to the Innkeeper.

Two days later John started to feel very withdrawn. He just had a vision of Mary standing in the corner of his cell without saying or doing anything. She was wearing the same nightgown as the night of the murder and he could not see her hands and feet. Her face was faint and obscure. He was sure that she was trying to say something to him. After another two days some of his blood was drawn for tests and he felt as if he were in a trance. He experienced some self-hatred, anger and depression and had suicidal thoughts, but his love for Mary kept him from committing suicide. Later that evening he showed some compassion for a black man that he did not know and who was bullied by others, by giving him fruit and cigarettes. This was a strange experience for him and he felt Mary made him do it. He felt scared and nervous and looked forward to see the doctor the following day for the first time after his arrest. He then wrote a poem, titled Mary wherein he compared his dreams with a river carrying all their experiences and battling to stay between the shores. He dedicated the poem the remembrance of their love. Three days later he had the same dream as before. This time he saw Mary clearly and she was smiling and telling him that she loved him very much. He heard her voice as if she was speaking inside of him. She was also holding a baby-like bundle in her one arm with her other arm stretched out towards him as she did in the past when she wanted him to hug her. She disappeared when he wanted to touch her. The emptiness, self-anger, sadness and desire to undo his crime then returned to him. Later that night he still felt that way and he cried in regret. These feelings were constant since the day of the murder and he could not accept what he did because he loved Mary so much. He remembered that his sister told him that he hit Mary with a pipe and then fainted. The only pipe-like objects that he could remember were the umbrella and the keep net that the just unpacked after returning from their weekend away. He had some remorse because he told some lies and remembered that they were sometimes snapping at each other recently. He had some constant headaches and felt tense and short tempered and tempted to commit suicide. However, he was determined to push through for the sake of his beloved and to tell the truth.

On Christmas Eve 1996 John woke up tired because a new inmate made a lot of noise during the night and he slept only for one hour. He felt angry, had a headache and no appetite and still longed for

his beloved. He was looking forward to be locked open in order to have a shower. He also thought about being at home with his mother, settling down and getting a lawyer who can communicate better than the first one he had, but did not know whom he could speak to about this. He recalled some intimate moments with his beloved and how beautiful she was. He blamed himself again for destroying their lives and future plans. He felt very close to breaking point and had many unanswered "why's" in his mind. He felt a need to speak to Mary's father because he would understand and was like a father for him. He wanted to apologise towards him that he killed his daughter. He tried to hide his emotions, but still felt very torn apart. He then exclaimed many of his emotions and he concluded by stating that it was not him who committed the murder. He then recalled many memories about sentiments they had and shared such as nature, songs and Disney Movies. He wrote that he would like to give her a small teddy bear (he often called Her teddy bear) with a pouch inside and inside that pouch a diamond and sapphire pendant that she could wear with her chain and glitter ball that he bought you before. He wanted her to imagine all his love to be inside the teddy bear, and whenever she held that teddy bear the love would flow out into her heart. He ended this entry in his diary with many big "why's" and then wrote a poem with the title "Babe", his other nickname for his beloved. The theme of the poem seems to be his yearning for every part of her being. He then repeats some of his already expressed emotions, centering on his inner battle with the clash between how he perceived himself and their relationship to be and the irreconcilability of that with what he did.

He then was exhausted and after sleeping for two hours he continued his entries about nostalgic commemorative moments and "firsts" with his beloved. Amongst others he wrote about how and where they met and the pool and games they played together. He then briefly returns to his immediate surroundings and thanks her for her inspiration to give his roommates some cookies and describes how happy they are and how they are dancing. After that he fantasizes about the family he planned to have with Mary and how he joyfully experienced her with all his senses.

At midnight when Christmas started he wished Mary a merry Christmas and drew some pictures to commemorate their love. He promised her, as well as their son and daughter that they planned to have that he would pay for what he did.

On 29 December 1996 he remembered some patches of what happened the night of the murder. He remembered that he phoned her mother after it happened. He also remembered that Mary told him that she did not love him any more and that he should pack his belongings and leave. He felt as if those words killed him inside and he could not believe that she said it. He recalled previous times when she said tender, loving and gentle words to him and he wrote that he did not hear it with his ears, but that it went straight to his soul and heart and that he would store it there forever. He also recalled the night when she first used the name "Babylove" for him. (He later chose this as his poetry alias). It was during a very intimate moment after he admired her body and she told him that she was convinced of the gentleness and purity of his love for her. She then gave him permission to freely explore her body. After describing this moment in detail, he wrote about the sacredness and intensity of their relationship for him. He expressed his belief that her father was the only other person whom she loved as much as she loved him. Now he can only share the memories with him. He then expresses his regret again, especially towards her father because he made them both lose her. The refrain of him wanting to "undo" what he did is repeated again.

During the year of 1997 and also in the first half of 1998 John kept writing extensively in his diary. However, he did not really introduce major new themes or insights, apart from revealing some more feelings about his father. The dream about Mary appearing to him, wanting to tell him something kept haunting him. He made it out for himself that she may have been pregnant with their first child during the time of the murder and she wanted to tell him about that. This interpretation triggered new visions of having a happy family life with her as well as renewed regret and self-blame because he destroyed this possibility. He also started dreaming of publishing <sup>4</sup>a poetry collection when he is released from prison, dedicated to his beloved. For this reason the style of his writing often took the form of verses with metaphors and other literary forms often found in poems. Because he was awaiting his trial and sentence during all of this time, he also often wrote about what he anticipated in this regard, but usually not in poetry form. He kept to normal "report" and "essay" styles when he wrote about this.

John wrote many poems from which only a few that were regarded as the most relevant were transcribed among the natural meaning units in this thesis. On 10 January 1997 he wrote one with the title of "Dad". He tried to express the emotional development between him and his father from the time that his father gave life to him, through the time when he started to experience him as absent, hated

---

<sup>4</sup> John's comment on 31 October 2002: "It is still my intention, but a lot of them needs to be refined in some way".

him and completely drifted apart from him. Then ironically after his fiancé's death they reconciled. He experienced this reconciliation as <sup>5</sup>very fragile and hoped it would last. He wished his beloved could witness it, because she always wanted it.

On 15 January 1997 he wrote "My sick life". He described his heart as unmoved and himself as someone who cannot be loved. His life was in autumn and grief and sorrow replaced all his fruits. He talks about his fire that changed into dead ash and his jealous care and love that he lost. He felt sad and wanted to shake his soul to free himself of his ugly part. He expressed his feelings of worthlessness and being unable to see things as clear as before. He concluded with a death wish in which he could choose the ground to be buried in.

On Monday 3 March 1997, the day before his appearance in court he mentioned that he still slept badly. He just finished another letter to his mother and wanted to write to his father too, but did not know what to write. While doing his morning chores he accidentally cut his moustache and then shaved it off. It made him feel naked and cold. He prepared his best suit and outfit and felt very nervous. He did not know what to expect. He considered writing to his sister instead of to his father, because it would make it easier for him to express his feelings. He wondered whether his psychologist was going to have the opportunity to talk or whether he was going to be asked to plead. He anticipated a postponement of the hearing date and that his lawyer may say nothing else than pleading not guilty. He still experienced some doubt in his mind about what happened during the murder and even if it were him who did it.

His birthday, 4 April 1997 was another day of grief and anger for him. He felt careless and aware of the fact that his life expectancy was shortened considerably because he could not face what was lying ahead of him. He felt angry and aggressive towards his fellow inmates. Three months later, on Tuesday 8 July 1997 he was on the verge of despair and isolated from the world outside. He counted the days and mentioned that he already spent 280 days in the awaiting trial cells. He anticipated something bad, but did not know what. He started using lower case when he wrote "I" and wrote that thinking about Mary was upsetting and hurting him so much that he refrained from communicating with her in writing or speech. However, he still wanted to treasure the good memories about her because they were his inspiration to life. He expected an interview with a social worker and a visit from his sister. He felt guilty of the fact that his sister had to visit him in such bad circumstances and was ashamed and afraid of his suicidal thoughts. After his sister visited him he was glad to hear that she and her children were well, but he longed to be with them. He was angry about the fact that their privilege to have magazines in prison has been terminated and it reminded him of how isolated he was. He expressed a death wish again and then wrote "The feel in Me". This short verse expressed his strong feelings of being isolated in a bad situation and his self-blame and self-hatred.

On Christmas day 1997 he wrote that it feels just like another day and that the place shaped him to "cruise on in automatic mode" and that he hated it. He continued to write a verse "When i fell in Love" expressing his sensation of being in another dimension when he first saw Mary. He immediately knew that he wanted to make her his wife and he felt very happy. He ends off by writing about his belief that he would, in spite of his current loneliness, remember that first impression of her forever and he will love her as long as he lives. When he returns to normal writing style, he expresses some confusion and later writes about his headache, depression and his enjoyment of the special food on Christmas day.

By the time of his final hearing on Monday 8 June 1998 his day count stood at 545 and he added some daily notes about his migraines and medication next to the date of every entry in his diary. He hardly ever used a capital I when he referred to himself now. He noted that he spent the whole day in court, that he was very edgy and that the final sentencing will take place within two days. He had some hope about the possibility of a five years sentence of Correctional Supervision, with psychotherapy sessions at his own cost as supported by the probation officer and his private psychologist. He thought about his father's lung cancer and their reconciliation and his mother's possible shock if he has to go to prison. He anticipated the possibility of an eight to fifteen years sentence of incarceration because the judge would feel responsible to punish him and Mary's mom was anti-him. He expressed some understanding for her negative feelings towards him, but also stated his dismay about it because her revenge would not bring Mary back and could cause more misery. His entry on the next day expresses his intense emotional and physical pain as well as his

---

<sup>5</sup> John's comment on 31 October 2002: It has improved to the point where we can have a normal discussion with no hang-up although still a bit on the stiff (formal) side".



<sup>6</sup>intolerance for the marijuana smoke in prison. He also expressed an intense fear that a sentence of incarceration would ruin the lives of all the people in his immediate family circle. He thought that suicide would be better if that happens, but he would not do it because of his promise to his beloved.

On the day of sentencing he made a short entry stating that he was sentenced for eight years and that it was a long time. He also expressed a sense of relief because he could start organizing and building his life again and made a few calculations about the possible period of imprisonment if he gets a reduction for good behaviour credits.

#### **B.2.4 Application**

When the reduced paragraph or the hypothetical application is randomly compared with different sections of the original text it proves to contain all the necessary, but also only the necessary elements of the experience described in the relevant section of the diary. During this phase of the study the processed data thus still proves to be valid because it is an accurate description of what John tried to express regarding his experiences.

### **B.3 The period while in prison and in therapy (themes that emerged in therapy, meaning units of specific relevance to John's expressions):**

#### **B.3.1 Natural meaning units**

##### **Establishing rapport**

In order to understand the process of establishing psychotherapeutic rapport with John, it is necessary to start with a brief sketch of the context within which this process took place. The physical Correctional Services facility consisted of huge premises on the outskirts of one of the largest cities in South Africa. During the relevant time, most of the Government managed correctional facilities were burdened with a complicated over population problem. Related to this was the fact that the courts could not cope appropriately with the case load which resulted from a very high crime rate. The specific facility was designed to be an intake and distribution centre with no appropriate room for training and recreational facilities usually included in the designs of longer term correctional facilities. However, it was never used only for the original purpose and had to be adjusted to accommodate nearly all the possible categories of inmates from awaiting trial to maximum security. There were four buildings to accommodate inmates and staff and one administrative building. There were also residential and recreational facilities for staff members within the larger cordoned off area. The Buildings accommodating inmates were approximately 500 metres apart and they were constructed mainly from concrete with small barred windows and many iron doors with huge keyholes and locks. One building was mainly used for medium security male inmates awaiting trial (Medium A prison), one for sentenced medium security male inmates (Medium B prison), one for sentenced maximum security male inmates (Maximum prison) and one for all categories of female inmates (female prison). All the facilities, except the maximum prison had very few single cells. Most beds were triple storied and approximately two metres apart to save space.

I (the researcher) was the only psychologist on the staff for a total sentenced inmate population of nearly 5 000 at the time of the first contact. Due to the fact that permanent Correctional Services staff members were not responsible for unsentenced inmates, I have not met him during his awaiting trial period. He has recently been transferred from Medium A prison (inmate population approximately 10 000) to Medium B prison with an inmate population of approximately 3 000. My office was in the administrative building due to a shortage of office space in the Medium B building. I usually had to make an arrangement to "borrow an office" when I did consultations in the prisons. Most inmates were not allowed to leave the premises of the building in which they were accommodated.

One of the social workers sent me a formal referral note, dated 8 October 1998. He attached a letter from John, addressed to the head of the prison, dated 2 September 1998. The letter (translated from Afrikaans) stated:

---

<sup>6</sup> John's comment on 31 October 2002: "I do hate it with a vengeance and can't tolerate it. My reaction to it has gone into a physical form by my nose running and my eyes watering just by smelling it".

To the head of the prison  
Y Prison

From. John X  
987788990  
Y Prison  
Q5 F section cell 32

02 September 1998

Re: Approval for a prescribed pair of spectacles and to see a psychologist

Dear sir. I hereby apply to see a psychologist because I feel I need one to treat me for my personal problems as well as the judge Mr. Black from the supreme court ordered that I should receive such treatment. My private psychologist Mr. George Z will be able to provide more details in this regard. His phone number is 082 4433 123 or home (015) 249 1133.

Then the approval of my prescribed pair of spectacles, my spectacles that I wear to enable me to see broke and I saw the optometrist here and he tested my eyes and found that I do need spectacles. Now that I did a further inquiry I found that it is only awaiting your approval. Seeing that I am a Migraine sufferer and that I am without spectacles is making the condition much worse and it is refused that I get the medicine that has been prescribed by the Dr. here. I permanently have a severe Migraine, so bad that it effects my hearing and sight very badly and it can again lead to a stroke as a few months ago. I will appreciate it if you can see these matters in a very serious light and help me as soon as possible.

I thank you for your help and time spared.

Signed: John X  
987788990

The original Afrikaans letter:

Aan die hoof van die gevangenis  
Johannesburg gevangenis

Van. John X  
98266229  
Johannesburg gevangenis  
P3 D seksie sel 21

02 September 1998

**Re: Goedkeuring vir 'n voorgeskrewe bril en om 'n sielkundige te sien**

Geagte meneer. Hiermee wil ek aansoek doen om 'n sielkundige te sien aangesien ek voel ek het een nodig om my te behandel vir my persoonlike probleme asook die regter mnr Labuscagne van die hooggeregshof het instruksies gegee dat ek sodanige behandeling ontvang my private sielkundige mnr George X sal meer detail kan gee oor die aangeleentheid sy telefoon no is 082 4433 123 of tuis (015) 249 1133.

Dan die goedkeuring van my voorgeskrewe bril, my bril wat ek dra om te kan sien het gebreek en ek het die oogarts hier gesien en hy het my oë getoets en bevind dat ek wel 'n bril benodig. Noudat ek

*verdere Navraag gedoen het, het ek uitgevind dat dit net wag vir u goedkeuring. Aangesien ek 'n Migrain lyer is en die dat ek sonder bril is maak die toestand baie erger en daar word geweier dat ek die sodanige medikasie kry wat wel voorgeskryf is deur die dr hier. Ek het pal "n erge migrain hoofpyn so erg dat dit my gehoor en sig erg aantast en kan lei tot weer 'n beroerte soos 'n klompie maande gelede. Ek sal dit waardeer as u die bogenoemde sake in 'n ernstige lig beskou en my kan help so gou as moontlik.*

*Ek bedank u vir u hulp en tyd afgestaan.*

*Geteken: John X*

*98266229*

On 13 October I met him for the first time in the referring social worker's office. He was grateful and very co-operative. I followed the normal psychological protocol of doing a full present state examination within the context of his history. What stood out for me during the assessment, were a) his long history of substance abuse (mainly cannabis), b) his relationship problems and experiences of conflict with his father, c) his inability to cope with the current prison environment (see prison issues), d) his physiological problems such as migraines and hypertension, that writing was one of his natural therapeutic self-help tools, and e) his intense regret and bereavement.

I realised that practical issues had to be taken as a preparatory ritual to facilitate psychotherapeutic development. I followed the necessary procedures to obtain his previous psychological assessment report written for the court proceedings, I recommended regular psychotherapy and transfer to a single cell in the Maximum security prison, I phoned his mother to investigate her possible supportive role, and I recommended a medical examination, a.s.a.p.

During the following period of time, the social worker in Maximum managed to get approval to use a section of the prison, containing 11 single cells as an accommodation facility for a substance abuse rehabilitation program stretching over a period of approximately three months. A new full time psychologist was also appointed to share my responsibilities. She was a young lady who was still busy with the final stages of her practical training and ironically Maximum prison was the safest place to accommodate her during that time. After a few follow-up psychological consultations with John and many communications with other staff members in this regard, we managed to get John admitted as one of the members of the first group who did the in house substance abuse rehabilitation program. Although the new psychologist took over his psychotherapy, I was still involved in a supervisory capacity. John was eager to do the program from the start, and participated fully in all the activities

After approximately three months (in the beginning of 1999), when the program was completed, the new psychologist was transferred to another location, and I had to take over his individual psychotherapy again. In accordance with the AA/NA treatment model, it was decided to allow the people who went through the program to volunteer to be trained as lay counsellors and act in a supervisory capacity for the next group of selected rehabilitation program occupants. Another similar section of the Maximum prison, close to the "rehabilitation centre" was obtained as a "halfway house" for the inmates who just finished the program and were in the process of being trained as lay counsellors. Although another psychologist (also a young lady in the final stage of training) was appointed in January 1999. She opted not to take the responsibility for John's individual psychotherapy, however, she did all group work and training sessions with the rehabilitation candidates. Later during the year, the male social worker that started the rehabilitation centre was also transferred to another location. His responsibilities were taken over by another young female social worker that was transferred from Medium B prison. John's involvement in the lay counsellor's training and activities made it possible for him to stay on in the appropriate section, containing single cells in Maximum prison.

All the practical arrangements amongst difficult circumstances helped to establish good psychotherapeutic rapport and trust that laid a sound foundation for the psychotherapy to follow. The following entry in his diary reflects some of his feelings during this period of time:

First consultation with the new psychologist: 1 December 1998

*tense Agro tired head*

175 2710/1965 2528/1586

*Well my friend another day in jail i slept fair but i am still tired and tense and agro i Saw Esther yesterday for the first session and yes already it hurts talking about Bear and yes it is something that Needs to be done it is the only way i can get it out of my system and put things Behind me and pul my life up and carry on.*

*My friend i Must get to the library today as i got Nothing to read and to get to the Library is a way for me to read and ease my Mind. i Want to hand in my request for a hobby as well and i will do it when i see Esther on Wednesday again Also i Must find out about drawing some Money for things i Need as well. Yes it is december Now Chr is coming up soon then it will be 2 Years my friend it is a long time but also feels so short as it was just yesterday. Must write some poems again as well some time.*

**Prison issues**

Although the policy makers of the South African Department of Correctional Services tried everything they could to make a safe and therapeutic atmosphere possible in the facilities under their auspices, it has always been difficult to implement this in practice. Factors such as overpopulation, gangsterism and intimidation, corruption and bribery among inmates and some staff members, frequent staff changes due to resignations and transfers, staff shortages, frequent transfers of inmates as a method of behaviour control, losses of valuable information in files of inmates and staff members, security concerns and illegal drug smuggling and abuse were ever present. These issues almost always served as restrictive factors that had to be dealt with during psychotherapy and other constructive activities. It is important to keep this context in mind while reading and interpreting the diary. John sometimes referred to them directly or indirectly. However, he was also well aware of the fact that it might “boomerang” if information he wrote down landed in the wrong hands. He often also wrote letters to staff members to try to raise some concerns or request some adjustments to his privileges, indicating that the mentioned issues were part of his everyday life that he had to deal with. The general approach and atmosphere in prison that was regarded as necessary to survive in these circumstances was sometimes referred to as “a healthy paranoia”. One thing that John was particularly afraid of, was the ever-present possibility of having to return to Medium B prison after his time in the rehabilitation centre was completed. He was always afraid that he would not be able to stand against the stronger intimidation in a less protected environment where he has to sleep in a crowded cell with other inmates and where the focus is more upon safe custody than on rehabilitation.

The following selections from John’s numerous references to his experience and dealings with such issues reflect something about how he linked it to his dealings with his emotions about his “fatal offence”:

Some inmates attempted to escape: Christmas 1998

*Morning my friend well yes it is Christmas today but it don't feel like it. i slept okay but i could do with a few hours more Yes i wish i can be with my family i miss them today. Yes my friend memories today goes way back and the urge to be with my people is great. Yes my friend highly irritated now Kevin is a lazy oke to clean and it iritates me i am not an official cleaner but i do most of the work. Yes my friend i so wish mom and Sus can come but ja it is okay if they can't. Well my friend people tried to escape and yes a total waste of time and life yes a life Not so good i am very ratly and upset a cher died here today from a heart attack and yes not nice the worst part is seeing him and also to clean the blood from the floor.*

*My friend not nice the blood made me go back to that weekend and yes i see the whole thing again.*

*Not something i appreciate.*

It is striking that, since January 1999, John’s entries in his diary were much shorter than before. However, he very seldom skipped a day. No relevant new themes were introduced in 1999, probably because he was involved in the rehabilitation program and got many studying and writing assignments

as part of it. Some of the essays he wrote during this time will be quoted in a later section of this thesis.

Anger, longing for freedom and worries about parents: Saturday, Christmas 1999

*Well my friend another christmas in jail it is the 4<sup>th</sup> one and I ask myself how do I feel well to be honest it is just another day and it is no different from the normal daily routine in jail. I sit and I am emotionless. My mind is out there by my family and yes my head yearns to be with them, I wonder what they doing right now. I can imagine René and Cameron very eager and exited who knows how they feel inside but my time is coming to be with them it is mom and dad I am concerned about and I am powerless to do anything about the situation right now and it frustrates me and makes me angry being in a position I am helpless in and yes it is my own fault.*

*I am under lig (ligament) strain and pressures I don't need right now and I wonder if there is a purpose in it all I don't know.*

*I can only hope this is my last Christmas in jail as I really need to get out and be there for mom and dad.*

*I had very little sleep and I feel tired and yet again short fused as well and these green ones is starting to get very annoying with their fucking noise it is true you can take them out of the bush but the bush you never get out of them. I am starting to hate them with a passion and I know it is wrong but it is their own fault they are what they are. My friend today I want to phone my mom, dad and family and I suspect I will get them at Sus's place as it is normal every Christmas for them to gather and yes I wish I was there.*

*My book is coming on okay and it will take a while but it will be exactly what is in me that needs to come out sometimes it is not easy to put it in words, but yes I am trying hard to put emotions into words and there is no shortcut nor a dictionary to use.*

*Well my friend I phoned mom and it is going okay with them but bad at the same time. their car is stolen by fucking black bastards I wish I can get my hands on them I will kill them I need to get out now and I am even thinking of escape my friend it is bad I am on a total edge about to explode majorly and I know nothing is going to stop me this time. Mom said the shrinks report is not at home and I haven't got it so I got angry and now I feel bad and I want to phone her and apologise now I don't know what is wrong with me I really don't know*

*I am so angry and frustrated that I can explode really not what I need or can afford but I don't know what to do either I will only see Arnold (the researcher) Wednesday and yes I need to speak to Him.*

*Also I need to get my ase in gear and write the thing for the parole board and yes I need to do it neat and give them maximum information and my friend I have to do something very soon to help mom and dad I need to see me Cuttings (social worker at correctional supervision office) as well things must starting to happen and nobody is willing to help so I must do it on my own. I must fight not for my sake but for mom and dad and yes I owe it to them and come hell or high water I will help them fullstop.*

*Well we will talk later again.*

Turn of the Century: Friday, 31 December 1999

*Well my friend it is an end of an era end of a part of my life as well, a part of my life I rather want to file away in the deepest folds of my mind. Yes, I have learnt but I also failed, I have failed my family and myself and yes at least I can say I have learned out of my recent faults and I refer specifically to the last 4 years it was a very hard and extremely painful lesson, a lesson I will never forget. Time has come for me now to build on what I have learnt to what I have experienced and yes from the results. I feel sad in a way but I must also carry on from here and I am sure Bear would have wanted me to carry on. There is so many questions in my mind about that night and yes I think I am scared of possible answers as it may open painful things but also I wonder sometimes really what happened that night and what went on in my mind and why I did what I did. I am still shocked and cant really believe, but yes I have to face facts as they are, it has happened and althoug it wasn't planed nor thought out it is something I must look at in my life as a big obstacle but also a steping stone to learn from and yes my friend I have. It has changed my life in a way I never thought could change and I say so because I was not consciously aware of my true mental condition (situation) call it what you want if I where*

*aware I am sure would have done something if not for myself but for my love for Bear. I know I still see her in my mind and yes I still do love her and I always will.*

*My friend there will never be another bear in my life and yes I know I cant expect it to be and the way I feel about Bear I don't want to have another lady in my life. My memories of Bear will always be there and it will be an issue I cannot get away from and it will be unfair to another lady. to be compared to Bear and yes it will happen, that is also one of my reasons I don't want another relationship in my life.*

*My friend I have done a lot of searching in my life in the past three years and there is things I need to do but also want to do and I will do but not for financial gain. I have been given a chance in life and I am using it to the maximum and I cannot pay in financial terms but yes I can help someone else to a better quality of life by helping them to help themselves it is paying back what I got out of helping myself. Yes it all sounds easy on paper but mentally and physically it is having a major impact on my life and there is no words to describe what really goes on in my mind I am busy writing a book and I do write poems and it is a way of unloading events in my mind but as much as I am writing I will never forget things and perhaps I will understand myself eventually as that will be a breakthrough in my life I need. I am fortunate to have a family that supports me all the way and yes that and their love is carrying me through and I am grateful for it and yes I am closer to my family than ever before.*

*My friend what lies ahead in the new year I don't really know but I have good faith that things can only get better from now for all of us My will is to get out soon and be with my family and I am going to work hard to better myself and yes I must look deep and hard at myself and come up with answers and I have to make decisions to better myself and yes I will.*

*My friend we will talk later again.*

*Well my friend it is close to 2000 now and yes what will lie ahead for us I wonder I have no idea. All I can say is give me space a private peacefull hole where I can curl up and dream dreams of a future that is real but also not real where I can stretch my imagination to its full, and plan and set my goals. I don't think it is much to ask for but will I get that change I don't know all I can do is ask. What will the minister have in store for our prisoners I really don't know all I can say please be human give the ones that deserve it and can prove themselves a chance in life and I assure him he will be surprised indeed.*

*My book is coming on slowly and yes that is one project I will complete and my Poems as well I plan to write some more and yes I think I will surprise myself in time. I got a gut feeling that I under judge myself.*

*I have things in me I cannot explain and perhaps I am only partly aware of them I need to do a thorough search deep inside myself and yes I may come up with answers I have problems and I have the answers but not the ability to un problem them it sound strange and it feels very frustration like and it enangers me greatly*

Selection from a letter to a staff member addressed to the new rehabilitation centre psychologist and the new maximum social worker :

20/01/2000

Sandra / Marcia

*I have a few points I need to get clarity on and also a few things I am very concerned about and I feel the need to bring it up as it concern not only me but peoples future as well and if not addressed it could lead to major problems.*

*First I will bring the things up that concerns me directly.*

*No 1 is you are aware of my mental problems and I will not go into them in detail. These problems I am having stem from a long time ago and currently I am aware of them and is trying to sort them out with the help from Arnold. I am gratefull I have the opportunity as it is for me the one and only chance in life and mainly because of what has happened in my life I want to better my life and is determined to do so and I have succeeded in a few areas, this has given me the drive force to carry on no matter how hard.*

*That is where Arnold is coming into the picture and I need to see him as long as what he thinks I need help and by going to go on this new rehab course and councillors course I don't want me seeing*

*Arnold and doing this course to clash as both is important to me. Can we arrange some sort of schedule where we can accommodate both to all parties satisfaction.*

The letter carries on mentioning another 10 environmental and structural issues such as food, health, wanting to use a computer, behaviour and drug abuse of other inmates, and equipment for hobbies. He then concludes:

*Sandy, thank you for your time and trouble and when you have a gap, Bill and myself would like to see you together there is some things we want to discuss with you re the rehab.*

*From John*

Page 8b from a 11 pages letter written to me on 26 February 2000

Page 8b

*Arnold by the end of September I will finish this course and then there is the thing of posible getting transfered back to P3 and I know deep inside I wont cope and could go back to where I was. Therefore I want to know the folowing. I would like to work and stay in hospital because there I can help people with drug problems and at night I can still be on my own secondly to work as a teaboy thirdly to work at vehicle maintenance fourth to work with the dog unit. The only requirement I have is to be allowed to be in a single cell else I wont cope because Arnold I have two problems I wont cope with one is noise no 2 is having to many people around me*

*Arnold then we get back to the computers. I think we must scrap the working on computers as we are banned using them because the people did not want to listen to the members and to avoid any friction and trouble I rather withdraw.*

*Also we have an arangement to have our sessions on Fridays and now classes is clashing with it and to me both these things is very important but if I have to choose I rather have the sessions with you because it is important to me to sort my inner problems out once and for all.*

*Arnold I always have been atracted to nature and the openness around me, that is also why I love fishing and camping. To me that is the only way I can relax completly and being one with nature and have peace and quiet and it forms a major part of my future as it will heal me inside out.*

*Then there is my family. My mom, dad, Sister, brother and brother in law suports me all the way and I owe them big time and I know I can never repay them but I can take care of my mom and dad at least that I can do for them.*

*I am very concerned about my sister she havent vissited me since december 1999 and this is not like her at all. I suspect there is problems between my dad and brother in law that is why she dont come that is why I need to have a consultation vissit first just with my sister as soon as it can be arranged. I first want to talk to her before I talk to my mom, dad and sister if needed. Arnold I would not have asked but it has become a major issue and I stress a lot again I will speak to Sandra tomorrow 2/3/2000 re this problem and hopefully I can out this problem. My sisters phone no at home is 123 4567 at home the code is (011) if you can contac her and found out if she can or want to come see me with a consultation vissit.*

*Arnold loosing my family is going to destroy me and I cannot afford to it is all I have got outside pleas if you can help I will appreciate it.*

*My emotions and feelings fluctuate on an hourly base and sometimes it is very unsettling and anoying. Sometimes I get angry and sometimes I feel sad and as much as I try I cannot switch of and just forget. Yes sometimes the memories is very painfull indeed.*

*People are very strange as they believe what they want and nothing can change their minds.*

*I know it is not easy to change your old ways but I do recent being treated as a mental retarded kid and yes I do have a lot of anger inside of me for people that treat me like this and so far I have managed to stay calm but I ask myself for how long will I be able to control this anger I do not know.*

*Arnold so far I have manage by withdrawing completly any volenteering and I only do what I have to do because I feel it is my duty not because "they" want me to do it. Comunication wise I dont talk to them unless spoken to and that is fortunately net very often. We have been told we dont clean our cells well I have decided why must I clean my cell if they say I dont and it is only one person that is breaking down the moral and make us negative*

*He thinks because we have comited a crime we will never be normal people again. He is attacking my dinaty and that is where a problem is going to start because I know where I stand and although my crime was not for gain and it was not planed I see myself as a better person then what he is at least I try to improve myself and I am not breaking down other people*

*No my mind is set to improve myself and I will continue to do so even under not so good circumstances but I do my best and I know I will suceed in everything I have set out for me to do and to reach my goal Arnold my goals I have set out may sound strange to the average person but it is not for me so strange because it is what I want and what I decisde sure it will upset people but you will never be able to please everybody at the same time and I will not put myself on the spot just to please people Firstly I must be comfortable and it must be what I need if it pleases people good if not well I am sory but my days of pretending is over and it is part of my life that was. I do realize to say it is easy but to do it is not but I am willing to take that changes because I see where I am going and I have direction now.*

*Last night I went over step 1 and 2 of the course and I realize just how dificult it is to be realy honest with myself but I also saw my possibilities and even if it hurts I can make headway and suceed.*

### **Family issues**

Right from the beginning of the entries in the available parts of John's diary, it is clear that his family relations played a major part in his development and conceptualisations around the prelude and aftermath of the murder of his fiancé. It became an even more pressing issue after he has been arrested due to the fact that he felt that there was a lot of unfinished business in his family relationships to deal with. He felt restricted by the fact that family visits was very limited due to several factors. The biggest restrictive factor in this regard was the fact that practical arrangements for visits in prison were difficult due to the problem of overcrowding and the use of visits as part of the privilege and reward system in the S.A. Correctional Services management system. A brief sketch of his family set-up as well as a few selections from his diary and other documents reflecting some of his experiences or thoughts in this regard will help to highlight the significance of this aspect of his living world.

John was the oldest child in a family of five who lived in a suburb of one of the biggest cities in South Africa. His parents were married in 1958 and he was born in 1961. Both his parents were still alive during this research, but they were both battling with restrictive physical illnesses. His mother was a nursery school teacher and his father was a retired factory manager. He retired in December 1999 at the age of sixty-two due to medical reasons. John experienced his childhood relationship with his father as very bad and stormy, and his relationship with his mother as good and supportive. He had one sister, two years younger than himself. She was married and had two children of her own. Her family also lived in a suburb of the same town where they grew up, approximately fifteen kilometres from their parents. His relationship with his sister was very good. He also had one adopted brother, thirteen years younger than himself. During the time of the research his brother was working as a mechanic, still single and living with their parents. John saw himself as a sort of a surrogate father figure for his adopted younger brother and often felt responsible to share some of the lessons he learned in live with him. He often felt bad that his brother was getting involved bad friends and habits and wanted to protect him against these influences.

During his time of incarceration John often expressed feelings indicating different reasons for wanting to be with his family, or at least some members of his family. After the murder he started to experience some reconciliation between himself and his father. The reports of the findings in court make it clear that his mother played an important part in convincing him to confess and hand himself over to the police while he was still very confused and afraid. She was also the person who sometimes tried to be an advocate for him by phoning some of the staff members in prison. He often expressed fears of not coming out of prison while his parents are still alive. He felt a strong responsibility to do something to make their time of old age easier for them. He felt that the opposite was happening in actual fact while he was incarcerated. The following entries in his diary reflect some of his thoughts and feeling about his family:

About his support resources and future goals: Saturday, 1 January 2000

*Seven important people in my life I would dearly would like to have been with now is Mom, dad, Ben, Julie, Pieter, René, and Cameron. They are the core of my very being and whom I cannot do without My friend the problems I am in is and was caused by myself and yes I can only blame myself for it but*



one thing stands out I have go a family 1000 and I can only pray that I will be given the opportunity to be there for them as they need me **now**.

My friend I do have problems and I do have solutions I do have goals I have dreams all of these things together will make me a balanced normal person and I just have to work very hard at it and I know it will not be easy but if I want to suceed I have to be dedicated already I have tremendous progress and I have achieved what I though I never would. But yet again I have still got a way to go and yes a goal and a dream I have got is to be out of prison by June 2000 and I have got a lot running for me I just have to do it right now.

My friend how does it sound to have my own business it sounds good and it is a dream and it is something I will have soon

Well I think it is time I try and get some sleep as I am tired and I feel sad as well. We will talk later again.

Well my friend emotions is not a thing you just carry with you because it is the in thing. I see myself as a very emotional person and yes perhaps I show it far to easy but if I put it behind a mask then I will pretending what I am not. This very morning emotions is flashing through my mind faster than what I can grab hold of. I feel uterly frustrated and angry but it is a passive anger and I cant pin it down to an exat cause I think it is a combination of events and feelings and yes even that I cant sort out, mainly because I don't know where to start and it is a confusing mater all in all. It is a complex situation and I don't think I am equiped to tackle I am thinking of talking to Arnold and yes I will see him on the 5<sup>th</sup> January 2000.

Also I must see Alex (social worker who started the rehab who was transferred to a new location) as I want to start proceedings for going out on correctional supervision.

I have got a lot in favour but it all hinges on what the parole board will decide to do.

Also I have got the building blocks to start a new life. I have got a job, I have a permanent address and even got wheels. My friend I am looking at 3 options but I need more information before I can decide on a course of action. As this will be a very important decision in my life that can have a major influence on my life I have to have all the information I can get before I can set a course of action. I want to prepare and present my case as strongly as possible at it will be my one and only change and I cannot aford to fail as it will be detremental to my family as well as myself I do look at the goals I have got and also my dreams because that is what will give me courage to do what I have to do in life. Also I have 2 important issues I would like to do one is helping old people no two is to help with the kids at Avril Elizabeth home My friend thes two things has become an important thing in my life and I feel compeled to do whatever I can do I feel I owe my community and financialy I would never be able to repay them but there is other options and yes that is what I will have to look at and decide.

My hobie of plaster ornaments and computer cards and CV's will be an additional form of income also I am thinking about things I can do for creches.

My friend we talk later.

Well I am back I wrote 3 poems and yes in general these 3 is just thoughts in thought of a memory in time but still very real and perhaps also an outlet valve sometimes I feel good and sometimes I don't A memory is a very painfull thing and a very devastating thing but yes there is sweet happy ones.

I have a mixed bunch of memories that varies from good to very very bad and it was my own makings and I only got myself to blame if I did not gone insane that night things could have been very very diferent and perhaps even a happy one. For the rest of my life I will have this scar if it will heal well only time will tell and yes for as long as I am still in prison I don't think I will heal completely for that I need a family around me physically 24 hours a day and that I hope to be very soon.

### **Emotional expressions**

One of the reasons for keeping a diary that John often brought up during psychotherapy, was that writing was the only way in which he felt that he really could express his real emotions. He regarded himself as an "unpopular loner" during schooldays and he did not talk very easily. However, he always had very intense emotions to deal with. He often started entries in his diary with "my friend". It is almost as if his diary became a surrogate for an imaginary friend that he created during early childhood when he did not have real friends. He later shared his image of his ideal "life partner and wife" with this "pen friend" and then thought he found her in real life. His deepest emotions were always shared in the context of talking to his most intimate friend, partly imaginary and later

represented by his beloved. He expressed his anger, fear, jealousy, ideas of inferiority and incompetence in metaphors, poems and letters addressed to his "friend". When he had to face some discrepancies between his ideal friend and its representation in the form of his beloved, something snapped and it became too much for him. After the murder he continued to write to "his friend", although it is as if a "fusion" developed between his friend and his memories of his beloved.

The following selections contain some of his emotional expressions toward his friend and/or his beloved:

28 December 1996:

*"In a moment of anger"*

*Shock, blast, zap, gone.*

*Gone she's gone now!!*

*Dead, finished, gone now!!!*

*And strange how it all works.*

*How it can happen!*

*What is last in one's mind?*

*Only tiny fragments of a memory,*

*Flashed by morsels of time,*

*The faint Perfume of disbelieve!!*

*hangs around.*

*A tale too brief to tell.*

*Remember nothing in a flash of time!!*

*What have I done?!*

*Why has this to happen?!*

*To me, To you, To us?*

*On our wedding eve?*

*Oh why? Oh why?*

*What for?*

*There was no need for this!!!*

*07h00 28/12/1996 Babylove*

*I was extremely angry when I wrote these words angry with myself angry for what I have done something I cannot believe nor accept I could never have done this to my Teddybear there must be some answers soon. because I going nuts because of all the why's In my heart I know I could not have done it nor would I have done it I am sorry to say*

*Princess this is for you.*

He continues to write some more poems (songs of praise and love) to his beloved. After a note indicating that it is just past midnight, he starts jotting down thoughts and emotions in normal writing style again:

Poems I wrote since I am in prison is very negative and scary but that is just how I *feel* inside and the words just come sometimes faster than what I can write My worst one to date is in a moment of anger.

*When i think of Teddybear I get very heartsore sad I miss her constandly in the time we were together we only were one night appart and that was on the tea party for Lesley and Pat I missed her so much that night I couln sleep else we spend all our free time together and that is what both of us wanted. We went everywhere together we enoy each others company and like doing things together When I do come out of prison I want to put her name up at Johnnys place at Green Valley that is where we spent most of our special moments and very special love and care. We were so happy together I never once said a swearword to her or called her any degrading names we were so happy together we always sorted our arguments out with a lot of ease never did we went to bed upset with each other we always made a point of it.*

*I cannot accept and believe the fact that I will physical harm my Teddybear no way*

*When she said to me that night that she don't want me she don't love me and that I must leave I don't remember what → I said or she said or if anything was said Next thing I am in the bathroom wiping my hand. I don't know if I went back to the bedroom I don't remember if I did remember grabing the keys and went to phone her mom I don't even Remember if I locked the flat or not. I don't know there is so many patches I don't remember and it is not that I didn't want to I just cant remember*

*I don't know why*

*My Poems names is strange as well*

*"Mary", "Time", "If I could", "Tears", "Babe", "Someone", "Love", "Living years", "Only want to be with you", "Open hand", "Here non there", "I ask", "Pink Roses", "Tide", "You", "In a moment of anger", "My Princess", "We", "To Mary from prison",, all the others I wrote at home and these I want to publish and I dedicate them all to my Teddybear with love.*

He then continues to describe some visions and dreams of her, which he firmly believed were real appearances of his beloved. He confirms his never-ending love for her again.

Letter to his beloved: 3 January 1997 (Compare this with his experiences of "firsts" as described in the beginning of chapter 4)

*Dear Mary*

*Teddybear I think this is going to be the longest letter I ever wrote to you. I will begin at the beginning of our lives. It started that evening at Blackball in dundas. You won your singles game and the very first person you came to was me we huged and kissed for the first time then you gave me a most pleasant surprise at Sheraton I was playing my singles game and as you walked in my Babe that was a lovely surprise to see you there and it meant a lot to me I did not expect to see you that night I was so pleased after that we starting to see each other on a day to day base then I asked you if you want to be my girlfriend and that is when I found out you were going out with Bill. Rember I said Mary I give you the choice between Bill and Me. Babe I hated to let you make that choice and when you made that choice babe I was happy yes but also sad for you. I know it was not easy for you to make a choice like that I understand now only how dificult it must have been. Teddybear then we went to fetch your stuff from Bills place and on our way back you were crying so much and all I could do or say was to hold you in my arms but Babe I realy meant it when I say it was okay for you to cry I understand. then all the good times we had at Tonys place all the cuddles kisses hugs love was in the air around us like a blanket our hands that slip every now and then.*

*The day we moved into our flat and the happy moments we shared. Babe when I asked you to mary me oh it was so perfect whe you said yes. Babes you made us so happy then we ask Dad if we can marry and he has given his blessing and he was so happy for us. Teddybear you were so happy you had the whole universe stars in your eyes then we went to Green Valley that was the first time I got there. I fell in love again and the place Mary we had such a good time up there I will remember that forever. The first time we made love was at your moms flat first time we bath together the fist time I saw you naked the first time was oh so wonderfull my Babe Nobody can take that away from us. I remember the first time we out for supper that was at Tonys place my love that was a meal for a Queen and King Our friends we met at Green Barry and Patsy Dirk and Lisbe Carol at the Royal Hotel Darryl at the Lodge Peter at the Sunshine inn. Oh my Babe what have I done. We moved into our flat how happy you were and how hard we work to make it a place of our own a place we called*

home how we look forward to our New house that is being built now ag my Teddybear I am so heartsore now all I can think of is to be with you.

