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# The Meaning and Process of Engagement in Outdoor Adventure from an Occupational Science Perspective to Inform Health Promotion and Occupational Therapy Practice.

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University of Plymouth

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**THE MEANING AND PROCESS OF ENGAGEMENT IN  
OUTDOOR ADVENTURE,  
FROM AN OCCUPATIONAL SCIENCE PERSPECTIVE TO INFORM  
HEALTH PROMOTION AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTICE.**

By

**ROSALIND ANGELA OATES RAINE**

A thesis submitted to the University of Plymouth

in partial fulfilment for the degree of

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

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**Abstract:** The Meaning and Process of Engagement in Outdoor Adventure, From an Occupational Science Perspective to Inform Health Promotion and Occupational Therapy Practice.

Rosalind Angela Oates Raine

**Background:** Outdoor adventure can offer meaningful occupations that enhance health and wellbeing. Theory in relation to the meaning of outdoor adventure from an occupational science perspective, and the process by which people become engaged in occupation, is underdeveloped.

**Methodology:** Phenomenological philosophy underpinned the methodology. Five elements are presented in this thesis, data were explored from: a systematic review and meta-synthesis of research exploring the meaning of outdoor adventure; focus groups exploring factors affecting sustained engagement in walking in a community context; adventure autobiographies as exemplars of engagement and outdoor culture; and interviews with participants who engaged in outdoor adventure. Concepts arising from the findings were thematically synthesised.

**Findings and discussion:** The meaning of outdoor adventure was associated with a sense of *connection* to self, others, nature, the environment, time and place. Meaning was associated with engagement that was *congruent* with aspirations for identity, health and wellbeing, values, and beliefs. The meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure were influenced by the ability to establish *confidence* in relation to developing social networks, physical skills and the knowledge required to participate in chosen occupations. The process of engagement in outdoor adventure was influenced by *convenience* and the ability to accommodate participation alongside other work and family routines, in terms of time, location and priorities. The process of engagement in outdoor adventure was influenced by *context*. The findings also suggest a change in the meaning of engagement in outdoor adventure over time.

**Conclusion:** The implications of the study are that these aspects of meaning and dynamic process could be considered within health promotion and occupational therapy practice to enhance initiating, sustaining and returning to occupational engagement in outdoor adventure. Further research would be beneficial in relation to evaluating the application of these concepts in occupational therapy practice.



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**Chapter 1.** Introduction: The meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure from an occupational science perspective to inform health promotion and occupational therapy practice.

## **1.1 Background**

Health and wellbeing can be improved by participation in activities in natural environments (World Health Organization, 2016a). The potential for outdoor adventure to have a positive impact on health is a concept that is developing momentum across a number of disciplines (Institute for Outdoor Learning, 2016). Occupational therapists are well positioned to develop the use of outdoor adventure within therapeutic practice (Jeffery and Wilson, 2017). Rigorous investigation into specific occupations to consider their complexities, context, influence on health and wellbeing, and meaning is recommended to contribute to occupational science (Wilcock and Hocking, 2015), as foundational theory for occupational therapy practice (Pierce, 2014). Research in relation to the process by which people become engaged in occupation is under-developed (Hitch, Pépin and Stagnitti (2014a). In this thesis, an occupational science perspective of the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure is explored, underpinned by phenomenology, with a view to informing occupational therapy and health promotion.

Five elements are presented in this thesis, data were explored from: a systematic review and meta-synthesis of research exploring the meaning of outdoor adventure; focus groups exploring factors affecting sustained engagement in walking in a community context; adventure autobiographies as

exemplars of engagement and outdoor culture; interviews with participants who engaged in outdoor adventure; and a thematic synthesis of concepts arising from the findings. These are presented in Chapters 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7; a summary of the thesis is provided in section 1.3.

‘Outdoor adventure’ is defined as activity in a natural environment (Dickson, Gray and Mann, 2008) with an element of perceived risk (Ewert and Sithorp, 2014), exploration, and decision making (Kane and Tucker, 2007) (see section 1.1.4). As such, for the purpose of this thesis the scope is broad, to include small, accessible experiences of engagement with the outdoors within everyday lives, and extreme expedition. This is to enable consideration of the full repertoire of opportunities offered by outdoor adventure to people who engage in it, at all levels. The study was confined to adults in order to consider the dynamic ‘process’ of engagement in outdoor adventure across the lifespan; capturing reflections on differing patterns of engagement at different times in peoples’ lives. Aside from element 2, the ‘meaning’ of outdoor adventure is considered outside of an intervention or education context. This is to explore the potential meaning that self-directed occupational engagement in outdoor adventure can offer to those who choose it.

This introductory chapter provides an overview of the background literature and a definition of terms; the research rationale, question, aims and objectives; and a summary of the thesis. Consideration of occupational therapy and occupational science; perspectives on the meaning of engagement in occupation; health promotion; outdoor adventure and physical activities in

nature; and outdoor adventure within occupational therapy are provided to justify the research rationale (section 1.2).

### 1.1.1 Occupational therapy and occupational science

Occupational therapists work with people of all ages, in a broad range of settings, to promote health, wellbeing and life satisfaction through participation in meaningful occupation (College of Occupational Therapists, 2016a).

Occupation is considered a major contributor to the experience of health (Wilcock and Hocking, 2015) and a fundamental human need (Caixeirinho, Almeida and Quaresma, 2018). The occupational therapy profession is defined by its “occupation focus”; however there has been much debate about the definition of key terms (Fisher, 2014:96). The UK Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) currently define “occupation” as:

*“...practical and purposeful activities that allow people to live independently and have a sense of identity. This could be essential day-to-day tasks such as self-care, work or leisure.” (RCOT, 2018, no page)*

Whilst this helpfully indicates the breadth of activities embraced, an emphasis on independence has been criticised as culturally situated within a Western perspective (Iwama, 2007). The usefulness of categorising occupations was questioned by Hammell (2009) who suggested that a focus on meaning would be more beneficial; and Wilcock (1998:341) suggested that “purposeful” does not fully encompass “meaning”. It has therefore been argued that occupation, defined as “meaningful and purposeful activity”, should be considered within “social, historical and political context” (Pollard and Sakellariou, 2012: xi). In addition, Pierce (2014:3) proposed that occupation be considered both at the level of a subjective, “richly contexted individual experience” and at the level of



“generalized cultural ideas of activities”, arguing that a sophisticated understanding of both views is valuable. These aspects are arguably better represented in the Canadian Occupational Therapy guidelines which define occupation as:

*“an activity or set of activities that is performed with some consistency and regularity that brings structure, and is given value and meaning by individuals and a culture”* (Polatajko, et al., 2013:19)

However, a focus on performance was also criticised by Polatajko, et al. (2013:24) for its limited perspective of occupational therapists’ concern for occupation, with “participation” suggested as a more encompassing term. An emphasis on both personal meaning and the cultural context of participation in occupation is evident within occupational science research (Reed, Hocking and Smythe, 2011). In this thesis, the meaning of participation and the process of engagement in outdoor adventure activities as occupations is explored within individual, community and cultural contexts.

Whilst the occupational therapy profession began in the 1930s (COT, 2016b), occupational science emerged in the 1990s (Yerxa et al., 1990; Clark et al., 1991; Yerxa, 1993) to establish the scientific status of the study of human occupations (Megalhães, 2012). Occupational scientists have identified a need for critical perspectives of human occupation as a means of enhancing the theoretical underpinnings of the occupational therapy profession (Pollard, Sakellariou and Lawson-Porter, 2010; Pierce, 2014). Occupational science was originally defined as “the systematic study of the human as an occupational being” (Clarke, et al., 1991:300). Developing professional understanding of occupations, in terms of how they are organised, require skills and offer a sense

meaning, is fundamental to progressing an occupational perspective (Borges de Costa and Cox, 2016). However, Pierce (2001) warned that basic research into occupations would be of limited usefulness to occupational therapy practice, unless complemented with a strategy to integrate the two. An occupational science perspective of engagement is explored within this thesis, including the consideration of how people initiate, organise and sustain their participation and the meaning it gives them.

Twenty years after its inception, Frank (2012a:26) argued that occupational science has provided the “discipline” for occupational therapy, and prompted inter-disciplinary exploration of moral philosophy. The result is the development of a discourse within occupational science of human rights and social justice in response to globalisation and oppression (Frank, 2012a). Meaningful occupation has been explored as a human right within political context (Pollard and Sakellariou, 2012), with calls for the discipline to be socially responsive (Angell, 2014) and to address an emancipatory agenda (Hocking and Whiteford, 2012:3). In line with this move, terms such as “occupational deprivation” (Whiteford, 2010) and “occupational apartheid” (Kronenberg and Pollard, 2005) were coined. A Framework of Occupational Justice (Stadnyk, Townsend and Wilcock, 2010) was established, identifying occupational imbalance, deprivation, marginalization and alienation; in order to challenge these and to facilitate human rights in global contexts. Further to this, there has been a call for occupation to be considered as an agent of population health (Wilcock and Hocking, 2015) and social transformation (Farias, *et al.* 2018; Laliberte Rudman, 2018). However, Madsen, Kanstrup and Josephsson (2016) conducted a

systematic review of occupational science and occupational therapy publications from 2004 – 2014 with robust process, and identified a lack of primary source material on inequality in health. Health promotion for population health is explored further in section 1.3; axiological considerations in relation to philosophical positioning in this thesis are discussed further in section 3.6.

### 1.1.2 Perspectives on the *meaning* of engagement in occupation

Occupational therapy is based on the premise that participation in meaningful occupation is beneficial for health (Wilcock and Hocking, 2015). The move to focus on participation, rather than performance, is relatively recent in the profession's conceptual development (Polatajko *et al.*, 2007). The inherent assumption that all occupation could be considered healthy has been criticised (Nicholls, 2008; Twinley and Addidle, 2012). However, the significance of meaningful occupation for health has remained a central tenet of the profession since its inception, with the assumption that the search for meaning is a distinct characteristic of humans, and that participation in occupation is an important source of meaning (Frankl, 1978; Kielhofner and Burke, 1980). Despite this longevity, scholars have articulated an ongoing need for greater understanding of how meaning is experienced within occupational engagement as a required foundation to the profession (Pierce, 2014).

The dimensions of meaning within occupations of daily life have been considered in terms of “doing, being, belonging and becoming” (Hammell, 2004: 296). Seminal author, Hammell (2004) built on the earlier work of Wilcock

(1998:341) who proposed that occupation was dependent on meaning, rather than just purpose, as a synthesis of “doing, being and becoming”, and Rebeiro *et al.*'s (2001:493) addition of “belonging”. Hammell (2004:301) explored “doing” in terms of keeping busy, exploring new opportunities, envisioning future engagement and contributing to others; where doing provides structure, affirmation of competence and self-worth through being valued and capable. The ontological concept of “being”, concerned with existence and sense of self, has been related to meaning from chosen occupations concerned with pleasure and appreciation (Hammell, 2004: 301). “Belonging” refers to the importance of relationships and connectedness, including interaction, support and feeling included, as a central concept of meaning from occupation (Hammell, 2004:302). Finally, “becoming” refers to meaning associated with a process of change over time and occupation that enables participants to envision future selves and new opportunities for who they wish to become in relation to what they consider to be worthwhile (Hammell, 2004:302).

Early occupational science research was been criticised for its individualistic perspective (Dickie, Cutchin and Humphrey, 2006). A challenge has been presented to consider the wider context of occupation beyond individualistic understanding, with meaning relating to the interconnected concepts of “the call, being with and possibilities” (Reed, Hocking and Smythe, 2010:140). “The call” relates to the cares and concerns, influenced by society, that prompt people to take action; “being-with” refers to the connection with others through occupation; and “possibilities” relates to how occupations demonstrate to self and others what people are becoming in the context of time and communities (Reed,

Hocking and Smythe, 2010:146). Similarly, Hasselkus (2011) refers to a continuum of contexts, of uniqueness and community, from self-definitions of meaning to social definitions of meaning, as with Pierce's (2014) personal and cultural concepts of occupation (discussed in 1.1.1).

Further contributing to the debate regarding “doing, being, becoming and belonging”, following a systematic review, Hitch, Pépin and Stagnitti (2014a:231) suggested that the concepts of “doing and being” have been comprehensively developed, but that “becoming and belonging” remain under-developed, with scope for further exploration of their interrelationships. Hammell (2014) returned to these concepts to emphasise the importance of belonging; connectedness, including with nature; and interdependence; as positive correlates with wellbeing and meaningful occupational engagement; although this paper is based on professional opinion rather than primary research.

In a recent systematic review of empirical occupational therapy and occupational science research, Roberts and Bannigan (2018, *in press*) presented a meta-synthesis of personal meaning from engagement in occupation. Four common dimensions of personal meaning were presented: “sense of fulfilment”; “a sense of restoration”; “social, cultural and intergenerational connection”; and “identity shaping” and a clear link between meaningful occupation and wellbeing is evidenced (Roberts and Bannigan (2018, *no page number available*). Further studies exploring the meaning of occupational engagement (many of which featured in Roberts and Bannigan's 2018 review) have ranged from engagement in sports (Garci and Mandich,

2005); food related occupations (Beagan and D'Sylva, 2011), traditional crafts (Tzanidaki and Reynolds, 2011) and; music (Eidevall and Leufstadius, 2014); to broader clusters of occupations associated with spirituality (Beagan and Etowa, 2011), social activism (Fox and Quinn, 2012), and family routines (Koome, Hocking and Sutton, 2012).

Research into food related occupations explored the meaning of eating with others for older people (Bundgaard, 2005) and young people (Absolom and Roberts, 2011) with similar findings of meaning from social connection and shared routines. A number of studies explored the meaning of preparing traditional foods (Hocking, Wright-St Clair and Bunrayong, 2002; Wright-St Clair, *et al.* 2004; Shordike and Pierce, 2005; Beagan and D'Sylva, 2011), which gave the additional element of meaning from connection with culture across generations; the latter three were part of a shared multi-site research study and made effective use of focus groups to discuss experiences within established social clusters. The meaning of making tea has been considered in the UK (Hannam, 1997) and Japan (Sakuae and Reid, 2012) identifying meaning from socio-cultural and intergenerational connection, respectively. Whilst the quality of methodological reporting could now be considered poor, Hannam's (1997) paper signalled a new focus on meaning construction in social context within occupational science theory at the time, and was therefore influential (Hocking, 2000; Farias and Asaba, 2013).

Both food and craft related, Scheerer, *et al.* (2004) explored cake decorating; here themes of meaning were considered in relation to initial and continued engagement. Satisfaction, flow and health benefits prompted initial engagement; compliments from others and the opportunity to express care prompted continued engagement, plus an ability to engage in other related occupations (Scheerer, *et al.*, 2004). The consideration of initial and continued engagement, and the transference of ability to other occupations, is useful for informing the process of engagement in occupation. A number of articles considered traditional craft related occupations (Boerema, Russell and Aguilar, 2010; Tzanidaki and Reynolds, 2011; Pöllänen, 2013; Stephenson, *et al.*, 2013; Watters, *et al.*, 2013). Meaning was associated with identity, empowerment, social connection, employment, wellbeing, and the use of craft as a metaphor and coping strategy for life circumstances. As with the food related occupations research however, there was high representation of participants who are female and have immigrated.

Research into music related occupations suggested that meaning was associated with social connection, creating and expressing identity, achievement, and improved health and wellbeing (Jacob, Guptill and Sumsion, 2009; Roberts and Farrugia, 2013; Eidevall and Leufstadius, 2014). Likewise, research into the meaning of sport related occupations included sea kayaking (Taylor and McGruder, 1996); dragon boating (Unruh and Elvin, 2004); wheelchair basketball (Garci and Mandich, 2005); skateboarding (Haines, Smith and Baxter, 2010); walking (Wensley and Slade, 2012); circle dancing (Borges de Costa and Cox, 2016); and cycling (Feighan and Roberts, 2017). These

also shared concepts in relation to social connection, achievement and wellbeing (see section 1.5 for further discussion on the latter four papers). Where participants were overcoming illness or disability (Taylor and McGruder, 1996; Unruh and Elvin, 2004; Garci and Mandich, 2005), competition was particularly valued as an indication of regaining control over health. Similarly, in studies of the meaning of occupations for older people in relation to play (Hoppes, Wilcox and Graham, 2001) and computer use (Aguilar, Boerema and Harrison, 2010) competition and feeling in control respectively, were highly valued.

Ikiugu and Pollard (2015) conducted an autobiographical study exploring how workers construct meaning in their lives. This retrospectively reviewed samples of writing from a project capturing the life experiences of working class people: “worker-writers” and led to the assertion that people use occupations to construct or discover meaning in their lives (Ikiugu and Pollard, 2015:33). Routes to meaning making were identified as: connection to something bigger than oneself, to others, culture and to temporal context; fulfilment through exploration, creativity and social responsibility; competence, dignity, identity and an ability to negotiate change (Ikiugu and Pollard, 2015:30).

Further to these empirical studies, a few additional literature-based studies focused on the meaning of specific occupations have been completed. Russell (2008:87) synthesised international literature on ‘the form, function and meaning of tagging’ (a type of graffiti). This was not conducted as a systematic review (as might be expected prior to the PRISMA guidance, Moher *et al.*, 2009).



However, it combined literature from research on education, art and design, public health, cultural studies, social evolution, child psychology and psychiatry, school nursing, youth development, adolescence, sociology, deviant behaviour, and penology. This research explored tagging from an occupational science perspective (Russell, 2008) and was considered influential within the field of occupational science (Cutchin and Dickie, 2012). The findings suggest that meaning was derived from “fame, belonging, risk taking and status”; with health promoting qualities, such as “developing and earning respect, loyalty and problem solving” (Russell, 2008:87), despite the fact that graffiti is also considered socially unacceptable by the wider community. Courtney (2015:170) conducted a scoping review on contemporary pilgrimage from an occupational perspective. Papers were drawn from broad research contexts including culture, psychology, nursing, tourism, religion and ritual, spirituality, anthropology, mental health and social science. The findings suggest that meaning associated with pilgrimage is derived from experience of health, wellbeing and sociological influence. The discussion explored links to other occupational literature in relation to “narrative, empowerment, spirituality, ritual, mental health, physical activity, aging and the occupational perspective of health” (Courtney, 2015:177). Finally, Genter, *et al.*'s (2015:593) systematic review on ‘the contribution of allotment gardening to health and wellbeing’ retrieved 10 papers with transparent process; two of these were published in occupational therapy journals, the remainder were from a range of journals focused on health psychology, psychiatry, environmental health, social science and horticulture. The findings suggest that allotment gardening as an occupation promotes meaning and wellbeing were derived from social network, stress-relief, healthier lifestyle, contact with nature and personal development (Genter, *et al.*, 2015).

These literature-based studies have drawn on wide, inter-professional contexts to address occupational science informed review questions, in-keeping with the inter-disciplinary mission of occupational science (Pierce, 2012).

Despite the diversity of topic, the findings from all of the occupational meaning studies discussed above, suggest that occupational engagement can be influenced by meaning associated with increased self-awareness and achievement, connection with others and a sense of health and wellbeing. Whilst these themes resonate with “doing, being, becoming and belonging” (Hammell, 2014), it could be argued that there is a missing link for how this relates to occupational therapy practice in terms of understanding how meaning informs the process of establishing engagement. Whilst the concepts of “becoming” (Hammell, 2014) and “possibilities” (Reed, Hocking and Smythe, 2010:146) suggest a dynamic process, it remains unclear how aspirations for occupation become established. Scheerer, *et al.*, (2004) considered how the meaning of occupation related to initial and continued engagement, and the transference to other occupations; Carlson (1996) and Carlson, *et al.* (2014) explored the self-perpetuation and repetition of occupations; however these concepts are under-developed in terms of an evidence base for the process of becoming engaged in occupation (Hitch, Pépin and Stagnitti, 2014a).

Occupational therapy models of practice have identified dimensions of occupation and the process of occupational therapy practice (Bass, Baum and Christiansen, 2015; Taylor, 2017). However, the processes by which people initiate and sustain engagement in activity from an occupational perspective

could still be further explored (Polatajko *et al.*, 2007). The occupational therapy profession continues to draw on allied disciplines, including psychology and sociology to inform understanding of human behaviour (Polatajko *et al.*, 2007; Hitch, Pépin and Stagnitti, 2014a). Occupational therapy has a growing remit in health promotion (Public Health England, 2015b). Occupational therapists may benefit from a greater understanding of the potential opportunities presented by outdoor adventure in terms of meaningful engagement, as a therapeutic tool, and as a health promotion tool; and also how the meaning of occupational participation influences the dynamic process of 'becoming' engaged in occupation.

### 1.1.3 Health promotion

Globally and nationally health providers are facing a number of significant challenges. Growing and aging populations and an increase in the number of people with non-communicable diseases, largely driven by lifestyle choices (World Health Organization, 2016), are among the factors that are considered to be stretching health resources beyond capacity (National Health Service England, 2014).

The World Health Organization's global action plan for non-communicable diseases (World Health Organization, 2013) has the target of reducing the global prevalence of insufficient physical activity by 10% by 2025. Physical inactivity is identified as the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality (World Health Organization, 2015). In terms of the burden of disease: it has been

estimated that physical inactivity causes 6% of coronary heart disease; 7% of type 2 diabetes; 10% of breast cancer; and 10% of colon cancer (Lee *et al.*, 2012). In terms of life expectancy: it has been estimated that physical inactivity causes 9% of premature mortality (Lee *et al.*, 2012).

Changing behaviour in relation to physical activity could reduce premature death, illness and costs to society by avoiding a substantial proportion of cancers, vascular dementias and circulatory diseases (Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 2010). Cost data, collected at clinical commissioning group level, suggests that physical inactivity costs the NHS in England more than £450 million a year (Public Health England, 2016). However, this analysis focused on only five disease areas (ischemic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, breast cancer, colon/rectum cancer, and diabetes mellitus) and did not consider some important health conditions (due to lack of attributable data), including obesity, musculoskeletal health, mental health and functional health (Public Health England, 2016). An earlier report, with much wider scope, "Everybody active, every day" (Public Health England, 2014a) stated that health problems associated with inactivity were deemed to be costing the UK economy an estimated £7.4 billion a year, although it is unclear how this figure was established.

These financial pressures are driving the need for efficient practice, based on innovative research that focusses on improving and protecting health and wellbeing, to be a priority for Public Health England (2014b). However, political rhetoric suggesting that individuals need to change actions and behaviour as

the solution to their problems, avoids recognising wider societal influence and responsibility (Garrett, 2015). It has been argued that this stems from a neoliberal political approach with a reduction in government intervention and spending on welfare (Russell, 2014). Casting social problems as matters of individual behaviour raises questions of interpretation of the concept of human agency (Parsell, Eggins and Marston, 2017). Bandura (1997a, 2006) suggested that beliefs of self-efficacy constitute human agency; whereas Bourdieu (1984) emphasises the role of habitus, field and capital in terms of understanding personal agency within societal context. A socio-cultural perspective can illuminate the local and global influences on the way individuals construct identity and lifestyle practices (Back *et al.*, 2012), (see 3.6.1). Consideration of occupational engagement within socio-cultural context may help to address this.

Further to the correlation between levels of activity and physical health, there is increasing evidence of the positive impact of physical activity on mental health (Carless, 2012; Cole, 2014), particularly when in an outdoor setting (Frühauf *et al.*, 2016; Rogerson *et al.*, 2016; Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2016). This is pertinent, given the suggested high prevalence of poor physical health and lifestyle behaviours in individuals with severe mental illness (Scott and Happell, 2011). People with mental ill-health are more likely to do less physical activity and have higher levels of obesity than the general population (Department of Health, 2014). This is heightened by poverty and social discrimination, prompting a role for health professionals to support people with mental health

problems to be more active to improve both their mental and physical health (Department of Health, 2014).

Allied health professionals have a key role to play in health promotion (Public Health England, 2015a, b), however, a systematic literature review of allied health professions and health promotion (Needle *et al.*, 2011) found that the quality of research in this area is generally weak and that this needs to be addressed to better reflect and inform practice. Health promotion has been defined as:

*“...the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health. It moves beyond a focus on individual behaviour towards a wide range of social and environmental interventions.”* (The World Health Organization, 2016b - no page number available)

The significance of environmental context, in addition to individual behaviour here is consistent with Pollard and Sakellariou's (2012) suggestion to consider occupation in social, historical and political context (see 1.1). Evidence-based practice, pro-active health promotion and innovation in novel arenas are important areas of concern for occupational therapy practice, education and research (Campbell *et al.*, 2010, Christiansen and Matuska, 2010). A role for occupational therapy within health promotion has been recognised for some time (Thibeault and Hébert, 1997; Moll *et al.*, 2013). In the UK, occupational therapy is considered to be an integral part of the public health workforce, specifically with a role to play in relation to promoting physical activity (Public Health England 2015b). The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2012) suggest that any primary care worker offering lifestyle guidance should be identifying and advising adults in line with the UK physical activity guidelines.

It is well documented that exercise is linked to improved health and UK government policies consistently promote physical activity as a means of maintaining physical and mental health (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2012). However, only 56% of adults meet the Chief Medical Officers' guidelines of 150 minutes of physical activity per week (Her Majesty's Government (2014). The UK National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2012:1) guidance "Walking and Cycling" states that walking should be promoted by public health practitioners as a means to achieve recommended levels of physical activity; a view also represented within World Health Organization guidance (Kahlmeier *et al.*, 2014). Evidence suggests that established behavioural change models such as Prochaska and Diclemente's (1986) model considering readiness to change and Bandura's (1986) model of self-efficacy continue to be used successfully within physical activity programmes (Martín-Borràs *et al.*, 2014; Voskuil and Robbins, 2015) (see section 1). However, Biddle *et al.* (2010) presented the case that understanding mechanisms for achieving change in relation to physical activity participation is still a priority area for investigation, and this opinion continues to be prevalent in current guidance (NICE, 2018). It has been suggested that an occupational perspective of population health is required to address problems linked to human occupations as both cause and cure (Frank, 2014), and that greater understanding of the *process* of occupational engagement would be beneficial (Polatajko *et al.*, 2007). This thesis explores how meaning relates to the process of occupational engagement in terms of initiating, sustaining and returning to engagement in outdoor adventure.

#### 1.1.4 Outdoor adventure and physical activities in nature

The opportunities for outdoor adventure, and other activities within green-space that promote contact with nature and physical activity, are also being presented within population health and health promotion literature (O'Brien, Williams and Stewart, 2010). The UK Government Department of Health recently cited both the use of outdoor space for health reasons, and physical activity, as significant indicators in relation to determinants of public health (2016:47,74). Historically outdoor adventure activities have been used to facilitate experiential education (Association of Experiential Education, 2016) and adventure therapy (Gass, Gillis and Russell, 2012; Fernee *et al.*, 2017). Outdoor adventure activities can be defined as human-powered activities in a natural environment (Dickson, Gray and Mann, 2008) with an element of real or perceived risk management (Ewert and Sithorp, 2014). Examples of activities may therefore include rock or ice climbing, mountaineering, caving, mountain biking and paddling in a kayak or canoe on moving water (Association of Experiential Education, 2016). Outdoor adventure can offer meaningful experiences associated with being outdoors (Revell, Duncan and Cooper, 2014), connection with wilderness (Hoyer, 2012; Freeman *et al.*, 2017), managing risk (Ewert and Sithorp, 2014) and increased levels of physical activity (Thompson Coon *et al.*, 2011). It is also suggested that physical activity in an outdoor environment prompts intention for further engagement, due to a sense of restoration (Thompson Coon *et al.*, 2011) and enjoyment (Focht, 2009). Participants therefore engage longer term in these occupations as they seek to re-experience nature (Freeman *et al.*, 2017).



In a systematic scoping review by the UK Forestry Commission considering 93 empirical journal articles, O'Brien, Williams and Stewart (2010) claim that the evidence for positive health outcomes of access to woodlands and greenspace is persuasive because of the number and consistency of studies. This review identified key health benefits of urban trees, woods and forests, including physical benefits associated with obesity, life expectancy, heart rate, blood pressure and increased physical activity; attention and cognitive benefits associated with restoration, mood, self-esteem and life satisfaction; and social contact through community cohesion (O'Brien, Williams and Stewart, 2010). Similarly, with the broader definition of 'outdoor environments', in a scoping study on the 'health-promoting impact of outdoor environments', Abraham, Sommerhalder, and Abel (2010:59) reviewed 120 qualitative studies and considered the health promoting characteristics of landscapes in relation to physical, mental and social wellbeing. As with the O'Brien, Williams and Stewart (2010) review, conclusions include that certain landscapes have the potential to reduce stress, and promote physical activity and social integration (Abraham, Sommerhalder, and Abel, 2010:59). Consistent with this in relation to stress, Haluza, Schobauer and Cervinka's (2014:5445) narrative review on 'the physiological effects of experiencing outdoor nature' identified 17 studies and concluded that nature has a harmonizing effect of on physiological stress reactions across all body systems. Likewise, in a qualitative systematic review by Orr *et al.* (2016), 26 papers were retrieved, with transparent process, to consider how older people describe their sensory experiences of the natural world. Thematic analysis led to discussion of sensory experiences, including pleasure and enjoyment from viewing nature, being and doing in nature and the subsequent positive impact on wellbeing and quality of life (Orr *et al.*, 2016).

In relation to physical activity in the outdoors, in a transparently conducted scoping review of predominantly quantitative research, Andkjær and Arvidsen (2015:25) provide an overview of studies exploring the significance of natural environments to active outdoor recreation, retrieving 51 studies. They conclude that natural environments, including the design of parks and trails, do have a significant impact on peoples' physical activity and recommend further qualitative research to understand this relationship (Andkjær and Arvidsen, 2015). Similarly, Thompson Coon *et al.* (2011) conducted a systematic review and narrative synthesis of 11 controlled trials, (conducted in accordance with the National Health Service Centre for Reviews and Dissemination) to answer: 'does participating in physical activity in outdoor natural environments have a greater effect on physical and mental wellbeing than physical activity indoors?' (Thompson Coon *et al.*, 2011:1761). They concluded that, due to a sense of restoration and higher levels of enjoyment and wellbeing, people are more likely to sustain engagement in exercise where they experience connection with nature (Thompson Coon *et al.*, 2011). However, they also state that the methodological quality of the papers retrieved is poor, revealing a need for more robust research of the potential advantages of outdoor exercise and the influence of these on the sustainability of physical activity (Thompson Coon *et al.*, 2011).

More recently, Lovell *et al.* (2015:8) completed a mixed-method systematic review of published and grey literature on the health and wellbeing benefits of environmental enhancement and conservation activities, also known as the "green gym". They retrieved 26 papers, 13 quantitative and 13 qualitative. A

robust review method was evidenced, including the selection process, quality evaluation and use of an experienced review team. The heterogeneity of evidence prompted a narrative synthesis. The findings suggest that the quantitative studies were of poor quality and inconclusive. Qualitative studies, of which only three were deemed good quality, indicated the benefits of conservation activities in relation to exposure to natural environments, achievement, enjoyment and social contact (Lovell *et al.*, 2015). A further review with the same team and topic (with 19 papers), reported on the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (Husk *et al.*, 2016), also stated that people felt better, and valued social contact, a sense of achievement, being in nature and the provision of structure to time (Husk *et al.*, 2016).

Focused more specifically on outdoor adventure activities, Dickson, Gray and Mann's (2008) catalogue of 'outdoor adventure activity benefits' identified 117 publications (of which 89 were research). This systematic review was conducted for the Outdoor Council of Australia and followed a rigorous process that was transparently presented. The findings indicated psycho-social, psychological, physical and spiritual benefits, particularly in relation to "developing self-efficacy, intellectual flexibility, personal skills and relationship building" (Dickson, Gray and Mann's (2008: iv). The development of values in relation to environmental stewardship was also highlighted (Dickson, Gray and Mann, 2008). Similarly, a meta-analysis of adventure therapy outcomes and moderators (Bowen and Neill, 2013:28) reporting on quantitative research from 197 studies, concluded that adventure therapy programmes facilitate psychological, behavioural, emotional and interpersonal change. The literature

above indicates consistency, both in relation to the suggestion that outdoor adventure can improve health and wellbeing, and in relation to a call for further robust research to evidence this. This thesis considers the opportunities presented by outdoor adventure to promote health and wellbeing.

#### 1.1.5 Outdoor adventure within occupational therapy

A recent article by Jeffery and Wilson (2017) stated they were unable to find any primary research papers, and limited theoretical papers (Levack, 2003; Reed, 2003), on the use of adventure therapy within intervention by occupational therapists; though they did not clarify the search terms they used. However, they present the case that adventure therapy and occupational therapy share philosophical and practice elements and evidence this through their findings from interviews with seven occupational therapists that use adventure therapy in New Zealand (Jeffery and Wilson, 2017). Prior to this, a literature review exploring the evidence base for outdoor recreation as an occupation to improve quality of life for people with enduring mental health, presented some good justification, but only from wider literature (Frances, 2006). None of the papers identified gave robust evidence of outdoor adventure within occupational therapy practice, and the review was not conducted as a systematic review, however, it included four papers by occupational therapists (Frances, 2006). Two reviewed the same project and described occupational therapists using outdoor adventure within occupational therapy as early intervention for psychosis, but had no primary data (Parlato, Lloyd and Bassett, 1999; Lloyd, Bassett and Samra, 2000). The other two were not in peer reviewed journals (Lewis, 2002; Raine and Ryan, 2002). Lewis (2002)

described a therapeutic surfing project and Raine and Ryan (2002) presented a case vignette from an occupational therapy programme for personal development using outdoor adventure. However, Frances (2016) usefully integrates findings arising from these papers with qualitative and single-case study design in relation to outdoor recreation and mental health and introduces an occupational science perspective. The discussion explores 'how occupations can facilitate quality of life and self-identity', 'outdoor recreation as an occupation', 'risk issues', and 'outdoor recreation as an occupation in keeping with governing legislation' (Frances, 2006:183/4). The paper concludes with the recommendation to practitioners to view outdoor recreation as a viable therapeutic medium for meaningful engagement and identify development. This short report provides evidenced opinion to support the therapeutic use of outdoor adventure within occupational therapy and an overview of the literature at that time is presented with the prompt for greater consideration of an occupational science perspective within research of outdoor adventure (Frances, 2006).

Papers by occupational therapists exploring the use of outdoor adventure activities for health-related outcomes include consideration of horse riding, sea kayaking and dragon boating. Bracher (2000) presents literature supporting the use of horse riding within occupational therapy and case studies as anecdotal evidence from the author's experience; however the methodology and ethical considerations of presenting these case studies is not provided. Similarly, Apel (2007) also presents case study examples of therapeutic horse riding within occupational therapy, but without evidence of research process. Taylor and

McGruder (1996) explored the meaning of sea-kayaking for three participants with acquired spinal cord injury; methodological and ethical considerations are clearly reported, although the study is now over 20 years old. The findings suggest the kayakers valued novelty, challenge, sociability, the natural environment; and “perception of the self as able in the eyes of others” (Taylor and McGruder, 1996:39). Whilst the research was completed by occupational therapists, and the kayaking group was established for people with disabilities, it is not clear whether or not the kayaking was part of occupational therapy intervention. Similarly, occupational therapists Unruh and Elvin (2004) explored women’s experience of breast cancer and dragon-boat racing in terms of meaningfulness. Whilst the dragon-boat racing was specifically for survivors of breast cancer, and the research was reported by occupational therapists, the activity was not facilitated as occupational therapy intervention. The findings suggest the significance of dragon boat-racing related to physical and emotional wellbeing; competition; social support; and connectedness (Unruh and Elvin, 2004).

Further research papers involving outdoor activity, completed by occupational therapists, but not within an intervention context, include Wensley and Slade’s (2012) walking study (involving interviews with walkers who were students) and Feighan and Roberts (2017) study of cycling (which recruited participants through a cycling organisation). Wensley and Slade (2012) found that walking was meaningful in relation to: social connectedness, wellbeing, connection to nature and achievement from a challenge (see section 3.1.2). Feighan and Roberts (2017) conclude that cycling can: be meaningful, alter mind-set and

emotions, contribute towards identity and offer opportunities for connection with others. These studies took an occupational science perspective to identify the meaning experienced through engagement in occupation and suggest the potential for these physical activities to be used within occupational therapy intervention.

In addition to these research papers, some conference abstracts also demonstrated support for occupational therapists using outdoor and related activities in their practice. This includes a descriptive account of wilderness adventure therapy with adolescents led by an occupational therapist (Crisp and O'Donnell, 1998) and, more recently occupational therapy intervention using climbing to promote recovery from drug and alcohol dependency (Laidlaw, 2015). With broader consideration of outdoor physical activities, Dickson (2017) reported on the use of cycling and walking; and Pettican, Hynes and Pearson (2015) presented their research on the use of football, both within adult mental health services. Overall, the literature suggests consistent enthusiasm for the use of outdoor adventure and related activities, but limited empirical studies linking occupational therapy with outdoor adventure. This thesis considers outdoor adventure from an occupational science perspective with a view to informing occupational therapy practice.

## **1.2 Research rationale, question, aims and objectives**

The background literature explored in this chapter demonstrates a call for research that explores the meaning of occupation (Pierce, 2014) within socio-

cultural context (Hasselkus, 2011; Pollard and Sakellariou, 2012) to provide the underpinning theory for occupational therapy practice. The relationship between meaning and the dynamic process of initiating, establishing and sustaining engagement in occupation, in terms of “becoming” is underdeveloped (Hitch, Pépin and Stagnitti, 2014a:231). Better understanding of the process of engagement could help inform occupational therapy and health promotion practice.

Outdoor adventure activities can offer occupations that prompt an increase in physical activity and connection with nature that promotes health and wellbeing (Thompson Coon *et al.*, 2011). Occupational therapy literature demonstrates that occupational therapists are using outdoor adventure activities within their practice, but with limited empirical evidence linking the two (Jeffery and Wilson, 2017). Whilst there are some occupational science studies exploring the meaning of sea kayaking (Taylor and McGruder, 1996), dragon boating (Unruh and Elvin, 2004), walking (Wensley and Slade, 2012); and cycling (Feighan and Roberts, 2017) the meaning of outdoor adventure more broadly has not been explored within the occupational science literature.

The rationale for this thesis is therefore to provide a contribution to occupational science and occupational therapy literature in relation to the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure from an occupational science perspective to inform health promotion and occupational therapy practice.



### **The research question:**

The research question is therefore: “What is the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure from an occupational science perspective and how can this inform health promotion and occupational therapy practice?”

### **The research aims are to:**

- Explore the meaning of outdoor adventure for participants
- Explore the opportunities presented by outdoor adventure to promote health and wellbeing
- Explore how this meaning relates to the process of occupational engagement in terms of initiating, sustaining and returning to engagement.

These aims have been addressed through five elements:

- *Element 1.* The meaning of outdoor adventure activities: a qualitative meta-synthesis.
- *Element 2.* Factors affecting sustained engagement in walking for health: a focus group study.
- *Element 3.* Outdoor adventure autobiographies as exemplars of occupational engagement: an interpretative phenomenological analysis study.
- *Element 4.* The meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure activities: an interpretative phenomenological analysis study.
- *Element 5.* A thematic synthesis of the findings.

Table 1 provides an overview of the research question and aims, and the objectives for the five elements informing the thesis.

**Research question:**

What is the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure from an occupational science perspective and how can this inform health promotion and occupational therapy practice?

**Research aims:**

1. Explore the meaning of outdoor adventure for participants
2. Explore the opportunities presented by outdoor adventure to promote health and wellbeing
3. Explore how meaning relates to the process of occupational engagement in terms of initiating, sustaining and returning to engagement in outdoor adventure.

<b>Ch.</b>	<b>Element:</b>	<b>Data collection method/short title:</b>	<b>Aims</b>	<b>Objectives:</b>
<b>2.</b>	<i>Element 1.</i> The meaning of outdoor adventure activities: a qualitative meta-synthesis.	Meta-synthesis element	1.	<i>Establish the current literature on the meaning of outdoor adventure to adult participants:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify the meaning experienced by adult participants engaging in outdoor adventure activities,</li> <li>• synthesise the meaning described.</li> </ul>
<b>4.</b>	<i>Element 2.</i> Factors affecting sustained engagement in walking for health: a focus group study.	Focus group element	2. 3.	<i>Explore outdoor adventure in a community context, to consider:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the experience of the occupation of walking in relation to health and wellbeing;</li> <li>• factors that lead to sustained engagement in walking;</li> <li>• factors influencing the sustainable provision of walking groups to inform practice.</li> </ul>
<b>5.</b>	<i>Element 3.</i> Outdoor adventure autobiographies as exemplars of occupational engagement: an	Autobiographies element	1. 3.	<i>Explore the meaning of outdoor adventure in cultural context:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to explore meaning in relation to how occupational engagement was initiated;</li> </ul>

	interpretative phenomenological analysis study.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to explore meaning in relation to how occupational engagement was sustained;</li> <li>• to explore meaning in relation to returning to occupational engagement after an interruption.</li> </ul>
<b>6.</b>	<i>Element 4.</i> The meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure activities: an interpretative phenomenological analysis study.	Interviews element	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>	<i>Explore outdoor adventure in an individual context:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify meaning experienced by participants engaging in outdoor adventure,</li> <li>• explore how this meaning relates to the process of initiating, sustaining and returning to engagement after an interruption,</li> <li>• consider how these features can inform occupational therapy practice and health promotion.</li> </ul>
<b>7.</b>	<i>Element 5:</i> Synthesis of findings	Thematic synthesis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>	<i>Thematic synthesis of the findings.</i>

Table 1. An overview of the research question, aims, objectives and methods within the five elements informing the thesis.

### **1.3 Summary of the thesis**

This introductory chapter has explored literature in relation to occupational science, occupational therapy, health promotion and outdoor adventure to present the rationale for the thesis. In chapter 2, element 1: a systematic review and meta-synthesis of wider inter-disciplinary literature on the meaning of outdoor adventure to participants is presented. Data was gathered using a systematic search strategy to locate research exploring the meaning of outdoor adventure. A meta-synthesis approach was used to aggregate the findings of included qualitative research studies. Ten findings were synthesised from participants within 22 research studies. The meta-synthesis established that outdoor adventure can offer meaning to participants. Further research was required to explore how this meaning influences the process of engagement in outdoor adventure and its relevance for practice. The meta-synthesis also indicated that phenomenology would offer a useful methodological approach to explore the meaning of lived experience of outdoor adventure and interconnection between body and world.

The philosophy informing the methodology for the thesis is explored in chapter 3. Phenomenology is discussed with consideration of epistemology and ontology and the position of the researcher in relation to the thesis. In chapter 4, element 2, a community practice context is considered in relation to factors affecting sustained engagement in walking for health. Data were gathered using three focus groups to consider the experience of eight walking group members and six walk leaders. The findings established that an occupational

perspective of participation can usefully inform practice and that further exploration of the process of engagement would be beneficial.

In chapter 5, element 3, outdoor adventure autobiographies were analysed as exemplars of occupational engagement. Stories from six autobiographies by adventurers, were considered using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis to focus on personal meaning. As published documents in the public domain, the autobiographies offered insight to the wider cultural context of outdoor adventure. The life span perspective offered by autobiography enabled discussion of meaning over time and consideration of how this meaning related to the process of engagement in outdoor adventure. The findings were used to establish an interview schedule for the next element. In chapter 6, element 4, the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure activities for eight individual participants was explored using interpretative phenomenological analysis.

Concepts arising from the findings were then thematically synthesised and presented in chapter 7, element 5, a thematic synthesis. Meaning was associated with a sense of *connection* to self, others, nature, the wider environment, time and place. Meaning was associated with engagement in outdoor adventure that was *congruent* with formative aspirations for identity, values and beliefs. The process of engagement in outdoor adventure was influenced by *convenience* and the ability to accommodate participation alongside other work and family routines, in terms of time, location and priorities. The process of engagement in outdoor adventure was influenced by the ability

to establish *confidence* in relation to developing social networks, physical skills and the knowledge required to participate in chosen occupations. The meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure was influenced by *context* in terms of occupational form, adaptation, equipment, risk, facilitators and barriers. In addition, the findings across studies demonstrated a change in the meaning of engagement in outdoor adventure over time and therefore a dynamic consideration of process, in terms of factors influencing initiating engagement, sustaining engagement and returning to engagement in outdoor adventure after an interruption may be useful to inform understanding of participation. Chapter 8 offers a final concluding discussion with consideration of the contribution and limitations of thesis.

#### **1.4 Reflexive account**

A hallmark of high quality qualitative research is that the researcher reflexively articulates their own position in relation to the research (Cohen and Crabtree, 2008) (see section 3.3.3 and 3.8). The Joanna Briggs Institute's (JBI, 2014:177) critical appraisal tool: "Qualitative Assessment and Review Instrument" (QARI) prompts consideration of whether "*there is a statement locating the researcher culturally or theoretically*" and if "*the influence of the researcher on the research, and vice versa, is addressed*" (see section 2.2.8). By way of addressing this, reflexive accounts are included throughout the thesis. In keeping with the narrative selection processes used in the autobiographies element (section 5), reflexive accounts throughout the thesis relate to 'big stories', 'small stories', 'crux stories' and 'core stories' (Bamberg, 2006). The reflexive account in this

chapter is part of the 'big' story, providing a brief overview of my life story in relation to the research topic to locate me as the researcher culturally.

***Part of the 'big' story – an outdoor adventure 'insider'***

*Firstly, and perhaps predictably, I have to confess to a personal life-long passion for outdoor adventure, in that way I am an 'insider' in relation to the participants in my research (Braun and Clarke, 2013). I grew up in the South West of England as an only child in a white middle class family, where I was introduced to camping, sea-swimming, wind surfing, cycling, and walking on coastal paths and moors. At University in Yorkshire, whilst studying occupational therapy in the early 1990s, I took up climbing, mountaineering and kayaking. I have worked as a trip leader and an assistant outdoor instructor in America and New Zealand, predominantly open boat canoeing, sea-kayaking and climbing. I have used a broad range of outdoor activities as a therapeutic tool within my practice as an occupational therapist in adult mental health services; my MSc dissertation evaluated this (Raine and Ryan, 2002). I have worked as a consultant and researcher for a charity promoting access to adventure expeditions for people with physical impairment through equipment design, specifically sailing, canoeing and white water rafting; joining expeditions in Iceland and Scotland. I have used adventure activities within my teaching as an experiential education tool; I evaluated this within studies for my Post Graduate Certificate in Further and Higher Education. I have supported the development and maintenance of occupational therapy student placements within role-emerging settings (Cooper and Raine, 2009) that use outdoor*

*adventure activities as a therapeutic tool, or adapt outdoor adventure activities to enable people with physical impairments to access them. I currently enjoy introducing my own family to a broad range of activities, particularly swimming, kayaking, camping, cycling, and climbing; and my children are teaching me to sail. It is with these personal and professional experiences and a strongly held belief that outdoor adventure is fun, enhances relationships, and promotes health and wellbeing, that I approached the thesis.*



## **Chapter 2. Element 1: The Meaning of Outdoor Adventure: a Qualitative Systematic Review and Meta-synthesis**

### **2.1 Introduction to chapter 2.**

Occupational scientists have consistently identified a need for critical perspectives of human occupation as a means of enhancing the theoretical underpinnings of the occupational therapy profession (Pollard, Sakellariou, Lawson-Porter, 2010). Exploration of the meaning of occupational engagement is a consistent and growing theme within occupational science (Eklund *et al.*, 2017; Ikiugu and Pollard, 2015). Despite defining core concepts that occupations are uniquely experienced, purposefully chosen and influence identity construction, there remains a need for deeper examination of subjective experiences (Watters *et al.*, 2013). In terms of outdoor adventure, with very limited consideration from an occupational science perspective (see 1.1.5), there is a need to look to the literature of other disciplines. Evidence that outdoor adventure can provide opportunities for meaningful occupation is presented within literature from the disciplines of geography (Riese and Vorkinn, 2002), leisure and tourism (Allman, *et al.*, 2009) and health psychology (Bowen and Neill, 2013). Roberts and Bannigan (2018 *in press*) suggest considering the dimensions of occupational meaning in relation to the bodies of work of other disciplines. At the outset, occupational science was intended to bring together a broad range of disciplines to investigate occupation (Pierce, 2012).

This systematic review and meta-synthesis was intended to identify and discuss the current literature across disciplines in relation to the meaning of outdoor adventure to participants. This chapter has been structured using the Preferred

Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) checklist (Moher *et al.*, 2009) and guidance within the PRISMA explanation and elaboration document (Liberati *et al.*, 2009). PRISMA was developed in response to recognition of a conceptual shortfall (Liberati *et al.*, 2009) in the previous, original guidance, the *QUality Of Reporting Of Meta-analyses* (QUOROM) statement (Moher *et al.*, 1999). Whilst QUOROM prompted greater transparency within review reporting, it did not consider the risk of bias at all levels and its use was limited to randomised controlled trials (Liberati *et al.*, 2009). The PRISMA checklist is a set of 27 reporting items for systematic reviews (PRISMA, 2017) (see appendix 1.). The protocol for this systematic review was published with Prospero (Raine *et al.*, 2016), see appendix 2.

### 2.1.1 Background literature

Preliminary searching identified that there are currently no systematic reviews on the meaning of outdoor adventure. However, as explored in the introduction (section 1.1.4) there are a number of systematic reviews that have been completed on related topics. Systematic reviews within the discipline of occupational science on the meaning of occupation include Roberts and Bannigan's (2018 *in press*) systematic review and meta-synthesis of the personal meaning of occupation; Genter, *et al's* (2015) systematic review on allotment gardening; and Courtney's (2015) scoping review on contemporary pilgrimage. Further, non-systematic literature based studies include Russell's (2008:87) study of the meaning of tagging, and Frances' (2006) study on outdoor recreation for people with mental health problems. These studies consistently identified dimensions of meaning in relation to fulfilment, restoration,

social connection and identity (Roberts and Bannigan, 2018 *in press*). In addition, Frances (2006) and Genter, *et al.* (2015) highlighted the value of connection with nature for health and wellbeing.

Reviews that more specifically considered the positive impact on health and wellbeing of being in nature include: Abraham, Sommerhalder and Abel (2010); O'Brien, Williams and Stewart (2010); Haluza, Schobauer and Cervinka (2014); Andkjaer and Arvidsen (2015); Husk *et al.*, (2016); and Orr *et al.* (2016).

Reviews that considered the positive impact on health and wellbeing of doing physical activities in nature include: Dickson, Gray and Mann (2008); Thompson Coon, *et al.* (2011); Bowen and Neill (2013); Lovell *et al.*'s (2015). All the papers above demonstrate consensus that being in nature is considered to promote health and wellbeing; some suggest that activities in nature prompt further engagement in physical activity (Thompson Coon, *et al.*, 2011) and activity related to social connection and community cohesion (O'Brien, Williams and Stewart, 2010). However, most reviewers lamented the poor methodological quality of the studies they had retrieved (Thompson Coon, *et al.*, 2011; Lovell, *et al.*, 2015).

### 2.1.2 Aims and objectives

The purpose of the review is in relation to the first aim of the thesis (see 1.2), to consider the meaning of outdoor adventure to participants. The review question is therefore:

‘What is the meaning of outdoor adventure activities to adult participants?’

The objectives of this review are to:

- identify meaning experienced by adult participants engaging in outdoor adventure activities,
- synthesize the meaning described.

Secondary research, by way of a systematic review, is indicated to establish an overview of what is currently known within the field, in relation to the meaning of outdoor adventure, prior to further primary data collection.

## 2.2 Methodology

A systematic review provides a summary of all high-quality research relevant to a specific question (Bettany-Saltikov and McSherry, 2016). The current study followed the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) handbook (JBI, 2014). Hannes and Lockwood (2011) argue that pragmatism is the philosophical foundation for the Joanna Briggs meta-aggregative approach. Despite the advances in the guidance for the reporting of systematic reviews to include qualitative studies, there are still epistemological concerns about the appropriateness of the use of a largely positivist approach to explore studies which may have been written from a post-positivist view (Marks and Sykes, 2004). However, the pragmatic benefits (Yardley and Marks, 2004) of a structured approach to inform a

foundation level exploration of occupation, with the view to informing practice were considered to outweigh these concerns.

As demonstrated by the papers discussed in section 2.1.1, reviews can range from a non-systematic literature review (Frances, 2006; Russell, 2008), to a systematic review with single method (Genter *et al.*, 2015; Orr *et al.*, 2016), or mixed method (Lovell *et al.*, 2015), a scoping review (Abraham, Sommerhalder and Abel, 2010; Andkjaer and Arvidsen, 2015; Courtney, 2015) or a comprehensive literature review. Recent additions to the list of review types include rapid reviews (Ball *et al.*, 2015); and realist reviews (Pearson *et al.*, 2015). Within each, data may be synthesised in a number of ways. Decisions as to the type of review are influenced by the review question, the amount and quality of literature available on the topic and reviewers' resources. This determines characteristics of the review, such as the inclusion of unpublished research and non-research papers.

Dundar and Fleeman (2017) recommend a pragmatic approach to search strategies, arguing the case that published literature is easier to locate, systematically and transparently search, and report; however there is a risk of publication bias. Also known as "positive results bias", publication bias occurs when papers are selectively submitted or selectively accepted in favour of papers with positive results (Booth, Sutton and Papaioannou, 2012:204). Inclusion of grey literature can help ameliorate this; however, the counterargument for the use of unpublished literature is that wider searching can be time-consuming, often with little impact on the overall results of the

review (Dundar and Fleeman, 2017). This is particularly the case when the review involves a critical appraisal of papers, as opposed to a scoping review. Other forms of bias include reviewer bias, in terms of selective screening of papers (Brunton, *et al.*, 2017) or the findings within them. In the current study this was reduced by using a team of reviewers, in line with Joanna Briggs Institute process (JBI, 2014), with two reviewers independently assessing the research articles through each screen, and the data extraction process. Guidance from 'The Reviewers Manual' (JBI, 2014) has been followed throughout and all reviewers had completed the JBI Critical Synthesis Review training.

Preliminary searches were conducted to clarify search terms and determine if any other reviews have explored this topic. Registers of reviews were checked for pre-existing and ongoing searches on the topic area. These searches included the databases listed within the search strategy below, and in addition the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) (2014) library of systematic reviews and protocols, the Cochrane library, the Campbell Collaboration Library, Prospero and DARE. It was established that the review, in terms of 'the meaning of outdoor adventure' had not been previously conducted. Preliminary searches also demonstrated sufficient primary qualitative research studies for a systematic review, rather than a scoping review. The methods used for collecting and analysing data are now presented.

### 2.2.1 Protocol and registration: Prospero

The process of consulting information specialists helped to refine the review question and search strategy, including establishing appropriate search terms and databases, and use of a reference managing tool (EndNote, 2017). In line with best practice, the protocol was then submitted to and published on the “Prospero international prospective register of systematic reviews” (Prospero, 2017; see appendix 2) and (Raine *et al.*, 2016). This is in accordance with the Joanna Briggs Institute Reviewers Manual which recommends that reviews state the following:

*“the objectives, inclusion criteria and methods of analysis for this review were specified in advance and documented in a protocol”* (JBI, 2014:121).

The review was then completed in accordance with the protocol, aside from the following deviations: the exclusion of unpublished research; the exclusion of quantitative studies; the use of the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) Qualitative Assessment and Review Instrument (QARI) (JBI, 2014: 177), in preference to the previously stated Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) tool (CASP, 2017). Qualitative research is more appropriate for the study of lived experience and meaning, once it had been established that these were available, quantitative studies were then excluded. The JBI QARI (2014) tool was used in preference to CASP (2017), due to its sensitivity to qualitative research (Hannes, Lockwood and Pearson, 2010).

### 2.2.2. Eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria were established using the mnemonic ‘PICO’ in accordance with the JBI reviewers’ manual (2014).

2.2.2.1 *Population*: The research population within the review included any person (over age 16), disabled or non-disabled, who has engaged in outdoor adventure activities and provided a description of the meaning it gives them. Participants were from across the life course and may have identified with either gender or none. Participants may have considered themselves to be from any cultural context or social group.

2.2.2.2 *Phenomena of interest*: The review considered qualitative research studies exploring the meaning to participants of engagement in any outdoor adventure activity, defined as activities in an outdoor environment with an element of exploration, risk or decision making. Studies focused on outdoor adventure activities to address education, therapeutic, corporate or management outcomes were excluded. Studies in relation to activities that are generally carried out outside, but did not have an adventurous or exploration element were also excluded, for example gardening, rugby or football

2.2.2.3 *Context*: The review considered studies that explore the meaning of engagement in outdoor adventure activities.

2.2.2.4 *Types of studies*: The review considered all published peer-reviewed primary research studies that focused on qualitative data including, but not limited to, designs such as phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, action research and feminist research. Studies published in English only were



considered for inclusion in this review. Studies published at any point in time were considered for inclusion in this review. Qualitative research was considered more appropriate for exploration of 'meaning' and quantitative studies were then excluded.

### 2.2.3. Information sources

The databases searched were: EBSCOhost: AMED, British Education Index (BEI), CINAHL Plus with Full Text, Environment Complete, ERIC, GreenFILE (EBSCO), MEDLINE (Ovid), SocINDEX; ProQuest: Australian Education Index, Periodicals Archive Online, PILOTS: Published International Literature on Traumatic Stress, PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO; Web of Science; and Scopus. The search period for the database search was January - March 2017.

### 2.2.4. Search

A three-step search strategy was utilized in this review. An initial limited search of MEDLINE and CINAHL was undertaken followed by an analysis of relevant articles to identify the words contained in the title and abstract and of the index terms used to describe the article. A second search using all identified keywords and index terms was then undertaken across all included databases, references were managed using EndNote. Thirdly, the reference list of all identified reports and articles were searched for additional studies. Electronic databases were searched using keywords and in accordance with search tools for each database. Reasons for inclusion and exclusion of studies were recorded on a PRISMA flow diagram (PRISMA, 2017). The reference lists of

the articles that were included in the review (after the critical appraisal screen) were scanned for further appropriate research articles. Articles arising from the reference search were discussed with the reviewing team.

#### 2.2.4.1 Initial search

The initial search was useful for establishing Boolean phrases, including identifying where words might be truncated with an asterisk and where this was problematic. For example, “alp\*” was not useful for capturing “alp” and “alpine” (in reference to mountaineering), because it also captures the word “alpha” which is unrelated to this review, likewise, “peak” and “ascend\*” were removed because of their frequent use in many other contexts. The aim of the review was to explore “meaning”, however in order to capture research that may have explored this concept from a different focus, “motivation”, “benefits” and “engagement” were added, with the use of truncation as follows: “meaning\* or motivat\* or benefi\* or engag\*” for the first search term. Initial searches captured many research articles exploring non-human subjects, therefore in order to exclude research relating to animals, the following was added: “people or person\* or participant\* or individual\* or member\*”. Thirdly, only qualitative studies were required, however not all qualitative studies use this as a descriptor, so the following phrase was used with the aim of capturing all qualitative studies: “qualitative or ethnograph\* or narrative or interview or phenomenolog\* or “grounded theory” or “focus group” or “action research”. Finally, terms relating to outdoor adventure were added after extensive searching using each phrase to establish terms for the most relevant usage.

### 2.2.4.2 Second search terms

The following searches were all run through all included databases for a ‘title and abstract’ search, see Table 2 for the search terms used in all databases.

<b>Search 1</b>	
	meaning* or motivat* or benefi* or engag*
AND	people or person* or participant* or individual* or member*
AND	qualitative or ethnograph* or narrative or interview or phenomenolog* or “grounded theory” or “focus group” or “action research”
AND	adventure or outdoor or wild* or expedition or nature-based or “natural environment” or greenspace or greengym or “green space” or “green gym” or bluespace or bluegym or “blue space” or “blue gym” or “extreme sport*” or “water sport*” or “snow sport*” or “mountain sport*”
<b>Search 2</b>	
	meaning* or motivat* or benefi* or engag*
AND	people or person* or participant* or individual* or member*
AND	qualitative or ethnograph* or narrative or interview or phenomenolog* or “grounded theory” or “focus group” or “action research”
AND	recreation* or leisure
AND	outdoor* or outside
<b>Search 3</b>	
	meaning* or motivat* or benefi* or engag*
AND	people or person* or participant* or individual* or member*
AND	qualitative or ethnograph* or narrative or interview or phenomenolog* or “grounded theory” or “focus group” or “action research”
AND	woodland or woods or forest or ice or rock or mountain or hill or alps or cliff or coast or bush
AND	walk* or run* or bik* or climb* or hik* or trek* or skiing or abseil* or tramp* or craft
<b>Search 4</b>	
	meaning* or motivat* or benefi* or engag*
AND	people or person* or participant* or individual* or member*
AND	qualitative or ethnograph* or narrative or interview or phenomenolog* or “grounded theory” or “focus group” or “action research”
AND	river or ocean or sea or lake
AND	swim* or sail* or kayak* or canoe* or boat* or paddl* or surf* or wake-board or dragon* or skiing

Table 2. Search terms for the title and abstract search (in all databases).

See appendix 3 for the number of articles retrieved from each database with these search terms.

## 2.2.5. Study selection

The following screening tool was then used for the title and abstract and full text screens for study selection.

Code:	Reviewer decision:	Reason:
1	Include	Research meets the inclusion criteria, with regards to content to progress to the full text screen.
2	Unsure	Research may meet the inclusion criteria, further information and discussion between reviewers required.
0 A	Exclude	The population is not adults, participants are under 16 and/or the primary focus is on educational outcomes.
0 B	Exclude	The primary focus is not on meaning, participants may be exploring other outcomes of therapeutic intervention or corporate training.
0 C	Exclude	The primary focus is not outdoor adventure; it may be conservation, wildlife encounters, environmental design or gardening.
0 D	Exclude	The article is not based on primary qualitative research; it may be quantitative research, a literature review or an opinion piece.
0 E	Exclude	The research/text is not published in a peer-reviewed research journal; it may be a conference paper, thesis or book.
0 F	Exclude	The research is unrelated to the review question, it may use search terms in a different context, metaphorically, or as a name.

Table 3. Screening tool for study selection.

The title and abstract of each of the retrieved articles were considered and coded by two independent reviewers using the screening tool in table 2. See appendix 4 for the number of articles scored in relation to each category at the title and abstract screen, of 2111 records. Two reviewers then independently considered full text articles for inclusion in relation to content relevance for the review and allocated a code. Where the codes allocated by the two reviewers differed, these were discussed until a consensus was reached or taken forward to discussion with a third reviewer, in line with JBI protocol (JBI, 2014). See

appendix 5 for the number of articles scored in relation to each category at the full text screen, of 143 records. See appendix 6 for an illustration of the reviewers' discussion of excluded articles. The reference lists of all included articles were searched, with a further full text screen of relevant documents. See appendix 7 for a summary of the reference lists search from included articles. See appendix 8 for the reasons for excluding articles from the reference list search.

#### 2.2.6. Data collection process

Data were collected from peer reviewed research journals reporting qualitative findings with regards to the meaning of outdoor adventure. Articles were retrieved through electronic databases where available. Some articles were retrieved from the British Library through inter-library loan. Some articles were retrieved from paper journals.

#### 2.2.7. Data items

Data items were research articles published within peer reviewed journals only (see 2.2).

#### 2.2.8. Risk of bias in individual studies

Articles that were selected for inclusion within the full text screen were progressed to a critical appraisal screen of methodological quality. These were assessed by two independent reviewers for methodological validity, prior to

inclusion in the review using standardized critical appraisal instruments from the Joanna Briggs Institute Qualitative Assessment and Review Instrument (JBI QARI) (JBI, 2014: 177), see appendix 9. Table 4 presents the scores of articles in the critical appraisal screen.

Study: \ Question:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Score:
Boniface, 2006	<b>U</b>	Y	Y	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	7 Include
Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	Y	Y	9 Include
Brymer and Gray, 2009	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	0 Exclude
Brymer and Oades, 2009	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	0 Exclude
Burke, Durand-Bush, Doell, 2010	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	8 Include
Fredrickson and Anderson, 1999	<b>U</b>	Y	Y	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	6 Include
Freeman <i>et al.</i> , 2016	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	10 Include
Hickman <i>et al.</i> , 2016	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	9 Include
Hinds, 2011	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	9 Include
Humberstone, 2011	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>N</b> <b>A</b>	<b>U</b>	0 Exclude
Kane and Tucker 2007	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	7 Include
Kerr and Hougue Mackenzie, 2012	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	7 Include
Leon <i>et al.</i> , 1997	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	0 Exclude
Loeffler, 2004	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	7 Include
Lusby and Anderson 2010	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	8 Include
Lynch and Dibben, 2016	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	Y	Y	8 Include
Miles and Wattchow, 2015	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	8 Include
Morse, (A) 2014	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	9 Include
Morse, (B) 2015	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	8 Include
Olafsdottir, 2013	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	Y	<b>U</b>	Y	8 Include

Pomfret, 2012	U	Y	Y	Y	Y	U	U	Y	U	Y	6	Include
Rickly-Boyd, 2012	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	U	U	Y	U	Y	7	Include
Riese and Vorkinn, 2002	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	0	Exclude
Roberson and Babic, 2009	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	0	Exclude
Simpson, Post and Tashman, 2014	Y	Y	U	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	9	Include
Svarstad, 2010	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	U	U	Y	8	Include
Taylor, 2010	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	U	U	Y	U	Y	7	Include
Varley, 2011	Y	U	U	U	U	Y	U	U	U	U	2	Exclude
Willig, 2008	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	U	U	Y	U	Y	7	Include
Total number "Unclear"	1	0	1	0	0	10	14	2	18	0		

Table 4. Critical appraisal of articles that meet the full screen criteria.

'The Reviewers Manual' (JBI, 2014) does not state a benchmark score for inclusion, reviewers are recommended to provide comments on the critical appraisal and selection process for transparency with regards to the reviewers' decision making process. All the excluded papers were allocated a score of 5 or below by one or both reviewers and were therefore considered on discussion to not have sufficient clarity to proceed within the review, this criteria was decided in advance. See appendix 10 for the reasons for excluding articles at the critical appraisal screen. See appendix 11 for a summary of the critical appraisal of included articles.

### 2.2.9. Summary measures

Qualitative data were extracted from papers included in the review using the standardized data extraction tool from JBI (2014). The data extracted includes the study characteristics in terms of specific details about the methodology, methods, phenomena of interest, setting, geographical and cultural context, participants, data analysis, conclusions and outcomes of significance to the review question and specific objectives, see Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI, 2014) Data Extraction of study characteristics, appendix 12.

### 2.2.10. Synthesis of findings

Qualitative data were synthesised using the JBI (2014) meta-synthesis tool, whereby findings and illustrations were extracted. Each finding was illustrated with a quote and allocated a level of credibility. Findings across studies were synthesised to produce categories. Study findings were extracted from all included papers using the authors' theme and sub-theme headings. For each finding, one illustration was highlighted and awarded a credibility rating of unequivocal, credible or unsupported. Two reviewers independently examined all included papers to identify the findings and illustrations, to reduce reviewer influence (JBI, 2014). These were tabulated using the JBI data extraction of study findings table, see appendix 13, 14 and 15.

### 2.2.11. Risk of bias across studies

Synthesised findings were then considered in relation to dependability and credibility to establish a level of confidence for each, using the "ConQual"



approach (Munn *et al.*, 2014). See appendix 16. ConQual: Establishing Confidence for Synthesised Findings. This demonstrates that all ten synthesised findings have a ConQual score of “Moderate” or “Low”; on a scale of “High, Moderate, Low or Very Low” (Munn *et al.*, 2014:5). This was generally due to a dependability issue across the majority of included studies in that they had no statement locating the researcher or acknowledging their influence on the research, see appendix 16 for the ConQual summary.

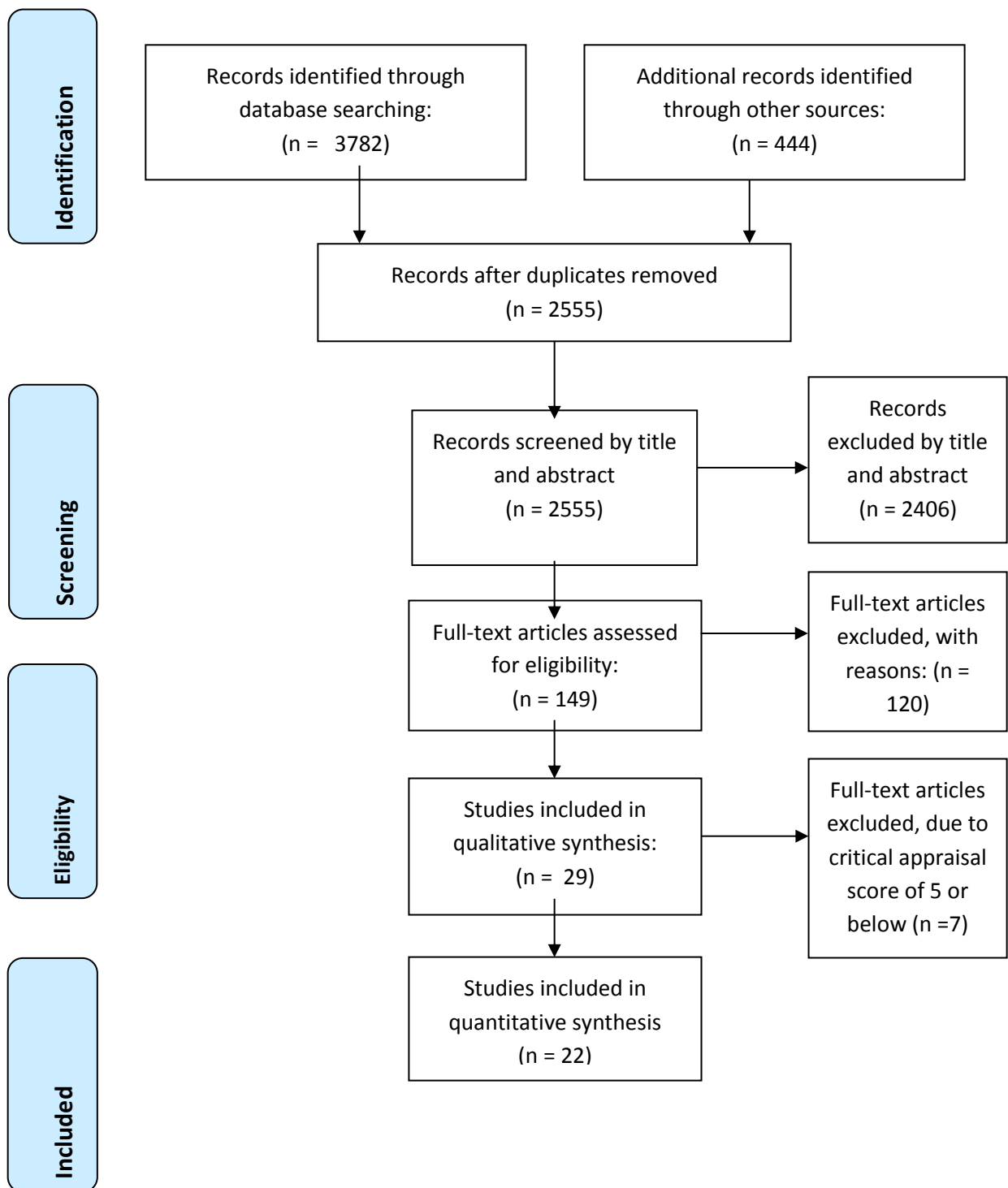
## **2.3 Findings**

The findings section presents the study selection, characteristics, risk of bias and findings. A meta-synthesis of the findings is then explored.

### 2.3.1. Study selection: see Figure 1. PRISMA flow chart

The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA, 2017: *no page number available*) identifies how many records were retrieved and how many were excluded. This demonstrates the articles retrieved in addition to the database search, through the reference list searches.

