

MODULE BMPF7008
Workbased Learning Project

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TOTAL WORD COUNT: 7920

PROJECT PROPOSAL

PROPOSED TITLE

Exploring the use of Acceptance and Commitment Coaching to aid Music Performance Anxiety levels in a singer-instrumentalist transitioning to vocal-only performance.

CONTEXT

Music Performance Anxiety (MPA) is a psychological phenomenon impacting performers from all walks of life (Kenny, 2011). This study aims to explore how a shift in musical identity from singer-instrumentalist to vocal-only performance scenarios exacerbates MPA levels and how Acceptance and Commitment Coaching (ACC) may reduce MPA levels (Juncos & de Paiva e Pona, 2022).

JUSTIFICATION

This project seeks to fill gaps identified in current MPA literature (Brugués, 2019) and build on the successful application of ACC in the singing studio (Shaw et al., 2020; Mahoney et al., 2022). Current research has mostly explored MPA experiences with primary instruments; this project seeks to explore MPA levels of a multi-instrumentalist and asks why a singer-instrumentalist may respond differently to vocal-only situations. The project offers a realistic and useful application of the ACC model not yet investigated; not only is the scenario of an adult performer experiencing changes in musical identity a common occurrence but there are many singer-instrumentalists who wish to perform in vocal-only situations, potentially inhibited in doing so due to MPA.

THE INTENDED IMPACT

MPA has been noted as the most prevalent non-physical problem amongst musicians (Dempsey & Comeau, 2019). Whilst recent research urges a transdisciplinary approach to treatment and offers increased awareness and guidance for performers, treatments for problematic MPA still commonly rely on referral to psychotherapists or other clinical professionals (Mahony et al., 2022). This project intends to offer practical data helpful in informing in-lesson teaching models for MPA. It aims to build deeper understanding of why MPA may increase in vocal-only situations, and to help highlight differences in MPA experience between instrumentalists and vocalists. By incorporating ACC into the teaching studio, this project's objective is to aid those experiencing a transition in musical identity and to provide a support system for singer-instrumentalists who wish to pursue vocal-only performance.

THE OUTLINED INTENTION

I will undertake a literature review of MPA and the impact of ACC. The project is a mixed-method case study. The volunteer is an established student of mine, the project a direct

response to their MPA in exploring vocal-only performance. They will be provided with an information sheet detailing the research and consent will be gained (end of September 2022). The participant will take part in a semi-structured interview offering a qualitative insight into their experience, informing topics for further exploration (October 2022). They will be given established questionnaires offering quantitative insight into MPA levels and psychological flexibility; K-MPAI (Kenny, 2016), BAFT (Herzberg et al., 2012), VQ (Smout et al., 2014), MAAQ (Osborne et al., 2021), PHMLS (Cardaciotto et al., 2008). The participant will take part in six weekly ACC coaching sessions, following the recommendations of Hill and Oliver (2019) (October-November 2022). The above questionnaires will be repeated midway through the project (November 2022) and at the end of the project (December 2022) to quantitatively monitor MPA levels. Following six coaching sessions, the participant will take part in a semi-structured interview (beginning of December 2022). All data will be analysed to inform a written report and presentation by mid January; these will be made available to the participant.

THE ETHICS AND INSIDER RESEARCH

The Insider-Researcher studies topics to which they are already exposed (Saidin & Yaacob, 2016); MPA is not only a prevalent issue in my teaching studio but one I have personally experienced and witness as commonplace amongst my peers.

Trust is at the heart of insider-research (Unluer, 2012). An established rapport with my participant offers a relatable and natural flow of communication that will aid the ability to extract 'true' data (Breen, 2007). I am aware of the influential bias created by teacher-student relationships (Cain, 2012) where the participant may say what they believe I wish to hear. Semi-structured interviews aim to guide the conversation. The use of quantitative questionnaires throughout the process seeks to overcome assumptions and bias (Unluer, 2012). To respect confidentiality, the participant's personal details will be anonymised.

Participant mental health and wellbeing may be impacted negatively due to discussing experiences of anxiety. Information of helplines and further support will be provided. I recognise my role is 'coach' and not 'therapist/counsellor' and will uphold boundaries between them (Hart et al., 2001; Whitmore, 1992). I recognise the significance of providing a safe environment for the participant.

PERSONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Develop skills as a performance coach.
- Learn how to successfully implement ACC skills into teaching practice.
- Develop personal understanding of MPA and how to aid students effectively.

WORD COUNT: 739

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PROJECT REPORT

PROJECT TITLE

Acceptance and Commitment Coaching: aiding Music Performance Anxiety levels in a singer-instrumentalist transitioning to vocal-only performance.

INTRODUCTION

The psychological phenomenon of Music Performance Anxiety (MPA) is one of the most prevalent non-physical problems amongst performers (Dempsey & Comeau, 2019). Its occurrence in musicians of all ages and abilities is well established (Kenny, 2011). There is an increasing demand on music teachers to help students cope with anxieties (Norton, 2016) and a need to educate teachers in belief-enhancing pedagogical practices (Lewis et al., 2021). Despite an urge for a more transdisciplinary approach in treating MPA, referral to clinical professionals remains most commonly relied upon (Mahony et al., 2022). A promising treatment for MPA is Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT; Juncos & de Paiva e Pona, 2022). This project explores how Acceptance and Commitment Coaching (ACC), developed from ACT and delivered by a singing teacher, can aid MPA levels in singer-instrumentalists transitioning to vocal-only performance. It investigates the perceived experience of a student undergoing such a shift in their musical identity.

A gigging multi-instrumentalist and singing teacher trained in Musical Theatre and Popular Music, I regularly witness professional and amateur musicians alike who, although have a desire to perform in vocal-only situations, are inhibited in doing so. As a teacher, I believe it my responsibility to aid those with a desire to sing to achieve their goal and take it upon myself to deliver accessible ACC intervention for MPA.

This project was conceived by a 'popular music' vocal student; a singer-instrumentalist, their musical identity has shifted due to a limiting medical condition. Noting a vast increase in MPA in vocal-only situations, this project addresses their desire to break free from both anxiety and instruments. Building on previously successful applications of ACC in the singing studio (Shaw et al. 2020; Mahony et al., 2022), it seeks to offer another realistic application of ACC alongside an understanding of musical identity's role in MPA occurrence. It asks the questions:

- Why does vocal-only performance exacerbate MPA levels?
- Can a shift in musical identity be aided by a teacher delivering ACC?

The expected learning outcomes of the project include:

- Learning how to successfully implement ACC for MPA.
- Developing performance coach skillset.
- Expanding understanding of MPA and its occurrence in students and singer-instrumentalists.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following review examines existing research into MPA causes, predictors and symptoms. It considers the role musical identity plays in the occurrence of MPA and investigates the use of ACC as an accessible intervention.

MUSIC PERFORMANCE ANXIETY

MPA is defined as “marked and persistent anxious apprehension in musical performance in front of an audience, manifested through affective, cognitive, somatic, and behavioural responses” (Gonzalez et al., 2018, pg. 832). It is caused by various factors including genetics, environment, and personal experience (Kenny, 2011),

A vast scope of research has identified numerous predictive factors: solo performance (Papageorgi et al., 2011); trait anxiety (Kenny et al., 2004); maladaptive perfectionism (Dobos et al., 2018; Sinden, 1999); pessimism (Orejudo et al., 2017); introversion (Smith & Rickard, 2004); age of commencing musical training (Zarza-Alzugaray et al., 2018); fear of negative evaluation (Nicholson et al., 2014). One of the most influencing factors is self-efficacy (Orejudo et al., 2017; Ritchie & Williamon, 2012; Zelenak, 2020; Sinden, 1999; Gonzalez et al., 2018).

An important aspect of both identity (Maddux & Gosselin, 2012) and anxiety arousal (Bandura, 1989), self-efficacy is shown to be the greatest predictor of performance quality and achievement (Zimmerman et al., 1992; McPherson & McCormick, 2006). Comprising of one’s self-knowledge and belief in one’s abilities, including the ability to learn new things (Bandura, 1997), those with low self-efficacy exhibit avoidant behaviours and procrastination (Bucura, 2019), pessimism (Orejudo et al., 2017), depressive rumination (Bandura, 1989), and self-doubt (Jaap & Patrick, 2011). Studies indicate high self-efficacy successfully lowers MPA levels (McPherson & McCormick, 2006; Ritchie & Williamon, 2010; Papageorgi et al., 2011; Dempsey & Comeau, 2019) and a focus on positive past and positive future occurrences increases general self-efficacy towards goal achievement (Taylor & Wilson, 2019). Ritchie & Williamon (2007) found a link between musicians’ general self-efficacy and self-beliefs that were part of their wider musical identity. Musicians’ self-efficacy beliefs were also proven to be task specific and not general self-efficacy beliefs about musical skill.

Musical genre impacts MPA levels (Thomas & Nettleback, 2014); ‘popular’ musicians have been found to make more frequent references to fear of failure and to experience the highest anxiety levels immediately prior to performance (Welch et al., 2008). Although MPA has been shown to be independent of age or experience (Kenny, 2006; Creech et al., 2009), ‘popular’ musicians have displayed an increasing level of MPA with age in contrast to ‘classical’ musicians who experienced a lessening of MPA with age and experience (Nussek et al., 2015).

MPA symptoms can be experienced mild to severe (Kenny, 2011). To assess the level of MPA, Juncos and de Paiva e Pona (2018) suggest identifying four symptom

categories; *cognitive* (e.g. worry about mistakes), *physiological* (e.g. palpitations, sweating), *behavioural* (e.g. avoidance of new repertoire, avoiding solos), and *distress* (e.g. feeling ashamed about having MPA). The more categories of symptoms present, the more problematic the MPA. Severity of symptoms may depend on higher ego investment and/or evaluative threat being present (Yoshie et al., 2009); those who view performance as a challenge rather than threat report significantly less anxiety and higher self-confidence (Osborne & McPherson, 2018).

MPA & MUSICAL IDENTITY

There is a lack of studies examining MPA under specific circumstances (Brugués, 2019), including mature students and those undergoing changes in musical identity. Nevertheless, there is relevant literature concerning the impact of changing musical identity and self-concepts on self-esteem, performance quality, and musical aspiration. The ‘singer’ identity has also been considered.

Musical self-concepts are broadly defined as self-appraisals of one’s competence in music (Mawang et al. 2018), formed via experiences and influenced by external evaluations and casual beliefs about one’s performance and musical accomplishments (Vispoel, 1994). As children, musical identities are influenced by parental beliefs and values (Davidson & Borthwick, 2002). As adults, disruption to established musical identities can cause damage to self-worth (Oakland et al., 2017).

Musical identities are defined by established cultural roles and categories, e.g. “musician”, “teacher”, “guitarist”. MacDonald et al. (2017) declare these identities do not necessarily link to technical skill or proficiency but to social influences. Considered a ‘very personal act’ (Arneson, 2010), social influence has a vast impact on singing; there are significant positive correlations between singers’ worry about other’s opinions and a number of variables: somatic problems, depression, and performance anxiety (Sandgren, 2002). Solo vocal performances are reported as more anxiety inducing than ensemble experiences, however singing in instrumental ensembles induces greater MPA than in choral ensembles (Spahn et al., 2021; Ryan & Andrews, 2009), suggesting different singing identities are prone to differing levels of MPA.

In Oakland et al.’s (2012) study of eight opera singers forced to deal with loss of musical identity, successful transition involved releasing limiting identities; adopting broader sub-identities, such as “performer”, maintained self-esteem. An over-investment in a specific musical identity, e.g. ‘not a solo vocalist’, can lead to a performer viewing a failed, related musical task as a reflection that they personally have failed, thus increasing MPA and cementing limiting self-concepts (Juncos & de Paiva e Pona, 2022). Defusing from limiting musical self-concepts is possible via ACT, and has shown improved performance quality, less mistake-making, and increased personal enjoyment (Juncos & Markman, 2016; Juncos et al., 2014).

Musical self-concept integrates perceptions about one's potential (Morin et al., 2016). The greater the discrepancy between present musical identity and ideal future musical self-concepts, the higher the MPA levels - thus, musicians experience a less positive connection to their current musical selves (Castiglione et al., 2018). Discrepancies between present and future identities for vocalists may be considered more heightened than other musicians; comparisons to impossible standards of edited recordings and idolised singers are suggested to exacerbate vocal anxiety (Barefield, 2012).

A strong sense of musical identity contributes to a person's sense of vitality, agency, belonging, and meaning (Ruud, 2017). Re-working self-concept and strengthening identity via music in response to trauma and disability has been found to increase overall feelings of mastery and agency, and challenge perspectives of 'spoiled identity' (Magee, 2017). Research also suggests positive correlations between musical self-concept and both music accomplishments (Schmidt, 2005) and musical creativity (Laycock, 1992). Investigating self-concept and singing ability, Demorest et al. (2016) found musical self-concept was a significant predictor for singing performance; stronger musical self-concepts resulted in better pitch accuracy. The singing self-concept has been shown to be distinct from other musical self-concepts, and it is encouraged to consider each musical self-concept independently (Vispoel, 1994; Mawang et al., 2018).

Singers differ in personality and practice behaviour compared to other musicians (Heller et al., 2015). It is unclear if the prevalence and experience of MPA also differs as there is a lack of comparative investigation into MPA experiences of differing instrumentalists (Brugués, 2019). Student vocalists are regarded as highly under-represented in both musical practice research (Heller et al., 2015) and MPA treatment research (Juncos et al., 2017). Nevertheless, Arneson (2010) suggests MPA is 'particularly pernicious' for singers due to requiring a high level of expertise in various skills, 'from fine motor coordination, attention, and memory, to aesthetic and interpretive skills'. This correlates with Brugués (2019) hypothesis that those who play instruments requiring a higher level of mastery suffer from higher levels of MPA.

ACCEPTANCE & COMMITMENT COACHING

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) is efficacious in enhancing athletic performance (Gross et al., 2016; Josefsson et al., 2019) and promising in enhancing performance in musicians with MPA (Juncos & de Paiva e Pona, 2022). When used in a non-clinical setting, ACT is called ACC. There is a growing consensus that non-clinical practitioners trained in ACC may be capable of delivering effective psychological intervention (Hall et al., 2018). The use of ACT as a non-clinical treatment by non-expert practitioners has been seen to create significant improvements in psychological flexibility (Zarling et al., 2017, 2020; Godfrey et al., 2020).

Four known studies concern ACC delivered by singing teachers (de Paiva e Pona, 2016; Mahony et al., 2022; Shaw et al., 2020; Swain & Bodkin-Allen, 2017). Results portray singing teachers successfully aided participants with MPA to achieve important performance goals. This included participants that don't identify as 'singers' or 'musicians' but as early childhood teachers (Swain & Bodkin-Allen, 2017), suggesting ACC's potential for assisting shifts in musical identity. They also noted improved psychological flexibility in students with high MPA (Shaw et al., 2020; Mahony et al., 2022), improved observer-rated performance quality (Mahony et al., 2022), changes in symptoms and shame (Shaw et al., 2020; Mahony et al., 2022), and clinically significant results achieved in half the time of previous applications of ACT with vocalists (Juncos et al., 2017). The promising evidence of ACC as a treatment for MPA suggests teachers may be able to help students with MPA in a 'significant and relatively quick way' via non-clinical treatment.

METHODS & METHODOLOGY

Coaching research is encouraged to combine objectivism's scientific integrity and subjectivism's practical utility (Stober et al., 2006). The social phenomena of MPA can be considered both objective and subjective in nature; we are the result of 'real' experiences alongside our personal interpretations of said experiences. Such 'a mixture of the two' grounds this project in a pragmatic paradigm (Feilzer, 2010). Founded through the participant identifying a 'need for change', it is pragmatic in being problem-centred and oriented in real world practice (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). This stance also links this project with Action Research (Bell & Waters, 2018); a collaborative approach integrating the participant into every stage, inclusive of participant perspective, and placing the practitioner's learning at its core (Rowley, 2003). Utilising Mixed Method Research (MMR), the case study allowed for qualitative exploration of the experience of MPA and musical identity shift but also the rigour of quantitative data analysis to observe effectiveness of ACC. A key component of MMR, triangulation combines counteracting methods to increase validity and improve reliability (O'Hanlon, 2018; Bashir et al., 2008). This project attempts triangulation through use of literature review, semi-structured interviews, and questionnaire data.

THE PARTICIPANT

The participant is a student (aged 65) with lifelong performance history as a multi-instrumentalist in popular music bands, the study a response to their wish to cope with the anxiety of singing without an instrument and their desire return to live performance as a vocalist. This itself is a response to severe Dupuytren's Contracture hindering instrumental ability. Attending private vocal lessons for approximately a year, the involvement of an existing teacher-student relationship offers potential for implicit bias (Cain, 2012; Staats, 2015); the participant may assume the researcher already knows information due to

relational intimacy (Saidin & Yaacob, 2016) whilst the researcher may make assumptions based on prior knowledge of the participant (Breen, 2007). The student may conform to what they believe the teacher wants to hear (Cain, 2012). Interview bias was challenged via external supervision and checking interpretations with the participant. Repetition of questionnaires at different stages of the project also aimed to lessen student-teacher bias.

THE RESEARCHER

Student-teacher dynamic offers an ability to naturally interact and extract 'true' data from the participant (Unluer, 2012). The adoption of practitioner-led enquiry further allows to implement and develop knowledge of MPA and ACC. Previous training included two online ACC courses with Dr. David Juncos (DJ), alongside studying ACT postgraduate content. DJ is a clinical and performance psychologist with specific expertise in ACT to treat MPA and has conducted various studies into ACT for MPA, including two studies with ACC trained singing teachers (Shaw et al., 2020; Mahony et al., 2022). DJ provided initial guidance for the project and assessed the practitioner's ability to engage the ACC model. The researcher received three hours of supervision from DJ, following the first coaching session, the third coaching session, and the final following the fifth coaching session.

QUALITATIVE

Subjective examining of participant experience in a qualitative manner is necessary to understand personal and specific experience of MPA and identity change. ACC's focus on how language and thinking influence human behaviour (Hills & Oliver, 2019) links to the use of interview to reveal meaningful aspects of phenomena (Crowther et al., 2007).

Two face-to-face interviews were conducted at the researcher's home teaching studio. A semi-structured interview method allowed for 'individual variation' (Hoepfl, 1997) and the 'discovery or elaboration of information' the participant felt important to disclose (Gill et al., 2008). The first interview, lasting 80 mins, gathered background information and views on musical identity, anxiety, coaching and goals; this highlighted key themes and allowed a strong foundation for coaching sessions. The second interview, lasting approximately two hours, took place a week after the final coaching session. Revisiting goals, identity, anxiety and coaching to assess change, it also explored views on ACC and understanding of the 'hexaflex' model.

In Vivo and Values coding were selected for suitability to the research method (interview) and topic (coaching). Longitudinal coding was used to assess changes in themes that may have occurred.

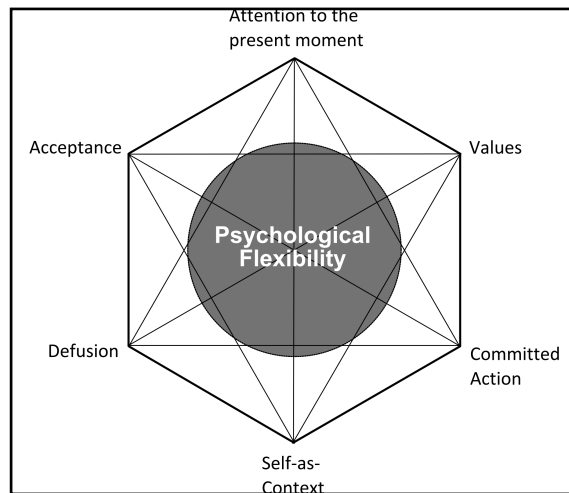


Figure 1. 'The ACT Hexaflex with the 6 core processes' (Batink et al., 2016)

QUANTITATIVE

Drawing on similar studies (Mahony et al. 2022; Shaw et al., 2020), five established questionnaires were selected, all with good or excellent internal consistency, to measure all six elements of the ACC process (see figure 1) and symptoms of MPA.

- ◆ *Believability in Anxious Feelings and Thoughts* (see appendix 4; BAFT; Herzberg et al., 2012) assessed cognitive defusion. Higher BAFT scores reflect higher levels of fusion with anxious thoughts and feelings. It has excellent internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.90$).
- ◆ *Musician's Acceptance and Action Questionnaire* (see appendix 6; MAAQ; Osborne et al., 2021) assessed psychological flexibility. Higher scores indicate higher levels of inflexibility. It shows good internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.84$).
- ◆ *Philadelphia Mindfulness Scale* (see appendix 7; PHLMS; Cardaciotto et al., 2008) assessed mindfulness via two sub-scales; Awareness sub-scale measures a person's monitoring of internal and external experiences, whilst Acceptance subscale measures the participant's non-judgemental attitude towards experiences. Both Awareness ($\alpha = 0.75$) and Acceptance ($\alpha = 0.82$) sub-scales show good internal consistency.
- ◆ *Valuing Questionnaire* (see appendix 8; VQ; Smout et al., 2014) assessed how consistently an individual has been living with self-determined values. Values are defined as personal principles someone has chosen to guide their behaviour. The VQ has two sub-scales; Progress and Obstruction. Scores indicating psychological health are high on the Progress sub-scale and low on the Obstruction sub-scale.
- ◆ *K-MPAI* assessed symptoms and discomfort (see appendix 5; Kenny, 2016). Higher scores indicate greater anxiety and distress; Kenny suggests a score of 105 or higher indicates clinically significant MPA. It has an excellent internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.94$).

All questionnaires were administered three times; prior to the first coaching session, after the third coaching session, after the final coaching session.

Regarding validity and reliability, self-report bias must be considered. The participant may not give answers that are fully correct due to uncertainty or seeking to make a good impression (American Psychological Association, 2023). Furthermore, the vast majority of MPA and ACC studies utilising the above questionnaires concern young adult participants; growing evidence depicts age may affect self-report bias, with older and younger respondents being differentially affected by questionnaire features (Knäuper et al., 2016). Older adults respond differently to psychometric scales with complex content and negatively worded items, and are more comfortable expressing their experiences verbally (Fox et al., 2007). Thus, older adults participants may provide less accurate and less complete self-reports, and self-report data may differ to verbal data.

COACHING

As in Shaw et al. (2020) and Mahoney et al. (2022), Hill and Oliver's (2019) six-session outline for coaches was adopted. Reference was also made to Juncos and de Paiva e Pona's (2022) book *ACT for Musicians*. The six sessions targeted six areas of the ACT Hexaflex (see figure 1); *mindfulness, acceptance, defusion, sense of self, values, committed action*.

ACT exercises from Juncos & de Paiva e Pona (2022) were used, including "Scanning a picture frame" to promote mindfulness, "Thought Labelling" for defusion, "Sky & Clouds" for self-as-context. These were alongside exercises from personal experience: - 'grounding' and 'breath journey' exercises for mindfulness - and Hill & Oliver's (2019) suggested exercises such as the "values matrix", and the "physicalising exercise" for acceptance. In between sessions, the participant was encouraged to practice exercises at home and was given regular homework to further strengthen psychological flexibility.

Coaching sessions aimed to treat MPA exclusively and did not target personal matters, ensuring the researcher did not function as a psychotherapist or counsellor. The participant was made aware of available counselling resources. The six sessions were conducted in person at a home teaching studio, an environment familiar to the participant. The participant chose to keep a journal throughout the course of ACC to reflect and continue working on what was explored. Sessions aimed to be 60mins, but allowed for extra time and lasted on average 80mins. Sessions were audio recorded, allowing personal reflection on the coaching and to collect notes for supervision. All data was securely stored on a personal, password protected computer.

FINDINGS

The following explores the relationship between MPA and singing and the impact of ACC on MPA levels. It considers what constitutes a 'singer' identity, the role of ACC in strengthening musical identity via self-efficacy and sense of agency, and the use of instruments as barriers. It concludes with a discussion of participant feedback.

MPA & SINGING: “I want to do it but...”

Prior to ACC, the participant was seen to express problematic MPA. Initial data highlighted predictive factors of MPA: trait anxiety (“*I will always be an anxious person*”), introversion (“*not an extrovert*”), and pessimism (“*I always concentrate on the negative because that’s just me*”). In spite of years of performance as a singer-instrumentalist, the participant commented vocal performance “*never got more comfortable*”, suggesting MPA has always been present, unaffected by experience and age. This reflects the well-established view that MPA is independent of age or experience (Kenny 2006; Creech et al., 2009).

Applying the symptom categories presented by Juncos and de Paiva e Pona (2018), the participant initially showed presence of all four. *Cognitively*, ‘mistakes’ were a reoccurring theme, not only in interviews but throughout the six coaching sessions. *Physiologically*, he expressed ‘tense muscles’ and the affect fronting a band had on his stomach. *Behaviourally*, the participant presented a reoccurring theme of ‘avoidance’ - avoidance of being late to gigs, ‘making excuses’, avoiding challenging repertoire, avoiding eye contact - and the use of coping mechanisms such as sitting down to sing in rehearsals in order to avoid performance. Regarding *distress* around MPA, the initial interview witnessed a high amount of negative self-talk and shame, e.g. “*what’s the matter with me?*”. Presence of all four symptom categories implies problematic levels of MPA (Juncos & de Paiva e Pona, 2018). This is cohesive with the initial K-MPAI score of 155; a score over 105 marked the participant, prior to ACC, as suffering from problematic MPA (Kenny, 2016).

Measure	Data pre-ACC	Data mid-ACC	Data post-ACC	Normative Mean (SD)
BAFT	68	76	38*	50.1 (16.88)
MAAQ	32	36	39	29.6 (4.74)
PHLMS	-	-	-	-
Awareness	42	39	39	36.65 (4.93)
Acceptance	39	31	40	30.19 (5.84)
VQ	-	-	-	-
Progress	10	11	22	17.2 (6.44)
Obstruction	19	23	11	12.1 (6.88)
K-MPAI-R	155	154	102	93.5 (39.1)

Table 1. Data for self-report measures from pre-ACC intervention, mid-ACC intervention (after three weekly sessions), and post-ACC intervention (after six weekly sessions), with normative means with standard deviations.

Recognising a predisposition for anxiety, it may be considered the participant's MPA was not specifically related to the act of singing. However, anecdotes of instrument-only performances regularly themed 'enjoyment', 'fun' and a lack of 'responsibility' to engage audiences:

"It was down to whoever was singing, you know, I could mess about behind him."

This suggests a higher ego-investment and responsibility with the role of 'singer'. As explored by Yoshie et al. (2009), severity of MPA symptoms may depend on higher ego-investment. Potentially, the participant considers singing a more responsible and important task in a band of popular musicians, offering reasoning of why vocal performance exacerbated MPA levels.

