

# Chapter

# 5

---

Category One –  
Adolescents



## **5.1 Preamble**

This chapter is devoted to the analysis of category ‘Adolescents’; a group of fourteen trainees aged in their teens but younger than eighteen years of age. To protect their identity and ensure their anonymity, they are coded from A1 to A14. Overall, gender is evenly distributed across this category; seven females and seven males but there is some irregularity when gender is distributed between the ages of the trainee. There are three fourteen year olds – A5 and A8 male, A9 female, five fifteen year olds – A1, A3 and A14 male, A2 and A11 female, two sixteen year olds – A4 and A7 female, and four seventeen year olds – A6 and A13 female and A10 and A12 male. Most adolescent trainees sailed as individuals and not as part of a school or organisation except A2 who indicates sailing as part of Cadets. A4 received a scholarship for 2 people to go on with a friend but they were separated into different watches. Similarly A7 sailed with her sister A9, but they were separated from each other. A9 also says she knew several people when she started but was separated from them so did not have much contact through being in a different watch. While A12 sailed with other trainees in his watch, his uncle, who was part of the crew was his carer due to him having diabetes. According to the trainees, their voyages ranged from five to nine days. Finally, not all trainees indicated but of those who did, they were excited and happy to go on their voyage!

## **5.2 Personal Development**

### **5.2.1 Sense of Self: Confidence**

Similar to what the literature reveals and confirming what workers believe, one of the most common outcomes cited by adolescents is how confident they felt about themselves when finishing their voyage. Their responses are not

differentiated by gender or age either. A2 describes her feelings like this, “Yeah, I definitely had a lot more confidence. Like I was very impressed with myself that I was able to do it. And the skills that I learnt, like I didn’t think I would be able to do it and it definitely improved like my confidence.” Likewise, A6 says, “Definitely. Um, you do exercises that give you more confidence.” A5 explains his feelings this way, “... I feel more confident in taking like, being a leader and it just helps you out a lot...” A3 describes the change in himself as, “Ah sort of I felt refreshed when I got off there ... I felt better about talking in groups as well ... yeah a lot more confident actually ...” A7 puts her feelings like this, “... I feel a bit, I’m very outgoing already but um, I learnt a lot ... And I learnt a lot and I felt more confident in that and I feel a lot more confident in other things.” A9 says she felt like this, “... I feel stronger and more confident, about myself.” Finally, when arriving back to shore, A14 describes his feelings this way:

*... yeah I reckon I did like, I’ve never been very like, I was confident, competent sailor but when I went to this Leeuwin trip, I would just look at it and go, oh god, are they putting me in charge of sailing this and I kind of freaked out a bit, about sailing that like what happens if we screw up kind of. In the end after it, I felt pretty confident.*

This feeling of confidence overflows into their everyday lives, too. For A11 it’s just after one week after her voyage. She describes feeling better about herself in contrast to her life at home before she sailed, a life she describes as, “not that good and everything.” While she does not specifically refer to feeling more confident when she first finishes her voyage, she says that at home she has a difference in her attitude and level of confidence. As she says, “it’s just my attitude and stuff ... It’s more confidence.”

As adolescents discuss their voyage up to six months after returning home, this feeling of confidence extends over months and relates to different areas of

their lives, too. A2 says she is “... definitely a lot more confident, I am more willing to try stuff.” For A5 it’s “How to take on a role that is pretty difficult like if you didn’t know what you are doing ... Like now I have used it a lot so.” And A7 relates to school and enhancing her academic achievement. This supports the idea that a sense of confidence gained on board influences their academic competency even if it is not a voyage specifically targeted to an educative program. As she describes:

*I’m in year 12 at the moment and I, am more confident now in my school work, too, you know ... I’m a smart person but I, am more confident to know, because I was a bit of kind of like I knew I was smart but I didn’t think I was going to do very well. Whereas speaking to some people in this I think 4 or 5 of us were in my watch which were going into Year 12 this year? ... And we all kind of spoke about things on, you know on bow watch while we were there and things. And that has given me more confidence to know I will do okay. And if I don’t it doesn’t matter.*

For A3 he says, “And now I come off and I feel a lot more confident. I still are a little bit shy but I open up a lot faster now ... Like I have been on a youth camp since and, yeah it’s, it’s a lot easier ...” But for A10 it is back at home he notices he is more confident and disciplined now. As he says, “Oh, definitely confidence wise, yes. You know, I guess from being on a ship my bedroom is a lot more cleaner as well.” But he also adds:

*Going on the Leeuwin has bought a part of me out that I am now glad I have because I am now able to you know be, I don’t know how to say it, I am sort of able to you know ... have confidence around other people, I can speak more in public than I was able to, than before. I am able to do this and that. I feel more confident about myself.*

Even A14, who has sailed smaller vessels, says he feels more confident after his voyage on the *Leeuwin II*. He says, "... I just I felt much more confident in the smaller boats that I sail, I felt more in control because oh if I can sail a tall ship it's a piece of cake."

Subsequently, what they convey supports the idea that identity development is retained over time, in this case up to six months after their *Leeuwin II* experience. The underlying sentiment is that they are more able to take control over what they do back at home, at school and in wider society. As the literature describes, it is them extending their horizons, expanding their beings, and revelling in a mastery of themselves (Hopkins 1993); it can also be viewed as them being resilient (Neill & Dias 2001; Pryor, Carpenter & Townsend 2005; Ungar, Dumond & McDonald 2005). Being able to cope with contemporary life juxtaposes the idea of successfully negotiating it. As such, having confidence to do this supports the idea that contributes to their habitus having acquired a sense of free agency from their experience on board.