Figure 1: The selection of studies is shown on the PRISMA flow diagram



### 2.3.2 Study characteristics

The data extracted includes the study characteristics (JBI, 2014) in terms of specific details about the methodology, methods, phenomena of interest, setting, geographical and cultural context, participants, data analysis, conclusions and outcomes of significance to the review question and specific objectives, see appendix 12. The methodology and methods and context of the studies are summarised here, the findings are synthesised in section 2.

#### 2.3.2.1 Methodology

The most frequently used methodology within the included articles was phenomenology. This includes: descriptive phenomenology (Willig, 2008), hermeneutic phenomenology (Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013), existential phenomenology (Simpson, Post and Tashman, 2014; Morse, 2014; Morse, 2015) and interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) (Hinds, 2011; Hickman, *et al.*, 2016). Hinds (2011) combined the use of IPA with ethnography. Other ethnographic studies were: Burke, Durand-Bush and Doell (2010); Rickly-Boyd (2012); and Olafsdottir (2013). Three studies used autobiographical narratives: Boniface (2006); Kane and Tucker (2007); Miles and Wattchow (2015). Three studies used grounded theory: Lusby and Anderson (2010); Svarstad (2010); and Freeman, *et al.* (2016). One study used photo-elicitation (Loeffler, 2004). Some studies referred to their research simply as qualitative (Fredrickson and Anderson, 1999; Taylor, 2010); or qualitative with an additional theory: a framework approach (Pomfret, 2012), self-determination theory (Lynch and Dibben, 2016), and reversal theory (Kerr and Hougue Mackenzie, 2012).

### 2.3.2.2 Method

The most frequently used data collection method was semi-structured interviews (Boniface, 2006; Willig, 2008; Lusby and Anderson, 2010; Taylor, 2010; Hinds, 2011; Pomfret, 2012; Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013; Simpson, Post and Tashman, 2014; Lynch and Dibben, 2016). One study used Scanlan, a collaborative interviewing technique (Kerr and Hougue Mackenzie, 2012). One study used photo-elicitation interviews (Loeffler, 2004). Three studies combined interviews with participant observation (Burke, Durand-Bush and Doell, 2010; Rickly-Boyd, 2012; Olafsdottir, 2013). Three studies combined interviews, participant observation and additional data including journals (Fredrickson and Anderson, 1999) and emails (Morse, 2014, 2015). Two studies combined semi-structured interviews with focus groups (Freeman, *et al.*, 2016; Hickman, *et al.*, 2016). One study collected data from letters (Svarstad, 2010). Two studies collected data from autobiographic adventure texts (Kane and Tucker 2007; Miles and Wattchow, 2015).

### 2.3.2.3 Phenomena of interest and context

All of the included articles considered the meaning of one or more outdoor adventure activities. These included mountain-based activities, water sports, air-born activities and multi-activity adventure racing. Mountain-based sports within the research included: mountaineering (Boniface, 2006; Kane and Tucker, 2007; Willig, 2008; Burke, Durand-Bush and Doell, 2010; Kerr and Hougue Mackenzie, 2012; Pomfret, 2012; Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013); climbing

(Loeffler, 2004; Rickly-Boyd, 2012; Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013; Hickman, *et al.*, 2016); back-packing or wild camping (Fredrickson and Anderson, 1999; Loeffler, 2004; Boniface, 2006; Svarstad, 2010; Hinds, 2011; Olafsdottir, 2013; Freeman, *et al.*, 2016); mountain biking (Taylor, 2010); caving (Boniface, 2006) and skiing (Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013). Water sports within the research included: canoeing or kayaking (Fredrickson and Anderson, 1999; Loeffler, 2004; Boniface, 2006; Kane and Tucker, 2007; Kerr and Hougue Mackenzie, 2012; Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013; Miles and Wattachow, 2015; Hickman, *et al.*, 2016); rafting (Morse, 2014; Morse 2015); sailing (Kane and Tucker, 2007; Lusby and Anderson, 2010); scuba diving (Boniface, 2006); and surfing (Kerr and Hougue Mackenzie, 2012; Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013). Air-born activities included within the research included bungee jumping (Kane and Tucker, 2007) and BASE (Building, Antenna, Space, Earth) jumping, hang-gliding or skydiving (Boniface, 2006; Willig, 2008; Kerr and Hougue Mackenzie, 2012; Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013). Adventure racing was considered in three studies (Kane and Tucker, 2007; Simpson, Post and Tashman, 2014; Lynch and Dibben, 2016).

Geographically the research originated in the UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Norway. Six studies were conducted in the UK (Boniface, 2006; Willig, 2008; Hinds, 2011; Pomfret, 2012; Freeman, *et al.*, 2016; and Hickman, *et al.*, 2016); a further study was conducted in Iceland, with the researcher from Luxembourg, but participants from the UK (Olafsdottir, 2013). Five studies were conducted in the USA (Fredrickson and Anderson, 1999; Lusby and Anderson, 2010; Kerr and Hougue Mackenzie, 2012; Rickly-Boyd, 2012; and Simpson,

Post and Tashman, 2014). Five studies were conducted in Australia (Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013; Morse, 2014; Morse, 2015; Miles and Wattoo, 2015; and Lynch and Dibben, 2016). Two studies were conducted in New Zealand (Kane and Tucker, 2007; Taylor, 2010); two in Canada (Loeffler, 2004; and Burke, Durand-Bush and Doell, 2010); and one in Norway (Svarstad, 2010). Whilst this demonstrates a geographical spread it suggests that the research is largely situated within a western perspective (see section 2.4.1.6 with regards to bias across the studies).

### 2.3.3 Risk of bias within studies

Twenty-two articles were considered appropriate for inclusion in the review at the critical appraisal screen. These papers all scored '6' or higher (see table 4 and appendix 9), issues highlighted are discussed below. Three articles were identified (by one reviewer each) as being 'unclear' in terms congruency between philosophical perspective and research methodology. Fredrickson and Anderson (1999) and Pomfret (2012) both referred to a 'qualitative' framework without expanding further. Boniface (2006) identified that she used a 'biographical' method as justification for interviews and personal stories, she also discussed a 'hermeneutical' approach and 'grounded theory' principles at different points in the paper. A more cohesive and consistent methodological perspective could have been presented across the paper as a whole. Aside from these issues no further concerns were raised by reviewers in relation to the congruity between the research methodology and the research question or objectives, for the included papers.

One article was highlighted by one reviewer as being unclear in terms of congruency between the methodology and the methods. Simpson, Post and Tashman (2014) stated that they used 'existential phenomenological interviews'. However, they then went on to state that the number of participants was 'determined by data saturation', a concept more akin to grounded theory. As the total number of participants was ten, with only two women, it is questionable whether saturation could actually have been reached. Saturation is more typically considered to have been achieved after 30 or more interviews (Charmaz, 2014); and even if the two women had described similar ideas, it is difficult to claim saturation. In addition, achieving saturation is not normally the aim of existential phenomenology. Despite the fact that the paper is fairly recent: 2014, most of the literature supporting the method was older than ten years prior it's publication; by using more topical sources this incongruity may have been avoided. The reviewers did not identify concerns in relation to the congruity between the research methodology and the representation and analysis of data; or in relation to the congruity between the research methodology and the interpretation of results, for any of the included articles.

Ten of the twenty-two articles included in the review did not provide a 'clear statement' locating the researcher (as indicated on table 4), however, with all of these the research context is apparent within the paper and is therefore alluded to. Fourteen of the twenty-two articles included in the review did not clearly address the influence of the researcher on the research. Whilst the two oldest papers, (Fredrickson and Anderson, 1999; and Loeffler, 2004) were amongst these, the date of publication does not appear to account for this issue as the

other twelve were written within the last ten years.

Both reviewers identified issues with the clarity of participant voice representation for two of the included articles. In the Lynch and Dibben (2016) paper the findings and discussion are combined and structured using researcher imposed themes of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, rather than themes arising from the data. Illustrative quotes are short and embedded within the researchers' narrative text. However the concepts within the themes are evidenced and credible and participants are identifiable by code, enabling their individual opinions to be traced through the paper. Similarly, in the Svarstad (2010) paper, illustrative quotes are generally limited to short phrases embedded within the text, although participants are traceable by code. Both papers were considered to demonstrate sufficient credibility to proceed for inclusion in the review. In terms of evidence that the research is ethical, this criterion highlighted the highest number of papers where there was a concern about lack of clarity, both reviewers identified 18 papers. However, the issue here was not about the research itself being unethical, but that the authors did not provide evidence of ethical approval by an appropriate body. This might again be explained by the research context. It might be assumed that either the author guidelines for respective journals did not stipulate that this evidence was required, or that the academic institution hosting the research did not require the study to be screened by an ethics panel. As the papers are not related to health intervention and participants are not considered to be vulnerable, the reviewers felt that these papers demonstrated sufficient ethical conduct to proceed for inclusion in the review. Finally, the reviewers did not identify



concerns for any of the included articles in relation to the conclusions drawn appearing to flow from the analysis of the data.

#### 2.3.4. Synthesis of findings

All findings from all included studies were transferred to a data synthesis table, see appendix 15. Findings with shared concepts were grouped into categories and then synthesised findings. Unsupported findings which were not accompanied by an illustration were not included in the synthesis. It is suggested that only findings identified by two or more studies are used to establish a category (JBI, 2014:21). However, there were no outlying concepts that could not be categorised, therefore all supported findings from all included papers have been synthesised. Two quotations have been selected for each statement arising from the categories; these are given to illustrate the synthesised findings. Table 5 presents an overview of the synthesised findings; these are now presented with some reference to wider literature explored in this thesis.

<b>Synthesised finding</b>
<p><b>1. The call and preparation.</b> Outdoor adventure provided meaning and focus in relation to establishing a plan to engage; and the physical, mental and logistical preparation for engagement.</p>
<p><b>2. Inter-connected experiences of bodily sensation, happiness and wellbeing:</b> Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to the bodily experience of dynamic movement, exertion, interconnection between mind and body; and flow; in addition, it invoked a sense of wellbeing, happiness, fitness and restoration.</p>
<p><b>3. Connection with a sense of self.</b> Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to enhanced self-awareness; participants sought opportunities that enabled a sense of autonomy and personal responsibility for decisions; reconnection with an authentic self; and identity construction.</p>
<p><b>4. Mastery, challenge, competence and capital.</b> Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to a perception of self as able to push personal boundaries, overcome hardships, master challenges and demonstrate competency for social capital.</p>
<p><b>5. Risk-taking, fear and fun.</b> Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to risk-taking and the opportunities for both fear and fun.</p>
<p><b>6. Connection with others, competition and communitas.</b> Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to connection with others in terms of support, shared experience, competition and belonging to a community of like-minded people.</p>
<p><b>7. Connection with wilderness</b> Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to connection with wilderness in terms of appreciating beauty and exploration; and managing natural elements.</p>
<p><b>8. Freedom and escapism</b> Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to escapism, freedom, novelty and an opportunity to live out a critique of society.</p>
<p><b>9. Spirituality, humility and perspective</b> Outdoor adventure prompted meaningful experiences of wilderness with a sense of spirituality and connection to time and place; humility with a new sense of self in context; and a metaphor for understanding other life circumstances.</p>
<p><b>10. Environmental values</b> Outdoor adventure provided meaningful experiences that changed participants' perspectives, values and priorities in relation to appreciating and protecting natural and cultural landscapes.</p>

Table 5. Synthesised findings

## 2.4 Findings and discussion

The synthesised findings are now explored.

### 2.4.1 The call and preparation for engagement:

*Synthesised finding 1:* Outdoor adventure provided meaning and focus in relation to establishing a plan to engage; and the physical, mental and logistical preparation for engagement.

A sense of longing to engage is evident:

*“...the Tasman was waiting patiently, turbulently, relentlessly, for Andrew McAuley’s assault.”* (Miles and Wattchow, 2015:20)

*“I was talking about it constantly at work and at home: ‘I’m going to Iceland, I can’t wait, I am going to do this, I’m going to walk on a glacier, I’m going to see volcanoes, and I’ve got my new boots and I’ve got my new coat and I’ve got my new rucksack’...”* (Olafsdottir, 2013:220)

The importance of feeling prepared for engagement was further demonstrated:

*“There’s a challenge in preparing for the race physically. The hardest part realistically is getting to the start line healthy”* (Simpson, Post and Tashman 2014:121)

*“I like to sit down and consider all the possible outcomes that could arise over the length of an expedition and develop strategies to cope and accept them...”* (Burke, Durand-Bush and Doell, 2010:386)

Anticipation of engagement and doing secondary activities to support this appears to be meaningful in itself, in addition to the meaning described during outdoor adventure participation. These ideas relate to the “call to action” described by Ricoeur (1981/2016) and the call to occupation described by Reed, Hocking, Smythe (2010).

## 2.4.2 Inter-connected experiences of bodily sensation, happiness and wellbeing

*Synthesised finding 2:* Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to the bodily experience of dynamic movement, exertion, interconnection between mind and body; and flow; in addition, it invoked a sense of wellbeing, happiness, fitness and restoration.

The bodily sensation of kinaesthetic movement was pleasurable:

*“I started solo climbing... I found out that I had a great delight in doing it I liked the feeling of the freedom of it being up there, you know, with no paraphernalia no slings or things or ropes and you just move freely”* (Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013:868)

*“It was just mellow and it’s just the feeling of being up in the air and moving in three dimensions – it’s awesome... it’s so dynamic – you move quick through the air and you move up and down and sideways and you balance the glider in the air as well in all dimensions.”* (Kerr and Hougue Mackenzie, 2012:654)

Participants described how they wanted to feel, the bodily experience of exertion and the interconnection between mind and body.

*“...I like the feeling I get when I have worked so hard that I sunburnt the inside of my lungs. I have always enjoyed that kind of sensation. You know that you are hurting either physically or mentally but at the same time you are totally coping with it”* (Burke, Durand-Bush and Doell, 2010:384)

*“As a climber you use your body and mind and soul”* (Rickly-Boyd, 2012:92)

The experience of outdoor adventure was also linked to the concepts of flow and time:

*“When you’re climbing you don’t have time to be thinking about anything else. It’s not that you don’t have time to think, but there’s just, like, no time, no time when you are climbing”* (Rickly-Boyd, 2012:94)

*“And when you are actually sailing you are totally immersed in what you are doing. You are using all your skills. So it takes you away from other*

*things that could be bothersome...It kind of keeps you in the moment.”*  
(Lusby and Anderson, 2010:99)

Outdoor adventure enabled some to increase fitness levels:

*“(it’s) the sheer fitness levels that it (mountain biking) gives you as it is one of the hardest, one of the most anaerobic, sports you can do, in a short period of time.”* (Taylor, 2010:265)

*“I like to use it (the event) as a bit of a stretch and a gauge of fitness”*  
(Lynch and Dibben, 2016:89)

Experiences were also described in terms of feeling better; promoting health and wellbeing; and providing a sense of restoration that enabled participants to “re-create societal performance abilities” (Svarstad, 2010:97):

*“We were just sat on these rocks and we just sat in silence and it was just so amazing being away from everyone and just, sat on the rocks looking at all the cliffs and out into the sea and just being able to sit there and just listen to the sea and not having to worry about anything, it was just so great and I feel so much better and so much happier”* (Hinds, 2011:194)

*“A feeling of satisfaction I did it. Mind is refreshed sort of, you clear your mind out of all the stuff, it gives you some perspective on what you do anyway, it refreshes you to do the work”* (Olafsdottir, 2013:227)

Feelings associated with outdoor adventure experiences are described both in terms of physical sensations and accompanying psychological benefits, some concepts here link to escapism (see section 2.4.5.8) and reconnection with a sense of self (see section 2.4.5.3). These concepts relate to wider literature with regards to flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008, 1993 a, b) and the embodied experience of being (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2009).

### **2.4.3 Connection with a sense of self.**

*Synthesised finding 3:* Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to enhanced self- awareness; participants sought opportunities that enabled a

sense of autonomy and personal responsibility for decisions; reconnection with an authentic self; and identity construction.

Being self-reliant and self-responsible was considered important:

*“I do stuff on my own as well, like the fell running. I tend to do most stuff on my bike on my own, just because it’s just me. I’m a self-contained unit and that’s really important to me as well.”* (Boniface, 2006:17)

*“...but the powerful thing about it (BASE jumping) is that as I mentioned to you before its totally up to you no one can help you and you are taking responsibility for your life totally. It’s your decision to jump or not jump. Like everyone else around you makes their own decision based on their skill and experience and how they’re feeling that day”* (Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013:871)

Outdoor adventure enabled opportunities to be an “authentic self” (Hinds, 2011:196) with sensitivity to the environment and its influence:

*“Maybe it is just feeling more alive and getting more of a sense of who you are, being able to just feel, be myself completely with no, nothing like making me (...) be more like this or I’ve got to be more like that, you can just be yourself and completely relaxed, just be exactly who I am.”* (Hinds, 2011:196)

*“...I am so looking forward to not having to spend time making sure my hair’s ok and not worrying about what my clothes look like, or what I look like. Here there were no distractions, I won’t get hurt from another person, I am safe in this place, I don’t have to put on an act - a mask, I can just be me with no distractions”* (Freeman et al., 2016:5)

Outdoor adventure enabled participants to learn about themselves:

*“You can find out a lot about yourself on the road, you just have to go and look”* (Rickly-Boyd, 2012:96)

*“I just find it fascinating because you know when you push yourself to the limit you can learn all kinds of stuff about yourself”* (Simpson, Post and Tashman, 2014:120)

The opportunity to construct an identity within outdoor adventure was considered meaningful:

*“I think we’ve got that, I guess you call it an X-factor... most of us are all pretty crazy, I think, to be doing it over and over and over again”* (Lynch and Dibben, 2016:91)

*“A dirtbag is someone who lets climbing dictate their life (...) and most of all dirtbags are there because climbing means something to them, they believe in it and believe it’s going to do something for them. I’d go a step further and say they don’t even believe in it because that sounds sort of faith-based. They know it, they’ve seen it make a change in their life and they keep pursuing that.”* (Rickly-Boyd, 2012:96)

Some of the concepts above align with authenticity as explored by Sartre (1946/1974) and Heidegger (1926/1962). In addition, aligning identity within outdoor adventure relates to a sense of belonging to a community, a concept explored in *communitas*, in section 2.4.5.6. Sense of self as competent is considered further within mastery, competence and capital in section 2.4.5.4.

#### **2.4.4 Mastery, challenge, competence and capital**

*Synthesised finding 4:* Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to a perception of self as able to push personal boundaries, overcome hardships, master challenges and demonstrate competency for social capital.

Opportunities to push mental and physical limitations to improve performance were sought and valued:

*“You’re pushing yourself beyond your normal comfort zone, beyond your normal state of doing things and that for me makes it very interesting”* (Simpson, Post, and Tashman, 2014:121)

*“The world of reality is so much easier than being a climber because it’s comfortable and you never extend your comfort zones. When you’re a climber, you’re constantly extending your comfort zones.”* (Kerr and Houge MacKenzie, 2012:653)

In keeping with a “quest narrative” (Miles and Wattchow, 2015:22), adventurers describe “hard adventure” (Hickman *et al.*, 2016:13); overcoming “obstacles” (Burke, Durand-Bush and Doell, 2010:387) and “suffering” (Willig, 2008:696):

*“The worry of knowing that I can fall into a crevasse or get swept away by an avalanche wears me down. It grates away at my psyche and makes me feel physically tired just thinking about it.”* (Burke, Durand-Bush and Doell, 2010:387)

*“The sea can be a very exciting place and with climbing one can usually escape difficult conditions by losing height. In sea kayaking it can be tricky to escape, there’s not so many options, so I need to be prepared by staying in good condition. I guess I appreciate that more and more, not just because I am now in my mid-70s, but because I get out more. It’s a positive circle, is that the opposite of a vicious circle, I get out so I’m fit, I’m fit so I get out. Of course the time helps.”* (Hickman *et al.*, 2016:13)

Mastering challenges and achieving goals were considered to give intrinsic reward:

*“I think what I liked about it was the fact that it was hard to learn. It is not something you can learn in one day. It takes years to learn how to do it. It’s not just physical condition, mental condition, you’ve got to build muscle memory, balance and build up strength. You’re using all your body, and it’s a challenge”* (Willig, 2008:695)

*“I like winning and having a goal. I’m not really competitive in other areas of my life, only in mountain biking, I like having a goal (and) training. I like doing all the technical side of it, just working out how you can go faster.”* (Kerr and Hougue MacKenzie, 2012:652)

Self-sufficiency and simple living were also considered to offer rewarding challenge:

*“Ah the other thing is the challenge and satisfaction of having your complete own environment. I mean on board the boat we have our own energy source, our own sanitation sources and manage that, we have to have our own water sources, cooking facilities, the food that you put away and what you can stock and store and keep within a relatively small area that can keep you going for a week or period of time. Imagine that whole thing and getting all that going and working, for me it provides a significant amount of satisfaction.”* (Lusby and Anderson, 2010:92)

*“You get something out of it. You get out what you put in and um... definitely you want to put in more effort (...) I want to put in more effort*



*and I get, the rewards are greater, um eating (laughing) eating a meal that's been cooked on a camp fire that you've spent ages making the fire building the fire from scratch and um it's so much more rewarding than going to, pop in MacDonalds" (p.198) (Hinds, 2011:)*

Participants "savoured serious adventure" (Hickman *et al.*, 2016:10) that elicited social "capital" (Kane and Tucker, 2007:35):

*"I knew that if I crossed the Tasman safely I could die a happy man, deeply satisfied that I had done something truly bold and significant for the world of sea kayaking" (Miles and Wattachow, 2015:22)*

*"I think I've been able to combine a high level of technical ability with stamina... An example would be the North Face of the Eiger where I think Murray Jones and I did something quite extraordinary when we climbed all those North Faces and particularly the Eiger because no other climbers from any other nation had gone straight on to it and straight up it." (Kane and Tucker, 2007:35)*

Some concepts here link to theories of self-reliance as explored in self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985). Some ideas here link to risk-taking (see section 2.4.5.5), competition and the culture and community of outdoor adventure (discussed in section 2.4.5.6); and environmental values (see section 2.4.5.10).

## **2.4.5 Risk-taking, fear and fun**

*Synthesised finding 5:* Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to risk-taking and the opportunities for both fear and fun.

Some participants sought risk and thrill for enjoyment:

*"That'd be why I got into (white-water pursuits): family background and because I want to do something that's fun and challenging – physically, mentally. And also because there is risk... the risk, its fun, its physical and its outdoors ...and I love water." (Kerr and Hougue MacKenzie, 2012:652)*

*“really cool, interesting, well-made (mountain bike) tracks... and it was great to ride them from that point of view, with the berms (banked corners) and the drops and corners. It was heaps of fun.” (Taylor, 2010:269)*

Some participants discussed adventure tourism and the reduction of risk by leaving decision-making to a guide:

*“I wouldn’t have done the course had I thought I would be in any real danger. There was no way I would have gone by myself but it’s nice to challenge yourself in an almost safe environment with a guide on hand to make all the important decisions.” (Pomfret, 2012:149)*

*“How can it (bungee jumping) be an adventure when you’re in a fully controlled environment? You’re not making any decisions! The only decision you make is you’re going to do the jump and once you pay your money and go and do your set up, everything else is taken out of your control.” (Kane and Tucker, 2007:36)*

Overcoming or controlling fear and a sense of “freedom as the release from fear” (Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013:869) was considered exhilarating and exciting:

*“You know we learn all these complex systems of fear as we get older and that’s part of society’s rules. The real reward of doing something like BASE jumping, which initially you fear as it’s scary, the real reward, personal reward is overcoming that fear, going right through it and turning it into elation. Turning it into this incredibly exhilarating experience this absolute celebration of living.” (Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013:869/870)*

*“My most memorable experiences are when it’s really dangerous... I’ve been scared several times – I got sucked up into clouds – you can’t see anything and you can fly into a mountain... its always like that when you do things and you get away with them... it’s a good feeling (laughs). Couple of times I’ve done things and I think I shouldn’t have done that, but I got away with it. Once you’re over the scary bit there, then you feel pretty good... I’ve still been enjoying it because it’s very, very exciting.” (Kerr and Hougue MacKenzie, 2012:654)*

Elements of danger here also relate to the experience of the natural environment, discussed in section 2.4.5.7. The importance of being able to have responsibility for own risk taking is highlighted by occupational scientists Dennhardt and Laliberte Rudman (2012).

## 2.4.6 Connection with others, competition and communitas

*Synthesised finding 6:* Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to connection with others in terms of support, shared experience, competition and belonging to a community of like-minded people.

Relationships in the outdoors were considered by some to be of “central importance” (Fredrickson and Anderson, 1999:30) to the overall experience and a key motivation for engagement.

*“The people I meet. The lifestyle – opportunities to travel to new and different places. I quite like travelling now. It’s a really cool crowd that you hang around with. My friends are racers from all around the world. It’s kind of lucky.”* (Kerr and Hougue MacKenzie, 2012:653)

*“It was about making good friends... it works really well for me to make friends by doing an activity with them. Being in a situation where there is a high risk and lots of cooperation needed and you help people and they help you. It is hard for me to find that kind of a connection when I am not outside and I’m not risking my life and putting it in someone else’s hands.”* (Loeffler, 2004:546)

Competition was also considered motivational:

*“We still compete, to be honest we don’t really tell anybody, but we are always competing with somebody”* (Simpson, Post and Tashman, 2014:123)

*‘(I) wanna beat this guy and that guy as well’* (Lynch and Dibben, 2016:89)

Participants valued camaraderie (Simpson, Post and Tashman, 2014:123)

inhabiting a community (Taylor, 2010:265), being an “adventure insider”

(Boniface, 2006:17) and a sense of “communitas” (Rickly-Boyd, 2012:100):

*“they bike and they run and they paddle, so when I’m doing that, it sort of just feels like I’m playing my part in that social group”* (Lynch and Dibben, 2016:90)

*“It is an intensive, intentional community which exists for me before and after the race which I value and enjoy.”* (Simpson, Post and Tashman, 2014:123)

Some ideas here relate to occupational science theory in terms of meaning from a sense of belonging (Hitch, Pépin and Stagnitti, 2014a). Some concepts here relate to the development of self-identity discussed in 2.4.5.3.

## **2.4.7 Connection with wilderness**

*Synthesised finding 7:* Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to connection with wilderness in terms of appreciating beauty and exploration; and managing natural elements.

The experience of being in a natural environment was described as an intimate interaction (Morse, 2015) and relationship (Lusby and Anderson, 2010).

Participants encountered “other world” feelings (Pomfret, 2012) and valued the aesthetics of place (Lynch and Dibben, 2016) and beauty (Lusby and Anderson, 2010).

*“When we arrived at the first mountain hut there was a beautiful view of Mont Blanc and it reminded me of just how beautiful the mountains are. I felt very happy with the sheer beauty of it all. Earlier on in the week we did this really easy walk and towards the end the valley opened up and it felt like being on top of the world. I just felt like it was great to be alive at that point...”* (Pomfret, 2012:152)

*“And noticing those things, that being what you’re turning your attention to, is things like sunlight on water, or, you know, the mist curling off it in the morning, like actually having the time, and turning your attention... turning your attention to those sorts of things.”* (Morse, 2014:53)

Travel was considered an important aspect of exploring nature:

*“there’s nowhere that is great 12 months of the year so if you climb all the time, it’s pretty important (to travel)”* (Rickly-Boyd, 2012:95)

*“Well and to travel. See different aspects... we have long range plans, in the next five years we wanna go to the Bahamas, Bermuda and the Caribbean and then take the boat over to the Mediterranean. And so the boat is mainly a vehicle for travel. Seeing things, rather than going to a*

*hotel and spending a week or two weeks. This way you say: 'Hey we will stay here for three months.'*" (Lusby and Anderson, 2010:94)

Sometimes the relationship with wilderness was difficult, here meaning was derived from coping with natural elements and life outdoors and respecting the dangers (Lusby and Anderson, 2010:96):

*"I mean every now and then you have those days where it's rainy and it's fucked and everything you have is wet and it's cold and it's shitty. And you're just like what the fuck am I doing living in the woods, man? I could be doing something with my life; I could be giving something back to society. But no, I'm going to live in my car and get rained on so I can go rock climbing tomorrow. But then when the sun comes out and the rock's dry and you do that first pitch and you remember why you're doing it."* (Rickly-Boyd, 2012:92/3)

*"That's all part of this. You could be in pretty dangerous weather conditions and so you have to know what you're doing, but that's part of it is getting through it"* (Simpson, Post and Tashman, 2014:122)

Some concepts here relate to wider literature of nature based activities (O'Brien, Williams and Stewart, 2010). Concepts here also relate to overcoming challenges, discussed in 2.4.5.4 and enhancing wellbeing, see 2.4.5.2.

## **2.4.8 Freedom and escapism**

*Synthesised finding 8:* Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to freedom, escapism, novelty and an opportunity to live out a critique of society.

Participants described feelings of "total escapism" (Boniface, 2006:16); and freedom from constraints and boredom in relation to work and domestic responsibilities. For some this allowed a disconnection from normal life that was meaningful, others made a more permanent lifestyle change:

*"I did enjoy being away from sort of everyday pressures and complications really if I'm honest, erm, like like uni' and work and paying bills and sort of that kind of eventually just went out of my mind*

*completely. I felt sort of more freedom from those kind of pressures” (Freeman et al., 2016:4)*

*“I realised surveying is actually pretty boring and I was into adventure... I did want to have an adventure in my life and for the rest of my life, and climbing was the medium that was going to give me that lifestyle.” (Kerr and Hougue MacKenzie, 2012:653)*

Outdoor adventure enabled “physical escape” (Taylor, 2010:268) by providing the opportunity to explore novel environments:

*“a very nice way to get out and see the country differently than you normally would see it... you see totally different things than with a push bike” (Lynch and Dibben, 2016:91)*

*“There’s always a time in these races where I just sort of sit there and stop and look around and go oh ‘WOW’ this is really cool... It feeds you. It gives you something you don’t get anyplace else.” (Simpson, Post and Tashman, 2014:119)*

Outdoor adventure also enabled freedom from societal rules and an opportunity to live out a critique of society:

*“I think we were fed up with the traffic up north, the attitudes, the amount of overabundance of people buying and buying and buying and we just wanted a simpler life. And a little bit more peacefulness in our lives. It just seems like um... just that rat race all the time...” (Lusby and Anderson, 2010:92)*

*“Nobody can live a happy and fully worthwhile life without nature! ‘Nonsense!’ some will say. But it is really not possible. Those who live without contact with nature survive in a way, but surely with reduced quality of life. They are exposed to tarmac syndrome, large city fever, shopping mall germs, neon lights, plastic values and disposable delights. They fumble and search, and they think that all happiness comes from a fat wallet... But I find real pleasure in more natural surroundings. My thoughts circle around the mountains, around ‘my’ mountains, around ‘new’ mountains, or around the ocean, on summits and on paths, on the next opportunity to a new experience – a nature experience.” (Svarstad, 2010:99)*

Escaping society to live out slower, less consumerist values with greater respect for the environment is also explored in section 2.4.5.10. Again

concepts here relate to freedom, escapism and authenticity in phenomenological philosophy (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2009; Sartre, 1946/1974).

#### **2.4.9 Spirituality, humility and perspective**

*Synthesised finding 9:* Outdoor adventure prompted meaningful experiences of wilderness with a sense of spirituality and connection to time and place; humility with a new sense of self in context; and a metaphor for understanding other life circumstances. Wilderness experiences enabled spiritual inspiration:

*“It was stopping for a moment and looking up to see the full moon rising, and having a sense of timelessness. I felt a complete merging with the surrounding environment. Instead of sitting back and observing it (the landscape), it’s like I was moving into it in some way (brief pause) or rather it was moving into me. I couldn’t deny its effect on me. I suppose what I experienced was transcendence (pause) losing myself into my surroundings. It was expansive and at first I was afraid and then deeply comforted and filled with a sense of complete peace.”* (Fredrickson and Anderson, 1999:34)

*“It is hard trying to explain the religious sense in nature. And you can use all the words like wonderful or awe but it is hard to really find the poetics that I think describe nature in words. It is more like communing with the land and this sense of awe that you get... it is kind of spiritual.”* (Loeffler, 2004:544)

Participants had a sense of freedom from “being at one” (Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013:870) through an immersion with their surroundings which was described as being “in the present” (Willig, 2008:697); “lost within” (Morse, 2015:174) and “rightness in being effortlessly aware” (Morse, 2015:176):

*“What I like is the quiet, you know, and your immersion in that landscape, it just gives you some quiet in your head. And you kind of just immerse yourself in what’s around you and just what you see, or what you smell, or the rhythm of your own body as well, that quiet is probably what I’m after.”* (Morse, 2015:174)

*“You don’t think about anything else. You think about where you’re putting your feet, you look for where you’re gonna go next. Above all, you feel it. You feel every footprint, you feel every handhold, you feel the*

*security in it and that's what you spend, or that's what I spend all my time doing (pause) is I suppose attempting to feel secure at that precise moment and that's the only thing you think about. It's not what you're gonna have when you get into the pub, it's not what happened twenty minutes ago, it's only that."* (Willig, 2008:697)

In addition to feeling in the present, and akin to the "timelessness" (Fredrickson and Anderson, 1999:34) concept directly above, participants also described their introspection as feeling connected to a sense of time across the ages. In-keeping with the ethereal nature of the concept, these moments were described as "epiphany and closing the circle" (Miles and Wattchow, 2015:23) and "the 'things' become 'something' (Morse, 2014:48):

*"One last paddle stroke, the forward glide of the kayak finally striking the resistance of the sand, unthreading oneself from the partnership with the kayak and the circle would be completed... I would have to give up the freedom of the tides and the paddle... So perhaps this journey was not what it appeared. It wasn't an expedition but an introspection, a bridge between the ages, connected by the silence of a heart and quieted with the rhythmic pull of the paddle"* (Miles and Wattchow, 2015:23)

*The 'things' become 'something' "I mean there are little creeks that have just carved their way through solid rock to get their output, to get to the river, to get out to the sea, they've just gone straight through this rock... you know that over time water wears away rock. And then you just see that, that incredible time scale is all sitting there in front of you in evidence."* (Morse, 2014:48)

This connection to time and place gave new perspectives through enabling contemplation (Hinds, 2011:200) and use of outdoor experiences as metaphor (Loeffler, 2004:548) for understanding of life circumstances. The clarity of thought (Hinds, 2011:194) gained led to feelings of empowerment, self-acceptance (Hinds, 2011:197), and healing (Lusby and Anderson, 2010:97).

*"The water also, throughout my life, has been a healing place. You know, if something very difficult had happened in my life I would always, no matter where I lived, try to get to the ocean and kind of work things through. So living on it is even better!"* (Lusby and Anderson, 2010:97)



*"I think climbing gives me a lot of perspective on life. There is so much in climbing where you will be working on a climb and realizing how it completely relates to the rest of your life. When I'm trying to explain things in life, most of the time now, I am using climbing or paddling metaphors... so for me, being outdoors really makes it easier to understand how other things are going on in my life. When situations get really complicated I think of it as this is the crux move of what I am doing, and once I get through this crux move of the climb I'll be okay" (Loeffler, 2004:548)*

Furthermore, participants described this change in "perspectives and priorities" (Hinds, 2011:199) as a result of an "intertwining with the more-than-human world" (Morse, 2014:50). This engendered a feeling of "humility" (Morse, 2014:47) and awareness of an "imminent paradox" (Morse, 2014:52) and "tension between vulnerability and comfort" (Morse, 2014:49) whereby participants had a sense of feeling small, whilst part of something big; like a "speck" on the horizon (Miles and Wattchow, 2015:21):

*"Sitting on the beach you're one tiny, tiny thing on the beach that's deserted and there's this vast ocean just literally a couple of meters away that stretches as far as the horizon and you are tiny and you are small, but then you know you're part of everything and everything's part of you" (Hinds, 2011:199)*

*"I feel insignificant in terms of the fact that all those water molecules have come from somewhere else, from the sky, from evaporation in the sea, but then from rivers before that. And that should make me feel small but it doesn't necessarily. I almost feel very small but part of something." (Morse, 2014:50)*

In another example of opposing emotions, some described a sense of peace and deep satisfaction, as coming after the activity, in contrast to the experience during the activity:

*"I didn't enjoy reaching the summit; it was only the day after when I looked back. It was just a horrible slog and you're cold and trying to keep warm, and the way the altitude affects the brain, you don't seem to think properly. Simple tasks like sorting your gloves and drinking water become a huge task to just get your head around. Once I reached the top, I felt great but I still had to get down. It was only later that I felt a deep satisfaction which I find hard to achieve any other way. It's a real sense that you've achieved something tangible." (Pomfret, 2012:151)*

*“Part of the enjoyment and enrichment of this experience is becoming very calm with things that, on the face of it, might seem disturbing... the more satisfying experiences of calmness come only after periods of intense exertion and mobility...” (Willig, 2008:697)*

The more spiritual rewards therefore may occur during or after engagement in outdoor adventure. These can enhance wellbeing and prompt further engagement, see section 2.4.5.2. Quay (2013) describes the significance of the experience of interconnection and immersion in nature in relation to phenomenology and transactionalism.

#### **2.4.10. Environmental values**

*Synthesised finding 10:* Outdoor adventure provided meaningful experiences that changed participants’ perspectives, values and priorities in relation to appreciating and protecting natural and cultural landscapes.

The educational value of adventure was demonstrated by participants’ desire for a continuation of their connection with nature:

*“I’ve seen the power of the outdoors and adventure to change people’s lives and to really develop attributes in people and to give them focus and pick a different balance in their lives.” (Kane and Tucker, 2007:37)*

*“I think I’m probably more alive to the intrusions of the natural world. You know, the inter-human space... What the Franklin experience has helped me to do is be a lot more contemplative, to see a lot more, to just dissolve into the experience” (Morse, 2015:178)*

Participants gained a sense of perspective on and appreciation for life (Freeman *et al.*, 2016:6) that changed their values and priorities (Hinds, 2011:199):

*“Walking through the hills or and just seeing (...) and being in awe of what’s around and unique that’s what makes me just realise that material things just aren’t important. ...It’s the world, the natural environment that*

*is more important. ...I feel a lot happier when I come on these things”*  
(Hinds, 2011:199)

*“being able to just come for a shower and that, erm it makes you appreciate those small things and that’s another great thing about it, it makes you really appreciate the little things that you’ve got that are not necessities and everything basically that’s in the house is a luxury, but you don’t have to carry everything about back that’s in the house, you can get clean, and put on some new clothes go out you know you don’t have to carry all your clothes about.”* (Freeman et al., 2016:6)

Participants described a desire to protect the environment with concepts such as “leave no wake” (Lusby and Anderson, 2010:97), avoiding “commodification” (Taylor, 2010:270) and establishing a sense of “belonging and continuity” (Svarstad, 2010:103) to enable future generations to experience natural and cultural landscapes:

*“The motto of the Seven Seas Cruising Association that we belong to is: leave no wake. Simple as that... Most sailors collect their garbage. I mean I can’t speak for everybody, but we burn our garbage and we follow our own policy...You have these plaques you are supposed to follow. Like not spilling oil. We are religious about that, we do not spill oil”*  
(Lusby and Anderson, 2010:97)

*“I wonder why it is very important for me to share experiences in forests and mountains with the next generation. To get out in nature, away from people and traffic, alone or with a few others... that brings a feeling of freedom. One (is united with) nature. Nothing else is important. One is back again to the origins. Human beings are a part of nature. In the cultural landscape this is indicated by paths which find the easiest way to the top, a cleared courtyard on a sunny ledge in a hillside, a lonely fisher hut far away in the mountains, a cabin in the forest, a cairn on a mountain top. A link to the generations before us. Yes this is what is important. This is what I do not want the coming generations to lose.”* (Svarstad, 2010:103)

It seems that the many layers of meaning experienced by participants engender a sense of responsibility and stewardship; participants then wish to protect the environment and share their experiences and values with others. This is a frequent finding in wider literature (Lovell, et al., 2015).

## 2.5. Implications for the thesis

This literature retrieved and synthesised in this review has informed the discussion within the rest of the thesis. The articles explored in this meta-synthesis indicate that phenomenology would be an appropriate philosophical framework to inform the methodology for the thesis (Willig, 2008; Hinds, 2011; Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013; Simpson, Post and Tashman, 2014; Morse, 2014; Morse, 2015; Hickman, *et al.*, 2016). This has been explored in chapter 3: the philosophy informing the methodology. The use of semi-structured interviews is also indicated (Boniface, 2006; Willig, 2008; Lusby and Anderson, 2010; Taylor, 2010; Hinds, 2011; Pomfret, 2012; Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013; Simpson, Post and Tashman, 2014; Lynch and Dibben, 2016). There is some justification to combine interviews with participant observation (Burke, Durand-Bush and Doell, 2010; Rickly-Boyd, 2012; Olafsdottir, 2013), focus groups (Freeman, *et al.*, 2016; Hickman, *et al.*, 2016) or journals (Fredrickson and Anderson, 1999). Gathering data from autobiographic adventure texts is also indicated (Kane and Tucker 2007; Miles and Wattchow, 2015). Further data collection methods in this thesis are explored in elements 2, 3 and 4: focus groups (section 4), autobiography (section 5) and interviews (section 6).

## **Chapter 3. Philosophy informing the methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction to chapter 3.**

Phenomenology offers an opportunity to make explicit the meanings attached to human experiences; however, the numerous versions of phenomenology can present a challenge (Finlay, 2011). Phenomenology is a philosophy, rather than a methodology; with influential phenomenologists having spanned differing epistemological and ontological viewpoints (Wright-St Clair, 2015). As such, it is an evolving philosophy with many parallel currents (Dowling, 2007), also referred to as a “tangled web” (Ehrich, 1999:19). It is therefore necessary to clarify the influences and situate the positions adopted within this thesis in relation to the research question, both in terms of phenomenology and wider philosophy. Philosophy can be used to define the underpinning views that have informed research in relation to epistemology, logic, ontology and ethics (Benton and Craib, 2011); these four aspects have been explored in turn through this philosophy chapter. Element 1 (section 2) indicated that phenomenology can offer a useful philosophical perspective for exploring the meaning of outdoor adventure. This thesis has been informed by hermeneutic, existential and social phenomenology, contextual constructionist epistemology, inductive logic, transactional ontology, and an axiological consideration of equality and social justice.

Philosophical perspectives informing the thesis have largely been influenced by post-modernism: scepticism of traditional authoritative theoretical claims of truth

or knowledge (Howell, 2013). In addition, the thesis has been influenced by meta-modernism: recognition of the contribution of diverse and opposing conceptual foundations to find pragmatic solutions to practice and societal issues (Baciu, Bocoş, Baciu-Urzică, 2015; Gardner, 2015). The meta-modernist movement is a reaction to postmodernism, which it considers outdated and unstructured (Snell, 2016). It claims to embrace both the enthusiasm of modernism and the irony of postmodernism to oscillate between and recognise differing perspectives (Vermeulen and van den Akker, 2010). Also referred to as post-postmodernism or “beyond postmodernism” (Frie, 2009:2), meta-modernist research therefore welcomes multi-dimensionality (Finlay, 2011) and philosophical and methodological pluralism. This aligns with the contextual constructionism and pragmatism prevalent in contemporary phenomenology (Gendlin, 2018).

As outlined in the introduction, this thesis combines the findings from five elements, with each employing different methods to answer the research question. Overall, the thesis has been primarily influenced by phenomenology; elements 3 and 4 used interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). The rationale and a critique of each method have been presented within the respective chapters; however, the philosophies underpinning these methods are presented here, in chapter 3. Table 1 identifies which of the research aims are addressed in each element and what method was used (section 1.2).

## **3.2 Phenomenology: exploring lifeworld**

Phenomenological research can be used to present descriptions and interpretations of human experiences as qualitative evidence (Galvin and Holloway, 2015), and thus is well suited to the study of human occupations (McLaughlin Gray, 1997; Barber, 2004; Park Lala and Kinsella, 2011). Key aspects of phenomenology include a focus on lived experience and meanings, existential issues, and interconnection between the body and world (Finlay, 2011). Phenomenology has influenced and been developed by philosophers, psychologists and sociologists, who have in turn influenced literature in relation to outdoor adventure, occupational science, occupational therapy and health promotion, and hence the context of this thesis.

### **3.2.1 Historical context of phenomenological research**

Whilst there have been an abundance of phenomenological theories, many representing conflicting views, the key authors who have influenced positioning within this thesis are presented here in historical context. These include idealists, existential phenomenologists, hermeneutic phenomenologists, social phenomenologists, and social philosophers who have been influenced by phenomenology and vice versa. (Where recent reprints of historic texts have been used, both dates have been provided to enable the work to be considered in the context of its time and to ensure that the page numbers for citations are accurate.)

Edmund Husserl (1913/1990) is credited as the founder of phenomenology, with its focus on “lifeworld” descriptions (Galvin and Holloway, 2015:212). Husserl lived from 1859 – 1938 (Kaplan, 2004) and developed the concepts of German idealists, Kant, 1724 – 1804 (Herissone-Kelly, 2004) and Hegel, 1770-1831 (Mason, 2004). Kant’s (1781/1963) ‘*Critique of Pure Reason*’ presents a criticism of empiricism and rationalism proposing that human understanding of time, space and causal relations stems from subjective intuition (Herissone-Kelly, 2004); he defined phenomena as appearances in consciousness (Kaplan, 2004). Hegel’s (1807/1979) ‘*Phenomenology of Spirit*’ presented a dialectical phenomenology that starts with a thesis, generates an antithesis, and then concludes with a new, non-dualistic, synthesis that retains truth from differing perspectives (Mason, 2004). Dualism is also referred to as “Cartesian” dualism (Cunning, 2014:18) after the work of Descartes (1641/2017) which reductively separated mind, body and spirit, and is considered to have influenced Western thinking. Husserl’s (1913/1990) ‘*Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*’ built on the work of Hegel and Kant to present a phenomenological attitude, whereby the essence of experience and consciousness should be examined in the way that it occurs for individuals, rather than fitting it into pre-existing categories (Kaplan, 2004). To do this, Husserl (1913/1990) proposed that researchers suspend (epoché) or bracket their preconceptions through a process of phenomenological reduction (Galvin and Holloway, 2015). Whilst the possibility of “epoché” has been contested (Kaplan, 2004:122), the suspension of judgement, a focus on the essence of subjective experience, idealism, and non-dualism remain fundamental to phenomenological research (Finlay, 2011).



Husserl's (1913/1990) attempt to objectively view the subjective was criticised by Heidegger (1926/1962) who presented a hermeneutic view and questioned the possibility of knowledge outside an interpretive stance (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). Heidegger (who lived from 1889-1976) was a student of Husserl's, his work transformed phenomenology in relation to hermeneutics and ontology (Thomson, 2004). Heidegger's (1926/1962) *'Being and Time'* presented "dasein" in the context of temporality, in terms of past, present and future (Thomson, 2004:115). "Dasein" has been translated as "human existence" and "being there" (Sheehan, 2010: x; Heidegger, 1925/2010). Controversially, Heidegger has been associated with fascism due to a short period of membership with the Nazi party (Clark, 2002). However, sociologist, Bourdieu (1991:105) argued that to reject Heidegger's philosophy due to this affiliation, or to separate the two, is to view his work ahistorically, without consideration of his "habitus" and is therefore skewed. It has been argued that the issue is not about claiming to be for or against Heidegger, but to recognise his significant influence on current thinking (Clark, 2002). Heidegger's (1926/1962) views on ontology informed existential phenomenology, and his views on interpretation informed hermeneutic phenomenology.

Strongly influenced by Husserl (1913/1990) and Heidegger (1926/1962), Merleau-Ponty's (1945/2009) *'Phenomenology of Perception'* expands on Heidegger's ontological temporality, to consider sensation and the embodied experience of being in space and time. Merleau-Ponty lived from 1908-1961 and, whilst he is credited for introducing the "lived body" of experience, he was also criticised for presenting a bodily experience that was universalized as

“white, male and without disability” (Paterson, 2004:160); (in contrast, around the same time, Beauvoir (1949/1952) introduced a feminist perspective to phenomenology). Similarly, Sartre (1946/1974), a contemporary of Merleau-Ponty, expanded on the embodied experience of being and shared Heidegger’s interest in authenticity (Cox, 2006). Living from 1905-1980, Sartre’s (1946/1974) *‘Existentialism and Humanism’* led to his recognition in relation to both, influencing sociology and political activism (Stangroom, 2004b). Whilst his work has been criticised for its strangeness (Stangroom, 2004b) Sartre’s (1946/1974) focus on individual existence, human freedom, and the lack of objective values, defined existentialism. Further to Merleau-Ponty (1945/2009) and Sartre’s (1946/1974) existentialism, Gendlin (1962/1997) explored the interaction between felt meanings or bodily intuitions and symbolizations such as language and images (Finlay, 2011). This was consistent with a movement known as the “linguistic turn” (Rorty, 1967/1992; Read, 2004:249), largely accredited to Wittgenstein (1953/2001), which explored the use of language in relation to how people represent their experiences (Benton and Craib, 2011:90). Gendlin lived from 1926-2017 (Biddlecombe, 2017); his ideas informed the humanistic therapy tool: “focussing” which involves finding words for the felt sense (Gendlin, 2003:4). Gendlin (2018) is recognised for his pragmatism and philosophical psychology offering a new, subtle perspective on societal context and the interaction between body, environment, time, space, behaviour, language, culture and situation. Gendlin (1962/1997) criticised both modernism and postmodernism, proposing a philosophy beyond both (Finlay, 2011). Gendlin (1962/1997: xvi) states:

*“A new philosophy can begin with the recognition that we can assume neither that the world is ordered as a logical or conceptual system, nor that it is arbitrary as if ‘anything goes’. There was always a conflicting*

*variety of 'ultimate' definitions of truth and goodness. The great error today is to assume that something is lost by this recognition."*

Gendlin's (1962/1997) phenomenology therefore presented a post-postmodern perspective of valuing differing truths from different contexts; although it could be argued that this is reminiscent of Hegel's (1807/1979) much earlier concept of synthesis. Also in the 1960s, Gadamer (1960/1989) developed Heidegger's work on hermeneutics to greater understand the context of interpretation.

Gadamer (1960/1989) lived from 1900-2002, his *'Truth and Method'* critiques the idea that researchers can step outside their own cultural reference points, suggesting instead that prejudices are present in all understanding (Lawn, 2004). Hence, the complexity of context was a concept also expanded by Gadamer (1960/1989) with reference to historically conditioned judgement, values and power; and a critique of hierarchy and authority (Warnke, 1987).

Likewise, Derrida (1974/2016:14) critiqued the construction of power in society, highlighting this through a "semiotic" analysis of language known as deconstruction (Derrida lived from 1930-2004). Gadamer and Derrida's phenomenological consideration of power was contemporary to the work of sociologists Foucault and Bourdieu outlined below.

Consideration of social context within phenomenology was originally developed by Schütz (1932/1972), a social phenomenologist (and a contemporary of Heidegger), who related Husserl's ideas to the social sciences (Endress, 2008). Schütz's (1932/1972) *'The Phenomenology of the Social World'* bridged sociological and phenomenological traditions, critiquing the work of both Husserl and Weber. Schütz lived from 1899-1959; his work reportedly influenced Weber's (1922/1978) *'Economy and Society'* (Barber, 2004). Weber

lived from 1864-1920 and is recognised, alongside Marx and Durkheim, as the founder of social science and sociology (Sung Ho, 2017). Also strongly influenced by Schütz (1932/1972), Berger and Luckmann's (1966/1975:56) '*The Social Construction of Reality*' critiqued earlier social theories for their focus on scientific and theoretical knowledge, to broaden understanding of societal knowledge to what everybody knows or the "social stock of knowledge". Berger and Luckmann (1966/1975) highlighted the impact of the scientist's experience of the world, tracing these to the social sphere (Gergen, 2015). This led to the "narrative turn" which prompted exploration of story and relationship between "self, other, community, social, political and historical dynamics" (Goodson and Gill, 2011:18). Researchers were therefore encouraged to locate themselves in the text of their research and consider the broader societal context of biographical study findings (Roberts, 2002). Hermeneutic phenomenologist, Ricoeur (1981/2016) influenced phenomenology and sociology by developing the concept of personal narrative in relation to identity and self-hood, to explore the call to action, presence, and self as a "relational constellation" of fragmented discourses (Watkin, 2009:83).

A prominent figure in theories of social constructionism, Foucault (1967/2007) explored how the construction of knowledge related to power. Living from 1926-1984, Foucault (1967/2007) defined how societal power led to the objectification of individuals, who in turn police themselves in relation to normality (Stangroom, 2004a). Similarly, Bourdieu, who lived from 1930-2002 (Speller, 2011) drew from the theories of phenomenologists and sociologists to explore how people position themselves within social groups (Bourdieu,

1979/2010). Social constructionism, including the work of Foucault (1977) and Bourdieu (1979/2010) is also credited with the “cultural turn” where meaning is understood within cultural context and societal structures (Chaney, 1994:2, Jeffrey, 1988). The cultural turn enhanced understanding of meaning-making and cultural identity (Jacobs and Spillman, 2005; Zelizer, 2005), this focus is evident within occupational science literature (Bonder, 2007). Whilst social constructionism is not synonymous with social phenomenology (Holstein and Gubrium, 2011), their influence on each other gives useful historical context to contemporary phenomenology.

Whilst some phenomenologists have embraced the significance of meaning within cultural context, particularly in relation to health outcomes, others argue that this is a non-traditional approach, contradicting the search for universal meaning through phenomenological reduction (Dowling, 2007). These differing positions have been associated with “new” or “American” phenomenology as opposed to “traditional” or “European” phenomenology; however, the impossibility of thinking “aculturally” has been argued (Caelli, 2000:371). The many perspectives of phenomenology have therefore been located in positivist (Husserl), post-positivist (Merleau-Ponty), interpretivist (Heidegger) and constructivist (Gadamer) paradigms (Dowling, 2007). In addition, the influence of the linguistic, narrative and cultural turn can be seen within contemporary phenomenology, including interpretative phenomenological analysis, in terms of its focus on language use, and the positioning of both the researchers and researched within the research narrative and societal context.

### 3.2.2 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was first defined in the 1990s as an approach within psychology to capture experiential, qualitative data and recognise the increasing influence of sociological perspectives within psychology research (Smith, 1996). Whilst IPA can be considered as an analysis tool or 'method', it has been argued that it is more accurately understood as a 'methodology' because it provides guiding theoretical principles in addition to a detailed framework for how to conduct a study (Braun and Clarke, 2013:180). IPA is based on three foundations: phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography to focus on personal meaning and sense-making in context (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). IPA draws on phenomenology to focus on lived experience and examine how people make sense of their personal and social world (Smith and Eatough, 2015). This is done initially through making linguistic, conceptual and descriptive comments on the data (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). The flexibility and meaning-focus of IPA can be useful to health practitioners seeking to understand lifestyle and health behaviour (Pringle *et al.*, 2011); consequently, IPA has been considered valuable in occupational therapy research (Clouston, 2014).

Further to Heidegger's (1926/1962) introduction to hermeneutics and its subsequent development (Gadamer, 1960/1989; Ricoeur, 1986/2008), IPA incorporates a two-stage interpretation process, termed a "double hermeneutic" where the researcher is trying to make sense of the participants' sense-making (Smith and Eatough, 2015:51). In practice, this involves employing reflexivity to identify both the participant and the researchers' responses to the stories within

the data, thereby increasing transparency (Storey, 2015). Within occupational therapy research it is useful to have tools that enable research participants to tell their story, whilst allowing for professional interpretation of this experience from an occupational perspective (Cronin-Davis, Butler and Mayers, 2009).

IPA is strongly committed to idiography in terms of presenting individual perspectives (Smith, 2004). This is in contrast to the predominantly nomothetic approach of psychology research at group or population level (Smith and Eatough, 2015). Sample sizes are therefore small (or even single case) to achieve depth (Bruyn and Cameron, 2017). The idiographic focus of IPA studies should not be confused with individualism, but rather it seeks to understand individual perspectives of experiential phenomena in context (Finlay, 2011); with personal and social aspects considered “mutually constitutive” (Larkin, Eatough and Osborn, 2011:4).

IPA, and more specifically the seminal text: Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) is not without criticism. Paley (2017:137) challenges an assumption within the text that themes “emerge from the data”, arguing that any code, theme or category brings to the data a comment from the researcher. To illustrate, Paley (2017:137,138) criticises the frequency with which the concepts of identity and meaning emerge as themes in IPA studies. Paley (2017:138) argues that researchers project these concepts onto the data, rather than “find” them and suggests that researchers should recognise and articulate the theories they are importing. Paley (2017) also challenges researchers to consider how the interview structure and researcher responses prompt and cue the participants to

explore required topics, leading participants to give the responses that the researcher is hoping to hear. However, it could be argued that what Paley (2017) is really proposing here is the need for greater recognition of the influence of the researcher. This is already acknowledged within IPA, in terms of the “double hermeneutic” of interpretation (Smith and Eatough, 2015:51) and therefore Paley (2017) is really critiquing Smith Flowers and Larkin (2009) against their own ideals. Ultimately the researcher is tasked with recognising the influences informing their interpretation of the findings and representing these transparently within research reports, so that readers can make their own decisions with regards to trustworthiness (Cohen and Crabtree, 2008) (see 3.3.3).

Similarly, in an exploration of eight researchers’ experiences of IPA from diverse academic backgrounds, Wagstaff, *et al.* (2014) criticised IPA for an uncomfortable dualism between theme and idiography; with the search for common themes across cases compromising their idiographic focus, (and leaving unique themes under-represented). As with Paley’s (2017) critique, the origin of the theme headings and priorities for focus could be questioned here. Within this thesis, this is addressed with the provision of idiographic thumb nail sketches of the participants in the IPA elements. Wagstaff, *et al.* (2014) unanimously agreed that IPA enabled the creation of rich, in-depth, thoughtful accounts of subjective experience, incorporating the perspectives and interpretations of researchers and participants, arguing that IPA could be used across disciplines to present findings with social relevance. Finally, some IPA studies have been criticised for making minimal reference to their



phenomenological underpinnings (Allen-Collinson, 2009), suggesting a missed opportunity for the richness this can offer.

### **3.3 Epistemology: perspectives on knowledge and truth**

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge and how it is constructed (Stanley and Nayar, 2015). Knowledge is considered in relation to where it sits on a continuum from a positivist to constructionist view (Braun and Clarke, 2013).

Epistemological positions can assume views of knowledge that reflect objectivism (that things exist independently of consciousness) aligning with positivism; to subjectivism, aligning with constructionism (where there is no external or objective truth and meaning is constructed) (Crotty, 1998).

Positivism asserts that knowledge can be based on a principle of rationalism or reason in line with deductive research, whereby a hypothesis is tested, as is typically the case with quantitative research (Creswell, 2014). In contrast, constructionism provides an interpretive framework that supports the ontological belief that multiple realities are constructed through experiences and interactions with others; and the epistemological belief that reality is known by co-construction between the researcher and the researched (Creswell, 2013). Hermeneutic phenomenological research is interpretative and thus constructionist, as developed originally by Heidegger (1926/1962).

Constructionism is also referred to by some authors as constructivism (Creswell, 2013). However, constructivism is focused on the individual developing meaning, whereas constructionism places greater emphasis on community, with meaning considered to be developed by social consensus (Howell, 2013) and influenced by cultural resources (Lyons, 2015). It is this wider view

incorporating the influence of society that has informed the epistemological perspective within this thesis. Constructionism aligns with postmodernism (Howell, 2013); however, Gergen (2015) argued that constructionism can move beyond both traditionalism and scepticism, to value different ways of understanding.

### 3.3.1 Contextual constructionism

Contextual constructionism can be considered a version of constructionism, as it recognises multiple realities, but in contrast to radical constructionism, it retains an interest in truth within context (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Contextual constructionism can offer useful perspective to enhance understanding of human behaviour in community contexts (Tebes, 2005), as is explored within this thesis. It has been argued that constructionism, contextualism, perspectivism and transactionalism stem from similar philosophical positions; that of recognising differing perspectives and the interaction between them (Tebes, 2005). Contextualism within phenomenological research was developed by Gadamer (1960/1989) and Gendlin (1962/1997).

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is based on hermeneutic phenomenology and a contextual constructionist epistemology (Lyons, 2015). Phenomena are considered in relation to wider social and cultural contexts (Jennings and Cronin-Davis, 2016). Larkin, Watts and Clifton (2006:108) describe this as phenomenologists revealing subject matter “on its own terms”, whilst recognising that both the researcher and the researched are “persons-in-

context”. Contextualist analysis demands that researchers articulate personal, cultural perspectives as a valuable analytic resource and opportunity for empathy with participants (Madill, Jordan and Shirley, 2000). Contextualists might consider cultural groups, for example, in relation to religion, socio-economic status, ethnicity, geographical region, age, gender, and physical or mental challenges (Cohen, 2010). However, Tebes (2010:58) argued that in addition to exploring the “contexts of diversity”, the “diversity of contexts” should also be considered, highlighting that concepts of identity can be fluid and negotiated within multiple contexts. This aligns with Ricoeur’s (1981/2016:230) portrayal of a “fragmented” narrative.

### 3.3.2 Interpretation: subjectivity, objectivity and neutrality

Using contextual constructionism, the investigator’s constructions are recognised and included in the research (Howell, 2013). This moves away from the positivist perspective that the researcher’s subjective views can be removed from the research process and again prompts a critical interrogation of context (Letherby, Scott and Williams, 2013). Kincheloe (2005:12, 13) stated that “pious protestations of pseudo-objectivity must be confronted”; arguing the impossibility of neutrality which is based on “the rationalist myth of cold reason”. This statement in itself demonstrates strong opinion and scepticism, familiar to postmodernism. However, with a more balanced approach, Letherby, Scott and Williams (2013) suggest the need for both subjectivity and objectivity within the research process, identified through researcher reflexivity. Within this thesis, researcher objectivity and subjectivity is acknowledged and explored through reflexive accounts.

### 3.3.3 Trustworthiness

The impact of the researcher on the findings can create a problem in relation to trustworthiness and credibility when evaluating qualitative approaches to research (Madill, Jordan and Shirley, 2000). Qualitative appraisal tools frequently place emphasis on critiquing studies in relation to researcher bias (Hannes, Lockwood and Pearson, 2010). IPA research has been criticised for small sample sizes and bias (Clouston, 2014). However, bias and confirmability can be contentious within phenomenological research where the researcher's experience is included in the data (Hannes, 2011). In a review of published criteria for qualitative research, Cohen and Crabtree (2008) identified seven quality dimensions; that research should be: ethical, important, coherent, rigorous, reflexive (or should attend to bias), credible or valid, and reliable or verifiable. However, whilst this meta-synthesis of seminal guidance presented a consensus regarding the first four quality dimensions, the application of the latter three varied depending on paradigm (Cohen and Crabtree, 2008). Within a realist view, researcher bias can be viewed as a problem affecting trustworthiness; or within an interpretivist view, researcher subjectivity can be reflexively acknowledged and actively and creatively used throughout the research process (Cohen and Crabtree, 2008).

Hannes, Lockwood and Pearson (2010) considered validity in relation to descriptive, interpretive, theoretical, evaluative and external validity, in terms of how accurately each is reported; suggesting that critical appraisal tools that prompted consideration of congruity with intrinsic methodology, were more

coherent than those that aligned with one paradigm or another (recommending tools from the Joanna Briggs Institute, 2014 see section 2). External validity within quantitative research is concerned with the generalisability of the results to a wider population; however, qualitative research is concerned with transferability, with quality enhanced by greater detail of the circumstances of the research allowing readers to evaluate the transferability of findings to another setting (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Similarly, Yardley (2015) proposed that validity be considered in terms of: sensitivity to context, commitment and rigour, coherence and transparency, and impact and importance. These criteria are recommended by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) as appropriate for IPA research. Finally, whilst verification or reliability is considered within some paradigms to be improved through processes such as triangulation, peer review, audit and member checking; the interpretivist perspective suggests that verification is negotiated between researchers and readers, whereby researchers report their analysis and interpretation, and readers discern the patterns identified (Cohen and Crabtree, 2008). Whilst the research in this thesis involves small sample sizes with findings that are therefore not generalizable, the discussion presents the case that the findings may be transferable to some practice contexts, with contextualised reflexive accounts provided for readers to determine the relevance to their own practice.

### **3.4 Logic: perspectives on reasoning**

Logic is presented as the second area for consideration in relation to philosophy informing the methodology (Benton and Craib, 2011). Theories of logic refer to the way in which the premises of arguments are constructed to present

reasoned conclusions (Benton and Craib, 2011). Within research, arguments can be presented as inductive or deductive (Howell, 2013).

#### 3.4.1 Induction and deduction

Phenomenological research involves inductive reasoning; this begins with data which are explored in relation to the research question, to discern patterns which are then linked to existing or new theory (Coyle, 2015). However, as with Paley's (2017) challenge to Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) (see section 3.2.2) the extent to which the data prompts new connections to theory, or that the researcher imposes theory, depends on the researcher. Howell (2013) acknowledged a continuum and interdependency between inductive and deductive approaches, arguing that whether research is developing or testing theory, researchers bring pre-conceptions to the analysis. However, whilst "pure induction" may not be possible, the analysis can still be primarily anchored in the data (Clarke and Braun, 2015:89) and this is the aim within this thesis.

#### 3.4.2 Phenomenological reduction

Whilst phenomenology is essentially anti-reductive, phenomenologists have described a reductive process to establish the essence of experience.

Phenomenological reduction involves several levels of reflection to enable consideration of experience as it has been lived; this includes stripping away personal feelings and established theories in relation to the phenomenon (van Manen, 1990). Husserl (1936/1970) defined eidetic and transcendental

reduction as part of the process to bracket the natural world and identify the structures of experience and foundations of thought (Chin-Ye, 2008). As identified in section 3.2.1, there is some debate as to whether phenomenological reduction should strip away cultural context (Husserl, 1927/1970) or present the researcher and researched within context (Gadamer, 1960/1989). This thesis sits within a contextualist paradigm with the positioning of the researcher and participants explored. Phenomenological reduction involves the researcher having a change in attitude to critically analyse and explain experience (Wesołowska, 2014). In this way, the process of phenomenology has the potential to be transformative for both the researcher and participants (Finlay, 2011).

### **3.5 Ontology: perspectives on being and existence**

Ontology is presented as the third area for consideration in relation to philosophy informing the methodology (Benton and Craib, 2011). Ontology is the study of being (Crotty, 1998) and refers to the nature of reality and its characteristics (Creswell, 2013). Interpretations of reality are considered to be on a continuum from realism, where reality is independent of human knowledge, to relativism or idealism, where reality depends entirely on interpretation (Braun and Clark, 2013). Heidegger (1962/26) is credited with introducing an ontological focus to phenomenology, building on the idealism of Kant (1781/1963), Hegel (1807/1979) and Husserl (1927/1970). This was then developed by existential phenomenologists Merleau-Ponty (1945/2009), Sartre (1946/1974) and Gendlin (1962/1997) in relation to exploring the experience of

being and existence. The ontological premise of occupational therapy has been summarised as:

*“Ever changing humans, interconnected with ever changing environments, occupy time with ever changing occupations, and thereby transform – and are transformed by – their actions, environments and states of health.”* Hooper and Wood (2014:38)

Embedded within this statement, alongside an occupation focus, is reference to wider theories that relate to phenomenological philosophy, specifically interconnection and transformation (Finlay, 2011). Ontological perspectives informing this thesis are now explored in terms of holism, embodied experience of being, individualism and collectivism, and transactionalism.

### 3.5.1 Holism

Holism is presented in the work of idealists Kant (1781/1963) Hegel (1807/1979) and Husserl (1927/1970) in response to the dualistic separation of mind and body. Holism was further explored by existential phenomenologists who presented the embodied experience of being: Merleau-Ponty (1945/2009), Sartre (1946/1974) and Gendlin (1962/1997). Holism is a key feature within philosophical discussions of occupational therapy (Drolet, 2014). A number of papers exploring holism and occupation were written in the 1990s (Hubbard, 1991; Miller, 1992; Schkade and Schultz, 1992; Peloquin, 1993; Rozario, 1997). This was a reaction to the dominance of the medical model within occupational therapy at that time, heralding a return to its roots (Wish-Baratz, 1989). McColl (1994) reflected on the holistic origins of the profession, but criticised a tendency within occupational therapy guidelines in the 1990s to state an interest in the whole person, whilst simultaneously presenting component parts, such as:



“physical, mental, sociocultural and spiritual” (Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists, 1991:17). McColl (1994) argued instead that the occupational nature of humans could be informed by holism, through considering the individual as an integrated whole, who is also integrated with his or her environment; rather than as a series of parts or systems. Health values arising from holism include: that states of health are influenced by the interconnection of personal and environmental factors; that people have self-healing capacity; and that people can be empowered to create lifestyles conducive to a sense of fulfilment (Finlay, 2001). These values, particularly with regards to interconnection and empowerment, continue to be recognised across prominent models of occupational therapy practice (for example, Polatajko *et al.*, 2013; Baum, Christiansen and Bass, 2015; Taylor and Kielhofner, 2017).

Within outdoor adventure literature holism is evident in the ecological ontology of interconnection between self, others and environment (Nicol, 2003; Beard, 2016). Holism also features in the work of pragmatist John Dewey (see 3.5.4) and sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (Bailliard, Carroll and Dallman, 2017), referred to earlier in relation to social constructionism (see 3.2.1). Aspects of holism, including the interconnection of mind and body; the interconnection of individuals with other people; and the interconnection of the individual with the environment, have been explored below.

### 3.5.2 Embodied experience of being

Despite the prominence of holism in occupational therapy theory (Finlay, 2001), the corporeal aspect of participation in meaningful occupation is frequently overlooked (Bailliard, Carroll and Dallman, 2017). That said, two studies identify a focus on embodied being: in a study of cancer survivors, Sleight and Clark (2015:477) suggested that holistic wellbeing could be enhanced by occupations that mindfully engage the 'core self' as a bridge between the physical body and conscious mind, whilst recognising that focussing on an ailing body may not be beneficial for all. Similarly considering the body's experiential knowledge of occupation, in a study of injured musicians, Guptill (2012:258) explored the bodily experience of playing music (with reference to existentialist Merleau-Ponty), including the musicians' connection with their instruments and description of addiction to "flow", despite overuse injuries.

Named by psychologist Csikszentmihalyi (2008), flow is described as the complete immersion in an activity, as though existence is temporarily suspended, resulting in an optimal experience of happiness. Flow as a concept is embraced within both occupational science (Wright, 2004; Morris and Cox, 2017) and outdoor adventure literature (Boniface, 2006; Lusby and Anderson, 2010; Rickly-Boyd, 2012; Ingman, 2017). Flow is also referred to within nature-based occupational therapy research (Fieldhouse, 2003; Pálsdóttir, Grahn and Persson, 2014; Joyce and Warren, 2016). Phenomenology, specifically the existential theories of Merleau-Ponty, are recommended for exploring the embodied experience of sport (Allen-Collinson, 2009). The sensation of freedom, with reference to Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger, was described by Brymer and Schweitzer (2013) in relation to BASE (Building, Antenna, Space,

Earth) jumping. Interpreted by the researchers as an experience of flow, the kinaesthetic sensation of moving through air or water during outdoor adventure, was described by Kerr and Hougue Mackenzie (2012) as pleasurable and thus motivational. Finally, flow and the embodied experience of climbing was described as an enjoyable relationship between body and mind that was sought by climbers; counteracting a modern ambivalence to body and sensuous knowledge (Rickly-Boyd, 2012). Existential phenomenology therefore offers a perspective on embodied meaning that can illuminate research on outdoor adventure and occupational science, in terms of the concept of the lived body (Park Lala and Kinsella, 2011).

