# Claire Interview 2 - 11 Date 6 Nov 2017

## C

I'm petrified about the video. I've got myself on screen here and on screen there now it is really bizarre.

## Claire

oh, yeh yeh, two different perspectives if it is any consolation I can see right up your nose. (laughter)

## C

Nice!  Hang on Hang on. (laughter) I don't know if I can get it any higher I'll have to stand sit like this for an hour.  Right I have a couple of quick questions actually cause I must have missed it last time. Erm How old were you when you joined?

## Claire

23

## C

And your actual out of service date was?

## Claire

1 April 16.

## C

First 4th 2016, so you were how old were you when you finished.

## Claire

77, 87 - 39.01:29

## C

Right, I am paranoid now, I am going to have to do this so you can't see up my nose now. (laughter) Right, really quick then, well not really quick but there is only about 6 or7 questions again.  Erm and we will just go through it and see how we do.  So erm

## Claire

yeh

## C

On reflection how do you feel about leaving the RAF?

## Claire

It was the thing to do at the right time for me erm it was more challenging than I thought it would be and that I gave the process credit for but I am glad I did it.  To the point where I have just been offered a reservist job at Cranwell and I don't really want to take it because I don't really want to go back into uniform.  Erm so I am quite glad because it was obviously the right decision.

## C

So, when you say it was a challenge can you tell me why?

## Claire

Erm yeh, working out what it is I actually wanted to do.  I think I put myself under pressure to go and find employment be that logistics manager in the in the new world erm it didn't really think through what I actually wanted.  It’s only now 18 months later that I am starting to understand what I want but I have almost had to go through well doing this and I have worked out what I don't want first and then kind of come into that what I do want. And it’s taken about 18 months, I still don't know what I want to do but I have got a lot more I know that's not for me.

## C

mmm h and so you said you don't want to go back into uniform so that going back into uniform as a reservist you don't feel that is something you want to do?

## Claire

No.  No.  Erm numerous reasons why. I've kind of left it I've done that chapter I want to try something different erm other is they would still expect me to be fit and expect me to be CCS current but I don't get any x-factor, I don't want to be gassed but as a civilian I don't have to be gassed.  (laughter) so you that's a you know it’s a silly reason but actually it’s like do you know what I don't mind being fit for my job but I really don't want to have to be gassed if I am on a home commitment (laughs).  But if you want to be a part time voluntary reserve, you have to be gassed and I need to fire a weapon.  And I don't want to do either of that erm and they are show stoppers for me now. No, it’s not for me anymore.

## C

Just to really understand that what is it about those things that make you go no I don't want to do it?

## Claire

Erm (pause) I don't want to have to make the decision over life or death basically erm if I have a rifle and therefore I am libel to be deployed or in the support of public duties erm very very very slim chance but it’s the probably over the last 18 months I've thought about some of the situations I've been in erm where I have seen, influenced, been a part of on the periphery of taking somebody's life out and you know physically seeing that on the erm on the screen at Al Udied when you are locked on, you know when you see the guys, you are part of this op and you are just seeing somebody being vaporised.  And like well I don't know if I truly agree with the politics that led to us being there and it it has given me a whole chance of reflection and I I deal with that by going I don't want to have to be in a position where I have to fire a weapon anymore erm I think there are other ways to deal with it that are a little bit more holistic erm in my naïve little world.

C

I don't think I don't think it is naïve I think erm I think it is interesting that little bit of distance has perhaps given you a different perspective.

## Claire

MMM, yeh yeh it has certainly made me think about it erm and gosh you know whether that is to do with, the guy that I saw being wiped out was you know, the guys behind me were going 'Woah, yes!, come on! bumph" to the point where I thought in the back of my mind said well yes that has saved some of our guys lives by wiping him out you know other Iraq Afghanistani women family saved their lives too in some respect but he still would have been somebody's son, so there would have been a mother out there and a family that would have been distraught regardless because he had different ideals to us he had a different belief set totally abhorrent to me because it involved blowing people up elsewhere by laying IEDs etc but he would still have been somebody's son (slight laugh). And he still might have been a parent himself he might have left orphans whatever and it it was that side of it that I didn't, I ohh gosh

## C

mmm

## Claire

who’s to say my belief system and my values are are so right I would want to kill him.  I wouldn't but inadvertently I was part of an organisation that that did.  Hmm so yeh I am kind of. So, it would be nice and easy07:12 but you know I just no.