Vocal performances with and without an instrument were both reflected on as "scary" and "terrifying", implying singing as the threatening performance scenario. Osborne & McPherson's study (2018) found those who view performance as a threat reported significantly more anxiety and lower self-confidence. Therefore, musicians who perceive vocal performance as a threat will experience heightened MPA levels in vocal performance scenarios.

When asked if he considered himself a perfectionist - an identified predictor of MPA occurrence (Dobos et al., 2018) - the participant responded yes, but only vocally:

"Because that's the main thing that people would hear. If you went off key it's very noticeable as opposed to playing guitar, you know where all the notes are. You're not going to go wrong as long as it's in tune, because you play a D chord you know it's going to be a D chord."

The above suggests the participant believes vocal performance riskier than playing instruments due to a lack of control over performance outcomes, corresponding with Arneson's (2010) view that MPA is 'particularly pernicious' for singers due to requiring a high level of mastery. Lacking a sense of control further suggests the participant lacked strong identity as a 'singer'; as seen by Ruud (2017) and Magee (2017), strong musical identity contributes to feelings of mastery and agency. Ergo, vocal-only performance may exacerbate MPA levels in singer-instrumentalists due to a lack of identity as a singer.

In summary, vocal-only performance can be suggested to exacerbate MPA levels due to a heightened sense of responsibility to engage the audience, higher ego-investment and a presence of vocal-specific perfectionism.

THE IMPACT OF ACC ON MPA LEVELS

Drawing on similar studies (Shaw et al., 2020; Mahony et al., 2022), it was hypothesised positive change would occur in participant MPA levels and psychological flexibility following six sessions of ACC. Quantitative data was expected to decline in experiences of fusion, physiological and psychological anxiety, and increase in mindfulness and commitment to values. An increase in psychological flexibility was expected to create a flexible sense of self, aiding in musical identity transition.

Self-report measures collected following three weekly ACC coaching sessions paint a surprisingly different picture than expected. The apparent incline of cognitive fusion and obstruction to values, decrease in awareness and acceptance, and lack of reliable change across all measures including the KMPAI suggested ACC was not improving symptoms of MPA but that symptoms were worsening. This was something both researcher and supervisor found vastly conflicting with subjective observations of progress made by the participant. The participant openly indicated to experiencing a week of emotional and personal upheaval and offered his expectation it would impact on self-report data. In the post-ACC interview, the participant further expressed an awareness of potential self-report bias: “sometimes you read a question and you think, mmm, I’ll just sugarcoat that one”. Nevertheless, despite difficulty in answering some items, he highlighted an attempt to be honest and distance himself from such bias throughout the project.

Measure	RCI (pre ACC - mid)	RCI (mid ACC -post)	RCI (pre ACC -post)
BAFT	0.47	-2.25*	-1.78
MAAQ	0.52	0.39	0.92
PHLMS	-	-	-
Awareness	-0.61	0	-0.61
Acceptance	-1.37	-1.54	0.17
VQ	-	-	-
Progress	0.16	1.71	1.86
Obstruction	0.58	-1.74	-1.16
K-MPAI-R	-0.03	-1.33	-1.36

Table 2. Reliable change indexes (RCIs) for self-report measures from 0 ACC sessions to 3 weekly ACC sessions, 3 weekly ACC sessions to 6 weekly ACC Sessions, and 0 ACC sessions to 6 weekly ACC sessions. (RCI > 1.96 or < -1.96 = reliable)

In comparison to previous studies where clinically significant results and reliable change index (RCI) portrayed ACC as effective on lowering MPA levels both mid and post intervention (Mahony et al., 2022; Shaw et al., 2020), a clinically significant result and

reliable change occurred on only one measure; the post-ACC BAFT score saw a significant decline in cognitive fusion, dropping from 76 to 38. Possible reasoning for significant results occurring in this measure only could be that coaching was approached with a specific aim to defuse the participant from old, limiting identities. As witnessed by Oakland et al. (2012), the releasing of old identities is key in forming new musical self-concepts. Exercises that promoted defusion from limiting 'self-stories', such as 'Thought Labelling' (Juncos & de Paiva e Pona, 2022) were thought by the participant as the most effective ACC tools provided. On reflection, he commented they allowed him to 'separate from thoughts and see them for what they are'.

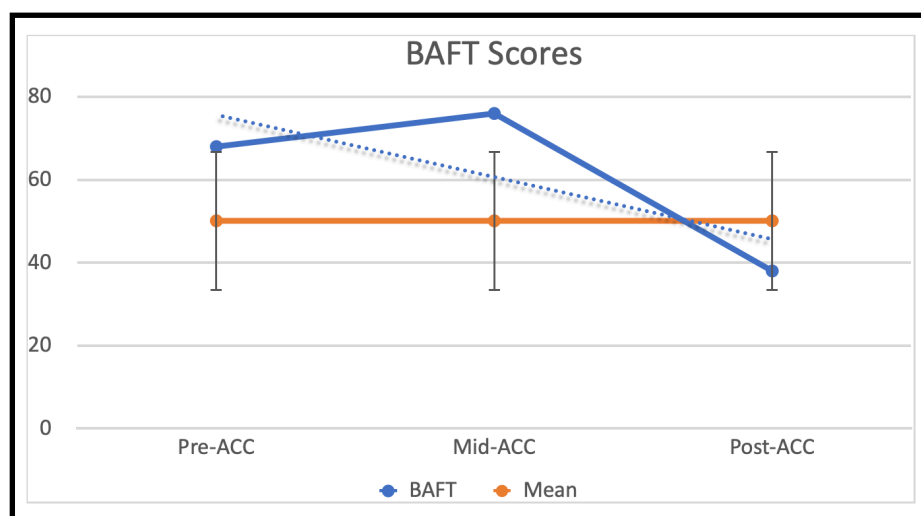


Fig. 2 A chart depicting BAFT scores pre, mid, and post six ACC coaching sessions. Normative mean, Standard Deviations (SD) range, and trend is also depicted.

The least reliable measure was the PHLMS. Both Awareness and Acceptance sub-scales remained above average. Lack of change and insignificance in data could be construed as a result of the participant showing a sense of awareness and acceptance from the outset. However, in contrast to other measures and interview data following predicted trends of ACC's impact, PHLMS data noted no change in the Awareness sub-scale, implying a negative correlation between ACC and mindfulness. Therefore, this measure could be considered biased.

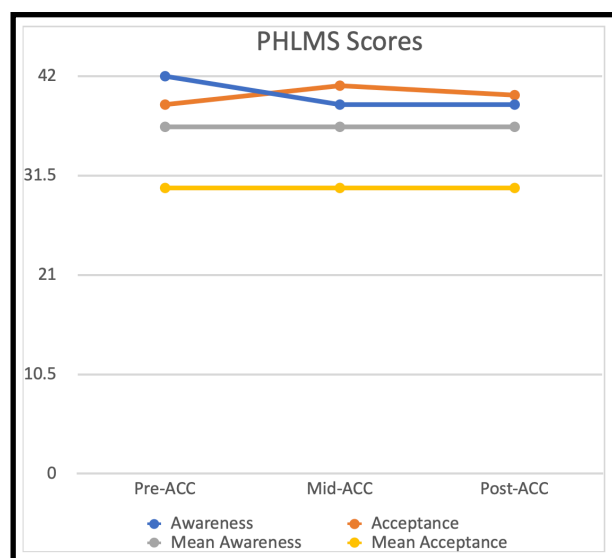


Fig. 3. A chart depicting PHLMS Awareness and Acceptance sub-scale scores pre, mid, and post six ACC coaching sessions. Normative mean is also depicted.

Regardless of the lack of RCI and clinically significant results and in spite of the PHLMS Awareness sub-scale, visually it can be seen that ACC aided improvements to MPA levels in a singer-instrumentalist undergoing a transition to vocal-only performance.

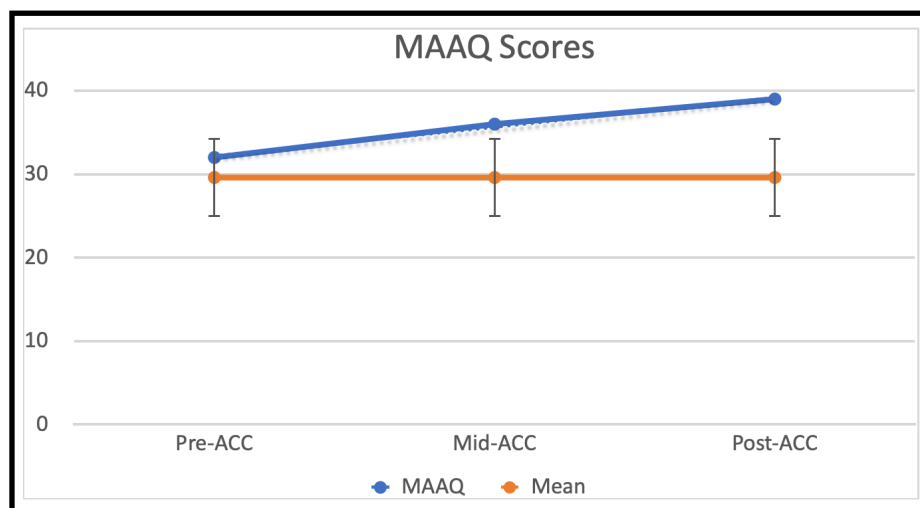


Fig. 4 A chart depicting MAAQ scores pre, mid, and post six ACC coaching sessions. Normative mean, Standard Deviations (SD) range, and trend is also depicted.

Results indicate a lessening of fusion with anxious thoughts and feelings, increased psychological flexibility, improved non-judgemental attitude towards experiences, and consistency in living within self-determined values. Interview data post-ACC strengthens these claims:

“It’s made me less anxious and more confident about what I could achieve and will achieve”

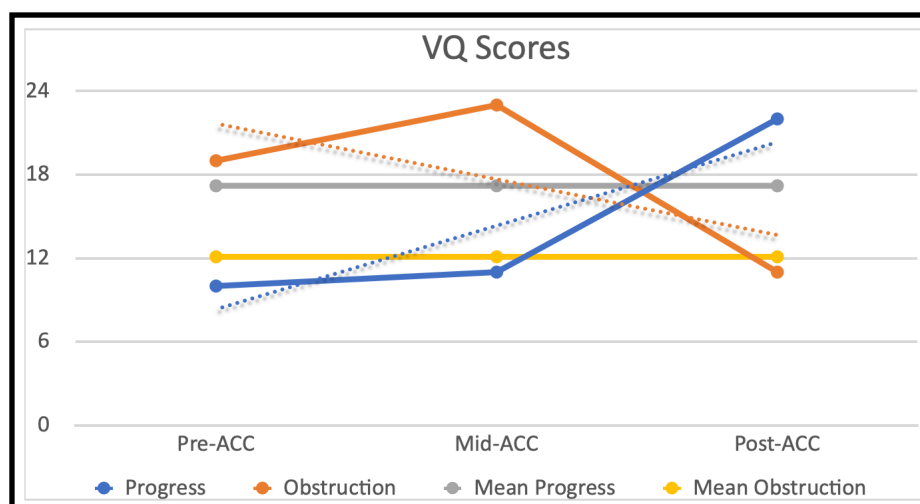


Fig. 5. A chart depicting VQ sub-scale scores for Progress and Obstruction pre, mid, and post six ACC coaching sessions. Normative means and trends are also depicted.

Overall symptoms and discomfort associated with MPA were seen to drop, with the participant falling from a problematic KMPAI rating of 155 to 102 (Mean: 93.5). According to Kenny (2016), this now places the participant under the threshold for problematic MPA. Such data was also present in the final interview, with the participant noting a fall from ‘high’ MPA on commencing ACC to experiencing ‘low to medium’ MPA on completing the six sessions.

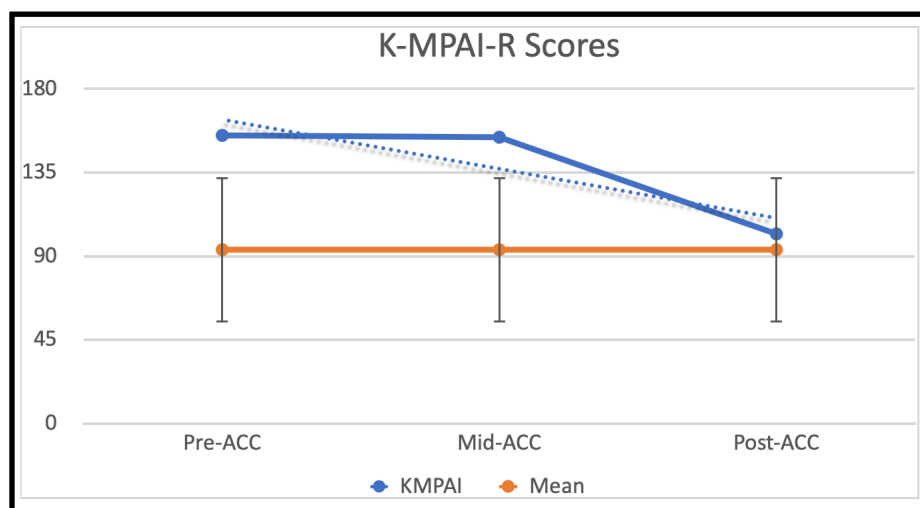


Fig. 6 A chart depicting KMPAI-R scores pre, mid, and post six ACC coaching sessions. Normative mean, Standard Deviations (SD) range, and trend is also depicted.

FORMING A SINGER'S IDENTITY: “getting rid of the old me”

Linked to social influence and established cultural expectations (MacDonald et al., 2017), expectations around musical identities may exacerbate MPA levels. This may be true with popular musicians who feel ‘forced’ into taking on the role of providing lead vocals in a band, as experienced by the participant:

“I was a guitarist that had to do the singing because nobody else wanted to take it on.”

Expectancy and responsibility as a lead vocalist was met with the fear of negative evaluation from both the audience and peers. The participant suggests popular music vocalists specifically may worry of negative external judgement amongst popular musicians:

“It was never considered that a vocalist was a proper musician”

Whilst singers have been seen to differ to other musicians in personality and practice behaviour (Heller et al., 2015), such a perspective of vocalists as ‘different’ could uniquely intensify singer’s MPA, alongside creating reluctance with singer-instrumentalists to identify as a ‘vocalist’.

Pre-ACC, the participant continuously perceived discrepancy between his present musical identity and his ideal musical identity of ‘vocalist’, repeatedly referring to ‘never considering’ himself a singer despite years of vocal performance. The participant identified a singer as being required to portray *presence*, *movement*, *extroversion*, *creativity*, and *proficiency* - he also depicted a strong belief that his current musical identity lacked in each of these qualities:

“I don’t feel I’ve got that”

“Probably not possible”

“Standing here singing not knowing what to do”

“I’d have to have a lot more confidence to do that”

Castiglione et al. (2018) showed greater discrepancy between present and ideal musical identities assumed higher the MPA levels, thus suggesting that if ACC could help the participant defuse from old identities, his experience of MPA around vocal-only performance would lessen. ACC can be seen to have aided in establishing identified qualities of a ‘vocalist’. Post ACC, presence was expressed as a frequently occurring, ‘more immediate thing’, with the participant getting ‘caught up in the moment’. Pre-ACC, movement was especially a concern and the participant had a fervent desire to ‘not be hung up on his body’, regarding it as a key issue he wished to explore through coaching. Following the ACC intervention, movement was deemed to be *“a natural thing”*:

“I found myself moving my hands and doing different things with them”

“I’m being emotive with my hands and doing things I wouldn’t really normally do”

Interview coding also showed a shift in self-labelled musical identity:

Identity labels Pre - ACC	Identity labels Post - ACC
<i>“Loosely termed musician”</i>	<i>“A learning vocalist”</i>
<i>“The guy playing guitar but used to sing”</i>	<i>“A skilled vocalist”</i>
<i>“A guitarist that had to do the singing”</i>	<i>“Vocalist”</i>

The above shift in identity was met with an ability to view things from a ‘musicians mindset’ rather than personal mindset. This allowed the participant to consider himself ‘more professional’, addressing the lacking sense of *proficiency* and going as far as to label himself *“a skilled vocalist”*. Additionally, the participant comments on the impact ACC had on vocal *creativity*. Prior to ACC, he ‘sung songs straight’. A lessening of MPA allowed him to no longer avoid mistakes or show concern of being overheard, allowing freedom to explore his

unique voice. Consistent with Laycock (1992), a positive correlation between musical self-concept and musical creativity can be seen. ACC, in turn, created a stronger sense of musical identity:

“It makes me sound like myself [...] and that’s another transition for me because I never knew what I sounded like”

Such feedback implies ACC as not only impacting MPA levels but successfully aiding transition to vocal-only performance and a ‘singer’ identity.

THE ROLE OF SELF-BELEIF: “I CAN be a vocalist”

Research confirmed the well-established relationship between self-efficacy and MPA levels (e.g. McPherson & McCormick, 2006; Ritchie & Williamon, 2010). ACC was seen to increase the participant’s self belief that he can be a ‘vocalist’, coinciding with lowered performance anxiety (as seen via KMPAI data).

Prior to coaching, the participant exhibited behaviours and attitudes related to low self-efficacy. Depressive rumination (Bandura, 1989) was not only concerned with negative self-judgement but with doubt over positive external judgement: *“Was it that good?”*. Values coding displayed a belief in lacking the confidence or chance to perform as a singer and an attitude of unworthiness. However, the participant did offer high self-efficacy beliefs concerning other instruments - *“I can play”, “I know my stuff”* - and belief he was improving in vocal skill: *“Vocally now I’ve got confidence”*. This divide in confidence over musicianship, skill and performance depicts the task-specific nature of musical self-efficacy.

Following the six sessions, the participant remarked on change in self-evaluation and worthiness to be a ‘vocalist’:

“There were songs that I wouldn’t attempt because of the old thoughts. No, you cannot sing that. But now it’s like, yes, you can sing it.”

“I’ve always felt that there’s loads of people out there that are much better than I am (...) but now it’s like, I can compete.”

The participant showed higher awareness of negative self-talk and rumination: *“I used to beat myself up about it”, “I would have dwelled on that”*. A further change concerned time perspective; post-ACC, the participant showed more focus on positive future and positive past events in comparison to negative past rumination. As seen in Taylor & Wilson’s (2019) research, such a shift in focus increases self-efficacy. Whilst there was evidence of valuing enjoyment and enjoying vocal performance prior to ACC, on completing coaching a

heightened sense of enjoyment and excitement surrounding future performance was commented to replace feelings of anxiety:

"I'm more excited about it than apprehensive about it"

This coincided with a desire and enjoyment in tackling challenging repertoire, in comparison to past avoidance:

"I enjoy singing those [songs] now because before I shied away from them"

Through the application of ACT, increased personal enjoyment has been linked to successful defusion from limiting musical self-concepts (Juncos & Markman, 2016; Juncos et al., 2014). The evident increase in enjoyment and decrease in avoidance stresses self-efficacy's importance in establishing musical identity, and highlights ACC's success in enhancing self-belief in new musical roles, as summarised by the participant:

"I think it heightened my degree of what I think of myself and what I can do, rather than shy away from different things. Not because I couldn't do them, [but] because I didn't want to attempt them. It's kind of a subtle difference."

A SENSE OF AGENCY

Increased psychological flexibility achieved through ACC appears to have strengthened the participant's musical identity as a 'vocalist'. Consistent with Ruud (2017) and Magee (2017), a stronger sense of musical identity correlated with the participant experiencing heightened sense of agency.

ACC has been seen to offer the participant a sense of control over progressing towards values and goals. He notes he is more 'discerning' and 'specific' about performance opportunities he would like as a vocalist *"rather than just getting into a band for the sake of it"*. Previous to ACC, there was hesitancy in taking action towards being a 'vocalist': he *"almost applied"* but was *"not quite ready"*. Remarkably, during the six-weeks of ACC, the participant already spoke of committed actions, parallel with improved VQ Progress data and previous suggestions of ACC delivered by a teacher providing a 'significant and quick way' to overcome MPA (Mahony et al., 2022; Shaw et al., 2020):

- *"actively looking to join a band"*
- Taking things *"seriously"*
- Engaging in *"small steps"* to return to singing in public (e.g. enquiring about karaoke)
- Not using instruments at band rehearsal: *"I wasn't actually playing things on some songs, I was just vocalising!"*

Furthermore, the participant expressed ACC's help in balancing emotion during vocal performance, allowing him to *"put enough emotion into it without falling apart."* Fundamentally, ACC appears to have offered a sense of control over the participant's MPA:

"Now I know what to do should things start faltering halfway through."

Post-ACC, anxiety is expressed in a positive light, as something that can be used 'in a positive sense' to create enthusiasm and presence. The participant commented on ability to 'manipulate' his anxiety and expressed improved change in distress over having MPA:

"Some anxiety I know will not go, but I think some of it is good."

Such a change is again reflective of results in both Shaw et al.'s (2020) and Mahony et al.'s (2022) studies. The above implies ACC delivered by a teacher successfully helps to strengthen musical identity, creating a sense of agency and positivity towards MPA.

"THE BREAKDOWN OF BARRIERS"

Addressing the question of why vocal-only performance exacerbates MPA levels in singer-instrumentalists, enquires were made about the presence of an instrument to aid anxiety around vocal performance.

The use of an instrument was noted as offering *"a barrier between you and an audience"*. The term 'barrier' implies the participant felt the need to protect himself from external judgement rather than engage with his audience during vocal performances. This confirms the significant positive correlations existing between singers' worry about others opinions and performance anxiety (Sandgren, 2002). Both prior to and post ACC, the participant commented on singing without an instrument as feeling *'naked'*, suggesting a singer-instrumentalist can feel vulnerable in vocal performances without the presence of an instrument. An instrument was used to address anxiety around movement during vocal performances, even when not actively playing the instrument; the use of an unplugged guitar provided *"something to do with your hands"*, *"something to do with your body"*. Overall, the presence of an instrument was thought by the participant to 'massively' alleviate MPA related to vocal performance.

It could be argued the provision of *"something else to do"* does not offer relief from anxiety but increases vocal-performance MPA via avoidance of 'singer' attributes; movement, audience engagement, artistic presence. Indeed, the relief the instrument brought to MPA around vocal performance was met with the theme of instruments as *'detrimental'* to vocal performance. Specifically, the participant addressed the impact 'splitting himself in two' had on the effort and presence required for 'a great vocal

performance', remarking that *"with an instrument it's difficult because you concentrate on two things all the time"*. Regarding presence, he commented *"playing an instrument takes away from that"*. Throughout the project, the participant expressed an adamant desire to perform without an instrument in the hopes of enhanced vocal performance.

As seen in the change of language below, ACC appears to have successfully created a shift in perspective over the need for an instrument 'barrier'.

PRE ACC	POST ACC
<i>"Always with. I was never without."</i>	<i>"I'd certainly choose without now."</i>
<i>"I'm tired of this lump"</i>	<i>"You don't need to have a prop."</i>
<i>"A heavy lump"</i>	<i>"You forget that there isn't anything in front of you"</i>
<i>"I've never done anything without it."</i>	

This correlates with the apparent shift in musical identity of 'a guitarist who sings' to 'vocalist', alongside decreased MPA levels seen in self-report data. The participant commented on ACC's success at creating a *"breakdown of barriers"*:

"It's made me feel that I don't need something in front of me, like a security blanket."

The participant further commented on successful change in habits that had already taken place within the six weeks, such as an ability and desire to 'put down the bass as much as possible'.

On overcoming the use of an instrumental barrier, the participant commented on the potential of replacing an instrument with other 'barriers', such as a music stand. As was the presence of an instrument linked with movement-related anxiety, the participant suggested a music stand would aid his anxiety of forgetting lyrics. However, highlighting his increased commitment to living with self-determined values (as depicted in VQ Progress sub-scale), the participant termed the presence of a stand as a 'backward step':

"I'd like to get to a stage where I don't have to rely on having things in front of me"

THOUGHTS ON ACC

The participant expressed that ACC had been an *'extremely successful'* but *'very intense'* process. He commented being *'shocked'* by growing awareness of thoughts and values. Despite self-report data not indicating clinically significant results, the participant's improved MPA levels and strengthened musical identity can be seen.

Although no attempt was made by the researcher to apply ACC to issues outside of MPA, the participant repeatedly commented on ACC indirectly impacting his personal life:

“It’s made me a more confident person, music aside.”

“It’s made things clearer [...] and I mean this in a personal way as well now.”

“I’ve used this in my personal life as well because I found it very useful, extremely useful experience.”

MPA is one of various issues that sees ACC as a promising intervention; others include general anxiety, mood problems, stress, and burn out (Hill & Oliver, 2019) - thus, as a result of increased psychological flexibility as seen in the participant’s overall improvements in self-report measures, such an indirect impact on other areas of the participant’s life can be expected.

Despite primarily used for research, the participant found opening and closing interviews useful; the initial allowed personal exploration and an easing of anxiety about ‘*what to expect*’ whilst the ending interview allowed for reviewing what he had learnt and how he had progressed. The participant recommended that eight sessions rather than six would be more suitable for future ACC intervention with a similar participant due finding it an ‘*intense*’ experience and wishing to deeper explore some areas of the Hexaflex. Eight sessions lies between Shaw et al.’s (2020) and Mahony et al.’s (2022) use of six and Juncos et al.’s (2017) use of twelve. The participant suggested two extra sessions may ‘*depend on the person*’ and should be judged on an individual level. He expressed a future wish to ‘*review things*’ and recap his use of ACC tools as he continues to take on more vocal performance challenges, “*...just to know that this is working.*”

The participant showed a commitment and acceptance in ACC as an ongoing process of personal development alongside a confidence in lasting impact; despite it being a ‘*new way of thinking*’ he assumed it would become ‘*second nature*’. Considering trends of self-report data and previous studies of ACC on singer’s MPA that used three-month follow ups after ACC intervention (Mahony et al., 2022; Shaw et al., 2020), it can be predicted that continuing implementation of ACC tools will continue to build psychological flexibility and, therefore, a stronger musical identity and lessening of MPA.

CONCLUSION

Through incorporating ACC into the singing studio, this project aimed to lessen MPA experienced by singer-instrumentalists transitioning to vocal-only performance. It set out to answer two questions: why vocal-only performance exacerbates MPA levels in multi-instrumentalists, and the effectiveness of ACC in aiding a shift in musical identity.

Vocal performance was found to exacerbate MPA levels due to heightened sense of responsibility and perfectionism. A ‘*singer*’ identity was thought to require presence,

movement, creativity, extroversion, and proficiency; if the musician feels lacking in these areas they may not identify themselves as singers and therefore experience MPA around vocal performance. The use of instruments as a barrier between performer and audience can be a relief to anxiety but also a hindrance to vocal performance.