### **5.2.2 Sense of Self: Accomplishment**

Another way adolescent trainees felt about themselves directly after completing their voyage is that of having a sense of accomplishment. Given a fourteen-year-old female and two seventeen year old males indicate this, there appears to be no distinguishing difference between their age and gender. A9 for example says "I felt like I had accomplished something." But for A12, accomplishment is wrapped up with relief. As he says, "... I just felt relieved that, that I actually done it. Cause if I can do that then I wouldn't feel the way I was. If, you know it's believe that you have actually tried something new and you just feel great." For A10, his sense of accomplishment is also tied up with being a valued part of the running of the ship and making friends, too. As he says:

*I felt more like I had completed something. You know, like especially what I have done to the ship itself. I felt more, I don't know how to explain it I felt like everything I had done was contributing toward the Leeuwin and what they do. I felt really, I made some awesome mates which is a really good thing.*

### **5.2.3 Interpersonal Relationships**

What A10 describes can also be interpreted as feeling connected to the Leeuwin II environment in different ways. Literature refers to this as interpersonal relationships and is also used here to describe feeling connected, relating and communicating with others. It is a feeling something Leeuwin II workers recognise and is also something both two male and one female trainees recall first after their voyage, too. They describe it as being more comfortable, friendlier and happier. As A6 says, “So like you feel more comfortable around complete strangers.” A1 explains it like this:

*Well. You just sort of feel, oh I am not sure just ... there are so many people and you just connected with everybody so quickly ... So even people who you know normally quite shy people don't really make friends easily, but people overall yeah with the whole group....sort of thing and you just become friendlier, happier.*

Plus feeling more connected impacts on working with others, too. As A8 says:

*... I feel like you know, I can work with a team better and stuff like that.*

Indeed, these young people's relationships in an individualised life are important when understanding they need bridge social networks in the field of education or the labour market for example. Thus translated into their everyday lives, this can be viewed in light of considering and relating to others;

interactions and relationships in an individualised society requiring intrapersonal and interpersonal skills to negotiate it. This means they are better positioned to play the game as Bourdieu (1990, p. 52) aptly describes. Or as Emirbayer and Johnson (2008, p. 4) say, it promotes the “interaction of a variety of habitus.”

In a contemporary individualised milieu like Australia, developed interpersonal skills and connecting with others is indeed essential. The relevance of these relationships extends across all areas of their lives also. This response is evident by both male and female adolescents, younger and older. For A12, his relationships are now like this:

*Yeah before I went on the voyage I didn't listen to people, I kind of made my own choice, I just sort of went ahead with things and they used to turn out really like bad, now that after the voyage I've learnt to listen and, before I do stuff and taking in what people are saying and everything that I do it's actually turns out quite well.*

Others like A1 agree. His way of thinking about this also indicates better control over his actions, too. As he says:

*You just look at people differently now ... Yeah. I make my own decisions and, you know who I want I want to hang out with and stuff like that ... Like I am more accepting ... I'm friends of people I would not have not have normally been friends with now.*

This change in relating to people extends across all areas of their lives. According to A4, she describes how her relationships have changed at home as well as outside it. She recognizes she's “... definitely self motivated in terms of school and stuff like that but when it came more to looking after me in a home, I realize that I can't be the person who always sits back and just does what I want

to do.” As A8 recognises his relationships with others, too, “... I’m back here now so I, you know, work with different people.”

### 5.2.4 Communication

Another theme for participants was connecting and relating to others and is experienced by all trainees, both females and males across all ages. However, when it comes to having an increased sense of communicating with others, only females identify this. Interestingly, they relate this to feeling more comfortable, respectful and again, having confidence to do it. This feeling of increased communication is well described by A13. In fact, it’s of special significance for her as she explains:

*... well I’ve had ... Asperger’s so I’ve had like problems communicating and after being on the voyage and talking, like being living together on for eight days and being really close, I’ve sort of um, felt more comfortable in communicating to other people.*

For A9 it’s, “... with friends and stuff I’ve kind of, like act not act their age but like being more able to communicate with someone older than me and knowing they communicate with me I kind of respect more.” A7 while confessing to being a good communicator prior to her voyage, describes how she relates to people now like this:

*... and with talking to people, it is not just talking to people but actually talking to people about them. Not like I would, I think I actually go up to strangers in the street and go like hello thinking I know them but talking to them in a better way. I guess talking better to people not just talking to people with a confidence to do that ... Yeah, on a deeper level and getting more out of it. Sometimes I feel like I’ve spoken to someone for 10 minutes and actually haven’t learnt anything or got anything out of it. They haven’t*

*grown or I haven't grown in any way shape or form where as now I have more confidence to do things, which are going to help people and help me get more out of it.*

And for her this means:

*With more confidence in just saying hello how are you to actually being like how's your day been? What have you been up to? You don't look too happy why? You know ... Yeah. I mean from you know I knew it was a good place to meet people on the Leeuwin and I did meet some great people ... And from that I realised it was a good way to get to know people was actually to speak to them a bit more in depth than, oh how nice is the weather today? And I had the confidence to do that. I am, I'm not being arrogant but I am quite loud and out there and confident already but ... (laughter) ... to speak to people to actually get to know them I did ... On the Leeuwin I kind of realised I got more confident in doing it. I spoke to just one of my friends I already knew and he spoke to one of the other guys and he said oh ... seems nice so I spoke to him more and the confidence I oh I guess I almost learnt it there and I bring into life out here.*

### **5.2.5 Feeling Free**

Another way to describe how some female adolescents felt directly after their voyage is provided by A4 who says, "Yeah, more relaxed and free ... not stressed." This is an interesting comment as the term 'free' distinctly creates an image of her agency being released from the ties of her everyday life and associated to freely choosing and having control over her life and therefore success in it. As she says, "Well, normally I'm a stressor like with school and everything and it just gets too overpowering but the voyage was during school

like holidays. So I got to relax a lot more and just get out a lot more.” This feeling carries over into A7’s everyday life, too. As she says:

*Well, I go to private school and things that before my attitude was kind of have to do well at school or my whole life is going to be a shemozzle but I saw with the apprenticeship girl that you don’t have to finish and things will be okay. It will work out. You can you know I can go on the Leeuwin for a year and have a good time I’m not really worried ...*

Both their responses indicate stress associated to being a student in their contemporary lives. Thus rather than the educative field furnishing them with reflective knowledge (Marginson 1996), they experience stress and pressure to perform in a certain way. Subsequently, this promotes the idea that being removed from everyday life to a field outside it contributes to them gaining a new perspective, in this case a sense of freedom over it.