## C

a moral a definite moral component there then.

## Claire

But I haven't quite answered in my own mind yet.

## C

yeh but I think it would probably b quite naïve to go back and not face those thoughts actually, to turn it round

## Claire

Mmm

## C

because you know that is a possibility that you would be put into that situation again and

07:41 if you didn't like and it didn't feel right then I think that's

## Claire

MMMhm <><>< when you are retaking that commission erm

## C

I couldn't get that sorry you broke up

## Claire

there is no place for conscientious objectors when you when you take the Queen's commission or you know or sign up to it again.

## C

mmm

## Claire

I think I came to terms with that as a very young 23-year-old kind of a bit gung ho and absolutely huhhu and that kind of stayed with me for a number of years erm but I think to go back in again I would go I need to revisit that in my own sense of self.

## C

yeh, yeh that is really interesting.  So erm looking back then on the actual leaving experience is there anything you would actually change about that?

## Claire

(Pause )- Gosh would I change anything? (Pause) If I'd of had the ball, I don't think you see I don't think I had the confidence or the insight I have now if I hadn't gone through this last 18 months of learning.

## C

yeh

## Claire

erm, I don't think I would have the same attitude as I do now.  So, would I do anything different if I could have my knowledge now 18 months ago I may not of joined the civil service and been a logistics manager I may well have gone do you know this coaching, NLP the bits that really interest me I might of taken more time to truly what elements of those do I like what elements of those do I want to take forward.  Erm and try to put a more business head to that erm because there are things like I would like to do but from a business perspective and an income stream perspective would they be you know am I just playing the you know am I just dreaming am I trying to do a little bit of stuff to keep me interested and to keep my hand in to keep that sense of like I like to be s I like to help people through help themselves if that makes sense.

## C

MM

## Claire

Whether or not I could make enough money from that I don't know erm so.

## C

So why do you think you took the logistics manager then as opposed to ...?

## Claire

It was easy and it was known.  I know how to be a logistics manager I know what is expected of me within DE&S within reason I am actually its more different than I thought it would be and it’s been more of a learning journey than I thought it would be than I was expecting it erm but it seemed to be the safest and the easiest option at that time.  And I think I've found now that where people say your first job is never your final job you always move on and I am going yeh I think I can see that now.10:41 But it’s given me some space and it’s given me the ability to go, No. You know I have learnt how to be appropriately assertive I've learnt to say, you have me for 37 hours a week where would you like me to focus my attention on erm I have to leave after 4.30 or it 4.45 might be to pick my daughter up and I can't do the over time that perhaps you want me to do because I've got other commitments. 11:15 so it’s kind of helped me make that break from the Air Force mentality that I was in, you work all hours God sends and you just keep going and you keep going and you keep going. Its helped me to make that break.

## C

Mmmmhm.  So how would you describe this process over the 18 months and what that has felt like making that transition from work, work, work to actually I am walking out of the door its quarter to five?

## C

Really hard, really harder than I expected it to be erm probably because I was in denial for a long time cause I thought I could do everything, I can do all this and still trying to be the person who I was without really listening to me go "well this is not you anymore". It hasn't been you in the Air Force for a very long time, this is your opportunity erm and just trying to continue at the same pace and at the same rate erm in an organisation that doesn't have the same mentality erm so that was an adjustment in itself, erm secondly the ability to actually go "I have got some control over this  I can actually I can put that part time application the world is not going to end when I do that erm I can say I am only prepared to do this and erm the organisation can take it or leave it if they leave it then I can walk.  It’s quite empowering but it has taken me it has taken me the 18 months to go yeh yeh I can erm and I kind of tag that in the appropriate assertiveness box because it’s there is a game to be played if I want to be employed there is always a game to be played but I am a lot more aware that I can play it to my strengths I've got that freedom and flexibility now erm where I didn't necessarily before.

## C

And what does that feel like?

## Claire

Erm I don't have a career manager, erm I am my career manager and I can make those decisions if my partner was posted to another station which is a potential the other job never turned up erm then I can choose to move, we can choose to move and we at free to do that. Erm well I wouldn't have had that choice 18 months ago.

## C

and how does that feel being able to make those choices?

