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The importance of father presence in childhood and beyond

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City, University of London

**A portfolio submitted for the Professional Doctorate in Counselling
Psychology (DPsych)**

December 2020

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Section A:

Preface

Traditional and historical understandings of a caregiver and rearing a child placed responsibility and importance on a mother's presence and role. This can be seen within the early literature where Rousseau claimed 'a mothers love will cure society's ill' (as cited in Kagan, 1978). With the traditional views and differences between feminine and masculine roles and responsibilities, mothers were expected to provide the love and care for their children, while fathers were expected to provide for the family. This dated and separating view of mothers and fathers has fortunately changed with time and modernisation. The modern view of roles of parents have moved towards equalisation; with more mothers building careers and more fathers providing love and nurturing for their children, and with the rightful acceptance of same sex relationships, allowing the formation of fathers to build families without the conventional mother within the family; the gap in the roles and expectations between parents have reduced and the role of fathers have become increasingly important in the love and care children continue to expect.

The father and child relationship has been described as a unique bond and attachment (Mackey, 2001). The father and child relationship has been cited to shape childhood development and to be a predictor for both positive and negative psychological well-being (Rohner & Veneziano, 2001). Rohner and Veneziano (2001) suggests that the largely traditional gender roles and identity which viewed mothers as the main parental figure in child rearing mediated the lack of attention to fathers, however with modernising gender roles, this lack in the research has also become more evident. There is growing evidence and citations in the literature suggesting that father love and availability may affect off-spring development at all ages, from infancy and through to at least young adulthood (Rohner & Veneziano, 2001).

Father absence and the importance of paternal presence have been cited and highlighted throughout the literature. Frank Mott (1990) asked the question 'when is the father really gone?' and this analysis of offspring and non-resident fathers found the categorical variable of father absence was indicated by the movement of male parents in and out of the child's home. Moving away from the mere physical presence of a father, psychological father presence and involvement has been attempted to be conceptualised in early literature. Lamb, Pleck and Levine (1987)

attempted to conceptualise father involvement and presence and suggested that father involvement can be conceptualised as comprising of accessibility or availability, engagement or interaction and responsibility. More recently, Krampe (2009) suggested a conceptual model of father presence as the psychological presence of the father in the child. Krampe (2009) suggested that components of father presence are: an inner sense of father in the child that orients him or her to the father; the child's relationship with the personal father; other family influences of father presence in the child and cultural and religious beliefs about the father found in the larger societal context. Such categories and suggestions highlight the importance of father presence, more specifically determined by availability, engagement, child's perceptions of a sense of father and the relationship as well and wider contextual understandings. While the importance of father presence is highlighted in the literature, what are the experiences of those individuals who felt a lack of father presence and the implications of this through their life? This theme of the role of a father's presence, both emotionally and physically, is the thread which infuses the works in this portfolio. The importance of a father's psychological role and impact on their children is evident throughout this portfolio and threads all the sections together.

In sections B and C of this portfolio, I present my research study as an academic thesis and journal. This research explores the lived experiences of growing up with a father with problem gambling. The notion of father presence is one that I have always found powerful and interesting. As a female who places great importance on my development and career, I have often thought about my presence and role for my future children and the power placed on mothers and their roles in rearing their children. I have often found myself in numerous debates with people around me, about the equal importance of a father in the child-parent relationship, thus the presence of a father is a notion which presents as a thread throughout this portfolio. The research component of this portfolio explores the implications of growing up with a father who gambled problematically during their offspring's childhood. The implications of problem gambling on the father's physical and emotional and availability and presence is explored, and the consequential lived experiences are presented within the research. The publishable manuscript, provided in section C

presents the research study as a journal aimed to be published in the Journal of Gambling Studies.

In section D of this portfolio, I present the clinical component. I present a clinical case study demonstrating my therapeutic work with a woman who was referred for psychological support for depression and anxiety. The framework which underpinned my therapeutic work with this client was Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. A big part of the intervention provided included a longitudinal formulation (Beck, 1979) and this included exploring and understanding her early experiences and developed core beliefs through her early and current experiences. One of her important early experiences was that when she was a couple of years old, her biological father left the family home, leaving behind my client, her older sister and their mother. My client described that her father was not present in her life actively and he would at times form contact with her, promising to maintain a relationship and be more present in her life, however such promises were often left broken and my client described feeling mistrust and disappointment. My client's mother also in this process re-married and my client's step-father became an important figure in her life, however he was later imprisoned for a long period of time. One prominent difficulty in which my client was experiencing was forming and maintaining relationships and this difficulty was often echoed within the mistrust she had felt in the absence of her father in her early and adult life and the expectations she had place on her father.

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Section B: Research Component

‘He says he loves us but he loves the gambling more’.

**Exploring the lived experience of growing up with a
problem gambling father**

Abstract

The research examining problem gambling in the UK is limited when compared to the research into other addictive behaviours. When the literature is reviewed, the studies available for problem gambling mainly exist to be quantitative, focusing on the problem gamblers themselves. The available literature indicates that the effects and consequences on the children of problem gamblers cannot be denied, however the research focusing on these individuals is scarce. This study explores the experiences of adult individuals who, in their childhood, grew up with a problem gambling father. Qualitative data was collected from individuals using semi-structured interviews from six adult participants who had experienced growing up with a problem gambling father. The participant interviews were transcribed and analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The analysis revealed three master themes of 'experience embedded in time and age', 'familial discord' and 'the absent experience'. The master themes encapsulated the following sub-themes: not understanding when younger, moving towards acceptance when older, difficulties in parent relationships, financial difficulties, adultification, loss of trust, the absent father and own needs not met. Theoretical, clinical and research implications, as well as limitations and directions for future research are discussed.

Chapter One

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Overview

Gambling is not a new phenomenon and it is referenced throughout history and in the literature (Kalischuk, Nowatzki, Cardwell, Klein & Solowoniuk, 2006). Gambling has become a popular pastime within many societies around the world and gambling opportunity can be found in many parts of the modern society; UK statistics have shown gambling to be on an increase and much more accessible. While the opportunities to gamble continue to multiply, traditional non-continuous forms of gambling such as bingo or sport betting's are being supplemented by gambling activities in the form of electronic gambling machines, casino games and scratch cards, especially with the development of technology (Banks et al., 2018).

The Gambling Commission (2019) reported 10,761 number of gambling premises in Great Britain in March 2019, with 8,320 being the total number of betting shops. Within the industry, 37% of the market shares consists of remote betting's, bingos and the casino sector, including online betting, bingo and casino games. Online participation has been found to be increased across most activities and participation in premise-based gambling has decreased across most activities, with 97% of online gambler playing at home (Be Gamble Aware, 2018)

As well as increased accessibility of gambling in the UK, overall rate of gambling behaviour has been on the increase. In the year 2019 to 2020 the provisional year to date total for betting and gambling receipts was £1,462 million, a rise of 0.5% compared with the same period in 2018 to 2019 (HMRC, 2019). The same report stated that the provisional total for lottery duty in September 2019 was £90.7 million which was reported as the second highest single month figure since it was introduced in November 1994. With both increased figures of gambling and more accessible gambling behaviour it has been found that 19% of males report to be betting regularly with female's regularly reported as 17.4% (Beating Betting, 2020).

While, like other addictive behaviours, gambling is not necessarily a problem for many individuals, it can cause a number of problems for other individuals and their families. Problem gambling is characterised as a 'persistent and recurrent problematic gambling behaviour leading to clinically significant impairment and distress' (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The impact problem gambling has on the gambler has been researched in many aspects, however the literature around a therapeutic focus and effects of problem gambling on families, in particular the offspring, has been slow to evolve (Shaw, Forbush, Schlinder, Rosenman & Black, 2007), but holds a great importance to Counselling Psychology and our understanding of the process such individuals go through and this will be explored further on in the chapter.

This current chapter will present and consider the existing literature and ways of conceptualising the lived experiences of those individuals who in their childhood, grew up with a father they identified as having problem gambling. I will start by presenting the literature around problem gambling and the literature available on the development of and the effects of problem gambling, with an emphasis on the systematic processes of the family and children of problem gamblers. I will end this chapter by summarising what we know so far and introducing the current study.

The review of the literature was conducted prior to the analysis of the data. Placing this research in the wider literature and equally finding the gaps in the literature was important for me to move this research project forward. While it was important to understand the existing and missing literature before the analysis of the data, this understandably could have had some limitations that should be considered. It was important for me to remain reflective and aware of my interpretations and assumptions from the existing literature and how these would have impacted my process and interpretations in the analysis, however I aimed to reflect on these in order to stay true to the participants' accounts throughout this process as I aimed catch the essence of the participant lived experiences.

The literature search was conducted using search engines including Psych Info, Psych Articles, Proquest, PubMed and Google Scholar. Keywords such as 'problem gambling', 'parental problem gambling', 'problem gambling fathers', 'problem

gambling and the family', 'attachment', ' attachment and problem gamblers', 'attachment father's' 'parental addiction' and 'gambling impact on offspring' were used to search the literature.

1.2 Problem gambling

Gambling is a social activity which typically refers to the act of putting forward money or something else of financial value towards an outcome of a game with the intent of winning additional money or something of increased financial value. Gambling socially typically takes place with friends or colleagues, and is known to last for a limited period of time and with predetermined losses which individuals who are playing expect and accept (Griffiths, 2007).

Although gambling is not perceived as a problem for many individuals, it is problematic for others at varying degrees. For a small significant group of people, gambling can have serious consequences, including problems related to legal, financial, vocational and interpersonal difficulties and it can be associated with psychiatric comorbidities (Crockford & el-Guebaly, 1998). Problem gambling is cited in early literature and Custer (Cited in Galski, 1987) defined problem gambling as a 'disorder compelled by the psychologically uncontrollable urge to gamble'. Messerlian, Derevensky and Gupta (2005) suggest that problem gambling is emerging to be a significant public health issue and this notion is more recently emphasised by the Gambling Commission (2017) who reported that gambling is increasingly becoming a policy interest.

In 2018, 0.5% of people aged sixteen plus in England were classified as being a problem gambler according to the Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI) or DSM-IV (Gambling Commission, 2017) and problem gambling was found to account for approximately 2.3% of the world's population (Williams, Volberg and Stevens, 2012). The Gambling Commission reported that in 2016 0.7% of people aged 16+ in England identified themselves as problem gamblers, with 48% of people having gambled on any gambling activity, a 3% increase from 2015 (Gambling Commission, 2017). The increasing availability and ease of gambling, through just a click of a button, makes gambling more appealing for such individuals. While not all gamblers

have problem gambling, it is no doubt that with the increasing statistics, problem gambling is sure to increase too.

Holtgraves (2009) examined the similarities and differences between gambling activities, and looked at gambling frequency and rates of problem gambling, based on the data from population-based surveys in Canada, between 2001 and 2006. It was found that there were two clear categories of gambling: sports gambling and horse races and lottery, bingo, slots and video lottery terminals and raffles, which was found to be predominately participated by females. It was also noted that problem gambling scores were associated with playing a larger number of games.

Some literature in the field has suggested that gambling is much more popular within lower socio-economic groups and the type of gambling activity individuals participate in varies and changes in relation to socio-economic backgrounds (Blaszczynski, Steel & McConaghy, 1997). Perhaps some may argue that this can be viewed as an out-dated way of understanding the problem gambling individual. However, it could be contested that cultural, social and economic backgrounds play an important factor in the way behaviours are picked up and maintained and experiences are lived, and therefore should be explored. Shaffer and Korn (2002) attempted to explain such differences and suggested that people living in lower socio-economic backgrounds or living in poverty, perceived greater potential and chance to change their lives from a gambling win than people from high economic backgrounds. Similarly, those individuals with less financial problems perceived little opportunity to change their lives from a potential gambling win.

Differences in gambling participation and in particular problem gambling can be seen between males and females. Epidemiological research has shown that problem gambling is more prevalent among men than women (National Research Council, 1999; Wardle et al., 2007) and similarly, adolescent boys were found to be more likely to take part in problem gambling than female adolescent individuals (MORI Social Research Institute, 2006).

The literature within the field points to the idea that a significant association can be found between problem gamblers and parental regular gambling (Wardle et al.,

2007), and compared to individuals in the general population who do not undertake problem gambling, problem gamblers are significantly more likely to have relatives who themselves participate in gambling activity (Grant and Kim, 2001). Similarly, Teo, Mythily, Anantha and Winslow (2007) found that 26.7% of problem gamblers receiving treatment reported a family history of gambling and Grant and Kim (2001) in their study found that 58% of problem gamblers had at least one first degree relative who also exhibited and portrayed symptoms of problem gambling. Interestingly, Petry, Stinson and Grant, (2005) reported that gambling participation within the family history was more apparent in female problem gamblers. More specifically Petry and colleagues (2005) suggested that female problem gamblers were more likely than male problem gamblers to be living with someone with a current gambling problem and female gamblers in this study had a greater number of friends who also gambled than the male participants who gambled. Petry et al. (2005) went on to suggest that female individuals who participated in gambling had their gambling behaviour more strongly tied to their own social networks and therefore made it possibly more difficult for them to then remove themselves from gambling situations and activity.

Black, Monahan, Temkit and Shaw (2006) explored problem gambling with other addictive behaviours and found that problem gambling individuals were significantly more likely to have relatives who participated in gambling and also reported higher rates of alcohol disorder and substance use disorder, than in the control group and their families. A study looking into specific gambling activity and behaviour explored American College students who participated in lottery gambling, and found that lottery gambling within the students were related to having parents who were also lottery gamblers (Browne and Brown, 1994). This particular study is important when considering the relationships, communications and modelling between individuals and their parents participating in gambling.

Perhaps when thinking about problem gambling and possible factors that lead towards an individual to have a problem with gambling it may be important to explore the role of gambling for individuals. Wood and Griffiths (2007) examined the role that gambling played in the lives of problem gamblers and the extent that it may be used as a way of coping. By conducting in-depth interviews with a large number of 50

problem gamblers they suggested that gambling was used as a strategy to cope as means to escape from negative states of mood, and therefore this facilitated the gambling problem. The idea of gambling as a means to escape was found to be achieved to modify mood, filling a feeling of void such as lack of social interactions and relieving a sense of boredom, the need for enhanced approval and avoiding general problems in their lives. Moreover, Wood and Griffiths (2007) argued that feeling a sense of regret influenced the desire to continue participating in problem gambling; the regret of losing money led to problem gamblers chasing losses which then led to the need to modify mood to escape and then gambling. Thus, Wood and Griffiths (2007) highlighted the vicious cycle of the nature of gambling that such individuals found themselves in.

1.3 Gambling as an addiction

Many people consider problem gambling as an addictive behaviour, due to its persistent and recurring nature. Pathological gambling became the first recognised non-substance behavioural addiction in the Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM) (Mann et al., 2016) and in 1980 the DSM defined criteria for gambling disorder (American Psychiatric Association, 1980). Within the literature, a number of commonalities between problem gambling and substance misuse disorders, such as alcohol and drugs, can be found. Among these include neurobiological underpinnings of brain function and cognitive features, and it is argued that the similarities in aspects of reward processing between pathological gambling and substance use disorders are distinct from impulse control disorders (Mann et al., 2016), showing the similarity in the possible detrimental effects to both. Research has also found shared genetic vulnerabilities between pathological gambling and substance use disorders (Lang et al., 2016) and co-aggregation of pathological gambling and substance use disorder in first degree relatives of individuals with pathological gambling as compared to those individuals in the control group and their relatives (Mann et al., 2016). Many of the current diagnostic criteria for problem gambling shares features similar to those for drug dependence (Potenza, 2008) and similarities extend to phenomenological, epidemiological, clinical, genetic and other biological domains (Goudriaan et al., 2004; Potenza, 2006; Brewer and Potenza, 2008). While many substance addictions such as drug use or alcohol use have

received increasing public health attention and funding, the increased availability of legalised gambling and its increasing popularity has warranted increased attention to its impacts (Potenza, 2008).

The literature into the impact of addictions, in particular drug and alcohol misuse, on offspring is dense. Findings suggest that children with parental addictions are more likely to be exposed to abuse (Anda et al., 2002; Harter, 2000), parental separation and divorce (Hussong et al., 2008; Anda et al., 2002) as well as poverty (Hussong et al., 2008). Research based on 84,765 children born in Denmark, has demonstrated that offspring of addicted individuals are significantly more likely to adopt self-destructive behaviours themselves, including substance abuse and suicidal behaviours (Christoffersen & Soothill, 2003). The adult offspring of parents with addiction were found to also be significantly more likely to experience social maladjustment (Harter & Taylor, 2000) and significant mental health problems that persisted into their adulthood (Balsa, Homer & French, 2009). Furthermore, it was found that offspring with problem-drinking fathers were more likely to have been diagnosed with mental health problems, while the offspring of problem-drinking mothers were more likely to have poorer self-perceived mental health as well as being more likely to be diagnosed with a mental health problem (Balsa, Homer & French, 2009). These results clearly demonstrate the adverse effects of parental addiction over the years observed on a long-term basis, suggesting that the negative impact of addiction on offspring can go beyond the years of the experienced addictive behaviour.

Fuller, Kats, Phan, Liddycoat & Brennenstuhl (2013) investigated the association between parental addictions with adult children's depression through a regionally representative sample of 6268 adults from Canada. Their results showed that those adults exposed to parental addiction were 69% more likely to experience depression as opposed to their peers who did not have addicted parents. While this study used a large representative sample size, it relied on retrospective self-reports for parental addictions which were not validated externally. Therefore, the answers could have potentially been socially desirable ones and the validity can be questioned in the participants' understanding of the questions and flexibility to answer. Nevertheless, the findings once again suggest a crucial impact on offspring of parents with

addiction, portraying the importance of emphasising research and intervention to such individuals. Moreover, a study focused on the emotional and psychological impact parental addiction had on the child (Youell, 2013). Through the perspective of an NHS child the study portrayed the account of a baby in which the urge to make an attachment with the parents had almost become destroyed and replaced with 'passive hopelessness'. Furthermore, teenagers were described to have little chance to attend to their own development as they struggled to support and rescue their addicted parents and were burdened by a sense of guilt and responsibility towards their parent.

It is clear that problem and pathological gambling share many co-morbidities, vulnerability factors, aetiological underpinnings and treatment pathways as other addiction disorders such as substance misuse. However, the lack in research within the field of problem gambling, in particular to the effects and experiences to the family and children, is one that is emphasised when compared to the depth of research into the effects and experiences on the children of those individuals affected by other addictions, such as drug and alcohol misuse disorders.

1.4 Gambling approaches

Many theories and approaches towards problem gambling hold a 'problem oriented' view and view gambling as a socially learned, maladaptive behaviour that can be placed on a spectrum which ranges from trouble-free to problem gambling, and one that is influenced by environmental opportunities and individual susceptibility (Griffiths, 2001; Lesieur, 1989). As the field has started to develop there has been an expanding body of literature explaining problem gambling behaviours, however the majority of the theoretical perspectives, especially earlier citing's in the literature, explain the development of problem gambling from an individual perspective. In the recent years, studies and theories have been situating the development of problem gambling within a familial and social context, however these too hold limitations. Increasingly problem gambling is being viewed and understood from a holistic approach, taking into consideration epistemological factors and the bio-psycho-social-spiritual-economic dimensions of human interactions and individuality (Romanow, 2002). This holistic view of gambling is one that is important for

Counselling Psychology as it shares similar underpinnings within its desire to understand human behaviours on an individual's level. Additionally, there has been an increasing emphasis on placing understandings of problem gambling within a public health context (Korn and Shaffer, 1999); Messerlain et al., 2005).

Most major branches of psychological theory have been applied to problem gambling and the development of it (Gaudia, 1987; Griffiths, 2001; Jacobs, 1986; Lesieur, 1989), including learning theories and more biological based theories, and many of such approaches have focused on the problem with little attention given to familial dynamics and interactions. Behavioural and Social Learning theories suggest that children learn gambling behaviours by observing and imitating or modelling those behaviours of their family members and significant others who are of high regard to them (Kalischuk, Nowatzki, Cardwell, Klein & Solowoniuk, 2006). It has been suggested that modelling and exposure plays a crucial role in shaping problem gambling behaviour and it may be modelled and exposed by, for example, parents asking their children to scratch their instant win cards, play card games with them or let them pick numbers for the lottery. In such instances, modelled behaviour can be then endorsed and reinforced by perceived rewards from the children such as interaction with their parents (Gaudia, 1987; Gupta and Derevensky, 1997; Stinchfield, 2001). Considering this approach to gambling, it is important to note the possible effects observing gambling has on the offspring, in which their future behaviours and lives can also be impacted. However, it is also important to consider that modelling gambling behaviour does not solely mean imitating problem gambling and nor all gambling behaviour is necessarily considered to be problematic.

Gupta and Derevensky (1997) reported that 86% of children who gambled regularly reported gambling with their family members and other studies have found that children of compulsive gamblers are four times more likely to gamble themselves in the future and often these children were introduced to gambling by their parents (Abbott et al., 1995; Ladouceur et al., 2001). Moreover, Hardoon et al. (2002) reported that at risk adolescents and probable pathological gamblers were found to have reported significantly more family members as having gambling problems as opposed to the non-gambling individuals and social gamblers. Alongside this behaviour being explained by social learning theorists as modelling, this tendency

has also been described as the 'intergenerational multiplier effect' in children whose parents are problem gamblers (Abbott, 2001). It is clear that exposure to parental and familial gambling can be indicative of future gambling behaviours in the children and consequently important to question the individual experiences of those children who have problem gambling parents.

As well as major psychological theories being applied to the development and maintenance of problem gambling, sociological perspectives populate the literature. Sociologists, generally speaking, examine the broader social context within which gambling takes place, including variables such as age, gender, ethnicity and socio-economic status (Kalischuk et al., 2007). Within the literature around gambling and with regards to the family, sociologists focus on social support and coping mechanisms as determinants (Kalischuk et al., 2007). Social support and coping mechanisms have repeatedly been related to socio-economic status, with literature stating that individuals experiencing lower socio-economic status or poverty are more likely to have less access to supportive social connections and interactions while simultaneously being at the risk of facing more stressors (Freund et al., 2003) and many sociological theories include the family as a contributing factor within the development of problem gambling.

The Social Control theory suggests that higher levels of attachment, commitment, involvement and belief are associated with less risk for individuals to take part in deviant behaviours such as gambling (Kalischuk et al., 2007). The theory claims that individuals with strong bonds to their families, school and communities and those who identify with values within their society and norms are less likely to develop an addiction (Vakalahi, 2001). Moreover, a model which stems from social control and learning theories is the Social Development model. This approach states that family and social processes are imperative in both the risk and protective factors for an individual (Kalischuk et al., 2007). Within this model, the family systems, relationships, interactions and characteristics can be a source of both risk and protection. Vakalahi (2001) highlights that a strong sense of bonding to parents, including feelings of attachment, commitment and belief are strong protective factors; thus, lack of strong bonds within the family systems could be a risk factor for the development and maintenance of maladaptive behaviours such as problem

gambling. However, perhaps one should note that this model moves away from the individual differences and resilience of the individual. The social development model views the family as a core system and assumes that those individuals without strong bonds and attachments to their family are more likely to be involved in gambling behaviour, however individual's resilience and personality can play an important part of development of such behaviours and broken bonds and attachments can be repaired.

The Pathways model (Blaszczynski & Nower, 2002) was derived to adequately combine sociological, psychological and biological processes to explain the aetiology of problem gambling, which have been believed throughout the literature to be processes involved for problem gambling individuals (Lesieur & Rosenthal, 1991). The model suggests that there are three primary subgroups of problem gamblers; the behaviourally conditioned gamblers who's conditioning and cognitive processes are key, the emotionally vulnerable gamblers characterised by disturbed personal histories, poor coping skills, and affective disturbance. The third subgroup is explained as the biologically vulnerable to impulsivity individuals who gamble who show early onset, attentional deficits and antisocial traits, in which dysfunctional neurological structures underpin their vulnerability. The model explains that the three subtypes display similar signs of gambling behaviour but it is important to distinguish them to inform treatment for example. However, it is important to mention that it may not be possible for every individual with problem gambling to fit neatly into one of these subtypes and there has not been enough longitudinal data to provide more accurate notions to these subtypes.

Dynamics within the family are repeatedly mentioned within the problem gambling literature and it very often points to be a contributing factor in the development of problem gambling (Kalischuk et al., 2007). A study conducted by Politzer et al. (1992) emphasised that the family and the dynamics within the family can be a prominent environmental risk factor within the development of problem gambling within the male population. They noted that problem gamblers were typically reared by and within the environment of strict yet inconsistent discipline, where there was a strong emphasis on money or material possessions. However, it is important to consider that this study was conducted many years ago, and with changing times

and family systems, emphasis on money and discipline can be perhaps viewed as changing and different aspects may play a role now in such risk factors. Similarly, in a study conducted by Hardoon et al., (2002), it was found that the young people involved in the research, who reported having problems within their family and whom perceived their families to be unsupportive appeared to be at an increased risk for the development of gambling problems. Hardoon et al. (2002) in the study reported that these young people perceived their family members, including parents, as uncaring, harsh or overly critical alongside have feelings of emotionally detached and distant from their families, in particular parents. Within such ideas discussed, it has been suggested that those individuals addicted to gambling report greater dissatisfaction with their familial environments including less cohesion, such as commitment and help and support from family members and reported a decreased sense of personal independence in their marriages (Ciarrochi & Hohman, 1989).

Much of the literature points to the notion that individuals who problem gamble are more likely to have a parent who has experienced problem gambling (Abbott, 2001; Gambino et al., 1993; Ladouceur et al., 2001; Lesieur & Rosenthal, 1991).

Therefore, looking at and understanding the aetiology of problem gambling and presenting some of the theories and risk factors to individuals who have a problem with gambling is an important indicator of the risk that family dynamics and environmental processes within the family hold. Perhaps it is important to note that not every individual exposed to parental problem gambling or difficulties within the family systems will then gamble themselves. While, the systems around the individual, specifically the family, have an effect on the chances and risk of problem gambling, we cannot deny the individuals possible resilience as well as the ability to develop healthy coping strategies when faced with adversity.

1.5 Problem gambling and the family

There are numerous references in the literature highlighting that problem gambling related harms extend beyond the individual gambler, impacting family members and close friends (Dowling et al., 2014). The extent in which problem gambling extends to can be seen early in the literature, with Lesieur and Custer (1984) estimating that each problem gambler would approximately effect between ten and seventeen

individuals, including family members and co-workers. While the effects of an individual problem gambling have been predicted and cited for many years, much of the literature available provides evidence of the negative effects of problem gambling on the family, with very little research on how the problem gambling specifically impacts the family or more relevantly to this study, their experiences of this phenomena. In a study conducted by Ciarrocchi and Reinert (1993) it was found that married Gambling Anonymous and Gam Anon members reported significantly greater dissatisfaction within their family life compared to the individuals within the control group and male problem gamblers' family environment which also included social support, had improved with the length in which they had stayed away from problem gambling.

A general consensus of the effects of problem gambling can be found, in a number of studies. Langan et al., (2016) through their study and findings, proposed a functional definition to gambling related harm and stated that it is any initial or exacerbated adverse consequence due to an engagement with gambling that leads to a decrement to the health or wellbeing of an individual, family unit, community or population. It is interesting, that this conceptualisation of gambling related harm included individuals beyond the individual with problem gambling.

The existing studies, both qualitative and quantitative, across the field, strongly suggest that gambling related harm and effects are not restricted to the individual with problem gambling. However, there is still a gap in the research assessing the experiences of non-problem gambling individuals around them, and only recently studies have started to assess this. Even with the gap starting to close in the literature, it is clear that the children of problem gamblers are more scarcely explored. Perhaps when we think of the word 'harm' we think about those whom are worse affected by the phenomena in question, yet Canale, Vieno and Griffiths (2016) who utilised data derived from the British Gambling Prevalence Survey in 2010 found that such gambling related harms were not just justified to problem gamblers but were distributed across low to moderate risk gamblers. Similar suggestions were found by Raisamo et al. (2014) whom studied telephone surveys of 4484 individuals from the general population in Finland and emphasised that harms were reported 'even at low gambling frequency expenditure levels.' All of such, once again

emphasise that the gambling extends beyond the individual gambling regardless of level of gambling, whether problem and even low risk and frequency gamblers.

It has been pointed out on a number of occasions that problem gambling can affect spouses, children, adult children, parents, as well as the overall family, and although the impacts on individual family members may be different, they are undoubtedly interwoven and have many different connections with one another (Kourgiantakis, Saint-Jacques and Tremblay, 2013). A number of studies within the literature suggests that the most common problems reported by the family members of problem gamblers include loss of household or personal money, arguments including anger and violence, lies between the family and deceptional neglect of family members, negatively affected relationships, poor communication and confusion of family roles and responsibilities as well as the development of gambling problems and other addictions within the family (Abbott, 2001; Grant and Kim, 2001; Lesieur, 1989, 1992, 1996). It is clear, through the published literature and the available knowledge that there is a growing body of research on the families of problem gamblers within an international context (Dowling et al., 2014; Hodgins et al., 2007; Mathews and Volberg, 2013; Patford, 2009; Suomi et al., 2013), however the research within a UK context is interestingly very scarce.

Much of the research holds a consensus that problem gambling can have a detrimental impact on the family relationships and potentially lead to emotional and psychological problems as well as socio-economic and financial difficulties (Dowling et al., 2014). Perhaps the vast majority of resources and attention, within the literature in the field, has been focused upon spouses or intimate partners. Studies have found spouses or intimate partners of problem gamblers experience high levels of conflict and distress within their households and relationships, a loss of trust and increased dissatisfaction within their relationships (Dickson-Swift et al., 2005; Hodgins et al., 2007; Mathews and Volberg, 2013). A number of studies also point to the idea that intimate partners of those individuals who experience problem gambling may also experience a range of physical and mental health problems such as insomnia, headaches, panic attacks and exhaustion, alongside sub-clinical levels of depression and anxiety, and increased levels of tobacco and alcohol consumption (Dickson-Swift et al., 2005; Patford, 2009). This highlights the idea that not only do

children of problem gamblers have particular experiences due to the gambling but the potential effects on spouses and therefore on the non-gambling parent emphasise the importance of a need of focus on this area within the research literature.

1.6 Parental gambling

As already discussed above, problem gambling can have many add-on effects, beyond financial, to the individual who partakes in problem gambling, and onto their family and social networks. Lesieur (1989) reported that 87% of problem gamblers had at some point in their relationship, after the problem gambling started, had ridiculed, insulted, embarrassed or belittled their wives in front of their children, this suggestion points to the possible negative experiences of children of problem gamblers both directly and indirectly.

Some evidence and references can be found in the literature on the experiences of children of problem gamblers dating back to the earlier studies within the field. Franklin and Thoms (1989) suggested that children of problem gamblers often experienced role conflicts including taking on the role of peacemaker within family conflicts, being caught in the middle of family tensions, serving as a scapegoat and taking blames for the family difficulties arising from their parent's problem gambling behaviours. Franklin and Thoms (1989) also noted that some children also felt responsible for the emotional atmosphere within their homes. Lesieur and Rothschild (1989) emphasised that children with problem gambling parents typically experienced a great deal of inconsistency in their relationships with their parents where at times they were shown attention whom they would not expect and at other times they were ignored. In another early study within the field found that 37% of the spouses of problem gamblers believed that their husbands generally did not spend enough time with their children and within the same study it was suggested that 44% of the participants reported that the children were close to only their mothers, compared to their fathers.

A number of studies have highlighted that children of problem gamblers reported feelings of abandonment, rejection, neglect, emotional deprivation, anger, sadness, confusion, isolation and helplessness (Abbott et al., 1995; Franklin and Thoms, 1989; Lesieur, 1992; Lesieur and Rothschild, 1989; Lorenz and Yaffee, 1988). It has been argued by some that children of problem gamblers often suffered from stress-related physical illnesses including asthma and allergies, headaches and stomach problems (Lorenz and Yaffee, 1988). Alongside these, there are a number of studies within the literature suggesting that children of problem gamblers experience financial hardship and reduced access to basic necessities including housing, warm and food, reported a lack of security and trust, increased risk of being victims themselves of physical abuse and emotional deprivation (Abbott, 2001; Darbyshire et al., 2001; Lesieur and Rothschild, 1989; Lorenz and Shuttlesworth, 1983).

Jacobs et al., (1989) and Lesieur (1992) separately in their studies suggested that children of problem gamblers were more likely to gamble themselves at a younger age than those whose parents who did not participate in problem gambling. More specifically Jacobs et al., (1989) suggested that children whose parents were problem gamblers were consistently at greater risk of being involved in threatening behaviours such as smoking, drinking or over eating, experienced a greater exposure to psychosocial risk factors such as broken home, poor self-image or overall poor quality of life, and endured a greater incidence of depression, anxiety, insecurity, need for success, poor mental state, school and work problems and suicide attempts. Further to this, Lorenz and Shuttlesworth (1983) reported that 25% of the children in their study had significant difficulties within their behaviours and adjustment, reflected a need of running away from their home, committed crime and engaged in drug use, alcohol or gambling related behaviours. This increased risk in the possible participation of gambling of children of problem gamblers possibly suggests a trans-generational habit and effect of the experiences of problem gambling within families and generations, once again emphasising the importance for an in-depth understanding of the experiences of children of problem gamblers, which this study aimed to achieve.

Data taken and analysed from a large-scale survey in Australia looked into problem gamblers and affected others. The analysed data showed that a typical problem

gambler affected six other people (Goodwin et al., 2017). There are numerous references in the literature pointing to the same notion that the effects and impact of problem gambling stretches beyond partners, as discussed above, but also include other family members including parents or children (Hodgins, Shead and Makarchuk, 2007). Such family members are thought to be affected financially but also psychologically and emotionally. Several results from studies suggest the idea that children of those individuals with problem gambling are exposed to a host of family stressors including parental neglect, inadequate role modelling, financial and emotional deprivations, family conflict and physical isolation (Darbyshire, 2001; Dowling et al, 2014).

One of the early quantitative studies by Lorenz and Shuttlesworth (1983) investigated the impact of pathological gambling on the spouse of the gambler, by using 144 participants of Gam Anon members. The results showed that 37% of the spouses of the problem gamblers believed that their husbands did not spend enough time with their children, with 44% of respondents reporting that the offspring were only close to their mothers, clearly displaying a separation and disruption to the relationship between the offspring and gambler. Moreover, 25% of the children in the study were reported to have significant behavioural and adjustment problems, like running away from home. Behavioural and adjustment problems were seen in children with parental alcohol addiction previously in the literature, this study showed that parental gambling also led to similar effects. While the study brought to light some interesting findings, it was only based on a limited sample and not randomised. Therefore, the findings can be argued not to be representative of the general population. Also, it is important to bear in mind that the research was conducted 30 years ago, and consider the changing times and familial structures of the current era. As statistics have shown, women gamblers are on an increase and the gap between gender roles between males and females are decreasing with the modernisation of society. Keeping these in mind, such results may perhaps differ if conducted in current times, yet they do show once again the impact parental problem gambling can have on the offspring. Similarly, Jacobs et al. (1989) conducted a quantitative study comparing the health status of 52 youth who described their parents as problem gamblers with 792 youth who had not reported any gambling problems among. While the study consisted of a limited experimental sample, the results

showed that children of problem gamblers were at significantly greater risk than the controls on involvement with health-threatening behaviour, psychological risk indicators and incidence of dysphoria, school and work problems and suicide attempts.

Vitaro, Wanner, Brendgen & Tremblay (2008) also through a quantitative study, compared the offspring of 24 problem gamblers to 100 offspring who did not experience any parental gambling; the participants were drawn from a relatively large community-based sample of 1872 participants. Parents were asked to rate their own gambling and other mental health problems when their children were in their mid-adolescence and the children's self-reports on their own depressive feelings and conduct problems were assessed at mid-adolescence and again by early adulthood. The results, unsurprisingly, portrayed that children of parents with gambling problems reported significantly more depressive feelings and more conduct problems by mid—adolescence compared to the offspring of parents without gambling problems. Those offspring with parental problem gambling were also found to experience increased levels of depressive symptoms into early adulthood. It is no doubt quantitative studies portray the extent of the problem in hand and are very important in our understanding but qualitative research is needed to fully understand the experience and process involved for those individuals involved especially in the field of Counselling Psychology.

Perhaps the study closest to this current study was conducted by Darbyshire, Oster and Carrig (2001), who argued that there was limited text in the literature contributing to our understanding of the experiences of children growing up in such families, thus, wanted to explore the experiences of Australian children living where a parent or caregiver was experiencing problem gambling. This qualitative study used 15 children and adolescents and conducted interviews in which parents' pattern of gambling, how the participants believed gambling affected them and home life in general, how they found out about their parents gambling and how they dealt with it, the impact gambling had on school and friendships, what they want others to know about living with parental problem gambling and what they believe might happen to them and the family in the future was explored. The analysis found that the most prominent theme was that of 'pervasive loss'; the offspring felt a loss of the gambling parent, both physically and emotionally, the loss of a relationship between the

offspring and the extended family, loss of trust and security and materialistic financial loss including savings and income. This central finding of 'pervasive loss' clearly portrays the extent in which these offspring's experiences of childhood were hindered and the way in which parental problem gambling affected them. This research paper clearly explains the issue in the wider context by explaining clearly where problem gambling stands in Australia and the importance of research in the area. Sensitivity is also held throughout the text, in particular taking care when outlining the idea of gambling within females is increasing the potential effects on the offspring by being mindful not to portray women as one with motherhood.

Research suggests that individuals that are exposed to gambling at an earlier age and have family members who gamble are at greater risk of developing gambling behaviours in the future (Shead, Derevensky & Gupta, 2010). While there is text in the literature which explores the experiences of young offspring with parental problem gambling (Darbyshire et al., 2001) and of adult offspring of late onset parental gambling (Patford, 2007), research has not yet explored the impact of adult offspring who have had a parent involved in problem gambling in their childhood, particularly in the UK. The research into offspring of parental problem gambling could be argued to be scarce in general. It has been noted throughout the literature that future research should focus on the family members of the problem gamblers, in particular conducting direct interviews of the offspring to understand the extent of the experience of growing up in a household with parental problem gambling and to ask what it is like to live in a family with a problem gambler for the children (Shaw et al., 2007; Darbyshire et al., 2001; Kalischuk et al, 2006; Crisp et al., 2001).

1.7 Attachment Theory

Attachment theory was initially introduced by John Bowlby (1958; 1960; 1969) and Bowlby described attachment as a 'lasting psychological connectedness between human beings' (Bowlby, 1969). Bowlby (1973) emphasised that attachment styles are formed throughout infancy and through to adolescence.

Ainsworth and Bell (1970) expanded on Bowlby's early work and suggested different attachment styles through the 'strange situation study' which included observations

of children between the ages of 12 and 18 months as they responded to separation and reunions of their caregivers. Through this study, they determined 3 major attachment styles: secure attachment, insecure-avoidance attachment and insecure – ambivalence attachment.

Secure attachment was identified in the infants who clearly used their primary caregiver as a ‘secure base’ to explore; they explored in their presence and checked on them in their absence (Goldberg, Muir & Kerr, 2009). These infants showed varying levels of distress in their caregivers’ absence and was happy on their return (Goldberg, Muir, Kerr, 2009). It is suggested that a securely attached infant will believe that their attachment figure will be able to meet their needs and will be able to attend to their distress, while being a ‘safe base’ for them to explore their world (Main & Cassidy, 1988). The attachment figure within a secure attachment will be ‘available, responsive and helpful’ suggested Bowlby (1980).

Those infants presented as the insecure-avoidance category of attachment appeared to explore without interest in their caregiver’s whereabouts, were minimally distressed by their departure and uninterested when they returned (Goldberg, Muir & Kerr, 2009). It is suggested that these individuals would be unlikely to seek their attachment figures at moments of distress (Behrens, Hess & Main, 2007). Finally, insecure-ambivalent infants appeared to have difficulty separating from their caregivers to explore, were extremely distressed by their departure and although they sought comfort on their return, they did not appear able to readily settle down (Goldberg, Muir & Kerr, 2009). Infants within the category of insecure-ambivalent found it difficult to experience a sense of security from their caregivers and typically appeared to be clingy or dependent but were failed to be comforted by them. Ainsworth (1979) suggested that the caregivers to these infants presented as having inconsistent levels of attendance to their needs.

Attachment theory assumes that infants internalize their interactions with significant others into ‘internal working models’ which are mental representations of significant others and the self (Al-Yagon, 2014). These internal working models, of unique attachment styles formed in early life, are manifested later during social interactions through adulthood. Yet, it is important to recognise that inner working models are not

necessarily static or absolute and instead can be dynamic, in that they can change and can be altered in response to 'new information' (Collins & Read, 1990). Kenny and Rice (1995) explained that such 'new information' can refer to new relational experiences or a deepened understanding of the individual's self.

1.7.1 Attachment and fathers

Bowlby emphasised the importance of a secure attachment to one's primary caregiver, a role historically reserved for mothers (Brown & Mangelsdorf, 2012). While historically mothers had been seen as the main caregivers and recipients in forming attachment with their infants, with the changing and modernising world, fathers have been more increasingly involved in child care in past several decades (Lamb, Pleck & Levine, 1985; Yeung, Sandberg, Davis, Kean & Hofferth, 2001) and they play an important role in child development (Cabrera, Fagan, Wight & Schadler, 2011). The historical view of mothers as primary caregivers may account for the main focus within the literature on children's attachment with mothers (Bretherton, 2010; Freeman, Newland & Coyl, 2010), however, some early attachment research suggested that many infants are likely to be distressed on separation from either parent (Kotelchuck, 1976) and direct attachment related behaviours towards both mothers and fathers on reunion (Lamb, 1976).

In one of the early studies on attachment and fathers, conducted by Lamb (1976), found that during a series of laboratory episodes in which either one or both parents were present, infants showed similar levels of approach and contact seeking to mothers and fathers, however fathers were the recipients of more affiliative behaviours such as smiling and vocalising, than were mothers.

Father-child attachment security has been highlighted in a number of studies looking into child outcomes. Research has found that securely attached father-child relationships showed children with fewer behavioural problems (Vershuere & Morcoen, 1999), greater sociability (Sagi, Lamb & Gardner, 1986) and more reciprocated relationships (Verissimo et al., 2011) than those children who were insecurely attached to their fathers. Further to this, father-child attachment security also appears to have important implications for nonclinical outcomes. Father-child

attachment security was found to lower the risk of internalising and externalising forms of psychopathology (Phares, Rojas, Thurston & Hankinson, 2010).

Some studies have linked secure attachment with fathers to children's positive interactions with friends (Parke et al., 2004). A growing amount of research suggest that mother and father attachment relations differ in their type. Grossman et al., (2002) suggested that father and mother attachment relationships are formed from different sets of early social experiences; mothers act as a secure base in times of distress while fathers act as a challenging but reassuring play partner. Similarly, George and colleagues (2010) suggested that individual parental mechanisms associated with insecure attachments differ. They found that father's low level of responsiveness was linked with insecure avoidant attachment with their children, whereas mothers' low level of responsiveness was linked with insecure ambivalent attachment (George et al., 2010).

Moreover, Verschueren and Marcoen (2005) highlighted that secure attachment with mothers best predicted children's functioning in more intimate small groups for dyadic interactions, while secure attachment in fathers best predicted peer acceptance. Richaud de Minzi (2006) found that availability of and reliance on the father outweighed attachment to mother in predicting their children's lower depression scores, whereas availability of and reliance on the mother outweighed father attachment in explaining differences in children's loneliness. Similarly, Al-Yagon found that child-father and child-mother attachment contributed to differences in children internalising features. Such studies highlight the importance of child-father attachments in early life and the implications of these through their on-going adult lives.