But is their stress indicative of females experiencing personal development in their everyday lives because it is sprinkled with ambiguity and contradiction (Van Newkirk 2006) more than their male counterparts? Perhaps it is or perhaps it is not. In the example of education, given there are only two sixteen year old females who discuss their sense of freedom it is not enough evidence to be certain. But given there is another female adolescent who indicates feeling free, while not specific to education, her comments might well be associated to this situation. A9 explains that for her being back at home now she has more freedom over her life in the way of choice. Before her voyage, she felt like she had to do things and had no choice in her life. As she says:

*I feel different about myself, like I seem to now go into things with more of a like oomph... Cause I didn’t really have a choice when I was, I had a choice but I made kind of say to myself don’t let yourself have a choice? Like do everything possible ... That was before I went and now I kind of*

*keep that kind of thing in my mind um, in everyday I enjoyed it so much just doing everything I could.*

### **5.2.6 Adventurousomeness**

The idea of feeling free can also be associated to adventuresomeness (Hattie et al 1997). For example, this concept attributes challenge and flexibility. It can also be associated with having a sense of freedom, too. Thus, as well as having increased communication, A13 describes a sense of adventuresomeness as freedom, as she says:

*Yeah I ... wanted to do a lot more than what I was doing. Like, I wasn't really doing much, I was sort of sitting at home and, hanging around doing nothing and then afterwards I wanted to do more voyages, I wanted to do more day sails. I just sort of wanted to go out and have a look at Australia and all that.*

### **5.2.7 Consequences**

Still there is another variation on the theme of feeling free and having choice over actions. This is described as being aware of consequences. A14, a male, explains that being back at home he is more aware of consequences; something he was not concerned about prior to his voyage. Perhaps this is associated with a fifteen-year-old gaining maturity? Or is it gender specific as it relates to risk-taking behaviour? It is clearly an individual having confidence to make his own choice about his actions. In this way, it suggests his habitus is set free to have the confidence over his life, in this case in relation to peer pressure. He explains:

*... there was a few things like climbing like, ever since I climbed that mast and just saw how like shaky and you can be up there. I think a little bit more like can I think awe, if this like, if this isn't something I'm meant to*

*climb on that could be dangerous. So I look at other things that, I look at you know, if your friend, if one of my friends tells you to try climbing the roof, which has already happened, ah I just looked and said awe, that's not meant for me to climb on. Like, I'm not going to climb on that cause that could break. I just after the Leeuwin, that's what I was thinking of, like how shaky the Leeuwin was.*

### **5.2.8 Processing: The Imagined**

Thus, there is an association with a sense of free agency contingently activated in the Leeuwin II field. When talking about their personal development, adolescents often describe it in contrast to their everyday lives. Overall, their comments support a freedom to choose and select; they describe themselves as individuals taking control of their lives – the choices they make and not being vulnerable. The confidence they gain, the relationships they form and more can be considered part of the illusion that they are masters over their world. But the imagined freedom underpinned by confidence, a part of habitus as a processing in everyday life is specifically articulated by A3 who says, “I also know, yeah, yeah you learn ah, you can like do pretty well anything if you set your mind to it.”

Clearly, this is of particular interest to this study. For it highlights the value of understanding habitus not only interpreting experience and creating dispositions to act, it also captures the importance of it to think and feel in a certain way (Lehmann 2004).

### **5.2.9 Sense of Self: Adulthood**

Of the fourteen adolescents, thirteen indicate feeling more like an adult after their voyage. In essence, a transition to adulthood regardless of their age and

gender appears to have been initiated. Leeuwin II workers often describe this as a catalyst for transition. Participating on board the Leeuwin II tall ship is a ‘kick start’ to this development even if it does not act as a total transition as indicated in the previous chapter.

When I asked adolescents about feeling more like an adult after their voyage they responded like this:

A1 says, “Well. Yeah. A bit more mature as well so ...” A2 says, “Yeah. For sure.” And A3 says, “Yeah, yeah. Just like I feel more confident towards it anyway ... U, so yeah I mean as yeah it did, I feel a lot more like I can take bigger responsibilities now.” The affirmation continues with A4 saying, “I think so”, while A5 simply says, “Yep.” A6 says, “Yeah you do.” A8 says, “Yeah.” A9 agrees and says, “It made me feel a bit more confident and yeah I felt more like an adult ... in my life kind of thing.” A10 says, “Of course. Yeah.” A11 says, “Yeah, I do actually.” A12 “Um, yeah ...” A13 “Yeah.” Finally A14 says, “Yes. Yeah, you can say that. Like when I came back, I did feel like much, much older you know.”

Interestingly, what these adolescents say about feeling more like adults after their voyage directs thought toward the trend that transitions in contemporary life are becoming increasingly extended – a time that lasts from the late teens through to the early twenties. What it highlights is the relevance of social fields relating to young people’s personal development and as such, challenges the idea that events have very little salience on their conceptions on the transition to adulthood (Arnett 1997). Subsequently, the relationship between their identity development and social fields like the Leeuwin II tall ship supports the idea of a rite of passage to adulthood. In this instance, adolescents have been separated from their everyday lives – taken to a special place where challenges are overcome and rituals performed – before returning home with a new identity

(van Genneep 1960). While this model relates to the third stage of incorporation where the community sees their identity changed, in an individualised society like Australia, a trainee returning home thinking and feeling in a certain way, like feeling more confident and more like an adult is relevant indeed. In terms of habitus, this idea supports it being removed from everyday life to a field like the Leeuwin II tall ship that is away from everyday life promoting their personal development in this respect.