Teddybear I love grany so much she is such a lovely lady. The first time we went down to dads place how lovely it was meeting Jim and Chelsey. Jim still said to me I am the best boyfriend ever that you had babe and I am so proud to know people approved of us. Dad is closer than I am to my own dad but got some good news for you my dad and me has made peace. You wanted it so badly Remember The time we spend the night in the train at the lodge. Remember the way we made love that night Babe you have such perfect Boobies and Bonit is just as beutiful Rember our very special night when you allowed me to spy and touch oh Babe that brought us so close and our love has got very intense.

Babe then I made the mistake of my life by lieing to you and not being straight oh my love I wish i can undo all those things I am so sorry and I do regret it so much my Babe I rember your face when I gave you your ring the engagement party at Grans place oh Babe we were just Perfect for each other the action cricket we played the indoor soccer the times we went on a pub crawls and how we planed to travel around the world the music we listened to the cheap inn food and service at home the good quality times we spend together My love it was so good rembe we planne our children Ben and Sandy how we enjoyed all those things as a couple We planned our wedding for October 1997 Moving into our own house being by ourselves My love i cant believed I distroye everything this makes me so mad to think I could have do this to us. Well now I have to pay for it but my Babe i got only one wish and that is that I can undo all the harm all the hurt all the pain.

My beloved Mary I will never ever forget you or our happy glorious moments we had together I am treasuring them deep in my heart Body & soul I am so angry inside of me for me. My Babe please forgive me and please look after me there where you are in heaven I fear the day I have to explain to the Lord why have I done this to you I know you will allways rember me and love me as I love you. my Babes I have to go Now but we will talk soon. Rember love you for ever and ever and I will always think of you Teddybear thank you for your love and care You are one hell of a lady one of a kind and you are mine. Babe I hope you are happy and look well after and please forgive me for this sin I have committed o Lord help me through this and please look after my Beloved Mary and let us see each other again sometime in the future when it is my time.

22h15 Feeling a bit okay now but still upset and Angry and starting to Worry about my future I don't know what lies ahead can be called a future but no ja I deserve it I cant get away from it nor can I even cont run away and I wont I promised my Teddybear I will Pay an so I will even with my life.

### **Fiancée's parents**

One of the most difficult issues for John seemed to be how to deal with his fiancé's parents. He experienced her father (dad Dough) as a very understanding and reasonable man, but felt that her mother directly blamed him for her daughter's death and as nurturing many thoughts of revenge. It seems very obvious that these experiences are very close too exactly the opposite of the experiences of his own parents. He often experienced a need to talk to his potential in-laws, but also expressed some understanding for the fact that it would never be the same as before. He often expressed his feeling that it may never be possible to talk to her mother again, and that he thought it is better to leave it that way. The quotes from 24 and 25 December 1996 as well as 3 January 1997 express something about these ideas. The following quote from his diary expresses more of these feelings, approximately four years later:

Page 5 of a 9 pages letter to his beloved: Wednesday 5 January, 2000

... Your Mom dad and sister I can just imagine must have a heavy burden and a lot of hearache and perhaps also questions But live is strange in a way time can heal but yes then again a person can never forget. When I am outside I will not make any contact with them and if there is contact it will be from their side. I am still very fragile inside there is many a day I just break up and feel I cant carry on but somehow I know I just have to and babe yes I know you want me to be happy perhaps that night you sensed it cant work between us I don't know we never brought it up and yes if it was important you would have been the first to say something ...

### Repentance and compensation

Two of the words John used most often in his diary after the murder are “undo” and “regret”. Many of his poems – he even used titles such as “Regret” - and letters can, in a way, be described as lamentations about what he did, how much regret he has about it and how much he wished that it never happened or that it could be reversed. One thing that came out quite clearly in the court report, but was never mentioned very specifically in his diary was that he told his beloved a few lies about his qualifications and the nature of his employment. He wanted to impress her and felt that she might look down upon his real education and employment status. The murder happened shortly after he decided to confess to her that he told these lies.

During the last phases of psychotherapy with me, he often spoke about how he doubts it whether he would ever be able to be involved in an intimate relationship with another girl. He preferred to picture himself as doing some community service in a home for the elderly. He thought that he owed the community some compensatory service. The fact that his own parents were aging probably contributed a lot towards the specific context that he envisaged for his future voluntary service to other people.

The following extracts from his diary and the court records reflect some of the realities that he experienced in this regard:

#### Extract from the transcript of the court findings (Translated from Afrikaans):

“Probably because the accused wanted to impress the deceased, he told her and her mother several blatant lies. Some examples are –

1. that he was an engineer who was busy with further studies;
2. that he won prizes at university;
3. that his motor vehicle was stolen.

He went so far as to commit fraud with the help of his brother-in-law’s credit card. This was a very stressful period, which caused further inferiority and dependence. It also had the consequence that the accused continuously lived in fear that the deceased would find out about his untruthfulness and that that he could loose her.”

The report further describes how John decided to tell the truth to his beloved. At first she did not react very fiercely, but soon afterwards, she took off her engagement ring and threw it against the wall. After several arguments, she later also ordered him to take his things and leave. The crime took place after these incidents. Apparently he hit her on the head with a pipe-like object. When John came to his senses again, he phoned her mother, asked her to call an ambulance and tried to bandage his beloved’s wounds. When he discovered that she was dead, he fled to a coastal town, approximately 500 km away. He asserted that he could not remember either how the crime took place or how he got to the coastal town. From the coastal town, he phoned his own mother and she convinced him to return home and make a statement at the nearest police office. He did so.

11 January 1997

#### Lies

*Lies destroy*

*It take away*

*that what you got*

*It causes hate.*

*It drive in a wedge.*

*of no escape.*

*It cause Sorrow.*

*and pain.*

*Regret on top.*

*So why do I lie?*

*to someone.*

*very dear and close to me.*

*I have got no answer.*

*But I have lost you.*

*The love from you.*

*is no more now.*

*Oh the pain*

*tears and shame!*

*Why did I lie to you.*

*Oh my love.*

*13h35 11/01/1997 Babylove*

Next to several of his poems like this, he wrote the word “regret” in the margin. He also wrote a poem titled “Regret”.

### **Relationships**

A lot has already been said about John’s relationships with other people and the specific difficulties he had with it. In fact, about every entry in his diary is about his experience of relationships in his life. However, it is as if the more reserved focus before psychotherapy started to change towards a more other-centred, expressive approach with therapeutic progress. Some quotes from before psychotherapy and one or more from later in psychotherapy may reflect some of his changes in his basic attitude towards other in his living world:

#### Conflicting emotions: Wednesday, 7 May 1996

*I had a major argument with my dad this morning about parking my car in the yard and I get so angry I can kill him, but for mom’s sake I just keep quite. My feelings for Mary is confusing that I don’t know what to do or say. I think I must just Back of. If I start to fall in love with her it just won’t be fair on her, because she is attached to Bill and I do not want to hurt her in any way at all*

#### Approaching the new millennium: 26 December 1999

*Well my friend time has come and time has gone and yes looking back I can see a lot of things that I can sit and reflect on a lot I have learned about life and personally I have come out stronger but I also have become aware of my faults and yes in the next year I hope to at least learn how to cope with them but I would prefer to sort them out and eliminate all of it. I also realize It will not be so easy. I am in for a long hard road and there is many a hill to climb.*

*I should have years ago started but I have got the tendency to put of hoping it will go away but they don’t how I am forced to face them and now it is difficult as it has become very complicated and affecting my life in ways I don’t like*

*I also realized the value of being a normal balanced person. I know I cant be perfect but I can strive to be perfect as it will give me motivation, give me purpose for life*

*Things has reached a stage in my life where I don’t just think about myself but also take my family in consideration and yes I have got a family of seven that need me now and I have to be there for them, they have suported me trough a very dificult time and I did not ask but they ware there and now that they need me I want to be there for them. I am having dificulties to do just that but it is only a very short temporary thing and I am determined to overcome all this dificulties and obstacles in my way to reach my one goal of helping my family.*

*Dads car got stolen and that puts an extra burden on them not having wheels when they need it deperately and unreadable word can afford another set of wheels but yes somehow it will be sorted out Today I must finish a few things as Mom and sus is coming to visit me tommorow and hopefully René and Cameron as well*

*I miss the kids a lot and yes I love them dearly Yesterday when I phoned home Cameron answered and he is getting good at answering the phone and when he recognised my vioce you could hear he got exited and happy, that in turn made me feel good he has accepted me just like the rest of my family and it makes me feel good*

*Well my friend we will talk later today and for Now it is cleaning the shack for inspection and a cup of coffee time.*

Page 5, 6 and 8 of a 9 pages letter to his beloved: Wednesday 5 January, 2000, continued

*My world has become very small and I have no friends just a lot of people that know of me.*

*Thank God Mom dad, Ben, Julie, Patrick, Rene and Cameron is there and yes I have found a family I thought I lost. They are the most important people in my life right now and later I have a duty towards them and yes I owe them more than what I even can repay and yes you have learned me that live has got a purpose and babe it has cost you your life*

*Babe I am changed a lot and have done a lot of thinking and I have set goals and have plans for my feature and yes there is some goals I have that we have discussed and yes the most important is to help in any way I can at Avril Elizabeth home and then babe our older people there is another way I can be of help and yes I am in the process of applying for Correctional supervision and yes your family might not accept it but babe time has come for me to look at my own life that of my family and no I am not running away from my sentence I have got a feeling is far more severe than a prison sentence after all the pain of loosing you and the fact that you are not there any more that to me is most probly the worst and from that I can not escape at all. Some news is that I am still writing poems and yes there I lay my emotions bare but there is a twist as my poems is getting strange lately very deep I think and somehow there is a hidden meaning and yes I started my book as well I am still a long way from finished but it will be done in the end.*

*I see the time is 3h15 now and I still got a lot to say so a cup of coffee and a smoke then back to you....*

Page 8

*...Time has come for me and I know you would want me to carry on with life and yes you may be right but there is going to be some major changes and one thing I am avoiding with extreme care is not to get involved with another relationship as I am against hurting people and yes I am also scared of myself so that is one door I have closed very firmly and locked it and trew the key away. Yes I want play pool again at the club nor action cricket again no babe, that is asking for to much as that is going to open things in me I rather not go into. I have enough of tears heart ache and mental pain Babe it has begun to get to a stage where I have to go to the next chapter in my life and yes as hard as it may sound so hard is it for me One thing of being in jail is it opens your eyes to many small things in live you took for granted or havent even known about. I personaly have discovered I have got a weird creature streak in me and it came out when I made cards for my family and recently with my plaster ornaments and I think I am pretty good at it and yes Mom and sus is for ever arguing about who gets what*

*And Babe yes I have got plans to expand it into a business creating extra money also I am very keen on computers and yes I see opportunities there as well. Babe yess all in all I think I can still do a lot in the time I have got left. Yes I am going to live with my parents and no I will not allow them to pay I will be doing the paying from now on and I will take care of their needs there is changes dad lost a car yes it was stolen Now he has bought another car and yes he is on pension since 10 december 1999*

Intention to serve his parents and the elderly: Friday, 7 January 2000

*Well my friend another night no sleep what can I say, I am utterly disgusted, Frustrated and Angry with myself and yes my friend I have made a proposal for Arnold and for me to stay here*

*Now it is wait and see*

*My friend I wrote to Bear and I think it was not such a good idea. I said things that opened a lot of pain again and not a nice thing to have hanging over my head.*

*My friend I have got goals in my mind but it will stay there till I know where I stand and yes I hope it will be a stand where I can have less mental agony. as I have reached a stage where I cant cope and that is no good I am thinking about Mom and dad and yes am concerned about it and I know what to do but cant because of being in jail*

*Everything is so confusing in my mind that it uterly frustrating for me raising the mental state to a point I cant cope*

*I am hoping we can go to the shop today but I don't have much hope there. Yes that is still a problem I am thinking a lot of fishing again and yes I do intend to go as soon as I am allowed to. I have prioreties but they all seen to demand the same attention.*

*My friend we will talk later again*

*Well my friend it is later again and yes in a way I am okay but mentaly I am not so okay and it is time I do some serious sorting and thinking because it has become urgent not for me to come right mental and in my physical setup. My friend I am not sleeping well I am on edge when I am awake. I get very upset physicaly and mentaly and in the long run it is detrimental to me to my family and other people and my friend my family has become very important to me and yes not just physical but moraly and yes I owe them more than my life somehow I want be able to repay them but yes I will do my best to help them in all possible ways and it is a mission I have put on myself and one I will not fail in*

*Time is short and I have to get things moving now and Tommorow I will start with my papers for the Parole board.*

### **Adjusting to society after release and possible work context**

Even before he was halfway through his time of sentence, John often tried to envisage his first period "back in the normal community". Although he yearned for freedom and the opportunity to deal with all his "debts to relatives and society", he also feared that he was not going to cope with facing all his responsibilities again. One thing that he held unto as an anchor amongst all these uncertainties, is the fact that one of his previous employers promised him a job when he is released. His biggest fear seemed to be entering into new close relationships again. He often pictured himself as quite isolated and busy with some compensatory duties, without allowing himself the privilege of very close relationships, especially with members of the opposite sex who are not related to him. Although this meaning unit overlap considerably with others such as "relationships", "parole and/or correctional supervision" and "search for safe context", the point that needs to be highlighted is his new awareness of his vulnerability and the accompanying fear of himself committing a similar crime again. Ironically this new awareness turned out to be one of his best alibis to prove that he is not at very high risk of committing a similar crime again.

The following quotes reflects something about these experiences:

Page 6 of his 9-page letter to his beloved: Wednesday 5 January 2000, continued

*Well I am back Babe I think I will still have my sad days but then again I look at the happy times we had Things is getting better for me as I have got a job waiting for me*

*I have got a place to stay and yes I even got wheels waiting for me and babe I can only hope to be with my family soon as they need me now very badly and babe you know who gave me hope a while ago is René and Cameron their spontaneous love and care and yes their acceptance was the breakthrough and to me they are like my own and yes I have got dreams and I am looking forward to be with them*

*Oh I nearly forget I have got a plant in my cell and yes it give me great pleasure and it is now my main living thing around me.*

Page 4 of a 11 pages letter to me: 26 February 2000

*One thing I have learned is to be just myself and not to pretend to be what I'm not.*

*Arnold, maybe you wont understand but all I want is a steady and secure job even if the pay is not good as long as I can enjoy what I am doing, that is very important for me.*

*I got involved with Mary because I thought I love her but now I see it was because I did what I thought people expected from me and I pretend to myself and other people to be what I was not. This had disasterous results for me and my family. I have committed a murder because I simply could not cope*



*with all this pretending and eventually I just exploded. Never again will I allow myself to get in such a situation as I know I could explode again.*

*Yes I looked very hard at myself and have found I have some weaknesses I always was aware of and by pretending I am okay by using drugs and booze by doing things I normally would not do I have destroyed my own life I destroyed a family loved ones and now I see I was wrong. There is now way I want to go through that ever again. I cannot handle teasing and joking and most times I react with violence to it, something I have become scared of because numerous times in my life I have hurt people and here I refer to fights on school, in the army and in my later times and even here in prison and simply because of pressure.*

### **Parole and/or correctional supervision**

Right from the start of his incarceration John expressed some thoughts and feelings about his expectations of the phase between release from incarceration and complete freedom. It started by him trying to apply for a conversion of his sentence of incarceration into one of correctional supervision. Although most concrete evidence pointed towards the fact that even if he manages to pull through such a conversion (which did not seem very likely), it would be so expensive and it would take so long that it would not be worth all the money and effort. It is as if his emotions in this regard got the better of him. He never really wanted to give up on trying, even if everyone with some knowledge in this regard tried to explain to him that the probability is very little. The time of him qualifying for parole would anyway approach nearly at the same time as correctional supervision if he gets maximum credits for good behaviour during incarceration. In practice there is not a big difference between the two. However, it is as if he wanted to hold onto this possibility as a reminder of the fact that his incarceration won't last forever. Sometimes it was also a matter of him trying to transcend his immediate situation of suffering in many senses of the word. His intentions to try to get his sentence converted also became much stronger at the time of the turn of the century. It is as if the new millennium also indicated a new millennium in his life for him. He wrote about those experiences in the form of letters to staff members as well as entries in his diary. Apart from the references to these aspects in quotes already made the following one confirms it:

Page 7b and 8a of a 11 pages letter to me: 26 February 2000

*Arnold I want to finish this course Doing Life (Title of the rehabilitation counsellors training course) and I want to finish it and walk away not only to help other people but in the process helping myself to a better life. Already so far I have seen a lot of mistakes I have made, my faults, my weaknesses and also why I failed in so many times in my life. I learned from scratch again to be honest with myself, that was the hardest part for me. I don't understand yet fully all of my problems but I have become acutely aware of them and in a few cases I already has made progress but I am still not fully prepared to cope with them. For me to cope I need to fully realize my problems and I must look at the options and possible remedies and also I must get direction in my life by knowing what I want Arnold until a few days ago I did not know really what I want, now I do now I know where I stand*

*One of the main things I know is that by december 2000 I can be outside in normal life I still don't trust the facts and I need some help from you here by confirming with me Ms Cuttings exactly what is the ins and outs, how to go about it. Also here you can tell here I want to make use of that electronic monitor device for people on parole as I want to get involved helping the department sorting out problems so that in future more people can be helped and at the same time make it safe for the community to have us out there with them.*

*I know I have a job and that is extremely important to me. I have a place to stay and I have wheels to get to work and back and to attend any courses and to do my community service. I know here I cannot pick and choose where I must do community service but I would like to work with old people and young kids.*

### **Search for safe context**

A last issue that ran like a golden wire through the whole period of incarceration is John's search for safe context. It can be interpreted literally as well as figuratively. He very often wanted to be protected against possible physical assault and intimidation in prison. He also wanted to find people who understood some of his inner struggles and looked for support to find answers to all his questions. He wanted to find some reassurance that he would one day be able to have a normal life again. However,

he was sure that he would never find such a safe context without undergoing many “purifying and compensatory rituals”. The following entries were selected to reflect these issues in his own words:

Last page of his 9 page letter to his beloved: Wednesday 5 January, 2000, continued

After saying that he wants to live with his parents he continues:

*I don't know how he (his father) is going to cope because he can not sit still and do nothing and yes I want him to get involved with things that is going to keep him going his back is now all steel plates and pins and his lungs is not so good but yes he has got determination Mom also is much older and yes it is because of me she has got skin cancer that they cut out last week and now on the 8 she is having a eye op to remove cataracts and 3 months later on the other eye Julie is still her normal self but is having a hard time finding permanent work Patrick well there is the surprise the person who should be anti me big time is my biggest support and yes things is okay between us.*

*Babe I have seen so much of life in a short span of time and yes one day in my book it will be there and just perhaps it can help somebody out there that is also the main motive behind the book.*

*The poems is something else there it is more personal but also it is public property as it may let them understand wand perhaps make their own problems clear. Well babe I feel empty now and yes I think perhaps it is also my last letter to you maybe not time will tell it is not for me to decide but time will decide*

*But for me time has come to begin to close doors of my past and concentrate on my future.*

*Remember I always will love you forever and I treasure the good memories*

*Love you*

*John*

Page 1 to 3, 5 to 7a of a 11 pages letter to me: 26 February 2000

*Tension and friction is another factor that can and do influence my life in a big negative way and friction is something I have become extremely sensitive since the murder and yes it is beter for me to avoid situations where I have to react in ways I don't feel comfortable or going against my normal self I have asked myself why must I be what I am not just to please other people and my answer is, there is no reason why I should just be myself if people don't like it wel then they must leave me alone.*

*Recently I am treated like a child and I have picked up that “they” expect me to react to it in negative ways. Well they don't know yet but I keep quiet and do what they want, that is not what they expect and yes in the end it will backfire in their own faces and I will walk out being a stronger person.*

*Also recently “they” are trying to break me down trying to make me negative and yes tey are trying very hard they say I have to many priveleges and I disgaree because I see myself as 'n human being even though I have killed somebody. I would like to tell them it could and can happen to them very easily and what then are they still going to say there is too many priveleges if they sit in jail*

*Arnold here is where I am going to kick my heels in and fight back and I will fight back in a mental way and if needed I will go physicaly*

*I thought I will pretend again I will just go with the flow but to be honest with myself I will fight Also yesterday 29/02/2000 all of us is banned on the computers because somebody made a flop on the computer I recent it strongly why must I be punished for someone elses mistakes, but I also realized it will be no good to fight it as they will simply take the computers away.*

*Already we have to eat out of a steel dish like dogs and myself have got a problem with that, that I don't eat coocked food and salads together in one dish I never have and I will never do so with the result is I don't eat much and is loosing weight because of it but so let it be.*

*All these things is happening because “people” cannot stand it that people with drug problems can come clean and have a normal life it or rather they force a person into a situation were being negative is the only way they are happy*

*Yes taking away the TV does not bother me so they took away the computers so what next already they complain about having too many books, will they take that away as well I am just wondering. One thing I do know is “they” will not break me I have made a decision to stay clean from drugs and booze and I am totally committed even when I am outside also I made a decision to improve my circumstances and beter my life and what I got now comes from hard work and being dedicated no*

*way I want to give up on it in fact I want to improve further and here I have options but I am still tied down because I cannot act on my decision until I get the okay from the head of prison and I am going to fight for it believe me. Arnold I have made a sane and conscious decision to stop using drugs and booze and I have succeeded and by overcoming that problem has given me courage to sort my other out as well. I realize I cant be perfect and I may make mistakes but I am striving to be as near as perfect as I can.*

*Arnold I know time is against us but I am sure we can succeed and if you agree we can continue even when I am outside because I feel I may need it as I may encounter situations outside where I may need psychological help.*

*You may ask what is my proposed plans and goals and I will gladly set it out for you because I have visions of where I want to go and yes you may laugh at it or me, it does not matter and yes I may have to propose some things and I may have to alter to reach my goals but yes in the end I will be on top.*

### **B.3.2 Reduction and linguistic transformation: The period while in prison and in therapy (themes that emerged in therapy, meaning units of specific relevance to John's expressions):**

#### **Establishing rapport**

The process of establishing psychotherapeutic rapport with John, happened within a huge Correctional Services facility on the outskirts of one of the largest cities in South Africa. During the relevant time, most of the Government managed correctional facilities were burdened with a complicated over population problem. Related to this was the fact that the courts could not cope with the case load which resulted from a very high crime rate. The specific facility was designed to be an intake and distribution centre with no appropriate room for training and recreational facilities usually included in the designs of longer term correctional facilities. It has been adjusted to accommodate nearly all the possible categories of inmates from awaiting trial to maximum security. One building was mainly used for medium security male inmates awaiting trial (Medium A prison), one for sentenced medium security male inmates (Medium B prison), one for sentenced maximum security male inmates (Maximum prison) and one for all categories of female inmates (female prison). All the facilities, except the maximum prison had very few single cells. Most beds were triple storied and approximately two metres apart to save space.

I (the researcher) was the only psychologist on the staff for a total sentenced inmate population of nearly 5 000 at the time of the first contact. Due to the fact that permanent Correctional Services staff members were not responsible for unsentenced inmates, I have not met him during his awaiting trial period. He has recently been transferred from Medium A prison (inmate population approximately 10 000) to Medium B prison with an inmate population of approximately 3 000. My office was in the administrative building, 500 metres away due to a shortage of office space in the Medium B building. I usually had to make an arrangement to "borrow an office" when I did consultations in the prisons. Most inmates were not allowed to leave the premises of the building in which they were accommodated.

One of the social workers sent me a formal referral note, dated 8 October 1998. He attached a letter from John, addressed to the head of the prison, on 2 September 1998. The letter motivated John's requests to obtain a pair of prescribed spectacles and to see a psychologist. he highlighted the facts the Judge ordered psychotherapy as part of his corrective regime and that he had bad migraines and that he feared a second stroke (apparently he was told a few months ago that he may have had a minor stroke).

On 13 October I met him for the first time in the referring social worker's office. He was grateful and very co-operative. I followed the normal psychological protocol of doing a full present state examination within the context of his history. What stood out for me during the assessment, were a) his long history of substance abuse (mainly cannabis), b) his relationship problems and experiences of conflict with his father, c) his inability to cope with the current prison environment (see prison issues), d) his physiological problems such as migraines and hypertension, that writing was one of his natural therapeutic self-help tools, and e) his intense regret and bereavement.

I realised that practical issues had to be taken as a preparatory ritual to facilitate psychotherapeutic development. I followed the necessary procedures to obtain his previous psychological assessment report written for the court proceedings, I recommended regular psychotherapy and transfer to a single

cell in the Maximum security prison, I phoned his mother to investigate her possible supportive role, and I recommended a medical examination, a.s.a.p.

During the following period of time, the social worker in Maximum managed to get approval to use a section of the prison, containing 11 single cell as an accommodation facility for a substance abuse rehabilitation program stretching over a period of approximately three months. A new full time psychologist was also appointed to share my responsibilities. She was a young lady who was still busy with the final stages of her practical training and ironically Maximum prison was the safest place to accommodate her during that time. After a few follow-up psychological consultations with John and many communications with other staff members in this regard, we managed to get John admitted as one of the first group who did the in house substance abuse rehabilitation program. Although the new psychologist took over his psychotherapy, I was still involved in a supervisory capacity. John was eager to do the program from the start, and participated fully in all the activities

After approximately three months (in the beginning of 1999), when the program was completed, the new psychologist was transferred to another location, and I had to take over his individual psychotherapy again. In accordance with the AA/NA treatment model, it was decided to allow the people who went through the program to volunteer to be trained as lay counsellors and act in a supervisory capacity for the next group of selected rehabilitation program occupants. Another similar section of the Maximum prison, close to the “rehabilitation centre” was obtained as a “halfway house” for the inmates who just finished the program and were in the process of being trained as lay counsellors. Although another psychologist (also a young lady in the final stage of training) was appointed in January 1999, she opted not to take the responsibility for John’s individual psychotherapy. However, she did all group work and training sessions with the rehab. rehabilitation candidates. Later during the year, the male social worker that started the rehabilitation centre was also transferred to another location. His responsibilities were taken over by another young female social worker that was transferred from Medium B prison. John’s involvement in the lay counsellor’s training and activities made it possible for him to stay on in the appropriate section, containing single cells in Maximum.

All the practical arrangements amongst difficult circumstances helped to establish good psychotherapeutic rapport and trust that laid a sound foundation for the psychotherapy to follow. On 1 December 1998, the day after the day he had his first individual consultation with the new psychologist he wrote in his diary about his tiredness and tension. He noted that it hurts to talk about his beloved, but that he needed to in order to get it out of his system and carry on with his life. He also wanted to address practical need such as getting something to read and requesting permission to practice a hobby. He realised that Christmas was close and that it has been nearly two years after the murder. The elapsed time was long, but it also felt like yesterday for him. He wanted to start writing poems again.

### **Prison issues**

In spite of efforts to control it, factors such as overpopulation, gangsterism and intimidation, corruption and bribery among inmates and some staff members, frequent staff changes due to resignations and transfers, staff shortages, frequent transfers of inmates as a method of behaviour control, losses of valuable information in files of inmates and staff members, security concerns and illegal drug smuggling and abuse were ever present in the facility where John served his sentence. These issues almost always served as restrictive factors that had to be dealt with during psychotherapy. John sometimes referred to such factors directly or indirectly. However, he was afraid to write down such information. He often wrote letters to staff members to try to raise some concerns or request some adjustments to his privileges, indicating that the mentioned issues were part of his everyday life that he had to deal with. The general approach and atmosphere in prison that was regarded as necessary to survive in these circumstances was sometimes referred to as “a healthy paranoia”. One thing that John was particularly afraid of, was the ever-present possibility of having to return to Medium B prison after his time in the rehabilitation centre was completed. He was always afraid that he would not be able to stand against the stronger intimidation in a less protected environment where he has to sleep in a crowded cell with other inmates and where the focus is more upon safe custody than on rehabilitation.

On Christmas day 1998 John wrote in his diary that it did not feel like Christmas and that he missed his family. His memories went back far, but a lazy cleaner whose work he had to do irritated him. He mentioned that people tried to escape and that it was a total waste of time and even a life. Someone

died from a heart attack and the worst part of it was to see him and to clean the blood from the floor. The blood precipitated a re-experiencing of the murder scene he was involved in.

The entries in John's diary were much shorter now. However, he very seldom skipped a day. No relevant new themes were introduced in 1999. Some studying and writing assignments he wrote during this time in the rehabilitation program will be quoted in a later section of this thesis.

Christmas day 1999 was just like another day. John longed to be with his family and he particularly thought about the excitement of his sister's children. He felt powerless to change his situation and blamed himself for it. He had some new physical problems and wondered whether there was any purpose in his situation. He hoped that it would be his last Christmas in prison because he wanted to help his parents. He started to feel very annoyed by the noise that some of his fellow inmates made and blamed their cultural origin for it. He started to "hate them with a passion". He was looking forward to phone his family and knew that they would gather at his sister's house. He mentioned that his book was making progress and that he tried to put his emotions into words in it. He found it quite difficult.

After he phoned his mother he expressed some mixed feelings. They were well, but their car was stolen. This incident enhanced his ethnic hatred and he wrote that he wished that he could get his hands on them, that he would kill them and that he was even thinking of escape. He felt on the edge and anticipated an unstoppable explosion. He was also angry because his external psychologists report was lost during the time that the psychologists office in Maximum prison was unoccupied. His mother did not have a copy at home either and he wanted to apologise to her that he was so angry when she told him. He realised that he could not afford to have an emotional explosion now and he wanted to speak to his individual psychologist about it. He also wanted to write a request to the parole board to have the remainder of his sentence converted into correctional supervision and wanted to speak to the relevant social worker about it. He was determined to do things for himself now "if nobody wanted to help him". His main motivation was to help his ageing parents at home.

On the last day of 1999 John remarked that it was an end of an era as well as the end of a part of his life that he rather wanted to "file away in the deepest folds of his mind". He felt that he has learned from the last four years, but also failed himself and his family. The lesson was extremely painful and unforgettable for him. Now time has come for him to build on what he has learned and to carry on as his beloved would have liked him to. Although he still had many questions in his mind about what really happened the night of the murder and he was afraid of the possible answers, he felt ready to face the facts of his life as an obstacle, but also a stepping stone that helped him to learn. It has changed his life in a way that he never expected. He was not aware of his true mental condition because if it were the case, he would have done something about it for the sake of his beloved and himself. He could still see her in his mind and will always love her. He realised that there would never be another Mary in his life and he did not want another lady. He felt it would be unfair to another lady if he still has all the memories of his beloved inevitably causing him to make comparisons. He did a lot of introspection during the past three years and realised that there were things that he needed to do, but not for financial gain. He has been given a chance in life and wanted to use it to the full to help others to better the quality of their lives. He wanted to share what he has learned from his own experience and it was so drastic for him that he felt that there were no words to describe it. He was writing a book about it and also continued writing poems as a way of unloading events in his mind. He was still hoping for a breakthrough in terms of understanding himself. He was grateful for the love and support of his family that carried him through this difficult time. He felt closer to them than ever before. He did not know what was ahead in the New Year, but he had good faith that things can only go better. He wanted to get out and be with his family soon and intended to work hard on improving himself and decision making and finding some answers to his questions. When the actual hour of the turn of the century was close, he added that he wanted space: a private peaceful hole where he could curl up and dream dreams and stretch his imagination while he was planning and setting goals. He expressed some hope that the minister of correctional services would grant some prisoners a discount of sentence. He felt he deserved it and intended to surprise the minister if it happens. He also intended to complete his book and poems and had a gut feeling that he underestimated himself. He was convinced that he had the answers to his own problems, but felt angry and frustrated because he could not apply the answers to solve his problems.

On 20 January 2000 he wrote a letter addressed to the rehabilitation centre psychologist and social worker. He mentioned that he wanted to clarify a few potentially problematic points that concerned himself and others. His first concern was about a possible clash between the counsellor's course he was doing and his individual psychotherapy sessions. He was afraid that the times would clash in such a

way that he would have to terminate the individual therapy. He motivated how important it was for him to be able to continue with both. The letter carries on mentioning another 10 environmental and structural issues such as food, health, wanting to use a computer, behaviour and drug abuse of other inmates, and equipment for hobbies. He then concludes by thanking the social worker for her time and requesting to see her together with one of his fellow course attendants to discuss the rehabilitation centre.

On page 8b of a letter written to me on 26 February 2000 John wrote that he was afraid to go back to Medium B prison when the counseling course finishes in September. Therefore he requested to either work and stay in the prison hospital (a small sick bay close to where he was for the course), work as a tea boy, work at the vehicle maintenance unit or at the dog unit. Whatever his position, he required to be in a single cell because he was afraid that he would not be able to cope with many people around him or with noise. He wanted to stop trying to use the computers in prison, because it caused too much friction. Furthermore he asked for a change in the scheduled time for his psychotherapy session because it started to clash with his coursework and he wanted to do both. He felt to have peace and quiet around him would help him to heal. He mentioned that he was very concerned about the fact that his sister did not visit him since December 1999 and he suspected that it had to do with some conflict between his father and brother in law. He requested a consultation visit with his sister to clarify this matter. He expressed his fear of what it might do to him if he loses his family and explained how his emotions fluctuated very frequently. He felt that he was treated unfairly by some of the wardens recently and they did not regard anything what he did or said as worth listening to. He withdrew from them and did not volunteer for anything anymore. He was angry at one specific staff member. He was convinced that his goals were realistic and with good motives. He did not want to pretend any more. A review of step 2 in his course made him realize how difficult it was to be honest with himself, but it also helped him to see his own possibilities.

### **Family issues**

Right from the beginning of the entries in the available parts of John's diary, it is clear that his family relations played a major part in his development and conceptualisations around the prelude and aftermath of the murder of his fiancé. It became an even more pressing issue after he has been arrested due to the fact that he felt that there was a lot of unfinished business in his family relationships to deal with.

John was the oldest child in a family of five who lived in a suburb of one of the biggest cities in South Africa. His parents were married in 1958 and he was born in 1961. Both his parents were still alive during this research, but they were both battling with restrictive physical illnesses. His mother was a nursery school teacher and his father was a retired factory manager. He retired in December 1999 at the age of sixty-two due to medical reasons. John experienced his childhood relationship with his father as very bad and stormy, and his relationship with his mother as good and supportive. He had one sister, two years younger than himself. She was married and had two children of her own. Her family also lived in a suburb of the same town where they grew up, approximately fifteen kilometres from their parents. His relationship with his sister was very good. He also had one adopted brother, thirteen years younger than himself. During the time of the research his brother was working as a mechanic, still single and living with their parents. John saw himself as a sort of a surrogate father figure for his adopted younger brother and often felt responsible to share some of the lessons he learned in life with him. He often felt bad that his brother was getting involved with bad friends and habits and wanted to protect him against these influences.

During his time of incarceration John often expressed feelings indicating different reasons for wanting to be with his family, or at least some members of his family. After the murder he started to experience some reconciliation between himself and his father. The reports of the findings in court make it clear that his mother played an important part in convincing him to confess and hand himself over to the police while he was still very confused and afraid. She was also the person who sometimes tried to be an advocate for him by phoning some of the staff members in prison. He often expressed fears of not coming out of prison while his parents are still alive. He felt a strong responsibility to do something to make their time of old age easier for them. He felt that the opposite was happening in actual fact while he was incarcerated.

On New Year's day of the new century He wrote in his diary that he would have liked to be with his parents and his sister's family. They are the core of his very being and although he realized that it was his problems (incarceration) were his fault, he prayed that he could be with them at that moment. He expressed his determination to succeed in reaching his goals and two of them were to be released by

June 2000 and to have his own business. He had very strong emotions that he described as a passive anger caused by a combination of and feelings. He felt a need for help from his individual psychotherapist to deal with it. He also wanted to see the social worker who was transferred to another location because he thought that he could help him to go out on correctional supervision sooner. Furthermore he wanted to become involved in supporting the elderly and needy young children in the community to compensate for some debt he has towards them. His hobbies of making plaster ornaments and cards on the computer could become a possible source of income. He then wrote three poems and mentioned that they were acting as an outlet valve for his painful and sometimes devastating memories. He felt they represented a permanent scar, but that time and having his family around him all the time could bring some healing.

### **Emotional expressions**

One of the reasons for keeping a diary that John often brought up during psychotherapy, was that writing was the only way in which he felt that he really could express his real emotions. He regarded himself as an “unpopular loner” during schooldays and he did not talk very easily. However, he always had very intense emotions to deal with. He often started entries in his diary with “my friend”. It is almost as if his diary became a surrogate for an imaginary friend that he created during early childhood when he did not have real friends. He later shared his image of his ideal “life partner and wife” with this “pen friend” and then thought he found her in real life. His deepest emotions were always shared in the context of talking to his most intimate friend, partly imaginary and later represented by his beloved. He expressed his anger, fear, jealousy, ideas of inferiority and incompetence in metaphors, poems and letters addressed to his “friend”. When he had to face some discrepancies between his ideal friend and its representation in the form of his beloved, something snapped and it became too much for him. After the murder he continued to write to “his friend”, although it is as if a “fusion” developed between his friend and his memories of his beloved.

Eighteen days after the murder John wrote a poem “In a moment of anger” in which he tries to make sense of his emotions. He emphasizes how radically a short moment of insanity can change lives. He also tries to express something of his complete inability to explain why it happened, apart from knowing that it had to do something with anger. He then writes some songs of love and praise for his beloved. He mentions that the negative contents of his verses since he was in custody were scary for him but that the words just “came faster than he could write”. He longs for his beloved and realized that they were only one night apart since they started dating. He wants to put her name up at Johnny’s Place in Green Valley when he comes out of prison. He never used any swearwords or degrading names towards her before and he never went to bed before sorting out arguments they had. He found it very difficult to accept that he could harm her physically. He tried to remember what happened but could only remember some actions from before and after the murder, not the murder itself. He then writes down the names of his recent poems that are also strange for him and describes his recurring visions of her looking as if is trying to tell him something and confirmed his everlasting love for her.

On 3 January 1997 John wrote a letter to Mary, outlining his memories of their relationship from the beginning. He describes how they met at an evening of Blackball. She still had another boyfriend, and he “gave her the choice” between the two of them. He recalls his gladness about the fact she chose him, and her crying when they went to fetch her belongings from his apartment. He then runs through his sentiments and memories about their favourite places and events such as when they moved into their apartment and when he asked her father to marry her. He mentions that the first time they made love was in her mother’s flat and recalls other firsts such as the first time they bathed together and their first dinner date as well as their first weekend away at Green Valley. He also describes his positive memories of significant friends and family members such as her grandmother and her brother who told him that he was the best boyfriend she ever had. He recalls their night in the train again and how intimate and intense that was.

Then he calls into memory his “mistake of his life” when he lied to her about his background. He mentions his regret and his wish to “undo” what he has done. He mentions what the engagement at her grandmother’s place meant to him and how they planned to have a boy and a girl and even chose names for them. Their wedding date was set for October 1997.

He ends the letter by expressing his disgust and disbelief about the fact that he destroyed all those memories and that he caused so much harm and hurt. He expresses his adoration for her, thanks her for what she has done for him, asks for forgiveness and vows that he will love her forever and hopes to see her when it is his time. After he ended the letter he makes a note stating that he is worried about his future, but that he would pay for what he has done, even with his life.

### **Fiancée's parents**

One of the most difficult issues for John seemed to be how to deal with his fiancé's parents. He experienced her father (dad Dough) as a very understanding and reasonable man, but felt that her mother directly blamed him for her daughter's death and as nurturing many thoughts of revenge. It seems very obvious that these experiences are very close too exactly the opposite of his experiences of his own parents. He often experienced a need to talk to his potential in-laws, but also expressed some understanding for the fact that it would never be the same as before. He often expressed his feeling that it may never be possible to talk to her mother again, and that he thought it is better to leave it that way. The quotes from 24 and 25 December 1996 as well as 3 January 1997 express something about these ideas. In his 5 January 2000 letter to his beloved he confirms his intention not to initiate any contact with them when he is released from prison. As part of his reason for this decision he mentions that he is still very fragile inside and often feels that he is close to another breakdown. He mentions that she might have been right during the night of the murder when she sensed that things between them could not work out.

### **Repentance and compensation**

Two of the words John used most often in his diary after the murder are "undo" and "regret". Many of his poems – he even used titles such as "Regret" - and letters can, in a way, be described as lamentations about what he did, how much regret he has about it and how much he wished that it never happened or that it could be reversed. One thing that came out quite clearly in the court report, but was never mentioned very specifically in his diary was that he told his beloved a few lies about his qualifications and the nature of his employment. He wanted to impress her and felt that she might look down upon his real education and employment status. The murder happened shortly after he decided to confess to her that he told these lies.

During the last phases of psychotherapy with me, he often spoke about how he doubts it whether he would ever be able to be involved in an intimate relationship with another girl. He preferred to picture himself as doing some community service in a home for the elderly. He thought that he owed the community some compensatory service. The fact that his own parents were aging probably contributed a lot towards the specific context that he envisaged for his future voluntary service to other people.

The following extracts from the court records reflect some of the realities that he experienced in this regard:

"Probably because the accused wanted to impress the deceased, he told her and her mother several blatant lies. Some examples are –

1. that he was an engineer who was busy with further studies;
2. that he won prizes at university;
3. that his motor vehicle was stolen.

He went so far as to commit fraud with the help of his brother-in-law's credit card. This was a very stressful period, which caused further inferiority and dependence. It also had the consequence that the accused continuously lived in fear that the deceased would find out about his untruthfulness and that that he could lose her."

The report further describes how John decided to tell the truth to his beloved. At first she did not react very fiercely, but soon afterwards, she took off her engagement ring and threw it against the wall. After several arguments, she later also ordered him to take his things and leave. The crime took place after these incidents. Apparently he hit her on the head with a pipe-like object. When John came to his senses again, he phoned her mother, asked her to call an ambulance and tried to bandage his beloved's wounds. When he discovered that she was dead, he fled to a coastal town, approximately 500 km away. He asserted that he could not remember either how the crime took place or how he got to the coastal town. From the coastal town, he phoned his own mother and she convinced him to return home and make a statement at the nearest police office. He did so.