1.8 The research so far

As explored, it can perhaps be argued that the attention and effort placed on research into the field of gambling is at a limit when we compare and look at the research for other addictive behaviours such as drug or alcohol misuse.

Nevertheless, when we consider the broader field of enquiry as well as the more specific findings, the literature into the experiences of people who grew up with a

problem gambling father can be argued to be scarce and limited. The studies around this area, thus far, have been of a quantitative nature with much of the findings and suggestions referencing risk factors, and impacts on gamblers, with very little detail and attention to the families, in particular to the children of problem gamblers.

Darbyshire et al. (2001) adds that it is imperative to ask what it is like to live in such a family using qualitative research to address not just what is documented through quantitative studies, but actual experiences to fully portray the impact on the family. It is further explained that the offspring of problem gamblers are often viewed as 'passive victims' and are usually studied indirectly through the experiences of their parents rather than more directly. However, a number of quantitative studies have suggested the impact of parental problem gambling can have on the offspring from behavioural and adjustment problems (Lorenz & Suttleswoth, 1983) to increased suicide attempts and psychological risk factors (Jacobs et al, 1989).

Therefore, ignoring the experiences of such offspring can be detrimental and understanding them through qualitative research can inform our practice within Counselling Psychology when working with such individuals and even the problem gamblers directly. While the need for research into this area of the field is clearly highlighted on many occasions, the focus of actual qualitative research into the area is very thin, especially in the UK. As explored through this introduction chapter and the literature available around the field, it is clear that international literature plays a leading role in the research in the field. Findings and suggestions from international literature clearly indicates that problem gambling can have significant impacts on families, friends and other loved ones. However, and in some sense unfortunately, this relationship and specific experiences remain very much underexplored within a UK context. There is a large sense and feeling, while I explored and engaged in the literature within the field that family members, especially the children of problem gamblers voices had not been heard or listened to sufficiently within the literature of gambling research. Patford (2007) argues that it is important to consider why family members' experiences have not gained more attention in debates around the world regarding the gaming industry. This could perhaps be explained through the argument Castellani (2000) provides in that governments are silent about the extended impact of problem gambling due to their dependence to gambling profits.

The importance of the experiences of offspring with parental problem gambling holds great importance to the field of Counselling Psychology; through such research we can understand and implement formal service systems to provide better care for offspring who have experienced parental gambling and accessed the services. Having such understanding will inform our Counselling Psychology practice by implementing correct care, interventions and Psychoeducation not only for the offspring involved but to the problem gamblers themselves on potential issues they may face in the future.

1.9 Introduction into the current study

When the literature is reviewed, it is very apparent that there is an absence of the voice of the individuals who grew up with a problem gambling father and their lived experiences of this particular phenomena. It is clear that there are many quantitative studies and references in the literature and much of the references to the experiences of children of problem gamblers are conducted indirectly through the problem gamblers themselves or through other family members, especially within the UK literature towards gambling research.

An important motive for conducting this current study is the importance of the knowledge that the study aims to obtain for the field of Counselling Psychology. I believe that gaining an insight into the lived experiences of individual's who grew up with a problem gambling father and the understandings of this research can be utilised by counselling psychologists in their clinical practice, in developing therapeutic interventions for evidence-based practice. Moreover, the knowledge gained from the current research can also help counselling psychologists form effective therapeutic spaces for the children who have had problem gambling fathers but also men in problem gambling services; ensuring that these difficulties are understood with empathy and acceptance and with an evidence base.

Therefore, I believe that conducting a qualitative study to contribute to the literature is very important. It allows for a space for the voices of such individuals to be heard and will perhaps allow scope for understanding into their actual experiences rather than negatively focusing on risk factors or potential causes, perhaps moving away

from a negative narrative around these experiences to shine light on possible resiliencies and difficulties in their experiences.

1.10 Reflexivity

My own drive into this field and study stems from different points and areas of my life. Growing up and being closely affiliated within the Turkish-Kurdish community, problem gambling was an experience I witnessed through many men in the community. As an ethnic minority community and one that was very closely tied, I often heard about, from childhood to adulthood, men gambling in community social clubs and the implications this had. This was a topic that I overheard many people talk about and discussed, whether it was how much the individual was gambling or how it had affected their partners. What always stood out for me was the missing element of the experience of their children and what they were going through. This cultural element of my experience and observations was important for me to start to understand this phenomenon in the wider population.

On a more personal note, my father had also attended such social clubs and at a few occasions in my childhood, I had heard conversations about my father gambling and the reaction this had caused within my family. While I do not identify as my father being a problem gambler, the very short-lived experience of my father gambling with my observations of the implications of problem gambling around me was merely a frightening experience filled with anxiety. This personal connection was important for me to explore this phenomenon and understand further the experiences of children of problem gamblers.

Chapter two

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Overview

This chapter describes and explains the way in which the research question, ‘what are the individual experiences of growing up with a problem gambling father?’ was attempted to be answered. This current chapter will give an account of the researcher’s epistemological assumptions and move towards detailed procedural descriptions and detail the considerations and steps to make this a valid and ethically committed piece of research.

This study employed a qualitative research design. Data was gathered from a small sample through semi-structured interviews. The data was collected through purposive and opportunity recruitment and all participants involved in this study were volunteers recruited through advertisement around City, University of London and on social media.

2.2 Epistemology, Methodology and Method

2.2.1 Epistemology

Epistemology is concerned with the way in which human beings have tried to make sense of the world they are surrounded by and how they move towards knowing things or believing in them to be true (Cardinal, Hayward & Jones, 2004). Flew (1989) has suggested that epistemology is committed to exploring what we know, how we know it and whether we can know. With these definitions in mind, I take the critical realist position as I believe that, within the world we live in, there are underlying phenomena and realities that exist but our experience of these are led by our own social situations, biology, culture, history and individual perspective.

In this section, the epistemological position will be presented and the Methodology and Method that has been implicated for the research question will be described.

2.2.2 The Critical Realist Position

The critical realist position assumes a realist ontology evolved from the writings of Roy Bhaskar (1975) and Bhaskar (2008) argued the importance of reducing statements about the world (ontology) to statements about knowledge of the world (epistemology). Critical realism is very interested in ontology and the position accepts that much of the reality exists and operates independently of our awareness or knowledge of it. However, the critical nature of the position is important in the production of knowledge and what can be known. While the belief in an objective reality is essential, it is important to acknowledge that our knowledge of the world is always relative to who we are as individuals (Archer et al. 2016).

The critical realist position is identified as being 'theory laden' as opposed to 'theory determined' Fletcher (2017). Fletcher (2017) states that the position accepts that real social work exists and scientific theoretical works can aim to understand the causal mechanisms driving phenomena or events, and therefore try and move closer to the 'reality'. However, it is also important to note that the position accepts that knowledge can differ and depend on how close it truly is to reality (Danermark et al, 2002).

A critical realist position would suggest that experiences are at some level real to us, beyond language and social constructs of them, however this reality can be known by us only partially and not absolutely (Bhaskar, 1975; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009) explain that as researchers, we must listen or read carefully to get as close as possible to how other people experience the world; however, we can never fully know their experience.

Within my epistemological framework of a critical realist, an extreme realist approach is rejected because whilst events occur in the real world, individuals experiencing this reality cannot accurately describe them as they hold only their subjective experiences of the reality, which can change from person to person. One individual's biology, history, social context, and individual perspective can differ from other individuals and consequently affecting the way they experience the real phenomena. Equally, an extreme relativist position is also rejected within this framework as while

participants' experiences are led by culture, language and politics (Pilgrim and Rogers, 1997), it provides us with information about the experience of a reality that is not purely constructed. This study is interested in the experiences of those who grew up with a problem gambling father, and in the analysis and throughout contact with the participants, I may not have been able to generate an accurate description but instead I have been able to build an awareness into how each individual, experiences their reality of this experience. Through the analysis, I was able to make sense of the individual's making sense of a phenomena which they have experienced in order to create critical realist knowledge.

2.2.3 Acceptance of qualitative methodology

This research is a qualitative study offering a phenomenological perspective to the experience of adult individuals who have identified themselves as having a problem gambling father growing up; focusing on the individuals experiences of the phenomenon and how they made sense of it. Therefore, this research rejects positivism, a leading epistemological position in Psychology. Positivist knowledge is usually collected through a quantitative research design and assumes that the research can directly access the truth of the world. Quantitative research in this area has provided numerous risk factors and symptomatic outcomes for such individuals, however qualitative research is essential in grasping the essence of the lived experience of each individual, which quantitative research fails to capture. Focusing on the subjective experience of the participants is more likely to lead to an empowering insight into this field (Stiles, 1993) and being a Trainee Counselling Psychologist shows that I place emphasis on subjective experiences of individuals, which is thus reflected through the knowledge I aimed to produce. While such perspective will offer insight into the experiences of such individuals, it could also further enhance future quantitative research by bringing into light beliefs and themes of those offspring who have experienced a problem gambling parent; maximising the validity and giving way for future quantitative research.

2.2.4 Method: Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

The transcribed interviews were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Larkin, Watts and Clifton (2006) describes IPA as 'giving voice' to the participants while, through interpretation, allowing the researcher to 'make sense', holding a psychological perspective, of these individual experiences. Moving away from Husserl's (1927) original transcendental and descriptive ideas, Heidegger (1962, 1927), Merleau-Ponty (1962) and Sartre view the person as embedded in a world of objects, relationships, language and culture and the lived world is something personal to each individual (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). Smith and Osbourne (2003) explain that 'double hermeneutics' is the researcher making sense of the participant who is making sense of the experience, and this idea highlights the role of hermeneutics within IPA research (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). The researcher aims to adopt an 'insider's perspective' (Conrad, 1987) while also standing alongside the participant to view them at a different angle. With this in mind, successful IPA is generally described as both empathic and questioning. Larkin, Watts and Clifton (2006) explains that IPA positions the initial descriptive account of the experience into the wider social, cultural and perhaps theoretical context, providing a conceptual outlook on the way the participant makes sense of their experience. This version of the phenomenological method accepts that direct access to research participant's life-worlds cannot be fully achieved and recognises that an exploration must be implicated in the researchers own view of the world as well as the interaction between the researcher and the participant (Willig, 2013).

Due to my epistemological position and ideas of knowledge, I believe that IPA is best suited for the questions I aimed to explore in this research. I believe that there is a real phenomenon experienced by individuals and in particular participants within this study, and that is of, growing up with a problem gambling father. I believe that this is a real experience but their individual experiences differ. However, I accept that it is impossible to gain direct access to the participant's lifeworld's and I could have only made sense of what they chose to share and of their own individual experience of the phenomena which differed between each participant. Therefore, I believe that this phenomenon is in reality and not purely constructed through language and narratives, going against a social constructionist view of knowledge.

IPA is an idiographic approach in that it is concerned in situating particular participants in their particular context and in doing so exploring their perspectives, while at the same time employing detailed examination of each case into more general claims. IPA's commitment to understanding how an individual makes sense of a particular phenomenon and the consequent in depth analysis means that it utilizes a small purposefully selected sample (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). In understanding the experience of the individual, semi-structured interviews are mainly used in gathering data in an IPA research and as Husserl states only the person can 'know' what they experienced (Hollway, Lucey and Phenix, 2007) and therefore individual interviews are deemed appropriate in gathering data such knowledge. The semi-structured interview is flexible in its nature, and allows the researcher to build rapport while following the participants interests or concerns. Questions are open-ended in which yes or no answers are not asked, and it encourages the participant to explain their experience with minimal interventions and without leading questions, while being encouraged to reveal as much detail as they can and are comfortable with. Questions start by tapping into descriptive experiences, and where necessary move to more analytical ones. This allows subjective experience from the participant, in which the researcher holds as data on their sense making of the phenomenon in hand and the individuals lived experiences. These ideas and the ideology of semi-structured interviews and IPA was kept in the epi-centre of my thoughts and ideas while developing my interview schedule, which I viewed as a non-prescriptive tool to help guide the interview process.

2.2.5 Consideration of alternative methodologies

Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (Foucault, 1972) was considered but decided would not produce the knowledge of this experience. Foucauldian Discourse Analysis argues that objects and subjects are constructed through discourses and discourses are products of a particular culture, place and time in history. However, I believe that there is a phenomenon out there that is real, and not just purely constructed, but our individual experiences of that can be different.

While choosing the methodology for the current study, Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was also considered. Grounded Theory is seen as one of the main

alternatives to an IPA study (Smith et al., 2009). During this consideration, the social constructionist approach at a moderate level of Grounded Theory was considered, however phenomenological methods are suggested to be better suited for psychological research aiming to explore the experiences of participants without generalising to the wider population and explaining particular social processes (Willig, 2013). Consequentially Grounded Theory usually requires a larger number of participants (Smith et al., 2009) which was not realistic for this current study and therefore using Grounded Theory was rejected.

Moreover, Discourse Analysis (Potter & Wetherell, 1987) was considered but very quickly rejected. A central premise of the position of Discourse Analysis is its challenge to the assumption that verbal reports reflect underlying cognitions and therefore the position is strongly influenced by the effects of different types of language (Smith, 1996), however the role of language was not the focus of my research but rather the experience. Further to this, IPA felt more consistent with the research aims of this current study because IPA is interested in the content of verbal communications and aims to gain an insight into the cognitions of the participants in relation to the phenomena in question, while Discourse Analysis argues that verbalisations of mental states should be analysed separately (Smith, Jarman & Osborn, 1999).

2.3 Research Design

A qualitative design was employed in this research in an attempt to answer the research question and this was informed by the epistemological position. Six one-to-one semi structured interviews (see, Appendix A) were conducted with individuals who had a problem gambling father while growing up. The duration of the interviews was between 45 and 90 minutes. The interviews were digitally recorded and then transcribed.

2.3.1 Semi structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the experiences of the participants. Kvale and Brinkman (2009) explain that the interview provides an inter-subjective context which leads to an opportunity to explore ambiguous and

contradictory statements as well as allowing an opportunity to address and raise more sensitive topics that might have been ignored in diaries.

My clinical experience as a trainee counselling psychologist was also important in my choice of semi-structured interviews as a means of data collection for this study, as opposed to diaries. My training provided me with the correct skills and attributes to create an interaction and space which could explore potentially sensitive topics within the semi-structured interview, within a safe and empathic space. I was attentive and aware of not moving the status of the semi-structured interviews from a research based one to a therapeutic counselling session and this was maintained through supervision and reflexivity throughout, however I believe my core skills I provide in a therapeutic session were essential in exploring these topics with my participants.

I conducted one-off interviews rather than multiple interviews with my participants. One off interviews require the interviewer to build rapport with the participants very quickly and to ensure that the interview schedule (see, Appendix A) is covered in the time allocated to the interview, to explore everything required to answer the research questions and to build an essence of the experience. I was drawn to the advantage of a one-off interview which allowed for more clear details due to its simpler design and practical benefits of having to share their experience only once, compared to multiple times (Flowers, 2008).

The Interview Schedule (see, Appendix A) was developed through a process that was guided by the conceptual framework. Once developed, it was used as a guide rather than a prescriptive tool and many participants covered areas in the schedule before they were asked.

It is important to recognise the limitations of using semi-structured interviews. Halcomb and Davidson (2006) argue that transcribing of the interviews is very time-consuming, physically draining and can be prone to human error. While, Wengraf (2001) argue that verbatim transcription of interviews couple with the research notations are an important part of creating quality research. I believe that dedicating the time in transcribing, though time-consuming, was important for the process of

capturing the experiences of the participants. Moreover, Halcomb and Davison (2006) critique that the individual differences between researcher and participant, including class, sex, culture and language barriers, semi-structure interview can become vulnerable to misunderstandings and misinterpretations. This was an important critique I held in mind throughout the process and I aimed to remain grounded in the data. During the interviews it was important that if I was not clear on anything, that I asked further for clarity on the participants' own experiences. Yet it is important also to add the role of hermeneutics within IPA research and the interpretations of the research of the participant experiences.

2.4 Limitations of the method

The IPA methodology has at times been critiqued by some for being highly dependent on participants' use of language and their ability to articulate and talk about the meanings they have attached to their lived experiences (Willig, 2001). The reliance of language used by participants for IPA researchers and their assumption that language does provide participants with the tools to describe their lived experiences is undeniable. This critique of the IPA method could perhaps be used to extend the current study onto conducting the study using varying or multiple methodological approaches. Future studies could perhaps utilise using more creative and imaginative methods of including non-verbal data in its analysis.

Willig (2001) presents a challenge of the suitability of participants' accounts and the participants' ability to communicate rich accounts of their experience to the researcher through interviews. Willig (2001) explains that those individuals who are not experienced in expressing their emotions, thoughts and perceptions might have difficulty in being able to communicate the essence of their experience and discusses the limited application of the IPA method due to the need of using sophisticated language in order for experiences to be communicated. It is important to highlight that the participants in this study ranged in educational and literary levels however they were all able to provide in depth descriptions and explorations of their lived experiences.

Moreover, IPA has been criticised as to whether it can accurately capture the experiences and meanings of experiences rather than opinions of it. It has been argued that phenomenological research relies on the accounts of the participants and the experiences of the research, therefore some question whether both the participant and researcher have the effective communication skills to successfully communicate nuances of the experience's (Tuffour, 2017). Further to this, some critique IPA as seeking to understand the lived experiences of individuals but not aiming to explain why they occur. However, Smith et al. (2009) have argued that IPA uses hermeneutic, idiographic and contextual analysis to understand the cultural position of the individual experiences.

It is important to discuss the use of volunteers within this study. Rozmovits and Ziebland (2004) explain that the motivation of individuals who volunteer to take part in research studies can be different to the motivation of individuals recruited using other methods. They highlight that volunteers may have specific motivations to take part in particular research projects, for example the experience of the research study holding a particular significance in their lives or an enjoyable or difficult experience and therefore leading to an intense need to talk about it, leading to volunteering. However, participants involved in this current study presented with a number of reasons and motivations to take part all on varying levels.

2.5 Ethics

This research complied with the British Psychological Society (2009) ethical-guidelines in order to both protect the participants involved in the study but also the researcher. The British Psychological Society defines ethics as 'the science of morals or rules of behaviour' (BPS 2009, pg6). As a member of the British Psychological Society and an individual dedicated to the field, ethical guidelines remained at a heightened importance throughout this research study.

The 'Ethical principles for conducting research with human participants' (British Psychological Society, 2009) were followed thoroughly throughout this research and have been outlined as follows.

Consent

Prior to conducting interviews with the participants, informed written consent was obtained from each participant (see, Appendix D).

Debriefing

Participants were given accurate information at the end of the research and were presented with a written debrief sheet (see, Appendix E). As part of the debrief form, participants were given information regarding services they could access post-interview if they felt distress and required further support.

Deception

I aimed to remain open about the aims of the study (see, Appendix C) and details of the study were explained to the participants as there were no methodological needs to withdraw this information but also, I wanted to place an emphasis on not causing any distress in debriefing of the participants.

Confidentiality

Anonymity was guaranteed and all names and identifying information were changed to ensure confidentiality was maintained throughout. Confidentiality was preserved by insuring that all recordings and transcripts were stored anonymously and safely, with any information linking the participant to their transcript were kept securely in locked files and destroyed at the end of the analysis and once the research requirements were met. When excerpts of the transcripts were used in the final research findings, all identifying material were changed and anonymity was maintained. Participants were made aware of the limits of confidentiality, prior to the interviews. I ensured that the participants were aware that, due to my duty of care as a professional, if I had heard anything that may have concerned me about the safety of the participants or anything around them, I would have informed relevant people and services (British Psychological Society, 2009), for example to safe-guard.

Withdrawal from the Research

Participants were made aware prior to the start of the interviews, and throughout the process, they had a right to withdraw from the study, without any explanation or

penalty up until the analysis had started and that any withdrawal request after this period was not permitted. No participant requested to withdraw from this research.

Protection of Participants

Protecting participants was kept at the centre and was ensured throughout the research process. Participants were not service users; however, it was considered that throughout talking about their particular experiences in a safe and empathic space, participants may have reached understandings of their experience and therefore some emotional distress was anticipated and considered prior to the interviews. However, due to my clinical experience and skills I felt confident in exploring and discussing these issues with the participants and was prepared to provide them with details of support and appropriate counselling services. As part of the debrief sheet, a number of services were presented to the participants should they have felt the need to access services beyond the interview.

While the safety of the participants was crucial, I ensured my own personal wellbeing through the use of personal therapy and specialised supervision.

2.6 Pilot

A Pilot study was conducted as a means to evaluate the effectiveness of the interview schedule in capturing the lived experiences of those individuals being interviewed. The pilot study also was important to develop my personal skills as a qualitative research interviewer.

2.5.1 Participant

One male participant was recruited through word-of-mouth. The participant was informed that they would be taking part in a preliminary interview to inform the development of my doctoral research project. The participant identified as growing up with a problem gambling father. 'Problem gambling' was not objectively defined, but rather the participant subjectively identified as having a father with 'problem gambling' during his childhood.

2.5.2 Data Collection

The participant who took part in the pilot for this research project was interviewed by myself. The interview was conducted face to face at City, University of London. The pilot interview lasted approximately 45 minutes and the interview schedule (see, Appendix A) was followed in order to test out and allow for feedback on the interview schedule and my own skills as a researcher.

After the interview, the participant was asked for feedback on his experience of taking part in the interview, the questions informed by the interview schedule as well as their experience of me as a researcher and interviewer.

2.5.3 Summary of feedback and outcomes

My initial view on the interview was that of a positive one. The interview schedule allowed for the interview to flow and produced rich descriptions of the participant's lived experience of the phenomena in question.

The participant stated that the interview allowed space for them to think about and explore their experience, which he said he had not allowed himself to do so previously; he reflected on the idea that the experience revolved mainly around his father therefore he felt like all attention was mainly on him. It was interesting, he felt, to have the space and time to reflect upon his experiences of having a father with problem gambling growing up.

The participant reflected that he found it difficult to answer the question on how he makes sense of his father's problem gambling now and how his father's problem gambling affected him now. These questions were closer to the beginning of the interview, and through this feedback I felt it was important to ask these questions later on in the interview; I believe this allowed the participants to think and talk about their experiences more at that point allowing them more time to process and express their experiences freely. I also felt that as the interview went on, a more effective trusting relationship could be established allowing more comfort to open up and consider the more difficult questions and experiences.

When I reflect back on this pilot interview, it was very important for my own confidence as a 'researcher', as prior to this interview I experienced a sense of confusion and doubt about my ability to differentiate my role as a 'researcher' and 'therapist'. I found that I was much more comfortable within my role as a researcher than I had anticipated, yet I was constantly reminding myself of this role. Rather than allowing my nerves to grow regarding my perceived abilities to differentiate my roles as 'therapist' and 'researcher', the pilot interview helped me to emphasise the advantage I held in the interview by having skills of being a 'therapist'.

2.7 Data Collection

2.7.1 Sample size

IPA is concerned with the 'detailed examination of personal change' (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009), meaning that it takes an idiographic position in regards to knowledge formation. Moreover, they describe IPA's commitment in understanding how a phenomenon experienced is understood from subjective perspectives of individuals in a particular context. This means that IPA places an importance on depth and detail in the analysis and throughout and a small and homogenous participant group is required in the study to explore the phenomenon in question.

Participants were recruited through purposive and opportunity sampling and I aimed to recruit between six to eight participants. Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) argue that there are no formal guidelines on sample numbers in qualitative research however it is harder to meet the commitments of IPA with a large sample size compared to one that is too small. My decision to recruit six participants came from my desire to hear as many different individual perspectives as I could in regards to the phenomenon while maintaining an idiographic approach allowing an in-depth analysis of each interview transcript.

2.7.2 Inclusion/ Exclusion Criteria

Participants had to be over the age of eighteen to take part in the study. Part of the inclusion criteria was that participants were asked to have a father who they identified as having problem gambling through their childhood, growing up.

Parental problem gambling was self-reported by the participants with no specific criteria of official diagnosis of a gambling disorder. Any individual who self-identified as having a father who gambled and whom they identified as this being problem gambling was invited to show interest in the study with the prospect of becoming a participant. Exclusion from the study included any individual whose parent had any other major mental health difficulties alongside the self-identified problem gambling. This was decided in order to keep the essence of the experience as close as possible to growing up with a parent with problem gambling. In order to further protect distress towards the participants, individuals who reported having a diagnosis of a mental health problem themselves would have also been excluded from the study to reduce potential vulnerability during the interview and post the interview. All the individuals who contacted me to show interest in the study met the inclusion criteria.

Identifying an inclusion and exclusion criteria was important for this study to maintain homogeneity as much as possible, yet it is important to note that this process is not always perfect. Homogeneity refers to the shared perspective upon the phenomenon of interest (Larkin, Shaw & Flowers, 2018). Homogeneity, within the study, was aimed to allow for the participant experiences to be as close to the research question as possible and for the understanding of the experiences to be based on the common experience of growing up with a problem gambling father. Therefore, including and excluding participants, for the nature of this current study, was important to capture the essence of the phenomena in question. Perhaps homogeneity could have been further achieved by filtering further the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the study, as this can be considered for future research. The inclusion and exclusion criteria were also important as it directly impacted recruitment feasibility. An inclusion and exclusion criteria which was too rigid could have potentially caused difficulties in recruiting participants for the study. Moreover,

staying true to the essence of phenomenological research, it was important for potential participants were able to feel able to self-identify as fitting to the criteria without a prescriptive list.

2.7.3 Participant Invitation

Participants were recruited for this study through purposive and opportunity recruitment. This meant that all participants for this study were volunteers who had come forward to participate. As part of the recruitment process, I had asked people around me to spread the word and my advertisement poster (see, Appendix B); essentially through snowball recruitment, meaning that people were told about the research who then told others. I also advertised on social media outlets such as Instagram and Twitter and asked people to repost or retweet. Alongside these, I also advertised by placing my study poster on the wall of City, University of London. The main aim of my recruitment process was to spread the advertisement of the study as widely as possible in order for potential participants to volunteer and contact me through their own identification.

In all the advertisements, I had included the research poster and potential participants were asked to contact me directly either through my e-mail address or supervisors work number. All contacts for interest by the potential participants were made through e-mail. I then asked when the best time would be for a call and asked for a number for contact. The mobile used in this study was my personal mobile and was only used by and was accessible by myself. No names or numbers of the participants were recorded on the mobile phone. When date and time was agreed, I contacted the participants via telephone. Upon contact, I introduced myself and thanked the potential participants for showing interest in my study. Following this, I offered the participants a chance to ask any questions they may have before we started, in order to ease anxiety and start rapport building.

Over the phone, I asked them questions in line with the exclusion and inclusion criteria as explained above. All individuals who showed interest fitted into the inclusion criteria and I did not need to reject any individual from taking part in the study based on the exclusion criteria. Once I determined that the individual was able

to take part in the study, I explained to them that participation in the study would include a one off semi-structured interview, where I would be interested in hearing about their personal experiences of growing up with a father who they identified as having problem gambling. All participants were happy with this and we were able to then collaboratively arrange the most convenient time to meet for the interview. I explained to the participants that the interviews will take place at City, University of London with their travel expenses to be reimbursed and all of the participants agreed to this. Once a date and time was agreed, I informed the participants that I would e-mail them a confirmation and the participant information sheet and that they could contact me in the meantime should they have any questions about the study. No participant asked any questions once they had received the participant information sheet and all participants attended the interview on the set date and times.

2.7.4 Introducing the Participants

Participant names have been anonymised throughout this research report in order to maintain confidentiality. Participant pseudonyms used throughout this report were selected by picking the first name that appeared for consecutive alphabetical letters in order of who was interviewed chronologically and depending on gender. For example, the first participant to be interviewed was a male participant and therefore was allocated the pseudonym Ali and the second participant interviewed was a female and was allocated Bernadette.

Below I will introduce the participants who took part in this study.

Ali

Ali contacted me after he came across my advertisement poster on twitter after it was retweeted by one of my followers. Ali contacted me initially through e-mail and the interview was conducted at City, University of London, in a pre-arranged room. Ali told me that his father had been gambling for most of his childhood and he remembered first becoming aware of it at the age of approximately twelve or thirteen. Ali said that he identified as being a child to a problem gambling father even though his father had never been clinically diagnosed nor had his father sought professional help for his gambling during Ali's childhood. Ali mentioned that more recently his father was seeing a psychologist regarding his gambling. His father had no other

known mental health concerns. Ali had not been diagnosed with a mental health problem himself and he told me that he has never had therapy nor has he ever been a service user in any mental health service.

Bernadette

Bernadette contacted me after her friend who attended City, University of London had seen my poster advertisement around the university and had sent her a picture of it in case she was interested in participating. Bernadette contacted me initially through e-mail and the interview was conducted at City, University of London, in a pre-arranged room. She told me that her father had a problem with gambling for as long as she could remember and through her childhood, growing up. She explained that his gambling had started when she was about one years old and continued through her childhood. Bernadette's father had not received a formal diagnosis of a gambling addiction nor had he ever sought help for it. Her father had no other known mental health concerns. Bernadette was not diagnosed with a mental health problem herself and she told me that she had never had therapy nor had she ever been a service user in any mental health service.

Callum

Callum contacted me after hearing about my study through someone who was aware of the research I was conducting. Callum contacted me initially through e-mail and the interview was conducted at City, University of London, in a pre-arranged room. Callum told me that his father's gambling had been present for as long as he could remember. He explained that he became aware of his problem gambling through the arguments between his mother and father when he was a child. Callum told me that his father had not received a formal diagnosis of a gambling disorder nor had he ever sought help for it during Callum's childhood. His father had no other known mental health concerns. Callum was not diagnosed with a mental health problem himself and he told me that he had never had therapy nor had he ever been a service user in any mental health service.

Darren

Darren contacted me after coming across my advertisement poster on Instagram while it was advertised by one of my colleagues. Darren contacted me initially

through e-mail and the interview was conducted at City, University of London, in a pre-arranged room. Darren explained that he had known his father to gamble for most of his life, up until now. Darren told me that his father had not received a formal diagnosis of a gambling disorder but he identified as his father as having problem gambling. His father had never sought help for his gambling and has no other known mental health concerns. Darren himself had not been diagnosed with a mental health problem himself and had never had any therapy nor had he been a service user in any mental health service.

Eliza

Eliza contacted me after coming across my advertisement poster around City, University of London. Eliza contacted me initially through e-mail and the interview was conducted at City, University of London, in a pre-arranged room. Eliza explained that her father had a problem with gambling for a very long time and through most of her childhood. Eliza told me that her father had not received a formal diagnosis of a gambling disorder but she identified as her father as having a problem gambling. Her father had never sought help for his gambling and had no other known mental health concerns. Eliza himself had not been diagnosed with a mental health problem and has never had any therapy nor had she been a service user in any mental health service.

Francesca

Francesca contacted me after hearing about my study from someone that was known to her whom I had asked to spread the word. Francesca contacted me initially through e-mail and the interview was conducted at City, University of London, in a pre-arranged room. Francesca told me that she became aware of her father's gambling through life at home and parental arguments. She said that at around the age of 12 she was able to understand more clearly what the arguments were about at home. Francesca's dad had not received a formal diagnosis of having a gambling disorder but she identified as her father having problem gambling through her childhood, growing up. Her father has never had therapy and had no other known mental health concerns. Francesca had not been diagnosed with a mental health problem herself and had never had therapy nor has she been a service user in any mental health service.

Name	Age	Gender	Ethnicity
Ali	26	Male	Turkish
Bernadette	20	Female	Kurdish
Callum	19	Male	Iranian
Darren	21	Male	Turkish
Eliza	26	Female	Black Caribbean
Francesca	29	Female	White British

Table 2.6.4 Table displaying demographic details of the participants.

2.7.4.1 Cultural and ethnic diversity

It is important to draw attention to the diversity within the sample in terms of ethnicity and culture. All participants were of British nationality and all reported being born and raised in the United Kingdom, in particular London. The participants of this study ranged in cultural and ethnic background and I believe this was important, in order to capture the lived experiences of these individuals, despite their cultural backgrounds. Within my critical realist position, I place an emphasis on the role of differences, including ethnicity and culture, on the phenomena experienced and therefore including a diverse sample was important in understanding these individual experiences. In particular, with the importance culture and ethnic background plays in the role of parenting and experiences within a household. However, it is also crucial to note the criticism some may hold, especially when thinking about the homogeneity of the sample. IPA seeks to generate a 'fairly homogenous sample' (Noon, 2018) to enable the togetherness of a closely defined group to whom the research question will be significant to (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Perhaps, the cultural diversity within the sample rears away from the homogeneity of the experience, but I believe that such differences are important in the production of knowledge, especially within IPA and the critical realist position.

2.7.5 The Interviews

The interview process was kept the same irrespective of the participant. I gave the participants the opportunity to ask any questions and answered any questions as best as I could. I believe this allowed to ease the participants into the process but also allowed rapport to strengthen.

Two copies of the consent form were signed by both the participant and myself, after I had gone through each point of the consent form with them to ensure that the consent they were giving and the form they were signing was fully informed, leaving little space for misunderstanding and misinterpretation. Once two copies of the consent form were signed, one copy was kept for myself and one was given to the participants. Then, participants were asked if they had any queries or questions before they started and were reminded of their right to terminate or take a break from the interview at any point.

Once the participants agreed to continue, the digital recorder was then switched and I emphasised to the participants that their personal experiences were important and my questions were to guide us through the interview, with no right or wrong answers (see, Appendix A). I emphasised to the participants that if the questions guided us onto other thoughts then this was important. The interviews ranged from 45 to 60 minutes.

All of the interviews took place at City, University of London where rooms were booked. This allowed for the participants to be protected and reduced any distractions. Safeguarding my own personal safety was also important, and conducting the interviews at the university was crucial in this. I also always informed a colleague that I had an interview at the university and would text them at the start and end of each interview.

2.7.6 Transcription

Kvale and Brinkman (2009) argue that transcription is an interpretative process within itself and needs to be explicitly reported. They explain that in transforming

recorded material into a written transcription, researchers need to be aware of what they are including and excluding. Smith, et al., (2009) explain that the aim of IPA is to interpret the meaning of the content of the participants accounts and therefore a detailed transcription of features such as pauses or non-verbal utterances of the interview are not necessary. However, I believe certain non-verbal details were necessary for the analysis and therefore aimed to note lengths of pauses and emotional expressions such as crying or laughing. The recordings were all transcribed verbatim.

2.8 Analytical Procedure

There have been a number of different methods proposed for the analysis of an IPA study however the literature does not point towards one specific method of analysis. Having explored the literature I chose to follow the guidelines proposed by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) as they offered a clear set of guidelines which helped guide my analysis while allowing me to maintain openness in my ideas and flexibility in my interpretation of the text, while remaining reflexive. An IPA analysis moves from a descriptive stance towards a more interpretative one and the guidelines provided by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) allow for this in a helpful and well-defined way.

The analysis of IPA research generally moves from detailed descriptions of the text to more interpretative analysis in which it transfers from focusing on one particular lived experience towards a more shared phenomena between the texts. Smith et al. (2009) detail six stages of analysis and below I describe transparently how I allowed these stages to guide by process through the analysis of the data.

2.7.1 Reading and Re-Reading

Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) explain that to begin the process of entering a participant's experience it is crucial to develop an active engagement in the data which reading and re-reading will capture. Eatough and Smith (2006) explain that reading the text helps the researcher to become increasingly responsive to what is being said by the participant in the text and further leads to re-familiarising the self

with what was explored in the interviews. Willig (2013) suggests that at this point it could also be useful to record one's own thoughts in response to the text of the interviews in a research diary. Therefore, once the interviews had been conducted and transcribed, reading and re-reading of the transcripts started where I also started making unfocused right-margin notes, line by line, which reflected my initial thoughts (see, Appendix F). Smith et al. (2009) suggest that this first stage of the IPA analysis ensures that the participant becomes the focus of the analysis as it helps break down and slow down our 'habitual propensity for quick and dirty reduction and synopsis'. This was important for me as I was aware that I had to emerge myself in the transcripts to be able to conduct a complete analysis which captured the phenomena in question.

2.8.2 Initial Noting

The analysis then slowly moved on to a more exploratory level and the initial noting began while remaining open minded. Smith et al. (2009) explains this stage to be the most detailed and time consuming which allows for a growing familiarity with the transcript as well as identifying specific ways in which the participant understands the phenomena. At this stage of the analysis there are no rules about what is commented on and the main aim here is to produce a comprehensive and detailed set of notes on the data while engaging analytically with each line of the transcript (Smith et al., 2009). I engaged in the text in a way in which I asked myself what the data meant for the experience of the participant. All the notes were made by hand as this gave me a more in-depth engagement with the text (see, Appendix F).

While undertaking the initial noting stage of the analysis I made clear distinct descriptive, linguistic and conceptual comments. The 'descriptive' comments included subjective experiences of the context described by the participants with as little personal influences as possible. Smith et al. (2009) explain that these thoughts take the text at 'face value' and highlight the structure of the participant's thoughts and experiences. It was important to keep these descriptive notes closely to the text in the transcripts without my interpretive input. The 'linguistic' comments were concerned with use of language. These comments focused on pauses, laughter, repetition, tone and degree of fluency. The 'conceptual' comments suggested by

Smith et al. (2009) are more interpretative and focuses on the context of the experience and its potential significance, drawing more on my own professional and experiential knowledge. Conceptual annotations are often about opening up of a range of provisional meanings (Smith et al., 2009) and I found myself at this stage asking many questions within my annotations of the text. An exemplar of an annotated transcript can be seen in Appendix F.

2.8.3 Development of Emergent Themes

The next stage of the analysis consisted of identifying and labelling emergent themes around each section of the text (Willig, 2013). Willig (2013) further states that phenomenological research is interested in the 'nature, quality and meaning of experience' and therefore, at this stage, such themes and labels should aim to reflect the experiential quality of the experience. Therefore, my main aim at this stage of the analysis was to reduce the many detailed notes while still maintaining their complexity and meanings of the experience and this involved a shift from working with the transcript to dealing with my initial notes while keeping the analysis closely tied to the original transcript.

Smith et al. (2009) explain that this stage of the analysis takes the focus further away from the participant and includes more of me as the researcher. However, I was closely involved with the lived experiences of the participant and therefore the analysis became a product of both mine and the participant's 'collaborative efforts'. This stage, and the engagement cycle once again highlighted my epistemological position; while the experience of the participant existed within reality and was a real experience, it was taking form as a product of interaction and context as well as my analysis.

Through forming emergent themes, it was intended that they captured what was important in the comments attached to a specific part of the transcript as succinct statement or phrase (Smith et al. 2009). The phrases that were used to express the emergent themes usually captured the psychological essence of the text while being both grounded in the text and conceptual. An example of stages two and three of the analytic process is seen in Appendix G.

2.8.4 Searching for Connections across Emergent Themes

This stage involved mapping how themes were able to fit together as a means of producing a structure which allowed me to point to all of the most interesting and important aspects of the participant's account (Smith et al., 2009). Smith et al. (2009) suggest that not all emergent themes must be incorporated into this stage of the analysis and at this stage of mapping, some themes can be discarded depending on the research question.

For this stage of the analysis, I ordered chronologically, in the order they appeared, the set of themes within the transcript on a word document. Following this, I started to process the themes and moved the themes around to form clusters of related themes. I started with the top theme and then moved down the list, either adding to a new cluster of themes, creating a theme or at very rare occasions discarding a theme. At this stage, some themes started to attract other themes towards them and then I was able to form a cluster of themes. A summary table was then formed, containing cluster themes and subordinate themes.

2.8.5 Moving on to the next case

IPA is idiographic in its nature; therefore, it was important that I engaged with each interview individually through steps one to four. Once I had transcribed one case, I moved onto the next case analysing the transcript on its own terms to do justice to its own individuality (Smith et al., 2009). Within this, it was important that I 'bracketed' ideas that had appeared from the previous transcripts in order to capture the essence of the lived experience of each participant equally and to maintain the idiographic commitment of IPA.

At this stage, picturing the participant and hearing their voice while I worked through each case and moved on to the next case was a way in which I was able to hold in mind the individuality and subjectivity of each transcript.

2.8.6 Looking for patterns across cases

Stage six of the analysis of the IPA research involved looking for patterns across transcripts of cases. Smith et al. (2009) explain that the best IPA research pieces have a dual quality of pointing to ways in which participants represent unique idiosyncratic instances while also sharing higher order qualities. This idea was important for me at this stage of the analysis. It meant that when I reached broad higher-level themes across the cases, I had to ground these themes in the text of the transcripts in order for the themes to stay close to the individual experiences.

I constructed a table illustrating the emergent themes grouped under the super-ordinate themes and references of where the theme is stated from the participant's transcript. This process of grouping emergent and super-ordinate themes led to some re-labelling of themes to best capture both the lived experience of the individual participants while maintaining and representing higher level theoretical understandings of the phenomena.

2.9 Trustworthiness of Qualitative Research

While historically qualitative research has been criticised for its subjective nature, it provides an ability to approach studying of humans by exploring individual experiences through describing phenomenon (Vishnevsky & Beanlands, 2004). Lincoln and Guba (1985) provided a criterion to evaluate trustworthiness of qualitative research the main four criteria proposed were credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability.

Credibility refers to the truth of the data or the views of the participant and the subsequent interpretation and representation of them by the researcher (Polit & Beck, 2012; Cope, 2014). A qualitative research is considered credible if the descriptions of human experiences are immediately recognised by individuals that share the same experience (Sandelowski, 1986). Credibility was aimed in the research through a reflexive journal as the reflexive awareness of my values, background and experiences, as a researcher, can affect the research process. Thus, a reflexive journal was used to bracket such perceptions and assumptions (Mantzoukas, 2005; Polit & Beck, 2012). Prolonged engagement in the field to learn and understand the phenomenon of interest is also suggested to achieve credibility in qualitative research. My own experience of problem gambling in my community

and personal life allowed for my engagement and understanding of the phenomenon. Moreover, while rapport was built very quickly with participants, continued engagement was maintained throughout the data collection process where participants received an information pack, consent forms, debrief forms and opportunities to contact for questions and queries. A pilot interview was also conducted, which increased credibility, to refine the overall process of the interview schedule and overall running of the interviews.

Dependability refers to the constancy of the data over similar conditions (Polit and Beck, 2012). A study is deemed dependable if the study findings were replicated with similar participants and similar conditions (Koch, 2006). It has been suggested that leading questions can influence the interview to attempt to see their experience through the eye of the interviewer rather than through their own (Francis, 1996), and I placed care not to include or ask leading questions within the interview schedule or throughout the interviews. The spoken words were also transcribed as accurately as possible throughout the transcription process, adding to the dependability of the research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) also suggest confirmability as a criterion in adding to trustworthiness of qualitative research. Confirmability refers to the researcher's ability to demonstrate that the data represent the participants' responses and not the researcher's biases or viewpoints. (Polit & Beck, 2012). This can be demonstrated by describing how conclusions and interpretations were established and identifying the findings from the data (Cope, 2014). Throughout the research and analysis, it was crucial for me to ground the findings in the data, and interpretations were derived from what was said within the transcriptions. Finally, transferability refers to findings that can be applied to other settings or groups (Houghton, Caset, Shaw & Murphy, 2013). Transferability has been met if the results have meaning to individuals who are not involved in the study and readers can associate the results with their own experiences (Cope, 2014). Cope (2014) suggests that research should provide sufficient information on the participants to enable the reader to assess the findings; capability of being 'fit' to them, and I aimed to introduce and provide information on the participants, while hiding all identifying features, in order for each participant's sense to be portrayed. Purposive sampling, as used in this study, also helps to make sure that the selected participants were representative of the participants experiencing the phenomenon.