### 3.5.3 Individualism and collectivism

The epistemological position of contextual constructionism informing this thesis (as explored in 3.3.1) aligns with the belief that knowledge and meaning are established through social consensus (Howell, 2013), and that people are understood in context, which is also a facet of cultural collectivism (Owe *at al.*, 2013). A key ontological dispute within social science is whether society itself is an independent reality or simply a collection of individuals (Benton and Craib, 2011). This debate is longstanding, with Kant (1781/1963) and Weber (1922/1978) presenting their opposition to individualism (Sung Ho, 2017). It has been argued within healthcare, that individualism is perpetuated by neoliberalist views of personal reliance and responsibility over collective interests; and biomedical emphasis of ill-health as an individual experience without recognition of social determinants (Gerlach, *et al.*, 2018).

More optimistically, positive psychologists Lopez, *et al.* (2014) suggest that individualism, associated with Western culture, values hope, independence, personal goals and uniqueness, and is associated with equal rights and freedom. Collectivism, associated with Eastern culture, emphasises dependence, conformity, concern for the welfare of group members, compassion, harmony and balance (Lopez, *et al.*, 2014). However, Lopez, *et al.* (2014) argue that Eastern and Western perspectives do not need to be viewed as static, and the heterogeneity of contemporary communities can enable a dynamic approach to the positive aspects of both individualist and collectivist cultures. Similarly, occupational scientists Ramugondo and Kronenberg (2015) suggest that perpetuating the view that individualism and collectivism are dichotomous is unhelpful when both perspectives can inform understanding of human occupation.

Exploring unique individual experience is an important focus for understanding human occupation; however contemporary occupational science has expanded to include the social, cultural and interactional aspects of occupation, within complex systems and social collectives, reflecting the need for multiple levels of analysis from micro to macro (Fogelberg and Frauwirth, 2010). Where social and cultural phenomena were previously viewed as a backdrop to the occupation of individuals; shared, collective occupations are increasingly being recognised in relation to complex systems theory and transactionalism (Fogelberg and Frauwirth, 2010). Collective occupations can maintain the self, family and social fabric of communities and balance between these (Kantartzis and Molineux, 2017). Collective experience and sense of “*communitas*” has also been identified as meaningful within outdoor adventure literature (Rickly-

Boyd, 2012:100). Both individualistic and collectivistic influence is evident in IPA, with its phenomenological focus on unique experience, and its hermeneutic focus on interpretation within social context (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009; Larkin, Eatough and Osborn, 2011). IPA is therefore a useful tool within this phenomenological thesis, focused on the meaning of occupation in relation to outdoor adventure from individual and community perspectives, within socio-cultural context, to inform occupational therapy.

#### 3.5.4 Transactionalism

The Deweyan concept of transaction (Dewey and Bentley, 1949) has been discussed within occupational science (Aldrich, 2008; Cutchin and Dickie, 2012; Reed and Hocking, 2013) and outdoor adventure (Ord and Leather, 2011; Quay, 2013) and is therefore a relevant ontological position for informing this thesis. Beyond the holism of mind and body, and the collectivist view of people in cultural context; transactionalism also embraces the interconnection of person in environment, time, space and place (Dewey and Bentley, 1949). This interconnection and temporality is evident in the work of phenomenologists: Heidegger (1926/1962), Merleau-Ponty (1945/2009) and Gendlin (2018). Finlay (2011:16) identified the assumption that “body and world are intertwined” as a key facet of phenomenology.

Outdoor educator Quay (2013) distinguished between Heidegger’s ideas, based on phenomenology and Dewey’s ideas, based on pragmatism. With Heidegger’s (1926/1962) phenomenological view, the parts are submerged and not discerned, presenting an aesthetic ‘simple whole’; whereas with a pragmatic

view, elements are relational and manifold, presenting a 'total whole' (Quay, 2013:142). Quay (2013) argues that appreciation of both senses of wholeness, aesthetic and relational, offer useful perspectives on outdoor adventure, where the trinity of self, others and nature has dominated theory. Morse (2014:49) equally presented the experience of "intertwining with the more-than-human-world" as a paradox of being both separate (relating to the world), and connected (being a part of the world), drawing on Merleau-Ponty's (1945/2009) phenomenological discussion of divergent possibilities of perception.

Within occupational science, Bailliard, Carroll and Dallman (2017) pointed to the complementary use of phenomenological theories from Merleau-Ponty to provide micro-level analysis, alongside the macro-analyses of Dewey and Bourdieu; to inform understanding of occupation and interaction on multiple levels. Pragmatism is evident in early theories of occupational therapy, in terms of Meyer's (1922) emphasis of relationship between person, environment and activity; and was later developed by Cutchin (2004) to initiate a discourse on transactionalism within occupational science (Cutchin and Dickie, 2012). Key models of occupational therapy practice present the dynamic interaction between person, occupation and environment (Law *et al.* 2002; Polatajko, *et al.*, 2013; Baum, Christiansen and Bass, 2015; O'Brien and Kielhofner, 2017). The Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance (PEOP) model is considered an "ecological-transactional systems model", viewing occupations as affecting and being affected by person and environment factors (Baum, Christiansen and Bass, 2015:49). However, PEOP (Baum and Christiansen, 2005) was criticised for viewing person and environment as unconnected except through occupation

(Polatajko, *et al.* 2013) and Dickie, Cutchin and Humphry (2006) challenged whether it is truly transactional. Similarly, the Model of Human Occupation (Kielhofner and Burke, 1980), the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) (World Health Organization, 2001) and the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (World Health Organization, 1986) have been criticised for being too individualistic, whilst they recognised environment, they did not fully integrate the individual within social-cultural context (Polatajko *et al.*, 2007). This point was also raised by Eriksson and Lindström's (2008) salutogenic critique of the Ottawa Charter. More recently, Reed and Hocking (2013) suggested that the meanings of occupations are complex, situated in context and shaped by others, and should be considered from broad perspectives that can be informed by both hermeneutic phenomenology and transactionalism. Whilst some traditional phenomenological theories can be differentiated from pragmatism (Quay, 2013); contemporary phenomenology (Gendlin, 2018) and occupational science (Cutchin and Dickie, 2012) embrace both pragmatism and transactionalism as useful perspectives for informing understanding of interconnected experience of occupation and have thus informed this thesis.

### **3.6 Ethics and axiology: perspectives on values and power**

Ethics and axiology are presented here as the fourth area for consideration in relation to the philosophy informing the methodology (Benton and Craib, 2011). The ethical considerations for each element of the thesis are explored within respective chapters, see table 1. However, ethics in relation to the philosophical context and axiological values underpinning the thesis are

explored here. Derrida (1974/2016) challenged phenomenologists to consider the ethical and political aspects of the way the world is experienced and interpreted, to inform a contextualised understanding of the phenomena being explored (Eaglestone, 2004). This is now discussed in terms of humanism and behaviourism, medical and social models of disability, and justice and emancipation.

### 3.6.1 Humanism and behaviourism

Humanism is a central tenet of phenomenology, particularly in relation to freedom (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2002; Sartre 1946/1974; Gendlin, 2003); this is evident in IPA (Smith and Eatough, 2015) and has informed this thesis in terms of the researchers approach to interpreting the data. A phenomenological approach is therefore opposed to the determinism of behaviourism, where behaviour is considered the outcome of a set of variables (Ashworth, 2015). Humanism asserts that people are driven towards self-actualisation, with the opportunity for a shift from self-interest to altruism and social interest (D'Souza and Gurin, 2016). The foundations of occupational science and occupational therapy have been informed by humanism, with notable humanists such as Frankl (1975), Csikszentmihalyi (1993b) and Maslow (1999) appearing in the literature (Collins, 2010). The occupational therapy profession embraced the humanistic approach of Carl Rogers (1951/2003) to inform client-centred practice and a collaborative approach to intervention (Townsend, *et al.*, 2013). Client-centred practice and humanism have been used to support the move towards an emancipatory agenda for occupational justice within occupational science (Hocking and Whiteford, 2012).



Health promotion literature, however, often appears to favour behavioural approaches to population health (Biddle *et al.*, 2010). Practitioners identify targeted behaviour and changes required for health, mapping determinants for the focus of behaviour intervention (Mitchie, van Stralen and West, 2011). A behavioural approach can lead to assumptions of good and bad behaviour in relation to personal responsibility for lifestyle choices; healthy self-regulating individuals are good neoliberal citizens in contrast to unhealthy failed neoliberal citizens (Tischner and Malson, 2012) (see 1.1.3). Despite, for example, evidence that income inequality leads to poor mental and physical health and that societal conditions perpetuate this, problems are often presented as being at an individual level, due to irresponsible lifestyle choices, without recognition of the wider social landscape (Anderson and Gibson, 2017). Within a behavioural view, outdoor adventure activities can be simultaneously considered good behaviour, in terms of maintaining fitness; and irresponsible behaviour where risk taking is considered unjustifiable (Thompson, 2012). Participation in meaningful occupations where there is potential for injury can be considered unhealthy, however this contradiction can be resolved with a broader definition of health and wellbeing to include psycho-social aspects, choice and justice (Guptil, 2012). As occupational therapists become more prominent in health promotion (Public Health England, 2015a), consideration may need to be given in relation to how the opposing philosophies of humanism and behaviourism can be navigated in practice. Within this thesis it is proposed that a phenomenological, humanistic approach focused on the meaning of occupation within socio-cultural context, can offer an alternative perspective for health promotion.

### 3.6.2 Medical and social models

A behavioural approach to health is considered to align with the medical model (Hudson, 2018). Western medicine is underpinned by the biomedical ethics of autonomy, nonmaleficence, beneficence and justice (Beauchamp and Childress, 2013). However, beneficence and philanthropy have been criticised for paternalism, at odds with autonomy; whilst the concept of autonomy has been criticised for being individualistic (Beauchamp and Childress, 2013). These arguments are prevalent in occupational therapy literature, where practitioners frequently work in medical contexts, but critique these for promoting a sick role at odds with empowerment (Agner, 2017). Occupational therapists have also criticised the medical model for its reductive focus on the individual and failure to consider social and cultural influences on health (Townsend, *et al.* 2009).

By contrast, the social model of disability has challenged discrimination and marginalisation of disabled people in society, in a movement of civil rights and political activism (Owens, 2015). However, the social model of disability has also been criticised as an outdated ideology, for the dualism of impairment and disability, and the focus on a disabled identity (Shakespeare and Watson, 2001). Whilst some aspects of health continue to demonstrate dualistic, hierarchical, behavioural and paternal approaches (Mitchie, van Stralen and West, 2011), an agenda to address health inequalities and social justice is being voiced across both biomedical (Beauchamp and Childress, 2013) and allied health professions (Venkatapuram, 2011). Occupational scientists have coined the term “occupational justice” as an expansion of client centred practice (Townsend and Wilcock, 2004) (see section 1.1.1), but could be criticised for not engaging more

with the field of bioethics, which examines moral issues relating to interdisciplinary health science (Durocher, Rappolt and Gibson, 2014). Within this thesis it is proposed that a greater emphasis on contextualised meaning, rather than illness or disability, enables a fresh perspective on sustained engagement in occupation.

### 3.6.3 Justice and emancipation

Occupational justice is based on the idea that participation in occupation has an impact on health, that people have a right to engage in diverse and meaningful occupations to develop their potential and that barriers to such engagement can be considered injustices (Durocher, Gibson and Rappolt, 2014) (see 1.1.1).

However, a dissonance between “the ideal and the reality” of human rights practice and occupational justice in occupational therapy has been highlighted (Galvin, Wilding and Whiteford, 2011:378). Associated concepts of occupational deprivation (Whiteford, 2010), occupational marginalization, alienation, imbalance (Stadnyk, Townsend and Wilcock, 2010) and occupational apartheid (Kronenberg and Pollard, 2005) have been highlighted; however, a lack of conceptual clarity has impeded their impact on practice (Durocher, Gibson and Rappolt, 2014:418). Further clarity and interdisciplinary collaboration (Durocher, Rappolt and Gibson, 2014), and greater awareness of historical, political and cultural context are required to move forward with social and occupational justice within occupational therapy (Frank, 2012a). Localised, contextualised discussion is required to translate ideals for human rights into practice (Galvin, Wilding and Whiteford, 2011).

Emancipatory research approaches identify traditional research as deeply implicated in power, with science providing an authoritative voice on the construction of knowledge (Humphries, 2008). The challenge to researchers wanting to reflect values of social justice therefore lies in the need to acknowledge a personal position of power, whilst at the same time attempting to confront and reduce inequalities, resulting in a complex reflexive position (see section 3.8).

### **3.7 Methods**

Specific methods for gathering and analysing data are discussed within each chapter. Methods within this thesis include data collection from primary sources: interviews and focus groups; and secondary sources: autobiographies and articles. The discussion involves third order interpretation: thematic synthesis, the process for this is discussed in section 7. Mixed methods research is a term that is more frequently used for studies where quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis occur within the same study, but can also refer to studies combining different qualitative methods (Sparkes and Smith, 2014; Turnball and Lathlean, 2015) in a pluralistic approach (Lyons, 2015), as in the case of this thesis. A pragmatic approach suggests that using philosophy and multiple methods flexibly, whilst focused on the research question and solutions, can address practice relevant issues (Creswell, 2013). Whilst points of conflict have been identified (Critchley *et al.*, 2003), many contemporary phenomenologists have embraced pragmatism (Rorty, 1982; Gendlin, 2018) which is considered philosophically congruent with contextualism (Hooper and Wood, 2002; Tebes, 2005) and post-postmodernism (Finlay, 2011). The

concept of triangulation does not readily fit with constructionism, within a contextualist epistemology the justification for use of pluralist mixed methods is for completeness rather than convergence (Madill, Jordan and Shirley, 2000).

### 3.7.1 Primary sources of data: interviews and focus groups

Within this thesis, element 4 used semi-structured interviews and element 2 used focus groups to gather primary data. Phenomenological research typically involves conducting interviews (Creswell, 2013), which allow an environment for storytelling (Howell, 2013). However phenomenological research can involve focus groups (Palmer *et al.*, 2010); and can also involve observation or experiential accounts represented within literature, poetry, art or biography (see 3.7.3) (van Manen, 1990). The benefit of interviews and focus groups is that they enable the researcher to direct the line of questioning in relation to the research question (Creswell, 2014). Phenomenological interviews can be used to gather lifeworld stories through prompting description of relevant experiences as fully as possible, including what the events meant to the person and how it felt (Galvin and Holloway, 2015). There is some discussion about whether there is a tension in the use of focus groups in phenomenological research (Taylor and Francis, 2013). However, where the focus group discussion takes place within a pre-existing group and the topic of investigation is directly related to this natural group, there can be benefits in this method (Palmer *et al.*, 2010). Given the contextualist focus of this thesis, and the growing interest in collective occupation and socio-cultural influences on occupational engagement (Reed and Hocking, 2013), it can be argued that focus groups can offer a useful

contribution to a phenomenological exploration of the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure.

### 3.7.2 Secondary sources of data: autobiographies and articles

Within this thesis, element 3 used autobiographies and element 1 used articles sampled through systematic searching to provide secondary data. Published autobiographies can offer insight as to how people create meaning in their lives through occupations (Ikiugu *et al.*, 2012). Autobiographical accounts can offer rich descriptions of lifeworld experience appropriate for phenomenological consideration (van Manen 1990; Smith and Eatough, 2015:55). Ricoeur's (1981/2016) phenomenological perspective of narrative and how personal stories can describe meaning, identity and call to action offers useful justification for the use of autobiography to explore the meaning and process of engagement in occupation. Advantages of using public documents of first-hand accounts of experience include that the researcher is able to unobtrusively obtain the language and words of participants through data to which participants have given thought and attention (Creswell, 2014).

A systematic review can provide the opportunity for synthesis of findings across a larger spectrum of participants from a broader range of contexts to "build a greater whole" (Murray and Stanley, 2015:174). The systematic review in element 1 (chapter 2) brought together widespread findings to enable comparison across studies and with the subsequent studies in the thesis. A systematic review can be based on an assumption that a methodical process

can be used to identify the truth that is known, consistent with a positivist view that truth can be identified and a single objective reality can be observed; this appears to be at odds with qualitative evidence from the post-realist view that knowledge is subjective (Marks and Sykes, 2004). However integration of knowledge from different epistemological sources is consistent with a pragmatist view (Yardley and Marks, 2004) and the critical appraisal tools from the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI, 2014: 177) have been recommended as prompting consideration of research in terms of its congruency with its stated methodology rather than aligning with a specific paradigm (Hannes, Lockwood and Pearson, 2010).

### 3.7.3 Third order interpretation: thematic synthesis

Qualitative researchers typically gather data from multiple sources and then organise it into themes across the whole data (Creswell, 2014). Each of the first four elements have been written with a discussion relating the key findings to literature at the end of respective chapters, these findings were then thematically synthesised. Many thematic synthesis techniques have been influenced by the processes for “meta-ethnography” originally established by Noblit and Hare (1988:10). This involves identifying key concepts from multiple studies and translating them into one another with creative, holistic interpretation (Noblit and Hare, 1988). Whilst this is typically used to synthesise the findings of multiple qualitative research studies sourced through systematic review, the techniques were originally established in primary research analysis and have offered a useful strategy for “third order interpretation” (Thomas and Harden, 2008:9) of multiple sources of primary and secondary data within this

thesis. Thematic synthesis is in-keeping with an idealist view (Barnett-Page and Thomas, 2009) and involved the organisation and grouping of themes from across the elements (see section 7). The thesis then concludes with a reflexive critique and discussion of contribution.

### **3.8 Reflexivity**

Reflexivity is the process by which the underlying personal and cultural expectations, values and beliefs, of the researcher and researched, are acknowledged with regards to their implicit and explicit influence on the research process (Bager-Charleson, 2014). Reflexivity has been differentiated from reflection in that it goes beyond consideration of an incident to interrogate broader context, including position in society and time; and how this relates to values and beliefs (Phelan, 2011). It therefore considers how the researcher's views, interests and relationships influence the study (Stanley and Nayar, 2015). Position can be considered both in terms of insider and outsider status in relation to the social groups of participants (Braun and Clarke, 2013) and in terms of clarifying the researchers' position in relation to epistemological beliefs (Stanley and Nayar, 2015).

This philosophy chapter has identified the historical context of phenomenological research for exploring lifeworld, and its contemporary applications including interpretative phenomenological analysis. The epistemological perspective on knowledge and truth of contextual constructionism has been considered, in relation to interpretation, subjectivity, objectivity, neutrality and trustworthiness. Logic, in terms of perspectives on



reason and argument, has been considered in terms of induction, deduction and phenomenological reduction. Phenomenological perspectives of ontology, being and existence; have been considered in relation to holism, an embodied experience of being, individualism and collectivism, and transactionalism. Ethical and axiological perspectives on values and power, including behaviourism and humanism, medical and social model, and justice and emancipation have been considered. From this summary three key influences can be identified:

1. Hermeneutic phenomenology and constructionism point to a view that knowledge is socially constructed and interpreted from the differing perspectives of both participants and researchers, requiring an honest, reflexive account of position.
2. Existential phenomenology and transactional ontology emphasise an understanding of experience of life that is unique, embodied, and interconnected, valuing individual and collective perspectives.
3. Social phenomenology, contextualism and social justice indicate the significance of socio-cultural influences on the experience of being and its interpretation.

These three aspects have informed my philosophical position, which I now link to my personal story, written as an autobiographical account of a “core story” (Bamberg, 2006) to provide a brief overview of my personal beliefs in relation to the research topic to locate me as the researcher theoretically.

### ***The core story – really he was writing his own requiem***

*One Valentine's day my mum, a journalist for the local radio, interviewed my teacher about Mozart's requiem. Commissioned for Walsegg, it was left incomplete when the composer died (Gombay, 1996). "But really he was writing his own requiem" she exclaimed with such enthusiasm that it stuck as a household catch phrase. Years later, studying phenomenology, I have been prompted to consider whether it is in fact possible to write about anything without it reflecting the life story of the author. And whilst I had no intention of discussing my own story at the outset of my studies, the journey made me realise that it was not only inevitable, but a requirement that I consider my personal position. Stanley and Nayar (2015:13) suggest that "the challenge is not to remove the subjective nature of qualitative research and be free of bias, rather to use it as the focus for more intense insight."*

*As a teenager I studied English literature and was fascinated by the metaphysical poets and their use of conceits, particularly where these were nature metaphors to explore ideas of relationship with God and existence. Connection with nature to understand my own place in the world made sense to me. Their use of nature metaphor made me very receptive to this idea when I later came across it in adventure therapy literature (Gass, 1993; Gass, Gillis and Russell, 2012) as I worked with people with mental health problems. Similarly, the element of linguistic analysis offered by interpretative phenomenology (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009) seemed relevant to me because of the recognised prevalence of nature metaphor within adventure stories (Wasserburger, 2012). As I came to learn more about phenomenology,*

*existentialism and transactionalism, I was drawn to these ideas, particularly when I could also identify with them being explored in occupational therapy literature. As a student occupational therapist, I was in awe of Linda Finlay, an inspirational lecturer, I am mindful that I was therefore very open to her ideas on phenomenology.*

*As a therapist, I believe that self-acceptance is the key to self-esteem, self-efficacy, sense of wellbeing and positive relationships with others. In a therapeutic context, I would hope to support people to develop self-acceptance by offering unconditional positive regard and promoting identity formation through aspirational occupational engagement and social connection. I believe in 'client centred practice' and the concept of the 'patient as expert' whilst simultaneously being uncomfortable with both the terms 'client' and 'patient' in that they stem from a medical model. I value the social model and equality movement. I recognise the dichotomy of practice when imparting guidance alongside promoting empowerment. I recognise that my personal views have been highly influenced by occupational science, in particular its emphasis on the meaning of occupation and social justice.*

*I grew up in the 1980s with an assumption that the fight of feminism was no longer necessary given that we had a female prime minister. Whilst I learnt to understand that wasn't true, it still came as a shock to read Arlene Blums' account of how hard she had to fight to be a mountaineer and a PhD researcher (see section 6). I realise that the research I am carrying out is only possible because of my situatedness in time, not only due to ideas that are now*

*acceptable in terms of qualitative research, but also as a woman, and a mother who has chosen to work, and study, and enjoy outdoor adventure. I am grateful for the equality I have within my immediate social network, but recognise the importance of feminism. Women are more likely to have diseases related to 'sedentary behaviour' than men and health promotion research needs to reflect the needs of people regardless of gender, and cognisant of socio-cultural context. That said, as I tell this story I am painfully aware that my demographic matches most of the occupational scientists before me (Hocking, 2015). As a white, Western, female professional there is a danger that my research only reflects my demographic and world view and I have tried to be mindful of this within my discussions.*

## **Chapter 4: Element 2: Factors affecting sustained engagement in walking for health: a focus group study**

### **4.1 Introduction to Chapter 4.**

Walking is the most likely way that adults can meet recommended levels of physical activity (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2012), to enhance physical and psychological health (Hanson and Jones, 2015a). In chapter 4, the second element: “Factors affecting sustained engagement in walking for health: a focus group study” has been presented. The purpose of this element was to consider the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure, in relation to walking groups in a community practice context. This is in terms of supporting occupational engagement, promoting physical activity and exploring health promotional practice in an outdoor environment (see sections 1.1.3; 1.2).

Early in the development of the PhD proposal an opportunity arose to work with a local government public health initiative to promote walking in an urban regeneration site. This project was targeted at populations who were considered likely to have poor health outcomes due to physical inactivity and involved walking groups that were run in conjunction with a woodland regeneration scheme. The project team commissioned the research to evaluate the walking groups and the study has since been published in the British Journal of Occupational Therapy (Raine *et al.*, 2017).

#### 4.1.1 Background literature

Walking can improve health and wellbeing; occupational therapists could use walking within intervention; and there is scope for an occupational therapy perspective in health promotion (Wensley and Slade, 2012). Those who exercise outdoors as opposed to indoors have more enjoyment and are more likely to repeat it, promoting a more sustained engagement in healthy activity (Thompson Coon *et al.*, 2011). Exposure to wilderness can lead people to increase physical activity as they seek to re-experience nature (Freeman *et al.*, 2016). The evidence for positive health outcomes of access to woodlands and greenspace is persuasive because of the number and consistency of studies (O'Brien *et al.*, 2010). However, the research commissioners for this study were responding to a requirement for local evidence of effectiveness for walking groups and woodland regeneration (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2006, 2012).

In a sizable systematic review, Hanson and Jones (2015a) concluded that walking group interventions have good adherence and wide-ranging health benefits in relation to: physiological, psychological and wellbeing outcomes; with no notable adverse side effects (Hanson and Jones, 2015a). Walking has a significant effect on improving the symptoms of depression (Robertson, *et al.*, 2012) and can improve cardio-vascular health (Hamer and Chida, 2008) and physical fitness (Murphy *et al.*, 2007). Walking is recommended as a means to improve health and wellbeing by the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2013; Kahlmeier, 2014), National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2012) and the UK Department of Health (2011). Despite this, there is no evidence of the

use of walking as a public health intervention from an occupational therapy perspective (see section 1.1.5). This is an issue worthy of being addressed, given the increasing role of occupational therapists within public health (Public Health England, 2015b).

Concern has been expressed that walking interventions were more likely to be successful amongst the more affluent (Hanson and Jones, 2015b) and those who need them least (Hanson, Guell and Jones, 2016). It has also been argued that walking groups targeting deprived groups, often do not attract participants who are representative of their community (Hanson, Cross and Jones, 2016). Further research is therefore needed to understand how walking interventions targeting socially deprived groups can be most effective and sustainable. In addition, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2012) recommends that researchers consider individual and local factors influencing the effectiveness of approaches to encourage walking.

#### 4.1.2 Context of the study

The context for this element was that a local government project team, commissioned the research to evaluate walking groups that were run in conjunction with a woodland regeneration project. These were targeted at populations with health needs relating to physical inactivity as identified by local government demographical public health data and practitioners. Providers of the scheme felt that research exploring their walking groups would help to

establish evidence of influence on health and wellbeing and enhance their relationship with referrers.

#### 4.1.3 Rationale and objectives

The rationale in the thesis introduction (section 1.2) justified research that would explore the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure within socio-cultural context. Research on walking groups for socially deprived communities is warranted to consider their sustainability; their ability to reach target populations and consider local factors; the opportunities for practice; and the potential for an occupational perspective to enhance this. The thesis research question and aims are stated in section 1.2.; the negotiated objectives between the commissioners and researchers were to consider:

- the experience of the occupation of walking in relation to health and wellbeing;
- factors that lead to sustained engagement in walking;
- factors influencing the sustainable provision of walking groups, to inform practice.

These link to the thesis aims in terms of exploring the opportunities presented by outdoor adventure to promote health and wellbeing; and how the meaning of outdoor adventure relates to the process of establishing sustained engagement, (see table 1).



## 4.2 Method

The epistemological view informing this thesis is contextual constructionism (see section 3.3.1). The belief that knowledge is socially constructed within multiple contexts offers useful perspective for understanding peoples' lived experiences within community context (Tebes, 2005). Qualitative research invites inquiry about the human condition and explores the meaning of human experiences (Taylor and Francis, 2013). The underpinning philosophy for this research was phenomenology, with the aim of describing meaning found in everyday lived experience (Finlay, 2011). Phenomenology is well suited to the study of human occupations (Park Lala and Kinsella, 2011), (see section 3.2). This was selected in order to understand the experience of walking from individual walkers, the group and the walk leaders' perspectives.

In contrast to the views of early phenomenologists (Husserl, 1913/1990), phenomenology situated in constructionism embraces the significance of cultural context (Dowling, 2007); and the belief that it is impossible to completely remove the influence of the researcher (Kincheloe, 2005; Howell, 2013). Instead, a reflexive account of the researcher's position, reflecting subjectivity and objectivity, is presented to improve trustworthiness (Letherby, Scott and Williams, 2013). Ricoeur (1986/2008:24) refers to the "hermeneutical condition" of phenomenology, that contemporary phenomenology is necessarily interpretative because of the belief that the researcher is subjectively viewing the knowledge found. In addition, Finlay (2011:87) argues that beyond a "descriptive-hermeneutic dichotomy", phenomenological research can reflect both. Whilst elements 3 and 4 of this thesis use interpretative

phenomenological analysis, the data analysis tool for this element is descriptive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2013), because the aim was to establish key themes in relation to practice arising from focus groups, rather than a deep interpretation of individual personal accounts. The use of a descriptive tool, rather than an interpretative tool therefore reflects the objectives of the study and the type of data arising from it, whilst the position of the researcher remains hermeneutic. The decision to use focus groups was pragmatic (see section 3.7) with a focus on the best fit for the service (Glasgow, 2013).

#### 4.2.1 Data collection: focus groups

Focus groups can be useful where the objective is to obtain data within social context, where people can consider their own views in the context of others and develop additional comments beyond their original responses (Patton, 2015).

Focus groups can therefore be useful to evaluate programmes with pre-existing groups whose members have had a similar experience (Holloway and Wheeler 2010). Within the systematic review (section 2, element 1), two of the studies retrieved made effective use of focus groups to gather rich data (Freeman, *et al.*, 2016; Hickman, *et al.*, 2016). In a three part, multi-site occupational science study, Hocking, Wright-St Clair and Bunrayong (2002), Wright-St Clair, *et al.* (2004) and Shordike and Pierce (2005) made effective use of focus groups to explore the meaning of food-related occupations with established groups, to enable the sharing of stories within community and cultural context (see section 1.1.2). Likewise, the current study used three natural groupings, with people who had shared experiences, to encourage people to talk freely, as recommended by Payne (2015). However, there is some debate as to whether

focus groups are an appropriate tool to use with phenomenology (Taylor and Francis 2013).

Focus group responses are socially constructed, reflecting group norms, with the potential for dominant voices to steer the discussion; individual opinion as expressed in a group may differ from one-to-one interviews due to the influence of others and subsequent synergism (Berg and Lune, 2012). However, Bradbury-Jones *et al.* (2009) argue that use of focus groups can provide a greater understanding of phenomena, because they stimulate discussion and generate new perspectives, despite traditional views that one to one interviews are the only way for an uncontaminated description of experience.

Phenomenological researchers, Palmer, *et al.* (2010), argue that focus groups can provide rich experiential data. The research objectives in this element are concerned with both the individual and the group experience. Naturalistic communication within established groups focused on shared topics of importance (Gibson and Riley, 2010) was therefore considered to be a strength in addressing these objectives.

Reports arising from focus group research have been criticised as operating only at a group level, at the expense of recognition of individual positioning in relation to the themes (Tomkins and Eatough 2010). To address this, pseudonyms have been used to enable individual opinion to be followed in the findings. Details in brackets after a quote identify the group and line number of the transcript, for example, focus group one, transcript line one (F1.1).

Data were gathered from three focus groups with participants who were walking group members (focus group one and three) and walk leaders (focus group two) (see section 4.2.2), to capture differing perspectives of the walking group provision. The focus group schedules were negotiated with the research commissioners (see appendix 17 ). They were then conducted with the lead researcher asking a combination of questions to stimulate, clarify and embellish the discussion, questions to steer the discussion to cover required topics, and prompts to participants to agree or disagree with each other, as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2013).

#### 4.2.2 Sample

The walking group host organisations acted as gatekeepers (Steffen, 2015) for access to participants involved in a scheme of walking groups targeted at people with health needs relating to physical inactivity. Participants in focus group one had been involved in a walking group for people who had recently had a cardiac event; three group members, two leaders and two researchers were present. Focus group two was for the walk leaders to capture their evaluation of the scheme and perspective of factors influencing the sustainable provision of walking groups; five walk leaders and two researchers were present. Focus group three was with a walking group for school parents, in a geographical area where prevalence of inactivity was considered to be high; five group members, one walk leader and one researcher were present. Table 6 shows the roles of people present at the focus groups, identified by pseudonym:

FG	Focus group description:	Walking group member:	Walk leader:	Researcher:
1.	Participants from the cardiac rehabilitation health promotion walking group.	Melissa Malcom Marj	Frank Fiona	A B
2.	Leaders of the health promotion walking groups.		Fiona Frank Kath Karen Harry	A B
3.	Participants from the school parents' health promotion walking group.	Sarah Sylvia Sam Sally Sharon	Emma	A

Table 6. Focus group participants

As identified in table 6 walk leaders were present alongside walking group members in focus group one and three. Walk leaders opinions are identified within the findings with 'leader' by each quotation.

#### 4.2.3 Ethical considerations and trustworthiness

Ethical approval was granted through the University Health Research Ethics Committee (*Reference: Woodland Walking Group Evaluation 6.12.XX*), (see appendix 17). In line with recommendations by King (2010), key issues addressed included informed consent, openness and honesty, right to withdraw, protection from harm, debriefing, confidentiality and researcher safety. All potential participants were provided with an information sheet about the project clarifying the research objectives and what would happen to each participant; participants were asked to sign a consent form for the use of their comments

within research (see appendix 17). No deception featured in the research process. It was made clear that the choice to participate in the focus group, or not, or to withdraw at any point had no bearing on permission to have full involvement in all walking group activities or on the relationship between group members and the organisations involved. The researcher was mindful of the risk of possible power relations between gatekeepers and participants with a view to ensuring the research was not tacitly coercive (Steffen, 2015). Participants were identifiable by pseudonym within transcripts so that data could be removed if requested.

Risk assessment for walking activities were completed by walk leaders, contact details of researchers were provided to participants for further debriefing if required. Participants attending focus groups were requested to regard proceedings as confidential. Participants and gatekeepers consented to the naming of organisations involved within publications on the understanding that all individual identifiers would be removed. All data was stored in password protected electronic files or locked cabinet.

One participant in the first focus group objected to audio recording, so two researchers took written field notes recording direct quotes where possible (see appendix 18). Focus groups two and three were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim (as suggested by Braun and Clarke 2013) (see appendix 19 and 20). Participants were provided with a copy of the initial findings (via the gatekeeper) and invited to make corrections, by way of member checking for accuracy (Holloway and Wheeler 2010), however no comments were received.

#### 4.2.4 Data analysis

The data were considered using descriptive phenomenological thematic analysis to elicit meaning. Van Manen (1990:87) stated that “theme” is the experience of meaning and “describes an aspect of the structure of lived experience”. Finlay (2011:228) suggests “dwelling” with the data and embracing an “attitude of wonder”; “evidencing” the analysis to ensure it is grounded in the data; and “capturing ambivalence” to explore ambiguity and paradox. Finlay (2011) also recommended Braun and Clarke’s (2006) stepped guide for thematic analysis as a useful tool for descriptive phenomenology, this was revised in Braun and Clarke (2013:202-203) as follows:

- “1. Transcription*
- 2. Reading and familiarisation; taking note of items of potential interest*
- 3. Coding – complete; across entire dataset*
- 4. Searching for themes*
- 5. Reviewing themes (producing a map of the provisional themes and subthemes, and relationship between them – aka the thematic map)*
- 6. Defining and naming themes*
- 7. Writing – finalising analysis”*

This process was followed, with data organised into themes to represent the essence of the experience arising from the data (Patton, 2015); whilst acknowledging that some influence from the researcher’s standpoint is unavoidable and that recognition of this is desirable (Hiles and Čermák, 2008), (see section 3.3.3).

### 4.3 Findings and discussion

The themes arising from the data analysis have been grouped to address the research objectives and are presented below. Literature has been integrated to discuss the findings throughout. Focus group one for participants for the cardiac rehabilitation scheme attended a walking group that ran for a few weeks, but then stopped due to poor attendance, their comments therefore contribute some useful contrast to the school group which was well established. The group leaders were involved in a number of health schemes across the city, including several walking groups and their comments reflect this wider perspective. Table 7 illustrates the themes (relating to the research objectives) and subthemes (arising from the data).

Themes (linked to objectives):	Sub-themes (arising from the data):
The experience of the occupation of walking on health and wellbeing	Feeling better
	Meaning from social support
	Meaning from being outside in nature
	Lifestyle changes, adopting new health occupations
	Improving the health of others
Factors that lead to sustained engagement in walking	Challenge, variety and woodland developments
	Accommodating routines
	Use of local green space
	Understanding barriers
Factors influencing the sustainable provision of walking groups	Walk leaders and health champions
	Marketing and clarity of remit
	Liaison with primary care

Table 7. Walking for health focus group table of themes.



#### 4.3.1 The experience of the occupation of walking for health and wellbeing

The findings suggest that all participants felt that walking could have a positive influence on health and wellbeing (with every focus group member contributing positively regarding this). This was both in relation to the immediate impact of feeling better, having social support and appreciating being outside in nature; as well as the longer term impact of lifestyle change and improving the health of others.

##### 4.3.1.1 Feeling better

The findings demonstrate a consensus across individuals within the walking groups that being engaged in the occupation of walking made people “*feel better*” (Malcom, F1.35). Sarah stated “*well everything is good about it, it’s positive, it gets you out in the fresh air, meet up with people and it’s healthy*” (F3.247). Sylvia declared “*you are more energised when you have been out*” (F3.426) and Sally said “*it helps me sleep*” (F3.26). Sharon stated: “*it is really nice because you just forget everything...I could just walk and switch off and it was just brilliant and I wouldn’t have to worry*” (F3.368, 371). These findings suggest physical and mental health benefits.

Feeling better and energised from exposure to nature is consistent with literature claiming the restorative aspects of natural environments (O’Brien, Williams and Stewart, 2010; Thompson Coon *et al.*, 2011). The findings of improved energy levels and sleep patterns are in line with the benefits of physical activity proposed by Cole (2014). Being able to ‘forget worries’ is a

consistent finding with Svarstad's (2010) research on hiking, where participants described being able to detach the mind from concerns.

#### 4.3.1.2 Meaning from social support

It was evident from the findings that individuals valued the social aspects of the occupation of walking. Melissa stated that the facilitated walking group *"gives you the confidence to go out"* (F1.2) and Malcom agreed that it was good for people *"who don't want to go out on their own"* (F1.31). Sylvia also said *"it is not something I would do on my own"* (F3.266) adding *"it is more a question of being motivated, if I am in a group I am happy to go along"* (F3.269). Sharon agreed *"going on your own is one thing, but with others it's much, much nicer"* (F3.272). The walk leaders' focus group also raised this issue *"I think the social side is really key... they'll come because they know the other one or two are coming"* (Kath/leader F2.399). Harry (leader) described a successful group stating *"(its) working out because it's a social day event... and there will be lunch and it's a day out"* (F2.268). Additional social activity such as coffee was also seen to contribute to the success of the group in focus group three, Sarah said *"yes we will go anywhere if we can get a coffee afterwards"* (F3.20-22)

The finding of walking for social support was evident in the research by Wensley and Slade (2012). The importance of social factors on the motivation to join walking groups and sustain ongoing engagement, both with the groups and with additional connections outside the group, was also highlighted by South *et al.*, (2017). Findings in the current element suggest that social

activities such as lunch and coffee and alternative indoor options during poor weather were useful tools to keep the group socially committed to each other. This is consistent with Reed, Hocking and Smythe's (2010) phenomenological occupational science research which identified that connection with others is meaningful; prioritising this aspect may promote sustained engagement.

#### 4.3.1.3 Meaning from being outside in nature

Walking group members described how being outside was meaningful. Malcom said *"I use the exercise studio, but I prefer just walking"* (F1.39), Marj agreed adding *"I'm too self-conscious to be indoors"* (F1.48). Malcom then said *"it's the nature side as well, I heard a woodpecker today"* (F1.51). In focus group three, woodland was described as *"peaceful"* (Sarah, F3.311), *"healthy"* (Sharon, F3.312) and *"a haven"* (Sally, F3.314). Sarah said *"it's just nice watching all the different seasons really, it was quite fruity up in those woods, berries and other things, deer..."* (F3.451-452), suggesting connection to time and change, in addition to enjoying green space.

The findings resonate with Ikiugu and Pollard's (2015:30) routes to meaning of connection to "something bigger" and "temporal context" (see section 1.1.2) and Macfarlane's (2008:65) suggestion that nature offers connection to "deep time". The findings of this element are consistent with Wensley and Slade's (2012) finding of meaning through connection with nature, also evident in the wider occupational science literature (Hammell, 2014; Iwama, Thomson and Macdonald, 2009).

#### 4.3.1.4 Lifestyle change, adopting new healthy occupations

Some individuals, from focus group three, reported secondary associated changes. This included walking (at other times) instead of driving, Sharon reasoned *“so I find now I will walk, because I think, well, I would walk further than that if I went on a walk so what is the difference?”* (F3.412). Sarah agreed adding *“it’s making sure you allow a bit more time to walk”* (F3.417). Group members also reported that subsequent to facilitated sessions they had started: *“running”* (Sarah, F3.398), *“swimming”* (Sylvia, F3.87), *“Zumba”* (Sally, F3.92), and *“tai chi”* (Sam, F3.93), mainly together as a group. Sharon also reported an improvement in eating habits *“the kind of things you feel like eating changes as well when you start doing more walking and exercise... I went on purpose to find fruit, which for me is a change in diet, I fancy eating fruit and yoghurts”* (F3.441-444). This suggests potential for wider impact on health.

In relation to a longer term influence, the findings show that some participants reported broader lifestyle changes, with not only an increase in walking, but also other forms of exercise. This is in line with the “Start Active, Stay Active” (Department of Health, Physical Activity, Health Improvement and Protection 2011) recommendations for variety of type and intensity of physical activity. This, plus for example, the reported change in diet to more fruit, suggests a shift to ownership of healthy living concepts consistent with recommendations by Cole (2014) for sustained involvement in exercise.

#### 4.3.1.5 Improving the health of others

A number of individuals also referred to changes for others as a result of their own choices, Malcom said *“with the walk, you can go with your wife”* (F1.86). Members of focus group three described how they had considered different ways to engage children in walking, including *“looking at bugs”* (Sylvia, F3.224), *“bush craft”* (Sarah, F3.228), *“we built fires”* (Sharon, F3.231), *“and we made little men out of mud and wood and logs and twine and bind weed”* (Sylvia, F3.232). Sharon suggested *“it is just about making it more interesting in terms of what you do ... a tree to climb or something”* (F3.531). Emma (leader) agreed adding *“some kind of outdoor play area”* or *“say they’ve got to collect something”* (F3.540). Sarah suggested *“it’s good when they have got other children to keep them company and play with each other”* (F3.545). This suggests the importance of social connection, variety and interest.

The fact that these health improvements then also appeared to prompt change in others, including partners and children, is another useful finding in terms of population health and involvement of friends and family in intervention. A recent large population-based study (n = 3722) highlighted a significant impact of lifestyle change on partners, stating that when one partner changed to a healthier lifestyle, the other partner was more likely to also make a positive lifestyle change, and therefore recommended involving partners in lifestyle change interventions (Jackson *et al.*, 2015). This is also apparent in another occupational science study using phenomenological by Van Nes *et al.* (2012) which suggested the value of meaning from co-occupation in relation to older adults walking with their partners.

#### 4.3.2 Factors that lead to sustained engagement in walking

The findings suggest that in order for walking groups to result in sustained engagement in walking, a number of factors need to be considered, including appropriate challenge and variety and woodland development, accommodating routines, use of local green space, and understanding of barriers such as weather and cost. These are discussed in turn.

##### 4.3.2.1 Challenge, variety and woodland developments

In terms of engaging adult walkers, challenge, variety and additional focus were recommended. Participants in focus group one were involved in a group that was discontinued for poor attendance, Malcom said this was because the walks were *“too short for some in the group, they wanted longer walks”* (F1.12), later adding *“I don’t want to see the same thing again ...it gets boring”* (F1.65,69). This was in contrast to Sharon in focus group three, who said *“I have found that it was nice to know that walking wasn’t so boring”* (F3.362). Sarah agreed *“its thoroughly enjoyable”* (F3.367), later adding *“it’s getting people interested to start with and then they find that they enjoy it and want to do it again”* (F3.552). Ideas for making walks interesting for adults included using a *“pedometer”* (Sarah, F3.250), *“clearing bramble and searching for mammals”* (Fiona/leader, F2.26) and *“the park warden can give a talk”* (Melissa, F1.44). Woodland developments such as an *“orienteering course”* (Fiona/leader, F2.1051) and accessible paths were seen as useful tools to promote engagement in walking; Sarah said *“the good thing about it is it’s so accessible she can use the*

*pushchair if she wants*” (F3.68) which also suggests the breadth of need to be accommodated.

The importance of establishing an appropriate balance between the demands of the occupation and the skills of the individual resonates with Yerxa’s (1998:415) seminal paper on the importance of the “just-right challenge”. In terms of woodland developments, Andkjaer and Arvidsen’s (2015) scoping review also highlighted the significance of trails and how nature areas are managed, concluding that the environment has a significant impact on physical activity levels.

#### 4.3.2.2 Accommodating routines

Careful consideration of the time of day in relation to the target group, proved to be important to the success of the group. Malcom suggested that the walking group he attended was “*at the wrong time*” adding “*not lunchtime*” (F1.15) and Sally suggested that other people would like to join their group “*but they work so they can’t make it*” (F3.135). Walk leaders suggested fitting in with other routines, Emma (leader) said “*it seems to work well doing it right as school starts*” (F3.321) and Karen (leader) said “*they like to get it done and dusted first thing in the morning*” (F2.156). In terms of frequency, Sarah stated “*once a month, everybody quite looks forward to that and then maybe we do organise something outside of that*” (F3.79). Requirements here are again diverse.

Research by Wagman *et al.* (2012) describes the challenge of balancing valued occupations to allow time for healthy habits such as exercise alongside competing demands. Similarly, Kielhofner's Model of Human Occupation (Wook Lee and Kielhofner, 2017b) prompts consideration of how occupations are organised into routines and affected by roles, in terms of habituation.

#### 4.3.2.3 Use of local green space

The use of local green spaces for groups was considered beneficial. One of the walk leaders, Kath, discussed utilisation of green space for exercise adding *“a lot of it is that they don't know what is going on in their local area”* (F2.315). In focus group three, Sam said *“it was nice for people to actually see the woodland if they hadn't ever seen it before”* (F3.254). Sylvia agreed *“yes because people might think oh I'm not taking my children up there and then saying oh well it's nice, there are paths and open spaces, there are tables, and I can bring a picnic... so you learn you got a preconceived idea, then that is dispelled”* (F3.262-264). It was evident that walking groups had helped to address knowledge of local resources.

The “Start Active, Stay Active” report (Department of Health, Physical Activity, Health Improvement and Protection 2011) and National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE, 2018) guidelines claim that there is evidence to suggest that proximity to green spaces correlates with increased physical activity and reduced obesity. The findings in the current element showed however, that people may not be aware of the green spaces near them without



support to find them. In addition, woodland developments such as accessible footpaths and orienteering courses prompted further engagement.

#### 4.3.2.4 Understanding barriers

All focus groups discussed poor weather as a barrier to participation in walking. In focus group one Melissa stated *“we are fine weather walkers”* (F1.32). In the walk leaders’ group two, Karen (leader) stated *“the weather has been absolutely atrocious”* (F2.16) and that starting a group *“in the autumn was a mistake”* (F2.358). Members of focus group three described finding alternative activities, or walking despite the weather, Emma (leader) stated: *“it was horrendous weather and I was surprised they went ahead with it”* (F3.183) demonstrating that an established group may well find ways to overcome poor weather. The cost of keeping healthy in general was discussed at length in focus groups two and three, Sylvia said *“I don’t know why healthy living has to be so expensive”* (F3.497) later adding (in relation to health club membership) *“one of the things that puts me off exercise groups is that it is so expensive”* (F3.564), Sarah agreed *“it is not accessible due to price”* (F3.513). Kath (leader) stated *“you’ve got these wonderful places on your doorstep, take a picnic... it won’t cost you anything except for the bus fare to get there, or walk”* (F2.711), in contrast to the cost of club membership.

The barriers expressed resonate with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guideline (2012), which states that barriers to walking included poor weather and that difficulty integrating walking into daily routines and boredom

were associated with discontinued membership of groups; a variety of routes, paces and distances at different times of the day and week were recommended.

#### 4.3.3 Factors influencing the sustainable provision of walking groups

The findings suggest that sustainable provision of walking groups for health may be affected by walk leaders and health champions; marketing and clarity of remit; and relationship with primary care.

##### 4.3.3.1 Walk leaders and health champions

The role and responsibilities of the walk leader were considered in focus groups two and three. Sylvia said to the walk leader *“I don’t think it would have continued without you”* (F3.579), to which Emma (leader) replied *“I think it’s those little texts that remind people ...it helps with motivation”* (F3.582). Sharon said she valued the group being *“not too serious... and not having the pressure of having to be there”* (F3.462). Sally agreed that *“being flexible”* was good (F3.463). In focus group two, Karen (leader) described how one of her group members had become a walk leader

*“well one of mine has gone on to do walks, he has taken over ...so he has set up a group with the group that used to come on my walks, they have set up their own group... and its brilliant, absolutely brilliant”* (F2.299-304).

There was also further discussion about health champions, where people who had changed their life style were in a position to support others. Kath (leader) stated:

*“then they make fantastic health champions really, because they are far better than any of us professionals in whatever we do to encourage other people, because they say, well look, I’ve done it, I mean we’ve got Liz (pseudonym) she has lost a lot of weight, overcome depression, she is worth 10 of me and she lives in the area” (F2.432).*

Individuals who had themselves overcome health related problems were considered strong advocates for exercise. The recommendation for use of health champions within the findings of the current element is supported by Woodall *et al.* (2013) who suggested that the community health champion role can be a catalyst for change, with positive outcomes for individuals and communities in terms of health and wellbeing.

#### 4.3.3.2 Marketing and clarity of remit

The role of marketing was seen as key to engagement across all groups. In focus group three, Sam (a group member) said *“my newsletter that I send out once a month, I just put it on the bottom... and it’s just really sort of word of mouth”* (F3.117, 122). It is again evident here that in a well-established group, members have taken on facilitating roles as above. In focus group one, Melissa described how the walking group had started with 14 members *“it was advertised in the paper, there was a great atmosphere”* (F1.24) however the numbers had then dropped off, Melissa recommended *“you need to mention it to more groups”* (F1.80) supporting the “word of mouth” idea above; Malcom agreed *“yes work on the promotion”* (F1.83). However there was some discrepancy over the target group, with Frank (leader) saying *“we advertise this as a beginners’ walk, if someone has had a heart attack they need short walks”* (F1.27) and Malcom saying *“some of the group want more like 3 miles”* (F1.15). This lack of clarity was considered a contributing factor to the group

discontinuing. In the walk leaders' focus group, in terms of advertising "web pages" (Fiona/leader, F2.324) were considered useful, in addition to encouragement from peers:

*"its word of mouth, people who live (there) who have used it will say why don't you come along and that is also very powerful"* (Kath/leader, F2.477-478).

Harry (leader) reflected on how poorly attended groups were managed in a health centre environment:

*"change the name, change the time, sometimes it will be exactly the same class ...so 'legs, bums and tums' became 'whole body conditioning' and it got busier just because we changed the name".* (F2. 373-382).

Names of walking groups were discussed and it was evident that groups whose name related to the area of the walk (such as the coastal path or moors) or to the social nature of the group were more popular than groups whose name indicated a focus on health.

One of the walking groups in this element struggled to recruit and maintain membership. This is in contrast to Hanson and Jones' (2015a) claim that walking groups have good adherence, but consistent with their concern for more deprived populations (Hanson, Cross and Jones, 2016). Recruitment issues are also consistent with those described by Matthews *et al.* (2012) who distinguished between walking groups in general and groups for populations who are targeted for a specific health issue. As with the current element, Matthews *et al.* (2012) suggested that word of mouth was the most effective recruitment strategy, but that this takes time, effort and effective partnership working. They also suggested that where marketing of groups focused on the

social rather than health aspect of walking, they were better attended (Matthews, *et al.*, 2012).

#### 4.3.3.3 Liaison with primary care

All groups suggested that primary care practitioners should recommend a variety of exercise initiatives in addition to gym referral. Malcom said “*the GP asks if I am still going to the gym every time I see him*” (F1.71). Sylvia said “*I don’t think I have ever been to the doctor and they have said... what do you do in your spare time? Do you get outside?*” (F3.489). Sarah agreed “*it’s usually go to the gym isn’t it from the GP point of view, like we can book you in at the gym and that is not everybody’s cup of tea*” (F3.491). This idea was evident in walk leaders group too, Karen (leader) said “*well walkers are walkers and gym users are gym users, ...they are different people*”, (F2.635). Fiona (leader) agreed they are “*outdoor people*” (F2.637) introducing the concept of identity and individual preference. Kath (leader) stated “*in the new world with GP commissioning and everything, there will be ...the physical health outcomes, one of them is about linking it with green space*” (F2.309-312). This suggests a need for further liaison and joined up working.

Findings in the current element suggest that walking group leaders felt that local referrers and service commissioners need more information about the provision of walking groups as an option for their patients. Information should be given to promote the benefits of walking for health and wellbeing and prompt referral to walking groups and a broader range of opportunities in addition to gym referral,

this is consistent with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance (2012).

#### 4.4 Reflexive account

Reflexive accounts are intended to locate the researcher culturally and theoretically, and to clarify the influence of the researcher on the research and vice versa (JBI, 2014:177). In keeping with the narrative selection processes used in the autobiographies element (section 5), reflexive accounts throughout the thesis relate to 'big stories', 'small stories', 'crux stories' and 'core stories' (Bamberg, 2006). The reflexive account in this chapter is a 'small' story to clarify my influence on the research and vice versa.

##### ***A short story: Kingfisher Commute***

*Its late on Saturday night, I'm well over 14 hours in, on my third consecutive day at my desk in the spare bedroom. Aside from the five minute school run, I haven't been more than 10 metres from my laptop for three days, with no exercise since the cycle home from work on Wednesday night. The irony that the cause is a study on outdoor adventure has not escaped me. I really do understand that the reasons for **sedentary behaviour are complex and important**. I pulled out of a half marathon this year. I have run all my life and never pulled out of anything before. I had signed up in the hope that it would inspire me to train, but as the day drew nearer, I simple hadn't put in the miles for it to have been even vaguely enjoyable and I have enough experience to know that a soft tissue injury would have been highly likely. I had to accept that*

*with the chaos of work, study and three children, the only way to fit in exercise is for it to be an **integral part of my routine** and I strongly identify with this theme in the findings. I genuinely believe that my cycle commute is one of the few things to have kept me sane and fit over the past few years.*

*I live next to a tidal lake and my cycle route to work follows the lake round to an estuary, then up a river towards its source on the moors. Virtually the whole route is through woodland and I recognise the positive reference to **woodland** within the data. The point where the river enters the estuary is about half way. It's usually about here that my thoughts start to calm and switch from the place I've left, in anticipation of my destination. I love this frequent connection with nature and the perspective it gives me. Despite nearly ten years back and forth on the same path, I still notice new things each time.*

*It's September, this week I noticed the strong smell of fennel seeds along the lake and the last of the blackberries ripening; mushrooms in the woods; and the leaves starting to turn and drop, in line with the temperature and daylight. I also saw deer and squirrels. The woods are starting to smell more mulchy and the days are shortening, soon I will need to remember my lights. In January, I am often early enough to hear the dawn chorus and I love spotting the changes of early flowers with reassurance that Spring is on its way. Snowdrops, wild garlic, daffodils; then eventually bluebells arrive in May, with the promise of warmer days. I also see the change in birdlife. By the lake I see gulls, ducks and swans; and watch as the swans nest then look after their young, carrying cygnets on their backs. As I travel along the estuary the birdlife changes,*

*chaffinches, gold finches, jays; then higher up the river I often see buzzards and hear woodpeckers. In late Spring near the moors, I hear the mating call of Peregrine Falcons, who nest here each year. And if I am really lucky, I see a kingfisher. Kingfishers navigate along this waterway (as do I), I see them maybe once or twice a year. A rare flash of electric blue can happen at any point along the journey and is always accompanied with a sense of privilege and gratitude, sharply waking me from my thoughts to reconnect me with my surroundings. Again, I strongly identify with the theme **connection with nature** in the findings.*

*Like prayer or cognitive therapy, my cycle provides the space for me to positively re-frame my thoughts in the context of a bigger perspective. I find the temporal connection in relation to sense of season, place and time; grounding and affirming. I recognise that being a cyclist is congruent with my identity as a healthy, outdoor person, enabling me to maintain this sense of who I am, whilst many things compete for my time. I understand the “**well walkers are walkers**” reference (see section 4.3.3.3) to identity within the findings, to which I would add “outdoor people are outdoor people”. I first cycled along this particular path when it opened; the old railway was tarmacked when I was twelve. I now take my children along it at weekends and I value both the sense of constancy and the opportunity to pass on my passion for the outdoors. I recognise the importance of **sharing experience** with friends and family that came from the element findings (4.3.1.5). I also appreciate that I am lucky to be able to access local green space (4.3.2.3). Cycling to work enables us as a family to only have one car, which in turn means that I cycle even when the weather might*



*otherwise put me off. This also offers a positive identity of being environmentally friendly, and with such a love for the outdoors, I value the belief that I am reducing my negative impact on the world around me, through my choice of transport. I value the fact that frequent exercise helps me maintain a healthier weight and overall physical fitness; but this is by no means the main incentive. I find myself giving people a quizzical look in response to the comment “aren’t you good! “Goodness” (when likened to obedience to an authoritarian directive) has never inspired my engagement in outdoor adventure, other than in the sense that cycling makes me feel better. I identify with the findings that walking and woodland made people “**feel better**” (4.3.1.1) and my overall sense is that the restoration I gain from cycle commuting is essential for me to maintain equilibrium in my life. Finally, from my experiences as a therapist, I can identify with the discussion around the impact of the facilitator; and how the remit of the group is communicated to potential participants and referrers (4.3.3). I also find the discussion in relation to health champions interesting in the light of the postmodern debate, in which individuals might more readily identify with peers, than to obey the guidance of authority figures (see section 3). I therefore acknowledge that my engagement with this element will have been influenced by my personal experiences. I did however, endeavour to thoroughly analyse the data to be true to what was there, rather than what I wanted to find and I hope that by using the words of participants and letting themes arise from the data, that I have given an honest account of their experiences, whilst recognising the potential influence of my own.*

#### 4.5 Limitations of the study

The lack of audio-recording with the first focus group could have reduced the detail of the data, detailed field notes were taken to address this, see appendix 18. The presence of walk leaders in focus group one and three was to support the walking group members, and reflected the dynamic of each walking group as a whole; however it may well have influenced the opinions expressed. Whilst the researchers encouraged balanced debate and some negative critique was offered, walking group members may not have felt able to explore this more fully. In addition, two walk leaders, Frank and Fiona were present at two focus groups (one and two). Their role in each group differed (group one was just for support as opposed to group two where their opinion was sought) however there was potential for duplication of ideas and influence. Finally, focus group three had one researcher present whilst the others had two, which may have influenced the dynamic of the group and opportunity for sharing researcher reflections. In terms of other influences, the two lead researchers were independent of the walking group service (they were not walk leaders or participants); their remit was to run and evaluate the focus groups to provide an external perspective of the participants' lived experience. The lead researchers were not biased towards a perpetuation of the specific walking groups evaluated, though some participants may have been. However, the researchers acknowledge personal belief in the value of walking for health and in the value of an occupational perspective of engagement in walking and this may have influenced the interpretation and organisation of the findings. This is explored in more depth in the reflexive account (see section 3.8). In addition, the research commissioners were an integral part of the service delivery and were keen to

establish recommendations for local practice in relation to walking groups, as a legacy of the woodland regeneration and collaborative walking group projects.

#### 4.6 Chapter conclusion

Walking groups can be used to support individuals and their families to engage in health-promoting occupations, increase levels of physical activity and improve their health and wellbeing. The use of descriptive phenomenology enabled elicitation of meaning from focus group discussion of the lived experience of engagement in walking groups. An occupational perspective of engagement in walking and walking groups highlighted the meaning of being in nature, connection with others and co-occupation; the importance of consideration of convenience, routines, and balancing competing occupational demands; and the need for appropriate challenge and diversity within the occupation of walking. In addition, consideration of facilitation style, marketing approaches and collaboration with primary care referrers is recommended for use of walking groups within occupational therapy and health promotion practice.



## **Chapter 5: Element 3. A Phenomenological Exploration of Meaning within Adventure Autobiographies as Exemplars of Occupational Engagement in Outdoor Adventure Activities**

### **5.1 Introduction to Chapter 5.**

Adventure narratives have historically portrayed heroic individuals overcoming adversity (Kane and Tucker, 2007), in the quest for discovery of life's meaning (Goodnow and Ruddell, 2009), and novelty (Miles and Wattchow, 2015).

Autobiographies as data can offer extreme case samples (Patton, 2015) and insight into how people construct meaning (Ikiugu and Pollard, 2015). This chapter presents the third research element, an autobiographical study. The findings then informed the semi-structured interview guide for element 4. The focus group element (2) explored the process of engaging in an outdoor activity within a community context (section 4). The autobiographies study, element 3, explored the meaning and process of engaging in outdoor adventure from a cultural context, by using published autobiographies as exemplars of popular outdoor culture, and exemplars of engagement. Whilst the autobiographies tell individual stories, they have been widely shared and therefore both illustrate and narrate the culture of outdoor adventure; as evidenced in Kane and Tucker's (2007) autobiographical study of outdoor culture in New Zealand.

Occupational scientists have consistently identified a need for studies of occupation outside a therapy context (Dickie, 2003) to provide greater depth in critical perspectives of human occupation (Pollard *et al.*, 2010). Pierce (2014:3) proposed the consideration of occupation in relation to the "cultural ideas of activities" in addition to individual experience (see section 1.1.1), consistent with

Fogelberg and Frauwirth's (2010) prompt for multiple levels of analysis to include the social and cultural aspects of occupation within complex systems (see 3.5.3).

#### 5.1.1 Rationale and objectives

The previous studies in the thesis and literature review have indicated that further research would be beneficial in relation to deepening understanding of the meaning of occupational engagement in outdoor adventure and the process of establishing engagement in outdoor adventure (see 1.2). Therefore, the objectives of this element are:

- To explore meaning in relation to how occupational engagement was initiated.
- To explore meaning in relation to how occupational engagement is sustained.
- To explore meaning in relation to returning to occupational engagement after an interruption.

These relate to the first and third research aims for the thesis, see table 1. As a study of meaning, this research necessarily required an inductive in-depth exploration of lived experience to generate rich data and allow scope for exploration of multiple versions of reality (Braun and Clarke, 2013).

## 5.2 Method

An exploration of meaning within autobiographies, illustrating outdoor adventure culture, is in keeping with a contextual constructionist epistemology (Tebes, 2005). Consideration of cultural context aligns with contemporary, 'new' phenomenology (Caelli, 2000), as pioneered by Derrida (1974/2016), Gadamer (1960/1989) and Ricoeur (1986/2008) (see section 3.2.1). Van Manen (1990:72) suggests that autobiography can offer "rich ore of lived-experience descriptions for phenomenological analysis", providing a story of possible human experience, beyond the readers' normal landscape, that can be considered existentially. This notion was also supported by Finlay (2011) and Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009). Ricoeur (1986/2008) introduced a narrative perspective to phenomenology, considering the way that story and plot are constructed by protagonists. However, none of the authors above offered practical guidance for selecting autobiographies, or narratives within them, and therefore wider narrative theory was consulted to inform the methodology for this element.

Influenced by phenomenological sociology (Berger and Luckman, 1966/1975) and narrative phenomenology (Ricoeur, 1986/2008), biographical and narrative approaches consider the subjective construction of life stories (Goodson, 2001) (see section 3.2.1). Bamberg's (2006) articulation of 'big' and 'small' stories was used to identify a range of narratives for consideration as data (see section 5.2.3). Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009) was then used to interrogate the texts (see section 5.2.4).

### 5.2.1 Data collection stage 1: identifying the autobiographies

Many renowned adventurers have written autobiographies about their lived experience of outdoor adventure activities. As this data was already in existence, would have been difficult to secure by other means, and provided in-depth reflection from an expert perspective, it was considered relevant to this thesis. Secondary sources of pre-existing textual data can be a valuable way to access people's experiences and perspectives (Braun and Clarke, 2013); providing detailed personal knowledge (Taylor and Francis, 2013). Published documents provide text that has not, in itself, been influenced by the researcher, and therefore articulates the participants' thoughts in their own words (Creswell, 2014) (see section 3.7.2). However, the selections of texts, and the narratives within them, are necessarily influenced by the researcher selecting them; and written texts may or may not directly address the research questions posed by the researcher (Creswell, 2014). The texts were therefore subjectively chosen in relation to how well they could inform a response to the research question. There is the potential therefore for counter arguments, contrasting the researchers' beliefs to be missed. However, Goodson (2001) argues that the move from modernism, which valued objectivity, to postmodernism, prompts concern instead for how subjectivities are constructed. The emphasis in this adventure autobiographies element is therefore to reflexively and transparently illustrate how the researcher has influenced the data selection, rather than to suggest otherwise (see section 5.5). The autobiographers' individual context and participant voice is enhanced with the use of idiographic summaries and verbatim quotes (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009) (see section 5.3).



### 5.2.2 Sample

Texts were accessed from multiple sources and then the researcher engaged in a strategy of immersion in a range of stories (Taylor and Francis, 2013) before selecting a sample. The researcher searched in public and university libraries and bookshops, including internet bookshops. Where an electronic search could be conducted, the terms “biography” or “autobiography” were combined with “adventure”, “expedition”, “exploration”; and then more specifically with the addition of descriptors like “ocean”, “sea”, “mountain”, “climbing”, “kayak”, “canoe”, “sail”, or “polar”. Where the information was provided, texts listed under “frequently bought together” were also considered. In addition, popular listings such as ‘greatest adventure stories’ (National Geographic, 2014) were considered. The selection was therefore influenced by popularity and fellow consumers. In excess of 30 autobiographies were considered, however this is a very small percentage of the number of autobiographies available that would meet the criteria for inclusion.

The sample was selected purposefully to represent a range of outdoor adventure activities from male and female autobiographers, some accounts consider one expedition and others consider a life time of engagement. Outdoor adventure activities included polar exploration on foot, sailing, kayaking, climbing and mountaineering. Small, purposively-selected, carefully-situated samples are considered appropriate for interpretative phenomenological analysis (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). Six autobiographies were selected. This was in an attempt to have a small enough sample to allow scope for depth

of consideration to “tell a rich story” (Braun and Clarke, 2013:56) and sufficient data for comparison. The following criteria were used to make the selection:

*5.2.2.1 Inclusion criteria:*

Stories told in the first person, that offered contemporary in-depth reflection on personal engagement in outdoor adventure activities, could be included.

*5.2.2.2 Exclusion criteria:*

General travel or sport biographies were excluded because they were not in line with the research objectives. Autobiographies that did not explore the meaning of outdoor adventure to the individual in any depth were not included. For example, Simpson’s first book “Touching the Void” (1988) does not give the extensive depth of reflection on meaning or life-time perspective as his sixth book “The Beckoning Silence” (2003) which was included in the sample.

Second-hand accounts of adventure experiences were not included, although these were considered to provide useful supporting evidence. Autobiographies by authors that were known personally to the researcher or via friends were not included to avoid a conflict of interest in reporting potentially sensitive interpretations. An example of the texts excluded and their reason for exclusion are summarised in table 8.

<i>Reason for exclusion:</i>	<i>Text/author:</i>
The autobiography is not contemporary in that the author was born more than 100 years ago and therefore may not be relevant to current culture.	“South” (Shackleton, 1919), “The End” (Scott, 1912) “White Spider” (Harrer, 1959)
Travel biography focused on socio-political context of the country rather than the outdoor adventure.	“Notes from a small island” (Bryson, 1995); “Travels in a thin Country” (Wheeler, 1999)
The book offers a limited description of meaning.	“A Hard Day’s Summer” (Hargreaves, 1994), “Kayak Across the Atlantic” (Bray, 2004)
The book is not written as a first person account.	“Savage Summit” (Jordan, 2005), “Mountains of the Mind” (MacFarlane, 2008), “Unjustifiable Risk” (Thompson, 2012).
The autobiography does not offer sufficient contrast to other texts in the sample.	There are many narratives from a male perspective exploring mountaineering, for example, “Into Thin Air” (Krakauer, 1997)
The autobiography does not offer sufficient points of comparison with other texts in the sample.	There are few books about deserts, for example, “The Worst Desert on Earth” (Blackmore, 1995)
The author has written an alternative more in depth account.	With all but one of the selected texts the authors have written other books (Fiennes, Blum, Simpson, MacArthur and Wilson), the text selected was the one that appeared to offer the greatest level of personal autobiographical reflection.

Table 8. An example of excluded texts

### 5.2.3 Data collection stage 2: selecting stories from the autobiographies

The included autobiographies were first read as a complete text, then overall key themes were summarised in an attempt to identify what each autobiographer was presenting as the most meaningful aspects of their engagement. A list of questions were considered in relation to each text to highlight sections rich in discussion on topics related to the research objectives,

(see appendix 21) Discussion within the texts relating to meaning, where this appeared to influence initiating, sustaining or returning to engagement were identified. Three discrete stories within each autobiography were then selected for analysis using a narrative approach.

Biographic narratives have been considered in terms of big, life stories; small, anecdotal stories and core stories exploring perception of self (Bamberg, 2006). Narrative sections relating to each were selected. Bamberg (2006) argued that small stories echo the core story and should not be underestimated in understanding the whole person. Within each autobiography a crux story was identified as a small story illustrating a significant event. The term crux is defined as a decisive point (Oxford Dictionary, 2016); it is also used within mountaineering communities to describe the most difficult part of a climb (Schmid, 2010) and is used here to describe a momentous experience as part of the adventure story in keeping with a quest narrative (Goodnow and Ruddell, 2009). In addition, where autobiographers directly stated why they engage in the occupation elsewhere in the book, these statements were also included because of their relevance to the research objectives.

#### 5.2.4 Data analysis

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was used to focus on personal meaning and sense-making in context (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). The underpinning principles of IPA are phenomenology (focus on lived experience), hermeneutics (interpretation) and idiography (individual perspective) (Smith,

Flowers and Larkin, 2009) (see section 3.2.2). This was in preference to narrative analysis which would have prompted a focus on the manner in which the stories are told, rather than the meaning within the story itself (Smythe, 2012).

In the first stage of analysis, selected narratives were considered in terms of their descriptive, linguistic and conceptual content. Emerging and superordinate themes were then identified for each individual (see appendix 21-22). In the second stage of analysis, the autobiographers' interpretation of their experience was considered within the wider context in which it was written (see idiographic thumb-nail sketches). Then the researcher's interpretation was also considered (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). Each case was examined in detail before the emergent and superordinate themes from all six autobiographies were combined to discover similarities and differences (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). Table 9 presents the seven steps of IPA adapted from Smith, Flowers and Larkin, (2009:79-107).

<b>Step:</b>	<b>Task:</b>	<b>Process:</b>
1.	Reading and re-reading	Multiple readings of transcript.
2.	Initial noting: descriptive, linguistic and conceptual comments; deconstruction.	Line-by-line analysis of experiential claims, concerns and understandings.
3.	Developing emergent themes	Identification of emergent patterns, convergence and divergence; commonality and nuance.
4.	Searching for connections across emergent themes to establish super-ordinate themes: abstraction, subsumption, polarization, contextualization, numeration, function, graphic representation.	Development of a dialogue between researchers and the data, leading to a more interpretative account. Development of a gestalt illustrating the relationships between themes. See appendices for initial and emergent themes
5.	Moving onto the next case	Repeat above for each case
6.	Looking for patterns across cases, taking it deeper, identifying recurrent super-ordinate themes	Organisation of material in a format that allows for analysed data to be traced right through the process from initial comments, through initial clustering and thematic development, into the final structure of themes. (See appendices for synthesising superordinate themes)
7.	Writing up	Use of supervision to test and develop coherence and plausibility of interpretation. Development of full narrative with detailed commentary on data extracts, to take the reader through interpretation theme-by-theme, supported by visual guide. Reflection on own perceptions and process.