The only adolescent who does not agree with the others about feeling more like an adult after her voyage is A7. However, what she says demonstrates confusion about this rather than her indicating no growth in this area at all. As she says, “I’m 16 now but um I do think that there is, I do feel like an adult not entirely because of the voyage but it came at a good time and definitely I learnt some things that it would make me into more of an adult, yeah.” Not entirely convinced she continues:

*Maybe not, yes in some ways. It was really good that there was mixed ages ... Most things I do the ages really are only kind of in maybe maximum 3 or 4 years above me. Which you know when you are 16, 4 years older at 20 that is quite a difference between being a teenager and being an adult. But they’re not physically in my watch but I did get to know some people through other things. One of the guys had retired for example and the crew as well um working on the same level as people. It did, maybe I don’t know, yeah I just feel an adult and having more responsibility, too.*

What is curious about her comments is they can be considered in conjunction with what adulthood is today. That is that it is understood rather than just being accepted (Willmott & Nelson 2005). Perhaps her confusion is also an indication of a lack of definition in a society that has no name for a distinct life stage between adolescence and adulthood (Arnett 2000)? Nonetheless, what she says

does raise two factors associated to understanding what an adult is, namely responsibility and age of the person. Adolescents agree and include these definitions, along with other descriptions of it, when they discuss what they think an adult is today in everyday life.

## **5.3 Adulthood: What is it?**

### **5.3.1 Responsibility**

This is actually a very popular response in how adolescent trainees understand adulthood in contemporary life. In fact, responsibility transcends adolescents across other research into perceptions of adulthood also (Hutson & Jenkins 1989; Arnett 2000; Westberg 2004). Four female and two male adolescents in this study include the idea of responsibility in their descriptions of what they think adulthood is. They express this not only in terms of responsibility for themselves but also how it relates to others. For example, A3 says an adult is, "... someone that can sort of lead people and, and confidently and sort of take responsibilities and address them wisely." A6 thinks about it and says, "I don't know. People that have more responsibilities." A7 takes it further and adds, "Not just has responsibility but actually is responsible. Being responsible for things not just for themselves." While A2 believes it is, "Someone who takes responsibility for themselves." A11 Adds and says, "... Someone who takes on a lot of responsibility." With this, she also recognises her own identity as an adult being able to take on more responsibility after her voyage. A13 also describes an adult in relation to it in both terms of the individual and others. She says, "... take responsibility for your actions ... Not doing anything stupid that can harm someone else." She continues and says that this is, "Treating everyone as an equal."

### 5.3.2 Independence and Choice

As well as responsibility, being independent and having choice are also popular characteristics considered by these adolescents as what constitutes an adult. There are three males and two females who express adulthood in these terms. A1 says an adult is, "... being able to make your own choices not having to have someone to feed you the whole way." A4 explains it like this, "I reckon it is being able to be self-motivated and sort of reliant upon yourself rather than someone else all the time ... You have other people there to rely on but you have to look after yourself." A9 says, "You can go out and live your life to the fullest. With not many impacts from other people around them." A12 echoes this saying, "Oh just people who can make their own choices and don't have to ask for assistance unless it is absolutely needed. Just make your own choices and decide you know, having your say and making people listen to you." But A8 also associates this with economic independence. He says, "... I don't know, a person who has their own life and stuff. Have their own car and houses and stuff ... it is like independence ... and stuff like that."

The idea of making independent decisions, being financially independent and accepting responsibility is qualities of character associated to adulthood in an individualised life (Arnett 2000). They can also be associated to the confidence underlying success and as such, an individual having a sense of free agency. Subsequently, it can be understood in relation to mastery, competence, positive identity, belonging, caring, connection, and resilience. There is indeed a connection between transition and development from this point of view.

### 5.3.3 Identity

But is it the age of a person or their identity as one that contributes to what an adult is? According to two male adolescents, it is how you think about yourself,

rather than a person's age, determining adulthood. When A10 ponders this he says, "Yes, that's exactly right. I think we can take it from that. You feel like you're you know mature and grown up then it becomes more adult to you as life becomes more easy as such." A14 also thinks being an adult is part of how you think about yourself. He says, "... older in appearance as well as, like in your mind..." By this he means, "Yeah, you have, you have to be, to be an adult well you could, you can be you know thirty, forty years old but I wouldn't say you are an adult if you're still acting like a kid."

Thus, this also highlights the relevance of habitus in contemporary life thinking and feeling in a certain way (Lehmann 2004). Interestingly, how adolescents describe adulthood so far, having a sense of adulthood is also related to having a sense of confidence; a sense of self underpinning a free agency to not only act independently but to have choice over decisions. But identity can also be considered in relation to how adolescents situate themselves with others. In other words, according to them society can influence how a person identifies as an adult as well.

### **5.3.4 A Social Definition**

For example, as A14 recognises, both individual and legal perspectives can be considered. He says, "Well, there's, an adult would be I'd say someone whose much more mature to make their own decisions for themselves. Legally they are allowed to make their own decisions themselves." A8 also raises the legal aspect of adulthood through being legally sanctioned to purchase and drink alcohol. As he says, an adult is, "A person that can drink." Hence, social structure appears to still influence their perception of adulthood as indicated by legality or their rights as adults to perform certain activities such as drinking alcohol.

Similar to A10 and A14 a person's age is raised in relation to understanding adulthood as well. But in this case, it is as they measure their age against others. There are two adolescents – one female and one male who describe what an adult is in this respect. As A8 says an adult is, "A person who is a bit older than me. (Laughter) ..." A2 agrees and describes it like this, "Well probably just someone that's a bit older than myself. And, like a bit more mature." These adolescents are aged fourteen and fifteen years old, so raises the idea that their age impacts on their identities as adults. However, there are two other fourteen year olds and four other fifteen year olds who do not describe adulthood in this way. Thus, rather than just a person's age, other contributing factors like the experience of the person can also be included to what an adult is.

### **5.3.5 Experience**

In fact, A7 understands adulthood this way. As she says:

*... and has some knowledge you know not just an old wise person but you have got common sense. You've lived for you know people say 18 is when officially you become an adult, you have lived through a good while. You have got life experience. I think that is what makes an adult.*

The idea of young people's experience contributing to their sense of self is directly linked to this study, essentially because it brings to light relationships between social fields and their personal development. For example, experience occurs in fields of their everyday life like educative institutions, and this experience occurring in fields removed from it such as the Leeuwin II tall ship. Hence, this raises the idea of habitus responding to social fields in and beyond everyday life in similar and different ways. When discussing their reasons for how and why they think their Leeuwin II experience works, will adolescents and the other trainees in this study shed light on this relationship?