2.9 Reflexivity

As the process of the interviews started I became aware of my interactions with the participants. By aiming to create an open and empathic space and through our forming rapport, I was aware that our interaction may have been impacting the interview and what was explored regards to their experience of the phenomenon. This awareness was not about disregarding their experience's existence outside of our interaction but instead, I was aware that our particular interaction in that moment was presenting their experience in a particular form and way. Thinking about this particular interaction emphasised for me my impact as a researcher on the phenomenon, both when collecting data but also through interpretation within data analysis. Understanding this interaction and my impact was very important, not only to allow me to be ethical and reflexive within my research but also it confirmed my epistemological position. While I believed that the participant's particular experiences occur in the real world and was a reality, they were making sense of their experience in a particular context with me in which I was aiming to make sense of them making sense of their experience.

I aimed to maintain epoché throughout this research, however existential phenomenologists such as Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty stated that this process of bracketing was not perfect (Langdridge, 2007), meaning that maintaining awareness throughout was pivotal and I aimed to stay curious throughout and hold a reflective diary through the process of the piece of research.

My own experience of having a father who had gambled was something I was very aware of during data collection, in particular during my interactions with the participants and the interview process as I was aware that my own experience should not get in the way of my communications and interactions with the participants in order for me to capture the essence of the participants' experiences. During the data collection and transcription process, I kept a research diary in which I noted my own thoughts and feelings I had about the interviews, any particular interesting comments participants made relating to their lived experience when the digital recorder was not switched on.

Through the research reflective diary and my own reflections, I was able to reflect that my experience and reality of having a father who gambled was different to those of my participants and it strengthened my understanding and identification of problem gambling. I was able to identify with pieces of the experiences I heard in the interviews and re-read in the transcripts and at these points it was important for me not to jump to conclusions and interpret from the essence of my experience. Part of this included me reflecting, in my diary, my own experiences of this phenomena and this allowed me to distinguish those feelings and thoughts and to park them effectively, in order to capture the lived experiences of my participants. In particular, I was aware in the interviewing process to allow time and space for the participant to feel free to talk about their experience, without me moving the interview on because I could relate and understand in my mind their experience. This was very important for me as it allowed the participant to really connect with their experience and also, I was aware that in the analysis stage it was important for me connect my interpretations to the data in the transcripts and not my personal interpretations of the data.

Chapter three

3.0 Findings

3.1 Overview

In this findings chapter, I present a number of themes that have been gathered towards forming an insight into the participants' lived experiences of having a father with problem gambling.

The interviews generated a large amount of data and therefore I had to make some difficult decisions regarding what was presented in this analysis. I was mindful and aimed to choose and present material which felt directly relevant to my research question and which was representative of the participants interviewed, which encapsulated their lived experiences while also ensuring that each participants' individual voice was heard. I aimed to present all the quotes in the transcripts, from the participants', that encapsulated the meanings of each theme and sub-theme. In particular, I paid close attention to presenting the voice and experiences of each participant as equally as possible.

I have not included any existing literature in this chapter. I aim to focus on interpreting the participant accounts of their lived experiences in depth and I felt that incorporating research and literature may have caused a shift away from the lived experiences of the participants' involved in this research project. After the presentation of the quotes in italics, I have included the participant name followed by a bracketed indication of page number and line numbers from the original transcripts.

Theme one: Experience embedded in time and age

- Not understanding when younger
- Moving towards acceptance when older
- Adult relationships

Theme two: Familial discord

- Difficulties in parent relationships

- Financial difficulties
- Adulthood

Theme three: The Absent Experience

- Loss of trust
- The Absent Father
- Own needs not met

Figure 3.1. Representation of master and sub-themes

3.2 Theme one: Experience embedded in time and age

This master theme reflects the retrospective nature of the experience of the participants' and the change of the process involved in order to make sense and understand their father's problem gambling through time and age, as well as the perceived roles of their past experiences on their current relationships.

'I think my experience is one that changed over time but has been present throughout my life, maybe more when I was younger.' Francesca (1, 8-10)

3.2.1 Not understanding when younger

This sub-theme explores participants' experiences of not understanding their father's problem gambling when they were younger. The participants discussed and reflected on their experiences when younger which included the experience of not knowing or understanding the problem gambling while remaining embedded within the experience and its effects.

'I do remember being frustrated but I didn't know why I was frustrated.' Eliza (22, 677-678)

Eliza describes feeling frustrated but not knowing why she felt like this at a younger age. This makes me wonder the experiences lived behind this feeling and I get the sense that not knowing the extent of the experience was adding to the feelings of frustration.

'Like when I was younger I knew it was serious too but I was much more confused but when I got older I understood more.' Callum (11, 325-326)

Similarly, Callum talks about confusion which gives me a sense of him not knowing and a lack of understanding. Callum adds to by recalling that he knew there was something 'serious' going on when he was younger but not knowing what the serious feeling was and therefore leaving him with a feeling of confusion. Callum reflects that as he got older he understood more and I interpret this as an emphasis on the feeling of not understanding when younger, as a contrast to knowing now in his adult life.

'... but back then I didn't really know what a bookie was. I knew it said 18, I knew I wasn't allowed in there because I was like 'can I come in with you? Can I come in?', 'no, no, threes no children in there, I'm just looking at horses'. I didn't even know what that meant. Like, I didn't really understand. Erm... so as I got older I realised like OK its gambling.' Eliza (2, 62-68)

Eliza recalls a memory when she was younger where her father made her wait outside in the car while he went into the bookmakers to gamble. Eliza started by reflecting that she did not know what a 'bookie' was, giving a sense that there was a lack of understanding of where she was at the time. Within this, Eliza recalls the conversation she had with her father at that moment and reflects on not understanding the explanation given to her. Eliza describes not 'even' knowing what looking at horses meant and the use of the word 'even' emphasises her lack of understanding at that moment. Similar to Callum, Eliza describes realising as she got older that her father was gambling. The use of the word 'realised' suggests to me an understanding by herself that she developed as she got older.

'One day, we were out not too far away from where we live, I either was with him inside or we went inside together. I can't really remember (...). But I remember, he had a lot of change and he put it into the machine and was playing. I think I was excited, we were doing something together. But I didn't understand what we were

doing, I remember obviously we were inside. (...) I never really said it to my mum maybe a year after, I think it was because I didn't understand.' (Ali, 13, 384-394)

Similar to Eliza, Ali described a memory when he was younger when he was with his father and they visited a bookmaker. Ali reflected on not remembering the circumstances around that day but remembering that his father had started playing his change into the machines and not understanding what they were doing. Ali specifically remembering the fact that he could not understand what was going on perhaps reflects how difficult it was for him. Ali described feeling excited as they were doing something together and this shows how important it was for Ali to spend some time together regardless of the quality of the time they were spending, as he was not understanding what they were doing. Ali describes not telling his mum, again emphasising because he did not understand.

'Because as I said I didn't understand it. I was like, like... I didn't understand what it meant. 20 quid is a lot of money or is it not? I didn't know, but it didn't seem to be a large amount to me then. Because it was just based on change. I don't know why? were we waiting for something? Were we going somewhere? Did I just see him going past? I can't exactly remember. It didn't seem... it seemed natural.' Ali (13, 405-412)

Here Ali tried to make sense of his memory with his father at the bookmakers when he was young and did not understand what was happening. Ali reflected on this moment by asking a number of questions and this perhaps highlights the confusion and frustration Ali had felt. Ali moved on to reflect that the experience 'seemed natural'. This gives me the sense that the feeling of not understanding was something he had experienced previously and, on many occasions, and it was becoming a 'natural' part of his experience.

'it was my norm so I was like 'yeah, my dad goes bookies, he goes, like yeah, couple times a day sometimes, he would leave the house and go' and someone was like 'what all the time? That's when... I don't know (...) it took someone pointing out to me like 'oh he goes every day? Sometimes twice a day? That's a lot', I was like 'no,

it's not'. They were like 'my dad's never been bookies' and I was like 'Oh OK'. Eliza (12, 534-364)

Embedded within Eliza's experience of not understanding her father's gambling when she was younger is the idea that her father visiting the 'bookies' was the norm. Eliza described that her father would visit the bookmakers a couple of times in the day and was part of his daily routine. This suggests to me that, this was all that Eliza knew and when younger was not able to understand the implications of gambling.

'To be honest, I don't know if at that stage I really understood what it meant that he was gambling. Like, I knew it was a bad thing obviously and it involved him being somewhere and spending money but I guess I didn't know the extent of what it involved at that stage but nevertheless I knew it was bad after a while I remember feeling embarrassed.' Francesca (8, 240-246)

Francesca speaks of her experience of not knowing 'the extent of what it involved' when talking about her father's problem gambling when she was younger. This gives a sense that her understanding of her father's gambling had evolved over time and perhaps now she could see the extent of the impact while holding a retrospective reflection. This could perhaps be emphasised with Francesca's use of the word 'stage' suggesting that her experience of understanding is embedded in stages. Francesca reflects that however, she understood that her father's problem gambling was a 'bad thing' and this is suggestive of a negative psychological experience and impact on her father and herself. Further to this, Francesca expresses feeling 'embarrassed' even though she did not know the extent of the impact of her father's problem gambling. This could suggest the lived psychological experience as one of shame without truly needing to know.

'Yeah, as I said I didn't really understand that it was gambling or what it was, because this was when I was quite young, like 10 years old approximately but I remember sitting in bed while they argued being angry at my mum for starting the arguments and being angry and frustrated at my dad for not listening to her.' Francesca (3, 80-85)

Through retrospective reflection Francesca talked about not completely understanding what gambling was, however she was able to remember her experiences of hearing her parents argue while in bed and feelings of anger and frustration towards her parents. This suggests to me that Francesca did not need to completely understand to be able feel anger and frustration. Feeling angry towards mum for starting the arguments, places the start of the problem on her mother and my understanding here is that there was perhaps an indirect impact on her relationship with her mother.

'And like, my mum would be very upset which affected me, which would have indirectly affected me. I wasn't too sure what was going on. And erm... eventually as I grew up it continued and I found out more about it and like, it made me not hate, but dislike my dad a bit because it was an on-going think and there were no signs of it stopping' Callum (1, 19-24)

Callum described his experience of the lack of understanding of his father's problem gambling when he was younger through the indirect effects in his mother. The phrase 'would have indirectly affected me' is suggestive that the impact and effects of his father's problem gambling were not direct for him and this was perhaps due to him not understanding exactly what was going on in his family and for his father. Callum highlighted this by exploring that as he grew older he started to find out more about the gambling and this conscious state led to difficult feelings such as 'dislike' towards his father.

Similar to Callum, Eliza talks about not knowing about the gambling when younger and therefore not being aware of the impact of it on her:

'You know, I wasn't fully aware what was going on but it obviously had an impact. It obviously had an impact when I was an adult, a young adult' Eliza (22, 673-675)

Eliza described not understanding her father's gambling when younger but understanding now that it had an impact on her when she was younger, and as a young adult. The word 'obviously' suggests the certainty that Eliza experienced now

on the 'impact' of her father's gambling as opposed to the uncertainty and lack of understanding she had when she was younger.

'I obviously didn't know why they would argue when I was much younger but I think as I got older I was able to understand that the arguments were worse and mainly happened in the evenings because that's when my dad would go gamble and so not come home on time.' Francesca, (1, 17-21)

Francesca spoke about 'obviously' not understanding when younger why her parents would argue. This is suggestive to me that she was not expected to understand and this was part of her lived experience when younger but also one that was accepted by her or otherwise could be interpreted as expected by others.

'If I had known that then I would have probably tried to stop him going or kick up a fuss maybe to not sit in the car or get more annoyed or angry when we weren't going to the park and stuff. So, if I knew what I knew now, it definitely... I'm not aware, like Ok I could have gone on that trip if he did not spend the hundred pounds somewhere, you could've given mum 50 pounds for the uniform. I think I definitely would have been more angry and frustrated if I knew as a child,' Eliza, (20, 603-611)

Eliza reflected upon her 'knowing' currently as an adult compared to the confusion and lack of understanding she experienced when she was younger. Eliza spoke about how she would have reacted to her father and his gambling when she was younger if she had more of an understanding and describes 'kicking up a fuss', feeling angry, annoyed and frustrated. Perhaps Eliza is making sense of her uncertainty when she was younger to increase her sense of knowing and understanding. Eliza also reflected on what could have happened in her experiences if she had understood what was going on, and I can interpret that perhaps Eliza was placing some responsibility on herself and inability to understand when she was younger. Perhaps Eliza felt like if she had known or understood the extent of her father's problem gambling, she could have reacted in a way that would have allowed her to go on her school trip.

3.2.2 Moving towards acceptance when older

This sub-theme explores the participants' process of gaining more understanding as they grew older as an experience embedded in time and age. Interestingly, this sub-theme presents experiences of understanding but being less invested emotionally with age and time.

'No, I had to figure it out. And as you grow up, you obviously start to realise things.'
Bernadette (7, 195-196)

Bernadette talked about figuring out her father's problem gambling as she grew older and through her lived experience. Bernadette uses the word 'had to' which suggests to me that this sense of figuring out was something that she found herself in, without choice. It further suggests that Bernadette was not directly told and the problem gambling was not discussed with her but she had to, in a sense, put pieces together to understand it.

Further to Bernadette's experience of figuring out her father's problem gambling, Francesca also reflects about her experience of coming to an understanding:

'Before there were arguing so badly I could hear what they were saying roughly... it was about him not coming home on time after work, him being out somewhere or him wasting money and I guess as I got older I was able to understand that it was about gambling.' Francesca (2, 50-55)

Francesca reflected on her understanding with time of the arguments between her parents. She reflected on the aspects of their conversations and the impact it was having on her mum and their relationship as a form of understanding as she got older. Perhaps this suggests the importance of the retrospective understanding for Francesca, as the process of understanding was one that came from when she was younger and did not understand the entirety of the experience to getting older and making sense.

'Because like he was not learning his lesson, erm... like, as I probably got older I realised it was much more serious' Callum (10, 318-320)

It seemed as though Callum's understanding of his father's problem gambling, through age and time, reflected on the seriousness of the problem gambling that he had understood. Callum described realising as he got older that his father's problem gambling was much more serious. My understanding here is that Callum had some understanding of the problem but with time this understanding developed into making sense of the seriousness of the gambling and its psychological impacts.

'like erm... as I grew up I became more aware of what was happening. My mum, like she told me and she told other people in the community who would know as well. And, you know like people would always say to me 'ah your dad, he's not that kind of guy, we don't know what happened to him.' Callum (2, 50-54)

Rather than having to figure out himself, as expressed by some participants, Callum talked about becoming more aware by his mum telling him and other people in the community. It appears that Callum came to understand as he got older through his mum's explanation. Callum reflects that others in the community were told too and my interpretation is that others around him, made the problem more tangible and emphasised the existence of the experience. Callum further reflects on how other people approached him after they knew and I interpret this as a possible projection of his own questions about the process of his father's problem gambling and what happened.

'As a child there was a sense of wanting to help, but as you grew up that changed to you not caring about it anymore' Bernadette (7, 218-220)

Bernadette reflected on her experience through time and understanding. She describes a shift in attitude from wanting to help when younger to not caring about her father's problem gambling as she got older. This could be interpreted on a number of levels; I could suggest that with time and age she tried to distance herself from the problem by 'not caring about it anymore' or perhaps through time and

understanding she came to an understanding that she was not able to help her father and placed the problem on him.

'But I guess I'm getting to a stage of acceptance... I don't know if acceptance is the right word actually, because I don't accept what he does but I guess, I don't know, I guess I don't care as much.' Francesca (12, 359-362)

Francesca spoke about a 'stage' of her experience, my understanding of this is that her experience is embedded in time and is a process with different levels. She explained her sense of 'acceptance' and then emphasised that she did not accept her father's problem gambling. By correcting and explaining herself, I get the sense that she wanted me to understand her views of problem gambling. I interpret that she accepted her experience of having a father who problem gambled and this acceptance of her own experience thus distances the problem from herself and she reaches a sense of not caring.

Similarly, Bernadette expresses her sense of caring less with time and age:

'As I grew older I seemed to care less. In the sense that, before I was like oh my god I should like figure out how to help, but then I was like if he's not going to help himself, like growing up teenage years obviously, I was like I'm not going to help, I don't really care anymore.' Bernadette (7, 208-213)

Bernadette spoke about wanting to figure out how to help when she was younger and this is emphasised by the phrase 'oh my god' and her increased volume in her speech to an understanding that her father should help himself. My interpretations of the use of 'oh my god' and the raised volume in her tone of speech is that her experience was much more connected and dedicated when she was younger, with an emphasis in wanting to help and 'figure out' what she could do for her dad. This is opposed to her experience when older, where she comes to an understanding that her father needs to try and help himself.

Bernadette expresses and highlights through repetition of the phrase 'I don't care' her understanding and possible acceptance of the embedded experience:

'And... it's just, now, obviously now it's still like upsetting for me, but like... thinking about it... I think I don't care anymore. I don't care what he does in a sense. Like, I do care what happens to like, my family, but I don't really care what he does. I don't care.' Bernadette (12, 374-378)

Bernadette emphasised that the experience still causes her upset and then highlights through repetition that she does not care anymore. The pace of Bernadette's voice was faster here suggesting her emphasis of wanting to get her point across and to be heard. Bernadette talks about caring about what happened to her family but not caring about what her father did suggests to me that she had distanced herself from her father but also from the concept of her family. Bernadette separated her father from her family through caring for her family but not caring what her father did.

'So, maybe it's being not as guarded, being more open and confident or not caring... I think there is a bit about that as well, just not caring what other people think' Ali (7, 217-219.)

Ali spoke about his experiences and personal traits when older. He reflected on being less guarded, open and confident and thus moving towards a process of 'not caring'. He described that there was a sense of 'not caring what other people [thought]'. My interpretation here is that with time, and age Ali had understood more about his father's problem gambling and the implications of it but through his own openness and confidence had reached an acceptance of his experience, in turn resulting in not caring what other people thought.

Ali further explains:

'I think from caring... from caring a lot more or being a lot more interested to trying to be a lot more involved a bit more or monitoring him of his gambling or whatever to just not caring at all (...) checking regularly, giving updates to my mum to not checking it for weeks or months to almost not checking it. It's not relevant, I don't care. Whether he gambles to not, whatever.' Ali (17, 538-546)

Ali described 'from' and 'to' implying that his experience was embedded in a process of understanding and involvement. Ali described caring when younger and monitoring his father's gambling to not checking and not caring. Ali stated that his father's gambling was 'not relevant' and I interpret this as a distance placed from his own life in his adult life to his father's problem gambling. It seems that Ali had placed his father's problem gambling further away from his life with time and age.

'Obviously when I think back and reflect back at it, it wasn't my mum's fault at all, him gambling. I could only imagine my mum's emotions and frustration in the relationship with him but it's difficult to make sense of that as a child.' Francesca (3, 85-89)

Francesca reflected on her views and experiences of her mum within the experience of her father's problem gambling and the impact it had on her mum and the family. This suggests to me a process and sense of understanding with age. Francesca reflected that 'it's difficult to make sense of that as a child' and this suggests to me the difficulties in the experience of placing blame on her mother and then this stance shifting with age.

'(...) it changed how I felt about it and it changed in a way that, in the way how I spoke about it too. I've never spoken about it before. In the sense that my friends knew what was going on but they didn't really know what it was so, I think I became more open about it and I became less like embarrassed to talk about it because like, it wasn't my fault, it was what he was doing' Bernadette (14, 424-431)

Similarly, Bernadette described a change and shift in her feelings and views about her father's problem gambling as she got older and with time. Bernadette talked about feeling less embarrassed by it and this is followed by 'it wasn't my fault'. My interpretation of this is that as she got older and understood the extent and implications of her father's problem gambling she was able to distance herself from the problem. Bernadette highlighted that there was a change in the way she spoke about the experience too and this suggests to me that not speaking about it perhaps tied in with the embarrassment and ideas of shame.

'Erm... I don't know... I guess I'm less angry, shocked or embarrassed about it now? As I said I think it's an addiction, it's a problem that he has and it's a problem that has obviously affected me and the whole family in different ways... I think... erm, I think everyone around him lived this problem in different ways but it's definitely a problem.' Francesca (11, 337-342)

Francesca reflected on being less angry, shocked or embarrassed about her father's problem gambling currently at the time of the interview. She explained this through her understanding of problem gambling as an addiction. My interpretation is that by understanding and making sense of her father's problem gambling as an addiction, Francesca had been able to change her view and thus distance the problem gambling from the more negative psychological experiences of anger, shock and embarrassment she initially felt when younger.

'But then as years went by and I got older, erm... I feel like I got more mature than certain kids because... with family problems and all that. (...) I just started thinking like whatever my father does I will do better, so I started learning from his mistakes, that's how I started growing, because I knew that was wrong.' Darren (2, 37-43)

Darren reflected on his experience as a process within time and getting older through a sense of maturity. He spoke about a comparison that his experience matured him more than other kids. Darren's understanding of his father's problem gambling as he got older is embedded in the experience of moving forward and learning. 'I started learning from his mistakes' suggests to me a sense of understanding what his father is doing, and using that as a lesson for his own life experiences. Darren talks about this understanding and learning as a growth for his psychological experience.

'I just think growing up you become more confident, you become more, a bit more brave maybe? You become a little bit more used to it. So maybe as an adult, if it had just happened, I'd be more guarded about it, a bit more protective, a bit more secretive about it, but it happened for such a long time that it's... I'm almost now desensitised to it, I'm used to it.' Ali (7, 192-198)

Ali similarly, reflected on the experience of his father's problem gambling as a process of growth. My interpretation of Ali becoming used to it with age and feeling 'almost now desensitised' is the enduring experience of his father's problem gambling. This suggests to me that the lived experience has been present for him for so long that he has in some sense become tolerant to the psychological experience of it. This enduring impact is highlighted when he describes how he would potentially feel if his father had started problem gambling in his adult life and he describes he would feel those difficult experiences again. However, Ali's experience has been long-standing through time and this has led to him feeling more accepting of his own experience.

3.2.3 Adult relationships

This sub-theme encapsulates participants' experiences of growing up with a problem gambling father and the implications of this experience on their lives currently in their adult lives.

'It's like if I had a strong relationship with my dad I would know like how relationships work and stuff like that' Bernadette (25, 483- 485)

Bernadette reflects on her relationship with her father and talks about what it would have meant for her now if she had a strong relationship with her father. Bernadette talks about having the ability to know how relationships work if she had a strong relationship with her father. My interpretation of this is that the effects of the difficulties in her father's relationship has left Bernadette potentially questioning her current experiences of her relationships.

'A lot of trust issues. I think it takes me a while to trust anyone. I don't think I even trust anyone now, I don't yeah...' Bernadette (15, 472-473)

Bernadette further reflects on the her lived experience of having a father with problem gambling on her untrusting view of her world. She describes the time taken for her to trust anyone and then confirms for herself that she does not trust anyone.

This suggests to me that during the interview, Bernadette experienced a process of making sense of her view of the world and this led to a realisation that her experience has left her with trust issues beyond her father.

Similar to Bernadette, Francesca described her difficulties in trusting in her current relationships and life:

'I have trust issues (laughs) that's what people say around me, I just question everything and don't expect much until it happens. I guess also as I speak about it, I'm thinking about it more and connecting things more now, and I think I'm so independent now because I missed out on a lot before. You know, in my childhood I missed a lot of those happy family memories and peace at home in the evenings so I know do most things in my own terms and put myself first I guess.' Francesca (16, 490 – 497)

Francesca reflected on the difficulties in trusting her father growing up, through his problem gambling, and how this has implicated her current life. Francesca talks about 'connecting' and making sense of her early experiences with difficulties with trust and how these transpire in her current adult life. Francesca suggests that she is able to understand that her past experiences with her father and his problem gambling had some effect on how she experiences her current relationships and way she responds to others.

'I think how I've now learnt relationships with myself and people and friends is based on what I've seen with my parents, erm... in regards to not very good at solving conflict. Very argumentative. I get very angry. That's just what I've seen and noticed' Eliza (6, 173- 177)

Eliza reflects on identifying that her experiences in her earlier years with her parents have had an impact on how she is in her relationships with herself, others and friends. She, in particular, reflects on her ability to solve conflict and her perceived sense of being argumentative and angry. Eliza talks about experiencing arguments and anger growing up, and therefore experiencing similar feelings in her adult life and relationships.

'Erm, I think if I have kids or anything I would know not to get with any random guy. Like I don't care how my relationship with him is but his relationship with the kids has to be perfect. That's something... I'm going to be very picky with my partner, so I don't know. Or maybe like, sometimes I feel like (pause) because of what happened, sometimes I feel like I don't want to have kids sometimes. Because what if like the father... even me, what if we do something wrong and it effects the children because we are humans and anything can happen and it will directly affect the kids.' Bernadette (16, 495- 504)

Bernadette talks about her future identity as a possible parent, based on her experiences with her parents. Bernadette highlights, for her, the importance she has placed on the experiences of her future children by dismissing her experience with her potential partner. Bernadette further talks about, maybe, not wanting children through her reflections of her father's problem gambling and possible fear of difficulties in parenting and effects on her future children. This suggests to me that Bernadette had experienced difficult psychological experiences and these have led to a possible fear of what she or her partner can lead to her future children experiencing.

Similar to Bernadette, Ali reflects on his future relationships:

'Maybe relationships. So... (pause)... something as simple as, so they have been divorced as a result of their problem gambling. one day I'm going to have a relationship, one day I'm going to get married and one day he needs to part of my life for my relationship, even as something simple as marriage because in my community the parents of each bride and groom will have to meet for that process and he needs to be present during those times. How do you explain why they're not together? What if they know they know about his problem gambling? it's embarrassing.' Ali (19, 596 – 606)

Ali talks about his future relationship and the implications of his father's problem gambling and the divorce of his parents, as a result of the gambling, may have on his relationships. Ali reflects on the role of his father and the presence of his father in the process of possible marriage for him in the future and importance of his father's role.

Ali questions whether his father will be present during those important moments in his life and goes on to further question his future brides and her family's perceptions on him and his family and reflects that knowing about his father's problem gambling is 'embarrassing'. This suggests to me, that Ali views that other people may associate his father's actions and choices with him and form a judgement on him. Perhaps Ali not only reflects on his father's problem gambling on his relationship but also the perceptions of others on his relationships.

3.3 Theme two: Familial discord

This master theme reflects the discord and disharmony felt within the family by the participants. The discord within their families and households is experienced mainly through the difficulties in their parents' relationships, financial difficulties as well as a sense of discord in expected roles where the participants took on adult responsibilities.

'(silence) it involved like, a lot of tension in the house.' Bernadette (1, 5)

3.3.1 Difficulties in parent relationships

This sub-theme explores the experience of difficulty within participants' parents' relationships due to their father's problem gambling and the effects such difficulties had on their lived experiences.

'Yeah, because there would be more arguments between my parents and like they got a divorce. That made me upset at the time' Callum (1, 29-31)

Callum talks about his experience of the arguments between his parents, with the difficulties leading to a divorce. The experience was difficult for Callum and he felt upset, however the use of the phrase 'at the time' suggests to me a difference in his experience from then when he first lived it to now.

'Like as soon as he walked into the house, like, you would know. Like, everyone knew what was going on. There was tension... my mum felt a bit of tension because their relationship wasn't good as well. So then when they felt tension then the children felt tension. My mum would be in the kitchen, my dad would stay in the living room and me and my siblings would be in one room. So, we would separate and all just feel the tension in the house as a whole.' Bernadette (3, 81-89)

Bernadette talks about her experience of her father, with his problem gambling, as causing and bringing 'tension' into the family. Bernadette explained 'as soon as he walked into the house, like you would know. Like, everyone knew what was going on'. My interpretation is that in her experience her father carried the tension with him and his problem gambling was the cause and centre of the tension felt in the house.

'I was scared and I hated the arguments. Reflecting back on it now obviously they were arguing because my dad was out gambling.' Francesca (2, 46-48)

Francesca experienced fear and hatred towards the arguments and difficulties between her parents. Through her sense making while in the interview she understood the experiences of fear and hatred as connected to her father's problem gambling. The use of the word 'obviously' suggests the certainty in Francesca's sense making of her lived experience.

Similar to Francesca, Callum also spoke about parental arguments within his experience and the effects it had on his experiences at home, through retrospective reflection:

'I was little when like, it started. So, I don't really remember that much. But, there would be a lot of arguments between my parents. And like, my mum would be very upset which affected me, which would have indirectly affected me.' Callum (1, 17-20)

He reflected that he did not remember much but it is clear that what stayed with Callum was 'a lot arguments' between his parents. My interpretation of this is that while, when Callum reflected retrospectively he felt like he did not remember much, the arguments were a big part of his experience as that is a thing he is able to recall.

He spoke about these arguments being very upsetting for him, through this mother 'indirectly'. This suggests to me that even though the arguments were between his parents, Callum felt an impact on his experience.

'I know him and my mum would have arguments about money and where's money going and etc.' Eliza (1, 18-20)

'How else is it going to affect us? Are they going to break up or are they going to stay together? Are we going to lose things we already got? Are we going to lose our house?' Ali, (14, 445-448)

Eliza more specifically pin points the arguments in her childhood, between her parents, to money or the lack off from her father's problem gambling. Eliza's reflects that her parents' arguments were about where money was and what was happening to the money within the family.

Ali talks about witnessing arguments between his parents and this leading to many questions for him including how the situation was going to affect them as a family and financial uncertainties. The repeated questions asked, suggests to me the depth of the confusion and uncertainty Ali experienced while his parents experienced difficulties in their relationship. My interpretation here is that Ali lacked the feelings of safety and the uncertainty he felt was a part of the difficult experiences.

Francesca retrospectively reflected on her experience of parental arguments and the process in which she made sense of them through time and age:

'I have memories of anticipating arguments and (pause) well (pause) dreading them while lying in bed. I obviously didn't know why they would argue when I was much younger but I think as I got older I was able to understand that the arguments were worse and mainly happened in the evenings because that's when my dad would go gamble and so not come home on time It in some ways felt Like the norm in the evenings, I would expect my dad not to come home on time and (pause) and then for there to be arguments or for mum to stress out.' Francesca (1, 12-24)

She discussed 'anticipating' and 'dreading' arguments. This gives me a sense of her experiencing a level of anxiety within the uncertainty and dread of her parents arguing. The anticipation, for me, sounds like her waiting for the arguments to happen and her distressing experiences starting and going beyond the actual physical arguments between her parents. The pauses in Francesca's speech suggests to me a sense of hesitation and a mirror of how difficult it felt for Francesca.

Francesca was able to make sense of the arguments more clearly with age, associating the arguments to her father's problem gambling. A process is suggested, for Francesca's experience, from the arguments being something she dreaded to the norm which shows the intensity and consistency in which she experienced her parents argue, showing once again how embedded the arguments between her parents were on her lived experience.

Similar to Francesca, there is a dimension of process in Ali's experience of his parents' arguments around his father's problem gambling.

'Because initially it was me, my mum, my younger brother and my dad (pause) so again, to be embarrassed. And then, the relationship changed to that fact that it was then affecting my parent's marriage. A lot of arguments, so affecting almost like the peace and the harmony at home. And then it got to a point where it became too bothersome.' Ali (2, 35-41)

The word 'initially' suggests a start in which one would expect a different middle and end. Ali explained that the impact of her father's problem gambling was 'initially' on each family member individually but this changed to affecting the 'peace and harmony at home'. Ali, then felt that the arguments were 'too bothersome' and this suggests to me that the process of his experience moved from a deep-felt emotional disharmony to something that was irritant.

The experience of the parental arguments being 'bothersome' is explained by Ali further as being distracting and almost lingering for him.

'But this is always in the background, this is always distracting. Whether you're doing your exams or doing whatever but there's always this, because either he is bothering you or mum's letting you know of the issues because she is upset or she wants to share it or she just wants some support. So, it affects you constantly and throughout my time growing up.' Ali (6, 163-168)

The effects of the arguments and difficulties in his parents' relationships was experienced by Ali as being present and extending to many aspects of his life. Ali reflected that the difficulties in his parents' relationships bothered him regardless of what he was doing. 'You' suggests to me that Ali reflected on his experience as one that is experienced by others too, perhaps in an attempt to normalise his own experiences. Ali's experience of the 'bothersome' parental arguments and difficulties affected him 'constantly' which I interpret as something he could not change or get rid of regardless of how bothered and irritated he was left feeling; something that became a norm for him, like Francesca and an experience he expects others to also live.

Within the experience of difficulties in their parents' relationships including arguments, the participants also talked about their parents' relationships ending.

Callum talks about this as the family being 'destroyed':

'I just think like, they always try to say like it's not a bad thing. They like (pause) it kind of destroyed his family and it's not been (pause) it's affected his life in a really bad way so...' Callum (2, 60-62)

Callum described her father destroying his family which suggests to me that the ending of their relationship felt like something that could not be repaired as there was a sense of complete destruction in his experience. This is perhaps emphasised when Callum recalls other people telling him that his father's problem gambling is 'not a bad thing'; Callum emphasises that contrary to that advice he experienced his family to be 'destroyed'.

The experience of disharmony and destruction was recalled by Darren too:

'Yeah, my parents broke up as well but he still carried on' Darren (16, 486)

'Erm (pause) it was around the times when they first broke up. Because they broke up twice. So, the first time they broke up, erm (pause) they were arguing quiet a lot and erm...' Darren (10, 297-299)

'So, yeah, I was quite aware that was the reason when they first broke up. And my sister was still young and then she cried when my mum told her about it, and then they got back together again and nothing really changed.' Darren (10, 313-317)

Darren recalled his father's problem gambling continuing beyond the break-up of his parent's relationship. This suggests to me that though the problem gambling was at the heart of the ending of the relationship, this was not enough for the gambling to stop and it extended beyond these difficulties. He then spoke about his parent's breaking up a number of times and arguing 'quiet a lot'. My interpretation of this is that Darren, like Callum, felt the impact and affects could not be fixed and were destructive. This suggests to me difficult but continued experience, perhaps emphasising how it felt like the 'norm' as mentioned previously by other participants.

Darren's experience of his father's problem gambling not stopping even after his parent's separation suggests to me the hopelessness felt and experienced by Darren. Darren explains that 'nothing really changed' after his parents broke up and then got back together suggesting to me that there was a hope for change but this was unfortunately not achieved.

'Erm (pause) I can't really pinpoint when I knew it wasn't a normal family, but, knowing it wasn't a, like, normal functional family I was like (pause) in my head all that I could think was like why?' Bernadette (5, 140-142)

Bernadette recalled the difficulties between her parents' relationships as not being a 'normal family'. This suggests to me that her experience within her family with her father's problem gambling was one that was far from a family dynamic that she would expect others to have; one that would be 'functional' as opposed to her

experience within her family. Bernadette recalls questioning this difference she felt and experienced in her family, perhaps not being able to make sense why she was going through it as the other.

3.3.2 Financial difficulties

This sub theme presents the difficulties the participants experienced financially while growing up with their father's problem gambling. They reflect on the effects and consequences financial difficulties had on their emotional and psychological experiences

Understanding the effects of the financial difficulties they were having within their family was an important moment for Francesca's experience in understanding her father's problem gambling:

'They were saying it was all because of his gambling and he had gambled all their savings away or something I can't remember fully but that's what stayed with me. I think something about him being in debt but also mental health problems (pause) obviously from what I could understand as a 12 year old, but I was quiet bright (laughs) so I was able to pick up things and I remember listening and all of a sudden someone, I can't remember who related it to my dad and how my dad should take that as a lesson as they don't want his family to break down and I think I can remember my mum crying' Francesca (7, 205-215)

Francesca retrospectively recalls a moment when she was 12 years old when her family were talking about someone they knew who was problem gambling and this moment led to a realisation of her father problem gambling. Francesca was able to understand her father's problem gambling through the financial difficulties someone else had and my interpretation of this is that the loss of finances and difficulties was a crucial part of her understanding and acknowledging her father's difficulties.

Francesca explained that she was a 'bright' child and she had to understand herself and this suggests to me that Francesca was not told directly what was happening with his father and had to figure certain things out herself; fitting together pieces.

This gives a sense that perhaps her experience and opinion was not seen as a primary concern. Francesca talks about remembering her mum crying and my interpretation of this is that Francesca witnessed her parent's reactions while her own emotional sense and response was not at the forefront of the experience.

Francesca continued to talk about the moment she realised her father's problem gambling and its effects through understanding the losses financially and describing this as a 'bad thing':

'Like, I knew it was a bad thing obviously and it involved him being somewhere and spending money but I guess I didn't know the extent of what it involved at that stage but nevertheless I knew it was a bad after a while I remember feeling embarrassed.'

Francesca (8, 241-246)

When talking about her father's problem gambling and her experience, Francesca repeats 'it was a bad thing'. My interpretation of this is that, even when she was not able to make sense of what problem gambling was, she knew it was a negative act and this was associated with him 'spending money'. Emphasising that the financial losses was a big part of Francesca realising and acknowledging her father's problem gambling, shows that financial difficulties had a crucial impact on her experience. Moreover, while it was difficult to recall and know the 'extent of what it involved' Francesca recalled feeling embarrassed. My interpretation is that, even when she was not able to understand exactly what problem gambling was, the financial losses was enough for her to have a difficult and negative experience.

Callum starts to recall his experience while going through financial difficulties as a consequence of his father's gambling:

'Erm... I don't know like. Maybe it was upsetting when I couldn't ask for stuff. For my mum to buy for me' Callum (13, 398-399)

He explained that it was 'upsetting' when he could not ask for things that he wanted due to his perception of the financial availability and difficulties within his family. My interpretation here is that Callum set his own needs to a side and felt like he could

not even ask for thing that he wanted. This gives me a sense of absence felt by Callum.

Callum continues to explain:

'Erm (pause) erm (pause) probably like, just... a lot of financial stuff. Like, I would try not to ask my mum to buy me like expensive things because I was actually worried that she may not have enough money and I would feel bad like, if she could not get anything.' Callum (8, 230-234)

The pauses and hesitation in his speech suggested to me the difficulty he was experiencing in making sense of the impact the financial difficulties had on him and his family. Callum talked about 'trying' not to ask his mum to buy him 'expensive things'. The word 'try' suggests to me that it was something he had to make a conscious effort to attempt to do. Callum recalled feeling worried that his mum may not have had enough money and this suggests to me that he was putting his mother's feelings before his own financial needs as he would 'feel bad'.

'The emotional, financial and physical unavailability was all because he was out gambling spending all the money we had on gambling and not being able to save' Francesca (11, 318-320)

Francesca clearly stated that she felt unavailability from her dad emotionally, financially and by him being physically present. She explained that such experiences of her father not being present was because he was 'out gambling and spending all the money'. This suggests to me that, the act of her father's gambling not only led to him spending all their family money but also through the act of gambling and him being out to physically gamble this led to him not being physically around and Francesca experienced this as a lack of his presence. My interpretation here is that there are links between the emotional, financial and physical factors experienced.

Similar to Francesca, Eliza experienced the issues around money growing up and is able to clearly attribute these to his father's problem gambling:

'School uniform (pause) I know it was paid for by my grandmother, the money was from my grandmother. I know he said he would pay it back but (pause)' so money has always been an issue and I know he's gambling.' Eliza (11, 337-340)

Eliza recalled her school uniform being paid for by her grandmother. Eliza felt like her father could not provide her basic needs such as school uniform and instead put that money towards gambling. She described this as 'always' being an issue and this suggested to me that the difficulties around money and finances have been a continuous experience through her father's problem gambling.

Eliza stated 'he said he would pay it back but'; the word 'but' and the pause afterwards suggests to me that her father would not pay her grandmother back and this was a disappointing experience for her. This disappointment is, in my interpretation, directly related to her father's problem gambling and her needs not being met financially.

This experience that financial needs and expectations were not met due to their father's problem gambling is also experienced by Ali:

'Erm (pause) it affects you financially as well I guess. Because although you're not exactly aware of, maybe when you're a little bit younger how much dad earns or how much disposable income or how much you have left or stuff, I guess you're a little bit wary to ask for stuff. Because if there is already pressure in the family, because, he's making money or they're making money but they're losing it or he is losing because of his gambling, you don't want to ask because you're not sure if it's there, or if it is there if it is going to be there by the time you ask for it or want it.' Ali (2, 49-59)

Ali explained that while he was not fully aware of the exact financial states and what it exactly meant by his father's income being used in his problem gambling or the extent of the financial consequences caused by problem gambling, he recalls being 'wary to ask for stuff'. This suggests to me that, regardless of understanding of the concept of money Ali was able to experience certain difficulties financially and his experience from a young age, was not being able to ask for what he wanted and

needed due to a felt sense of difficulties. Ali described this as being 'wary' and this word suggests to me being suspicious while not fully knowing.

'I... just... I... at the first stage I was a bit angry about it. I was like you just wasted this money. You could just save this up and make it go towards uni or something that would actually help.' Darren (5, 153-156)

Daren, similar to Ali and Eliza talked about feeling like the money his father put towards his problem gambling was used instead of going towards something he needed or wanted. Darren spoke about his father wasting money while problem gambling and this suggests to me feelings of disappointment that the money was spent on something which had no worth and was in fact 'wasted'. Darren recalls his desire for money to have been spend or put towards something that would 'actually help' and the word 'actually' as well as his tone of voice at the moment suggests to me his frustration at where the money was going and perhaps not going too.

'That makes me feel sad because it makes me think 'ok you put a lot of strain on my mum who is ill and not working at the time, you could've helped me and my brother out'. I don't ever remember times when there wasn't food on my table, but I definitely know there was times when my mum was struggling. Stuff like that... even if it was child care and things which wasn't cheap. But obviously his money was going somewhere else, it wasn't coming to me or my brother or my mum.' Eliza (10, 296-304)

Eliza recalls feeling 'sad' at the strain put on her mother through her father's problem gambling and financial difficulties. Eliza explained that the difficulties financially were never to the extent in which they could not eat but it was still felt through other aspects such as child care. It suggests to me that the financial difficulties did not need to be extreme to be felt at a young age but the sense that some things were difficult or the 'pressure' Eliza described was enough for finances having an impact.

Similar to Eliza, the effects of the financial difficulties on emotional experiences is highlighted by Ali:

'Definitely, definitely. I think the emotional is a lot stronger but the financial effects it as well. Because you're a young boy and you want something but you know it's not going to be there. Because you can't afford it that will affect you emotionally as well.'
Ali (3, 68-72)

Ali reflected on the links between being emotionally and financially affected by his father's problem gambling. Ali mentions the emotional and financial effects back and forth and this suggests to me that their links are like a cycle; his father's problem gambling leads to financial problems and this affects his father and him emotionally and this further is affected by further financial difficulties through the continuation of the problem gambling and this cycle continues.

He retrospectively reflected on being a 'young boy' and wanting something and knowing that it is not going to be there. Ali highlighting these suggests to me the difficulties financial problems or lack of finances had on his general experience of being a teenager and his needs while growing up.

'It's sad when I think back and remember those difficulties including financial, where it felt unfair that I couldn't get something I wanted when it seemed so simple and all my friends had it, or my mum dealing with or getting angry with money owed to people, or more broadly it seemed like we were not going anywhere. He was earning and working, or so he was saying he was working but we were always stuck at the same point and if anything having financial difficulties.' Francesca (17, 531-539)

Francesca talks about remembering her experiences of financial difficulties while growing up as 'sad', this suggests to me a sense of pity perhaps felt for herself then through the difficulties she lived. This is perhaps highlighted when she reflects on having financial difficulties while growing up as 'unfair'. This suggests to me Francesca's experiences of being left out and more broadly, perhaps experiencing a sense of difference; feeling different to her peers negatively.