Table 9. Seven steps of IPA (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009:79-107)

### 5.2.5 Trustworthiness and ethical considerations

Whilst the complexities of establishing ethically sound relationships with participants are avoided in this study through the use of published secondary

sources, the researcher still has a responsibility to ensure ethically sound research (Braun and Clarke, 2013). This includes non-discriminatory practice, accurate representation of data and honesty as to the positioning of the researcher (Braun and Clarke, 2013). In a genre dominated by male stories (Naylor, 2010), care was taken to represent both female and male voices. Contrary to confidentiality practice within most primary data collection studies, subjects have been named. O'Brien and Clark (2010) refer to intellectual property rights stating that the term used to describe the originator of the material should be consistent; to avoid confusion with the research author, the term autobiographer has therefore been used throughout. A reflective diary was kept throughout the research process for reflexive recognition of the primary researchers' subjective influence on the research (Finlay, 2011). This was particularly in relation to the selection of stories and emotional response to them; to acknowledge the researcher's lifelong personal engagement in outdoor adventure activities and communities; and to recognise a career in occupational therapy, see reflexive account (5.5).

### 5.3 Findings: idiographic thumb-nail sketches

In keeping with the idiographic principles of interpretative phenomenological analysis (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009), the autobiographies were first considered as individual cases before comparing themes across cases at a super-ordinate level. This was to ensure that unique themes are represented in addition to themes across cases.

### 5.3.1 Sue and Victoria Riches

The *first* book, “Frigid Women” (Riches and Riches, 2010) focusses primarily on one expedition to the North Pole by an all-female party in 1997. The group included a mother and daughter who have written their account in the format of two integrated diaries. The selected stories and narrative sections for Riches and Riches (2010) are presented in table 10. See appendix 22 for the descriptive, linguistic and conceptual comments, and for a table of emerging themes.

Story type:	Narrative: Riches and Riches (2010)
1. Core story	Page 13-15: Prologue – an overview of beliefs and values that informed the decision to go to the North Pole.
2. Small crux story	Page 153-154: Artic sea swim – an account of falling in the sea as a near death experience.
3. Part of the big story	Page 185-186: The plane home – a reflection from the plane home contextualising the experience of the North Pole trip.

Table 10. Narratives for Riches and Riches (2010)

In answer to the question of why they went to the North Pole (in terms of initiating engagement), Victoria Riches states:

*“...the only one I can come up with is that I was brought up to believe that anything is possible (Riches and Riches, 2010:25)*

Sue Riches gives three reasons:

*“The first one was that I felt that Victoria had issued a challenge...Secondly, becoming fifty can give you a bit of a kick start into trying to do something different. ...The third cause ... I had been diagnosed as having breast cancer and had had a mastectomy. Whilst lying in my hospital bed I had been thinking that this was the time for change.” (Riches and Riches, 2010:26-27)*



In addition, there is a strong theme of wishing to inspire others to do the same.

Sue states:

*“I would like to inspire those who are suffering from breast cancer and show how cancer helped me find a goal.”* (Riches and Riches, 2010:13)

Victoria states:

*“It doesn’t matter what you do. If, as a result of succeeding, you can walk tall, hold your head up high and feel proud, then that is your North Pole.”* (Riches and Riches, 2010:15).

Sue describes the intensity of the experience and connection with self, nature and God:

*“We all have a new sense of wonder now, realising the sheer power of nature”... “I definitely felt a lot closer to God and my faith became stronger”* (Riches and Riches, 2010:186).

There is also a strong sense of connection to others:

*“It was a very sad moment saying goodbye...we had become especially close”* (Riches and Riches, 2010:185)

Victoria and Sue summarised their expedition and book as being about:

teamwork, tolerance, relationships, perseverance, and expectation of self.

Superordinate themes arising from the analysis included: planning, challenge, escaping mundane life and illness, competence, identity, friendship, heroes, risk taking, beauty of wilderness, space for reflection, perspective and God. In terms of context, written in the 1990s, Victoria and Sue described being women in a man’s environment. Both then had careers in motivational speaking.

### 5.3.2 Ranulph Fiennes

The *second* book, “Mad, Bad and Dangerous to Know” (Fiennes, 2007) also considers polar exploration. Fiennes reflects on a life time of adventure, exploration and travel writing. The selected stories and narrative sections for Fiennes (2007) are presented in table 11.

Story type:	Narrative: (Fiennes, 2007)
1. Part of the big story	Page 223-225: The start of the journey exploring conflicting emotions
2. Core story	Page 157: Because I like it – reflecting on reasons for expeditions
3. Small crux story	Page 170-171: Reaching the South Pole

Table 11 Narratives for Fiennes (2007)

In terms of reasons for engagement Fiennes (2007) states:

*“...expedition leadership is quite simply my chosen way of making a living: and under “occupation” in my passport the entry has always stated “travel writer” (Fiennes, 2007:157)*

In terms of sustaining engagement, Fiennes appears to be driven by competition:

*“Travelling over the past twenty-five years our group had four times broken the current world record for unsupported travel towards the North Pole.” (Fiennes, 2007:225)*

He contrasts this with an expedition partner’s response:

*“He talked of stunning landscapes and equated his adventures with a more intense version of the pleasures he had found as a boy from mountaineering, hill walking and rock climbing.” (Fiennes, 2007:157)*

Whilst Fiennes does describe the landscape, this seems more to emphasise the hostility of the environment than its beauty:

*“ice ‘defences’ were split everywhere...like cauldrons of witches, thick black fog swirled above new cracks...twilight grey zigzagged through the stark black outlines of ice obstacles.” (Fiennes, 2007:225)*

Fiennes appears to relish adversity with reference to war:

*“We had to earn our daily ration with the mileage put behind us” (Fiennes, 2007:171)*

He also identifies with his heroes:

*“Our condition in terms of body deterioration, slow starvation, inadequate clothing, wind chill temperature, altitude, and even the day of the year exactly matched those of Scott and his four companions as they came away from the Pole in 1912.” (Fiennes, 2007:171)*

When facing hardship he found strength from others:

*“God and family and the whole clan here inside me” (Fiennes, 2007:170)*

Superordinate themes arising from the analysis included: challenge, planning, fitness regime, friendship, guilty for risk taking, impact of other people’s risk taking, competition, self as competent, and travel writer. In terms of autobiographer context, Fiennes (2007) was born in 1944 (towards the end of World War II) and comes from a family with strong links to royalty and the armed forces, where arguably expedition is considered a valued occupation.

### 5.3.3 Arlene Blum

The *third* book is “Breaking Trail A Climbing Life” (Blum, 2005). Blum (2005) was the first woman to attempt Everest in the 1970s and is a world renowned expedition leader. The selected stories and narrative sections for Blum (2005) are presented in table 12.

Story type:	Narrative: Blum (2005)
1. Small crux story	Page xi-xiii: Becoming a leader at the top of Denali
2. Part of the big story	Page 198-201: Climbing Lenin reflecting on values
3. Core story	Page 362-363: Reasons for taking risks over life story

Table 12. Narratives for Blum (2005)

In terms of initiating and sustaining engagement, Blum (2005) describes climbing for the sense of freedom, escapism and challenge it offers and connection with nature and others:

*“Like a compressed spring, I was catapulted by my narrow, overprotected early years into the heights” (pg xiii); “...we climbed primarily for the beauty, challenge and companionship” (pg362)*

Blum (2005) reflects on her risk-taking:

*“However, we recalled at perilous moments having the feeling that it didn’t matter if we lived or died.” (pg362).*

However, Blum (2005) presents herself as a competent and skilful woman:

*“Many people believed that women lacked the physical strength and technical skill to climb the toughest mountains. Our ascent demonstrated to the world and ourselves what women could achieve.” (pg xi)*

She also demonstrates a desire to communicate messages to inspire others:

*“I am heartbroken at the destruction of our planet’s environment and at the increasing gap between rich and poor.” (pg 365)*

*“I continue to believe that if each of us takes slow, steady steps, we can break a trail to the summits of our dreams.” (pg365).*

Superordinate themes arising from the analysis included: desire for challenge, planning, fitness regime, the beauty of nature, friendship, risk taking then and now as a mother, impact of other people’s risk taking, all women, competition, environment, self as competent, and break your own trail. In terms of

autobiographer context, Blum (2005) was born in 1945 and challenged gender stereotypes both within her scientific work and mountaineering.

#### 5.3.4 Joe Simpson

The *fourth* book “The Beckoning Silence” (Simpson, 2003) primarily focusses on an expedition to climb the North Face of the Eiger. The trip is presented as a cathartic finale to a climbing career following the death of friends and fresh appreciation of risk. The selected stories and narrative sections for (Simpson, 2003) are presented in table 13.

Story type:	Narrative: (Simpson, 2003)
1. Part of the big story	Page 15-17: Ice climbing Alea Jacta Est reflecting on deep play.
2. Small crux story	Page 159-160: Storm on the Eiger, the power of nature
3. Core story	Page 282-284: Reflection on risk, death and addiction

Table 13. Narratives for Simpson (2003)

Simpson (2003) states his reasons for climbing expeditions are for connection with others and storytelling:

*“It seemed to me that the essence of these trips was not necessarily the climbing or the summits reached but the laughter and friendship and story-telling that they generated” (pg52)*

He describes feelings about risk taking:

*“It had put me in an invidious position and I had had to stand there and watch while the rest of my life was determined by the shaky adhesion of a few millimetres of frail, melting ice and the dubious friction of a tiny point of metal scratching against a flake of rock.”(pg16)*

He then counters this, stating in the past this would have given meaning, he would have felt:

*“This was where you defined yourself, balanced tenuously between life and death.” (pg16)*

Superordinate themes arising from the analysis included: historic heroes (Mallory), challenge, beauty, anthropomorphic nature, friendship, and the impact of other people’s risk taking, competition, self as competent, story-telling and fun. In terms of autobiographer context, Simpson (2003) is well known for writing about a near death experience in the Peruvian Andes. “The Beckoning Silence” is a much more reflective book, perhaps to address criticism of risk taking after the first book.

### 5.3.5 Brian Wilson

The *fifth* book, “Blazing Paddles A Scottish Coastal Odyssey” (Wilson, 1998) describes a sea kayak trip around the coast of Scotland (1,800 miles). The selected stories and narrative sections for (Wilson, 1998) are presented in table 14.

Story type:	Narrative: (Wilson, 1998)
1. Core story	Page 12-14: The elf queen whispers in the ear of the hobbit, childhood aspirations for adventure.
2. Small crux story	Page 126-127: The quantum leap of the whale, close encounter from a kayak.
3. Part of the big story	Page 190-192: End of the journey, reflecting on experience in context of life.

Table 14. Narratives for (Wilson, 1998)

With regards to initiating engagement, Wilson refers to childhood dreams:

*“Long before the age of fourteen when I floated my first patched battleship of a canoe down the river, with a pair of rusty pram wheels strapped on behind to haul it home again, the idea of self-propelled travel by water had me utterly seduced.”* (Wilson, 1998:12).

The concept of escapism through ideas of adventure develops, with the statement:

*“Between bouts of study for final exams in philosophy I took mental refuge in building the journey upon the most adventurous ideas I could conceive.”* (Wilson, 1998:13)

Seeking independence and escapism are recurring themes, Wilson states:

*“And I could do it alone! ....at last I was satisfied, for I had created what I believed to be the very paradigm of independence and adventure”* (Wilson, 1998:13)

In terms of meaning to sustain engagement, Wilson describes intense connection with nature in his encounter with a whale:

*“I swung round just in time to see a great piebald giant heave itself effortlessly from the sea. WHALE! Those moments froze as though in action replay as it exploded powerfully upwards, gained clearance of the water and somersaulted backwards in a living embodiment of the ocean’s force”* (Wilson, 1998:126)

A further concept evident throughout the book and selected narratives is the meaning gained through development of skill and subsequent self-awareness:

*“Steadily I accumulated basic skills, learned to calculate and predict the complicated movements of Scotland’s tides, to navigate using map and compass, to Eskimo-roll a capsized kayak and, most importantly to appreciate my own strengths and weaknesses.”* (Wilson, 1998:12)

Superordinate themes arising from the analysis included: fictional heroes from childhood, the boat, friendship, environment, self as competent and escaping unemployment. In terms of autobiographer context, Wilson’s trip was in the 1980s when unemployment in the UK was very high.

### 5.3.6 Ellen MacArthur

Finally the *sixth* book “Full Circle. My Life and Journey” (MacArthur, 2010) presents reflections from a female solo sailor, including her achievements, reasons for sailing and reasons for stopping. The selected stories and narrative sections for (MacArthur, 2010) are presented in table 15.

Story type:	Narrative: MacArthur (2010)
1. Part of the big story	Page 5-6: Derbyshire to the Vendee
2. Small crux story	Page 30-32: Exploding spinnaker
3. Core story	Page 360-361: Transferable values for environmentalism

Table 15. Narratives for MacArthur (2010)

In terms of initiating engagement MacArthur (2010) describes how her love of sailing began in childhood:

*“Ever since the age of four, I’d dreamt of being at sea,”* (MacArthur, 2010:6)

In terms of sustained engagement, MacArthur describes connection with nature and time, stating how, when on land:

*“I missed the connection that you have with life itself, the rhythms of the natural world, and that feeling that you are seeing something special”* (MacArthur, 2010:31)

MacArthur is driven by competition:

*“I was twenty-four and I’d come second in the most high-profile solo ocean race in the world.”* (MacArthur, 2010:5)

MacArthur also describes how her engagement could offer meaning retrospectively with learning taken forwards to new ventures:



*“Spending time on the edge taught me to always have hope and to always look forwards” (MacArthur, 2010:360); “My trip was about the journey, not the destination.” (MacArthur, 2010:360)*

MacArthur takes her experiences and uses them to deliver an environmental message:

*“Through our rampant pursuit to grab as much energy as we could from the world, we thought that we could be excluded from the basic rules of life.” “One of the rules is that we put back what we take.” (MacArthur, 2010:361)*

Engagement in sailing offers a focus that is later missed:

*“It was as if the second I stepped off her I had reached my destination, and there I was, standing uncomfortably at a junction, having no idea which path was next” (MacArthur, 2010:5)*

Superordinate themes include: beauty, rhythms of the world, windows to the past, the boat, friendship, being a woman, competition, self as competent and transferring learning to new experiences. In terms of autobiographer context, Ellen is famous for breaking the world record in 2005 for the fastest solo circumnavigation of the globe (at that time).

## **5.4 Findings and discussion**

Once themes had been established within single cases, commonalities and differences were considered across cases with some reconfiguration of themes to cover the most potent concepts (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). These were then organised in relation to the study objectives and are discussed in relation to the wider literature. Table 16 presents the theme structure.

<i>Research objectives:</i>	<i>Superordinate theme:</i>
Initiating occupational engagement: making sense of the inspiration	Dreams and heroes
	Change and challenge
	Purpose from planning
Sustaining occupational engagement over time: making sense of the experience and connection	Connection with the environment
	Connection with others
	Connection with self
Returning to occupational engagement: making sense of the past and future	Meaning changing over time and adaptation
	Repertoire of narratives and transference of learning
	The value of story telling

Table 16. Superordinate themes for the autobiographies.

#### 5.4.1 Objective 1: Initiating occupational engagement – making sense of the inspiration

Themes emerging from the findings in relation to meaning that influenced initiating engagement included childhood dreams, aspirations and identifying with heroes; seeking change and new challenges; and the sense of purpose offered by planning.

##### 5.4.1.1 Dreams and heroes

Wilson (1998) and MacArthur (2010) describe childhood dreams of freedom and adventure as inspiration for their adult engagement in exploration:

*“For the first time in my life I felt the boat come alive: the wind filled our sails, and we began to move through the water... Dependent on nothing but the elements, I was convinced we could sail forever, and to a country child used to running free in the fields ‘forever’ felt like the biggest field imaginable. Almost endless, the ocean held more excitement and adventure than I could cram into my tiny head”* MacArthur (2010:6)

Victoria Riches describes being brought up to believe “anything is possible”

(Riches and Riches, 2010:14). Most of the autobiographers referred to inspiring

heroes: Fiennes (2007) relates his experience to Scott and family members in the military; Victoria Riches discussed Shackleton (Riches and Riches, 2010); Wilson (1998) refers to childhood fictional characters; and Simpson (2003) discusses Mallory:

*“I want to follow in the footsteps of those climbers. It is how I had always climbed in the Alps, paying homage to the heroes I had read about by climbing their routes”* Simpson (2003:149)

The significance of role models and inspiring narratives in childhood is clear and consistent with Naylor’s research (2010) on the influence of childhood literature adventure heroes on adult behaviour. In terms of health promotion, this finding would support initiatives such as the youth sport strategy, building on an Olympics and Paralympics legacy, whereby young people are inspired to “emulate their heroes” (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2012:3). This finding also aligns with the concept of “becoming” within the occupational science literature, of meaning from occupation that enables participants to envision future selves and explore opportunities to become who they wish to be (Hammell, 2004:302; Wilcock, 1998: 341).

#### 5.4.1.2 Change and challenge

Blum (2005: xiii) states that her overprotective childhood “catapulted” her into adventure with a sense of desperation for freedom. Victoria Riches described wanting to escape mundane life (Riches and Riches, 2010). Sue Riches states wanting change and challenge following illness (Riches and Riches, 2010). Fiennes (2007), Simpson (2003) and Blum (2005) all describe a desire for challenge. Wilson (1998) wanted to escape unemployment:

*“Pippa put her arms around me and with sad eyes said “Brian you’re becoming depressed, stagnant and cynical. It’s time for you to DO something.” And it was as though the elf queen had whispered in the ear of the hobbit for, with the force of sudden revelation, I knew she was right... the dream was rekindled and I began to throw all my energy into bringing it into being.” Wilson (1998:13)*

Reed, Hocking and Smythe (2010) describe ‘the call’ to occupation as the most pressing issue, reminiscent of Ricoeur’s (1986/2008) ‘call to action’ and Miles and Wattchow (2015:20) description of the call of the Tasman. Readiness for change is a concept explored within psychology literature (Prochaska and Diclemente’s, 1986; Biddle and Mutrie, 2008). It also aligns with the idea of “just right challenge” from occupational scientist, Yerxa (2000).

#### 5.4.1.3 Purpose from planning

All of the autobiographers described planning activities in some detail; it is evident that during the time when planning there is a sense of new focus and direction that is in itself meaningful. Fiennes (2007), Victoria Riches (Riches and Riches, 2010) and Blum (2005) describe intense fitness regimes, route planning and packing. Wilson (1998:13) describes planning as “mental refuge” from revision.

*“And so began the long months of preparation that lie behind any expedition. The route had to be decided, maps acquired, distances and timings estimated as accurately as possible. What sort of food should I carry? How much would that weigh? Essential canoeing, camping and safety equipment would have to be decided on and purchased. A sea-going canoe would be helpful.” Wilson (1998:14)*

This sense of direction, focus, autonomy and ownership demonstrate a high level of investment and engagement in the occupation and are consistent with psychological theory in relation to self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977a, b), determination and intrinsic motivation (Hagger and Chatzisarantis, 2007). This

is also in keeping with definitions of meaning from doing and becoming where the occupation enables the participant to envision possibilities of future engagement in valued activity (Wilcock, 1998; Hammell, 2004; Reed, Hocking and Smythe, 2010).

#### 5.4.2 Objective 2: Sustaining occupational engagement over time – making sense of experience and connection

Themes emerging from the data in relation to meaning that influenced sustaining engagement included a sense of connection with the environment, with others and with self, in line with Dewy and Bentley's (1949) transactionalism (see 3.5.4).

##### 5.4.2.1 Connection with the environment

All of the autobiographers describe the outdoor environment; and meaning from this connection is evident. All of the autobiographers (except Fiennes, 2007) describe beauty in their surroundings with a sense of solace and restoration, consistent with Thompson Coon *et al.* (2011) in relation to restoration and sustained engagement in exercise where there is connection with nature.

Fiennes (2007), by contrast, appears to mock a colleague for valuing beauty and instead describes his surroundings using war-like metaphors. He appears to view his environment purely as a source of challenge and achievement, a personified opponent with which to compete and conquer.

*“The ice-floes that are blown south against this northern coastline of the Canadian Archipelago often shatter against the ice-shelf, and blocks up to thirty-five feet tumble over one another, often forming huge ramparts that run east-west for miles. Behind them a scene of utter chaos can*

*meet the despairing manhauler, slab upon slab of fractured ice-block as far as the weary eye can see... in many places, like cauldrons of witches, thick black fog swirled above cracks and pools” (Fiennes, 2007:224)*

All of the autobiographers give anthropomorphic descriptions of inanimate objects including the sea, ice, rock and weather (Wilson, 1998 and MacArthur, 2010 also extend this to their boats).

*“I remember vividly how difficult I had found leaving Kingfisher in February 2001. As I climbed over her guardrails, it felt like having a part of me I no longer knew how to live without torn out of me” (MacArthur, 2010:5)*

This gives a heightened sense of the intensity of relationship with surroundings and meaning derived from this suggesting connection with the environment and a sense of “belonging” as proposed by Wilcock (1998). A sense of temporal connection is evident in MacArthur’s (2010:31) description of connecting with the “rhythms of the world” and “windows to the past” and Simpson’s (2003:161) “elemental” connection to the “tempest”, these ideas link with Macfarlane’s concept of ‘deep time’ (2008) and sense of self in time, as small against something ‘bigger’. For some this is feeling small in relation to the vastness of the sea (Wilson, 1998 and MacArther 2010) or mountain (Simpson, 2003 and Blum, 2005); for others this is a sense of connection with God (Sue Riches) (Riches and Riches, 2010). Simpson (2003) described a storm:

*“We stood cowering in the heart of this cataclysm with fire and light and flame all around. Yet I felt blessed. We were mute spectators, impotent and awed. The world exploded around us and we stood still and quiet until it seemed we too were spinning wildly in the storm, twirling helplessly in space, no longer human, non-sentient, absorbed by the tempest, elemental. I gazed spellbound as the tremendous forces erupted around us” (Simpson, 2003:161)*

In addition, several authors give inspirational messages about people's responsibility to protect the environment (Wilson, 1998; and Blum, 2005).

#### 5.4.2.2 Connection with others

In terms of connection with others, Simpson (2003) and Blum (2005) both refer to 'friendship' as a prime reason for engagement and both describe relationships in depth throughout their books, as do Sue and Victoria Riches (Riches and Riches, 2010).

*"It seemed to me that the essence of these trips was not necessarily the climbing or the summits reached, but the laughter and friendship and story-telling that they generated"* (Simpson, 2003:52)

Wilson (1998), Fiennes (2007) and MacArthur (2010) also make reference to absent others, describing the support of family members or friends. Social connection features both within literature on occupational meaning in terms of sense of community, belonging and relationship (for example: Hannam, 1997; Russell, 2008; Jacob *et al.*, 2009; Aguilar *et al.*, 2010; Haines *et al.*, 2010; Roberts and Farrugia, 2013) and literature on motivation in terms of support (Chatzisarantis and Hagger, 2007). This is also in keeping with meaning from belonging (Hammell, 2004) and being-with (Reed, Hocking and Smythe, 2010). Fiennes (2007) and Victoria Riches (Riches and Riches, 2010) describe feeling guilty for the anxiety their risk taking causes absent loved ones, in contrast to Blum who feels her family do not care what risks she takes (until she has a daughter):

*"We didn't feel suicidal, or have a death wish, or want to get close to death to appreciate life. Rather, we had a sense that as individuals we weren't all that important. We agreed that this feeling contributed to our continuing to climb risky peaks in spite of the losses we had suffered.*

*Nancy and I acknowledged we could never know for certain the impact of our childhoods on our willingness to face death in the mountains when we were younger, but it was interesting to speculate. We now both have dearly beloved daughters. As mothers, we are no longer willing to attempt dangerous mountains.” (Blum, 2005: 362)*

Simpson (2003), Blum (2005) and Fiennes (2007) describe the risk decisions of expedition partners and the difficult impact it has on them when others put both their lives in danger. Also the subsequent impact this has on their decision-making and appreciation of risk. Whilst the concept of risk can be linked to sense of achievement and sensation (Russell, 2008; Haines *et al.*, 2010) in a meaningful way; there is debate within adventure literature as to whether risk taking is justifiable (Thompson, 2012). Judgements on this have varied according to socio-cultural variants including affluence and gender. Jordan (2005) describes how media reaction to Alison Hargreaves’ death on K2 focused on the selfishness of choosing mountains over motherhood in a way never experienced by fathers who have died climbing. In terms of competition, Fiennes (2007) is very driven by the desire to be ‘the first’ this is also evident with Blum (2005) and MacArthur (2010).

*“Travelling over the past twenty-five years our group had four times broken the current world record for unsupported travel towards the North Pole.” Fiennes (2007:224)*

Opinion about competition varies; Hull, Garci and Mandich’s (2005) study about occupational engagement for elite-level wheelchair basketball athletes, describes competition as a significant source of meaning. Likewise, Unruh and Elvin (2004) found that competition was a meaningful aspect of dragon boat racing for women with breast cancer, helping them to rebuild self-esteem. Marsh, Cheng and Middleton (2011:51) however, state that in highly competitive environments there are more losers than winners and this can lead to lower



self-concept. Blum (2005) and Victoria and Sue Riches (Riches and Riches, 2010) all describe being part of the “first all women” expeditions. Whilst motivated to be the first, there is a powerful message to inspire other women to believe in their own abilities. Research by Knight *et al.* (2007) also identified a desire to support and inspire others as an important motivator for occupational engagement.

#### 5.4.2.3 Connection with self:

All of the autobiographers appear to derive meaning from presenting themselves as competent; this is consistent with Hammell’s (2004) description of meaning from doing where the occupation provides an opportunity for competence and being capable. Each describes the development of skill in terms of physical strength and technique; and cognitive skills such as informed decision making with regards to planning and risk management. As an illustration, Fiennes (2007) describes setting up camp:

*“After seven hours of hard man-hauling I was cold and tired. I erected the tent in six minutes and started the cooker in four. These two acts, which I had practised thousands of times are the key to survival, and with two usable hands can be performed easily in extreme temperatures, high winds and blizzards”* (Fiennes, 2007:224)

This is also consistent with Biddle and Mutrie’s (2008) suggestion that sense of self as competent is motivating. In addition Simpson (2003) states that he values climbing for the identity it has given him and there is a sense of authoring identity through occupation (Molineux and Whiteford, 2005) both figuratively and literally.

### 5.4.3 Objective 3: Returning to occupational engagement: making sense of the past and future

Themes emerging in relation to meaning that influenced returning to engagement included accommodating changes in meaning over time and aligning occupational engagement with sense of self and personal life story. In addition, secondary engagement in related occupations arose from the findings as a theme.

#### 5.4.3.1 Meaning changing over time and adaptation

All of the autobiographers referred to learning from previous experiences and changes in perception and meaning over time. This was both in terms of the meaning associated with previous engagement being viewed in a different way when considered retrospectively and, in more general terms, the meaning associated with engagement changing at different points across the life span. For example in terms of escapism, at the time of writing their autobiographies, Wilson (1998) was escaping unemployment and Sue Riches (Riches and Riches, 2010) was escaping illness, however these incentives for change may not be present at another point in their lives. Also in terms of risk, Simpson (2003) and Blum (2005) describe a reckless approach to risk that changed with age, for Blum (2005) this was due to motherhood, whereas Simpson (2003) just describes no longer feeling it is worth it:

*“It wasn’t worth our lives. The whole notion of ‘deep play’ – the gambling theory of extreme risk-taking when the gambler stands to lose far more than he could ever possibly win – may well be an apt description of some levels of climbing, but playing the game in reality now seemed a conceited and ridiculous enterprise”* Simpson (2003:17)

Taylor and Kay (2013) in a study on construction of identity in relation to leisure occupations also identified changes in the meaning of occupations over time and change in participation, in that the quantity or quality of engagement and roles within this may vary over time. This suggests that long term engagement or returning to engagement in outdoor adventure will need to accommodate these changes in meaning.

#### 5.4.3.2 Repertoire of narratives and transference of learning

MacArthur (2010) describes reflecting on her sailing experience to find solutions to new challenges. When considering her approach to a new venture focused on sustainable living she reflected on her approach to hardship when sailing. Sue and Victoria Riches (Riches and Riches, 2010) also talk of learning from their experience in particular the value of perseverance.

*“Being part of the first all-women’s expedition to the North Pole had given me an inner confidence... If I’ve faced a challenge during the last decade, and I have many times, I have been safe in the knowledge that I can work around a problem and that I do have the necessary willpower. While in the Arctic we were tested to our limits and beyond, yet somehow we found an inner strength that we didn’t know we had and carried on. Over the past few years I have faced challenges that ranged from the mundane to the heart breaking but with the tools learned from our expedition my ever-growing inner self-belief has kept me going” (Riches and Riches, 2010:10)*

Smith and Sparkes (2009) describe the value of having a repertoire of multiple narratives, so that by having access to more stories with different outcomes, people are able to envisage alternative opportunities.

#### 5.4.3.3 The value of story telling

All the autobiographers have chosen to engage in a secondary occupation of writing. Fiennes (2007:157) states that his occupation is “travel writer” and Simpson (2003:52) describes valuing the “story telling” his adventures enabled. Victoria and Sue Riches (Riches and Riches, 2010) have developed new careers as motivational speakers and state:

*“We hope that by reading this book you will be inspired to find your North Pole, whatever or wherever it is.”* (Riches and Riches, 2010:15)

It is evident that creative interpretation of experience is in itself meaningful. Ikiugu *et al.* (2012) looked at meaning identified by worker-writers and, consistent with some of the themes in the current study, found that meaning was associated with relationships, control over one’s life, leisure, wellbeing and “contribution to or connection to something greater than oneself”. In particular it is this concept that comes across from the findings of the current study that, through writing, the autobiographers feel they can improve the lives of others, to inspire them to “find their North Pole” (Riches and Riches, 2010:15); “break their own trail” (Blum, 2005:363); respect, sustain and connect with the environment (Wilson, 1998; Blum, 2005; MacArthur, 2010); but most of all, to have an adventure because “it’s fun” (Simpson, 2003:52).

### 5.5 Reflexive account

Here I present my own story in relation to selecting the texts to demonstrate reflexivity in relation to the influence of the researcher on the research and vice versa (Finlay, 2011).

## A 'small' story: choosing stories

*“..and then Simon just cut the rope and Joe fell to the bottom of the glacier! He crawled along the bottom with broken legs for 5 miles and then he climbed up through a hole used as a toilet at base camp.” Jin (a pseudonym) described the story enthusiastically in gory detail, no doubt elaborating with his own embellishments wherever he felt appropriate, goading us to debate the ethics of cutting the rope if you think your climbing partner on the end (and out of sight) is dead. I try to tip the pint glass towards my lips without lifting it, my scraped, chalk covered fingers and pumped arms barely functional after trying to keep up with the boys on overhangs at the wall. I zone out, dreaming of glaciers, as climbers round the table leap in with their own kamikaze stories, each one more reckless than the last: “...when I got to the top he only had one anchor and that could have popped any minute”. So who was this Joe Simpson? A hero of our time defining our culture? Not the distant, noble, bearded British explorer of the past discovering new lands with the queens blessing. No, this was someone fallible, irresponsible, and unprepared by his own admission; this was someone we could relate to. The first book, “Touching the Void” (Simpson, 1988:189, 192) had an agenda to set the record straight, to tell Simon publically in writing “you did right ...you saved my life you know”, after harsh critics in the media condemned Joe’s climbing partner. However, 15 years on, a man in his 40s and author of six books, Joe Simpson’s “The Beckoning Silence” (2003) has a different agenda. Joe debates with himself his reasons for climbing and whether he should stop when he has lost so many friends to the sport and describes in detail his passion for wilderness and adventure, a rich description, a long-term perspective. As I read this book, I think back to those stories in a London pub 20 years ago, it’s an easy choice to include Joe Simpson in my*

*sample. Returning to his story again made me reflect on how I have made risk-related decisions in the past and how this changed for me when I became a parent; precariousness for fun no-longer seemed justifiable.*

*Now for a different perspective of mountaineering, a woman? Another pub discussion from the past, this time in the Lake District as a friend and I plan a trip to New Zealand “but Alison Hargreaves was an amazing climber and yet everyone criticised her because she left young children when she died on K2, no one criticised George Mallory for mountaineering when his three children were under 10”, we lament, formulating our feminist perspective. As I later look for female narratives, first I read Hargreaves’ “Hard Day’s Summer” (1994). It’s an easy and inspiring read, but no real discussion of meaning; perhaps it would have been different if she could have known her fate and posthumous rise to fame. Next I read Jordan’s “Life and Death of the First Women of K2” (2005). This adds to Hargreaves’ story, but is not written in the first person, and therefore can’t claim to present what mountaineering really meant to Alison. Jordan (2005) describes how, at that time, only six women had reached the summit of K2, three died coming down and two subsequently died on other climbs, the sixth was Arlene Blum (2005). I ordered a copy of Arlene’s autobiography from a second hand bookstore, as I opened the title page I saw, in scrawly hand-writing “To Diane may you break your own trails to the summits of your dreams. Arlene Blum”, a signed copy! The further I got into the book the more I enjoyed this connection with the author. Arlene’s account of her life, why she climbed mountains and what it meant to her, could not be more open and reflective. In the quest for a story of meaning, I couldn’t hope to find better.*

*Arlene's story inspired me on many levels and she became a heroine figure for me. Aside from her mountaineering achievements, Arlene's story of perseverance to complete her PhD against the odds and her desire to use research to make the world a better place has spurred me on through hard times studying.*

*One of my favorite books was written by a friend who broke her back climbing. We met on a research expedition to trial equipment, sea-kayaking in Iceland. It is an inspiring story that I have used with occupational therapy students, in which the author describes how she comes to terms with her paralysis and continues to live an adventurous life. Tempting as it was to use my friend's story in my sample, this would not be appropriate given the personal connection that I have with her. However, the forward to this book was written by Ranulph Fiennes and I know they respect each other. At the time when I was looking for stories, I attended a talk by some polar scientists that inspired me to consider polar exploration stories. As I trawled library and shop bookshelves and the internet I came across two very different stories of polar exploration, the first by Sue and Victoria Riches (2010) and the second by Ranulph Fiennes (2007). Both offered rich descriptions of meaning; however Ranulph has had a life-time of extreme expeditions and for Sue and Victoria this was their first trip and their account offered useful contrast with an alternative perspective. Perhaps it was the connection to my friend that made me first reach for Fiennes' books, of the many he has written, his "Mad, Bad and Dangerous to Know" (2007) book seemed to offer the most detailed life-time perspective. Later, as part of my literature review I visited the Royal Geographic Society library, as I scanned*

*their databases I came across a listing for the contents of a box deposited by Ranulph Fiennes of artefacts from his polar expeditions in the 1980s. As I sat in the warm, air conditioned basement, in the heart of the capitol city I opened laminated maps, note books and charts covered in annotations, creases and smudges gained on their trips to the top and bottom of the earth at below -30°C, (in stark contrast to my homely surroundings), bringing a new level of connection with the author. Ranulph's approach to adventure is entirely different to mine; he uses military precision to win each new competition, rarely pausing to express enjoyment or appreciation of beauty. Victoria and Sue are the opposite and I relate much more to their accounts. Reading these stories with stark contrast in their description of the North Pole gave me a fresh awareness of how different people will take very different meaning from similar experiences.*

*Next, having considered exploration of the highest points and polar tips of the earth, I was looking for stories in a different environment. Perhaps my own love of the sea drew me to stories of adventures on the ocean. When I was a teenager my mum interviewed a kayaker for a radio programme she worked on. He was due to embark on an Atlantic crossing, my mum describes how, part way through the interview, she realised that he was completely unprepared and that she may be the last person to see him alive. She was right, he was found washed up on the French coast a few weeks later. Perhaps it was this story that intrigued me and drew me to Pete Bray's "Kayak Across the Atlantic" (2004). Another enjoyable read, however Bray didn't give any discussion of what the trip meant to him. Back to trawling internet and bookshops, a few looked*



*promising, and then I came across Brian Wilson (1998), described as a philosopher and green activist reflecting on his tour of the Scottish isles, it didn't disappoint. I completed my four star sea-kayak training on the Isle of Skye and have had numerous trips to the Hebrides. Brian's story filled my head with stunning landscapes from much loved memories and he reignited my own passion for journeying.*

*As for Ellen MacArthur (2010), hers was a very public story when I was a young adult. Two years younger than me, she hit fame when she was 19 as she sailed single-handed on a circumnavigation of Great Britain and later the globe. As I was on my own quest for adventure and independence by flying around the world on a plane with a friend and a work visa; Ellen was sailing it, on her own, the epitome of independence and an inspirational woman for me at the time. Of the many books she has written, Full Circle offered a reflective retrospective account with the perspective of a decade to draw on. As with Brian and Arlene, Ellen's desire to inspire people to care for the planet more proactively prompted me to rethink about my own behaviour in relation to environmental responsibility.*

*Whilst it had not been my intention to be so subjective at the time, I recognise now that for the most part these were either stories from my formative years in outdoor adventure, stories relating to friendships I've had, or connected stories that I found by delving deeper into these. I was looking for rich descriptions of meaning from contemporary lives that explored the culture of outdoor adventure and offered contrast. I recognise that I was drawn to stories that relate to my own experience of that culture and that this would be different for another*

*researcher. I aimed to have a spread of ages, length of engagement and perspectives including different gender. I recognise that the nature of using autobiography limits the stories to fairly academic perspectives. However, I also appreciate that a small qualitative sample can't be representative of a population and would inevitably be biased by the person selecting the stories, even if the researcher failed to acknowledge it. By recognising that it would not be possible to disentangle the selection from the selector, and instead valuing the perspective that I can bring as a person who has engaged in the culture, I hope that this reflection brings richness and honesty to my account of the sampling process.*

*The Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) critical appraisal tool asks reviewers to identify if the "influence of the researcher on the research, and vice versa, is addressed" (JBI, 2014, see below), this reflexive account is an attempt to demonstrate awareness of both the influence I had on the research and the influence it had on me. This influence relates to each layer of the research process, including: the selection of research question, aims, objectives and methods (as explored in the introduction chapter 1); the sample in terms of texts and narrative sections (as explored here and in the selection section above in 4.); the analysis and cross-case comparison in terms of selecting the most significant themes (as in 4.), conclusions to carry forward to the next study, and the implications for practice based on my own practice experience.*

## 5.6 Chapter conclusion

The findings suggest that meaning in relation to initiating occupational engagement (in terms of influences for starting to take part in outdoor adventure activities) may include identifying with heroes, dreams and role models and childhood influences; consideration of readiness for change and challenge; and by having a high level of direction, focus, autonomy and ownership from planning. Sustained occupational engagement (in terms of continuing to take part in outdoor adventure activities) can be influenced by meaning derived from connection with environment, others and self. Connection with the environment may include interaction with nature and a sense of self in time and place. Connection with others may include consideration of social support and opportunity for competition and a desire to inspire others. Recognition of risk is useful both in terms of its potential for a sense of achievement, but also the impact of risk taking on self and others. Connection to a sense of self can be meaningful where a perception of self as competent and a sense of identity can be established. Returning to occupational engagement (in terms of re-engagement in outdoor adventure activities over a long period of time or after an interruption) may be influenced by consideration of changes in meaning over time; the value of having a repertoire of narratives and the opportunity for telling a story; and perception of self as an active participant. Use of published autobiographies gave access to detailed reflection from people who had exceptional and extreme experiences of occupational engagement in outdoor adventure activities. Interpretative phenomenological analysis allowed for “meaning” within the data and context to be considered. The extent to which the secondary occupation of writing, and retrospective and selective reporting has influenced the data and the meaning reported is not possible to ascertain.

The findings from element 3 were used to devise an interview schedule for element 4, see appendix 24. In particular, this element informed the questions regarding initiating, sustaining and returning to engagement in outdoor adventure in element 4.

## **Chapter 6.**

### **Element 4: The meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure activities: an interpretative phenomenological analysis study.**

#### **6.1 Introduction to chapter 6.**

Outdoor adventure activities can potentially offer opportunities for meaningful occupational engagement, as evidenced in elements 1, 2 and 3. The rationale given in the introduction (section 1.2) highlighted that an exploration of the meaning and process of engaging in outdoor adventure, could offer a useful contribution to occupational science, occupational therapy and health promotion literature. This is now explored through individual participant interviews.

Exploration of the meaning of occupational engagement is a consistent and growing theme within occupational science (Ikiugu and Pollard, 2015; Eklund *et al.*, 2017). However due to the diversity of research on the study of occupations, and the preference for small sample sizes in qualitative studies (to allow in-depth exploration of meaning), systematic reviewing of literature from broader contexts is recommended as a means to connect “small islands of knowledge” (Murray and Stanley, 2015:174). The systematic review (section 2) demonstrated the meaning of engaging in outdoor adventure as explored in literature outside of occupational science. However, further exploration in relation to the process of occupational engagement in outdoor adventure is indicated to enable consideration of primary data from an occupational science perspective. The focus group element (section 4) demonstrated the potential

practice relevance for exploring the meaning and process of occupational engagement in outdoor adventure. This element concluded that walking groups can be used to support individuals to engage in health-promoting occupations and an occupational perspective can usefully inform practice. However, the limitations of the study suggest that further research is required to explore the meaning and process of occupational engagement in outdoor adventure more broadly. The autobiographies element (section 5) explored personal stories in depth. This demonstrated some shared themes with the systematic review in relation to meaning and in addition illuminated aspects of the process of occupational engagement in outdoor adventure. The findings of element 3 led to the development of the interview schedule for the current study. The limitations of the study included the use of only extreme examples and therefore further primary data collection was indicated to explore whether the themes of meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure had any consistency with other participants.

Whilst there are examples within the occupational therapy literature of the process of planning (in terms of goal setting) to support people to start engaging in occupation through sequential steps (Bowman and Mogensen, 2010; Polglase and Treseder, 2012), there is no clear occupational science literature proposing what steps people take in terms of the process of engaging in occupation, or the influences on these. Historically, the occupational therapy profession has lacked a theory of “change through occupational enablement” and in its absence, has instead drawn on psychology and sociology theory (Townsend *et al.*, 2013b:141). The Canadian Occupational Therapy Guidelines

suggest that “enablement foundations” include having a “vision of possibility” (Townsend *et al.*, 2013a:101). In addition, the Canadian “Do-Live-Well” framework for promoting occupation, health, and wellbeing (Moll *et al.*, 2015:9) explores “dimensions of experience” and the “forces that affect activity engagement” (Moll *et al.*, 2015:17). Whilst all of these concepts resonate with the findings of the first three studies (see chapters 3, 4 and 5), there remains a gap in terms of primary evidence underpinning understanding of the process of occupational engagement.

#### 6.1.1 Research objectives

Further to the rationale, question and aims stated in the introduction (section 1.2), this element had the following objectives (see table 1).

- Identify meaning experienced by participants engaging in outdoor adventure
- Critically explore how this meaning relates to the process of initiating and sustaining and returning to engagement after an interruption
- Consider how these features can inform health promotion and occupational therapy practice

These informed all three research aims.

## 6.2 Method

Qualitative phenomenological research is recommended as a mechanism for exploring the meaning of occupational engagement for application to practice (Scheerer *et al.*, 2004). Interpretive phenomenology goes beyond description of core concepts, to consider meaning embedded in narratives produced by those engaged in occupations (Smythe *et al.*, 2008). Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) has the capacity to focus on the structure, meaning and processes of lived personal experiences (Brocki and Weardon, 2006). IPA is described as a double hermeneutic, where the participant is trying to make sense of their world and the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant making sense of their world (Smith and Osborn, 2003). This study adopted a qualitative interpretive phenomenological approach and participants were invited to take part in semi-structured interviews.

### 6.2.1 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were held with individual participants who engage in outdoor adventure activities, with the aim of exploring the value and meaning they attribute to this and the process through which they established this engagement. The findings from element 3 (chapter 5) as a prior exploration of published adventure biographies have informed the semi-structured interview guide, see appendix 24. Interviews offer the opportunity for in-depth personal exploration of meaning (Finlay, 2011) whilst avoiding the social constraints that may influence data gathered in focus groups (Berg and Lune, 2012). However, the 'researcher-participant' relationship introduces a different social context that



can also influence the data gathered (Finlay, 2011) and this was recognised and explored through reflexive accounts.

### 6.2.2 Sample and recruitment

The aim for the sample selection was to secure a fairly homogenous sample (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009) in terms of engagement in outdoor adventure activity, but with scope for rich discussion from a range of perspectives. It was proposed that the sample could include any person, disabled or non-disabled, who engages in outdoor adventure and was willing to take part in the interview to provide a description of the meaning it gives them. It was proposed that participants could be from across the life course, may identify with either gender or none and may consider themselves to be from any cultural context or social group. Within an interpretative phenomenological study, there is not an aim to represent all demographics because sample sizes are small to enable depth (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). A definition of outdoor adventure is given in section 1.1.2.

A chain sampling (Patton, 2015) strategy was used with the researcher's personal contacts within the field of outdoor adventure, across the UK. These people acted as facilitators by providing the contact details of people they believed would be interested in taking part in the study. In addition, some organisations and research networks were approached. Details of how each person was contacted are provided in the idiographic thumb-nail sketches (see section 6.3.1). Participants were recruited using private email and telephone

calls through facilitators from outdoor adventure organisations, research networks and the lead researcher's personal contacts within the industry. Interviewees were asked for additional contacts for others who could offer another perspective. Care was taken to ensure that the participants were not known personally to the researcher prior to interviews and that they are not coerced to take part. Some people who were contacted through facilitators chose not to respond to an initial email or telephone message and were therefore not contacted further. Where research is focused on occupational phenomena, consideration of the natural surroundings relating to the occupation is recommended (Josephsson and Alsaker, 2015) to prompt reflection associated with these. Interviews were held in a public place, related to outdoor adventure activities that were convenient for the participant, such as a café or where an outdoor adventure activity club meets, whilst being mindful of privacy and background noise. A spread of geographical locations was included in order to prompt a rich sample of people who engage in a range of outdoor adventure activities.

Eight participants were recruited to enable a small enough sample for in-depth idiographic exploration of the data (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). Table 17 provides an overview of the research participants in relation to age, activities, employment and location, to enable consideration of participants' socio-cultural context. Whilst participants were not asked their age during the interview or selection process, many gave this information anyway and for the rest this was approximated in terms of their age now. The reason for inclusion here is because of the impact on context across the lifespan. As an example, people

who were engaging in outdoor adventure activities as young adults in the 1980s were doing so at a time of mass unemployment which led to an increase in the number of people engaging in outdoor adventure activities during week days (Wilson, 1998).

Within table 17 the researcher's details are also provided in addition to the participants. The purpose of this is to emphasise the relational nature of phenomenological research (Finlay, 2011) and that people relate to different people in different ways (Yardley, 2015). In terms of how replicable the research is (Yardley, 2015), whilst the research processes followed could be replicated, the outcome may differ. Hermeneutic phenomenologists recognise the influence of the researcher (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009); therefore it is possible that even the same participants might give different responses to another researcher as they would relate to each other in a different way. The idiographic thumb-nail sketches highlight how I feel participants may have related to me as the researcher to enhance transparency (Yardley, 2015), (see section 6.3.1).

Table17. Participant and researcher characteristics

Pseudonym	Gender	Approximate Age Band				Outdoor Adventure Activities	Employment/ Profession
		25-35	36-45	46-55	56-65		
Amy	Female	•				mountain biking, fell running and climbing	health professional
Ben	Male	•				mountaineering, wild-camping and climbing	outdoor instructor
Craig	Male	•				climbing, fell running and moor-walking	outdoor instructor
Dave	Male			•		kayaking, canoeing, sailing, mountain biking and triathlons	outdoor instructor
Ed	Male		•			expeditions in extreme environments, fishing, cycling and running	outdoor instructor
Fran	Female			•		kayaking, sailing, wild camping and rafting	teacher primary and fitness
Gill	Female				•	horse riding, kayaking, climbing	social care professional
Hannah	Female		•			adventure racing, running, climbing, sailing, kayaking and journeying	outdoor instructor, teacher/lecturer
Researcher	Female		•			mountain biking, camping, running, climbing and kayaking	academic/health professional

### 6.2.3 Trustworthiness and ethics

In addition to establishing ethically sound relationships with participants, the researcher also had a responsibility to ensure ethically sound research throughout the whole process (Braun and Clarke, 2013). This included non-discriminatory practice, accurate representation of data and honesty as to the positioning of the researcher (Braun and Clarke, 2013). In an arena dominated by male stories (Naylor, 2010), care was taken to represent differing gender perspectives. A reflective diary was kept throughout the research process for reflexive recognition of the primary researchers' subjective influence on the research, including perceived power dynamics (Finlay, 2011).

Participants were given an information sheet with details of the study and an explanation of their rights, including the right to withdraw and maintenance of confidentiality in line with recommendations by King (2010) (see appendix 23 for ethical approval, information and consent). This was sent to proposed participants (identified by facilitators) in advance of making arrangements to meet, by email or post. It was made clear that the choice to participate in the research, or not, would have no bearing on the relationship with the researchers, Plymouth University or the organisation providing the interview venue. The consent forms were circulated in advance, signed and confirmed on the day of the interview and stored separately from the research data. A pseudonym was used to enable removal of a participant's data should they request it at a later date. The interviews were facilitated, audio recorded, transcribed and analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis by the lead researcher. Confidentiality was maintained, ensuring that data was made anonymous by

removing all names and storing in password protected files or locked cabinet. Transcriptions of their own data only were available to the participants to check transcriptions for accuracy. No corrections were made. Data arising from the research was otherwise only available to participants in the final written report. Real names have been replaced with pseudonyms within this chapter and arising publications.

#### 6.2.4 Data analysis

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was used to focus on personal meaning and sense-making in context (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009) (see sections 3.2.2; 5.2.4). Interviews were completed with eight participants, these were then transcribed verbatim. The researcher listened to each recording in full at least twice and then made detailed hand written notes in the margins, in line with recommendations for IPA (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). Individual transcripts were considered in terms of their descriptive, linguistic and conceptual content. Emerging and super-ordinate themes were then identified for each individual. Participants' interpretation of their experience has been considered within a wider context. The researcher's interpretation of the experience of the participant and the context in which this interpretation has been made is considered (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). Each individual case has been examined in detail with exploration of their unique idiographic perspective. Then a cross-case analysis has examined differences and similarities across the participant's responses (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009).

#### 6.2.4.1 Hermeneutics: Participant interpretation and sense making

IPA is described as having a double hermeneutic (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009), in that there are two layers of interpretation. The researcher is trying to make sense of the participant's experience, whilst at the same time; the participant is also making sense of their experience. At times within the interviews it was evident that the participant was forming new ideas and understanding of their experiences within the conversation. This was demonstrated with phrases such as "*that is interesting, I hadn't thought about that before*" (Ed: 871), as stated by Ed in reference to his own story. These instances are highlighted within the idiographic summary for each participant.

#### 6.2.4.2 Researcher interpretation: exploring contradictions and cultural context

Many concepts explored within the findings section demonstrated consistency across the data in this study and allude to social norms within this cultural context. However, there were also inconsistencies and contradictions, both across and within individual accounts. The interpretative approach within interpretative phenomenological analysis prompts exploration of "contradictions and paradoxes" (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009:82). Within this study, examination of these divergent and convergent concepts highlighted complex personal and social expectations and value systems held by individuals and assumed within the outdoor adventure culture. As an 'insider' I am mindful that I recognised and interpreted these in relation to my own experiences and understanding.

## **6. 3 Findings and discussion**

In this section, the findings arising from participants are considered in relation to other studies and wider literature. As with the whole thesis, literature has been drawn from the key practice areas of occupational therapy, health promotion and outdoor adventure education and therapy; and the key foundational sciences of occupational science, psychology and sociology

### **6.3.1 Individual participant summaries: idiographic thumb-nail sketches**

Within interpretative phenomenological analysis, the individual experience is valued. Interviews therefore represent an idiographic account of phenomena (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). In order to recognise this, individual emergent themes were identified within cases before looking across cases.

Individual participant summaries are provided here to illuminate the uniqueness of each account and relationship dynamics before exploring the super-ordinate themes across cases.

#### **6.3.1.1 Amy**

Amy was contacted via a facilitator who is a health professional and an outdoor instructor. The interview took place in a garden. The descriptive comments during the interpretative phenomenological analysis highlighted that Amy is a health professional and a conservationist. She currently enjoys mountain and road biking; fell-running; lake-swimming; and tree, rock and ice-climbing. Amy told stories about walking and camping as a child, racing, and mountaineering. She also discussed trying to inspire her patients to exercise. The conceptual



comments demonstrated an emphasis on social connection, experiencing nature, outdoor identity, competition and escapism. Amy had prioritised her engagement in outdoor adventure over other occupations and organised her time and life-style to reflect this. She particularly valued the impact of engaging in outdoor adventure on her physical and mental health and sought to promote this for others through her work. The linguistic comments highlighted a sense of fun and passion, for example: *“now I like to maybe go back, sort of, put a sneaky result in”* (Amy: 96); *“mountain-biking really took over and that was like a real focus point”* (Amy: 10). The linguistic comments also highlighted a strong desire to improve the lives of others: *“I am a great believer in group motivation, like, it’s definitely, that’s my favourite part of my job”* (Amy: 476-477). I felt that Amy’s decision to meet me reflected her desire to contribute to research promoting healthy occupation and that she related to me as a fellow health professional.

#### 6.3.1.2 Ben

Ben was contacted via a facilitator through a mountain rescue service. The interview took place outside a café beside a working dairy farm; this may have influenced the recall of childhood memories *“but then there was part of my young childhood when we used to live on a farm”* (Ben: 613). The descriptive comments during the interpretative phenomenological analysis highlighted that Ben runs a mountaineering company and volunteers for the mountain rescue service. Ben’s work can involve taking individuals and groups hill-walking and on gorge scrambles. Ben’s main interests are climbing and mountaineering, he also enjoys road biking and running. Ben told stories about: taking up climbing

in his early twenties whilst travelling and mountaineering expeditions; having and being a mentor; and experiences as a guide. The conceptual comments demonstrated an emphasis on: valuing wilderness and solitude; exploration and understanding nature; being efficient; and supporting others to engage in outdoor adventure. The linguistic comments highlighted a clear distinction between activities as part of work and activities for personal enjoyment and the value of the positive impact on health. With reference to gorge walking, Ben stated: *“I think it’s been very few occasions that are, that I will go and do that for personal”* (Ben: 15-16), the phrase *“for personal”* was repeated several times during the interview. When asked about the impact on health, Ben stated: *“I think it massively improves my health and wellbeing”* (Ben: 253). I felt that Ben’s decision to meet me reflected his desire to share his passion for hillwalking and the positive impact it can have on wellbeing.

#### 6.3.1.3 Craig

Craig volunteered to take part in the research when I approached the staff at a climbing centre to ask if they might consider being a facilitator for contacts. The interview took place at an indoor climbing wall, this appeared to influence the discussion as Craig stated: *“I talk about climbing because we are sat in a climbing wall and it’s my day to day thing, um, I walk, I’m as happy going out and walking”* (Craig: 655-657). The descriptive comments during the interpretative phenomenological analysis highlighted that Craig manages an indoor climbing wall and also runs his own business as a climbing and mountaineering guide and a life coach. In addition to climbing and mountaineering, Craig enjoys fell-running, walking and exploring. Craig told

stories about: taking up climbing at school as an alternative to team sports; climbing trees at his grand-parents' garden; reading adventure stories; climbing sea-cliffs; and an expedition to the Himalaya. The conceptual comments highlighted a strong sense of belonging to the climbing community and belief in the value of experiential learning. The linguistic comments demonstrated an emphasis on Craig's enthusiasm "*climbing and mountaineering are the sort of underlying passions*" (Craig: 2); and the risk taking elements of his sport: "*we went to do a route on the North coast, quite adventurous climbing, notoriously a little bit loose, a little bit serious*" (Craig: 305); and: "*the potential risk, the aspect of deep play*" (Craig: 699). I felt that Craig's decision to meet me reflected his desire to share his belief in the therapeutic value of using climbing as a metaphor to understand life, develop resilience and become happy. I felt that Craig related to me as a fellow therapist.

#### 6.3.1.4 Dave

Dave was contacted via a facilitator who is a design engineer for accessible outdoor adventure equipment and an outdoor instructor. The interview took place via Skype due to the participant's remote location. Dave described his view "*I am looking out, I can see the beach, um, I can see the mountains behind it there, and I am inside*" (Dave: 422-423). The descriptive comments during the interpretative phenomenological analysis highlighted that Dave is an outdoor learning manager and professional skipper. He delivers first aid, power-boat and safety training and outdoor education in sailing, kayaking, mountain biking and hillwalking. Dave has competed in adventure racing and in addition to the sports above he enjoys diving, skiing and running. Dave told

stories about: building his own kayak at school; being and having a mentor; travelling; and playing outside with his children. He referred to authors who were explorers and educators. The conceptual comments highlighted a respect for inspirational adventurers and his value of practical skills and escapism. The linguistic comments highlighted an emphasis on an appreciation for intrinsic as well as extrinsic journeys that could lead to self-discovery. Dave overtly demonstrated his attempt to interpret his experiences with phrases such as “*so I am going to try and explore my philosophy or my thinking and how I understand it, and one of the things that I want to understand is the fact that I am sitting here going, could I, am I inspired by me?*” (Dave: 153-155). Dave is currently doing a Masters in outdoor education and I felt that he related to me as a fellow postgraduate student.

#### 6.3.1.5 Ed

Ed was contacted via a facilitator who is a design engineer for accessible outdoor adventure equipment. The interview took place in the library of an expedition centre. The descriptive comments during the interpretative phenomenological analysis highlighted that Ed leads expeditions to extreme environments, including polar, mountain and rain-forest expeditions. In addition, Ed enjoyed canoeing, triathlons and fishing. His stories included: his childhood interest in wildlife, cadets and survival skills; travelling; and encouraging his children to share his interests. The conceptual comments highlighted the value Ed placed on exploring, independence, self-sufficiency, environmental science and his consideration of socio-economic barriers to participation in outdoor adventure. The linguistic comments highlighted an emphasis on how Ed’s

lifestyle was fulfilling a childhood dream: *“that sort of adventurous idea of life style seemed to appeal in some way”* (Ed: 91); *“everything that I dreamt about I am now living”* (Ed: 275). Ed made reference to his own reflection and interpretation of his story and also his thoughts before we met: *“(I thought) ‘oh I bet she is going to ask me how I got into doing the outdoors’, but I cannot, it’s either a case of its always been there, or it’s a case of that I just fell into it”*. (Ed: 77) He then referred to *“these layers of reflection”* (Ed: 127); and later stated: *“yes so that, those sort of things seem to have just, it’s those little connections that come together, I have always wondered, how on earth did I get from a council estate... to being able to climb up Kilimanjaro or dive to the bottom of the Earth”* (Ed: 249-271). Ed had worked in a psychiatric hospital supporting people to do outdoor activities. He had been involved in a public health project promoting physical activity and inclusive expedition planning. He is also currently studying. I felt that he related to me as a fellow student and health practitioner with an interest in inclusion. I also empathised with his experiences of parenting.

#### 6.3.1.6 Fran

Fran responded to an email asking for participants in this study that was circulated to a research network for people interested in outdoor learning. The interview took place outside a café beside a canal. The canal formed part of Fran’s daily commute and therefore the location may have prompted the telling of this story. At one point Fran commented on children playing in a puddle nearby to illustrate her discussion of playing in nature *“you see that is lovely look, they are being allowed to stamp in that”* (Fran: 1217-1218). The

descriptive comments during the interpretative phenomenological analysis highlighted that Fran is a primary school teacher who uses outdoor activities within her teaching and has also worked as a fitness instructor. Fran's personal engagement in outdoor adventure involved cycling, walking, kayaking, rafting, sailing, paddle-boarding and going on a zip-wire. Fran is a member of several outdoor adventure clubs. Fran's stories included: sailing as a child, clubs and adventure courses; travelling to the Amazon and Borneo; seeing the positive impact of the outdoors on others when they were ill; rafting in Sweden and eco-coasteering. The conceptual comments demonstrated an emphasis on health promotion, motivation, risk management and supporting others to engage in outdoor adventure. The linguistic comments highlighted a sense of joy "*finding some fun in life and having a good old belly laugh I think is just good all round*" (Fran: 404-405); "*my motto in life is happiness and fun, my motto as a teacher is spread some joy*" (Fran: 370). I felt that Fran's decision to meet me reflected this desire to encourage others to have fun and inspire people to explore and enjoy the world. I felt that Fran related to me as a fellow parent, teacher and health promoter.

#### 6.3.1.7 Gill

Gill was contacted via another participant who circulated information about the research study to a multi-activity outdoor adventure club for women. The interview took place in a rural pub near the participants' home, which may have prompted reference to activities carried out in the village. The descriptive comments during the interpretative phenomenological analysis highlighted that Gill has worked within health and social care management and is a trustee for a

charity promoting connection to nature and mindfulness. Gill described taking part in surf life-saving as a child. She also described kayaking, canoeing, orienteering, climbing, scrambling, abseiling and archery with the club she attends. However, currently her main interests are horse riding and walking. Gill told stories about horse riding, therapeutic communities, kayaking whilst travelling, supporting friends to exercise; and her children and grandchild. The conceptual comments demonstrated a focus on the restorative aspects of the outdoors, incorporating healthy activity within a daily or weekly routine, balancing demands and the therapeutic benefits of horse riding. The linguistic comments highlighted an emphasis on the value of connection to environment and community for health and recovery: *“we are all about connecting people to nature and mindfulness on the basis that it is a far better prescription than meditation or therapy”* (Gill: 28-30). I felt that Gill’s decision to meet me reflected her desire to promote this value. I felt that Gill related to me as a health practitioner and an academic.

#### 6.3.1.8 Hannah

Hannah was contacted via a facilitator who is a research fellow. The interview took place beside a river at a boat yard where Hannah works, which may have prompted discussion about the local area. The descriptive comments during the interpretative phenomenological analysis highlighted that, in addition to her work at the boatyard, Hannah has taught a broad range of groups as an outdoor instructor. Hannah has competed in adventure races at world championship level. She currently enjoys running, cycling, climbing, scrambling, sailing, kayaking and *“journeys under my own steam”* (Hannah: 23). Hannah also told

stories about experiencing outdoor adventure as a student at university, adventure racing and setting up a running club. The conceptual comments demonstrated an emphasis on empowering others, self-sufficiency, resilience and fun. The linguistic comments highlighted a sense of valuing simplicity, the experience of journeys and being drawn to the outdoors: *“just simple journeys, so um, nice simple journeys, I mean most of my journeys have been on foot, so take a train to the coast path, run or walk”* (Hannah: 41-43); *“it just sort of drew me towards it and I was quite excited about doing outdoor stuff, um, but that was kind of like a draw from inside really”* (Hannah: 97-99). I felt that Hannah’s decision to meet me reflected her desire empower others to experience the outdoors. I felt that she related to me as a fellow lecturer.

### 6.3.2 Super-ordinate themes

The findings were categorised into super-ordinate themes that related to the meaning of engaging in outdoor adventure and super-ordinate themes that related to the process of engaging in outdoor adventure; whilst recognising that these are interconnected with each other. Table 18. below presents a summary of the super-ordinate themes.



**Table 18: Super-ordinate themes for the interviews data**

<b>A. The meaning of engaging in outdoor adventure:</b>	<b>B. The process of engaging in outdoor adventure:</b>
<p><b>A1. Meaning from experiencing connection with nature</b>            Appreciating beauty and feeling at one with nature            Exploring: understanding the land, seasons and weather            Escapism: seeking wilderness, solitude and simplicity            Spirituality and perspective</p>	<p><b>B1. Factors that inspired initial engagement in outdoor adventure</b>            Childhood influences            Forming aspirational identity            Formative experiences in adulthood            Facilitating others</p>
<p><b>A2. Meaning from experiencing connection with others</b>            Sharing activities and belonging to a group of like-minded people            Seeking or avoiding competition            Environmental values within outdoor culture</p>	<p><b>B2. Factors that promoted sustained engagement in outdoor adventure</b>            Friends and mentors            Navigating social barriers and norms            Location and routine            Managing family commitments            Managing work commitments            Finances            Change in meaning over time            Novelty</p>
<p><b>A3. Meaning in relation to self-perception/connection to self</b>            Identity and self-narrative            Decision making and risk management            Developing resilience through managing hardship            Achievement, mastery and competence</p>	<p><b>B3. Factors that promoted a return to engagement in outdoor adventure following an interruption</b>            Adapting activities            Revisiting inspirational factors            Revisiting sustaining factors</p>
<p><b>A4. Meaning in relation to health and wellbeing</b>            Mental health and psychological wellbeing            Physical health and fitness            Managing injuries</p>	

### 6.3.3 A. The meaning of engaging in outdoor adventure

#### 6.3.3.1 A1. Meaning from experiencing connection with nature

All participants described the meaning they experienced from connection with nature. Meaning from experiencing connection with nature was considered in terms of appreciating beauty and feeling at one with nature; exploring: understanding the land, seasons and weather; escapism: seeking wilderness, solitude and simplicity; and spirituality and perspective. The meaning of engaging in outdoor adventure was explored by participants; the findings are integrated with literature here.

##### 6.3.3.1.1 Appreciating beauty and feeling at one with nature

All participants gave examples of experiencing and appreciating the natural environment in relation to beauty:

*“I mean why it was memorable is because the environment we were in was just spectacular... just in this fantastic environment on glaciers... you know big fjords and glacial melts falling down whole, it was just a spectacular environment”* (Hannah: 207-213)

*“The panoramic views of the Himalaya are incredible”* (Ben: 186)

*“We mountain-biked around (the headland) which is just breath-taking and that was fantastic”* (Dave: 563-564)

Some participants gave a sense of complete immersion in nature:

*“I put my head under the water and I was in a television with Jacques Cousteau and this wonderful underwater world and I felt like it was the place I had always wanted to be. It was just this incredible, um, I mean*

*given the chance I would spend all my time under-water, um, I love being under-water, that weightlessness and the ability to fly, it is just beautiful” (Dave: 595-602)*

*“I enjoy being in and seeing precipitous terrain... I think the sense of exposure, the sense of being up high, the sense of space below you. I also enjoy walking along the bottom of valleys and looking up, but there is a, I have a very personal affinity to verticality, to height, to seeing mountains, to being on top, to being half way up, to being at the bottom, to being surrounded by them” (Craig: 657-664)*

Some described the significance of this sense of beauty and connection:

*“I think just getting up into the hills, I feel it’s my freedom, I feel, you know, because I often go out on my own as well as with friends, um, you know, I just feel at one with nature, nature is a massive thing for me” (Amy: 142-146)*

*“I took him (my son) out in the afternoon for a couple of hours and he just sat and was just engaged in it. You know, kingfishers and heron and all that sort of stuff, and I love the pace of fishing, watching them get into that makes me realise the power, that is probably the best, of all the other things I do, the moment I connected to the outdoors I think was through fishing, that is how it is in my head. I love watching my children get affected by it, just watching them” (Ed: 435-442)*

The findings of the current study demonstrating meaning derived from a sense of connection and “being at one” with nature (Amy: 146), is consistent with Brymer and Schweitzer’s paper (2013) included in the findings in the systematic review. This is also identified in a theoretical occupational science paper by Hammell (2014:44) who asserts that connectedness with nature has been recognised as an “important motivator for occupation” in relation to a sense of belonging. Similarly, Iwama, Thomson and Macdonald (2009) explore occupation within the context of differing cultural views of nature and the potential meaning of human-environment transaction. A sense of connection

with nature was also a key theme arising from Wensley and Slade's (2012) research study on walking as a meaningful occupation.

Noticing and valuing the beauty of nature is a consistent theme across the participants (Hannah: 213; Ben: 186; Dave: 563) and across literature (Pomfret, 2012; Morse, 2014; Passmore and Holder, 2017). Participants' description of meaning from a sense of complete immersion in their environment, particularly Dave's description of "weightlessness" (Dave: 602) when diving, are consistent with the haptic experience of diving described by Allen-Collinson and Hockey (2011) and the pleasure from kinaesthetic movement identified by Kerr and Hogue MacKenzie (2012) and Brymer and Schweitzer (2013). This sense of connection related to both landscape and wildlife and prompted exploration.

#### 6.3.3.1.2 Exploring: understanding the land, seasons and weather

Some participants described their enjoyment of exploring:

*"There is an innate curiosity um, there's a, there is a need to wander around, I don't like, I am not a very stationary person, um, I like the, I like exploring, I suppose it is the explorer in me"* (Dave: 448-451)

*"just exploring places, and being really remote... and seeing new things as well, because you can, I'll be up (the mountain) every other week, you know, sometimes every day, like last week I went up, you know places along there that I hadn't been before"* (Ben: 216-222)

*"Learning to kayak and canoe has been good, because when you go on holiday you can usually do that... we kayaked through the mangrove jungle"* (Gill: 335-345)

Some participants described wanting to understand how the environment works:

*“I will spend quite a lot of time just looking at maps and the guidebooks, and that is just like getting the whole picture of what is around. And I think that then engages me in different aspects, so like if I can physically see like the weather changing, I can physically see how the land is all put together, and then, so I am more likely to watch a programme on TV about those things” (Ben: 348-353)*

*“well I did do botany and zoology to A-level so I like watching the changes and it’s that, so it is not just the activity for me, it is being outside and connecting with the change of the seasons and yeah, because of that I know stuff, the trees and seeing what plants are out this month, that sort of thing, I suppose it connects me in a real way to the Universe I guess.” (Gill: 397-402)*

*“I think if you are involved in doing things in the outdoors you become more comfortable with it, you become more attuned to it, I definitely think that being involved in tracking and bush-craft... and travelling and doing expeditions, you do feel more of a connection, well I feel more of a connection with the outdoors I suppose and the rhythms... and the little things that you then transfer somewhere else and say ‘oh yeah that is going to happen then’ and someone will say, ‘oh how do you know that’, I and will say ‘well I looked at the clouds, you can see it’s going to rain over there’” (Ed: 467-482)*

Responding to curiosity (Dave: 448) and a need to explore (Dave: 448; Ben: 216) and understand the world (Gill: 402; Ed: 468) was also identified as meaningful by Lusby and Anderson (2010). Encouraging curiosity as a mechanism for wellbeing, in terms of a prompt to explore natural environments, is a concept that is gaining momentum within research exploring geography and health (Phillips, Evans, Muirhead, 2015). Exploration was also identified as a route to meaning making in Ikiugu and Pollard’s (2015) worker-writer study. Understanding the natural world gave a sense of escapism from other aspects of life.