## Claire

Great, great but scary it has taken me the last 6 months of being off work to go well I can leave. If I leave I'm stepping into black hole there is nothing to step into, well you don't need anything to go into. You step through the door and you are then in a different mindset, opportunity will come because the type of person you are I will make those opportunities.  I will invest them and I will invest the time that I don't have right now so so leaping into doing nothing is a isn't a scary place to be erm which I'm guessing it was 18 months ago because I wanted that safe option.  I used that word myself to

## C

you did

## Claire

the safe option.

## C

you did yeh

## Claire

and employed.  14:36

## C

So, what is it would you say you missed most about the military?

## C

the team work and the comradeship. I don't have the same level of connection that with my colleagues in work so if you have had a bad day you just want to go and take the team for coffee and go ah come on its not really done erm other elements of the team do but they are predominantly the engineering guys who are ex-serving anyway so I work with a number of long term civil servants and that camaraderie just isn't there. er in the same way so I've just come back into work after 7 weeks off erm I've just taken the lady I work with for coffee erm and it was really challenging (whispered).  It was She wasn't sure I wasn't sure I said come on let’s just get talk, let’s just go and do this, where are you where is your head.  What do you need help with what do you not? What's been the worry beads over the last 6/7 weeks, where do you want me to concentrate first and she said "oh I didn't know what to do with you I didn't know I thought it was all going to be awful." Ah no but oh we have just got onto ModNet there's no one, I looked round to go I really need to ask someone for help but I don't know who to ask their cause there is no one there and everyone is heads down busy and doesn't want to be disturbed so it’s where as if I kind of put myself in uniform upstairs in FHQ and the change was happening there has always been somebody there to fall back onto to go what about this and what about the other? I don't have that anymore.

## C

So why have you taken this time off work?

## Claire

Oh, I imploded. (laughs)

## C

Did you.

## Claire

absolutely imploded, yeh that I was had been on my own, we effectively need about 4 people to do everything within our team and there are only 2 of us.  Well I've been on my own since June when my colleague off for erm an operation and issues various she didn't come back into work until August and then I went on 2 weeks leave, she went away as I came back.  She is (pause) she needs to be to do a very basic very tactical level job with routine with repetition what I don't have is anyone on the same intellectual level as me to go "oh you know this isn't really working what can we do about it? because there is no answer to what we have got to do we have got to come up with it we can't just do what other platforms have done because we don't look like that our support solution means we can't be traditional or normal and I don't have that and although I think the management are desperately trying to they recognise 17:26 it now and are desperately trying to recruit for it, it’s just not available erm and it just got all too much and I was like fuck this shit.  (laughs) I can't cope with this.  I'm a single mum in the week I'm trying to do that work full time it was horrible and it all just got a bit too much.  So, I went no, no, no, no I need time out for me er so yeh I started back last week for three days a week I've put my part time application in and I've effectively said its shit or bust it’s that or nothing.

## C

mmm

## Claire

Erm, and that is what I was working through the 6/7weeks I was off that well what is it that I want? erm what is it that I need and what is it I need to do about that.

## C

Do you think you had effectively almost put yourself back into the situation you were when you were in the Air Force?  Trying to do the job, do the family do the ...

## Claire

yep, yep, yep, I'm saying you know it’s almost like the last 18 months were that, pretty shit erm trying to do that its only really I had some space where fucking hell there were quite a few light bulb moments there come on and its its just changed that perspective but it’s just literally in the last 7/8 weeks and I have still got to make that transition of that mentality into <><> erm so today I just sent an e-mail to my, well he's not my delivery manager he's my delivery manager's boss, who's asked me to do some work on CAT, and I've gone, no, because myself and my functional manager my people like the person who looks after me, there is erm <><> to work through and that’s how we are going to do it.  And he well (cough) <><>< that <><>< you know he doesn't know he won’t know but it is down to you as an individual returning back to work to bat off the work that is out there cause you FDO has said we are not doing that we are going to work on you.  Erm

## C

So how does that make you, make you fell are you feeling quite positive now or is ...?

## Claire

I think it is making me realise that I am not going to change the civil service because it is was it is and I need to just sit down and write some objectives and work out way how I can translate that, you can't control it, I might be able influence some people and some situations at some point erm but that is all I can do.  Erm and I have got to test that over the next few weeks to go its unacceptable Claire.

## C

mmm

## Claire

or you just go no I can cope with 3 days a week and I can switch off or its tie to try something different.

## C

MMMM, So how long do you think you will give yourself?