In contrast to previous studies (Mahony et al., 2022; Shaw et al., 2020), quantitative data did not depict ACC as significantly effective on MPA. Clinically significant results were only found in BAFT scores, implying a relationship between fusion and musical self-concepts (Juncos & Markman, 2016; Juncos et al., 2014). However, when combined with qualitative, experiential data, all data implies ACC delivered by a teacher was 'extremely successful' in diminishing vocal-related MPA. Data discrepancies between this study and previous studies using ACT and ACC for MPA may be due to self-report bias, including the older age of the participant (Knäuper et al., 2016), with previous studies concerning young adults. Overall, data confirmed decreased MPA, increased psychological flexibility, alongside acceptance and commitment to a new musical identity. Hence, ACC delivered by a singing teacher is seen to aid MPA in singer-instrumentalists transitioning to vocal-only performance.

Further investigation may wish to consider comparative study of singer-instrumentalists transitioning to vocal-only performance with participants of different ages, gender and skill level. To provide a more comprehensive view of the impact of musical identity on MPA, assessment of musical self-concept alongside MPA and ACC measures could be considered, such as the use of a self-report measure such as Vispoel's Musical Self Perception Index (1994).

Continuing professional development in the area of coaching, I felt placing my participant at the project's heart was essential to strengthening my practice (Harding, 2009). The vast scope of reading required to understand a specific MPA experience was overwhelming, as was working in MMR. Whilst aware the most valuable outcome of practitioner-led enquiry may not be the research itself but personal development (Costley, 2006), I found it disheartening receiving quantitative data that did not correlate with observations made in sessions. Such results led to doubt and scrutiny of actions. However, the ability gained as an ACT practitioner is irreplaceable. Furthermore, the confidence placed in my abilities via my supervisor and participant has been extremely rewarding. I have found the role of performance coach to be a natural, welcoming fit and look forward to exploring it further.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically. A researcher may not be covered by the University's insurance if ethical approval has not been obtained prior to commencement.

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**: "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications". As such this covers activities undertaken by members of staff, postgraduate research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the "principal researcher".

Ethical approval is not required for routine audits, performance reviews, quality assurance studies, testing within normal educational requirements, and literary or artistic criticism.

Please read the notes for guidance before completing ALL sections of the form.

This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity. Please see Checklist for details of process for different categories of application.

Delete the Guidance Notes at the end of the form BEFORE submitting your application

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:	ALICIA CORAL GIRLING BALLARD			
2	Tick all boxes which apply:	Member of staff:	☐	Honorary research fellow:	☐
3	Undergraduate Student	☐	Taught Postgraduate Student	☒	Postgraduate Research Student
4	Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre:	WAPPAR			
5	Campus:	Carmarthen			
6	E-mail address:	ACGBALLARD@HOTMAIL.CO.UK			
7	Contact Telephone Number:	07866-483115			
For students:					
8	Student Number:	2118385			
9	Programme of Study:	MA in Professional Practice (Voice Pedagogy)			
10	Director of Studies/ Supervisor:	Debbie Winter/Louise Emanuel			

SECTION B: Approval for Research Activity

1	Has the research activity received approval in principle? (please check the Guidance Notes as to the appropriate approval process for different levels of research by different categories of individual)	YES	☒	NO	☐
					Date
2	If Yes, please indicate source of approval (and date where known): Approval in principle must be obtained from the relevant source prior to seeking ethical approval	Research Degrees Committee	☐		
3		Institute Research Committee	☐		
4		Other (write in) WAPPAR Ethics Board Representative	☒		

SECTION C: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials

	Please list the core ethical guidance documents that have been referred to during the completion of this form (including any discipline-specific codes of research ethics, and also any specific ethical guidance relating to the proposed methodology). Please tick to confirm that your research proposal adheres to these codes and guidelines.	
1	UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice	X
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy	X
3		☐

SECTION D: External Collaborative Research Activity

1	Does the research activity involve collaborators outside of the University?	YES	☐	NO	☒
2	If Yes, please provide the name of the external organisation and name and contact details for the main contact person and confirmation this person has consented to their personal data being shared as part of this collaboration.				
3	Institution				
4	Contact person name				
5	Contact person e-mail address				
6	Has this individual consented to sharing their details on this form?	YES	☐	NO	☐

7	Are you in receipt of a KESS scholarship?		YES	☐	NO	☐
8	Is your research externally funded		YES	☐	NO	☐
9	Are you specifically employed to undertake this research in either a paid or voluntary capacity?	Voluntary	YES	☐	NO	☐
10		Employed	YES	☐	NO	☐
11	Is the research being undertaken within an existing UWTSD Athrofa Professional Learning Partnership (APLP)	If YES then the permission question below does not need to be answered.	YES	☐	NO	☐
12	Permission to undertake the research has been provided by the partner organisation	(If YES attach copy) If NO the application cannot continue	YES	☐	NO	☐

Where research activity is carried out in collaboration with an external organisation

13	Does this organisation have its own ethics approval system?	YES	☐	NO	☐
14	If Yes, please attach a copy of any final approval (or interim approval) from the organisation				

SECTION E: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	The Instrument Comfort Blanket: using ACC to aid MPA levels in a singer-instrumentalist in vocal-only performance situations.		
2	Proposed start date:	19/09/22	Proposed end date:	05/01/23
3	Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words) Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the three points below: • <i>Purpose of Research Activity</i> • <i>Proposed Research Question</i> • <i>Aims of Research Activity</i> • <i>Objectives of Research Activity</i> Demonstrate, briefly, how <u>Existing Research</u> has informed the proposed activity and explain • <i>What the research activity will add to the body of knowledge</i> • <i>How it addresses an area of importance.</i>			

4	Purpose of Research Activity To understand the impact of Music Performance Anxiety (MPA) on singer-instrumentalists when placed in vocal-only situations, and how a voice teacher can incorporate Acceptance and Commitment Coaching (ACC) to overcome such an obstacle. So far, studies incorporating ACC with vocalists have done so from a purely performance coach stance. This project uses an established teacher-student relationship, offering potential to develop a teaching model that incorporates ACC; the use of interview will identify specific areas of the ACC model that need addressing. Furthermore, the use of ACC not with young students but an adult, more experienced performer undergoing changes in performance identity is a highly realistic and useful application of the model seemingly not yet investigated. (this box should expand as you type)
5	Research Question How can performance coaching, utilising ACC, aid singer-instrumentalists who suffer from MPA in vocal-only situations? Why is there such an increase in MPA levels when in vocal-only situations? (this box should expand as you type)
6	Aims of Research Activity To develop personal skills as a performance coach and ability to aid MPA in clients. To develop my knowledge and application of ACC. To understand the increase in MPA for singer-instrumentalists in vocal-only situations. To offer practical data that can help inform potential in-lesson teaching models for MPA. (this box should expand as you type)
7	Objectives of Research Activity • To examine relevant MPA, ACC and performance coaching information. • To question the participant on differing MPA experiences with and without an instrument. • To identify key areas of MPA experience in the participant using the ACC Hexaflex model, and receiving more specific survey data. • To utilise the Hexaflex model to structure a set amount of coaching sessions with the participant, selecting only required elements of the model. • To evaluate the impact of ACC on MPA in an adult undergoing a change in performance identity. To increase my personal proficiency in using ACC to help manage and improve symptoms of client MPA (this box should expand as you type)
8	Proposed methods (maximum 600 words) Provide a brief summary of all the methods that may be used in the research activity, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed.

9	My research, concerning one participant, will be a case study. I will use a Mixed Method Research model, allowing for triangulation. Combining quantitative and qualitative methods will offer valuable data and insight both from a coaching and teacher perspective but also statistical data into how teachers can incorporate ACC into their practice, and the potential to develop the research into a teaching model. 1) Survey: quantitative data will be collected pre-, post- and during the project at different stages using established MPA and ACT surveys and questionnaires such as the KMPA-I. Participant results from different surveys will be compared, as will they be compared with data from the surveys' sources. 2) Semi-Structured Interview: qualitative data will be collected from the participant at the beginning of the project, to identify the suitable areas of the ACC model for session work. Further interviews will be used to monitor the participant's experience. Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. 3) Diary: my personal autoethnographic account will be drawn from journals and recollections of the coaching sessions. This data will take into account any observations of my own teaching/coaching experience and inform my personal practice. An ethnographic account observing the impact of the sessions on the participant may be included in these journals, with such data informing future ACC sessions in the project and an ongoing evolution of the research. Using such a reflective approach, I will ask for feedback from the participant throughout the project, making adjustments as we continue. 4) Observation: visual recordings of musical performance may be utilised at different stages of the project to help identify improvements in outward appearing MPA symptoms during vocal-only situations. (this box should expand as you type)
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10	Location of research activity Identify all locations where research activity will take place.
11	Research activity will take place in my private teaching studio in Essex. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
12	Research activity outside of the UK If research activity will take place overseas, you are responsible for ensuring that local ethical considerations are complied with and that the relevant permissions are sought. Specify any local guidelines (e.g. from local professional associations/ learned societies/universities) that exist and whether these involve any ethical stipulations beyond those usual in the UK (provide details of any licenses or permissions required). Also specify whether there are any specific ethical issues raised by the local context in which the research activity is taking place, for example, particular cultural and/or legal sensitivities or vulnerabilities of participants.
13	N/A <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

14	Use of documentation not in the public domain: Are any documents NOT publicly available?	NO	☒
		YES	☐
15	If Yes, please provide details here of how you will gain access to specific documentation that is not in the public domain and that this is in accordance with prevailing data protection law of the country in question and England and Wales. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

SECTION F: Scope of Research Activity

1	Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
2	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☒	☐
3	Use of interviews?	☒	☐
4	Use of diaries?	☒	☐
5	Participant observation with their knowledge?	☒	☐
6	Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☒
7	Use of video or audio recording?	☒	☐
8	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☒
9	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☒

10	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☐
11	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	X
12	Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	X
13	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	X
14	Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	X
15	Other primary data collection methods, please explain in this box For example, 'focus groups'. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) in this box and tick the accompany box.	☐	X
16	Details of any other primary data collection method: (this box should expand as you type)		

If NO to every question, then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and **may** be exempt from **some** of the following sections (please refer to Guidance Notes).

If YES to any question, then no research activity should be undertaken until full ethical approval has been obtained.

SECTION G: Intended Participants

1	Who are the intended participants:	YES	NO
2	Students or staff at the University?	☐	X
3	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	X	☐
4	Vulnerable adults?	☐	X
5	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☐	X
6	Prisoners?	☐	X
7	Young offenders?	☐	X
8	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	X
9	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	X
10	Others (please identify specifically any group who may be unable to give consent) please indicate here and tick the appropriate box.	☐	X
11	Other – please indicate here: (this box should expand as you type)		

12	Participant numbers and source Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?	
13	How many participants are expected?	I expect one participant to take part in my study. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
14	Who will the participants be?	The participant will be an adult student of mine, over the age of 18, with a lifetime of performance experience. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
15	How will you identify the participants?	They will be identified by openly expressing an interest in my research and wanting to take part after I mention my plans to conduct research as part of my studies. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

16	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
17	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	X	☐	☐
18	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	X	☐	☐
19	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	X	☐	☐
20	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	X	☐	☐
21	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	X	☐	☐
22	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	X	☐	☐
23	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	X	☐	☐
24	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	X	☐	☐
25	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	X	☐	☐
26	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			
27	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			

28	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
29	Will participants be paid?	☐	X	☐
30	Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?	X	☐	☐
31	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	X	☐
32	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	X	☐
33	If YES to any question, please provide full details			

34	I will be using my iMAC computer, USB microphone and recording software to record interviews. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
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SECTION H: Anticipated Risks

1	Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researchers and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them. If you have completed a full risk assessment (for example as required by a laboratory, or external research collaborator) you may append that to this form.		
2	Full risk assessment completed and appended?	Yes	☐
		No	X
3	Risks to participants For example: emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information		
4	Risk to Participant: I will be recording interviews and transcribing the data so there will be risk of disclosing sensitive personal data. There may be risk of emotional distress with the participant recalling stressful circumstances of performance anxiety. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	<i>How will you mitigate the Risk to Participant</i> I will mitigate this risk by ensuring all data is stored on my password protected desktop computer of which only I have access. I will not record or store interview data on my mobile device but on the desktop computer with personal access only. I will be supervised by an expert in ACC. I will inform the participant pre-interview of questions/research content and ask beforehand if there is any topic or area they wish to avoid. I will respect my role as teacher/coach and not as therapist, and not step over therapeutic boundaries. Other anxiety and trauma related issues may arise during the project. Where this occurs, the participant will be referred to relevant support groups such as BAPAM and Musicians Union. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	

5	If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) or issues likely to disclose information requiring further action (e.g. criminal activity), give details of the procedures to deal with these issues, including any support/advice (e.g. helpline numbers) to be offered to participants. Note that where applicable, consent procedures should make it clear that if something potentially or actually illegal is discovered in the course of a project, it may need to be disclosed to the proper authorities		
	Interviews may include the triggering of sensitive or upsetting topics due to the topic of anxiety. If required, I will follow the steps I have learnt as a Mental Health First Aider, provide helpline numbers such as Mind, and also offer avenues for further support such as BAPAM. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
6	Risks to investigator For example: personal safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest		
	Risk to Investigator: There may be a risk of emotional distress through the triggering memories of anxiety experienced by the investigator. There may be a risk of overwhelm and confusion in how to approach coaching sessions. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How will you mitigate the Risk to Investigator: I am aware of potential emotional distress and will seek support if needed. I will consult with my expert supervisor on ACC if such obstacles occur. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	
7	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection		
	Risk to University: The risk to the University will be of data protection. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How will you mitigate the Risk to University: This will be mitigated by all day being stored securely on a password protected desktop computer, accessed only by myself. Participant name and data will be coded to ensure anonymity. All data will be destroyed at the end of the project. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	

8	Disclosure and Barring Service			
9	If the research activity involves children or vulnerable adults, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate must be obtained before any contact with such participants.	YES	NO	N/A
10	Does your research require you to hold a current DBS Certificate?	☐	☒	☐

SECTION I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

1	Feedback What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?
	I will provide my participant the opportunity to receive and feedback on transcriptions and summaries of questionnaire/survey analysis, and offer them a copy of my final report.
2	Informed consent Describe the arrangements to inform potential participants, before providing consent, of what is involved in participating. Describe the arrangements for participants to provide full consent before data collection begins. If gaining consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation.
	I will inform the participant prior to gaining formal consent via paper form, providing details of time involvement, information I am seeking, the purpose of the study and what it entails for them. I will provide a formal consent form in person for them to sign, with each of us maintaining a copy. Questionnaire/surveys will receive approval from supervisor. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
3	Confidentiality / Anonymity Set out how anonymity of participants and confidentiality will be ensured in any outputs. If anonymity is not being offered, explain why this is the case.
	I will not name the participant. Any data will be stored in a password secured file on my computer. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

SECTION J: Data Protection and Storage

In completing this section refer to the University's Research Data Management Policy and the extensive resources on the University's Research Data Management web pages (<http://uwtسد.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/>).

1	Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 "GDPR" and the Data Protection Act 2018 "DPA")?	YES	NO
	"Personal data" means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person.	X	☐

2	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
	Personal data collected includes the name of the participant, their signed consent forms, audio/visual recordings made of interviews and potential performance observations, and transcriptions of these recordings. Video data may be collected of the participant performing at different stages of the research project to evaluate the impact of performance coaching on the quality of their performance. As part of the research process, coaching sessions and interviews may bring up mental, social, and cultural identifiers of the participant due to the nature of coaching. (this box should expand as you type)		
3	Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	YES	NO
	“Special category data” means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subjects’ – (a) racial or ethnic origin, (b) political opinions, (c) religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, (d) membership of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992), (e) physical or mental health or condition, (f) sexual life, (g) genetics, (h) biometric data (as used for ID purposes),	X	☐
4	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
	Research may collect sensitive personal data concerning the mental health of the participant due to the study’s concern with identifying and improving anxiety in musical performance. (this box should expand as you type)		

5	Will the research activity involve storing personal data and/or special category data on one of the following:	YES	NO
6	Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?	X	☐
7	University computers?	☐	X
8	Private company computers?	☐	X
9	Home or other personal computers?	X	☐
10	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	X	☐
11	“Cloud” storage or websites?	☐	X
12	Other – specify:	☐	X

13	For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected, data confidentiality, including details of password protection, encryption, anonymisation and pseudonymisation:		
	All data will be kept in password protected computer storage on my personal laptop which will not be shared. Audio/visual data will be transcribed and would be shown to participants to check accuracy of reporting. Any USB sticks used to store or transfer data will be password protected. The participant will be given a coded name to ensure anonymity. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
14	All Data Storage		
15	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO
16	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	X	☐
17	Sharing of data with others at the University?	X	☐
18	Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	X
19	Export of data outside the European Union or importing of data from outside the UK?	X	☐
20	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☐	X
21	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☐	X
22	Use of data management system?	☐	X
23	Data archiving?	☐	X
24	If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the GDPR and DPA (and/or any international equivalent):		
	All data will be encrypted and kept in password protected files on my personal computer which will not be shared. Any USB sticks used to store or transfer data will be password protected. All data transfers will be encrypted and password protected. The participant will be given a unique identifier to ensure confidentiality. The data will be stored until the completion of the project and then deleted. In accordance with the DPA2018, participants will have the right to ask to see what data is held relating to them, and this data will be deleted immediately if the participant requests this, in which case the data will not be used in the project. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
25	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	Myself, the principal researcher, and my supervisor guiding my research. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
26	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:		

	Only myself, the principal researcher. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
27	Give details of data storage arrangements, including security measures in place to protect the data, where data will be stored, how long for, and in what form. Will data be archived – if so how and if not why not.		
	All data will be encrypted and kept in password protected file storage on my personal MAC laptop which will not be shared. Any USB sticks used to store or transfer data will be password protected, and will be reformatted at the end of the project in order to destroy the data. The data will be stored until the completion of the project and then deleted. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
28	Please indicate if your data will be stored in the UWTSD Research Data Repository (see https://researchdata.uwtsd.ac.uk/). If so please explain. <i>(Most relevant to academic staff)</i>		
	N/A <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
29	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	YES	X
		NO	☐
30	Confirm that you are aware that you need to keep all data until after your research has completed or the end of your funding	YES	X
		NO	☐

SECTION K: Declaration

31	The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants. In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice which is published on the website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/		
	Signature of applicant:	Alicia Ballard	Date: 08/08/22

For STUDENT Submissions:

32	Director of Studies/ Supervisor:	Louise Emanuel	Date: 13-9-22
33	Signature:	Louise Emanuel	

For STAFF Submissions:

34	Academic Director/ Assistant Dean:		Date:
35	Signature:		

Checklist: Please complete the checklist below to ensure that you have completed the form according to the guidelines and attached any required documentation:

☒	I have read the guidance notes supplied before completing the form.
☒	I have completed ALL RELEVANT sections of the form in full.
☒	I confirm that the research activity has received approval in principle
☐	I have attached a copy of final/interim approval from external organisation (where appropriate)
☐	I have attached a full risk assessment (and have NOT completed Section H of this form) (where appropriate) ONLY TICK IF YOU HAVE ATTACHED A FULL RISK ASSESSMENT
☒	I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice.
☒	I understand that before commencing data collection all documents aimed at respondents (including information sheets, consent forms, questionnaires, interview schedules etc.) must be confirmed by the DoS/Supervisor, module tutor or Academic Director.
☒	I have deleted the guidance notes before submitting the PG2 for consideration

RESEARCH STUDENTS AND STAFF ONLY

All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk , with the title 'Ethical Approval' followed by your name.

You will be informed of the outcome of your claim by email; therefore it is important that you check your University and personal email accounts regularly.

STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.

This form is available electronically from the Academic Office web pages: <https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>

Application Process

All staff research projects and all research students must submit the Ethical Approval Form to the **University Research Ethics Committee** via the Academic Office (pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk). Staff research directly in relation to personal study for taught undergraduate or Masters programmes should be submitted via the Institute procedures explained below.

Taught masters and taught undergraduate research Ethical Approval Forms are considered **within Institutes**. Institutes will provide details of the specific processes for this. Where the Ethical issues within any single ethical application are of particular concern the Institute will refer these to the University Research Ethics Committee. Any student activity that involves the collection of primary data needs to undergo Ethical approval, this includes assignment work as well as dissertations.

APPENDIX 2: SELF PERMISSION LETTER



A. B. Singing
17th August 2022

Dear UWTSD,

RE: The Instrument Comfort Blanket: using ACC to aid MPA levels in a singer-instrumentalist in vocal-only performance situations.

I confirm that I approve of the research proposed into 'acceptance and commitment coaching for singer-instrumentalists' to be carried out by Alicia Ballard, of A. B. Singing during private lessons between September 2022 and December 2022.

Kind Regards,

Alicia Ballard

APPENDIX 3

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

This document sets out to inform the participant about the purpose and nature of the study that they are agreeing to partake in.

As part of her post-graduate certificate with the Voice Study Centre and University of Wales Trinity St David, specialising in Performance Coaching, the researcher is undertaking a Work-Based Research Project. This is intended to grow skills that the researcher can apply to her practice as a singing teacher and vocal coach, and to help her development into performance coaching.

The project looks to research the application and effect of Acceptance and Commitment Coaching on Music Performance Anxiety (MPA), specifically MPA experienced by vocalist-instrumentalists who encounter an increase in MPA when in vocal-only performance scenarios. As a vocalist-instrumentalist herself who knows and works with many vocalist-instrumentalist who experience the impact of MPA in vocal-only situations, the researcher aims to develop her ability to aid musician mental health and performance outcomes. The aim of the research is to investigate if and why there is such an increase with and without an instrument, and how such an increase in MPA can be improved via coaching. The researcher hopes that the participant will see improvements in their MPA levels.

The researcher intends to offer a course of six weekly coaching sessions to the participant on a day and time to suit both the participant and researcher. Prior to the coaching sessions, the researcher will interview the participant and will provide questionnaires and surveys for the participant to fill out. This will help gauge MPA levels and specific areas of interest to the research. Further questionnaires and surveys will also be provided to be filled out during and after the course of six coaching sessions. The researcher will ask the participant for a follow-up interview following the six coaching sessions to gather qualitative feedback on the experience.

The researcher will take every step to safeguard the participant and any sensitive information. The researcher adopts the role of coach, not counsellor or therapist; a coach supports a person to achieve a specific personal or professional goal by providing training and guidance, while counselling is a process where a counsellor provides assistance and guidance to a person in resolving personal or psychological problems. The researcher will avoid probing and delving into sensitive and personal topics, and the participant has every right to decline to talk about a particular topic or answer particular questions. The researcher intends to be in contact with an expert in Acceptance and Commitment Coaching for supervision throughout the course.

APPENDIX 3

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

- I.....voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interviews and surveys within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had multiple opportunities to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that participation involves an interview asking about my history of performance and anxiety, regular questionnaires and surveys, six coaching sessions, and a follow up interview about my personal experience.
- Due to the nature of the project concerning anxiety and coaching, I understand topics that I find emotional or sensitive may arise.
- I understand my right to privacy and to stop a line of questioning if I feel uncomfortable.
- I have had the role of the researcher explained to me and understand the difference between the role of a coach and the role of a counsellor.
- I understand the researcher is not a therapist and will not be offering counselling or therapeutic services.
- I understand the researcher will provide information about where to seek further mental health aid and support if required.
- I understand that, whilst the researcher hopes I will benefit from the coaching sessions, I may not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.
- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in academic papers, presentations, published papers.

- I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.
- I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained on the researcher's private laptop until the exam board confirms the results of the researcher's project.
- I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for two years from the date of the exam board.
- I understand that under freedom of information legalisation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.
- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information:

Alicia Ballard B.A. Hons, M.A
 16 Nelson Gardens
 Rayleigh
 SS6 8HD
 07866483114
acgballard@hotmail.co.uk

Voice Study Centre
 4c Hadleigh Road,
 East Bergholt
 CO7 6QT
 01206298172
info@voicestudycentre.com

Signature of research participant

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of researcher

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

Signature of researcher

Date

APPENDIX 4

Believability of Anxious Feelings and Thoughts Questionnaire (BAFT)

Imagine the following thoughts occurred to you right now. How valid or believable would each be to you? Please use the following scale. For each thought, please circle a number 1 (not at all believable) through 7 (completely believable) depending on how believable that thought is to you.