### 6.3.3.1.3 Escapism: seeking wilderness, solitude and simplicity

Participants described seeking authentic wilderness with a sense of being remote, and considered that their own need for solitude might be more extreme than most other peoples':

*"funnily enough I tend to go on my own with a lot of these journeys, although I would go with somebody that I could share it with, I have been with people that I thought I could share the journey with and it has not been quite the shared experience that I'd anticipated, just because we haven't been quite clear about what we both were after, or you know the experience wasn't, we didn't quite see the experience in the same way, of something a little bit wilder, a little bit more sort of natural rather than a full on tourist type activity" (Hannah: 72-79)*

*"I think there is different levels, because if I, if I took 99% of the clients I have on hillwalking days, and I took them to like, for me, wilderness for me, they would completely freak out, they wouldn't be able to cope, um, so I think there's these levels isn't there, of just being outside of your comfort zone... but not so much that they are into their stretch zone... I like to find that little bit of solitude and then prolong it, whereas I find a lot of people, they want to find it, just to kind of reconnect, but then they are quite happy to you know, to go back, whereas mine seems to be, it needs to be a little bit more sustained." (Ben: 234-245)*

*"As stunning as the scenery is, there is more wilderness available on (the) moor than there is on a well-trodden Himalayan trekking path, by a long way. I have been in far more remote places off my backdoor step" (Craig: 281-284)*

Some described their need for wilderness as escapism from the business of cities:

*"I'm not one for busy society, you know, I like to escape, and to feel like I am out in the wilderness with nature. That's a big part of what I do, you know, um, I think I do struggle to live in towns or cities, like I have to be in a little village up in the mountains (laughs)" (Amy: 152-156)*

*"I avoid large numbers of people, I have a very small and select group of friends who are people like me, I don't live in a city, I don't want to be surrounded by people, the hustle and bustle of humanity, I don't place high value on that, um, my value is more on solitude, being in a natural environment" (Craig: 771-775)*

*“I think it’s that sense of calmness that you get, without being bombarded by like the rules, and advertising and all those things that underlie, because I lived in central London for a year and all those things that underlie there, even when you go on the escalator, you’ve got to be on the escalator like, the advertising is right there, you don’t get that, if I want to go and walk up a rock face, I can go out and walk up a rock face and that kind of freedom I think is really important for me, um, that might be a little bit to do of personality as well, but I need those things to be able to stay sane I guess in a way” (Ben: 224-232)*

In addition, a number of participants described valuing simplicity:

*“I have spent quite a lot of time living in tents, um, and I like the simplicity, and well maybe a better way to describe it is why do I like sailing, when you step on to a sailing boat, the rest of the world stops, it stops existing... So you have to live in the moment, and you, you live on ship’s time, and there is no, the world doesn’t impinge on you, all the pressures of politics and the pressures of work and domestic life are gone, because you are living in this little bubble and that is quite a, it allows you this sort of quiet in my head, to find a quiet place in my head” (Dave: 349-358); “...I would kind of quite happily live outside, and I suppose I hanker for a simple life, you know it’s the simplicity of it” (Dave: 487-488)*

*“Just simple journeys, so um, nice simple journeys, I mean most of my journeys have been on foot, so um take a train to the coast path, run or walk... Take a tent, camp, have a pint of beer, a nice curry, (laughs) do it again, in the morning... just something really simple where you can get somewhere... same thing on my bike with a rucksack, just what you need in the back, there is enough there for you to survive on for a number of days and hop between youth hostels. I think it’s just that under your own steam, you know without a car” (Hannah: 41-52)*

*“Canoeing for me means so many different things... I like the slowness, I like the engagement, the history, all those things... in a canoe you can just get in in a pair of trousers and a t-shirt, you don’t have to have any labelled kit particularly to do it” (Ed: 545-552)*

The value of solitude highlighted by Ben (239) and Hannah (72) was also recognised by Boniface (2006) and Hinds(2011). Escapism from everyday pressures was highlighted by Amy (152), Craig (771) and Ben (224) and was

also identified as important by Freeman *et al.* (2016:4), Kerr and Hougue MacKenzie (2012:653) and Boniface (2006:16). Simplicity was sought for enabling “*quiet in my head*” (Dave: 358) a phrase repeated in the findings by Morse (2015:174). Simplicity also engendered a sense of self-sufficiency (Fran: 622; Hannah: 41) that was recognised in the literature (Lusby and Anderson, 2010:92) and was seen to align with environmental (Dave: 487) and anti-consumerist values (Hannah: 303) as explored in section 6. In line with simplicity, an anti-consumerist perspective is evident here and explored further below (see section: 6.3.4.2.6 Finances).

#### 6.3.3.1.4 Spirituality and perspective

A number of participants referred to their engagement with the outdoors as offering perspective or spiritual connection:

*“I think activity is grounding and I am somebody who is often too much in their own head, I’m an introvert and I am often too much in my own head, over-processing stuff that is partly personality and partly work and actually being in nature you just get over yourself, you know, it’s not that important is it to be fretting about”* (Gill: 404-408)

*“I think there is a sense of perspective to be gained as well in remembering you are just a very, very small animal in a complicated ecosystem, and actually we are nothing more than that, and for me it would seem a great shame to see myself as anything more, or to spend what little time I have here not enjoying it as much as possible.”* (Craig: 792-796)

*“So, I think the outdoors is, for me, with activity it is that, the adventure of being out and the multi-sensory aspect of it, I mean every day when I come in along the canal path, there is not a day goes by when I don’t hear, see, smell, touch something wonderful. I work at a C of E (Church of England) school and I am not religious in a conventional sense, but when they talk about spirituality, its great because I just think well that is how I live my life, so I am quite happy to go and their moral code is quite fitting, so people are quite surprised when they realise, but I am quite*



*comfortable with you know teaching Christianity and talking about awe and wonder of the world because I see and feel that every day” (Fran: 499-508)*

*“I feel it’s kind of meditation in a way, it’s quite spiritual” (Amy: 151)*

This sense of spiritual connection also relates to the appreciation of beauty and sense of oneness with nature described above (see section: 6.3.3.1.1 Appreciating beauty and feeling at one with nature). Simplicity and quietness relates to the potential for reflection and spiritual connection and perspective. Amy’s description of her experiences in the outdoors being “spiritual” (Amy: 151) are consistent with Fredrickson and Anderson’s (1999:34) description of transcendence and spiritual inspiration. Fran’s description of “awe and wonder” (Fran: 507) shares these terms with Loeffler’s (2004:544) findings.

### **6.3.3.2 A2. Meaning from experiencing connection with others**

All participants described their connections with other people through their engagement in outdoor adventure activity. Meaning from experiencing connection with others was considered in terms of sharing activities and belonging to a group of like-minded people; seeking or avoiding competition; and environmental values within outdoor culture. Despite valuing solitude at times (6.3.3.1.3), all participants spoke at length about the significance of relationships in association with their engagement in outdoor adventure.

### 6.3.3.2.1 Sharing activities and belonging to a group of like-minded people

Some participants described how other people influenced the activities they chose and their experience of these:

*“It kind of also depends who is around, actually, what activities you do are dependent, one on what you have got available, but also the people that are there to do it with... I mountain bike on my own, most of the time... but I just do sea-kayaking for the social experience” (Dave: 332-338)*

*“It was a week and it was full of scary bits like river crossings... where, you know, my team mates were six foot, evidently I am quite significantly shorter than that and it’s just up here and its purple rivers... really quite cold glacial water, so that actually that, when you talk about sharing experiences, you know, that kind of experience becomes, well we stuck together as a team, so after doing a few races like that you really know each other well.” (Hannah: 249-259)*

*“the trust and friendship that develops when you, when you share that experience with someone else, I think climbing partners can be a real good example of inter-dependence where it is not just two independent climbers achieving it is actually two people who by working together allow both people to achieve something they couldn’t achieve on their own, ...and that has formed friendships stronger than anything” (Craig: 400-408)*

Some participants described their friendship groups and a sense of belonging:

*“I think I’ve always wanted to mountain bike, and then I think I’m a bit of an adrenaline junkie and when I just sort of threw myself into down-hill mountain biking, I realised there is a real scene of people who are quite similar to me... and I just really enjoyed the social aspect of racing” (Amy: 40-45)*

*“I would say maybe my friendship group has probably changed as well... So before people I thought would be friends, were folk who do similar things, you’ve just got to share the same sort of thing. Yeah I guess that runs through everything that I do really, everything is in some way related to being outdoors.” (Ben: 359-366)*

Dave (338), Hannah (258), Gill (373) and Craig (408) described the value of shared experiences; Amy (44) and Ben (360) described a sense of belonging to social groups that were meaningful to them. Interestingly, Ingman (2017) recently suggested that appreciation of solitude and camaraderie within outdoor adventure might be facilitated by each other, in that having some time alone then enhances the experience of time spent with others and vice versa. A sense of belonging and social connection is widely recognised as a meaningful aspect of occupation within the occupational science literature (Hamell, 2014; Hitch, 2017) and has been considered in relation to co-occupation (Pierce, 2009) and collective occupations (Elelwani, Ramugondo and Kronenberg, 2015). As referenced in chapter 3 (section 3.5.1), a phenomenological occupational science study by Van Nes *et al.* (2012) suggested the significance of meaning from co-occupation in relation to older adults walking with their partners. Connection with others is recognised as a motivational determinant within psychology theory as “relatedness” (Deci and Ryan, 2000; Ng *et al.*, 2012). It is also recognised within anthropology as “communitas” (Turner, 2012) and sociology as “social connectedness” with implications for support networks (Cornwell and Laumann, 2015). Within the outdoor adventure literature the importance of sharing activities with others and belonging to a group of like-minded people was explored by Fredrickson and Anderson (1999); Loeffler (2004); Kerr and Hougue MacKenzie (2012), and Simpson, Post and Tashman (2014), who all cited this as a key incentive for engagement in outdoor adventure. Relationships with others offered connection and belonging and involved differing levels of competition.

### 6.3.3.2.2 Seeking or avoiding competition

Some participants valued competition as an incentive for their engagement in outdoor adventure:

*“So the competition for me, yes it is obviously a motivator, um, but actually you know, so being outside is great and an excuse to go outside, maybe that is what competition gives you, the excuse to do it” (Dave: 929-933)*

*“I just seemed to like, be able to sort of, put the speed down, and I don’t, I was doing quite well fairly quickly, so I think I just got addicted to it yeah, it was good... like I was quite, I was really competitive with it, but also, um, the social aspect was a big thing” (Amy: 45-51)*

However, Amy’s experience of this changed over time, and Ben did not like this aspect of some people’s approach to their engagement in outdoor adventure:

*“But then, once I got to a level, like once I was at an elite level and I was starting to do sort of world cup stuff, I found the pressure too much” (Amy: 66)*

*“I’ve come across I’d say like more so in the climbing world, there is those guys who like have got to be the best, and I don’t think it really makes a difference if they were climbing, runners or whatever, they’ve got to be the best they’ve got to be the strongest and to me that is just kind of a bit macho and well I’d much rather get like, a real feeling from it rather than always being under pressure. To me it’s a way of releasing that pressure.” (Ben: 632-638)*

Craig described his engagement in climbing as an alternative to competitive sport:

*“I wasn’t a particularly team competitive person at the time, so the idea of doing something (climbing) that had performance measured only by my own progression, not comparatively to others was very appealing” (Craig: 90-95)*

Interestingly, competition was both sought (Amy: 45; Dave: 929) and avoided (Craig: 90; Ben: 638) by participants in the current study (4). However, competition was identified as a motivating feature by Simpson, Post and Tashman (2014) and Lynch and Dibben (2016). Some concepts here relate to differing social norms within outdoor adventure culture, these were also evident in relation to environmental awareness, responsibility and values.

#### 6.3.3.2.3 Environmental values within outdoor culture

Some participants described how their experience of outdoor adventure prompted them to consider environmental responsibility:

*“I think I’m quite aware of sort of, um, environmental factors and farming, just like animal, well how farming is affecting, I just think the way farming is going is terrible, you know like mass factory farms and the way meat is produced, so it’s an awareness of that as well” (Amy: 261-265)*

For some participants, environmental values were something they then wished to engender in others.

*“I suppose I hanker for a simple life, you know it’s the simplicity of it, now don’t get me wrong I am not somebody who could live off the grid, as I am sitting here using fibre-optic you know, but I do like that combination, I hope that I have engendered in my children, is that actually you need both, you know, but actually you won’t get, you won’t be able to have nice things, unless you look after the places that we are in... if you can get a child to think, that I like this little plot of land here, once they understand that and they start to understand their impact on it, and then it starts to develop a regard and a responsibility for the planet, so for me it is that, you know being outside, it’s that I feel responsible for being outside and I like, I like the responsibility of the place that I live in, and because I am curious about it, I start to get angry when people start to mess it up” (Dave: 487-503)*

*“I hope that when they walk away from me as a guide, having learnt something about the environment or the wildlife or the place where they are, whether it’s talking about porter rights or in those environments so*

*they understand where they are, it's not just a trek up a mountain for charity, sort of thing, it's the wider experience.” (Ed: 402-407)*

The idea that engaging in outdoor adventure engendered environmentalist values, (Amy: 261; Dave: 503; Ed: 403) is also evident within literature.

Environmental planner and occupational scientist, Manual (2003:31) suggests that this “human-nature connection” is not only meaningful, but that it supports “environmental citizenship”; also referred to as guardianship (McNeill, 2017).

The importance of protecting the natural environment for future generations (Dave, 503) is consistent with findings by Lusby and Anderson (2010) and Svarstad (2010). The concept of anti-consumerist values as evidenced in Dave’s (Dave: 763) reference and objection to the “MacDonaldization” (Ritzer, 2017:11) of the outdoors, is important within outdoor adventure culture, was also identified by Svarstad (2010). Emulating environmental values may also relate to a desire to present a personal identity that is congruent with the culture and with an aspirational sense of self.

#### **6.3.3.3 A3. Meaning in relation to self-perception/connection to self**

Meaning in relation to self-perception was considered in terms of identity formation; a sense of self who is able to make decisions and manage risk; a sense of self who is resilient through managing hardship; and a sense of achievement, mastery and competence.

#### 6.3.3.3.1 Identity and self-narrative

All participants identified as being people who loved the outdoors and numerous outdoor adventure activities that enabled them to experience it:

*“I’m totally up for anything outdoorsy really” (Amy: 31)*

*“it’s just kind of part of who I am really, yeah, it’s just that holistic, being in the outdoors, is yeah, part of me, so in terms of activities, anything that takes me outside” (Hannah: 4-6)*

*“Oh, outdoors, anything, um, you know, I literally will do anything to be outside” (Dave: 292-293)*

Participants also referred to sub-cultures within the outdoor adventure culture and positioned themselves in relation to a number of activities that they did or did not enjoy:

*“I don’t tend to do much paddling (kayaking), just ‘cos I tend to be pretty rubbish at it” (Ben: 7)*

*“I have dabbled in kayaking and canoeing but I’m not really, it’s not really my thing because I don’t like getting wet.” (Craig: 8-10)*

*“subcultures... climbers being different from mountaineers, canoeists being different from kayakers, and things like that, you know, I’d identify myself as a canoeist more than I’d identify as a kayaker, and I can coach kayaking” (Ed: 540-543)*

Even within the same activity, participants delineated between their own participation and the way others might approach the activity:

*“but actually I am not a runner, I run in the outdoors and in the woods, you know, with other people and my dogs because it is outside and that is an outdoor activity, I wouldn’t necessarily be that keen just to go for a jog*

*around the roads, that wouldn't be the same, so part of why I keep doing it is to get outside, to get outdoors" (Hannah: 7-13)*

*"I run, I try and do some fell-running, I'm not particularly interested in pounding around the streets... despite it being outdoors. I'd rather be on untamed ground" (Craig: 5-8)*

These statements are interesting because they possibly refer to 'rules' that accompany the participation. An observer would not doubt that Ed is a kayaker or that Hannah is a runner. However, Hannah feels she is not a runner, despite running every day, because she doesn't like running on roads. Ed feels he is not a kayaker, despite teaching it, because he does not like it as much as he likes canoeing. Perhaps there is a need for participants to state an allegiance to one group over the other due to rivalries between the two. Amy's discussion about her participation in climbing is useful to expand on this line of interpretation:

*"I like to climb every now and then, so I dabble in climbing" (Amy: 21-22)*

*"We went out to Chamonix and I've never done any alpine climbing and I'd only been ice climbing about twice or three times out in Scotland, and we went and did Cosmiques ridge, Cosmiques Arete without a guide or anything. We didn't really know what we were doing, and that was a scary day, that was intense, like, um, perfect weather, good conditions, but winter so a lot of snow, and um, yeah, cos (we) don't climb outside very often, I think we kind of cowboied it and it kind of made me realise actually we probably had, we pretty much, well nearly soloed it really, which is a bit silly" (Amy: 180-189)*

*"Ice climbing is the thing that scares me the most; I have nightmares about avalanches after every ice climb (laughs)... It's quite, er, I mean climbing, well I'm not really a climber so, you know, but yeah it was good, we survived it, yeah" (Amy: 205-209)*

Arête des Cosmiques is a serious winter route that requires skilled climbing (UK Climbing, 2017), however Amy's suggestion that she was 'not really a climber'



appears to allude to the frequency that she climbs, the type and number of times she has climbed before and how competent and scared she feels. This suggests a perception of complex social rules that need to be understood for participants to own the identity associated with the occupation. In addition to offering opportunities to align identity with an occupation, some participants acknowledged how their participation in outdoor adventure had led to a positive self-perception:

*“It gives me a sense of self-worth...it’s definitely driven me to feel pretty good about myself basically” (Craig: 452-461)*

This included the ability to tell an adventurous story and make metaphorical connections across their own stories and experiences:

*“I’ve been trying to write my life, not really for me but for my kid to read... ‘travels with a green rucksack’ because I’ve got a rucksack that I got, I don’t even want to think about how many years ago, but it is hanging up in the bar, and it has been pretty much on all my travels... everything sort of hangs around that, you know, and this, I can get it off the shelf and say oh, and I start to remember the places it’s been and the climbs it’s done and the adventures and it’s worn out in various different places and it’s just those, those are the sort of triggers I suppose for me” (Dave: 126-138)*

*“I think that’s the real thing about the metaphor of the outdoors, or... using things that occur in the outdoors as metaphors, so other things, and people make those connections and that can only be healthy as well in some ways... to be able to tell their back story maybe through it or use that as a defining moment that then leads them down another route and I think that’s really interesting. You know it was really interesting telling my story to a group of young people about how the canopy project this year in Peru came about from this idea that I had had for years” (Ed: 977-987)*

Amy started her interview with the statement:

*“OK, well, um, I will maybe tell you a bit of a story then...”*

The power of having an adventurous story to tell is evident, with protagonists who are able to direct their story, have a strong sense of agency and who are responsible for decision making. Participants aligned their identity with niche sub-groups or “subcultures” (Ritzer, 2015:118) and then further defined themselves within the group, to a particular type of runner, climber or kayaker; for example Craig and Hannah were off-road runners (Craig:8; Hannah:7). Identity formation through outdoor adventure was highlighted as meaningful by Rickly-Boyd (2012) and Lynch and Dibben (2016) as cited in the systematic review (study 2, reported in chapter 4) and explored as the opportunity for a “reinvented self” by Jakubec, Carruthers Den Hoed and Ray (2014:213).

Identity formation in relation to occupation was explored by Christiansen (1999) in an article recently listed as one of the most highly cited occupational therapy papers (Brown *et al.*, 2017), demonstrating its prevalence as a theme within occupational therapy and occupational science. Identity has since been established as a core area of interest within occupational science, although scholars have been criticised as frequently presenting it without consideration of their assumptions (Phelan and Kinsella, 2011). Whilst not entirely novel (the concepts built on the work of anthropologists and sociologists) and despite its age now, Christiansen’s (1999:547) theoretical paper serves as a seminal introduction within occupational science, to “occupation as identity”, considering “competence, coherence and the creation of meaning”. These concepts resonate with the findings from the current study in that participants identified

with being adventurers and were able to articulate meaning from their engagement in outdoor adventure in terms of self-perception and competence. Kielhofner (2008b:107) has been credited with coining the term “occupational identity” (Phelan and Kinsella, 2011:85). The fifth edition of Kielhofner’s Model of Human Occupation (Taylor and Kielhofner, 2017) defines occupational identity as “a composite sense of who one is and wishes to become as an occupational being” (De las Heras de Pablo, Fan and Kielhofner, 2017:117) as established through integration of volition, habituation and participation experiences. The participants’ desire to further differentiate the type of adventurer they were aligns with the ideas of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1984) who refers to the quest for distinction and the need to distinguish self from others (Ritzer, 2015:282). The requirement for occupation to be congruent with beliefs and self-perception; and the need to establish a niche identity within a subculture, could be considered important components within the process of engaging in outdoor adventure.

#### 6.3.3.3.2 Decision making and risk management

Participants discussed the importance of having autonomy for making decisions and the consequences of the decisions. Craig and Amy stated that they wouldn’t use a guide:

*“Nanda Devi. For an arbitrary peak, if I had to choose one, I’d like to climb that, and, but only with the right people and at the right time and on the right terms, I wouldn’t want to be flown to the top of it, that wouldn’t mean anything, I wouldn’t want to go up it with an organised group, that wouldn’t mean anything” (Craig: 674-678)*

*“I like to do things without a guide, I hate to get a guide because I feel like its cheating, like, I don’t know, well it’s kind of cheating, but also it doesn’t*

*feel so exciting because someone is showing you the way...whereas if you can go and experience a route, it kind of feels untouched in a way” (Amy: 213-219)*

This is in contrast to Fran, who described a couple of occasions when she had done activities with a guide, (a difference being that she was also taking her family) in relation to sea-kayaking in Turkey she stated:

*“We had someone with us who knew what he was doing... I wouldn’t have taken them out on my own because I just know that weather can change so quickly” (Fran: 854-858)*

Ben described a situation where he turned back from a mountain in the Himalaya during a monsoon and Craig describes a difficult sea-cliff climb and how he valued it as a learning experience:

*“I think from a mountaineering point of view, if you make that decision to turn around, then I think that is kind of a stronger decision to make than to carry on going. Because we had had the opportunity to go up the day before... but I just didn’t feel, I didn’t feel right, and that is the right decision to make, so I am really happy with making those decisions, yeah, because I am not stuck in a glacier somewhere” (Ben: 173-181)*

*“I still think the choice we made to go on it was perfectly appropriate with the information we had... But it only wasn’t fun at the time and actually the only, the only thing in my mind that would be not cool about it would be not learning from it... if I learn from it and make sure I change something as a result of it, then that’s OK, you know I don’t, I firmly believe that a bad experience is just something to learn from, not necessarily something to avoid having” (Craig: 383-395)*

Dave and Craig described how they valued making real decisions with consequences:

*“With adventure racing it’s not just about being fit, it’s about also making critical decisions when you are very stressed... There is a reality, you know that actually when I make a decision mountain biking it is the difference between getting badly injured and not being badly injured, um, you know, you do, if you are making a decision kayaking it is the same*

*thing, and if you make a decision whether or not to run a waterfall that can be the difference between being alive and being dead... And they are very real decisions and actually I think that the world we live in most people never make a decision that actually has any real consequences” (Dave: 667-683)*

*“often I’ll get that moment when you climb, especially climbing outdoors, when you climb in the mountains, climbing in serious scenarios where you are very aware that whatever is happening you need to do this right at this point. There will be consequences if you don’t get it right, maybe those consequences will be a fall, a little bit of a scare, maybe they will be something significantly more catastrophic, all the way up to, if I fall off now, we are both going to die” (Craig: 303-312)*

Craig returned to this concept several times and later stated:

*“Something I often find myself talking about with people is the, is the potential risk, the aspect of deep play when you lose more than you ever stand to gain. It does play on people’s minds, it is, for those who don’t climb it can seem a ridiculous thing to do and for those who do climb it can seem a ridiculous thing to do sometimes as well... I think without the freedom to do that, that’s, there are certain people, myself among them, who need the freedom to do that... there is a level of need for me to know that, that, I am in control of myself and of my life... my way of doing that, is risking my life and putting myself in control of that, which doesn’t mean to say I actively go out and choose to do dangerous things, but I do put myself in positions where, if I don’t get it right it’s my fault when it goes wrong. And I value that, very highly.” (Craig: 699-734)*

Dave also felt this was part of the experience:

*“you need to have miss-adventures to have adventures, you know I think the best adventures usually end up with something going slightly wrong and having to dig your way out of it” (Dave: 518-521)*

Whereas, Ben and Amy described how, with experience of seeing people getting seriously injured they now took less risk:

*“I’m a better climber now, but I don’t climb any harder because I am more fearful, because I understand the risks because I am more knowledgeable*

*as well, yeah, I can obviously with the rescue team as well, I see, I see what happens on the other side of that as well, so that, so that's kind of changed how hard I push myself I guess, I've kind of dropped that down a level I think, in all honesty... (I've seen) everything, unfortunately, um, yes, so like from broken ankles to your, to your deaths" (Ben: 424-432)*

*"Because you have so much pressure to hit these huge jumps, which are really scary... and you see so many people hurting themselves!" (Amy: 71)*

Participants described how managing risk enables the development of resilience which can be transferred to other life scenarios:

*"Because it's actually OK to say oh I'm a bit scared and nervous here, because you are in a scary place and that's kind of cool, and it's suddenly a lot easier to say, well actually I'm really scared about this promotion or you know whatever it is that, there is a fair bit of therapeutic stuff." (Craig: 65-69) "...it's certainly taught me resilience, it's given me a framework to structure all of my, it gives me a model to work, it gives me a view of the world that I can use to adapt to think about, to resolve any bits and bobs... And it's a brilliant model, it fits all. I have very, very rarely found, I can't think of a time for a climber, that there isn't a climbing metaphor you can use" (Craig: 429-448)*

*"So you learn to manage risk in a physical environment, but that also allows you to understand how to manage risks emotionally, but it also allows you to manage risk within my role in my community because obviously you risk your standing and your esteem by investing in your community, so when you invest in that community you risk your emotional wellbeing when you enter into a relationship, you risk your mental wellbeing when you work with people, you know when you stand up in a meeting to make that client, you are nervous about, you're risking your, you know what people are going to think of you" (Dave: 738-747)*

Development of resilience and self-sufficiency is also evident in discussions of hardship.

#### 6.3.3.3.3. Developing resilience through managing hardship

All participants described hardship. However this appeared to give meaning in terms of heightened sense of achievement, resilience and belief that they were able to experience their limitations:

*“I have also got used to the fact that things hurt, because if you were doing something in the outdoors, it tends to be quite tough, you get used to hardship... So actually that allows you to do stuff, it also makes you aware of your expectations of yourself are much higher... by doing things in the outdoors, by me going for a walk and going walking for as long as I am expecting to walk, I kind of think, oh actually I can do that, and that allows you to do other things... it allows you to increase your expectations... that actually we've all got huge capabilities in us... the outdoors allows you to develop that mental toughness” (Dave: 701-729)*

*“I went back to Duke of Edinburgh... So again there was quite a lot of hardship I suppose, I mean we had horrendous weather, we were in the Lake District, the only good thing was, we couldn't climb any mountains so it was flatter, I had blisters the size of, I don't know, huge blisters, but you just learn to get on with it really” (Fran: 258-265)*

*“I deferred on the winter mountain leader award and so I need to go back and do a reassessment on that, and that, I would say was probably like my hardest and lowest point in the mountains, being deferred on that, but it's the most meaningful, because I worked at something, doing my best and I got feedback on it, so that to me was quite meaningful.” (Ben: 210-216)*

There is also a sense of meaning from self-sufficiency and simplicity in terms of managing to cope with very little:

*“but they (the boys) got used to going to the loo in the woods and things like that, that they had never done before, yeah and we camped on a wasps nest by mistake once and things like that so you can, you can camp on shore every night but one night we got stuck on a sand bank and we couldn't get the raft off and they are really heavy so we had to sleep on the raft which was like giant corrugated steel and I don't think my husband slept a wink, I slept a bit in between, and the boys they say it was the best night of the whole trip, is sleeping on the raft... they have very fond memories of it, although you know, it was quite hard at times, we had to*

*take all our own food and things like that onto the raft and we had to deal with the weather” (Fran: 622-645)*

*“I guess it’s a bit similar to like a military tour when you are out there and you are not sleeping, you are hallucinating, you are almost taken back to your animal survival state, which very few people get to experience really... I love it, yeah and it’s probably influenced my, you know I only really need to, it’s nice to have somewhere to sleep, it’s nice to have some food, but other than that, it’s nice to have the odd, it’s nice to have stuff, but it’s not essential, it is only stuff, but the important things are people and life quality” (Hannah: 290-303)*

Craig also described the experience of taking school children to Nepal where they experienced seeing others that cope with very little:

*“I think it was quite an emotional epic for some of the participants who’d never been there (the Himalaya) although the biggest one, as I am sure anyone whose done any travel to the third world, the biggest epic was coming back to the first world again, you know the culture, the reverse culture shock of coming home after you’ve spent three weeks, four weeks away, is massive for people who’ve grown up in a private school” (Craig: 292-298)*

The concept of valuing feeling empowered, by making decisions with significant consequences and taking responsibility for one’s own life (Ben:181; Dave:668; Craig:312, 734), was consistent with Brymer and Schweitzer’s (2013) research. Some participants sought to reduce risk with the support of a guide (Fran: 854), as with Pomfret’s (2012) study; and some felt this would de-value the experience (Craig: 678; Amy: 213) as with Kane and Tucker’s (2007) study. Demonstrating competence and autonomy are considered key motivational determinants within some psychology theory (Deci and Ryan, 2000; Ng *et al.*, 2012). However, it has been suggested that risk taking within extreme outdoor adventure could be the result of a psychological defence mechanism to demonstrate omnipotence and deny anxiety, vulnerability and dependence



(Nicholls, 2008). Nicholls (2008:253) criticises occupational scientists for celebrating occupational choices without analysing the “unconscious representation” of need that they may suggest. However, Willig (2008:696) challenged the assumption that risky behaviour can be understood as a manifestation of psychopathology, and goes on to suggest that the meaning behind the behaviour should be explored, citing “mastery and skill” and managing challenge and suffering as meaningful aspects of extreme sports that off-set the risks involved. Jennings and Cronin-Davis (2016) and Twinley and Addidle (2012) also support the notion of exploring the meaning of risk-taking from an occupational science perspective.

Participants felt that navigating risks and managing hardship enhanced a sense of achievement and led to resilience that could be transferred to other areas of life (Dave:729, 747; Fran:265; Ben:216; Craig:448). The concept of meaning from overcoming hardship is consistent with research by Burke, Durand-Bush and Doell (2010) and Miles and Wattoo (2015). The concept of resilience through outdoor adventure was explored by Ewert and Yoshino (2011:35) who concluded that “perseverance, self-awareness, social support, confidence, responsibility to others, and achievement” were important aspects of developing resilience that were reported by participants following expedition. The concept of transference of learning from outdoor adventure experiences to other areas of life has been central to discussions within outdoor education and adventure therapy (Gass, 2012). Participants appear to value hardship, in terms of its contrast to everyday luxuries which are then appreciated afresh; and in terms of its potential to heighten the sense of achievement accompanying the

participation in outdoor adventure. Hardship enables the quest (Ewert and Sibthorp, 2014) to be perceived as more difficult.

#### 6.3.3.3.4 Achievement, mastery and competence

The importance of achievement and having targets was illustrated by most participants:

*“for me the meaningful stuff is like, I guess, achieving something new... but I wouldn't say that is always at my absolute limit, like my physical limit, but I get a sense of achieving something which is like a good long journey” (Ben: 201-206)*

*“I think I do push myself quite hard, but I have gone from doing maybe little tiny fells and never having run up many of the fells, to then this year, doing like, the (...) horseshoe which is 24 miles of fells” (Amy: 271-280); “I think there's always got to be a challenge” (Amy: 387)*

*“I don't know that it is competition against anybody else, it's about, one, having a target, I need a, I need a target, so I am mountain biking a lot because I've got this assessment coming up, um, when I was training I was training for races, so I would use the outdoors a lot for that, so having a target to train for, um, it's a bit like, I mean there's some people that need deadlines, so I think I am probably one of those” (Dave: 904-910)*

Interestingly, there appeared to be a contradiction within Ben's story when he described both 'ticking off' and not 'ticking off' experiences:

*“We had a brilliant experience and that is why you go and do these things, it's for the experience. I'm not, I'm not really one of these people who ticks it all off, like, I don't go up something and then right, tick it, right, onto the next thing” (Ben: 169-173)*

*“I'll want to do a certain thing, and then I will get there and I then I won't do that activity for a while. So last year, I was doing a lot of bouldering and I really wanted to get a certain grade of bouldering and I got there and then, I was like, OK brilliant, and I didn't really boulder again then. I kind of like*

*moved on... I'll have a goal and I'll work towards it and I get that goal and yeah... I kind of like, I get there, tick it off, put it in, OK, and I will still go out bouldering and enjoy it, but I won't be training to get there" (Ben: 458-462)*

Perhaps, whilst he used the same phrase, he is referring to different things here, that it is acceptable to him to 'tick off' the accomplishment of a skill, but not to 'tick off' a mountain. This can be interpreted in terms of valuing the achievement and experience a journey and having a focus for training; but not being motivated by the concept of 'conquering' or 'collecting' the mountain and the lack of respect that this suggests (Ewert and Sibthorp, 2014). This sentiment is also apparent in Craig's statement:

*"I wouldn't say there is a particular mountain or peak I value beyond others, I value the bit between the bottom and the top, and who I do it with, more than what the top is... so no the experience of it is far more valuable to me than the name, or the peak or the end." (Craig: 678-683)*

Hannah also referred to journeys:

*"my love for the journey probably came from adventure racing actually, where you start there, and the aim is to finish there, and in between you do lots of activities and you go on a big journey, a non-stop journey almost" (Hannah: 189-192)*

Perhaps this alludes to a prevalent approach, style or attitude within outdoor adventure with regards to valuing journeys and experience as achievement. In addition, some participants particularly valued being both efficient and able to learn from others:

*"if I'm out with certain individuals I might see something that they do and then think that is really good, that is really smooth, that is really fluid, and then like I'll try it and have my aspect of that, so then, so I was out in Wales recently climbing with a friend, and he was just, he just organised his climbing gear really, really well" (Ben: 476-480)*

*“I’m comfortable enough to ask for help, you know for me that wouldn’t be a barrier, if I didn’t know how to do something I am actually old enough and long enough in the tooth to know that actually I need to ask somebody for help for this, so I am comfortable enough and that has taken me a long time to get to that point... perhaps its ego, you know that there is an ego thing that actually I know I can’t, I’m meant to be an instructor therefore I can’t be seen to be failing, maybe that’s as a parent you do that as well, you don’t want your children to see you fail... that you are fallible, but that is an essential life skill” (Dave:806-820)*

Again, this suggests meaning associated with valuing and learning from experiences and from others, with an element of humility, over proving themselves. Achievement in relation to self-perception as competent, is a frequently cited source of meaning, within occupational science (Holahan, 2014), occupational therapy (De las Heras de Pablo *et al.*, 2017) and outdoor adventure literature (Hickman *et al.*, 2016). However, the discussion of accomplishment of the journey (process focused), as opposed to conquering a mountain (end product focused), is a discourse within outdoor adventure with particular pertinence (Ewert and Sibthorp, 2014) because of its literal as well as metaphorical interpretation (Schmid, 2010).

Achievement is recognised by some as developing skill, mastery, competence, self-awareness, resilience and humility rather than defeating nature and opponents. This is consistent with the discomfort suggested with some elements of competition (in section 6.3.3.2.2 Seeking or avoiding competition).

#### 6.3.3.4 A4. Meaning in relation to health and wellbeing

Meaning in relation to health and wellbeing was considered in terms of mental health and psychological wellbeing; physical health and fitness and managing injuries.

##### 6.3.3.4.1 Mental health and psychological wellbeing

All participants spoke at length about the positive impact that engagement in outdoor adventure had on mental health and wellbeing, for themselves and others:

*“So I mean my, the reason why I go outside is basically to stay fit and get outside, fresh air, because it does so much for my psychological wellbeing, um, and my own mental health, it is really key to it” (Hannah: 36-39)*

*“the mental health aspects of the outdoors I think are crucial, whether you are using it as a context for therapy, or it’s a, just an experience that allows people to be calm and to sit and be quiet or whatever, you know and reflect, or do something really physical and challenging that pushes them” (Ed: 942-946)*

*“I think everything in life needs to be as joyful as you can make it and you need to look for those little moments and that is what I get from being outside and from being especially in wilder places I do like, I love the woods, that is my favourite place to be” (Fran: 370-375); “I think because I have seen the healing, it sounds really sort of alternative doesn’t it? But the healing qualities for different people of being outside, and the joy and you see so many people who don’t have joy around you” (Fran: 1174-1178)*

Some participants described times when they had not spent enough time outside and the negative impact this had on their mental health:

*“I mean I have had times out and I think it affects my mood generally. If I don’t get out I really notice it” (Amy: 241-242)*

*“Yeah I think it massively improves my health and wellbeing, yeah, if I’m stressed or something like that, if I feel bogged down, I know that, I’ll actually know that I need to go out... it does, um, keep you sane, I will notice in the winter months if I am not out as much when its darker, I’ll you know, feel that, mentally” (Ben: 253-271)*

Some described seeking the outdoors as a way of managing life circumstances:

*“When I was struggling, battling with the divorce, one of the things I used, was I used running a lot... I was so angry I would run until it dissipated and it cost me a couple of times because I ran quite a long way one day, and then I had to run back (laughs). So that was quite, that was quite a big day actually, but it was that process, for me it was, in the outdoors I use it, I use it to look after my own mental wellbeing” (Dave: 402-411)*

*“this friend who had very serious depression, and she was suicidal, she had a family she was bringing up so I went round and I said come on lets go out and we started walking regularly, and in hind-sight she said you know that was such a huge influence on getting through... I am very aware of the difference it can make for some people, for some I’m sure it’s not for everyone, um, but I think personally it makes a huge difference to how people feel just being outside and active if your whole body’s moving” (Fran:479-493)*

*“I had this like depression, a few mental health things going on, so I always wanted to find an outlet that I could participate in, have a real sense of belonging and being in the outdoors gives me that” (Ben: 282-284)*

*“If I am worried about something or maybe even a bit depressed, going out and having a walk, or juggling with a problem, or if I’m stuck with a piece of intellectual work I go out for a walk, or I actually share an orchard with one of the neighbours and I can go up there and sit and listen to the birds” (Gill: 386-391)*

For some a sense of restoration was discussed specifically in relation to managing the demands of work:

*“I had a very, very stressful job at that time and I realised that the one time I wasn’t thinking about how to balance the budget and how to save the*

*million a year I had to save in my job, was when I was on the back of a horse for an hour a week, and partly that was fear, and also you learn that on a horse you have to be really in the moment” (Gill: 253-259)*

*“In a way, it’s quite a freedom to focus on something. Not that I don’t enjoy work, but I think that because it’s so busy you just need that bit of, sort of, stress release valve so to speak... so I think it helps with stress relief. I think mental health wise it’s very good, a. for the social side; b. for the endorphins and just how satisfied you feel following exercise; and just getting out into the fells ” (Amy: 280-287)*

There was also evidence of when outdoor adventure had an adverse effect on psychological wellbeing:

*“I mean if you want to experience the line between, you know, in terms of mental health being OK and not, just keep moving for 50 odd hours and have a half an hour sleep and then you see things. And they are there, they are there, but they are not there, but your brain is telling you that that is what you think you are seeing... sleep monsters I call them, that’s what adventure racers call them” (Hannah: 376-384); “I once saw a giant chunky knit hippo in a field!” (Hannah: 361-362)*

*“normally you will get an island of safety where there is good rock and good gear and then you will climb through a scary bit and then you will be able to relax again, I don’t mean switch off, but you won’t be in that super, super heightened alertness, um, definitely a case of sort of over, from like a sport psychology point of view, over arousal, complete overload, too much, too much going on, um, and very, very much at the edge of panic and mis-adventure” (Craig: 351-357)*

However, both stories were told in the context of being experiences to learn from, as with hardship discussed above (see section: 6.3.3.3.3).

All participants described the positive impact of their engagement in outdoor adventure on their psychological wellbeing (Amy: 241; Ben: 253; Ed: 942; Hannah: 39). The importance of outdoor adventure in terms of its capacity to offer restoration was acknowledged widely within the literature (Hinds, 2011).

The finding that this then enabled participants to manage the demands of their working lives (Gill: 254) was highlighted by Svarstad (2010) and Olafsdottir (2013). Fran's description of "healing qualities" of being outside (Fran: 1176) are consistent with Lusby and Anderson's (2010:97) description a sense of healing from connection to the outdoors. In addition to mental health, all participants referred to their physical health.

#### 6.3.3.4.2 Physical health and fitness

Participants discussed their engagement in outdoor adventure in relation to meaning from promoting their physical health:

*"actually maintaining you know, kind of a healthy life style and my own fitness is really important to me, that is also part of who I am, so if I don't do that, it you know, it all goes a little bit pear shaped, not just psychologically, but physically, so that is a really important part"* (Hannah: 18-22)

*"It's a considerable outlet that I use to keep fit, it doesn't work for me to try and go to the gym"* (Dave: 652); *"you feel better because you get fitter and then actually you are able to do more of the other things you want to do because you are physically fitter, like it's a virtuous spiral or loop"* (Dave: 689-692)

Participants also discussed their hopes for their children to do the same:

*"I really worry that my children won't take this on, this is my big worry as a parent"* (Fran: 699) *"...because we are fighting against the x-box, that is the other side of his life and it just drives me mad, you know this sedentary lifestyle which is taking over"* (Fran: 765-767)

Engagement in one outdoor adventure activity was also a prompt for other supporting activities and health-related behaviour:



*“I am quite strict on my diet. I was experimenting with being vegan from September last year... and I feel actually fitter and stronger having eaten less saturated fat, um, and leaner for running, I think it’s quite a good diet for running” (Amy: 245-257)*

*“I’m fairly rigid in a climbing training pattern I guess, I’m in here twice a week training and I climb at another two walls... I do a fair amount of additional physical activity” (Craig: 488-493)*

*“also the allied activities to that, so to keep fit for expedition I do, I run and I cycle and I do other things, so, so yeah and to keep fit to do your job, you need to do things in the outdoors like go out on your own and climb mountains, you know you’ve got to be hill fit as much as you’ve got to be physically fit” (Ed: 580-584)*

Participants’ descriptions of how their engagement in outdoor adventure had a positive impact on their fitness (Hannah: 18; Dave: 689) was consistent with Taylor’s (2010) research. The concept that outdoor adventure prompted additional allied healthy behaviour (Amy: 257; Craig: 488; Ed: 580) is consistent with Lynch and Dibben’s (2016) findings. Dave’s description of a “*virtuous spiral*” (Dave: 692) resonates with a quote from Hickman *et al.*, (2016:13) “*It’s a positive circle... I get out so I’m fit; I’m fit so I get out*” (See section 4.4.5.). Managing injuries as an accepted and integral part of engagement in outdoor adventure (Amy: 291; Ben: 277; Craig: 423; Hannah: 315) aligned with participants’ justification for navigating risk and managing hardship (explored in section 6.3.3.3.3). Alongside a positive physical impact, there were also stories of injury.

#### 6.3.3.4.3 Managing injuries

Participants described how their engagement in outdoor adventure had led to physical injuries; however these were accepted as part of the activity:

*“I think I probably bash myself about a bit, like mountain biking wise I’ve had some fat crashes (laughs) and you just don’t know how that will affect you in the long term, but it’s worth it” (Amy: 291-295)*

*“Like this summer has been absolutely mad, I’ve been the busiest that I’ve been, so I feel it in my knees, I feel it in my hips, you know, I feel it in my back. There’s days when I feel like, oh I really can’t be doing this, carrying a heavy rucksack, you know, and spending time at night on the yoga mat to try and sort everything out. But on the flip side of that, I don’t feel it in the head, so I’m quite happy with that.” (Ben: 275-281)*

*“on my physical health, yes definitely, I’m broken, definitely going to need knee replacements from running up and down mountains, way before, I have a lifetime of wear on my knees, I have sore fingers, dodgy elbows, a whole range of physical injuries but none that I would consider to have a negative impact on my health and wellbeing, um, in terms of from what I would see as far more important, my mental health and wellbeing” (Craig: 423-429)*

*“In terms of injuries, well I think the gains completely outweigh any kind of injury you can get and if you, well I am covered in bruises, now as I sit here, this is an old injury here, but you know I’ve got tendonitis in my arm from kayaking (laughs), I have done something to my wrist where I caught it on the tractor whilst playing and then I did something over there where I fell over a stick, constantly there are little niggles or things where I have fallen over, but I don’t see that as a problem as well. I think there are sort of, kind of normal people who find it really disturbing if they fall over, as if it is something quite unusual, and actually you could be an outdoor person, and all the people I know fall over all the time, it’s no big deal, it might hurt a bit more as you get a bit older, but it’s just part of being outside.” (Hannah: 315-327)*

Meaning derived from the positive impact on health and wellbeing was seen to counteract any negative impact from injury, as with Haines, Smith and Baxter’s (2010) study on skateboarding. In addition there appeared to be a sense of

belonging to the outdoor community within which this was acceptable and part of the expectation, perhaps along with hardship (see section: 6.3.3.3.3).

#### **6.3.4 B. The process of engaging in outdoor adventure:**

In addition to anticipating and experiencing meaningful engagement as described, the following factors were considered to influence the process of engagement.

##### **6.3.4.1 Factors that inspired initial engagement in outdoor adventure**

###### **6.3.4.1.1 Childhood influences**

Family attitudes in relation to taking part in outdoor activities contributed to childhood and consequently adulthood engagement:

*“growing up as a kid I was always, you know, out on the fells with my mum, fell walking and going camping and things like that” (Amy: 8-10)*

*“A lot of it was from my mum’s folks who are from the coast, so basically entertainment was, if it’s raining go out for a walk, if it’s sunny go out for a longer walk. I lived outside, I didn’t do much indoors.” (Craig: 220-223)*

*“Well we weren’t a really active family, my dad loves sailing and I had really bad experiences of sailing because he used to like to be in charge and everyone else got shouted at, but it was a case of, everyone in the family, that is what happened at the weekend we all had to go sailing... I think that is probably though where my love of being on the water and being away, we used to go to some quite deserted places... we could moor up and there’d be birds everywhere and I loved all of that” (Fran: 151-159); “I realise that now as a parent how lucky we were to have an outdoors life and I had the garden and my mum came and made me a patch that I could just, I wasn’t really a gardener but I liked rooting around and seeing what I could, you know, looking at the little creatures that were there.” (Fran: 173-177)*

*“But then there was a part of my young childhood when we used to live on a farm. So we lived on a farm and then we moved away um, to like a village so we didn’t live on that farm anymore, but then I’ve gone like back to the outdoors, trying to find that meaning again.” (Ben: 613-617)*

Some participants discussed the significance of clubs that they were a part of whilst growing up:

*“There was a young ornithologist club, like a bird ringing thing, and it was hands on, and they always encouraged us to do stuff, I remember keeping, I was an avid keeper of animals, albeit things I found in the garden, and I remember once finding some caterpillars that then died of some growth. And I wrote to the natural history museum, at the age of like 8, something like that, and got a massive letter back... an encouraging letter from somebody in the natural history museum explaining what it was that had happened to these things I was keeping in a jam jar... so there was all this around nature and then sort of wanting to be a vet or an adventurer or a safari guide or something... and I got into fishing” (Ed: 100-115); “cadets was my access to, was definitely my access to that more formative outdoor learning” (Ed: 155-157)*

*“I was two and a half miles from the village and maybe two miles from the beach, so, and then if you are on the beach you are in the sea surfing and I was in the surf life-saving club... so one night a week that was drill on the beach and then in winter we would do volleyball in the hall” (Gill: 146-153)*

*“It’s always been the adventure of going outdoors. Climbing indoors was just preparation for that. That was probably drilled into me actually by, not intentionally, but by the attitudes and beliefs of the teacher at the school and the guys at the club” (Craig: 203-206)*

Gill and Dave described their enjoyment of physical education at school. They also both described subjects that prompted them to explore the world around them. By contrast Fran and Craig did not enjoy physical education and came to outdoor adventure activities as an alternative. Dave’s introduction to outdoor adventure came when he built his own kayak at school.

*“Being awful at rugby at school, at about 11... getting horrible migraines when I took my glasses off and not being able to see anyway... and I was lucky enough that there was the opportunity to go and do some climbing in games lessons with a couple of other kids who were, you know, not rugby or not hockey players” (Craig: 75-84)*

*“we camped when I was a kid and stuff like that, but I never did any outdoor, we didn’t do outdoor activities, well maybe hillwalking perhaps, but not anything like that, and then I discovered, well I built my own kayak at school and I was about, well I must have been about 12, ...and I kayaked the length of (a) lake and I mean I jumped in my kayak, and I did the whole lake, there and back in a day, on my own, completely oblivious to any danger, right in the middle, miles away from shore...and once I’d got this toy, because that was the other thing was that it was almost a passport to being able to escape” (Dave:87-105)*

Factors that inspired initial engagement in outdoor adventure included:

childhood influences; forming aspirational identity; formative experiences in adulthood and facilitation from others. All participants described the influence of childhood experiences in terms of family (Amy: 8), school (Craig: 206), clubs (Ed: 100), friends (Gill: 146), and seeking independence (Dave: 90). The positive influence of childhood participation in physical activity on adulthood participation is well recorded. Whilst now a little dated, in a sizable, longitudinal study (2309 subjects over 21 years), Telama *et al.* (2005) concluded that high-levels of physical activity between 9-18 years significantly influenced adult physical activity. Likewise, in a systematic review tracking physical activity, Jones *et al.* (2013) concluded that childhood is a critical time to promote lifestyle behaviours. A further systematic review of 23 studies on peer-influence for adolescents concluded that friendships have an important role to play in physical activity behaviour (Fitzgerald, Fitzgerald and Aherne, 2012). Network-based strategies may enhance physical activity in young people (Haye *et al.*, 2011). Peer-mentoring is a model with a growing evidence base of effectiveness to increase physical activity across the life-span, as evidenced in

Dorgo, *et al.*'s (2013) study with older adults. All participants referred to aspirations, formed for the most part in childhood.

#### 6.3.4.1.2 Forming aspirational identity

Most participants described how they had been influenced by books, films and programmes during childhood:

*"I've always found in how I read, how I entertain myself, um, travel writing, adventurous fiction, um, more recently, mountaineering non-fiction, travel non-fiction... I've never found an indoor narrative particularly interesting either, you know, even books as a child, they were definitely pirates and adventurers... Huckleberry Finn, I would say is a classic sort of, you know outdoor life, um, Lord of the Rings, and the adventurous journey"* (Craig: 223-237)

*"(Tallman) and Shipton reckoned that they could plan a Himalayan expedition for six months on the back of an envelope with two pairs of socks and if you read their books, I mean their books are just brilliant... and that is the inspirational bit of it for me, being inspired by those, but realising that there is not a big jump between what they do and adventures that you can have, as a kid I used to just step out of the back door and disappear into the fields at the back of the house, for like days on end, that, I was exploring because they made expeditions about, their Himalayan expeditions, the two of them with two Sherpas and living off the land doing that, that allowed me to go, oh actually I could do that, you don't need a massive military operation... those are the sorts of things that made me be outside but yeah, just, I just like being outside"* (Dave: 466-485)

*"I was 5 or 6 years old, I seem to remember watching David Attenborough programmes, at my Nan's house... That sort of adventurous idea of life style seemed to appeal in some way"* (Ed: 88-92) *"because of the fact that expeditions were always something I wanted to get into, right from watching those David Attenborough things, I pushed myself into that route of trying to get into the expedition world."* (Ed: 242-245)

*"Well I read a lot of nature books, um well for a while, well you have bizarre ideas when you are a teenager, but because I was into botany and zoology and fascinated by religion and we weren't a religious family at all, I had this idea of being probably married to someone like David Livingstone,*

*but I would be the famous botanist, married to him so that we would be going through the jungle (laughs)” (Gill: 534-540)*

Fran described how she revisited a childhood favourite book whilst on a rafting trip by reading it to her own children.

*“it was lovely because I read a childhood favourite book, called the “Minnow on the Saye” about a boy who finds a canoe as we went along (on the raft) and I read them like a few chapters every day and my husband would be like just making sure we didn’t bang into anything, because sometimes you had to steer a bit... which I’d read as a child and I think actually that book had a big influence on me” (Fran: 1023-1031)*

Reading also inspired people to form aspirational identity in adulthood:

*“I’m hugely in awe of Ellen MacArthur’s round the world effort, I mean, yeah, and there’s plenty of others as well, um but that is one in particular that I followed, um, I don’t really have heroes and heroines, but I can admire people for what they do” (Hannah: 423-427)*

*“I do definitely read a lot of outdoor books, um ranging from like, technical stuff telling you what to do, like walking and climbing guides...or gear and stuff, or actual peoples stories or, I do quite like to read about people’s stories, that can be quite inspirational, and often I like to read somebody’s book and then go and visit their area and really like see... I read a book about someone who was on helicopter rescue on Stornoway and then it’s nice to go and have a look at the Hebrides and then like think oh yeah that’s where they did whatever” (Amy: 327-340)*

Adventure stories appeared to be an important part of outdoor adventure culture.

Participants described how they had been influenced by stories and images in books, pictures and films, both in childhood (Gill: 534; Ed: 88; Dave: 458) and as adults (Hannah: 423; Amy: 327). Occupational scientists, Reed, Hocking and Smythe (2010:140, 2011:307) have suggested that people experience a “call” to occupation and envisage possibilities. Here participants have been inspired by adventure narratives, further exploration of what informs this call, could be useful to occupational therapists and scientists. In addition to

formative childhood experiences, participants described formative adulthood experiences, including clubs, mentors, university and work, plus all participants had some experience in facilitating others.

#### 6.3.4.1.3 Formative experiences in adulthood

In addition to childhood influences, all participants described formative events in adulthood that had attracted or expanded their interest:

*“I mean I was looking for something, I know that now, I was looking for something meaningful. I used to work a lot in music, and I thought that that was meaningful for me, but it wasn’t. It wasn’t quite there, it wasn’t quite ticking all the boxes and like I said, I searched around for something meaningful and it’s only when I discovered I liked being in the outdoors, that I realised, you know.” (Ben: 608-613)*

*“When I was about twenty, I got into down-hill mountain biking and I was racing all over the world” (Amy: 4-7)*

For some people adulthood engagement in outdoor adventure involved joining clubs:

*“they (the club) offered people tasters and I hadn’t been here that long and... it was difficult to meet people to do stuff, so I did a taster day and I think we did orienteering and kayaking and maybe a little bit of scrambling... but as a result of that I did join, as did two of the other ladies” (Gill: 95-99)*

Work and study related courses were also influential:

*“we did do a few trips at Uni, a few climbing trips, and I had a friend who I used to explore the moor with and do some bits and bobs with, um, but it was probably through the university course itself that introduced me to, or allowed me the opportunity to get involved in activities and I think the whole appreciation of the outdoors came after that whole experience” (Hannah: 130-135)*



*“For ages I had been wanting to do forest school training... that was a brilliant experience, absolutely great... I think it was two weeks... and part of that, at the end, was that you went out and make your own den to sleep in overnight and you could build a fire” (Fran: 543-561)*

*“I got invited by a friend, a horsey friend, I hadn’t ridden by this stage and I was invited to be part of, well I had a letter, it came through my bosses... so he said ‘you like horses, I’ve had this request for somebody from the statutory sector to join a study trip to Denmark looking into the therapeutic benefits of horses’ so that was actually a very powerful 10 days” (Gill: 180-192) “...it was a kind of an awakening for me” (Gill: 232-233)*

In addition to their own formative experiences, all participants explored how they have, or would, support others to engage in outdoor adventure (all of the participants in the study had some facilitation experience).

#### 6.3.4.1.4 Facilitating others

Participants described how they might inspire and support others to engage in outdoor adventure:

*“I think I would just tell them about the really sort of, fulfilling sense of satisfaction that I feel from it and show them how beautiful the mountains are, I think I’d really, you know, you kind of want to take them there, so maybe, I mean if you can’t take them there yourself, like show them pictures or, you know, just share experiences and feelings about it and how exciting it was and what you got out of it and how good it is to do it with your friends” (Amy: 429-436)*

*“I’d just show them that there are endless opportunities really and every day is different, um, and just show them, just tell them that there is a lot of joy to be taken from all of those things” (Ben: 507-510)*

*“taking them to these places that are powerful that influences like a great mountain or a great mountain bike course or a lovely day paddling down a river and seeing some wildlife or whatever and that is action rather than inspiring in some ways, you inspire through action” (Ed: 850-854)*

*"I'd like to introduce them to an experience in the outdoors that perhaps isn't what they perceive it's going to be like... I am sure if you asked the average person in the street what was meant by outdoor activities they would all give you, I don't know, say, oh it's about zip-wiring across here or doing these death defying adrenaline fuelled activities rather than, well we could do this, we could walk up here or we could cook something by a lake and do you know, then we could wander back. Um and those simple things, they have always worked for me."* (Hannah: 439-448)

Expanding on this, some participants described the value of short events which they referred to as little or mini adventures:

*"We go out for a starlight walk, in early December when you've got all the showers, meteor showers... and then we meet up at 5.30, we walk and then we have supper in a pub, one of those mini-adventures"* (Gill: 359-365)

*"It's a social jog, you know so I am planning on taking the boat up there, you know and running from there and getting picked up. It's about having a little adventure as well"* (Hannah: 502-509)

Some participants gave examples of how they had supported people in their local community to engage in outdoor adventure:

*"I'm trying to get the local cycling club, because some people were saying they need a young people's section, so I'm going to take them out, a group of young lads that I met mountain biking and I took them out, and I said hey, do you want some training and they were like yeah brilliant that will be great and now I'm trying to sort out the cycling club into something, so that they can start and then I'll stand away from it and let them run it, you know"* (Dave: 73-79)

*"You need to know what motivates people a little bit, or what is going to switch them on. I guess if it was someone in the village who was a little bit isolated or wasn't going out, I'd offer to go with them, or say why don't you come out and walk with us, we've done that in the village"* (Gill: 486-490)  
*"...I would say well lets go for a walk and then we can have a nice coffee, you know, find an incentive"* (Gill: 504-505)

Ben described how different people were attracted to different aspects of the outdoor adventure:

*“So I did a course recently on, like mountain flowers... (then) speaking to like clients on the hill, they absolutely love it... So there is so many different aspects... if you really like high endurance and you need those endorphins kicking in, ...you can go for a bike ride up in the hills, you can go for a fell-run, if you need that peace and quiet then you can go for a walk, if you need that adrenaline, you can go for a, you know, go climbing, there’s so many different aspects of the environment so it can lead to so many different aspects of our personalities, which I guess that is kind of like your link in ... some people really like that kind of, like a, I find they want to get like a snapshot of like how people live in the area... to them it’s like spending a day being in the mountains and living in the mountains, so they will be really interested in the farming, they would be really interested in the geology” (Ben:542-563)*

Participants also described how the people they work with might be surprised in terms of what they actually find meaningful, with regards to working with teenagers, Ben and Hannah said the following:

*“so I have worked a lot with teenagers this summer and you will take them out and you’ll do like a gorge scramble, where it’s like fast flowing water, slid, go, go, go and then they will like say, ‘oh yes that was the best thing of the week’. But then when you actually dive deeper, they actually find that being out with a group walking all day, actually gives them more, I would say more meaning” (Ben: 574-579)*

*“I was teaching a group of disaffected lads, funnily enough you would think they would be into the really scary stuff but they weren’t, their favourite activities were taking a Trangia (stove)... cooking a sausage and some beans on it, and then coming home, and that really was one of their favourite things” (Hannah:449-453)*

Both participants here described how it was the adventurous element that inspired the young people to engage, but the group context that was the most meaningful in the end. There were also some consistent ideas arising from participants in relation to working with children and the importance of

experiencing the outdoors, physical development and learning how to take and manage risk:

*“I have just been talking over lunch about letting your kids go, and the fact that nowadays you can’t let them do that, you just can’t, you know, parents attitudes are that you have to have them on a short leash, and the allotment, and I suppose fishing is very similar to that... so they can make, just go anywhere, there isn’t those additional risks, so therefore they can make mistakes like falling out of trees and tripping over and stuff like that which I think is really important, you do get smashed up and, you know, get grazed and bruised and get in touch with stuff” (Ed: 498-514)*

*“where I teach the children are out, I am lucky I teach the young ones so they can be out all day if they want to be and we do wellie time so that everyone comes out and we have a focus so we might look at trees or we might do some harvesting, we might do gardening we might go and make mud pies, and we do that every week” (Fran: 180-185); “some children are coming to school and... they can’t lift their hands above their heads... it is really common now in foundation stage because they are not swinging, when I was a school you swung on bars in the playground, we’re not allowed those anymore because they are too dangerous if you fall off, oh the rules we have about what they can play at play time, just horrendous so we are actually limiting people’s physical development... And then if your physical development is limited your physical confidence is going to be limited, you know if you have never climbed up and jumped or fallen off something” (Fran: 1145-1457)*

Drawing on their facilitation experience, participants’ suggestions for initiating engagement in outdoor adventure included: inspiring people by sharing stories or pictures (Amy: 436) and showing the breadth of different opportunities (Ben: 507); and facilitating a manageable initial experience (not “death-defying”, Hannah: 439) or a “mini-adventure” (Gill: 365). Similarly, Pálsdóttir *et al.* (2014) suggested a phased approach to introducing nature-based occupations. Participants’ suggested that facilitated experiences could offer connection with nature, for example, wildlife (Ed:850) and information about geology or human geography (Ben:542) akin to Svarstad’s (2010:103) suggestion of meaning from exploring “cultural landscape” in the wilderness in addition to the forests and

mountains. Participants' suggested that facilitated experiences could offer connection with others, by being mindful of friendship groups (Ben: 579), as in Loeffler (2004) and Simpson, Post and Tashman's (2014) research. Making food outside (Hannah: 453) or sharing coffee (Gill: 504) could also offer incentive, ("having coffee" was also highlighted in study 1, chapter 3. 3.4.1.2). In terms of risk and exertion, it was felt that some people are seeking adrenaline (Ben: 556) or high endurance sport (Ben: 545) and some find it useful to learn about their limitations by falling (Ed: 514; Fran: 1457). Meaning from outdoor adventure to explore personal boundaries and limitations was also discussed by Kerr and Hougue MacKenzie (2012) and Simpson, Post and Tashman (2014). Participants described how different groups of people might be inspired to engage in outdoor adventure in different ways and the importance of tailoring activities to address diverse interests that can then be developed to support more sustained engagement in outdoor adventure.

#### **6.3.4.2 Factors that promoted sustained engagement in outdoor adventure**

Following the initial inspiration to engage in outdoor activities, a number of factors influenced participants' ability to have a sustained engagement in outdoor adventure.

##### 6.3.4.2.1 Friends, mentors and developing knowledge and skill

Ben, Dave and Ed talked about having and being a mentor:

*"I was very lucky to meet a man who is a mountain guide who gave me, a. the inspiration and b. the chance to go and work for him for a bit as an assistant instructor, and go into the outdoors that way"* (Ed: 225-228)

*“so I started in the local climbing wall... it was really good for me there, because there was a chap there who was running all the courses, who became like a really good friend and a mentor, so he’d take me out places, and that is kind of, how it started... for me that’s quite important to pass back on as well... so I look after two kids now as well that I mentor and take them out, take them out climbing, take them out in the hills, so that is quite important to me as well, just passing that back on really, yeah” (Ben: 71-83); “I think it’s from having that mentor that kind of like really inspired me... it makes it easy for you, you have someone who can take you to the great places, you are not always having like a big drama, so you are not always, so it’s someone who can take those basic skills that you might not have, but you still can have that adventure... it’s a chap who is still a friend now and its quite nice, because now we’ve gone full circle, now I employ him on a few days as well” (Ben: 100-109)*

*“I taught a guy who now runs a scout centre... I taught him to kayak when he was about 12 and I now work with him in the outdoor centre and he’s been off and sea-kayaked in Sri Lanka and been to Borneo all around places, and I get really inspired by that, that is one of the things that makes me want to go you know, if (he) is doing it, I must have done something right” (Dave: 209-215)*

These relationships demonstrate an empowering passing on of practical knowledge and a way in to the outdoor community. This enabled the participants to overcome an initial barrier in terms of knowledge and skill, Dave describes this further:

*“Barrier, um, knowledge perhaps, there’s a, you know I sit there and I actually teach sailing, it’s such a dynamic environment, there’s so much going on with sailing, but because not only are you dealing with the fact that this dinghy you are sitting in is tippy, you also pull on these ropes and if you don’t pull on the ropes you are going to end up in the water and if you do pull on the ropes it’s all going to go horribly controlled, and you’ve got to steer and there is somebody else in the boat and the wind is not stationary, it moves, its changes, and so there is a knowledge of that, between your knowledge and the perceived knowledge that you need, there is a huge gap that can be a barrier for people, I can see people and I do see people who struggle with that” (Dave: 822-833)*

The factors that promoted sustained engagement in outdoor adventure included having friends and mentors; navigating social norms and barriers; consideration

of location and routine; managing family and work commitments; finances; novelty and accommodating change in meaning over time. Of these, the most frequently discussed was successful development of social networks for support and learning skills (Ed: 225; Ben: 72; Dave: 209). However, navigating social norms was also considered the greatest barrier to participation. Whilst identifying with a distinguished group could offer a sense of belonging and identity the corollary of this, was that participants felt excluded from other groups of which they were not a part that they then perceived as elitist. In addition to a barrier of knowledge and skill, which can be addressed through training courses and mentorships, participants also described social barriers to participation.

#### 6.3.4.2.2 Navigating social norms and barriers

The participants' reflections on their facilitator experiences, in terms of issues relating to participation in outdoor adventure, beyond just their own personal engagement, gave further breadth to their discussion. Participants described their experiences of elitism, both in terms of not feeling able to access groups, and in terms of trying to persuade others that they could:

*“a lot of outdoor sports tend to be viewed as quite elitist...I have certainly seen that with mountain biking at the moment, you know that there is that, people do feel it is a bit elitist, I mean, I find that for me with road biking, the cycling club, I am terrified of, I mean I am quite a good cyclist, I have done a lot of cycling over the years, but I am terrified to go for a road run, I'd get destroyed... I don't want to put myself in a position where I am going to deliberately be embarrassed... I use the word clique very carefully, but there is a group of them that is this clique of cyclists, who you see out cycling all the time, who are really good, they are really fast, certainly peaking on quite a high level, so I can't see the bridge between where I am and they are” (Dave: 244-271)*

*“So I took up triathlon a couple of years ago... and it was a very sad experience, you know everyone is into the kit and into the fast bikes and labels and it was very much that sort of elite sport type thing, I then did a duathlon last year, which I am going to do again... it felt a bit more rough and ready. And all they had done is just changed the venue, the organisation and the kit being used, but it changed the perspective of it completely, so I think that how people perceive themselves in the outdoors has a place” (Ed: 517-530)*

*“I have belonged to gyms at certain times in my life, but I find it soul-less and really difficult to motivate myself to go to the gym, you have to have the right clothes” (Gill: 368-370)*

It seems that knowing and having the right equipment and skill level is important to feel accepted within the group. Perhaps in some cases, the sense of elitism comes from the person believing themselves to be excluded rather than anything generated by the group. Hannah described the challenges of setting up an inclusive running group and the perceptions of new group members:

*“we wanted to encourage anyone who wanted to get outside and try running... in a social, not competitive environment and just get outside and experience the trails in the woods... there have been a number of people that have said to us, you know, a few weeks down the line, when they get to know us, ‘oh I was a bit worried about coming along because I know you are runners’, and we’ve tried to make it, when I wrote for the community paper, we really want to make it as open as possible, but there’s still that... ‘I am not sure I want to come with you because you run really fast’, but actually we run at the pace of the slowest person... we just like going outside” (Hannah: 459-494)*

Sometimes the differences between sub-groups were evident within conflict scenarios between social groups:

*“It’s like you pull up and you see cyclists pull up and all look at each other’s bikes and things like that, it’s that elitism that comes into it, people’s relationship with it. You see cyclists and motorcyclists having fights over who owns which bits of the road, in the past motorcyclists had the right of way in everything, but now with cyclists they are such a big gang, they think it’s their road all the time, and it’s quite interesting, and I’ll*



*get in a row with someone and they are having a row back and I'm like well I'm a cyclist too, and you are acting like an arse, it's not your road, but it's the same with canoeists and kayakers, it's the same with anglers and canoeists and kayakers and things like that, there are just conflicts, because of different people's relationships with the outdoors and what they perceive as being that outdoor thing." (Ed: 559-571)*

Some female participants felt that there were barriers in relation to gender and perceptions of strength:

*"like the canoe club I belong to, there are some very, very competitive blokes in there, you know and like they get their canoes and they toss them onto the roof of their car and I think I can't even lift it, unless there is someone else on the other end and then I am struggling, you know and I don't think I am a weak woman, and that is quite off-putting and I like to be independent and that is another thing I am finding hard is that I can't be independent I need my other half there to help me to put things on the roof and get them off, I'm not tall enough" (Fran: 1509-1519)*

*"I mean I live and play and work in quite a male orientated environment and I never really think about it, sometimes you can see some of the blokes, especially here when I move a big thing, you can see them thinking, 'oh, oh you can move the boat', 'oh you can go and pick that up', 'oh you can go and drop me off from there'... 'Oh you can pick that up and hammer that in' and it's like 'yeah, yeah'" (Hannah: 634-639)*

Some participants discussed the barriers to participation in outdoor adventure that related to class and culture:

*"I find that class is a massive barrier to the outdoors... as someone who has come purely from a working class background... looking at who I interact with within my professional career, some barriers that have come my way, although I have been stubborn enough to push through most of that I believe, has been that I work around middle to upper-middle class people a lot of the time. They are predominantly, well in fact they are all white... it doesn't necessarily meet my inclusive head" (Ed:626-653) "...I set up and ran an outdoor centre, in... one of the poorest boroughs in the country, predominantly a Bengali population, so we were working 99% with young people from that back ground, but I had white male instructors, you know, I had one female, Bengali part time canoe client instructor for the evenings... our client group was Bengali but our staff team didn't reflect it" (Ed: 665-675)*

Inherent in Ed's description here though is a sense of agency that he had to push through the barrier he perceived for himself and a desire to do the same for others. Fran described working with families from different cultural backgrounds:

*"They often won't come and say 'oh I'm not coming' and I say 'why not?'... 'why don't you come?' and then you find out yeah, they think there are bears in the woods, because of course they come from a different culture and they don't know what the wildlife is, once we get over the bears, and now I know to say 'there are no bears'" (Fran:1129-1136)*

Some participants described historical perspectives, including a fear of wildlife that might still be reflected in people's experience of barriers:

*"also the historical relationship in the UK, of people not wanting to go out in the mountains because they were scary places and that is where the beasties lived and up until the Victorian era that was the predominant sort of ethos of the mountains, it wasn't until the mad men and the poets and the scientists and the botanists all went up and saw it from different eyes. And I am quite interested in the way that working class climbers of the 1950s and 60s you know the Joe Browns and the Don Whillans, who is one of my climbing heroes, who came from the working class guys from Sheffield and Manchester, who got to the Peaks and started climbing, and confronted the upper middle class domination of those sports, you know the Henry Whiphrops and the George Mallorys from the private schools" (Ed: 715-722)*

*"everyone sees outdoor activities as the thrilling, scary activities, and that's not really what it is all about for me, that is a bit of an old fashioned idea" (Hannah: 22-34);*

*"too many people have this historic view again of outdoor education being what it is all about and outward bound, that it is about getting wet through, freezing cold and having a really uncomfortable night's sleep, well it isn't... it is not about roughing it, it's about smoothing it, apart from when its complicated, and then you roll, you know, um, yes it can be exciting, yes it can be scary, yes it can be uncomfortable, but you should always have a choice that you put yourself there" (Dave: 1000-1009)*

The concept of choice is interesting here; discomfort and hardship when it was considered a choice was valued, as explored above (see section 6.3.3.3.3. Developing resilience through managing hardship), however it does not necessarily need to be a part of all engagement in outdoor adventure. There is a suggestion here that the anticipation of fear and discomfort can present a barrier that needs to be overcome in order to support sustained engagement in outdoor adventure.