On 11 January 1997 he wrote a poem with the title "Lies" in which he tries to express which insights a retrospective look at the consequences of the lies he told brought to him. It destroys, takes away, causes hate, drives in a wedge and causes sorrow, pain and regret. He ends off with an ironic and rhetoric "why did I lie to you?"



Next to several of his poems like this, he wrote the word “regret” in the margin. He also wrote a poem titled “Regret”.

### **Relationships**

A lot has already been said about John’s relationships with other people and the specific difficulties he had with it. In fact, about every entry in his diary is about his experience of relationships in his life. However, it is as if the more reserved focus before psychotherapy started to change towards a more other-centred, expressive approach with therapeutic progress. Before the murder, on 7 May 1996 he wrote in his diary that he had an argument with his father and that he got so angry that he could kill him, but that he just keep quiet for his mother’s sake. He also wrote about the fact that he started to fall in love with Mary, but that he thought it would be better to “back off” because she was still in love with Bill and that he did not want to hurt her.

After approximately one year in psychotherapy after the murder, on 26 December 1999 he wrote that he has learned a lot about life, that he became stronger and that he became aware of his shortcomings. He wanted to work on his shortcomings, but also realised that it is not going to be fast and easy. He avoided addressing it in the past and realised how complicated the required process of change within himself became because of his procrastination. He strived to become a more balanced person and he wanted to take his relatives more into consideration because he was thankful for their support during difficult times and wanted to contribute something in their lives now. He thought about his fathers difficulties after his car was stolen and he wanted to prepare for his mother and sisters expected visit the next day. He missed his sister’s children and hoped they would come along.

Ten days later, on 5 January 2000 he continued to express some experiences about relationships in his life in his letter to Mary. He wrote that his world has become very small and that he had no friends. Only people who knew him. he thanked God for his immediate relatives and again expressed his indebtedness towards them. He thanked Mary that she learned him that life has a purpose, but regretted the fact that it cost her her life. He told her about his intention to serve the elderly and needy children in institutions and that he did not want to do it to escape his punishment. He started to write poems again and a book as well. There were a twist in his poems and they had a hidden, deeper now.

After a coffee break he told her that he decided that it was time to go on with his life now and that there were going to be major changes. He decided to avoid getting involved in heterosexual relationships again because he does not like to hurt people and he was scared of himself. he wanted to do some of the recreational activities again that they used to do together, such as pool and indoor cricket. he had enough emotional pain now and wanted to start a new chapter in his life, although it is going to be very hard for him. He also discovered through the things that came out in the cards and plaster ornaments that he made that he had a “weird creature streak” in him. It gave satisfaction to see that it gave his mother and sister some pleasure. He wanted to go and live with his parents and mentioned that his father bought a new car and that he was on pension since 10 December 1999.

Two days later he wrote in his diary that he was “utterly disgusted, frustrated and angry with himself. He mentioned that he proposed to stay in the rehabilitation section of the complex and that he wrote a letter to Mary. Writing the letter opened a lot of emotional pain in him again. he felt that he could not cope so well any more and that he felt trapped because he could not implement his intentions to serve his family and the elderly while he was in prison. He felt it was detrimental to keep up his moral that he should be enabled to do this and he intended to write a proposal to the parole board the next day.

### **Adjusting to society after release and possible work context**

Even before he was halfway through his time of sentence, John often tried to envisage his first period “back in the normal community”. Although he yearned for freedom and the opportunity to deal with all his “debts to relatives and society”, he also feared that he was not going to cope with facing all his responsibilities again. One thing that he held unto as an anchor amongst all these uncertainties, is the fact that one of his previous employers promised him a job when he is released. His biggest fear seemed to be entering into new close relationships again. He often pictured himself as quite isolated and busy with some compensatory duties, without allowing himself the privilege of very close relationships, especially with members of the opposite sex who are not related to him. Although this meaning unit overlap considerably with others such as “relationships”, “parole and/or correctional supervision” and “search for safe context”, the point that needs to be highlighted is his new awareness of his vulnerability and the accompanying fear of himself committing a similar crime again. Ironically this new awareness turned out to be one of his best alibis to prove that he is not at very high risk of committing a similar crime again.

In his letter to Mary on 5 January 2000 John mentioned that things were getting better for him, that he had a job waiting for him, a place to stay and even a car waiting for him. He mentioned that his family needed him very badly and that his sister's children's acceptance of him caused a breakthrough for him. He then returned his thoughts to his cell and mentioned that his plant was his main living thing around him and that it gave him great pleasure.

On 26 February 2000 he wrote in a letter addressed to me that he learned to be himself and not to pretend to be what he is not. He just longed to have a steady and secure job again, even if the remuneration is not too good. He realized that he got involved with Mary because he wanted to pretend that he was someone that he was not. Eventually he just could not cope with the pretending any more and he exploded. He did not want to allow that to happen again. He realized that he could not handle teasing right through his school and his national service up to his adult life and even now in prison. He experienced it as pressure and it made him aggressive.

### **Parole and/or correctional supervision**

Right from the start of his incarceration John expressed some thoughts and feelings about his expectations of the phase between release from incarceration and complete freedom. It started by him trying to apply for a conversion of his sentence of incarceration into one of correctional supervision. Although most concrete evidence pointed towards the fact that it was very unlikely, it is as if his emotions in this regard got the better of him. He never really wanted to give up on trying, even if everyone with some knowledge in this regard tried to explain to him that the probability is very little. It is as if he wanted to hold onto this possibility as a reminder of the fact that his incarceration won't last forever. Sometimes it was also a matter of him trying to transcend his immediate situation of suffering in many senses of the word. His intentions to try to get his sentence converted also became much stronger at the time of the turn of the century. The new millennium probably also indicated a new millennium in his life for him. He wrote about those experiences in the form of letters to staff members as well as entries in his diary. In his letter to me on 26 February 2000 he explained to me why it was so important for him to finish the counselor's course. He mentioned that it already helped him to get some new insights in his own weaknesses, but that he still had to learn to cope with them. He stated that he reset his goal to be out of prison by December 2000. He asked some advice on how to go about to achieve this goal and mentioned that he heard about an electronic monitor device for people on parole and that he would like to use it. He also intended to help "the department sorting out problems so that in future more people and be helped...". He confirmed that he had some sufficient support systems at home and that he would like to serve the elderly and children.

### **Search for safe context**

A last issue that ran like a golden wire through the whole period of incarceration is John's search for safe context. It can be interpreted literally as well as figuratively. He very often wanted to be protected against possible physical assault and intimidation in prison. He also wanted to find people who understood some of his inner struggles and looked for support to find answers to all his questions. He wanted to find some reassurance that he would one day be able to have a normal life again. However, he was sure that he would never find such a safe context without undergoing many "purifying and compensatory rituals".

In the letter John wrote to Mary on 5 January 2000 he confirmed his concern about his father's back and lung problems and his mother's skin cancer and cataracts on the eyes. His sister had some difficulty finding a permanent job and his brother in law was surprisingly supportive towards him. He wanted to help all of them and mentioned that one of the motives behind writing a book was also to help others through sharing with them the many things that he learned. His poems were more personal for him, but he also thought that someone else might find some clarifications for their own problems there. He mentions that this may be his letter to her, but "only time will tell". He will always remember her and treasure the good memories.

His letter to me on 26 February 2000 centers on John's search for safe context. He mentioned that tension and friction may sometimes make him act in ways that he does not feel comfortable with, that he felt extremely sensitive since the murder and that he decided to avoid situations that may be hazardous to him. He felt that he has recently been treated like a child by some prison wardens and that he just kept quiet and did what was required from him, hoping that it would "backfire" towards them. He was told that he had too many privileges and he disagreed. He expressed his determination to fight back mentally and even physically "if needed". They were recently banned from the computers due to a mistake someone else made and he felt it was unfair. They were eating out of dishes "like dogs" and he was losing weight. He would not allow them to break him and will stay clean from drugs

and alcohol even if he is out of prison. He felt tied down because he could not act upon his decision to serve in the community, but was determined not to give up. He expressed a need to go on with psychotherapy, even when he is outside prison and he wanted to formulate his future plans.

### **B.3.3 Elimination of statements not explicating the meaning of 'crimes of passion'**

#### **Establishing rapport**

The process of establishing psychotherapeutic rapport with John, happened within a huge Correctional Services facility on the outskirts of one of the largest cities in South Africa. During the relevant time, most of the government managed correctional facilities were burdened with a complicated over population problem. Related to this was the fact that the courts could not cope with the caseload that resulted from a very high crime rate. The specific facility was designed to be an intake and distribution centre with no appropriate room for training and recreational facilities usually included in the designs of longer term correctional facilities. It has been adjusted to accommodate nearly all the possible categories of inmates from awaiting trial to maximum security. One building was mainly used for medium security male inmates awaiting trial (Medium A prison), one for sentenced medium security male inmates (Medium B prison), one for sentenced maximum security male inmates (Maximum prison) and one for all categories of female inmates (female prison). All the facilities, except the maximum prison had very few single cells. Most beds were triple storied and approximately two metres apart to save space.

I (the researcher) was the only psychologist on the staff for a total sentenced inmate population of <sup>7</sup>nearly 5 000 at the time of the first contact. Due to the fact that permanent Correctional Services staff members were not responsible for unsentenced inmates, I have not met him during his awaiting trial period. He has recently been transferred from Medium A prison (inmate population approximately 10 000) to Medium B prison with an inmate population of approximately 3 000. My office was in the administrative building, 500 metres away due to a shortage of office space in the Medium B building. I usually had to make an arrangement to "borrow an office" when I did consultations in the prisons. Most inmates were not allowed to leave the premises of the building in which they were accommodated.

One of the social workers sent me a formal referral note, dated 8 October 1998. He attached a letter from John, addressed to the head of the prison, on 2 September 1998. The letter motivated John's requests to obtain a pair of prescribed spectacles and to see a psychologist. John highlighted the facts the Judge ordered psychotherapy as part of his corrective regime and that he had bad migraines and that he feared a second stroke (apparently he was told a few months ago that he may have had a minor stroke).

On 13 October I met him for the first time in the referring social worker's office. He was grateful and very co-operative. I followed the normal psychological protocol of doing a full present state examination. What stood out for me during the assessment, were a) his long history of substance abuse (mainly cannabis), b) his relationship problems and experiences of conflict with his father, c) his inability to cope with the current prison environment (see prison issues), d) his physiological problems such as migraines and hypertension, e) that writing was one of his natural therapeutic self-help tools, and f) his intense regret and bereavement.

I realised that practical issues had to be taken as a preparatory ritual to facilitate psychotherapeutic development. I followed the necessary procedures to obtain his previous psychological assessment report written for the court proceedings, I recommended regular psychotherapy and transfer to a single cell in the Maximum security prison, I phoned his mother to investigate her possible supportive role, and I recommended a medical examination, a.s.a.p.

During the following period of time, the social worker in Maximum managed to get approval to use a section of the prison, containing 11 single cell as an accommodation facility for a substance abuse rehabilitation program stretching over a period of approximately three months. A new full time psychologist was also appointed to share my responsibilities. She was a young lady who was still busy with the final stages of her practical training and ironically Maximum prison was the safest place to accommodate her during that time. After a few follow-up psychological consultations with John and many communications with other staff members in this regard, we managed to get John admitted as one of the first groups who did the in house substance abuse rehabilitation program. Although the new

---

<sup>7</sup> John's comment on 31 October 2002: "now close to 10 000".

psychologist took over his psychotherapy, I was still involved in a supervisory capacity. John was eager to do the program from the start, and participated fully in all the activities

After approximately three months (in the beginning of 1999), when the program was completed, the new psychologist was transferred to another location, and I had to take over his individual psychotherapy again. In accordance with the AA/NA treatment model, it was decided to allow the people who went through the program to volunteer to be trained as lay counsellors and act in a supervisory capacity for the next group of selected rehabilitation program occupants. Another similar section of the Maximum prison, close to the “rehabilitation centre” was obtained as a “halfway house” for the inmates who just finished the program and were in the process of being trained as lay counsellors. Although another psychologist (also a young lady in the final stage of training) was appointed in January 1999, she opted not to take the responsibility for John’s individual psychotherapy. However, she did all group work and training sessions with the rehabilitation candidates. Later during the year, the male social worker that started the rehabilitation centre was also transferred to another location. His responsibilities were taken over by another young female social worker that was transferred from Medium B prison. John’s involvement in the lay counsellor’s training and activities made it possible for him to stay on in the appropriate section, containing single cells in Maximum. All the practical arrangements amongst difficult circumstances helped to establish good psychotherapeutic rapport and trust that laid a sound foundation for the psychotherapy to follow.

On 1 December 1998, the day after the day he had his first individual consultation with the new psychologist he wrote in his diary about his tiredness and tension. He noted that it hurts to talk about his beloved, but that he needed to in order to get it out of his system and carry on with his life. He also wanted to address practical need such as getting something to read and requesting permission to practice a hobby. He realised that Christmas was close and that it has been nearly two years after the murder. The elapsed time was long, but it also felt like yesterday for him. He wanted to start writing poems again.

### **Prison issues**

In spite of efforts to control it, factors such as overpopulation, gangsterism and intimidation, corruption and bribery among inmates and some staff members, frequent staff changes due to resignations and transfers, staff shortages, frequent transfers of inmates as a method of behaviour control, losses of valuable information in files of inmates and staff members, security concerns and illegal drug smuggling and abuse were ever present in the facility where John served his sentence. These issues almost always served as restrictive factors that had to be dealt with during psychotherapy. John sometimes referred to such factors directly or indirectly. However, he was afraid to write down such information. He often wrote letters to staff members to try to raise some concerns or request some adjustments to his privileges, indicating that the mentioned issues were part of his everyday life that he had to deal with. The general approach and atmosphere in prison that was regarded as necessary to survive in these circumstances was sometimes referred to as “a healthy paranoia”. One thing that John was particularly afraid of, was the ever-present possibility of having to return to Medium B prison after his time in the rehabilitation centre was completed. He was always afraid that he would not be able to stand against the stronger intimidation in a less protected environment where he has to sleep in a crowded cell with other inmates and where the focus is more upon safe custody than on rehabilitation.

On Christmas day 1998 John wrote in his diary that it did not feel like Christmas and that he missed his family. His memories went back far, but a lazy cleaner whose work he had to do irritated him. He mentioned that people tried to escape and that it was a total waste of time and even a life. Someone died from a heart attack and the worst part of it was to see him and to clean the blood from the floor. The blood precipitated a re-experiencing of the murder scene he was involved in.

The entries in John’s diary were much shorter now. However, he very seldom skipped a day. No relevant new themes were introduced in 1999. Some studying and writing assignments he wrote during this time in the rehabilitation program will be quoted in a later section of this thesis.

Christmas day 1999 was just like another day. John longed to be with his family and he particularly thought about the excitement of his sister’s children. He felt powerless to change his situation and blamed himself for it. He had some new physical problems and wondered whether there was any purpose in his situation. He hoped that it would be his last Christmas in prison because he wanted to help his parents. He started to feel very annoyed by the noise that some of his fellow inmates made and blamed their cultural origin for it. He started to “hate them with a passion“. He was looking forward to phone his family and knew that they would gather at his sister’s house. He mentioned that

<sup>8</sup>his book was making progress and that he tried to put his emotions into words in it. He found it quite difficult.

After he phoned his mother he expressed some mixed feelings. They were well, but their car was stolen. This incident enhanced his ethnic hatred and he wrote that he wished that he could get his hands on the thieves, that he would kill them and that he was even thinking of escape. He felt on the edge and anticipated an unstoppable emotional explosion. He was also angry because his external psychologist's report was lost during the time that the psychologist's office in Maximum prison was unoccupied. His mother did not have a copy at home either and he wanted to apologise to her that he was so angry when she told him. He realized that he could not afford to have an emotional explosion now and he wanted to speak to his individual psychologist about it. He also wanted to write a request to the parole board to have the remainder of his sentence converted into correctional supervision and wanted to speak to the relevant social worker about it. <sup>9</sup>He was determined to do things for himself now "if nobody wanted to help him". His main motivation was to help his aging parents at home.

On the last day of 1999 John remarked that it was the end of an era as well as the end of a part of his life that he rather wanted to "file away in the deepest folds of his mind". He felt that he has learned from the last four years, but also failed himself and his family. The lesson was extremely painful and unforgettable for him. Now time has come for him to build on what he has learned and to carry on as his beloved would have liked him to. Although he still had many questions in his mind about what really happened the night of the murder and he was afraid of the possible answers, he felt ready to face the facts of his life as an obstacle, but also a stepping stone that helped him to learn. It has changed his life in a way that he never expected. He was not aware of his true mental condition because if it were the case, he would have done something about it for the sake of his beloved and himself. He could still see her in his mind and will always love her. He realized that there would never be another Mary in his life and he did not want another lady. He felt it would be unfair to another lady if he still has all the memories of his beloved inevitably causing him to make comparisons. He did a lot of introspection during the past three years and realized that there were things that he needed to do, but not for financial gain. He has been given a chance in life and wanted to use it to the full to help others to better the quality of their lives. He wanted to share what he has learned from his own experience and it was so drastic for him that he felt that there were no words to describe it. He was writing a book about it and also continued writing poems as a way of unloading events in his mind. He was still hoping for a breakthrough in terms of understanding himself. He was grateful for the love and support of his family that carried him through this difficult time. He felt closer to them than ever before. He did not know what was ahead in the New Year, but he had good faith that things can only go better. He wanted to get out and be with his family soon and intended to work hard on improving himself, decision making and finding some answers to his questions. When the actual hour of the turn of the century was close, he added that he wanted space: a private peaceful hole where he could curl up and dream dreams and stretch his imagination while he was planning and setting goals. He expressed some hope that the minister of correctional services would grant some deserving prisoners a discount of sentence. He also intended to complete his book and poems and had a gut feeling that he underestimated himself. He was convinced that he had the answers to his own problems, but felt angry and frustrated because he could not apply the answers to solve his problems yet.

On 20 January 2000 he wrote a letter addressed to the rehabilitation centre psychologist and social worker. He mentioned that he wanted to clarify a few potentially problematic points that concerned him self and others. His first concern was about a possible clash between the counselor's course he was doing and his individual psychotherapy sessions. He was afraid that the times would clash in such a way that he would have to terminate the individual therapy. He motivated how important it was for him to be able to continue with both. The letter carries on mentioning another 10 environmental and structural issues such as food, health, wanting to use a computer, bad behaviour and drug abuse of other inmates, and equipment for hobbies. He then concludes by thanking the social worker for her time and requesting to see her together with one of his fellow course attendants to discuss the rehabilitation centre.

---

<sup>8</sup> John's comment on 31 October 2002: "I am making constant notes and sometimes essays for remembering things for when I get home on the computer because I decided I will write what is in my mind on a given time and later arrange it so that it will make sense."

<sup>9</sup> John's comment on 31 October 2002: "I still am fighting the system and it has been noted by the members (popular name for Correctional Services personnel - researcher's comment) because they became more helpful and respect me for what I am."

On page 8b of a letter written to me on 26 February 2000 John also wrote that he was afraid to go back to Medium B prison when the counseling course finishes in September. Therefore he requested to either work and stay in the prison hospital (a small sick bay close to where he was for the course), work as a tea boy, work at the vehicle maintenance unit or at the dog unit. Whatever his position, he required to be in a single cell because he was afraid that he would not be able to cope with many people around him or with noise. He wanted to stop trying to use the computers in prison, because it caused too much friction. Furthermore he confirmed his request for a change in the scheduled time for his psychotherapy sessions.<sup>10</sup> He felt to have peace and quiet around him would help him to heal.

He mentioned that he was very concerned about the fact that his sister did not visit him since December 1999 and he suspected that it had to do with some conflict between his father and brother in law. He requested a consultation visit with his sister to clarify this matter. He expressed his fear of what it might do to him if he loses his family and explained how his emotions fluctuated very frequently. He felt that he was treated unfairly by some of the wardens recently and they did not regard anything what he did or say as worth listening to. He withdrew from them and did not volunteer for anything anymore. He was angry with one specific staff member. He was convinced that his goals were realistic and with good motives. He did not want to pretend any more. A review of step 2 in his course made him realize how difficult it was to be honest with himself, but it also helped him to see his own possibilities.

### **Family issues**

Right from the beginning of the entries in the available parts of John's diary, it is clear that his family relations played a major part in his development and conceptualisations around the prelude and aftermath of the murder of his fiancé. It became an even more pressing issue after he has been arrested due to the fact that he felt that there was a lot of unfinished business in his family relationships to deal with.

John was the oldest child in a family of five who lived in a suburb of one of the biggest cities in South Africa. His parents were married in 1958 and he was born in 1961. Both his parents were still alive during this research, but they were both battling with restrictive physical illnesses. His mother was a nursery school teacher and his father was a retired factory manager. He retired in December 1999 at the age of sixty-two due to medical reasons. John experienced his childhood relationship with his father as very bad and stormy and his relationship with his mother as good and supportive. He had one sister, two years younger than himself. She was married and had two children of her own. Her family also lived in a suburb of the same town where they grew up, approximately fifteen kilometres from their parents. His relationship with his sister was very good. He also had one adopted brother, thirteen years younger than himself. During the time of the research his brother was working as a mechanic, still single and living with their parents. John saw himself as a sort of a surrogate father figure for his adopted younger brother and often felt responsible to share some of the lessons he learned in life with him. He often felt bad that his brother was getting involved with bad friends and habits and wanted to protect him against these influences.

During his time of incarceration John often expressed feelings indicating different reasons for wanting to be with his family, or at least some members of his family. After the murder he started to experience some reconciliation between himself and his father. The reports of the findings in court make it clear that his mother played an important part in convincing him to confess and hand himself over to the police while he was still very confused and afraid. She was also the person who sometimes tried to be an advocate for him by phoning some of the staff members in prison. He often expressed fears of not coming out of prison while his parents are still alive. He felt a strong responsibility to do something to make their time of old age easier for them. He felt that the opposite was happening in actual fact while he was incarcerated.

On New Years day of the new century He wrote in his diary that he would have liked to be with his parents and his sister's family. They are the core of his very being and although he realized that it was his problems (incarceration) were his fault, he prayed that he could be with them at that moment. He expressed his determination to succeed in reaching his goals and two of them were to be released by June 2000 and<sup>11</sup> to have his own business. He had very strong emotions that he described as a passive anger caused by a combination of circumstances and feelings. He felt a need for help from his

---

<sup>10</sup> John's comment on 31 October 2002: "It still do help and yes, it is the only way for me to calm down."

<sup>11</sup> John's comment on 31 October 2002: "I already have my business plans drawn up and I will partner with my brother."

individual psychotherapist to deal with it. He also wanted to see the social worker that was transferred to another location because he thought that he could help him to go out on correctional supervision sooner. Furthermore he wanted to become involved in supporting the elderly and needy young children in the community to compensate for some debt he has towards them. His hobbies of making plaster ornaments and cards on the computer could become a possible source of income. He then wrote three poems and mentioned that they were acting as an outlet valve for his painful and sometimes devastating memories. He felt they represented a permanent scar, but that time and being with his family could bring some healing.

### **Emotional expressions**

One of the reasons for keeping a diary that John often brought up during psychotherapy, was that writing was the only way in which he felt that he really could express his real emotions. He regarded himself as an “unpopular loner” during schooldays and he did not talk very easily. However, he always had very intense emotions to deal with. He often started entries in his diary with “my friend”. It is almost as if his diary became a surrogate for an imaginary friend that he created during early childhood when he did not have real friends. He later shared his image of his ideal “life partner and wife” with this “pen friend” and then thought he found her in real life. His deepest emotions were always shared in the context of talking to his most intimate friend, partly imaginary and later often represented by his beloved. He expressed his anger, fear, jealousy and ideas of inferiority and incompetence in metaphors, poems and letters addressed to his “friend”. When he had to face some discrepancies between his ideal friend and its representation in the form of his beloved, something snapped and it became too much for him. After the murder he continued to write to “his friend”, although it is as if a “fusion” developed between his friend and his memories of his beloved.

Eighteen days after the murder John wrote a poem “In a moment of anger” in which he tries to make sense of his emotions. He emphasizes how radically a short moment of insanity can change lives. He also tries to express something of his complete inability to explain why it happened, apart from knowing that it had to do something with anger. He then writes some songs of love and praise for his beloved. He mentions that the negative contents of his verses since he was in custody were scary for him but that the words just “came faster than he could write”. He longs for his beloved and realized that they were only one night apart since they started dating. He wanted to put her name up at Johnny’s Place in Green Valley when he comes out of prison. He never used any swearwords or degrading names towards her before and they never went to bed before sorting out arguments they had. He found it very difficult to accept that he could harm her physically. He tried to remember what happened but could only remember some actions from before and after the murder, not the murder itself. He then writes down the names of his recent poems and mentions how strange they are for him and he describes his recurring visions of her looking as if is trying to tell him something. He then confirms his everlasting love for her.

On 3 January 1997 John wrote a letter to Mary, outlining his memories of their relationship from the beginning. He describes how they met at an evening of Blackball. She still had another boyfriend, and he “gave her the choice” between the two of them. He recalls his gladness about the fact that she chose him, and her crying when they went to fetch her belongings from his apartment. He then runs through his sentiments and memories about their favourite places and events such as when they moved into their apartment and when he asked her father to marry her. He mentions that the first time they made love was in her mother’s flat and recalls other firsts such as the first time they bathed together and their first dinner date as well as their first weekend away at Green Valley. He also describes his positive memories of significant friends and family members such as her grandmother and her brother who told him that he was the best boyfriend she ever had. He recalls their night in the train again and how intimate and intense that was.

Then he calls into memory his “mistake of his life” when he lied to her about his background. He mentions his regret and his wish to “undo” what he has done. He mentions what the engagement at her grandmother’s place meant to him and how they planned to have a boy and a girl and even chose names for them. Their wedding date was set for October 1997.

He ends the letter by expressing his disgust and disbelief about the fact that he destroyed all those memories and that he caused so much harm and hurt. He expresses his adoration for her, thanks her for what she has done for him, asks for forgiveness and vows that he will love her forever and hopes to see her when it is his time. After he ended the letter he makes a note stating that he is worried about his future, but that he would pay for what he has done, even with his life.

### **Fiancée's parents**

One of the most difficult issues for John seemed to be how to deal with his fiancée's parents. He experienced her father (dad Dough) as a very understanding and reasonable man, but felt that her mother directly blamed him for her daughter's death and was nurturing many thoughts of revenge. It seems very obvious that these experiences are very close to exactly the opposite of his experiences of his own parents. He often experienced a need to talk to his potential in-laws, but also expressed some understanding for the fact that it would never be the same as before. He often expressed his feeling that it may never be possible to talk to her mother again, and that he thought it is better to leave it that way. The quotes from 24 and 25 December 1996 as well as 3 January 1997 express something about these ideas. In his 5 January 2000 letter to his beloved he confirms his intention not to initiate any contact with them when he is released from prison. As part of his reason for this decision he mentions that he is still very fragile inside and often feels that he is close to another breakdown. He mentions that she might have been right during the night of the murder when she sensed that things between them could not work out.

### **Repentance and compensation**

Two of the words John used most often in his diary after the murder are "undo" and "regret". Many of his poems – he even used titles such as "Regret" - and letters can, in a way, be described as lamentations about what he did, how much regret he has about it and how much he wished that it never happened or that it could be reversed. One thing that came out quite clearly in the court report, but was only indirectly referred to in his diary was the fact that he told his beloved a few lies about his qualifications and the nature of his employment. He wanted to impress her and felt that she might look down upon his real education and employment status. The murder happened shortly after he decided to confess to her that he told these lies.

During the last phases of psychotherapy with me, he often spoke about how he doubts it whether he would ever be able to be involved in an intimate relationship with another girl. He preferred to picture himself as doing some community service in a home for the elderly. He thought that he owed the community some compensatory service. The fact that his own parents were ageing probably contributed a lot towards the specific context that he envisaged for his future voluntary service to other people.

The following extracts from the court records reflect some of the realities that he experienced in this regard:

"Probably because the accused wanted to impress the deceased, he told her and her mother several blatant lies. Some examples are –

1. that he was an engineer who was busy with further studies;
2. that he won prizes at university;
3. that his motor vehicle was stolen.

He went so far as to commit fraud with the help of his brother-in-law's credit card. This was a very stressful period, which caused further inferiority and dependence. It also had the consequence that the accused continuously lived in fear that the deceased would find out about his untruthfulness and that that he could lose her."

The report further describes how John decided to tell the truth to his beloved. At first she did not react very fiercely, but soon afterwards, she took off her engagement ring and threw it against the wall. After several arguments, she later also ordered him to take his things and leave. The crime took place after these incidents. Apparently he hit her on the head with a pipe-like object. When John came to his senses again, he phoned her mother, asked her to call an ambulance and tried to bandage his beloved's wounds. When he discovered that she was dead, he fled to a coastal town, approximately 500 km away. He asserted that he could not remember either how the crime took place or how he got to the coastal town. From the coastal town, he phoned his own mother and she convinced him to return home and make a statement at the nearest police office. He did so.

On 11 January 1997 he wrote a poem with the title "Lies" in which he tries to express which insights a retrospective look at the consequences of the lies he told brought to him. It destroys, takes away, causes hate, drives in a wedge and causes sorrow, pain and regret. He ends off with an ironic and rhetoric "why did I lie to you?"



Next to several of his poems like this, he wrote the word “regret” in the margin. He also wrote a poem titled “Regret”.

### **Relationships**

A lot has already been said about John’s relationships with other people and the specific difficulties he had with it. In fact, about every entry in his diary is about his experience of relationships in his life. However, it is as if the more reserved focus before psychotherapy started to change towards a more other-centered, expressive approach with therapeutic progress. Before the murder, on 7 May 1996 he wrote in his diary that he had an argument with his father and that he got so angry that he could kill him, but that he just keep quiet for his mother’s sake. He also wrote about the fact that he started to fall in love with Mary, but that he thought it would be better to “back off” because she was still in love with Bill and that he did not want to hurt her.

After approximately one year in psychotherapy after the murder, on 26 December 1999 he wrote that he has learned a lot about life, that he became stronger and that he became aware of his shortcomings. He wanted to work on his shortcomings, but also realized that it is not going to be fast and easy. He avoided addressing it in the past and realized how complicated the required process of change within himself became because of his procrastination. He strived to become a more balanced person and he wanted to take his relatives more into consideration because he was thankful for their support during difficult times and wanted to contribute something in their lives now. He thought about his father’s difficulties after his car was stolen and he wanted to prepare for his mother and sisters expected visit the next day. He missed his sister’s children and hoped they would come along.

Ten days later, on 5 January 2000 he continued to express some experiences about relationships in his life in his letter to Mary. He wrote that his world has become very small and that he had no friends - only people who knew him. He thanked God for his immediate relatives and again expressed his indebtedness towards them. He thanked Mary that she taught him that life has a purpose, but regretted the fact that it cost her her life. He told her about his intention to serve the elderly and needy children in institutions and that he did not want to do it to escape his punishment. He started to write poems again and a book as well. There was a twist in his poems and they had a hidden, deeper meaning now.

After a coffee break he told her that he decided that it was time to go on with his life now and that there were going to be major changes. He decided to avoid getting involved in heterosexual relationships again because he does not like to hurt people and he was scared of himself. He wanted to do some of the recreational activities again that they used to do together, such as pool and indoor cricket. He had enough emotional pain now and wanted to start a new chapter in his life, although it is going to be very hard for him. He also discovered through the things that came out in the cards and plaster ornaments that he made that he had a “weird creature streak” in him. It gave him satisfaction to see that it gave his mother and sister some pleasure. He wanted to go and live with his parents and mentioned that his father bought a new car and that he was on pension since 10 December 1999.

Two days later he wrote in his diary that he was “utterly disgusted, frustrated and angry with himself”. He mentioned that he proposed to stay in the rehabilitation section of the complex and that he wrote a letter to Mary. Writing the letter opened a lot of emotional pain in him again. He felt that he could not cope so well any more and that he felt trapped because he could not implement his intentions to serve his family and the elderly while he was in prison. It was detrimental to keep up his moral that he should be enabled to do this and he intended to write a proposal to the parole board the next day.

### **Adjusting to society after release and possible work context**

Even before he was halfway through his time of sentence, John often tried to envisage his first period “back in the normal community”. Although he yearned for freedom and the opportunity to deal with all his “debts to relatives and society”, he also feared that he was not going to cope with facing all his responsibilities again. One thing that he held unto as an anchor amongst all these uncertainties, is the fact that one of his previous employers promised him a job when he is released. His biggest fear seemed to be entering into new close relationships again. He often pictured himself as quite isolated and busy with some compensatory duties, without allowing himself the privilege of very close relationships, especially with members of the opposite sex who are not related to him. Although this meaning unit overlap considerably with others such as “relationships”, “parole and/or correctional supervision” and “search for safe context”, the point that needs to be highlighted is his new awareness of his vulnerability and the accompanying fear of himself committing a similar crime again. Ironically

this new awareness turned out to be one of his best alibis to prove that he is not at very high risk of committing a similar crime again.

In his letter to Mary on 5 January 2000 John mentioned that things were getting better for him, that he had a job waiting for him, a place to stay and even a car waiting for him. He mentioned that his family needed him very badly and that his sister's children's acceptance of him caused a breakthrough for him. He then returned his thoughts to his cell and mentioned that his plant was his main living thing around him and that it gave him great pleasure.

On 26 February 2000 he wrote in a letter addressed to me that he learned to be himself and not to pretend to be what he is not. He just longed to have a steady and secure job again, even if the remuneration is not too good. He realized that he got involved with Mary because he wanted to pretend that he was someone that he was not. Eventually he just could not cope with the pretending any more and he exploded. He did not want to allow that to happen again. He realized that he could not handle teasing right through his school and his national service up to his adult life and even now in prison. He experienced it as pressure and it made him aggressive.

### **Parole and/or correctional supervision**

Right from the start of his incarceration John expressed some thoughts and feelings about his expectations of the phase between release from incarceration and complete freedom. It started by him trying to apply for a conversion of his sentence of incarceration into one of correctional supervision. Although most concrete evidence pointed towards the fact that it was very unlikely, it is as if his emotions in this regard got the better of him. He never really wanted to give up on trying, even if everyone with some knowledge in this regard tried to explain to him that the probability is very little. It is as if he wanted to hold onto this possibility as a reminder of the fact that his incarceration won't last forever. Sometimes it was also a matter of him trying to transcend his immediate situation of suffering in many senses of the word. His intentions to try to get his sentence converted also became much stronger at the time of the turn of the century. The new millennium probably also indicated a new millennium in his life for him. He wrote about those experiences in the form of letters to staff members as well as entries in his diary. In his letter to me on 26 February 2000 he explained to me why it was so important for him to finish the counselor's course. He mentioned that it already helped him to get some new insights in his own weaknesses, but that he still had to learn to cope with them. He stated that he reset his goal to be out of prison by December 2000. He asked some advice on how to go about to achieve this goal and mentioned that he heard about an electronic monitor device for people on parole and that he would like to use it. He also intended to help "the department sorting out problems so that in future more people and be helped..." . He confirmed that he had some sufficient support systems at home and that he would like to serve the elderly and children.

### **Search for safe context**

A last issue that ran like a golden wire through the whole period of incarceration is John's search for safe context. It can be interpreted literally as well as figuratively. He very often wanted to be protected against possible physical assault and intimidation in prison. He also wanted to find people who understood some of his inner struggles and looked for support to find answers to all his questions. He wanted to find some reassurance that he would one day be able to have a normal life again. However, he was sure that he would never find such a safe context without undergoing many "purifying and compensatory rituals".

In the letter John wrote to Mary on 5 January 2000 he confirmed his concern about his father's back and lung problems and his mother's skin cancer and cataracts on the eyes. His sister had some difficulty finding a permanent job and his brother in law was surprisingly supportive towards him. He wanted to help all of them and mentioned that one of the motives behind writing a book was also to help others through sharing with them the many things that he learned. His poems were more personal for him, but he also thought that someone else might find some clarifications for their own problems there. He mentions that this may be his letter to her, but "only time will tell". He will always remember her and treasure the good memories.

His letter to me on 26 February 2000 centers on John's search for safe context. He mentioned that tension and friction might sometimes make him act in ways that he does not feel comfortable with, that he felt extremely sensitive since the murder and that he decided to avoid situations that may be hazardous to him. He felt that some prison wardens have recently treated him like a child and that he just kept quiet and did what was required from him, hoping that it would "backfire" towards them. He was told that he had too many privileges and he disagreed. He expressed his determination to fight

back mentally and even physically “if needed”. They were recently banned from the computers due to a mistake someone else made and he felt it was unfair. They were eating out of dishes “like dogs” and he was losing weight. He would not allow them to break him and will stay clean from drugs and alcohol even if he were out of prison. He felt tied down because he could not act upon his decision to serve in the community, but was determined not to give up. He expressed a need to go on with psychotherapy, even when he is outside prison and he wanted to formulate his future plans.

### B.3.4 Application

When the reduced paragraph or the hypothetical application is randomly compared with different sections of the original text it proves to contain all the necessary, but also only the necessary elements of the experience described in the relevant section of the diary. During this phase of the study the processed data thus still proves to be valid because it is an accurate description of what John tried to express regarding his experiences.

## B.4 Selection from his short essays specifically relevant to the topic of this study.

John sometimes also wrote essays about specific subjects, which were not included in his diary. I suggested some of these essays such as “Time” and “A Crime of Passion” as part of his psychotherapeutic schedule. Others were written spontaneously without any specific encouragement.

### B.4.1 Natural meaning units

Inmates often refer to their incarceration as “doing time”. When they drug themselves with marijuana or other drugs they refer to it as “pushing time”. In existential-phenomenological psychology time refers to a way of being, rather than passing minutes or hours on a clock. Although I had some of those concepts in mind when I decided to ask John to write something about time, I tried not to mention any of those possible meanings to him. I wanted to see what his spontaneous associations, feelings and thoughts were.

#### Time??!! (July 1999)

*December 1996 to July 1999 yes call it 3 years 3 years is what I call a long time, time I had and could have used constructive. For me time is a thing I never really noticed before 1996 but it come to lie heavily on my mind and in fact my whole being. It all started way back in 1976 I began to smoke cigrets so a big deal*

*yes is the answer if you look to where it leaded to later “wrong friends” and booze so what I can control it Bad news a fast violent temper and booze dont mix very well result was many a bar fight with serious consequences for the victim no not me. When I loose my cool when I am sober it is bad when I am drunk I become very quiet and tend to draw into myself with very little or no talking or having a conversation this was my normal pattern. Booze well I can take a lot before it affects me noticeable to myself and by others. Time went on I started to use dagga well it is like smoking wrong so wrong. Dagga is suppose to calm you down yes it did not make me calm but even more quiet with time I tend to crop up my emotions and when I should say my piece I dont that is a dangerous situation I only realize years later then come LSD not my style I react badly to it and the result I spend time in hospital then Cocaine was the thing, Hey man that was the thing for me and for a long time I used it even in prison then Cocke was not enoug it become a mixture of dagga Cocke and mandrax plus Booze by then it was not just beer and whine but whiskey, Rum, Tiqualas and finally brandy neat no mix. December 1996 came along and I had a good weekend fishing. That monday night it was dagga + cocaine and plenty Booze I was on a vibe as the weekend I did not use anything*

*I had a fiancée by then whom I adored We had words I got hot under the collar but was still okay then the words “I dont love you” “take you stuff and go” that really rock the unstable mind (boat) very badly. I switched of for a few seconds and I did something to another person I never did before and not even in my worst night mare thought I could do I killed her in a terrible violent rage. The result was a smashed in head and my first murder. Looking back I dont think I did it consiesly but like a robot because if I had to plan it I **never** would have done it I would have walked out on her that very night.*

*I can now look back as I had time to sit and think about that few seconds and yes subconsciously I did take all of it in but it is very patchy recaling and it makes me angry as I normally recall things well. I*

sometimes hear a noise like breaking branches that is dry, that to me brings a thing in my mind like bones crushing yes it upsets me and it fills me with a fear a revulsion a hate for myself. also I will never forget the smell of blood "Copeny" is the nearest I can describe it. You would say it was 3 years ago yes it was but sometimes it feels like it just happened. That is a thing that will haunt me forever My wound / scar call it what you want will heal or looks healed well between you and me I live behind a mask underneath it is still very raw and tender and festering.

Time is a thing like dust it settles and sometimes it is better not to disturb it but at times it gets disturbed and it is what is happening to me. Pain is part of time and of that I have more than what I can Cope with and I dont really feel I am right now but I have got No choice.

The time I have been in prison well all I can say it is hell again no choice. I got 8 years yes and it is a long time a very long time for me. the first 3 years I got involved with drugs in a big scale using it myself I started to become a non caring monster and the vast part a violent one as well now I still see myself as a monster but a better one when will I see myself as a normal human being well I dont know I can only pray it will be soon Prisoners even now are still scared of me and they avoid making me angry as I tend to explode af few times at Med B I half killed someone because I exploded and you know the scary thing it always was something small never a big thing. Time went on and I got scared for myself I started to see me as a danger to myself and that rocked me badly. After 2 Mini strokes and numerous bad migraine attacks and hurting people physically I decided to seek help. Well that was not easy as I did not want to admitt to myself I need help. Time drove me in a corner and I beged for help in the end and yes help arrived but it was up to me to decide what to do with it. I thought I will give myself a chance and Now I realize it is the one and only chance I ever will have. for 35 years my life was going one way unstopable and it cost a life to make me realize just where I really stand and to stop me in my tracks not a good or nice thing a murder but time sometimes use drastic steps to stop you and say hey it is time to change.

November 1998 things again came to a point it took me only 3 years to come to a point of blowing to pieces my life and it is then I realize time want to be on my side but it cant unless I let it Nov 1999 I am of drugs I have a drugfree lifestile I am comited myself to end I am at a stage now where I Need a secure surrounding to sort my mess out without security I cannot do what I have to do to my life to be a normal human being

With time over the last 9 Months I already can see a new John emerging but I am still shaky and unsure of just really what I need to do

Yes I have dreams I have goals In fact I think I want to do to much too soon and is getting frustrated in the process. Recently my world nearly fall in again because of insecurity and it is better now I am still not in a position where I can say I feel secure settled so that I can lay down my new foundation for a well balanced secure lifestyle.