QUESTIONS	1- NOT AT ALL BELIEVABLE	2	3	4	5	6	7- COMPLETELY BELIEVABLE
1. I need to get a handle on my anxiety and fear for me to have the life I want	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Appearing nervous is not good and causes me to suffer.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. I can't really do the things that I want to do when I have anxiety and fear	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. I must stay in control of my emotions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. If I were like other people, I would be able to get a grip on my anxious thoughts and feelings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. My anxious thoughts and feelings are a problem	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. I am sure to be embarrassed and make a fool of myself when other people notice how nervous and shaky I feel	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Unusual body sensations are scary and something I need to act on to reduce or get rid of before I can do anything else	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. My anxious thoughts and feelings are not normal	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Scanning my body for signs and symptoms of anxiety is important to keep me safe	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. When I am very anxious or afraid, there is a good chance that I might be dying	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. I could lose control of myself when I feel anxious or afraid	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. I must do something about my anxiety or fear when it shows up	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. When unpleasant thoughts occur, I must push them out of my mind.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. When I feel bad, I must fight the feeling in order to make it go away	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. My happiness and success depend on how good I feel	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

APPENDIX 5

K-MPAI-R

Below are some statements about how you feel generally and how you feel **before or during a performance**. Please circle one number to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

		Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree	
K_1	I generally feel in control of my life.....	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
K_2	I find it easy to trust others	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
K_3	Sometimes I feel depressed without knowing why	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_4	I often find it difficult to work up the energy to do things	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_5	Excessive worrying is a characteristic of my family	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_6	I often feel that life has not much to offer me	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_7	Even if I work hard in preparation for a performance, I am likely to make mistakes	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_8	I find it difficult to depend on others	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_9	My parents were mostly responsive to my needs	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
K_10	Prior to, or during a performance, I get feelings akin to panic.....	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_11	I never know before a concert whether I will perform well	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_12	Prior to, or during a performance, I experience dry mouth.....	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_13	I often feel that I am not worth much as a person.....	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_14	During a performance I find myself thinking about whether I'll even get through it	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_15	Thinking about the evaluation I may get interferes with my performance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_16	Prior to, or during a performance, I feel sick or faint or have a churning in my stomach.....	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_17	Even in the most stressful performance situations, I am confident that I will perform well	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
K_18	I am often concerned about a negative reaction from the audience	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_19	Sometimes I feel anxious for no particular reason	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_20	From early in my music studies, I remember being anxious about performing	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

		Strongly disagree					Strongly Agree	
K_21	I worry that one bad performance may ruin my career	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_22	Prior to, or during a performance, I experience increased heart rate like pounding in my chest.....	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_23	My parents almost always listened to me	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
K_24	I give up worthwhile performance opportunities	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_25	After the performance, I worry about whether I played well enough.....	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_26	My worry and nervousness about my performance interferes with my focus and concentration.....	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_27	As a child, I often felt sad	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_28	I often prepare for a concert with a sense of dread and impending disaster.....	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_29	One or both of my parents were overly anxious.....	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_30	Prior to, or during a performance, I have increased muscle tension.....	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_31	I often feel that I have nothing to look forward to	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_32	After the performance, I replay it in my mind over and over...	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_33	My parents encouraged me to try new things	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
K_34	I worry so much before a performance, I cannot sleep.....	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_35	When performing without music, my memory is reliable.....	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
K_36	Prior to, or during a performance, I experience shaking or trembling or tremor.....	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_37	I am confident playing from memory	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
K_38	I am concerned about being scrutinized by others	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_39	I am concerned about my own judgement of how I will perform.....	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
K_40	I remain committed to performing even though it causes me great anxiety.....	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

©Kenny, D.T. (2009). *Kenny Music Performance Anxiety Inventor-Revised (K-MPAI-R)*

Musician's Acceptance and Action Questionnaire (MAAQ)

QUESTION	1 - NEVER TRUE	2 - VERY SELDOM TRUE	3 - SELDOM TRUE	4 - SOMETIMES TRUE	5 - FREQUENTLY TRUE	6 - ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE	7 - ALWAYS TRUE
1. My memories of previous mistakes prevent me from performing in ways that I find important	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Worries and anxiety about my performances don't get in the way of my success	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. If I make a mistake while performing I can move past it.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. My performance-related difficulties prevent me from giving meaningful performances.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I can remain in the present moment while performing.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. I can still perform even if I don't feel like it.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. My difficult thoughts and feelings prevent me from making progress while practicing.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

APPENDIX 7

Assessment of Present-Moment Awareness and Acceptance
Cardaciotto et al., 2005, 2008

Philadelphia Mindfulness Scale (PHLMS)

QUESTIONS	1 - NEVER	2 - RARELY	3 - SOMETIMES	4 - OFTEN	5 - VERY OFTEN
1. I am aware that thoughts are passing through my mind	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. I try to distract myself when I feel unpleasant emotions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. When talking with other people, I am aware of their facial and body expressions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. There are aspects of myself I don't want to think about	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. When I shower, I am aware of how the water is running over my body	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. I try to stay busy to keep thoughts or feelings from coming to mind	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. When I am startled, I notice what is going on inside my body	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. I wish I could control my emotions more easily	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. When I walk outside, I am aware of smells or how the air feels against my face	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. I tell myself that I shouldn't have certain thoughts	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. When someone asks how I am feeling, I can identify my emotions easily	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. There are things I try not to think about	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. I am aware of thoughts I'm having when my mood changes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. I tell myself that I shouldn't feel sad	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. I notice changes inside my body, like my heart beating faster or my muscles getting tense	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. If there is something I don't want to change, I am conscious of them immediately	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. Whenever my emotions change, I am conscious of them immediately	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. I try to put my problems out of my mind	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. When talking with other people, I am aware of the emotions I am experiencing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. When I have a bad memory, I try to distract myself to make it go away	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Valuing Questionnaire (VQ)

Please read each statement carefully and then circle the number which best describes how much the statement was true for you DURING THE PAST WEEK, INCLUDING TODAY.

QUESTIONS	0 - NOT AT ALL TRUE	1	2	3	4	5	6 - COMPLETELY TRUE
1. I spent a lot of time thinking about the past or future, rather than being engaged in activities that mattered to me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. I was basically on 'auto pilot' most of the time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. I worked toward my goals even if I didn't feel motivated to	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. I was proud about how I lived my life	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I made progress in the areas of my life I care most about	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Difficult thoughts, feelings or memories got in the way of what I really wanted to do	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. I continued to get better at being the kind of person I want to be	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. When things didn't go according to plan, I gave up easily	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. I felt like I had a purpose in life	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. It seemed like I was just 'going through the motions', rather than focusing on what was important to me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

APPENDIX 9
PRE-COACHING INTERVIEW
INTERVIEW DATE: 14/10/22

[00:00:18] - Researcher

I'm Alicia, I am a postgraduate student at the Voice Study Centre, currently (...) taking on my module three, looking at the effect of acceptance and commitment coaching on MPA levels in, uh, someone who is going from a situation where they're used to playing with an instrument into vocal only situation and how we can help you feel comfortable in vocal only situation. My participant is [NAME REMOVED] and I'm going to take the names out later on. So do you want to introduce yourself to your name and all sorts of things?

[00:01:02] - Participant

Well, I'm [NAME REMOVED] as stated. Um, I'm 65 now (laugh) he said, trying to mumble. I've been playing music for, since I was about 14 and (...) going into different various bands as we go along.

[00:01:21] - Researcher

That's great, we're going to dive into that. [NAME REMOVED] has been a student of mine since when did you start? When was it?

[00:01:32] - Participant

I had a couple last year. At the end of last year, I remember I did a couple of single ones.

[00:01:37] - Researcher

Okay, yeah.

[00:01:37] - Participant

And then we went into when it got into January, I think we went straight into the block.

[00:01:40] - Researcher

So almost a year. Almost a year. So we have quite a good rapport (laugh). So, yes, I've talked about the aims of the research and hopefully that you'll feel like you benefit from it. I have to talk about the origins of my interest in the research. Obviously I've suffered with MPA in the past myself, and I'm obviously a vocal coach. I get a lot of people coming to me with different varying levels of MPA and I work with musicians, professional musicians who are multi instrumentalists who want to step out from behind their instrument and sing, but they always say, argh, singing! So ways that we can help that. I can confirm that I have permission to record the discussion. I have your permission.

[00:02:29] - Participant

Yes you do.

[00:02:30] - Researcher

And, um, I've got to reassure you that all of these comments will be made in confidentiality and all your name and everything will be retracted from the final things and I think we're ready to go. Is that all right?

[00:02:46] - Participant

Yeah.

[00:02:47] - Researcher

So I'm going to just start by going 'tell me about your musical background'.

[00:02:52] - Participant

Okay. There's a few years of it, but nothing fantastic, as I said, aside in, um, when I was 14. Um, my mum bought me an acoustic guitar because they said they were having lessons at the school I was at at the time. I said okay (mumble). But then by the time we got everything together, the places were all booked up and everything so I thought okay, I'll learn this myself. And from that I kind of just started and just continued and then taught myself piano, taught myself um theory, that sort of thing, in and out of various bands, just playing pubs, clubs um as the years went on, and playing different instruments in different bands because people knew I could play these different things and if someone was on holiday they'd...can you fit in on bass for a couple of weeks? (Mumble) And I'd go yeah fine. So I'd (mumble). There was one point I learnt, I think it was about 17 songs in about two days on guitar (laugh) but we got through it. And that was the main thing - oh I've actually played drums at one gig as well (...) yeah. It - we got through it (laugh) So yeah, um (...) singing wise, um, I'd (...) always had been behind a keyboard or behind a guitar which the - the band that I was in, uh, needed at that time so that was fine (...) Um, (chuckle) my brother and myself, uh, he plays drums - we decided to form our own band a good few years ago now and was looking for other people but nobody - I mean we got other people but they couldn't (...) really sing (...) to a good degree, so I ended up doing that (laugh) and that was my kind of first venture into (...) almost being at the front if you like. But still behind something (...) um, and I kind of got used to that um, and it was fine because you - you get your own ways of doing stuff and it was okay but never had vocal lessons until now, which is actually great by the way.

[00:05:09] - Researcher

Thank you (laugh) Well you're a great student! So yeah. That's great, so I was going to say how long have you been performing? But you've given me the answer there, so could you give me a list of the different instruments that you play?

[00:05:25] - Participant

Um, I think I just covered it, really, bass, guitar, keyboards, um, vocals (...) play drums (...) not fantastic, but it helps someone get a (...) um -

[00:05:38] - Researcher

It's still an instrument still in your repertoire. So the guitar came before the singing?

[00:05:48] - Participant

Definitely, yeah. That was, my first main instrument was the guitar. I just wanted to play stuff that I could hear, you know, that was such a thrill.

[00:05:56] - Researcher

Were you engaged in singing in any other way when you were a child?

[00:06:06] - Participant

Um, only (...) only just school stuff, nothing outstanding, you know, they never picked me out to do anything, um (...) not that I can remember no.

[00:06:14] - Researcher

No? Let's see - it's alright you've answered a lot of my questions (both laugh) Um, when was it that you started performing in front of people? So what kind of age?

[00:06:34] - Participant

Sort of quite late, I suppose (...) probably my late twenties, I think (...) always sort of been in rehearsals and just done different stuff, you know, just a bit of fun and bit of a release and stuff but (...) no, probably about late twenties I would say - can't actually put a (...) date on it really.

[00:06:58] - Researcher

Do you remember how it felt to be performing in front of people in that age?

[00:07:03] - Participant

Scary.

[00:07:03] - Researcher

Yeah?

[00:07:04] - Participant

Yeah. Very scary. Every time. Even after we'd been gigging for a few years (...) it always used to like it used to be Saturdays mainly and it used to get to the Saturday and it's like (...) I've got to go out now and do that and it's like (laugh) I don't want to do it (breath) but obviously when you get there you set up and you get a couple of songs in and you get into that sort of area (...) you get into that sort of comfort zone I suppose, but it's just getting there and (...) not knowing what the place is going to be like, what the people are going to be like and it's like ooo

[00:07:39] - Researcher

So it's more the anticipation of it.

[00:07:41] - Participant

Yeah, it was very much so.

[00:07:44] - Researcher

How did it feel when you were actually in the performance at that age?

[00:07:50] - Participant

(Laugh) If it was a good night, it's going well (...) It was absolutely brilliant you know. You kind of fed off of the feedback that they was giving you because, you know, as the evening went on, people were actually dancing and things like that, which is like clubs and things (...) and it's actually brilliant sometimes you obviously don't go down as well and it's like hmm, you go on a downer and it's like, whatever. But I must admit, there was one gig we played, it was a New Year's Eve, actually. Um, and we went down really well - people were out to enjoy themselves anyway, but it was a really good gig. And afterwards I can see how (...) people, when they're playing stadiums and things, they would go on to party all night because mentally you can't settle after that and it's like, yeah, that was brilliant. And you're up until god knows what time in the morning (laugh) just, just on the buzz I suppose, you know, brilliant.

[00:08:46] - Researcher

Absolutely. So what was the motivation that made you start exploring vocal only performance?

[00:08:58] - Participant

(Sighs) Probably stemming from when we were looking for a guitarist -vocalist. Guitarist turned up, but he was a busker, um, and he had that busker voice where they don't put a lot of effort into it, but he never translated being in a band. And that's when I started to (sigh) do I think it was about 90% of the singing. Um, I suppose you could call that (...) the starting of the series, which I was in my early thirties, I suppose. And really scary times. Terrible at remembering lyrics (laugh) I used to have a massive great book with just lyrics after lyrics, you know, whatever songs we were play - I think we had about 80 songs that we could choose from so whatever gig you turned up at, you could kind of gauge who you were playing too, and just switch things around. You'd have a set list, but you can change things around to how it's all going you know - if they didn't like that, they changed. So yeah (...) But I did start to enjoy the singing part of it I must admit (laugh) it was something I never considered, but after doing it for a little while, it's like, yeah I kind of enjoy this you know.

[00:10:19] - Researcher

Was this when you were playing with an instrument or without an instrument?

[00:10:23] - Participant

Oh, always with. I was never without. (Laughter)

[00:10:32] - Researcher

Recently we've been working on vocal only performance. So in your recent band, have you been vocal only?

[00:10:40] - Participant

Only for one song, maybe two songs, but it's only, like, been rehearsing. There's nothing seriously going on. Um (...) And I think I ended up sitting - It was a slow song, it was like a very depressing song, nothing wrong with that, but it was that style of song, so I kind of sat down with it and just had them, like, in front of me. So (...) suppose in a way, I was kind of away (laugh) from it and not just standing there, not knowing what to do. Sitting down is kind of easier, I suppose.

[00:11:17] - Researcher

And what is it about vocals only performance that (participant sighs) scares you? Or makes you feel anxious?

[00:11:25] - Participant

I think it's not knowing what to do (...) Like when you've got a guitar, you know what to do with your hands, you're playing this chord, you're playing that song, whatever. The same with the keyboard, you know what you're doing and everything's there (sigh). But you're just standing there (...) you have to have some sort of presence, and (...) I don't feel I've got that. (...) It's just - what do I do? What do I do with my hands, what do I do with my - my legs (laugh) you know (...)

[00:11:51] - Researcher

Could you describe what you mean by presence?

[00:11:57] - Participant

Um (...) Like being out in the front, it's like, um, you get a certain sort of, um, feeling from people. I've seen many bands as you have, and I've seen Queen. Freddie he walks on, you know he's there - (laugh) you know. I mean he plays instruments yeah but (...) most of the time he's at the front and he's getting (sigh) I saw Queen at Earls Court and I was a long way back, but felt a total part of it. It didn't matter how far he was away, he was *in* there you know. And that, to me, was - you know - someone that can grab you (...) and take you along.

[00:12:38] - Researcher

Do you think you would be possible of that?

[00:12:44] - Participant

(Laughs) Hmm (...) At this point? Probably not.

[00:12:47] - Researcher

No?

[00:12:47] - Participant

No.

[00:12:48] - Researcher

Do you ever feel like you're in flow? Or could you describe flow or an occasion where you felt -

[00:12:55] - Participant

Yeah! Um (...) There's been oh, I should have mentioned karaoke as well, a few years ago, about 2016. Never considered karaoke at all. Um, a friend, a work colleague, she said, why don't you come along? Because I think you got a good voice come along and do it. Okay. (Sighs) And at that point, I was (sighs) I wish I had a lot of change of nappies at that time (laughs). It was - ah, do I really want to do this? And um, I sang a song, um - people seem to enjoy it. I thought, okay, fine, um, but it was, um, didn't know what to do. And you just can't stand there and just sing, and it's like (sigh) I don't know why, I just can't wait to get off. But at the end of it, it was like (...) I felt like I was sounding good even though I hadn't had any formal training at that point, I thought it sounded good and a few people commented afterwards and said that was great and so it obviously (...) affected someone somewhere on the line. And I always remember, um, with this same friend, we went to Liverpool to - for a visit, um, and the guy we stayed with, um, he did his own karaoke type disco type thing and he took us along to sing a couple of songs because she was a great singer as well. And, um, (sigh) I remember doing this song and (...) just before I sang this song a coach load of choir people came in and they just come from a gig that they'd had so they were all still suited and booted with cummerbunds and everything you know, they were great by the way (laughter) Um (...) and I sang, what did I sing? Oh, Don't Stop Believing. Which is (...) quite high as you know. Um, when I sat down um, and at that point I think it was the leader of the choir, he came over and he said would you like to join? Because we're looking for someone in that vocal range. I said, I'd love to, but you're based up here and Liverpool is like (laugh) four hours away so I can't really do it but to me it was a great boost. Again, there was no real performance, but vocally (...) I suppose it was good, but um movement wise it was just like standing there and thinking I hope I get through this okay. (Laugh)

[00:15:40] - Researcher

That's really cool. And it's, uh, a bit of evidence there as well, isn't it, about ability.

[00:15:44] - Participant

Yeah, I suppose so, yeah, it really (...) really brought me on, you know, because you never know because your friends are saying, oh yeah, that was great. (...) Yeah okay. Maybe, but I don't know.

[00:15:59] - Participant

Do you believe that you have that ability?

[00:16:06] - Researcher

(Sigh) (...) Now or then?

[00:16:06] - Participant

That's interesting. Let's say then, did you believe and do you believe now?

[00:16:15] - Researcher

Okay. At that time, because once I started karaoke I kind of got a bit of a bug for it and I thought it was nice to sing in front of people, especially if they enjoyed it and they commented afterwards you know (...) Um (...) personally (...) I always thought I could do better. There was always bits that, mm, that wasn't great and (...) it just didn't - sometimes it just didn't go anywhere. When it was good, I felt it's okay (...) um, but that's as far as I would go in criticising myself. I (...) I never over (...) um, criticise myself in terms of, um, making myself sound good, as you know (laugh). You ask me and I always concentrate on the negative because that's just me, I suppose, but now (...) wow. Yesterday I was (...) um, putting into practice the techniques that you taught me over time and there was lots of songs coming up on the app that I'd never sang before, (mumble) I thought okay let's do it - and it kind of got enjoyable. I was only going to sing like half an hour or something, but about 2 hours later it was like, this is sounding good, I'm enjoying this you know. And I actually found myself - I was on my own, in

the front room, but I actually found myself kinda moving in silly ways (laugh) just for the sake of it. The dog must have thought I was nuts but (laugh)

[00:17:56] - Researcher

(Laughs) Did you do any, on one foot?

[00:18:00] - Participant

(Laughs) Yeah - what are you doing? Um, but I felt like now I can tackle songs in the right way and have confidence to hit those notes and, and sing that properly, you know. Totally down to you.

[00:18:16] - Researcher

No! It's your hard work. (Laughs) So I'm going to ask you - what motivated you to start the singing lessons, to start vocal coaching? What was the motivation? Because you've been (...) in the band all your life, you've been in front, performing in front of people, singing, and then you've found this kind of, I want to say segue into kind of using karaoke as a tool to kind of bring you into vocal only. And so now, now it's the singing lessons and the coaching. So what motivated you to start?

[00:18:53] - Participant

As I say, the karaoke thing I never considered at all, obviously been in pubs and stuff and seen it happen, never had any confidence to do it. Just like I say, my friends said you should do one or two songs at least. Okay (laughs). Wasn't comfortable *at all* with it, um. But the motivation. I've always felt (...) there's more because you listen to professional people and you think (...) I kind of almost (...) sound good, but where do you get to that sort of stage? Where, you know, whatever they sing, sounds fantastic, what's going on? And from where I used to live in Hackney. Not Hackney, Edmonton sorry. Used to live in Hackney many years ago. Um, it was like, (sigh) yeah perhaps I need to sort out a vocal coach and (...) I think it was probably the area, I didn't overly (sigh) like the - I've never been to one, but you know you get a feeling for the way they're putting themselves out there and things like that and you think, mmm, no. Then a year ago September, um (...) I thought let's have a look and see who's around this area because it's obviously a better area anyway, and something just draw me to - to yourself (laugh). And I thought, okay. Let's - And that's why we had the first one or two just solo lessons sort of thing.

[00:21:27] - Researcher

Which is good to do.

[00:20:49] - Participant

Yeah, because I mean I've taught people to play guitar like kids and grown ups (...) and keyboards as well, come to that. And I always say, let's start with just one half an hour lesson, no charge, just let's go in and just see how we get on with each other because obviously you've got to have that (...) give and take with the person, otherwise (...) if you haven't got nothing in common with them or anything, it's like part of music, obviously (...) it's like it's just not going to work. That's kind of what pushed me forward, I suppose.

[00:21:17] - Researcher

I'm going to go back to your um musical background and just really quickly and ask you what do you think the biggest crowd that you've performed to is?

[00:21:27] - Participant

Oh, um, was probably the New Year's Eve gig I was talking about because obviously people want to go out and it was a biggish club, I suppose, so in terms of numbers. Wasn't (laugh) wasn't big in terms of numbers, but from what we've been playing, it was quite big I suppose (...) about 150?

[00:21:46] - Researcher

Yeah that's a decent size.

[00:21:48] - Participant

Yeah, 100, a hundred - around that area but it was a big club and it was really full at that time so.

[00:21:55] - Researcher

When back then would you have considered yourself kind of a semi professional?

[00:22:00] - Participant

No. It was just (...) um, gigs where we could get them. Obviously had a day job um (...) as you know gigs don't pull in much money (...) to stop working completely which would have been nice (laugh) every musician's dream is like yeah I can actually move on I don't have to do a job during the day (laugh). So yeah, no I wouldn't consider it semi professional no. It, it was just (...) at first it was just a bunch of guys getting together (...) rehearsing a lot of songs up going out and see if we can get gigs doing a few pubs and (...) we actually got a residency in one pub which was quite good.

[00:22:48] - Researcher

That is good. I mean I would consider that semi professional.

[00:22:54] - Participant

The guy just liked us for whatever reason (laugh) he liked us, um, and that was when I was doing, um, about 90% of the singing at that point as well which was good, um - It was a very small pub but (...) he wanted to book us every week every week it was about every Saturday I think it was.

[00:23:15] - Researcher

That's very good.

[00:23:16] - Participant

And that was about (...) it went on for a good six months I think (...) something like that - I don't know why we stopped but (...)

[00:23:24] - Researcher

But you did (both laugh). Um, so we're going to go on now to talk about musical identity, um, so this is quite a big question. How would you describe your personality?

[00:23:42] - Participant

Ooh (...). Very introvert (...) Mm. Yeah, I wouldn't say I'm out there at all (laugh) In crowds I get very (...) very anxious. I kind of squirrel myself away, somewhere. Um (...) someone, well my wife threw me a, um, a surprise birthday party for my sixtieth I think it was (...) I think it was and she'd hired this small hall and they made a uh an excuse to get me in there (...) and I thought, really (sigh) I kind of - it was a nice thing to do but I kind of hated it? I shouldn't say that really but there was everybody there and I thought, oh, I can't be dealing with this (laugh) I just wanted to sort of sit in the corner (sigh) so no I wouldn't say I was um (...) I wouldn't say an extrovert at all. I mean you see me standing here singing not knowing what to do and just hoping that this song takes me (sigh) away, mentally it just takes me but.

[00:24:57] - Researcher

That's an interesting thing to say would you feel that your personality changes when you're on or when you've been on stage or when you are singing and performing? Would you say that there's a shift?

[00:25:10] - Participant

There is a shift because in front of people you feel (...) you have to or you *want* to do well, um, because effectively, um, they're hiring you to do that job and you want to be good obviously because you want to be asked back, and you want to be good because people actually enjoy themselves, and you want to be part of that and you want to give them a good time and let them go away thinking yeah I had a really good night, talked to a load of friends. A good band. That's all I go out for. Yeah, though it (...) But I'm not an extrovert a person at all. (Laugh)

[00:26:04] - Researcher

That is interesting. And that's actually something that comes up quite a lot. Um, some of the best performers and most of the best performers are people that are actually quite introvert. And then when they're on the stage -

[00:26:15] - Participant

They come alive.

[00:26:16] - Researcher

- they become a different person. So -

[00:26:19] - Participant

I could liken it to the job I had before I stopped working. I used to work in a school. But I was an IT technician. But then they wanted me to *teach* IT (...) as well. So I kind of, drifted into that not that I really wanted to because all of a sudden (...) I'm in front of 30 kids. I think - I know my stuff. But how do you move out to them? Normally, you're going fixing things or somethings wrong with something. And as you said just now, you - you become a different person. And (...) I didn't hate it at first. I just found it very odd I was actually doing that sort of job at that time, and it was like, okay. And then you start having fun with it because I knew the kids anyway because I've worked there for a few years. (...) And then they start asking you questions. You start having fun with the kids in terms of erm what they would say and what you would say back, that sort of thing. Which was very funny at times. And they got used to me like that. And I think they learnt in a (...) in a fun way. It wasn't just this is this, this is that, which I see lots of teachers do. Um, to me, it - it had to be fun. What if we did it? You know - obviously not all the time. They're there to learn, and (...) I hope I taught them something along the way.

[00:27:57] - Researcher

I'm sure you did.

[00:28:00] - Participant

But it was, yeah, it - it was just having a bit of fun with it and I I'm - you know - and it relaxed them as well because it wasn't like, just teaching. (Sigh) And I think I got less hassle from them as well. I mean, it was primary school kids but they can still (laughs).

[00:28:12] - Researcher

They can be the hardest audience. (Laughs) Erm, so, in terms of musical identity, some people might differentiate between their identity, say, the identity of being a vocalist and the identity of being a musician. So obviously you've been playing both roles now, you know, most of your life. I don't know. What would you consider yourself? A musician?

[00:28:40] - Participant

Yeah.

[00:28:40] - Researcher

Yeah? And what do you consider yourself as now?

[00:28:45] - Participant

Yeah. Loosely termed musician. (Laughs) I mean, I can - I can *play*. That's, you know I never like to toot my own trumpet, as you say, but (...) I can play and whatever songs we would play, I would learn them so I knew them backwards, so I didn't have to concentrate on that so much (...) um (...) Sorry, what was the question?

[00:29:10] - Researcher

That's all right. So I'm saying people might differentiate between being a singer and a musician. So what do you think about that? What's the difference in the identity?

[00:29:23] - Participant

(Sigh) Musicians seem to have set things that they would play. Especially behind a vocalist. Whoever that might be. (...) Because there's different cues obviously that go on. When it comes to solos, pretty much free rein whatever you want to do - as long as you come back at a certain point (laugh) um (...) But in terms of (...) vocalising (...) as I say I used to do 90% of it (...) but I always used to sing it straight as you would hear it (...) if you was playing a record or something. Not anywhere as near as good. But I would just stick to that and not go off, deviate from that (...) but now after lessons. (Laugh) You've given me so much confidence to go off with the melody and try that.

[00:30:18] - Researcher

So would you consider yourself a *singer* now? What would you identify as?

[00:30:26] - Participant

A big question. I haven't gigged for a while. Um (...) I would consider myself a *better* singer. Than before, certainly got to a next level, and I'm sure there's many levels to be got to (laugh). Um (...) but I do yeah I do consider myself a *better* singer.

[00:31:02] - Researcher

So if you, if this was a - imagine a job application in your brain and you had to write down your job role (...) in terms of a musical identity, what would you put?

[00:31:13] - Participant

As a blanket, I would put musician, because obviously your voice is a musical instrument anyway, um (...) so, you know (...) people look at vocalists differently, for whatever reason they do.

[00:31:30] - Researcher

Tell me about that. What's the difference about that? What do you think?

[00:31:34] - Participant

They don't - I don't think they consider them (...) musicians. Whereas like a guitarist would turn up and say, well I know the theory this and the chords, this that and the other. You just stand there and sing (...) and I kind of got that as a general feeling between the two (...) but looking at somebody you never know what they can do.