Participants described cliques (Dave: 268) that were more competitive (Fran: 1509) or consumerist (Ed: 518), that they did not feel able to join for fear of not being good enough (Dave: 271) or wearing the right clothes (Gill: 370). Given that all participants had successfully achieved a high level of competence in one or more outdoor adventure activity, it is interesting that some felt excluded from other allied groups. Bourdieu's (1984) work on habitus, capital and field (as explored in chapter 1) can illuminate how individuals might position or perceive themselves within social hierarchy or social space (Burke *et al.*, 2016). Whilst, Kane and Tucker (2007) explored how the adventurer could demonstrate social capital in terms of skills and achievements, this also had potential to be a barrier to participation. This was evident in Hannah's description of people not feeling able to join a running group (Hannah: 465) and Dave's description of people not joining a cycling group (Dave: 79) for fear of not being good enough.

In addition to a social barrier of perceived lack of skill or knowledge (Dave: 822), participants also articulated barriers associated with gender (Fran: 1509; Hannah: 639); class (Ed: 626); and culture (Ed: 675; Fran: 1136). An outdated

portrayal of outdoor adventure associated with these and in relation to risk, was considered a barrier to participation (Ed: 715; Hannah: 22; Dave: 1000). The outdoor adventure industry has been criticised for the dominance of privileged, white men (Ingman, 2017) and challenged to address the need for social justice (Warren, 2005) and cultural bridges (Norton and Hsieh, 2011). Whilst recognising the need for change at societal level, participants in this study have needed a sense of capacity and self-efficacy (Wook Lee and Kielhofner, 2017a) to overcome barriers, (in terms of developing skill, moderating risk, and addressing social hierarchy) in order for engagement in outdoor adventure be sustained. (It is interesting to note that the participants themselves were generally from a privileged position, see section 6.5).

#### 6.3.4.2.3 Location and routine

Participants described how they organised their lives around their engagement in terms of where they lived and worked; their weekly routine; and who they shared activities with.

*“But also where I work, I used to work out on the coast where there’s no mountains and one of the big factors for coming here to work was I’m literally, can run out of work and up a fell, but also with our business you know, (my husband) is often in the area so we can meet up after work or he can drop the dog off with me and off we go, so you know, yeah, I think it’s just locating yourself in the right place as well.” (Amy: 306-311)*

*“that is why we live here, because it is very much plopped in the middle of the woods and the river, and so yeah, location living in the location where you are quite close to it, I think, you can go outside can’t you but we live in the middle woods. So part of being outside is here, moving here living where I live in a kind of cottage... I choose to live in this community as well, yeah and this community is quite different to anywhere else actually that I have lived before, we’re a bit earthy, a lot of the people that live here share the same kind of values” (Hannah: 401-409)*

*“there’s some lovely walks around this village, so with a couple of neighbours, we try to keep a date to walk for an hour on Monday and Friday at nine o’clock... well it’s those days because one woman doesn’t work those days, most other people are retired or like me working freelance and you can manage your own time around it” (Gill: 133-139); “Trying to find things that fit in with your life-style and someone to do it with, so I’ve usually got, I share a lift with somebody to go to Pilates” (Gill: 373-375)*

Craig discussed whether or not it is acceptable to climb exclusively; his statements here are interesting because they show how his perception changed over time:

*“I proceeded to climb almost exclusively rather than going to school as much as possible.” (Craig: 86-88)*

*“I don’t think its morally right or viable anymore to be an out of work full time climber, 30 years ago there were loads of people who did that and that worked, that was fine it worked for the time, but it’s just not viable” (Craig:527-530)*

What is also interesting here, is that Craig is referring to the climbers of the 1980s, who followed the *“Joe Browns and the Don Whillans”* (Ed: 717) admired by Ed above (see section: 6.3.4.2.2) and presents a contrasting view in terms of whether an exclusive adventure lifestyle is desirable. The concept of *“morally right”* (Craig: 527) perhaps alluding to responsibility to work and family.

#### 6.3.4.2.4 Managing family commitments

All participants described how they managed their engagement in outdoor adventure alongside family commitments. Ben and Craig talked about partners who were not as interested in climbing as they are:

*“I think the biggest one is family life, yeah, so, um, it’s kind of, it’s always a small argument in our house, how much time I will be at home, and so, like in an ideal world, maybe the both of us would be out there, but yeah I have to understand that that is not what (my partner) wants” (Ben: 491-495)*

*“I certainly make some concessions with my, with my partner who doesn’t climb so hard and doesn’t see climbing in the same way” (Craig: 537-539)*

Some participants, who were parents, described how they found it difficult to juggle responsibilities alongside their own personal engagement in outdoor adventure:

*“But then I think, once I had the children I had very little time when I wasn’t working so usually I was trying to manage four children and a job... so actually you neglect doing what you want to do to do their stuff” (Gill: 162-167)*

*“these days it seems to be standing at the side of rugby pitches watching other people play and feeling really bad about it” (Ed: 51-53); “I suppose in general life gets in the way, the other things you have to do, you have to make sure you plan way ahead for certain things, the thing I sacrifice is spending more personal time in the hills for example and therefore doing things with the children has now become more of a focus... I’m waiting for the twins to get a bit older so they can start going, then I can say, right we are going to the mountains because and then I can get what I want out of it and they can get what they want” (Ed: 604-614)*

Some participants also described how they continued to engage in outdoor adventure through activities they did with their children:

*“we used to go out a lot with the children and later taking the children out and then, there was a lot of like-minded people and we would go to outdoor places where the children could be free, and as the children got older it was very much oh (she) will take them out, let’s go down the woods, and we bought them knives, and things that you are not really meant to have.” (Fran: 381-386)*

*“If I am going out with the kids, it might just be a walk on the beach, um, maybe go and do some building sandcastles, drawing art on the beach,*

*finding stuff, fishing, looking at seaweed snot, all covered in stuff, it's just an excuse to go outside, always" (Dave: 341-345)*

In addition, some participants discussed the positive influence of having a family dog:

*"we used to have a Labrador and it was very squashed and probably quite stinky on the boat, we used to go off and take her on shore and go rambling around...I think also the dog was quite a big influence, I mean as a teenager I used to go out with friends who all had dogs as well and we used to play in the woods a lot, we used to make trails and play hide and seek with the dogs" (Fran: 162-172)*

*"Just pack a dog and some kit... I enjoy seeing the dog in its, in a natural environment enjoying itself, so it does add to the experience, you know, and when you can see its just loving jumping and running" (Hannah: 63-67)*

*"Since I got my collie dog, I probably do a lot more fell-running than mountain-biking" (Amy: 18)*

Family commitments influenced how and when people engaged in outdoor adventure, as did employment.

#### 6.3.4.2.5 Managing work commitments

Participants described how they managed their personal engagement in outdoor adventure activities around their work commitments:

*"that is why I cycle to work whenever I can, because I mean, I am lucky, it's a beautiful route in, I'm not on the road much so I can cycle in, it doesn't take, well it takes me longer in the morning, but on the way back it takes me no longer than driving and then you sort of think, well I've done some exercise, I've got outside, had some fresh air, you feel so much better for it." (Fran: 44-50)*

*“Trying to fit your outdoor life around your professional life is quite tough, but you do feel better... if you do go for that run, you drag yourself out the door, get on your bike or just go for a run, you definitely feel better and that must be the serotonin, you know the physiological effects of that as well, and just being, having that moment on your own.”* (Ed: 813-820)

*“I used to do a lot of work at home on the computer, and I’d say ‘ring me if you need me’, and then I’d have an early afternoon out for people with disabilities out on the horses, so that was a nice little work out and a break from the computer”* (Gill: 128-131)

Some participants described how they found it difficult to work indoors and had subsequently changed their working hours, changed jobs or taken a break:

*“I really struggle to work five days a week inside, so I don’t do that anymore, and hence why I feel like tree work is good for me, because I like to be outside and I am a very physical person.”* (Amy: 146-149)

*“having, well for about three years taken a job on which kept me inside full time completely destroyed me, and I had to leave because mentally I couldn’t cope with being inside doing the same things every day.”* (Hannah: 312-315); *“I enjoy working in the outdoors so being part of the boatyard is another actually a great way of, well being outside, and doing something quite useful”* (Hannah:15-17)

*“I took 3 months off work one year and went and worked for just my board and lodgings and then now I still go to another horse farm, somebody I have got to know and I cook for the horses (riding holidays).”* (Gill: 329-332)

Most participants worked in the outdoor industry or spent some of their work time outside; but then also found that they needed a distinction between their work lives and personal engagement in outdoor adventure:

*“there are two things I’ve always kept as things I don’t instruct, one is skiing and one is diving, the diving one, I deliberately kept it because I didn’t want to destroy the magic”* (Dave: 586-589); *“sometimes being an outdoor instructor it can become a bit of a sausage factory, where you just do the same, like low level stuff every day”* (Dave: 610- 612)



*“work to me is work, I appreciate the nice days that I have, like the nice sunny days when you get nice views, but I wouldn’t say it’s meaningful, its more meaningful than being an accountant” (Ben: 198-202)*

*“Well I am not doing enough outdoorsy stuff myself, I am doing loads of professional stuff, but I am not doing that, you know, the rationale for doing, you know trying to balance those things... I think you have to come back to it from time to time and yeah get back into fishing again and do those things that create those links that give you the rationale for why you do what you do.” (Ed: 229-240)*

Despite choosing a profession that enabled them to work outside, participants still sought the restorative aspects of outdoor adventure outside of a work context.

A further important factor in establishing sustained engagement in outdoor adventure was around the participants’ ability to manage their engagement alongside family and work commitments in accordance with their routine and location. Most participants were involved in outdoor adventure as a part or all of their paid work life in addition to their life outside of work. Whilst valuing time outside for work, they still made the distinction between outdoor adventure for pleasure as opposed to employment; in line with Bingley’s (2013) paper challenging the assumption that working in the outdoors would be restorative. All participants alluded to their need for life-balance (Clouston, 2015), which for them involved personal time in the outdoors, in addition to any work time. In terms of habituation (Wook Lee and Kielhofner, 2017b) participants described how they organised their lives, including where they lived and worked, finances, and who they spent time with to enable them to maintain their engagement in outdoor adventure.

#### 6.3.4.2.6 Finances

Decisions to prioritise engagement in outdoor adventure activities had financial implications, both in terms of pay and expenses:

*“you don’t get paid a huge amount for doing it (expeditions), that is far, I left my idea of ever earning decent money, as long as I can, you know, pay for things” (Ed: 328-329)*

*“I enjoy the work I do, I take a lot of pleasure from it, working in climbing and working in a therapeutic sense with clients, I wouldn’t want to change that, but I’ve spent a lot of time engineering that so that I can make enough money to stay happy and live my life, so I guess that would be a challenge if for whatever reason that changed. So there are, of course there are real life economic constraints on what I can do (Craig: 530-536)*

*“Also the financial aspect of racing, because at that time in my life I was buying a house... well I wasn’t actually getting paid, I was just, I had sponsors that would sort of provide my kit and things, but I still had to pay my race entries and sort all the transport out and things, so you know it was still quite a big financial outlay to do all that racing” (Amy: 77-90)*

In addition there was some discussion about the equipment required to engage in outdoor adventure. Dave commented on how expensive some equipment can be, but then went on later to describe how it doesn’t need to be expensive for people to engage in outdoor adventure:

*“I do like sailing but that is like standing under a shower tearing up £50 notes” (Dave: 324)*

*“Money is actually less of an issue, but money is an issue in terms of equipment, um, there is a MacDonaldization of the outdoors... about the fact that we have made it a commodity and put, people will try to sell you equipment and there is a feeling that you can’t do these things without this equipment... so there is a barrier in there for this about perception of what we need to do outdoors” (Dave: 762-785)*

*“I am just now having to starting to think about replacing some of my kit, I’m terrified by the prices and people laugh at me because I am still walking around in really knackered old clothing but I don’t need that to do the things I do, but I can only do that because I have massive amounts of experience and know and understand that I don’t need expensive kit to do it” (Dave: 797-804)*

There are some interesting concepts here; the idea that there might be a personal or social expectation to wear clothes that are in-keeping with the identity associated with the activity is consistent with Amy’s statement:

*“When I was a mountain biker I definitely liked the clothes, I liked to have the mountain biker look, you know to be identified” (Amy: 358-360)*

However, there might be a philosophical incongruence with the simplicity and anti-consumerist values that also accompany the outdoor adventure culture, explored above (see section: 6.3.3.1.3). Perspectives in relation to this may change over time and with experience.

#### 6.3.4.2.7 Change in meaning over time

All participants described a change in the meaning they experienced from outdoor adventure over time. These varied however there were some common themes in relation to how participants were initially attracted to the excitement, potential for achievement, social capital and positive identity formation within the activity. Later their engagement was more about mastery or to re-experience a sense of connection, restoration, wellbeing and happiness:

*“And now I like to maybe go back, sort of, put a sneaky result in, but I don’t really, I don’t feel that I need to be competitive and prove myself in the way that I did (laughs)” (Amy: 96-98); “I’m totally different to when I was in racing, obviously that was all about the results and but also my friends; and that was all about pushing and getting faster and going, just riding like*

*an idiot and hitting crazy jumps... However because I have responsibilities and things I feel like it's now more of my escape and my relaxation as opposed to my focus to push harder." (Amy: 375-386)*

*"I think when I was first starting it was all about getting that tick, and getting that immediate gratification... and also, just because I was younger and male, a bit of show boating as well, and now, I don't really care for that at all, to me it's about, I'd say maybe being quite efficient in what I do... So I take, I take more gratification from, yeah being efficient and making right decisions... I really don't care, me personally, about show-boating that, for me it's about myself and I'd say that is probably the biggest change." (Ben: 399-412)*

*"I guess you are looking for a bit of excitement when you are a bit younger, you know, Well I do like a bit of excitement now, I haven't become a boring old fish, so, I still get a buzz from sailing along you know quickly or pike'ing out or going downhill on my mountain bike quite quickly and out of control on my road bike, so I do enjoy the excitement of that, but it's certainly not everything or being outside doesn't have to have that element in it, that's just a specific activity but most of the time it's just about being connected to the place that you are in" (Hannah: 341-350)*

*"when I started climbing as a child it was, it gave me an escape from the things I didn't want to do, um, it then gave me a value and an identity that wasn't shared by anyone else, so essentially it made me, at that point it made me a very willing outcast... so it was escapist for a long time, and very selfish at that time. Learning to teach and impart knowledge made it initially more, gave it a nice veneer of it seeming to be a little less self-serving, but actually that wasn't true it was just what I told myself because it just let me do it at work as well as at play, um, I hope now that I hope actually, I'm very happy and if people want to be upset about me being happy, I'm afraid that is their call." (Craig: 569-584)*

For some, changes in the way they engaged in outdoor adventure related to the people they were with:

*"initially doing the riding was about doing something to try to keep my daughter socially included and something we could do together... also its about exploring what is this all about in the world, in a therapeutic sense, but over time you just do it for yourself and in that way the meaning has changed because you are doing it because it is good for you I suppose" (Gill: 467-475)*

*“I have noticed it recently, with my kids, getting into fishing, I’ve discovered that taking my children fishing with me, has re-found something in fishing, it’s a very different route in. Because fishing became a very solo thing, so it started off as a social thing with lots of youngsters, because it’s an accessible outdoor activity... there was a big lake that we used to go to lots when I was a kid, and then as I became older it became a solo thing, something I did on my own and it was that peace and quiet thing, and I quite like hunting and shooting and things like that, I’ve dived in and out of it, stalking, I have done a bit of stalking, things like that, even though its wildlife I don’t have a problem with top-to-tail eating, you know, that sort of thing, and um, so it was a solo thing, and now, I have been trying to bring my children into it and discovered that, how they’ve been attracted to it. And it’s amazing.” (Ed: 408-422)*

*“We went through this lovely cave tunnel and it was quite, although the tide was going out the swell was quite strong, it was hard work swimming against it and everyone was finding it quite hard and then my husband started to find it hard to breathe so he had to be taken out... So we didn’t get to see much wildlife we’d got all this plan that we were going to go into all these little coves, so yeah, so now I am sort of losing my partner in crime a bit... I’ve got a friend who is very willing to do things but you know, she’s got her own family life, and that makes it hard, you know in an ideal world I need to find someone who likes the same sort of things” (Fran: 914-926)*

Fran’s partner was then diagnosed with a heart condition and she described how she had to adapt to this, including joining organised groups. Similarly, participants described how they had to adapt activities when returning from an interruption to their occupational engagement (see: 6.3.4.3 Factors that promoted a return to engagement following an interruption). For some, changes in their participation in outdoor adventure related to a desire to seek new experiences.

Sustained engagement in outdoor adventure was associated with the potential to accommodate changes in meaning over time and capacity to vary the level of challenge, complexity and novelty. This is consistent with Lynch and Dibben

(2016) findings that participants sought novelty and found meaning from balancing challenge and skill. It is also consistent with Taylor and Kay's (2015) research on serious leisure occupations, which discussed changes in the way individuals relate to an occupation over time. In order for participants to sustain engagement over time, the activity needed to have potential to be adapted to changing requirements over time.

#### 6.3.4.2.8 Novelty

The changing nature of participation in outdoor adventure appeared to also relate to a need for novelty, increased challenge and greater complexity. As discussed in relation to exploring above, (see section: 6.3.3.1.2 Exploring: understanding the land, seasons and weather) experiencing new things gave meaning, it also promoted sustained participation in outdoor adventure over time:

*"But I still have goals. I think there's always got to be a challenge and I think that is one reason why I've gone... to fell running from mountain biking, like because I'd carried my bike up most of the fells... it wasn't really new anymore and I started fell running with a friend and she was keen to set the similar goals to me and we just started like you know a new fell to run up that I'd never run up before it's a good challenge and I think that, I still like to have those challenges to apply something new, whether it's a new sport or just doing something new, you know, like running up a hill you've not run up before or whatever, I think I still have to have that drive... it's nice to have that new challenge and you feel that sense of achievement rather than just repeating something you've done before" (Amy: 386-402)*

*"I will try anything, I like to try new things, I like to have a bit of adrenaline rush, I enjoy that, I enjoy doing things that are a bit, you know, a bit different for me, something I've maybe not tried before" (Fran: 111-114)*

*“I have managed to keep a career going that has also allowed me to diversify and do lots of different types of things. So I have done, I like to think I have done every environment there possibly is, I haven’t, but I have done arctic expeditions, I have done temperate expeditions, I have done mountain expeditions, high altitude expeditions, jungles, and I have been to some places that I never would have thought of” (Ed:297-303)*

New challenges inspired sustained engagement and re-engagement in outdoor adventure after an interruption.

### **6.3.4.3 Factors that promoted a return to engagement in outdoor adventure following an interruption**

Most participants were able to identify times where life circumstances led to a brief interruption in their engagement in one or all of their preferred activities and factors that prompted a return to participation in outdoor adventure. In addition to revisiting the meaning of engaging in outdoor adventure, this involved adapting activities and returning to factors that promoted initial and sustained engagement.

#### **6.3.4.3.1 Adapting activities**

Some participants described how they adapted activities or engaged in alternative outdoor activities after an injury:

*“I was in plaster for 9 months, after a reconstruction, a fairly trial surgery to rebuild the wrist... So that was dull, but to be honest, it didn’t stop me; I was still working at the climbing wall... I was volunteering my time, doing a lot of one-handed climbing, going out for a lot of walks” (Craig: 645-655)*

*“I had broken my arm... and we started walking regularly” (Fran: 469-482)*

*“when I was recovering from my knee operation and then after the varicose vein treatment with the knee I had to build up to 10 minute walks and then 15 and then 20, it was a very slow process, but with the varicose veins, half an hour a day I had to walk, and I guess its yeah its quite a good thing to build in, it just helps if you can put it into the structure of the day really.” (Gill: 566-573)*

Here, walking gave the opportunity to be outside and then build up to more demanding activities. Continuing to work at the wall and climb one-handed enabled Craig to retain his identity as a climber even when he couldn't actually climb (see section: 6.3.3.3.1 Identity).

#### 6.3.4.3.2 Revisiting inspirational factors

Some participants were reminded of inspirational factors by watching films or observing friends:

*“When I could I was watching mountain biking videos... and actually when I came back from my illness I was riding faster than I've ridden for a long time... the break made me more hungry for it” (Amy: 412-423)*

*“I broke my nose and as a consequence I've kind of been getting sinus infections, but I can't swim, I stopped swimming and I stopped training and that and so I had a break from sort of competitive stuff, and I'm wondering whether that, there's a triathlon at a sports centre and somebody is borrowing my bike and I suspect I am probably going to be a bit jealous...I don't know that I want to compete against other people, but actually I probably want to compete against myself, so I am wondering whether I will like, I am wondering whether I might start running a bit more seriously, and look, I've done one ultra-marathon and I am half thinking it might be time to do another one” (Dave: 871-886)*

Here the meaning from previous experience, including competition (see section: 6.3.3.2.2), inspiration from other people's stories and aspirational identity (see section: 6.3.4.1.2), prompted the participants to re-engage in outdoor adventure.



#### 6.3.4.3.3 Revisiting sustaining factors

One of the most important factors in sustaining engagement in outdoor adventure was friendship (see section: 6.3.4.2.1 Friends, mentors and developing knowledge and skill); this is also evident in terms of meaning from connection with others (see section: 6.3.3.2.1 Sharing activities and belonging to a group of like-minded people); and again in relation to returning to engagement in outdoor adventure:

*“it’s (the group is) just really friendly, and it’s a really, having been away from it, I feel really comfortable coming back into it, it’s not that people have cliques within it, and they do social things sometimes, although obviously the activities are a big social thing and they just give you a real lift, as a result of that other people will arrange for walks and things, you know, you do make friends within it, so that has been a really big way of me getting back into the activities that I enjoy.”* (Fran: 436-443)

*“I had the op’ and then there was no riding for another six months... it was really difficult to then build it up, I put on a stone... (then) some people who we had met riding in Spain when we were there... they were wanting to make a reunion of the people who had been in that group... so that put me straight on a diet and straight back to say right I need to get riding fit again”* (Gill: 427-437)

As a result of the support from others, participants were reminded of what they enjoyed and the meaning it gave them and were able to re-engage in outdoor adventure. Participants described the factors that promoted a return to engagement in outdoor adventure following an interruption (where there had been one), as desire to re-experience positive aspects of previous engagement. This is consistent with Freeman *et al.*'s (2016) description of positive wilderness experiences prompting a desire to re-access nature. It is also consistent with studies demonstrating that physical activity in natural environments enhanced intention for further physical activity (Thompson Coon *et al.*, 2011; Calogiuri, Nordtug and Weydahl, 2015). Participants returned to outdoor adventure by

revisiting inspirational (Amy: 423; Dave: 886) and sustaining factors (Fran: 436; Gill: 437). In some cases this involved adapting activities to navigate physical and environmental barriers, consistent with occupational therapy practice (O'Brien and Kielhofner, 2017).

#### **6.4 Influences and limitations**

The aim with phenomenological studies is to have a small homogenous sample (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009) to enable in-depth exploration of rich accounts, whilst recognising the demographics and influences on the set. In this case, all participants had engaged in outdoor adventure at a high level, with three competing in world championships. All participants had studied at degree level and worked as professionals, with experience of facilitating groups in the outdoors. All participants had offered to give up their time to contribute to the research because they believed in promoting the use of outdoor adventure for health related outcomes.

There is a possibility that the sample represents views that could be considered an “echo chamber” (Sunstein, 2004:57) of the researcher’s beliefs, exacerbated by the sampling strategy of using my personal contacts as facilitators to contact others. However, it may also be the case that this group is fairly consistent with a number of people who engage in outdoor adventure, in terms of being white and middle-class, (some of the barriers to participation have been explored in 6.3.4.2.2 Navigating social norms and barriers). The participants’ reflections on their facilitator experiences, in terms of issues relating to participation in outdoor

adventure, beyond just their own personal engagement, gave further breadth to their discussion. Within this thesis, the inclusion of participants within groups targeted for health intervention (see chapter 3) and literature from research involving over 350 participants (see chapter 4) offers useful triangulation to the current study. However, these studies were also dominated by Western perspectives and a limitation remains in that broader cultural contexts need to be explored within further research.

#### **6.4.1 Reflexive account:**

##### **A 'small' story – reflecting on influence**

*I recognise that, as the final study, I approached this research with the knowledge and beliefs I had gained from the previous studies. In some cases this was overt, such as the use of the autobiographies to help formulate appropriate questions for the interviews. In some cases this was less deliberate. I recognise that my interpretation and responses during the later interviews in the current study (study 4) would have been influenced by my opinions of the earlier interviews. Whilst I was careful to ensure I only asked the same open, non-leading questions during the core part of the interviews, this was evident within the transcriptions at more relaxed points. For example, after concluding the penultimate interview, I gave the following comments: "I have just been really interested, because it wasn't something that was one of my questions, or that I had anticipated, but lots of people have talked about childhood books that inspired them" (Gill:529-531). As the interviews progressed I recognised a number of consistent themes, notably the significance of friendships, childhood heroes (especially from books) and the development of confidence to join social*

groups. I tried to ensure that I did not prompt responses to collude with these formulating ideas, by being careful not mention any previous findings until after the interview had finished.

Finlay (2011) suggests that phenomenological research should be relational and transformative for both the participant and the researcher. I have therefore considered the relationship dynamics between myself and the participants, and where the experience could potentially be considered transformative for the participants and for me as the researcher. I have highlighted within the individual participant summaries (idiographic accounts) (section 6.3.1) where participants may have been influenced by surroundings and their own sense-making of their story and the context in which I believe they related to me. I have recognised in previous reflexive accounts how I came to the research with a life time passion for the value of outdoor adventure experiences. Perhaps by the later study, I was emboldened by my experiences of the first three studies that gave greater evidence for the beliefs I already held. I was also further encouraged by each interview, which gave me greater confidence in my thesis as they progressed. The interviews with participants were transformative in that my experience of them was very affirming, in terms of what I personally believe. Throughout the thesis, I have also been challenged by greater exposure to views and judgements of the recklessness of risk taking, compounding my own doubts in relation to this. My own defence mechanisms to discount these in the past, have been challenged by my experiences of now having greater responsibility including dependents; and by witnessing friends and people within my wider social networks that have died or sustained life changing injuries as a

result of taking risk in the outdoors. It is with this insider's mixed bag of strong emotion: passion, need for escapism, reminiscence, loss and unresolved controversy over risk-taking; that I approached the interviews with participants who I imagined were like-minded experienced enthusiasts. I recognise that I am more comfortable with Fran's desire for joy and fun; and Gill's desire for nature connections for wellbeing; than I am with Amy's desire for competition or Craig's desire for deep play. The concept of deep play suggests that players have more to lose than they could ever gain and contradicts my own engagement with outdoor adventure, where I have to believe that on balance it is worth it. I have tried to address my own biases firstly recognising them; and by secondly, ensuring I gave open, non-judgemental responses to the participants' answers and by being transparent about my own views. Whilst I would hope I was successful in not appearing critical, I expect I was less successful at hiding my enthusiasm when participants described experiences that were close to my own. Positive, encouraging verbal and non-verbal responses are key to rapport building and fundamental requirement for effective interviewing, however, there is a danger that I encouraged the telling only of stories I wanted to hear. To address this I worked hard to monitor and limit the amount of personal information I gave about myself. I was pleased to see that within transcripts my own phrases were generally limited to 5-10 words. I tried to ensure that I was equally welcoming of stories I was uncomfortable with, as I was of stories that aligned with my own world view. Using interpretative phenomenological analysis prompted me to consider in depth every phrase within transcriptions to ensure I recorded all content, not just ideas I personally identified with.

Chapter 7 discusses the findings across elements 1,2,3 and 4 in a thematic synthesis.



## **Chapter 7. Element 5. Thematic Synthesis**

### **7.1 Introduction to chapter 7.**

Outdoor adventure can present opportunities for meaningful occupational engagement with a positive impact on health and wellbeing (see the introduction, section 1). It was proposed within the rationale (1.2) that understanding the potential meaning it can offer, and the process by which people become engaged in outdoor adventure, might usefully inform occupational scientists, occupational therapists, outdoor educators and health promotion practitioners. This chapter revisits the research rationale, question and aims, and presents the findings across the elements using thematic synthesis. The research question was: “What is the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure from an occupational science perspective and how can this inform health promotion within occupational therapy?” The research aims were to:

1. explore the meaning of outdoor adventure for participants;
2. explore the opportunities presented by outdoor adventure to promote health and wellbeing;
3. explore how this meaning relates to the process of occupational engagement in terms of initiating, sustaining and returning to engagement.

Table 1 in the introduction (section 1.2) provides an overview of each element and the study aims they address. This thematic synthesis chapter, element 5, considers five synthesised themes, under the headings: connection, congruence, competence and confidence, convenience and context. A



response to the research question and aims is then provided in the concluding discussion (section 8).

### 7.1.1 Summarising the findings

The systematic review meta-synthesis element (section 2) explored the meaning of outdoor adventure for participants (aim 1) within 22 research studies and established ten synthesised findings. These are summarised as: the call and preparation; the inter-connected experiences of bodily sensation, happiness and wellbeing; connection with a sense of self; mastery, challenge, competence and capital; risk-taking, fear and fun; connection with others, competition and communitas; connection with wilderness; freedom and escapism; spirituality, humility and perspective; and environmental values. Many of these synthesised findings relate to key concepts within phenomenological philosophy, which was then used to inform the methodology for the rest of the thesis.

The focus group element (section 4) explored the opportunities presented by outdoor adventure to promote health and wellbeing (aim 2) in relation to walking groups. It demonstrated that the participants perceived that the experience of walking groups included improved feelings of wellbeing; and meaning derived from social support and connection with nature. Participants reported changes that improved the health of walkers and their families, suggesting that walking groups can be used to support individuals to engage in health-promoting occupations. The focus group element also considered the process of occupational engagement (aim 3). Factors that influenced sustained

engagement in walking included appropriate challenge and variety; woodland developments; accommodation of routine; use of local green space and consideration of barriers. Factors that influenced the sustainable provision of walking groups included facilitation style; health champions; marketing approaches and clarity; and collaboration with primary care referrers.

The autobiography element (section 5) considered the meaning of outdoor adventure for participants (aim 1) and how this meaning relates to the process of occupational engagement in terms of initiating, sustaining and returning to engagement in outdoor adventure (aim 3). It demonstrated that initiating occupational engagement was influenced by meanings associated with identifying with role models; consideration of readiness for change and challenge; and meaning from ownership and focus of planning. Sustained occupational engagement was influenced by the meaning derived from connection with the environment (including nature and time); connection with others (including support, competition and wishing to inspire others); and connection with self, (where a sense of identity and self as competent can be established). Changes in meaning over time; and meaning from having a repertoire of narratives and the opportunity for telling a story may influence a re-engagement in occupation after an interruption.

The interviews element (section 6) explored all three aims. It demonstrated that participation in outdoor adventure held meaning for participants (aim 1) in relation to experiencing connection with nature, connection with others, to self-perception; and to health and wellbeing. Meaning from connection with nature was associated with appreciating beauty and feeling at one with nature;

exploring and understanding the land, seasons and weather; escapism in terms of seeking wilderness, solitude and simplicity; and spirituality and a new sense of perspective. Meaning from connection with others was associated sharing activities and belonging to a group of like-minded people, seeking or avoiding competition; and aligning personal views with environmental values within outdoor culture. Meaning from connection to a sense of self was associated with identity formation, decision making and risk management, developing resilience through managing hardship; and achievement and competence. Meaning from a sense of improved health and wellbeing (aim 2) was associated with mental health, physical health and fitness and managing injuries.

Factors were identified that inspired initial engagement, promoted sustained engagement and that prompted a return to engagement in outdoor adventure following an interruption (aim 3). Factors that inspired initial engagement in outdoor adventure were associated with childhood influences, forming aspirational identity, formative experiences in adulthood and experiences of facilitation for and by others. Factors that promoted sustained engagement in outdoor adventure were associated with friends and mentors; navigating social norms and barriers; accommodating needs in terms of location and routine; managing family commitments; managing work commitments; finances; novelty and a change in meaning over time. Factors that promoted a return to engagement in outdoor adventure following an interruption were associated with adapting activities; revisiting inspirational factors; and revisiting sustaining factors.

### 7.1.2 Method: thematic synthesis

Third order interpretation of the findings across the thesis has been used in inform the process of thematic synthesis (Thomas and Harden, 2008) (see section 3.7.3). This involves identifying key concepts from multiple studies and translating them into one another with creative, holistic interpretation (Noblit and Hare, 1988). Thematic synthesis is in-keeping with an idealist view (Barnett-Page and Thomas, 2009) and involved the grouping of themes from across the previous four elements. Thematic synthesis, described by Thomas and Harden (2008:1) involves three stages: line-by-line consideration of the findings, development of initial themes and then establishing analytical themes beyond the original studies (elements). The data for each element is presented in each of the element chapters, 2, 4, 5 and 6. The consideration of the findings in each of these elements is evidenced in appendices. Element 2 was a meta-synthesis arising from a systematic review; element 3 was a thematic analysis of focus group transcripts; element 4 was an interpretative phenomenological analysis of data from autobiographies, and element 5 was an interpretative phenomenological analysis of data from interviews. The themes from each of these elements are presented in table 19. They were then each allocated a new synthesised theme; these are colour coded on the table. Whilst thematic synthesis is typically used within systematic reviews, the process originated from primary research (Noblit and Hare, 1988) and has enabled the integration of themes from across the thesis.

## 7.2 The meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure

A summary of the findings arising from the four previous elements are presented in Table 19. These have been colour coded to demonstrate how they have contributed to the five themes informing element 5.

Colour codes:

1. Connection to self, others and the natural environment (ORANGE)
2. Congruence with aspirations, values, beliefs and identity (GREEN)
3. Competence and confidence in social, physical and cognitive skills (BLUE)
4. Convenience of location and routine alongside competing demands (PURPLE)
5. Context at individual, community and population level (RED)

<b>Element:</b>	<b>Findings:</b>	<b>Synthesised theme:</b>
<b>Element 1.</b> Outdoor Adventure Systematic Review (meta-synthesis)	<i>1. The call and preparation.</i> Outdoor adventure provided meaning and focus in relation to establishing a plan to engage; and the physical, mental and logistical preparation for engagement.	2
	<i>2. Inter-connected experiences of bodily sensation, happiness and wellbeing:</i> Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to the bodily experience of dynamic movement, exertion, interconnection between mind and body; and flow; in addition, it invoked a sense of wellbeing, happiness, fitness and restoration.	2
	<i>3. Connection with a sense of self.</i> Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to enhanced self-awareness; participants sought opportunities that enabled a sense of autonomy and personal responsibility for decisions; reconnection with an authentic self; and identity construction.	1
	<i>4. Mastery, challenge, competence and capital.</i> Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to a perception of self as able to push personal boundaries, overcome hardships, master	3

	challenges and demonstrate competency for social capital.	
	5. <i>Risk-taking, fear and fun.</i> Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to risk-taking and the opportunities for both fear and fun.	3
	6. <i>Connection with others, competition and communitas.</i> Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to connection with others in terms of support, shared experience, competition and belonging to a community of like-minded people.	1
	7. <i>Connection with wilderness</i> Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to connection with wilderness in terms of appreciating beauty and exploration; and managing natural elements.	1
	8. <i>Freedom and escapism</i> Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to escapism, freedom, novelty and an opportunity to live out a critique of society.	2
	9. <i>Spirituality, humility and perspective</i> Outdoor adventure prompted meaningful experiences of wilderness with a sense of spirituality and connection to time and place; humility with a new sense of self in context; and a metaphor for understanding other life circumstances.	1
	10. <i>Environmental values</i> Outdoor adventure provided meaningful experiences that changed participants' perspectives, values and priorities in relation to appreciating and protecting natural and cultural landscapes.	2
<b>Element 2.</b> Walking for Health Focus Groups (FG)	<i>Influence on health and wellbeing:</i>	
	● Feeling better.	2
	● Meaning from social support.	1
	● Meaning from being outside in nature.	1
	● Behaviour change, adopting new healthy occupations.	2
	● Improving the health of others.	2
	<i>Factors influencing sustained engagement in the occupation of walking:</i>	
	● Challenge, variety and woodland developments.	3
	● Accommodating routines.	4
	● Using local green space.	4
● Considering barriers.	4	
<i>Factors influencing the sustainable provision of walking groups:</i>		
● Walk leaders and health champions.	5	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marketing and clarity.</li> <li>Primary care referral.</li> </ul>	5 5
<b>Element 3.</b> Outdoor Adventure Autobiographies (AA)	<i>Initiating engagement in occupation – making sense of the inspiration:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dreams and heroes</li> <li>Change and challenge</li> <li>Purpose from planning</li> </ul>	2 2 2
	<i>Sustaining engagement in occupation over time – making sense of experience and connection:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connection with environment</li> <li>Connection with others</li> <li>Connection with self and the value of story telling</li> </ul>	1 1 1
	<i>Returning to engagement in occupation – making sense of the past and future:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meaning changing over time and adaptation</li> <li>Repertoire of narratives</li> </ul>	3 3
	<b>Element 4.</b> Outdoor Adventure Individual Interviews (II)	<i>A1. Meaning from experiencing connection with nature:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appreciating beauty and feeling at one with nature</li> <li>Exploring: understanding the land, seasons and weather</li> <li>Escapism: seeking wilderness, solitude and simplicity</li> <li>Spirituality and perspective</li> </ul>
A: Meaning of engaging in outdoor adventure	<i>A2. Meaning from experiencing connection with others:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sharing activities and belonging to a group of like-minded people</li> <li>Seeking or avoiding competition</li> <li>Environmental values within outdoor culture</li> </ul>	1 1 1 1
	<i>A3. Meaning in relation to self-perception:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identity</li> <li>Decision making and risk management</li> <li>Developing resilience through managing hardship</li> <li>Achievement, mastery and competence</li> </ul>	1 3 3 3
B: Process of engaging in outdoor adventure	<i>A4. Meaning in relation to health and wellbeing:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental health and psychological wellbeing</li> <li>Physical health and fitness</li> <li>Managing injuries</li> </ul>	2 2 2
	<i>B1. Factors that inspired initial engagement in outdoor adventure</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Childhood influences</li> <li>Forming aspirational identity</li> <li>Formative experiences in adulthood</li> <li>Facilitating others</li> </ul>	2 2 5 5

	<i>B2. Factors that promoted sustained engagement in outdoor adventure</i>	
	• Friends and mentors	1
	• Navigating social norms and barriers	5
	• Location and routine	4
	• Managing family commitments	4
	• Managing work commitments	4
	• Finances	4
	• Change in meaning over time	3
	• Novelty	3
	<i>B3. Factors that promoted a return to engagement in outdoor adventure following an interruption:</i>	
• Adapting activities	3	
• Revisiting inspirational factors	2	
• Revisiting sustaining factors	4	

Table 19. A summary of the findings across four elements to establish synthesised themes.

### 7.2.1 Thematic synthesis across the four previous elements

Concepts arising from the four previous elements were synthesised to five themes in relation to the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure. These are: connection; congruence; competence and confidence; convenience; and context. The findings also demonstrated a change in the meaning of engagement in outdoor adventure over time. Therefore a dynamic consideration of process, in terms of factors influencing initiating engagement, sustaining engagement and returning to engagement in outdoor adventure after an interruption is explored.

**Connection to self, others and the natural environment:** the *meaning* of engagement in outdoor adventure in relation to occupation that enables



connection with nature, the environment and a sense of self in time, place and space; and connection with other people.

**Congruence with aspirations, values, beliefs and identity:** the *meaning* of engagement in outdoor adventure in relation to occupation that is congruent with beliefs, values and aspirations for self and others; and in relation to an adventurous identity, health and wellbeing and environmental responsibility.

**Competence and confidence in social, physical and cognitive skills:** the *meaning and process* of engagement in outdoor adventure in relation to developing competence, confidence and accommodating increasing complexity and change in meaning over time; and developing social, physical and cognitive skills through new challenge, choices, risk and decision making.

**Convenience of location and routine alongside competing demands:** the *process* of engagement in outdoor adventure in relation to convenience, accommodating routines, location and multiple competing commitments.

**Context at individual, community and population level:** the *process* of engagement in outdoor adventure in relation to recognising the influence of individual, community and population contexts.

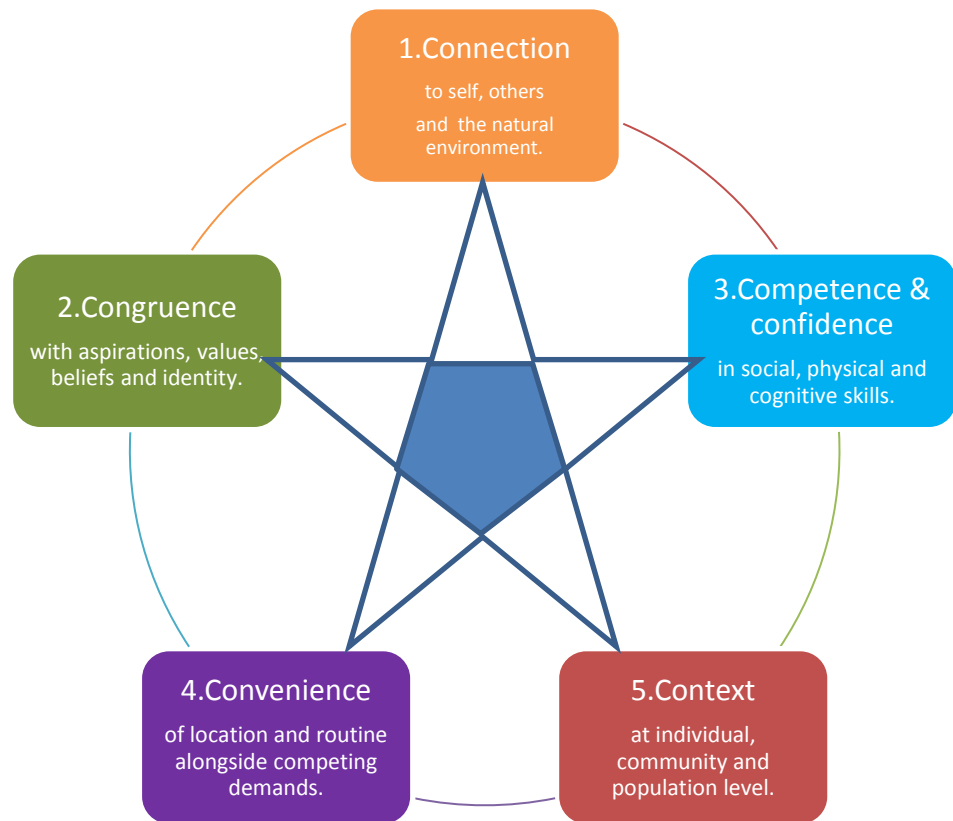


Figure 2. Synthesised themes: considerations in relation to the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure.

Figure 2 was intended to suggest the interconnection of concepts rather than any hierarchical dominance. The synthesised themes are now discussed in turn.

**7.2.2 Connection to self, others and the natural environment:** meaning in relation to occupation that enables connection with nature, the environment and a sense of self in time, place and space; and connection with other people.

Meaning was associated with a sense of connection with nature and the wider environment; connection to a sense of self in context; and connection with other

people (the findings in relation to these are explored under theme headings below, 7.2.2.1/2/3). The potential for outdoor adventure to offer a sense of connection to nature, self and others is widely reported within outdoor education (Quay, 2013) and adventure therapy literature (Hoyer, 2012) and was evident across all four elements. Connection is a key concept within phenomenology with the “body-self-world” considered “intertwined” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2009; Finlay, 2011:21). Connection is also a key concept within pragmatism and transactionalism (Dewey and Bentley, 1949); this is evident in occupational therapy models in relation to their emphasis on the association between person, environment and occupation (in particular: Iwama, Thomson and Macdonald, 2009 and Baum, Christiansen and Bass, 2015), (see section 3.5.4). Connection and identity as constructs that offer meaning are evident within occupational science research (Ikiugu and Pollard, 2015). In addition (in a theoretical paper), Hammell (2014) identified as meaningful a sense of connectedness to others, to ancestors, to culture, and to nature; in keeping with a move in occupational science theory to emphasise sociocultural context and belonging.

#### 7.2.2.1 Connection with nature

Meaning derived from connection to nature was evident in all four elements. This was in relation to appreciating aesthetic beauty of landscape and wildlife; connection with the rhythm of seasons and elements; immersion, oneness and relationship with the environment; and the opportunity for exploration. The natural environment could also present both hardship and the opportunity for restoration. Appreciation of aesthetic beauty was identified as contributing to the meaningfulness of outdoor adventure experience in the meta-synthesis

(section 2.4.5.7) (Lusby and Anderson, 2010; Pomfret, 2012; Lynch and Dibben, 2016); the autobiographies element (5.4.2.1) and the interviews element (section 6.3.3.1.1). This is consistent with Dewey's (1960) portrayal of aesthetics, naturalism and transactionalism; which have influenced outdoor adventure and experiential education (Ord and Leather, 2011) and environmental ethics (Bernstein, 1960; Hildebrand, 2008). In the focus group element (section 4) participants described their preference for being outside as opposed to exercising indoors; and meaning in relation to noticing nature, including wildlife such as birds and deer; and vegetation. This offered a sense of peace and awareness of seasons (section 4.4.1.3). In the interviews element (section 6) participants also described awareness of seasons and appreciating beauty and immersion in nature and valuing opportunities to explore and understand the environment (section 6.3.3.1). The sense of temporality is consistent with the suggestion that outdoor adventure that offers connection to place, time and space can be meaningful (Ross, Christie, Nicol and Higgins, 2014). Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to connection with wilderness, described as an "intimate interaction" (Morse, 2015:172); and was considered in terms of appreciating beauty and exploration; and managing natural elements (section 2.4.5.7). In the adventure autobiographies element (section 5) anthropomorphic descriptions of nature heightened this sense of relationship and the beauty of the natural environment was described at length (section 5.7.2).

Consideration of aesthetic judgement and appreciation of beauty in nature was explored by the idealist philosopher Kant (1790/1987) (see section 3.2.1) in terms of subjective universality, in that people might agree to finding beauty in

nature as a commonly held assumption (Pluhar, 1987). Illustrating this, Karlsen (2010) expanded on this subjective but shared appreciation of beauty, to propose that climbers claim a climbing route is considered beautiful when it is both visually and proprioceptively pleasing (see embodied experience). However, it has been proposed that the defining feature of a climbing route that is universally acknowledged as beautiful, or a “classic climb”, is one that appears impossible and is then experienced to be achievable (Karlsen, 2010:228). The suggestion that an experience perceived as difficult, might also be considered beautiful, (or even that the perception of anticipated difficulty enhances the perception of beauty) is useful when exploring the frequent reference to hardship within the data. A more challenging adventure offers greater achievement and therefore an enhanced sense of self and an enhanced appreciation of beauty. Nature was considered to be adversarial in both the autobiographies (section 5.4.2.1) and the meta-synthesis (section 2.4.5.7). An emphasis on hardship is evident across all four elements with meaning derived from the ability to manage and cope in an unpredictable environment which therefore led to a sense of self as competent. The implications here are that subjective positive perceptions of beauty in nature can be related to the potential for positive perceptions of self, supporting the notion of a complex transaction (Dewey, 1960).

#### 7.2.2.2 Connection with self in context

Meaning derived from connection to a sense of self in context, through outdoor adventure, was evident within the meta-synthesis, adventure autobiographies and the interviews elements. In the meta-synthesis element (section 2) outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to enhanced self- awareness (Rickly-

Boyd, 2012; Simpson, *et al.* 2014); participants sought opportunities that enabled a sense of autonomy (Boniface, 2006) and personal responsibility for decisions (Brymer and Schweitzer, 2013); reconnection with an authentic self (Hinds, 2011); and identity construction (Lynch and Dibben, 2016) (see section 4.4.5.3). In addition, outdoor adventure prompted meaningful experiences of wilderness with a sense of spirituality (Loeffler, 2004) and connection to time and place (Hinds, 2011); humility with a new sense of self in context (Morse, 2014); and a metaphor for understanding other life circumstances (Loeffler, 2004) (see section 4.4.5.9). In the adventure autobiographies element (section 5) outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to identity formation and the opportunity to tell a creative interpretation of the adventure story (Simpson, 2003) (section 5.7.2.3). In the interviews element (section 6) participants described the significance of having their identity aligned with outdoor adventure (section 6.3.3.3.1); they also explored how solitude and simplicity met spiritual needs and enhanced perspective.

The claim that outdoor adventure can increase self-awareness is prevalent across the literature (Asfeldt and Hvenegaard, 2014). The related concepts of authentic-self and escapism (Heidegger, 1925/2010; Sartre, 1946/1974) and an embodied experience of being in space and time (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2009) originate from existential phenomenology. The sense of finding spiritual perspective, humility and reverence, by recognising being small in relation to the vastness of nature and time, is a recurrent theme, both across the thesis (sections 2.4.5.9; 5.3.4; 6.3.3.1.4) and across philosophical debate of the meaning of outdoor adventure (Macfarlane, 2003; Treanor, 2010). However,

whilst outdoor adventure has been associated with enhanced self-awareness, some argue that its inherent risk taking can be associated with a lack of understanding of personal defence mechanisms and avoidance of self-awareness (Nichols, 2008; Willig, 2008).

#### 7.2.2.3 Connection with others

Meaning derived from connection to others and a sense of belonging through outdoor adventure was evident in the data from all four elements. Belonging can be considered in terms of immediate personal relationships, community relationships; and societal relationships within cultural context (Hammell, 2014), aligning with a collectivist view (Owe *et al.*, 2013). Outdoor adventure can provide opportunities for connection with others, in terms of: belonging to a partnership or group for sharing an experience, and a wider group and community of people who identify with the outdoor adventure culture. Shared experience can provide opportunities for developing friendship, trust and camaraderie (Simpson, *et al.*, 2014). This finding was evident in the meta-synthesis (section 2.4.5.6) which identified that outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to connection with others in terms of developing friendship (Kerr and Hougue MacKenzie, 2012) and trust (Loeffler, 2004). In the focus group element (section 4.4.1.2) participants described meaning from social support. Being with others gave confidence and an incentive for walking and made the experience more enjoyable, prompting sustained participation, consistent with research by South *et al.* (2017). In the adventure autobiographies element (section 5.7.2.2) friendship was highlighted as a prime reason for engagement in outdoor adventure (Simpson, 2003; Blum, 2005;

Riches and Riches, 2010). In the interviews element (section 6.3.3.2) participants described meaning from sharing with and belonging to a group of like-minded people, consistent with occupational science theory (Reed, Hocking and Smythe, 2010; Hammell, 2014; Hitch, 2014).

Social connection was considered of central importance for initiating; sustaining and returning to engagement in outdoor adventure (see sections 6.3.4.1; 6.3.4.2 and 6.3.4.3). The interviews element also identified the importance of learning from others (this is explored further in relation to mastery). Some participants enjoyed the potential for competition and actively sought this. In the meta-synthesis (section 2.4.5.6) competition was considered enjoyable and motivational (Simpson, Post and Tashman, 2014; Lynch and Dibben, 2016). Similarly, Fiennes (2007) and MacArthur (2010) described being driven by competition. In the interviews element (section 6) participants described valuing opportunities both to seek or avoid competition (see section 6.3.3.2).

Outdoor adventure offered an opportunity for connection to a wider group and community of people who identify with the outdoor adventure culture, within which there are further sub-groups relating to specific activities. This was evident in the interviews element (6.3.3.2.1) and the meta-synthesis (section 2.4.5.6) where outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to inhabiting a community (Taylor, 2010; Simpson, Post and Tashman, 2014). Some added to this an ancestral or historic connection, in keeping with Hammell's (2014) suggestion. Svarstad (2010) described a cultural landscape linking across



generations; Fiennes (2007:170) referred to connection to the “whole clan here inside me” and Simpson (2003:149) describes “paying homage to heroes”.

In contrast, however, the concept of “adventure insiders” (Boniface, 2006:17) also gives rise to outsiders; the social context of outdoor adventure could also present a barrier. The ability to navigate social barriers was important in enabling participation in outdoor adventure and many described difficulties with membership of groups they perceived to be elitist (see section 6.3.4.2.2). This includes concern as to whether the group will accommodate the individuals’ current skill levels, as was evident in the focus group element (section 4.3.3.2). This in part relates to Wook Lee and Kielhofner’s (2017a:42) portrayal of “personal causation”, dependent on a sense of “personal capacity” and “self-efficacy”, where people need to feel able to achieve their desired outcomes in order to attempt them. It also relates to the need for a supportive social environment to enhance occupational engagement (Fisher, Parkinson and Haglund, 2017).

Sharing outdoor adventure with others can reduce or increase a sense of risk and responsibility. In the adventure autobiographies element (section 5) risk taking was explored in terms of its potentially negative impact on others, both present (on the expedition) and absent (friends and family at home) (see section 5.7.2.2). The element of risk can be uncomfortable in terms of the potential impact on others present and absent. Reconciling this is a feature of participation, with participants in outdoor adventure balancing rewards with moral and ethical judgements to justify risk taking (Charlton, 2010). Some

participants sought outdoor adventure for solitude to offset societal demands and manage relationships (section 6.3.3.4.1). Restoration through engaging in outdoor adventure can enable people to meet social demands (Ingman 2017) this is discussed in relation to escapism for health and wellbeing.

**7.2.3 Congruence with aspirations, values, beliefs and identity:** meaning in relation to occupation that is congruent with beliefs, values and aspirations for self and others; and in relation to an adventurous identity, health and wellbeing and environmental responsibility.

Across the four elements there was evidence of meaning associated with engagement in outdoor adventure that was congruent with values, beliefs and aspirations for self and others, in relation to identity, health and wellbeing. Occupations were meaningful because they provided the evidence for a personal identity associated with adventure, health and environmental responsibility (the findings in relation to these are explored under theme headings below, 7.2.3.1/2/3). The theme of congruence partly relates to the construct of spirituality in the Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E) (Polatajko, *et al.* 2013), in that occupations are meaningful when they align with values, identity and aspirations (Brémault-Phillips, 2018). It also partly relates to the construct of volition within Kielhofner's Model of Human Occupation (MOHO) (Wook Lee and Kielhofner, 2017a), of which, two components are: values and interests. The Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance (PEOP) model (Baum, Christiansen and Bass, 2015) refers to coherent "self-narratives" (Eakman, 2015:315) that bring order and meaning, aligning the present with future goals. Psychologists,

Oyserman and James (2012) also highlight the importance of congruency of actions, with perceptions of the current and future self, in order to pursue positive possible future identities (in their identity-based motivation model).

#### 7.2.3.1 Congruence with aspirations for adventure identity

In the meta-synthesis element (section 2) outdoor adventure provided meaning and focus in relation to establishing a plan for future participation (Olafsdottir, 2013; Miles and Wattchow, 2015); the call and preparation for engagement was in itself purposeful and congruent with aspirations for adventure (section 2.4.5.1). In the adventure autobiographies element (section 5) the autobiographers' described how their adventures had been inspired by childhood dreams and heroes (Wilson, 1998; Simpson, 2003; MacArther, 2010) and a need for change and challenge (Wilson, 1998; Riches and Riches, 2010). Childhood aspirations were influenced by historic and fictional adventure story characters and family members (Fiennes, 2007). Planning to fulfil these aspirations gave purpose (section 5.7.1). In the interviews element, participants were also influenced by adventure stories and family members; in addition, the role of clubs, schools, mentors and friends in influencing the desire to plan to participate in adventure was noteworthy (section 6.3.4.1).

Occupational scientists, Reed, Hocking and Smythe (2010:144) describe the "call to occupation" as the most pressing concern of competing demands. This reflects the "call of conscience" (Winkler, 2016:221) explored in the work of phenomenologists Heidegger (1926/1962), Levinas (1951/2006) and Ricoeur

(1981/2016), who describe the call to act in a way that is authentic to the self-narrative (consistent with Eakman, 2015). Of interest to this research however, is how the call, authentic self, and self-narrative become established, the answers arising in the findings in relation to outdoor adventure, suggest that it is through formative relationships and childhood adventure stories (section 5.7.1; 6.3.4.1).

However, an adventurous identity can also be problematic. An adventurous identity associated with being brave, fun and competent can be attractive; however, an adventurous identity associated with taking unnecessary risk and irresponsibility may be less desirable. This was evident within the apparent contradictions in the interviews study where participants portrayed themselves as both enjoying and avoiding risk (section 6.3.3.2).

#### 7.2.3.2 Congruence with aspirations for health and wellbeing

In the meta-synthesis (section 2) outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to the bodily experience of dynamic movement (Kerr and Hougue Mackenzie, 2012), exertion, interconnection between mind and body (Burke, Durand-Bush and Doell, 2010); and flow (Rickly-Boyd, 2012). This invoked feelings of wellbeing, happiness, fitness and restoration that were congruent with how participants wished to feel in terms of meeting aspirations for health and wellbeing (section 2.4.5.2). In the walking for health focus group element (section 4) walking groups were valued because they made participants feel better and adopt new occupations that improved the health of group members

and their families (section 4.4.1). Occupations were therefore congruent with aspirations for a healthier self. In the interviews element (section 6) participants presented the positive implications of outdoor adventure for mental health and psychological wellbeing; and physical health and fitness (section 6.3.3.4). This is consistent with widespread literature supporting the notion that outdoor adventure promotes health and wellbeing (Harper, Gabrielsen, and Carpenter, 2017); in terms of physical fitness (Andkjaer and Arvidsen, 2015), psychological restoration (Haluzá, Schobauer and Cervinka, 2014) and sustained engagement (Thompson Coon, *et al.*, 2011).

Whilst outdoor adventure can be associated with health and wellbeing, however, it can also be associated with injury. Managing injuries was framed positively in terms of being insignificant on balance in relation to the positives of participation in outdoor adventure (section 6.3.3.4.3) and in relation to presenting the self as resilient and able to manage hardship, consistent with a quest narrative (Goodnow and Ruddell, 2009; Miles and Wattchow, 2015) and adventurous identity (section 4.4.5.4).

#### 7.2.3.3 Congruence with beliefs of self in society and environmental responsibility.

In the meta-synthesis element, outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to escapism, freedom, novelty and an opportunity to live out a critique of society (Lusby and Anderson, 2010) (section 2.4.5.8). In addition, outdoor adventure provided meaningful experiences that changed participants' perspectives,

values and priorities in relation to appreciating and protecting natural and cultural landscapes (Hinds, 2011) (section 2.4.5.10). In the adventure autobiographies element, environmental values are presented as an integral part of three of the six stories (Wilson, 1998; Blum, 2005, MacArthur, 2010) (sections 4.6.3, 4.6.5, 4.6.6). In the interviews element (section 6) environmental values were evident in terms of farming, simplicity, and engendering responsibility within others to maintain an environment to be enjoyed as part of outdoor adventure culture (section 6.3.3.2.3). However, whilst outdoor adventure can be associated with appreciation of nature, it can also be associated with consumerism, the “MacDonaldization” (Ritzer, 2017) of the outdoors, and some participants described how they had engaged with the outdoor industry, or avoided it (section 6.3.3.2.3).

Evidence to suggest that use of outdoor adventure can engender values in relation to environmental stewardship is widespread (Dickson, Gray and Mann, 2008; Bramston, Pretty and Zammit, 2011; McDougle, Greenspan and Handy, 2011; Ross, Christie, Nicol and Higgins, 2014; Manni, Ottander and Sporre, 2017). An occupational therapy study, found that conservation volunteering could benefit mental and physical health and offer “ethical and spiritual resonance” (Birch, 2005:251). The concept of meaning arising from occupational engagement that enables a sense of social responsibility is consistent with the work of occupational scientists Ikiugu and Pollard (2015:36) who identified this as a finding within their research exploring meaningfulness arising from “worker-writer” autobiographies. In the worker-writer element, this included occupations focused towards political activism (Ikiugu and Pollard,

2015). Similarly, occupational scientists, Fox and Quinn (2012) explored the meaning of social activism to older adults in Ireland, concluding that it can be an occupation that enhances self-perception, wellbeing, societal status and a sense of purpose and busyness; and addressed spiritual goals.

#### **7.2.4 Competence and confidence in social, physical and cognitive skills:**

the *meaning and process* of engagement in outdoor adventure in relation to: developing social, physical and cognitive skills through new challenge, choices, risk and decision making; developing competence, confidence and accommodating a need for increasing complexity.

Meaning was associated with engagement in outdoor adventure that enabled the development of skills and a sense of mastery and competence in relation to new challenge, choices, risk and decision making. In addition, the process of engagement in outdoor adventure was influenced by the ability to establish confidence and accommodate increasing complexity; in terms of developing social networks, physical skills and the knowledge required to participate in chosen occupations.

##### **7.2.4.1 Competence and mastery of skills as meaningful aspects of engagement in outdoor adventure.**

In the meta-synthesis element, outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to a perception of self as able to push personal boundaries (Simpson, *et al.*, 2014), overcome hardships, master challenges and demonstrate competency for social capital (Hickman, *et al.*, 2016) (section 2.4.5.4). In addition, outdoor

adventure provided meaning in relation to risk-taking; the opportunities for fear and fun; and the ability to make decisions to accommodate both (Kerr and Hougue MacKenzie, 2012) (section 2.4.5.5). In the adventure autobiographies element, all of the stories presented the auto-biographer as competent in terms of strength, technique and ability to plan, make decisions and manage risk (section 5.7.2.3). In the interviews element, participants describe meaning from decision making and risk management, developing resilience through managing hardship and achievement, mastery and competence (6.3.3.3.1). Equally, in the walking for health focus group element (section 4) participants described the importance of having walks that offered an appropriate level of challenge and novelty (section 4.4.2.1) to enable a sense of achievement rather than boredom or inadequacy. A desire for novelty (Taylor,2010) was also evident in the meta-synthesis (section 4.4.5.8). Competence and mastery of skills, and the subsequent development of self-efficacy and resilience, are widely cited as meaningful aspects of engagement in outdoor adventure (Dickson, Gray and Mann, 2008; Ewert and Yoshino, 2011). In addition, occupational science research cites efficacy and competence as meaningful aspects of occupation more broadly (Ikuigu and Pollard, 2015). Having the right level of challenge is fundamental to this (Yerxa, 1998).

7.2.4.2 Confidence to support the process of establishing engagement in outdoor adventure.

Across all four elements, it was evident that participants needed to establish a feeling of confidence, as part of the process of engagement in outdoor adventure. In the meta-synthesis element and autobiographies element



participants described training physically and mentally in order to prepare for participation in outdoor adventure (Blum, 2005; Fiennes, 2007; Burke, Durand-Bush and Doell, 2010; Riches and Riches, 2010; Simpson, Post and Tashman, 2014) (sections 2.4.5.1; 5.4.1.3). In both the meta-synthesis element and the interviews element there was some debate about the use of guides, with some saying that having a guide enabled them to feel more confident (Pomfret, 2012; sections 2.4.5.5; 6.3.3.3.2). In contrast to this, some suggested that in order for an experience to be an adventure, people needed to be responsible for their own decisions (Kane and Tucker, 2007; sections 2.4.5.5; 6.3.3.3.2). In the focus group element, participants described the need for knowledge of the local area (section 4.3.2.3) and support from friends to try new things (section 4.3.1.2). In the interviews element, participants described knowing how to get into groups and developing skill to avoid embarrassment (section 6.3.4.2.1). The greatest barrier to participation in outdoor adventure was considered to be elitism within established groups, associated with skill, knowledge, gender, class and culture (section 6.3.3.2.2). It was notable that even participants with high levels of skill and agency, did not feel able to join certain groups. To overcome this, participants consistently referred to mentors and friends (section 6.3.4.2.1) and facilitated groups aimed at beginners (section 6.3.4.1.4), consistent with Pálsdóttir, *et al.*'s (2014) phased approach to nature-based occupations.

### 7.2.5 Convenience of location and routine alongside competing

**demands:** the *process* of engagement in outdoor adventure in relation to convenience: accommodating routines, location and multiple competing commitments.

The process of engagement in outdoor adventure was influenced by location, finances and the ability to accommodate participation in outdoor adventure alongside multiple competing priorities including work and family commitments and routines. In the focus group element, participants described accommodating routines, using local green space and considering barriers such as weather and finances (section 4.4.2). In the interviews element, participants also described how they accommodated their desire to participate in outdoor adventure in relation to their location and routine (section 6.3.4.2.3), managing family commitments (section 6.3.4.2.4), and managing work commitments (section 6.3.4.2.5) and finances (section 6.3.4.2.6). The difference between the two elements here are that: with the focus group participants the activity needed to fit in with competing demands in order for people to start participating; and with the interviews element individuals prioritised their participation over other commitments and changed jobs or moved location to enhance their participation in outdoor adventure. This perhaps reflects the extent to which participants had embraced the occupation as part of their identity and routine.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE, 2012:27) public health guidance of walking and cycling suggests that embedding physical activity within daily routine, especially commuting can be an effective way to enhance participation, stating that walking and cycling are the “most likely way”

people can achieve recommended levels of physical activity. Building on this, more recently NICE (2018) recommended promoting the use of public green spaces, highlighting environmental correlates with physical activity. These suggestions are consistent with the thesis findings in terms of sustained participation in walking, and outdoor adventure more broadly, being influenced by daily routine and location.

The concept of organising engagement in occupation in a patterned manner, consistent with roles and routine commitments, is recognised in Kielhofner's Model of Human Occupation (Wook Lee and Kielhofner, 2017b); convenience can be considered in relation to habituation. This is defined as:

*“Habituation is an internalized readiness to exhibit consistent patterns of behaviour guided by our habits and roles and fitted to the characteristics of routine temporal, physical, and social environments”* (Wook Lee and Kielhofner, 2017b)

Where participants in the focus group element and interviews element have been able to accommodate their engagement in walking and outdoor adventure alongside other routines, a pattern of engagement is sustained. This is evident with the parents meeting at the start of the school day (section 3.3.2.3) and the individuals who have embedded outdoor adventure within their working day or commute (section 6.3.4.2.3). However, where groups were arranged at an inconvenient time or location, participation was not sustained (section 3.3.2.3).

Despite “habituation” being a central tenet of the Model of Human Occupation since it originated (Kielhofner and Burke, 1980), Kielhofner's (2008a) use of the word to incorporate consideration of habits, roles and routines, differs from its

wider use within psychology, where it is considered in relation to mean acclimatisation or familiarisation (Rankin *et al.*, 2009). Whilst Kielhofner's (2008a) work offers a useful expansion on the psychological construct of habituation to explore determinants of occupational behaviour, and despite identifying the significance of social context and environment, his work has been criticised for its individualistic ontology (Iwama, 2006; Polatajko *et al.*, 2013). The related term "habitus" developed by sociologist Bourdieu (1979/2010:165) gives greater weighting to the social construction of behaviour and is useful here to illuminate the socio-cultural influences on engagement in occupation. In addition, the concepts of "field" and "capital" (Bourdieu, 1979/2010:3) are useful when considering the adventurous stories people integrate with their personal narrative and the contexts in which they play out this narrative. This then influenced how they prioritise their participation in their chosen occupations.

**7.2.6 Context at individual, community and population level:** process in relation to recognising the influence of individual, community and population contexts.

The meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure were influenced by individual, community and population context.

#### 7.2.6.1 Individual context

In keeping with a phenomenological focus on unique experience (Finlay, 2011) the influence of individual perspective and context was evident in the focus

group, autobiographies and interviews elements. These highlighted a change in the meaning and expectations of outdoor adventure over time and at different points in the life span. In the focus group study, participants highlighted a desire for increasing challenge and complexity as skills and confidence developed (section 4.3.2.1). By contrast, in the autobiographies element, Blum (2005) and Simpson (2003) described seeking less challenge over time, as they sought to reduce risk and instead focus on aesthetic appreciation of nature (sections 5.4.3.1). MacArthur (2010) was initially driven by competition and then later focused on environmentalism. Similarly, in the interviews element, some participants were initially attracted to outdoor adventure for excitement, competition, risk and social capital; however, later engagement was more greatly influenced by connection, restoration and wellbeing (section 6.3.4.2.7). In addition, (whilst the aspects that were considered meaningful changed), across the autobiographies and interviews elements, engagement in outdoor adventure through childhood and early adulthood had an important influence on engagement across the rest of the lifespan (sections 5.4.1.1 and 6.3.4.1). These changes over time are consistent with recent research by Loeffler (2018) who also identified the significance of childhood engagement in outdoor adventure. This was then expanded in adulthood to form a “repertoire of outdoor activity”, to accommodate the fluctuating demands of other commitments, and a changeable relationship with risk and achievement (Loeffler, 2018:8).

Similarly, Boniface’s (2006) study of women in the outdoors described how most of her participants would kayak in the winter and climb or mountaineer in

the summer. An occupational science research study of “serious leisure” also highlighted changes over time, both in the way that people engage with occupations, and the aspects that offer meaning (Taylor and Kay, 2013). Consistent with this, Eakman (2015) suggested that meaning in occupation is plastic and dynamic and that change must be considered in order to understand the meaning of occupation.

#### 7.2.6.2 Community context

In keeping with a contextual constructionist epistemology and transactional ontology (section 3.1), individual contexts in terms of personal expectations across the lifespan are considered socially-situated. As explored in sections 7.2.2.3 and 7.2.4.2, within the interviews element participants described social barriers and elitism associated with skill, knowledge, gender, class and culture (section 6.3.3.2.2). Similarly, the NICE (2018) guideline: “Physical activity and the environment” suggests that particular groups of people are less likely to use open spaces for physical activity due to social inequalities and disadvantage associated with socioeconomic status, disability or ethnicity. In the focus group element, walking groups were set up to target potentially disadvantaged populations, but these were difficult to establish (section 4.3). The successful walking group was convenient for participants, had a clear remit and a strong social focus (in a community with pre-established connections), and group members took increasing responsibility for functional tasks (section 3.3.3.1). This transference of responsibility and leadership skills is consonant with the mentoring model described by participants in the interviews element, where beginners were taught new skills from more experienced peers and then in turn

passed this knowledge on (section 6.3.4.2.1). The supported development of skills and confidence could then offset perceived social barriers. In addition, the participants in the interviews element suggested that the breadth of opportunities of outdoor adventure and what it could offer could be explored with people to inspire participation (section 6.3.4.1.4).

### 7.2.6.3 Population context

The findings of both the autobiographies element and the interviews element demonstrated the significance of cultural narratives in inspiring engagement in outdoor adventure (sections 5.4.1.1 and 6.3.4.1.2). Most of the autobiographies referred to (other) famous adventurers, including Scott (Fiennes, 2007), Shackleton (Riches and Riches, 2010) and Mallory (Simpson, 2003); in addition, they also referred to fictional adventure story characters (Wilson, 1998). Likewise, in the interviews element, participants referred to inspirational adventure and nature-based stories read in both childhood and adulthood (section 6.3.4.1.2). This suggests that inspirational stories can have an impact on occupational engagement.

The implications of the study and recommendations for further research are explored in Chapter 8, the concluding discussion.

## **Chapter 8. Concluding discussion**

8.1 The implications of each element of the thesis and recommendations for further research

In chapter 8, the conclusion, the research question, aims and objectives have been revisited with consideration of the contribution and implications of the thesis, and its limitations with recommendations for future research. Each element of the thesis is considered in turn.

8.1.1 Element 1: the meaning of outdoor adventure: a qualitative systematic review and meta-synthesis

This element presented a systematic review of the literature available on the meaning of outdoor adventure and a meta-synthesis of the findings (see section 2.1). This review demonstrated that, in 22 studies with a combined total of over 350 participants, people described outdoor adventure as meaningful and beneficial for health and wellbeing. Clear inclusion criteria informed the search strategy. The articles retrieved came from diverse academic disciplines; notably, no studies acknowledged an occupational science perspective, evidencing a gap in relation to this. Despite the diversity of disciplines, the studies presented consistency in relation to the meaning of outdoor adventure. These also resonated with wider occupational science research on the meaning of occupation (Ikiugu and Pollard, 2015); supporting the notion of the value of looking to other disciplines to understand the experience of occupations (Pierce, 2014).