She explains being 'stuck at the same point' in regards to her and her family's financial stance. My interpretation of this is that Francesca experienced her situation as something that would not change, or she could not get out of. The materialistic

consequences of her father's problem gambling were through the effects of finances on their household and Francesca, in my interpretation, experienced this as something which was posed upon her and 'stuck' with her.

Similar to Francesca, Darren expresses a comparison financially to others around him:

'Other families would have homes and cars and they would have been here maybe even less than my father, because my father's been here for about 22 years. And the people that I know that have been here for this long have a car or have a house or have a fixed job. But, we never had that.' Darren (1, 15-20)

Darren compared other families having 'homes and cars' despite being in the country for less than his father. He reflected on their experience of stability with a fixed job, which suggests to me that his experiences were that financially they did not have stability or a 'fixed' income in the family. The specific comparison which Darren explored to people who had been in the country for the same amount of time or less time than his father, suggests to me a sense of being stuck, similar to Francesca. My interpretation is that Darren experienced that financially they were not moving forward despite his father working for many years, and his problem gambling was disabling the family from making progress.

'Just (pause) just the embarrassment. Just thinking how it's going to affect us. As in you know you suddenly think instead of two wages coming to the house or one wage coming to the house, you think erm... are they going to stay together?' Ali (14, 449-443)

The comparison experienced by Darren and Francesca can be seen by Ali's experience of embarrassment through his experience of financial difficulties as a consequence of his father's problem gambling. The pause and repetition of 'just' before expressing his experience of embarrassment suggest to me a difficulty in expressing and acknowledging the distressing experiences. He describes it as 'just', potentially minimising the affect. Similar to Darren, Ali experiences a sense of instability and confusion through his questioning of how the lost money through his

father problem gambling is going to affect their household but also the relationship between his parents.

Darren further reflects on a sense of instability and confusion about the future while growing up and experiencing financial hardship within the household:

'Yeah, of course that would be from the gambling because he won't be able to take the money and the money he gets... some of it will go to the house, shopping and all that. Yes, of course he helped but, that's not enough. Thinking about the future of your kids, I think there would be more important things as well.' Darren (1, 24-29)

Darren highlighted that the financial difficulties experienced within his family was definitely a consequence of his father's problem gambling. He points out that his father helped out within the house but reflects that it was 'not enough'. My interpretation of this is that Darren felt like what his dad was contributing where he would try was not enough to fulfil what he needed and this suggests a sense of void in his father thinking about and considering the future of his children.

Eliza and Callum spoke about the financial difficulties affecting the relationships within the house, in particular their parents:

'I know that obviously one of the reasons why my mum and dad split up because of the money thing.' Eliza (1, 13-15)

'Well like (pause) he ruined his relationship with my mum. And like, we had plans to move to a different house but because he gambled a lot of money we couldn't.'

Callum (5, 135-137)

Eliza's use of the word 'obviously' suggests that in her experience her father's problem gambling had a direct effect on the relationship between her father and mother and the financial difficulties was in some sense a catalyst for these relational difficulties.

Callum stated that his father 'ruined' his relationship with his mother. This suggests to me a difficult experience of a relationship being broken but more distressingly 'ruined' which suggests a sense of conscious destruction. Callum reflected that the families plans to move home was not met due their money being gambled. The use of the word 'we' when speaking about plans in the family suggests a collective sense of disappointment when they could not work towards moving home.

Similar to Eliza and Callum, Francesca also explores that most of the arguments at home were related to the financial difficulties as a consequence of her father's problem gambling:

'And I know, or I was certain after I realised that he was problem gambling that most (pause) or shall I say all the arguments were over him gambling (pause) him not coming home on time or coming home really late after work, not spending time with us, him being aggressive (pause) I guess when he lost, erm (pause) him not being able to financially support the family as much as he could for the amount he was or should be working.' Francesca (10, 287-294)

Francesca retrospectively reflected that all of the arguments between her parents were over her father's problem gambling and her father consequently 'not being able to financially support the family as much as he could'. The pause between Francesca reflecting that the arguments were mostly to always due to her father's problem gambling suggests a sense of hesitation and perhaps realisation through the interview process.

Further to the effects of financial difficulties on the relationships within the house which have been expressed by many of the participants within the study, Darren specifically highlights the psychological and emotional effects of losing money within problem gambling:

'Yeah it does because gambling if you lose money you're affected psychologically, if you win money you're affect psychologically. Every way psychological and emotional things are part of it...' Darren (6, 182-185)

Darren reflects that whether you lose or win money through problem gambling there are consequences and effects psychologically and emotionally. This suggests the interlinked consequences of his father's problem gambling experienced by Darren and the idea that when his father is affected psychologically this also has an impact on his psychological experience.

Eliza goes on to talk about the financial effects of her father's problem gambling on her life now:

'It still affects me because now it affects me financially. Whereas maybe it affected my mum financially then, but now... because I feel guilty. There's the guilt... 'place can you lend me 20 pounds, can you lend me 30 pounds, can you lend me a tenner?' because he's telling me it's for food.' Eliza (14, 436-440)

The word 'still' suggests to me that the financial effects of Eliza's father's problem gambling was a continuous process of her; one in which she remembers retrospectively and continues to feel till this day. She spoke about this process through the feelings of guilt. While in the past the effects were predominantly on her mum this has evolved onto her, perhaps through age. Eliza explains that she feels 'guilt' which is interesting as she reflects feeling this feeling towards her father. Eliza spoke about giving her father money because he wants it for food, as a means of survival, but perhaps with the felt guilt Eliza also felt a sense of doubt. In my interpretation the guilt Eliza felt is her experience of making her sure her father has food but also perhaps guilt through her doubt of a chance that perhaps he is gambling with her money.

3.3.3 Adultification

This sub-theme reflects the participants' experiences of maturing through their lived experiences of their father's problem gambling and taking on more adult roles and responsibilities.

'It felt bad because I don't have to tell him what to do. He's the father he should be telling me what to do. He should be telling me what's right from wrong. If I'm going to

listen or if I'm not going to listen that's something else of course but, that's... I should be the one, his son shouldn't be... no son should be one telling their father what to do and how to look after the family.' Darren (19, 598-604)

Darren reflected on his experience of feeling like he was telling his father what to do and what not to do. Darren spoke about feeling 'bad' about this which suggests to me a negative and difficult psychological experience of stepping up to advise his father. As he mentioned, perhaps it is expected, in a father and child relationship, for the father to be offering advice or instructions however Darren experienced the opposite. Darren extends his experience to his general expectations to the relationship between fathers and sons which suggest to me that he views his experience of telling his father what to do out of the norm and not a role usually expected. His role of advising his father and talking to him about 'right from wrong' suggests a role reversal, where Darren had become the adult in the relationship.

'As I mentioned earlier I felt like my father wasn't emotionally or mentally available as he was preoccupied with gambling and my mother I didn't feel fully emotionally available, as I said, not her fault, but she was thinking about my dad's gambling I guess so I learnt... or shall we say had to rely on myself on a lot of things including preparing my own packed lunches as a child or supporting myself emotionally, I don't know... not something I fully reflected on before.' Francesca (6, 168- 176)

Similar to Darren, Francesca reflected on taking on an adult role. Francesca experienced her maturity and adultification through her need to learn to support herself both in terms of survival and emotionally. Francesca explained learning to prepare her own packed lunches and supporting herself emotionally. This sense of stepping into an adult role to provide for herself suggests to me an unavailability or basic needs in her home environment and in some sense, her need to become an adult for herself to survive both physically and mentally. Francesca stated that this was something she had not reflected on before and my interpretation of this is that through the interview she is making sense of her difficult experiences while growing up and the effects of her father's problem gambling.

'I think that's more to do with my nature and because I had to because my brothers crying, mums not well and dads not here, for whatever reason... gambling, bookies, he's just not here at the minute. So that was a lot of the support system, I think I just had to do it. I didn't have a choice.' Eliza (6, 162-167)

Eliza spoke about her experience of supporting the family while growing up, in particular offering physical and emotional support to her brother. The use of phrases such as 'because I had to', 'I just had to do it' and 'I didn't have a choice' suggests to me that Eliza's process of adultification was implanted onto her, one that she had to adopt in order to survive and support her brother to survive rather than one she choice. The particular phrase of 'I didn't have a choice' suggests me that taking on an adult role was the only option Eliza had.

Similar to Eliza, Francesca reflected on her experiences of having to act with enhanced responsibility while growing up with her father's problem gambling:

'Yes definitely. I definitely matured quicker. I felt responsible for my sister and for myself for too long when I was young. Like I said, I'm not saying it was my mums' fault, I can only imagine what she was going through and what her experience was but I had to do many things for myself for too long that that has just stayed with me and that is who I am. I think now in my adult life, my mum especially cares really what my opinion is and takes that on board. Maybe caring for myself and my sister in my own ways distracted from the problem. I don't know but I would definitely say my mature nature and independence comes from those younger experiences.'

Francesca (16, 505-515)

Francesca stated that she 'matured quicker' and this is emphasised with the repetition of the word 'definitely'. My interpretation of this is that Francesca was sure of the reason why she felt she matured faster and earlier than her peers and this is 'definitely' attributed to her experience of growing up with a problem gambling father. Similar to Eliza, Francesca's use of the phrase 'I had to do many things' suggests to me that she felt like she had no choice in her role and her father's problem gambling pushed this role onto her.

Francesca talking about caring for herself and her sister as a means of distraction suggests a sense of coping but also perhaps her experience of psychologically avoiding the felt emotional effects of her father's problem gambling. She reflects on the effects on her life now including independence of her increased responsibility and independence while growing up with her father's problem gambling and consequently her mother not being as available.

'But then as years went by and I got older, erm... I feel like I got more mature than certain kids because... with family problems and all that. Or maybe it's just me thinking of it that way. Erm... I just started thinking like whatever my father does I will do better, so I started learning from his mistakes. If that makes sense. That's how I started growing, because I knew that was wrong.' Darren (2, 37-43)

Darren reflected on his process of maturing quicker than his peers; he explained that he matured more than his peers 'as years went by' and my interpretation of this is that maturing for him was more of a journey which increased with time and age. Darren spoke about learning from his fathers 'mistakes' as a process of 'growing' and developing. This suggests an idea of resilience and coping and the word 'growing' reflects this for me. My interpretation is that through the exposure of adult experiences such as gambling from a young age, he developed his own characteristics for his life.

'We had a lot going on in the house, so to know that it could have been worse... emotionally for myself and my brother. Because I'm more emotional now, do you know what I mean? If I had been emotional from young, god knows what kind of mess I would be, if that makes sense.' Eliza (20, 630-634)

Similar to Darren and Francesca, Eliza reflected on her life now and the aspects of growing up with a problem gambling father which stayed with her. She stated that she is more emotional now in her adult life, something she was not before. My interpretation of Eliza's experience is that, similar to Francesca in the moment of it when she was younger, she was avoiding certain psychological and emotional reactions through her perceived need to be responsible and take on the adult role, something she is not doing now and therefore experiencing more emotions.

'In the sense that, before I was like omg I should like figure out how to help, but then I was like if he's not going to help himself, like growing up teenage years obviously, I was like I'm not going to help' Bernadette (7, 209-212)

Bernadette discussed feeling like she needed to help her father through his problem gambling. My interpretation of this is that she felt an elevated sense of responsibility, one beyond her age and ability and a feeling which made her aware of adult concepts and felt the need to take on a role of the adult in the house. For Bernadette this experience changed into passing on the responsibility back to her father and understanding that change had to come from him rather than being her responsibility.

Ali and Eliza spoke about their experience of 'protecting' and developing an 'adult role' for their brother's:

'I've grown up with it and so has my younger brother which I may have tried to protect from.' Ali (7, 219-222)

'Because that would have more of an emotional impact on me or my brother... as I said I probably take a big sister or adult role at a very young age' Eliza (20, 623-635)

'I think it wasn't more of strain on me, it was more of a strain on my brother with the arguments. He's reacted badly to it. Go in his room and start crying. I think I've just been more grown up before my time because I've been there to support him.' Eliza (5, 151-155)

Ali explains trying to 'protect' his brother from the effects of his father's problem gambling. The use of the word 'tried' suggests to me difficult nature of developing an adult role and identity in developing responsibility and acting as a protector. Similar to Ali, Eliza spoke about taking on a 'adult role at a very young age'. My interpretation of this is that Eliza was exposed to adult concepts and responsibilities before she was ready and prepared and this was difficult for her own experience of being a child while growing up with a father with problem gambling. Eliza stated that

she has been 'more grown before my time' and attributes this to needing to support her brother's emotional needs. This suggests to me that in her experience of growing up with a father with problem gambling Eliza felt responsible to step up the absent adult roles in their life and 'support' her brother.

'And like, my brother didn't also speak to him for a long time, one or two years. I'd have to be in the middle of them two trying and communicate with each other.'

Callum (5, 143-145)

My interpretation here is that Callum experiences adultification and enhanced responsibility through his experience of mediating and communicating between his brother and father. The experience of his father's problem gambling led to difficulties between his father and brother's relationship and this had an effect on him, in particular his felt sense of responsibility to create harmony and order in the home environment.

'I don't have many memories of us doing things with him or as a family. Me more than my sister because as I said she was younger and by the time she grew up I think I was very protective over her and was aware to make up things for her (laughs) it's funny... I felt like I had to make things up for her when nothing was my fault and I had not done anything. But I guess, I knew how scared and angry I had felt and the things I had longed for... you know I went to a good school and the things that my peers were doing, I could not do... I don't know, was it because of finances or time or availability? I don't know but I remember at many times longing for things, whether it was doing activities together or materialistic things... but I remember even as a teenager and still young I would be protective over what my younger sister was going through and would.' Francesca (10, 297-312)

Francesca retrospectively reflected that her experience of her father's problem gambling was more difficult than her sisters despite her need to be 'protective over her'. When Francesca spoke about protecting her sister this suggests sense of coping and containment for herself but my interpretation here is that even though Francesca felt like there was more of an effect on her, she still felt like she had to be protective over her sister by putting her own experience to a side. My interpretation

of Francesca's experience is that perhaps she used her emotional and psychological distress to understand how to protect her sister, this is highlighted when Francesca reflects 'I felt like I had to make things up for her when nothing was my fault and I had not done anything.' This experience also brings up for me feelings of resentment of having to step up and protect her sister even though it was not her fault or place to.

Eliza spoke about the enhanced sense of responsibility in her life more presently:

'So yeah, even my brother he's in America right now, he will ask my brother in America for money and sometimes that's why I would just give it because I don't want money to come out of my brother's pocket.' Eliza (15, 456-459)

Eliza talks about giving her father money when he asks for it, despite it possibly going towards his gambling and my sense of this is that she feels like she needs to 'protect' her brother from the financial pressures that her father may put on him. This is an extension to the emotional support she provided for her brother when they were growing up and with age it is clear to me that this has also evolved itself into needing to step up to protect him in other ways, even if this means that she faces the negative consequences.

3.4 Theme three: The Absent Experience

This master theme explores the experiences of absence felt by the participant's through their father's problem gambling. The experience of absence is expressed through a loss of trust, the absent father and through the experience that the participant's felt their own needs were not met.

3.4.1 Loss of trust

This sub-theme explores the experience of lost and absent trust towards their father presented by the participant's. While some participants experienced a loss of existing trust, others felt that the trust was always absent.

'Erm, I think he... there was like a loss of trust, and loss of love as well I think'

Bernadette (18, 543-544)

Bernadette described her felt experience of loss of trust and love. The statement started with hesitation and after a short pause Bernadette said 'there was...' which suggests to me certainty in her experience. My understanding in the pause between her thinking and more certain narrative is that she came to an understanding.

Bernadette spoke about a 'loss' for trust and love suggesting to me that for Bernadette these were experiences that were once present, but have been lost following the problem gambling.

'And like, just... like he always promised it's never going to happen again but it always would. And like, it takes away your trust.' Callum (11, 327-329)

Similarly, Callum talks about his experience as trust being taken away, as it did for Bernadette too. This suggests to me that Callum also had a sense of trust to his father but this taken away through his father's problem gambling. Callum used the word 'always' when he spoke about his dad promising not to gamble again but he 'always' would. My interpretation here is that the promises 'always' being broken is a repeated and expected experience and thus the loss of trust came through the repeated experience of not sticking to promises.

'It's upsetting. Like, usually he borrows money from me, and... I will give it to him but you think is he going to pay you back? because like if he had his problems he won't be able to.' Ali (12, 366-368)

Ali reflected on his experience of lost trust as 'upsetting' and this shows the negative emotional and psychological impact of his father's problem gambling had on him. Ali described questioning whether his dad will give his money back when he borrowed money from him. This questioning suggests to me an uncertainty around his experiences with his father. It suggests that though Ali is connecting with his father this accompanies questions around trust and this to me seems like a difficult experience.

'Looking at it now, it's a bit sad... it's a bit... I know how addiction can play with peoples... their mindset and how they think. Erm... it definitely put a strain. A bit of mistrust, not believing your dad which is not great. Yeah... you want to believe your dad.' Eliza (4, 121-125)

My understanding here is that Eliza experiences difficult and negative emotions as an impact of her father's problem gambling; she describes feelings of sadness. Eliza talks about the strain her father's problem gambling has put on her and the experience of 'mistrust' and not believing her dad which she describes as a difficult experience. Using the word 'addiction' to describe the impact on her experience suggests to me that she is unconsciously placing the responsibility on an external factor rather than her father, which further suggests that coming to a sense that there is mistrust between herself and her father is a difficult experience. The difficulty and negative impact on her psychological experience is further highlighted for me when Eliza says 'you want to believe your dad'. My interpretation of this is a sense of longing for trust and by using 'you' Eliza further distances those difficult feelings from her own experience.

'Probably like... a bit of dislike towards my dad. And like... I think I would say like 'liar, liar, liar'. Because it never happened.' Callum (15, 449-451)

Here, Callum describes feeling 'a bit of dislike towards my dad' through his felt experience of lost trust, suggesting to me a difficult experience as one would expect that it would take a lot of for an individual to dislike their father. Callum repeats the word 'liar' three times accompanied by an increase in volume in his voice which perhaps highlights this concept for him.

'(...) Even if he was still gambling my mum wouldn't know because he would still pay the rent, he would still pay the bills and everything. But, he could still be gambling because he is getting money from the restaurant so I don't really know. Before like, if he was gambling and he didn't have money, my mum would know as there would be no other way that money would go.' Bernadette (13, 386-392)

Bernadette spoke about the difficulties in trusting her father indirectly through questioning whether her father continues to gamble or not. She stated that her 'mum wouldn't know' if her father was continuing to problem gambling as he pays the rent and bills. This suggests to me that the difficulties of trust Bernadette is experiencing continues beyond the difficulties her father is experiencing. My interpretation is that due to her lived experience, even when there are no indications of her father problem gambling Bernadette continues to question it.

'I wouldn't trust whether he was coming or if we was actually going to the park that day, if we were actually going bowling. Or if we were we wouldn't spend... like if you had 2 hours with your dad on Saturday afternoon I knew it wouldn't be the whole two hours.' So, I wouldn't always trust, with both my parents there was always something with trust. But with my dad he would say he was doing something and it wouldn't always happen.' Eliza (4, 112-120)

Eliza reflects on difficulty in trusting her father through her memories when younger. She reflects on her feelings of mistrust on whether her father would stick to plans he had with her, and even if they did spend time together Eliza explains that she would not trust the time they would have to spend together. Eliza described an experience of mistrust with both her parents 'always'. The word 'always' suggests to me that the experience of lack of trust is embedded strongly in her lived experience and the experience of questioning trust around her father was different to the one she felt with her parents as a whole. This suggests to me and emphasis on the particular experience of her father as a problem gambler.

'I mean that car thing really pissed me off because he used us. So, you think what else has he done that I don't know about. Has he asked for money from my friends or asked money off his family and friends for me?' Ali (5, 129-132)

Ali talks about a past memory in which he had a problem with his car and told his father. Following this, his father asked for money from someone they knew informing them that it would be used for Ali's car, however this money was not used for his car. In the first sentence of this extract it is clear in his use of language and strength in the tone of his voice that this was a memory that fills Ali with distress, anger and

frustration. Ali's repetition of questions wondering about whether his father asked for money on other occasions, to my understanding, reflects his confusion and frustration towards the situation and a notion of questioning towards his father's choices and behaviours.

So, I'm thinking, you know even with us when we're trying to... you know it's weird because he's always told me to be smart with my money, he's always told me from when I was young. He was like 'here's 5 pounds, do not spend it all on one go' do you know what I mean? So... it's just weird. Because he has... he speaks with sense to me, he tells me all the right things so then his actions are a bit different.' Eliza (9, 273-280)

My interpretation here is that Eliza's use of 'you know' repeatedly and 'do you know what I mean?' showed her desire for me to understand and hear her. It suggests to me that Eliza has felt that her experience and difficulties in her trust towards her father have not been previously heard, listened to or understood. Eliza reflected on the discrepancies between her father's words and actions and this adds to her mistrust towards her father. The use of the word 'weird' implies to me an experience that is away from the normal; one that is different to the experience that an individual would expect. Thus, this suggests to me that Eliza views this lack of trust as one not expected between a daughter and father.

'Erm... I guess a little bit of respect, but... not completely until it's done, if that makes sense because it's happened so many times, where he's tried, where he's promised. Maybe not seek professional support but said 'yes, last time. I promise, I swear, I'll do this, you can take this to prevent me, you can look after the finances, you can take my card, you can take my ID' you can do this you can do that, but he would still gamble. So, it's like, it's like each and every single time he would say it's going to be different this time, but it's never guaranteed.' Ali (16, 494-503)

Ali here reflects on his loss of trust in the process of recovery his father has 'promised' him. Similar to Eliza, Ali stated 'if that makes sense' suggesting to me that he wanted to make sure that he is understood by me and perhaps with this comes feelings of not being understood or heard previously. Ali's experience of repeated

promises from his father to stop his problem gambling gives a sense of frustration and exhaustion. Ali lists the statements promised to him by his dad and his pace is also quick here; my interpretation of this is that perhaps Ali feels like promises are exhausted by his father and this lends into a feeling of lost trust.

'Yeah, like my trust is zero. That may be related back to parents (laughs) you can do therapy on me (laughs). That could be going all the way back, erm... that could be going back to my trust with like... yeah. Erm... it's a let-down feeling. Like I remember getting upset and angry, if he were to let me down now I would still get upset and angry. That's a natural reaction, response.' Eliza (13, 406-412)

Eliza described her trust as 'zero' this suggests a complete loss of trust which to me suggests a difficult psychological experience. Eliza reflected that the complete lack of trust is related to her parents and this is followed by her laughing and using humour. This can be interpreted in a number of ways; Eliza may feel at a point of acceptance of her experience and is able to interpret her experience and impact through humour. This could also be interpreted as her wanting to soften the distress felt by expressing her 'zero trust'. The difficult psychological impact felt by Eliza is further seen by her expressing feeling 'let-down' and 'upset and angry'.

'But I guess I didn't trust most things around him, I didn't trust that plans would be kept or trust what he said would happen and maybe that stayed with me now. I have trust issues (laughs) that's what people say around me, I just question everything and don't expect much until it happens.' Francesca (16, 493-498)

My understanding here is that Francesca reflected on the loss of trust she experienced with her father through his problem gambling and how this has 'stayed' with her now. The word 'stayed' suggests to me something that will remain, therefore the mistrust she is experiencing is something that will stay and be part of her currently. Francesca reflected on her 'trust issues' with laughter and this is similar to Eliza and could be interpreted as her desire to soften to difficult and distressing feelings experienced.

3.4.2 The Absent Father

This sub-theme presents the participants' experiences of an 'absent father'. The absent father is experienced through the participants both physically not being there due the gambling but also emotionally not being available or absent.

Bernadette talks about not remembering her dad being there:

'I don't remember anything. Like my dad being there for anything... I don't remember. I don't have any memories of my father being there.' Bernadette (1, 31-34)

Not remembering her dad being there or having any memories with her father felt to me to be a difficult experience and repeating this suggests to me that Bernadette is trying to process this difficult experience retrospectively. Bernadette experienced the absence of her father very clearly physically where she does not remember him being present or any memories with him.

'Erm... so, I would only see my father when he would come home from work at night, so I would stay up and have school the next day and I would stay up to see him.' Darren (1, 8-10)

Darren reflected on only seeing his father late at night after work and staying up to see him. The use of the word 'only' suggests to me the lack of memories with his father, similar to Bernadette. Darren spoke about staying up to see his father which I interpret as his desire to spend time with his father regardless of the consequences to him.

Similarly, Callum described seeing his dad less:

'And, erm... I saw less and less of my dad. He changed jobs quite a few times and places he was working and where he was living. I was a bit confused as to what was happening to him, I didn't really know.' Callum (9, 257-260)

The use of 'less and less' suggests to me a process in which Callum experienced the absence of his father. Callum reflected on his confusion of seeing his father less and when he said 'what was happening to him' it suggests to me that Callum is able to put the problem on his father and notice that something was happening to his father.

'But as I mentioned I experienced an emotional and physical unavailability from my dad as well... and my dad I guess. I did not do much with my dad when I was younger... like, I don't have many memories of us doing things with him or as a family. Me more than my sister because as I said she was younger and by the time she grew up I think I was very protective over her and was aware to make up things for her (laughs) it's funny... I felt like I had to make things up for her when nothing was my fault and I had not done anything.' Francesca (10, 294-303)

Similar to Callum, Darren and Bernadette, Francesca spoke about, through a retrospective perspective, her absent memories with her father while growing up which she stated is an 'emotional and physical unavailability'. Further to this, Francesca explored this as the absent memories with her father or more broadly as a family. My understanding here is that the physical and emotional unavailability experienced by Francesca were interlinked; it may have been that physically not being around would have had emotional difficulties for Francesca or that by not being physically around he was also not showing his presence emotionally. Francesca further reflected on her experience compared to her younger sister and the experience of making up to her. During the interview, I remember the laugh, as reflected in the text, felt like an angry and bitter laugh; something that felt very serious to her but in processing it she could not understand. My interpretation here is that Francesca, similar to Callum, placed the responsibility back on her father, through retrospective reflection, to distance herself from the problem.

Francesca reflected on her experience of her father's absence as 'feelings of being let down':

'I remember feelings of being let down when I was younger, you know could be simple things where I was expecting him to erm... him to come home and he wasn't home in the evening or us planning to do something as a family, something erm,

something fun and it not happening because I don't know because he's not around or because him and mum argues and plans were cancelled.' Francesca (16, 487-493)

Francesca spoke about her expectations to spend time with her father as 'simple things' which suggests to me that she felt like she did not want complicated things from her father but rather for him to be around. She reflects on feeling 'let down' by cancelled plans and her expectations to spend time with her dad not being met which suggests a difficult psychological experience.

'So erm... so when he has money can spend time with us but when he doesn't have money he thinks that because he has no money he can't spend time with us.' Darren (6, 185-188)

Darren explored the absence of this father's presence by reflecting on the financial nature of gambling. His experience is that when his father had money he was able to spend time with him and the family compared to when he did not money due to his problem gambling. My interpretation of this is that Darren viewed the absence of his father to be related to his gambling, perhaps blaming the problem gambling for his father not spending time with him and his sister. The use of 'he thinks' suggests to me his views on wanting to spend time with his father as this is not what he wants or thinks; it suggests to me that Darren, as opposed to his father's thoughts, would want to spend time with his father regardless of the money he has.

'I don't know like, it probably makes you more distant from your own dad. And, you just think that 'how could this happen' and 'how did it happen?' Callum (7, 212-214)

Callum here questions his experience of being distant from his father; from moving from the question 'how could this happen' to 'how did it happen' shows a progression from a probability to a reality. My interpretation here is that Callum's experience was a process moving from him wondering to processing that this is his experience. This echo's Callum's experience of seeing his father 'less and less'.

Further to this, Callum spoke about his experience here as 'you' and 'probably' which I interpret as a means of Callum attempting to familiarise me with his experience or on another level, to normalise his experience.

'If you claim to say you love the family, you don't really love the family if you gamble every night, problem gambling. So, in my head I was like he's lying, he says he loves us but he loves the gambling more in a sense.' Bernadette (8, 231-234)

Similar to Callum, Bernadette externalised his experience. Using 'you' and 'the family' objectified her father and moved these concepts away from her personally. Rather than her talking about her own father and her own family, using these phrases, suggests to me that Bernadette distances herself from her experiences. This could be a way in which, similar to Callum, Bernadette attempted to normalise her experience, or by distancing and externalising it could be that she is moving away from these difficult experiences as a means of coping. Bernadette says 'he loves the gambling more in a sense' which reflects the difficulty in the experience; this suggests to me that as well as not being at home 'every night' because his father is gambling, Bernadette also felt a sense of absent love, with the gambling overpowering his father's love.

'The emotional, financial and physical unavailability was all because he was out gambling spending all the money we had on gambling and not being able to save or because even when he was home he would be quiet and not attentive to us... I guess he was thinking about the gambling, I'm not sure but probably.' Francesca (11, 318-323)

Francesca described her experience of her father as 'emotional, financial and physical unavailability' due to his problem gambling. My interpretation here is that Francesca was reflecting on the difficult and negative impact of her father's problem gambling. Using the word 'all' suggests to me that Francesca views all of her negative experiences as a consequence of the problem gambling. Francesca reflected that 'he was thinking about the gambling' even when spending time with her suggesting that regardless of physical absence or not, she felt an absence of his overall presence.

'He would just come home late. So, he would be at work 'till late anyway and he would come home and we would not be able to speak because he would put on the TV, just taking notes down on a football team. So, the gambling will continue at home.' Darren (13, 391-395)

The word 'just' suggests to me that this is the reality of Darren's experience; not providing any flexibility but as a rigid and definite experience. Darren described the gambling as continuing at home which I interpret as a difficult experience for Darren. I get a sense here a feeling of being let down for Darren who expected to spend time with his father in the evenings, however even with something as simple as watching TV at home, it was related to his father's gambling. Similar in some sense to Francesca, here Darren felt a lack in closeness and attention, though physically his father was present.

While Darren and Francesca explored the experience of their fathers not being present physically and emotionally, Bernadette explored her experience of needing to avoid and be distant from her father:

'I just didn't want to be in the same room as him. I didn't want to be in the same place. I knew it was a bad thing. I didn't really know what it was, but I knew it was a bad thing. I knew like I had to avoid him. In my head I was like I have to avoid him.' Bernadette (2, 39-43)

Bernadette described not wanting to be in the same room or place as her father. She reflected on this as knowing that 'it was a bad thing' and this suggests to me that with a need and desire to be away from her dad there was also a sense of guilt. Bernadette's experience of needing to be away from her father and needing to 'avoid' him gives me a sense of a natural reaction to difficult experiences, ones similar to 'fight or flight'. She reflected on not knowing why, but in her head thinking that she 'had' to avoid him, suggesting to me a sense of survival; avoiding her father as a means of coping with the difficult psychological experience.

Bernadette also spoke about her father being absent physically:

'He would be home like 10, but then, as soon as he was home I would be in my room. And like, me and my dad didn't really have that much of a relationship as I was growing up.' Bernadette (1, 27-30)

Bernadette described being in her room when her father got home, which perhaps was because she felt like she had to avoid her father or because he would come home late and naturally they could not spend time together. She reflects on the absence of their closeness physically as not having a relationship.

'Yeah, so I would just sit down and watch the TV with him, that's all that I would do. I would watch the football as well, like not in a gambling way but I would watch like who's won, I was interested because I would play football at school.' Darren (14, 419-422)

As opposed to Bernadette, Darren spoke about his father coming home late and his way of spending time with him was to sit and watch football with his father. Darren says 'that's all that I would do' and my interpretation of this is that there was a sense that this was not enough for Darren with a feeling of something, more emotional, missing from their interaction. Darren, says 'like not in a gambling way' to explain himself and justify why he was watching the football, which I interpret as his way of not wanting to misunderstand him and show me the reason why he would watch the football with his father.

Darren describes sitting with his father as a desire for him to hold on to his shared experiences with his father and similarly Bernadette reflects on this by exploring that she and her father had nothing to talk about:

'Because we didn't have a relationship and didn't have anything to talk about. So, when I was away from it... it kind of felt more comfortable being away from him. So, in a sense it was kind of comforting but at the same time it felt weird not to be able to speak to my dad, but that was just how it was so it was kind of normal to me.' Bernadette (2, 56-63)

Bernadette related that being physically next to her father was not comfortable and being away from him as being 'more comfortable' suggesting that the absence in her father's presence, with time, became the norm for her and when they did spend time together this was a different and difficult experience for her.

'My mum and dad would always argue and it would mainly be in the evening, I think when my dad was due to come home but he would be increasingly late to come home.' Francesca (1, 12-15)

Francesca discussed her father becoming 'increasingly late to come home'. Similar to Callum, my understanding here is that Francesca experienced the absence of her father and his presence gradually as a process through time and one that got worse. Francesca experienced her father coming home late and reflects that even when he was home, and physically present, he would argue with her mother and this suggests to me that he would be absent emotionally, but also taking away her mother's availability.

Francesca described making sense of the arguments between her father and mother and talked about them being over her father's gambling and absence:

'And I know, or I was certain after I realised that he was problem gambling that most... or shall I say all the arguments were over him gambling... him not coming on time or coming home really late after work, not spending time with us...' Francesca (10, 287-291)

Using 'and I know, or I was certain' suggests to me Francesca knowing for certain that her father's absence was due to his problem gambling. This suggests to me to be a difficult and distressing realisation for Francesca to make sense of.

Similar to Francesca, Darren talked about, retrospectively, his experiences of the difficulties between her mother and father and his father's lack of presence to the extent that he would gamble next to him:

'So, the first time they broke up, erm... they were arguing quiet a lot and erm... my dad would go into the gambling shop while I was next to him. He would make me wait outside and would go inside.' Darren (10, 298-301)

Darren reflected on his father going into the gambling shop while with him and Darren waiting outside while his father went inside to gamble. Darren says 'he would make me' which suggests to me that this was something Darren did not want to do. It reflects, for me, his desire to be next to his father while his father made him wait outside and he was inside, gambling, rather than spending time with him. I also get a sense here that Darren felt abandoned outside, while his father chose to go 'inside' and gamble.

'So, it would be to the point that where, erm... he would leave me and my younger brother in the car, and he would go into the bookies. I remember being as young as... 7.' Eliza (1, 10-13)

Eliza, similar to Darren, reflected on her memories of being left alone by her father, when they should have been spending time together, to go 'into the bookies' to gamble. 'It would be to the point that' suggests to me Eliza's own disbelief of her father leaving Eliza and her younger brother alone in the care, while he went into the bookmakers to gamble and reflecting on her experience the extent her father would go to gamble resulting in him not being present for her and her brother.

Eliza further described her disbelief of being left by her father and the absence of her father:

'Like 'dad you're always leaving us in the car' and obviously it would only be 10 minutes but as a child it would not feel like 10 minutes. It didn't feel like 10 minutes, maybe he was only gone for 10 minutes but I felt like longer. It would be quite... I think because me and my brother were quite grown, erm, mature shall I say, that we managed to stay in the car. But obviously it's not that very great. People don't do that now (laughs) you can't leave children in the car at that age because my brother would have been like 5.' Eliza (1, 25-33)

Eliza spoke about a memory where her father left her and her brother in the car while he went inside a bookmaker to gamble. She repeatedly reflected that the experience did not feel like 10 minutes and my interpretation of this is that Eliza was processing how long her father felt absent for. Eliza said: 'but obviously it's not very great' and this suggests to me that she felt like her experience was difficult and 'obviously' emphasises this for herself.

My interpretation of when Eliza comments 'people don't do that now' and then laughed is that she is expressing her expectations of what fathers should and should not do and in particular using the word 'people' suggests to me her views of the action being something she does not expect from everyone generally, not just her father.

'Like 'ah dad's going bookies again, he said we're going to the park, why has he pulled over?' I don't remember which bookies, I think it's still there. So that was sad. Especially because my mum and him split up, he came down to spend time with us but he wasn't. He would go bookies first.' Eliza (2, 46-5)

The word 'again' used to describe her dad going to the 'bookies' suggests to me this was an experience and memory which Eliza lived on a number of occasions, reflecting on the longevity of her father's absence while he was problem gambling. This is followed by Eliza questioning why they had pulled over when he has 'said [they're] going to the park'. Eliza presents a sense of disappointment at her father not being present while they had arranged a trip to the park and describes this experience as 'sad'. This shows me the difficult psychological experience felt by Eliza at the absence of her father in that moment.

The disappointment and 'sad' experiences are further explored by Eliza when she says 'he would go bookies first'. My interpretation of this is that perhaps Eliza experienced her dad as putting the gambling first, before they spent any time for him and again, this reflects a sense of disappointment.

Ali explored her father's problem gambling as an absence in their relationship:

'Erm... its... it impacted our relationship, from probably having a father and son good relationship to not having any sort of relationship' Ali (18, 551-553)

The trembling for Ali before starting the sentence suggests to me the difficulty in him expressing and saying out loud the truth he felt about his relationship with his father. Ali spoke about a diminishing relationship by describing his relationship with his father as 'from... to'. This suggests to me a process in his experience and his relationship got worse over time.

Similarly, Darren reflects on the absence of his father through losing a father figure:

'So, of course I was speaking to my mum and sister but I didn't have like that father figure, that masculine figure in the family. I didn't have that so I would speak a lot more at school. Erm... I think that's one of the reasons why I was emotional at school as well because like...' Darren (12, 355-359)

'Like, you would want a father figure to speak to them when something happened at school, or you're a male and there are some things... you are growing up into which you can't speak to about with your mum. For example, some things a girl will speak to a mother and some things a male will speak to their father and I didn't have that.' Darren (12, 381-386)

The phrase 'but I didn't have like that father figure' suggests to me a sense of absence and an experience he felt was lacking. Using 'but' suggests a consequence, that while he was speaking to his mother and sister this did not feel enough for him and he did not have 'that father figure' he would have expected to have. Darren explores his behaviours at school with his experience and reflects that not having a 'masculine figure' he was more talkative at school and this suggests to me that Darren is making sense and processing his experience of not having a 'father figure' and what this meant for him.

Darren's use of the word 'you' to explain his experience of not having a father figure shows, for me, his expectations of his father. Using 'you' aims to perhaps normalise and make the experience relatable; something that is expected by not just him, but

me and others too. This suggest that perhaps not having a father figure was disappointing for Darren as it was something he and others would expect to have but he 'didn't have'

'So... it hasn't set a good role model for me, erm... it hasn't set a good role model for me. Erm... which you should look up to your parents sometimes, as role models. I know not everyone does but that's the general consensus.' Eliza (8, 237-340)

Similar to Darren, Eliza explores the absence of her father due to his problem gambling as not having a 'good role model'. By repeating 'it hasn't set a good role model for me' suggests to me that Eliza is highlighting the importance of the absence of her father as a role model. This is emphasised by Eliza stating that he was not a 'good' role model. My interpretation of this is that Eliza experienced 'bad' and negative modelling from her father and this, like Darren, is not something she would expect. Similar to Darren, Eliza also says 'you should look up to your parents' suggesting to me her expectations of a father for herself, and as a whole as her image of what a father should do in general and this experience is emphasised when she describes having good role models as parents as a 'general consensus'.

Bernadette emphasises the absence of her father as a father figure who was 'never there':

'I've never gone through anything like grief wise or anything. And I didn't mean like a loss of a father figure but he just wasn't ever there. Like I didn't lose him, it's just he was never there.' Bernadette (17, 531-534)

My understanding here is that, Bernadette explored that she did not experience 'grief' associated with loss but rather her father, due to his problem gambling, was 'never there'. My interpretation here is that Bernadette removed herself from the emotional experiences she associated with 'loss' and 'grief' and reflected on an emotional disconnectedness as never experiencing to have a father figure. When I think of loss and grief, I expect one to be invested in or emotionally connected to something to then feel such strong and distressing emotions, yet Bernadette moved away from this affect.

Following retrospective exploration and reflection Ali explored the absence of his father in his life growing up, to his life and the current moment of the interview.

'I still haven't spoken to him or communicated to him for years maybe on and off. Unless extremely urgent or necessary and give one word replies that's about it.' Ali (5, 144-146)

The absence felt by Ali continued through time and age and the use of the word 'still' suggests to me that the absence of his father is an enduring and long-standing experience for Ali. Ali explained not speaking or communicating to his father for years, 'unless extremely urgent or necessary' and this highlight, for me, the felt experience of his father's absence in his life. The phrase 'unless extremely urgent and necessary' gave me a sense of survival and emergency which I interpret as the extent in which Ali experiences the absence of his father.

Similar to Ali, Bernadette also reflected on the absence of her father in her life on her current life during the interview:

'Erm, yeah, obviously there's going to be an impact on life for a long time but, in a sense that, erm, it has an impact on my life because I basically feel like I have no dad. And, also, erm... I think that's the main thing. It has an impact on life that in the sense I just don't feel like I've had a dad, like I've had a good upbringing... so, I think it's just...' Bernadette (15, 460-465)

Bernadette used the phrase 'I basically feel like I have no dad' and this suggests to me that the absence of a father felt by Bernadette continued through time and age also. Once again, Bernadette did not imply a loss but rather an absence of a father and spoke about this as the 'main thing' which suggests to me the importance of the impact having 'no dad' had for Bernadette's experience as a whole and continues to have to this day. Rather than experiencing change and the difficult experiences associated with a loss, Bernadette expressed the absence of her father as one that is a norm to her.

3.4.3 Own needs not met

This sub-theme presents the participants experiences of feeling that their own needs were not met or put aside, as secondary, through their lived experiences of growing up with a father with problem gambling.

'If you claim to say you love the family, you don't really love the family if you gamble every night, problem gambling. So, in my head I was like he's lying, he says he loves us but he loves the gambling more in a sense.' Bernadette (8, 231-234)

Bernadette here talks about her experience of her father and his perceived love; she explores that her father cannot love his family if he is problem gambling every night. My understanding of the use of the word 'you' suggests to me that these are Bernadette's beliefs and understanding of others and the world around her. Further to this, using 'you' distances herself from her father; rather than owning her father she is distancing him as the other. The phrase 'he loves the gambling more in a sense' provides an image for me that Bernadette felt secondary and pushed to a side, when compared to the gambling. My interpretation here is that she experienced her father's problem gambling as another member in their family and when compared to the problem gambling, her own needs for love were put aside.

'Erm... and another thing I think about when I think about problem gambling is all consuming. So, it's not something they can do while they continue their life as normal and something on the side while they continue to interact with their family as they would do but it consumes all that they do, including their relationships, their finances, their time, their emotions I guess... their mental state... it... it just takes over everything that they do.' Francesca (4, 122-130)

Francesca called the problem gambling 'all consuming' suggesting to me that her lived experience of her father's problem gambling consisted of it taking over everything in her life. I interpret the phrase 'all consuming' as an experience that similar to Bernadette, Francesca felt pushed to a side and her own needs were not met because the problem gambling was taking over everything around her. This is highlighted when Francesca reflects 'it's not something they can do while they

continue their life as normal and something on the side while they continue to interact with their family'. This suggests to me that Francesca truly felt like her father's problem gambling consumed everything he did and his world, which prevented his interactions and 'normal life' with his family.

'I would feel bad maybe because I would feel like I didn't really live my childhood properly. Yeah... I don't think I've lived a childhood that a child should live.' Darren (11, 335-337)

Darren explained feeling like he 'didn't really live [his] childhood properly' and he emphasises this experience, or lack of, by repeating the phrase. This suggests to me his need to emphasise his experience in order to be heard and for him to put his lived experience across. My interpretation of Darren's experience of not living his childhood properly is that he is denied, in some sense, a need that is expected to any child and by any parent and thus, his needs are pushed to a side are not met as a child.