[00:32:00] - Researcher

Why - er - so what do you think - yeah go into that little bit more, the stereotype behind being called a vocalist or being labelled as a vocalist.

[00:32:10] - Participant

Um (...) I'd actually taught, um, a couple of music lessons in school as well, um, which I *really* enjoyed. (Laugh). Um (...) and, there was one part we used to go through different genres and stuff and I used to say, okay, what is this genre? And I've just played them a piece of music and it would be

different eras. Um, then I'd go on to say, what musical instruments can you hear? Guitar, whatever it might be. Nobody actually said vocalist. Or vocals. I said, Is a vocalist, um, is that a musical instrument? Put your hands up at your finger. And it was always kind of 50 50 (...) so it was never considered that a vocalist was a proper musician. He said in air quotes. (Laughter)

[00:33:10] - Researcher

Yeah, the air quotes. (Laugh) What do you think a proper musician is?

[00:33:17] - Participant

I don't consider a proper musician to be someone (...) who knows the background of everything, knows all the different, um, theory and everything else because there's lots of (sigh) really talented people that do not know (...) but they can *play* the crap out of things, they can really play and you think, what was your background? I just taught myself and just, wow.

[00:33:44] - Researcher

Yeah.

[00:33:46] - Participant

So, you know, so a proper musician is, I don't think identifiable, to be honest. I - if I was pushed, I would say (sigh) it's someone who's confident in what they're doing (...) and can actually do what they do without messing up too many times - we'll mess up, let's face it (laugh) but (...) Yeah, just someone with the confidence to - to sit there, stand there or whatever, and just *do* it. And you get that sort of feeling from them. Yeah, this guy knows what he's doing or she knows what she's doing

[00:34:23] - Researcher

That's a great answer. (Both laugh) So do you think your identity as a performer has changed?

[00:34:30] - Participant

Yes.

[00:34:32] - Researcher

How has it changed?

[00:34:35] - Participant

It's changed (...) in confidence (...) I think. (...) We went to Liverpool - I say we - it was my son, my brother, his son and myself, and we went to see the, um, Beatles Experience, and they had a big thing on up there as well, going on. I thought, oh that's great. And just before we went back to the hotel, we thought to have a go and have a drink, and we went into this bar, didn't know what it was, but it happened to be a karaoke bar - I thought, oh bonus (laugh). I thought, I got to get up and do something. Um, and I did Somebody to Love the Queen Song, um, and people were very appreciative of (...) me actually singing that afterwards. And I heard the erm, the guy who was running it just before I handed it right back to him, I heard him say I wouldn't follow that. (Laugh) Okay. (Laugh) Really? Was it that good? I don't know. You know, to me, I sing and I can't wait to get off - I want to do it but it's (...) when people sort of clap afterwards you think oh okay, oh, nice, you know (laugh) It's - it's a bonus you know.

[00:36:14] - Researcher

That's cool. So suppose you had the option between singing with or without an instrument. What would you choose?

[00:36:24] - Participant

Ooh (sigh) that's a big question at the moment. (Sigh) I think I would be comfortable *without* now, because of the confidence I've gained from (...) your vocal coaching, I still wouldn't know what to do with myself. So (...) in a karaoke level, yes, I'd be okay. Because you're not really expected to

perform, (...) because I'm sure you've been to many karaokes yourself, and people just get up and they're terrible. But the point is, they got up and they did something and they enjoyed it. Hey, that's all you want. Who cares what you sound like? You want to get up and you want to do it, great. It doesn't matter to me. You know I - Like I say, I went to Liverpool, there was a guy who got up and he was out of tune and everything, afterwards I just clapped the hell out of him. I thought, Brilliant. You got up there, you did it fantastic. You had the guts to get up there and do something.

[00:37:27] - Researcher

So that's in karaoke context. But what if you were to go back into gigging? (Participant releases a heavy sigh) Would you prefer it with or without an instrument?

[00:37:37] - Participant

I think it would probably depend on circumstances, as in how you fit in a band with whatever's needed instrumental wise. I suppose, given the choice, if they say, well, we've got all the instruments and people to play them, would you like to? (Sigh) I would say yes, but then I would certainly work on (...) putting songs across. (...) Um, certainly what you showed me as well, feeling the song, um, what does the song actually mean? What are you trying to convey? Um, (...) but I would still certainly work on as I said presence before, um, (...) just to grab people in, because effectively, (laugh) rightly or wrongly, you're the front man or the front person, I should say. Um, guitarists always like to take over, but yeah, (laugh) that's all part of a band make up! So (...) I think I'd be comfortable with it now. Certainly confident vocally with it, movement wise, as I say, (...) that would be certainly different for me, and I'd make it my business to work on that, to not just stand there and sing a song and walk off.

[00:39:14] - Researcher

But it would be your preference to be vocal only?

[00:39:19] - Participant

I think now it would.

[00:39:21] - Researcher

That's interesting.

[00:39:22] - Participant

I think now it would.

[00:39:25] - Researcher

Could you imagine yourself saying that if you were that person back in your 30s saying - ?

[00:39:35] - Participant

No - I could never - I'd never considered myself - as I say, it was only that we was advertising for someone that could sing and play guitar, um, and he could sing, but not too a great. Okay, I think somebody else said, you can sing better than that, so why don't you do it? (Sigh) And that scared the hell out of me straight away, but I worked on it and I thought, okay, yeah, I can do it. And some songs were tough because you (...) there were certain riffs that you're playing on a guitar and you're singing a different melody across that and, ooh, your brain's gone you know?

[00:40:08] - Researcher

Yeah.

[00:40:11] - Participant

(...) Um (...) But as I said, I did start to enjoy that side of things. So if it came up now, yes, I (laugh) I'd probably jump at the chance actually to do a vocal, a front vocal, um, but certainly work on what I

need to do to be entertaining, if you like, because obviously if you're doing that at gigs, that's what people want, that's what the clubs are paying for, effectively, that's what the people are paying for. So you're like, okay, (...) I know it's not all about money and everything, but (sigh) obviously you want to be asked back and you want to do a good (...) a good performance, whatever you do, however you feel it's, like, want to do a good performance on this.

[00:40:52] - Researcher

Absolutely. (Both laugh) So how do you think of your performance changes with and without an instrument?

[00:41:02] - Participant

With an instrument, um (...) it's difficult (...) because you concentrate on the two things all the time. So you - I couldn't put (...) the effort into one thing or the other. I mean, there were songs that somebody else would sing (...) so I'd just be playing the guitar, just be playing the keys and I can put a lot more effort into that and put a lot more (...) um (...) different things musically into it, whereas if I'm just standing there singing, I'll just say *if* (...) I didn't mean that (laugh) but (...) I'm just standing there singing, playing guitar, because you concentrate on both of the things, it's like, okay, I'm just playing chords at this point. I'm not doing anything fancy because I know I'm going to mess up because I'm concentrating on this at that point. Um (...) But, yeah, if I went to just to do vocals only, I'd kind of be okay with that. Confidence - vocally, confidence wise, I'd be okay with that. As I say, it all comes down to that movement and getting people.

[00:42:19] - Researcher

Why do you think people feel more safe having an instrument in front of them when they sing?

[00:42:24] - Participant

I think it's a barrier.

[00:42:26] - Researcher

Yeah?

[00:42:29] - Participant

As I say I used to - my brother played drums (laugh) and he used to make me laugh when he was setting up, because he used to scope out of the place, because obviously the drums are at the back. He used to scope out of the place and used to see where all the seats were and where everyone was sitting. Then he used to set his symbols up accordingly, so it was like, if I'm sitting here and they're sitting there, I can't see them because my symbols in the way. And he used to use that even though he had a big set of drums around him. It was like I don't want to see that person, I don't want to see that person.

[00:42:56] - Researcher

Really?

[00:42:57] - Participant

Yeah, and he - he admitted that to me, a few times and - I've set that up there so (laugh) And obviously just didn't want to make (...) eye contact. But obviously once he got into it, it was like, yeah, look you know, he's away, um (...) and I feel the same way. It's like a barrier between - and something to do with your hands, something to do with your body. Um (laugh) I used to play in a friend's band. I played bass in his band, I played guitar in his band and everything. Um, and when we had (laugh) a decent sized stage, you could actually move about on (...) I relished that, because he used to do most of the singing anyway, so I used to do about five songs or something, which was great, but I was mostly doing guitar. So I used to sort of go and walk up behind him and (...) just have a bit of fun with it you know? And I kind of enjoyed that part of it. Even though the guitar was still in front of me, I didn't feel I had to (...) um, do a performance to bring people in. It was just having fun yourself, which (...)

kind of spilled out. Once I think people - once they see you, you're having fun, it kind of brings them along with you. And that's what I think is probably the next thing I need to learn, just vocals only, to have that kind of, um (...) confidence to do it, but the patter as well, to bring people in and to *look* like you're enjoying yourself. Whatever's going on in your life, you look like you enjoying yourself, you move around the stage and, you know, just bring people along with you and (...)

[00:44:50] - Researcher

So I'm going to ask a few questions now about performance anxiety. So, in terms of anxiety, how does or how did when you first started doing it vocal only performance make you feel?

[00:45:21] - Participant

Terrified (laughs) In a word. Um (...) yeah, as I say I was (sighs) kind of forced into it in a way (...) Whereas we had the lineup we wanted to, when we were doing our own band because when I was in somebody else's obviously they're taking care of most of all the (...) Erm (...) And, it was like, why don't you do it? O-okay, let's give it a go and see how it goes - in rehearsals this is. And it was like, okay. And I knew what had to work on, which songs didn't sound quite right. We knew how to play them, nothing wrong with that. It was just the vocal part what can I do to make that better? And then get into actual gigs. Ah (Big exhale and laugh) I so remember the first one (...) It was like really? I'm going to sing this? And it was a (...) it wasn't a working man's club but it was like a - it was that sort of feeling. It was, it was a pub -

[00:46:23] - Researcher

A social club?

[00:46:24] - Participant

Kind of. Towards the evening it was a social club and I think we, we played from early evening as people were just kind of come - because it was right next to West Ham's football ground. Um (...) so we kind of went from that into the evening so the feel changed. But I remember - (laugh) and I always remember this (...) I was playing guitar and I was singing this song - I think it was a Freddie and the Dreamers song or something - and all of a sudden I could hear my voice coming back, in this big place - well it wasn't a big place but you (sigh) I could hear my voice going into this place and I thought (sigh) oh wow. That was me. You know. And it's like (pulls face and laughs) I've got to keep going now because obviously you just can't stop singing or anything but it sounded okay. It sounded tune - in tune at least you know, I thought mm okay let's just keep going, see (laugh) see what happens. But never (...) got more comfortable with it as obviously you do more gigs and you know what you can do and what you can get away with (...) but in terms of confidence mmm (...) no, it was always, oof (laugh). When I was in a band with somebody else - yes there was that type of feeling but I felt I didn't have to (...) not put as much effort into it because you do because you're in the band and you want to do good (...) erm, but I thought I didn't have to try as hard to get people into it. It was down to whoever singing, you know, I could mess about behind him and he used to enjoy that - that's what he told me (laughs) erm, yeah so -

[00:48:19] - Researcher

Is this with you *with* the guitar and singing?

[00:48:22] - Participant

Yes, because apart from karaoke and as I say, just the odd song when we've been rehearsing, I've never done anything without it (...) and I think even that one song when we first started to do it, the other guitarist, he would just play the chords and he said - it was just me and him basically at this point. And when we were first starting to do it, I still had my guitar on.

[00:48:47] - Researcher

Ah, okay.

[00:48:49] - Participant

But it was only afterwards (...) I thought, okay, I don't need this guitar cause I think I had the bass on and it was a heavy lump and I thought, I'm tired of this lump (laugh) my head's going down. So I just - and that's when I sat down and just sang it. I thought, okay. Did feel a bit (...) naked if you like, you know. And it was like oh, there's - there's no barrier (inaudible mumble).

[00:49:15] - Researcher

So when you're doing a vocal only performance, what kind of challenges do you experience?

[00:49:34] - Participant

(Sigh) (...) (sigh) Challenges - vocal challenges I find are getting less and less, because of coaching.

[00:49:39] - Researcher

The technical challenges?

[00:49:43] - Participant

Yes. (...) And I know how to handle things.

[00:49:46] - Researcher

How about the anxiety side of things-

[00:49:47] - Participant

Anxiety, um, even coming here. (...) I always get here 15 minutes or so before I need to, because I need to know I'm here. That's probably part of my anxiety I just - I'm only ten minutes down the road, I check the traffic anyway, and it's fine, I'm still going to leave half an hour before I need to get here. So I'm here 15 minutes before (...) which I use to warm up in the car anyway, but (sigh) it's like (...) uh, I've got to sing now. (Laugh) And I know it's us, it's just us, but it's still that, oh (sigh) - But once I'm here, and we get into it, we start warming up and it's like, okay, and we fall into that routine, if you like - and I still never know what you're going to throw at me (laugh) in terms of techniques and things, which is great, but that's, that I don't find being anxious about. I kind of relish that in a way, because you're showing techniques, you're showing me different things, and it all kind of falls into place with whatever song we're doing at the time, and it's - and when you apply that to other songs, it's like, hey, I can do that. I couldn't do that before, I could do it now. So, yeah, vocally, but (sigh) I still get that anxious feeling even before setting out (...) and then sitting outside it's like (Sigh) okay (laugh). And then you build yourself up like, okay.

[00:51:21] - Researcher

What do you think it is that makes you feel anxious?

[00:51:29] - Participant

Oh (sigh) (...) That's a big question actually.

[00:51:30] - Researcher

That's a very big question.

[00:51:35] - Participant

(...) I don't think I could actually put my finger on it, but I - as I say, I don't think I've ever been an extrovert, even when we're at parties, and even parties that I probably know *everybody* there, it's like, even if it's not my party, it doesn't matter. It's like I just don't want to (...) not get involved, but not - if I'm one to one with somebody I - it - If you're at a party or something like that, um (...) and there's say six people talking, I would kind of fade back. (...) I don't know if that's part of, um, trying not to say the wrong thing or, um (...) but eventually, obviously, people split up. If it's like one to one, I'm (...) so more comfortable with that, but get really anxious in crowds, big time.

[00:52:41] - Researcher

So would you consider yourself an anxious person in general?

[00:52:45] - Participant

Yeah.

[00:52:46] - Researcher

Yeah? Okay (...) Sorry, I'm just reading through my questions.

[00:52:57] - Participant

Actually. I didn't *realise* it was being anxious, I just thought it was very nervous. But, um, coming into contact with who's now a good friend, she goes through that as well, and it's like yeah. Just getting to know her and talking to her about different things, it's kind of brought it out in me, so I've kind of recognised it more rather than, why am I feeling like this? Is is nervous? What is it going on? And just chatting to her about it was like, yeah okay, that's me. Oh, yeah, that's me. That's me. And her ways around - I mean, she doesn't go out, she goes to work obviously, but again, she's quite happy just being at home, which I am (...) for the most part. You know, if there was a choice of shall we go and do this or shall we sit down? (Laugh) I'm quite happy being at home, let's say.

[00:54:18] - Researcher

In terms of musical performance, what would your goals be in terms of your musical performance?

[00:54:28] - Participant

I thought about that recently (...) and I was actually going to ask you at some point, when I've got enough confidence to say where could I go with it? Am I good enough to do something with it? Where could I go with it?

[00:54:46] - Researcher

What would you want to do with it?

[00:54:48] - Participant

I've got no idea. (Laugh)

[00:54:53] - Researcher

Are you wanting to go back into performing? And if you were, would you be wanting to do it with or without the instrument?

[00:55:02] - Participant

I thought about that very often as well recently, because of the confidence vocally that I've been getting, I'd be quite happy to go back into it. I haven't gigged for (...) ages. As I say karaoke's a different animal, I suppose, but yeah, I actually saw an advertisement for a band, they wanted - they played covers, but they played very diverse covers and I thought, I like this, I like the stuff they're playing. They was advertising for a vocalist, I thought, I don't know, I'm not ready.

[00:55:49] - Researcher

If it was a vocalist guitarist, would you have gone for it?

[00:55:52] - Participant

No (laugh) I still don't think I'd have been ready for it, being out of it for a while, I mean, doing this stuff now, do rehearsals and stuff, it's kind of got me back into the playing side of it as well as obviously the singing side. I'm doing a lot of the singing as well. So I'm kind of getting back into it, but again, it's just people I know. It's three of us, four of us sometimes, and that's it. And, you know them, we know what

we can do together and stuff. We know it's not actually *going* anywhere, it's just a group of friends getting together, let's play these songs, great and just let off a bit of steam.

[00:56:37] - Researcher

So if there were two different adverts and one was for vocalist and one was for vocalist guitarist, and you had the choice to go for either of them and you felt like you were ready.

[00:56:49] - Participant

I'd go for vocalist, yeah.

[00:56:51] - Researcher

Yeah? And why that change?

[00:57:01] - Participant

Because vocally *now* I've got confidence and if I was in a band and just doing vocals only, I could concentrate on that better than having an instrument and trying to split myself between the two and probably not doing a very good job, because I noticed when we're rehearsing (...) we play Creep. You've heard me sing creep. When I'm playing and singing it, it's so hard because I know how I can sing it, but playing an instrument takes away from that and I don't stop playing, but the playing kind of goes all over the place at times where I'm trying to sing it properly.

[00:57:44] - Researcher

So you feel ready to put the barrier down?

[00:57:46] - Participant

Yeah, (laugh) I'd still like to know what to do with myself, but, yeah, I would. And there's that as well, which kind of stopped me from doing - sorry that's a Dupuytren's Contracture, um, which I've had for - I actually had it on both little fingers for some reason. They operated on that. You can see the big scar where they'd taken all that stuff out, um, but never had this one down because Covid took over, I think, at one point.

[00:58:14] - Researcher

Do you feel like that's affected your musical identity?

[00:58:18] - Participant

Yes. Certainly guitar playing wise, where you can't play minor chords properly (laugh) unless you're playing bar chords and stuff. Piano wise, my stretch for my ring finger, I can get an octave between a ring finger and thumb.

[00:58:40] - Researcher

That's pretty good going!

[00:58:41] - Participant

Yeah, and I've learned to do that because obviously this is pretty much useless and that was (sigh) as I said I taught myself. So anything I play on my left hand is very, very basic, but just to make it noisy and pad it out, I've always played octaves on my left hand. I don't know if everyone does that, but I've never played chords in my left hand. So the style that I play kind of didn't really matter as long as I can get an octave out of that. So (...) piano wise, I probably could get away with it, but I'd still - now I'd like to do a vocal thing.

[00:59:22] - Researcher

And do you think this has helped you kind of in that kind of transition of an identity, because you feel its impacted on the other?

[00:59:35] - Participant

In certain instruments. As I say the guitar, certainly, yeah, because you're very limited to chords you can play I mean, you can play them in different ways (...) but there are certain things where you have to play them this way, otherwise the song just doesn't sound the same. Um, I could play bass, I suppose (...) (laugh) As I say, I could play, um, keyboards, but (...) you know I'd adapt.

[01:00:08] - Researcher

It's all about adapting.

[01:00:10] - Participant

It is.

[01:00:13] - Researcher

Thank you for answering that. So I'm going to ask, how would you describe performance anxiety?

[01:00:26] - Participant

(Sigh) As I say, I always thought it was just being very nervous, which you know, you hear people in interviews, like professional people (sigh) and they say, I'm very nervous, I'd even throw up before - not me, but you know they'd say I'd even throw up before I go on and everything. (Sigh) Yeah, I get that. I get where you're coming from. Um, and even at the level we used to play (...) like Friday or Saturday night, you're playing to maybe 50 people, tops. (...) And even at that level, it's like, oh (sigh) stomach goes and it's like ah really? You know and then your head starts to think about all these different things and (sigh) will I remember that bit, not to the point of throwing up, but I - I get where the professional people are coming from, where (sigh) it's more their name on the line as well. Um, but they're playing it in front of so many people, and they say that once they get on there, they get into their second song (...) and they find - stuff takes over, the adrenalin takes over, I suppose, and you're off with it (...) and you know what you should be doing. (...) Yeah, it is (sigh) an *extremely* nervous thing. Extremely nervous thing. I-it affects you, it affects your stomach (laugh) (...) and your muscles sort of all tense up and it's like, ugh (...) It was always that first song. We always used to start with an easy song to sing, easy song to play. Um, Bad Moon Rising, I think, is what we used to do.

[01:02:08] - Researcher

Very popular one to start off with function gigs. (Both laugh)

[01:02:12] - Participant

Eases yourself into it. It's an easy song to play, you don't have to think too much about anything, but it kind of dispels the - the nerves and the anxiety a bit more. Just something comfortable that you don't have to think too much about, but it's leading up to that. It's like ah (sighs).

[01:02:35] - Researcher

So tell me about a time when you felt anxiety free in a performance.

[01:02:41] - Participant

(Big exhale) Did that ever happen. (...) I don't think that ever happened. (...) No. (...) I don't think that's ever happened. There's always been (...) you know, as many times as you play gigs and you go back to certain places so you know what to expect. It's still that dread. It's like, argh, what am I doing? There was even (...) points when I used to ask my brother to come along with me just to see somebody there - I mean he used to help me set up when I was playing in somebody else's band so he would come along - sometimes he just didn't want to but he saw how I was feeling and he was just someone sitting there in front of you (...) just to focus on if you like. So you don't have to focus on strange people or strangers. Strangers and stuff, you know, which kind of easier a bit, but you still got that dread hours before actually setting out.

[01:03:53] - Researcher

So you just kind of answered my next question, which is, give me an example of actions you might do to stop yourself feeling that way. (Both laugh) That's obviously something that you've done.

[01:04:03] - Participant

That was one, but he wasn't always there obviously because he had things to do and I didn't like asking him. But there were certain times when I felt I needed something. Um, but other times it was like you just get on with it. You deal with it, maybe not in a good way. But you deal with it.

[01:04:22] - Researcher

So what kind of actions would you say put into place now if you were going to do a gig?

[01:04:30] - Participant

In terms of just singing or singing with an instrument?

[01:04:36] - Researcher

I would say just singing first of all.

[01:04:40] - Participant

Yet to be seen, I think.

[01:04:42] - Researcher

So what would you do?

[01:04:43] - Participant

What would I do?

[01:04:44] - Researcher

Hypothetically.

[01:04:47] - Participant

I think I'd certainly work on (...) what I need to do bodily wise to (...) to move and make it entertaining. Um (...) I don't know, um, because not been in that situation apart from karaoke, where yes, you get nervous but you know you're only up there for four minutes, whatever it is, and then you can go and sit down in the corner

[01:05:18] - Researcher

Yeah.

[01:05:22] - Participant

(Sigh) It's a difficult one. I've not been in that position. (...) But I'd like to try.

[01:05:28] - Researcher

And what would you do if it was a vocals and instrument? It's a multi instrumentalist situation. Any actions? So you mentioned about having someone else with support. But did you used to put anything else in place to help you?

[01:05:42] - Participant

(Sigh) No, didn't know what to put in place. Um, it was just a matter of, yes, we're doing another gig. There's nobody there that I know. (...) Let's just get on and do it. And as I say, I think the best thing was knowing we had so many songs (...) because the worst thing is just dying. So it's like, okay, you do - you have a set list. You do the first three songs, let's say, and they don't get a reaction. Okay,

forget the set list, let's play this next. And all of a sudden it starts, okay - that's the sort of stuff they like. But there was always that was that added to the anxiety, really. Playing a new place, it's like you don't know what they like, how they're going to react to certain things. And (exhales) (...)

[01:06:47] - Researcher

I should take you out to one of my function gigs. You'll see what happens half the time (both laugh) Sorry, I digress. What are you hoping to get out of our coaching session?

[01:07:00] - Participant

That's a good question as well. And (...) I didn't even consider getting anything out of it apart from becoming a better vocalist, because I've always wanted to try it. Didn't know how long I'd do it for. I thought, okay, and then you had the block bookings of ten. I thought, okay, let's do ten. Let's see how that goes. Yeah, because I don't want to just do one and two and then just be flaky about it. I thought, let's give it a good go, let's give it a good chance. Then all of a sudden, you kind of get to these new levels, new techniques, new confidences. It's like, okay. That spurred me on to do the second set and then the third set. There's so much to learn. Obviously there's still so much to learn (laugh) No doubt.

[01:07:56] - Researcher

So what are you hoping to get out of our, so rather than vocal coaching, what are you hoping to get out of our six coaching sessions? Where we're working on ACC.

[01:08:04] - Participant

Um, hopefully more confidence in movement.

[01:08:11] - Researcher

Yeah?

[01:08:13] - Participant

Yeah. Knowing what to do with myself rather than just standing there in front of the microphone singing, which is okay, but not very entertaining if you're (...) doing it in front of people.

[01:08:27] - Researcher

So movement is one of the main things that you value.

[01:08:30] - Participant

I think so (...) Obviously, what comes along with that is, um, looking like you're enjoying it because you're not hung up on what am I doing with my body - I should be doing something, or I'll be just standing there doing a (whispers) Phil Collins. (Both laugh)

[01:08:53] - Researcher

That was Phil Collins. (Both laugh) So what do you think? Obviously so we're doing these six sessions, six weekly sessions where we're going to be doing coaching. One to one coaching and taking you through different areas of Acceptance and Commitment Coaching. So what do you think might be challenging for you? Challenging areas or topics or (...) what do you think might be challenging?

[01:09:19] - Participant

Definitely movement. Um, I don't know what to expect.

[01:09:22] - Researcher

Okay.

[01:09:23] - Participant

To be honest, um -

[01:09:24] - Researcher

That's fine! (Both laugh)

[01:09:26] - Participant

That makes me anxious. (Laughs) It does. Even today, I was like I don't know what to expect. I know you said it was like an interview.

[01:09:36] - Researcher

It's just like a chat really isn't it?

[01:09:37] - Participant

I know. It's been comfortable, to be honest.

[01:09:39] - Researcher

Good, I'm glad.

[01:09:42] - Participant

But (...) That's probably the biggest thing, I suppose. But I don't know (...) When we started the vocal coaching, it was like I didn't know what to expect. I didn't know how it would go. And that's - that's what I'm going into this with. I don't know what to expect, I don't know where it would go afterwards. Um, So I think I mentioned to you before that (...) whatever lesson I go to, or (...) somebody I watch, I would get something out of that. Musically, I would get something out of that. I might not be able to do it myself, but I think, ah, I saw what they did that

[01:10:28] - Researcher

Yeah. Well, hopefully we can give you the tools so that you can do things yourself. And of course, this is all about making a vocal only situation really comfortable for you and you know making us - making you really confident in it. So one more question. So suppose you no longer felt any anxiety around vocal performance. What would that be like?