## Claire

Probably til Christmas,

## C

yeh

## Claire

erm it’s kind of unusual cause I I think they are trying to recruit.  Do you remember Phil Clark?

## C

Vaguely

## Claire

Erm, yeh he is a guy he’s he’s looking for a job and he was like oh there's a level 3 er a C1 in old money oh come and work with us, so basically desperately trying to recruit him last week actually do you know what it’s really quite an exciting time because we have got a B2 post created we have got  the team are trying they have really they have recognised what I've had to say and erm and a change of aligning with functions has all helped erm CASP and failing our own metrics it has helped because we get very high star office folks very quickly so all these things have  come together but it will take a long time to bed in and change.  the really disappointing side of it is that the lady who works for me we've been through mediation, etc she is very challenging erm and she has lots of her own issues that we need to manage and we need to work through she needs a manger that is there more than 3 days a week erm really erm because it is going to take me I am going to allocate as much time as it takes me I just need to be honest about that to my <><><>< yeh ,><>< nobody else wants to manage her.  I have no choice so erm we have got to work through that one

## C

yeh

## Claire

erm its very challenging cause she doesn't want to be managed erm and it’s kind of that's almost another ice that's the icing on that cake of Hahn we will see how that goes.

## C

MM that doesn't sound fun.22:38

So

## Claire

MMM yeh, it’s a challenge

## C

I'm just checking my list of questions, yeh, yeh when you have got problems in your own life you don't need to, when you are just living you don't need the extra responsibility do you of babysitting somebody?

## Claire

No and I think that is the right terminology she wants to be led I mean she is in effectively a C2 equivalent post to put it into perspective the old for you but it’s you know will I take what I want to do what I can and what I can't do I take do I take <><><>< what's my job please tell me what do I need to do?

## C

MMMM.  So what erm you have already kind of already answered it but what's would you say you miss most about the military or have I already asked that question?

## Claire

the camaraderie and the team work.

## C

oh, we have a visitor hello honey

## T

hello

## C

are you tired?

## Claire

how are you Toby, do you know last time I saw you you were about 3 it was a long time ago.  I came to pick up some of your old baby stuff that you and your sister didn't need any more for my little girl, yeh

## C

laughs, right I am working here so24:15 (conversation continues)

They can't help it they think they are going to miss out don't they 24:49

## C

yeh, <><

little do they know (laughter) right can I, can I say what erm do you still consider yourself part of the military family and if so in what way?

## Claire

Pause no I don't think I do.  Well yes, I do and I don't because my partner is in the military.  He's in I get what he's doing, you know it’s that, my friends are still in so yeh I am connected to the military community still erm urgh at work it’s very difficult to, everybody has an assumption, I'm ex-military so therefore I must be like this erm but no "Claire, you are only siding with them because you are one of them"  And I'm going no actually I am Claire (laughs) and and I just understand where they are coming from I think when you are interpreting the situation like this I would say have you considered interpreting it like this? er so we can have that, I don't know, discussion. Erm so what’s the biggest source of conflict is unmet expectations so erm let’s try and just just try and look at that.  So yeh, I guess I am in some way.  Do I feel commitment to it though? No.

## C

Its its interesting

## Claire

<<>< feel like I am missing out if I don't go on the next deployment or something? erm perhaps funnily enough do you know when all the hurricane support went JHSU and TSW would have been out there and I was thinking I would have been involved in that erm and that would have sat right with my morals, quite good at that point.

## C

yeah, yeah

## Claire

erm actually I was like oh that would have been quite an interesting one to see that being maptered.

## C

mm

## Claire

So, I guess I still think that way but if I saw us going into Syria to do something like that peacekeeping and that and the other I would be (draws in breath) less comfortable

## C

yeh

## Claire

and I would I would distance myself further.

## C

It’s interesting that erm that you said people see you in a certain way because you are ex-military can you sort of describe that a little bit go into that a little bit?