Francesca talks about not being able to express how she felt about finding out about her father's problem gambling:

'My mum had cried so I remember not wanting to speak up about it or show anyone that I had understood or was scared about what was happening or what could happen but I was definitely scared and perhaps this left to me worrying a lot about it for a few days. I didn't feel like I could speak about it with anyone erm... because you know no one had told me directly so I guess, I don't know I guess I thought it was something I should know about so I just kept quiet.' Francesca (8, 226-234)

Francesca reflected feeling 'scared about what was happening or what could happen but I was definitely scared'. This suggests to me the difficult and distressing emotions experienced by Francesca when she found out about her father's problem gambling and came to an understanding of it. Francesca expressed her fear at that current moment but also reflected on a worry and fear for the future, which stayed with her for a few days. However, Francesca described not being able to express her difficult experiences: 'I didn't feel like I could speak about it with anyone'. This for me

created an image of a young individual going through difficult realisations but not being able to express and find ways to manage these difficulties, showing that her one emotional and psychological needs were not met and had to be pushed back. Francesca reflected that she was not able to talk to others because no one had told her directly and my interpretation of this is that she felt like her experiences did not seem to matter and she was not seen as a 'direct' participant of the experience.

Darren described experiencing his father's problem gambling through his 'whole life' and the impact on their relationship:

'Erm... well, it's been actually throughout my whole life. So, erm... so, I would only see my father when he would come home from work at night, so I would stay up and have school the next day and I would stay up to see him' (Darren, 1, 7-10)

The phrase 'it's been actually throughout my whole life' suggests to me that Darren has felt the experience and impact of his father's problem gambling from a very young age up until now and he has experienced it as something that is consistent and constant. He spoke about 'only' seeing his father when he came home from work at night and the word 'only' suggests to me a limit in their interactions and relationships. My interpretation of this is that he felt like his father was not available for him and his needs at all times but it was 'only' very late in the day. Further to this, through a retrospective perspective, Darren reflected on staying up to see his father and having school the next day suggesting his desire and efforts to see his father and spend time with him regardless on the consequences on him, such as sleeping late on a school night. This leaves me with a sense that he had to put his own basic needs, such as sleep, aside in order to form some connections with his father.

'It was like 'oh you did this to me you did that to me', it was just cursing. I wasn't really getting anything across so I don't think I ever got anything across to him.'
Bernadette (8, 252-255)

My interpretation here is that Bernadette did not feel like she was understood by her father which suggests to me that she was not heard and therefore her emotional needs were not met as she had perhaps expected. Bernadette repeats in one

sentence that she never got anything across to her father suggesting to me that she was trying but he was not listening and this in some sense sounds to me like a frustrating experience.

'Erm...I think there was a lot of pressure on me as I had to look after my younger brother. Definitely bored and sometimes sad. Like 'oh you're going bookies again'. Cos it was... like I said he would say 10 minutes but it was like 'ah you always say 10 minutes but this doesn't feel likes 10 minutes.' And, every time he's always leaving it wasn't a good... I don't remember feeling good, like sad. Like 'ah dads going bookies again, he said we're going to the park, why has he pulled over?' Eliza (2, 40-48)

Eliza's needs were not met as a child, in particular here she talks about her needs of wanting to spend time with her father and brother and visit the park. The phrase 'ah dads going bookies again, he said we're going to the park, why has he pulled over' suggests to me feelings of disappointment in Eliza's experience with her father. She questions why they had pulled away instead of going to the park, suggesting that her father had gone against her expectations. This disappointment and lack of her expectations being met are portrayed when Eliza says 'I don't remember feeling good, like sad' showing that Eliza felt sad in that moment and perhaps other negative and difficult emotions as she does not 'remember feeling good'.

Eliza reflected that 'there was a lot of pressure on me as I had to look after my younger brother', this once again reflects that Eliza felt like her own needs were secondary. I get the idea that Eliza felt she had to put her own needs to a side and care for her younger brother during such difficult experiences, therefore she was not able to think about what she needed nor was anyone attentive to what she needed. Eliza's use of the words 'again' and 'every time' suggests to me that these difficult psychological experiences of disappointment, expectations and needs not being met and sadness were things that she experienced on a number of occasions.

Further to this, Darren reflected on what he felt he needed and expected from a father, as a child, however these were not met:

'A son will always want to play football with his father, but we never had that really. It was just always like him coming from working, sitting watching the news or football, the news to watching something like a movie and then going back to work.' Darren (3, 78-82)

Darren spoke about 'a son will always want to play football with his father'; my interpretation here is by the use of 'a son' and 'his father' Darren reflected on what a son would expect generally and universally from their father, like a general consensus. He then says 'but we never had that really' suggesting that the need that he expected everyone to get was not met for him. The use of the word 'but' shows his disappointment for me and suggesting that his experience was not similar to those other 'sons' when their needs are met.

Darren continues to talk about what one should expect from a family:

'When you're in a family you would expect them to sit down and have a meal together at least once a week maybe, maybe not every day. Erm... yeah just have a decent conversation and share things together. Time is important throughout your life but it's important who you spend it with and what you spend it on.' Darren (11, 341-346)

Again, Darren reflected on what he believed people should expect and need in their family and he reflected that he viewed these expectations to be sitting down and having a meal together at least once a week and to have conversations and share experiences. Darren, like above, uses the words 'you're' and 'you' and this suggests to me what he expected one should have in a family; he talks about this in an almost prescriptive manner by saying 'at least once a week maybe'. My interpretation of this is that Darren is almost highlighting and justifying what he expects people in families to expect but also his expectations are kept low and quantifiable – 'at least once a week maybe, maybe not every day' suggests to me that he is reflecting that he does not expect much anyway.

In some way similar to Darren, Callum talks about his needs not being met in his family home:

'Like, I would be trying to sleep in my room but I could hear them arguing in the living room and I couldn't sleep, and it would keep me up because I could hear what they would be saying. And, even when they stopped I would keep thinking about what they were saying.' Callum (8, 251-256)

Callum, remembers his experiences of being kept awake because to the arguments between his mother and father, due his father's problem gambling. Callum reflected on a difficult experience of not being able to sleep despite 'trying' and this suggests to me a sense of struggle; him struggling and trying for his basic need of sleeping to be met, yet this was difficult. Callum talks about 'thinking about what they were saying' beyond their arguments suggests to me that the impact on Callum was not just physical emotional and psychological too as he was left thinking about what they were arguing about.

Similar to Darren and his expectations of what one should have in a family and a father, Eliza explores what she expects parents to do financially:

'Even if it was child care and things which wasn't cheap. But obviously his money was going somewhere else, it wasn't coming to me or my brother or my mum. I mean you see parents say 'I'll put some money away', I'm 25 now and if you was putting anything away... unless you're going to give it to me when I'm 30 (laughs) I don't think it's there. So that was kind of sad that... you could have done more' Eliza (10, 301-308)

Eliza says 'you see parents say...' and this shows that they had observed in other families and what she expected within her family and by her father, in particular. Specifically, Eliza speaks about financial support then and for her now, in the form of saving but this expectation and need was not met. Eliza uses humour here to reflect that her father has not passed down any financial support or savings to her as of yet. My interpretation of her laughter here is a slight sense of hope that she may get it when she is 30 but at the same time knowing that the financial support is not available to her. Eliza says 'his money was going somewhere else' suggests to me

that financially while her needs were not being met, her father was using that money for problem gambling.

Similar to Callum and Eliza, Ali reflected on the physical and financial impact of his father's problem gambling and spoke about that the emotional and psychological effects of it go beyond the others:

'The money side is fine, I had the money but I told him about it because he asked or whatever happened, he was saying happy birthday. And I remember he went and took money off a family friend to say I didn't have enough money to fix the car. So, I think that was another low embarrassing and frustrating point because not only did he use that me as an excuse to get money off family and friends. It was... it made me look weak, it made me look stupid.' Ali (4, 108-115)

Ali reflected on a memory where he told his father that he had a problem with his car, on his birthday, and his father asked a family friend for money, using Ali's car as a reason. Ali says 'the money side is fine' suggesting that, for him, the financial losses and financial needs that were not met were not as problematic for him. Ali explored feeling low, embarrassed and frustrated suggesting to me that he had felt used. My interpretation of this experience is that Ali told his father for support and felt that his emotional needs were not met in a difficult experience but also like he was used for his father's problem gambling needs. Therefore, not only were his own needs not met but his needs were put aside for his father to meet his own needs regarding his own gambling.

Ali says 'it made me look weak, it made me look stupid' and this suggest to me feelings of not only frustration but also anger. Through his father's desire to meet his own gambling needs, Ali felt like his character was being questioned by others.

'(silence) when I was little and I said I wanted to move to a different house, like I was really looking forward to that and like my dreams were crushed because of the problem. Because that was one of my biggest hopes' Callum (14, 441-444)

Callum reflected on his hopes and dreams and how his fantasies were not met due to his father's problem gambling. During the interview, there was a pause as reflected by the silence in the transcript, before Callum was able to make the above reflection. This suggests to me the difficult nature of the experience and perhaps Callum taking some time to make sense for himself the disappointment felt in his experience. The use of the word 'crushed' specifically feels like an emotive and difficult experience. The sense I get here is that Callum felt like his dreams were crushed by someone else, and he reflects that they could not move home due to 'the problem'. Calling his father's problem gambling 'the problem' suggests that perhaps Callum externalised this experience and distanced the problem gambling from his father, perhaps because it felt difficult to make sense that his father's problem gambling led to his dreams to 'crush'.

'If he would have saved like ten pounds a month or whatever it was instead of going bookies... I don't know how much it is to put money on horses, but even if you saved ten pounds that's something. It got to the fact that when I did go away with school, it was your brother, my uncle who gave me money to go away.' Eliza (11, 321-326)

Eliza spoke about her needs not being met due to financial problems through her father's problem gambling. Eliza reflected on her desires of her father saving a small amount of money for her, 'instead of going bookies'. The word 'instead' here suggests to me that Eliza experienced that her needs were put to a side and the 'bookies' were put first and prioritised. Eliza's experiences involved her father's brother giving her money for school trips and this suggests to me that Eliza had to have her needs to be met by other people, in particular other family members suggesting that her needs were not met by her father in particular, but she was able to have them met by others around her and close to her.

'Erm... I think I already mentioned that part of, or a big part of who I am now comes from my experiences in childhood and a big part of that was my father's problem gambling.' Francesca (15, 462-464)

Francesca reflected that she believed a 'big part' of who she views herself to be now has been directed by her father's problem gambling. My interpretation of this

reflection and experience is that Francesca views who she is now directed by her past experiences, in particular her father's lived experiences and needs through his problem gambling. I get the sense that this direction, from her father's problem gambling, pushed her own needs for herself and other experiences that she could have lived and the problem gambling had been prioritised.

'It's better for my life because your dad is getting better and you don't have to be worried about him because you get worried about him.' Callum (12, 357-359)

Callum similarly reflected on his own feelings and wellbeing but this is pushed secondary and he prioritises how his father is and if he is 'getting better'. Callum believes that if his dad's problem gambling will be improved this will be better for his life in general and this suggests to me that his experience is dependent of his father's problem gambling, essentially putting his own needs and experiences aside and secondary.

Chapter four

4.0 Discussion

4.1 Overview

I will start this chapter by reviewing and highlighting a summary of the findings from this study in relation to the initial research aims and question. I will then move onto considering the findings of this research project in relation to the context of the wider literature. I will then aim to highlight the clinical, training and policy implications of the findings derived from this study in relation to the discipline of counselling psychology. I will then reflect on the quality of the research study by considering the strengths and limitations of the design and analysis method, followed by suggestions for future research.

4.2 Research aims and summary of findings

The aim of this research study was to gain an understanding and insight into the participants' experiences of growing up with a father with problem gambling. The study aimed to shed light on how these individuals made sense of this experience while growing up, and also in their current adult lives. The findings suggested a number of important psychological experiences and presented three master themes which included 'Experience embedded in time and age', 'Familial discord' and 'The absent experience'. These three master themes encapsulated lived experiences of not understanding when younger, moving towards acceptance when older, adult relationships, difficulties in parent relationships, financial difficulties, adultification, loss of trust, the absent father and own needs not met.

4.3 Discussion of findings in context of the wider literature

4.3.1 Experience embedded in time and age

The first master theme found in this current study was 'Experience embedded in time and age'. Within this master theme, participants experienced 'not understanding when younger' and 'moving towards acceptance when older'. This theme showed the importance of time and age in the participants' experiences, and how with time and age their sense making and experience of growing up with a father with problem gambling evolved from not being able to understand or make sense when younger towards knowing and accepting when older in age.

Zimbardo and Boyd (1999) explained time perspectives as the outcome of a 'process whereby the continual flows of personal and social experiences are decomposed or allocated into temporal categories.' Time perspective has been characterised as a relatively stable individual view that likely evolves with age (Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999). This mirrors the notion of this current master theme in which perspective was aligned with time flowing with both personal and social experiences. Laureiro-Martinez et al., (2017) argue that the idea of time perspective is a 'pervasive construct' and it is important in the way we conceive the world and effects countless behavioural outcomes.

Not understanding when younger

This finding shows the participants' experiences of not understanding when they were younger in age. This sub-theme incorporates the experience that the participants were not told what was happening directly and they had to figure out what was going on. Participants spoke about making sense with time that their father was gambling and what this meant. Another experience within this sub-theme was that the participants did not understand fully and the extent of what it meant, even when they found out that their father was problem gambling. The participants highlighted that they experienced certain negative emotions and situations but were not told nor were they able to understand what exactly this meant when they were younger. Perhaps adults around them were consumed by their own experiences of this phenomena or children when younger were not believed to understand or know what was happening.

The literature shows that children are social individuals who show selective trust; most of their understanding of events within the world that they live in, including other people's behaviours, comes from information from adults and peers (Miller & Aloise-Younger (2018) and this supports the findings of this current study. Research within the field suggests that children selectively trust information from others (Mills, 2013). Children detect and understand that only certain people around them provide reliable information and testimony about the world which includes other people's desires, beliefs, traits and social categories. Miller and Aloise-Younger (2018) further highlight that children build a construct and understanding of their social worlds actively in collaboration with adults in their lives. The participants in this current study highlighted their experiences of not being told directly and in some sense being left in the dark, this suggests to me, alongside the literature, the difficult experiences of not being able to understand their lived worlds from others around them.

Miller and Aloise-Younger (2018) suggest that while children rely on conversations with other people for the information they gain and develop about the world, they also use their prior experience with people to help them decide whom to trust. Social relationships that they develop, including their attachment with their caregivers are important in order for trust to be developed for right information sharing about others and this is one-way parents influence social-cognitive development (Millet & Aloise-Younger, 2018). The research suggests the importance of parent's roles in effective information sharing on social-cognitive development. With the current research, the findings suggest that participants felt that this information sharing was inhibited and they had to gather information using their own means.

Moving towards acceptance when older

This sub-theme of 'moving towards acceptance when older' holds light to participants' experiences of moving towards being able to understand and accept their father's problem gambling. Participants involved in his current study spoke about coming to an understanding as they grew older and took on age; this understanding for many of the participants came from their own making sense and gathering of information. This current study found that with knowledge and understanding came the experience of 'acceptance'. It is clear from the participant

interviews that rather than accepting their father's problem gambling, participants explored acceptance of their experience of their father's problem gambling. For some participants this acceptance included understanding what problem gambling meant, for others it was about accepting that their father actually did gamble problematically and for others or in parallel, expressed 'not caring' which led to acceptance of the gambling without wanting to change it nor experiencing it in their current lives.

This change in emotional experience and understanding with time and age is seen in the literature and the experiences of the participants in this study supports this. The current study found that with age and time more negative psychological experiences were left behind and with acceptance came understanding and neutrality in the emotional experiences. The literature suggests that as individuals grow older, their past memories become shaded by tones that are more positive and less negative (Laureiro-Martinez, Trujilo & Unda, 2017). Furthermore, cross-sectional age comparisons suggest the possibility that from early adulthood into older age there is a marked improvement in emotional experience (Laureiro-Martinez, Trujilo & Unda, 2017). More specifically, it found that individuals of older age appear to focus less on negative events of the past and approach the present in a less hedonistic manner. Overall, when the literature is searched, there is mounting evidence to support the idea that as people get older in age they tend to remember the past more positively than those of a younger age (Levine & Bluck, 1997; Lockenhoff & Carstensen, 2003; Carstensen et al., 2006; Isaacowitz et al., 2006; Kim et al., 2008). This idea mimics the tone within the interviews in the current study, where negative feelings and experiences were spoken about more during younger years and through retrospective reflections.

Adult relationships

This sub-theme encapsulates the participants' experiences of their adult relationships in relation to their father's problem gambling. Participants explored, through the interviews, their ways of coping and relating to others within their romantic relationships, general relationships in their lives and future possible relationships, including their relationships with their future possible children. The

participants were able to process that their particular experiences of their father's problem gambling had potentially affected the way they experienced and perceived their current and future relationships.

'Internal working models' theory was derived from attachment literature and it proposes that individuals form mental representations through their early experiences with their primary caregivers and such mental representations influences how they interact and build relationships with others as they grow older. Internal working model's theory explains that beliefs that individuals hold regarding their views about themselves and their close relationships are relatively stable, and the individual differences in the behaviours of adults in their relationships are reflections of their early attachment experiences (Fraley & Shaver, 2000). This suggests, for this current study, that the experiences of participants with their fathers had an impact on their relationships in adulthood. Yet, it is important to recognise that inner working models are in fact viewed as dynamic, rather than stable as the theory initially stated, and may be altered in response to new information and relationships (Collins & Read, 1990). Hazan and Shaver (1987), specifically explored romantic relationships and suggested that an individual's attachment style served as a base from which one can establish romantic connections as an adult. It should be also noted that romantic relationships also present as an opportunity for a new 'secure base' and for insecure attachment styles and subsequent internal working models to be altered and repaired (Crowell et al., 2002)

4.3.2. Familial Discord

The second master-theme elucidated by the current study was 'familial discord'. This master theme was split into three sub-themes of 'difficulties in parent relationships', 'financial difficulties' and 'adultification'. This master-theme encompassed within itself the difficulties the participants experienced through this discord and disharmony felt in the family and home following their father's problem gambling.

Van Manen (1990) highlights the powerful meaning of 'home' and explains it as more than just a physical space in which people reside in and suggest that our concerns for those individuals who are homeless reflects our feelings that 'there is a deeper

tragedy involved than merely not having a roof over one's head'. One would usually expect the connotations of home to be positive and associated with security, warmth and comfort, yet the participants in this current study portrayed experiences of discord and disharmony, when thinking about their home and family.

Difficulties in Parent Relationships

Many studies within the literature have highlighted the negative impact on offspring, including younger and older individuals. It is important to consider and present this literature in the context of this theme within this study, as difficulties in parent relationships, as a consequence of their father's problem gambling, was found to be experienced by all the participants.

Much research has demonstrated associations between exposure to parental divorce and marital discord while growing up and children's psychological distress in adulthood thereafter and highlighting these are important for this current study. Amato & Sobolewski (2001) used 17 years of longitudinal data from two generations and the results showed that divorce and marital discord predicted lower levels of psychological well-being in adulthood. It was further suggested that parent-child relationships mediated most of the associations between parents' marital discord and divorce and children's subsequent psychological outcomes (Amato & Sobolewski, 2001). In particular, they showed that the experience of marital discord appeared to have a negative effect on children's emotional bonds with their fathers. The results from this study highlight the continuing importance of parent-child ties on wellbeing in childhood but also in adulthood. The interesting finding of this study suggesting that marital discord had, in particular, negative effects on child-father relationships highlights the importance of this experience on the participants of this current study. As well as the experience of problem gambling, marital discord possibly led to difficulties in their relationships with their fathers. The literature therefore suggests that while the participants of this current study experienced difficulties in their parent's relationships, this also had subsequent consequences on their experiences.

Similarly, another study conducted by Harris and Ainslie (1998) looking into marital discord and parent-child relationships used three types of variables including marital discord, parent child relationship quality and child interpersonal awareness as predictors of children's social behavioural profiles in a sample of 45 five-year-old. The study found evidence for indirect relationships between marital discord and both social withdrawal and aggression. It was found that marital discord predicted high levels of child aggression for child social withdrawal and the prediction from marital discord was mediated by both parent child relationship quality and child interpersonal awareness. This study also shows the importance of marital discord on child-parent relationships and vice versa and this idea supports the importance of this finding in this current study as it highlights the secondary experiences of marital discord between their parent's.

Moreover, Roizblatt, Leiva and Maida (2018) highlighted that individuals who experienced marital discord and difficulties had increased risk of developing behavioural disorders, poor school performance and substance abuse had been documented. They also found that in adult life these individuals experienced higher risk of psychiatric pathologies or difficulties in their own interpersonal relationships. One other study which drew on a national longitudinal study of 297 parents and their married offspring found that parents' marital discord was negatively related to offspring's marital harmony and positively related to their offspring's marital discord (Amato & Booth, 2001). Highlighting the findings in the literature around the experiences of parental marital discord and its possible consequences is important to draw on possible implications for individuals experiencing not only problem gambling from their fathers but this also leading to the experience of difficulties in their parent's relationships.

It is important to consider that perhaps individuals start gambling as a coping method to existing difficulties within their relationships and home and thus one should maintain caution not to form a causal effect of problem gambling to difficulties in parent relationships. This can be seen in the literature; Suomi and colleagues (2013) screened 120 help-seeking family members of problem gamblers in a range of clinical services and found that for many participants relationship difficulties predated the problem gambling. Similarly, research suggests that perceived stress

impacts gambling severity suggesting the importance of considering that pre-existing stress within the household potentially can pre-date the problem gambling. However, it is important to note that participants' in this study experienced the difficulties within their parent's relationships.

Financial Difficulties

This sub-theme reflects and depicts the experience of financial difficulties as a consequence of growing up with a problem gambling father. All of the participants expressed difficulties around finances due to their father spending family money and finances on gambling. Some participants, within this current study, spoke about not being able to do or get certain things due to financial difficulties and other's around them helping the family, while others spoke about their experiences of understanding difficulties within the home financially and not wanting to ask or want certain things their peers were comfortably getting.

There is mounting evidence from a number of studies which support the view that children who live in an environment where gambling is experienced and is problematic, may be exposed to implications and negative consequences from financial difficulties. The literature supports the idea that the children and individuals may become more socially isolated and deprived both emotionally and physically by their parents, being left with feelings of abandonment, anger, depression and leading to suicidal ideation (Darbyshire, Oster & Carrig, 2001; Jacobs, 1989; Jacobs et al, 1989; Abbot & Cramer, 1993; Herineman, 1994; Orford, 1994; Volberg, 1994). Yet, it is important to consider that perhaps problem gambling is experienced due to initial financial difficulties, and therefore a causal relationship cannot be derived from these experiences, rather, we can move towards an understanding of the lived experiences. Oksanen and colleagues (2018) conducted three studies and found that debt was linked to problem gambling and debt had a role in making severe financial problems worse. One can suggest that debt assumes financial difficulties, thus it is important to consider that the difficulties with finances and problems with debt can lead to people to gamble. Perhaps it can be argued that gambling does not solely assumes and lead to financial difficulties and while the participants' clearly

experience financial difficulties with the parental problem gambling, caution must be held in not forming a causal relationship.

Darbyshire, Oster and Carrig (2001) argue that it would be a mistake and an overlook to view such children living with parental problem gambling and expressing difficulties with finances as being 'spoiled' and 'simply hankering after the latest designer trainers or larger allowances'. Darbyshire and colleagues (2001) explained that such experiences of financial difficulties were not experienced by children with problem gambling parents as a situation where money was tight and therefore the whole family needing to economise to survive, but instead the children, were found to understand that gambling was consuming more and more of the family budget and the rest of the family members were paying for this consuming nature of the parental gambling. Darbyshire and colleagues (2001), through their study, highlighted that the lack of money and financial difficulties was not the problem but the difficulty in that experience was where the money was being spent. This notion is definitely mirrored by the experiences of the participants in this current study; participants reflected anger and confusion around not having money for their basic needs or for the family but being able to use money to gamble.

Adultification

This sub-theme of 'adultification' as a finding of this current study aims to express participants' experiences of 'stepping up' to parent roles and finding the need to take care of themselves and others around them, mainly siblings, both emotionally and physically while their father's gambled and mothers were pre-occupied by its affects. All of the participants, spoke about a sense of maturing through their lived experiences of their father's problem gambling and taking on enhanced adult roles and responsibilities but also giving advice and providing mature insights.

There are a number of studies in the body of literature suggesting the implications of child adultification and taking on responsibilities at an early age and its emotional consequences. Darbyshire, Oster and Carrig (2001) who conducted a study on children and adolescents whose parent or caregiver gambled suggested that children are often expected by adults to be unaware, innocent or untenable however

they concluded through their study of children of problem gamblers found that these children were 'shouldering' responsibilities and concerns which should be expected to and rightfully belong to adults and parents and this supports the findings of this current study. Darbyshire and colleagues (2001) note that it is absolutely reasonable to expect an older child or adolescent to help with the care and needs of a younger brother or sister, however they highlight the difference of this to the children or adolescents feeling that they have responsibility for them. This finding and consequential suggestion directly mirrors the findings of this current study and this current study and highlights the difficulty children of problem gamblers face on 'shouldering' responsibilities and concerns which is expected of their parents. The individuals involved in this current study, expressed their experiences of needing to care for their siblings in order to make up for the difficulties in their parents' relationship and family home.

Burton (2007) conducted research based on exploring lives of low-income families. Burton (2007) suggested that 'childhood adultification involved contextual, social and developmental processes in which youth are prematurely, and often inappropriately' exposed to adult knowledge and assume extensive adult roles and responsibilities within their family networks'. Through studying 5 longitudinal ethnographies of children and adolescents, Burton (2007) derived four different component and stages of adult childhood adultification. These include precocious knowledge where children witness and acquire an awareness of adult topics or behaviours, mentored adultification where children adopt adult roles often without sufficient supervision from an adult, peerification which refers to a child taking on a role of parent's peer and parentification where child adopts to the role of a parent to his siblings or even parent.

This current study and its findings provide evidence for all of the stages of adultification conceptualised by Burton (2007). While all the participants spoke about not understanding the adult concept of gambling at a very young age, they all gained some understanding as they grew older, therefore acquired awareness of adult behaviours. Many of the participants in this current study also expressed their experiences of feeling alone and the absence of their parents, in particular fathers, and this provides evidence for the mentored adultification stage. In terms of

'peerification' a number of the participant's spoke about their experiences of providing advice to their mothers and fathers in light of their father's problem gambling and therefore acting up to the peer role to their parents and all participants expressed their experiences of adopting and stepping into adult or parent roles for their siblings.

4.3.3 The Absent Experience

The third master theme elicited from this current study draws attention to the participants' experience of 'the absent experience'. This master theme includes three sub-themes of 'loss of trust', 'the absent father' and 'own needs not met'. The master theme of 'the absent experience' explores the experiences the participants felt of a void physically, mentally and emotionally following their father's problem gambling. The participants explored their experiences of absence through their fathers physically not being present, emotionally not being available, the absence and loss of trust and certainty as well as a void in their own needs needing to be met.

A study which supports the findings of this current study was conducted by Darbyshire, Oster and Carrig (2001) who used 15 children and adolescents between the ages of 7 and 18 years old. Each participant was interviewed individually and the aim of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of Australian children who lived in families where a parent or caregiver had a serious gambling problem. The researchers within this study wanted to explore the perspective and understandings of children and young people themselves. Darbyshire and colleagues (2011) found a central finding of pervasive loss, a sense of loss encompassed both physical and existential aspects of the child's life. The current study's finding of 'the absent experience' mimics this finding of 'pervasive loss' in which the participants experiences a sense of loss or void both physically and existentially. It is important to note that while some experienced a loss which implies something being present and then taken away, many of the participants explored a sense of absence, something they never had so could not lose.

The study conducted by Darbyshire and colleagues (2011) found that children perceived that they lost parents, through their experience of loss. They perceived that they lost parents, through both separation and divorce but also existentially.

They highlighted that as the gambling parent's centre of gravity and attention shifted more towards gambling, their children lost the crucial aspects of the relationship that as a child they should have enjoyed with a parent which included the sense of being loved and valued, as well as the feeling of being cared for and cared about and the security of knowing that they were their parent's priority. These specific findings mirror those of this current study; the experience of lost trust and certainty, a sense of their father's not being present both physically and emotionally and perceiving that their parents did not prioritise their needs or that their needs were not met.

Loss of Trust

The sub-theme of 'loss of trust' relates to the findings of this study where the participants' experienced their trust for their fathers diminish due to their problem gambling. At times participants spoke about never trusting their fathers and other times the built trust was lost. Through the experience of loss of trust, participants also lived a lack of certainty and security where they did not trust their fathers and at times mothers to provide certainty and continuity.

Darbyshire, Oster and Carrig (2001) in their review of 'children of parents who have gambling problem' highlight the extent of the problems that children who have parents that problem gamble may face. In their review they describe a child who lives with almost continuous disappointment as their parent fails to keep various promises (Darbyshire, Oster & Carrig, 2001). They describe that such child may aim to rescue the situation by becoming over responsible to fix the difficulties in the family or become the scapegoat or the peacemaker within the family or household. Moreover, emotionally, they can experience isolation, depression, anxiety and anger which they may find difficulty in expressing nor is their family able to attend to. Darbyshire and colleague's review support the findings of loss of trust from this current study and suggests the difficult experiences lived by offspring of problem gamblers and their experience of disappointment continuously by promises or expectations not being met, consequently experiencing a lack of certainty and continuity.

Magoon and Ingersoll (2006) studied 116 male and female students from a mid-western American urban high school, with a mean age of 16.8, and they were surveyed to determine the prevalence and relationship among gambling behaviour and parental and peer influenced. The findings of the study found that decreased parental trust and communication resulted in increased problem gambling for the students. This suggests for the current findings that, while parental problem gambling leads to experience of loss of trust in their offspring, this loss of trust can have a relationship with an increased chance of these individuals gambling themselves, which offers negative implications of these individuals.

The Absent Father

This sub-theme encapsulated the participants' experiences of not having their father's present or around both physically within their home and family but also emotionally where they felt that their fathers were unavailable for their emotional and psychological needs. This current study found that the experience of not having their father's around was due to their fathers either being out gambling or physically being next to them but mentally feeling distant, whether that was because they were gambling in those moments, or the tension that their presence brought about, thus not being able to form or maintain emotional bonds

The theory of attachment is important to highlight at this point. Attachment theory was instigated by Bowlby (1958d; 1960d; 1961c) who highlighted the importance of forming emotional bonds to individuals as a basic part of human nature, which forms from a neonatal stage and continues through life (Bowlby, 1988). Bowlby (1973) suggested that attachment with caregivers are mainly formed throughout infant years and through to adolescents and this shows the importance of the part that parents, both mothers and fathers, have in forming emotional bonds and connections while their children are growing up.

The formed attachment relationships serve as contexts and schemas within which children begin to develop their emotional capacities and this is seen through the attachment styles which Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters and Wall (1978) suggested. They emphasised that secure attachment styles allow children to believe that their

attachment figures will be able to meet their needs and will be a 'safe base' to their distress (Main & Cassidy, 1988), an insecure avoidant attachment will show a child being both physically and emotionally independent and will not seek their attachment figure at moments of distress (Behrens, Hesse & Main, 2007) and insecure ambivalent attachment style shows children who do not feel secure with their caregivers, whom will display dependency but also an inability to be comforted when distressed.

There are a number of studies in the literature on the importance of attachment that support the findings of this current study. A meta-analysis review assessed the strength of associations of parent-child attachment patterns with the experience and regulation of emotion in children under the age of 18 years old (Cooke et al., 2018). The findings of the study found that children who were more securely attached had experienced more global positive effects and less global negative affect. It further found that children who experiences less global positive affect were less likely to regulate emotions and were more often using cognitive and social support coping strategies (Cooke et al., 2018). The study further highlighted that those children who were more ambivalently attached to their caregivers experienced more global and more elicited negative affect and were less able to regulate their emotions (Cooke et al., 2018). The study also suggested that those children who were more disorganised within their attachment styles experienced less global positive affect and more global negative affect. These findings importantly provide evidence that attachment styles to parents have implications for children's emotional development through their lives (Cooke et al., 2018).

The absence felt by the participants in this current study, both physically and emotionally, is important when we consider attachment styles. The literature around attachment theory clearly point to the importance of availability of caregivers in forming secure or insecure attachment styles and the future implications this can have on children through their adult lives too. The experiences felt by the participants in this current study of having an absent father, when highlighted with attachment theory, sheds light at the possible difficulties that could be faced in building these important emotional bonds. Yet, as discussed previously, it is important to acknowledge that attachment difficulties can be repaired through healthy

relationships with other individuals. It is important to consider, while the father may have been absent, the relationship with the mother or care giver can be important in forming healthy attachment styles.

Moreover, a sense of 'abandonment' was captured through this finding of this current study. Participants reflected experiences of being let down or physically being left outside or in cars while their fathers went to gamble in bookmakers. This concern of abandonment has often been enunciated in gambling 'urban legend' stories about parents who were so consumed by their urges to gamble that they would leave their children in cars outside of casinos or hotel gambling rooms. Similar to many urban legends, these stories catch the imagination of the public by narrative very complex issues into easily understood moral narrative, in these cases of neglect and those going against values of parenthood (Brunwand, 1987; Brunvand, 1983; Brunvand 1989).

Own Needs Not Met

The finding of 'own needs not met' encapsulates participants experiences of feeling that their own needs were not met or their needs were put aside and viewed as secondary. The experience of their needs not being met included, for the participants, the feeling that the gambling came first for their fathers due to the time, attention and efforts placed on gambling by their fathers. Within this, the participants also experienced needing to put their own needs or desires to a side to accommodate for the difficulties or tensions experienced in the family and home in general. The participants experienced that their emotional, materialistic and physical needs were not met.

While we cannot label this as 'neglect' it is important to consider Dubowitz and colleagues (1993) who suggested a conceptual definition of neglect basing it on an ecological model of child maltreatment. Their definition of 'neglect' focused on the concept of the basic needs of children as not being met, rather than on the intentions of behaviour of parents. This conceptual definition shifted the view from parental culpability by a shared responsibility including parents, families, the community and society and therefore placed the needs of children at the centre of their model.

Dubowitz and colleagues (1993) highlighted that neglect is seen as a 'heterogeneous phenomenon' that can vary by its type, severity and chronicity, therefore viewed children on a spectrum of spectrum, rather than the labelling terms of neglected or not. It was suggested that neglect should be understood as existing on a continuum ranging from optimal care of children to inadequate care and the context within which neglect occurs, including parents' understanding of their children's needs and cultural beliefs as well as external influences should be considered.

It may sound punitive to label these experiences of the participants in this study as being 'neglected', I believe it is important to consider Dubowitz and colleagues (1993) continuum view of neglect from optimal to inadequate care. The participants experienced and viewed that their needs were not met and it can be argued that this places such children on the above discussed continuum. As it is suggested by Dubowitz and colleagues (1993), parents views and understandings of their children's needs should be considered and it is clear from the accounts of the participants, in this study, that the fathers were mostly unaware of the indirect effects on their children and within their difficulties of dealing with a problem gambling partner, mothers at times overlooked their offspring's needs.

4.4 Clinical implications and counselling psychology

4.4.1 Clinical work

Experience embedded in time and age

The findings of this theme highlighted the retrospective nature of the experience of the participants involved in this current study. It emphasises the change of the process involved in making sense of the experience and understanding their father's problem gambling through time and age but also their experiences of their father's problem gambling which differs with time and age.

This current study suggests that it is important for clinicians, individuals and parents to understand that experiences of having a father with problem gambling may be

embedded in time and age. Thus, the emotional understandings and making sense of the experience can change and evolve with time and age, where individuals make sense and experience their father's problem as they get older and as time goes by. It is important therefore, to understand the effects of age and time on how they perceive and react to their father; as found in this study individuals experienced not understanding the problem gambling when younger towards more understanding and acceptance of the experience as they get older.

Moreover, the study shows that it is important for parents to implement and educate themselves on the importance of changing age and time. While at times parents may feel like children do not need to know what is happening in the family or to their fathers, the findings suggest difficulties in not being told but having to understand using their own means when they were younger, and the implication of this when they grew older. It is important for parents to acknowledge their children's experience and speak to them about it in a way that has boundaries and, in an age-appropriate manner in order to find a fine balance so that they can gain an understanding but not feel overwhelmed or lead to anxiety.

The findings of this study further suggest the importance of the role of attachment styles and the implications of these for future relationships. While the experience of problem gambling is one of varying difficulties for the individual gambling, partner and extended family members, extra caution should be taken in building meaningful and appropriate bonds and connections with children of problem gamblers. It is important to note research suggests that ruptured relationships can be repaired and therefore, parents and family members should aim to repair difficulties in relationships and bonds and advocate for healthy relationships even in adulthood. This is particularly relevant from an attachment perspective, and perhaps clinicians working from an attachment approach in advocating and creating trusting and meaningful relationships in order for individuals to experience repaired internal working models.

Familial discord

This theme reflects the discord and disharmony felt and experienced within the families of the participants of this current study. The experience of familial discord encapsulated difficulties in parent relationships, financial difficulties and adultification.

The findings of the study suggest that it is important to acknowledge that the consequences of their father's problem gambling does not only have negative and difficult consequences on the father and partner, but it is important to recognise that the effects go beyond and onto the children too. Undeniably, problem gambling of the father can place strain and difficulties on the marriage or relationships and it is important for parents and clinicians to recognise that these difficulties have impacts on the children. It is therefore important for children to have a safe place where they can express and understand their own emotions. Perhaps specifically, when counselling psychologists are working within a systemic approach this space is protected and acknowledged in the process of hypothesising. The offspring's role within the family and their views of the difficulties should be considered and aimed to be understood while formulating for the difficulties experienced. While a father problem gambling and the possible difficulties in the parental relationships can cause distress for the individual parents, it is important that parents are not consumed by their own distress nor should they view the consequences as directly on them and important the recognise the impact on their children.

Further, the findings suggest that it is important to recognise that it is not appropriate for children to take on roles and responsibilities of adults or have increased responsibilities when they are not ready. It is crucial that parents maintain appropriate boundaries with their children and not to rely on them to step in for the roles and responsibilities they cannot maintain. This being said, it is important for clinicians and clients to be aware of the role of 'adultification' and understand how taking on such roles and responsibilities in their early life could be related to how they manage and handle distress and relationships in their later life. It will be important for this to be considered in relation to building a formulation for future possible difficulties.

It is also important to acknowledge that while financial difficulties can be a part of the gambling experience and at times a difficulty individuals endure, parents should not implement these difficulties on to their children solely where the children end up feeling like they are burdens and cannot ask for common needs. Parents should aim to be reasonable with what can be offered to children and what cannot.

The absent experience

This master-theme suggested that the participants experienced a sense of absence through their father's problem gambling. The absence was experienced through a loss of trust, the father being absent both physically and emotionally and the sense that their own needs were not met.

The findings suggest that it is important for offspring to be recognised as individuals of their own entity with their own needs. Often through parents' own experiences of the problem gambling, the needs of the offspring can be overlooked, especially their emotional needs, and this should be recognised and understood by clinicians, clients and parents. Clinicians working with problem gamblers, or the problem gambling father or their families should recognise the impact it can have on the offspring and assess how much they are present or emotionally available, to be able to advise and educate appropriately.

Moreover, it is important to recognise that problem gambling can be all consuming not only for the problem gambling father but other members around him like partners or extended family members who are aiming to help. Within this, it is important that the children are not missed and any void or absence experienced by the offspring should be aimed to be filled in appropriately. Parents should aim to reassure children of their love and spend time with their children and build bonds and relationships if they feel broken or absent.

Additionally, it is imperative to give offspring the time and space they deserve and need to understand their needs and difficulties. Within this, parents should aim for their children to feel understood and heard. It is important for offspring to feel safe

and free to express their concerns and needs without feeling like a burden or that they do not matter.

4.4.2 Training

This current research study and its findings may have implications for the training of counselling psychologists and broader psychology trainings. This study highlights the importance of understanding individual's subjective experiences and accounts in understanding their emotional difficulties and lived experiences. Understanding the individual and subjective experiences of individuals supports the philosophical roots and underpinnings of the counselling psychology discipline. Counselling psychology holds a humanistic and holistic view of individuals, viewing the individual in the context of the experience whilst also working with symptomatic presentations, biology and diagnostic views of mental health, while placing the importance on formulation to form a better understanding of individuals and their difficulties. A formulation helps form a picture of the wider factors, in order to understand and plan effective interventions and care plans beyond.

This current research can be important for training counselling psychologists working with both children and adolescents and adult services. It provides and presents clear descriptions and interpretations of experiences of potential service users with similar experiences and therefore allows the discipline to an understanding of the lived experiences of such individuals and further onto building conceptual understandings to enhance evidence base practice. The findings of this study are particularly important for training within children and adolescent services and within systemic or family therapy approaches. Understanding the implications and experiences of children growing up with problem gamblers father's allows clinicians to formulation and understand their clients while working with children and adolescents. Moreover, systemic therapy is interesting in the systems of interaction between family members, and the findings of this study sheds light on the experiences of this client group, which gives clinicians a deeper understanding of the systems and lived worlds of these individuals.

4.4.3 Policy

It is presented by many, both within the psychology discipline and beyond, that research and attention on the effects of parental problem gambling on their children is limited. While many studies have been seen to investigate the effects of problem gambling on the children through indirect means, the offspring of these parents are often 'lost' and their views ignored. While the argument in changing gambling policy to more responsible gambling and monitoring gambling effectively can be made through the direct experiences and consequences on problem gamblers, this current study emphasises the importance as viewing the problem and need for more specific policy beyond the gambling individual, and more onto their wider context, including their offspring. It is clear from this current study that while the participants showed immense levels of resilience and coping, they very clearly lived very difficult experiences in their early childhood and beyond and the implications of these cannot be denied.

4.5 Limitations and suggestions for future research

While I aimed to conduct this study with ultimate care, it is important to note possible limitations of this research project and how this research can be improved and extended onto future research within the field and beyond.

First of all, it is important to note that while an IPA study emphasises the importance of depth of data within its idiosyncratic nature this study was conducted with a small sample size and perhaps the experiences of growing up with problem gambling fathers could be explored for more individuals and within a larger sample size. This can be conducted perhaps using other methodologies. While I did not aim to be able to generalise the findings of my research and was interested on the lived experiences of my individual participants, future research can use more participants and explore the phenomena within the wider population. However, despite the small sample size, it is important to note that the openness and honesty of the participants within this study provided a rich amount of quality data. It was important for me throughout this process to capture the lived experiences of the participants involved

and I did not aim to sacrifice the in-depth quality of the data with a larger sample size.

The participants involved within this study were all between the ages of 19 and 29 and perhaps it could be argued that they were all of similar age range and perhaps their experiences could differ from those of older individuals. While this study was interested in the retrospective understanding of the experiences of growing up with a problem gambling father, a future study can be conducted looking at participants of different ages, perhaps older. This could explore the experiences of older individuals and their making sense of growing up with a problem gambling father, beyond the ages of the participants in this study.

It is also very important to acknowledge that there may have been different and varying understandings and definitions of problem gambling. In this research study, participants were invited to volunteer to take part on their own subjective perceptions and beliefs of what it meant to have a problem gambling father and it is important to note that different participants may have held different meanings and perceptions of this.