[01:10:55] - Participant

I'd probably be dead. (Both laugh)

[01:10:59] - Researcher

What would that be like?

[01:11:01] - Participant

Wow.

[01:11:02] - Researcher

Imagine you've solved all of the anxieties, all of the anticipation, and you're in a place where you just have no anxiety around vocal only performance. (...) It's a big question, another big question. I like throwing in a big question here and there. What would that be like?

[01:11:23] - Participant

That would actually be fantastic (...) in any situation, in a karaoke situation, just knowing that (sigh). But even now I mean that question is - is almost answered where if I went to a karaoke now (...) yes, I'd be nervous and anxious about doing something in front of people I haven't got a clue who they are - and sometimes that's a good thing. Um (...) But I'd have the confidence vocally to stand there and sing pretty much any song. I know that I could do a good job of it.

[01:12:02] - Researcher

How about in a gigging situation?

[01:12:04] - Participant

In a gigging situation? (...) Are we talking anxiety free?

[01:12:13] - Researcher

Anxiety free in a gigging situation.

[01:12:18] - Participant

Ah, that would be brilliant. That would be the best. If I was in a band, if I - if I got lots of confidence out of these sessions and the vocal sessions, as I said, I almost applied for that. I thought, no, you're not quite ready for that yet, let's - And it was kind of not early days, but it was about three months or so into it. Yeah, I could probably do that, but let's - let's get a bit more confidence about it. And this coming up now is like (laugh) wow. And for you picking me, I kind of felt honoured.

[01:12:56] - Researcher

That's right. Well, you brought it to me, you brought this topic. I thought, well Ron I could help you with that! (Both laugh)

[01:13:09] - Participant

That's probably why I don't open my mouth (laugh)

[01:13:14] - Researcher

That's great. So one final thing. Could you describe your ideal performance, your ideal vocal only performance.

[01:13:23] - Participant

Song wise or?

[01:13:24] - Researcher

How it would feel and (...)

[01:13:35] - Participant

Ah (...) it would feel. And I've only ever felt (...) a really good feeling - like I say we were doing that New Year's Eve, um, and towards the end, you know you're going into the last three, five songs, whatever. People are just enjoying themselves. They're just all over the place and it's fantastic. And once you've got to that point, *you* know they're enjoying it, that's it. And you can - I found myself relaxing so much that I was kind of doing things that I thought, what do you do that for? Because it was fun.

[01:14:14] - Researcher

Yeah.

[01:14:15] - Participant

There was one point, as I say it was in a friends band, and he was a good (...) four, five inches taller than I am, and (laugh) he saw me wandering about the stage and he knows that's what I used to do just for the fun of it, so he thought he'd do the same thing. So he went over to my microphone, so he's kind of bending down like this so that he could sing into the microphone. And I'm standing at his microphone and there was parts where I would be harmonising with him. So he's kind of bending down and taking the mickey out of how short I am. And then I'm trying to do a harmony part and I'm kind of jumping up to get to his microphone. I didn't actually move it, I was just having a laugh with it

and that was (...) the relaxed state that we got to at that point. But to go *on* like that, like from the off, ah, it would be something else.

[01:15:14] - Researcher

Yeah? Well we'll see what we can do. And if you were going to go into doing function gigging or something like that, would you (...) feel like you had to do it in a band or do you feel like you would want to do it on your own?

[01:15:34] - Participant

I've looked up function people, not many, where somebody's taking a video and stuff and it's just like a solo person and (...) usually they'd only sing a few songs anyway, and it's like, yeah (...) I could do that. I know I'd have to have a lot more confidence to do that because it's just me - in a band situation, it's like, yeah (...) you complain onto someone else, why did you play that note? (Laugh) But there's banter between you, um, and you feed off of each other. But just being there on your own, (sigh) I'd love to do it. Not sure if I would ever get (...) a chance to do it or the confidence to do that just on my own. Because it's just you and if you mess up, you've only got yourself to blame. I think that's probably a big part of it.

[01:16:35] - Researcher

Yeah.

[01:16:37] - Participant

I'd like to - I mean, I think I told you I auditioned for The Voice at one point.

[01:16:42] - Researcher

Yeah.

[01:16:47] - Participant

That was (sigh) yeah, that was something else.

[01:16:48] - Researcher

Yeah.

[01:16:49] - Participant

But an experience.

[01:16:50] - Researcher

Absolutely.

[01:16:52] - Participant

A big experience. I'm thinking back on it now and thinking, why did you do that? (Laugh) How did you do that?

[01:17:02] - Researcher

Well, I've kind of come to the end of everything.

[01:17:05] - Participant

Okay.

[01:17:05] - Researcher

So what I'm going to do is just ask you if there's any other points that you want to raise or anything else that you want to say about performance anxiety, about changing in the identity, or about vocal only performance.

[01:17:25] - Participant

I'd like to do a vocal only performance at the end of everything. (...) You know, not just Karaoke. To have the confidence to (...) let's say you're at a function and someone says oh the singer hasn't turned up, I'd do it. You know, I'd like to have that confidence to say yes I'd do that. And take that on. And actually (sigh) maybe even do it, um (...) just to be a gigging musician again. Not to say that

that's putting it down. That style of things. It's just getting out there again, I think. (...) I think now, unless you go into a band that's already gigging (...) to put a band together now, I think it would be very difficult commitment wise, not for me, because that's something I'd - I'd love to do again, to be honest (..) but I think that's probably a good thing about just doing it on your own where you've only got yourself to (...) to get there. Suppose if the PA is all set up and everything, you just turn up and do it, whereas before it's like you got to make sure this person gets there lots of equipment and (...) you know how it goes.

[01:18:57] - Researcher

I do know how it goes. (Both laugh)

[01:19:01] - Participant

So, yeah, I - I'd love to be able to (...) just sing (...) with very little anxiety. (...) Even karaoke wise just singing with little anxiety. Even coming here. (...) Because I - we go through all the techniques and then we do the song and it's like applying those techniques (...) and (laugh) once we've got to that point in the structure (...) sometimes it all goes out of my head and as you know sometimes it comes from the chest and it's like I didn't sing that like that before, what am I doing? And I correct it because you're giving me signs. But it's like (...) I know I can do better than that - what is the matter with me. I'd like to be able to have that confidence to (...) sing a song and thinking, yes, that was good. Even myself saying walk away and think I did a good job on that, which I've never done. I've never done. I've never walked away from something and thought, yeah, that was good (...) I've always felt that bit was a bit ropey. Could have done much better than that.

[01:20:26] - Researcher

I'm going to ask you one more question. Would you classify yourself as a perfectionist?

[01:20:43] - Participant

Oh (laughs) Well, that's a big question. Um (...) Vocally yes.

[01:20:46] - Researcher

Why'd you think that is?

[01:20:52] - Participant

Because that's the main thing that people would hear (...) if you went off key it's very noticeable that as opposed to playing guitar, um, you know where all the notes are. You're not going to go wrong as long as it's in tune, obviously (laugh), because you play a D chord you know it's going to be a D chord it's in tune. So it'd be nice just to (...) just to sing some songs and know that you - you've done the best you can and for yourself it sounded good. I could walk away and say, yes, that sounded good. I did a good job on that, which I've never got to.

[01:21:46] - Researcher

Well you should (both laugh). Thanks. Yeah, I mean, unless you've got anything else to say, I think I've covered all my questions. I've got a lot out of you.

[01:21:55] - Participant

Oh good! I was hoping I was going to be a good candidate.

[01:21:58] - Researcher

No, absolutely. Really, thank you so much for that. Thank you for all of your comments. And I look forward to going down this adventure with you.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]

APPENDIX 10

POST-COACHING INTERVIEW

INTERVIEW DATE: 01/12/22

[00:03:29] - Researcher

So the thing that I've got to do is I've got to confirm that I have permission to record the discussion, introduce myself again, you know, we've already been through all this. Okay, so I'm Alicia Ballard. I am studying a postgraduate certificate in Professional Practice, voice pedagogy with a specialism in performance coaching. And this is part of my research project for my module three. My participant is [NAME REMOVED], who is a student of mine who has undergone six sessions of ACT coaching. The aims of the research are to see how ACT can help with music performance anxiety in a transitioning musician, a musical identity, going from being a vocalist-instrumentalist into a situation where you are vocalist-only. The origins of interest in my research, I've always been interested in MPA and in coaching, and [NAME REMOVED] brought this forward to me as an area that we might explore and it's been, I think, very useful. I have to reassure you about the confidentiality of the comments made during the interview. The interview gets transcribed, I will remove your name and it will be coded and it will go into my final project and my presentation. So should we get on with it? [Both laugh] So, first question, how have you found your coaching experience?

[00:05:18] - Participant

I knew you was going to say that. But seriously, I was thinking about it last night. Um [...] At times, tough, because I've been aware of the things that we've been doing, but not aware enough to know where to go with it or what to do about it. Um [...] But as I said, that was kind of tough, but then it's made me see things for what they are. And it's like, yeah - I even made a note here and then I reworded it. Oh, yes, I put down, Can I sing in a band? I thought, Hang on, I can sing in a band. And it was that sort of realisation. It's like, yes, you can do it, what's the matter with you - you used to do, it's fine, get on with it. But it gives you the tools to [...] when you're getting really nervous, anxious and stuff, to know what to do with it and about it. And it kind of, um, for me personally, it spurred me on to getting back into it because - I think we've covered it before, where um ... you started to make me sound good. I could always - I could sing, but it was just singing, but now it sounds good. So then I thought, where can I go with it? What can I do with it? And that was kind of a natural progression, I suppose, but it was one that I haven't done for a while and as you said, it's like transitioning, so it was the realisation that I could get back into a band and sing again.

[00:07:14] - Researcher

Good. So what were you hoping to get out of coaching sessions? So when I approached you with, we're going to do a few sessions of ACT, if you want to, about this change in identity and the level of MPA in being vocal only.

[00:07:37] - Participant

Oh, it interested me very much because the only time I've ever sang without an instrument in front of me was like karaoke. But then you do like, four minutes and you can go and screw yourself in a corner and get out of the way. But this has now given me the [...] the confidence, if you like to go ahead and say, yes I could only sing about it, just vocal only in a band.

[00:08:10] - Researcher

What were you hoping, if you look back at the start, before he even began, or even during, what were you hoping to get out of it? What were you hoping for?

[00:08:20] - Participant

I was just hoping I was going to gain more confidence. I think initially.

[00:08:25] - Researcher

Confidence in your skills or in yourself?

[00:08:30] - Participant

Both, but I think you've been given me confidence in my skills in singing, but confidence in myself big time because, as I say, getting back into it after many years and [...] just to get over that, yes, you can do it type of thing. I think it's a lot of confidence in myself I've gained, and I've used this in my personal life as well because I found it very useful, extremely useful experience. It makes you - as I say, it makes you see things for what they are. Yeah, that's a thought... and? You know what I mean with that? Yes. You think about it, you don't dismiss it, it's there, but okay, is it important? Not really, it's fine. And even just getting past little things, you can get past that. That's not a big thing anymore. Whereas in my head I'd probably be putting up barriers that I don't want to do that, so I'll just make an excuse for that. But now it's like I'm kind of getting excited about getting back into all that and belting stuff out.

[00:10:15] - Researcher

Great. How successful do you feel acceptance and commitment coaching have been in helping you move towards your goals and values? How successful do you think ACC itself has been?

[00:10:37] - Participant

I think it's been extremely successful, personally, because I would probably still be at the stage where we'd be doing our weekly sessions, and in the back of my head, it's like, yeah, maybe I'll get in a band and it probably wouldn't go any further. I'd probably get back into Karaoke, which is [...] not easy, but it's a stepping stone. But that's as far as I would have gone and the band would have still been in the back of the mind and making excuses, but it's spurred me on to think, yes, as I say - I've renewed some apps that I've got, the join my band - I've been searching that pretty much every night when I'm not falling asleep. And it's made me look, there are still bands out there doing the stuff that I like. To me that's great and I could get involved in that quite easily now.

[00:11:52] - Researcher

Yeah, great. That's a nice little quote. [both laugh] Fantastic. So do you feel like you've been able to identify your values through ACC?

[00:12:03] - Participant

Yeah, it makes things clearer. As I say, in my head, things were kind of all over the place, like thoughts about where do I go with this, how do I approach that. But that would get in the way and then - okay. And there was like more barriers and more barriers and as I say, it was just a thought in the back of the head, yes, I might get in a band, but now it's like, yeah, I know what that barrier is and it's like, huh, it's a thought. It doesn't even come into it. Why do you think that that's going to get in the way? And it's that sort of feeling, and it's like - yeah, okay. And it pushes things into different categories for me. And I kind of like that area where you can - yeah, so it's not all just jumbled up in my head. It's like separated and okay, that's not important, that's not important, that I'll cross when I come to it, like rehearsals or interviews, that sort of thing. Um [...] But by the same token, it's not a big thing. That's more of an anxiety thing, you're meeting different people, you're getting into somebody else's band, and stuff like that. And then there'll be the one where we do our first gig or our first rehearsal or whatever. But again, I'm more excited about it than apprehensive about it. [laughs]

[00:13:42] - Researcher

What does that tell you about your MPA? Are you willing?

[00:13:48] - Participant

Yeah. It tells me I can do it.

[00:13:50] - Researcher

There's an acceptance there, right?

[00:13:52] - Participant

Yeah. Oh yeah.

[00:13:53] - Researcher

So what does it tell us about the acceptance of commitment coaching?

[00:14:00] - Participant

It works! [Both laugh] It categorises things, and that's how my mind works.

[00:14:07] - Researcher

Well, it gives you that defusion. That thought labelling process. And what we're going to do later is I'm going to ask you questions about - specifically going through the different areas of the Hexaflex and getting your feedback on them. So, we'll explore that in depth later. Is that okay?

[00:14:27] - Participant

Yeah, that's fine.

[00:14:28] - Researcher

So what would your goals be in terms of your musical performance? What would your goals have been in terms of musical performance before we did the sessions?

[00:14:41] - Participant

As I said, in my head, it would have been nice to get back into gigging, but [...] it was just a thought in the back of the head and like, yeah, maybe, maybe not. I don't know. Um [...] Would I have gone any further? Um [...] Maybe not. It might have been I stuck to - the guy, I told you we rehearse, but we're not doing anything. We're not actively looking to go anywhere with it. It's just a bit of fun. And to me, that would have probably been enough, but now it's just not enough. [Laugh]

[00:15:28] - Researcher

What would your goal be now in terms of musical performance?

[00:15:35] - Participant

Initially, it's getting back into that karaoke, but I'm certainly actively looking to join a band. That's a big thing for me. Not only because it's getting back out there again, it's because it's vocal only. And as I said to you before, I found myself moving my hands and doing different things with them because I get caught up in the moment and it's like suddenly you're opening your eyes. What are you doing? And it's fine because it's like expression. It's coming from here [points to chest], but you're kind of just in there and it's, wow. You don't realise you're doing stuff.

[00:16:26] - Researcher

What do we call that state of mind? What do we call that? The F word.

[00:16:33] - Participant

It's the terminology on all this as well.

[00:16:36] - Researcher

Flow.

[00:16:38] - Participant

Definitely. Yeah.

[00:16:39] - Researcher

That's fantastic, because in our first interview, we spoke about flow and how you experience that. And we're going to talk about flow later. Ticking off through my checklist, but that's wonderful to hear. So my next question was have your performance goals changed since your coaching sessions -

[00:16:57] - Participant

Oh yeah.

[00:16:59] - Researcher

Yeah? And do you think that's because you've been able to kind of pinpoint what your values are?

[00:15:10] - Participant

Yeah -

[00:15:11] - Researcher

Maybe values that were always there?

[00:17:16] - Participant

I say this time around it's because I've left gigging for years, but yeah, it's put the values back, but in an organised way, whereas when I was younger, it's like you didn't sort of worry about it, you was like, yeah, I could do that. You don't get anxious or nervous about it again? I used to get nervous before gigs and things, um [...] but I wanted to do it, and I'm getting that feeling back again. It's like, yeah, I'll probably be anxious when I go an audition and things like that. But I want to do it, and that's the difference now. It's made me aware of different things that may have stopped me if I hadn't have done this course. And it would have just been in the back of my mind and I would have just been happy to do a few songs on the app and things like that. But now it's kind of not enough. I want to! [laugh]

[00:18:20] - Researcher

There's not that avoidance of the audience anymore?

[00:18:27] - Participant

No, and that will be one of the big steps, I suppose the first one would be to meet people again, like in bands and then like auditions, rehearsals and then the actual gigs of doing things in front of people. But the smaller steps would be to go and do karaoke, which I haven't done. I did tell you I found it.

[00:18:55] - Researcher

No, you didn't! That's fantastic. Really well done.

[00:18:56] - Participant

Oh, yeah, it's been a long week there it was the same afternoon, I think it was I phoned them, nobody answered, but it was early evening, so it shouldn't have been that busy, so I give it a while, then I phoned them again. Okay, but then I looked in their website, which they've revamped yeah, and that's still part of it. So the fact that they've revamped it and that's still categorised as yes, Friday night - okay. But obviously doing long days and it's like okay, but actually not making excuse.

[00:19:36] - Researcher

No.

[00:19:39] - Participant

Friday was the first full day I did round, decorating and in the evening we went for something to eat I didn't get until quite late and then it was forget about it.

[00:19:51] - Researcher

The thing is that you took the initiation to moved towards that value. And I'm sure you'll keep going with.

[00:20:02] - Participant

I want to, yeah, I do want to.

[00:20:06] - Researcher

So you mentioned in our first interview that you felt ready to put the barrier down and the instrument down do you feel ready to put the barrier down and the instrument down? Do you feel like you have put the barrier down and the instrument down?

[00:20:24] - Participant

Yes, and as I told you before, I feel things happen for a reason and there are no coincidences um {...] and playing with the couple of friends that we just get together for fun, that went a little way towards it as well, where I wasn't actually playing things on some songs, I was just vocalising! It was a bit nervy because you feel a bit naked without anything in front of you, but now doing this, it's like, yeah, I've got - let's go back a bit. Doing the vocal coaching, that went a long way for me to give me confidence to say, yes, I can leave that alone, I don't have to have something in front of me. And now, doing this course, it's made me aware that you can do it and you don't need to have a prop or anything, even if it wasn't plugged in, I don't need - because that thought crossed my mind a while back, that I could just have a guitar just strapped around me.

[00:21:49] - Researcher

Well, we spoke about that in the sessions, didn't we? About you having the bass still around your neck, even though you didn't need it, and then you put it down and that was a big change, putting it down and putting the barrier down. So that's a big change.

[00:22:07] - Participant

It is a big change. And a very small part of why I probably wouldn't play the guitar again in a band is because my finger, Dupytren's contracture - can never say it properly, which stops me playing chords properly. I can get round it for my own pleasure, if you like, but - In a band you need to be a bit more okay. I'm sure that if I got into a band, I would state that, yes, I can play guitar or keyboard, but I don't want to. Because the advert I saw there was like two guitars, bass and drums, and they were just looking for a vocalist. Yes, that's all I'm interested in. The songs they was doing were good and I could quite comfortably sing those. There was a few I didn't know, but again, I'm sure my vocal coach would help me. [Both laugh]

[00:23:33] - Researcher

In our initial interview, you mentioned wanting to know what to do with yourself and your body in a vocal only situation. We've already spoken a little bit about this, but has the acceptance and commitment coaching helped you with that? And if so, how has it helped you?

[00:23:50] - Participant

It has helped, and I'm sure it's still helping, and I'm exploring that, more now at home when I'm just singing. I know it's just me on my own, but the microphone is on a stand, so I've got nothing to do with anything. I can't do anything with my hands, but as I said, I find I'm being emotive with my hands and doing things I wouldn't really normally do. So, yeah, just being a vocalist only has helped a lot in that. Whereas, I've seen singers and they would just stand there.

[00:24:41] - Researcher

How do you think that acceptance and commitment coaching has helped you in being able to do things with your body and your hands and expression? How do you think it has helped?

[00:24:59] - Participant

I think it's given me confidence in the fact that I don't worry so much about it. I think not worrying about what I'm doing in my hand more worrying - not worrying, but more getting a performance across vocally. Then I find myself doing different things in my hand and it's like yeah, it's like a natural thing. So it kind of removed kind of barriers where in my head it's like, okay, I'm singing this song, but what am I supposed to do with...? Now I've got all this freedom, but it just seemed to fall into place, so it took those barriers away, if you like. I'm not sure If I'm explaining it properly.

[00:25:52] - Researcher

No that's great. That's really great. Yeah, that's good. As we go on, these things will crop up in different questions as well, so that's fine. So would you consider yourself as more in touch with what matters to you about performing now?

[00:26:18] - Participant

Yeah, because we spoke about it. [...] I'm more in touch with the fact that I know what band I want to get into rather than just getting into a band for the sake of it because they're looking for someone, I fit the bill, not really keen on what they're doing. So I'm being a bit more discerning about which band I'd like to get into, especially being a vocalist-only I got to know that I can do those songs, not that I couldn't sing anything, but the fact that I can do it justice. I think it's opened me up a lot.

[00:27:17] - Researcher

What about your personal performance values? Would you tend to do yourself more in touch with kind of what you value out of performing?

[00:27:28] - Participant

Yeah, it's categorised what I want to do and removed certain things that obviously didn't matter, so it's put me in touch with the important values rather than the things that were values but kind of getting in the way but weren't important.

[00:27:57] - Researcher

And what do you value out of performing?

[00:28:01] - Participant

Enjoyment [laugh]

[00:28:02] - Researcher

Enjoyment?

[00:28:03] - Participant

Yeah.

[00:28:04] - Researcher

Anything else as a performer, what do you value being?

[00:28:10] - Participant

As a performer? [...] I like to know that I can [...] sing whatever songs we end up doing to a very high degree. And I valued that because [...] getting into a band, being in a band, obviously you're the person that people would look at mostly, because the vocalist is - you get drawn to that person. So I'd like to know that I can put a song across [...] and I can do it just- so I can do it justice, I can put enough emotion into it without falling apart. That's what this has taught me as well, that you can pull yourself away just enough to get the emotion into the song but not fall apart completely.

[00:29:26] - Researcher

So the next few questions are going to be about musical identity, speaking about values. So this project was all about seeing if we could take you from being connected to this one identity and step into a new one and help you with the anxiety along the way and shape different things in that, so learning what to do with your hands, learning what you value out of your voice and as a performer, and expression and enjoyment, things that you've already brought up. So how did you use to describe yourself as a performer before the sessions?

[00:30:24] - Participant
A learning vocalist.

[00:30:27] - Researcher
Let me rephrase it. How would you describe yourself as a performer? Just simply. How would you describe yourself as a performer?

[00:30:40] - Participant
Right now? Confident.

[00:30:42] - Researcher
Yeah? And what would your identity as a performer be - if you had to label yourself as a specific performer?

[00:30:53] - Participant
In what terms?

[00:30:56] - Researcher
Would you call yourself a musician or a vocalist or an instrumentalist or a guitarist -

[00:31:02] - Participant
I think anybody that can play an instrument, and obviously the vocals is an instrument, to me is a musician anyway. And obviously there's different degrees of that. I think it heightened my degree of what I think of myself and what I can do, rather than kind of shy away from different things. Not because I couldn't do them, because I didn't want to attempt them. It's kind of a subtle difference. At home, yes, I would attempt them and maybe even get them sometimes, but because of the fact that it was maybe seven or eight times out of ten that it would fall apart [...] sometimes, yes, it would sound good, but now it's like, yes, I know what to do to make that sound good. And mistakes, yes, still happen, but they're mistakes, they're live. You can do nothing about them. It happened.

[00:32:18] - Researcher
So what would you, if you are writing a CV out and you had to write your title, your job description, let's say - as a musician, what would your kind of label be as a musician now?.

[00:32:46] - Participant
We spoke about putting my own advert out last week, which was an interesting one, because I've never, ever been down that avenue. And again, I think that's me not having confidence in myself to say, yes, I'm a guitarist, or yes, I'm a keyboard player. To me, it's always been, yes, I can play these things, and I can pretty much play anything you throw at me. But I would never call myself that because I've always felt that there's loads of people out there that are much better than I am, and it was that sort of feeling, but now it's like, I can compete, I can get back involved and do a good job.

[00:33:41] - Researcher
So what would you call yourself on that advert?

[00:33:48] - Participant
[Laughs] Vocalist. I would actually go as far as to say skilled vocalist.

[00:33:50] - Researcher

Fantastic. How's that change from how you described yourself before the session?

[00:33:58] - Participant

Oh yeah.

[00:34:02] - Researcher

What did you use to label yourself as?

[00:34:06] - Participant

A learning vocalist.

[00:34:07] - Researcher

A learning vocalist?

[00:34:09] - Participant

And still am, but to a much higher degree. I think. Because when we do our sessions now, you always ask me, what do I want to sing? What do I want to learn next? And I always kind of throw it back to you, because if it was left to me, I would - I usually get stuck in a rut and sing the same things all the time. So you come up with all these interesting things I've never heard of before. Like the Hozier one. Yes, I've heard the song, but not thought anything about it. And to actually sing that, it's like, really? When I went home and listened to it, it was like, wow, this is some sort of range and dynamics about it - a tough one, but yeah, you've made me feel that I can tackle these things and you throw these things at me because you know that I can do them. And to me, that goes a long way where if I came to you with a song, would I be able to do it? Or would you say that that's beyond you? You wouldn't, because you would get me to do it. I know you would. You would do anything that I'd ask you. Can we do this song? Yes, you can do it. But I like the songs you come up with because they're more challenging than anything I know, because I'm stuck back in, 70s, 80s, if you like. Not that I don't listen to anything now, but it's knowing - not what is good, but what is relevant, what is useful in terms of vocalising that.

[00:36:35] - Researcher

Bringing it back to coaching.

[00:36:37] - Participant

Yes. Sorry.

[00:36:37] - Researcher

That's all right! Bring it back to coaching. It's very easy to get - to move from the singing to the coaching. I know about this is an identity thing, but we could also talk about the fact that do you feel like you would avoid challenging repertoire now?

[00:36:56] - Participant

No.

[00:36:58] - Researcher

Do you think that you would have avoided challenging repertoire? If we look back, would you have avoided challenging repertoire?

[00:37:06] - Participant

There would be certain songs, yeah, that I would listen to them. And think, no, I couldn't do that.

[00:37:15] - Researcher

And do you think that coaching has helped you take on challenging repertoire?

[00:37:19] - Participant

Oh, yeah, big time.

[00:37:22] - Researcher

How has it helped you to take on challenge repertoire?

