

# Embedding Circles of Courage A Youth Work Case Example

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**Context:** Young male aged 14, new to the country and experiencing significant conflict related trauma. Highly intelligent and fluent in English. Placed in a residential area with elevated rates of violence and racism. Blamed for a threat against a local gang leader's son. Given a number of hours to leave the area or he and his family would be 'put out'.



## Belonging

Housed in a PUL area and attends school in a CNR area. Majority of friends in a CNR area.  
Identity issues create conflict with Muslim parents at home.  
Held back a year in school.  
When he ran away, had no safe space to go to. Slept rough with only a coat for two nights.  
No positive youth development activities, however did **attend school regularly**.



## Belonging

Due to **embedded youth worker in his school**, the youth worker was able to engage with the young man and then **connect** him to a specialist youth worker in the community that he was living in. He was engaged in **one-to-one** support as well as boxing and biking to promote positive wellbeing and an alternative outlet for aggression.  
Greater **communication between school and home**, facilitated by the youth worker.



## Mastery

Had **significant capacity to adapt to the local context and understand the social dynamics**. Realised that if he could befriend local youths involved in criminality and gang identities he would protect himself. The threat was 'lifted' after contact with known criminals.



## Mastery

Given **safe spaces** to **critically reflect** on his situation and understand the potential risks. He was introduced to the idea of criminal exploitation and reflected on the ways that he could unwittingly become exploited and the ways that he could avoid those risks.  
Considered **event sequences** and **patterns** of behaviour and outcomes.



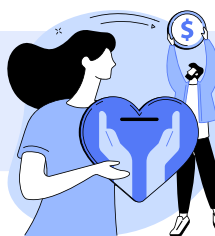
## Independence

**Increasingly independent** enabled by money that he was received from unknown sources. In one incident, there was a physical altercation between him and his father, A local man passed by in a car, gave him a lift and gave him £40 for no known reason. Had his phone taken off him due to concerns around CCE. He was then given another.



## Independence

Facilitation of a series of experiential activities in order to promote **independent critical thinking** (e.g., 'the masks that we wear').  
Considered the risks of taking money from known criminals and **alternatives**.  
**Goal setting and review** (e.g., spending positive time with family)  
**Rewards** for working towards goals.



## Generosity

Has a **desire to give to others** and wants to please others. Often manipulated into physical fights due to protecting the safety or status of others. E.g. online abuse against a disabled sibling led to a serious fight led by this young man.



## Generosity

Spent time **helping** others in school, often unnoticed and after other students had left for home.  
**Volunteering** in the local community.