Time has shown me a lot of my weak points and yes I am a person that have become very critical with myself but in a constructive way as I am doing something about myself not just hoping it all will go away.

My confidence in myself has grown to a point where I take the initiative of helping myself to a better lifestyle Time has also warned me that this is my one and only time I can do what I have to do.

Looking back is like looking at a baby that is growing up with all the pains tears and falls but it is also making me stronger. Things I took for granted 3 years ago is now real things and some of them is very much missed like being outside, walking on green grass feeling the rain on my face enjoying a good home cooked meal well this is the things I have to give up for Now till I sorted myself out yes it is a high price to pay but you cannot put a price to a life that has been taken, Yes it was not intended but it still happened and I cant run away from it that is a thing time cant take away. Missing a loved one is a very painfull thing expecially when that loved one is dead and in the past time is bad at times reminding you of what happened and yes it is not easy sometimes

I wish I can switch my mind of and clean out bad memories but it is not only the bad memories that upset me even the good times we as a couple had is getting me upset just to know it will be no more One thing I know and realize with a heart that feels very sad is the fact that I dont want another relationship with a woman and it is twofold one how will she react to telling her you killed your fiancée and secondly what will my reactions be in a similar situation. I can say to you now I will do this and that but when it gets to the crunch nobody can foretell and to protect myself and others it will be better to avoid a situation where I dont feel secure in.

*Bitter words you might say but also I think I know myself a bit better and writing to Julie also made me see a side I never looked at. I always will have that inner feeling of being alone no wife and kids and yes not even time will or can take it away but I also have found a part of me that feels very happy because Julie have two little ones and yes I love them very dearly and between the two I am building a part of me only in time will I know if I ever will have kids of my own. It is a long term thing but time is I hope on my side for Now I am content with seeing, loving, holding René a Cameron*

*My Mom and dad, Ben and Julie is my cornerstones right Now and I believe in the future as well to think I nearly lost them as well but now they are the ones that is there for me.*

*So you see my friend time is a thing you cannot define in a certain way only it is everything and Nothing at the same time only weakness and the will to overcome that weaknesse will help me Now and yes in time I might look back and say I told you so.*

#### A Crime of Passion. (approximately August 1999)

*Well here I sit and finaly I am looking hard at what I call a "thing" other people call it a crime of passion Well let me see the dictionary call it "crime passionnel" a crime exspecially of murder due to sexual jealousy.*

*Well it dont include buildup of tension, worries, fears, anger, frustration, insecurity, an inability to control emotions, inmaturity, internal personality problems, lies, pretending what I am not, impressing people, trying to be part of the crowd, fear of lossing love, sensitivity and yes my friends these and many more things I havent got a label for. It dont include the mental hell I am still going trough, the longing, the heartsore, regrets.*

*For 3 years and more if you take the time before this "thing" happened and maybe you as an outsider might get a clear picture because I dont and I am confused about my feelings, my reations and life in general but I also have grown mentally by experiencing these feelings and emotions, this emotional internal fight I have with myself.*

*All in all I get a painfull picture of myself and I dont even know or let me say believe what people think or see about me, but that is one part I dont really care about as it is their problems not mine.*

*I fell in love with Mary 3 years 8 months ago and yes I thought my life is really began then well all I can say is I was so wrong indeed, but love can make a person go blind for the obvious things that should have been seen or noticed but was not. Things I did which I shouldnt have done but have done as I thought it was the right thing to do at that time.*

*Decisions I made then I regret and I wish I can undo them as well as some actions but alas not so easy and life has got a tendency to carry on no matter what happened and so do I have to pick up all the pieces and carry on.*

*A persons mind can be your worst enemy because your heart can forgive and forget but your mind only forgives but never forget and it is like a scar only visible to myself because I see it everyday. Since I was 18 I yearned for a secure peacefull life and in many ways it was so but also I have some problems and I have a tendency to push them aside so that I dont have to deal with them.*

*I saw myself as a peacefull non violent person but I am starting to see myself in a diferent light exspecially after the "thing". This murder has turned my life inside out and things will never be the same again. I was stopped dead in lifes tracks and was forced to look at myself and where I stood and where I want to go, I was forced to deal with problems that I have put aside for years and I still am busy dealing with them.*

*The time before the murder well I look at it with open mind and did not hide anything, for a change I was honest with myself and yes it feels good. But let me go back to before the murder. In April 1996 I was promoted from production supervisor to production manager and yes I think that is where my first thing in life gone wrong. I enjoyed my work very much the only thing I hated was all the paper work. I am not a man for paperwork and never was okay I like writing poems but admiss that is as far as it goes. With all this paperwork daily I was less on the bench where I feel comfortable and not so much pressure finaly in July 96 I came to a point where I either resigne or get fired I choose to resign from there on my life just fell appart but I kept it to myself*

All that time I realized my relationship with Mary is a serious thing and I not only fell in love with her but I worship her never before I felt like this about a woman and I was ill equipped to handle it but I thought that is what I want and I dont want to loose her or her love.

Now jealousy did not play a big part but I was very posesive over her and protective. We did have a lot in common but also a lot we dont. What was very nice was the fact she loved fishing nearly as much as I do and it means I could have a peaceful weekend fishing at my favourite spot and have the love of my life with me. We played action cricket together sometimes up to 3 times a week we both played league pool and both of us was good and has won many trophies and prizes that in a way brought us very close but we also had our diferences she liked to party be socialy involved I dont I cant handle a noise and I mean music playing loud it hurt my ears it gives me migraines and that includes music I love, there again we had very simaler tastes and I like it soft she liked it loud and it was a constant battle in a non physical way but I usually gave in and let her have her way. She was a type of person that was very neat and tidy I am not but with time I become very consious about wher and how I pack things or put things. I always helped her cleaning up and I did not mind as I love her so and there is also the fact my mom trained me well in household things eg cleaning, cooking and planing.

Cooking she did not like much I love coocking and is very happy in a kitchen and yes I love eating and in the kitchen I dont stand back for nothing from a full course meal to baking bread. Most times I did the cooking she would help with the dishes and that was it

Money issues was not a problem till I lost my work and all of a sudden I had no income that put severe strain on me as I could not handle that she paid for everything it made me very tense and angry with myself and yes I have tried for 6 months to get work and I had a few prospects and I had a few jobs I could have but it meant night shift and she did not like it and wouldnt allow me to take it it irked me but I also did not want to loose her.

Yes I have been under a lot of pressure not having work the fact that we got engaged and planed to marry.

I had a car a Golf II GTI nearly paid for that I sold for 8000-00 to pay for rent and food as I was not happy that she paid for everything herself. Ilied to her and told her my car got stolen then drugs became a part of our lifes in a mayor way we always used drugs but on a small scale we both used dagga and mandrax and I used coke and it all cost money. We traveled a lot to a coastal town, Kwazulu Natal and we spend a lot of money. She had previous relationships and so did I but I was very cautious about her previous boyfriends in her life as they still stayed in contact and I did not liked it but because I loved her I did nothing. I had problems with my dad, he and I clashed most of the time and that influenced my life big time in more way I care to rember as it brings a lot of biterness and I dont like to dwell on it.

Finaly that fatal night I wanted to tell her about my lies, my life and I did so, she was shoked but accepted and agreed to help me later on she said she dont love me she dont want me but I pleaded with her and she calmed down then later again she compared me with her previous boyfriend sexualy as well now that is a tender sensitive thing for me as I had problems in that department but I kept quiet althoug it hurts like hell later she said that is it I dont love you I dont want you, pack your stuff and go well I dont think so much it was what she said as how she said it that snapped me. Now here I dont rember very much I rember I went for her and then hitting her and afterwards the blood. I found out later I killed her using a steel pipe. Yes to me that was the end of my life as well and tried to kill myself and couldnt do it as I promised her I will pay for what I did.

Her deaf has killed me inside and even now 3 years down the line it still haunts me big time.

I never was a violent person exept when I lost my temper in a big way and then I loos total control so I was and still is carefull not to loose my temper but there is times it happens so quick before I know it happened and it was over even here in jail I try not to loose it and the first 6 months was sheer hell I battle to come to terms with what I have done and on top of that I used drugs and joined a gang. I had many fights and I became very violent at times and yes **Noise** is a major triger in loosing it all.

I come to realize after 6 months in jail (I call it hell) if I dont do something now I may as well kill myself. and that is where my life has changed for the better and I am working very hard on just that. I write a lot of poems in my 18month so far and I using it as a way of venting my emotions in the begining I did not even realized it was happening but as I got better in my personality I realized it is a way of getting healed and now I do it on purpose but still only do it wen I have words I dont force myself

Everytime I think about that murder I feel that emotions going thru me and it is hell believe me I still dont cope well with it and have many a nights I dont sleep thinking about it and it haunts me.

You may ask why how can I do it well all I can say is I dont know but yes it did happened. The way I see it I was pushed behind my limits. I was ill equiped to handle a serious relationship I was very imature and life was what I see it not what it realy was and if I did things would they have been different? the answer I leave for you to decide as I can say honestly I dont know Will it happen again well I say no others might not agree and even others might debate it but I know in my heart that it wont happen again because I am very carefull and I have close that department in my life very firmly and permanently. I never want to put myself in a situation where I cant cope.

People will react differently on the same circumstances and nobody can say how he or she will react and life is very unpredictable as well. I am a type of person that is not realy equiped to be in a relationship with a woman and I have fall very hard and my eys is very wide open for life drugs and booze is something of the past and in general I am better of now than what I was.

You may ask if I planed all this and the murder and my answer is no circumstances out of my control was the driver my inability to control my anger was the trigger and caused the action it was like a robot out of control if at any time I had control over my actions and emotions this "thing" would never have happened The thought **never** came accross to kill her and in fact I am very severe against violence to woman and kids and still is that is what make me so confused about what happened and also my dificulty to accept her death.

How do I feel 3 years later well very sensitive about the murder and having confused feelings and a lot of pain but yes looking at it from all angles I have learned 'n very important lesson in life and never again will I allow myself to get involved with a relationship as it is one thing I cant cope with and I realize there is a possibility that I may be in a simalar situation in the future and it scares me a lot but what I learned and how I feel emotion wise is a deterent for me so it is something I will be very alert for

Why did I use a steelpipe. I just wish it was not there in the room because I have got a bad thing if I loose my temper I tend to grab whatever comes near at hand and it always has been like that. I dont loos my temper easy and it takes a lot to get me angry in my mind and I think that is what is bad because when I loose it then all that bottled up anger and emotions come out in a few seconds. I always was and still is very sensitive to people

#### Spontaneous untitled, undated essay approximately middle 2000, page 1 to 3

I look at my life and what do I see? A pattern a weave of colours, white and black some grey as well and yes pain regret sorrow and a heavyness, drugs, booze, sex and lies and yes I also saw changes good and bad. Family strive, problems and financial. I see dreams scattered I also see dreams come true and goals been put aside because of circumstances, I see anger, I see hate and love confusion misunderstanding and all that in a short span of 5 years.

Sometimes I wished I can switch of but alas not so easy at all first I was on a high in life then in the deepest deep you can think. I wrote poems I was dreaming I had nightmares sleepless nights and now I know why and how but can I do something about it? Yes I can and I did.

In the recent past I was happy but at a cost. A cost of what you may ask and yes you have the right to ask as it do not only concerns me, my family my friends and also my comunity You may ask if I am a danger to my Comunity and there the answer is no bet you may not think so and can I blame you No I dont think so.

Drugs why?. Well I have to be honest and I have looked at it from all angles and the only answer I can give if I am honest with myself is to be in with the crowd is it the crowds fault no because it was my choice a wrong choice I see now but at the time I thought it was the right one. Where did it lead to? Well drugs is a wonderful thing if used for the purpose it is made for but the minute You abuse it lik what I did that is when trouble starts and trouble I never had in my worst nightmares. Where did it lead to well financial ruin mental and physical harm a unstable mind anger tension a greed for more to feel better eventually murder well my friend that is the centre of all and my very worst time was that very moment in my life. You will ask was it a decision I made Consiously No subcounscious perhaps I do not realy know what it was and how I decided but yes it happened and it happened so fast I only realized afterwards what I have done and as usual you only realize what the consequences of our deeds is afterwards I was madly in love and very blind for reality and I was on such a high from life I

*stared myself blind at reality I did not see at that time what I can see now and if only I could have seen it then things could have been very different now and I would not have done what I have done.*

*Pain yes for myself my friends my family and lot of heartache and non acceptance of facts unbelievable*

*What did it do to me is something I will carry with me to my grave and there is not a thing I can do about it but yes I have learned from it and I will not make the same mistake again. Yes I have fears of what I will do in a similar situation and it makes me feel concerned but I also know the penalty of my actions if I should do it again and that to me is a big deterrent. Yes to be in jail is something it is but not my main penalty or struggles the fact that I took a life that was not to be taken the fact I did it and the pain of a lost one the shame for my family the hardships I caused for other people that is what's the worst penalty and that is for life even when I do get out of prison it will always be with me.*

*I want to show you a glimpse of what I went thru and if it only will help one person in life I will be happy*

*I come from a good home a good background and family but I did not think so then I rebelled a lot I fight a lot and I had a very violent temper in me but tend to bottle everything and for a long time it was bottled up tightly*

*I became an alcoholic a drug addict I lost my work I lost my car, I lost my friends I even lost my self respect I lost my loved one I lost my dreams my goals*

*I lost the will to live I became or became a walking talking timebomb to myself and others I was set on self destruct I even left God behind in my life*

*The result I have blood on my hands. Do you know how it feels to kill someone I don't think you want to know or ever experience it. It is a big thing for me it was the end of the world. Did I gain from it Yes and no I gained no satisfaction no financial reward no happiness I gained pain, sadness but I have learned a big lesson do not lose your temper do not use drugs do not abuse booze and keep your life clean and open do not pretend to be what you are not. I have gone through hell and back and I come out okay but at the cost of a life and the only purpose I saw out of this murder was to stop me in life so that I can take stock and get out of the groove and yes that life was very precious and it cost a life to put me on the right track again that is why I have made a serious and committed effort to come right and I have succeeded by being drugfree booze free in fact I have become a person of normal behaviour and in my eyes I even will become an asset for life with a purpose Am I angry yes I am angry with myself for letting me into situations where I could not cope will I do it again No I will not that is something I am very much aware of now and I acutely avoid such situations I am not Mr Perfect so I know my strengths and I also know my weaknesses and I can plan accordingly if I was perfect I would not have been in situations and places I am now.*

#### **B.4.2 Reduction and linguistic transformation: Selection from his short essays specifically relevant to the topic of this study.**

Inmates often refer to their incarceration as "doing time". When they drug themselves with marijuana or other drugs they refer to it as "pushing time". In existential-phenomenological psychology time refers to a way of being, rather than passing minutes or hours on a clock. Although I had some of those concepts in mind when I decided to ask John to write something about time, I tried not to mention any of those possible meanings to him. I wanted to see what his spontaneous associations, feelings and thoughts were. He confirmed the significance of the subject for him by putting several exclamation- and question marks behind the title. He mentioned how long it has been since he was arrested and added that he could have used the time more constructively. Time was something he never really noticed before, but since he met Mary (in 1996) it became something lying heavily on his mind and whole being. For him it all started in 1976 when he started to smoke cigarettes. In itself it was no big deal, but it led to wrong friends and drinking. He thought that he could control it, but discovered that a bad temper and alcohol did not mix very well. He got involved in many bar fights and injured many victims. It felt bad for him to lose his temper when he was sober and when he was drunk he tended to withdraw and did not talk at all – this became his pattern of behaviour. He could drink a lot of alcohol before anyone would notice that it affected him. When time went on he started to use marijuana as well. Although he thought it would calm him down, it just made him quieter with bottled up emotions. Years later he realized that it was a very dangerous situation. He also tried LSD, but that did not agree with him at all and he ended up in hospital. When he tried cocaine he felt that it was just the thing for him. He used it for a long time, even in prison and often mixed it with marijuana,



mandrax (methaqualone, a barbiturate – very popular in South Africa) and alcohol such as wine, whiskey, rum and tequila.

In December 1996 he had a good fishing weekend. The Monday night he took marijuana, cocaine and a lot of alcohol. He did not use anything during the weekend because he was with his fiancé whom he adored. When they had the argument that night he felt angry, but could control himself until he heard the words “I don’t love you – take your things and go”. I really rocked his unstable mind. He switched off for a few seconds and did something that he never did before and that he did not even dreamt about in his worst nightmare: he killed his fiancé in a terrible violent rage. Her head was smashed and he became a murderer. In retrospect he thinks he acted like a robot. He did not plan it consciously – if he did, he would have walked out on her that night. In spite of the fact that his memory is normally very well, his recollections of that night are very patchy. Sometimes he can hear a noise like breaking dry branches that he associates with breaking bones. It upsets him and fills him with fear, revulsion and self-hatred. He will never forget the coppery smell of blood. Sometimes it feels as if it just happened. He feels this scene will haunt him forever. He lives behind a mask covering a tender and festering wound. Time is like dust – it settles and sometimes it is better not to disturb it. However, at times it is disturbed and that happens to him. Pain is part of time for him and he has more of it than he can cope with, however, he has no choice. The eight years he got in prison is a very long time for him. During the first three years he abused a lot of drugs and started seeing himself as a big non-caring, sometimes violent monster. He finds it difficult to start seeing himself as a normal human being. He often exploded in Medium B prison after being triggered by only a small incident. A few times he nearly killed someone. He sometimes was scared of himself too. After two mini strokes and numerous migraine attacks and after he hurt some people physically, he decided to seek some help. It was difficult for him to admit that he needed help, but he felt that time drove him into a corner and beg for help. Help did arrive, but he still had to decide what to do with it. He later realised that it was the only chance that he would ever have. His life went unstopably in the wrong way for 35 years and it cost a life, a murder to make him stop in his tracks and realise that it was time to change.

In November 1998 things again to a point where he realised that it took him only three years to come to a point of blowing to pieces his life. He then realised that time was on his side, but that he had to allow it to heal him. He then made a breakthrough decision and by November 1999 he had a drug-free lifestyle. He committed himself to change and felt that he needed a secure surrounding to help him become a normal human being. Time over the previous nine months helped him to see a new John emerging, but he still felt shaky and uncertain about what to do. He had so many dreams and goals that he sometimes frustrated because he wanted to do too much too soon. Recently his world nearly crumbled because of insecurity and he thus had a need for a secure environment from where he could lay the foundation for a well-balanced lifestyle. Time has shown him many of his weak points and he developed an attitude of constructive self-criticism and active involvement in addressing his weak points. His confidence grew and time warned him that this was his one and only time to do what he had to do. Looking back is like looking at a growing baby becoming stronger through pains, tears and falls. He does not take things for granted any more that he took for granted three years ago such as being outside, walking on green grass, feeling the rain on his face and enjoying a good home cooked meal. Although it was a high price to pay, he felt it was not too high for a life that has been taken. Time cannot take away the fact that it happened and the painfulness of missing a loved one who is dead and in the past. Time sometimes brings hurting reminders. He wished that he could clean out bad memories. Even memories of good times with Mary are upsetting John because he knows it will be no more. One thing that he realised with sadness is that he does not want another relationship with another woman. He was afraid her reactions to dealing with the fact that he killed his fiancé as well as his possible counter reaction. He thought it would be best to avoid a situation in which he would feel insecure. He realised that it might be seen as a bitter reaction, but his better self-knowledge and writing to his sister helped him a side of himself that he never looked at before. He will always have an inner feeling of loneliness that time won’t be able to take away. He found another part of him that was very happy about the fact that his sister had two children whom he loved dearly. Only time will tell whether he will ever have children of his own. At the moment he was content with being able to see love and hold his sister’s children. The members of his core family were his cornerstones for the moment and, he believed, for the future, although he nearly lost them too. He concluded that time is a thing you cannot define in one certain way only. It is everything and nothing at the same time. Only weakness and the will to overcome it would help him at the moment. In time he might look back and say: “I told you so”.

I also thought it would be helpful in the explication of hidden meanings if I ask John to write down his thoughts on “a crime of passion”. He did this shortly after his essay about time. He started by stating

that he is finally looking hard at what he calls a “thing” and others call “a crime of passion”. He looked up the dictionary’s definition stating that it is “a crime especially of murder due to sexual jealousy”. He commented by stating that this definition does not include the build up of tension, worries, fears, anger, frustration, insecurity, inability to control emotions, immaturity, internal personality problems, lies, his pretending to be what was not, impressing people, trying to be part of the crowd, fear of losing love, sensitivity and many more things that he did not have a label for. It also did not include the mental hell he was still going through, the longing, the heart-sore and regrets. Those things lasted more than three years already and although an outsider may think he might get a clear picture of it, his experience of it was confusing. However, it made him grow mentally. His picture of himself was painful and he did not believe or care about other people’s perceptions about it – that was their problem, not his. When he fell in love with Mary three years and eight months ago, he thought his life started. Soon afterwards he realised how wrong he was. Love made him go blind and he did not notice things that were quite obvious. He did things and made decisions that he regrets and wants to undo. It is not so easy, however, and life has a tendency to go on no matter what happened. He just has to pick up the pieces and carry on. His mind is his worst enemy because a person’s heart can forgive and forget, but the mind forgives, but never forgets. It caused a scar only visible to him that he sees every day. Since he was 18 he yearned for a secure peaceful life and in many ways it was so. However, he also had some problems and had a tendency to push them aside not to have to deal with them. He saw himself as a peaceful, non-violent person, but started to see himself in a different light especially after the “thing”. This murder has turned his life inside out and things will never be the same again. He was stopped dead in life’s tracks and was forced to look at himself and where he stood and where he wanted to go. He was forced to start dealing with problems that he put aside for years. He looked at the time before the murder with an open mind and did not hide anything. He was honest with himself and it felt good.

He then looked back to before the murder. In April 1996 he was promoted from production supervisor to production manager and he thought that is where the first thing in his life went wrong. He enjoyed my work very much, but hated all the paper work. He has never been a man for paperwork. He likes writing poems but admits that is how far his love for paperwork goes. With all this paperwork daily he was less on the workbench where I felt comfortable. In July 1996 he reached a point where he either had to resign or get fired. He chose to resign and from there on his life just fell apart. However, he kept it to himself. All that time he realised his relationship with Mary was a serious thing and he did not only fall in love with her, but I worshipped her. Never before did he feel like this about a woman and he was ill equipped to handle it. He just thought that that is what he wanted and he did not want to lose her or her love. Jealousy did not play a big part, but he was very possessive over her and protective. They did have a lot in common, but also many differences. What was very nice was the fact she loved fishing nearly as much as he did and it meant he could have a peaceful weekend fishing at my favourite spot and have the love of his life with him. They played action cricket together very often, they both played league pool and both of them have won many trophies and prizes that in a way brought them very close. Their first difference was that she liked to party and to be socially involved while he just cannot handle noise and loud music playing – even the music he loves. It hurts his ears and gives him migraines. They had very similar music tastes, but he liked it soft she liked it loud and it was a constant battle in a non-physical way. He usually gave in and let her have her way. She was a type of person that was very neat and tidy - he was not, but with time he became very conscious about where and how he packed things or put things. He always helped her cleaning up and he did not mind because he loved her so much and his mother trained him well in household things, e.g. cleaning, cooking and planning. She did not like cooking much and he loved cooking and eating and was very happy in a kitchen. Money issues were not a problem until he lost his work. All of a sudden he had no income and that put severe strain on him. He could not handle that she paid for everything. It made him very tense and angry with himself. He tried to get work for 6 months and there were a few jobs he could have, but it meant night shift and she did not like it and would not allow him to take it. It irritated him but he did not want to lose her. Not having a job put a lot of pressure upon him, especially because they got engaged and planned to marry. He sold his car for R8000-00 to pay for rent and food as he was not happy that she paid for everything herself. He lied to her and told her his car was stolen. Then drugs became a part of their lives on a bigger scale than before. They both used dagga (marijuana) and mandrax and he used cocaine as well. It all cost money. They often travelled to a coastal town in Kwazulu Natal and they spend a lot of money. She had previous relationships and so did he, but he was very cautious about her previous boyfriends in her life as they still stayed in contact and he did not like it. However, because he loved her he did nothing. He also had problems with his father and they clashed most of the time. That influenced his life greatly in many ways. To remember it brought a lot of bitterness and he did not like to dwell on it.

Finally that fatal night he wanted to tell her about his lies and his life and I did so. She was shocked but accepted and agreed to help him. Later on she said she doesn't love him and she doesn't want him, but he pleaded with her and she calmed down. Then later again she compared him with her previous boyfriend sexually as well. That is was a tender, sensitive thing for him, because he had problems in that department but he kept quiet although it hurt like hell. Later she said: "that is it. I don't love you, I don't want you, pack your stuff and go!" He does not think it was what she said as much as how she said it that snapped him. About what happened immediately after that he doesn't remember very much. He remembered he went for her and then hitting her and afterwards the blood. He found out later that he killed her using a steel pipe. To him that was the end of his life as well, He tried to kill himself and couldn't do it, as he promised her he will pay for what he did. Her death has killed him inside and even 3 years down the line it still haunted me a lot. I never was a violent person except when he lost his temper in completely Then he lost control completely. He thus has always been careful not to loose his temper, but there were times when it happened so quick that before he knew it happened. Even in prison he tried not to loose it. The first six months was sheer hell. He battled to come to terms with what he has done and on top of that he used drugs and joined a gang. he had many fights and he became very violent at times. **Noise** was a major trigger in loosing it all. After 6 months in jail (he calls it hell) if he doesn't do something immediately, he might as well kill himself. That is where his life has changed for the better and he was working very hard on just that. He wrote a lot of poems in his first 18 months and he used it as a way of venting his emotions. In the beginning he did not even realise it was happening, but as he made therapeutic progress, he realised it is a way of getting healed and later he did it on purpose, but he still only did it when he had words. He did not force himself.

Every time he thinks about that murder John still feels those emotions going through him and feels like hell. He still doesn't cope well with it, and has many sleepless nights due to the haunting recollections. He is not sure why he did it, but the way he sees it, is that he was pushed behind his limits. He was ill equipped to handle a serious relationship. He was very immature and saw life different than it really was. He is uncertain whether the murder could have been prevented, but although others might disagree he knows in his heart that it won't happen again because he is very careful. He closed that department in his life very firmly and permanently. He never again wants to put himself in a situation where he cannot cope. He feels people will react differently on the same circumstances and nobody can say how he or she will react. Life is very unpredictable as well. He is a type of person who is not really equipped to be in a relationship with a woman. He fell very hard and my eyes are very wide open for life. Drugs and alcohol is something of the past and in general is better off now than what he were. About whether he planned the build-up and the murder his answer is no. Circumstances out of his control were the driver. His inability to control his anger was the trigger and caused the action it was like a robot out of control. If at any time he had control over his actions and emotions this "thing" would never have happened. The thought **never** came across his mind to kill her and in fact he was very much against violence to woman and kids and he still is. That is what made him so confused about what happened and why it also is so difficult for him to accept her death. Three years later he still felt very sensitive about the murder and he still had confused feelings and a lot of pain. However, looking at it from all angles he has learned a very important lesson in life. Never again will he allow himself to get involved in a relationship because that is one thing he can't cope with. He did realise that there is a possibility that he might be in a similar situation in the future and it scares him a lot. What he learned and how he feels is something he will be very alert for.

He just wishes the steel pipe were not in the room. He might have used it because if he looses his temper he tends to grab whatever is at hand and it always has been like that. he doesn't loose his temper easily and it takes a lot to get him angry in his mind. He thinks that is what is bad because when he looses it, then all that bottled up anger and emotions come out in a few seconds. He always was and still is very sensitive to people.

In a spontaneous untitled, undated essay that John wrote approximately middle 2000, he described his life as a pattern or a weave of colours: white and black, some gray as well. He saw pain regret sorrow and a heaviness involving drugs, booze, sex and lies and he also saw changes, good and bad; family problems and financial problems. He also saw dreams scattered; dreams come true and goals put aside because of circumstances. He saw anger, hate and love; confusion, misunderstanding and all that in a short span of 5 years. Sometimes he wished he could switch off, but did not find it easy at all. First he was on a high in life, then in the deepest deep you can think. He wrote poems, he was dreaming, he had nightmares, sleepless nights and he discovered why and that he could do something about it. In the recent past he was happy, but at a cost that did not only concern him, but also his family, his friends and his community. However, he did not regard himself as a danger to his

community any more. His honest opinion about why he abused drugs is that it was to be in with the crowd. However, it could not be regarded as the crowd's fault because it was his choice: a wrong choice and he realised it now. Drugs is a wonderful thing if used for the purpose it is made for, but the minute it is abused as he did, trouble started: trouble he never had in his worst nightmares. It led to financial ruin, mental and physical harm, an unstable mind, anger, tension, a greed for more to feel better and eventually murder. His worst time was that very moment in his life. It wasn't a decision he has made consciously, subconsciously perhaps - he does not really know what it was and how he decided, but it happened and it happened so fast he only realized afterwards what he has done. He only realized what the consequences of his deeds were afterwards. He was madly in love and very blind for reality and he was on such a high from life he stared himself blind against reality. He did not see at that time what he could see later and if only he could have seen it then things could have been very different now and he would not have done what he has done. It caused pain for himself, his friends, his family and lot of heartache and non acceptance of facts: disbelief. What did it do to him is something he will carry with him to his grave and there is not a thing he can do about it. However, he learned from it and he will not make the same mistake again. He has fears of what he will do in a similar situation and it makes him feel concerned, but he also knows the penalty of his actions if he should do it again and that is a big deterrent to him. To be in jail is something, is but it is not his main penalty or struggle. The fact that he took a life that was not to be taken - the fact that he did it and the pain of a lost one, the shame for his family, the hardships he caused for other people - that is what's the worst penalty. That is for life even when he does get out of prison it will always be with him. He wanted to show a glimpse of what he went through and if it only will help one person in life he will be happy. He comes from a good home a good background and family but I did not think so. Then he rebelled a lot - he fought a lot and he had a very violent temper in him, but tended to bottle everything. For a long time it was bottled up tightly. He then became an alcoholic and a drug addict, he lost his work, he lost his car, he lost his friends and he even lost his self-respect. He then lost his beloved, his dreams and his goals. He lost the will to live. He became a walking, talking, doing time bomb to himself and others. He was set on self destruct. He even left God behind in his life. It resulted in him having blood on his hands. He does not wish it to anyone to know how it feels to kill someone. It is a big thing for him - it was the end of the world. In a way he did gain from it, but he also lost a lot. He gained no satisfaction, no financial reward, no happiness. He gained pain and sadness. He has learned a big lesson: do not lose your temper, do not use drugs, do not abuse alcohol and keep your life clean and open. Do not pretend to be what you are not. He has gone through hell and back and I came out well, but at the cost of a life. The only purpose he saw out of this murder was to stop him in life, to enable him to take stock and get out of the groove. That life was very precious and it cost a life to put him on the right track again. That is why he made a serious and committed effort to come right. He succeeded by being drug free and alcohol free. In fact became a person of normal behaviour and in his eyes he even will become an asset for life with a purpose. He is angry with himself for letting him into situations where he could not cope. However, he is convinced of the fact that he will never do it again. He now actively avoids similar situations. He does not think he is perfect. He knows his strengths and he also knows his weaknesses. He can plan accordingly. If he were perfect, he would not have been in situations and places like prison.

#### **B.4.3 Elimination of statements not inherent in explicating the meaning of 'crimes of passion'**

Inmates often refer to their incarceration as "doing time". When they drug themselves with marijuana or other drugs they refer to it as "pushing time". In existential-phenomenological psychology time refers to a way of being, rather than passing minutes or hours on a clock. Although I had some of those concepts in mind when I decided to ask John to write something about time, I tried not to mention any of those possible meanings to him. I wanted to see what his spontaneous associations, feelings and thoughts were. He confirmed the significance of the subject for him by putting several exclamation- and question marks behind the title. He mentioned how long it has been since he was arrested and added that he could have used the time more constructively. Time was something he never really noticed before, but since he met Mary (in 1996) it became something lying heavily on his mind and whole being. For him it all started in 1976 when he started to smoke cigarettes. In itself it was no big deal, but it led to wrong friends and drinking. He thought that he could control it, but discovered that a bad temper and alcohol did not mix very well. He got involved in many bar fights and injured many victims. It felt bad for him to lose his temper when he was sober and when he was drunk he tended to withdraw and did not talk at all - this became his pattern of behaviour. He could drink a lot of alcohol before anyone would notice that it affected him. When time went on he started to use marijuana as well. Although he thought it would calm him down, it just made him quieter with

bottled up emotions. Years later he realized that it was a very dangerous situation. He also tried LSD, but that did not agree with him at all and he ended up in hospital. When he tried cocaine he felt that it was just the thing for him. He used it for a long time, even in prison and often mixed it with marijuana, mandrax (methaqualone, a barbiturate – very popular in South Africa) and alcohol such as wine, whiskey, rum and tequila.

In December 1996 he had a good fishing weekend. The Monday night he took marijuana, cocaine and a lot of alcohol. He did not use anything during the weekend because he was with his fiancé whom he adored. When they had the argument that night he felt angry, but could control himself until he heard the words "I don't love you – take your things and go". It really rocked his unstable mind. He switched off for a few seconds and did something that he never did before and that he did not even dreamt about in his worst nightmare: he killed his fiancé in a terrible violent rage. Her head was smashed and he became a murderer. In retrospect he thinks he acted like a robot. He did not plan it consciously – if he did, he would have walked out on her that night. In spite of the fact that his memory is normally very well, his recollections of that night are very patchy. Sometimes he can hear a noise like breaking dry branches that he associates with breaking bones. It upsets him and fills him with fear, revulsion and self-hatred. He will never forget the coppery smell of blood. Sometimes it feels as if it just happened. He feels this scene will haunt him forever. He lives behind a mask covering a tender and festering wound. Time is like dust – it settles and sometimes it is better not to disturb it. However, at times it is disturbed and that happens to him. Pain is part of time for him and he has more of it than he can cope with, however, he has no choice. The eight years he got in prison is a very long time for him. During the first three years he abused a lot of drugs and started seeing himself as a big non-caring, sometimes violent monster. He finds it difficult to start seeing himself as a normal human being. He often exploded in Medium B prison after being triggered by only a small incident. A few times he nearly killed someone. He sometimes was scared of himself too. After two mini strokes and numerous migraine attacks and after he hurt some people physically, he decided to seek some help. It was difficult for him to admit that he needed help, but he felt that time drove him into a corner and beg for help. Help did arrive, but he still had to decide what to do with it. He later realised that it was the only chance that he would ever have. His life went unstoppably in the wrong way for 35 years and it cost a life, a murder to make him stop in his tracks and realise that it was time to change.

In November 1998 things again to a point where he realised that it took him only three years to come to a point of blowing to pieces his life. He then realised that time was on his side, but that he had to allow it to heal him. He then made a breakthrough decision and by November 1999 he had a drug-free lifestyle. He committed himself to change and felt that he needed a secure surrounding to help him become a normal human being. Time over the previous nine months helped him to see a new John emerging, but he still felt shaky and uncertain about what to do. He had so many dreams and goals that he sometimes frustrated because he wanted to do too much too soon. Recently his world nearly crumbled because of insecurity and he thus had a need for a secure environment from where he could lay the foundation for a well-balanced lifestyle. Time has shown him many of his weak points and he developed an attitude of constructive self-criticism and active involvement in addressing his weak points. His confidence grew and time warned him that this was his one and only time to do what he had to do. Looking back is like looking at a growing baby becoming stronger through pains, tears and falls. He does not take things for granted any more that he took for granted three years ago such as being outside, walking on green grass, feeling the rain on his face and enjoying a good home cooked meal. Although it was a high price to pay, he felt it was not too high for a life that has been taken. Time cannot take away the fact that it happened and the painfulness of missing a loved one who is dead and in the past. Time sometimes brings hurting reminders. He wished that he could clean out bad memories. Even memories of good times with Mary are upsetting John because he knows it will be no more. One thing that he realised with sadness is that he does not want another relationship with another woman. He was afraid her reactions to dealing with the fact that he killed his fiancé as well as his possible counter reaction. He thought it would be best to avoid a situation in which he would feel insecure. He realised that it might be seen as a bitter reaction, but his better self-knowledge and writing to his sister helped him a side of himself that he never looked at before. He will always have an inner feeling of loneliness that time won't be able to take away. He found another part of him that was very happy about the fact that his sister had two children whom he loved dearly. Only time will tell whether he will ever have children of his own. At the moment he was content with being able to see love and hold his sister's children. The members of his core family were his cornerstones for the moment and, he believed, for the future, although he nearly lost them too. He concluded that time is a thing you cannot define in one certain way only. It is everything and nothing at the same time. Only

weakness and the will to overcome it would help him at the moment. In time he might look back and say: "I told you so".

I also thought it would be helpful in the explication of hidden meanings if I ask John to write down his thoughts on "a crime of passion". He did this shortly after his essay about time. He started by stating that he is finally looking hard at what he calls a "thing" and others call "a crime of passion". He looked up the dictionary's definition stating that it is "a crime especially of murder due to sexual jealousy". He commented by stating that this definition does not include the build up of tension, worries, fears, anger, frustration, insecurity, inability to control emotions, immaturity, internal personality problems, lies, his pretending to be what was not, impressing people, trying to be part of the crowd, fear of losing love, sensitivity and many more things that he did not have a label for. It also did not include the mental hell he was still going through, the longing, the heart-sore and regrets. Those things lasted more than three years already and although an outsider may think he might get a clear picture of it, his experience of it was confusing. However, it made him grow mentally. His picture of himself was painful and he did not believe or care about other people's perceptions about it – that was their problem, not his. When he fell in love with Mary three years and eight months ago, he thought his life started. Soon afterwards he realised how wrong he was. Love made him go blind and he did not notice things that were quite obvious. He did things and made decisions that he regrets and wants to undo. It is not so easy, however, and life has a tendency to go on no matter what happened. He just has to pick up the pieces and carry on. His mind is his worst enemy because a person's heart can forgive and forget, but the mind forgives, but never forgets. It caused a scar only visible to him that he sees every day. Since he was 18 he yearned for a secure peaceful life and in many ways it was so. However, he also had some problems and had a tendency to push them aside not to have to deal with them. He saw himself as a peaceful, non-violent person, but started to see himself in a different light especially after the "thing". This murder has turned his life inside out and things will never be the same again. He was stopped dead in life's tracks and was forced to look at himself and where he stood and where he wanted to go. He was forced to start dealing with problems that he put aside for years. He looked at the time before the murder with an open mind and did not hide anything. He was honest with himself and it felt good.

He then looked back to before the murder. In April 1996 he was promoted from production supervisor to production manager and he thought that is where the first thing in his life went wrong. He enjoyed my work very much, but hated all the paper work. He has never been a man for paperwork. He likes writing poems but admits that is how far his love for paperwork goes. With all this paperwork daily he was less on the workbench where I felt comfortable. In July 1996 he reached a point where he either had to resign or get fired. He chose to resign and from there on his life just fell apart. However, he kept it to himself. All that time he realised his relationship with Mary was a serious thing and he did not only fall in love with her, but I worshipped her. Never before did he feel like this about a woman and he was ill equipped to handle it. He just thought that that is what he wanted and he did not want to lose her or her love. Jealousy did not play a big part, but he was very possessive over her and protective. They did have a lot in common, but also many differences. What was very nice was the fact she loved fishing nearly as much as he did and it meant he could have a peaceful weekend fishing at my favourite spot and have the love of his life with him. They played action cricket together very often, they both played league pool and both of them have won many trophies and prizes that in a way brought them very close. Their first difference was that she liked to party and to be socially involved while he just cannot handle noise and loud music playing – even the music he loves. It hurts his ears and gives him migraines. They had very similar music tastes, but he liked it soft she liked it loud and it was a constant battle in a non-physical way. He usually gave in and let her have her way. She was a type of person that was very neat and tidy - he was not, but with time he became very conscious about where and how he packed things or put things. He always helped her cleaning up and he did not mind because he loved her so much and his mother trained him well in household things, e.g. cleaning, cooking and planning. She did not like cooking much and he loved cooking and eating and was very happy in a kitchen. Money issues were not a problem until he lost his work. All of a sudden he had no income and that put severe strain on him. He could not handle that she paid for everything. It made him very tense and angry with himself. He tried to get work for 6 months and there were a few jobs he could have, but it meant night shift and she did not like it and would not allow him to take it. It irritated him but he did not want to lose her. Not having a job put a lot of pressure upon him, especially because they got engaged and planned to marry. He sold his car for R8000-00 to pay for rent and food as he was not happy that she paid for everything herself. He lied to her and told her his car was stolen. Then drugs became a part of their lives on a bigger scale than before. They both used dagga (marijuana) and mandrax and he used cocaine as well. It all cost money. They often travelled to a

coastal town in Kwazulu Natal and they spend a lot of money. She had previous relationships and so did he, but he was very cautious about her previous boyfriends in her life as they still stayed in contact and he did not like it. However, because he loved her he did nothing. He also had problems with his father and they clashed most of the time. That influenced his life greatly in many ways. To remember it brought a lot of bitterness and he did not like to dwell on it.

Finally that fatal night he wanted to tell her about his lies and his life and I did so. She was shocked but accepted and agreed to help him. Later on she said she doesn't love him and she doesn't want him, but he pleaded with her and she calmed down. Then later again she compared him with her previous boyfriend sexually as well. That is was a tender, sensitive thing for him, because he had problems in that department but he kept quiet although it hurt like hell. Later she said: "that is it. I don't love you, I don't want you, pack your stuff and go!" He does not think it was what she said as much as how she said it that snapped him. About what happened immediately after that he doesn't remember very much. He remembered he went for her and then hitting her and afterwards the blood. He found out later that he killed her using a steel pipe. To him that was the end of his life as well, He tried to kill himself and couldn't do it, as he promised her he will pay for what he did. Her death has killed him inside and even 3 years down the line it still haunted me a lot. I never was a violent person except when he lost his temper in completely Then he lost control completely. He thus has always been careful not to loose his temper, but there were times when it happened so quick that before he knew it happened. Even in prison he tried not to loose it. The first six months was sheer hell. He battled to come to terms with what he has done and on top of that he used drugs and joined a gang. he had many fights and he became very violent at times. <sup>12</sup>**Noise** was a major trigger in loosing it all. After 6 months in jail (he calls it hell) if he doesn't do something immediately, he might as well kill himself. That is where his life has changed for the better and he was working very hard on just that. He wrote a lot of poems in his first 18 months and he used it as a way of venting his emotions. In the beginning he did not even realise it was happening, but as he made therapeutic progress, he realised it is a way of getting healed and later he did it on purpose, but he still only did it when he had words. He did not force himself.