A further idea for future research could perhaps be the idea of expanding on the master theme of 'familial discord'. This current study did not differentiate or focus upon whether or not participants' parents became divorced as a result of the familial discord and difficulties in their relationships through the experience of their father's problem gambling. In the current study five out of six of the parents of the participants ended up having a divorce but the extent of the divorce as a result of the problem gambling was not explored or looked at in depth. Future studies and research could perhaps explore the experiences of parental separation and its role within the lived experience of their father's problem gambling.

4.5.1 Trustworthiness of the research

In the Methodology chapter I outlined how trustworthiness was attempted to be fulfilled through this research by drawing on the criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed that credibility, dependability,

confirmability and transferability provide a criteria to assess the trustworthiness of a qualitative research. As discussed, trustworthiness was attempted to be achieved through the use of a reflexive journal, enhanced engagement with the participants and experience, conducting a pilot interview, not asking leading questions, being grounded to the data, transcribing interviews accurately, presenting the participants in depth and the use of purposive sampling.

While the steps outlined in the methodology chapter provide clear and sufficient steps to maintain and achieve trustworthiness of this research, it is important to outline how these could have been enhanced, perhaps in future research. Casey and Murphy (2009) explain that triangulation can enhance credibility through the process of using multiple sources to draw conclusions. Multiple methods could be used for data collection in an attempt to gain a comprehensive view of the phenomenon. Moreover, credibility of the research could have been enhanced through member checking which includes communicating a summary of the themes to the participants to validate the conclusions reached.

Steps were taken throughout the research to keep a track record of the data collection process and careful steps were taken to securely store the data derived in this study, and therefore dependability was highly achieved. However, methodological triangulation could have been used to further meet the criteria of confirmability in order to demonstrate that the data represent the participants' responses and not the researcher's biases. Analytical triangulation could have been also used to enhance credibility of the research. This would have included a debriefer helping to uncover biases, perspective and assumption of the researcher of the emerging themes. This would have helped identify if the I, as the researcher, was able to bracket my views, experiences and assumptions, as best as I could, though it is important to note that this process cannot be perfect.

4.6 Final Personal Reflections

As the discussion and final chapter of this research study comes to an end, I wanted to end with my own personal reflections. As I mentioned earlier in the chapters, the decision to explore these experiences came from a personal perspective of my

experiences of my father gambling though I did not view as problematic, it was definitely an experience I could see as becoming problematic if it had persisted. Also, my personal experiences of coming from a Turkish cultural community was important to consider. Problem gambling, in my view and observations of my community in London, is a large problem, one that is known but not acknowledged as much as it perhaps it could be. My personal interactions of children of problem gamblers and their wider family members but also hearing about these experiences was important for me in conducting this current study.

While at times in the process of planning this study and conducting it, some things felt difficult and perhaps 'too close to home', as I end I am certain this experience of conducting this piece of research was a very important and valuable experience for me and one that I will support with pride throughout my life. Conducting this piece of research was important to validate the start of some of my own personal experiences as well as the numerous experiences I had had witnessed or heard about around me and in my community. Coming from a cultural community where mental health and difficulties can still be seen as a taboo and are not very much spoken about, understanding and presenting the difficulties and experiences of children of parents with problem gambling was validating for me and their experiences that I had understood.

Moving through and deeply engaging with the transcripts of this study has been a deeply moving experience for me. My desire to give the transcripts and the participants accounts the attention and time they deserved was very important. At times, I was moved by the courage of the participants and their ability to offer very personal and in-depth accounts of their experiences and was able to connect with them emotionally, but it was important for me to remind myself of my 'professional and researcher' identity to allow that my own emotional connectedness and feelings were bracketed and parked and participant accounts always remained in the forefront of the research and findings.

As I worked through the transcripts through the analysis process and writing up the findings chapter of this study the difficulties and pain of the participants was re-enlightened for me, but also, I was able to pick up on messages and experiences of

resilience which proved to be very empowering for the participants, myself and I hope beyond, for the readers of this research. This empowerment was important for me, when writing the discussion chapter, as I felt like it was my final chance to make my argument and present the stories of these individuals and the importance of their experiences. The courage of these participants is something I reminded myself of continuously during the write up, especially in this final chapter in order to shed light on their experiences in the most appropriate manner and build a case for the importance of these experiences for other individual's, clinically for service users, for trainees and for policy makers.

My aim for this research was to shine some light to understand the experiences of children who grew up with a problem gambling fathers and hearing the participants experiences and reflections about taking part in the research, including for most was the first chance they had to speak about their experiences, highlights for me how imperative it is to continue this conversation and I hope that research will continue in the field, especially within the UK literature.

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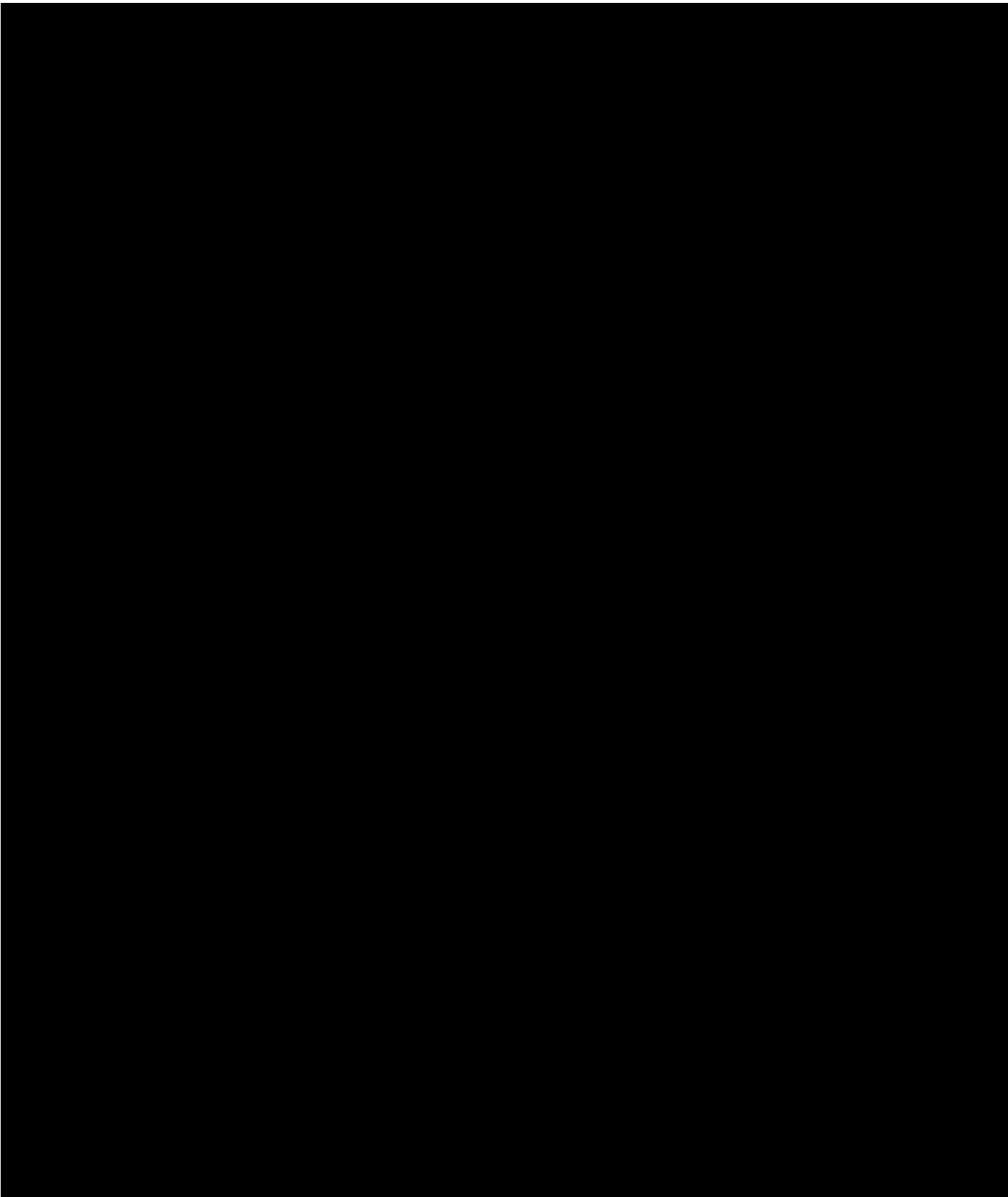
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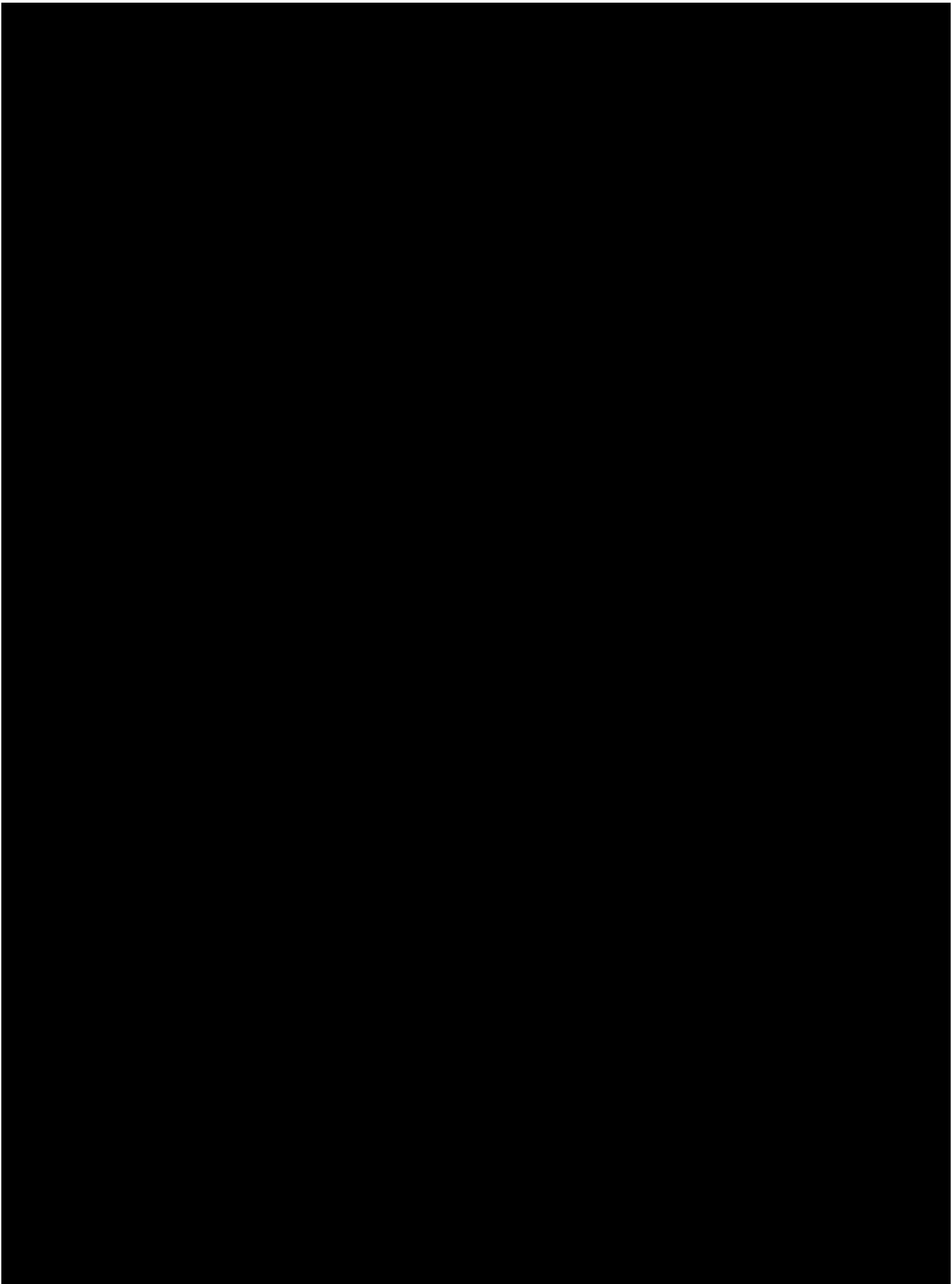
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- You will be asked to complete an anonymous demographics form and take part in an individual semi-structured interview
- You will be part of a qualitative research aiming to understand your personal experiences of relationships as an adult having had, in your childhood, a father with problem gambling
- The research will take part in the UK, on the City, University of London campus

Expenses and Payments

To thank you for your time and participation in this study we will reimburse your travel expenses and you will receive this at the end of your interview with your researcher.

What do I have to do?

As a participant of this study you will only be asked to partake in a semi-structured interview with the researcher. The interview will be open-ended where you can comfortably and confidentially talk about your experience about being a child to a problem gambler and what this meant for you. It will be an open space, with no right or wrong answers, as the researcher will only be interested in your experience of growing up with a father with problem gambling

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

Due to the nature of the study, there is a low possibility that some participants may experience a degree of distress. However, you, as a participant, will be protected from the potential of such risks by receiving a clear debrief and being signposted to services that could offer further support., post-interview.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Your participation in this research will contribute to the existing and growing knowledge of the experiences of children who have problem gambling fathers. This knowledge will be helpful in educating healthcare professionals as well as future service-users in this area, where correct care and interventions can be implemented. Such knowledge will also be useful in implementing further research within the field, in the future.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

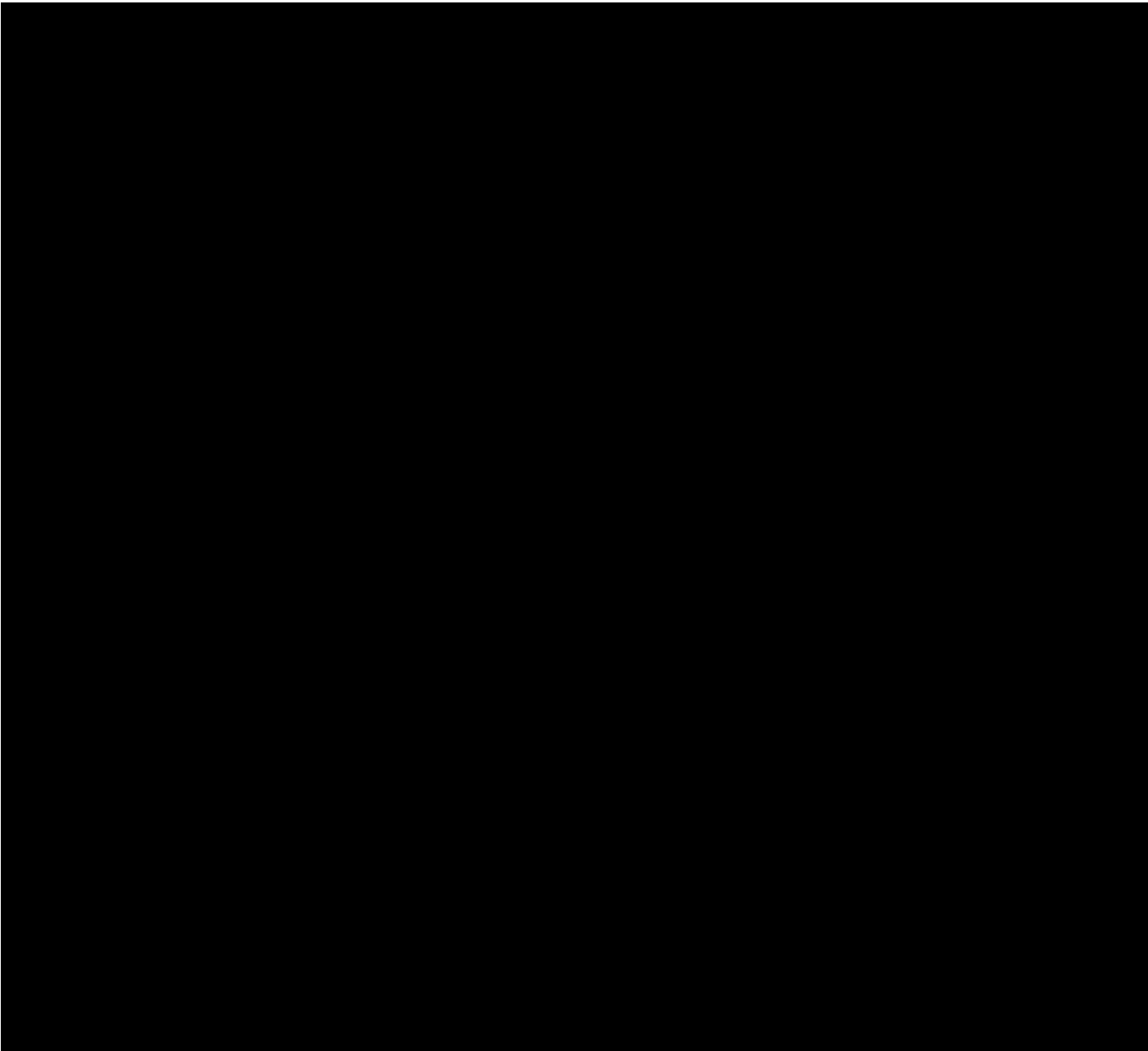
- The interview audio-recordings and transcripts will only be accessible by the researcher and supervisor
- Personally identifiable information will not be kept and any quotes which may be used in the final project will be referred to under a pseudonym
- All audio-recordings and transcripts will be kept in safe locations
- Confidentiality will be insured throughout except on the disclosure of abuse, violence, self-inflicted harm or harm to others
- If the study is abandoned before completion, all data will be destroyed and you will be informed

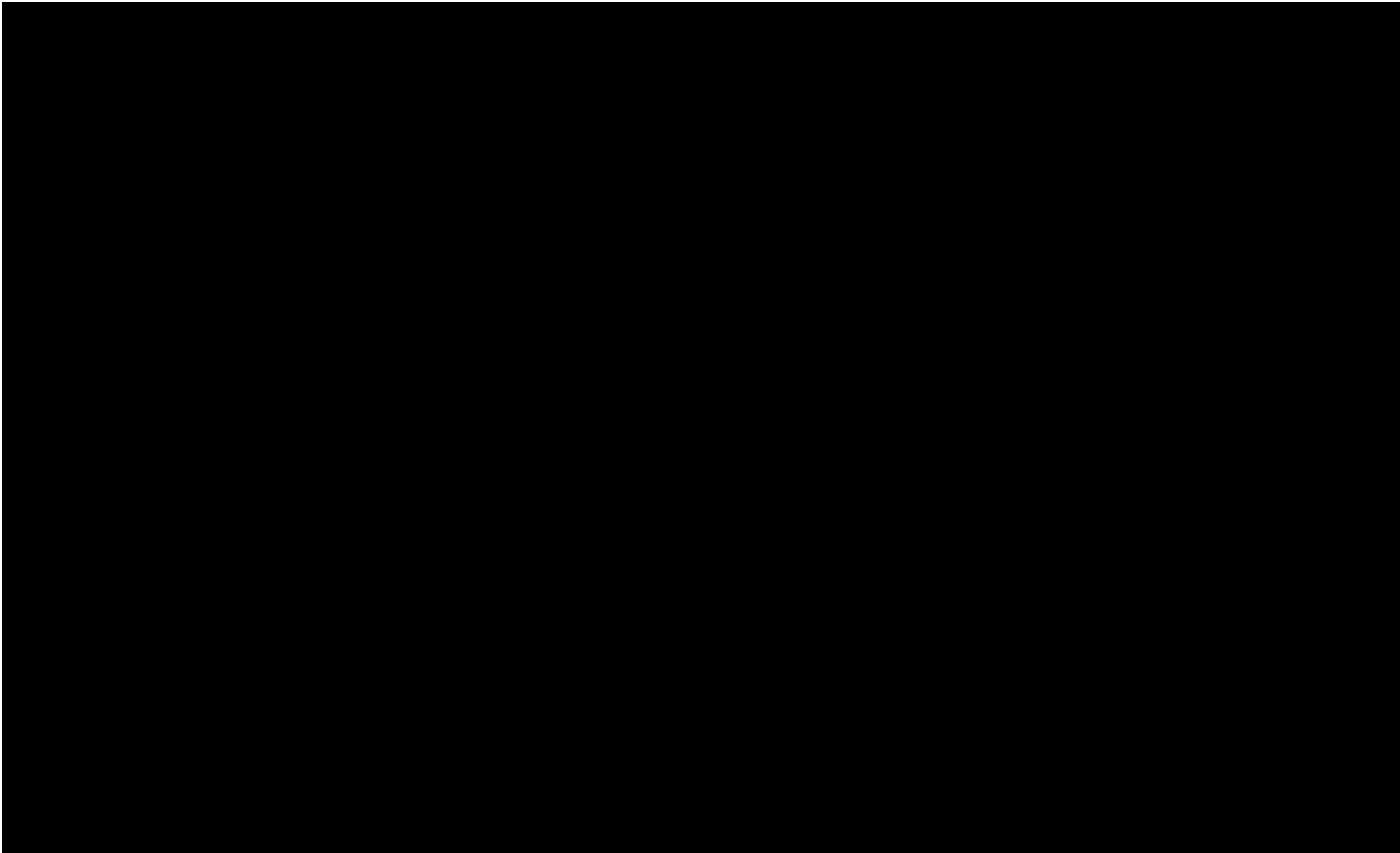
What will happen to the results of the research study?

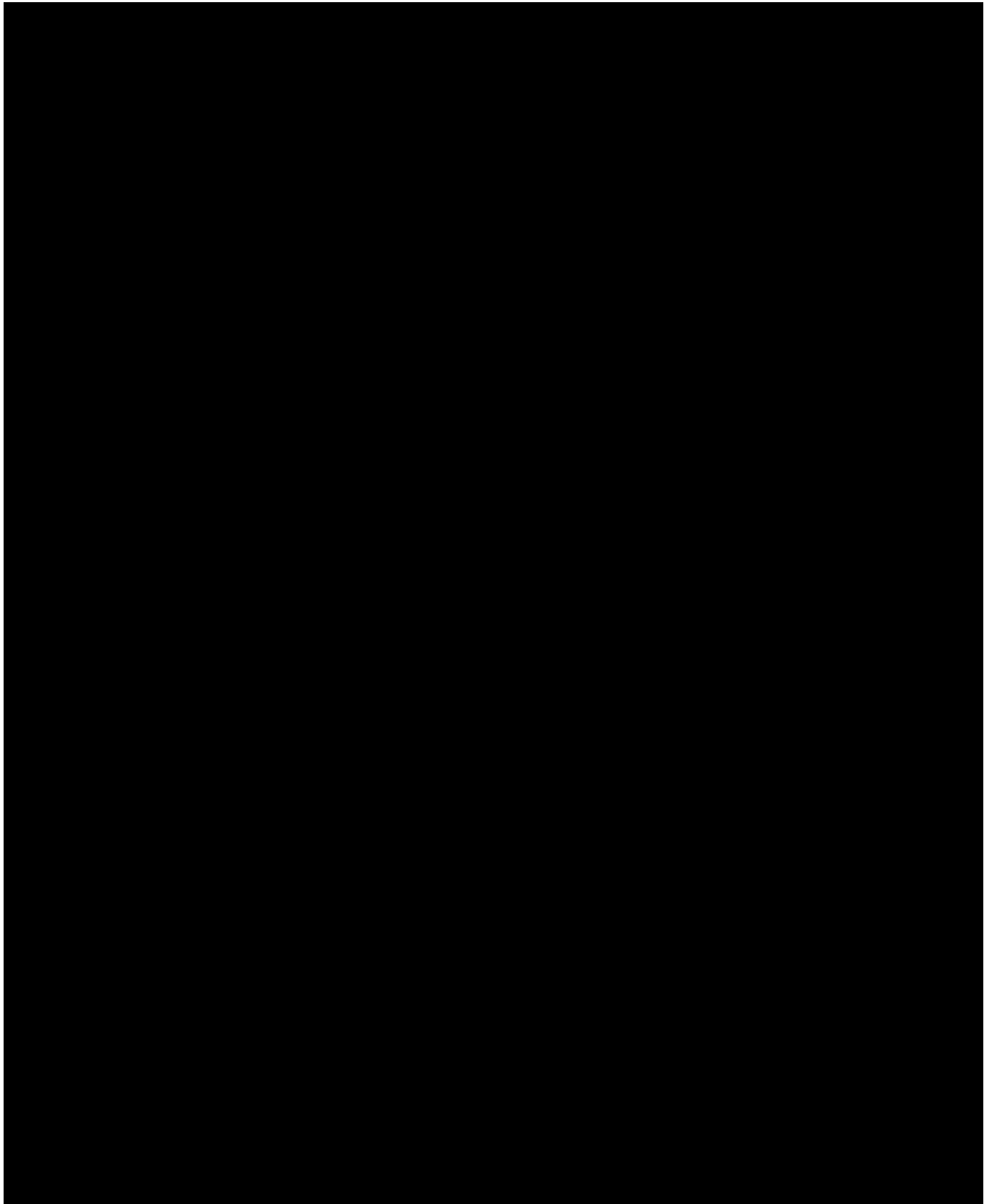
It is anticipated that once this study is complete, it will be published as a professional Doctoral thesis and possibly in future journals as an article, however anonymity will be maintained throughout any publications arising from this current study. You are entitled to receive a copy of the publication or summary of results, and this can be directly requested from the researcher.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

As a participant of this study, you are free to withdraw from the research without explanation or penalty up until the data analysis has started, and any data withdrawal request after this period will not be permitted.

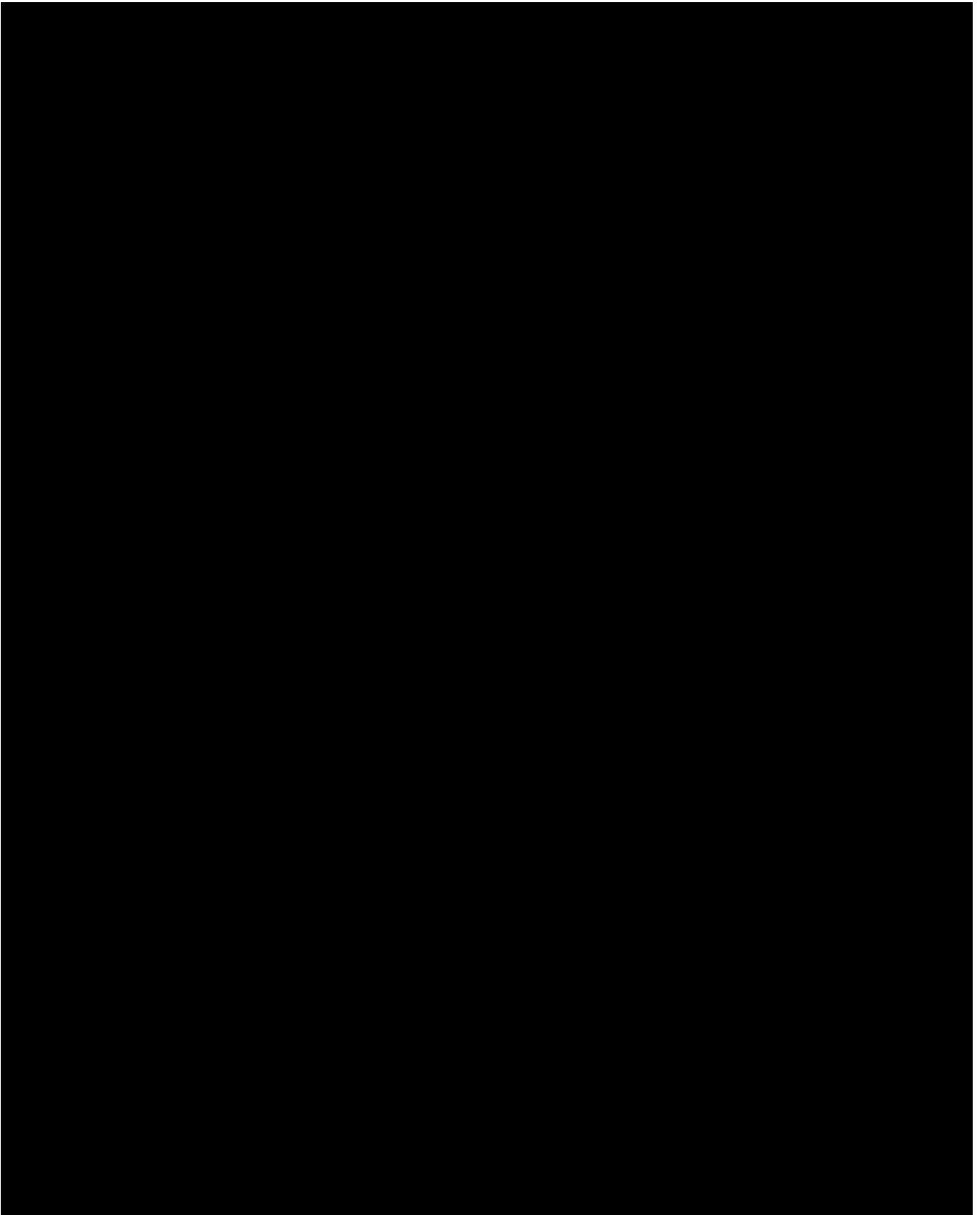






Appendix F

An example of annotated transcript

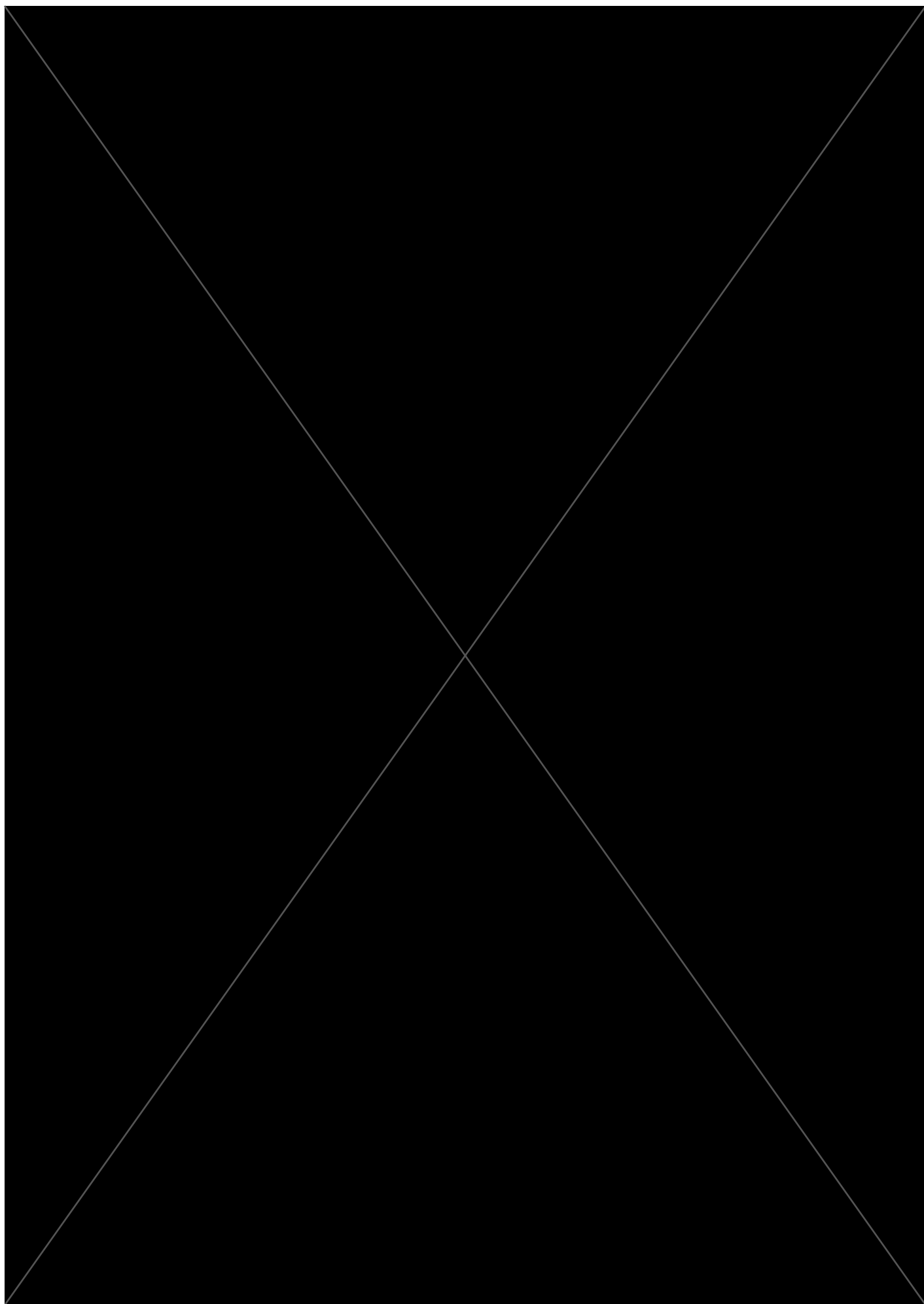


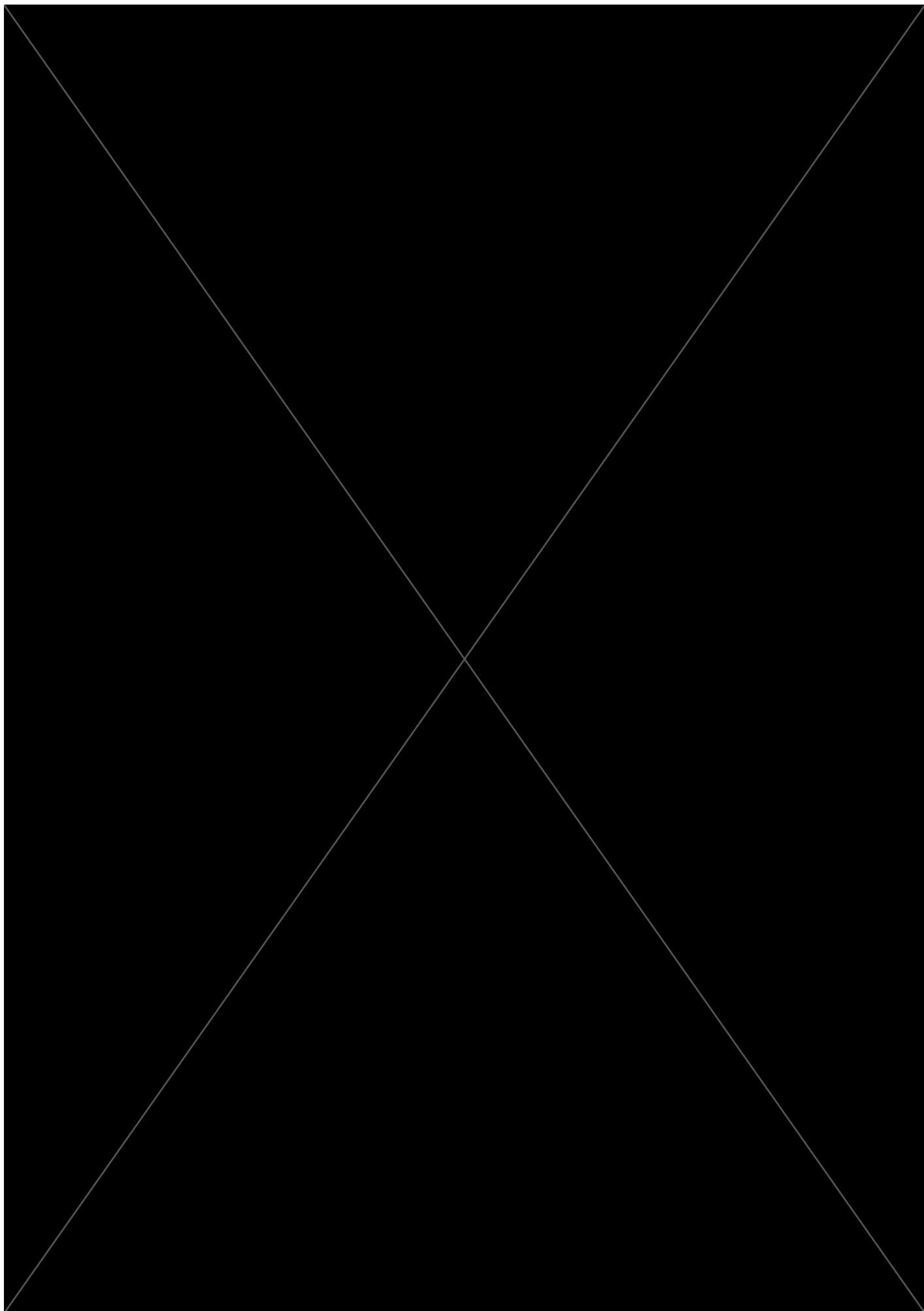
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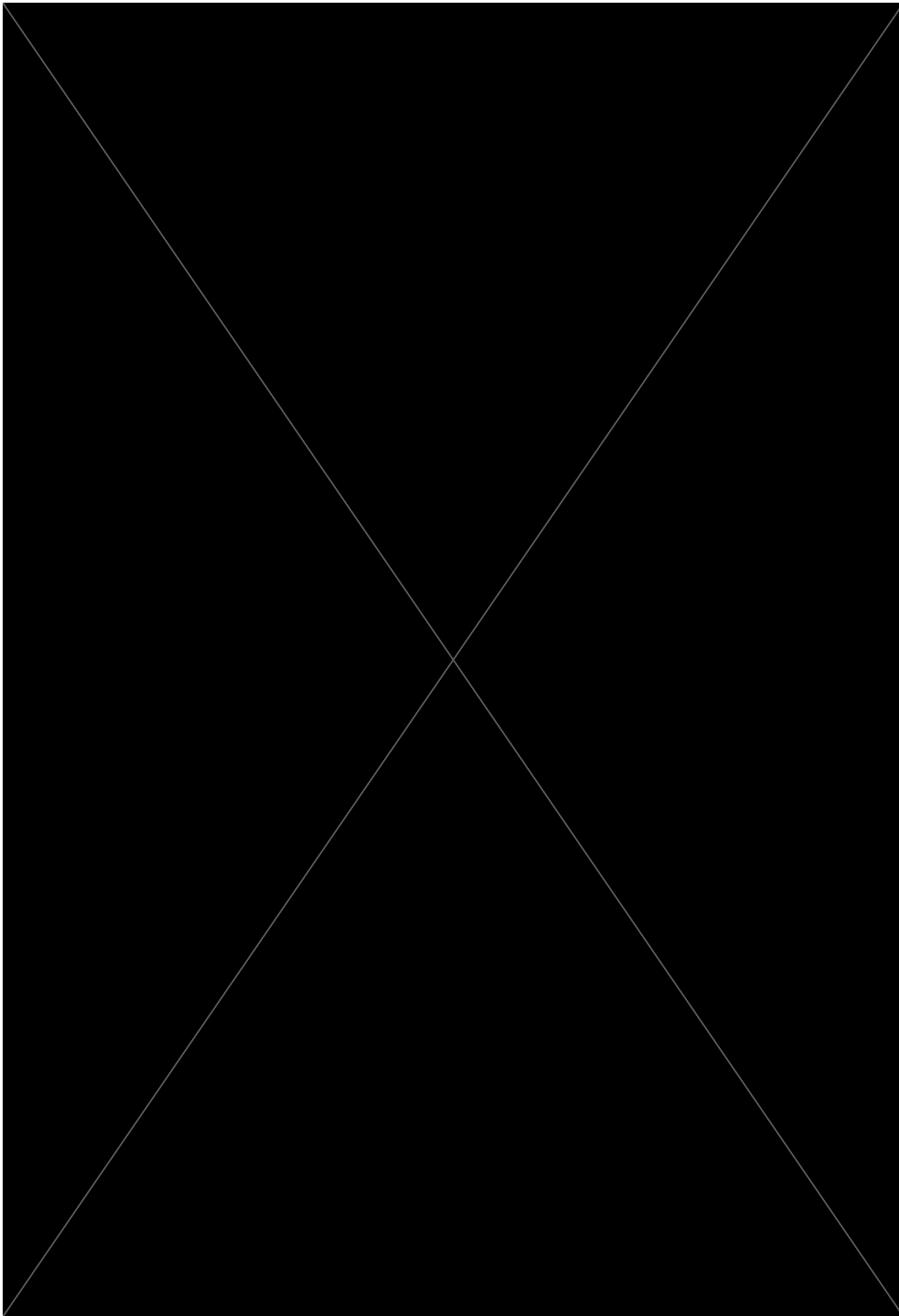
Section C: Publishable Manuscript