## 5.4 How and Why the Leeuwin II Adventure Works

### 5.4.1 Responsibility

The first thing that stands out for adolescents is that both females and males indicate an association with being given responsibility contributing to their identity development. This includes their sense of confidence as well as their identities as adults. In the way adolescents describe an adult as one who is more responsible and can take on more responsibility, it certainly makes sense to link their development as adults with the responsibility they experience on board. A3 attributes feeling more like an adult this way and says:

*... you get more responsibilities and that on the Leeuwin like, even like the anchor watches and that kind of stuff it sort of, if you go on with a not very confident person ... you have got to show them and, and I mean you have got to have all that responsibility of, like the last night I did anchor watch the boat drifted a bit towards the shore and the Captain said if it drifted at all toward the shore you have to wake him, wake her up. So, that was a big responsibility as well.*

A7 puts her view like this “... definitely with responsibility yes. You know with anchor watch if you weren’t up there or if you didn’t get the next lot out of bed then you had a bit of a responsibility quite a lot of responsibility and though it wasn’t like wow this is a big responsibility you have got to do this you just take it on and you do it.”

When understanding adulthood in this way, it supports habitus as socialisation and capable of reproduction. It backs up what LW6 says that they crave responsibility in the end. However, being removed from everyday life is not essential to their development because it is possible to replicate their experience

of responsibility for example to reproduce their habitus in social fields like education in their everyday lives. Nonetheless, in the field of the Leeuwin II tall ship, the idea of being given responsibility, does support what many Leeuwin workers believe and that is, that responsibility contributes to trainee's personal development.

So given this rationale, it is not automatic to simply assume that experiencing responsibility on their Leeuwin II voyage as a contrast from their everyday lives is the primary reason as to why and how it works. But when it is understood, as LW 6 says, that it is in so few places that young people are given any responsibility at all, certainly the idea of contrast makes sense as to why some adolescents cite this as a key feature of why and how their Leeuwin II adventure works for them.

Indeed, A5 and A8 consider the taking of responsibility in the way it increased their confidence and ability to work with others respectively. For them, they describe responsibility that comes with running a tall ship. A8 puts it this way:

*I think it is, you know it's like, helping to sail a ship and stuff I guess. Just like you get to, just get a job from that you have to sail a ship and you start to like really wake up to it ... like you've got a lot of responsibility to sail a ship.*

For A5 he says, "... I guess how to ... basically make sure that everyone is safe and that you get where you need to go." Given these trainees are both male and aged fourteen, when considering their gender and age it is possible there is significance for them that may not be replicated for others. Is experiencing responsibility more relevant for young males? Is it different for females and older trainees? Does it contrast with what they experience in their everyday lives?

In fact, as they continue to discuss how and why they think they experienced increased confidence, they recognise their experience of responsibility contrasting with their everyday lives. As A5 points out, “Most kids don’t get to do that sort of thing and the things that we did like adults would do ... like taking over the ship ... yeah just doing things that people like our age wouldn’t do every day.” A8 puts it like this, “... they give you more responsibility than what they would with a kid.”

This contrast also stands out for A13 aged seventeen who has Asperger’s syndrome, as she recognises that being away from home is key to her personal development in terms of responsibility. As she says:

*I felt more responsible like for the way that I acted. It’s, like cause you have been away from home like that far away from home and not being with your parents and that you get, like you do more stuff yourself ... and you learn to take better care of yourself and that.*

Thus, because their Leeuwin II experience contrasts with what is lacking in their everyday life, in this instance being given responsibility, for these adolescents specially as it might be emphasised by their experience in accord to their young age and in this case disability, that promotes their personal development, particularly in their increased sense of confidence, can indeed be considered in this light as to why and how their experience works.

One observation when understanding responsibility as contrast is that it is a real experience as opposed to someone superficially playing the game as Bourdieu says. This is something connected to the idea of communitas and is taken up in more detail below.

### 5.4.2 Workers

Understanding the nature of the field is important also. In other words, the internal process of social fields, wherever they are, and the relationships within them, as Bourdieu recognises, is an important part of understanding the influence on the personal development of young people. For adolescents participating in the Leeuwin II tall ship, this includes their relationship with all on board including the workers. In fact, according to the literature, there is evidence that points to the instructors playing a vital part in participant growth (McKenzie 2000), and adolescents – both female and male - agree with this.

The adolescent participants cite respect, trust, and support from workers contributing to how and why their voyage works. Standing out for A2's feeling more like an adult is because of the way crew/volunteers treated her. As she says, "More, they were more like your friends rather than being like a big authority figure telling you what to do." A11 agrees and says, "... just the way they like treated you and spoke to you and everything it just made you feel like an adult and everything." A8 contributes to this and says part of feeling more like an adult is "... cause they don't, they don't treat you like kids on there. They, they treat you like adults. They treat you like adults when you are on there, yeah." Others like A6 recognise the issue of trust. She understands why and how her Leeuwin II experience worked because crew/volunteers exhibit trust in trainees despite their age. She says, "Yeah ... leaders put a lot of trust in you to do things that, like they don't just say oh no you are too young or ... you wouldn't be able to do it, they give you the option to do it."

### 5.4.3 Support

While this can be understood in terms of adolescents being given responsibility, there is a relationship of support with workers they repeatedly

raise and thus appears important for them as well. Interestingly, this consolidates workers' views of support as adolescents describe the field. For A3 it is contributing to his increase in confidence. As he says:

*... like confident that I like even with like the heights and that. I didn't want to do that, climb the mast but I got there and I did it because ... of all the support that you get on the Leeuwin as well and ... just made as you say you feel a lot more confident when you get off there. I reckon ... Ah they treated us like, when you like when we had to ... furl like do plays and that on how to furl and unfurl sails and ... talking in front of people ... I mean all of that is part of the stuff like it just, I was shy to talk in front of people when I first went on there ... they pushed you like pushed you as far as you could go which that is a good thing because you learn your boundaries.*

A12 agrees it is the support from workers on board when he talks about how and why he felt a sense of achievement. As he says, "... probably just the sort of ... feedback you get from all your permanent crew and the captain and how you ... did and what they said to you and how they made you feel what you experienced."