Every time he thinks about that murder john still feels those emotions going through him and feels like hell. He still doesn't cope well with it, and has many sleepless nights due to the haunting recollections. He is not sure why he did it, but the way he sees it, is that he was pushed behind his limits. He was ill equipped to handle a serious relationship. He was very immature and saw life different than it really was. He is uncertain whether the murder could have been prevented, but although others might disagree he knows in his heart that it won't happen again because he is very careful. He closed that department in his life very firmly and permanently. He never again wants to put himself in a situation where he cannot cope. He feels people will react differently on the same circumstances and nobody can say how he or she will react. Life is very unpredictable as well. He is a type of person who is not really equipped to be in a relationship with a woman. He fell very hard and my eyes are very wide open for life. Drugs and alcohol is something of the past and in general is better off now than what he were. About whether he planned the build-up and the murder his answer is no. Circumstances out of his control were the driver. His inability to control his anger was the trigger and caused the action it was like a robot out of control. If at any time he had control over his actions and emotions this "thing" would never have happened. The thought **never** came across his mind to kill her and in fact he was very much against violence to woman and kids and he still is. That is what made him so confused about what happened and why it also is so difficult for him to accept her death. Three years later he still felt very sensitive about the murder and he still had confused feelings and a lot of pain. However, looking at it from all angles he has learned a very important lesson in life. Never again will he allow himself to get involved in a relationship because that is one thing he can't cope with. He did realise that there is a possibility that he might be in a similar situation in the future and it scares him a lot. What he learned and how he feels is something he will be very alert for.

He just wishes the steel pipe were not in the room. He might have used it because if he looses his temper he tends to grab whatever is at hand and it always has been like that. he doesn't loose his temper easily and it takes a lot to get him angry in his mind. He thinks that is what is bad because when he looses it, then all that bottled up anger and emotions come out in a few seconds. He always was and still is very sensitive to people.

---

<sup>12</sup> John's comment on 31 October 2002: "Noise is still a main trigger, but instead of Blaming I just try and move away from the noise. If cannot then I address it in some physical form that suits the circumstance, but I never become violent anymore."

In a spontaneous untitled, undated essay that John wrote approximately middle 2000, he described his life as a pattern or a weave of colours: white and black, some gray as well. He saw pain regret sorrow and a heaviness involving drugs, booze, sex and lies and he also saw changes, good and bad; family problems and financial problems. He also saw dreams scattered; dreams come true and goals put aside because of circumstances. He saw anger, hate and love; confusion, misunderstanding and all that in a short span of 5 years. Sometimes he wished he could switch off, but did not find it easy at all. First he was on a high in life, then in the deepest deep you can think. He wrote poems, he was dreaming, he had nightmares, sleepless nights and he discovered why and that he could do something about it. In the recent past he was happy, but at a cost that did not only concern him, but also his family, his friends and his community. However, he did not regard himself as a danger to his community any more. His honest opinion about why he abused drugs is that it was to be in with the crowd. However, it could not be regarded as the crowd's fault because it was his choice: a wrong choice and he realised it now. Drugs is a wonderful thing if used for the purpose it is made for, but the minute it is abused as he did, trouble started: trouble he never had in his worst nightmares. It led to financial ruin, mental and physical harm, an unstable mind, anger, tension, a greed for more to feel better and eventually murder. His worst time was that very moment in his life. It wasn't a decision he has made consciously, subconsciously perhaps - he does not really know what it was and how he decided, but it happened and it happened so fast he only realized afterwards what he has done. He only realized what the consequences of his deeds were afterwards. He was madly in love and very blind for reality and he was on such a high from life he stared himself blind against reality. He did not see at that time what he could see later and if only he could have seen it then things could have been very different now and he would not have done what he has done. It caused pain for himself, his friends, his family and lot of heartache and non acceptance of facts: disbelieve. What did it do to him is something he will carry with him to his grave and there is not a thing he can do about it. However, he learned from it and he will not make the same mistake again. he has fears of what he will do in a similar situation and it makes him feel concerned, but he also knows the penalty of his actions if he should do it again and that is a big deterrent to him. To be in jail is something, is but it is not his main penalty or struggle. The fact that he took a life that was not to be taken - the fact that he did it and the pain of a lost one, the shame for his family, the hardships he caused for other people - that is what's the worst penalty. That is for life even when he does get out of prison it will always be with him. He wanted to show a glimpse of what he went through and if it only will help one person in life he will be happy. He comes from a good home a good background and family but he did realize it. Then he rebelled a lot - he fought a lot and he had a very violent temper in him, but tended to bottle everything. For a long time it was bottled up tightly. He then became an alcoholic and a drug addict, he lost his work, he lost his car, he lost his friends and he even lost his self-respect. He then lost his beloved, his dreams and his goals. He lost the will to live. He became a walking, talking, doing time bomb to himself and others. He was set on self destruct. He even left God behind in his life. It resulted in him having blood on his hands. He does not wish it to anyone to know how it feels to kill someone. It is a big thing for him - it was the end of the world. In a way he did gain from it, but he also lost a lot. He gained no satisfaction, no financial reward, no happiness. He gained pain and sadness. He has learned a big lesson: do not loose your temper, do not use drugs, do not abuse alcohol and keep your life clean and open. Do not pretend to be what you are not. He has gone through hell and back and I came out well, but at the cost of a life. The only purpose he saw out of this murder was to stop him in life, to enable him to take stock and get out of the groove. That life was very precious and it cost a life to put him on the right track again. That is why he made a serious and committed effort to come right. He succeeded by being drug free and alcohol free. In fact became a person of normal behaviour and in his eyes he even will become an asset for life with a purpose. He is angry with himself for letting him into situations where he could not cope. However, he is convinced of the fact that he will never do it again. He now actively avoids similar situations. He does not think he is perfect. He knows his strengths and he also knows his weaknesses. He can plan accordingly. If he were perfect, he would not have been in situations and places like prison.

#### **B.4.4 Application**

When the reduced paragraph or the hypothetical application is randomly compared with different sections of the original text it proves to contain all the necessary, but also only the necessary elements of the experience described in the relevant section of the diary. During this phase of the study the processed data thus still proves to be valid because it is an accurate description of what John tried to express regarding his experiences.



### **B.5 Summary of reduced statements from John's story as it relates to the meaning of 'crimes of passion'**

The day that John first kissed Mary, Monday 5 May 1996, was unforgettable. She was very beautiful for him in appearance, but especially in terms of personality. He completely fell in love with her and, although he sometimes doubted his own ability to do so, yearned to spend the rest of his life with her. Ten days later they went to a forest-like place where they met some new friends and saw several wild animals and birds. They slept on the train during the first night of the weekend because they drank too much alcohol to drive. For John that was also a lovely night because they made love for the first time and then just fell asleep in each other's arms.

Two weeks later John and Mary moved into their own flat. John was very excited about it and prayed that it would work out for them. That night again felt like their first night together in each other's arms.

Ten days later John's workplace closed down due to fraud of one of the managers, who committed suicide when it was discovered. John felt very bad. At first he was uncertain about whether he should tell Mary about it, but he decided that he should because her love for him would make her understand.

On Wednesday 24 July 1996 John felt a need to apologise to Mary for the fact that he did not attend her Netball league matches the day before by writing two poems for her and buying her a gift and a card. He was afraid of losing her and felt that he had to earn her love. They had a talk the previous night and he felt that it helped him to understand her better. She told him that she does not have enough space in her heart to love him completely due to the fact that two of her ex-boyfriends and her puppy still occupy some space in her heart. John felt upset about this, but did not interpret as jealousy. He trusted her and decided that the best word to describe his love for her was an "ace". He also spoke to her about a sexual problem he experienced and afterwards he felt more at ease and they slept well that night. He expressed some anxiety about himself not being able to live without her, because she was fulfilling many of his desires. He also felt insecure because he was in the process of looking for a new job.

For nearly two months after his talk with Mary, John stopped writing in his diary. On Thursday 10 October 1996 he started by writing about his regret about an injury to Mary's finger. He reported that they attended a wedding on 5 October and had an argument after an ex-boyfriend of hers said good bye to her. They were both upset and on their way back home he made some sexual gestures towards her. At home, after he undressed her, she did not want to have sex with him. He then lost his temper and said some things to her that he regrets. She replied by pointing out to him that he gets angry when she is not ready for sex and demands it from her, that her ex-boyfriend is nothing more than a friend and that he handles her too rough. She went on to undress and challenged him to do with her whatever he wanted to. He was taken aback and could not have sex with her then, because he realized that it was not right if she does not agree to it. The first time when they had sex again was 4 days later. He experienced that as a very significant change in his approach towards the intimate part of their relationship because she was close to menstruation and very sensitive. He learned to treasure her more and handle her more tenderly.

After more than a month John made his next entry in his diary, which turned out to be his last entry before the murder. He has been retrenched and had serious financial problems. However, he was now more convinced than ever before that he is totally in love with Mary. He expressed very strong feelings of an overwhelming and possessive love for her that could sometimes push him towards violent deeds, as well as a feeling of inability to convey his feelings to her. He lastly mentioned that they were engaged the previous day.

On 10 December 1996 John's whole being cried for an explanation of the fact that he killed Mary, whom he felt was so special for him that they were parts of each other. He despised of the fact that he broke his promise to himself that he would never hurt her physically or emotionally. It was difficult for him to believe that he killed Mary. In the past they were able to solve their differences of opinion by talking about it and compromising. He tried to tell her that he wanted to undo what he did. Their love was without equal for him.

He sensed her telling him to come back and give himself up after he fled from the scene of the murder. He listened to her, thanked her and felt that he had to pay for it – even with his life – if necessary. He did not perceive himself as a violent person and was convinced that Mary could confirm that. He thought they could communicate without words and he sensed her forgiveness.

However, he still felt very guilty and wanted to compensate for it. On the day after the murder he made a statement of confession to the police and appeared in court. He asked for an attorney. He did not have a clear memory of what happened the previous night. He had deep regret.

On the day of Mary's funeral, 14 December 1996 John still felt heartbroken. He wished he could attend the funeral, but was not allowed to. It gave him some comfort to know that his mother and sister represented him there. He thought that Mary's father is the only person who would understand what special relationship they had and found more comfort in the fact that he approved of their relationship. John made a promise to God and Mary that when he was released from incarceration he would put twelve pink roses wherever her ashes were, or if not possible he would go to their favourite place and give them to the Innkeeper.

Two days later, while in prison, John started to feel very withdrawn. He just had a vision of Mary standing in the corner of his cell without saying or doing anything. She was wearing the same nightgown as the night of the murder and he could not see her hands and feet. Her face was faint and obscure. He was sure that she was trying to say something to him. After another two days some of his blood was drawn for tests and he felt as if he were in a trance. He experienced some self-hatred, anger and depression and had suicidal thoughts, but his love for Mary kept him from committing suicide. Later that evening he showed some compassion for a black man that he did not know and who was bullied by others, by giving him fruit and cigarettes. This was a strange experience for him and he felt Mary made him do it. He felt scared and nervous and looked forward to see the doctor the following day for the first time after his arrest. He then wrote a poem, titled *Mary* wherein he compared his dreams with a river carrying all their experiences and with battling to stay between the shores. He dedicated the poem the remembrance of their love.

Three days later he had the same dream again. This time he saw Mary clearly and she was smiling and telling him that she loved him very much. He heard her voice as if she was speaking inside of him. She was also holding a baby-like bundle in her one arm with her other arm stretched out towards him as she did in the past when she wanted him to hug her. She disappeared when he wanted to touch her. The emptiness, self-anger, sadness and desire to undo his crime then returned to him. Later that night he still felt that way and he cried in regret. These feelings were constant since the day of the murder and he could not accept what he did because he loved Mary so much. He remembered that his sister told him that he hit Mary with a pipe and then fainted. The only pipe-like objects that he could remember were the umbrella and the keep-net that the just unpacked after returning from their weekend away. He had some remorse because he told some lies and remembered that they were sometimes snapping at each other recently. He had some constant headaches and felt tense and short tempered and tempted to commit suicide. However, he was determined to push through for the sake of his beloved and to tell the truth.

On Christmas Eve 1996 John woke up tired because a new inmate made a lot of noise during the night and he slept only for one hour. He felt angry, had a headache and no appetite and still longed for his beloved. He was looking forward to be locked open in order to have a shower. He also thought about being at home with his mother, settling down and getting a lawyer who can communicate better than the first one he had, but did not know whom he could speak to about this. He recalled some intimate moments with his beloved and how beautiful she was. He blamed himself again for destroying their lives and future plans. He felt very close to breaking point and had many unanswered "why's" in his mind. He felt a need to speak to Mary's father because he would understand and was like a father for him. He wanted to apologise towards him that he killed his daughter. He tried to hide his emotions, but still felt very torn apart. He then exclaimed many of his emotions and he concluded by stating that it was not him who committed the murder. He recalled many memories about sentiments they shared, such as nature, songs and Disney Movies. He wrote that he would like to give her a small teddy bear (he often called Her teddy bear) with a pouch inside and inside that pouch a diamond and sapphire pendant that she could wear with her chain and glitter ball that he bought you before. He wanted her to imagine all his love to be inside the teddy bear, and whenever she held that teddy bear the love would flow out into her heart. He ended this entry in his diary with many big "why's" and then wrote a poem with the title "Babe", his other nickname for his beloved. The theme of the poem seems to be his yearning for every part of her being. He then repeats some of his already expressed emotions, centering on his inner battle with the clash between how he perceived himself and their relationship to be and the irreconcilability of that with what he did.

He then was exhausted and after sleeping for two hours he continued his entries about nostalgic commemorative moments and "firsts" with his beloved. Amongst others he wrote about how and where they met and played pool and together. He then briefly returns to his immediate surroundings

and thanks her for her inspiration to give his roommates some cookies and describes how happy they are and how they are dancing. After that he fantasizes about the family he planned to have with Mary and how he joyfully experienced her with all his senses.

At midnight when Christmas started he wished Mary a merry Christmas and drew some pictures to commemorate their love. He promised her, as well as their son and daughter that they planned to have, that he would pay for what he did.

On 29 December 1996 he remembered some patches of what happened the night of the murder. He remembered that he phoned her mother after it happened. He also remembered that Mary told him that she did not love him any more and that he should pack his belongings and leave. He felt as if those words killed him inside and he could not believe that she said it. He recalled previous times when she said tender, loving and gentle words to him and he wrote that he did not hear it with his ears, but that it went straight to his soul and heart and that he would store it there forever. He also recalled the night when she first used the name "Babylove" for him. (He later chose this as his poetry alias). It was during a very intimate moment after he admired her body and she told him that she was convinced of the gentleness and purity of his love for her. She then gave him permission to freely explore her body. After describing this moment in detail, he wrote about the sacredness and intensity of their relationship for him. He expressed his belief that her father was the only other person whom she loved as much as she loved him. Now he can only share the memories with him. He then expresses his regret again, especially towards her father because he made them both lose her. The refrain of him wanting to "undo" what he did is repeated again.

During the year of 1997 and also in the first half of 1998 John kept writing extensively in his diary. However, he did not really introduce major new themes or insights, apart from revealing some more feelings about his father. The dream about Mary appearing to him, wanting to tell him something, kept haunting him. He made it out for himself that she may have been pregnant with their first child during the time of the murder and that she wanted to tell him about that. This interpretation triggered new visions of having a happy family life with her as well as renewed regret and self-blame because he destroyed this possibility. He also started dreaming of publishing a poetry collection when he is released from prison, dedicated to his beloved. For this reason the style of his writing often took the form of verses with metaphors and other literary forms often found in poems. Because he was awaiting his trial and sentence during all of this time, he also often wrote about what he anticipated in this regard, but usually not in poetry form. He kept to normal "report" and "essay" styles when he wrote about this.

John wrote many poems from which only a few that were regarded as the most relevant were transcribed among the natural meaning units in the appendix of this thesis. On 10 January 1997 he wrote one with the title of *Dad*. He tried to express the emotional development between him and his father from the time that his father gave life to him, through the time when he started to experience him as absent, hated him and completely drifted apart from him. Then ironically after his fiancé's death they reconciled. He experienced this reconciliation as very fragile and hoped it would last. He wished his beloved could witness it, because she always wanted it.

On 15 January 1997 he wrote "My sick life". He described his heart as unmoved and himself as someone who cannot be loved. His life was in autumn and grief and sorrow replaced all his fruits. He talks about his fire that changed into dead ash and his jealous care and love that he lost. He felt sad and wanted to shake his soul to free himself of his ugly part. He expressed his feelings of worthlessness and being unable to see things as clear as before. He concluded with a death wish in which he could choose the ground to be buried in.

On Monday 3 March 1997, the day before his appearance in court he mentioned that he still slept badly. He just finished another letter to his mother and wanted to write to his father too, but did not know what to write. While doing his morning chores he accidentally cut his moustache and then shaved it off. It made him feel naked and cold. He prepared his best suit and outfit and felt very nervous. He did not know what to expect. He considered writing to his sister instead of to his father, because it would make it easier for him to express his feelings. He wondered whether his psychologist was going to have the opportunity to talk in court or whether he was only going to be asked to plead. He anticipated a postponement of the hearing date and that his lawyer may say nothing else than pleading not guilty. He still experienced some doubt in his mind about what happened during the murder. He even doubted if it were he who did it.

His birthday, 4 April 1997 was another day of grief and anger for him. He felt careless and aware of the fact that his life expectancy was shortened considerably because he could not face what was lying

ahead of him. He felt angry and aggressive towards his fellow inmates. These emotions were continuous. Three months later, on Tuesday 8 July 1997 he was on the verge of despair and isolated from the world outside. He counted the days and mentioned that he already spent 280 days in the awaiting trial cells. He anticipated something bad, but did not know what. He started using lower case when he wrote "I" and wrote that thinking about Mary was upsetting and hurting him so much that he refrained from communicating with her in writing or speech. However, he still wanted to treasure the good memories about her, because they were his inspiration to live. He expected an interview with a social worker and a visit from his sister. He felt guilty of the fact that his sister had to visit him in such bad circumstances and was ashamed and afraid of his suicidal thoughts.

After his sister visited him he was glad to hear that she and her children were well, but he longed to be with them. He was angry about the fact that their privilege to have magazines in prison has been terminated and it reminded him of how isolated he was. He expressed a death wish again and then wrote *The feel in Me*. This short verse expressed his strong feelings of being isolated in a bad situation as well as his self-blame and self-hatred.

On Christmas day 1997 he wrote that it feels just like another day and that the place shaped him to "cruise on in automatic mode" and that he hated it. He continued to write a verse *When i fell in Love* expressing his sensation of being in another dimension when he first saw Mary. He immediately knew that he wanted to make her his wife and he felt very happy. He ends off by writing about his belief that he would, in spite of his current loneliness, remember that first impression of her forever and that he will love her as long as he lives. When he returns to normal writing style, he expresses some confusion and later writes about his headache, depression and his enjoyment of the special food on Christmas day.

By the time of his final hearing on Monday 8 June 1998, his day count stood at 545 and he added some daily notes about his migraines and medication next to the date of every entry in his diary. He hardly ever used a capital I when he referred to himself now. He noted that he spent the whole day in court, that he was very edgy and that the final sentencing will take place within two days. He had some hope about the possibility of a five years sentence of Correctional Supervision, with psychotherapy sessions at his own cost as supported by the probation officer and his private psychologist. He thought about his father's lung cancer and their reconciliation and his mother's possible shock if he has to go to prison. He anticipated the possibility of an eight to fifteen years sentence of incarceration because the judge would feel responsible to punish him. Also, Mary's mother was "anti-me". He expressed some understanding for her negative feelings towards him, but furthermore stated his dismay about it because her revenge would not bring Mary back and could cause more misery. His entry on the next day expresses his intense emotional and physical pain as well as his intolerance for the marijuana smoke in prison. He also expressed an intense fear that a sentence of incarceration would ruin the lives of all the people in his immediate family circle. He thought that suicide would be better if that happens, but he would not do it because of his promise to his beloved.

On the day of sentencing he made a short entry stating that he was sentenced for eight years and that it was a long time. He also expressed a sense of relief because he could start organizing and building his life again and made a few calculations about the possible period of imprisonment if he gets a reduction for good behaviour credits.

### **B.5.1 Establishing rapport**

The process of establishing psychotherapeutic rapport with John, happened within a huge Correctional Services facility on the outskirts of one of the largest cities in South Africa. During the relevant time, most of the government managed correctional facilities were burdened with a complicated over population problem. Related to this was the fact that the courts could not cope with the caseload that resulted from a very high crime rate. The specific facility was designed to be an intake and distribution centre with no appropriate room for training and recreational facilities usually included in the designs of longer term correctional facilities. It has been adjusted to accommodate nearly all the possible categories of inmates from awaiting trial to maximum security.

There were four buildings accommodating inmates on the premises as well as several buildings for personnel facilities. One building was mainly used for medium security male inmates awaiting trial (Medium A prison), one for sentenced medium security male inmates (Medium B prison), one for

sentenced maximum security male inmates (Maximum prison) and one for all categories of female inmates (female prison). All the facilities, except the maximum prison had very few single cells. Most beds were triple storied and approximately two metres apart to save space.

I (the researcher) was the only psychologist on the staff for a total sentenced inmate population of nearly 5,000 at the time of the first contact. Due to the fact that permanent Correctional Services staff members were not responsible for unsentenced inmates, I have not met him during his awaiting trial period. He has recently been transferred from Medium A prison (inmate population approximately 10,000) to Medium B prison with an inmate population of approximately 3,000. My office was in the administrative building, 500 metres away due to a shortage of office space in the Medium B building. I usually had to make an arrangement to “borrow an office” when I did consultations in the prisons. Most inmates were not allowed to leave the premises of the building in which they were accommodated.

One of the social workers sent me a formal referral note, dated 8 October 1998. He attached a letter from John, addressed to the head of the prison, on 2 September 1998. The letter motivated John's requests to obtain a pair of prescribed spectacles and to see a psychologist. John highlighted the facts the Judge ordered psychotherapy as part of his corrective regime and that he had bad migraines and that he feared a second stroke (apparently he was told a few months ago that he may have had a minor stroke).

On 13 October I met him for the first time in the referring social worker's office. He was grateful and very co-operative. I followed the normal psychological protocol of doing a full present state examination. What stood out for me during the assessment, were

- a) his long history of substance abuse (mainly cannabis),
- b) his relationship problems and experiences of conflict with his father,
- c) his inability to cope with the current prison environment (see prison issues),
- d) his physiological problems such as migraines and hypertension,
- e) that writing was one of his natural therapeutic self-help tools, and
- f) his intense regret and bereavement.

I realised that practical issues had to be addressed as a preparatory ritual to facilitate psychotherapeutic development. I followed the necessary procedures to obtain his previous psychological assessment report written for the court proceedings, I recommended regular psychotherapy and transfer to a single cell in the Maximum security prison, I phoned his mother to investigate her possible supportive role, and I recommended a medical examination, a.s.a.p.

During the following period of time, the social worker in Maximum managed to get approval to use a section of the prison, containing 11 single cell as an accommodation facility for a substance abuse rehabilitation program stretching over a period of approximately three months. A new full time psychologist was also appointed to share my responsibilities. She was a young lady who was still busy with the final stages of her practical training and ironically Maximum prison was the safest place to accommodate her during that time. After a few follow-up psychological consultations with John and many communications with other staff members in this regard, we managed to get John admitted as a member of the first group who did the in house substance abuse rehabilitation program. Although the new psychologist took over his psychotherapy, I was still involved in a supervisory capacity. John was eager to do the program from the start, and participated fully in all the activities

After approximately three months (in the beginning of 1999), when the program was completed, the new psychologist was transferred to another location, and I had to take over John's individual psychotherapy again. In accordance with the AA/NA treatment model, it was decided to allow the people who went through the program to volunteer to be trained as lay counselors and act in a supervisory capacity for the next group of selected rehabilitation program occupants. Another similar section of the Maximum prison, close to the “rehabilitation centre” was obtained as a “halfway house” for the inmates who just finished the program and were in the process of being trained as lay counselors. Although another psychologist (also a young lady in the final stage of training) was appointed in January 1999, she opted not to take the responsibility for John's individual psychotherapy. However, she did all group work and training sessions with the rehabilitation candidates. Later during the year, the male social worker that started the rehabilitation centre was also transferred to another location. His responsibilities were taken over by another young female social worker who was transferred from Medium B prison. John's involvement in the lay counsellor's training

and activities made it possible for him to stay on in the appropriate section, containing single cells in Maximum. All the practical arrangements amongst difficult circumstances helped to establish good psychotherapeutic rapport and trust that laid a sound foundation for the psychotherapy to follow.

On 1 December 1998, the day after the day he had his first individual consultation with the new psychologist, John wrote in his diary about his tiredness and tension. He noted that it hurts to talk about his beloved, but that he needed to in order to get it out of his system and carry on with his life. He also wanted to address practical needs such as getting something to read and requesting permission to practice a hobby. He realized that Christmas was close and that it has been nearly two years after the murder. The relapsed time was long, but it also felt like yesterday for him. He wanted to start writing poems again.

### **B.5.2 Prison issues**

In spite of efforts to control it, factors such as overpopulation, gangsterism and intimidation, corruption and bribery among inmates and some staff members, frequent staff changes due to resignations and transfers, staff shortages, frequent transfers of inmates as a method of behaviour control, losses of valuable information in files of inmates and staff members, security concerns and illegal drug smuggling and abuse were ever present in the facility where John served his sentence. These issues almost always served as restrictive factors that had to be dealt with during psychotherapy. John sometimes referred to such factors directly or indirectly. However, he was afraid to write down such information. He often wrote letters to staff members to try to raise some concerns or request some adjustments to his privileges, indicating that the mentioned issues were part of his everyday life that he had to deal with. The general approach and atmosphere in prison that was regarded as necessary to survive in these circumstances was sometimes referred to as "a healthy paranoia". One thing that John was particularly afraid of, was the ever-present possibility of having to return to Medium B prison after his time in the rehabilitation centre was completed. He was always afraid that he would not be able to stand against the stronger intimidation in a less protected environment where he has to sleep in a crowded cell with other inmates and where the focus is more upon safe custody than on rehabilitation.

On Christmas day 1998 John wrote in his diary that it did not feel like Christmas and that he missed his family. His memories went back far, but a "lazy cleaner" whose work he had to do irritated him. He mentioned that people tried to escape and that it was a total waste of time and even a life. Someone died from a "heart attack" and the worst part of it was to see him and to clean the blood from the floor. The blood precipitated a re-experiencing of the murder scene he was involved in.

The entries in John's diary were much shorter now. However, he very seldom skipped a day. No relevant new themes were introduced in 1999. Some studying and writing assignments he wrote during this time in the rehabilitation program will be quoted in a later section of this thesis.

Christmas day 1999 was just like another day. John longed to be with his family and he particularly thought about the excitement of his sister's children. He felt powerless to change his situation and blamed himself for it. He had some new physical problems and wondered whether there was any purpose in his situation. He hoped that it would be his last Christmas in prison because he wanted to help his parents. He started to feel very annoyed by the noise that some of his fellow inmates made and blamed their cultural origin for it. He started to "hate them with a passion". He was looking forward to phone his family and knew that they would gather at his sister's house. He mentioned that his book was making progress and that he tried to put his emotions into words in it. He found it quite difficult.

After he phoned his mother he expressed some mixed feelings. They were well, but their car was stolen. This incident enhanced his ethnic hatred and he wrote that he wished that he could get his hands on the thieves, that he would kill them and that he was even thinking of escape. He felt on the edge and anticipated an unstoppable emotional explosion. He was also angry because his external psychologist's report was lost during the time that the psychologist's office in Maximum prison was unoccupied. His mother did not have a copy at home either and he wanted to apologise to her that he was so angry when she told him. He realized that he could not afford to have an emotional explosion now and he wanted to speak to his individual psychologist about it. He also wanted to write a request to the parole board to have the remainder of his sentence converted into correctional supervision and wanted to speak to the relevant social worker about it. He was determined to do things for himself now "if nobody wanted to help him". His main motivation was to help his aging parents at home.

On the last day of 1999 John remarked that it was an end of an era as well as the end of a part of his life that he rather wanted to “file away in the deepest folds of his mind”. He felt that he has learned from the last four years, but also failed himself and his family. The lesson was extremely painful and unforgettable for him. Now time has come for him to build on what he has learned and to carry on as his beloved would have liked him to. Although he still had many questions in his mind about what really happened the night of the murder and he was afraid of the possible answers, he felt ready to face the facts of his life as an obstacle, but also a stepping stone that helped him to learn. It has changed his life in a way that he never expected. He was not aware of his true mental condition because, if it were the case, he would have done something about it for the sake of his beloved and himself. He could still see her in his mind and will always love her. He realized that there would never be another Mary in his life and he did not want another lady. He felt it would be unfair to another lady if he still has all the memories of his beloved inevitably causing him to make comparisons. He did a lot of introspection during the past three years and realized that there were things that he needed to do, but not for financial gain. He has been given a chance in life and wanted to use it to the full to help others to better the quality of their lives. He wanted to share what he has learned from his own experience and it was so drastic for him that he felt that there were no words to describe it. He was writing a book about it and also continued writing poems as a way of unloading events in his mind. He was still hoping for a breakthrough in terms of understanding himself. He was grateful for the love and support of his family that carried him through this difficult time. He felt closer to them than ever before. He did not know what was ahead in the New Year, but he had good faith that things can only go better. He wanted to get out and be with his family soon and intended to work hard on improving himself, decision making and finding some answers to his questions. When the actual hour of the turn of the century was close, he added that he wanted space: a private peaceful hole where he could curl up and dream dreams and stretch his imagination while he was planning and setting goals. He expressed some hope that the minister of correctional services would grant some deserving prisoners a discount of sentence. He also intended to complete his book and poems and had a gut feeling that he underestimated himself. He was convinced that he had the answers to his own problems, but felt angry and frustrated because he could not apply the answers to solve his problems yet.

On 20 January 2000 John wrote a letter addressed to the rehabilitation centre psychologist and social worker. He mentioned that he wanted to clarify a few potentially problematic points that concerned himself and others. His first concern was about a possible clash between the counselor's course he was doing and his individual psychotherapy sessions. He was afraid that the times would clash in such a way that he would have to terminate the individual therapy. He motivated how important it was for him to be able to continue with both. The letter carries on mentioning another ten environmental and structural issues such as food, health, wanting to use a computer, bad behaviour and drug abuse of other inmates, and equipment for hobbies. He then concludes by thanking the social worker for her time and requesting to see her together with one of his fellow course attendants to discuss the rehabilitation centre.

In a letter written to me on 26 February 2000 John wrote that he was afraid to go back to Medium B prison when the counseling course finishes in September. Therefore he requested to either work and stay in the prison hospital (a small sick bay close to where he was for the course), work as a tea boy, work at the vehicle maintenance unit or at the dog unit. Whatever his position, he required to be in a single cell because he was afraid that he would not be able to cope with many people around him or with noise. He wanted to stop trying to use the computers in prison, because it caused too much friction. Furthermore he confirmed his request for a change in the scheduled time for his psychotherapy sessions. He felt that having peace and quiet around him would help him to heal.

He mentioned that he was very concerned about the fact that his sister did not visit him since December 1999 and he suspected that it had to do with some conflict between his father and brother-in-law. He requested a consultation visit with his sister to clarify this matter. He expressed his fear of what it might do to him if he loses his family and explained how his emotions fluctuated very frequently. He felt that he was treated unfairly by some of the wardens recently and they did not regard anything what he did or say as worth listening to. He withdrew from them and did not volunteer for anything anymore. He was angry with one specific staff member. He was convinced that his goals were realistic and with good motives. He did not want to pretend any more. A review of step 2 in his course made him realize how difficult it was to be honest with himself, but it also helped him to see his own possibilities.

### **B.5.3 Family issues**

Right from the beginning of the entries in the available parts of John's diary, it is clear that his family relations played a major part in his development and conceptualizations around the prelude and aftermath of the murder of his fiancé. It became an even more pressing issue after he has been arrested due to the fact that he felt that there was a lot of unfinished business in his family relationships to deal with.

John was the oldest child in a family of five who lived in a suburb of one of the biggest cities in South Africa. His parents were married in 1958 and he was born in 1961. Both his parents were still alive during this research, but they were both battling with restrictive physical illnesses. His mother was a nursery school teacher and his father was a retired factory manager. He retired in December 1999 at the age of sixty-two due to medical reasons. John experienced his childhood relationship with his father as very bad and stormy and his relationship with his mother as good and supportive. He had one sister, two years younger than himself. She was married and had two children of her own. Her family also lived in a suburb of the same town where they grew up, approximately fifteen kilometers from their parents. His relationship with his sister was very good. He also had one adopted brother, thirteen years younger than himself. During the time of the research his brother was working as a mechanic, still single and living with their parents. John saw himself as a sort of a surrogate father figure for his adopted younger brother and often felt responsible to share some of the lessons he learned in live with him. He often felt bad that his brother was getting involved bad friends and habits and wanted to protect him against these influences.

During his time of incarceration John often expressed feelings indicating different reasons for wanting to be with his family, or at least some members of his family. After the murder he started to experience some reconciliation between himself and his father. The reports of the findings in court make it clear that his mother played an important part in convincing him to confess and hand himself over to the police while he was still very confused and afraid. She was also the person who sometimes tried to be an advocate for him by phoning some of the staff members in prison. He often expressed fears of not coming out of prison while his parents are still alive. He felt a strong responsibility to do something to make their time of old age easier for them. He felt that the opposite was happening in actual fact while he was incarcerated.

On New Years day of the new century He wrote in his diary that he would have liked to be with his parents and his sister's family. They are the core of his very being and although he realized that his problems (incarceration) were his fault, he prayed that he could be with them at that moment. He expressed his determination to succeed in reaching his goals and two of them were to be released by June 2000 and to have his own business. He had very strong emotions that he described as a passive anger caused by a combination of circumstances and feelings. He felt a need for help from his individual psychotherapist to deal with it. He also wanted to see the social worker that was transferred to another location because he thought that he could help him to go out on correctional supervision sooner. Furthermore he wanted to become involved in supporting the elderly and needy young children in the community to compensate for some debt he has towards them. His hobbies of making plaster ornaments and cards on the computer could become a possible source of income. He then wrote three poems and mentioned that they were acting as an outlet valve for his painful and sometimes devastating memories. He felt they represented a permanent scar, but that time and being with his family could bring some healing.

### **B.5.4 Emotional expressions**

One of the reasons for keeping a diary that John often brought up during psychotherapy, was that writing was the only way in which he felt that he really could express his real emotions. He regarded himself as an "unpopular loner" during schooldays and he did not talk very easily. However, he always had very intense emotions to deal with. He often started entries in his diary with "my friend". It is almost as if his diary became a surrogate for an imaginary friend that he created during early childhood when he did not have real friends. He later shared his image of his ideal "life partner and wife" with this "pen friend" and then thought he found her in real life. His deepest emotions were always shared in the context of talking to his most intimate friend, partly imaginary and later often represented by his beloved. He expressed his anger, fear, jealousy and ideas of inferiority and incompetence in metaphors, poems and letters addressed to his "friend". When he had to face some discrepancies between his ideal friend and its representation in the form of his beloved, something



snapped and it became too much for him. After the murder he continued to write to “his friend”, although it is as if a “fusion” developed between his friend and his memories of his beloved.

Eighteen days after the murder John wrote a poem *In a moment of anger* in which he tries to make sense of his emotions. He emphasizes how radically a short moment of “insanity” can change lives. He also tries to express something of his complete inability to explain why it happened, apart from knowing that it had to do something with anger. He then writes some songs of love and praise for his beloved. He mentions that the negative contents of his verses since he was in custody were scary for him but that the words just “came faster than he could write”. He longs for his beloved and realized that they were only one night apart since they started dating. He wanted to put her name up at Johnny’s Place in Green Valley when he comes out of prison. He never used any swearwords or degrading names towards her before and they never went to bed before sorting out arguments they had. He found it very difficult to accept that he could harm her physically. He tried to remember what happened, but could only remember some actions from before and after the murder, not the murder itself. He then writes down the names of his recent poems and mentions how strange they are for him and he describes his recurring visions of her looking as if she is trying to tell him something. He then confirms his everlasting love for her.

On 3 January 1997 John wrote a letter to Mary, outlining his memories of their relationship from the beginning. He describes how they met at an evening of Blackball. She still had another boyfriend, and he (John) “gave her the choice” between the two of them. He recalls his gladness about the fact that she chose him, and her crying when they went to fetch her belongings from his apartment. He then runs through his sentiments and memories about their favourite places and events such as when they moved into their apartment and when he asked her father to marry her. He mentions that the first time they made love was in her mother’s flat and recalls other “firsts” such as the first time they bathed together and their first dinner date as well as their first weekend away at Green Valley. He also describes his positive memories of significant friends and family members such as her grandmother and her brother who told him that he was the best boyfriend she ever had. He recalls their night in the train again and how intimate and intense that was.

Then he calls into memory his “mistake of his life” when he lied to her about his background. He mentions his regret and his wish to “undo” what he has done. He mentions what the engagement at her grandmother’s place meant to him and how they planned to have a boy and a girl and even chose names for them. Their wedding date was set for October 1997.

He ends the letter by expressing his disgust and disbelief about the fact that he destroyed all those memories and that he caused so much harm and hurt. He expresses his adoration for her, thanks her for what she has done for him, asks for forgiveness and vows that he will love her forever and hopes to see her when it is his time. After he ended the letter he makes a note stating that he is worried about his future, but that he would pay for what he has done, even, if necessary, with his life.

#### **B.5.5 Fiancée’s parents**

One of the most difficult issues for John seemed to be how to deal with his fiancé’s parents. He experienced her father (dad Dough) as a very understanding and reasonable man, but felt that her mother directly blamed him for her daughter’s death and was nurturing many thoughts of revenge. It seems very obvious that these experiences are nearly the opposite of his experiences of his own parents. He often experienced a need to talk to his potential in-laws, but also expressed some understanding for the fact that it would never be the same as before. He often expressed his feeling that it may never be possible to talk to her mother again, and that he thought it is better to leave it that way. The quotes from 24 and 25 December 1996 as well as 3 January 1997 express something about these ideas. In his 5 January 2000 letter to his beloved he confirms his intention not to initiate any contact with them when he is released from prison. As part of his reason for this decision he mentions that he is still very fragile inside and often feels that he is close to another breakdown. He mentions that Mary might have been right during the night of the murder when she sensed that things between them could not work out.

#### **B.5.6 Repentance and compensation**

Two of the words John used most often in his diary after the murder are “undo” and “regret”. Many of his poems – he even used titles such as “Regret” - and letters can, in a way, be described as

lamentations about what he did, how much regret he has about it and how much he wished that it never happened or that it could be reversed. One thing that came out quite clearly in the court report, but was only indirectly referred to in his diary was the fact that he told his beloved a few lies about his qualifications and the nature of his employment. He wanted to impress her and felt that she might look down upon his real education and employment status. The murder happened shortly after he decided to confess to her that he told these lies.

During the last phases of psychotherapy with me, he often spoke about how he doubts it whether he would ever be able to be involved in an intimate relationship with another girl. He preferred to picture himself as doing some community service in a home for the elderly. He thought that he owed the community some compensatory service. The fact that his own parents were ageing probably contributed a lot towards the specific context that he envisaged for his future voluntary service to other people.

The following extracts from the court records reflect some of the realities that he experienced in this regard:

“Probably because the accused wanted to impress the deceased, he told her and her mother several blatant lies. Some examples are –

1. that he was an engineer who was busy with further studies;
2. that he won prizes at university;
3. that his motor vehicle was stolen.

He went so far as to commit fraud with the help of his brother-in-law’s credit card. This was a very stressful period, which caused further inferiority and dependence. It also had the consequence that the accused continuously lived in fear that the deceased would find out about his untruthfulness and that that he could lose her.”

The report further describes how John decided to tell the truth to his beloved. At first she did not react very fiercely, but soon afterwards, she took off her engagement ring and threw it against the wall. After several arguments, she later also ordered him to take his things and leave. The crime took place after these incidents. Apparently he hit her on the head with a pipe-like object. When John came to his senses again, he phoned her mother, asked her to call an ambulance and tried to bandage his beloved’s wounds. When he discovered that she was dead, he fled to a coastal town, approximately 500 km away. He asserted that he could not remember either how the crime took place or how he got to the coastal town. From the coastal town, he phoned his own mother and she convinced him to return home and make a statement at the nearest police office. He did so.

On 11 January 1997 he wrote a poem with the title “Lies” in which he tries to express which insights a retrospective look at the consequences of the lies he told brought to him. It destroy, take away, causes hate, drive in a wedge and cause sorrow, pain and regret. He ends off with an ironic and rhetoric “why did I lie to you?”

Next to several of his poems like this, he wrote the word “regret” in the margin. He also wrote a poem titled “Regret”.

### **B.5.7 Relationships**

A lot has already been said about John’s relationships with other people and the specific difficulties he had with it. In fact, about every entry in his diary is about his experience of relationships in his life. However, it is as if the more reserved focus before psychotherapy started to change towards a more other-centered, expressive approach with therapeutic progress. Before the murder, on 7 May 1996 he wrote in his diary that he had an argument with his father and that he got so angry that he could kill him, but that he just keep quiet for his mother’s sake. He also wrote about the fact that he started to fall in love with Mary, but that he thought it would be better to “back off” because she was still in love with Bill and that he did not want to hurt her.

After approximately one year in psychotherapy after the murder, on 26 December 1999 he wrote that he has learned a lot about life, that he became stronger and that he became aware of his shortcomings. He wanted to work on his shortcomings, but also realized that it is not going to be fast and easy. He avoided addressing it in the past and realized how complicated the required process of change within himself became because of his procrastination. He strived to become a more balanced

person and he wanted to take his relatives more into consideration because he was thankful for their support during difficult times and wanted to contribute something in their lives now. He thought about his father's difficulties after his car was stolen and he wanted to prepare for his mother and sisters expected visit the next day. He missed his sister's children and hoped they would come along.

Ten days later, on 5 January 2000 he continued to express some experiences about relationships in his life in his letter to Mary. He wrote that his world has become very small and that he had no "friends" - only people who knew him. He thanked God for his immediate relatives and again expressed his indebtedness towards them. He thanked Mary that she taught him that life has a purpose, but regretted the fact that it cost her her life. He told her about his intention to serve the elderly and needy children in institutions and that he did not want to do it to escape his punishment. He started to write poems again and a book as well. There was a twist in his poems and they had a hidden, deeper meaning now.

