engaging people's imagination so their thoughts readily move along in the proposed direction.

Frames can often be episodic, in the sense that they are motifs that trigger ministories, opening up a whole world of shared experiences among people. With those common narratives comes the episodic, integrative knowledge that is needed to furnish a foundation for solution ideas. Many original design practitioners are great storytellers, capturing the elusive aspects of their frames by talking about their projects. All of these aspects of frames came to the fore in case 8, the entertainment district project. The key framing metaphor ("a music festival") contains a pattern of relationships that integrates new approaches to many of the most pressing problems that occur throughout the area, during all phases of a night on the town. The original statement transforms the discussion from one of criminality to one of the misdeeds of otherwise mostly innocent and fun-loving youth. The mental image of the music festival is coherent, in all its complexity, and it is robust in the sense that it can be easily understood and shared by stakeholders—many of whom will have experienced festivals firsthand, or have to think about them as concerned parents. There might be differences in interpretation or emotional response, but those can become the basis for a discussion that will only serve to enrich the imagery.

We must be careful and realize that "What's in a frame?" may not be the right question to ask—a frame is not a completely static concept. Frames are tools that exist within a world of actions and intentions, and whether some metaphor or pattern of relationships can be called a "frame" is completely defined by its use. "When is something a frame?" might be a better question to ask.

Once frames are accepted, they become the context for routine behavior: once accepted, the frame immediately begins to fade. Statements that started life as original frames become limiting rationalities in themselves, holding back new developments. Frames are best when they are "fresh." Creative and innovative people battle against fossilized frames, as we will see in the next chapters.

4   EXPLORING THEMES

Earlier in this chapter, a particular kind of abstraction was mentioned as the key strategy used by expert designers to develop problem situations beyond the core paradox. This is not "abstraction" only in the sense of going from the particular to a more general view of the problem situation: rather, expert designers