#### **5.4.4 Acceptance**

As such, the emphasis is on what you can do and on less about what you can't. As LW9 says, it is based on what you can provide and that makes the support, especially for people who might feel a bit socially awkward, feel a lot more comfortable. It also demonstrates the philosophy of challenge by choice that workers speak about as part of the Leeuwin II environment. This is reflected in A13's comments as she says:

*Everyone accepts you for the way you were. They weren't like putting you down, teasing you – like at school I've often been teased and bullied and that*

*and on the Leeuwin and that, that doesn't happen. You don't get bullied or anything ... Yeah and just because everyone was like so, ah, I don't know how to say it, but ... just, they welcomed you into everything and you weren't, you didn't feel pressured to do something you didn't want to do.*

As indicated in the previous chapter this was raised by the Board member B2 and it is something that stands out for me on my voyage also. Perhaps when framing this in light of disability, what it suggests is that supportive relationships based on inclusion and acceptance as an equal can be considered a powerful enabler. What it does highlight is that the contrast provided by the Leeuwin II experience to everyday life is contributing to this awareness.

But also as a young person, A4 understands being accepted as an important part of how and why her Leeuwin II adventure works, too. Indeed, she is aware of this in light of her life back home as she explains:

*Well basically when you go out into society today, like she says with the media and everything, everyone has got their perceptions about you and it is just like you are characterised being one certain person based on your looks, upon what your behaviour and stuff like that and they don't realise there is so much more to you. But when you go on the Leeuwin it is like you are reforming, you are starting anew and you just get accepted because nobody knows anybody and it is like, I don't know how to describe it, just on there people seem to accept other people's faults because they themselves know that they have faults.*

Being accepted she explains is an important part of why and how the Leeuwin II field works because "... when you are accepted you are way more confident. You are not as afraid to put yourself out there."

### 5.4.5 Teamwork

Participating as a team member with the others contributing to the sailing of a tall ship like the Leeuwin II becomes part of the support, too. Simply relating to others on board the Leeuwin II tall ship is inevitable as A1 says, “Well you have to have a team. You can’t do it by yourself.” Indeed, as LW6 says, “nothing they really do they do on their own”.

McKenzie (2003) also recognises the relevance of teamwork. Couching it in terms of a group, she explains the relationships to interacting with other group members, the attitudes of other group members, relying on other group members and taking care of each other. The adolescent participants, base their reasons why and how adventure works on relationships of respect, trust and cooperation with others. A7 puts it like this:

*Like the 3 watches together I thought you know my team was the ... my watch there was 11 of us. Then as a group, all of us worked kind of under the crew. There is a real hierarchy on ship, it has always been like that so I thought that we worked as a team you know the ship has got to go somehow and I think that is how we did it with all of us working together you know. If it was just our watch then it would be pretty crappie having to do all night watch the whole time and stuff like that.*

When understood in terms of a team, these supportive relationships are also associated with developing skills like communication. As A7 puts it:

*And with knowing things yes I learnt lots of things and maybe not I don’t need to know how to roll a coil properly but, for to survive in an adult world but I do think that learning things of team and communications skills that they don’t teach you specifically but you learn that definitely yeah the Leeuwin helped me become like more of yep.*

However, rather than identifying teamwork as such, it is understood by the relationships with others that contributes to understanding how and why the Leeuwin II experience works. As well as support, these relationships are also described as cooperative, too. A14 explains:

*I would have to say the cooperation of teamwork that really built our skills – we became like, me and my watch, we really became a strong group. It kind of gives you much more people skills because you become really confident talking to complete strangers. And by the end of the boat, you are just friends with everyone. And, yeah, the cooperation really makes the difference.*

#### **5.4.6 Equality**

Relationships with everyone also sits with how some Leeuwin workers describe Leeuwin II environment as a levelling one where everyone is treated the same; an environment that promotes personal growth and development of new identities based on relationships with all on board. This is something indicated by A9 who believes she feels more like an adult because, “I was the youngest on my voyage and I think just being around other people who were older and some were adults and just seeing the way that they took it and the way that I took it.” As she explains, “... they acted with me like I was their age ... And, and I acted with them like I was their age as well.” What A9 says again reiterates the importance of social fields on development; like the idea of responsibility, it highlights how habitus can be reproduced in social fields.

#### **5.4.7 Peers**

The adolescent participants also identified relationships with their peers as being important. Simply, the physical environment of the Leeuwin II tall ship

encourages these relationships; a place where they have to cope with the elements and connect with and support each other to achieve the goal of sailing the ship. A1 describes it like this:

*I think it was all pretty tough and it sort of forced people to get together ... I remember there was that one night where we were all just freezing. It was pouring down with rain and everyone was huddling together that is how cold we were ... That creates changes.*

For A7 the supportive relationships meant being part of a group. She explains:

*... like you know especially in big groups. If someone else is going on about something deep and meaningful, you feel fine to do that. If you say something you are not sure of or if you want help with something then definitely they'll feel, yeah definitely you feel support and in a group.*

### **5.4.8 Contrast**

Clearly, there is a contrast of the relationships within the field of the Leeuwin II tall ship and those in everyday life when understanding how Bourdieu (1990) describes social fields as made up of power struggles based on self-interest and competition. On the Leeuwin II tall ship, rather than overt competition being emphasised, the competition is within the individual with cooperation required among the group members (Hattie et al 1997). This shifts how the game is played from internal competition and self-interest (Bourdieu 1990) to one witnessed by trainees to one of support and trust with everyone working together to sail a tall ship. Indeed, the Leeuwin II dismisses relations based on power struggles for domination over the field and creates no dividing lines distinguishing between those who belong and those who do not, a contrast to how fields are organised in everyday contemporary individualised life.