After a coffee break he told Mary that he decided that it was time to go on with his life now and that there were going to be major changes. He decided to avoid getting involved in heterosexual relationships again because he does not like to hurt people and he was scared of himself. He wanted to do some of the recreational activities again that they used to do together, such as pool and indoor cricket. He had enough emotional pain now and wanted to start a new chapter in his life, although it is going to be very hard for him. He also discovered through the things that came out in the cards and plaster ornaments that he made that he had a "weird creature streak" in him. It gave him satisfaction to see that it gave his mother and sister some pleasure. He wanted to go and live with his parents and mentioned that his father bought a new car and that he was on pension since 10 December 1999.

Two days later he wrote in his diary that he was "utterly disgusted, frustrated and angry with himself". He mentioned that he applied to stay in the rehabilitation section of the complex and that he wrote a letter to Mary. Writing the letter opened a lot of emotional pain in him again. He felt that he could not cope so well any more and he felt trapped because he could not implement his intentions to serve his family and the elderly while he was in prison. It was detrimental to keep up his moral that he should be enabled to do this and he intended to write a proposal to the parole board the next day.

#### **B.5.8 Adjusting to society after release and possible work context**

Even before he was halfway through his time of sentence, John often tried to envisage his first period "back in the normal community". Although he yearned for freedom and the opportunity to deal with all his "debts to relatives and society", he also feared that he was not going to cope with facing all his responsibilities again. One thing that he held onto as an anchor amongst all these uncertainties, is the fact that one of his previous employers promised him a job when he is released. His biggest fear seemed to be entering into new close relationships again. He often pictured himself as quite isolated and busy with some compensatory duties, without allowing himself the privilege of very close relationships, especially with members of the opposite sex who are not related to him. Although this meaning unit overlap considerably with others such as "relationships", "parole and/or correctional supervision" and "search for safe context", the point that needs to be highlighted is his new awareness of his vulnerability and the accompanying fear of himself committing a similar crime again. Ironically this new awareness turned out to be one of his best alibis to prove that he is not at very high risk of committing a similar crime again.

In his letter to Mary on 5 January 2000 John mentioned that things were getting better for him, that he had a job waiting for him, a place to stay and even a car waiting for him. He mentioned that his family needed him very badly and that his sister's children's acceptance of him caused a breakthrough for him. He then returned his thoughts to his cell and mentioned that his pot plant was his "main living thing" around him and that it gave him great pleasure.

On 26 February 2000 he wrote in a letter addressed to me, the researcher, that he learned to be himself and not to pretend to be what he is not. He just longed to have a steady and secure job again, even if the remuneration is not too good. He realized that he got involved with Mary because he wanted to pretend that he was someone that he was not. Eventually he just could not cope with the pretending any more and he exploded. He did not want to allow that to happen again. He realized that he could not handle teasing right through his school and his national service up to his adult life and even now in prison. He experienced it as pressure and it made him aggressive.

### **B.5.9 Parole and/or correctional supervision**

Right from the start of his incarceration John expressed some thoughts and feelings about his expectations of the phase between release from incarceration and complete freedom. It started by him trying to apply for a conversion of his sentence of incarceration into one of correctional supervision. Although most concrete evidence pointed towards the fact that it was very unlikely, it is as if his emotions in this regard got the better of him. He never really wanted to give up on trying, even if everyone with some knowledge in this regard tried to explain to him that the probability is very little. It is as if he wanted to hold onto this possibility as a reminder of the fact that his incarceration won't last forever. Sometimes it was also a matter of him trying to transcend his immediate situation of suffering in many senses of the word. His intentions to try to get his sentence converted also became much stronger at the time of the turn of the century. The new millennium probably also indicated a new millennium in his life for him. He wrote about those experiences in the form of letters to staff members as well as entries in his diary. In his letter to me on 26 February 2000 he explained to me why it was so important for him to finish the counselor's course. He mentioned that it already helped him to get some new insights in his own weaknesses, but that he still had to learn to cope with them. He stated that he reset his goal to be out of prison by December 2000. He asked some advice on how to go about to achieve this goal and mentioned that he heard about an electronic monitor device for people on parole and that he would like to use it. He also intended to help "the department sorting out problems so that in future more people can be helped...". He confirmed that he had some sufficient support systems at home and that he would like to serve the elderly and children.

### **B.5.10 Search for safe context**

A last issue that runs like a golden wire through the whole period of incarceration is John's search for safe context. It can be interpreted literally as well as figuratively. He very often wanted to be protected against possible physical assault and intimidation in prison. He also wanted to find people who understood some of his inner struggles and looked for support to find answers to all his questions. He wanted to find some reassurance that he would one day be able to have a normal life again. However, he was sure that he would never find such a safe context without undergoing many "purifying and compensatory rituals".

In the letter John wrote to Mary on 5 January 2000 he expressed his concern about his father's back and lung problems and his mother's skin cancer and cataracts on the eyes. His sister had some difficulty finding a permanent job and his brother in law was surprisingly supportive towards him. He wanted to help all of them and mentioned that one of the motives behind writing a book was also to help others through sharing with them the many things that he learned. His poems were more personal for him, but he also thought that someone else might find some clarifications for their own problems by reading them. He mentions that this may be his last letter to Mary, but "only time will tell". He will always remember her and treasure the good memories.

John's letter to me on 26 February 2000 centers on his search for safe context. He mentioned that tension and friction might sometimes make him act in ways that he does not feel comfortable with, that he felt extremely sensitive since the murder and that he decided to avoid situations that may be hazardous to him. He felt that some prison wardens have recently treated him like a child and that he just kept quiet and did what was required from him, hoping that it would "backfire" towards them. He was told that he had too many privileges and he disagreed. He expressed his determination to fight back mentally and even physically "if needed". They were recently banned from the computers due to a mistake someone else made and he felt it was unfair. They were eating out of dishes "like dogs" and he was losing weight. He would not allow them to break him and will stay clean from drugs and alcohol even if he were out of prison. He felt tied down because he could not act upon his decision to serve in the community, but was determined not to give up. He expressed a need to go on with psychotherapy, even when he is outside prison and he wanted to formulate his future plans.

### **Writings not in the diary**

Inmates often refer to their incarceration as "doing time". When they drug themselves with marijuana or other drugs they refer to it as "pushing time". In existential-phenomenological psychology time refers to a way of being, rather than passing minutes or hours on a clock. Although I had some of those concepts in mind when I decided to ask John to write something about time, I tried not to mention any of those possible meanings to him. I wanted to see what his spontaneous associations, feelings and thoughts were. He confirmed the significance of the subject for him by putting several

exclamation- and question marks behind the title. He mentioned how long it has been since he was arrested and added that he could have used the time more constructively. Time was something he never really noticed before, but since he met Mary (in 1996) it became something lying heavily on his mind and whole being.

For John it all started in 1976 when he started to smoke cigarettes. In itself it was no big deal, but it led to wrong friends and drinking. He thought that he could control it, but discovered that a bad temper and alcohol did not mix very well. He got involved in many bar fights and injured many victims. It felt bad for him to lose his temper when he was sober and when he was drunk he tended to withdraw and did not talk at all – this became his pattern of behaviour. He could drink a lot of alcohol before anyone would notice that it affected him. When time went on, he started to use marijuana as well. Although he thought it would calm him down, it just made him quieter with bottled up emotions. Years later he realized that it was a very dangerous situation. He also tried LSD, but that did not agree with him at all and he ended up in hospital. When he tried cocaine he felt that it was just the thing for him. He used it for a long time, even in prison and often mixed it with marijuana, mandrax (methaqualone, a barbiturate – very popular in South Africa) and alcohol such as wine, whiskey, rum and tequila.

In December 1996 he had a good fishing weekend. The Monday night he took marijuana, cocaine and a lot of alcohol. He did not use anything during the weekend because he was with his fiancé whom he adored and respected. When they had the argument that night he felt angry, but could control himself until he heard the words "I don't love you – take your things and go". It really rocked his unstable mind. He switched off for a few seconds and did something that he never did before and that he did not even dream about in his worst nightmares: he killed his fiancé in a terrible violent rage. Her head was smashed and he became a murderer. In retrospect he thinks he acted like a robot. He did not plan it consciously – if he did, he would have walked out on her that night. In spite of the fact that his memory is normally very well, his recollections of that night are very patchy. Sometimes he can hear a noise like breaking dry branches that he associates with breaking bones. It upsets him and fills him with fear, revulsion and self-hatred. He will never forget the coppery smell of blood. Sometimes it feels as if it happened very recently. He feels this scene will haunt him forever.

Since then John lives behind a mask covering a tender and festering wound. Time is like dust – it settles and sometimes it is better not to disturb it. However, at times time is disturbed in his life. Pain is part of time for him and he has more of it than he can cope with. However, he has no choice. The eight years he got in prison is a very long time for him. During the first three years he abused a lot of drugs and started seeing himself as a big non-caring, sometimes violent monster. He finds it difficult to start seeing himself as a normal human being again. He often exploded in Medium B prison after being triggered by only a small incident. A few times he nearly killed someone. He sometimes was scared of himself too. After two mini strokes and numerous migraine attacks and after he hurt some people physically, he decided to seek some help. It was difficult for him to admit that he needed help, but he felt that time drove him into a corner and beg for help. Help did arrive, but he still had to decide what to do with it. He later realized that it was the only chance that he would ever have. His life went unstopably in the wrong direction for 35 years and it cost a life, a murder to make him stop in his tracks and realize that it was time to change.

In November 1998 things reached a point where John realized that it took him only three years to come to a point where his life was scattering into pieces. He then realized that time was on his side and that he had to allow it to heal him. This realization led to a "breakthrough decision" and by November 1999 he had a drug-free lifestyle. He committed himself to change and felt that he needed a secure surrounding to help him become a "normal human being".

Past time over the previous nine months helped him to see a new John emerging, but he still felt shaky and uncertain about what to do in future. He had so many dreams and goals that he sometimes felt frustrated because he wanted to do too much too soon. Recently his world nearly crumbled because of insecurity and he thus had a need for a secure environment from where he could lay the foundation for a well-balanced lifestyle. Time has shown him many of his weaknesses and he developed an attitude of constructive self-criticism and active involvement in addressing them. His confidence grew and time warned him that this was his one and only time to do what he had to do.

Looking back is like looking at a growing baby becoming stronger through pains, tears and falls. He does not take things such as being outside, walking on green grass, feeling the rain on his face and enjoying a good home cooked meal for granted any. Although he had a high price to pay, he felt it was not too high for a life that has been taken. Time cannot take away the fact of what happened and the

painfulness of missing a loved one who is dead and in the past. Time sometimes brings hurting reminders. He wished that he could clean out bad memories. Even memories of good times with Mary are upsetting John because he knows it will be no more. One thing that he realized with sadness is that he does not want another relationship with another woman. He was afraid of her reactions to dealing with the fact that he killed his fiancé as well as his possible counter reaction. He thought it would be best to avoid a situation in which he would feel insecure. He realized that it might be seen as a bitter reaction, but his better self-knowledge and writing to his sister helped him to see a side of himself that he never looked at before. He will always have an inner feeling of loneliness which time won't be able to take away. He found another part of him that was very happy about the fact that his sister had two children whom he loved dearly. Only time will tell whether he will ever have children of his own. At the moment he was content with being able to see, love and hold his sister's children. The members of his core family were his cornerstones for the moment and, he believed, also for the future, although he nearly lost them too. He concluded that time is a thing you cannot define in one certain way only. It is everything and nothing at the same time. Only weakness and the will to overcome it would help him at the moment. In time he might look back and say: "I told you so".

I also thought it would be helpful in the explication of hidden meanings if I ask John to write down his thoughts on "a crime of passion". He did this shortly after his essay about time. He started by stating that he is finally looking hard at what he calls a "thing" and others call "a crime of passion". He looked up the dictionary's definition stating that it is "a crime especially of murder due to sexual jealousy". He commented by stating that this definition does not include the build up of tension, worries, fears, anger, frustration, insecurity, inability to control emotions, immaturity, internal personality problems, lies, his pretending to be what was not, impressing people, trying to be part of the crowd, fear of losing love, sensitivity and many more things that he did not have a label for. It also did not include the mental hell he was still going through, the longing, the heart-sore and regrets. Those things lasted more than three years already and although an outsider may think he might get a clear picture of it, his experience of it was confusing. However, it made him grow mentally. His picture of himself was painful and he did not believe or care about other people's perceptions about it – that was their problem, not his. When he fell in love with Mary three years and eight months ago, he thought his life started. Soon afterwards he realized how wrong he was. Love made him go blind and he did not notice things that were quite obvious. He did things and made decisions that he regrets and wants to undo. It is not so easy, however, and life has a tendency to go on no matter what happened. He just has to pick up the pieces and carry on. His mind is his worst enemy because a person's heart can forgive and forget, but the mind forgives, but never forgets. It caused a scar only visible to him that he sees every day.

Since he was 18 John yearned for a secure peaceful life and in many ways it was so. However, he also had some problems and had a tendency to push them aside not to have to deal with them. He saw himself as a peaceful, non-violent person, but started to see himself in a different light especially after the "thing". This murder has turned his life inside out and things will never be the same again. He was stopped dead in life's tracks and was forced to look at himself and where he stood and where he wanted to go. He was forced to start dealing with problems that he put aside for years. He looked at the time before the murder with an open mind and did not hide anything. He was honest with himself and it felt good.

He then looked back to before the murder. In April 1996 he was promoted from production supervisor to production manager and he thought that is where the first thing went wrong. He enjoyed his work very much, but hated all the paperwork. He has never been a man for paperwork. He likes writing poems but admits that is how far his love for paperwork goes. With all this paperwork daily he was less on the workbench where he felt comfortable. In July 1996 he reached a point where he either had to resign or get fired. He chose to resign and from there on his life just fell apart. However, he kept it to himself.

During this time John realized how serious he felt about his relationship with Mary. He did not only fall in love with her, but he "worshipped" her. Never before did he feel like this about a woman and he was ill equipped to handle it. He just thought that that is what he wanted and he did not want to lose her or her love. Jealousy did not play a big part, but he was very possessive over her and protective. They did have a lot in common, but also many differences. What was very nice was the fact she loved fishing nearly as much as he did and it meant he could have a peaceful weekend fishing at my favourite spot and have the love of his life with him. They played action cricket together very often, they both played league pool and both of them have won many trophies and prizes that in a way brought them very close. Their first difference was that she liked to party and to be socially involved while he just cannot handle noise and loud music playing – even the music he loves. It hurts his ears

and gives him migraines. They had very similar music tastes, but he liked it soft she liked it loud and it was a constant battle in a non-physical way. He usually gave in and let her have her way. She was a type of person that was very neat and tidy - he was not, but with time he became very conscious about where and how he packed things or put things. He always helped her cleaning up and he did not mind because he loved her so much and his mother trained him well in household things, e.g. cleaning, cooking and planning. She did not like cooking much and he loved cooking and eating and was very happy in a kitchen. Money issues were not a problem until he lost his work. All of a sudden he had no income and that put severe strain on him. He could not handle that she paid for everything. It made him very tense and angry with himself. He tried to get work for 6 months and there were a few jobs he could have, but it meant night shift and she did not like it and would not allow him to take it. It irritated him but he did not want to lose her. Not having a job put a lot of pressure upon him, especially because they got engaged and planned to marry. He sold his car for R8000-00 to pay for rent and food as he was not happy that she paid for everything herself. He lied to her and told her his car was stolen. Then drugs became a part of their lives on a bigger scale than before. They both used dagga (marijuana) and mandrax and he used cocaine as well. It all cost money. They often travelled to a coastal town in Kwazulu Natal and they spend a lot of money. She had previous relationships and so did he, but he was very cautious about her previous boyfriends in her life as they still stayed in contact and he did not like it. However, because he loved her he did nothing. He also had problems with his father and they clashed most of the time. These arguments influenced his life greatly in many ways. To remember it brought a lot of bitterness and he did not like to dwell on it.

Finally, during "that fatal night" John wanted to tell Mary about his lies and his life of pretending and he did so. She was shocked, but at first accepted his story and agreed to help him. Later on she told him very loudly and in no uncertain terms that she does not love him and she that she does not want him. He pleaded with her to reconsider and she calmed down. Then again, she compared, amongst other features, his sexual traits with that of her previous boyfriend. For John that was a tender, sensitive issue, because he had problems in that area. However, he kept quiet although it hurt him very much. Later she exclaimed: "that is it. I don't love you, I don't want you, pack your stuff and go!"

John does not think it was what she said as much as how she said it that snapped him. About what happened immediately after that, he doesn't remember very much. He remembered he went for her and then hitting her and afterwards the blood. He found out later that he killed her using a steel pipe. To him that was the end of his life, as well. He tried to kill himself and couldn't do it, as he promised her that he will pay for what he did. Her death has killed him inside and even three years down the line it still haunted him a lot. He had never been a violent person except when he lost his temper in completely. Then he lost control completely. He thus has always been careful not to lose his temper, but there were times when it happened so quickly that, before he knew, it happened.

Even in prison John tried not to lose his temper. The first six months was sheer hell. He battled to come to terms with what he had done and on top of that he used drugs and joined a gang. He had many fights and he became very violent at times. **Noise** was a major trigger in losing it all. After 6 months in jail (he calls it hell) he realized that, if he doesn't do something immediately, he might as well kill himself. That is where his life has changed for the better and he was working very hard on just that. He wrote many poems in his first 18 months and he used it as a way of venting his emotions. In the beginning he did not even realize it was happening, but as he made therapeutic progress, he realized it is a way of getting healed and later he did it on purpose, but he still only did it when he had words. He did not force himself.

Every time John thinks about that murder, he still feels those emotions going through him. It feels like hell. He still doesn't cope with it well, and has many sleepless nights due to the haunting recollections. He is not sure why he did it, but the way he sees it, is that he was pushed beyond his limits. He was ill equipped to handle a serious relationship. He was very immature and saw life different than it really was. He is uncertain whether the murder could have been prevented, but although others might disagree, he knows in his heart that it won't happen again because he is very careful. He closed that department in his life very firmly and permanently. He never again wants to put himself in a situation where he cannot cope. He feels people will react differently on the same circumstances and nobody can say how he or she will react. Life is very unpredictable. He is a type of person who is not really equipped to be in a relationship with a woman. He fell very hard and his eyes are very wide open for life now.

Drugs and alcohol are something of his past and in general John is better off now than before. About whether he planned the build-up and the murder his answer is no. Circumstances out of his control drove him. His inability to control his anger was the trigger and caused the action. He was like a robot

out of control. If at any time he had control over his actions and emotions this “thing” would never have happened. The thought **never** came across his mind to kill her and in fact he was very much against violence to women and children and he still is. That is what made him so confused about what happened and why it also is so difficult for him to accept her death. Three years later he still felt very sensitive about the murder and he still had confused feelings and a lot of pain. However, by looking at it from all angles he has learned a very important lesson in life. Never again will he allow himself to get involved in a relationship because that is one thing he can't cope with. He realizes that there is a possibility that he might be in a similar situation in the future and it scares him a lot. What he learned and how he feels is something he will be very alert for.

John just wishes the steel pipe were not in the room. He might have used it because if he loses his temper he tends to grab whatever is at hand and it always has been like that. He doesn't lose his temper easily and it takes a lot to get him angry in his mind. He thinks that is what is bad because when he loses it, then all that bottled up anger and emotions come out in a few seconds. He always was and still is very sensitive to people.

In a spontaneous untitled, undated essay that John wrote approximately middle 2000, he described his life as "a pattern or a weave of colours: white and black, some gray as well". He saw pain regret sorrow and a "heaviness" involving drugs, booze, sex and lies and he also saw changes, good and bad, family problems and financial problems. He also saw dreams scattered, dreams come true and goals put aside because of circumstances. He saw anger, hate and love, confusion, misunderstanding and all that in a short span of 5 years. Sometimes he wished he could switch off, but did not find it easy at all. First he was on a high in life, then in the deepest deep you can think. He wrote poems, he was dreaming, he had nightmares, sleepless nights and he discovered why and that he could do something about it. In the recent past he was happy, but at a cost that did not only concern him, but also his family, his friends and his community. However, he did not regard himself as a danger to his community any more. His honest opinion about why he abused drugs is that it was to be *in* with the crowd. However, it could not be regarded as the crowd's fault because it was his choice: a wrong choice and he realized it now. Drugs is a wonderful thing if used for the purpose it is made for, but the minute it is abused as he did, trouble started: trouble he never had in his worst nightmares. It led to financial ruin, mental and physical harm, an unstable mind, anger, tension, greed for more to feel better and eventually murder. His worst time was that very moment in his life. It wasn't a decision he has made consciously, subconsciously perhaps - he does not really know what it was and how he decided, but it happened and it happened so fast that he only realized afterwards what he has done. He only grasped what the consequences of his deeds in retrospect. He was madly in love and very blind for reality and he was on such "a high from life" that he stared himself blind against reality. He did not see at that time what he could see later and if only he could have seen it, then things could have been very different now. He would not have done what he has done. It caused pain for himself, his friends, his family and lot of heartache and non-acceptance of facts: disbelief. What it did do to him is something he will carry with him to his grave and there is not a thing he can do about it. However, he learned from it and he will not make the same mistakes again. He has fears of what he will do in a similar situation and it makes him feel concerned, but he also knows the penalty of his actions if he should do it again and that is a big deterrent to him. To be in jail is something, but it is not his main penalty or struggle. The fact that he took a life that was not to be taken - the fact that he did it and the pain of a lost one, the shame for his family, the hardships he caused for other people - that is what is the worst penalty. This penalty is for life even when he does get out of prison, it will always be with him.

John wanted to show a glimpse of what he went through and if it only will help one person in life he will be happy. He comes from a good home a good background and family but I did not think so. Then he rebelled a lot - he fought a lot and he had a very violent temper in him, but tended to bottle everything up. For a long time it was bottled up tightly. He then became an alcoholic and a drug addict, he lost his work, he lost his car, he lost his friends and he even lost his self-respect. He then lost his beloved, his dreams and his goals. He lost the will to live. He became a walking, talking, doing time bomb to himself and others. He was set on self-destruct. He even left God behind in his life. It resulted in him having blood on his hands. He does not wish it to anyone to know how it feels to kill someone. It is a big thing for him - it was the end of the world. In a way he did gain from it, but he also lost a lot. He gained no satisfaction, no financial reward, no happiness. He gained pain and sadness. He has learned a big lesson: do not lose your temper, do not use drugs, do not abuse alcohol and keep your life clean and open. Do not pretend to be what you are not. He has gone through hell and back and he came out well, but at the cost of a life. The only purpose he saw out of this murder was to stop him in life, to enable him to take stock and get out of the groove. He learned that life was very precious



and it cost a life to put him on the right track again. That is why he made a serious and committed effort to come right. He succeeded by being drug free and alcohol free. In fact, he became a person of normal behaviour and in his eyes he even will become an asset for life: someone with a purpose. He is angry with himself for letting him into situations where he could not cope. However, he is convinced of the fact that he will never do it again. He now actively avoids similar situations. He does not think he is perfect. He knows his strengths and he also knows his weaknesses. He can plan accordingly. If he were perfect, he would not have been in situations and places like prison.

## **B.6 John's comments after reading the summary of his story as presented under 1.6**

*Well what can I say after I read the portions you gave me today. Silence is the word as it is me you describe better than what I ever can do. I read and reread it a couple of times made some comments but yes in a nutshell you have done what I would find very hard to do.*

*You describe feelings and emotions the exact way I did feel at that time as well as the history behind it all.*

*It made me realize that other people will also understand better what can go on in a person's mind under certain conditions.*

*I have made footnotes where I felt it was needed you may use it any way you may need to.*

*The facts are true and accurate and I feel there is nothing I can add. The later part describes a lot of emotions I can visualize again in my mind and it brought down the fact that is what I was and what I did.*

*Arnold I don't know if you need anything else but I have got a few more poems I will send on to you these poems are different in a way than the first ones but I will let you be the judge of that.*

*I am not very clear on exactly what you require apart for verification but I thought I will write you an essay on my impressions and feelings from what you have given me.*

*If you want I can use Tony (the current psychologist in the Correctional facility where John stays) or my sister as a go between. On the moment I feel Tony will be easier as he is nearer.*

### **B.6.1 My impression**

*Well silence and silence, that in itself is an answer but not a good one. It is like running away for your own shadow but you can't.*

*No anger was not present at all, Shame yes of my deeds but that is also not the main thing. It made me look at myself again and yes I found out that that is what was needed to bring my life a bit under the magnifying glass. Nothing major found a few small things I realized but under control.*

*Astonish by the honesty and bare facts and yes leave it that way. It made me look again at myself so surely somebody else will take notice and examine his/her own life and rectify any wrongs before it is too late.*

*I am glad you did it and yes I am glad you choose me to help you and in the progress it was a mutual benefit. If there is anyone that doubt the truth then there is nothing he/she will believe. Well done Arnold.*

*Arnold*

*Well I was real glad to see you it was very a very nice surprise totally unexpected. I needed that this place is really a creepy place but I have learned to cope with life although I still don't like a change in routine I handle it better and I settle down far quicker now.*

*I am still drugfree and yes it will stay that way. I know it and I don't even think about what when I get out. No, drugs is history for me no doubt no fears no butts. This is one part of my life I am totally sure and safe on.*

*Where it comes to my personality, I am more self assured I do a lot of good positive things for myself. Yes I feel I am important so if I don't look after myself nobody else will, yes I can be agro in a positive*

*way now Without losing my self control. I am assertive and maybe a bit too forcefull but yes I can handle it.*

*Well I will send you more poems in the next week or so I must just get them on paper for you.*

*From your friend*

*John*

31/10/2002

## **B.7 Presentation Of John's Story According To Preliminary Categories**

In order to facilitate the final process of categorisation and analysis, John's story is presented here without the headings and meaning units that were used to guide this process. I am the storyteller and John is the indicated in the third person. Although I am telling the story (inferred from his life history, diary and other writings), I try to stick to John's interpretation and perceptions in order to "make him speak" during this presentation. However, some preliminary comments of mine and the court reports (typed in text boxes) might serve as meta-communication contextualising his crime for the reader before embarking on the further process of analysing the meaning units, psychological meaning, and eventually interpretation to answer the research question in further chapters.

Before John's story is presented as it evolved from his diary and other communications, a description of the context of his psychotherapy will serve to provide a framework for a better understanding of the peripheral factors that impacted on the unpacking of his story.

### **B.7.1 The context of psychotherapy with John**

The process of establishing psychotherapeutic rapport with John happened within a huge Correctional Services facility, on the outskirts of one of the largest cities in South Africa. During the relevant time, most of the government managed correctional facilities were burdened with a complicated over population problem. Related to this was the fact that the courts could not cope with the caseload that resulted from a very high crime rate. The specific facility was designed to be an intake and distribution centre with no appropriate room for training and recreational facilities usually included in the designs of longer term correctional facilities. It has been adjusted to accommodate nearly all the possible categories of inmates from awaiting trial to maximum security.

There were four buildings accommodating inmates on the premises as well as several buildings for personnel facilities. One building was mainly used for medium security male inmates awaiting trial (Medium A prison), one for sentenced medium security male inmates (Medium B prison), one for sentenced maximum-security male inmates (Maximum prison), and one for all categories of female inmates (female prison). All the facilities, except the maximum prison had very few single cells. Most beds were triple storied and approximately two metres apart to save space.

At the time of first contact with John, I was the only psychologist on the staff for a total sentenced inmate population of nearly 5 000. Due to the fact that permanent Correctional Services staff members were not responsible for un-sentenced inmates, I have not met him during his awaiting trial period. He has recently been transferred from Medium A prison (inmate population approximately 10 000) to Medium B prison with an inmate population of approximately 3 000. My office was in the administrative building, 500 metres away due to a shortage of office space in the Medium B building. I usually had to make an arrangement to "borrow an office" when I did consultations in the prisons. Most inmates were not allowed to leave the premises of the building in which they were accommodated.

In spite of efforts to control it, factors such as overpopulation, gangsterism and intimidation, corruption and bribery among inmates and some staff members, frequent staff changes due to resignations and transfers, staff shortages, frequent transfers of inmates as a method of behaviour control, losses of valuable information in files of inmates and staff members, security concerns and illegal drug smuggling and abuse were ever present in the facility where John served his sentence. These issues almost always served as restrictive factors that had to be dealt with during psychotherapy. John sometimes referred to such factors directly or indirectly.

However, he was afraid to write down such information. He often wrote letters to staff members to try to raise some concerns or request some adjustments to his privileges, indicating that the mentioned issues were part of his everyday life that he had to deal with. The general approach and atmosphere in prison that was regarded as necessary to survive in these circumstances was sometimes referred to as “a healthy paranoia”. One thing that John was particularly afraid of was the ever-present possibility of having to return to Medium B prison after his time in the rehabilitation centre was completed. He was always afraid that he would not be able to stand against the stronger intimidation in a less protected environment where he has to sleep in a crowded cell with other inmates and where the focus is more upon safe custody than on rehabilitation.

The relevant episode of John’s life story, which revealed itself in this context started when he met Mary.

### **B.7.2 John’s story – context and background**

John was the oldest child in a family of five who lived in a suburb of one of the biggest cities in South Africa. His parents were married in 1958 and he was born in 1961. Both his parents were still alive during this research, but they were both battling with restrictive physical illnesses. His mother was a nursery school teacher and his father was a retired factory manager. He retired in December 1999 at the age of sixty-two due to medical reasons. John experienced his childhood relationship with his father as very bad and stormy and his relationship with his mother as good and supportive. He had one sister, two years younger than himself. She was married and had two children of her own. Her family also lived in a suburb of the same town where they grew up, approximately fifteen kilometres from their parents. His relationship with his sister was very good. He also had one adopted brother, thirteen years younger than himself. During the time of the research his brother was working as a mechanic, still single and living with their parents. John saw himself as a sort of a surrogate father figure for his adopted younger brother and often felt responsible to share some of the lessons he learned in live with him. He often felt bad that his brother was getting involved with bad friends and habits and wanted to protect him against these influences.

John’s story as it is revealed in his own transcripts, is divided in two sections. The first section is his storey as it is reflected in his diary, which forms the biggest source of information for this study. This part mainly contains the story as John experienced it and reported it immediately when it happened. The second part is the John’s story as reflected in the court report, his letters and his essays that he wrote during incarceration and psychotherapy. This part contains some preliminary because it consists of John’s own retrospective meditations about his life as well as some third party interpretations of his story in the court report.

### **B.7.3 John’s story as reflected in his diary**

Monday 5 May 1996, the day that John first kissed Mary<sup>13</sup>, was unforgettable. To him she was very beautiful in appearance, but especially in terms of personality. He completely fell in love with her and, although he sometimes doubted his own ability to do so, he yearned to spend the rest of his life with her. One Month and ten days after the first kiss they went to a forest-like place called Green Valley, where they met some new friends and saw several wild animals and birds. They slept on the train during the first night of the weekend because they drank too much alcohol to drive. For John that night was lovely and unforgettable because they made love for the first time and then just fell asleep in each other’s arms.

Two weeks after their trip to Green Valley, John and Mary moved into their own apartment. John was very excited about it and prayed that it would work out for them. That night again felt like their first night together in each other’s arms.

<sup>13</sup> Alias is for the sake of confidentiality. Although the name Mary might have some symbolic meaning and specific connotations in some contexts, these meanings were not considered as a reason for choosing this name. However, it should be acknowledged that for John Mary impersonated ‘immaculateness’

Ten days later John's workplace closed down due to the fraud of one of the managers, who committed suicide when it was discovered. John felt very bad. At first, he was uncertain about whether he should tell Mary about it, but he decided to do so because her love for him would make her understand. She did not react as negatively as he had feared.

On Wednesday 24 July 1996 John felt a need to apologise to Mary for the fact that he did not attend her Netball league matches the day before by writing two poems for her and buying her a gift and a card. He was afraid of losing her and felt that he had to earn her love. They had a talk the previous night and he felt that it helped him to understand her better. She told him that she does not have enough space in her heart to love him completely due to the fact that two of her ex-boyfriends and her puppy still occupy some space in her heart. John felt upset about this, but did not interpret his emotion as jealousy. He trusted her and decided that the best word to describe his love for her was an "ace". He also spoke to her about a sexual problem he experienced and afterwards he felt more at ease and they slept well that night. He expressed some anxiety about himself not being able to live without her, because she was fulfilling many of his desires. He also felt insecure because he was in the process of looking for a new job.

For nearly two months after this talk with Mary, John stopped writing in his diary. On Thursday 10 October 1996 he started by writing about his regret about an injury to Mary's finger. He reported that they attended a wedding on 5 October and had an argument after an ex-boyfriend of hers said good-bye to her. They were both upset and on their way back home he made some sexual gestures/overtures towards her. At home, after he undressed her, she did not want to have sex with him. He then lost his temper and said some things to her that he regretted afterwards. She replied by pointing out to him that he gets angry when she is not ready for sex and demands it from her, that her ex-boyfriend is nothing more than a friend and that John handles her too roughly. She went on to undress and challenged him to do with her whatever he wanted to. He was taken aback and could not have sex with her then, because he realised that it was not right if she does not agree to it. The first time when they had sex again was 4 days later. He experienced that as a very significant change in his approach towards the intimate part of their relationship because she was close to menstruation and very sensitive. He learned to treasure her more and handle her more tenderly.

After more than a month John made his next entry in his diary, which turned out to be his last entry before the murder. He has been retrenched again and had serious financial problems. However, he was now more convinced than ever before that he is totally in love with Mary. He expressed very strong feelings of an overwhelming and possessive love for her that could sometimes push him towards violent deeds, as well as a feeling of inability to convey his feelings to her. He lastly mentioned that they were engaged the previous day.

After not writing in his diary for approximately one month, John committed his 'crime of passion'

On 10 December 1996 John's whole being cried for an explanation of the fact that he killed Mary, whom he felt was so special for him that they were parts of each other. He despised of the fact that he broke his promise to himself that he would never hurt her physically or emotionally. It was difficult for him to believe that he killed Mary. In the past they were able to solve their differences of opinion by talking about it and compromising. He tried to tell her that he wanted to undo what he did. Their love was without equal for him.

He sensed her telling him to come back and give himself up after he fled from the scene of the murder. He listened to her, thanked her and felt that he had to pay for it – even with his life – if necessary. He did not perceive himself as a violent person and was convinced that Mary could confirm that. He thought they could communicate without words and he sensed her forgiveness. However, he still felt very guilty and wanted to compensate for it. On the day after the murder, he made a statement of confession to the police, appeared in court and asked for an attorney. His memory of what happened the previous night was very vague. Deep regret overwhelmed him.

On the day of Mary's funeral, 14 December 1996, John still felt heartbroken. He wished he could attend the funeral, but was not allowed to. It gave him some comfort to know that his mother and sister represented him there. He thought that Mary's father is the only person who would understand what special relationship they had and found more comfort in the fact that he approved of their relationship. John made a promise to God and Mary that, when he was released from incarceration, he would put twelve pink roses wherever her ashes were, or if not possible he would go to their favourite place and give them to the Innkeeper.

Two days later, while in prison, John started to feel very withdrawn. He just had a vision of Mary standing in the corner of his cell without saying or doing anything. She was wearing the same nightgown as the night of the murder and he could not see her hands and feet. Her face was faint and obscure. He was sure that she was trying to say something to him. After another two days some of his blood was drawn for tests and he felt as if he were in a trance. He experienced self-hatred, anger and depression and had suicidal thoughts, but his love for Mary kept him from committing suicide. Later that evening he showed some compassion for a black man that he did not know and who was bullied by others, by giving him fruit and cigarettes. This was a strange experience for him and he felt Mary made him do it. He felt scared and nervous and looked forward to see the doctor the following day for the first time after his arrest. He then wrote a poem, titled *Mary* wherein he compared his dreams with a river carrying all their experiences and with battling to stay between the shores. He dedicated the poem to the remembrance of their love.

Three days later John had the same dream again. This time he saw Mary clearly and she was smiling and telling him that she loved him very much. He heard her voice as if she was speaking inside of him. She was also holding a baby-like bundle in her one arm with her other arm stretched out towards him as she did in the past when she wanted him to hug her. She disappeared when he wanted to touch her. The emptiness, self-anger, sadness and desire to undo his crime then returned to him. Later that night he still felt that way and cried in regret. These feelings were constant since the day of the murder and he could not accept what he did because he loved Mary so much. He remembered that his sister told him that he hit Mary with a pipe and then fainted. The only pipe-like objects that he could remember were the umbrella and the keep-net that he unpacked after returning from their weekend away. He had some remorse because he told some lies and remembered that they were sometimes snapping at each other in the days prior to the murder. He had some constant headaches and felt tense and short tempered and tempted to commit suicide. However, he was determined to push through for the sake of his beloved and to tell the truth.

On Christmas Eve 1996 John woke up tired because of a new inmate that made a lot of noise during the night and he had slept for only one hour. He felt angry, had a headache and no appetite and still longed for his beloved. He was looking forward to be released from his cell in order to have a shower. He also thought about being at home with his mother, settling down and getting a lawyer who can communicate better than the first one he had, but did not know whom he could speak to about this. He recalled some intimate moments with his beloved and how beautiful she was. He blamed himself again for destroying their lives and future plans. He felt very close to breaking point and had many unanswered "*why's*" in his mind. John felt a need to speak to Mary's father because he thought that her father would understand and was like a father for him. He wanted to apologise towards him that he killed his daughter. He tried to hide his emotions, but still felt very torn apart. He then expressed many of his emotions and he concluded by stating that it was "*not him*" who committed the murder. He recalled many memories about sentiments they shared, such as nature, songs and Disney Movies. He wrote that he "*would like to give her a small teddy bear<sup>14</sup> with a pouch inside, and inside that pouch a diamond and sapphire pendant that she could wear with her chain and glitter ball that he bought her before*". He wanted her to imagine all his love to be inside the teddy bear, and whenever she held that teddy bear the love would flow out into her heart. He ended this entry in his diary with many big "*why's*" and then wrote a poem with the title "*Babe*"<sup>15</sup>.

The theme of the poem seems to be his yearning for every part of her being. He then repeats some of his already expressed emotions, centring on his inner battle with the clash between how he perceived himself and their relationship to be and the irreconcilability of that with what he did.

John mentioned being exhausted after this emotional display in his diary. After sleeping for two hours, he continued his entries about nostalgic commemorative moments and "firsts" with his beloved. Amongst others he wrote about how and where they met and played pool and other games together. He then briefly returns to his immediate surroundings and thanks her for her inspiration to give his roommates some cookies and describes how happy they are and how they are dancing. After that he fantasised about the family he planned to have with Mary and how he joyfully experienced her with all his senses.

At midnight, at the start of Christmas John wished Mary a merry Christmas and drew some

<sup>14</sup> He often called her Teddy Bear

<sup>15</sup> His other nickname for his beloved

pictures to commemorate their love. He promised her, as well as their son and daughter that they planned to have, that he would pay for what he did.

Eighteen days after the murder John wrote a poem, "In a moment of anger" in which he tries to make sense of his emotions. He emphasises how radically a short moment of "insanity" can change lives. He also tries to express something of his complete inability to explain why it happened, apart from knowing that it had to do something with anger. He then writes some songs of love and praise for his beloved. He mentions that the negative contents of his verses since he was in custody were scary for him but that the words just "came faster than he could write". He longs for his beloved and realised that they were only one night apart since they started dating. He wanted to put her name up at Johnny's Place in Green Valley when he comes out of prison. He never used any swearwords or degrading names towards her before and they never went to bed before sorting out arguments they had. He found it very difficult to accept that he could harm her physically. He tried to remember what happened, but could only remember some actions from before and after the murder, not the murder itself. He then writes down the names of his recent poems and mentions how strange they are for him and he describes his recurring visions of her looking as if she is trying to tell him something. He then confirms his everlasting love for her.

On 29 December 1996 John remembered some patches of what happened the night of the murder. He remembered that he phoned Mary's mother after the murder. He also remembered that Mary told him that she did not love him any more and that he should pack his belongings and leave. He felt as if those words killed him inside and he could not believe that she said it. He recalled previous times when she said tender, loving and gentle words to him and he wrote that he did not hear it with his ears, but that it went straight to his soul and heart and that he would store it there forever. He also recalled the night when she first used the name "Babylove"<sup>16</sup> for him.

It was during a very intimate moment after he admired her body and she told him that she was convinced of the gentleness and purity of his love for her. She then gave him permission to freely explore her body.

After describing this moment in detail, he wrote about the sacredness and intensity of their relationship for him. He expressed his belief that her father was the only other person whom she loved as much as she loved him. Now he can only share the memories with him. He then expresses his regret again, especially towards her father because he made them both lose her.

The refrain of him wanting to "undo" what he did is repeated again

On 11 January 1997 he wrote a poem with the title "Lies" in which he tries to express which insights a retrospective look at the consequences of the lies he told brought to him. It destroy, take away, causes hate, drive in a wedge and cause sorrow, pain and regret. He ends of with an ironic and rhetoric "why did I lie to you?"

Next to several of his poems like this, he wrote the word "regret" in the margin. He also wrote a poem titled "Regret".

Much has already been said about John's relationships with other people and the specific difficulties he had with it. In fact, about every entry in his diary is about his experience of relationships in his life. However, it is as if the more reserved focus before psychotherapy started to change towards a more other-centred, expressive approach with therapeutic progress. Before the murder, on 7 May 1996 he wrote in his diary that he had an argument with his father and that he got so angry that he could kill him, but that he just keep quiet for his mother's sake. He also wrote about the fact that he started to fall in love with Mary, but that he thought it would be better to "back off" because she was still in love with Bill and that he did not want to hurt her.

After approximately one year in psychotherapy after the murder, he continued

On 26 December 1999 he wrote that he has learned a lot about life, that he became stronger and that he became aware of his shortcomings. He wanted to work on his shortcomings, but also realised that it is not going to be fast and easy. He avoided addressing it in the past and realised how complicated the required process of change within himself became because of his procrastination. He strived to become a more balanced person and he wanted to take his relatives more into consideration because he was thankful for their support during difficult times and wanted to contribute something in their lives

<sup>16</sup> He later chose this as his poetry alias

now. He thought about his father's difficulties after his car was stolen and he wanted to prepare for his mother and sisters expected visit the next day. He missed his sister's children and hoped they would come along.

Ten days later, on 5 January 2000 he continued to express some experiences about relationships in his life in his letter to Mary. He wrote that his world has become very small and that he had no "friends" - only people who knew him. He thanked God for his immediate relatives and again expressed his indebtedness towards them. He thanked Mary that she taught him that life has a purpose, but regretted the fact that it cost her her life. He told her about his intention to serve the elderly and needy children in institutions and that he did not want to do it to escape his punishment. He started to write poems again and a book as well. There was a twist in his poems and they had a hidden, deeper meaning now.