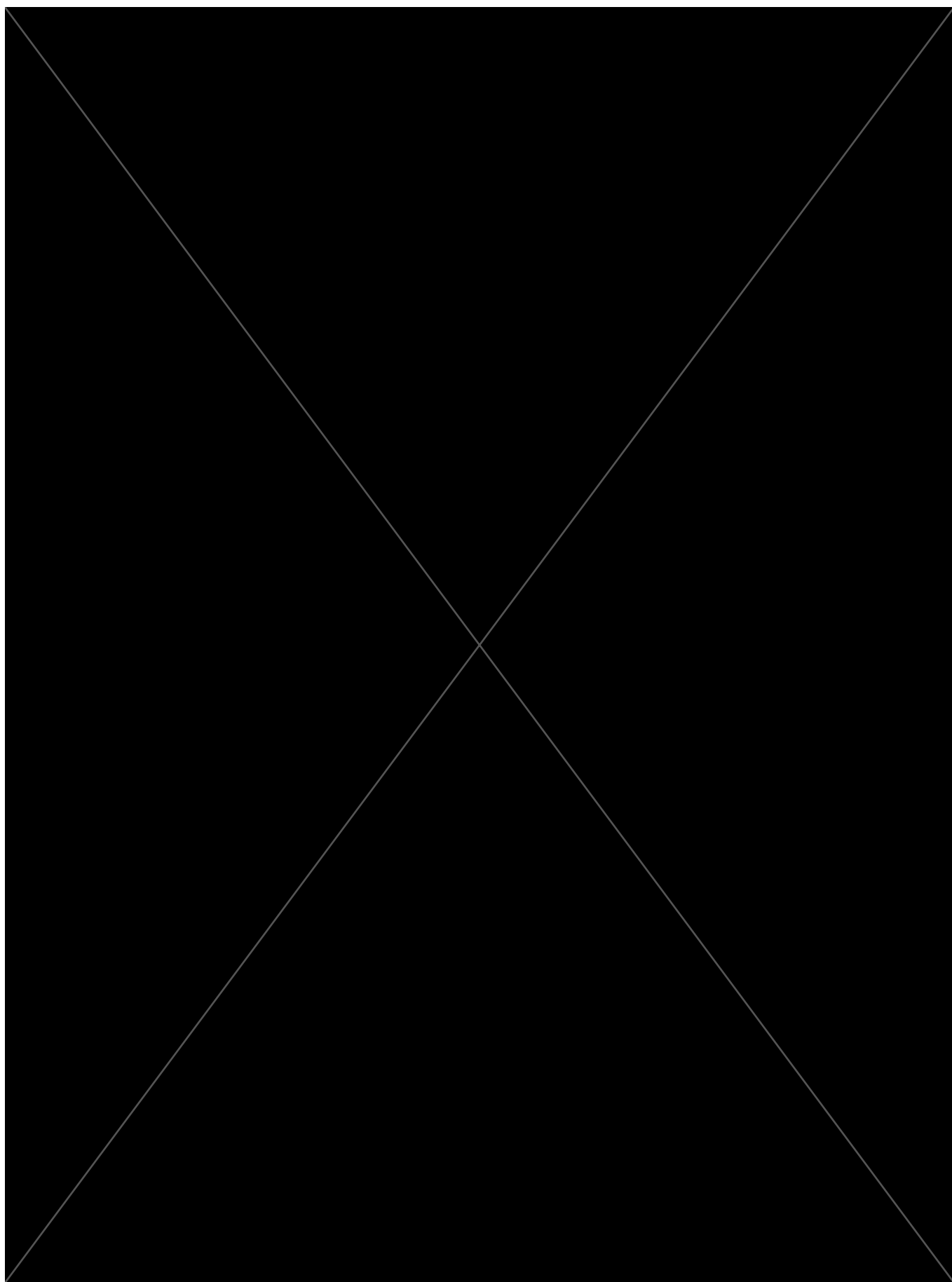
Journal Article

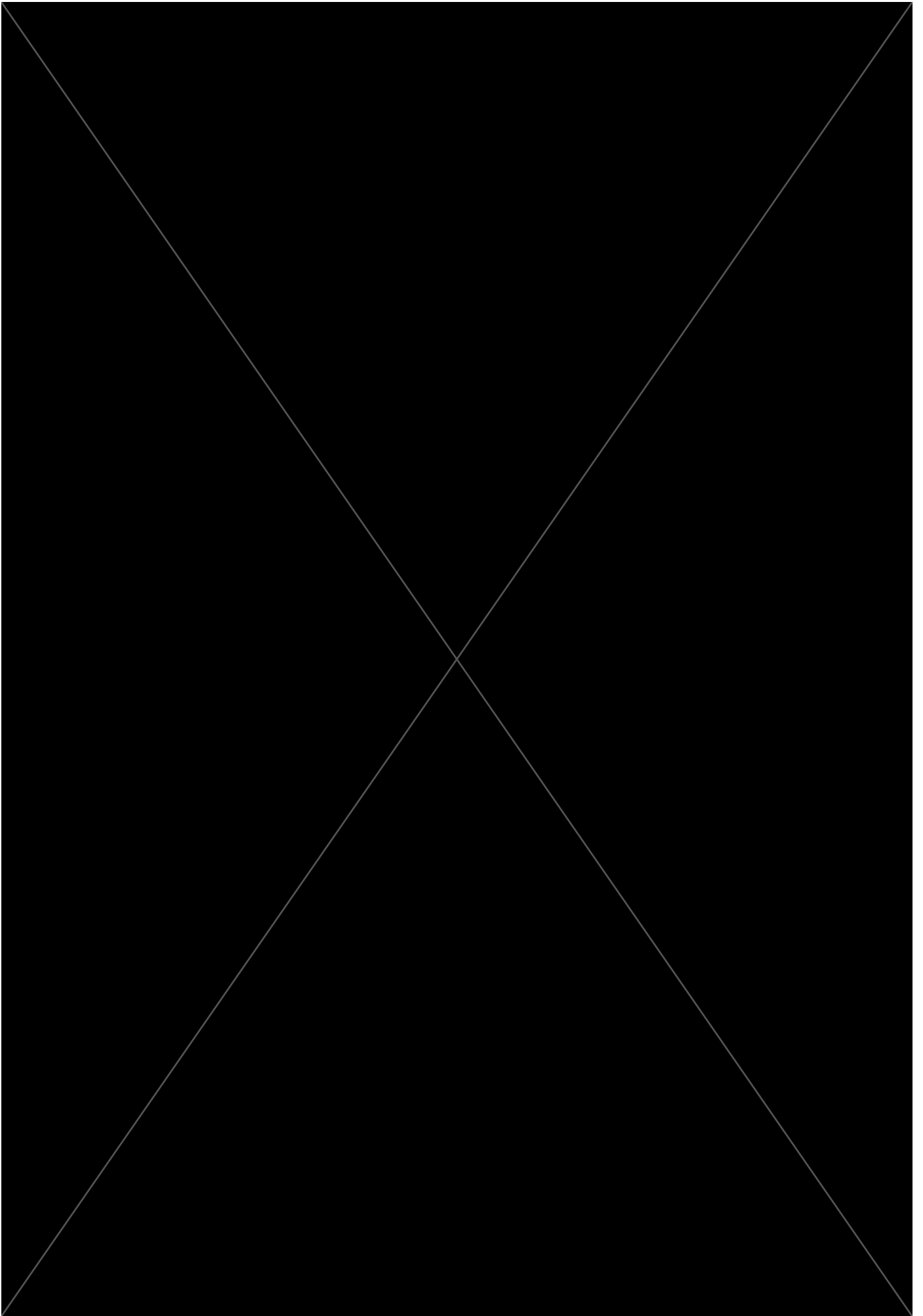
'He says he loves us but he loves the gambling more'.
Exploring the lived experiences of growing up with a problem
gambling father