## Claire

yeah it started when I was on my AMACS my advanced management <><> course up at Manchester Business School there was one of the guys, one of the lecturers who did some of the I can't remember which of the modules he did but he was a plastic socialist erm hate the military hate the RRRRHGHGH and this and I was like do you have a stereotypical view? and and I don't know if you are aware but I've never had to order anybody to do anything so what differences us from a from you is that we have a legal bit and the only time that I could ever say that "you are to" was if it fit that that the legal implication of of that (coughing) >><>< and I said I've never had to erm I was going into the welfare side of things bits of the other exa,<<>, helping the guys during their PTSD type and the knock call that effects that.  Erm and he was just gobsmacked and I was like oh well well you you don't judge a book by its cover, actually you you could speak to several Army guys and they'd look at me and go she's fucking pink and fluffy, erm you think I'm not because you have got one view and they've got another and what you will actually find is that regardless of my rank, my position and my number I am still Claire (laughs) you know erm and I had to pick up a few people up in the civil service erm particularly around the issues we've had around my colleague and my line manager and they said you know "well you've left the Air Force your you are grieving" and I am going you you may have a point there but I think I am trying to adjust to a new organisation and a new environment erm rather than this and their oh no Claire don't try that approach, we don't we don't want to <><>, but they had no idea what approach I would have taken.  And actually what what were you expecting me to do? and I said well actually that approach or Claire we we we think a bit bolshy a bit and I "do you know how I was going to deal with this" I was going to take this line and deal with it this way and they were like oh oh oh well ok that's fine and so there are a number of differences and management issues that I have with my colleague erm as part of my (pause) what was it? it was er it was harassment in effect I would say I I do you know sorry, this is it I've had it with the with the explosions at me erm if I was in the military managing this individual I would do the following, erm I would recommend an occupational health assessment  for her dyslexia I would recommend this I would make a referral to our welfare services and I would want to explain to the individual that these are the standards of behaviour accepted because well <><>< the people and this is the reaction I don't know I kind of said but you can't do the same as the military, where is that difference with the civil service show me? and they can't it’s the same policy.  Erm I I <><><><>< If I was in the military I would deal with it this way tell me how and it was like no that's that is a sensible management approach we wouldn't jump at that erm it was just that my direct management were failing to address the situation and they were trying to say well it’s because you are ex-military which was just, no. I'm going no I don't an individual's behaviour has crossed the line you are not addressing that and it is not because I am ex-military. Erm so it’s its calmed down but its I guess I might I probably found whatever organisation I went into is that you have a stereotype of what oh you know officer in the Armed Forces this is what we expected to be like erm it is the unconscious bias isn't it almost if I walk into an office and see someone who is vastly over weight I would probably think oh I don't want to work with you.  You know that is my, it’s now conscious, you know that's my kind of

## C

yeh

## Claire

well <><>< there’s this theory of the Brunswick lens isn't it where you you judge people based on your own values etc and your own experiences I probably would have noticed it everywhere.

## C

yeh

## Claire

everywhere

## C

yeh, yeh probably. Ok would erm in what ways then would you say the military has and continues to influence your professional life, how you go about dealing with issues?

## Claire

I'd rather be open and up front erm so if I see something that is not right I will would like us all to discuss it erm just get those I can fairly I don't know if that is me as in individual or me as a military I've got that spider sense for "there are things being left unsaid here, there are under currents here that aren't healthy erm that are effecting our ability to make a decision t and move on and deal with an issue, and just get on with it resolve it move on.  Erm that's when I kind of my my instinct is to go have a chat with everybody involved work out whether it is safe to discuss all this with each of those people, I am going "how does this all what do we do" erm whereas my colleagues will go "we'll just leave it Claire, it'll get solved eventually" when I am kind of wanting it to be done a bit quicker. Erm the way I go about managing my work I will write down and capture an up brief and go "this is the situation, these are the issues, these are the people who can do, these are my recommendations" erm I will yeah just and the organisation part of it is "all we need is that, why did we fail to deliver that milestone?"  "Oh, yeh that is because of that" and actually when I investigate that it’s far from the truth.  Well actually no the root cause of that is this the single contributing factor we need to nip that in the bud and sort it.  But that took an hour’s worth of investigation whereas I will invest that time to make sure we have got the right root cause and in briefing up my message.  Erm which is why I have come in at a level and gone it’s really bad, well no it’s not really bad there is a lot of improvements to make because what you have been briefed before and is er not what I am experiencing here that is not my understanding today.

## C

mmmm ok so as you look to the future then where do you see yourself in a years’ time, or is that a little too complicated at the moment?

## Claire

there are 2 options, it will be working 3 days a week in the civil service because I can put that what I need to put into place for me and my protections and my health and sanity.  So, I will be working 3 days a week in the civil service Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and having 4 days at home having that balance or I'll of left and I will be pursuing coaching and all the other bits and pieces I want to.