After a coffee break he told Mary that he decided that it was time to go on with his life now and that there were going to be major changes. He decided to avoid getting involved in heterosexual relationships again because he does not like to hurt people and he was scared of himself. He wanted to do some of the recreational activities again that they used to do together, such as pool and indoor cricket. He had enough emotional pain now and wanted to start a new chapter in his life, although it is going to be very hard for him. He also discovered through the things that came out in the cards and plaster ornaments that he made that he had a "weird creature streak" in him. It gave him satisfaction to see that it gave his mother and sister some pleasure. He wanted to go and live with his parents and mentioned that his father bought a new car and that he was on pension since 10 December 1999.

Two days later he wrote in his diary that he was "utterly disgusted, frustrated and angry with myself". He mentioned that he applied to stay in the rehabilitation section of the complex and that he wrote a letter to Mary. Writing the letter opened a lot of emotional pain in him again. He felt that he could not cope so well any more and he felt trapped because he could not implement his intentions to serve his family and the elderly while he was in prison. It was detrimental to keep up his moral that he should be enabled to do this and he intended to write a proposal to the parole board the next day.

In a letter John wrote to Mary on 5 January 2000 he expressed his concern about his father's back and lung problems and his mother's skin cancer and cataracts on the eyes. His sister had some difficulty finding a permanent job and his brother in law was surprisingly supportive towards him. He wanted to help all of them and mentioned that one of the motives behind writing a book was also to help others through sharing with them the many things that he learned. His poems were more personal for him, but he also thought that someone else might find some clarifications for their own problems by reading them. He mentions that this may be his last letter to Mary, but "only time will tell". He will always remember her and treasure the good memories.

Even before he was halfway through his time of sentence, John often tried to envisage his first period "back in the normal community". Although he yearned for freedom and the opportunity to deal with all his perceived debts to relatives and society, he also feared that he was not going to cope with facing all his responsibilities again. One thing that he held onto as an anchor amongst all these uncertainties is the fact that one of his previous employers promised him a job when he is released. His biggest fear seemed to be entering into new close relationships again. He often pictured himself as quite isolated and busy with some compensatory duties, without allowing himself the privilege of very close relationships, especially with members of the opposite sex who are not related to him. The point that needs to be highlighted is his new awareness of his vulnerability and the accompanying fear of himself committing a similar crime again. Ironically this new awareness turned out to be one of his best alibis to prove that he is not at very high risk of committing a similar crime again.

During the year of 1997 and also in the first half of 1998 John continued writing extensively in his diary. However, he did not really introduce major new themes or insights, apart from revealing some more feelings about his father. The dream about Mary appearing to him, wanting to tell him something, kept haunting him. He made it out for himself that she may have been pregnant with their first child during the time of the murder and that she wanted to tell him about that. This interpretation triggered new visions of having a happy family life with her as well as renewed regret and self-blame because he destroyed this possibility. He also started dreaming of publishing a poetry collection when he is released from prison, dedicated to his beloved. For this reason the style of his writing often took the form of verses with metaphors and other literary forms often found in poems. Because he was awaiting his trial and sentence during all of this time, he also often wrote about what he anticipated in this regard, but usually not in poetry form.

He kept to normal “report” and “essay” styles when he wrote about this.

During his time of incarceration John often expressed feelings indicating different reasons for wanting to be with his family, or at least some members of his family. After the murder he started to experience some reconciliation between himself and his father. The reports of the findings in court make it clear that his mother played an important part in convincing him to confess and hand himself over to the police while he was still very confused and afraid. She was also the person who sometimes tried to be an advocate for him by phoning some of the staff members in prison. He often expressed fears of not coming out of prison while his parents are still alive. He felt a strong responsibility to do something to make their time of old age easier for them. He felt that the opposite was happening in actual fact while he was incarcerated.

On New Years day of the new century John wrote in his diary that he would have liked to be with his parents and his sister’s family. They are the core of his very being and although he realised that his problems (incarceration) were his fault, he prayed that he could be with them at that moment. He expressed his determination to succeed in reaching his goals and two of them were to be released by June 2000 and to have his own business. He had very strong emotions that he described as a passive anger caused by a combination of circumstances and feelings. He felt a need for help from his individual psychotherapist to deal with it. He also wanted to see the social worker that was transferred to another location because he thought that he could help him to go out on correctional supervision sooner. Furthermore he wanted to become involved in supporting the elderly and needy young children in the community to compensate for some debt he has towards them. His hobbies of making plaster ornaments and cards on the computer could become a possible source of income. He then wrote three poems and mentioned that they were acting as an outlet valve for his painful and sometimes devastating memories. He felt they represented a permanent scar, but that time and being with his family could bring some healing.

One of the reasons for keeping a diary that John often brought up during psychotherapy was that writing was the only way in which he felt that he really could express his real emotions. He regarded himself as an “unpopular loner” during schooldays and he did not talk very easily. However, he always had very intense emotions to deal with. He often started entries in his diary with “my friend”. It is almost as if his diary became a surrogate for an imaginary friend that he created during early childhood when he did not have real friends. He later shared his image of his ideal “life partner and wife” with this “pen friend” and then thought he found her in real life. His deepest emotions were always shared in the context of talking to his most intimate friend, partly imaginary and later often represented by his beloved. He expressed his anger, fear, jealousy and ideas of inferiority and incompetence in metaphors, poems and letters addressed to his “friend”. When he had to face some discrepancies between his ideal friend and its representation in the form of his beloved, something snapped and it became too much for him. After the murder he continued to write to “his friend”, although it is as if a “fusion” developed between his friend and his memories of his beloved.

John wrote many poems from which only a few that were regarded as the most relevant were transcribed among the natural meaning units in the appendix of this thesis.

On 10 January 1997 John wrote a poem with the title of “*Dad*”. He tried to express the emotional development between him and his father from the time that his father gave life to him, through the time when he started to experience him as absent, hated him and completely drifted apart from him. Then, ironically, after his fiancée’s death they reconciled. He experienced this reconciliation as very fragile and hoped it would last. He wished his beloved could witness it, because she always wanted it.

On 15 January 1997 he wrote “*My sick life*”. He described his heart as unmoved and himself as someone who cannot be loved. His life was in autumn and grief and sorrow replaced all his fruits. He talks about his fire that changed into dead ash and his jealous care and love that he lost. He felt sad and wanted to shake his soul to free himself of his ugly part. He expressed his feelings of worthlessness and being unable to see things as clear as before. He concluded with a death wish in which he could choose the ground to be buried in.

On Monday 3 March 1997, the day before his appearance in court, John mentioned that he still slept badly. He just finished another letter to his mother and wanted to write to his father too, but did not know what to write. While doing his morning chores he accidentally cut his moustache and then shaved it off. It made him feel naked and cold. He prepared his best suit and outfit and felt very nervous. He did not know what to expect. He considered writing to his sister instead of to his father,



because it would make it easier for him to express his feelings. He wondered whether his psychologist was going to have the opportunity to talk in court or whether he was only going to be asked to plead. He anticipated a postponement of the hearing date and that his lawyer may say nothing else than pleading, "not guilty". He still experienced some doubt in his mind about what happened during the murder. He even doubted if it were he who did it.

His birthday, 4 April 1997 was another day of grief and anger for him. He felt careless and aware of the fact that his life expectancy was shortened considerably because he could not face what was lying ahead of him. He felt angry and aggressive towards his fellow inmates. These emotions were continuous.

Three months later, on Tuesday 8 July 1997 John was on the verge of despair and isolated from the world outside. He counted the days and mentioned that he already spent 280 days in the awaiting trial cells. He anticipated something bad, but did not know what. However, he was looking forward to a scheduled interview with a social worker and a visit from his sister. He felt guilty of the fact that his sister had to visit him in such bad circumstances and was ashamed and afraid of his suicidal thoughts.

John started using lower case when he wrote "I" and he mentioned that thinking about Mary was upsetting and hurting him so much that he refrained from communicating with her in writing or speech. However, he still wanted to treasure the good memories about her, because they were his inspiration to live.

After his sister visited him John was glad to hear that she and her children were well, but he longed to be with them. He was angry about the fact that their privilege to have magazines in prison has been terminated and it reminded him of how isolated he was. He expressed a death wish again and then wrote "*The feel in Me*". This short verse expressed his strong feelings of being isolated in a bad situation as well as his self-blame and self-hatred.

On Christmas day 1997 John wrote that it feels just like another day and that the place shaped him to "*cruise on in automatic mode*" and that he hated it. He continued to write a verse, "*When i fell in Love*" expressing his sensation of being in another dimension when he first saw Mary. He immediately knew that he wanted to make her his wife and he felt very happy. He ends off by writing about his belief that he would, in spite of his current loneliness, remember that first impression of her forever and that he will love her as long as he lives. When he returns to normal writing style, he expresses some confusion and later writes about his headache, depression and his enjoyment of the special food on Christmas day.

By the time of his final hearing on Monday 8 June 1998, his day count stood at 545 and he added some daily notes about his migraines and medication next to the date of every entry in his diary. He hardly ever used a capital I when he referred to himself now.

John noted that he spent the whole day in court, that he was very edgy and that the final sentencing will take place within two days. He had some hope about the possibility of a five years sentence of Correctional Supervision, with psychotherapy sessions at his own cost as supported by the probation officer and his private psychologist. He thought about his father's lung cancer and their reconciliation and his mother's possible shock if he has to go to prison. He anticipated the possibility of an eight to fifteen years sentence of incarceration because the judge would feel responsible to punish him. Also, Mary's mother was "*anti-me*". He expressed some understanding for her negative feelings towards him, but furthermore stated his dismay about it because her revenge would not bring Mary back and could cause more misery. His entry on the next day expresses his intense emotional and physical pain as well as his intolerance for the marijuana smoke in prison. He also expressed an intense fear that a sentence of incarceration would ruin the lives of all the people in his immediate family circle. He thought that suicide would be better if that happens, but he would not do it because of his promise to his beloved.

On the day of sentencing he made a short entry stating that he was sentenced for eight years and that it was a long time. He also expressed a sense of relief because he could start organising and building his life again and made a few calculations about the possible period of imprisonment if he gets a reduction for good behaviour credits.

Four months after John started to serve his sentence, one of the social workers in the correctional facility where he was incarcerated sent me a formal referral note, dated 8 October 1998. He attached a letter from John, addressed to the head of the prison, dated 2 September 1998. The letter motivated John's requests to obtain a pair of prescribed spectacles and to see a psychologist. John highlighted the facts that the Judge ordered psychotherapy as part of his corrective regime, that he had bad migraines and that he feared a second stroke (apparently he was told a few months ago that he may have had a minor stroke).

On 13 October I met John for the first time in the referring social worker's office. He was grateful and very co-operative. I followed the normal psychological protocol of doing a full present state examination. What stood out for me during the assessment, were a) his long history of substance abuse (mainly cannabis), b) his relationship problems and experiences of conflict with his father, c) his inability to cope with the current prison environment (see prison issues), d) his physiological problems such as migraines and hypertension, e) that writing was one of his natural therapeutic self-help tools, and f) his intense regret and bereavement.

I realised that practical issues had to be addressed as a preparatory ritual to facilitate psychotherapeutic development. I followed the necessary procedures to obtain his previous psychological assessment report written for the court proceedings, I recommended regular psychotherapy and transfer to a single cell in the Maximum security prison, I phoned his mother to investigate her possible supportive role, and I recommended a medical examination, a.s.a.p.

During the following period of time, the social worker in Maximum managed to get approval to use a section of the prison, containing 11 single cells as an accommodation facility for a substance abuse rehabilitation program stretching over a period of approximately three months. A new full time psychologist was also appointed to share my responsibilities. She was a young lady who was still busy with the final stages of her practical training and ironically Maximum prison was the safest place to accommodate her during that time. After a few follow-up psychological consultations with John and many communications with other staff members in this regard, we managed to get John admitted as a member of the first group who did the in house substance abuse rehabilitation program. Although the new psychologist took over his psychotherapy, I was still involved in a supervisory capacity. John was eager to do the program from the start, and participated fully in all the activities. After approximately three months (in the beginning of 1999), I had to take over John's individual psychotherapy again. In accordance with the AA/NA treatment model, it was decided to allow the people who went through the program to volunteer to be trained as lay counsellors and act in a supervisory capacity for the next group of selected rehabilitation program occupants. Another similar section of the Maximum prison, close to the "rehabilitation centre" was obtained as a "halfway house" for the inmates who just finished the program and were in the process of being trained as lay counsellors. Although another psychologist (also a young lady in the final stage of training) was appointed in January 1999, she opted not to take the responsibility for John's individual psychotherapy. However, she did all group work and training sessions with the rehabilitation candidates. Later during the year, the male social worker that started the rehabilitation centre was also transferred to another location. His responsibilities were taken over by another young female social worker who was transferred from Medium B prison. John's involvement in the lay counsellor's training and activities made it possible for him to stay on in the appropriate section, containing single cells in Maximum. All the practical arrangements amongst difficult circumstances helped to establish good psychotherapeutic rapport and trust that laid a sound foundation for the psychotherapy to follow.

On 1 December 1998, the day after the day John had his first individual consultation with his new psychologist, he wrote in his diary about his tiredness and tension. He noted that it hurts to talk about his beloved, but that he needed to, in order to get it out of his system and carry on with his life. He also wanted to address practical needs such as getting something to read and requesting permission to practice a hobby. He realised that Christmas was close and that it has been nearly two years after the murder. The elapsed time was long, but it also felt like yesterday for him. He wanted to start writing poems again.

On Christmas day 1998 John wrote in his diary that it did not feel like Christmas and that he missed his family. His memories went back far, but a "lazy cleaner" whose work he had to do irritated him. He mentioned that people tried to escape and that it was a total waste of time and even a life. Someone

died in prison from a "heart attack" and the worst part of it was to see him and to clean the blood from the floor<sup>17</sup>. The blood precipitated a re-experiencing of the murder scene he was involved in.

The entries in John's diary were much shorter now. However, he very seldom skipped a day. No relevant new themes were introduced in 1999. Some studying and writing assignments he wrote during this time in the rehabilitation program will be referred to in a later section of this thesis.

Christmas day 1999 was just like another day. John longed to be with his family and he particularly thought about the excitement of his sister's children. He felt powerless to change his situation and blamed himself for it. He had some new physical problems and wondered whether there was any purpose in his situation. He hoped that it would be his last Christmas in prison because he wanted to help his parents. He started to feel very annoyed by the noise that some of his fellow inmates made and blamed their cultural origin for it. He started to "*hate them with a passion*". He was looking forward to phone his family and knew that they would gather at his sister's house. He mentioned that his book<sup>18</sup> was making progress and that he tried to put his emotions into words in it. He found it quite difficult.

After he phoned his mother John expressed some mixed feelings. His family members were all well, but their car was stolen. This incident enhanced his ethnic hatred and he wrote that he wished that he could get his hands on the thieves, that he would kill them and that he was even thinking of escape. He felt on the edge and anticipated an unstoppable emotional explosion. He was also angry because his external psychologist's report was lost during the time that the psychologist's office in Maximum prison was unoccupied. His mother did not have a copy at home either and he wanted to apologise to her that he was so angry when she told him that she could not find the copy. He realised that he could not afford to have an emotional explosion now and he wanted to speak to his individual psychologist about it. He also wanted to write a request to the parole board to have the remainder of his sentence converted into correctional supervision and wanted to speak to the relevant social worker about it. He was determined to do things for himself now "if nobody wanted to help him". His main motivation was to help his ageing parents at home.

On the last day of 1999 John remarked that it was an end of an era as well as the end of a part of his life that he rather wanted to "*file away in the deepest folds of his mind*". He felt that he has learned from the last four years, but also failed himself and his family. The lesson was extremely painful and unforgettable for him. Now time arrived for him to build on what he has learned and to carry on as his beloved would have liked him to. Although he still had many questions in his mind about what really happened the night of the murder and he was afraid of the possible answers, he felt ready to face the facts of his life as an obstacle, but also a stepping-stone that helped him to learn. It has changed his life in a way that he never expected. He was not aware of his true mental condition because, if it were the case, he would have done something about it for the sake of his beloved and himself. He could still see her in his mind and will always love her. He realised that there would never be another Mary in his life and he did not want another lady. He felt it would be unfair to another lady if he still has all the memories of his beloved inevitably causing him to make comparisons. He did a lot of introspection during the past three years and realised that there were things that he needed to do, but not for financial gain. He has been given a chance in life and wanted to use it to the full to help others to better the quality of their lives. He wanted to share what he has learned from his own experience and it was so drastic for him that he felt that there were no words to describe it. He was writing a book about it and also continued writing poems as a way of unloading events in his mind. He was still hoping for a breakthrough in terms of understanding himself. He was grateful for the love and support of his family that carried him through this difficult time. He felt closer to them than ever before. He did not know what was ahead in the New Year, but he had good faith that things can only go better. He wanted to get out and be with his family soon and intended to work hard on improving himself, decision-making and finding some answers to his questions. When the actual hour of the turn of the century was close, he added that he wanted space: a private peaceful hole where he could curl up and dream dreams and stretch his imagination while he was planning and setting goals. He expressed some hope that the minister of correctional services would grant some deserving prisoners a discount of sentence. He also intended to complete his book and poems and had a gut feeling that he underestimated himself. He was convinced that he had the answers to his own problems, but felt angry and frustrated because he could not apply the answers to solve his problems yet.

---

<sup>17</sup> What actually happened was that there was an attempted escape on Christmas day and one of the inmates was shot in the resulting clash between staff and some inmates

<sup>18</sup> probably his book of poetry

#### B.7.4 Preliminary interpretations of John's story

Some preliminary interpretations of John's story are reflected in the court report, his letters and his essays.

On 20 January 2000 John wrote a letter addressed to the rehabilitation centre psychologist and social worker. He mentioned that he wanted to clarify a few potentially problematic points that concerned him and others. His first concern was about a possible clash between the counsellor's course he was doing and his individual psychotherapy sessions. He was afraid that the times would clash in such a way that he would have to terminate the individual therapy. He motivated how important it was for him to be able to continue with both. The letter carries on mentioning another ten environmental and structural issues such as food, health, wanting to use a computer, bad behaviour and drug abuse of other inmates, and equipment for hobbies. He then concludes by thanking the social worker for her time and requesting to see her together with one of his fellow course attendants to discuss the rehabilitation centre.

In a letter written to me on 26 February 2000 John wrote that he was afraid to go back to Medium B prison when the counselling course finishes in September. Therefore he requested either to work and stay in the prison hospital (a small sick bay close to where he was for the course), or to work as a tea boy, work at the vehicle maintenance unit or at the dog unit. Whatever his position, he required to be in a single cell because he was afraid that he would not be able to cope with many people around him or with noise. He wanted to stop trying to use the computers in prison, because it caused too much friction. Furthermore he confirmed his request for a change in the scheduled time for his psychotherapy sessions. He felt a need to have peace and quiet around him would help him to heal.

He mentioned that he was very concerned about the fact that his sister did not visit him since December 1999 and he suspected that it had to do with some conflict between his father and brother-in-law. He requested a consultation visit with his sister to clarify this matter. He expressed his fear of what it might do to him if he loses his family and explained how his emotions fluctuated very frequently. He felt that he was treated unfairly by some of the wardens recently and they did not regard anything what he did or say as worth listening to. He withdrew from them and did not volunteer for anything anymore. He was angry with one specific staff member. He was convinced that his goals were realistic and with good motives. He did not want to pretend any more. A review of step 2 in his course<sup>19</sup> made him realise how difficult it was to be honest with him, but it also helped him to see his own possibilities.

Right from the beginning of the entries in the available parts of John's diary, it is clear that his family relations played a major part in his development and conceptualisations around the prelude and aftermath of the murder of his fiancée. It became an even more pressing issue after he has been arrested due to the fact that he felt that there was a lot of unfinished business in his family relationships to deal with.

On 3 January 1997 John wrote a letter to Mary, outlining his memories of their relationship from the beginning. He describes how they met at an evening of Blackball. She still had another boyfriend, and he (John) "*gave her the choice*" between the two of them. He recalls his gladness about the fact that she chose him, and her crying when they went to fetch her belongings from his apartment. He then runs through his sentiments and memories about their favourite places and events such as when they moved into their apartment and when he asked her father to marry her. He mentions that the first time they made love was in her mother's flat and recalls other "*firsts*" such as the first time they bathed together and their first dinner date as well as their first weekend away at Green Valley. He also describes his positive memories of significant friends and family members such as her grandmother and her brother who told him that he was the best boyfriend she ever had. He recalls their night in the train again and how intimate and intense that was.

Then he calls into memory his "*mistake of his life*" when he lied to her about his background. He mentions his regret and his wish to "*undo*" what he has done. He mentions what the engagement at her grandmother's place meant to him and how they planned to have a boy and a girl and even chose names for them. Their wedding date was set for October 1997.

<sup>19</sup> To believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity

He ends the letter by expressing his disgust and disbelief about the fact that he destroyed all those memories and that he caused so much harm and hurt. He expresses his adoration for her, thanks her for what she has done for him, asks for forgiveness and vows that he will love her forever and hopes to see her when it is his time. After he ended the letter he makes a note stating that he is worried about his future, but that he would pay for what he has done, even, if necessary, with his life.

Two of the words John used most often in his diary after the murder are “undo” and “regret”. Many of his poems – he even used titles such as “Regret” - and letters can, in a way, be described as lamentations about what he did, how much regret he has about it and how much he wished that it never happened or that it could be reversed. One thing that came out quite clearly in the court report, but was only indirectly referred to in his diary was the fact that he told his beloved a few lies about his qualifications and the nature of his employment. He wanted to impress her and felt that she might look down upon his real education and employment status. The murder happened shortly after he decided to confess to her that he told these lies.

During the last phases of psychotherapy with me, he often spoke about how he doubts it whether he would ever be able to be involved in an intimate relationship with another girl. He preferred to picture himself as doing some community service in a home for the elderly. He thought that he owed the community some compensatory service. The fact that his own parents were ageing probably contributed a lot towards the specific context that he envisaged for his future voluntary service to other people.

The following extracts from the court records reflect some of the realities that he experienced in this regard:

“Probably because the accused wanted to impress the deceased, he told her and her mother several blatant lies. Some examples are –

- that he was an engineer who was busy with further studies;
- that he won prizes at university;
- that his motor vehicle was stolen.

He went so far as to commit fraud with the help of his brother-in-law’s credit card. This was a very stressful period, which caused further inferiority and dependence. It also had the consequence that the accused continuously lived in fear that the deceased would find out about his untruthfulness and that that he could loose her.”

The report further describes how John decided to tell the truth to his beloved. At first she did not react very fiercely, but soon afterwards, she took off her engagement ring and threw it against the wall. After several arguments, she later also ordered him to take his things and leave. The crime took place after these incidents. Apparently he hit her on the head with a pipe-like object. When John came to his senses again, he phoned her mother, asked her to call an ambulance and tried to bandage his beloved’s wounds. When he discovered that she was dead, he fled to a coastal town, approximately 500 km away. He asserted that he could not remember either how the crime took place or how he got to the coastal town. From the coastal town, he phoned his own mother and she convinced him to return home and make a statement at the nearest police office. He did so.

In his letter to Mary on 5 January 2000 John mentioned that things were getting better for him, that he had a job waiting for him, a place to stay and even a car waiting for him. He mentioned that his family needed him very badly and that his sister’s children’s acceptance of him caused a breakthrough for him. He then returned his thoughts to his cell and mentioned that his pot plant was his “main living thing” around him and that it gave him great pleasure.

On 26 February 2000 John wrote<sup>20</sup> that he learned to be himself and not to pretend to be what he is not. He just longed to have a steady and secure job again, even if the remuneration is not to good. He realised that he got involved with Mary because he wanted to pretend that he was someone that he was not. Eventually he just could not cope with the pretending any more and he exploded. He did not want to allow that to happen again. He realised that he could not handle teasing right through his school and his national service up to his adult life and even now in prison. He experienced it as pressure and it made him aggressive.

<sup>20</sup> In a letter addressed to me, the researcher and therapist

Right from the start of his incarceration John expressed some thoughts and feelings about his expectations of the phase between release from incarceration and complete freedom. It started by him trying to apply for a conversion of his sentence of incarceration into one of correctional supervision. Although most concrete evidence pointed towards the fact that it was very unlikely, it is as if his emotions in this regard got the better of him. He never really wanted to give up on trying, even if everyone with some knowledge in this regard tried to explain to him that the probability is very little. It is as if he wanted to hold onto this possibility as a reminder of the fact that his incarceration won't last forever. Sometimes it was also a matter of him trying to transcend his immediate situation of suffering in many senses of the word. His intentions to try to get his sentence converted also became much stronger at the time of the turn of the century. The new millennium probably also indicated a new millennium in his life for him. He wrote about those experiences in the form of letters to staff members as well as entries in his diary.

In his letter to me on 26 February 2000 John explained to me why it was so important for him to finish the counsellor's course. He mentioned that it already helped him to get some new insights in his own weaknesses, but that he still had to learn to cope with them. He stated that he reset his goal to be out of prison by December 2000. He asked some advice on how to go about to achieve this goal and mentioned that he heard about an electronic monitor device for people on parole and that he would like to use it. He also intended to help *"the department sorting out problems so that in future more people can be helped..."* He confirmed that he had some sufficient support systems at home<sup>21</sup> and that he would like to serve the elderly and children.

A last issue that runs like a golden thread through the whole period of incarceration is John's search for safe context. It can be interpreted literally as well as figuratively. He very often wanted to be protected against possible physical assault and intimidation in prison. He also wanted to find people who understood some of his inner struggles and looked for support to find answers to all his questions. He wanted to find some reassurance that he would one day be able to have a normal life again. However, he was sure that he would never find such a safe context without undergoing many *"purifying and compensatory rituals"*.

John's letter to me on 26 February 2000 centres on his search for safe context. He mentioned that tension and friction might sometimes make him act in ways that he does not feel comfortable with, that he felt extremely sensitive since the murder and that he decided to avoid situations that may be hazardous to him. He felt that some prison wardens have recently treated him like a child and that he just kept quiet and did what was required from him, hoping that it would *"backfire"* towards them. He was told that he had too many privileges and he disagreed. He expressed his determination to fight back mentally and even physically "if needed". They were recently banned from the computers due to a mistake someone else made and he felt it was unfair. They were eating out of dishes *"like dogs"* and he was losing weight. He would not allow them to break him and will stay clean from drugs and alcohol even if he were out of prison. He felt tied down because he could not act upon his decision to serve in the community, but was determined not to give up. He expressed a need to go on with psychotherapy, even when he is outside prison and he wanted to formulate his future plans.

A safe context to John was one in which he could act upon his intentions to serve a community that was not threatening to his mental condition.

Another issue related to serving a sentence, was that inmates often referred to incarceration as "doing time". When they drug themselves with marijuana or other drugs they refer to it as "pushing time". In existential-phenomenological psychology time refers to a way of being, rather than passing minutes or hours on a clock. Although I had some of those concepts in mind when I decided to ask John to write something about time in July 1999, I tried not to mention any of those possible meanings to him. I wanted to see what his spontaneous associations, feelings and thoughts were. John confirmed the significance of the subject of "Time" for him by putting several exclamation- and question marks behind the title.

John started his essay on "Time" by mentioning how long it has been since he was arrested and added that he could have used the time more constructively. Time was something he never really

<sup>21</sup> This was one of the conditions before a parole date could be allocated

noticed before, but since he met Mary (in 1996) it became something lying heavily on his mind and whole being.

For John it all started in 1976 when he started to smoke cigarettes. In itself it was no big deal, but it led to wrong friends and drinking. He thought that he could control it, but discovered that a bad temper and alcohol did not mix very well. He got involved in many bar fights and injured many victims. It felt bad for him to lose his temper when he was sober and when he was drunk he tended to withdraw and did not talk at all – this became his pattern of behaviour. He could drink a lot of alcohol before anyone would notice that it affected him. When time went on, he started to use marijuana as well. Although he thought it would calm him down, it just made him quieter with bottled up emotions. Years later he realised that it was a very dangerous situation. He also tried LSD, but that did not agree with him at all and he ended up in hospital. When he tried cocaine he felt that it was just the thing for him. He used it for a long time, even in prison and often mixed it with marijuana, Mandrax<sup>22</sup> and alcohol such as wine, whiskey, rum and tequila.

In December 1996 he had a good fishing weekend. The Monday night he took marijuana, cocaine and "a lot of alcohol". He did not use anything during the weekend because he was with his fiancée, whom he adored and respected. When they had the argument that night he felt angry, but could not control himself until he heard the words "I don't love you – take your things and go". It really "rocked his unstable mind". He "switched off for a few seconds and did something that I never did before and that he did not even dream about in his worst nightmares": he killed his fiancée in a terrible violent rage. Her head was smashed and he became a murderer. In retrospect he thinks he acted like a robot. He did not plan it consciously – if he did, he would have walked out on her that night. In spite of the fact that his memory is normally very well, his recollections of that night are very patchy. Sometimes he can hear a noise like breaking dry branches that he associates with breaking bones. It upsets him and fills him with fear, revulsion and self-hatred. He will never forget the coppery smell of blood. Sometimes it feels as if it happened very recently. He feels this scene will haunt him forever.

Since then John lives behind a mask covering a tender and festering wound. Time is like dust – it settles and sometimes it is better not to disturb it. However, at times in life it is disturbed. Pain is part of time for him and he has more of it than he can cope with. However, he has no choice. The eight years he got in prison is a very long time for him. During the first three years he abused a lot of drugs and started seeing himself as a big non-caring, sometimes violent monster. He finds it difficult to start seeing himself as a normal human being again. He often exploded in Medium B prison after being triggered by only a small incident. A few times he nearly killed someone. He sometimes was scared of himself too. After two mini strokes and numerous migraine attacks and after he hurt some people physically, he decided to seek some help. It was difficult for him to admit that he needed help, but he felt that time drove him into a corner and beg for help. Help did arrive, but he still had to decide what to do with it. He later realised that it was the only chance that he would ever have. His life went unstopably in the wrong direction for 35 years and it cost a life, a murder to make him stop in his tracks and realise that it was time to change.

In November 1998 things reached a point where John realised that it took him only three years to come to a point where his life was scattering into pieces. He then also realised that time was on his side and that he had to allow it to heal him. This realisation led to a "breakthrough decision" and by November 1999 he had a drug-free lifestyle. He committed himself to change and felt that he needed a secure surrounding to help him become a "normal human being".

John reported that "*Past time*", over the previous nine months helped him to see a new John emerging, but he still felt shaky and uncertain about what to do in future. He had so many dreams and goals that he sometimes felt frustrated because he wanted to do too much too soon. Recently his world nearly crumbled because of insecurity and he thus had a need for a secure environment from where he could lay the foundation for a well-balanced lifestyle. Time has shown him many of his weaknesses and he developed an attitude of constructive self-criticism and active involvement in addressing them. His confidence grew and time warned him that this was his one and only time to do what he had to do.

Looking back is like looking at a growing baby becoming stronger through pains, tears and falls. He does not take things He does not take things such as being outside, walking on green grass, feeling the rain on his face and enjoying a good home cooked meal for granted any more. Although he had a high price to pay, he felt it was not too high for a life that has been taken. Time cannot take away the

---

<sup>22</sup> Methaqualone, a barbiturate – very popular in South Africa

fact of what happened and the painfulness of missing a loved one who is dead and in the past. Time sometimes brings hurting reminders. He wished that he could clean out bad memories. Even memories of good times with Mary are upsetting John because he knows it will be no more. One thing that he realised with sadness is that he does not want another relationship with another woman. He was afraid of her reactions to dealing with the fact that he killed his fiancée as well as his possible counter reaction. He thought it would be best to avoid a situation in which he would feel insecure. He realised that it might be seen as a bitter reaction, but his better self-knowledge and writing to his sister helped him to see a side of himself that he never looked at before. He will always have an inner feeling of loneliness which time won't be able to take away. He found another part of him that was very happy about the fact that his sister had two children whom he loved dearly. Only time will tell whether he will ever have children of his own. At the moment he was content with being able to see, love and hold his sister's children. The members of his core family were his cornerstones for the moment and, he believed, also for the future, although he nearly lost them too. He concluded that time is a thing you cannot define in one certain way only. It is everything and nothing at the same time. Only weakness and the will to overcome it would help him at the moment. In time he might look back and say, "*I told you so*".

I thought it would be helpful in the explication of hidden meanings if I ask John to write down his thoughts on 'a crime of passion'. He did this shortly after his essay about time (in July 1999).

John started his reflections by stating that he is finally "*looking hard*"<sup>23</sup> at what he calls a "thing" and others call "a crime of passion". He looked up the dictionary's definition<sup>24</sup> stating that it is "a crime especially of murder due to sexual jealousy". He commented that this definition does not include the build up of tension, worries, fears, anger, frustration, insecurity, inability to control emotions, immaturity, internal personality problems, lies, his pretending to be what was not, impressing people, trying to be part of the crowd, fear of losing love, sensitivity and many more things that he did not have a label for. It also did not include the mental hell he was still going through, the longing, the heart-sore and regrets.

John's hardships already lasted more than three years and although an outsider may think a clear picture of the ever-present destitution is possible, his experience of it was confusing. However, it made him grow mentally. His picture of himself was painful and he did not believe or care about other people's perceptions about it – that was their problem, not his. When he fell in love with Mary three years and eight months ago, John thought his life started. Soon afterwards he realised how wrong he was. Love made him go blind and he did not notice things that were quite obvious. He did things and made decisions that he regrets and wants to undo. It is not so easy, however, and life has a tendency to go on no matter what happened. He just has to pick up the pieces and carry on. His mind is his worst enemy because a person's heart can forgive and forget, but the mind forgives, but never forgets. It caused a scar only visible to him that he sees every day.

Since he was 18 John yearned for a secure peaceful life and in many ways it was so. However, he had some problems and had a tendency to push them aside and avoided dealing with them. He saw himself as a peaceful, non-violent person before, but now he started to see himself in a different light - especially after the "*thing*". This murder has turned his life inside out and things will never be the same again. He was stopped dead in life's tracks and was forced to look at himself: where he stood and where he wanted to go. He was forced to start dealing with problems that he put aside for years. He looked at the time before the murder with an open mind and did not hide anything. He was honest with himself for the first time and it felt good.

John also looked back to before the murder. In April 1996 he was promoted from production supervisor to production manager and he thought that is where the first thing went wrong. He enjoyed his work very much, but hated all the paper work. He has never been keen on paperwork. He likes writing poems but admits that is how far his love for paperwork goes. With all this paperwork daily he was less on the workbench where he felt comfortable. In July 1996 he reached a point where he either had to resign or get fired. He chose to resign and from there on his life just fell apart. However, he kept it to himself.

During this time John realised how serious he felt about his relationship with Mary. He did not only fall in love with her, but he "*worshipped*" her. Never before did he feel like this about a woman and he was ill equipped to handle it. He only focussed on the fact that he wanted her and that he did not want

<sup>23</sup> A phrase from Lion King, one of his favourite movies, which helped him to make sense of his life history.

<sup>24</sup> John did not mention in his diary which dictionary he used.



to lose her or her love. Jealousy did not play a big part, but he was very possessive and protective over her. They did have a lot in common, but also many differences. John was glad about the fact she loved fishing nearly as much as he did. For him it meant he could have a peaceful weekend fishing at his favourite while he could also have the love of his life with him. They played action cricket together very often, they both played league pool and both of them have won many trophies and prizes. Their shared interests made them feel very close to each other.

The first difference that John discovered between them was that she liked to party and to be socially involved while he just cannot handle noise and loud music – even the music he loves. It hurts his ears and gives him migraines. They had very similar music tastes, but he liked it soft she liked it loud and they constantly experienced a mental in this regard. He usually gave in and let her have her way. A second difference was that Mary was a type of person that was very neat and tidy - John was not. With time he became very conscious about where and how he packed things or put things. He always helped her cleaning up and he did not mind because he loved her so much and his mother trained him well in household things, e.g. cleaning, cooking and planning. Mary did not like cooking much and he loved cooking and eating. He was very happy in a kitchen. Money issues were not a problem until he lost his job. All of a sudden he had no income and that put severe strain on him. He could not handle the fact that she paid for everything. It made him very tense and angry with himself. He tried to obtain a job for 6 months and there were a few jobs he could have, but it meant night shift and she did not like it and would not allow him to take it. This fact frustrated him but because he did not want to lose her, he did not protest too much. Not having a job put a lot of pressure upon him, especially because they got engaged and planned to marry. He sold his car for R8000-00 to pay for rent and food, as he was not happy that she paid for everything herself. He lied to her and told her his car was stolen.

During his time of John's unemployment, drugs became a bigger part of Mary's and his lives than before. They both used dagga (marijuana) and Mandrax and he used cocaine as well. It all cost money. They often travelled to a coastal town in KwaZulu Natal and they spend a lot of money. She had previous relationships and so did he, but he was very cautious about her previous boyfriends in her life as they still contacted her and he did not like it. However, because he loved her he did nothing. He also had problems with his father and they clashed most of the time. These arguments influenced his life greatly in many ways. To remember it brought a lot of bitterness and he did not like to dwell on it.

Finally, during "*that fatal night*" John wanted to tell Mary about his lies and his life of pretending and he did so. She was shocked, but at first accepted his story and agreed to help him. Later on she told him very loudly and in no uncertain terms that she does not love him and she that she does not want him. He pleaded with her to reconsider and she calmed down. Then again, she compared, amongst other features, his sexual traits with that of her previous boyfriend. For John that was a tender, sensitive issue, because he had problems in that area. However, he kept quiet although it hurt him very much. Later she exclaimed: "that is it. I don't love you, I don't want you, pack your stuff and go!"

John does not think it was what she said as much as how she said it that made him lose control. He does not remember very much about what happened immediately after that. He remembered that he went for her, that he was hitting her and the blood afterwards. Later he found out that he killed her using a steel pipe. To him that was the end of his life, as well. He tried to kill himself and couldn't do it, because he promised her that he will pay for what he did. Her death has killed him inside and even three years later it still haunted him a lot. He had never been a violent person, except when he lost his temper completely. When he lost his temper, he lost control completely. He thus has always been careful not to lose his temper, but there were times when it happened so quickly that, before he knew, it happened.

Even in prison John tried not to lose his temper. The first six months was sheer hell for him. He battled to come to terms with what he had done and on top of that he used drugs and joined a gang. He had many fights and he became very violent at times. Noise<sup>25</sup> was a major trigger in "*losing it all*". After 6 months in jail<sup>26</sup> he realised that, if he doesn't do something immediately, he might as well kill himself. That is where his life has changed for the better and he was working very hard to make this change happening. He wrote many poems in his first 18 months and he used it as a way of venting his emotions. In the beginning he did not even realise it was happening, but as he made therapeutic progress, he realised it is a way of getting healed and later he did it on purpose. However, he still only did it when he had words. He did not force himself.

<sup>25</sup> John underlined this several times in his diary

<sup>26</sup> he calls it "*hell*"

Every time John thinks about that murder, he still feels those emotions going through him. It feels like hell. He still doesn't cope with it well, and has many sleepless nights due to the haunting recollections. He is not sure why he did it, but the way he sees it, is that he was pushed beyond his limits. He was ill equipped to handle a serious relationship. He was very immature and saw life different than it really was. He is uncertain whether the murder could have been prevented, but although others might disagree, he knows in his heart that it will not happen again. He is very careful. He dealt with that part of his life very firmly and permanently. He never again wants to put himself in a situation where he cannot cope. He feels people will react differently on the same circumstances and nobody can say how he or she will react. Life is very unpredictable. He is a type of person who is not really equipped to be in a relationship with a woman. He fell very hard and his eyes are very wide open for life now.

Drugs and alcohol are something of his past and in general John is better off now than before. When he is asked whether he planned the build-up and the murder, his answer is no. Circumstances out of his control drove him. His inability to control his anger was the trigger and caused the action. He was like a robot out of control. If at any time he had control over his actions and emotions this "thing" would never have happened. The thought never<sup>27</sup> came across his mind to kill her and in fact he was very much against violence to women and children and he still is. That is what made him so confused about what happened and why it also is so difficult for him to accept her death. Three years after her death he still felt very sensitive about the murder and he still had confused feelings and a lot of pain. However, by looking at it from all angles he has learned a very important lesson in life. Never again will he allow himself to get involved in a relationship because that is one thing he cannot cope with. He realises that there is a possibility that he might be in a similar situation in the future and it scares him a lot. What he learned and how he feels is something he will be very alert for.

John just wishes the steel pipe were not in the room. He might have used it because if he loses his temper he tends to grab whatever is at hand and it always has been like that. He doesn't lose his temper easily and it takes a lot to get him angry in his mind. He thinks that is what is bad because when he loses it, and then all that bottled up anger and emotions come out in a few seconds. He always was and still is very sensitive to people.

In a spontaneous untitled, undated essay that John wrote approximately middle 2000, he described his life as *"a pattern or a weave of colours: white and black, some gray as well"*. He saw pain regret sorrow and a *"heaviness"* involving drugs, booze, sex and lies and he also saw changes, good and bad, family problems and financial problems. He also saw dreams scattered, dreams come true and goals put aside because of circumstances. He saw anger, hate and love, confusion and misunderstanding. Everything happened in a short span of five years. Sometimes he wished he could switch off, but did not find it easy at all. First he was on a high in life, then in the deepest deep you can think. He wrote poems, he was dreaming, he had nightmares, sleepless nights and he discovered why and that he could do something about it. In the recent past he was happy, but at a cost that did not only concern him, but also his family, his friends and his community. However, he did not regard himself as a danger to his community any more. His honest opinion about why he abused drugs is that it was to be *in* with the crowd. However, it could not be regarded as the crowd's fault because it was his choice: a wrong choice and he realised it now. A drug is a wonderful thing if used for the purpose it is made for, but the minute he started abusing it trouble started: trouble he never had in his worst nightmares. It led to financial ruin, mental and physical harm, an unstable mind, anger, tension, a craving for more to feel better and, eventually, murder. His worst time was that very moment in his life. It wasn't a decision he had made consciously, subconsciously perhaps - he does not really know what it was and how he decided, but it happened and it happened so fast that he only realised afterwards what he has done. He only grasped the consequences of his deeds in retrospect. He was madly in love and very blind for reality. He was on such a "high from life" that he stared himself blind against reality. He did not see at that time what he could see later and if only he could have seen it, then things could have been very different now. He would not have done what he has done. It caused pain for himself, his friends, his family and lot of heartache and non-acceptance of facts: disbelief.