[00:37:27] - Participant

I think I've said before - it's categorised things for me, whatever barriers I'm up against maybe singing a certain song. Why can't you do that? You've been for coaching lessons for like, a year now, and you know how to do these things, and that removes a lot. And then when we're doing this, it's like that thought is kind of still there in the back of my head, whereas you're still putting that barrier up, because you're telling yourself that you can't do it. Why can't you do it? That's a fault that's gone now. What's your next barrier you're going to put up? It's like fighting different things and things that don't even matter. It was just thoughts from old that you can only sing these sort of things. But you've shown me that [...]

[00:38:34] - Researcher

Do you feel like the way that you used to identify as musician was limiting you?

[00:38:41] - Participant

Yeah, I'd always listen to many different things, and [...] as an instrumentalist, there's always different genres that I'd love to have played and attempted to, but only to a fashion. So I'd always stuck with what I'd known, um pop, rock, soft rock, which is fine, um [...] but now I'm finding myself playing different things, singing different things. It's opened up so many different avenues, if you like. Whereas I would see different adverts and they would list songs. And it's like, okay, I can sing that, even if it's something that I know, like listening to I've known but not sang before. Yeah, I could do that. It's no big deal. I can do that.

[00:39:58] - Researcher

Great. Have I asked this already? What have you learned about yourself as a musician through coaching?

[00:40:13] - Participant

Yeah. Because I think we cover it as we go along.

[00:40:15] - Researcher

Yeah, I'm losing my thread a little bit. Do you feel that ACC has helped you in this shift in your musical identity, or do you feel like it's helped you shift in musical identity?

[00:40:31] - Participant

Yeah, it's been a slow shift because of getting used to what I've been learning um [...] and I'm still processing it all as we go along. But lots of things have become easier, whereas there was [...] there were songs that I wouldn't attempt because of the old thoughts. No, you cannot sing that. But now it's like, yes, you can sing it. Okay. There might be notes that you'd struggle to get to, but then that's technique. In terms of removing those thoughts and those barriers and categorising them, they're not important. It's like getting rid of that old me, if you like. It's like, yeah, you can do this. I'm sure there will be songs that I will come across that are totally beyond me. I might need to pick one, actually, just to prove to myself that, no, I can't do that.

[00:41:55] - Researcher

That's interesting, 'getting rid of the old me'.

[00:42:00] - Participant

It is, it really is. There was, like, thoughts of a train of thought before where I would [...] I started my own band on my brother. As I told you, I've been in bands before where they needed a guitarist to fill in or someone was on holiday. And that's fine, and I would do that, but it was always the same kind of genre and I would chuck in some backing vocals and things like that, but always kind of stayed in a background type of thing, which kind of suited me. And it was like, okay, stand over here, play a few chords, sing a few bits and pieces. Um [...] But now it's like - I was never the archetypal type of lead guitarist, like, hey, look at me. It's like, yeah, I'm playing lead guitar, but don't look at me! You look at me, I'm going to mess up. But now it's like [...] vocal only? Yeah, listen to me, I can do this. And I hope that I can bring people along with that energy, with that confidence.

[00:43:23] - Researcher

Wonderful. So I asked you this question in the first interview, I'm going to ask you again now. So some people might differentiate between a singer being a singer and being a musician. What do you think?

[00:43:42] - Participant

Differentiate between being a singer and being a musician. I think all singers are musicians, whether they can play instruments or not. Their instrument is their voice. And I've always felt that anyway. I've always admired singers.

[00:44:03] - Researcher

Has - Doing these coaching sessions last six weeks, has that helped solidify that or change that identity in any way?

[00:44:12] - Participant

It's certainly enforced it. What I've always thought um [...] Again, there's different genres and different ways that people sing. And obviously, everybody has their own taste on what they do and what they listen to, but certainly it's opened up um [...] not what I listen to, but a better appreciation of what they're doing. It's like, yeah, I understand what he's doing there. It's more difficult than he's making it. And you kind of listen to stuff now. Yeah. Even the things you thought were simple.

[00:45:25] - Researcher

Has it made you appreciate singers more?

[00:45:27] - Participant

Oh, big time. Yeah, I always did appreciate them. But I appreciate them more. Even ones that I thought were [...] just singing and rattling off a few songs. When you sort of go to go for it yourself you think, okay. Yeah. That makes you appreciate people more, I think, just trying to sing the songs that they're singing.

[00:46:07] - Researcher

What is a 'proper' vocalist? Would you see that as an identity now or has that shifted? That proper vocalist image?

[00:46:17] - Participant

I think vocalists fit into the style that they're playing. And I don't really mean that in cover bands, I mean that in professional terms where like Oasis Queen, those - their voices fit what they do, which is probably part of them writing their own songs. So they're writing to suit themselves and that is their sound and there's nothing wrong with that at all. I forgot where this was (...)

[00:46:53] - Researcher

So we were talking about whether or not you see that label as proper vocalist, as an identity now or if it's changed.

[00:47:10] - Participant

It's changed because I appreciate vocalists more, especially becoming a vocalist-only now. Whereas before I just used to be the guy playing a guitar but used to sing - to a fashion. But now it's like so much more in depth. And [...] I do appreciate more now what vocalists actually do and what they go through. It's not so much being a proper vocalist. It's being very [...] very skilled, I suppose. Well, definitely it's very skilled, um [...] but there's a lot more to it than what I expected.

[00:48:16] - Researcher

Do you feel that the acceptance and commitment coaching has helped you identify with your own voice more? [...] So the things that you've learned from coaching, has it helped you consider what kind of vocalist you are, how you would identify?

[00:48:52] - Participant

Yeah, because - I come back to the mistakes thing where, yes, I'd make mistakes and still do, but knowing how to get past them now and see them for what they are. So it makes me sound like myself rather than trying to emulate somebody else. And that's another transition for me because I never knew what I sounded like. So going forward with that, I kind of make a mistake because I'm not singing like them, because I'm singing like me. And that's fine because I'm finding my own identity with singing like me. And yes, there are mistakes, but now I'm singing with proper technique, whereas before it was like just belting a song out because I could.

[00:50:03] - Researcher

Even without the technique, just thinking about the coaching rather than the singing stuff, you feel like it's - what I'm hearing is you feel like it's kind of solidified your own vocal identity -

[00:50:23] - Participant

Yeah. And as I say, me getting used to myself, how I actually sound, has thrown up mistakes because I don't know now how to sing that. [laugh] It's a weird feeling. But making those mistakes is like, it's okay, I made that mistake. And then I go into grounding, which is great for me, it helps me get past it. And then, depending on what kind of mistake it was, if it's like a thing where I need to practice, that's fine, yes, I'll go back and practice that bit. But if it's a thing where nine times out of ten, I would sing that probably it was just one of those days, I can differentiate between that now and put that into certain categories that, yes, that was a mistake, I don't usually make that mistake. It's fine, you go and sing it again a couple of days later. It doesn't happen. It doesn't even enter your head that that's happened. Yes, it's happened, but it's like, move on, push it to one side. Yes, it happened. Just accept it.

[00:51:54] - Researcher

If you had the option to be singing with or without your instrument now, what would you choose?

[00:52:01] - Participant

I'd certainly choose without now because I kind of like the idea of being a vocalist only.

[00:52:08] - Researcher

Has there been a shift in that since we've done the coaching sessions?

[00:52:17] - Participant

Yeah, mainly because it's made me feel that I don't need something in front of me, like a security blanket, if you like. It's opened my mind to things like, why do you need that? Even if it wasn't plugged

in. It wasn't plugged in. Why would you need something in front of it? You don't. Get involved with the vocal side of it only, and that is your instrument, so explore that. And in doing that, it's like you kind of forget that there isn't anything in front of you because you're not concentrating so hard to do a performance. It's like you want to do a great performance and you know how to do it, so you don't need anything in front of you to do that, to get that across.

[00:53:22] - Researcher

And has that changed? Before we started the coaching sessions did you still feel the need to have something in front of you?

[00:53:29] - Participant

Yeah. Even coming here and just standing there, you probably saw how awkward I've been. I'd say back in the day, it was only about three years ago, like before COVID and stuff, where I used to go regular karaoke, but even then it was like, used to shut me eyes a lot. Nobody exists and I'm just going to sing this song and get off.

[00:54:03] - Researcher

Do you notice now what all of those past behaviours were?

[00:54:07] - Participant

Yeah, I think now if - I say if - when I go back to karaoke, as a small step to singing back in front of people, it would be getting the mic away from me afterwards [laugh]

[00:54:29] - Researcher

Great. So would you consider yourself able to separate your personal identity from your musical identity?

[00:54:41] - Participant

Define personal identity?

[00:54:45] - Researcher

I think we spoke about this in session, so if you think about people who, if something goes wrong in a performance, they would take it on a personal level rather than leaving that with their musical identity. So do you feel able to separate your personal identity from that musical identity?

[00:55:11] - Participant

Yeah, it's easy to say yes, and obviously, once I get back into it, that would happen, but I would know how to deal with that now on a musical level, rather than letting it get to me and thinking somebody said that and that's going to mess me up. But it's not anymore. It's like yeah that happened. Musically, I can get past that.

[00:55:45] - Researcher

Do you feel like that's changed since the coaching sessions?

[00:55:49] - Participant

Yeah, I'm not sure if we covered it in this session, but I heard somebody say about bass playing, because I was a bass player at one point, and it was like a derogatory term that they'd used, and that kind of got to me and that stayed with me for a long time. And coming back into these sessions, it's thrown up lots of different things, good and bad, of things that I've remembered, and that was one of them. But now it's like, okay, I'm standing here playing and you're sitting there, even if you're a musician, what are you doing on Saturday night? You're sitting there watching me. What does that tell you?

[00:56:35] - Researcher

So would you say that ACC has helped you separate performance from the personal?

[00:56:41] - Participant

Yeah, because it gives me the tools to deal with that and push it into a musical perspective rather than hanging onto it. It allows me to bypass it, if you like, and not hang on to it for years.

[00:57:06] - Researcher

We're going to talk a bit about performance anxiety now and see if we can get some examples of any improvement that you might have felt. So how would you describe your performance anxiety now? Having gone through six sessions coaching.

[00:57:34] - Participant

I think I'm a more confident vocalist [...] because of finding out about me and how to deal with different things that would crop up and will crop up. So it's having those tools and knowing what to do with them at the certain times that things would happen. Like we said, if you're doing live performance, you make a mistake. I know where to go with that. I think we spoke about before, as you get ten people, nine people say, yes, that was fantastic. One person says, mmm, but now it's like - I would have dwelled on that back in time. Now it's like, okay, you can't please all the people all the time. That's fine, you don't have to be liked by everybody, and that's kind of impossible anyway.

[00:58:44] - Researcher

So my next question was, does that differ in how you describe your performance anxiety in the past? And you've given us a little insight into that, but if we spoke about levels, maybe if you were high, moderate or mild, what would you have considered your anxiety in the past?

[00:59:09] - Participant

Performing?

[00:59:10] - Researcher

Yeah, performance anxiety.

[00:59:17] - Participant

It did always depend on where we played that had a big thing to do with it, and if it was the first time we was playing at a certain place, the anxiety was quite high because obviously you want to get asked back because that is why you do it. But when we played a place where they asked us back the anxiety isn't there because I think part of it is because they know what to expect, they know what we're about and if it's like a club you get the same clientele back down there. So obviously the reason we got asked back is because they liked us, not because the club liked us, because obviously if the club likes you, people just stop turning up because [...] I don't want to listen to them.

[01:00:20] - Researcher

So if we think about recent past so if you think about before the sessions, before the six sessions and say you were doing your practice or you were at a jam with your rehearsal band, how high would your performance anxiety have been in practicing or rehearsals? Think about [...] kind of the apprehension of mistakes or other people here. So we know now that it takes in all these different elements. So what would your level have been?

[01:01:01] - Participant

At first, when we first started doing that, the rehearsals, it was very high.

[01:01:09] - Researcher

What would you consider it now after doing the six sessions? Has there been any change?

[01:01:19] - Participant

Yeah, it's like low to medium now [...] and it's a hard one to put my finger on properly, um [...] but I think it's the breakdown of the barriers that's happened and it's made me realise that [...] you're doing it from a musician's point of view rather than being personal about it and getting all worked up about it. From that point of view, when it's been put into, like, a musician perspective, I can see the way - I can see where I'm going with it. And so you become more professional? If that makes sense? In the way, certainly the way I approach things now. And it's like - looking for bands, it's like I can see what they do from professional musicians point of view. Yes, I can do that. That is not a problem.

[01:02:42] - Researcher

So could you give me a specific example of how your performance anxiety might have changed? Is there a specific occasion or an event or something that happens in practice, anything that you feel has changed over the last six weeks?

[01:03:02] - Participant

I think I have more confidence to attempt anything now, whereas before, it was like old thoughts tell you that, no, you can't do that, because - you might not have even attempted it before. But in my head, it's like, I could never see that. But now it's like [...] asking myself questions of, well, you always wanted to sing that song. Why can't you sing that song? All the kind of barrier type things come up and it's like, well, you can't see that because and then you analyse that thought and it's like, really? That's a thing?

[01:03:54] - Researcher

Yeah.

[01:03:55] - Participant

Then it's like it's not even an acceptance sometimes. It's like, what are you doing to yourself? What's that all about? And there are some things that you think about and, okay I accept that, but that's not going to stop me from doing that, because I understand what that barrier is. That's fine, that's good.

[01:04:23] - Researcher

So, in terms of performance anxiety, if you think back to before your sessions, how did performance anxiety differ in a vocal only situation to you performing with an instrument and singing? How did they differ? If you think back to before we did any acceptance and commitment work, how was your performance anxiety differing?

[01:04:56] - Participant

Jumbled. Um [...] with the rehearsal band - because that's kind of my recent thing before. It was like I had very little input in the songs that we were doing, and some of the songs that were being thrown at me, I think out of maybe ten of them, I might have known two or three.

[01:05:31] - Researcher

And how did you feel in terms of anxiety when you would sing, just sing. And when you would sing with the instrument? And was there any difference?

[01:05:43] - Participant

Big difference, massive difference, but in a positive way.

[01:05:52] - Researcher

How much anxiety was there - did there used to be around you singing with an instrument?

[01:06:01] - Participant

Very little, because I had something else to do, something else to concentrate on as well. But I found that was kind of detrimental to actually being a vocalist.

[01:06:15] - Researcher

So how did that differ to them recently, before we did our sessions, how did that differ? How you used to feel when they asked you to just sing?

[01:06:29] - Participant

At first it was really odd, because I've never been in that position, like in a rehearsal room where I've not had anything to play or anything to do. Um [...] And it's like the Death Cab for Cutie one, which was the very first one. You always remember the first one.

[01:06:53] - Researcher

Yeah, of course. It's quite recent.

[01:06:58] - Participant

I'd never heard of a song before, and so we did it down there and I related to the song in a big way, so when we first did it, I put the bass down and I would go and sit down with a microphone. So I was almost squirrelling myself away in the corner somewhere um [...] and almost breaking down the very first time I sang it down there. But after learning how to deal with those thoughts [...]

[01:07:39] - Researcher

Now we're talking about we've done the sessions. So now, if you think about that same situation. How is that different? Do you squirrel yourself away?

[01:07:51] - Participant

No, the last time we went down there was I think I told you about two, three, two - it was recent - and yes, we did that and I was happy to do more of not playing an instrument, but just more vocalising and there was a different dynamic last time we went down there. The guy I know and his dad went down there, so we were doing lots of songs that we all knew and it was just a case of he was looking on his phone do you know this one? Because he was just like reading chords of songs that he knew. I said, yes, I know that one. I used to get the words up, but I was quite happy to put the bass down as much as possible and thinking this don't need that - because we never had a drummer anyway, it's never going to sound full, so we do an acoustic version of it. Even if I had it there, it was just I'm not playing it because I want to get a better performance rather than split myself between. So I was quite happy to even put it down on a few songs that I did play the bass on before. We're just rehearsed we're not going anywhere. What would it sound like without that? Because the bass without the drums behind it sounds strange songs. Just put that down. I was quite happy to stand in and sing these songs.

[01:09:46] - Researcher

Do you feel there's less anxious apprehension around doing things like that or just going ahead and playing a new song?

[01:10:04] - Participant

Yeah [...] I'm not so [...] not so worked up about doing new stuff. Because I think I've got the confidence now to [...] Even if you threw something at me and said learn this within the next ten minutes, I'd take it all in and just do it and that wouldn't worry me - yes I'd make mistakes because I've never heard it before maybe, but let's go for it.

[01:10:37] - Researcher

Do you feel like your performance anxiety affects your memory as much in terms of learning new pieces?

[01:10:50] - Participant
That's interesting -

[01:10:51] - Researcher
Because I know this has been something that's come up in our sessions and I think in our original interview as well. Do you feel like it's improved in that sense?

[01:11:20] -Participant
Sorry, can we recap on?

[01:11:22] - Researcher
Yes. I was asking if you feel like - so we spoke about how you're performing anxiety and that anxiousness about making mistakes might make you forget parts of songs or - because you just mentioned there about you felt, yeah, I can learn this in ten minutes. Do you feel like that's been a change? Do you feel like that's changed at all because of the coaching?

[01:11:51] - Participant
That has changed. To me the anxiety and confidence were kind of like that all the time. [holding hands together]

[01:12:04] - Researcher
And he's bringing his hands together.

[01:12:06] - Participant
Yes. They get hold of each other and there is no differentiation between anything. But now it's like, I know why the anxiety is there and I can use it more. But the confidence of being a more skilled - I won't say properly skilled, because I don't want to use the p word, but a more skilled vocalist has kind of taken over and put me in a musician's head rather than this is anxiety.

[01:12:48] - Researcher
Do you feel like you can trust your memory more now?

[01:13:01] - Participant
Um [...] That's a really interesting one, because even before, I think I told you I was in our own band, I think at one point we had about 80 songs that we could choose from, but there was no way that I was ever going to remember all the lyrics to all those songs. So I always used to have like a stand and the things were there. Um [...] Could I do it now? I've not actually been in that position, but when we've been doing the rehearsing, I kind of fell back on [...] I fell back on the old things that I used to do, where I had a booklet with the lyrics in there, because to me, reading it from a phone was very small anyway, and I didn't want the song to fall over, even though we were just rehearsing it, because I couldn't remember lyrics. That's a silly thing to me. But moving forward, if I got into a band, it would be something to be reckoned with, I think, um [...] because even when I'm singing on the app, the things are in front of the lyrics, in front of me, too. You don't have to worry about going wrong, it's just getting a good performance. I think I'd have to get back into that position, but I'd like to know that when I get back into a band, say they've got 20, 25 songs, that I could do those songs without any prompts. I think for my own benefit, I might have them there, but probably not even look at them. It's just like a security thing.

[01:15:10] - Researcher
Do you feel more confident in going forward and thinking you won't have to lean on them as much?

[01:15:16] - Participant

Yeah, there's some I've seen now on the app and even some that we've seen in rehearsal. I told you, I went with my brother and his son. We did some stuff and there was songs that he was just doing and stuff that I knew backwards. I wasn't even looking at the lyrics. I was like, yeah, because I knew, obviously, you know them. And I think we discussed last week in the session, not this session, but the other one it's the song you sing [...] every day, if you like, and all of a sudden is that one time that you're live and it's like, what's that first line? Once you get past the first line, everything else, it's like, yeah.

[01:16:08] - Researcher

So does that make you fear it, or do you feel more comfortable with the idea of, yeah, I forget that line, but I can move forward?

[01:16:18] - Participant

I think that's another technique, but I'd like to get to a stage where I don't have to rely on having things in front of me, because to me, that's a backward step where I've got a stand now in front of me with lyrics on it. So instead of like a keyboard or a guitar, it's something else there.

[01:16:43] - Researcher

Yeah.

[01:16:44] - Participant

It's like, I don't want to do that and I don't want to do that anymore. I want it to be in here.

[01:16:51] - Researcher

But it's in stages.

[01:16:55] - Participant

It is in stages. And it's not until I think now that I've gone through this course, when I get to that stage, I won't know properly how I'm going to react to having that memory.

[01:17:10] - Researcher

And you might react and is that a problem?

[01:17:15] - Participant

It's not a problem, no.

[01:17:20] - Researcher

We accept it and we work with it, with the skills and space that we've learnt and we move forward.

[01:17:27] - Participant

I've even forgotten things, like we were just messing about. You get to the second verse, but you'd make stuff up or sing the first verse again, you get through it, it doesn't matter.

[01:17:42] - Researcher

So tell me now, how does the idea of vocal any performance make you feel now?

[01:17:53] - Participant

I can't wait.

[01:17:55] - Researcher

That's so lovely to hear!

[01:17:57] - Participant

Seriously, before um [...] this course aside, just for the moment, when I was coming here, I was so [...] didn't know what to expect. It's just me being judged by my voice. But you never did that and you knew how to handle anything that I was doing. And that was so good to me because this is my first venture of actually having any sort of instruction on any musical level, because I've always taught myself different things. I've got lots of bad habits, but even guitar playing, keyboard playing, I've got lots of bad habits I know, but again, I play songs and they sound like they're supposed to sound like, so I'm not worried about that. But now coming here has given me the confidence to, yes, you can sing these songs and you can sing them damn well. Now doing this course and having more tools to know what to do about different thoughts about um [...] my biggest one is mistakes. I beat myself up constantly. I used to beat myself up constantly. You've gone wrong on that. But now it's like, yeah, whatever, that was a mistake. You probably would never do that one again anyway, because you didn't do it before, but before I beat myself up about it.

[01:20:05] - Researcher

So you're excited now about vocal only performance, being a vocalist and identifying as a vocalist?

[01:20:13] - Participant

Yeah, I think that's the biggest thing. Before I was a guitarist that had to do the singing because nobody else wanted to take it on. Okay? Yeah, I did it. I did it to a fashion. It was fine. We got gigs out of it and people got into it, mostly they liked it and everything. Fine. But now it's like, yes, I can be a vocalist only, I can do that. And not only that, I'm excited about doing that, yes, I'm going to be apprehensive about it for the first time because it's like the first time you do stuff and being in the band, getting into a band and doing that only it will be like finding my feet again. I always used to like, I was in a friends band for quite a while and the stages you had, like, in clubs, are all kind of tiny, as you know, but occasionally we used to play a place where you get a big stage and you could move about a bit. And I always used to like messing about and running about, so I don't think just standing static being a vocalist only now would be a problem because I would certainly move about. I wouldn't be a Liam Gallagher, hands behind the back.

[01:21:51] - Researcher

So would you consider yourself willing to perform in a vocal situation in spite of your anxiety? So in spite of feeling that anxious apprehension, would you feel willing to perform as a vocalist?

[01:22:06] - Participant

Yeah.

[01:22:08] - Researcher

And has that changed?

[01:22:09] - Participant

That has changed.

[01:22:13] - Researcher

These are all kind of would you consider would you consider yourself more willing to perform vocally now than prior to your sessions?

[01:22:22] - Participant

Yeah

[01:22:24] - Researcher

We've answered a lot of these anyway, but yeah, I asked you this in the first one, why do you think people may feel more safe and less anxious when they sing with an instrument?

[01:22:45] - Participant

I think - from personal experience, it's having something in front of me as like a barrier if they, like, between you and an audience and having something to do with your hands. But now it's like, for me, it takes away from a vocal performance, whereas I don't now have to concentrate on two different things and not get a decent performance out of either. It's like vocalist only, I can do a damn good job on this song.

[01:23:28] - Researcher

Yeah.

[01:23:30] - Participant

You know where I'm coming from.

[01:23:31] - Researcher

So when you're singing in vocal only situations now, what kind of challenges do you experience? If you experience any challenges.

[01:23:42] - Participant

The challenges being experienced are the different songs.

[01:23:46] - Researcher

So it's more about the repertoire now?

[01:23:47] - Participant

Yeah.

[01:23:48] - Researcher

Than the actual situation of being.

[01:23:54] - Participant

That doesn't enter into it anymore. It's like, what can I sing next? Because you showed me that, yes, you can sing these songs. You shy away from them before but you can sing these songs and it's like, yes, I can sing this song, I'd have to work at it. But your confidence in me has given me big confidence to say, yes, I can do that. What can I sing next? Give me something to do.

[01:24:24] - Researcher

So would you say that are there any performance anxiety challenges that might be around doing a vocal situation or do you feel like they've gone?

[01:24:40] - Participant

At this moment? I feel confident that I can get into a band and do it. Obviously I will do that. I will feel anxiety at first because there's different facts as it's getting back into it again, getting back into it, being a vocalist only and how I'm going to deal with that.

[01:25:10] - Researcher

What challenges do you think might crop up in terms of your performance anxiety? What kind of symptoms?

[01:25:19] - Participant

I'd probably get very nervous.

[01:25:22] - Researcher
Is that the anxious apprehension?

[01:25:24] - Participant
Yeah [...] but it's that old feeling in a good way of knowing that that's what you want to do. So yes, but you can use that in the performance and the um what's the word [...] the excitement that you can generate from that - enthusiasm. That's the word. Even just getting into a band initially, it's like that enthusiasm. I want to do this. Give me a microphone, I want to sing these songs. To me, yes it will be apprehension, but it will be - I want to do it. So it's kind of in the background. It doesn't really come into it now. Yes, it will be there, but the musician type thoughts will be far outweighing the anxiety thoughts. Yes, you can do this. You know how to do that. If that gets too much. As I say, all this is quite new, a new way of thinking to me. And so sometimes it's second nature on, you know, how to deal with that, and sometimes it's like, think about it, what's happening, and then gradually move on and categorise it. That's fine. And I assume that will now become second nature as we go along and you deal with different situations because of that.

[01:27:21] - Researcher
I'm hearing that your challenges have changed from challenges to do the actual performance anxiety of singing, being a vocalist, and they've changed more about - they've changed from being related to performance anxiety, and now the challenges are actually related to, well, how can I achieve my goals? Or how can I push myself further?

[01:27:51] - Participant
Yeah

[01:27:51] - Researcher
Or what's my next song?

[01:27:54] - Participant
Yeah, yeah

[01:27:55] - Researcher
The challenges aren't anxiety related?

[01:27:59] - Participant
No.

[01:28:00] - Researcher
They're not moves away, they're move towards? So you're looking for the challenges?

[01:28:06] - Participant
Yeah. Musically.

[01:28:07] - Researcher
Rather than pushing away anxious challenges?

[01:28:13] - Participant
Yeah, definitely.

[01:28:17] - Researcher
We've probably already gone through this. We've covered a lot of things anyway. But when I ask these different questions in different ways, it can throw up different ways of you saying things or

different memories. Do you feel able and willing to perform in spite of any performance anxiety challenges that may come up now?

[01:28:45] - Participant

This is one of the questions, isn't it, as well, on the questionnaires. Yeah, I think I can, because, again, it's coming back to the tools and knowing how to deal with those certain things that would crop up, and some of them I won't know, and that was where some of those questions were more difficult for me to answer. Not being in the position of actually giggling and being in that area.