## C

yeah, good

## Claire

but it’s taken 18 months to be able to give you that second option. (laughing) does that make sense?

## C

yeah, it does it does.  It does I erm I think it in its interesting for me now because I am going round doing that second lot of interviews with people and seeing how people have moved on and I I think I can't remember now if you are the 3rd or 4th person that I have come back for the second interview and erm at least one other has er has just actually ditched that initial job and is just looking at doing other things and they again she pretty much jumped into, it wasn't a civil service job but it was a defence related job and then realised 6months later it wasn't working out.

## Claire

yeh I was talking to, I can't remember who I was talking to the other day at all, 36:04 the point is though there seems to be this we need to knock the civil service it’s another very safe, very secure place to be

## C

yeh

## Claire

so, you are making one major life transition out of the Armed Forces where you have been you know we encourage black and white thinking we encourage that completer finisher mentality all those those ways of thinking and those ways of being that probably personality traits in a lot of us it, it has encouraged them and then we are making them very transition into a very different way of being it’s a safe and steady option in many ways.

## C

yeah

## Claire

36:33 and erm the pension is amazing so erm if I was working for a defence contractor and I'd said you have me for 37 hours a week how would you like to use me and so I can't buy you out of the resource problem by doing overtime probably wouldn't have a job you know (laughs)

## C

yeh

## Claire

so if you look at it in that way I can but say I can't take home I am not working, I will take some work home with me occasionally don't get me wrong, it’s in my interests to but I can leave it at work the fact that I ruminate over issues is my deal, that's my bad to get over but erm I wouldn't be able to do that with a defence contractor erm although I would get £20,000 a year more as a minimum.

## C

yeh

## Claire

No, thousands pound I'd double my income (laughs) but that comes with it a certain level of expectation.

## C

yeh, so what you say has been your biggest professional challenge?

## Claire

my colleague, without a shadow of a doubt. Erm I am dealing with somebody who is no, I've placed them in a position, they have placed themselves in a position where there behaviour was unacceptable and they had a shot across the bows and placed on a formal warning, that resulted in erm an assessment for what is a severe dyslexia which is a good thing and the individual had been fighting it for years but I view that as a safety net because if somebody comes in that there are ways we now have to adapt and manage individuals based on their needs and requirements it’s a safe guard for them and for their next line manager.

## C

yeh

## Claire

erm I had secondly just about to go to move a an occupational health assessment for, whatever spectrum disorder, she is on it, erm it’s just working out where.  And again it has been fought against for years but I think she has realised that her way of dealing with issues up until this year and I just said stop now, this stops this I have had enough has been to just emotionally and verbally erupt and it’s a nasty tone of voice and I am not the only one to say that it’s a nasty tone of voice its big blow up the world has ending its threatening to down tools and down tools and walking out. Then the next day coming in as though nothing is wrong cause she has had that 39:08 release that is needed erm and that was what the working environment was allowing, my question was well actually that's making me feel intimidated, its making me feel like I'm working with Jekyl and Hyde and I don't know how she is and she doesn't want to be managed that's the bottom line erm she would like to do what she wants to do when she wants to do it and the working environment is always like that so I have had to gain confidence in going I hear you but do it, you know,

## C

MMM

## Claire

erm and find different ways of really its taken me a long while to adapt my style around her its all been about mediation, I need to provide this and I need to provide that I need to provide this, and well what the fuck is she doing then? (laughs) you know well actually she is probably doing as much as she can because she has some real significant issues a lot of them, I have less so.  Erm that has been really really challenging I think she will be probably be my final straw but she is a lovely lovely lady,

## C

mmm

## Claire

when you talk to her normally over a cup of coffee it's lovely, start to get work related she doesn't want to share what she is doing she doesn't want me to check up on what she's doing erm but I have to do the outputs that I need to meet and (laughing) she is responsible for doing them that I kind of <><>< I need to have that <><>< erm cause otherwise it can be <><>< but yeh managing that but working through my gut feeling was probably right but I saw some really bad poor management that situation so the departments lack of action was condoning that behaviour and I could not get my head round that.  I was being told its because you are ex-military I was being told no and you just need to let things be and I am going but you are not hearing the vitriol you are not being effected by the tone of voice my my resilliance not to take things personally has dropped erm, and we now need to do something about it erm but the military side of me in that respect was able to put across a very dot the I's cross the Ts, not a complaint as such but going through the harassment complaint and ask some very specific questions which got straight up to my 1\* that erm the challenge their very management of a particular situation erm and I was able to get sorted out very quickly thing, because I was actually able to staff it appropriately if you want military jargon.