The consequences of his deeds are something John will carry with him to his grave and there is not a thing he can do about it. However, he learned from it and he will not make the same mistakes again. He has fears of what he will do in a similar situation in future and it makes him feel concerned, but he also knows the penalty of his actions if he should do it again and that is a big deterrent to him. To be in jail is something, but it is not his main penalty or struggle. The fact that he took a life that was not to be taken - the fact that he did it and the pain of a lost one, the shame for his family, the hardships he

---

<sup>27</sup> John highlighted this word

caused for other people - that is what is the worst penalty. This penalty is for life, even when he does get out of prison it will always be with him.

John wanted to show a glimpse of what he went through and if it only will help one person in life he will be happy. He comes from a good home a good background and family but he did realise it. He rebelled a lot, he fought a lot and he had a very violent temper in him, but tended to bottle everything up. For a long time it was bottled up tightly. He then became an alcoholic and a drug addict, he lost his job, he lost his car, he lost his friends and he even lost his self-respect. He then lost his beloved, his dreams and his goals. He lost the will to live. He became a "*walking, talking, doing time bomb*" to himself and others. He was set on self-destruct. He even left God behind in his life. It resulted in him having blood on his hands. He does not wish it to anyone to know how it feels to kill someone. It is a big thing for him - it was the end of the world. In a way he did gain from it, but he also lost a lot. He gained no satisfaction, no financial reward, no happiness. He gained pain and sadness. He has learned a big lesson: do not loose your temper, do not use drugs, do not abuse alcohol and keep your life clean and open. Do not pretend to be what you are not. He has gone through hell and back and he came out well, but at the cost of a life.

The only purpose he saw out of this murder was to stop him in life, to enable him to take stock and get out of the insincere existence. He learned that life is very precious and it cost a life to put him on the right track again. That is why he made a serious and committed effort to change his way of living. He succeeded by being drug free and alcohol free. In fact, he became a person of normal behaviour and in his eyes he even will become an asset for life: someone with a purpose. He is angry with himself for letting him into situations where he could not cope. However, he is convinced of the fact that he will never do it again. He now actively avoids similar situations. He does not think he is perfect. He knows his strengths and he also knows his weaknesses. He can plan accordingly. If he were perfect, he would not have been in situations and places such as prison.

## C Natural meaning units

### C.1 Repetition within and across diary entries and other written communications

The following issues or statements are repeated more than once in what John wrote in his diary:

A01	He wanted to compensate for what he did. He made several promises towards Mary: John made a promise to God and Mary that, when he was released from incarceration, he would put twelve pink roses wherever her ashes were, or if not possible he would go to their favourite place and give them to the Innkeeper; He promised her, as well as their son and daughter that they planned to have, that he would pay for what he did
A01	He wanted to help his parents.
A01	A last issue that runs like a golden thread through the John's period of incarceration is John's search for safe context. It can be interpreted literally as well as figuratively. However, he was sure that he would never find such a safe context without undergoing many "purifying and compensatory rituals".
A02	He dedicated poems the remembrance of their love
A02	He was dreaming of publishing a poetry collection
A02	He mentioned that his book was making progress and that he tried to put his emotions into words in it. He found it quite difficult.
A03	He repeats that their love was without equal for him
A03	He thought they could communicate without words
A03	His love for Mary kept him from committing suicide
A03	He felt Mary made him do good things (e.g. show compassion to black man in prison)
A04	He had repetitive visions of Mary. He could not see her hands and feet at first. Her face was faint and obscure. He was sure that she was trying to say something to him. Later he saw Mary holding a baby-like bundle in her one arm with her other arm stretched out towards him as she did in the past when she wanted him to hug her. She disappeared when he wanted to touch her.
A04	He recalled many memories about sentiments he shared with Mary
A04	He often called Mary pet names such as <i>Teddy Bear</i> and <i>Babe</i>
A04	He wanted to treasure the good memories about her, because they were his inspiration to live
A04	He could still see Mary in his mind and he will always love her
A04	He realized that there would never be another Mary in his life and he did not want another lady. He felt it would be unfair to the other lady
A04	He often had visions of Mary looking as if she is trying to tell him something. She also made some non verbal gestures to towards him
A04	He remembered that Mary and he planned to have a boy and a girl and even chose names for them
A05	He mentioned several times that he did not interpret his emotion towards Mary's ex-boyfriends as jealousy
A05	He did not perceive himself as a violent person
A05	Although he was the executor of the deed, he felt that it was "not him" who committed the murder
A05	He described his heart as unmoved and himself as someone who cannot be loved
A05	He was determined to do things for himself now

A05	He was hoping for a breakthrough in terms of understanding himself
A05	He realized how difficult it was to be honest with himself, but it also helped him to see his own possibilities
A05	He wanted to work on his shortcomings, but also realized that it is not going to be fast and easy
A06	He more than once had an argument with Mary after an ex-boyfriend of hers was present either in her mind or in reality
A06	John more than once lost his temper and said some things to her that he regrets
A06	John more than once lost his temper and said some things to her that he regrets
A06	He mentioned several times that wanted to undo what he did
A06	He had some remorse because he told some lies
A06	He often mentions his regret
A06	He blamed himself for destroying their lives and future plans.
A06	He referred to a clash between how he perceived himself and their relationship and the irreconcilability of that with what he did
A06	He was at the end of a part of his life that he rather wanted to forget
A06	He expressed disgust and disbelief about the fact that he destroyed all those memories and that he caused so much harm and hurt he would pay for what he has done, even, if necessary, with his life
A06	Two of the words John used most often in his diary after the murder are “undo” and “regret
A07	He had some constant headaches and felt tense and short tempered and tempted to commit suicide
A07	He had a strong death wish and he felt trapped
A07	He mentioned more than once that he had a sexual problem about which he felt very sensitive
A07	He often referred to financial problems
A07	He often wanted to clarify some potentially problematic issues that concerned himself and others in writing or by talking about it
A07	He missed his sister’s children and hoped they would come along when she visited him
A07	He was upset by noise
A07	He could not sleep properly
A07	He made daily notes about his migraines and medication
A07	He missed his family
A07	He had several physical problems, especially migraines
A08	Shortly before the murder there were two periods of more than a month that he wrote nothing in his diary
A08	He thought that Mary’s father is the only person who would understand what special relationship they had
A08	He felt very close to breaking point and had many unanswered “why’s” in his mind
A08	He wondered whether there was any purpose in his situation
A08	He missed his sister’s children and hoped they would come along when she visited him
A09	He often wrote about reconciliation between himself and his father

A09	He had a bad childhood relationship with his father
A09	He had a good relationship with his mother
A09	He thought about his father's lung cancer and their reconciliation and his mother's shock and suffering
A09	He was grateful for the love and support of his family that carried him through this difficult time and he intended to work hard on improving himself, decision-making and finding some answers to his questions
A09	There was a lot of unfinished business in his family relationships to deal with
A09	He described his positive memories of significant friends and family members such as Mary's grandmother and her brother who told him that he was the best boyfriend she ever had
A10	He still experienced some doubt in his mind about what happened during the murder. He even doubted if it were he who did it.
A10	The elapsed time since the murder was long, but it also felt like yesterday for him
A10	Special days such as Christmas, New Year and his birthday did not feel special for him
A10	He often had visions of Mary looking as if she is trying to tell him something. She also made some non verbal gestures to towards him
A10	The new millennium probably also indicated a new millennium in his life for John.
A10	He counted the days in incarceration
A10	He referred to his intolerance for the marijuana smoke in prison
A10	John wanted to address practical needs such as getting something to read and requesting permission to practice a hobby
A10	He wanted to write a request to the parole board to have the remainder of his sentence converted into correctional supervision
A10	He was at the end of a part of his life that he rather wanted to forget
A10	He was afraid that he would not be able to cope with many people around him or with noise
A10	He did not want to pretend any more
A10	He pictured himself in future as quite isolated and busy with some restitutive duties, without allowing himself the privilege of very close relationships, especially with members of the opposite sex who are not related to him
A10	A last issue that runs like a golden wire through the John's period of incarceration is John's search for safe context. It can be interpreted literally as well as figuratively. However, he was sure that he would never find such a safe context without undergoing many "purifying and compensatory rituals".

**C.2 Expressions of emotion**

B01	When John first kissed Mary, he completely fell in love with her
B01	He trusted her and decided that the best word to describe his love for her was an “ace” – John was totally in love with Mary.
B01	He recalled some intimate moments with his beloved and how beautiful she was.
B01	John wrote that he would like to give her a small teddy bear (he often called her Teddy Bear) with a pouch inside, and inside that pouch a diamond and sapphire pendant that she could wear with her chain and glitter ball that he bought her before. He wanted her to imagine all his love to be inside the teddy bear, and whenever she held that teddy bear, the love would flow out into her heart
B01	He yearned for every part of her being
B01	On Christmas day 1996 he drew some pictures of them with hearts and arrows between them, to commemorate their love
B01	He fantasized about publishing a poetry collection when he is released from prison, dedicated to his beloved. For this reason the style of his writing often took the form of verses with metaphors and other literary forms often found in poems
B01	He continued to write a verse <i>When i fell in Love</i> expressing his sensation of being in another dimension when he first saw Mary. He immediately knew that he wanted to make her his wife and he felt very happy. He ends off by writing about his belief that he would, in spite of his current loneliness, remember that first impression of her forever and that he will love her as long as he lives.
B01	He then writes some songs of love and praise for his beloved.
B01	He was madly in love and very blind for reality
B01	He expressed very strong feelings of an overwhelming and possessive love for her that could sometimes push him towards violent deeds
B02	John felt upset when Mary told him that her ex-boyfriends and her dog still occupied some room in her heart, but did not interpret his emotion as jealousy
B02	He despised of the fact that he broke his promise to himself that he would never hurt her physically or emotionally.
B02	He experienced some self-hatred, anger and depression and had suicidal thoughts, but his love for Mary kept him from committing suicide
B02	He blamed himself for destroying their lives and future plans. He felt very close to breaking point
B02	John remembered that Mary told him at the night of the murder that she did not love him any more and that he should pack his belongings and leave. He felt as if those words killed him inside and he could not believe that she said it. He recalled previous times when she said tender, loving and gentle words to him and he wrote that he did not hear her words with his ears, but that it went straight to his soul and heart and that he would store it there forever
B02	He felt angry and aggressive towards his fellow inmates.
B02	He was angry about the fact that their privilege to have magazines in prison has been terminated and it reminded him of how isolated he was.
B02	He had very strong emotions that he described as a passive anger caused by a combination of circumstances and feelings.
B02	He wished that he could get his hands on the thieves, that he would kill them and that he was even thinking of escape. He felt on the edge and anticipated an unstoppable emotional explosion

B02	He felt that he was treated unfairly by some of the wardens recently and they did not regard anything what he did or say as worth listening to. He withdrew from them and did not volunteer for anything anymore
B02	He had very strong emotions that he described as a passive anger caused by a combination of circumstances and feelings
B02	Eighteen days after the murder John wrote a poem <i>In a moment of anger</i> in which he tries to make sense of his emotions. He emphasizes how radically a short moment of "insanity" can change lives. He also tries to express something of his complete inability to explain why it happened, apart from knowing that it had to do something with anger
B02	John was very cautious about Mary's previous boyfriends as they still contacted her and he did not like it
B03	He experienced some self-hatred, anger and depression and had suicidal thoughts, but his love for Mary kept him from committing suicide
B03	In a poem with the title of <i>Dad</i> John tried to express the emotional development between him and his father from the time that his father gave life to him, through the time when he started to experience him as absent, hated him and completely drifted apart from him.
B03	John was annoyed by the noise that some of his fellow inmates made and blamed their cultural origin for it. After he heard that his father's car was stolen by people from a similar origin, he started to "hate them with a passion".
B03	After he phoned his mother he expressed some mixed feelings. They were well, but their car was stolen. This incident enhanced his ethnic hatred
B03	He expressed a death wish again and then wrote <i>The feel in Me</i> . This short verse expressed his strong feelings of being isolated in a bad situation as well as his self-blame and self-hatred
B04	When he lost his job, he was uncertain about whether he should tell Mary about it, but he decided that he should because her love for him would make her understand
B04	He was afraid of losing her and felt that he had to earn her love
B04	He expressed some anxiety about himself not being able to live without her, because she was fulfilling many of his desires
B04	When he killed Mary, his whole being cried for an explanation of the fact that he killed Mary
B04	He felt scared and nervous and looked forward to see the doctor for the first time after his arrest. He then wrote a poem explaining how he is "battling to stay between the shores".
B04	John often felt tense and short tempered and tempted to commit suicide
B04	He experienced this reconciliation as very fragile and hoped it would last.
B04	On the day before his appearance in court, he mentioned that he still slept badly. He just finished another letter to his mother and wanted to write to his father too, but did not know what to write. While doing his morning chores he accidentally cut his moustache and then shaved it off. It made him feel naked and cold. He prepared his best suit and outfit and felt very nervous. He did not know what to expect.
B04	He felt careless and aware of the fact that his life expectancy was shortened considerably because he could not face what was lying ahead of him.
B04	While in a single cell in a rehabilitation unit for substance abuse, he was always afraid that he would not be able to stand against the stronger intimidation in a less protected environment where he has to sleep in a crowded cell with other inmates and where the focus is more upon safe custody than on rehabilitation
B04	He mentioned that people tried to escape and that it was a total waste of time and even



	a life. Someone died from a "heart attack" and the worst part of it was to see him and to clean the blood from the floor. The blood precipitated a re-experiencing of the murder scene he was involved in
B04	He mentions that the negative contents of his verses since he was in custody were scary for him but that the words just "came faster than he could write".
B04	John developed an awareness of his vulnerability and the accompanying fear of himself committing a similar crime again
B04	Time was something he never really noticed before, but since he met Mary (in 1996) it became something lying heavily on his mind and whole being
B05	On the day of Mary's funeral John still felt heartbroken.
B05	His life was in autumn and grief and sorrow replaced all his fruits. He talks about his fire that changed into dead ash and his jealous care and love that he lost. He felt sad and wanted to shake his soul to free himself of his ugly part.
B05	The day after the day he had his first individual consultation with a new psychologist, John wrote in his diary about his tiredness and tension. He noted that it hurts to talk about his beloved, but that he needed to in order to get it out of his system and carry on with his life
B05	John doubted it whether he would ever be able to be involved in an intimate relationship with another girl
B05	The murder has turned his life inside out and things will never be the same again
B05	Every time John thinks about that murder, he still feels those emotions going through him. It feels like hell. He still doesn't cope with it well, and has many sleepless nights due to the haunting recollections
B05	The consequences of his deeds are something John will carry with him to his grave and there is not a thing he can do about it.
B05	<i>that fatal night</i>
B06	When they moved into their own flat, John was very excited about it and prayed that it would work out for them
B06	He was on such a "high from life" that he stared himself blind against reality
B07	After they talked he felt that it helped him to understand her better
B07	It gave him some comfort to know that his mother and sister represented him at the funeral.
B07	He was determined to push through for the sake of his beloved and to tell the truth
B07	Then, ironically, after his fiancée's death they reconciled.
B07	He still wanted to treasure the good memories about her, because they were his inspiration to live. He expected an interview with a social worker and a visit from his sister.
B07	After his sister visited him, John was glad to hear that she and her children were well, but he longed to be with them.
B07	On the day of sentencing he made a short entry stating that he was sentenced for eight years and that it was a long time. He also expressed a sense of relief because he could start organizing and building his life again and made a few calculations about the possible period of imprisonment if he gets a reduction for good behaviour credits.
B07	He was looking forward to phone his family and knew that they would gather at his sister's house. He mentioned that his book was making progress and that he tried to put his emotions into words in it. He found it quite difficult
B07	He realized that he could not afford to have an emotional explosion now and he wanted to speak to his individual psychologist about it

B07	He felt a need to have peace and quiet around him and thought it would help him to heal
B07	He did not want to pretend any more
B07	He felt a determination to succeed in reaching his goals
B07	He felt a need for help from his individual psychotherapist to deal with it
B07	He mentioned that writing poems were acting as an outlet valve for his painful and sometimes devastating memories. He felt they represented a permanent scar, but that time and being with his family could bring some healing
B07	He thanked God for his immediate relatives and again expressed his indebtedness towards them.
B07	He felt his sister's children's acceptance of him caused a breakthrough for him
B07	The new millennium probably also indicated a new millennium in his life for him
B08	Time is like dust – it settles and sometimes it is better not to disturb it. However, it has been disturbed in his life. Pain is part of time for him and he has more of it than he can cope with. However, he has no choice. The eight years he got in prison is a very long time for him
B08	His entry on the next day expresses his intense emotional and physical pain as well as his intolerance for the marijuana smoke in prison. He also expressed an intense fear that a sentence of incarceration would ruin the lives of all the people in his immediate family circle
B08	He concluded with a death wish in which he could choose the ground to be buried in
B08	Although he sometimes doubted his own ability to do so, yearned to spend the rest of his life with her
B08	He had a feeling of inability to convey his feelings to her
B08	The emptiness, self-anger, sadness and desire to undo his crime often returned to him
B08	He wished his beloved could witness his reconciliation with his father because she always wanted it
B08	On Christmas day 1997 he wrote that it feels just like another day and that the place shaped him to "cruise on in automatic mode" and that he hated it.
B08	He hardly ever used a capital I when he referred to himself now. He anticipated the possibility of an eight to fifteen years sentence of incarceration because the judge would feel responsible to punish him.
B08	The entries in John's diary were much shorter now. However, he very seldom skipped a day. He felt powerless to change his situation and blamed himself for it
B08	John felt that there was a lot of unfinished business in his family relationships to deal with. He often expressed fears of not coming out of prison while his parents are still alive. He felt a strong responsibility to do something to make their time of old age easier for them. He felt that the opposite was happening in actual fact while he was incarcerated
B08	One of the most difficult issues for John seemed to be how to deal with his fiancée's parents. He experienced her father (dad Dough) as a very understanding and reasonable man, but felt that her mother directly blamed him for her daughter's death and was nurturing many thoughts of revenge. It seems very obvious that these experiences are nearly the opposite of his experiences of his own parents. He often experienced a need to talk to his potential in-laws, but also expressed some understanding for the fact that it would never be the same as before. He often expressed his feeling that it may never be possible to talk to her mother again, and that he thought it is better to leave it that way

B08	He ends of with an ironic a rhetoric “why did I lie to you?”
B08	Although he yearned for freedom and the opportunity to deal with all his perceived debts to relatives and society, he also feared that he was not going to cope with facing all his responsibilities again
B08	Love made him go blind and he did not notice things that were quite obvious
B08	He was frustrated because he could not apply the answers to solve his problems yet
B08	John just wishes the steel pipe were not in the room
B09	He felt insecure because he was in the process of looking for a new job
B09	He started to feel very withdrawn.
B09	John was on the verge of despair and isolated from the world outside He started using lower case when he wrote “I” and wrote that thinking about Mary was upsetting and hurting him so much that he refrained from communicating with her in writing or speech.
B09	He wrote that his world has become very small and that he had no “friends” - only people who knew him.
B09	In prison his pot plant was his “main living thing” around him and that it gave him great pleasure
B09	John wanted space: a private peaceful hole where he could curl up and dream dreams and stretch his imagination while he was planning and setting goals
B10	He sensed her forgiveness, however, he still felt very guilty
B10	He made a statement of confession to the police
B10	He had a lot of regret & remorse
B10	He felt guilty of the fact that his sister had to visit him in such bad circumstances and was ashamed and afraid of his suicidal thoughts
B10	He expressed his adoration for Mary, thanked her for what she has done for him, asked for forgiveness and vowed that he will love her forever and hoped to see her when it is his time
B10	He was worried about his future, but stated that he would pay for what he has done, even, if necessary, with his life
B10	Many of his poems – he even used titles such as “Regret” - and letters can, in a way, be described as lamentations about what he did, how much regret he has about it and how much he wished that it never happened or that it could be reversed.
B10	He thought that he owed the community some restitutive service. The fact that his own parents were ageing probably contributed a lot towards the specific context that he envisaged for his future voluntary service to other people
B10	In a poem with the title “Lies” he tries to express which insights a retrospective look at the consequences of the lies he told brought to him. It destroys, takes away, causes hate, drives in a wedge and causes sorrow, pain and regret.
B10	He thanked Mary that she taught him that life has a purpose, but regretted the fact that it cost her life
B10	He wanted to find some reassurance that he would one day be able to have a normal life again. However, he was sure that he would never find such a safe context without undergoing many purifying and compensatory rituals
B10	He learned from it and he will not make the same mistakes again. He has fears of what he will do in a similar situation in future and it makes him feel concerned, but he also knows the penalty of his actions if he should do it again and that is a big deterrent to him. To be in jail is something, but it is not his main penalty or struggle. The fact that he took a life that was not to be taken - the fact that he did it and the pain of a lost one, the

	shame for his family, the hardships he caused for other people - that is what is the worst penalty. This penalty is for life, even when he does get out of prison it will always be with him
John's own summary of emotions	He described his life as "a pattern or a weave of colours: white and black, some grey as well". He saw pain, regret, sorrow and a "heaviness" involving drugs, booze, sex and lies and he also saw changes, good and bad, family problems and financial problems. He also saw dreams scattered, dreams come true and goals put aside because of circumstances. He saw anger, hate and love, confusion and misunderstanding. Everything happened in a short span of five years. Sometimes he wished he could switch off, but did not find it easy at all. First he was on a high in life, and then in the deepest deep you can think. He wrote poems, he was dreaming, he had nightmares, sleepless nights and he discovered why and that he could do something about it. In the last period of incarceration he was happy, but at a cost that did not only concern him, but also his family, his friends and his community. However, he did not regard himself as a danger to his community any more.

### C.3 Historical explanations, descriptions, and interpretations

C01	John was the oldest child in a family of five who lived in a suburb of one of the biggest cities in South Africa. His parents were married in 1958 and he was born in 1961. Both his parents were still alive during this research, but they were both battling with restrictive physical illnesses. His mother was a nursery school teacher and his father was a retired factory manager. He retired in December 1999 at the age of sixty-two due to medical reasons. John experienced his childhood relationship with his father as very bad and stormy and his relationship with his mother as good and supportive. He had one sister, two years younger than himself. She was married and had two children of her own. Her family also lived in a suburb of the same town where they grew up, approximately fifteen kilometers from their parents. His relationship with his sister was very good. He also had one adopted brother, thirteen years younger than himself. During the time of the research his brother was working as a mechanic, still single and living with their parents. John saw himself as a sort of a surrogate father figure for his adopted younger brother and often felt responsible to share some of the lessons he learned in live with him. He often felt bad that his brother was getting involved with bad friends and habits and wanted to protect him against these influences.
C02	The day that John first kissed Mary, Monday 5 May 1996, was unforgettable. She was very beautiful for him in appearance, but especially in terms of personality. He completely fell in love with her and, although he sometimes doubted his own ability to do so, yearned to spend the rest of his life with her. Ten days later they went to a forest-like place called Green Valley, where they met some new friends and saw several wild animals and birds. They slept on the train during the first night of the weekend because they drank too much alcohol to drive. For John that was also a lovely night because they made love for the first time and then just fell asleep in each other's arms. Two weeks after their trip to Green Valley, John and Mary moved into their own flat. John was very exited about it and prayed that it would work out for them. That night again felt like their first night together in each other's arms. Ten days later John's workplace closed down due to fraud of one of the managers, who committed suicide when it was discovered
C03	On Thursday 10 October 1996 John wrote about his regret about an injury to Mary's finger. He reported that they attended a wedding on 5 October and had an argument after an ex-boyfriend of hers said good-bye to her. They were both upset and on their way back home he made some sexual gestures towards her. At home, after he undressed her, she did not want to have sex with him. He then lost his temper and said some things to her that he regrets. She replied by pointing out to him that he gets angry when she is not ready for sex and demands it from her, that her ex-boyfriend is nothing more than a friend and that he handles her too rough. She went on to undress and challenged him to do with her whatever he wanted to. He was taken aback and could not have sex with her then, because he realized that it was not right if she does not agree to it. The first time when they had sex again was four days later. He experienced that as a very significant change in his approach towards the intimate part of their relationship because she was close to menstruation and

	<p>very sensitive. He learned to treasure her more and handle her more tenderly. After more than a month John made his next entry in his diary, which turned out to be his last entry before the murder. He has been retrenched and had serious financial problems. However, he was now more convinced than ever before that he is totally in love with Mary.</p>
C04	<p>The following extracts from the court records reflect some of the facts not clearly stated in John's diary experienced in this regard:</p> <p>"Probably because the accused wanted to impress the deceased, he told her and her mother several blatant lies. Some examples are –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.                               that he was an engineer who was busy with further studies;</li> <li>2.                               that he won prizes at university;</li> <li>3.                               that his motor vehicle was stolen.</li> </ol> <p>He went so far as to commit fraud with the help of his brother-in-law's credit card. This was a very stressful period, which caused further inferiority and dependence. It also had the consequence that the accused continuously lived in fear that the deceased would find out about his untruthfulness and that that he could lose her".</p> <p>The report further describes how John decided to tell the truth to his beloved. At first she did not react very fiercely, but soon afterwards, she took off her engagement ring and threw it against the wall. After several arguments, she later also ordered him to take his things and leave. The crime took place after these incidents. Apparently he hit her on the head with a pipe-like object. When John came to his senses again, he phoned her mother, asked her to call an ambulance and tried to bandage his beloved's wounds. When he discovered that she was dead, he fled to a coastal town, approximately 500 km away. He asserted that he could not remember either how the crime took place or how he got to the coastal town. From the coastal town, he phoned his own mother and she convinced him to return home and make a statement at the nearest police office. He did so.</p>
C05	<p>On 29 December 1996 John remembered some patches of what happened the night of the murder. He remembered that he phoned her mother after it happened. He also remembered that Mary told him that she did not love him any more and that he should pack his belongings and leave. He felt as if those words killed him inside and he could not believe that she said it. He recalled previous times when she said tender, loving and gentle words to him and he wrote that he did not hear it with his ears, but that it went straight to his soul and heart and that he would store it there forever. He also recalled the night when she first used the name "Babylove" for him. (He later chose this as his poetry alias). It was during a very intimate moment after he admired her body and she told him that she was convinced of the gentleness and purity of his love for her. She then gave him permission to freely explore her body. After describing this moment in detail, he wrote about the sacredness and intensity of their relationship for him.</p>
C06	<p>On 3 January 1997 John wrote a letter to Mary, outlining his memories of their relationship from the beginning. He describes how they met at an evening of Blackball. She still had another boyfriend, and he (John) "gave her the choice" between the two of them. He recalls his gladness about the fact that she chose him, and her crying when they went to fetch her belongings from his apartment. He then runs through his sentiments and memories about their favourite places and events such as when they moved into their apartment and when he asked her father to marry her. He mentions that the first time they made love was in her mother's flat and recalls other "firsts" such as the first time they bathed together and their first dinner date as well as their first weekend away at Green Valley. He also describes his positive memories of significant friends and family members such as her grandmother and her brother who told him that he was the best boyfriend she ever had. He recalls their night in the train again and how intimate and intense that was. Then he calls into memory his "mistake of his life" when he lied to her about his background. He mentions his regret and his wish to "undo" what he has done. He mentions what the engagement at her grandmother's place meant to him and how they planned to have a boy and a girl and even chose names for them. Their wedding date was set for October 1997.</p>

**C.4 Explicit and implicit interpretations**

D01	John explained in a letter written in July 1999 that all his problems started in 1976 when he started to smoke cigarettes at the age of fourteen. In itself it was “no big deal”, but it led to wrong friends and drinking. He thought that he could control it, but discovered that a bad temper and alcohol did not mix very well. He got involved in many bar fights and injured many victims. It felt bad for him to lose his temper when he was sober and when he was drunk he tended to withdraw and did not talk at all – this became his pattern of behaviour. He could drink a lot of alcohol before anyone would notice that it affected him. As time went on, he started to use Marijuana as well. Although he thought it would calm him down, it just made him quieter with bottled up emotions. Years later he realized that it was a very dangerous situation. He also tried LSD, but that did not agree with him at all and he ended up in hospital. When he tried Cocaine, he felt that it was just the thing for him. He used it for a long time, even in prison and often mixed it with Marijuana and Mandrax (methaqualone, a barbiturate – very popular in South Africa) and alcohol such as wine, whiskey, rum and tequila.
D01	In November 1998 things reached a point where John realized that it took him only three years to come to a point where his life was scattering into pieces. He then also realized that time was on his side and that he had to allow it to heal him. This realization led to a “breakthrough decision” and by November 1999 he had a drug-free lifestyle. He committed himself to change and felt that he needed a secure surrounding to help him become a “normal human being”.
D01	During his time of John's unemployment, drugs became a bigger part of Mary's and his lives than before. They both used dagga (Marijuana) and Mandrax and he used Cocaine as well. It all cost money. They often travelled to a coastal town in Kwazulu Natal and they spent a lot of money
D02	John wrote in his diary that he was afraid of losing Mary and felt that he had to earn her love.
D02	He did not perceive himself as a violent person and was convinced that Mary could confirm that
D02	He described his heart as unmoved and himself as someone who cannot be loved.
D02	When he accidentally cut his moustache and then shaved it off on the day of the hearing, it made him feel naked and cold
D02	In December 1996 John had a good fishing weekend with Mary. The Monday night he took marijuana, cocaine and a lot of alcohol. He did not use anything during the weekend because he was with his fiancée, whom he adored and respected. When they had the argument that night he felt angry, but could control himself until he heard the words “I don't love you – take your things and go”. It really rocked his unstable mind. He switched off for a few seconds and did something that he never did before and that he did not even dream about in his worst nightmares: he killed his fiancée in a terrible violent rage. Her head was smashed and he became a murderer.
D02	John mentions that Mary might have been right during the night of the murder when she sensed that things between them could not work out
D02	John realised that he was not aware of his true mental condition
D02	John called it the “mistake of my life” when he lied to Mary about his background. He thanked Mary that she taught him that life has a purpose, but regretted the fact that it cost her her life
D02	He realized that he got involved with Mary because he wanted to pretend that he was someone that he was not. Eventually he just could not cope with the pretending any more and he exploded. He did not want to allow that to happen again. He realized that he could not handle teasing right through his school and his national service up to his adult life and even now in prison. He experienced it as pressure and it made him aggressive
D02	He looked up the dictionary's definition of a ‘crime of passion’, stating that it is “a crime especially of murder due to sexual jealousy”. He commented that this definition does not include the build up of tension, worries, fears, anger, frustration, insecurity, inability to control

	emotions, immaturity, internal personality problems, lies, his pretending to be what was not, impressing people, trying to be part of the crowd, fear of losing love, sensitivity and many more things that he did not have a label for. It also did not include the mental hell he was still going through, the longing, the heart-sore and regrets.
D03	On one occasion, after they had an argument when she resisted John's sexual gestures they had a talk about it and he felt that it helped him to understand her better. She told him that she does not have enough space in her heart to love him completely due to the fact that two of her ex-boyfriends and her puppy still occupy some space in her heart. John felt upset about this, but did not interpret his emotion as jealousy.
D03	He experienced the reconciliation with his father as very fragile.
D03	His life was in autumn and grief and sorrow replaced all his fruits.
D03	Writing to his sister instead of to his father made it easier for him to express his emotions
D03	He experienced Mary's mother as "anti-me".
D03	John was annoyed by the noise that some of his fellow inmates made and attributed their noisiness to their cultural origin. When his father's car was stolen by people from the same culture, he started to "hate them with a passion"
D03	He learned from the first four years after the murder, but also felt that he failed himself and his family
D03	Only time will tell whether John will ever have children of his own. At the moment he was content with being able to see, love and hold his sister's children. The members of his core family were his cornerstones for the moment and, he believed, also for the future, although he nearly lost them too.
D03	His world has become very small and that he had no "friends" - only people who knew him
D03	John does not think it was what she said as much as how she said it that made him lose control
D03	When he fell in love with Mary three years and eight months ago, John thought his life started. Soon afterwards he realized how wrong he was. Love made him go blind and he did not notice things that were quite obvious. He did things and made decisions that he regrets and wants to undo. It is not so easy, however, and life has a tendency to go on no matter what happened. He just has to pick up the pieces and carry on.
D03	John had problems with his father before the murder and they clashed most of the time. These arguments influenced his life greatly in many ways. To remember it brought a lot of bitterness and he did not like to dwell on it.
D04	He expressed very strong feelings of an overwhelming and possessive love for her that could sometimes push him towards violent deeds, as well as a feeling of inability to convey his feelings to her.
D04	Mary was so special for him that they were parts of each other. Their love was without equal for him
D04	Their relationship was sacred and very intense of their for him
D04	He talks about his fire that changed into dead ash and his "jealous care" and love that he lost.
D04	He longs for his beloved and realized that they were only one night apart since they started dating.
D04	Mary had previous relationships and so did he, but he was very cautious about her previous boyfriends in her life as they still contacted her and he did not like it. However, because he loved her he did nothing.
D05	He trusted her and decided that the best word to describe his love for her was an "ace".
D05	His love for Mary kept him from committing suicide

D05	When Mary told John that she did not love him any more and that he should pack his belongings and leave, he felt as if those words killed him inside and he could not believe that she said it. He recalled previous times when she said tender, loving and gentle words to him and he wrote that he did not hear it with his ears, but that it went straight to his soul and heart and that he would store it there forever
D05	He realized that there would never be another Mary in his life and he did not want another lady. He felt it would be unfair to another lady if he still has all the memories of his beloved inevitably causing him to make comparisons.
D05	During the time when he lost his job, John realized how serious he felt about his relationship with Mary. He did not only fall in love with her, but he "worshipped" her. Never before did he feel like this about a woman and he was ill equipped to handle it. He only focussed on the fact that he wanted her and that he did not want to loose her or her love. Jealousy did not play a big part, but he was very possessive and protective over her. They did have a lot in common, but also many differences. John was glad about the fact she loved fishing nearly as much as he did. For him it meant he could have a peaceful weekend fishing at his favourite while he could also have the love of his life with him. They played action cricket together very often, they both played league pool and both of them have won many trophies and prizes. Their shared interests made them feel very close to each other.
D06	Shortly before his hearing he started using lower case when he wrote "I" and wrote that thinking about Mary was upsetting and hurting him so much that he refrained from communicating with her in writing or speech
D06	His poems were acting as an outlet valve for his painful and sometimes devastating memories. He felt they represented a permanent scar, but that time and being with his family could bring some healing.
D06	One of the reasons for keeping a diary that John often brought up during psychotherapy, was that writing was the only way in which he felt that he really could express his real emotions.
D06	He regarded himself as an "unpopular loner" during schooldays and he did not talk very easily. However, he always had very intense emotions to deal with. He often started entries in his diary with "my friend". It is almost as if his diary became a surrogate for an imaginary friend that he created during early childhood when he did not have real friends. He later shared his image of his ideal "life partner and wife" with this "pen friend" and then thought he found her in real life. His deepest emotions were always shared in the context of talking to his most intimate friend, partly imaginary and later often represented by his beloved. He expressed his anger, fear, jealousy and ideas of inferiority and incompetence in metaphors, poems and letters addressed to his "friend". When he had to face some discrepancies between his ideal friend and its representation in the form of his beloved, something snapped and it became too much for him. After the murder he continued to write to "his friend", although it is as if a "fusion" developed between his friend and his memories of his beloved
D06	His poems were more personal for him, but he also thought that someone else might find some clarifications for their own problems by reading them. He mentions that he might stop writing letters to Mary now, but "only time will tell".
D06	Since he was 18 John yearned for a secure peaceful life and in many ways it was so. However, he had some problems and had a tendency to push them aside and avoided dealing with them. He saw himself as a peaceful, non-violent person before, but now he started to see himself in a different light - especially after the "thing". This murder has turned his life inside out and things will never be the same again. He was stopped dead in life's tracks and was forced to look at himself: where he stood and where he wanted to go. He was forced to start dealing with problems that he put aside for years. He looked at the time before the murder with an open mind and did not hide anything. He was honest with himself for the first time and it felt good.
D06	The first difference that John discovered between them was that she liked to party and to be socially involved while he just cannot handle noise and loud music – even the music he loves. It hurts his ears and gives him migraines. They had very similar music tastes, but he liked it soft she liked it loud and they a constantly experienced a mental in this regard. He usually gave in and let her have her way.



D06	He wrote many poems in his first 18 months and he used it as a way of venting his emotions. In the beginning he did not even realize it was happening, but as he made therapeutic progress, he realized it is a way of getting healed and later he did it on purpose. However, he still only did it when he had words. He did not force himself.
D07	He thought they could communicate without words and he sensed her forgiveness
D07	John interpreted Mary's appearance in his recurring visions as an indication that she was trying to say something to him. He made it out for himself that she may have been pregnant with their first child during the time of the murder and that she wanted to tell him about that.
D07	He mentions that the negative contents of his verses since he was in custody were scary for him but that the words just "came faster than he could write"
D07	Later John found out that he killed Mary using a steel pipe. To him that was the end of his life, as well. He tried to kill himself and couldn't do it, because he promised her that he would pay for what he did. Her death has killed him inside and even three years later it still haunted him a lot. He had never been a violent person, except when he lost his temper completely. When he lost his temper, he lost control completely. He thus has always been careful not to loose his temper, but there were times when it happened so quickly that, before he knew, it happened.
D07	Mary made him show compassion to people about whom he did not have a natural feeling of compassion
D08	John also looked back to before the murder. In April 1996 he was promoted from production supervisor to production manager and he thought that is where the first thing went wrong. He enjoyed his work very much, but hated all the paper work. He has never been keen on paperwork. He likes writing poems but admits that is how far his love for paperwork goes. With all this paperwork daily he was less on the workbench where he felt comfortable. In July 1996 he reached a point where he either had to resign or get fired. He chose to resign and from there on his life just fell apart. However, he kept it to himself
D08	A second difference was that Mary was a type of person that was very neat and tidy - John was not. With time he became very conscious about where and how he packed things or put things. He always helped her cleaning up and he did not mind because he loved her so much and his mother trained him well in household things, e.g. cleaning, cooking and planning. Mary did not like cooking much and he loved cooking and eating. He was very happy in a kitchen. Money issues were not a problem until he lost his job. All of a sudden he had no income and that put severe strain on him. He could not handle the fact that she paid for everything. It made him very tense and angry with himself. He tried to obtain a job for 6 months and there were a few jobs he could have, but it meant night shift and she did not like it and would not allow him to take it. This fact frustrated him but because he did not want to loose her, he did not protest too much. Not having a job put a lot of pressure upon him, especially because they got engaged and planned to marry. He sold his car for R8000-00 to pay for rent and food, as he was not happy that she paid for everything herself. He lied to her and told her his car was stolen
D08	Finally, during "that fatal night" John wanted to tell Mary about his lies and his life of pretending and he did so. She was shocked, but at first accepted his story and agreed to help him. Later on she told him very loudly and in no uncertain terms that she does not love him and she that she does not want him. He pleaded with her to reconsider and she calmed down. Then again, she compared, amongst other features, his sexual traits with that of her previous boyfriend. For John that was a tender, sensitive issue, because he had problems in that area. However, he kept quiet although it hurt him very much. Later she exclaimed: "that is it. I don't love you, I don't want you, pack your stuff and go!" John does not think it was what she said as much as how she said it that made him loose control. He does not remember very much about what happened immediately after that. He remembered that he went for her, that he was hitting her and he remembers the blood afterwards.
D08	Although he admitted guilt, he interpreted it as "not him" who committed the murder
D08	On Christmas day 1997 he wrote that it feels just like another day and that the prison shaped him to "cruise on in automatic mode".

D09	In 2000 he felt ready to face the facts of his life as an obstacle, but also a stepping-stone that helped him to learn. It has changed his life in a way that he never expected
D09	He felt a need to speak to Mary's father because he would understand and was like a father for him. Her father was the only other person whom she loved as much as she loved him. One of the most difficult issues for John seemed to be how to deal with his fiancée's parents. He experienced her father (dad Dough) as a very understanding and reasonable man, but felt that her mother directly blamed him for her daughter's death and was nurturing many thoughts of revenge. It seems very obvious that these experiences are nearly the opposite of his experiences of his own parents. He often experienced a need to talk to his potential in-laws, but also expressed some understanding for the fact that it would never be the same as before. He often expressed his feeling that it may never be possible to talk to her mother again, and that he thought it is better to leave it that way. The quotes from 24 and 25 December 1996 as well as 3 January 1997 express something about these ideas. In his 5 January 2000 letter to his beloved he confirms his intention not to initiate any contact with them when he is released from prison. As part of his reason for this decision he mentions that he is still very fragile inside and often feels that he is close to another breakdown. He mentions that Mary might have been right during the night of the murder when she sensed that things between them could not work out.
D09	Right from the beginning of the entries in the available parts of John's diary, it is clear that his family relations played a major part in his development and conceptualizations around the prelude and aftermath of the murder of his fiancée. It became an even more pressing issue after he has been arrested due to the fact that he felt that there was a lot of unfinished business in his family relationships to deal with.
D09	In retrospect he thinks he acted like a robot. He did not plan it consciously – if he did, he would have walked out on her that night. In spite of the fact that his memory is normally very well, his recollections of that night are very patchy. Since then John lives behind a mask covering a tender and festering wound. Time is like dust – it settles and sometimes it is better not to disturb it. However, at times it is disturbed in his life. Pain is part of time for him and he has more of it than he can cope with. However, he has no choice. The eight years he got in prison is a very long time for him. During the first three years he abused a lot of drugs and started seeing himself as a big non-caring, sometimes violent monster. He finds it difficult to start seeing himself as a normal human being again. He often exploded in Medium B prison after being triggered by only a small incident. A few times he nearly killed someone. He sometimes was scared of himself too. After two mini strokes and numerous migraine attacks and after he hurt some people physically, he decided to seek some help. It was difficult for him to admit that he needed help, but he felt that time drove him into a corner and beg for help. Help did arrive, but he still had to decide what to do with it. He later realized that it was the only chance that he would ever have. His life went unstoppably in the wrong direction for 35 years and it cost a life, a murder to make him stop in his tracks and realize that it was time to change.
D09	He avoided addressing his own shortcomings in the past and realized how complicated the required process of change within himself became because of his procrastination
D09	Time was something John never really noticed before, but since he met Mary, it became something lying heavily on his mind and whole being. He concluded that time is a thing you cannot define in one certain way only. It is everything and nothing at the same time. Only weakness and the will to overcome it would help him at the moment. In time he might look back and say: "I told you so".
D09	His mind is his worst enemy because a person's heart can forgive and forget, but the mind forgives, but never forgets. It caused a scar only visible to him that he sees every day.