Supportive relationships on the Leeuwin II are therefore an important part of identity development and contribute to, in many ways as a contrast to their lived experience, explain why some adolescents identify why and how they think it influences their understanding and perceptions. Arguably, it is possible to consider these relationships replicated in everyday life, in social fields like educative institutions for example. But considering the influence of semi-autonomous fields, Bourdieu (1990) describes how social organisation relates in everyday life, particularly when considering it as an indirect or unconscious occurrence the replication is understood as difficult. In other words, the political, economic and media spheres that permeate Australian society make it difficult to provide what the Leeuwin II can in quite the same way being removed from this context. For trainees, this might relate to them sailing without their technology, for example, their iPhones, iPods and lap tops, as B2 and several Leeuwin II workers believe, is a contrast contributing to why and how the program works.

Thus as one of McKenzie's (2003) research participants says, the wilderness simply strips civilisation's artificial things away and as such, suggests the wilderness is a contrast from everyday life contributing to why and how adventure works. However, what is also implicated is that social fields like the Leeuwin II tall ship can be considered as *communitas*.

#### **5.4.9 Communitas**

In *communitas*, it is not just supporting each other that accompanies working in a team that makes the difference. Rather it is the meaningful engagement and participation of trainees experience in sailing it. Adolescents as they have described, are each valued members of the Leeuwin field; the ship cannot sail without their participation and working with each other. Thus, real participation

and reciprocal relationships are important considerations in understanding why and how adolescents experience personal growth. It promotes connection to others, fostering a sense of community; a sense of belonging that is believed by some as essential for the development of individuals (Lertzman 2002). This is beyond just a sense of community; as A4 explains, "... you would still be getting out and having fun and doing all that. But with the Leeuwin you are in such like short confines with people you really start to see them as more of a family rather than friends." As such the Leeuwin is a place removed from everyday life where, in this instance, trainees recognise and accept differences in each other but also realise they are in many ways the same and they tend to develop special relationships or as Turner (1969) describes, intense comradeship.

Indicators of autonomy such as, independent decisions, of learning individual skills, or of engaging in self-reflection are associated with this development. Stepping out of what they know is an opportunity for them to re-examine and explore their own values (Chapman, McPhee & Proudman 1995); it is seen to fulfil a basic human need that is not often met within today's society (Walsh & Golins 1976). Thus, according to the adolescent participants, the Leeuwin II tall ship as communitas can be considered as contrast when understanding why and how adventure works. As A10 says, "There are lots of different - you know the difference I think was not just the mateship. The, leadership skills you learnt as well as that. Everything combined just made the voyage absolutely fantastic." But it is also as he puts it:

*Yes, you put yourself in a situation a lot of the time you wont get to experience anywhere else, like there are not many places you can you know get to climb up the mast and get to do this and that especially if you know a lot about the ship ... and it's just a different view ... on, on life I guess.*

Thus what adolescents say contrasts their Leeuwin II experience to their everyday life and supports the idea that habitus being removed from it to a field outside it, like that of *communitas* can promote feelings of courage and audacity. It can contingently activate individual identity such as a sense of adulthood. Furthermore, it can also initiate and build on a sense of free agency underpinned by a confidence to act in this way as described by these adolescent participants.

As such, it supports the first stage – separation - of the rights of passage to adulthood as being an important part of their identity development. Leeuwin II Board members and workers talk about this in relation to trainees being taken out of their comfort zone. The adolescent participants also understand it in terms of it being a new experience in relation to the people on board, relationships and working together, and the environment itself. As A5 explains, the Leeuwin II tall ship is “... meeting new people ... adapting to an environment that you don’t really deal with everyday.”

#### **5.4.10 New: Relationships**

Interestingly, identifying new relationships as a key indicator of how and why they think their Leeuwin II adventure works is an overwhelmingly female response. Indeed, of the six adolescents who respond in this way, only one male adolescent includes this as his reason.

A4 understands it as being removed from pressures of her everyday life and meeting new people. As she says, “I think it was because of the time I just had exams and everything and I was spending a lot of my time studying whereas it gave me a chance to get out and meet new people and just have fun.” She also believes it is being able to form new relationships without your parents. Being separated from them as she says:

*I think so because it was a lot about leadership and working within a team so like you still had other people around you but they weren't necessarily your parents. So you got to break away from your parents and make more relationships outside of that bonding.*

Other adolescent trainees who believe the building of new relationships is why they experience change include A7. As she says, it is:

*Because there were lots of different people. One of the girls is going into year 12 but she is actually doing an apprenticeship and one other guy is doing extremely difficult subjects but I'm ... in the middle of doing, doing well and I have the confidence to know that it will be okay.*

For A2 her feeling more like an adult stems from relating to adults on board "... I don't know it just kind of, cause there was adults on there you as like you talk to each and every one, you just felt like a bit more mature and able to talk to older people ... whereas before I was a bit shy." A3 associates the new experience as a kind of holiday and also meeting new people. As he says, "It was like sort of a holiday and I felt more able to like, confront like strangers and talk to them because as you know, well I didn't know anyone on the Leeuwin at all. So yeah and yeah it was just, yeah, like I felt really refreshed when I got off because I met some new people ..." A9, also thinks her Leeuwin II experience worked because, "I think just working together with ... other people in a completely different environment other than like the school or the home ... and doing something that I had never done before. I think that's helped as well." But she continues to add that, it is because "... not knowing many, not knowing like most of the people." Finally, A6 also recognises new relationships as the reasons why and how her Leeuwin II experience works. As she says, "... first we have, like you make friends that you would never have thought of, people coming from everywhere." With further contemplation she adds, "I don't know

it is just people from such different like you have got kids from different like backgrounds.”