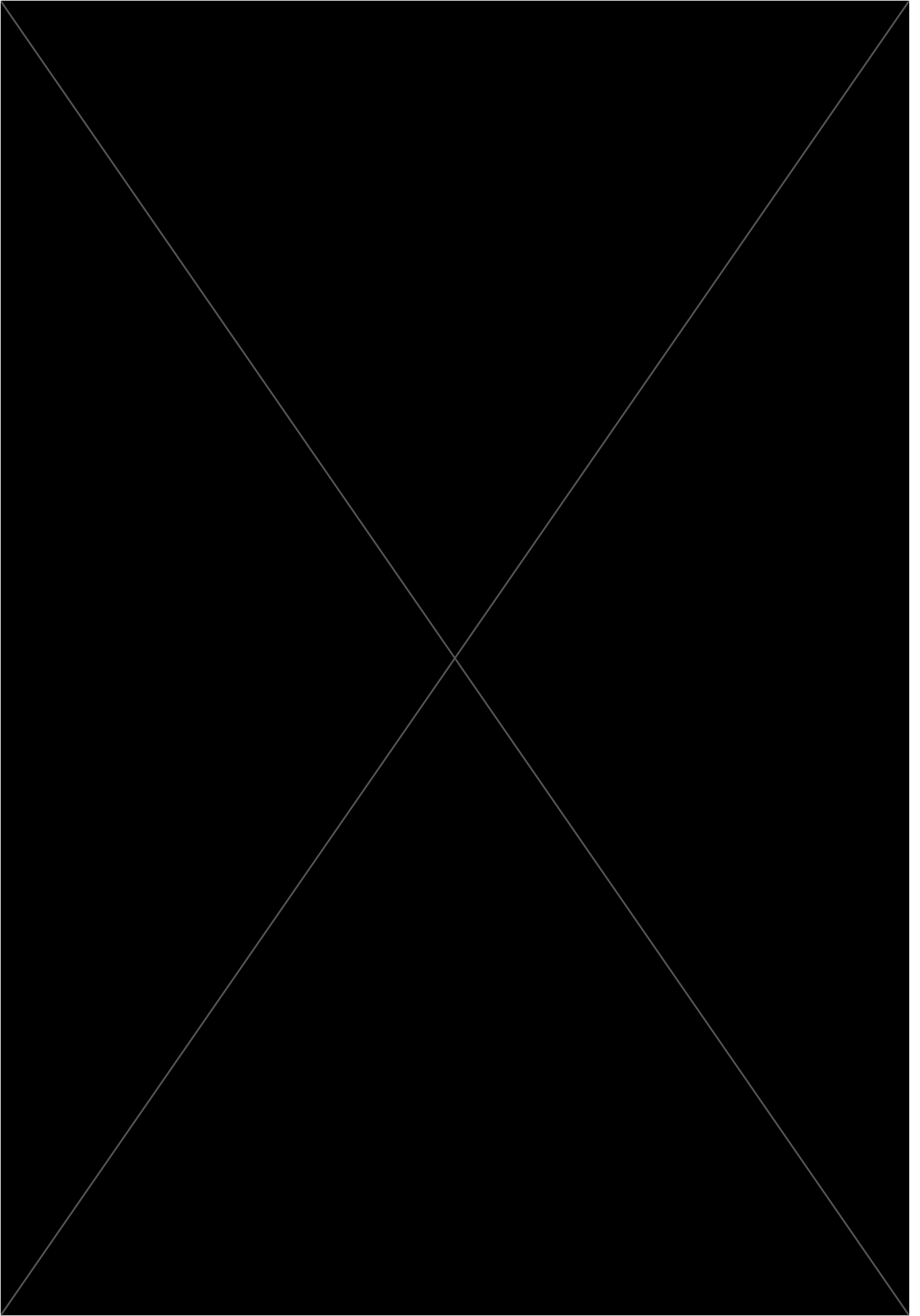


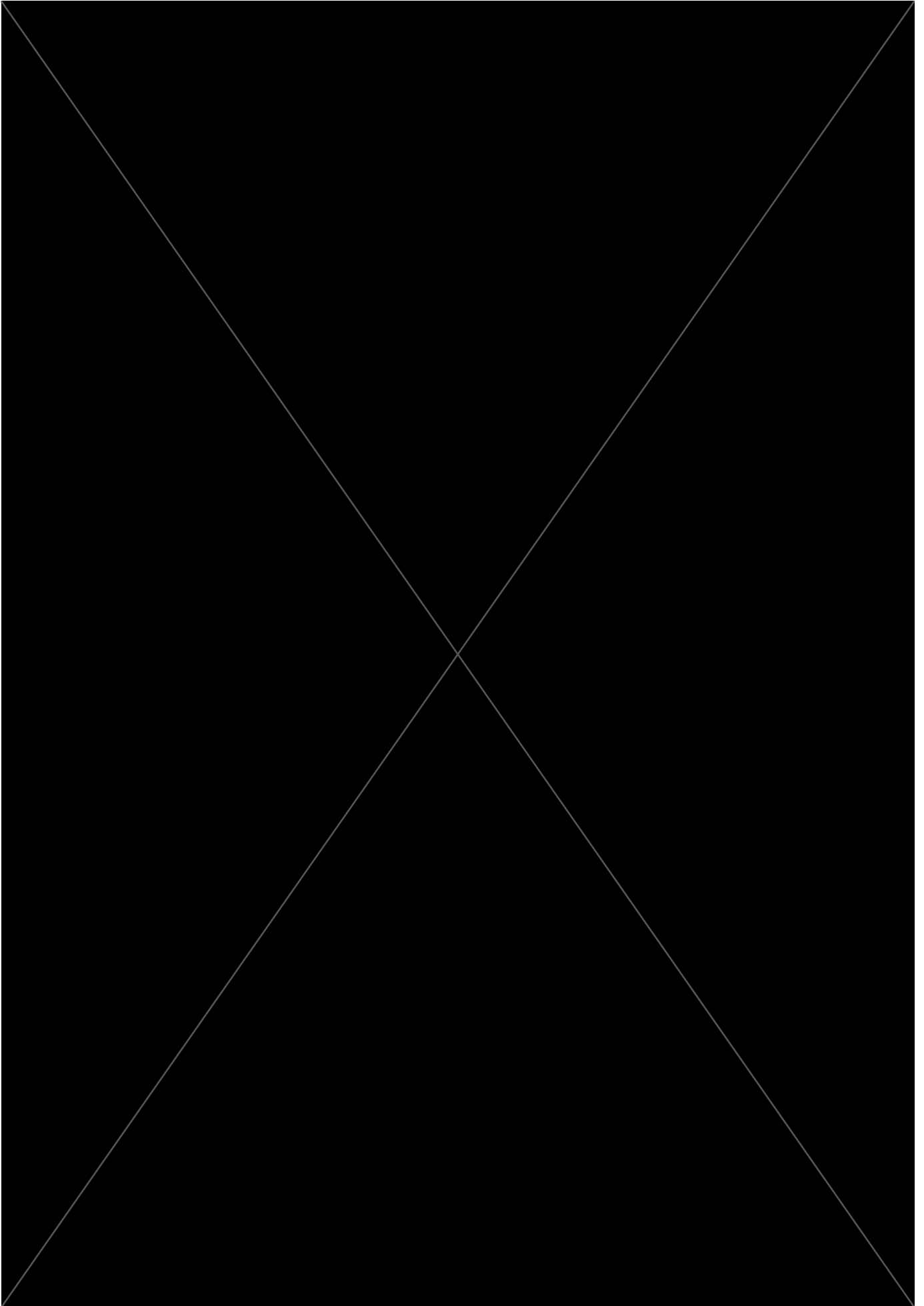


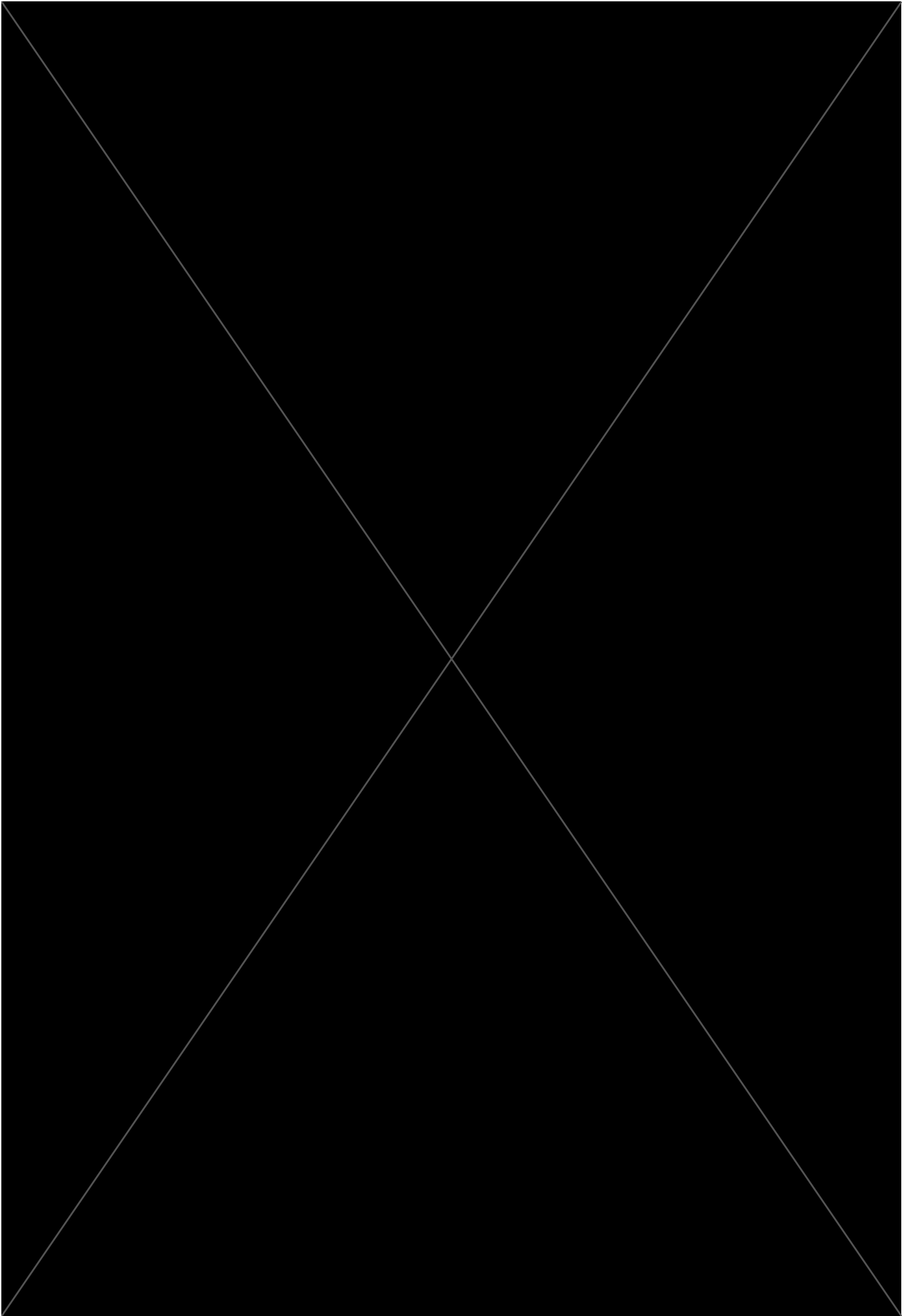


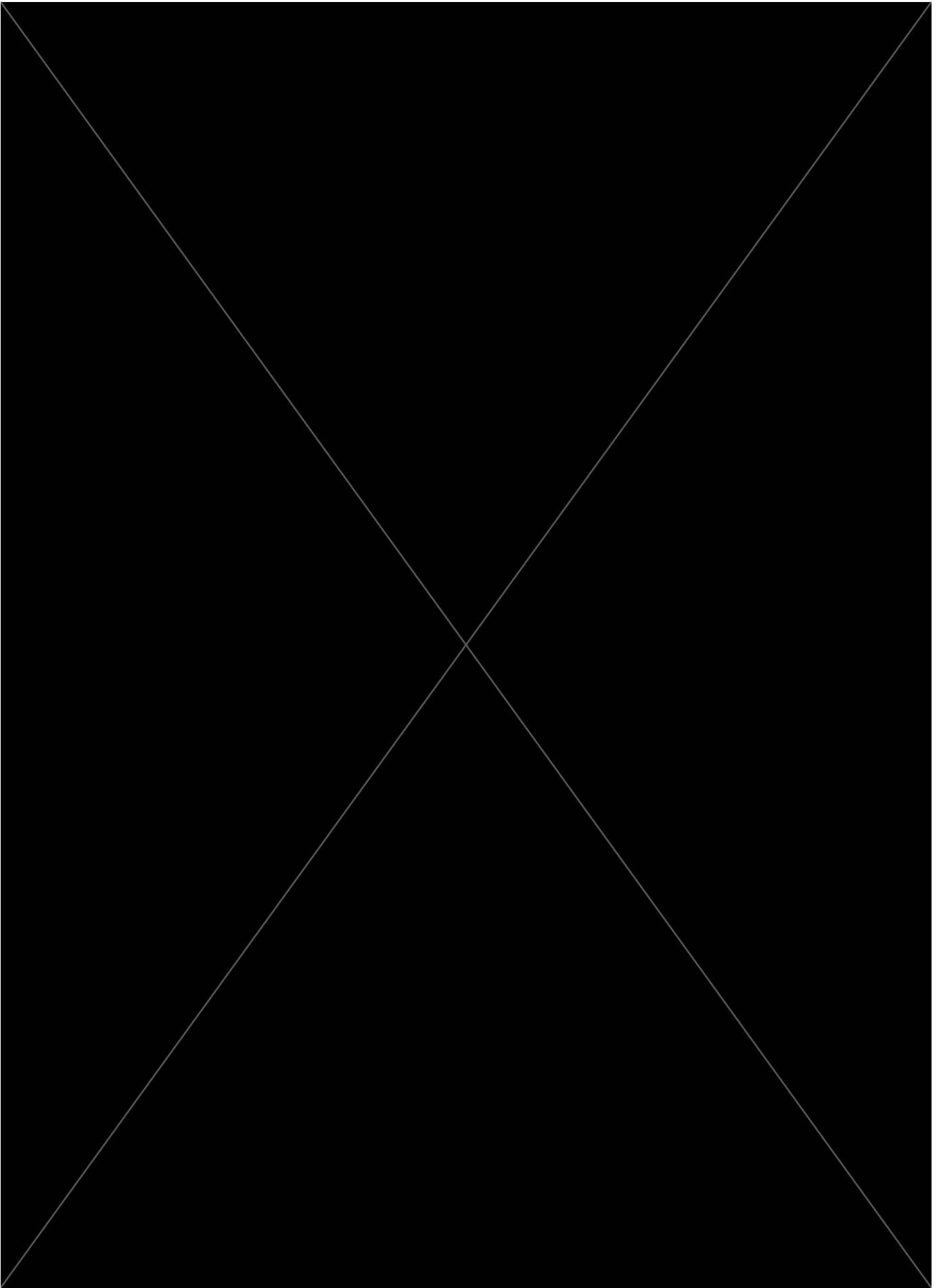


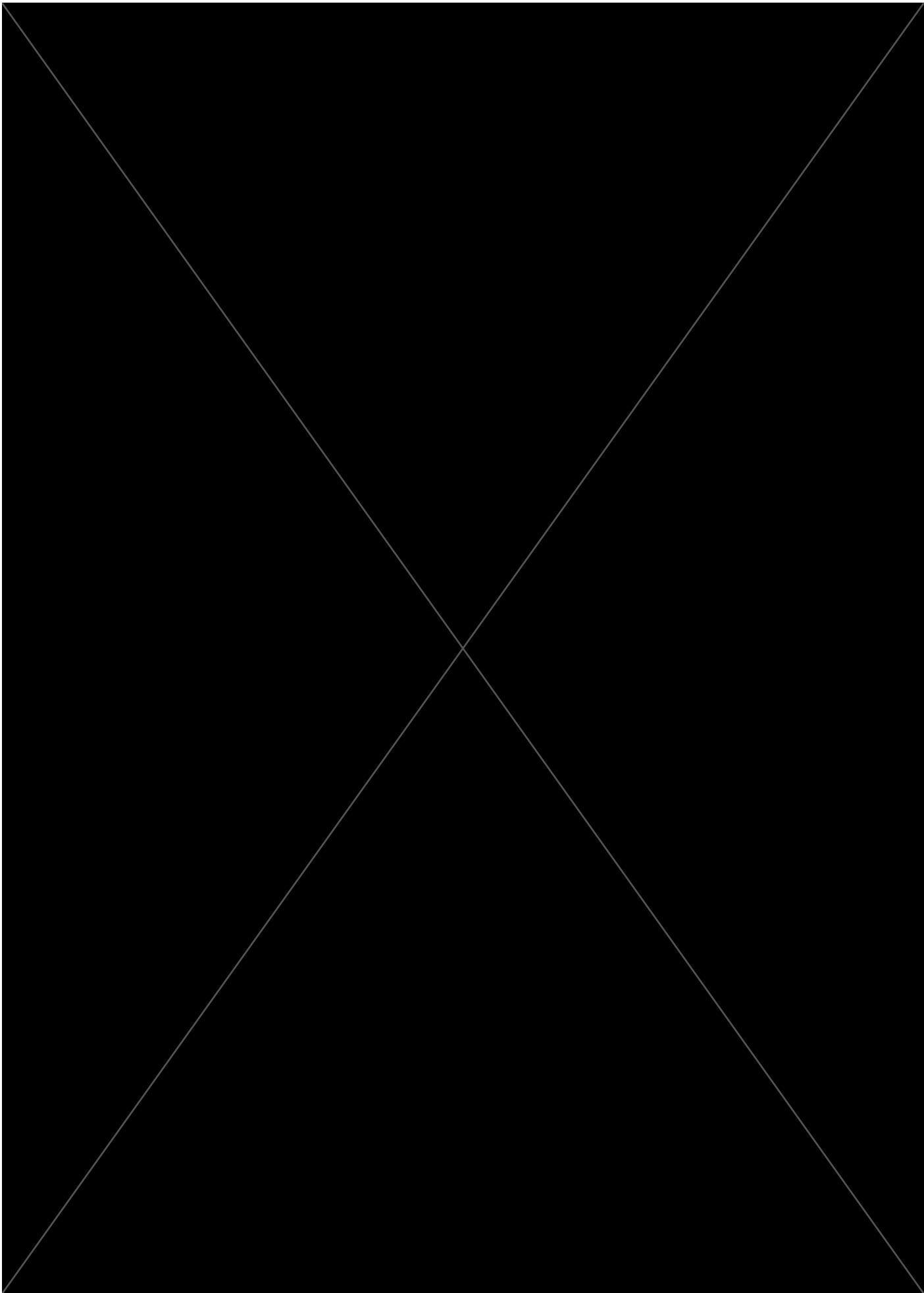


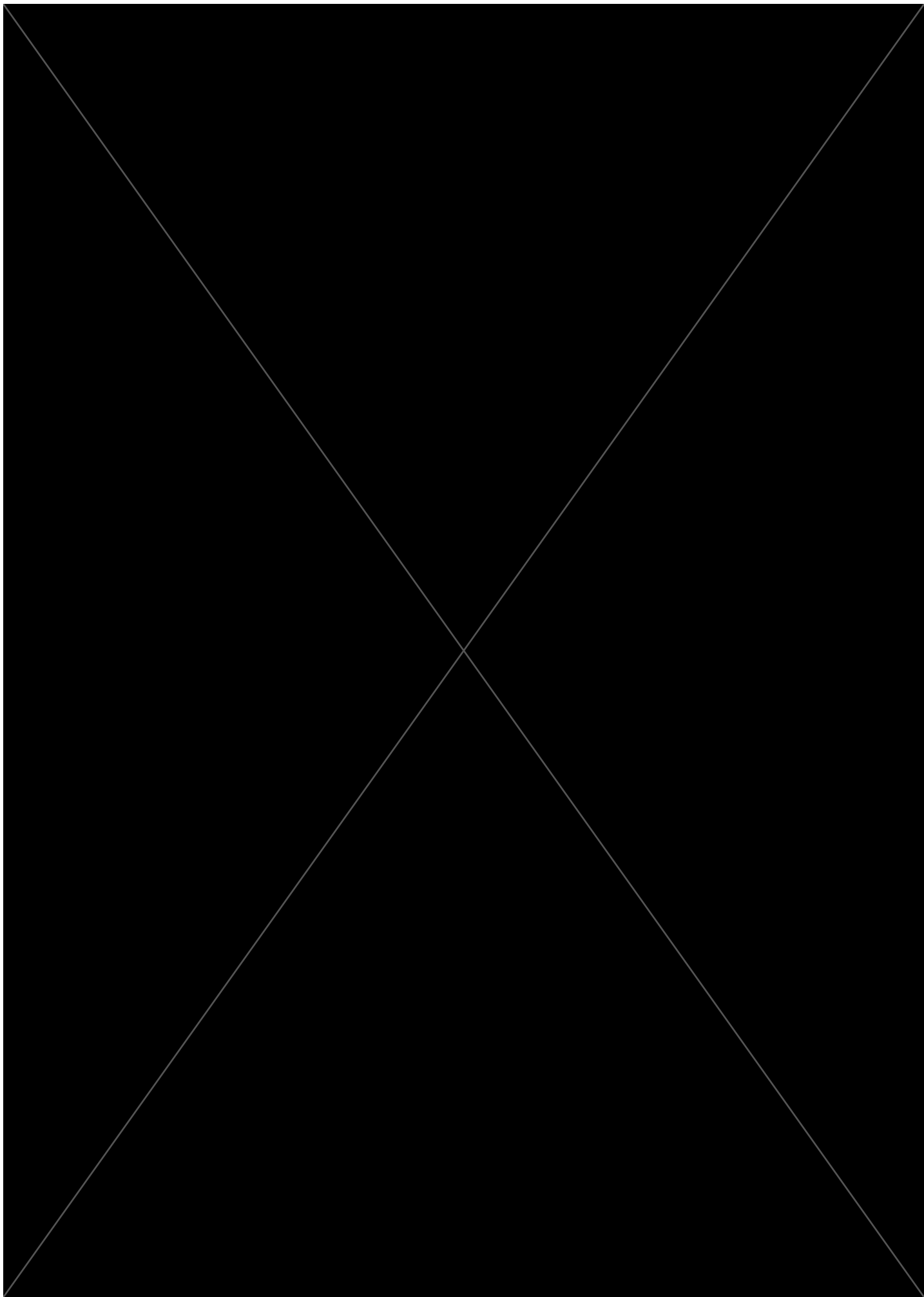


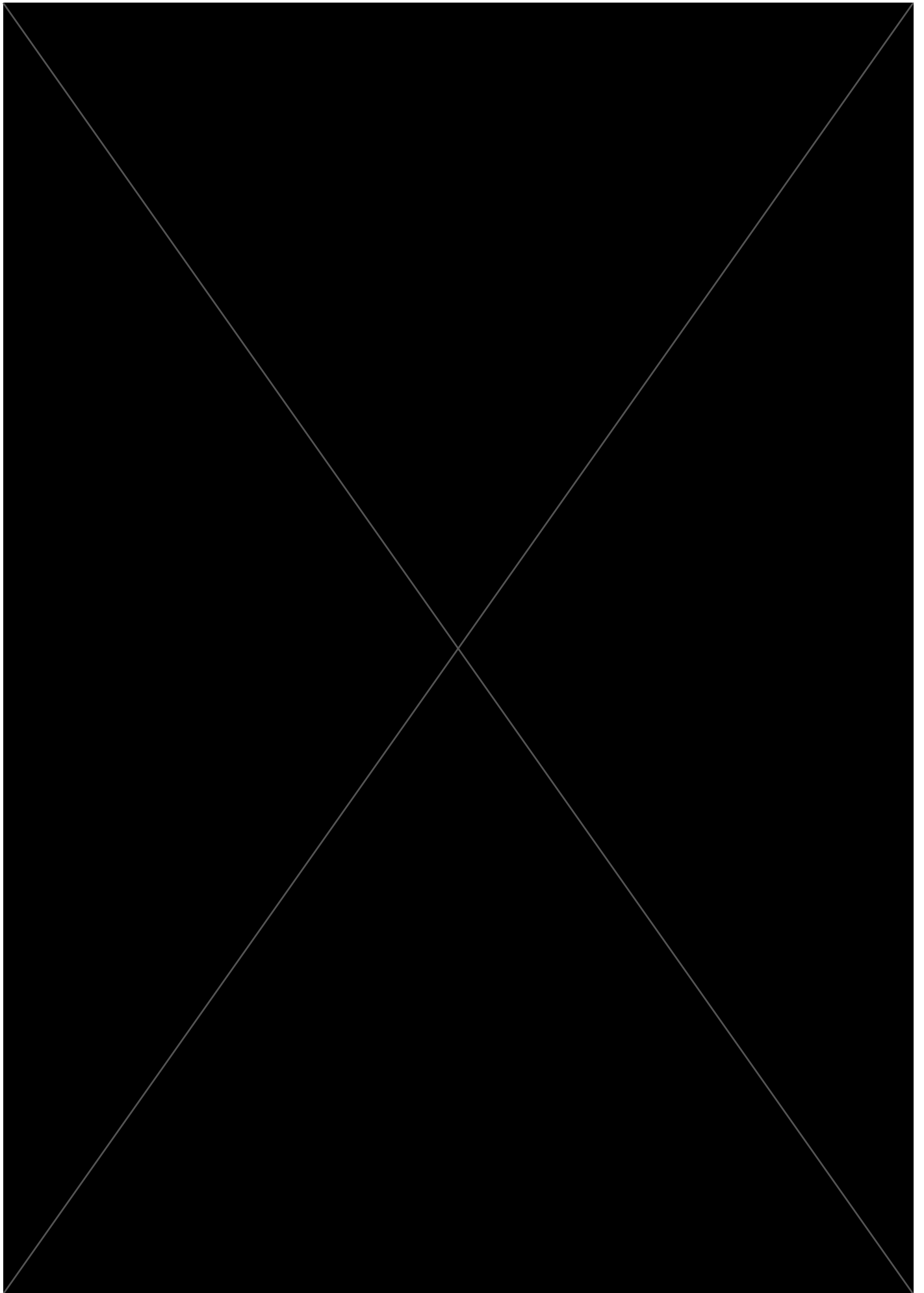


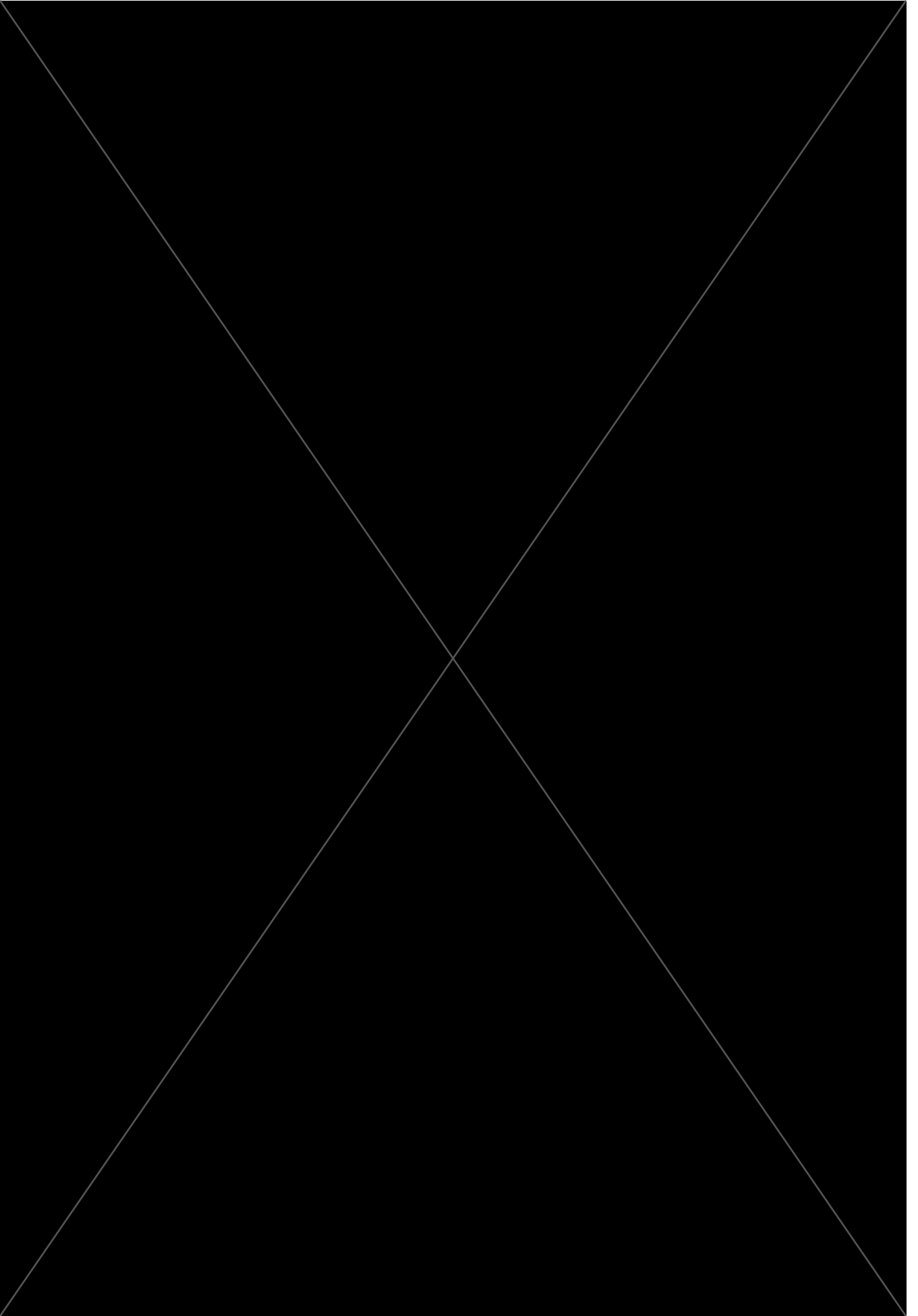


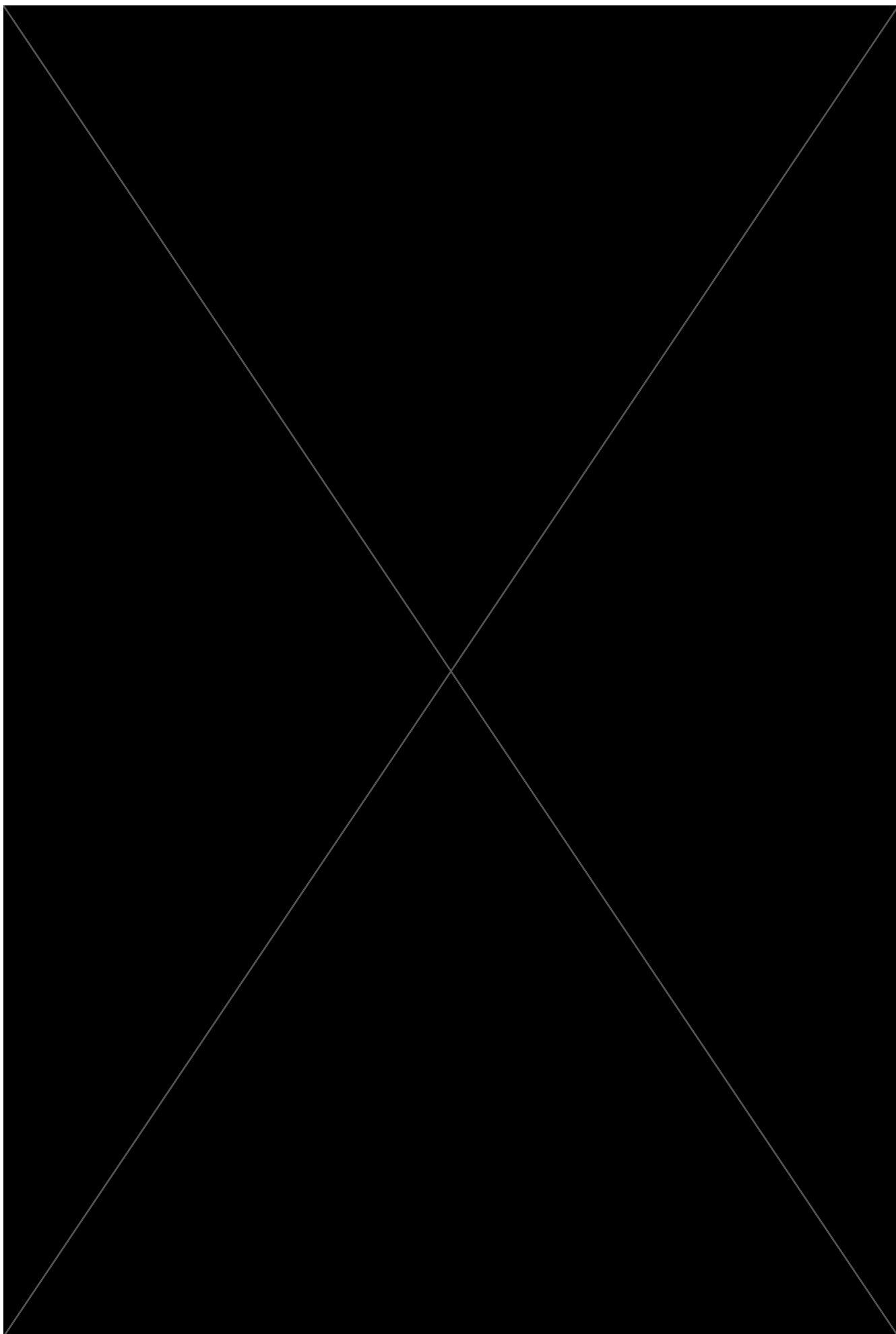


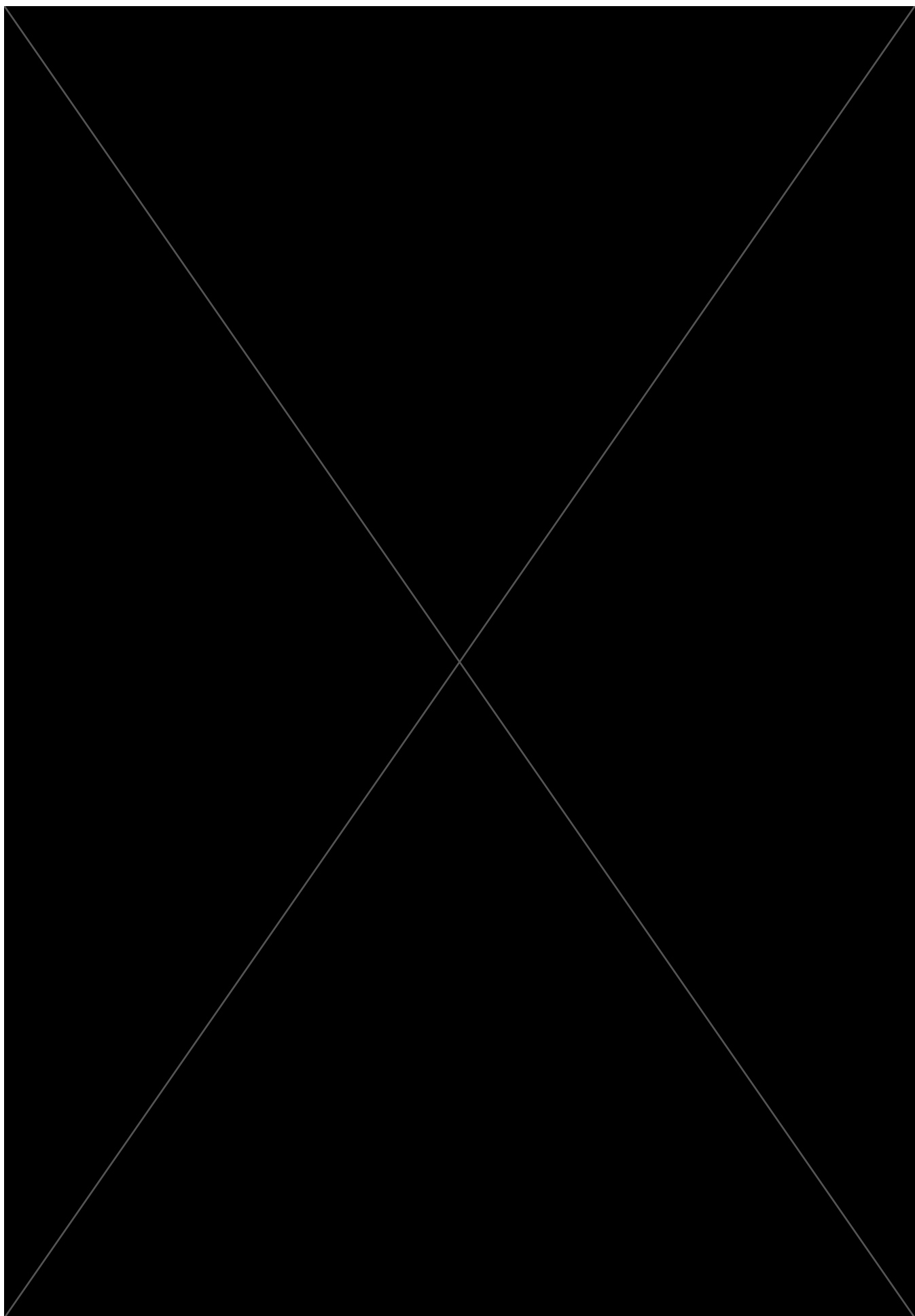


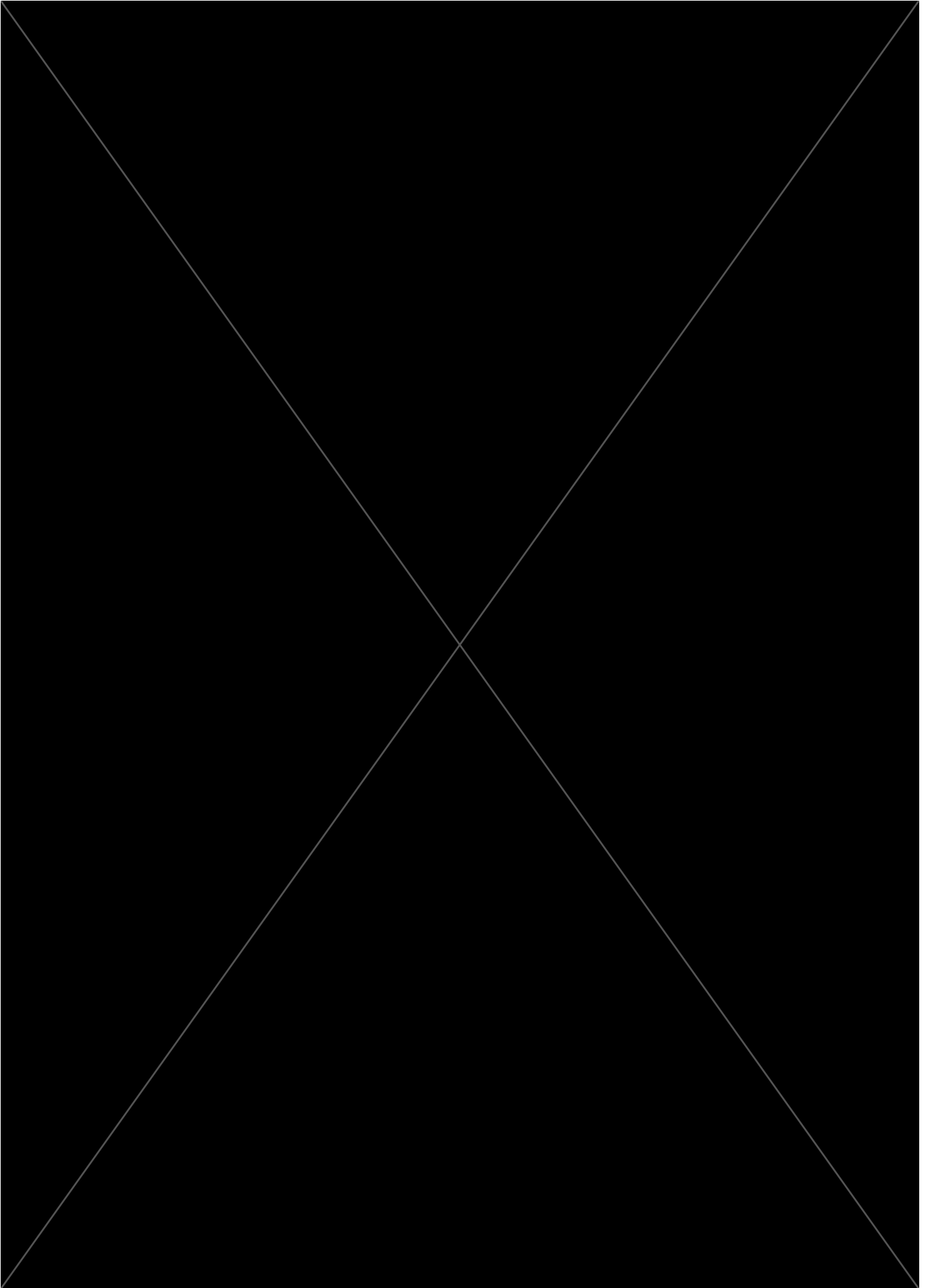


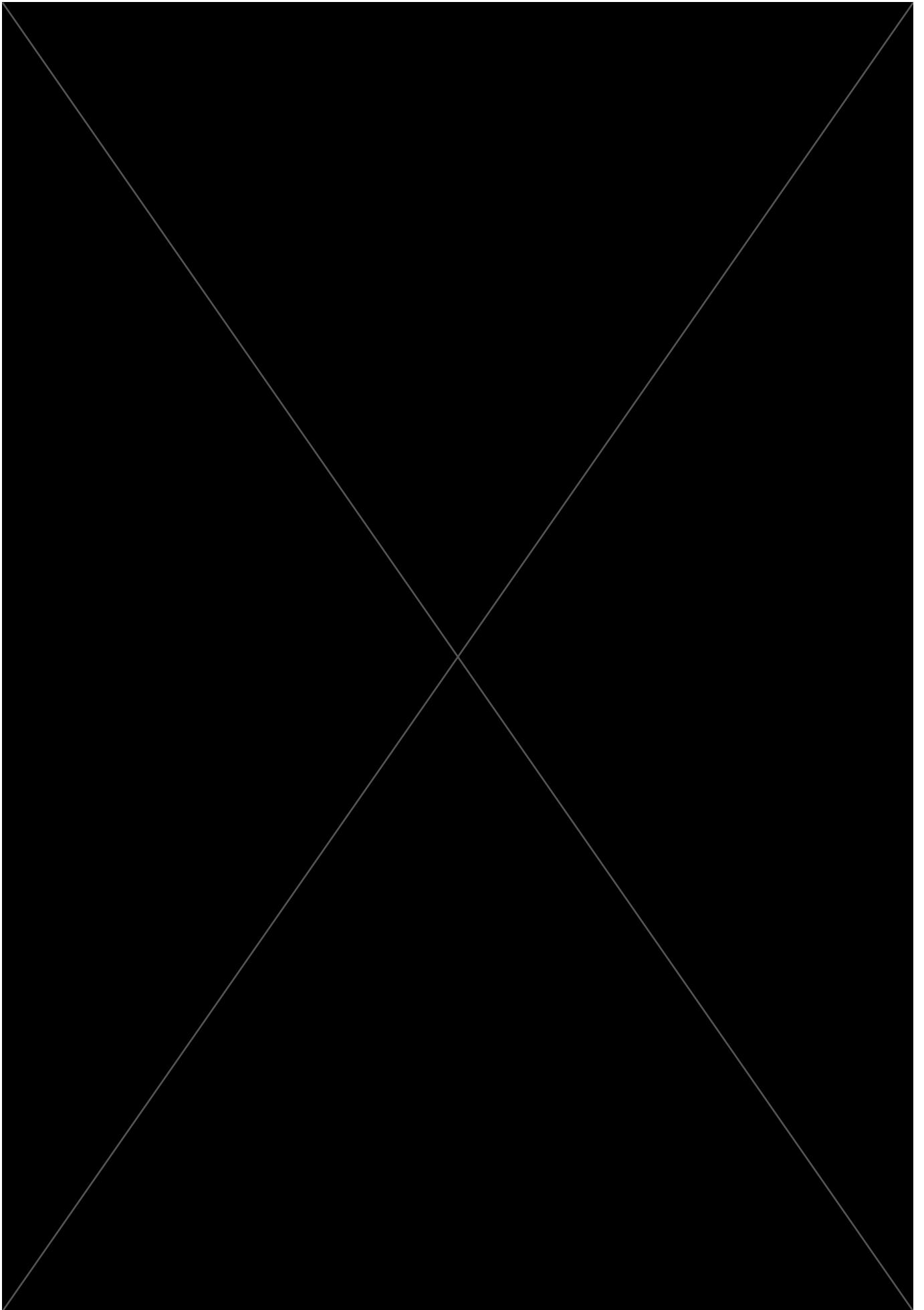


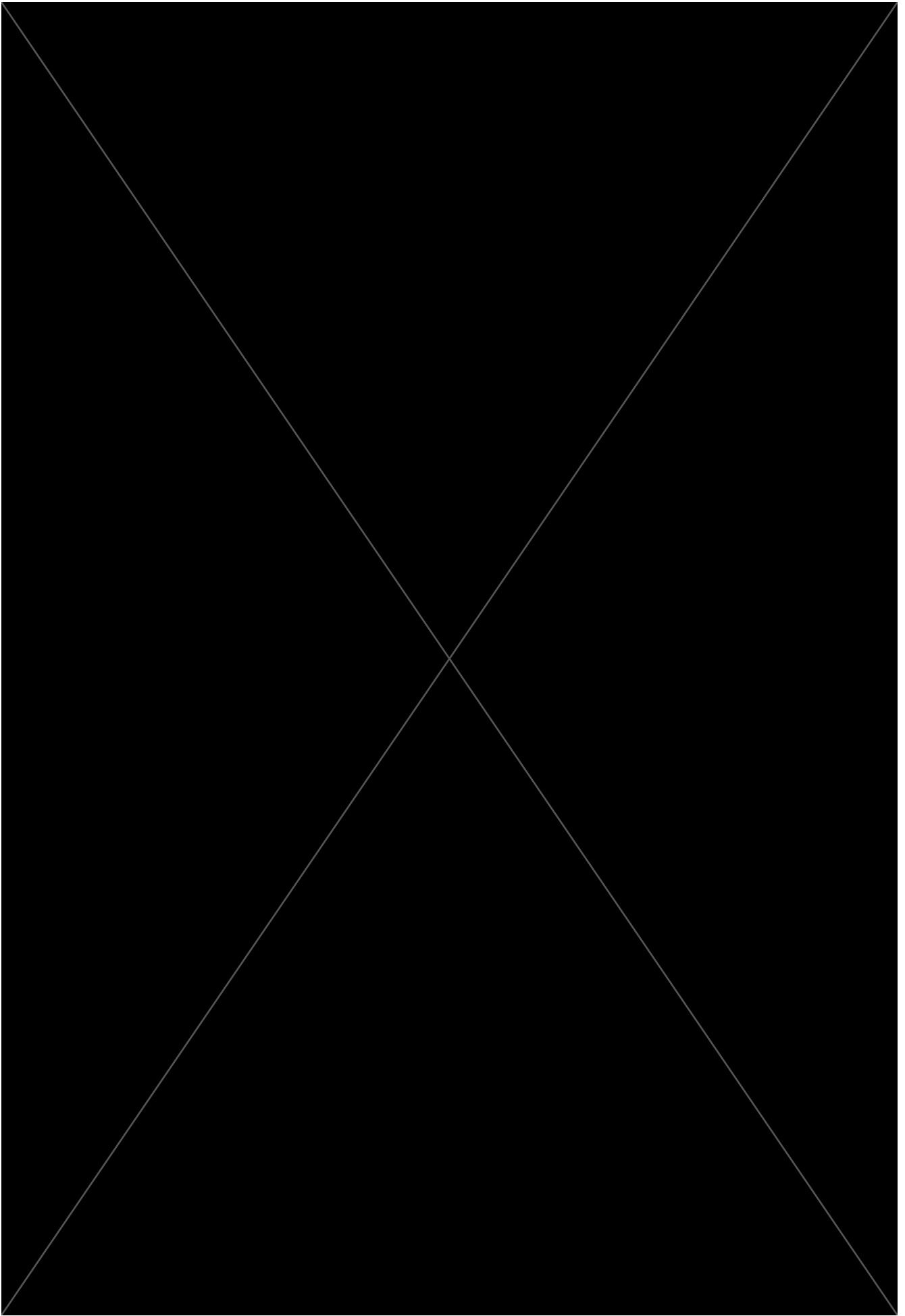


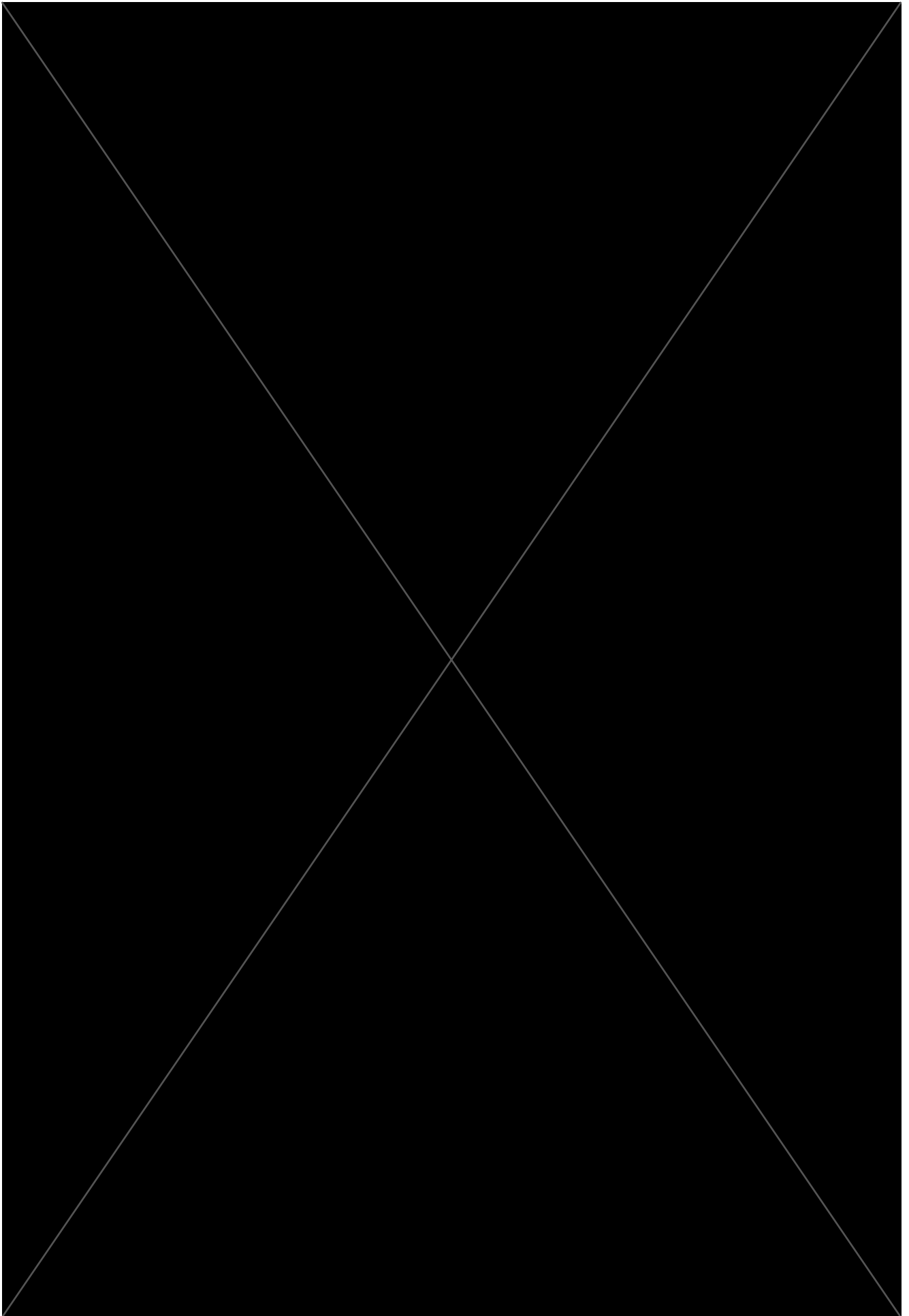


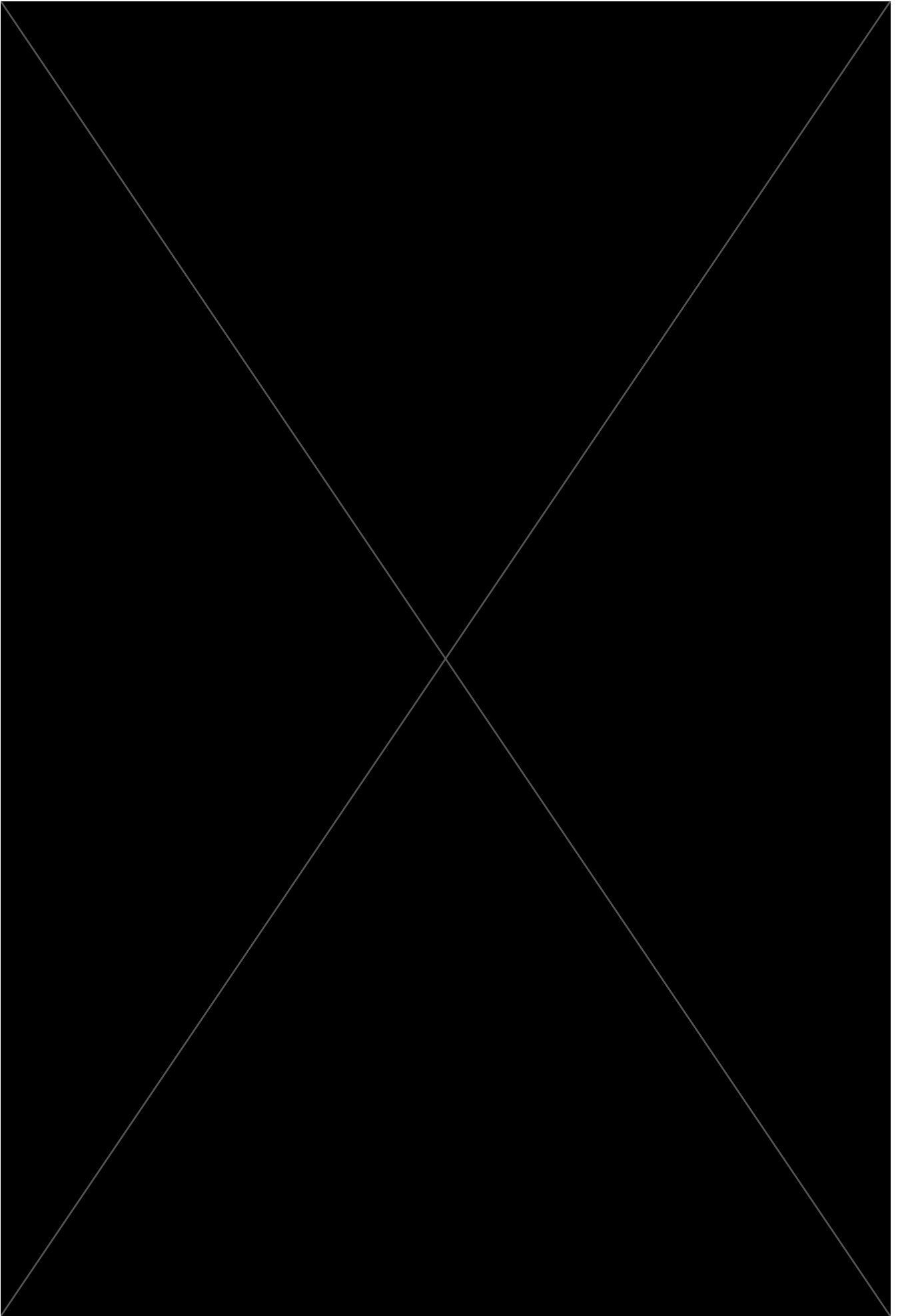


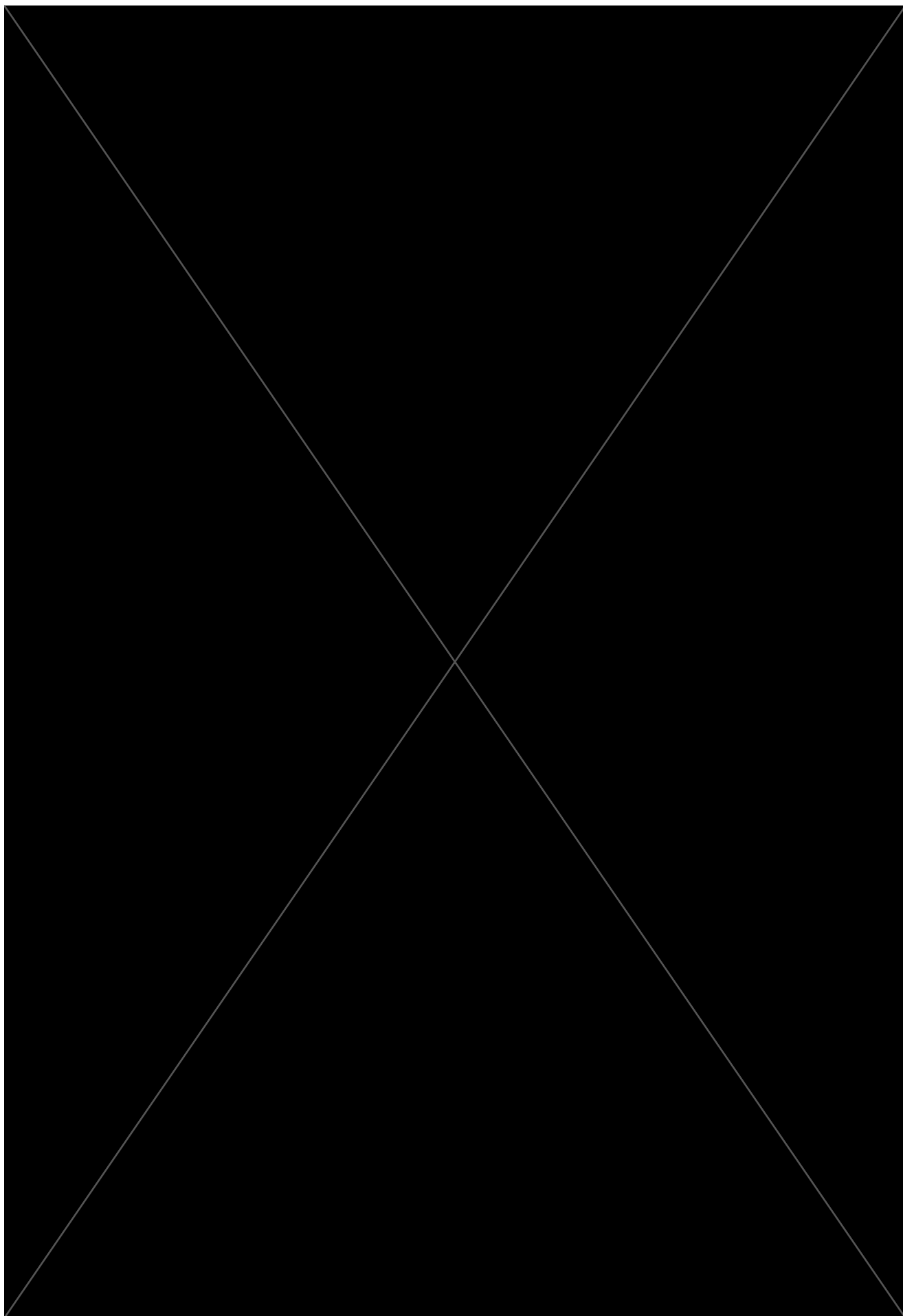


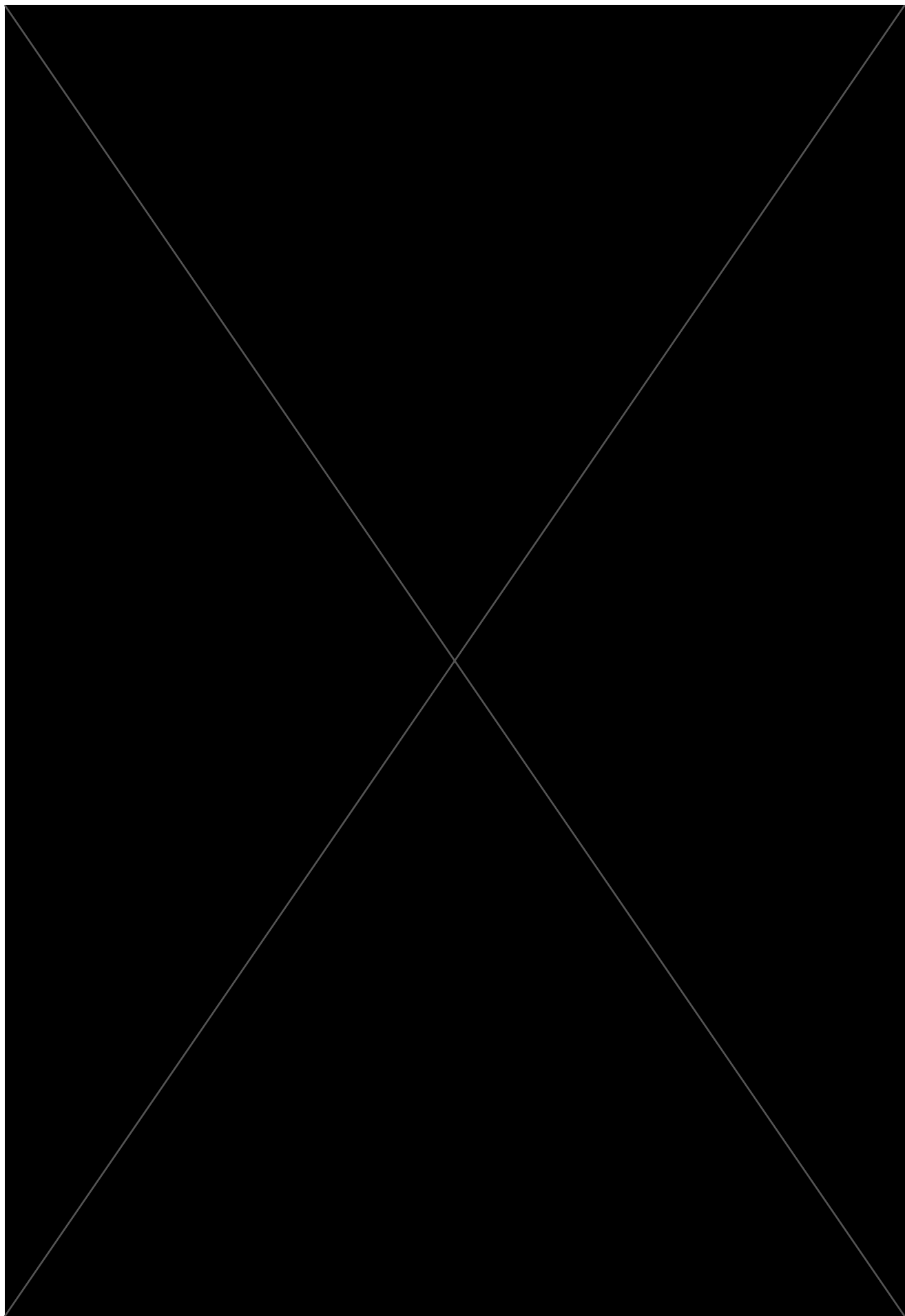


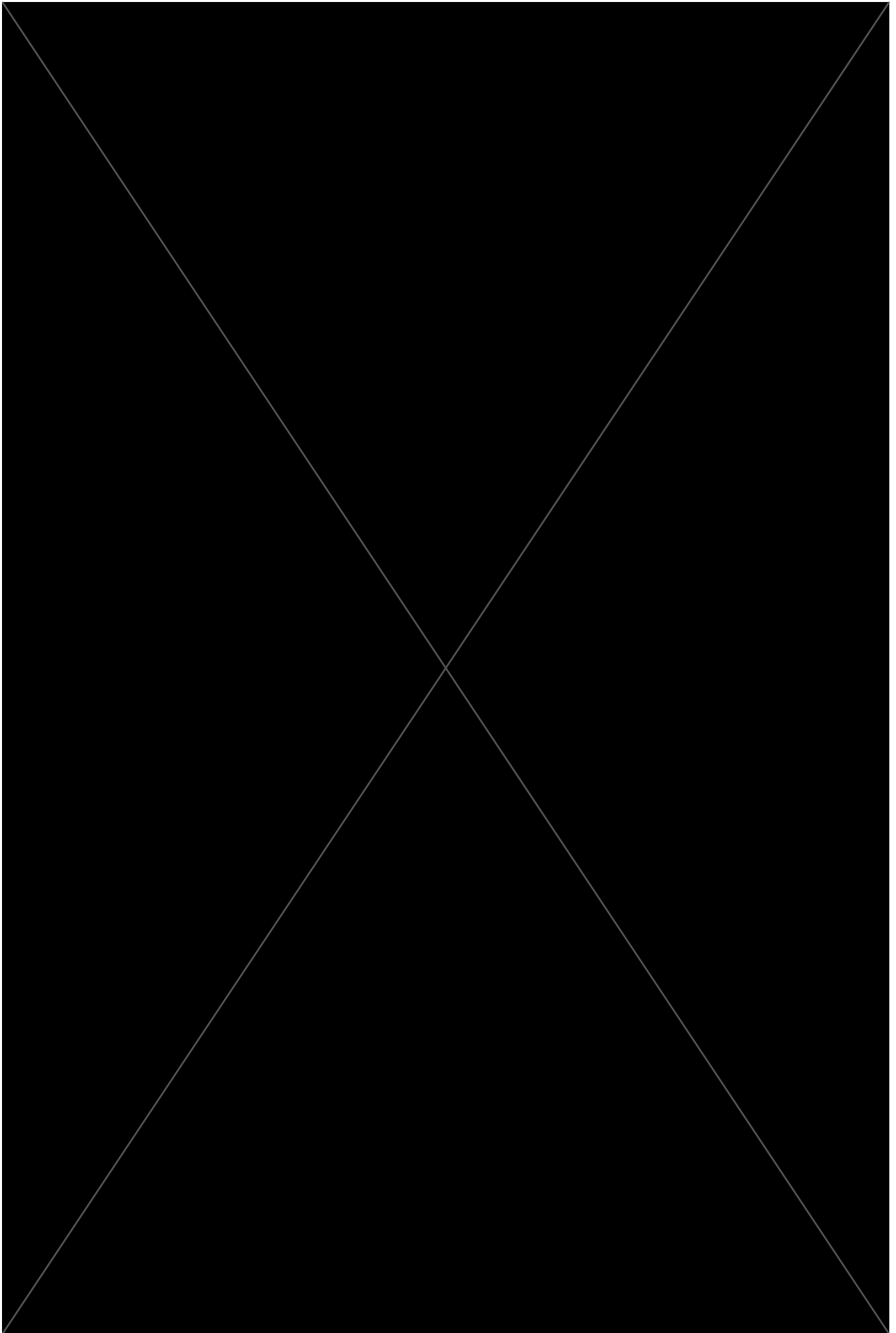


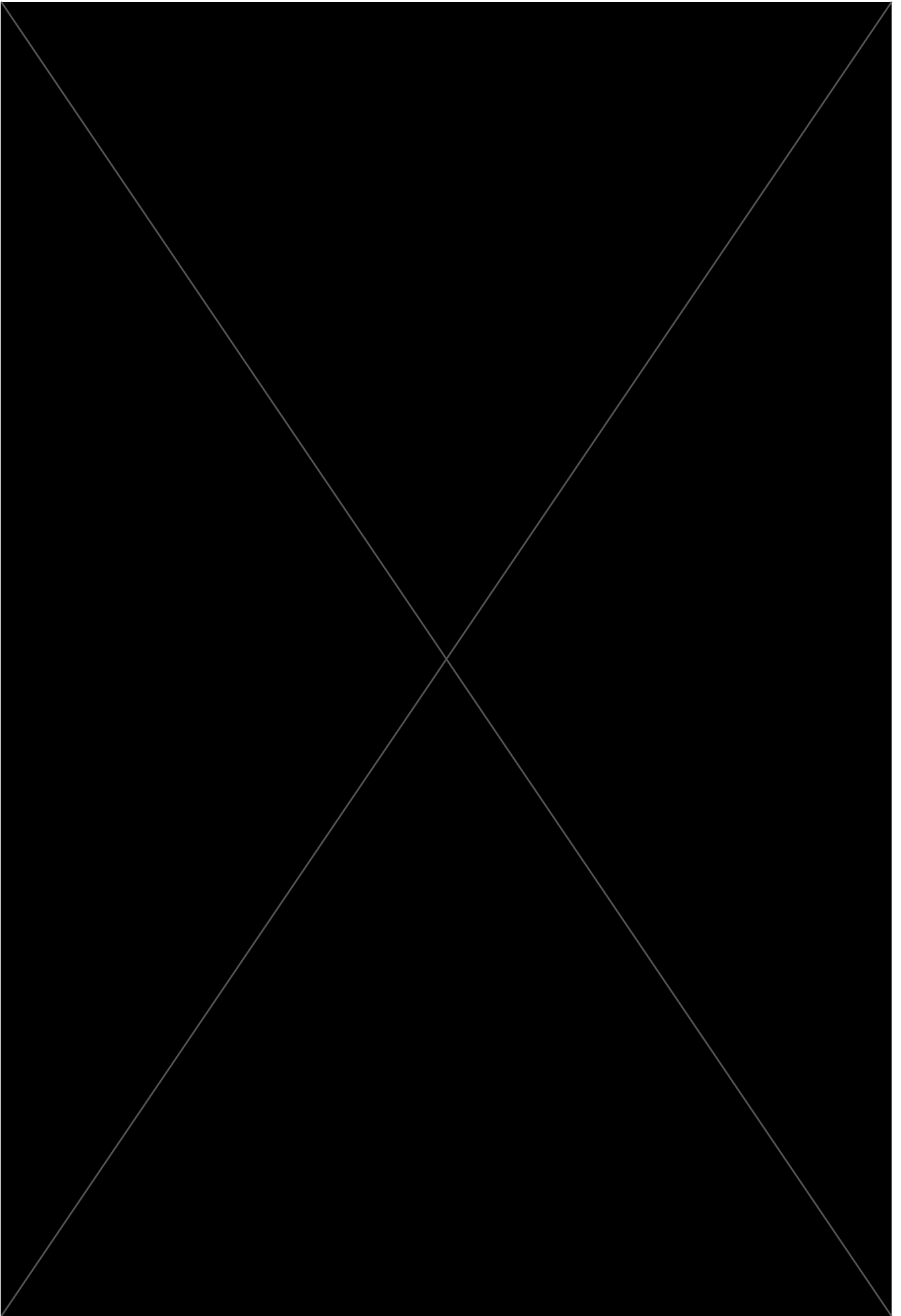


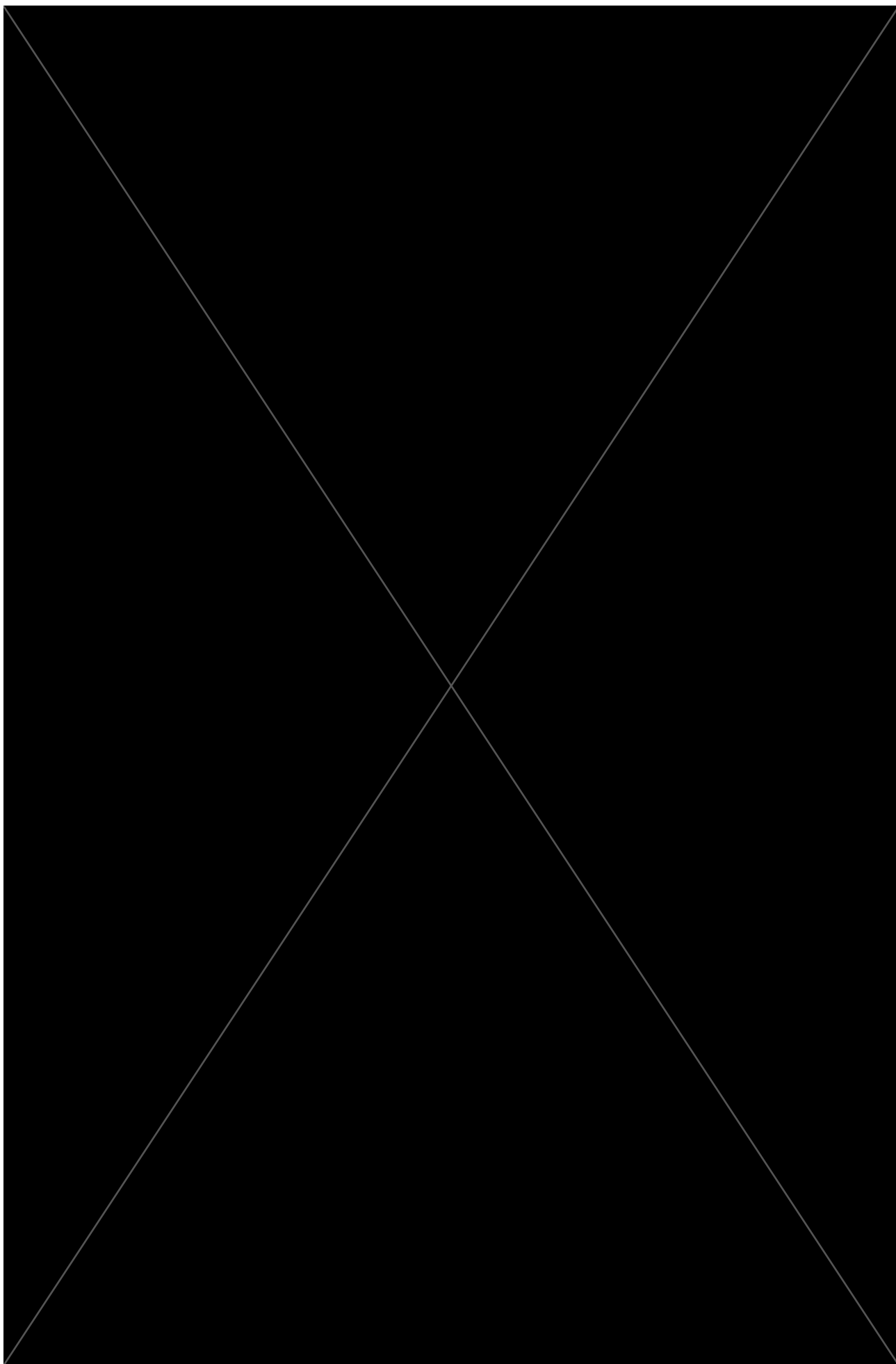


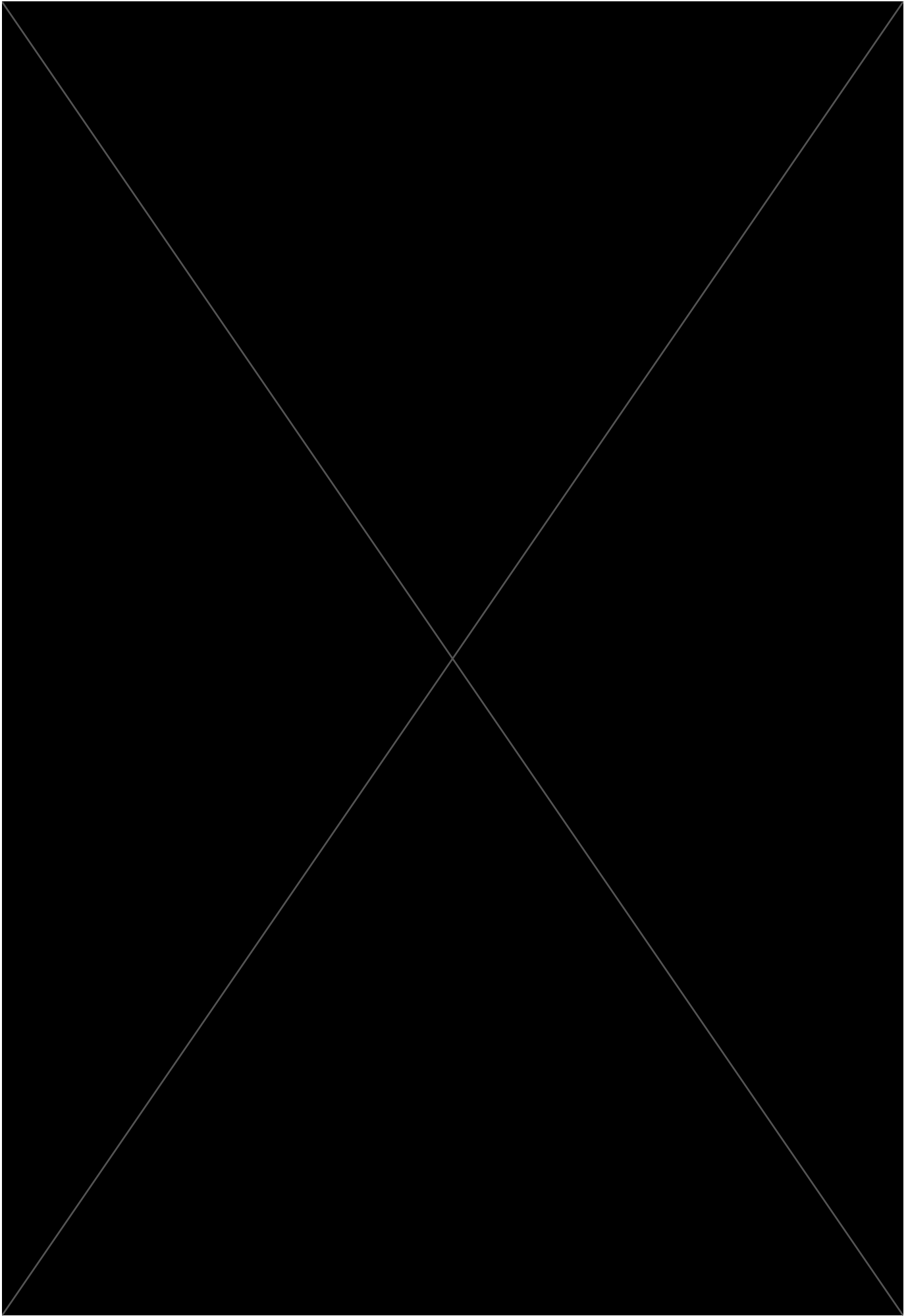


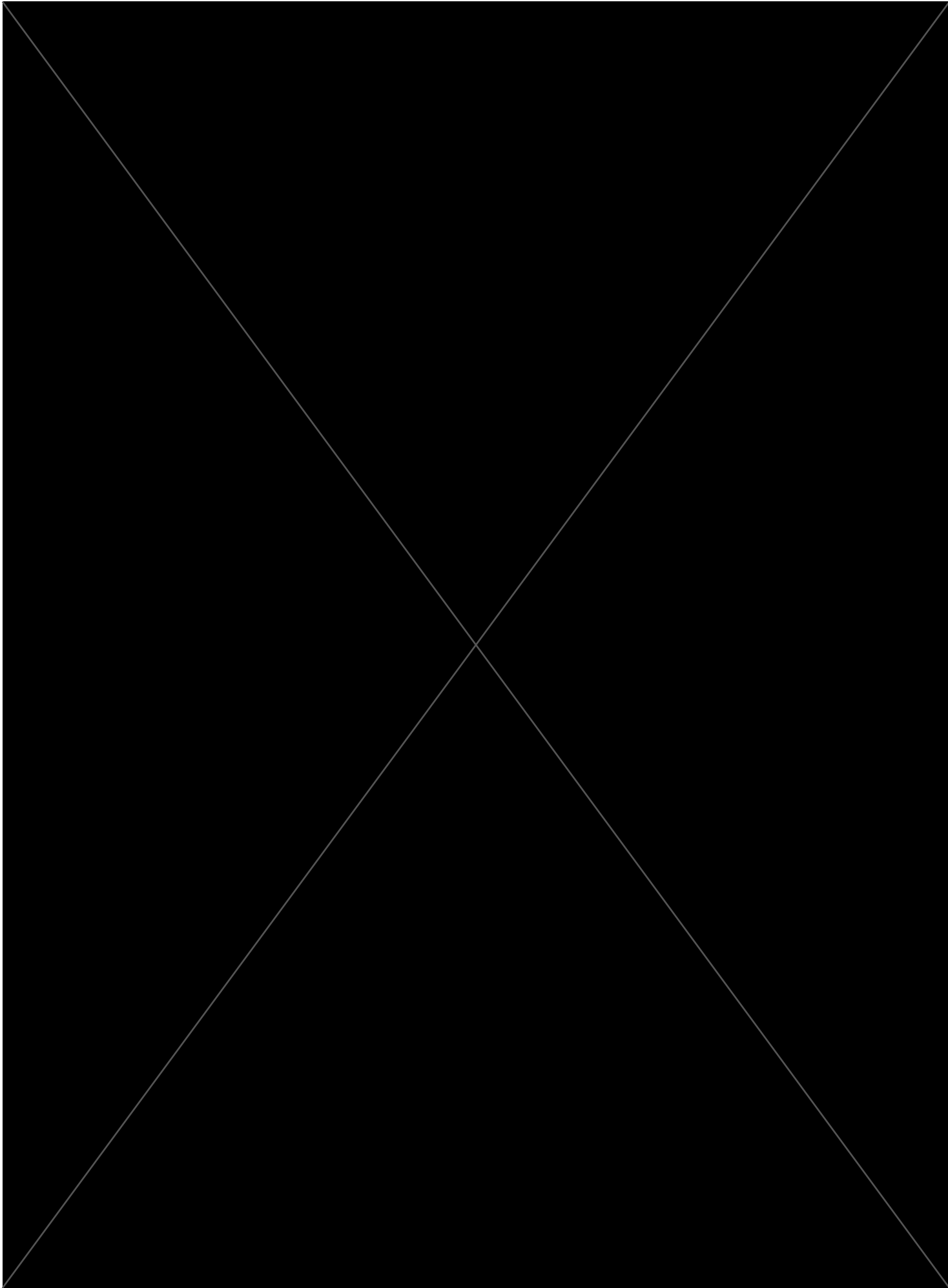












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Section D: Professional Component

**Importance for formulation and collaboration in the
formation of CBT interventions**