A limitation of having a systematic review within an interpretivist thesis is that it is epistemologically rooted in a differing philosophical position (Marks and Sykes, 2004). However, the articles retrieved were all qualitative and predominantly phenomenological, prompting the use of phenomenology to inform the thesis. The advantage of a systematic review within a qualitative thesis is that it enabled breadth, in a study that otherwise has small sample sizes for depth, for cross comparison.

A critical appraisal screen was used to ensure that literature included in the review was of a high quality (JBI, 2014). A limitation of the study is that unpublished material was excluded. This was a pragmatic decision, as reviewers can spend long periods of time searching for unpublished material that then does not meet the critical appraisal screen requirements (Dundar and Fleeman, 2017). However, this means that the data is subject to a publication bias of favourable outcomes. Further searching of unpublished material would enhance the rigour of this element.

Arising from this element therefore, is a contribution to research in relation to understanding the meaning of outdoor adventure as described across disciplines; and evidence of a gap in the literature in terms of considering outdoor adventure from an occupational science perspective, which enhanced the rationale for further research within the thesis. This element demonstrated the usefulness of reviewing literature from other disciplines to enhance understanding of occupation. Further research to explore the meaning of wider

occupations is therefore justified. In addition, literature searching for the introduction demonstrated a number of conference abstracts, but very little high quality research in relation to the use of outdoor adventure within occupational therapy (Jeffery and Wilson, 2017). A scoping review would therefore be useful to establish current practice.

#### 8.1.2 Element 2: factors affecting sustained engagement in walking for health: a focus group study

The focus group element captured views from group members from both successful and unsuccessful walking groups, and from staff members (see section 4.1). A strength of this element is that it enabled exploration of a community practice context and established useful considerations with regards to the sustainability of walking and walking groups. The contribution from this element is the evidence that walking groups can promote health and wellbeing and lead to sustained engagement in walking; also that clarity over the remit and format of the group and roles of facilitators is required for a group to be successfully established. However the sample size was small, and wider consideration of walking groups in differing contexts would be beneficial.

Focus groups are useful for understanding cultural context (Gibson and Riley, 2010) but may limit the depth of discussion from individuals (Berg and Lune, 2012). Further research into community interventions might follow up focus groups with individual interviews for greater depth. In addition, the research also raised discussion around collaborative working between agencies in

relation to clarity over remit (see section 4.3.3.2). Future research into the sustainability of walking groups might also explore the relationships between providers, potentially, for example, a Foucauldian discourse analysis might enable consideration of dynamics between partners (Willig, 2015), and how these could be enhanced to promote collaborative practice.

### 8.1.3 Element 3: outdoor adventure autobiographies as exemplars of occupational engagement: an interpretative phenomenological analysis study

Analysis of adventure autobiographies enabled consideration of life span perspectives and storied accounts of participation in outdoor adventure (see section 5.1). This element also informed the semi-structured interview guide for element 4. The contribution to research of this element is that the findings illustrated the process by which people became engaged in outdoor adventure, an underdeveloped concept. Autobiographies were a useful tool for consideration of occupational engagement and of outdoor adventure culture. A limitation of the study was the sample size. Whilst IPA studies necessarily have small, homogenous samples to enable depth (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009), further research would be beneficial to consider broader socio-cultural contexts. The use of autobiography to consider the meaning of occupations demonstrated the potential contribution of a narrative approach to explore storied accounts of occupation.

#### 8.1.4 Element 4: the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure activities: an interpretative phenomenological analysis study

The individual outdoor adventure participant interviews demonstrated that participants found outdoor adventure meaningful in relation to connection with self, others and nature, and enhanced health and wellbeing. The process of becoming engaged in outdoor adventure was influenced by formative experiences, relationships, accommodating competing commitments and changes in meaning over time (see section 6.3.2). This element offers a contribution to research in relation to understanding the process by which people become engaged in occupations and the meaning of outdoor adventure. The strengths of the study are that it offers in depth consideration of detailed accounts of engagement. A limitation of this element is the sample, influenced by Western, academic and professional perspectives (see Table 17). Participants themselves identified the need for greater socio-cultural diversity within the outdoor adventure community and research (see section 6.3.4.2.2). Further research to consider multi-cultural and socio-economic diversity would be beneficial to enhance a broader understanding of the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure and consider accessibility to potential participants at all levels.

#### 8.1.5 Element 5: synthesis of the findings

This element provides a thematic synthesis of the findings across the previous four elements (see section 7.1). Five synthesised themes are presented, in relation to the meaning and process of engagement of outdoor adventure. The

implications of the thesis are therefore that consideration of: connection, congruence, competence and confidence, convenience and context can inform understanding of the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure. This provides an alternative perspective to the behavioural models of physical activity participation (Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 2010) presented in the introduction (section 1.1.3). Phenomenology enhanced a humanistic interpretation of the findings (Smith and Eatough, 2015) and exploration of the meaning of lived experience (Finlay, 2011). An occupational science perspective prompted a focus on the meaning and process of occupational engagement (Pierce, 2014). The implications of the study are that these aspects of meaning and dynamic process could be considered within health promotion and occupational therapy practice to enhance initiating, sustaining and returning to occupational engagement in outdoor adventure. Further research would now be beneficial in relation to evaluating the application of these concepts in occupational therapy practice.

## 8.2 Response to the research question and aims

The research question was: "What is the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure from an occupational science perspective and how can this inform health promotion within occupational therapy?" This is now considered in relation to the aims.

### 8.2.1 Aim 1: Explore the meaning of outdoor adventure for participants

The meaning of outdoor adventure for participants was associated with connection to self, others and the natural environment; the congruence of occupations with aspirations, values, beliefs and identity; and a sense of competence and mastery of physical, cognitive and social skills. Outdoor adventure participants experienced changes in meaning and priorities over time. The implications for the use of outdoor adventure within occupational therapy and health promotion practice are that, sustained engagement can be promoted through: supporting the experience of connection, congruence and competence; and supporting people to develop a repertoire of activities that can accommodate changing preference over time.

### 8.2.2 Aim 2: Explore the opportunities presented by outdoor adventure to promote health and wellbeing

Outdoor adventure provided opportunities to enhance health and wellbeing in relation to an embodied experience of flow and restoration. Participants reported feeling better, both in terms of physical fitness and psychological wellbeing. Aspects of outdoor adventure that were experienced as meaningful enhanced the sustained engagement and therefore the physical and psychological benefits. The implications for the use of outdoor adventure within occupational therapy and health promotion practice are that, supporting people to have meaningful engagement in outdoor adventure can enhance physical and psychological health and wellbeing and sustained engagement in health promoting occupation.

8.2.3 Aim 3: Explore how this meaning relates to the process of occupational engagement in terms of initiating, sustaining and returning to engagement.

The process of establishing engagement in outdoor adventure was influenced by: levels of confidence in social, physical and cognitive skills; the convenience of participating in terms of location and routine alongside competing demands; and context at individual, community and population levels. In addition, outdoor adventure that was anticipated to be, and then experienced as, meaningful, led to sustained engagement. The implications for the use of outdoor adventure within occupational therapy and health promotion practice are that, people benefit from support to develop confidence in new skills when initiating engagement, mentoring schemes can be useful for this. In addition, it is helpful if activities can be provided at a variety of locations, times and levels; with required skills clearly communicated. Finally, aspirational identity was influenced by cultural narratives, engaging with inspirational adventure stories can prompt initial, sustained and a return to engagement in outdoor adventure; seeking opportunities to harness this in practice contexts may be beneficial.

### 8.3 Critical evaluation

When evaluating the validity of qualitative research, Yardley (2015:269) suggests the following four principles: “sensitivity to context”, “commitment and rigour”, “coherence and transparency” and “impact and importance” (see section 3.3.3). These informed the evaluation of this thesis:

### 8.3.1 Sensitivity to context

This thesis demonstrated sensitivity to context in relation to the literature used to inform the thesis which was drawn from inter-disciplinary contexts. The introduction explored literature from occupational science, occupational therapy, health promotion and outdoor adventure (see section 1.1). The systematic review included research in relation to a broad range on outdoor adventure activities (see 2.3.2) from differing disciplines, including geography (Riese and Vorkinn, 2002), leisure and tourism (Allman, *et al.*, 2009) and health psychology (Bowen and Neill, 2013); and different countries including the UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Norway. In the following elements, a community context is considered through the use of focus groups in relation to walking for health. The cultural context of outdoor adventure is explored through adventure autobiographies. Unique individual perspectives are explored through semi-structured interview and interpretative phenomenological analysis. The researcher's context is explored through reflexive accounts. A dominance of Western perspectives is acknowledged across all elements.

### 8.3.2 Commitment and rigour:

Social, hermeneutic and existential phenomenology enabled contextualised, interpretative consideration of rich accounts of lived experience. The systematic review provided a breadth of wider research for cross comparison with in-depth unique perspectives arising from autobiographies and interviews. Interpretative phenomenological analysis prompted detailed interrogation of



descriptive, linguistic and conceptual aspects of the data (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009).

### 8.3.3 Coherence and transparency:

Philosophy informing the methodology is explored in Chapter 3; the historical context of phenomenology is presented with clarification of the position of the researcher (see section 3.8). Reflexive accounts throughout the thesis demonstrate the influence of the researcher on the research and vice versa (JBI, 2014) for transparency.

### 8.3.4 Impact and importance:

To conclude, the thesis is summarised with a thematic synthesis of the findings across elements to present five aspects for consideration in relation to the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure. As identified in 8.2, the implications of the thesis are therefore that consideration of: connection, congruence, competence and confidence, convenience and context can inform understanding of the meaning and process of engagement in outdoor adventure. Further research is required to evaluate the application of these concepts in occupational therapy practice.

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## Appendices:

Appendix 1.

### PRISMA 2009 Checklist (Moher *et al*, 2009:4/5)

Section :	#	Checklist item:	Pg.
TITLE			
Title	1		
ABSTRACT			
Structured summary	2		
INTRODUCTION			
Rationale	3		
Objectives	4		
METHODS			
Protocol and registration	5		
Eligibility criteria	6		
Information sources	7		
Search	8		
Study selection	9		
Data collection process	10		
Data items	11		
Risk of bias in individual studies	12		
Summary measures	13		
Synthesis of results	14		
Risk of bias across studies	15		
Additional analyses	16		

<b>RESULTS</b>			
Study selection	17		
Study characteristics	18		
Risk of bias within studies	19		
Results of individual studies	20		
Synthesis of results	21		
Risk of bias across studies	22		
Additional analysis	23		
<b>DISCUSSION</b>			
Summary of evidence	24		
Limitations	25		
Conclusions	26		
<b>FUNDING</b>			
Funding	27		

## **The Meaning of Outdoor Adventure: A Systematic Review to Inform Health Promotion**

### **Citation**

Raine, Rosi; Bannigan, Katrina; Roberts, Anne; Callaghan, Lynne.

The Meaning of Outdoor Adventure: A Systematic Review to Inform Health Promotion

Available from: <http://www.crd.york.ac.uk/PROSPERO>

### **Review question:**

What is the meaning of outdoor adventure to participants?

### **Searches**

The literature search will include research studies that are published, unpublished and grey literature. Electronic databases will be searched using keywords and in accordance with search tools for each database. In addition identified journals of direct relevance will be hand-searched, if not available through electronic database. Forward and backward citation searching will also be carried out on included studies. Reasons for inclusion and exclusion of studies will be recorded on a PRISMA flow diagram. Researchers, institutions and organisations associated with this field of study will be contacted to find eligible on-going or unpublished studies, this will include, for example:

- Natural England: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/>
- The Institute for Outdoor Learning: <http://www.outdoor-learning.org/>
- Association of Experiential Education (USA/Europe): <http://www.aee.org/>
- Collaboration for Environmental Evidence: <http://www.environmentalevidence.org/>
- and the European Centre for Environment and Human Health: <http://www.ecehh.org/>

*Electronic data sources to include:*

Databases for published research:	Databases for additional grey literature:
<p>AMED</p> <p>British Education Index (BEI)</p> <p>British Nursing Index (BNI)</p> <p>CINAHL Plus with Full Text</p> <p>Cochrane Library</p> <p>EMBASE: Excerpta Medica (Ovid)</p> <p>Environment Complete</p> <p>ERIC</p> <p>GreenFILE (EBSCO)</p> <p>Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) EBP</p> <p>MEDLINE (Ovid)</p> <p>PsycINFO</p> <p>SocINDEX</p> <p>Web of Science</p> <p>ASSIA</p> <p>SPORTDiscus (EBSCO)</p> <p>ScopusProQuest Sociology</p> <p>Campbell Library</p>	<p>EThOS</p> <p>MEDLINE-in-Process (Ovid)</p> <p>ProQuest Dissertations &amp; Theses</p> <p>ProQuest Conference Papers Index</p> <p>OTseeker (College of Occupational Therapists)</p> <p>Open Grey</p>

The following specific journals of direct relevance were checked for inclusion in databases, to ensure that articles will be retrieved through the database search:

<b><i>Outdoor Adventure Journals:</i></b>	<b><i>Date from:</i></b>	<b><i>Data source:</i></b>
Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning	JAEOL 1998 to present	ERIC
Wilderness & Environmental Medicine	1995 to present	CINAHL Plus (with Full Text)
<b><i>Occupational Therapy/Science Journals:</i></b>	<b><i>Date from:</i></b>	<b><i>Data source:</i></b>
British Journal of Occupational Therapy	1986 – present	CINAHL Plus
Mental Health Occupational Therapy	03/01/2003 to 03/01/2011	CINAHL Plus
Occupational Therapy Now	01/01/1999 to present	CINAHL Plus
Indian Journal of Physiotherapy & Occupational Therapy	01/01/2008 to present	CINAHL Plus
New Zealand Journal of Occupational Therapy	BR: 01/01/1995 to present; FullText:03/01/2003 to present	CINAHL Plus
Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy	BR01/01/1996 to present; Full Text:03/02/1999 to 2014	CINAHL Plus
South African Journal of Occupational Therapy	BR 05/01/2003 to present; Full Text:03/01/2008 to present	CINAHL Plus
American Journal of Occupational Therapy	Bibliographic Records: 01/01/1963 to present	CINAHL Plus
Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy	Bibliographic Records: 02/01/1983 to present	CINAHL Plus
Occupational Therapy Journal of Research	Bibliographic Records: 07/01/1986 to 12/01/2001	CINAHL Plus
Occupational Therapy in Health Care	BR 01/01/1988 to present; Full Text:01/01/2001 to 2014	CINAHL Plus
Occupational Therapy	BR 03/01/1994 to present;	CINAHL Plus



International	Full Text:03/01/2000 to 2014	
Australian Occupational Therapy Journal	BR 03/01/1991 to present; Full Text:03/01/1998 to 2014	CINAHL Plus
Hong Kong Journal of Occupational Therapy	Bibliographic Records: 06/01/2011 to present	CINAHL Plus
Occupational Therapy in Mental Health	Bibliographic Records: 03/01/1980 to present	CINAHL Plus
Advance for Occupational Therapy Practitioners	Bibliographic Records: 01/04/2010 to present	CINAHL Plus
Irish Journal of Occupational Therapy	BR:03/01/2008 to present	CINAHL Plus
Israel Journal of Occupational Therapy	Bibliographic Records: 02/01/2005 to present	CINAHL Plus
Journal of Occupational Science	BR 04/01/1998 to present	CINAHL Plus
Journal of Occupational Science: Australia	BR 04/01/1995 to 11/01/1997	CINAHL Plus
Ergoscience	BR 03/01/2011 to present	CINAHL Plus
Cadernos de Terapia Ocupacional da UFSCar	Bibliographic Records:01/01/2010 to present	CINAHL Plus
OTJR: Occupation, Participation & Health	BR 04/01/2002 to present; Full Text:01/01/2003 to 2010	CINAHL Plus
Physical Disabilities Special Interest Section Quarterly	Bibliographic Records: 03/01/1999 to present	CINAHL Plus
Occupation	BR11/01/1993 to 12/01/2002	CINAHL Plus
Home & Community Health Special Interest Section Quarterly	Bibliographic Records: 03/01/1999 to present	CINAHL Plus
Ergotherapie & Rehabilitation	BR Selective coverage to 2001	CINAHL Plus
OT Practice	BR 01/01/1996 to present	CINAHL Plus

In addition the following hand searches will be carried out (other journals may be added as identified through citation searches):

*Hand-search data sources to include:*

<b><i>Outdoor Adventure Journals:</i></b>	<b><i>Date from:</i></b>	<b><i>Data source:</i></b>
Horizons (JAEOL)	1991 to 1998	HAND-SEARCH: (paper)
Adventure Education (JAEOL)	1984 to 1991	HAND-SEARCH: (paper)
Journal of Experiential Education	1978 to present	HAND-SEARCH: (paper)
Therapeutic Recreation Journal	1983 to present	HAND-SEARCH: SAGAMORE
Australian Journal of Outdoor Education	2007 to present	HAND-SEARCH: e-journal
New Zealand Journal of Outdoor Education	2004 – 2011	HAND-SEARCH: (paper)
Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education and Leadership	2015 (transfer to Sagamore)	HAND-SEARCH: SAGAMORE
	2009 to 2014	HAND-SEARCH: (journal website)
<b><i>Occupational Therapy/Science Journals:</i></b>	<b><i>Date from:</i></b>	<b><i>Data source:</i></b>
British Journal of Occupational Therapy	Before 1986	HANDSEARCH on journal website
Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy	Previous 18 months (2014-2016)	HANDSEARCH on journal website
Occupational Therapy in Health Care	Previous 18 months (2014-2016)	HANDSEARCH on journal website
Occupational Therapy International	Previous 18 months (2014-2016)	HANDSEARCH on journal website
Australian Occupational Therapy Journal	Previous 18 months (2014-2016)	HANDSEARCH on journal website

*Publication period:* unlimited start date, search to be completed June 2016.

*Species:* Human

*Language:* English (including translated)

*Keywords/search terms:* see table below.

### **Types of study to be included:**

All research studies considering outdoor adventure in terms of the meaning for participants, including:

- Qualitative research studies from any discipline, data collection may include: cohort or case studies, focus groups; individual interviews; ethnographic interviews; participant observation; documentary analysis; field notes and audio visual collection. Methods of analysis may include: grounded theory; narrative analysis; thematic analysis; interpretative phenomenological analysis; discourse analysis.
- Quantitative studies, for example statistical effectiveness with pre and post intervention outcomes.
- Systematic literature reviews including narrative analysis, meta-syntheses or meta-analyses of any study design. (Systematic reviews will be used to inform the study and locate relevant research; they will not be included in the synthesis of data to avoid duplication.)

### **Condition or domain being studied**

The meaning of engaging in outdoor adventure for participants.

### **Participants/ population**

The research population may include any participant who engages in outdoor adventure and offers a description of the meaning it gives them. Populations may include people who consider themselves to be disabled or non-disabled and may include people who are participating to address mental health, physical health, social or personal development outcomes. Participants may be from across the life course and either gender. Participants may consider themselves to be from any cultural context or social group.

## **Intervention(s), exposure(s)**

### *Included:*

Research exploring the meaning to adult participants of engaging in any outdoor adventure activities will be included. These are considered to be meaningful physical activities carried out in a natural environment with an element of risk management. Outdoor adventure activities are difficult to categorise, the Association of Experiential Education (2015) has described high adventure activities with examples of “rock climbing, paddling on moving water, mountain biking, ice climbing, caving, rappelling, mountaineering, canyoneering, or more remote and extended backpacking trips” and low adventure activities as hiking or paddling in a more controlled environment.

### *Excluded:*

Non-research articles and research focussed on outdoor adventure to address education, corporate or management outcomes will be excluded. Studies in relation to activities that are generally carried out outside, but do not have an adventurous or exploration element will be excluded, for example gardening, fishing, rugby or football. Studies where all participants are under age 18 will be excluded.

## **Comparator(s)/ control**

N/A

## **Outcome(s)**

### **Primary outcomes**

Identify the meaning of outdoor adventure to participants to inform health promotion with adults.

### **Secondary outcomes**

N/A

## **Data extraction (selection and coding)**

First preliminary searches and piloting of the study selection process is required to confirm search terms and the eligibility criteria. Once refined, all identified data sources will be searched. A PRISMA flow diagram will be used to document the study selection process.

Search results of titles and abstracts will be entered into EndNote reference manager and duplicates removed. They will then be formally screened against the eligibility criteria by two reviewers independently to identify potentially relevant studies. The reason for rejection of abstracts will be recorded.

Then full-text articles will be obtained and any disputed texts will be assessed again using the same criteria by two review team members. If there are discrepancies in judging eligibility that cannot be resolved by discussion, a third reviewer will be consulted. Data will be extracted using a piloted data extraction form, to include the following:

- study purpose, rationale, justification;
- research aims, objectives and questions;
- study design, methodology, method, analytic process;
- population characteristics, sampling strategy, sample size;
- activity, intervention, programme, setting, theoretical approach, location;
- outcomes used and findings.

Study characteristics will be tabulated.

### **Risk of bias (quality) assessment**

The CASP (Critical Appraisal Skills Programme, 2015) appraisal tools will be used to evaluate identified studies. These include tools for cohort studies, qualitative studies and systematic reviews which preliminary reading suggests are the studies that are likely to be available for review. Two authors will assess each study; where further discussion is required a third reviewer will be consulted. Studies will not be excluded on the grounds of poor methodological quality, however weaknesses in the study design will be identified and results will be interpreted with caution.

### **Strategy for data synthesis**

Methods of data synthesis will depend on the nature of the evidence identified; the reasons for choices will be reported. Study characteristics will be tabulated.

- Qualitative research studies – thematic analyses of all studies will be completed and used to summarise the evidence. If there is sufficient depth within the studies a narrative synthesis will be conducted.
- Quantitative studies – if sufficient studies are identified a meta-analysis will be conducted, alternatively the findings will be integrated with the thematic analysis reported above.
- (Systematic literature reviews – these will be used to inform this review; studies identified within these will be sourced separately and integrated with the findings above. Care will be taken to ensure there is no duplication of data.)

**Analysis of subgroups or subsets**

By research method, population, outdoor adventure activity and meaning identified.

**Dissemination plans**

This systematic literature review will contribute to a PhD thesis. The author will also seek to publish it in a peer reviewed journal and present at conferences.

**Contact details for further information**

Rosi Raine, School of Health Professions, PAHC, Derriford Rd, Plymouth, PL6 8BH

**Organisational affiliation of the review:** Plymouth University

**Anticipated or actual start date:** 10<sup>th</sup> January 2016

**Anticipated completion date:** 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016

**Funding sources/sponsors:** None

**Conflicts of interest:** None known

**Language:** English

**Country:** UK

**Subject index terms status:** Subject indexing assigned by CRD

**Subject index terms:** Humans

**Stage of review:** Ongoing

**Date of registration in PROSPERO:** 10<sup>th</sup> January 2016

**Date of publication of this revision:** 10<sup>th</sup> January 2016

<b>Stage of review at time of this submission Completed</b>	<b>Started</b>	
Preliminary searches	Yes	No
Piloting of the study selection process	Yes	No
Formal screening of search results against eligibility criteria	No	No
Data extraction	No	No
Risk of bias (quality) assessment	No	No
Data analysis	No	No

## **PROSPERO**

### **International prospective register of systematic reviews**

The information in this record has been provided by the named contact for this review.

### **References:**

Association of Experiential Education (2015) Adventure Activities: High Adventure/Natural Environment Activities.

[http://www.aee.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=223:tapg-high-adventure&catid=22:connect](http://www.aee.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=223:tapg-high-adventure&catid=22:connect) Accessed 22.11.15

Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (2015) <http://www.casp-uk.net/> Accessed 29.11.15

## A Systematic Review of the Meaning of Outdoor Adventure

Search strategy: synonyms for title and abstract search.

Search concepts will include the following terms/concepts each will be searched separately in turn to enable identification of terms that generate large amounts of data that does not meet the inclusion criteria. These will then be refined, for example, “blue” has been refined to “blue gym”.

SEARCH TERM/CONCEPT 1: <b>OR</b>	<b>AND</b> SEARCH TERM/CONCEPT 2: <b>OR</b>	
<i>Meaning:</i>	<i>Outdoor:</i>	
Meaning*	Outdoor	Forest
Motiv*	Outside	River
Determin*	Wilderness	Ocean
Sense	Bush	Sea
Value	Natur*	Canyon*
Importan*	Eco*	Creek*
Intrinsic	Environment*	Cave
	Mountain*	Glacier
	Peak	Ice
	Alp*	“Blue gym”
	Hill	“Green gym”
	Rock	
<i>Additional terms:</i>	<i>Adventure:</i>	
Outcome	Adventure	Recreation
Purpos*	Risk	Explor*
Benefi*	Experien*	Excursion*
Rationale	Challenge	“Extreme sport**”
Occupation	Expedition	“Physical leisure”
	Journey	“Outdoor leisure”
	<i>Activities:</i>	



	Sail*	Cycl*
	Div*	Run*
	Climb*	Ascen*
	Repelling	Paddl*
	Abseil*	Kayak
	Hik*	Rope
	Tramp*	Boat
	Walk*	Canoe
	Trek*	Bike
	Swim*	Board
	Camp*	

Appendix 3. Databases, hosts and number of articles retrieved” below:

	<b>Database/host:</b>	<b>Number of articles:</b>
1	<b>EBSCOhost:</b> AMED, British Education Index (BEI), <a href="#">CINAHL Plus with Full Text</a> , Environment Complete, ERIC, GreenFILE (EBSCO), <a href="#">MEDLINE (Ovid)</a> , SocINDEX	906
2	<b>ProQuest:</b> Australian Education Index, Periodicals Archive Online, PILOTS: Published International Literature on Traumatic Stress, PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO	574
3	<b>Web of Science</b>	1056
4	<b>Scopus</b>	1232
	Total number of articles found:	3768
	Once duplicates had been removed:	2111

Appendix 4. Title and abstract screen of 2111 records

Code:	Reviewer decision:	Reason:	Number of articles:
1	Include	Research meets the inclusion criteria, with regards to content to progress to the full text screen.	44
2	Unsure	Research may meet the inclusion criteria, further information and discussion between reviewers required.	99
0 A	Exclude	The population is not adults, participants are under 16 and/or the primary focus is on educational outcomes.	83
0 B	Exclude	The primary focus is not on meaning, participants may be exploring other outcomes of therapeutic intervention or corporate training.	64
0 C	Exclude	The primary focus is not outdoor adventure; it may be conservation, wildlife encounters, environmental design or gardening.	116
0 D	Exclude	The article is not based on primary qualitative research; it may be quantitative research, a literature review or an opinion piece.	6
0 E	Exclude	The research/text is not published in a peer-reviewed research journal; it may be a conference paper, thesis or book.	646
0 F	Exclude	The research is unrelated to the review question, it may use search terms in a different context, metaphorically, or as a name.	1053

All articles given a “1” - include”, or a “2 - unsure” by either reviewer, were taken forward to be read in full, therefore a total of 143 articles went through a full text screen.

Appendix 5. Full Text Screen of 143 articles:

Code:	Reviewer decision:	Reason:	Number of articles:	
1	Include	Research meets the inclusion criteria, with regards to content to progress to critical appraisal screen.	26	
0 A	Exclude	The population is not adults, participants are under 16 and/or the primary focus is on educational outcomes.	14	
0 B	Exclude	The primary focus is not on meaning, participants may be exploring other outcomes of therapeutic intervention or corporate training.	23	
0 C	Exclude	The primary focus is not outdoor adventure; it may be conservation, wildlife encounters, environmental design or gardening.	20	
0 D	Exclude	The article is not based on qualitative research; it may be quantitative research, a literature review or an opinion piece.	3	
0 E	Exclude	The research/text is not published in a peer-reviewed research journal; it may be a conference paper, thesis or book.	2	
0 F	Exclude	The research is unrelated to the review question, it may use search terms in a different context, metaphorically, or as a name.	0	
0 G	Exclude	Other reason to be stated:	55	
		Not in English		5
		Not outdoor adventure		8
		Not meaning, focused on tourism or sports facilities		15
		Not meaning, focused on risk only		8
		Not meaning, focused on a scientific expedition		4
		Not meaning, focused on sport performance science		12
		Not meaning, focused on gender equality and perceptions		3

In total, 143 articles were considered in the full text screen by two reviewers, 26 went forward for a critical appraisal screen. Of these 26, 18 were allocated a “1 – include” code by both reviewers independently, the other eight were discussed between the two reviewers before being given a “1 – include” code. With the 117 articles that were excluded, 88 were given a code of “0 – exclude” by both reviewers, 21 were discussed in depth between the two reviewers before being given a “0 – exclude” code and eight were also discussed with a third reviewer before being given a “0 - exclude” code. Five papers were excluded due to language, ‘The Reviewers’ Manual’ (JBI, 2014) recommends that a record is kept of the number of studies in each language group for transparency. Of the five non-English papers, three are written in French (all from France), one in German (from Germany) and one in Portuguese (from Brazil). The eight papers that were discussed with three reviewers (RR, LB & PE) are included within the numbers above.

Appendix 6. Illustration of reviewers' discussion of excluded articles.

Reference:	Article title:	Reason for exclusion:
Foley (2015)	'Swimming in Ireland: Immersions in therapeutic blue space'	<i>OG – not 'adventure'</i> : This article was originally considered for inclusion in relation to wild swimming. However on closer inspection, despite being in the sea, the swimming occurs in an established site with man-made facilities including steps, seats and changing shelters and therefore the activity does not meet the criteria in relation to outdoor adventure and exploration of wilderness.
Hagen & Boyes (2016)	'Affective ride experiences on mountain bike terrain'	<i>OG - not 'meaning', focused on sports facilities</i> : This article was originally considered for inclusion because it explores the experience of mountain biking. However on closer inspection, the findings relate primarily to structures and terrain within trails, including types of soil, ruts, jumps and technical challenge. Whilst there is some discussion about the experience of fear, there is no mention 'meaning'.
Houge Mackenzie & Kerr (2017)	'Positive motivational experience over a three-day outdoor adventure trek in Peru'	<i>OG - not 'meaning', focused on tourism</i> : This article was originally considered for inclusion because it explores the experience of a trek in Peru. However on closer inspection, this auto-ethnographic study analyses personal psychological and motivational states and emotions in response to changes on the trek using reversal theory. Whilst there is some discussion about the enjoyment, there is no mention of the concept of meaning and the discussion is related to guidance for tourism.
Langseth (2012)	'B.A.S.E. jumping— Beyond the thrills'	<i>OG - not 'meaning', focused on risk</i> : This article was originally considered for inclusion because it explores why people take part in B.A.S.E. jumping. However on closer inspection, the findings and analysis are focused on risk-taking behaviour only. Whilst there is some interesting sociological discussion in relation to Bourdieu, there is no mention of 'meaning'.
Little & Wilson (2005)	'Adventure and the gender gap: Acknowledging diversity of experience'	<i>OG – not 'meaning', focused on gender (and travel)</i> : This article was originally considered for inclusion because it has some participants who engage in adventure pursuits. However on closer inspection, 'adventure' is defined as 'doing something new' and for approximately half the participants, this is in relation to independent travel only. Whilst there is some discussion of meaning, this is predominantly in

		relation to not conforming to gender conventions.
Mottet, Eccles & Saury (2016)	'Navigation in outdoor environments as an embodied, social, cultural, and situated experience: An empirical study of orienteering'	<i>OA - the primary focus is on educational outcomes:</i> This article was originally considered for inclusion because it explores the experience of navigation. However on closer inspection, although the participants are adults, the findings and discussion relate to an educational experience and how participants felt about their navigational skills.
Pike & Beames (2007)	'A critical interactionist analysis of 'youth development' expeditions'	<i>OA - the primary focus is on educational outcomes:</i> This article was originally considered for inclusion because it explores the experience of an expedition. However on closer inspection, although the participants are adults, the findings relate to an educational conservation experience and how this was facilitated for personal development.
Taylor & McGruder (1996)	'The meaning of sea kayaking for persons with spinal cord injuries'	<i>OB - participants are exploring the outcomes of therapeutic intervention:</i> This article was originally considered for inclusion because it explores the meaning of sea-kayaking. However on closer inspection, whilst the research question was not intervention focused: ("tell me about sea-kayaking") the findings primarily relate to therapeutic outcomes and how these have influenced the rehabilitation of participants.

## Appendix 7. Reference list search

The reference lists of the articles that were included in the review. A total of 447 texts went through a title and abstract screen, from these 6 articles were selected for a full text screen and 3 went forward for the critical appraisal screen. Within the table, “total” refers to the total number of references cited in the reference list of each article; these may include methodology papers, books, reports or policies. “Title and abstract” refers to the number of research articles within the reference list, where the title and abstract could then be considered for inclusion within the review, this number was then added to the PRISMA diagram below. “Already screened” refers to research articles identified within reference lists where the full text article has already been considered within this review, these are therefore duplicates. “Full text” refers to the number and name of articles where the full text was retrieved and considered for inclusion in the review. “CA” indicates articles that then went forward for the critical appraisal screen.

	Total:	Research Title and abstract:	Already Full Text screened:	Full text:	CA
Boniface, 2006	74	38	8	1: Celsi, Rose & Leigh (1993)	0
Brymer & Schweitzer, 2013	70	42	5	2: Allman <i>et al</i> (2009); Brymer & Oades (2009)	1
Burke, Durand-Bush, Doell, 2010	64	30	3	0	0
Fredrickson & Anderson, 1999	35	5	0	0	0
Freeman et al, 2016	48	27	0	1: Hinds (2011)	1
Hickman et al, 2016	101	26	0	0	0



Kane & Tucker 2007	41	7	1	1: Kane & Tucker (2004)	0
Kerr & Hougue Mackenzie, 2012	46	34	4	1: Allman <i>et al</i> (2009)	0
Loeffler, 2004	48	9	2	0	0
Lusby & Anderson 2010	42	10	0	0	0
Lynch & Dibben, 2016	66	29	3	0	0
Miles & Wattchow, 2015	45	11	1	0	0
Morse, (A) 2014	30	10	1	0	0
Morse, (B) 2015	33	7	1	0	0
Olafsdottir, 2013	68	20	0	0	0
Pomfret, 2012	64	42	5	0	0
Rickly-Boyd, 2012	85	37	2	0	0
Simpson et al, 2014	22	20	8	0	0
Svarstad, 2010	50	11	1	1: Riese and Vorkinn, 2002	1
Taylor, 2010	92	61	3	2: Celsi, Rose & Leigh (1993); Kane & Tucker (2004)	0
Willig, 2010	42	21	2	1: Celsi, Rose &	0

2008				Leigh (1993)	
Total:	1166	497	50	(10)	3
Duplicates removed:		443		6	

Six articles went forward to a full text screen, of these, three were excluded due to content and three went forward to a critical appraisal screen. This illustrates the reasons why articles arising from the reference search and considered in the full text screen were then excluded, these were discussed with the reviewing team.

Appendix 8. Reasons for excluding articles arising from the reference search

Reference:	Article title:	Reason for exclusion:
Allman <i>et al</i> , (2009)	Exploring the Motivations of BASE Jumpers: Extreme Sport Enthusiasts.	<i>OG - not 'meaning', focused on risk:</i> This article was considered for inclusion because it explores why people take part in B.A.S.E. jumping. However, the full text screen revealed that the findings focus primarily on reasons for risk-taking behaviour and the analysis used descriptive statistics with very few illustrative quotes. Whilst this is an interesting study, the potential for data extraction for a qualitative meta-synthesis was therefore very limited, both in terms of content and method.
Celsi, Rose and Leigh, (1993)	An exploration of high-risk leisure consumption through skydiving.	<i>OG - not 'meaning', focused on risk:</i> This article was considered for inclusion because it explores why people take part in skydiving. However, the full text screen revealed that the findings and discussion are primarily focused on the motives for risk-taking behaviour and risk acculturation. Whilst there is integration of interesting sociological theory, there is limited discussion of 'meaning'.
Kane and Tucker (2004)	'Adventure tourism: The freedom to play with reality'	<i>OG - not 'meaning', focused on tourism:</i> This article was considered for inclusion because it considers the experience of participants on a white-water kayaking tour. However, the full text screen revealed that the findings and discussion focus on aspects of adventure tourism with recommendations for package holidays.

Appendix 9. Assessment of methodological quality

**JBI QARI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Interpretive & Critical Research**

Reviewer ..... Date .....

Author ..... Year ..... Record Number .....

	Yes	No	Unclear	Not Applicable
1. Is there congruity between the stated philosophical perspective and the research methodology?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Is there congruity between the research methodology and the research question or objectives?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Is there congruity between the research methodology and the methods used to collect data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Is there congruity between the research methodology and the representation and analysis of data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Is there congruity between the research methodology and the interpretation of results?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Is there a statement locating the researcher culturally or theoretically?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Is the influence of the researcher on the research, and vice-versa, addressed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Are participants, and their voices, adequately represented?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Is the research ethical according to current criteria or, for recent studies, and is there evidence of ethical approval by an appropriate body?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Do the conclusions drawn in the research report flow from the analysis, or interpretation, of the data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Overall appraisal:  Include  Exclude  Seek further info.

Comments (Including reason for exclusion)

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In total, twenty-nine articles went through to the critical appraisal screen; twenty-five of these came from the original database search, one was added through the hand search (Freeman *et al*, 2016) and three were added through the reference list search (Brymer and Oades, 2009; Hinds, 2011; Riese and Vorkinn, 2002).

Of the twenty-nine articles that went through the critical appraisal screen, twenty-two were considered to meet the criteria for inclusion in the review. 'The Reviewers Manual' (JBI, 2014) does not state a benchmark score for inclusion, reviewers are recommended to provide comments on the critical appraisal and selection process for transparency with regards to the reviewers' decision making process. Table: "Critical appraisal of articles to be included in the review" lists the articles that reviewers decided to include in the systematic review and provides the outcome of the reviewers' discussions through critical appraisal screen. If either the first or second reviewer indicated any concerns with clarity, this was recorded below; (Y = Yes; N = No; U = Unclear; NA = Not Applicable). Articles in the critical appraisal screen were discussed in depth between two reviewers (RR & PE).

## Appendix 10. Reasons for excluding articles at the critical appraisal screen

During the critical appraisal screen, seven articles were excluded. All of the excluded papers presented an interesting discussion on relevant topics and many were frequently cited by other papers (the number of citations was obtained from the database 'googlescholar'). However, all the excluded papers were allocated a score of 5 or below by one or both reviewers and were therefore considered on discussion to not have sufficient clarity to proceed within the review. Table: 'Critical appraisal of articles to be excluded from the review' provides the scores and highlights the areas of reviewers' concerns, where one reviewer indicated 'U' for unclear this has been recorded. These papers are then discussed below.

### *Brymer & Gray, (2009) and Brymer & Oades, (2009)*

These two papers, with Brymer as the first author appear to be about the same research study, as with Brymer & Schweitzer (2013) which was included in the review. The later paper (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2013) presents the method and analysis clearly, however the earlier papers are not so transparent. Whilst it would appear that all three papers use primary data from the same 15 participants, both the 2009 papers also integrate data from secondary sources. Lack of clarity as to the sampling strategy of secondary sources makes it difficult to ascertain robust method. Had the secondary sources only been used to inform the wider literature review (as in the later paper, Brymer & Schweitzer, 2013) or had the sampling process been clearly explained, (as with the use of secondary sources by Kane and Tucker, 2007), this would be less problematic. The methodology and method for the primary data collection are congruent and clearly presented. However in relation to "other data sources", the Brymer and Oades (2009) paper does not state how these were located and the Brymer and Gray (2009:139) paper states "firsthand accounts in the form of autobiographies, biographies, academic papers and video were resourced from around the world". In both papers, quotes from the secondary sources are used more frequently to illustrate the 'findings' within the discussion than the primary data with no clarity as to their reliability or provenance. Whilst both papers offer

thoughtful discussion, when critiqued using the JBI appraisal tool, the outcome is poor. If they were to proceed to data extraction, in terms of illustrative quotes arising from the primary data, the opportunities are minimal, with only two short direct quotes from participants in the Brymer and Gray (2009) paper. The Brymer and Oades (2009) paper has six short quotes from the primary data; however this is in contrast to over double that from secondary sources. With no evidence of the credibility of the secondary sources it is not appropriate to proceed to data extraction for a meta-synthesis with these papers, despite the fact that they offer illuminating opinion. It is interesting to note that the Brymer and Gray (2009) paper has been cited by 55 subsequent papers and the Brymer and Oades (2009) paper has been cited by 87 papers; these are clearly influential papers, however inappropriate for a meta-synthesis.

#### *Humberstone, (2011)*

This paper also presents topical opinion supported by a wide range of relevant literature, it has subsequently been cited by 50 papers. The stated methodology is auto-ethnography, however there are only two excerpts that are clearly from the auto-ethnographer's journal. The rest of the paper presents an engaging reflexive narrative integrating experience with wider literature. However, one reviewer felt that only one of the JBI appraisal criteria was met, 'the influence of the researcher on the research and vice versa'. The other reviewer felt that only the 'congruity between the stated philosophical perspective and the research methodology' had been met. Reviewers agreed that the paper is unclear in relation to the 'collection', 'analysis' and 'interpretation' of data and therefore also whether the conclusions 'flow from the analysis'. Again, in terms of contribution to a meta-synthesis there is limited opportunity to cite specific findings with illustrative quotes from the paper.

#### *Leon et al (1997)*

This paper (cited by 3) is the oldest in the critical appraisal screen and some of the issues with it may be due to reporting standards. The paper describes a fascinating wheelchair expedition across Russia, however none of the JBI

appraisal criteria have been clearly addressed and the paper was therefore excluded from the review sample.

*Riese and Vorkinn (2002)*

This paper (cited by 22) states that data has been analyzed from “14 narratives of outdoor recreation practices” (Riese and Vorkinn, 2002:199). However the findings are presented as three stories, within which, only three short sentences are direct quotes from primary data. There is therefore insufficient evidence of participant voice to proceed to data extraction.

*Roberson & Babic (2009)*

This paper (cited by 19) considers the experience of hikers on a mountain. 122 people were interviewed and from the data five themes were established, however, only three findings are discussed. Whilst each of these is illustrated with a quote from the primary data, the potential for data extraction is minimal and the adequate representation of participant voice is questionable. In addition the methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation are unclear. Both reviewers felt it was unclear as to whether any of the JBI appraisal criteria had been met and the paper was therefore excluded from the review.

*Varley (2011)*

This paper has been cited by 23 papers, including by 4 within this review. It usefully integrates the sociological concepts of liminoid marginality, communitas and sea-kayaking, with engaging originality. Interestingly it is published in “Leisure Studies” as is the Humberstone (2011) article and shares some of the same issues in relation to its potential use within a meta-synthesis. Ethnographic (including auto-ethnographic) data from participants on sea-kayaking expeditions over a seven month period were gathered and have been integrated with quotes from secondary sources (as with Brymer & Gray, 2009 and Brymer & Oades, 2009). However, the discussion is researcher lead with many “findings” illustrated with literature only, rather than primary data. Of the



six themes presented, only two are illustrated with quotes arising from primary data. Whilst referenced, the provenance of quotes from secondary sources is unclear with no comment on the methods from which they have arisen. In relation to the other themes, the paper therefore offers an interesting literature review from a reflexive insider perspective; but limited opportunity for data extraction for a meta-synthesis.

## Appendix 11. Critical appraisal of included articles

Twenty-two articles were considered appropriate for inclusion in the review at the critical appraisal screen. These papers all scored '6' or higher, issues highlighted are discussed below. At this points issues are discussed only in relation to quality, a further discussion of the characteristics of the studies can be found in the findings section (4.\*\*)

1. *There is congruity between the stated philosophical perspective and the research methodology.*

Three articles were identified (by one reviewer each) as being 'unclear' in terms congruency between philosophical perspective and research methodology. Pomfret (2012) and Fredrickson and Anderson (1999) both referred to a 'qualitative' framework without expanding further. Boniface (2006) identified that she used a 'biographical' method as justification for interviews and personal stories, she also discussed a 'hermeneutical' approach and 'grounded theory' principles at different points in the paper. A more cohesive and consistent methodological perspective could have been presented across the paper as a whole.

2. *There is congruity between the research methodology and the research question or objectives.*

Aside from the issues already indicated in question 1 above, no further concerns were raised by reviewers in relation to question 2 for the included papers.

3. *There is congruity between the research methodology and the methods used to collect data.*

One article was highlighted by one reviewer as being unclear in terms of congruency between the methodology and the methods. Simpson *et al* (2014) stated that they used 'existential phenomenological interviews'. However, they then went on to state that the number of participants was 'determined by data saturation', a concept more akin to grounded theory. As

the total number of participants was ten, with only two women, it is questionable whether saturation could actually have been reached. Saturation is more typically considered to have been achieved after 30 or more interviews (ref \*\*); and even if the two women had described similar ideas, it is difficult to claim saturation. In addition, achieving saturation is not normally the aim of existential phenomenology (ref \*\*). Despite the recency of the paper, 2014, most of the literature supporting the method was older than ten years prior its publication; by using more topical sources this incongruity may have been avoided.

4. *There is congruity between the research methodology and the representation and analysis of data.*

The reviewers did not identify concerns for any of the included articles.

5. *There is congruity between the research methodology and the interpretation of results.*

The reviewers did not identify concerns for any of the included articles.

6. *There is a statement locating the researcher culturally or theoretically.*

Ten of the twenty-two articles included in the review did not provide a 'clear statement' locating the researcher (as indicated on the table), however, with all of these the research context is apparent within the paper and is discussed under the study characteristics in 4.\*\*.

7. *The influence of the researcher on the research, and vice versa, is addressed.*

Fourteen of the twenty-two articles included in the review did not clearly address the influence of the researcher on the research. Whilst the two oldest papers, (Fredrickson & Anderson, 1999; and Loeffler, 2004) were amongst these, the date of publication doesn't appear to account for this issue as the other twelve were written within the last ten years. The high number of papers identified here might be influenced by the research context. The JBI appraisal tool (JBI, 2014) was established to evaluate research on health interventions, whereas many of the research papers in

this review were written by researchers working within education, tourism, leisure, sport and social science where reporting standards may differ.

8. *Participants and their voices are adequately represented.*

Both reviewers identified issues with the clarity of participant voice representation for two of the included articles. In the Lynch & Dibben (2016) paper the findings and discussion are combined and structured using researcher imposed themes of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, rather than themes arising from the data. Illustrative quotes are short and embedded within the researchers' narrative text. However the concepts within the themes are evidenced and credible and participants are identifiable by code, enabling their individual opinions to be traced through the paper. Similarly, in the Svarstad (2010) paper, illustrative quotes are generally limited to short phrases embedded within the text, although participants are traceable by code. Both papers were considered to demonstrate sufficient credibility to proceed for inclusion in the review.

9. *The research is ethical according to current criteria or, for recent studies there is evidence of ethical approval by an appropriate body.*

This criteria highlighted the highest number of papers where there was a concern about lack of clarity, both reviewers identified 18 papers. However, the issue here was not about the research itself being unethical, but that the authors did not provide evidence of ethical approval by an appropriate body. This might again be explained by the research context. It might be assumed that either the author guidelines for respective journals didn't stipulate that this evidence was required, or that the academic institution hosting the research did not require the study to be screened by an ethics panel. As the papers are not related to health intervention and participants are not considered to be vulnerable, the reviewers felt that these papers demonstrated sufficient ethical conduct to proceed for inclusion in the review.

*10. Conclusions drawn in the research report do appear to flow from the analysis, or interpretation, of the data.*

The reviewers did not identify concerns for any of the included articles.

*Overall score:*

The included papers all had a score of '6' or over, with clarity issues predominantly around the reporting of ethical approval and researcher influence.

Appendix 12. Study characteristics

**JBI QARI Data Extraction Form for Interpretive & Critical Research**

Reviewer ..... Date .....

Author ..... Year .....

Journal\_ ..... Record Number .....

**Study Description**

Methodology  
.....  
.....

Method  
.....  
.....

Phenomena of interest  
.....  
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Setting  
.....  
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Geographical  
.....  
.....

Cultural  
.....  
.....

Participants  
.....  
.....

Data analysis  
.....  
.....

Authors Conclusions  
.....  
.....

Comments  
.....  
.....

Complete

Yes

No

Appendix 13. Data extraction

**QARI data extraction instrument**

Findings	Illustration from Publication (page number)	Evidence		
		Unequivocal	Credible	Unsupported

Extraction of findings complete

Yes

No





Appendix 14

*“The meaning of outdoor adventure activities: a systematic review”*

**Data extraction table: an example of one article only**

**Cred.** = Credibility rating; **UEQ** = Unequivocal; **CRD** = Credible; **USP** = Unsupported

<b>Author</b> <b>Year</b> <b>Title</b>	<b>JBI Data extraction tool:</b>	<b>Main themes:</b>	<b>Finding:</b>	<b>Illustration:</b>	<b>Cred.</b>
<b>Boniface, M.</b>  (2006)  The meaning of adventurous activities for ‘women in the outdoors’.	<b>1. Methodology</b>  Biographical life story interviews  Interpretative  Grounded theory  Hermeneutical  Lived experience	The significance of adventurous activities	The women in this research emphasised the benefits, values and importance of adventurous activities.	“more important than work or family, and it’s the main way I get to know friends”	UEQ
			Outdoor adventure had influenced all aspects of their lives.	“what drives me to do everything... the outdoors is what’s made me who I am”	UEQ
			Resultant feelings of wellbeing connected to bodily experiences.	“...more than anything I always think it makes me feel more alive”	UEQ
			Feelings of excitement and euphoria	“a buzz”	CRD
			Satisfaction and achievement arising out of successful completion of a demanding mental and physical challenge.		USP
<b>2. Method</b>  In-depth interviews  8 women					

<p>Snowball sample</p> <p><b>3. Phenomena of interest</b></p> <p>Examines the meanings of long-term participation in adventurous activities for women working in education.</p> <p><b>4. Setting</b></p> <p>White water kayaking, open canoeing, climbing, mountaineering, winter climbing, trekking, caving, white water rafting, skydiving, scuba diving.</p>		Sense of omnipotence from surviving life-threatening experiences.		USP
	Fear	Fear is inherent in high-risk adventure.	"you do get scared and controlling your fear is, I think, that's a part of it"	UEQ
		The level of fear experienced contributed to the degree of excitement felt on completion of the task.	"...you think something's going to go wrong at the top... But the excitement as soon as you make that last move is just amazing. It's worth the whole day just for that one move."  "...an enormous buzz, you're just absolutely bananas for weeks afterwards and you just bore everyone to tears"	UEQ
		The significance of psychological factors.	(she felt petrified and would) "often have a good cry on the bank trying to decide whether to do it or not"	UEQ
		Decisions about whether to attempt a particular challenge appeared to relate to the degree of control predicted.	"Perhaps one rapid will just freak me out, and sometimes I decide to paddle it and it's just part of getting my head into gear and other times I just walk round it."	UEQ
		Women are not more fearful than men; they are just more willing to admit fears.		USP

	<b>5. Geographical context</b> Chichester UK  <b>6. Cultural context</b> Adventure education  <b>7. Participants</b> 8 women who work in education, UK	Feelings of freedom	<p>A high priority was placed on time for themselves, to escape from constraints and materialism of everyday life and was seen as valuable in terms of its benefits to the women's mental health.</p>	<p>"you're just totally absorbed in what you're doing... Everything else is just forgotten like all the worries about school and kids and work."</p> <p>"feel better, feel normal. Somehow you can put life in its proper place and get things in perspective"</p> <p>"rejuvenating", "peaceful", "calming"</p> <p>"you might go out with something on your mind and you come back and it's just put in its place... It's just got everything combed out in your head... it's lovely and you're free to carry on."</p>	UEQ	
			<p>Actions take on more significance and achievements become more meaningful.</p>	<p>"the decisions you have to make are a lot more serious"</p>	CRD	
		The 'self' in the outdoors	<p>Taking part in adventurous activities provided opportunities to reconstruct and nurture both an independent and a social self, separate from their (other) roles.</p>	<p>"you can just be yourself"</p> <p>"I do stuff on my own as well, like the fell-running. I tend to do most stuff on my bike on my own, just because it's just me. I'm a self-contained unit and that's really important to me as well."</p>	CRD	
			<p>The opportunities provided in the outdoors for personal challenge</p>	<p>"if you get yourself into trouble you've got to sort it out"; (it) "gives you confidence in</p>	UEQ	

			<p>meant that the women had to rely on their own abilities.</p> <p>Realising aspects of their mental and physical potential had increased their self-esteem and their cognitive abilities.</p>	<p>your own ability to look after yourself</p> <p>“I’m more self-confident, especially... I got a lot of self-confidence from doing a couple of trips where I was the leader... on a really difficult river, and you come feeling that you can make those decisions”</p> <p>“participation in outdoor adventurous activities makes you strong and driven in other areas of your life.”</p>	UEQ
		Relationships in the outdoors	<p>Friendships developed out of their adventure participation.</p> <p>Shared experience can lead to the formation of close bonds with other adventure participants.</p> <p>The women perceived themselves as belonging to a small elite group of like-minded</p>	<p>(friends were) “virtually all based in outdoor activities”</p> <p>“based around people that do the same activities as me”</p> <p>“the thing about paddling is you rely on the people around you... you look after them and they look after you.”</p> <p>“...connect(s) you with each other...the interaction you have with people in that (adventure) context is a lot more... rewarding”</p> <p>“you actually meet people you know all the time, and I quite like that, I quite like belonging”</p>	UEQ UEQ UEQ

			people.		
			All expressed a preference for certain conditions to be met by any other group members.	“level of competence”, “you don’t know if they can get you out of something”, “I’m really, really choosy who I go with”	UEQ

		Revisiting their feel	The elite climbers were more aware when they were not physically, mentally and emotionally feeling the way they wanted and they knew exactly what to do to change this.	“Every day you feel more tired and lethargic, which can have a profound effect on your mind and body. And, I could feel that after three or four days at Camp 2. I felt a lack of energy and lost interest in the task at hand. But the good thing was that I was conscious of it. I did specific things like using my breathing to help me refocus so that I could get back the feelings and state of mind.”	UEQ
			The recreational climbers were not as apt to reconnect with how they wanted to feel on a regular basis.	“I noticed myself getting really tired and drifting off during the day. My expedition leader told me that I had to stay focussed on what I am doing at all times, like clipping in and being aware of my surroundings when I cross over snow bridges. But I was feeling bad and I struggled to stay focussed so I tried talking to myself and reminding myself that I had to remain in the moment	UEQ

				but it didn't seem to help me."	
			Elite climbers – the feeling of pushing through physical pain and challenges was a motivating factor	"I am happy that I got the chance today to climb on my own at my own speed doing my own thing. All this makes me feel the way I want to feel – happy, in harmony with the mountain and strong. For a few hundred metres I didn't use the line. I was free climbing and this reminded me why I am here in the first place. Because I enjoy being up there, struggling physically but at the same time overcoming it and having the energy to just push through."	UEQ
			Recreational climbers – their motive to be successful appeared to be more important than the experience of fully immersing themselves in the difficult task.	"When I climbed today, I felt strong, energetic and accomplished. Because I felt good with my energy levels, I felt strong and then that feeling added to me feeling successful because I knew unless something went really wrong I would make it to Camp 1. And that is what kept me going through the day"	UEQ

### Appendix 15. Data Synthesis Table

Findings:	Categories:	Synthesised finding:
The call (Miles & Wattchow, 2015)	A sense of longing to engage was evident through a call to engagement and the idea of going.	<b>1. The call and preparation.</b>  Outdoor adventure provided meaning and focus in relation to establishing a plan to engage; and the physical, mental and logistical preparation for engagement.
The idea of going (Olafsdottir, 2013)		
Image and imagery: creating a desire (Taylor, 2010)		
From books to blogs: external information sources (Taylor, 2010)		
Preparation (Burke, Durand-Bush & Doell, 2010)	Participants felt it was important to feel prepared for engagement physically, mentally and logistically.	
Preparation: physical (Simpson <i>et al</i> , 2014)		
Preparation: mental/ logistical (Simpson <i>et al</i> , 2014)		

Findings:	Categories:	Synthesised finding:
Freedom as movement (Brymer & Schweitser, 2013)	The bodily sensation of kinaesthetic movement was pleasurable.	<b>2. Inter-connected experiences of bodily sensation, happiness and well-being:</b>  Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to the bodily experience of
Pleasure (Willig, 2008)		

The body and the craft (Miles & Wattchow, 2015)		dynamic movement, exertion, interconnection between mind and body; and flow; in addition, it invoked a sense of well-being, happiness, fitness and restoration.
Pleasurable kinaesthetic bodily sensations from moving in water or air (Kerr & Hougue Mackenzie, 2012)		
Multiple motivations (Lynch & Dibben, 2016)		
Compulsion (Willig, 2008)		
Bodily feelings: rock climbing as practice (Rickly-Boyd, 2012)	Participants described the bodily experience of exertion and connection between mind and body.	
Their feel: the way they wanted to feel (Burke, Durand-Bush & Doell, 2010)		
Revisiting their feel (Burke, Durand-Bush & Doell, 2010)		
Liminality: Flow (Rickly-Boyd, 2012)	Participants described the experience of flow and time.	
Flow (Lusby & Anderson, 2010)		
Time (Lusby & Anderson, 2010)		
Why people are motivated to mountain bike (Taylor, 2010) (fitness)	Outdoor adventure enabled some to increase fitness levels	
Extrinsic: fitness (Lynch & Dibben, 2016)		
Bodily feelings: body as display (Rickly-Boyd, 2012)		
Solitude and simplicity:	Bodily experiences were described in	



Well-being (Hinds, 2011)	terms of feeling better; as promoting fitness, health and well-being; and a sense of happiness and restoration that enabled participants to re-create societal performance abilities	
Solitude and simplicity: Feeling alive (Hinds, 2011)		
Intrinsic: enjoyment (Lynch & Dibben, 2016)		
The recreation category – hiking as re-creation of societal performance abilities (Svarsted, 2010)		
Being back (Olafsdottir, 2013)		

Findings:	Categories:	Synthesised finding:
The 'self' in the outdoors (Boniface, 2006)	Being self-reliant and self-responsible was considered meaningful.	<p><b>3. Connection with a sense of self.</b></p> <p>Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to enhanced self- awareness; participants sought opportunities that enabled a sense of autonomy and personal responsibility for decisions; reconnection with an authentic self; and identity construction.</p>
Intrinsic: Opportunities to be self-responsible (Lynch & Dibben, 2016)		
Gaining confidence in being able to cope and take action (Freeman <i>et al</i> , 2016)		
Freedom as choice and personal responsibility (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2013)		
Context (I'd prefer to go alone) (Willig, 2008)		
Gaining a sense of awareness and sensitivity to one's environment and its influence (Freeman <i>et al</i> , 2016)	Outdoor adventure enabled opportunities to be an authentic self with sensitivity to the environment and its influence.	
Solitude and simplicity: Authentic self (Hinds, 2011)		
Freedom: being one's own person (Lusby & Anderson, 2010)		
Sense of self: discovering self (Rickly-Boyd, 2012)	Outdoor adventure enabled participants to learn about themselves.	
Adventure: personal discovery (Simpson <i>et al</i> , 2014)		

Sense of self: constructing an identity (Rickly-Boyd, 2012)	The opportunity to construct an identity within outdoor adventure was considered meaningful.	
Extrinsic: identity as motivation (Lynch & Dibben, 2016)		

Findings:	Categories:	Synthesised finding:
Pushing limits: pushing mental limits (Simpson <i>et al</i> , 2014)	Opportunities to push mental and physical limitations to improve performance were sought and valued	<b>4. Mastery, challenge, competence and capital.</b>  Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to a perception of self as able to push personal boundaries, overcome hardships, master challenges and demonstrate competency for social capital.
Pushing limits: pushing physical limits (Simpson <i>et al</i> , 2014)		
Pushing personal boundaries (Kerr & Hougue MacKenzie, 2012)		
Intrinsic: progressively improving performance (Lynch & Dibben, 2016)		
Descent into darkness, emergence into light (quest genre, facing trials) (Miles & Wattchow, 2015)	In keeping with a quest narrative, adventurers describe overcoming obstacles and suffering.	
Obstacles (Burke, Durand-Bush & Doell, 2010)		
Suffering (Willig, 2008)		
Savouring hard adventure (Hickman <i>et al</i> , 2016)		

Challenge (Willig, 2008)	Mastering challenges and achieving goals were considered to give intrinsic reward.	
Mastering the challenge: the potential for great intrinsic rewards (Taylor, 2010)		
Intrinsic: challenge (Lynch & Dibben, 2016)		
Intrinsic: Balancing challenge and skill (Lynch & Dibben, 2016)		
Goal achievement (Kerr & Hougue MacKenzie, 2012)		
Freedom: challenge (Lusby & Anderson, 2010)	Self-sufficiency and simple living were also considered to offer rewarding challenge.	
Challenge and accomplishment: Reward (Hinds, 2011)		
Learning the <i>field</i> of adventure (Kane & Tucker, 2007)		
Savouring serious adventure (Hickman <i>et al</i> , 2016)	Participants savoured serious adventure that elicited social capital.	
An adventurer's capital (Kane & Tucker, 2007)		
Speed, distance and safety (Miles & Wattchow, 2015)		
Mastery and skill (Willig, 2008)		
Other people (Willig, 2008)		

Findings:	Categories:	Synthesised finding:
Site attributes: thrills and challenges on the trail (Taylor, 2010)	Some participants sought risk and thrill for enjoyment	<p><b>5. Risk-taking, fear and fun.</b></p> <p>Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to risk-taking and the opportunities for both fear and fun.</p>
Risk-taking (Kerr & Hougue MacKenzie, 2012)		
Site attributes: fast, flowing single track: mountain bike nirvana (Taylor, 2010)		
Perceptions of risk experienced during packaged adventure activity (Pomfret, 2012)	Some participants discussed adventure tourism and the reduction of risk by leaving decision-making to a guide.	
The false value of thrill and epic (Kane & Tucker, 2007)		
Fear (Boniface, 2006)	Overcoming or controlling fear and a sense of freedom as the release from fear were considered exhilarating.	
Freedom as the release from fear (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2013)		
Freedom as letting go of the need for control (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2013)		
Overcoming fear (Kerr & Hougue MacKenzie, 2012)		
Departure (fear) (Miles & Wattchow, 2015)		

Findings:	Categories:	Synthesised finding:
Relationships in the outdoors (Boniface, 2006)	Relationships in the outdoors were considered by some to be of “central importance” to the overall experience and a key motivation for engagement.	<p><b>6. Connection with others, competition and communitas.</b></p> <p>Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to connection with others in terms of support, shared experience, competition and belonging to a community of like-minded people.</p>
The centrality and importance of being with an all-women’s group (Fredrickson & Anderson, 1999)		
Challenge and accomplishment: Sociability (Hinds, 2011)		
Social motivation (Kerr & Hougue MacKenzie, 2012)		
Connections with others through the outdoor experience (Loeffler, 2004)		
The significance of adventurous activities (the main way I get to know friends) (Boniface, 2006)		
Extrinsic: competition (Lynch & Dibben, 2016)	Competition was considered motivational	
Community : competition (Simpson <i>et al</i> , 2014)		
Communitas (Rickly-Boyd, 2012)	Participants valued camaraderie, inhabiting a community, being an adventure insider and a sense of communitas.	
Adventure ‘insiders’ (Boniface, 2006)		
Inhabiting the mountain biking community (Taylor, 2010)		

Community : camaraderie (Simpson <i>et al</i> , 2014)		
Extrinsic: social interaction (Lynch & Dibben, 2016)		

Findings:	Categories:	Synthesised finding:
The importance of being in bone fide wilderness (Fredrickson & Anderson, 1999)	<p>The experience of being in a natural environment was described as an intimate interaction and relationship. Participants encountered “other world” feelings and valued the aesthetics of place and beauty.</p>	<p><b>7. Connection with wilderness</b></p> <p>Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to connection with wilderness in terms of appreciating beauty and exploration; and managing natural elements.</p>
Adventure: Wilderness (Simpson <i>et al</i> , 2014)		
Extrinsic: Aesthetics of place (Lynch & Dibben, 2016)		
Connecting with the natural environment (Kerr & Hougue MacKenzie, 2012)		
Motivation: Love of the sea (Lusby & Anderson, 2010)		
Relationship with the marine environment: Beauty (Lusby & Anderson, 2010)		
Contributing components of the journey (Morse, 2014)		
An intimate interaction (Morse, 2015)		
The ‘river-scape’ (Morse, 2015)		

Being there (Olafsdottir, 2013)		
'Other world' feelings encountered during mountaineering activity participation (Pomfret, 2012)		
Liminality: mobility (Rickly-Boyd, 2012)	Travel was considered an important aspect of exploring nature.	
Freedom: travel (Lusby & Anderson, 2010)		
Natural elements : weather (Simpson <i>et al</i> , 2014)	Sometimes the relationship with wilderness was difficult, here meaning was derived from coping with natural elements and life outdoors and respecting the dangers.	
Bodily feelings: life outdoors (Rickly-Boyd, 2012)		
Natural elements : danger (Simpson <i>et al</i> , 2014)		
Relationship with the marine environment: Mother Ocean - respect (Lusby & Anderson, 2010)		

Finding:	Category:	Synthesised finding:
Feelings of freedom (Boniface, 2006)	Participants described feelings of “total escapism” (Boniface, 2006); and freedom from constraints and boredom in relation to work and domestic responsibilities. For some this allowed a disconnection from normal life that was	<b>8. Freedom and escapism.</b>  Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to escapism, freedom, novelty and an opportunity to live out a critique
Freedom from constraints (Brymer & Schweitser, 2013)		
Gaining a sense of freedom and escape		



(Freeman <i>et al</i> , 2016)	valued, others made a more permanent lifestyle change	of society.
Adventure: Freedom (Simpson <i>et al</i> , 2014)		
Escape from boredom (Kerr & Hougue MacKenzie, 2012)		
Freedom: escape (Lusby & Anderson, 2010)		
Physical escape and mental catharsis (Taylor, 2010)	Outdoor adventure enabled physical escape by providing the opportunity to explore novel environments.	
Extrinsic: Novelty (Lynch & Dibben, 2016)		
Adventure: Novel Experiences (Simpson <i>et al</i> , 2014)		
Traditional rights-of-way: A different type of experience (Taylor, 2010)	Outdoor adventure enabled freedom from societal rules and an opportunity to live out a critique of society.	
Freedom: pace (Lusby & Anderson, 2010)		
Motivation: Freedom (Lusby & Anderson, 2010)		
The simple outdoors discourse – hiking as a way of living out a critique of society (Svarsted, 2010)		

Findings:	Categories:	Synthesised finding:
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Wilderness as spiritual inspiration (Fredrickson & Anderson, 1999)	Wilderness experiences enabled spiritual inspiration.	<b>9. Spirituality, humility and perspective</b>  Outdoor adventure prompted meaningful experiences of wilderness with a sense of spirituality and connection to time and place; humility with a new sense of self in context; and a metaphor for understanding other life circumstances.
Spiritual connection with the outdoors (Loeffler, 2004)		
Being lost within (Morse, 2015)	Participants had a sense of freedom from “being at one” through an immersion with their surroundings which was described as being “in the present”; “lost within” and a “rightness in being effortlessly aware”.	
A ‘rightness’ in being effortlessly aware (Morse, 2015)		
Being in the present (Willig, 2008)		
Freedom as being at one (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2013)		
The ‘things’ become ‘something’ (Morse, 2014)	Participants described their introspection as feeling connected to a sense of time across the ages. In-keeping with the ethereal nature of the concept, these moments were described as “epiphany and closing the circle” and “the ‘things’ become ‘something’”.	
Epiphany and closing the circle (Miles & Wattchow, 2015)		
Challenge and accomplishment: Acceptance (Hinds, 2011)	This connection to time and place gave new perspectives through enabling contemplation and use of outdoor experiences as metaphor for understanding of life circumstances. The clarity of thought gained led to feelings of empowerment, self-acceptance, and healing.	
Changing perspectives and priorities: Contemplation (Hinds, 2011)		
Solitude and simplicity: Clarity of thought (Hinds, 2011)		

Relationship with the marine environment: spirituality and healing (Lusby & Anderson, 2010)		
Self-discovery and gaining perspectives through the outdoor experience (Loeffler, 2004)		
Crossing the threshold (Miles & Wattchow, 2015)		
Changing perspectives and priorities: Environmental connection (Hinds, 2011)	Participants described this change in perspectives and priorities as a result of an intertwining with the more-than-human world. This engendered a feeling of humility and awareness of an imminent paradox and tension between vulnerability and comfort whereby participants had a sense of feeling small, whilst part of something big; like a speck on the horizon.	
Speck, point and horizon (Miles & Wattchow, 2015)		
An intertwining with the more-than-human world (Morse, 2014)		
A tension between vulnerability and comfort (Morse, 2014)		
An imminent paradox (Morse, 2014)		
A feeling of humility (Morse, 2014)		
Contrasting emotions experienced during mountaineering activity participation (Pomfret, 2012)		Some described contrasting emotions, with a sense of peace and deep satisfaction as coming after the activity, in contrast to the experience during the activity.
Contrasts (Willig, 2008)		

Findings:	Categories:	Synthesised finding:
The educational value of adventure (Kane & Tucker, 2007)	The educational value of adventure was evidenced by participants' desire for a continuation of their connection with nature.	<p><b>10. Environmental values</b></p> <p>Outdoor adventure provided meaningful experiences that changed participants' perspectives, values and priorities in relation to appreciating and protecting natural and cultural landscapes.</p>
Continuity (Morse, 2015)		
Changing perspectives and priorities: Values (Hinds, 2011)	Participants gained a sense of perspective on and appreciation for life that changed their values and priorities.	
Gaining a sense of perspective on and appreciation for life (Freeman <i>et al</i> , 2016)		
Relationship with the marine environment: Mother ocean: leave no wake (Lusby & Anderson, 2010)	<p>Participants described a desire to protect the environment with concepts such as "leave no wake"; avoiding "commodification"; and establishing a sense of "belonging and continuity" to enable future generations to experience natural and cultural landscapes.</p> <p>generations to experience natural and cultural landscapes:</p>	
The belonging category – hiking to establish a sense of belonging and continuity (Svarstad, 2010)		
Site attributes: purpose-built centres: commodifying mountain biking? (Taylor, 2010)		
Extrinsic: prizes (Lynch & Dibben, 2016)		
Place attachment: nostalgia and familiarity (Taylor, 2010)		

Appendix 16. ConQual Summary of Findings Table

Synthesised finding	Type of research	Dependability	Credibility	ConQual Score
<p><b>1. The call and preparation.</b></p> <p>Outdoor adventure provided meaning and focus in relation to establishing a plan to engage; and the physical, mental and logistical preparation for engagement.</p>	Qualitative	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
<p><b>2. Inter-connected experiences of bodily sensation, happiness and well-being:</b></p> <p>Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to the bodily experience of dynamic movement, exertion, interconnection between mind and body; and flow; in addition, it invoked a sense of well-being, happiness, fitness and restoration.</p>	Qualitative	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
<p><b>3. Connection with a sense of self.</b></p> <p>Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to enhanced self-awareness; participants sought opportunities that enabled a sense of autonomy and personal responsibility for decisions; reconnection with an authentic self; and identity construction.</p>	Qualitative	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
<p><b>4. Mastery, challenge, competence and capital.</b></p> <p>Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to a perception of self as able to push personal boundaries, overcome hardships, master challenges and demonstrate competency for social capital.</p>	Qualitative	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

<p><b>5. Risk-taking, fear and fun.</b></p> <p>Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to risk-taking and the opportunities for both fear and fun.</p>	Qualitative	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
<p><b>6. Connection with others, competition and communitas.</b></p> <p>Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to connection with others in terms of support, shared experience, competition and belonging to a community of like-minded people.</p>	Qualitative	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
<p><b>7. Connection with wilderness</b></p> <p>Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to connection with wilderness in terms of appreciating beauty and exploration; and managing natural elements.</p>	Qualitative	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
<p><b>8. Freedom and escapism</b></p> <p>Outdoor adventure provided meaning in relation to escapism, freedom, novelty and an opportunity to live out a critique of society.</p>	Qualitative	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
<p><b>9. Spirituality, humility and perspective</b></p> <p>Outdoor adventure prompted meaningful experiences of wilderness with a sense of spirituality and connection to time and place; humility with a new sense of self in context; and a metaphor for understanding other life circumstances.</p>	Qualitative	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
<p><b>10. Environmental values</b></p> <p>Outdoor adventure provided meaningful experiences that changed participants' perspectives, values and priorities in relation to appreciating</p>	Qualitative	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

and protecting natural and cultural landscapes.