### 5.4.11 New: Activities and Challenge

Perhaps described as being on the flip side, of six adolescents who cite experiencing new activities and challenges as to why and how their Leeuwin II experience works, only one female responds this way. While not always referred to as a new experience, male trainees overwhelmingly raise issues of overcoming challenge, a sense of achievement and that it was fun. One-way to understand this is that they are dealing with tasks and novel problems and in this respect, it is something new that can be considered in relation to their development. A2 acknowledges this. He says:

*I have never really been on a boat before ... I think I had more confidence cause I was trying such different stuff ... like stuff that I had never done before and then I was able to do it ... And then to go out there, like, change directions of the sails and all that kind of stuff ... it's real like, cause I've never done it before.*

And A3 says, “I’ve achieved things, things that I didn’t think I could.” And A8 explains it as, “Oh at the start I was like oh crap. But, towards the end it was like, oh yeah, you know, it was pretty fun.” The female adolescent, A11 says:

*Probably just when I had to climb really high up to the main mast and stuff ... getting up there and just knowing that I can do it and everything ... I was really nervous and I was like, no I'm not going to get up there. Then when I got up there it was relief.*

When relating to a sense of adulthood, another male adolescent, A12, thinks why and how he felt more like an adult after his voyage is because, “... yeah it

really had a more bigger understanding of ... leadership and, how like, like ... I could do more things myself.” This he says, “I could make more choices that made me feel a lot more older than I really was.” This is also understood in terms of being away from parents as A14 recognises. He expresses this in a way that not only extends to his feeling more like an adult, but also feeling good about what he has achieved.

Interestingly, this ties up with the idea of adulthood being understood in terms of experience. As he says:

*You just, you kind of feel a little bit more experienced. Like you come back you just like I've just done almost a whole week on a boat without any parents. I was like you really do feel good about yourself. You do, you do feel older.*

#### **5.4.12 A Positive Experience**

Thus, the indication appears to be – although not mutually exclusive – females place emphasis on new interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships and males on the new challenge of the environment. Does this suggest that females develop through relationships and males through physical activity - challenge and achievement, which is a contrast to their everyday lives? Whatever the perspective – the people or the environment, their habitus being separated from their everyday lives, their comfort zones, away from the people they know, appears to contribute to their identity development. This is all while feeling safe with both female and male adolescents agreeing their Leeuwin II experience was fun. As many of them say: A2, “... it was lots of fun.” A3 says, “... well just great fun all up.” A4 puts it like this, “(Laughter) ... it was still fun because you got to challenge yourself against something rough than what a normal voyage would normally be.” A5 says, “... it was fun.” A6 expresses it

like this, "... it was good." A7 says, "Yeah, I had a great time ... it was extremely good and I suggest everyone to do it." A8 concurs by saying, "It's like it feels really good so, if anyone can get a chance to go then (Whistle.) Then they should." A10 says, "I thoroughly, I thoroughly enjoyed it." A13 says, "Oh, it was just so good. I would go on again, again, again and again".

### 5.4.13 Processing and Reflecting

Finally, another reason the adolescent participants explain as to why and how the Leeuwin II adventure works stems from their processing and reflections of the experience. As indicated previously LW6 believes it is an important part of trainee development because they grow when they think back and recall what they did when they went on their voyage. In essence, she believes that if they could do it on the ship, they can do other things in other parts of their lives like in school or the workforce. She refers to this as a reflective mechanism. It can also be understood as a comparative one. A6 agrees as this is how and why her experience works also. She explains it like this, "... if you are faced with like a situation like, it kind of puts more confidence into you because you think oh I can do this or I have done something that is like this".

When discussing adulthood, A10 believes his experience works because he reflects on his time on board as a part of genuinely achieving something, something he takes with him. Interestingly, again this supports the idea of *communitas* particularly in the way the experience is real. He says:

*You know like you go there and you look back on what you have completed, you feel this whole, I can't explain it. It's like you have done something that you are very proud of yourself. You know, it's not like ... not like anyone else must be proud of you, you are proud of what you completed by yourself. It is sort of you know a personal pat on the back as such.*

His comments certainly conjure up the idea of him being “inwardly transformed” if not “outwardly changed” (Turner 1992, pp. 48 – 49). He is certainly aware of how his experience on board impacts his everyday life.

## **5.5 Concluding Remarks**

Overwhelmingly, these adolescent trainees expressed that they feel more confident about themselves after their voyage on the Leeuwin II tall ship. This reflects literature that cites a sense of self, of which confidence is a part, as the most common personal development experienced by young people who participate in adventure programs. On the Leeuwin II tall ship, this appears to be regardless of their gender and age. They are more confident to take on challenges and make decisions in their everyday lives. Further, this sense of confidence accompanies their sense of accomplishment, as well as their sense of feeling free. Furthermore, feeling more like adults and their definition of adulthood as being more responsible and independent, feeling free to take control of their lives is an important and relevant development. What they indicate is their habitus is set free to do this. But as they still acknowledge legalities and their age as significant factors, they also consider the social as influencing their negotiation. Perhaps this is evidence of their personal development also, acting responsibly in an individualised society?

Indeed, responsibility is a reoccurring theme the adolescent participants raise in relation to them developing as adults and building their sense of confidence. In fact, they indicate that being given responsibility translates into them acting responsibly. Relationships based on teamwork, trust, respect, cooperation, acceptance, equality, and support contributing to their transformation. The question still not yet adequately answered is that would habitus respond the

same way if they were given more responsibility in their lives back home? Perhaps post adolescents will answer this in the next chapter?

Habitus being removed from what and who they know in their everyday lives to return back home does appear to be another part of it and highlights the role of *communitas* in their development. The suggestion is that overcoming challenge, gaining a sense of achievement and widening points of views by meeting and connecting to new people, and having a real experience in a new environment allows *habitus* to free itself and have control over actions. Regardless of personality type – being shy or outgoing – this is true for either adolescent trainee.

It is interesting that the responses of these participants experience of how they were treated by crew and volunteers on board the *Leeuwin II* is an androgynous one in that they perceive they are all treated the same, there are clear differences in gender perceptions. That is, females tend to consider new relationships being important while for males it is new activity they understand as to how and why their adventure on board works. This raises the debate surrounding it being a lingering sign of their *habitus* being determined by past experience, their socialisation or is it an innate quality of the different sexes? There are differing views according to the literature (for example, Hattie et al 1997, Culp 1998 & Humberstone 2000). In fact, this discourse reflects an on going conundrum of a nature – nurture debate, but one not being taken up in this book. Whatever the answer, the view being portrayed by the adolescent participants is that they have experienced personal development such as feeling more confident and more like an adult.

With curiosity aroused, wondering what themes will emerge from older trainees and if what they say will shed more light on what the adolescent participants raise, I now turn to the next chapter – the category of post adolescents.