## C

ok, I have a question cause it has just made me think, so she obviously got dislyxia and autism perhaps do you think if you had come across as difficult to work with during you military career and you just either ... well do you think you would come across someone like that in your military career, do you think someone like that would have got in? I am just wondering ...

## Claire

I have <><>< who worked for me erm well he didn't work directly for me so the person who was in my position doing that daily management would have been the SNCO, Warrant Officer, from a welfare perspective his issues far outweighed my colleague's

in that respect but in turns of mental erm OCD and border line personality disorder so I have seen it erm and I have seen the obsessive kind of behaviour before erm I haven't seen anyone who erupted and dealt with it in the way that she did.  Erm

## C

I'm just thinking, do you think ..

## Claire

But I guess mm I've seen

## C

go on you first

## Claire

I've seen the obsessive erm in the military two or three times which is not much over 17 years.

## C

MMM I am just wondering if erm perhaps there is a temptation to deal with it differently in the military because you know you are not going to be around long enough to let it really get to you?  Compared to this job you are in now, where you are stuck with her for years.

## Claire

Nobody else wants to take her on so its either actually if I was to give the organisation a choice they would probably want to retain her because of her technical  knowledge for that respect you know managers come managers can go

## C

yeh

## Claire

erm that's not to say I would never put them in that position but yeh there is that I can't move on to escape this now neither will they so yeh.

## C

ok. Last couple of questions really, erm what would you say has been your biggest personal challenge of leaving?

## Claire

coming to terms with .... I left because I wanted to be more of a mum I wanted more control over my life  and more say in what you know where I did and actually coming to terms with well what does that look like? What does that mean?  that has been the biggest personal challenge, going yeh, erm I thought I wanted this, this isn't what I want, what is it that I do do want erm and what does that look like?

## C

And do you think you re still, do you think you are still trying to figure that out?

## Claire

yeh yeh very much so. I'm a lot further forward than I was, erm but it is that if this 3 days doesn't work then it is the civil service isn't for me what else then? and and going through that?

## C

yeh

## Claire

<><><><><><><

## C

sorry say that again

## Claire

Its test and adjust time.

## C

test and adjust

## Claire

erm the part time I do not want to work full time I want to pick my daughter up from school, a couple of days a week, not every day because I still want that interaction that intellectual challenge I just don't want it all the time.  And accepting that has been the biggest challenge.

## C

Why do you think that has been a challenge?

## Claire

Ohhhh (big sigh) yeh why?  Erm because I have I think for a long long time I've had this vision of what I should be and that's not what I want.  Erm it like yeh could be I could be erm vs no Claire you should be this you should be able to do this, you should be able to do that and that almost needing rather than being content with me and myself internally I need effectively well you need to be this.  Why do I need to be that Claire? I can do that, cause I am looking for that external influence and that external pat on the back do I need to be in a certain position do I need to be this for that feeling of, if its self-esteem or even self-belief its like you don't need that cause the person that is going to give that to you is you and how do you then make that transition in your life needing that external position, role, thought, pat on the back, way whatever it is for that that self-esteem bit and that's actually no Claire, that comes from you. Erm I'm making that change.

## C

I yeh I I do completely understand what you are saying it is really useful.

## Claire

I try to describe it as a a t-pot, so as a a cup of tea so you have got the saucer, so the cup is you and inside that rim is you and you can influence everything that goes on in there.  You can control everything that goes on in there you put your t-cup on the saucer that's the external influence, you might be able to influence those around you in immediate situations you can't control them erm but you have a little influence and then you look to the organisation at work, my partners organisation at work can't control them he can't even influence them because they are too far removed yet I I'm been in a probably an organisation that has encouraged it I have naturally have those type of character traits where I'm looking for "no I don't want to do that I want that to turn to there we need to be able to do this can you not do? no sorry that's wrong I need you to do it this way".  "Right how do I get into that to influence that ?" its like,

"no you can't"

"Erm even what, that means I'm finished, what? No!" (laughs) "God dammit!"