[01:29:20] - Researcher

Because you're in a transition?

[01:29:23] - Participant

Yeah. Once I get to that, yes, that will pop up, but that's when everything else will kick in, so, we've covered this. That's where that comes into it now. And I found - talking about the questionnaire - I surprised myself with some of the answers that I gave.

[01:29:43] - Researcher

Okay, that'd be interesting - in a positive way or -?

[01:29:49] - Participant

Yeah! But hopefully you'll give me feedback on that last set of questions. To say if that was true or not. Because sometimes I get caught up in what I'm reading and how I'm feeling at that moment, especially that one over the last week. There's one set of questions there as you're feeling now, if this came up right now - that is difficult because it makes you think about now. It's happening to you now.

[01:30:24] - Researcher

Self report can be very biased as well because of everything else is going on in your life. Which is why we're doing both the qualitative and the quantitative - you know, you sitting across and talking to me because we've discussed all the experiences and the changes that you've had.

[01:30:41] - Participant

Because reading the question, I [...] I was trying to distance myself and be honest [...] with myself. Because sometimes you read a question and you think, mm I'll just sugarcoat that one. To me, I was trying to - that's how I feel now, because that's the question. What are you feeling now at this moment? Over the last week and this week was different because I had different things to concentrate on, like getting this bit of paint right. But in doing that, we were still listening to music through like a little speaker and stuff. And my son's girl, she was playing different stuff. And it's like, I know this one. It was in the back of my head, I kind of heard that before. And it's like, I could sing that I'd like to. And so I had different things um, going on this week, but the music was still constant through it.

[01:32:01] - Researcher

So bring us back to talking about performance anxiety. Do you feel like you're able to overcome performance and barriers that were there before?

[01:32:11] - Participant

Yes.

[01:32:12] - Researcher

Could you give an example of a barrier that you're able to overcome.

[01:32:19] - Participant

I told you, obviously I haven't got to the stage -

[01:32:21] - Researcher

So maybe even in practice, so we can talk about mistakes, but what are the performance barriers were there?

[01:32:28] - Participant

It was the big one where people were listening. So aware of people listening to me next door, even though they might not have even been in. And it's like I'd make a mistake or I built something out and my voice would croak on something and okay, let's not do that again. Let's do some softer songs. I think I told you last time, I was rehearsing the song and it was like, it wasn't happening, I wasn't getting it right. But I did it again at the same level, the same song. It was like, yeah, that was better. But I could do better. And I went into it again, and it was just like, not that I didn't care, but I didn't worry about if people could hear me or not. It was like, okay, they can hear me, so what? They think it's good, I'll charge them [laugh] It was that sort of feeling. I think that's thrown up another slight anxiety of repetition, whereas - I've heard people play a song and they're trying to get it right, and then they play it again, and after about the fourth or fifth time, it's like, just play something else to just break it. And that kind of threw that up again. So, even to give myself a rest from that song, I would go and sing something else. It could still be loud. But I'd go and sing something else and come back to it again, and then find that my voice may have warmed up a bit more towards that song and I'd sing it better. So I didn't only worry about repetition of doing - yes I would do it a few times at first, but then it's like when you're learning a song on keyboard or something, you learn part of it. Instead of getting frustrated, you just learn parts, different bits, and go back to it. For me, like 20 minutes bursts are adequate on an instrument.

[01:34:42] - Researcher

So has there been a change in your actions, in your practicing?

[01:34:46] - Participant

Yeah, it's like I would just go at it.

[01:34:51] - Researcher

So you're not afraid of repetition anymore?

[01:34:54] - Participant

No.

[01:34:55] - Researcher

You're not afraid of making mistakes?

[01:34:58] - Participant

The only time. No, not at all.

[01:35:00] - Researcher

Or other people listening in?

[01:35:05] - Participant

That does affect me sometimes - I think it's how I'm feeling, but it doesn't affect me half as much as it used to. It's not right at the front here anymore, it's like - they can hear me, but this is what I want to do.

[01:35:26] - Researcher

So, I mean, all of these are examples about how your MPA has improved, but can you give me a specific example about how your MPA has improved?

[01:35:39] - Participant

That's a difficult one, just to pinpoint an area, because even going through this, there's many different factors to all kind of dance around each other, if you like.

[01:35:54] - Researcher

Yeah. It's all interlinked.

[01:35:56] - Participant

Yeah. And to pick.

[01:36:00] - Researcher

You've just give me a couple of examples.

[01:36:02] - Participant

Yeah. To me, the biggest one was mistakes. I think my next challenge, I suppose, if you want to put it that way, would be to go back to the end of the garden, where I know damn well people can hear me if they're out in their gardens or because it's just a wooden structure, whereas it's not a brick built house. So I'm going to get back out of there and start to belt songs out from there and see how I feel. It's kind of my next challenge, if you like, personal challenge to do that.

[01:36:44] - Researcher

But do you feel willing to take that challenge on?

[01:36:47] - Participant

I do, and it's only happened once before, where I was down there and I was in a rock mode. I just wanted to belt stuff out because I could, and I was belting these songs out and I could hear people three gardens away like summertime, and they were just talking. I can hear you, you must well hear me belting this out and it didn't worry me. And that only it happened really once. There's some other times it's like I can hear someone, do some softer songs.

[01:37:29] - Researcher

Do you think it'll come more that you don't worry about it now?

[01:37:34] - Participant

I think it will. I'm definitely hoping it will, but I think it will because things are sounding good now as well. I think that's a big part of it. But even now, going down there and doing songs that I wouldn't normally do and yes, I would go wrong, I'd accept that because I know that that's the first time I've done it. Yeah, okay, it went wrong. Let's do it again, and I wouldn't worry about it. I'll do it the same level.

[01:38:08] - Researcher

My last set of questions is all about coaching. Throwing the same questions out and seeing if we get different responses, how is coaching being beneficial to you?

[01:38:26] - Participant

This coaching?

[01:38:27] - Researcher

Yeah.

[01:38:32] - Participant

Again, it's mainly categorised areas where there was all jumbled before, and it's made me separate them, and in separating them, it's thrown up - Now you've got that one there, that one there. That one's not important at all. That's just a stupid thought and it's not even an acceptance thing. It's like, what are you doing to yourself? You know? And something like, yeah, okay, that's a valid thought. Is it important to what you're doing? Is it relevant? No, it's like, accept it, move on. And some of them will still be there, but able to work around them.

[01:39:22] - Researcher

That's good. What is the most useful tool that you've taken away from our coaching session?

[01:39:33] - Participant

I think it is the splitting of all the thoughts.

[01:39:40] - Researcher

So we're talking about defusion?

[01:39:41] - Participant

Yeah.

[01:39:42] - Researcher

And being able to see it as a thought? Or I noticed I had the feeling, I noticed I had the urge is that what -

[01:39:52] - Participant

Yeah. Whereas before all those thoughts and emotions and everything, they would all be jumbled. Yeah. And then it just throws up all the barriers. And I don't even think past that like before. But now I know how to differentiate between what's going on and separate that and see these thoughts for what they are. Some of them, yes. That's just a thought. Is that relevant to what you're doing? And that's a big skill for me. That's the biggest thing for me, to notice it now. And as I say, hopefully, well, I know these things will become second nature, but it's recognising it now. It's okay, that doesn't matter.

[01:40:52] - Researcher

Can you give an example of how I mean, we would give an example of how coaching has changed your approach to music? When I say coaching, I mean -

[01:41:14] - Participant

Um [...] yeah [...] It's made me less anxious and more confident about what I could achieve and will achieve. And what I mean by that is that I go back to what we said at the beginning of this session before I would yes, I want to get into a band and it sounds great. Would I do anything about it? Probably not. You know, I go down rehearsal for a bit of fun, that's great. With my brother, that's great. But now it's like I can do that and the anxiety is much less. And I know it will be there when I actually contact a band, like the initial phone call or something. But it's something I will do and I want to do because I'm getting excited about being just a vocalist, being - and I don't mean that in a derogatory way!

[01:42:21] - Researcher

Oh no, being able to focus on the vocals and having that new identity?

[01:42:25] - Participant

And putting songs across, because I know I can do it.

[01:42:30] - Researcher

So you're excited about this new identity? That's what I'm hearing [both laugh] Can you describe the importance of mindfulness.

[01:42:42] - Participant

To me? That's putting things into perspective. Yeah. What's important to where I want to go and lots of things are not important. And that kind of shocked me, I think, at first, because it's the old school thinking of - you can't do that. Why are you trying to sing that song? It's getting rid of all that [...] crap. Excuse me, but all that sort of stuff.

[01:43:29] - Researcher

What do you feel mindfulness brings to your performance?

[01:43:36] - Participant

A big confidence, much more enjoyment.

[01:43:42] - Researcher

Enjoyment?

[01:43:45] - Participant

Yeah. Much less anxiety. As I say, they kind of got split now.

[01:43:49] - Researcher

Good.

[01:43:50] - Participant

Whereas the confidence and the anxiety would always struggle against each other and nine times out of ten the anxiety would win. But now it's kind of a separation between that and I can identify with that separation. I know when it's happening. Yes, that doesn't need to happen.

[01:44:16] - Researcher

Do you feel more present in your singing now?

[01:44:21] - Participant

Mmm. Yeah, I feel like I can tackle things now without getting up tight about certain areas, as I would before. And now it's like you can do that. That's the feeling that yes, you can do that.

[01:44:48] - Researcher

Can you describe flow?

[01:44:54] - Participant

I think we said it before where it's happened to me not often. A couple of times where I'm totally in the moment. And [...] there could be two people. There could be a hundred people, a thousand people, and it's like nobody exists. Because I'm just [...] I'm just in my own world, and it's all sounding good. And I'm not worried about anything because I know this is what I want to do. This is where I'm going. An example I think is best. I'm not sure if I told you this one. We was out - I used to work in a school and all the staff - some of the staff was there in the pub. It was karaoke night and I was singing the Journey song and I start singing it and I didn't have my eyes properly - I was just focusing on something away from everything. And to me it was sounded really good. Everything was on form. And I just got myself lost in the first verse and chorus and really lost myself in it to the point where I didn't even know that, where I was type of thing. And then came the small instrumental section and I made

the mistake of opening my eyes and all of a sudden I see lots of cameras pointed, phone cameras pointed at me. And it's like, you're doing this?! I carried on the performance on the strength of what it was sounding like, carried me through the rest of it. And it was all of a certain standard. And I think even that it was like an anxiety at first. And it was like, well, obviously they think this is only good, otherwise they wouldn't be filming it unless they think it sounded really bad in which case it gets posted on YouTube. But that wasn't the case!

[01:47:23] - Researcher

In that example, you were able to notice the present, noticing the positives more than the anxiety in that situation. Would you consider yourself more present and more likely to experience flow now? Now that we've had the coaching sessions?

[01:47:44] - Participant

Yeah, I think, yes is the answer to that.

[01:47:49] - Researcher

Do you feel flow more in your practice?

[01:47:53] - Participant

I do! I do get lost. Obviously it's only me singing at home, but I do get lost in what I am singing now. Mostly. If I'm practising a certain song, the flow isn't there as much because you're trying to get things right. But once I'm comfortable with that, there was a song, I can't remember what it was called, it was the Jekyll and Hyde song. Yeah, that did it for me at one point. Whereas when you suggested that it's like, I can't sing a show tune to save my life. Come on, what are you doing? And getting into that and getting all the parts right, and now I still singing at home, I really lose myself in that sometimes and I get to the end of it and I'm doing that big long note at the end and it's like, I could come on further with this. It really ends that quickly? But I - sort of songs like that where I totally enjoy singing those now because before I shied away from them, I can't do something as big as that. Yes. Now I know how to sing them and know what to do should things start faltering halfway through it's like, yes, you can sing through that and you can get to that second part and get lost in stuff.

[01:49:31] - Researcher

And find your way back to flow?

[01:49:32] - Participant

Oh, yeah.

[01:49:35] - Researcher

That's lovely. So would you know what I mean now if I said avoidance and acceptance?

[01:49:44] - Participant

Yeah, as I said, this is very new to me and I'm still learning to [...] know when I'm avoiding something. I'm recognising it more now because I know that as soon as there's a certain thing that happens up here and it's like, hang on, you're not accepting that, you're just bypassing it, you're just pushing it to one side, it's not going away, you're not even considering what that's telling you. And I'm recognising that more now, whereas before it would just be a thing and it would become a big thing.

[01:50:35] - Researcher

When we avoid something, it keeps coming back -

[01:50:36] - Participant

Yes, exactly. Yes. As I say, it's going to take me a while to get all these things in here to use properly. And a lot of things, as I say, will develop as I get into different situations, like getting into a band and

things like even just going karaoke again after all this time, a lot of these things will kick in. But even just talking about it now, it's like I'm kind of getting excited about it.

[01:51:14] - Researcher

Fantastic. Would you be able to explain the difference between fusion and defusion?

[01:51:22] - Participant

Yeah, as I said before, the terminology is new to me, most of it, but yeah, defusing things is another big thing to me. Whereas before I would let it take hold and I wouldn't know what to do with it, but now it's like, hang on, hold that from a distance. What is it? What is it? What is it telling you? It's not relevant to what you're doing and you can just accept that. And then it becomes like a background - it's still there, still a background thought, but it's not like taking another and stopping you from doing what you want to do.

[01:52:15] - Researcher

Do you feel like you have a more flexible sense of self?

[01:52:26] - Participant

[...] It's made things clearer [...] and I mean this in a personal way as well now. It was accepting different things and knowing what to do about those and the importance of those things. Something, yes, they're damn important, I need to work through them - musically, I'm talking about, but it has crossed over, but it separates a lot and even when it separates, all of a sudden there's even more separation on the different aspects of how they've panned out, if that makes sense. So instead of being like a jumbled mess, it kind of splits apart and it's like, yes, okay, let's deal with that, and then just dealing with that, that kind of splits apart and most times it diffuses into nothing. It's like, what was the point of that? But obviously the other ones, some of the other ones were like bigger things to deal with. But in separating it, that's not just one big bundle that you can't make head more tail of. So yes, it does [...] I suppose it's more lateral thinking than anything else.

[01:54:16] - Researcher

Do you feel that the ACC has enhanced your performance skills?

[01:54:37] - Participant

It has, because [...] it taught me how to deal with, like, people listening. Does that matter? Like the repetition and that side of things? So, yes, it has affected my performance. If I approach it in a different way, has it affected a performance that I know I can do well? Perhaps.

[01:55:20] - Researcher

Do you feel - in terms of performance enhancements - do you feel ACC has been helpful in terms of offering you more presence?

[01:55:47] - Participant

I would say yes, mainly because [...] it's more of an immediate thing, but it's dealing with things as they happen, like - I keep going back to mistakes. But that's a big thing with me. But knowing now that yes, if I made a mistake, whether I was just passing at home on my own, rehearsing or eventually getting into a band and make a mistake, how to deal with that and not let it overwhelm me, overtake me just seeing it for what it is, defusing it, accepting it, bye bye. Still there. But it doesn't grip me. And I'm constantly thinking about it, which would affect the rest of what I would be singing. It makes me more even in terms of performance, I suppose, if that makes sense.

[01:56:56] - Researcher

Yeah, absolutely. So did you find coaching different than what you expected?

[01:57:03] - Participant

I wasn't sure what to expect, to be honest um [...] When you mentioned about it, it was like why did you open your big mouth and say that?

[01:57:13] - Researcher

[both laugh] He means himself, not me.

[01:57:23] - Participant

And then I went and looked it up as you know, because I - I wanted to know - it's probably just me - I wanted to know kind of what to expect don't like surprises too much.

[01:57:37] - Researcher

Do you think that's to do with anxiety?

[01:57:40] - Participant

Oh yeah, [both laugh] very much so. And some anxiety I know will not go, but I think some of it is good. It's like coming here on a weekly basis sometimes I do get quite anxious about it and sometimes it's like, I can't wait to get there, sing that song. I come in here today, I was here a bit early and I was just listening to some stuff in the car. But that to me, I always got to places, got to gigs early, and I just wanted to know that I was there so I didn't sit in traffic and thinking, ten minutes, I'm not going to be there. Even if I'm there and the place isn't open and I've done that before, but I know I'm there straight away. That relaxes me, because I want to know that I'm there. Once I'm there, it's like, yeah, okay, I've got all this time to set up now. It's not like a big rush. Sometimes you can't avoid that and I've been in that situation as probably you have many times and you just about get there and it's like, I've not got everything set up properly. And you go into the first few songs and your mind is still racing of your journey there or have you got everything? So yes, I don't think that side of anxiety will ever leave me but that's kind of in a good way

[01:59:26] - Researcher

Is it helpful?

[01:59:27] - Participant

I think so, in that situation it is - to me it is helpful because I know I'm there, I'm on time.

[01:59:35] - Researcher

Do you find it easier to view anxiety as a positive thing now after going through the sessions?

[01:59:53] - Participant

I'm tempted to say yes, but is it positive? It's less [...] visible. Um, I know some of it like I say, will never go, I always will be an anxious person, but in terms of music-wise, it's - as I say, it was that confidence and anxiety which was always battling and the anxiety is much less now on anything I tackle musically.

[02:00:33] - Researcher

But the anxiety you have are you more able to see the positive aspects of it, like arriving early for a gig?

[02:00:42] - Participant

Yeah, I think I can get to a place where I can manipulate it more, to use it in a positive sense, rather than, oh, my gosh, the anxiety is getting to me. I think I can use that anxiety and defuse most of it, but keep some of it to use in performance, because I think if I didn't have that at all, it would be like I didn't care. And straight away that comes out in a performance and it's like you're just singing a song. And if

you did that in front of people, obviously you want to get positive feedback because you want to get asked back there again. It's like, he doesn't care about what he's singing. It comes across.

[02:01:38] - Researcher

So is anxiety a problem or is it a good thing?

[02:01:41] - Participant

It's a good thing used properly.

[02:01:45] - Researcher

Has that perspective changed since we've done the ACC?

[02:01:49] - Participant

Yeah, before I did, the anxiety would take over and I wouldn't fight it. Not that I fight it now, but I just know how to manipulate it and use it.

[02:02:01] - Researcher

Was anxiety a problem or was it a good thing? In the past.

[02:02:14] - Participant

Hmm [...] Getting to gigs [...] it didn't do me any good, but it got me to gigs on time.

[02:02:22] - Researcher

Was that the only positive?

[02:02:27] - Participant

Yeah, because even when you're setting up, you're getting butterflies, you're getting closer to all you - going on in ten minutes, starting.

[02:02:37] - Researcher

Are there more positive to have an anxiety now, after we've done the sessions?

[02:02:42] - Participant

Yeah, because I feel I can tackle more things without that getting a big deal, inside. It's not so much in my head um [...] and like I said, until I get further into what I want to achieve, I would be able to answer that much better.

[02:03:09] - Researcher

Would you feel able to take forward what you've learnt from our last six sessions? Do you feel confident in being able to take these skills, these tools forward?

[02:03:17] - Participant

Oh, yeah. Oh yeah, um [...] it's knowing what to do in different situations and even the situations that existed before. It's like [...] most of it doesn't matter because of these sessions. It's knowing how to deal with that and where to go with that. It's like - Why is that even a thing? Exactly, it doesn't matter. So I suppose it's like unscrambling things that have all sort of linked and knowing how to process them in different ways. That was a big thing before. It's not now. I think if I liken it to singing long notes. When I first started to sing long notes, I wouldn't run out of breath, but the quality would be very shaky. But now it's like, I don't even fear that anymore and that's just throwing up a different thought, actually. I can see clearly now? There's a long note in that and I think that is what they class as a grade eight piece. Not that I ever went for grades, but I did look into it at one point and even they said, split that line up. So get to that point, take a breath, do the rest of it. But I got to a certain point, I thought, Why? Why can't you sing? People can hold notes for a long time. Why can't you sing

people? So I joined a person that has opened that song, and that was my line, and I just sang it as a complete line. And she commented afterwards and said, wow, if I was 20 years younger, I'd kidnap you. [laugh] Stick you in my band.

[02:05:38] - Researcher

Was that a situation before or after the sessions?

[02:05:44] - Participant

About the same time, it was about the same time. But now, like, the Jekyll and Hyde song has some massive - I think my son even timed it 18 seconds or something. Ridiculous.

[02:06:06] - Researcher

Is there anything you would have feel you would have liked to change or develop about the sessions?

[02:06:17] - Participant

Um [...] For me, the terminology was difficult to get my head around, but maybe someone with a better education would um [...] Very intense. [laughs] Very intense.

[02:06:38] - Researcher

Six weeks.

[02:06:39] - Participant

Six weeks, yeah. And it's a lot to take in [...] as much as you want to - I mean, I was all for this, as you know. I'm a great believer in all this. But some weeks, as much as - even the vocal coaching - you want to do it, things get in the way and you're not always allowed or have time to practice what we've been doing as much as I would like to. Certainly some weeks where it's like, it's come round again, and I haven't done anything, and I felt so guilty about that. But I know you understand because it's life at the end of the day. But I try to devote as much as I can because I know this is good for me.

[02:07:42] - Researcher

What number of sessions would you if - like if this is to be put out as, like I'm not saying, like, a programme package. What number of sessions do you think would be the right amount to go all the way around that hexaflex without feeling rushed? Would it be eight? Would it be 10? 12? Whatever.

[02:08:05] - Participant

Realistically, probably eight.

[02:08:07] - Researcher

Two more?

[02:08:09] - Participant

Yeah. Again, it depends on the person as well. To me, coming into it cold, if you like, and not understanding certain aspects of it until we got into it. Certain aspects of it would be nice to carry over into a second session.

[02:08:39] - Researcher

Obviously, we've had an interview as well at the start and the end, so would you consider that part of the programme?

[02:08:52] - Participant

[...] It is. The first interview is interesting because [...] it kind of made me aware of what to expect to a certain degree. But then when we got into it, it was, like, very intense. And it's like, wow, okay. And

then having the interview now at the end and recapping on everything, you can see it from the other side and how much you've developed and learnt, and learnt to control different things that crop up. So, yeah, I think these are very useful because, whereas you concentrate on the individual aspects, yes, they will cross over, but as it unfolds, you can see how and why they cross over. And then having this at the end is like, yeah. I've probably been saying things where it's encompassed pretty much everything in my answers because I understand it more now. But yeah, it's certainly a lot to take in and as I say, some people will, six sessions and they'll be fine, but obviously that's hard to define.

[02:10:14] - Researcher

I have another couple of questions. We have gone quite a lot over, but it's fine. So can you give an example of how MPA might have previously moved you away from your values? I think we've spoken a bit about this already. How it might stop you in the past.

[02:10:39] - Participant

Ability would be one. Confidence, big one. Anxiety big one. I would be just playing things I know I could play, or if somebody came up with a song, yes, I would learn it, but there might be certain aspects of it that I could never play because of my abilities. But there were songs where I had surprised myself and thought, yeah, you'd be able to do that. But most of the time it was like a workaround, because up here it's like you would never play that. You could never play like that in a million years. And the thought never entered my head afterwards was, well why? You can play the instrument, why can't you play that solo? Whatever it might be - that never entered it. It was like it was the ability myself, I suppose.

[02:11:57] - Researcher

Oh, that's defusion. The belief in the thought.

[02:12:02] - Participant

And that stayed with me. A lot.

[02:12:08] - Researcher

Our storied self, isn't it? We tell ourselves a story and the more we tell ourselves a story, the more we believe in the story. Just like Father Christmas. Two more questions. Can you give an example how you move towards your values now? So is there anything specific you've done that move you towards your values?

[02:12:34] - Participant

Big ones are looking into karaokes, looking into um [...] bands, updating profiles on the indeed site like the job and talent side of things there, whereas I've just let that lapse over the years, um, and certainly looking into the join my band site seriously, rather than just, are they looking for this? And then putting it away. And it's like looking at it now with the thought of, yeah, I can do that. But now what surprised me was I would see a vocalist only and yes, that's what I want to do, but is that what I want to sing? Am I just doing that because I want to be a vocalist? I don't want to do that, I'm looking for something else. So I'm being more specific in where I'm moving towards in matching my values.

[02:13:37] - Researcher

Yeah, that's really great. I've got one more question, which I've been meaning to ask you for a while. Have other people noticed a difference?

[02:13:46] - Participant

Yeah, I think I've spoken to you about it before, but in a vocal session. Especially on the app because people you can make comments afterwards and yeah, you sound different. I think probably what they mean by that is I sound like me. Even if I'm emulating somebody else, they still say, that was great, what have you done? Yeah, just talk about things more. It's put me in a more relaxed sense when I am actually singing, knowing that I can deal with stuff. And I think that's probably what diffuses the

anxiety more that I know how to deal with this stuff. And the anxiety is now fighting for a place, if you like, which as I say, as I come to terms with it more, will not happen. It will be sort of shut down. Accepted.

[02:15:09] - Researcher

Just to finish off, are there any points that you think you want to raise that need to still be covered or anything that you want to say?

[02:15:19] - Participant

Within the course?

[02:15:21] - Researcher

Yeah, anything at all to do with the coaching ACC, the impact on your MPA or the change in your identity. Anything at all. That you feel that you might want to comment on these last six weeks?

[02:15:36] - Participant

As I say, this has been quite an eye opener for me going so in depth with all these thoughts. I think the only thing I would say is just personally it could be spread out longer to explore more of certain aspects of it. But it would also be nice to maybe review things, I don't know, a month down the line or something like that and just have a session. I see you every week anyway, but it'd be like nice to do it from this point of view. What have you done? What have you come across? And I can only relate that to me personally as not been gigging yet, but once I start, that will then come into it more and it's like, yes, this happened, I did this about it. Maybe certain milestones if you like, it might not have to be a month. It's like when something happens. So if I did go and audition for a band and maybe got into that band on the strength of that audition and then maybe have a session to revisit this - okay, yes, that was scary, but I did this about it in the audition. So just like little milestones that would happen and then sort of recap just to know that this is working. Or maybe if we could have that put into place to cover this element of it. As I say, not being in that situation, especially as a vocalist only, but with this in mind as well now it's changed the whole dynamic of what happens [laugh] in a good way.

[02:17:46] - Researcher

That's good. Anything else you want to say about ACC or your MPA or anything?

[02:17:57] - Participant

It's made me a more confident person, music aside. Yeah, it certainly made me a more confident person. I'm not sure if that comes across.

[02:18:14] - Researcher

It definitely does in your interview. I'm very glad, I'm very happy and thank you so much for participating and being my test bunny and I'm really thrilled how you've responded to it and how you've taken it on board. See these changes and may they continue. Thank you so much, Ron. Thank you.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]