Why do I need to feel that the the need to reply to an e-mail when someone has questioned my judgement? I should just be able to go, "well he was having a bad day wasn't he" rather than waste 40 minutes going "you fucking wanka, I'm going to fucking show you" you know waste that time and emotional energy on e-mails to put him back in his box, why? It's so pointless, you know its those kind of things. So yeh I'm concentrating on the t-cup, the saucer that may or not stay put there is not a lot I can do about that.

(laugher)

## C

Brillaint, brilliant analogy.  I've got lots to think about now (laugheter) so erm

## Claire

there is em

## C

go on, is there anything else you would like to add about this whole transition process?

## Claire

I hope it fucking ends soon.(laughter) It had  better make it <><><> (laughter) I am getting fed up of it now.  (laughter) The fact is the bottom line to me is by Christmas I will either worked put you know what I can cope with the civil service three days a week and everything that that means or start looking at pastures new lest give it a go (laughs) see what that looks like.

## C

I love that.  "It had better fucking end soon" (laughter). I have to write that down just in case it doesn't come across proper (laughter) I I'll have to I am meeting with my supervisors tomorrow I think I will quote that one to them if I may (laughter).  It's exhausting isn't it its tiring? Its tiring?

## Claire

yes and you know getting caught in that trap of I need to take over the world I need to solve every work problem going now its all my responsibility you know that? No, Claire its not you know the t-cup is me, your trying to saucer out and you aint going to do that, that's well ok urgg ok so when I've had this spaced to think really think through it and use that time effectively which is a massive bonus in the civil service so I shouldn't winge too much, fully paid erm

## C

fully paid thinking time

## Claire

yep yep you know I wasn't even on statutory sick pay, and I've still got a few weeks left before I reach the limit so really its I've winged too much about actually there is an awful lot going for it the fact I can flexible working etc, but its yeh, yeh, concentrate on the t-cup the rest well it is what it is.

## C

mmm.  Maybe you should break the t-cup, see what happens.

## Claire

Fuck no. (laughs)

## C

Fantastic, but it its I was really interesting I was this is just relly feedback now on some of the other interviews which I think you will find really interesting.  Because a couple of other people I have interviewed have also brought up moral issues about what the military is doing and why it is doing it and that's only happened in the last couple of weeks when I have spoken to, one was an officer and one was an airwoman and erm no one had ever mentioned that before so its quite or if that or at least if they had  hadn't picked up on it so I will have to go back through all the interviews.  But erm yeh one of the airwoman she was in recruiting and she realised she just felt really uncomfortable asking 16 year olds if they would kill somebody.  Cause its

## Claire

Too young, yeh I get where where is coming

## C

why am I asking children if they would kill somebody? and when you put it like that there is no

## Claire

Where where do I differ?  <<<>< when you look at it like that my view is different, my moral component is different that I am asking children to kill other people that  they need to.  Is that too dis-similar but we don't look at it like that is like the Hitler, well do you know what, the psueydo transformational leadership, you know the psueydo bit which we are not aloud to talk about, erm I think its that is it too different if the boot was on the other foot? Erm

## C

Obviously we don't send 16year olds to war but we used to didn't we, they do have to be 18 and that is the legal adult but if you join at 16 do you really understand what you are getting yourself into? Its interesting

## Claire

Especially if you are an airman you are in an environment where you don't knock the system, not when you are that age.  And you are told to play the game and everything, just just head down<><>< we are all doing this, that social pressure what is his or her new social.

## C

yep yep you are not alone.

<><><><>><

## Claire

its only 7 steps on JPA should you change your mind.  Yeh its funny isn't it the bit I missed out on recently and I wouldn't ..... operations in in the drones and things doing I am not necessarily interested in, I missed out on the humanitarian bit I have a huge draw there going wow I want to get involved in that I want to get involve din this that is half the reason, I always remember wanting to join up because I saw the humanitarian aid drop picture in a library and it was always that bit and that is the bit I felt I was missing out on cause if TSW or JHSU were there that would be that would be mine, you know if I'd been in.  You know mounting those short notice ops but you are very easily to when you are in able to just go along with the what is going on because it is going on and you are like well how do I get this problem, that problem, this problem, sorting it out all the time and then you take a step back and go ...... yep, whose to say we are right.

## C

yeh

## Claire

Whose to say we are right we are imposing our will on the wider world and on wider cultures and have we not been doing that since the day dot. (laughs)<<><>< somebody will impose there will on us I'm sure (laughs) but that is what seems to happen, you know.  But who is to say we are right.

## C

yeh, indeed.  56:12