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Appendix 17 Ethical approval and proposal:

6<sup>th</sup> December 2011

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Rosi Raine

Occupational Therapy Lecturer

School of Health Professions

Plymouth University

Peninsula Allied Health Centre

Derriford Road

Plymouth

PL6 8BH

**Dear Rosi**

**Application for Approval by Faculty Research Ethics Committee**

***Application Title: Woodland Walking Group Evaluation***

*Following receipt of your revised ethics application, I am pleased to inform you that the Committee has granted approval to you to conduct this research.*

Please note that this approval is for three years, after which you will be required to seek extension of existing approval.

Please note that should any MAJOR changes to your research design occur which effect the ethics of procedures involved you must inform the Committee. Please contact Alison Bendall on (01752) 586703 or by email [alison.bendall@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:alison.bendall@plymouth.ac.uk)

Yours sincerely

Professor Michael Sheppard, PhD, AcSS,  
Chair, Health Research Ethics Committee  
Faculty of Health, Education and Society  
Plymouth University

Health Human Ethics Sub-Committee

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL OF RESEARCH

**Title of research:**

**Woodland Walking Group Evaluation**

**1. Nature of approval sought (Please tick relevant box)**

(a) PROJECT\*:

(b) PROGRAMME\*:

*If (a) then please indicate which category:*

- Funded research project
- MPhil/PhD project
- Other (please specify):

This study may be used to inform the pilot study for a PhD research project. Additional ethical approval for postgraduate study will be sought separately for the rest of the PhD proposal.

*\*Note: In most cases, approval should be sought individually for each project. Programme approval is granted for research which comprises an ongoing set of studies or investigations utilising the same methods and methodology and where the precise number and timing of such studies cannot be specified in advance. Such approval is normally appropriate only for ongoing, and typically unfunded, scholarly research activity.*

## 2. Investigators/Supervisors

Principal Investigator (staff or postgraduate student)\*:

Rosi Raine (staff and postgraduate student)

Occupational Therapy Lecturer

Faculty of Health, Education and Society, Plymouth University

[Rosi.raine@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:Rosi.raine@plymouth.ac.uk)

Other staff investigators: Anne Roberts

Programme Lead for Advanced Occupational Therapy and Director of Postgraduate Studies in Occupational Therapy

Faculty of Health, Education and Society, Plymouth University

[Anne.roberts@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:Anne.roberts@plymouth.ac.uk)

Director of Studies/other supervisors (only where Principal Investigator is a postgraduate student) :

(Anne Roberts above)

Lynne Callaghan, Research Fellow,

Faculty of Health, Education and Society, Plymouth University

(second supervisor)

External collaborators:

Zoe Goss

Stepping Stones to Nature Project Coordinator

Planning Services

Plymouth City Council

Plymouth

PL1 2AA

Tony Fuqua, YMCA

YMCA HONICKNOWLE

*Please indicate Department of each named individual, including collaborators external to the Faculty.*

2 cont..

*\*Note: Principal investigators are responsible for ensuring that all staff employed on projects (including research assistants, technicians and clerical staff) act in accordance with the University's ethical principles, the design of the research described in this proposal and any conditions attached to its approval.*

**3. Funding body (if any) and duration of project/programme with dates\*:**

Stepping Stones to Nature Project and Plymouth, YMCA

Research project to be completed within 1 year. Walking group is running for 26 weeks October 2011 – March 2012.

**Costing**

**University**

Writing ethics proposal and literature review costs (approx 4 days of 7 hours at £35 per hour) = £980

Focus groups: 4 days per focus group (conducting group, transcription and analysis)  
(@£35 per hr, 7 hours per day) 28 hours £980 x 4 focus groups = £3920  
Write up 3 days (21 hours) = £735  
Total = £5635 approx (SS2N to fund)

### **YMCA/Stepping Stones**

26 sessions of BACR approved instructor Total: £2210 (SS2N to fund)

Match funding in kind for publicity and marketing of walks by YMCA

Match funding in kind of staff time from Physical Activity Officer to support walks

*\*Approval is granted for the duration of projects or for a maximum of three years in the case of programmes. Further approval is necessary for any extension of programmes.*

#### **4. Research Outline:**

*Please provide an outline of the proposed research. Information should be given on the background, aims, objectives or questions raised by the research; include information regarding recruitment process and methods used. Please note that this should be a maximum of 2,000 words.*

### **Research Proposal for Woodland Walking Group Evaluation**

Rosi Raine and Anne Roberts, Plymouth University

#### **Rationale**

It is well documented that exercise is linked to improved health and wellbeing and evidence consistently recommends moderate regular exercise for all (Kahn et al, 2002; Ogilvie et al, 2007). Physical inactivity constitutes major public health concern with related social and economic costs (McGannon and Spence 2010, Katzmarzyk et al, 2000). Government policy (from both this government and the previous), promote the increase of physical activity as a means of maintaining physical and mental health (Department of Health DOH, 2004a; DoH, 2004b; Disability Rights Commission DRC, 2006; DoH 2011; DoH 2010; GB HMSO, 2010).

Despite this, it has been observed by YMCA exercise manager that there has been a reduction in GP referrals to the exercise prescription programme subsequent to

the publication of the NICE guidance (NICE, 2006) which suggested rigorous evaluation is required as a part of any new project. Arising from this is the need for a clear evidence base to support exercise interventions.

The YMCA has a well established programme for time limited gym based exercise as part of cardiac rehabilitation for individuals in phase 3. An opportunity has arisen to extend this programme to outdoor exercise, walking in local woodland via the Stepping Stones project. This is now available to participants in phase 4 with the view to establishing sustained engagement in healthy activity embedded in the local community. Exercise outdoors compared to indoor exercise has been associated with greater feelings of invigoration, energy and positive mood; and lower levels of tension, depression and tiredness (Tilt, 2011; Depledge, 2011; Thompson et al, 2011; Geyer et al, 2009). In addition, those who exercise outdoors have more enjoyment and are more likely to repeat it, promoting a more sustained engagement in healthy activity (Depledge, 2011).

The requirement for a clear evidence base for interventions of this nature coincides with the development of a new woodland walking group being offered to people engaging in the YMCA cardiac rehab phase 4. In order to enhance referral from GPs to this kind of scheme an evaluation of the group is planned.

### **Research question:**

What is the impact and the sustainability of a woodland walking group?

### **Aims:**

- To explore the views of group members including staff and facilitators of a woodland walking group in terms of the perceived impact of the scheme
- To consider the factors regarding sustained engagement in walking
- To consider the factors that will ensure the sustainability of the provision of a walking group

### **Method**

An inductive approach using a qualitative methodology will be used in order to evaluate the walking group, as little literature currently exists specifically in this area. A case study evaluation is required due to the small number of people involved initially in the group. The sample will be purposive; all participants engaged in the walking project will be invited by letter to attend a series of focus groups. The sample will be between four and twelve participants. Krueger et al (2000) suggest that focus groups should have a minimum of four participants and a maximum of

twelve; therefore if more than twelve people volunteer to participate, two groups will run consecutively where possible and if required. All participants will be provided with an information sheet about the project and a consent form. Please see the information sheet, consent form and focus group guide below (5).

The rationale for use of focus groups is to enable participants to feel supported by other group members and reflect together on the shared group experience of the woodland walking group. All walking group members (1) will be invited to attend the focus group, it will be made clear that the choice to participate in the focus group or not will have no bearing on permission to have full involvement in all walking group activities or on the relationship between group members and Plymouth University, YMCA and Stepping Stones project.

There will be three focus groups for the walking group members (all three will be available to all walking group members(1)). The walking group started in October and will be running until April 2012. The focus groups will be held in February, April and June approximately to capture group opinions during, at the end and at a follow-up point. It is anticipated that membership of the walking groups and the focus groups will change over time. Membership of the walking group is open and all members (1) will be invited to attend the focus group each time. Participants will be recruited through the letter/information sheet and consent form below (5) which will be given to all group members two weeks before the first focus group. The consent forms will be signed on the day of the focus group and stored separately from the research data. A number coding system will be used to enable removal of a participant's data if requested. Focus groups will be held at the YMCA. Refreshments will be available for all walking group members on the days when focus groups are held. Care will be taken to ensure that walking group members do not feel coerced to attend the focus group by advising facilitators to clarify this and to state that refreshments are available regardless of contribution to the focus group.

In addition there will be one focus group with YMCA and Stepping stones staff and facilitators in March, all staff will be invited through the letter/information sheet below (5). Walking group facilitators will not attend the group members' focus groups to enable honest feedback and evaluation of the group.

The four focus groups will be facilitated, audio recorded, transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis by Plymouth University research team. Confidentiality will be maintained, ensuring that data is made anonymous by removing all names and storing in password protected files or locked cabinet. Transcriptions will only be available for focus group members of the specific group they attended. Participants

will be asked to check transcriptions for accuracy. Data arising from the research will otherwise only be available to participants in the final written report which they will also be asked to check before broader circulation.

### **Outcomes**

It is hoped that the research report will be used in the following ways:

- Research report for local GPs with executive summary
- Journal article for example in The International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation, The British Medical Journal, The British Journal of Occupational Therapy.
- Local dissemination: local newspaper, press release, university magazine; presentations at local health and well being related conferences, community engagement conferences within the university; poster presentations at stakeholders meetings.

- 5. Where you are providing information sheets for participants please enclose a copy here. The information should usually include, in lay language, the nature and purpose of the research and participants right to withdraw:**

*Research information sheet 1 (Group members):*

Dear Walking Group Member / potential participant (1)

#### **Re: Woodland Walking Group Evaluation**

We would like to invite you to join a series of three focus groups to discuss the Ham Woods walking group run by the YMCA and Stepping Stones on:

(Dates to be confirmed following ethical approval)

You can attend one or all of the focus groups designed to capture the experience of group members. This will contribute to a research study to evaluate the walking group. By undertaking this study we hope to understand what works well and what could be improved in the running of the walking group. We would like to understand the impact that attending the group has had on your health and well being. Please see the research question and aims below:

#### **Research question:**

What is the impact and the sustainability of a woodland walking group?



**Aims:**

- To explore the views of group members including staff and facilitators of a woodland walking group in terms of the perceived impact of the scheme
- To consider the factors regarding sustained engagement in walking
- To consider the factors that will ensure the sustainability of the provision of a walking group

All information provided by you during the focus groups will be stored confidentially by the researchers. All focus group discussions will be recorded with digital audio recorders and transcribed with your permission. Electronic data will be stored in password protected files and paper copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet, these will only be accessible to the research team. You will also have the opportunity to comment on a brief summary of key themes arising from the focus groups that you take part in to check for accuracy (4). We will request that those attending the focus group regard the proceedings as confidential (3).

Information from the study will be collated and structured into a report. A copy of this will be made available to all participants on completion. The report will focus on the impact of walking and the walking group on health and well being. The report will not name any individuals. Publicity materials arising from the report may be used by the organisations involved to promote the group and enable people to join or refer others to join the group.

Your participation in the study is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw information you have provided at any time without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time or a decision not to take part, will not affect your relationship in any way with the researchers, Plymouth University, the YMCA or Stepping Stones. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form.

Questions you may have about the study (1):

*Why have I been chosen?*

You have been chosen to take part in this study as a member of the Ham Woods walking group. We would like to ask for your opinion about the group and the impact that it has had on you.

*What is the overall aim of the study?*

The aim of the study is to consider the impact and the sustainability of a woodland walking group. We would like to explore the views of group members in terms of the perceived impact of the scheme, the factors regarding your engagement in walking and the factors that will ensure the sustainability of the provision of a walking group.

*What would I have to do if I take part in the study?*

If you would like to take part in the study you will be asked to read this information sheet and sign a consent form agreeing to take part in the study. You are welcome to join one, two or three focus groups running over the next 6 months. Your participation in the study is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw information you have provided at any time without giving a reason.

*Do I have to take part?*

You do not have to take part in this study. A decision not to take part or a decision to withdraw at any time or will not affect your relationship in any way with the researchers, Plymouth University, the YMCA or Stepping Stones. It will also not affect your ability to take part in any of the other walking group activities.

*Will my records be confidential?*

Yes, we will not be retaining any personal information about you other than a transcript of the focus groups. Your name and any identifying information will be removed from the transcript. All information provided by you during the focus groups will be stored confidentially by the researchers. All focus group discussions will be recorded with digital audio recorders and transcribed. Electronic data will be stored in password protected files and paper copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet, these will only be accessible to the research team. We will request that those attending the focus group regard the proceedings as confidential (3). You will have the opportunity to comment on a brief summary of key themes arising from the focus groups that you take part in to check for accuracy. The final report summarising the findings from all the focus groups will not name any individuals. Publicity materials arising from the report may be used by the organisations involved to promote the group and enable people to join or refer others to join the group.

*What are the potential benefits of taking part in the study?*

We hope that you will enjoy taking part in discussions about the group, sharing your ideas with others and reflecting on the impact that the group has had for you. We also hope that the report arising from the study will be used to promote the group.

*What are the possible disadvantages of taking part in the study?*

Attending the focus group will take up some of your time. The focus group will run directly after the walking group on the dates indicated above and refreshments will be available after. It is anticipated that it will not continue for longer than an hour and you are free to leave when you wish.

*Who is organising the study?*

The study has been organised in collaboration with Plymouth University, Plymouth YMCA and the Stepping Stones project.

*Who has reviewed this research study?*

This study has been ethically approved by the Health Research Ethics Committee at the Faculty of Health, Education and Society, Plymouth University. The research ethics proposal was written by Rosi Raine and Anne Roberts, Lecturers in Occupational Therapy at Plymouth University, in consultation with staff from the YMCA and Stepping Stones.

*How will I hear about the results of the study?*

Information from the study will be collated and structured into a report. The report will focus on the impact of walking and the walking group on health and well being.

A copy of the final report can be made available to all participants on completion, by requesting it from the walking group facilitators or from the researchers.

If you have any further questions or you would like a follow-up or debrief meeting please contact Rosi Raine on: [rosi.raine@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:rosi.raine@plymouth.ac.uk) .

Thank you for your time.  
Yours sincerely

Rosi Raine, Project Lead  
Lecturer in Occupational Therapy, Plymouth University.

*Research information sheet 2 (staff and facilitators):*

Dear Staff Member / potential participant (1)

**Re: Woodland Walking Group Evaluation**

We would like to invite you to join a focus group to discuss the walking group run by the YMCA and Stepping Stones on:

(Dates to be confirmed following ethical approval)

This will contribute to a research study to evaluate the walking group. By undertaking this study we hope to understand what works well and what could be improved in the running of the walking group. We would like to understand the impact that you believe attending the group has had on the health and well-being of group members. Please see the research question and aims below:

**Research question:**

What is the impact and the sustainability of a woodland walking group?

**Aims:**

- To explore the views of group members including staff and facilitators of a woodland walking group in terms of the perceived impact of the scheme
- To consider the factors regarding sustained engagement in walking
- To consider the factors that will ensure the sustainability of the provision of a walking group

All information provided by you during the focus groups will be stored confidentially by the researchers. All focus group discussions will be recorded with digital audio recorders and transcribed with your permission. Electronic data will be stored in password protected files and paper copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet, these will only be accessible to the research team. You will also have the opportunity to comment on the transcription of focus groups that you take part in.

Information from the study will be collated and structured into a report. A copy of this will be made available to all participants on completion. The report will focus on the impact of walking and the walking group on health and well-being. The report will not name any individuals. Publicity materials arising from the report may be used by the organisations involved to promote the group and enable people to join or refer others to join the group.

Your participation in the study is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw information you have provided at any time without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time or a decision not to take part, will not affect your relationship in any way with the researchers, Plymouth University, the YMCA or Stepping Stones. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form.

Questions you may have about the study (1):

*Why have I been chosen?*

You have been chosen to take part in this study as a member of staff involved in the Ham Woods walking group. We would like to ask for your opinion about the group and the impact that you believe it has had on you and the walking group members.

*What is the overall aim of the study?*

The aim of the study is to consider the impact and the sustainability of a woodland walking group. We would like to explore the views of group members in terms of the perceived impact of the scheme, the factors regarding engagement in walking and the factors that will ensure the sustainability of the provision of a walking group.

*What would I have to do if I take part in the study?*

If you would like to take part in the study you will be asked to read this information sheet and sign a consent form agreeing to take part in the study. You would then attend the staff focus group on the date above. Your participation in the study is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw information you have provided at any time without giving a reason.

*Do I have to take part?*

You do not have to take part in this study. A decision not to take part or a decision to withdraw at any time or will not affect your relationship in any way with the researchers, Plymouth University, the YMCA or Stepping Stones. It will also not affect your ability to take part in any of the other walking group activities.

*Will my records be confidential?*

Yes, we will not be retaining any personal information about you other than a transcript of the focus groups. Your name and any identifying information will be removed from the transcript. All information provided by you during the focus groups will be stored confidentially by the researchers. All focus group discussions will be recorded with digital audio recorders and transcribed. Electronic data will be stored in password protected files and paper copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet, these will only be accessible to the research team. We will request that those attending the focus group regard the proceedings as confidential (3). You will have the opportunity to comment on a brief summary of key themes arising from the focus groups that you take part in to check for accuracy. The final report summarising the findings from all the focus groups will not name any individuals. Publicity materials arising from the report may be used by the organisations involved to promote the group and enable people to join or refer others to join the group.

*What are the potential benefits of taking part in the study?*

We hope that you will enjoy taking part in discussions about the group, sharing your ideas with others and reflecting on the impact that you believe the group has had for you and for group members. We also hope that the report arising from the study will

be used to promote the group.

*What are the possible disadvantages of taking part in the study?*

Attending the focus group will take up some of your time. The focus group will run directly after the walking group on the dates indicated above and refreshments will be available after. It is anticipated that it will not continue for longer than an hour and you are free to leave when you wish.

*Who is organising the study?*

The study has been organised in collaboration with Plymouth University, Plymouth YMCA and the Stepping Stones project.

*Who has reviewed this research study?*

This study has been ethically approved by the Health Research Ethics Committee at the Faculty of Health, Education and Society, Plymouth University. The research ethics proposal was written by Rosi Raine and Anne Roberts, Lecturers in Occupational Therapy at Plymouth University, in consultation with staff from the YMCA and Stepping Stones.

*How will I hear about the results of the study?*

Information from the study will be collated and structured into a report. The report will focus on the impact of walking and the walking group on health and well being.

A copy of the final report can be made available to all participants on completion from the researchers.

If you have any further questions or you would like a follow-up or debrief meeting please contact Rosi Raine on: [rosi.raine@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:rosi.raine@plymouth.ac.uk) .

Thank you for your time.  
Yours sincerely

Rosi Raine, Project Lead  
Lecturer in Occupational Therapy, Plymouth University.

*Consent form:*

**Woodland Walking Group Evaluation**

- I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study.
- I am willing to discuss the walking group with researchers from Plymouth University in a focus group.
- I agree to the focus group discussion being digitally recorded and written data being retained by the researchers.
- I agree to keep all personal information arising from discussions confidential (3).
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without prejudice and that if I withdraw from the study any information provided by me will be destroyed.
- I understand that my decision to take part or withdraw from this study will not negatively affect my relationship with the researchers, Plymouth University, the YMCA or Stepping Stones project or affect my participation in the walking group.
- I agree to the presentation, publication and dissemination of a report of the findings in which I will not be personally identified. I understand that the YMCA and Stepping Stones project will be identified in the report.
- I agree to take part in the study.

Participant name:

Signature:

Date:

Lead researcher:

Signature:

Date:

*Focus Group Guide:*

All four focus groups will explore the following areas. The researcher will use the prompt questions as guidance to expand the discussion as required.

Have you all been given a copy of the information sheet and completed the consent

form?

### **Introductions**

Question 1. Please can you introduce yourself and tell us about your involvement in the group?

*Prompts:*

*How long have you been coming to the walking group?*

*How did you hear about the group?*

*Did you attend the cardiac rehab gym sessions before the walking group?*

*Have you been a member of a walking group before?*

*Have you ever been to Ham woods or the YMCA before attending the group?*

*How have you been involved in facilitating the group? (Staff only)*

### **About the running of the walking group**

Question 2. Tell me about what you do at the walking group?

*Prompts:*

*How does the walking group usually run?*

*Have you walked on different routes each time?*

*What works well/not so well?*

*Do you find anything difficult about attending the walking group?*

*How do/could you overcome those difficulties?*

*Is there anything you don't like?*

*Has the weather had an impact on the group?*

*What improvements/recommendations could you suggest for the running of the group?*

*How do you think the group could develop?*



### **The impact of the walking group**

Question 3. Tell me about the impact the walking group has had on you?

*Prompts*

*How do you feel before, during and after the walking group?*

*How do you feel when you are in woodland?*

*What do you enjoy the most about the group?*

*Do you have any thoughts about walking outdoors as opposed to going to the gym?*

*Do you think attending the group has had any impact on your health? If so what?*

*Has attending the group had any impact on any other area of your life/lifestyle? For example diet, smoking, drinking, stress management, or other exercise?*

*Do you have any thoughts on walking for cardiac rehab?*

*Do you walk at any other time in the week?*

*Do you have any other thoughts about the impact of the scheme?*

*What do you think is the impact of the group on the health of its members? (Staff only)*

### **Sustainability of engagement in walking**

Question 4. Can you see yourselves as walkers?

*Prompts:*

*Do you think you will continue walking after the group?*

*Have you been a walker in the past?*

*Have you bought any walking clothes, books, magazines, holidays?*

*What motivates you to walk?*

*What meaning does it give you?*

*How does walking fit in with your other commitments eg work and family?*

*Do you have time off work to attend?*

*Have any of your family members/friends joined the group?*

*Do you think you will continue walking after the group?*

*What would help you to do this?*

*Are you aware of any other walking groups in your local area?*

*Do you know where your local park is? Do you feel comfortable using it?*

*Do you think group members will sustain engagement in walking? (Staff only)*

*What have you/could you do to support this?*

### **Sustainability of the walking group**

Question 5. What would make the walking group sustainable long term?

*Prompts:*

*Were you referred to the group by your GP?*

*What recommendations were you given about lifestyle changes as part of cardiac rehab?*

*What information do you think would be helpful to give to GPs about the group?*

*What do you think are the health benefits of walking?*

*Do you have any thoughts about marketing/promotional material?*

*Do you have any thoughts about funding?*

*Have you considered becoming a walking group leader?*

*How would you like to see this group developing from here?*

### **Concluding comments**

Question 6. Is there anything else that you would like to discuss?

*Prompts:*

*Any other comments you would like to give the facilitators?*

*Do you have any other thoughts about how the YMCA, Stepping Stones or Plymouth University could promote walking for health?*

*Would you like to be sent a copy of the final report?*

*Do you have any questions about the research study?*

Thank you all so much for your time, if you have any further questions or concerns

please feel free to contact me or discuss them with the facilitators from the YMCA or stepping stones project.

**6. Ethical Protocol:**

Please indicate how you will ensure this research conforms with each clause of Plymouth University's *Principles for Research Involving Human Participants*. Please attach a statement which addresses each of the ethical principles set out below. Please note: you may provide the degree of detail required. Each section will expand to accommodate this information.

**(a) Informed consent:**

*Please indicate if a consent form is to be used.*

An information form and consent form will be used for all participants. The information sheet and consent form will be given to all walking group members two weeks before the focus group, the consent form will be collected at the start of the focus group and given to the researcher.

**(b) Openness and honesty:**

*Note that deception is permissible only where it can be shown that all three conditions specified in Section 2 of Plymouth University's Ethical Principles have been made in full. Proposers are required to provide a detailed justification and to supply the names of two independent assessors whom the Sub-Committee can approach for advice.*

All information and interaction will be conducted in an open and honest manner with no attempt of deception. Participants will be kept informed of the aims of the study at all times.

**(c) Right to withdraw:**

All participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the research study at any time before report publication, without any implications for their participation in

the walking group or their relationship with YMCA, Stepping Stones or Plymouth University staff. Data will be identifiable by code by the researchers so that information can be removed if required.

(d) **Protection from harm:**

*Indicate here any vulnerability which may be present because:*

- *of the participants (they may be children or have mental health issues)*
- *of the nature of the research process. Indicate how you shall ensure their protection from harm.*

*Does this research involve:*

*Please tick*

<i>Vulnerable groups</i>	
<i>Sensitive topics</i>	
<i>Permission of a gatekeeper for initial access</i>	√
<i>Deception or research which is conducted without full and informed consent</i>	
<i>Research that will induce psychological stress, anxiety or humiliation or cause minimal pain</i>	
<i>Intrusive intervention (eg, the administration of drugs, vigorous physical exercise or hypnotherapy)</i>	

(2) Permission of a gate keeper for initial access to participants is required for this study in terms of access to Ham woods walking group members via the YMCA. This study has been written in collaboration with the YMCA and Stepping Stones Project staff.

There is unlikely to be any harm caused by the research study. Whilst participants will have been involved in the exercise of walking in woodland, this has not been set up or facilitated by the researcher and risks associated with this have been assessed and minimised by the walking group leaders from the YMCA and Stepping Stones Project separately. The research study will involve focus groups, should any emotional distress be caused by the discussions within the groups, members will be advised to seek support from the walking group facilitators, YMCA or Stepping Stones staff as appropriate.

**Debriefing:**

Any debriefing related to the research process will be provided by the researchers. Participants will be given contact details of the research lead should further information, support or debriefing be required. This is stated on the information sheet.

(e)

(f) **Confidentiality:**

All data arising from the focus groups will be kept confidential in the following ways below. All names will be removed from transcripts, replaced with number codes and stored separately from the consent forms. This will enable identification if required for withdrawal from the study, but not by anyone other than the researchers. Data arising from the walking group members focus group will not be available to the YMCA or Stepping Stones project staff team or vice versa except in the final written report. Participants will be given the transcript of the focus group they attended to approve prior to data analysis. All audio data and written transcripts will be stored in password protected files in electronic format and in a locked filing cabinet when in paper format on Plymouth University premises. This study will conform with the principles of the Data Protection Act (1998).

(g) **Professional bodies whose ethical policies apply to this research:**

The researchers are both members of the College of Occupational Therapists and registered with the Health Professions Council and will adhere to ethical policies arising from these.

**7. Researchers Safety**

(a) **Are there any special considerations in relation to researchers safety?**

The risks to the researchers' safety are minimal, researchers will ensure that YMCA are aware of their whereabouts. All focus groups will be on YMCA premises.

(b) **If so what provision has been made (*for example the provision of a mobile phone, or a clear recording of movements*)**

## 8. Declaration:

To the best of our knowledge and belief, this research conforms to the ethical principles laid down by Plymouth University and by the professional body specified in 6 (g).

Principal Investigator:	Signature	Date
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Other staff investigators:	Signature(s)	Date
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Director of Studies (only where Principal Investigator is a postgraduate student):	Signature	Date
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**Appendix 18. Field notes for focus group 1: cardiac walking group**

Woodland Walking Group Evaluation

Focus Group One Notes

8<sup>th</sup> February 2012

R1	What do you think are the benefits of the walking group?	001
P1	It gives you the confidence to go out.	2
P2	The gym class gave me confidence to leave the house. I had two heart operations and then came to the phase three cardiac rehab group.	3 4
P1	You came six weeks after hospital	5
P2	You do mild exercise in phase three and when you finish you go on to stage four, I've been coming to the walking group since October. First the community nurse came and went through the cupboards, advising on food, she didn't tell us to throw things away, just what not to buy again. Then in the phase three group someone from the hospital visited to advice on diet. On the cardiac side, we go for walks ourselves, organised walks. This is a starter but too short for some in the group, they want longer walks. There are some (other) walks, and some that (another facilitator) organises like around (a lake). This walk is about 1 to 2 miles; some of the group want more like 3 miles. My wife said that this is at the wrong time, it should be morning or afternoon, not lunchtime. Some of the people from the phase four came, but they want longer walks, not this one again.	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17
F1	It was run at that time over the winter due to the dark	18
P2	If you could go to (other) woods or (somewhere else) and advertise you would get more people.	19 20
F2	We were hoping to attract local people, but we could open it out to other spaces. It is strange that there were 14, where did they come from?	21 22
P2	There were four from our place, they didn't come back.	23
P1	It was advertised in the paper, there was a great atmosphere. Would the (host organisation) still be involved if the walks went wider?	24 25
P2	Or we could take a longer walk from here.	26
F2	We advertise this as a beginner's walk, if someone's had a heart attack they need short walks.	27 28
P2	If it picks up, maybe say a month in advance so that people can plan it, for anyone wanting to come on a walk with someone qualified in cardiac rehab, people who don't want to go out on their own.	29 30 31
P1	We are fine weather walkers, it was rough towards the end of December. The day with 14 walkers was a nice day. We walk most days.	32 33
R1	Why do you walk?	34
P2	We feel better. Lucky there are loads of places we can walk, and chat with people.	35 36
F1	One of the reasons we are at the (host organisation) is so that we could offer indoor activities if it rains. Would that appeal to you?	37 38

P2	It depends what it is. I use the exercise studio but I prefer just walking. I would go to the gym but only a certain sort of person goes to the gym. It would help to have someone to go with, but we don't need anyone really.	39 40 41
P1	There must be people who would like to join walks that are not too strenuous. (Another group) park walks came from nowhere. The park warden can give a talk.	42 43 44
P3	What would the indoor activity be?	45
F2	It would be strength and conditioning work, perhaps the exercise bike.	46
R2	Do you enjoy being outdoors?	47
P3	if I'm outdoors its fine, I'm too self-conscious to be indoors. Some like to be outdoors, others indoors. Well you have connections to the area and its history, you grew up here.	48 49 50
P1	It's the nature side as well, I heard a woodpecker today.	51
R2	When you say other groups, how do they manage in the rain?	52
P2	Some come, some don't.	53
F1	Is it to do with the clothing? We wondered whether we should buy waterproofs for the group?	54 55
P1	We have waterproof clothing. We go on (another place) walks in the rain!	56
R1	Do you see yourself as walkers?	57
P2	No we are not walkers! We go for about 40 minutes a day. We are not ramblers.	58 59
P3	Oh I think with rambling you could stop for a bit, not walk at a pace	60
P1	We walk around (a lake) and that is 4 miles.	61
P2	But it is flat, ramblers walk for a half day or whole day that is not us.	62
P2	When you have had a heart attack they say walk fast, then walk slow, then fast. Sometimes I walk for 20 minutes around the streets. But I won't go there again (woods walk). I don't want to do the same thing again. We've been four times around the same place and I don't want to see the same thing again, unless it is to meet new people.	63 64 65 66 67
P1	But we go to (another place) every week!	68
P2	But it is handy and we go on different routes, it gets boring talking to the same person on the same walk, no offence! It's a social thing, getting to know new people, and it is company. The GP asks if I'm still going to the gym every time I see him. It is three times a week, but I don't go three times. It's a social thing, sharing pains, they take my blood pressure. I wouldn't go on my own. (The cardiac facilitator) asks me about my medication, its about confidence, she says "are you alright?" It gets you out and I can talk to others. When you are in phase 3, first out of hospital, people would come along to say about benefits and support. One week (the walk group facilitator) came along to tell the group about the walk, that was when 14 people came.	69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79
P1	You need to mention it to more groups at the cardiac rehab, we saw it in the paper, we wouldn't have known otherwise.	80 81
P2	Yes, then she told the class. You need to think about other places, maybe a four week programme. Work on the promotion and have some more challenging walks. When we all went out that day, the	82 83 84

	wives were there whereas in the gym we are on our own. But with the walk you can go with your wife.	85 86
P1	But you need to change the time, not have it at lunch time, we always have lunch at this time and it is too late when you get back after the group.	87 88

### Researcher 1. summary

We arrived at the walking group meeting point early and were informed that no one had been attending the group since before Christmas (now February) but one session in November had attracted 14 participants. One facilitator suggested that this could have been due to the weather, in particular the cold, as people with angina are advised not to go out in the cold.

Three walking group members arrived for the walk, having been contacted by phone to explain that we would like their opinions for the research. One person had been receiving cardiac rehabilitation following cardiac arrest 12 months ago. He was accompanied by his wife and a friend. In addition, there were three facilitators, two researchers and a group of six students with a tutor from a local outdoor education foundations studies programme. The group of 14 walked around a recently regenerated woodland area for about 45 minutes with a few stops to point out and discuss recently installed features and further development plans. The two researchers rotated around all group members to develop rapport.

After the group the three original walking group members were invited to stay for a cup of tea in the community cafe. An area was partitioned off to provide a more private area within the cafe, however this was quite noisy. With some negotiation it was decided that the focus group would be less formal and more appropriate for the situation if the facilitators stayed to contribute to the discussion. This is because of the size of the group and the lack of prior information given to participants. It had been agreed that participants would be given written information and consent forms prior to the research project, however because no one had attended the group this was not possible.

The research study was explained to the participants and written information was circulated. Verbal consent was given from all three participants for the focus group to go ahead and to be documented for use within the research project. One participant refused permission for the focus group to be audio recorded so both researchers took written notes instead.

The main issues that were discussed were around why the group had not been attended recently and how these issues could be addressed for the future. The reasons given for non-attendance were that the group is not challenging or

varied enough; the length of the walk is too short for walkers beyond four sessions; the weather and time of year; and the time of day being lunchtime. Suggestions to improve future groups include better advertising; change of time, promotion within other cardiac rehab programmes; greater variety of challenges, distance and location; and a planned schedule or four week programme circulated in advance. Stronger links with established cardiac groups and walking groups to progress onto were recommended. The opportunity to be outside; engage with nature; meet new people; and share the experience with partners was seen as positive. Appropriate clothing was not considered to be a barrier to participation. The provision of a beginners group with a cardiac facilitator was considered useful for a time limited period.

One incident considered within the discussion was when 14 participants attended the group in November. Reasons given for the high numbers were that the group was advertised in the local paper and at the cardiac rehab support group. Reasons given to not returning to the group were that the walk was not challenging enough and the weather got colder.

Another incident raised by the facilitator was the attendance of a slower walker. She stated she would not have the confidence to walk outside on her own, but did not return to the group because she felt she could not keep up with the rest of the group and was uncomfortable holding people up. In discussion with facilitators after the focus group, we discussed who should be the target group for the walks? Stronger participants felt the walks were not challenging enough, however less confident walkers felt it was too difficult.

It was agreed that there is a need for a beginners group for walkers who are not confident to walk far or on their own and would benefit from the presence of a cardiac trained facilitator. There is also a need to run groups for more confident walkers and to sign post on to other local walking groups which can offer greater variety of challenge.

The walking group for the following week was cancelled due to anticipated lack of attendance. The facilitators agreed to work with the cardiac group facilitator to embed the walking sessions within the cardiac rehab programme. Walking sessions will be run for a four week programme. Researchers will be invited to hold a focus group once a group have been established.

**Researcher 2: Field notes on focus group woods walks. 8th February.**

Comments below came from the walk participants. Comments in italics were from staff/organisers.	
People like to walk in company.	<b>Company is good</b>
Gives confidence to walk with other people.	

These walks (in H Woods) are too short, will come back to walk with longer BHF walks with S.	<b>Walks in H woods too short</b>
Need good advertising to get people interested.	<b>Advertising important</b>
12 noon is wrong time for a walk. People eat 12-1pm. 10am or 2pm better time.	<b>Timing is wrong</b>
<i>Walk organiser said choice of time related to staffing ie when cardiac instructor was present. Discussion was had on whether a cardiac instructor was actually needed for the walks.</i>	
Could walks be extended to P so attract more people as the walk is longer?	<b>Longer walks</b>
<i>Walk organiser said not many local people to the woods came on the walks, in fact they were from all over the city, so could open the walks out to other venues.</i>	
On one occasion there were 14 people...from the advert in the paper perhaps.	<b>Advertising</b>
Pity there weren't more people.	
YMCA could be involved in walks in other woodlands besides H.	<b>Other woodland walks</b>
Or run longer walks	
<i>Walk organiser said it's a beginner's walk. Could have 1 week for beginners another week for a longer walk.</i>	
If it does pick up. Advertise what's happening.	<b>Advertising</b>
Anyone who has had a heart attack would be reassured by the presence of a qualified trainer.	
Nice to get out – don't like walking on own. Wouldn't go out on own even with a map.	<b>Good to get out in company</b>
Like fine weather, but don't mind rain.	<b>Weather doesn't really matter</b>
Weather was good when the 14 people came. Walk	

days have been drizzly.	
We go out every day for 40 minutes.	
Feel better when come back	<b>Feel good when you get back</b>
Nice to get out	
See different people and have a chat	<b>Meet people and chat</b>
<i>Walk organiser asked if weather was bad and they stayed indoors, would they come.</i>	
I prefer walking, wouldn't come for indoors. Some would "certain sort of person" it would depend on the person.	<b>Prefer outdoor to indoor</b>
Must be loads of people who would like to walk	
I'd be self-conscious indoors. Not for me.	
Liked comment on the trees, points of interest, heard the birds, heard the woodpecker.	<b>Added value walks</b>
Take N, he knows about birds.	
<i>Walk organiser asked if wet weather gear would help.</i>	
Did history of P – got very wet, heavy rain.	
Don't see ourselves as "walkers". Not ramblers, they walk too far, too keen!	<b>Don't see selves as walkers</b>
We can walk fast, slow down, speed up near home.	
Walking must be scary to start with (if you've had a heart attack)	
If it's just same walk I won't come again.	
But we do go to S every week. That's different	<b>Like variety</b>
Like to walk with other people get fed up seeing same people. It's a social thing, getting to know them, company as well.	<b>Like different company</b>
	<b>Socialise with chaps</b>

2 or 3 times a week, it's social with other chaps. Wouldn't go to gym on own x3 a week	
Take BP ask questions, group thing, confidence can do it with instructor there to help. Talk with other chaps	
The week lots of other people came was when it was mentioned by S; she told the class.	<b>Important of a group champion</b>
Otherwise only came if saw it in the paper, wouldn't have known about it otherwise I wouldn't walk on my own in the woods. I don't think I would.	
Summary by walk organiser:	
There are other places we can walk.	
Suggest 4 week programme	
Work on promotion, get group going	
More challenging walks, graded (not too challenging)	
Bring partners good as they are out benefitting too.	
Change the time of the group	
Get Suzanne on board and use it for phase 4 cardiac rehab or all-comers welcome at own risk, YMCA involved to champion it but led by volunteers.	

Researcher 2: summary:

The group had no doubt that walking outdoors was a good thing and hoped that others would join. They liked the social element. Also it was felt that variety and challenge was needed if they were going to sustain walking in this group, but really these participants were a bit beyond a basic group as they walked elsewhere regularly during the week. So marketing to the correct potential participants is needed. It transpired that Suzanne was the link pin in achieving this. The focus of who the group was for also needed to be clearer and following discussion with Z it seemed that cardiac rehab phase 4 was the best target.

## Appendix 19. Transcription of focus group 2: walking group leaders

### Woodland Walking Group Evaluation

Focus Group Two Transcript (Staff, facilitators and research team)

13<sup>th</sup> July 2012

R	Basically it was a year ago when we started talking about setting up the walking group which was planned for October. It started in Oct half term; you had a large group for a few sessions. We met in February but no one had attended... We hoped that there would be a group in the Spring. I came back in the Spring but there were some problems. There was a wild dog attacking people in the woods?	0001 2 3 4 5 6
S	Yes, because people walk down there and I think it was a staffy that had already killed a walkers dog down the woods	7 8
Z	I have not heard that story from anyone else in the wood and I wonder whether it's one of those urban myths?	9 10
S	No, it was there.	11
R	Did you say it was in the paper?	12
S	Yes, think it was in the paper and the police were down there trying to see if they could catch the dog as well.	13 14
R	Well that is a possibility; probably I think continued bad weather...	15
S	the weather has been absolutely atrocious	16
R	But also I think may be acknowledging that we are trying to target quite a hard to reach group. Because people who are already quite confident with walking are walking! So it is acknowledging that actually we are working with a difficult to target group here. And what do you want to do with that? So when we initially started, it was felt that what was needed was a report to GPs that could demonstrate that walking was good for people and that that would generate referrals. And so we have set up another focus group with an established walking group, which I am hoping to do next Tuesday which is a walking group over at W to look at..., you know, we have got some data for why a group might not work, and we can get some data about why a group does work, and I am happy then to complete a report and circulate that to GPs. So it is whether you want anything else and what you want to do about establishing a group? It's whether that is something that you want to follow up or not really?	17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
N	It's a really difficult one, because it didn't really work, did it, this time. We did advertise it out through the exercise through referral group, the HL, and around P, the EHL, so we did spread the word. And then you get a group of people saying yeah I'll turn up, yeah I'll be there Wednesday, but they just never materialise, so it is quite disappointing	31 32 33 34 35
S	Well it's disappointing and for some of my cardiac rehab group, they already do walk and it is just not long enough for them. It's just too short, you know, it's just down there and then back, but they are up to 8 or 9 miles so there is another leader that takes	36 37 38 39



	people out at Pk and at E. So we advertised it out at HL and they said oh yeah we will come to that and they go all excited but we get to the day and there's no one.	40 41
Z	and is that something that is happening, it would be interesting to know if that is something that happens in all the stuff that HL are doing? Or is it that it is an outdoor event? Do you know what I mean? So they don't go to the outdoor events but they do go to the indoor events? Or is it just generic?	42 43 44 45 46
P	I think the HL programme ...there are lots of people going to them.	47
N	Well how many people do you get going to them, down at D?	48
S	Well on average there is 6 but you can get...	49
R	What is this sorry?	50
S	HL	51
R	Is that a walk?	52
S	No its a programme that we do in the community, so at D.	53
N	It's like a community circuit, like exercise and education so you go round to hard to reach places in the community to try to get people exercising	54 55
R	Oh OK, but getting them to come to a gym?	56
N	They come to the community centre or wherever we are	57
R	To the centre?	58
N	So it is like a mobile exercise system, so instead of saying come to a facility like here	59 60
R	Oh OK, an aerobics class?	61
N	You would say, we are in your community now, come and do some exercise.	62 63
P	Its people who are identified as being at risk, so they have had a health check which has identified them, so you are targeting people	64 65
N	Yeah it's the same sort of people	66
P	People who need the exercise, in fact what is happening at the moment, it's quite a lot of the guys are then coming onto our TP programme. So they are trickling on, so it is working. So those people who have been identified as needing to do more exercise, or some exercise because they might not be doing any.	67 68 69 70 71
R	So by GP referral and then they are coming?	72
P	Well it's being done, we've targeted the 10 neighbourhoods in P who have got the worst coronary vascular disease, so the worker attached to our team goes in first, to raise awareness through questionnaires, goes to community centres and does the health checks. Then the exercise programme is set up in that neighbourhood for a 10 week programme for those people, and others, to come to get them started on doing some safe exercise.	73 74 75 76 77 78
R	And where would those people go? What would they move on to after the 10 weeks?	79 80
P	Well they could either come to one of our programmes or at TP we do a health lives programme but with an exercise component as well which is in a gym or health walks, so they are a specifically targeted group.	81 82 83
S	Well we offered our Wednesday walk to our group, but they are exercising and they are linked in with things local to them but they didn't come to our walk.	84 85 86

N	Do you think its bus routes?	87
D	There may be a bit of distance issues, especially with the climate, people don't have disposable income and they have to get a bus here and a bus back	88 89 90
S	Not just one too, if you get people from E there is not a bus from E that comes through here, so if you are asking somebody to travel two hours because they would have to go to CH, and then from CH out here.	91 92 93
Z	I mean it is interesting isn't it because one of the ideas for using H woods is that the YMCA is based here, so it's a local facility for local people, or people who are already coming here, who know where it is. So they aren't travelling because they come here anyway, and then it's, "oh look there is another thing I can do which is going on in the woods". But the interesting thing is that since then you're now going out, so it is almost like, if you were going to do a woodland walk you need to do it in the communities where you are out. So it is almost like the programme itself has changed. Because you are right, there is no point advertising the walk in Ham woods to people in D who haven't got any money or cars to travel around, so it doesn't fit that, does it? It's kind of got to be local hasn't it? As much as we would like to see people walking around the city a bit more, that's...	94 85 96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105
N	Its stage two isn't it	106
Z	Yeah that's stage two isn't it whereas stage one is	107
P	And walking is not really seen as anything particularly...	108
Z	Sexy?	109
P	No, unless, no its not and people in NP say, well I walk up to the school four times a day, and then pick the kids up and come back, so they don't view it as something else, they say "well why would I want to do another walk, I do plenty of walking anyway", so it's got to be something that sells it a bit more. I think in a way, I mean obviously I can see what you are saying about it being too short and you have got people who you further on. So you really have to target quite carefully, people who might be coming to your classes here and who are short walkers because it is such a low risk intervention isn't it? That you have got to be quite poorly to only walk for half an hour or whatever so you are trying to target quite a hard target really.	110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120
S	Yeah you can't really have blanket support for routes, you have got to like split off and do a longer walk.	121 122
N	Yes, the idea is to move some up to CP, because it is a bigger facility and then walk on really, so we can increase the walk and once they could and then focus on the people with less fitness levels, but we never really got to the point where we had enough people to separate it off. It really is difficult, like I said earlier, it's not related, well it is, the gym this year has been really quiet with the weather. People, I mean, I know its slightly different, but the T-shirts and shorts haven't come out so people aren't so worried about their body image, and its hit on everything, even our aerobics classes, people are ringing up and saying, I'm staying in tonight with a bottle of wine, because I've looked out the window and its	123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131 132 133

	torrential rain and I can't be bothered to go out, so it has had a marked effect on all our fitness provision.	134
D	It's knocked on to other projects, if you are not getting people through the door then they can't find out about other activities in the area.	135 136
N	It really has been probably the worst year I have known for fitness provision and getting out, because obviously I'm looking at my budget all the time, it's really having a knock on effect. Obviously walking in the woods when it's been torrential rain, there is plenty of advertising but you know	137 138 139 140 141
R	No	142
Z	I know	143
R	Are you still getting, how many people do you get referred through? Because when we initially started the idea was, as you say there are issues about busses and things but the idea was that there was already a group that was coming here, there was a steady flow of GP referral to the gym programme, so it was like an established, well we were hoping that it was working with an established group already, is that still happening? Are you getting those referrals through?	144 145 146 147 148 149 150
N	We are still getting referrals, but not as many	151
S	But they come first thing in the morning or in the evening	152
R	Because they are working?	153
S	It's just that they have got their exercises to do they come and there is not a lot of people around, because they come from all over P, they don't particularly live here so they like to get it done and dusted first thing in the morning, so they won't come back here again to do a walk, and they won't come on a different day to do a walk because it's not their local area.	154 155 156 157 158
R	OK so what about your education groups, are you still doing those, because the people, the chap that was here before was saying that he was in a group where people would tell him all about how to look after his heart, so it was like an educational group?	159 160 161 162
S	Oh yes that is the phase 3, yes that is still going on	163
R	so people are coming in for that group? There would be a group of people that were coming in for education?	164 165
N	yes they would be having their education	166
R	Yes so that was the group that we were targeting wasn't it?	167
S	that group there it's the same thing, they are not from around here, so they have to travel in	168 169
R	No but they are travelling in	170
S	But at the end of it they will get a choice of where to do exercise, so then they would go closer to home, so if somebody lives up Pk, they are not going to come to H woods at all. The only people that will come are like the people that are coming to my group but now you've got CH, you've got D, you've got Pk, and Pn whereas once upon a time this used to be the only place where you could do phase 4. But it is now in the community so you find those people now will stay where they live, they won't travel in. I mean my group, we go out all over the place, they come from all over the place, but they won't go on that walk, the phase 4 people, because	171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178 179 180

	they are up to, it started like with the half an hour walk, and they've built right up, so they are walking further and they are going out where they live to do walking so.	181 182
N	I think the other thing with phase 3, I mean I don't know if you know, but phase 1 is like the event, the heart attack, phase 2 is the hospital, and then phase 3 is the first time really that they are exercising. So it sounds awful but for a lot of them it is still in the fore front, that I need to get fit because I have just had this heart attack, and once they have done phase 3, you do sometimes get a drop off to phase 4 because, part of them will think they are already cured, you know. They have had a heart attack, they have don't some exercise and then you get that gradual drift, it is not so prominent in their mind	183 184 185 186 187 188 189 190 191
R	No, OK, and why, because we had set it up that you would be taking out the phase 4 people because you felt that they were ready, why don't you take the phase 3 people? You don't feel they are ready?	192 193 194
N	It's not possible	195
R	Can we talk about that? That is interesting, so you are saying that the walk is too small for the phase 4 people but it is not possible to take the phase 3 people, why is that then?	196 197 198
S	Because they are with a trained cardiac nurses, so if they have an event, I don't want to be there thank you! So that is why they are in phase 3 so they can optimise their own exercise level, they are being taught how to exercise, how hard they should be working, and making sure they are safe to exercise. They have a test before and a test after, so they wouldn't be recommended to take that person outside.	199 200 201 202 203 204
R	Right OK	205
S	That is why we don't take them out	206
R	Right OK, so how much exercise are we talking? What sort of exercise are they doing?	207 208
N	24 minutes	209
R	24 minutes precisely!	210
N	It's 12 stations for 2 minutes	211
R	OK so they are exercising for 24 mins	212
S	Yes it's a gradual build up	213
R	Is it humidity controlled?	214
S	Yes	215
R	Right and temperature controlled?	216
N	Yes	217
R	And then are they walking home?	218
S	Driving	219
R	And would they walk around their home environment, you know there kind of neighbourhood?	220 221
N	Yes, they can be given home based exercise to do but I think it all goes down to the liability, you know the phase 3 is still quite ill people, a lot of them are, and that is why you have an exercise physiologist down there and two cardiac nurses for 15 so you have three people for 15 and they are so closely monitored that every two minutes they have to state what their heart rate is so it is that	222 223 224 225 226 227

	sort of level of monitoring, which is different when you are outside. Obviously if they go outside on their own then and walking round the house, that is their risk then, but it is not anything to do with us. They are obviously advised to do home exercise, and things like that, but we are not taking on that risk.	228 229 230 231
S	You wouldn't get any phase 3 people referred into any exercise group	232
N	It's a pathway to phase 4	233
R	So the phase 4 then, they are dispersed geographically they are all over the city so they have got no interest in coming here and the phase 3 are too high risk.	234 235 236
S	Yes	237
R	That is why we have a hard to reach group	238
S	The cardiac nurses wouldn't let you take them out anyway	239
R	No, but that is why we have got ourselves with a group where it is too short for the people who are phase 4 and it is too difficult for the people who are phase 3.	240 241 242
N	Yes. Obviously it is very easy to monitor phase 3 in that environment with optimum controls, there is someone doing the timing there is information on each one there, they are taking their rate of exertion, the air flow out, they are the sort of things you couldn't really take out into the field.	243 244 245 246 247
S	And there is a defib' and a crash trolley	248
N	<i>(Laughing)</i> yes you don't want to take the crash trolley on the walk.	249
R	OK well I think that is it then though isn't it that the reason that the group hasn't worked is because it isn't challenging enough for the phase 4 group and it isn't possible to use for the phase 3 group, so it depends. Initially the idea was set up because, I suppose the YMCA wanted more people through its doors and Stepping stones wanted people to use the woods, and I wanted to do some research, so you know, what do we want to do know really? Because I can write up a report from the findings that we have got, if I am talking to other groups, and maybe it would be helpful if I could talk to your established group that do long walks, maybe I could come and talk to them, and then we would have had three focus groups. We have had a focus group with the group which didn't take off, we have a focus group with a group in W I think it's a school mum's group, and perhaps I can talk to your group, then we would have the data of established groups, if you want a report to GPs to say, get people walking, that is fine. But what do you want to do long term with your group really?	250 251 252 253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260 261 262 263 264 265
N	Well that's it. I think S's group is working out because it's a social day event, so it is not just having a part of the afternoon, its advertised a month before and there will be lunch and you it's a day out with a walking group, it's a lovely day out	266 267 268 269
S	And it's also established, you got to remember these people can't, they get to know each other, and if you are going to go on a walk and you don't know who is going to be there and you don't know what is happening. And also walking around, if it's your local area, it's like well it's like, well it's not embarrassment, but people are like oh god what if someone sees me, that type of thing, where a lot of	270 271 272 273 274 275

	people if they are coming from outside and they think well nobody knows them, and they are coming with their friend. It's a sad thing, it could have been a really nice group but it just wasn't going to happen. And it's really unusual, because I can usually get people, by you know saying oh come along, I can usually gee them up, but I found it really hard, it didn't matter what you did and what you said, it just wasn't going to happen. But you are more than welcome to talk to my (other) group.	276 277 278 279 280 281 282
R	When is your next event coming up?	283
S	Our next event will be, I think K is doing the next one, which will be next Saturday, I think it's C to RH and back I think that is 8 miles.	284 285
R	Wow, they will not be interested in H woods are they?! They are walking out to RH and back from C?!	286 287
S	And the last one we did was out to a pub on Dartmoor by a rock	288
Z	There are lots of rocks on Dartmoor! Lots of pubs as well	289
S	I think the pub is called the rock, and we walked back.	290
R	Lovely.	291
Z	It would be interesting to know, I think the focus group with your group would be really interesting, because I would be interested to know if going out with you on the longer walks encourages them to explore their neighbourhood and their local green spaces and whether, do you know what I mean? And if as a result of coming on your programme now they are going out to their local nature reserve and they are kind of getting a bit more confident to go out?	292 293 294 295 296 297 298
S	Well one of mine has gone on to do walks, he has taken over, we never walk in the winter, we always start in the summer time because its been so bad, but he is like at Pn, he lives at Pk, so he has set up a group with the group that used to come on my walks out at S, they have set up their own group and that and then, obviously some of ours go to that as well so that has come up with him walking, and it is brilliant, absolutely brilliant.	299 300 301 302 303 304
R	That's lovely.	305
S	So he does a roster and I do one as well	306
P	And the GPs will have to start, because they have got public health outcomes that are out there now and one of them is looking at green spaces so, in the new world with GP commissioning and everything there will be, I don't think they are aware of it perhaps, the physical health outcomes, but one of them is about linking it with green space, there is quite a few, utilisation of green space for	307 308 309 310 311 312
Z	Utilisation of green space for exercise, as a health resource.	313
P	So it might be that they say actually we need to be supporting this. A lot of it is that they don't know what is going on in their local area. We are doing a social prescribing pilot and I mean, the purpose of that really is that they don't have to know really they just refer to the pilot and we do all of that,	314 315 316 317 318
S	Is there a park walk still going?	319
P	Yes, not D's, the gardeners walk	320
S	Is that walk still going?	321
Z	Yeah	322
S	What days is that on then is that?	323
Z	Well if you go on the web page we've just upgraded the park walk	324

	website, I can't remember.	325
R	What do you think the YMCA wants to get out of all of this?	326
N	I don't think, well because obviously we were up for doing the walk, so we don't want to have a staff team just sat, it is a bit demoralising with no one showing all the time. I don't know whether the way to go ahead is to do more structured walking events as in, like the day stuff that you do where it would take an afternoon or something, where we could take out. But I am not sure if the short walks are, well, through the evidence, the short walks just aren't working. Because it's difficult to get people to come at a certain time, there is always something else in the way, or a lot of them want to train first thing in the morning because, especially the older people, they want to come in at 8:30, they are in at 8, they are up at 6 for some reason, and they are almost queuing to get in at 8 o'clock because they want to be done for the day and that is it. So it is pretty difficult to have a mid day or a walk to get good numbers.	327 328 329 330 331 332 333 334 335 336 337 338 339
S	But if it is a nice day, and the duration of the walk and where it is, they won't go they will go on their own at a time that suits them, they might walk the kids to school and that is all just walking through the park and back. They will do that because it is not out anywhere, it's like the park, is right there so they don't have to travel to do it, it's just like, if I was walking my boys to M, I would go the long way back home,	340 341 342 343 344 345
D	Yes, you don't have to wait for a particular time to do it, it is just a spur of the moment	346 347
S	Yes it's like oh yes let's take the dog for a walk oh let's take a walk down there, it's really nice.	348 349
P	yes but that is because we are confident enough and we know our surroundings, but I do think there is, I totally appreciate what you are saying about phase 3, but I do think there are people who would appreciate some either company, that is why people do like going on walks together and may not be as able, somewhere before your lot who are doing yomps of 8 miles.	350 351 352 353 354 355
S	Totally right but you know, it's how you	356
P	How you get to them, exactly, it's that transition isn't it, starting in the Autumn was probably a mistake, well it was November probably by the time you started and going through to the end of the year. And this summer is not much better, but generally those things would be better to start when the weather is getting better. That happens with most of the walking groups, unless you are very, very keen and you've got all the wet weather gear, you are far less likely to get people to go out, so possibly that didn't help. It would have been better to have started it in May or June when the weather was getting better rather than starting in the autumn when it's wet outside.	357 358 359 360 361 362 363 364 365 366
N	Obviously it is the same as like an aerobics class, if you have got a busy class it will stay busy, but as soon as it starts to drop it will drop right off because nobody wants to join something that is quiet, and that is always one of the biggest difficulties we have got. We just can't get it off at the start.	367 368 369 370 371

R	How do you deal with that with aerobics groups?	372
N	Change the name, change the time, sometimes it will be exactly the same class but you will just be able to change the name, and even that can do it, so “legs, bums and tums” can become a “whole body conditioning workout” and that will do it. We just keep watching over so many weeks and then we just keep changing things around. The timetable will change every three months and you can just slot like another class in there, and then move that class to another time and sometimes that can work. So it is really just shuffling around. So “legs bums and tums” became “whole body conditioning” and it got busier just because we changed the name, it’s bizarre!	373 374 375 376 377 378 379 380 381 382
R	Interesting isn’t it?	383
P	Its marketing	384
N	Yes we just constantly look at marketing and shuffling around, so that is why our timetables, and a lot of the bigger commercial gyms they always change every three months, and it just keeps it fresh and then people try another class at that same time and it just keeps the interest back up. People that wouldn’t usually be able to take that class because of time will try it because it has been switched around, so that is really how we do it. Or if it carries on failing then obviously we take it off then and double up on another class that is popular, so it is tricky.	385 386 387 388 389 390 391 392
P	And I think the social side is really key.	393
S	Definitely.	394
P	Because I think we’ve got some guys coming to our TP gym class, people who, well in fact two of them from the weight management programme, and we’ve got these three guys and its lovely, because there are women there as well, but the three guys are on the same bits of kit chatting to each other and they’ll come because they will know the other one or two are coming. Whereas if they were the only bloke in that group, they probably wouldn’t come but they stick together, they do yeah. In fact two of them might not now have surgery because they feel they are getting there under their own steam which is absolutely fantastic. It’s very slow and they have to be committed, but it works and because it is a very small gym (you’ve been in A haven’t you) it’s very friendly and that.	395 396 397 398 399 400 401 402 403 404 405
N	Same applies here though	406
P	But the same perhaps applies to a bigger gym, and more commercial gyms, because this is about support, it’s about somebody who has got the same as you, the same difficulties as you, saying, you know, well I know exactly what it’s like for you.	407 408 409 410
S	It’s an interesting case that, because one of the gents, splits his time between A and me because he has a commitment to the gym but he wants another session so he splits his time between the two of us.	411 412 413
P	Yes and it works well for him. So I think once you have got people, and they are comfortable, then that is brilliant and you can then, then they are all go, but it is that engagement in the beginning that is quite tricky.	414 415 416
R	Yes	417



N	Yes and that is the problem that we have got	418
R	And it's that commitment to others isn't it, it only needs to be a group of three, but they feel oh well I'll turn up because otherwise I'll let you down.	419 420 421
P	Yeah. Yes and because their health conditions are similar, they know what it's like for the other person.	422 423
N	Yes	424
P	But if you were to go into the life centre or somewhere surrounded by gym bunnies, they probably wouldn't go. Those specific groups are really important. It's very hard and I know that weight management groups have the same problem in terms of people committing. They'll go for a bit and then they, because it is really hard because its hard work, isn't it, you've got to lose quite a lot of weight, through exercise. And obviously the quick option is to go and have this operation, but that is not necessarily the best option. But once you have got that then they make fantastic health champions really. Because they are far better than any of us professionals in whatever we do to encourage other people, because they say, well look I've done it. I mean we've got M who works at A, she has lost a lot of weight, she's overcome depression, she is worth 10 of me, and she lives in the area that we've got the gym in.	425 426 427 428 429 430 431 432 433 434 435 436 437
R	I like that health champion idea maybe that is what we need?	438
P	Well we are.	439
S	We were going to do that, we have all agreed to do that. We've agreed to take somebody from our group, to do the walk leaders it was.	440 441
R	Yeah	442
P	But we are developing that we've got a worker for public health nurse who is working with the guild initially, just to um, she might well be visiting you in a few months to look at spotting health champions to get them trained up. Get some qualifications as well, because they are worth their absolute weight in gold. They've managed to do it, where ever they live, same place as other people. They are not somebody who is paid to come in and is seen to be, you know	443 444 445 446 447 448 449
N	It's the same sort of thing with us, because we've got D coming in with his Parkinson's, and then people complaining about trying to get fit, and then they see D come in who can hardly walk and struggling to keep fit and it prompts them to think, well what am I complaining about, and then they say, well I've got utmost admiration I think I'd better work a bit harder, and then the next person comes in and sees that one and it just keeps going on. And other people say what have I got to complain about I really just need to get fit you know and it does work through, but you need that start.	450 451 452 453 454 455 456 457 458
S	that's been a real success and we've put a lot of hard work into that and its building up	459 460
N	And its small and it's become social and they are all discussing each other, like you said they've got stuff in common, and it just keeps building. But to get that build, even E took the first year.	461 462 463

P	That's right, these things take longer than six months, they take a year easily	464 465
N	It was empty for a year	466
R	And it's not now?	467
N	No we had circuits and it's almost too popular now.	468
R	That is interesting how lovely	469
P	Send them down to A.	470
N	I mean it has its moments, we've had some quiet times like every gym, but it does have busy times, I mean we are only talking 14, 15 a day but that is still 14, 15 a day in a gym that is only six stations, or 4 stations, something like that. 4 people in there and it's too busy, cause they all want one piece of kit, but it has become popular, and it's been going for the fourth year.	471 472 473 474 475 476
P	And its word of mouth, people who live in E who have used that will say, why don't you come along and that is also very powerful.	477 478
N	Then you've got the doctors behind you because it's in the doctor's surgery so instead of writing prescriptions they are writing prescriptions for exercise, so you've got that small amount coming in all the time. Obviously you've got a high drop off like with everything, but then it only takes one person to stay for a certain amount of time every now and then and it just keeps it going. So it's got that support and advertising, because it's in the surgery, it says "Gym – that way" so people are in the waiting room and they can see there's a gym here.	479 480 481 482 483 484 485 486
Z	OK but in terms of, well, does YMCA want to use H woods? Is number one. And if you don't then, you know ( <i>laughs</i> ), and second question is, if you are happy doing stuff in here and, well the other question is, as you're running successful outdoor walking projects and activities, whether there is a different kind of support that you might be interested in, that might be around linking up with walk leader training, as the next step for your clients, or providing adequate information for people about their local neighbourhoods, so that they do know where their local woods are if they now feel confident to go out and use them. So it's more about, saying well I'm from Pk, well I know more about R woods and I can give you this map here, and that's from Stepping Stones, and then you can go on and do it, so there is two elements to this, now you're city-wide. But the first thing is do you actually want to use H woods for walking or other stuff, and if so, how can we support that?	487 488 489 490 491 492 493 494 495 496 497 498 499 500
N	I think that, well H woods obviously we'd be silly not to use it because it's right there and it's been done up, so things like the summer clubs, things like that where I can put alternatives to things we got, like craft work, things like that. In relation to the walking, I think we've tried it and to be realistic it's going to be difficult to set up something and unless anyone can come up with any ideas for how to make it busy, but we did put quite a lot of work into trying to get it built, and I suppose I'm trying to say, admit defeat on that one. But in relation to like the youth work and things like that if we can have more links with you, because I wouldn't have known about you having the Wednesdays now, so I will go straight outside in a minute and hopefully A is still out there, I can say right you've	501 502 503 504 505 506 507 508 509 510 511 512

	got your summer club, there is a Wednesday activity at this time, so that is brilliant. Um the relationship with S, with the information for S with walks and all that is ideal.	513 514
S	Ideal	515
N	So there is a partnership there, and maybe using some of the walks that you've got for the day event that you do, the social day event	516 517
S	Yes	518
N	But the actual structured one day a week walking hour or two hours, I just can't see it working.	519 520
S	If you can access the people that it is for, the people who haven't got anything else or who are on their own, things like that, if you could get those people, then yes, it would be good, but it is so difficult to get to those people, where are they, where are they living, you know what I mean? Unless you know or you are in the know of where these people are, and then you can go right, there is something you can do, and then get them to come along, and then spend the time to encourage them to stay, then fine.	521 522 523 524 525 526 527 528
P	Well there is a gap isn't there because the GPs in your area, they will know who your high risk people are, so there is a gap between them knowing before someone has a heart attack, has an event, it's that prevention bit isn't it of having, that is the bit that at the moment it doesn't quite work, unless, a) you are a very forward thinking GP and you are into fitness yourself, and it's more likely to be on your radar, but every GP practice has got lists, they will know who has got high blood pressure and who has got high cholesterol.	529 530 531 532 533 534 535 536
Z	It kind of goes back to what you were saying about where the walk goes from, because actually if it goes from the GP surgery and there is a big arrow and it says meet this person here, on Wednesdays, you know, at 9 o'clock, and we will go for a walk together, maybe that's an idea. Because I also think perhaps this building, its quite divorced, certainly from the area that we are working in around NP, where all the regeneration is going on so it feels to me a little bit out of the way, maybe it isn't, maybe it's just because I work over that way. Um, but for people to actually walk here from over there they have to walk through the woods anyway! So they have kind of done their walk before they even get to the start of the walk, so, um.	537 538 539 540 541 542 543 544 545 546 547
N	It's always been difficult to get here, it's one of our biggest problems really, bus routes	548 549
S	Because you can't get a bus here from MP, and we are right next to MP, if there was one that could go straight to MP, but it's just like bus routes, I went up to Ms to take my niece into town and it was a nightmare.	550 551 552
Z	So is it, in terms of your programmes, is it worth sitting down with your youth summer clubs programme before you put your programme together and go, right do you want to put in H woods as part of this programme?	553 554 555
N	Yes, you could get them to bring down the children, don't know if you would want them all!	556 557
Z	well from my perspective, I would like to enable you guys to have	558

	activities as well, because we are only here for another year	559
N	Yeah.	560
Z	So it is kind of things like we are putting in the orienteering, um permanent orienteering course, so actually what would be great is if you could bring people down to test it out.	561 562 563
N	Yes well they are looking for stuff.	564
Z	And then your staff can do that independently, because we're going to be gone, out of Ham Woods by the end of next summer, so we need, well we can provide activities, and we will do, because they are going to happen anyway, but we need to think of legacy stuff that, you know	565 566 567 568
N	Yes	569
Z	That you are going to want to continue, that is useful to the YMCA as part of your general programme.	570 571
N	Well obviously that is A's department, but I know that they are putting together the full summer club, and they do outdoor events and N, that you know, does orienteering and stuff like that, he does a lot of D and TT, so he's very outdoor focussed anyway, and I am sure he would jump at getting groups down here. Because why would you want them playing in the sports hall when they could be, if the weather is nice, you want them out.	572 573 574 575 576 577 578
Z	Yes	579
N	So that change of environment would be great on their programme.	580
Z	Because we also, I was talking to the education officer yesterday, and we were talking about how you can get some of your D of E stuff through using these spaces. You don't necessarily need to go out to D and how do we start to embed that within D of E plans for teachers, and journeys in the city, so that you can get your Bronze orienteering probably in H woods. Because actually I get pretty lost half the time I go there, so it's how we can start to use the woods for something you are already doing, rather than feeling that what we are doing now is adding on, rather than an extra job for your staff that we need to fund	581 582 583 584 585 586 587 588 589
N	Yep. No what I'll do because these are A's contacts and N's contacts, and I will speak to then as well, but that makes sense for definite, that would be really good. Well I can't speak on that department but I can't see why they wouldn't want to take their youth and summer clubs out, and make better use of the woods, Ham Woods and also the other stuff that you do and all the craft work. It's just finding, you know what it's like, for 6 weeks holiday, we're looking for as much variation and excitement for the summer club as we can.	590 591 592 593 594 595 596 597
Z	I think there are barriers though, otherwise it would have happened already, and I can't see why people wouldn't want to take kids out but actually its a lot more effort than delivering what you normally do, and that is a big barrier, and we support staff to overcome that barrier, there is already a barrier and I know, and it is probably my fault really, I think last year we had this, we generally do the events at the same time, and I don't think its a time that fits in with your time, so I think that is also already a barrier I am sure there was an issue we discussed last year about that.	598 599 600 601 602 603 604 605

N	Right I would have to look into that, OK.	606
Z	But I think it is worth acknowledging that there are some barriers.	607
N	Right, I know there is ratio and stuff like that	608
Z	And I think generally there is a drop in at your summer clubs, they are drop in so in order to take them out how would they do that? So there are a few things that we have to work through.	609 610 611
N	I know we've changed it recently, but yes it would be a drop in, but there has been more, obviously it's improving each year and they are putting in more procedures and getting more assistance, improving the ratio of staff to children, but it's not my department so I can't comment on all that area. But I will speak to N and A because it is right on our doorstep.	612 613 614 615 616
Z	I don't know if you do cycling proficiency or that kind of stuff?	617
N	N does it, he does bike leader, that would be the person really, it's N ( <i>leaves</i> )	618 619
Z	The other thing is that we are trying to upgrade the parks web pages at the moment, and there's around probably about 40 parks across the city, or nature reserves, and what would be interesting is actually having people telling us what they'd like on those web pages or collecting photographs that we can put on those web guide, or collecting information. Because actually until you walk around a site you don't know what is in it and whether that can be part of their walk. It isn't just about going for a walk but actually it is about collecting data like photographs so that we can then put that on our web pages. That would be really helpful because we're struggling, it is just about time really, and actually about having local people, have been to a place saying, you know what, this is the really interesting bit, you've got to tell people they need to go and see this, that would be helpful. But, they are not sexy walks, like you know C and RH, people are like wow yeah.	620 621 622 623 624 625 626 627 628 629 630 631 632 633
S	Well walkers are walkers and gym users are gym users, they are different animals. You know they are different people, you know people that do walking are	634 635 636
Z	Outdoor people	637
S	Yeah and wouldn't think of coming to a gym, like the ramblers, that is why all these clubs you know, once you've started a walking group, you've got the ramblers, you've got this, you've got that, they are the P something or other, part of a group. So it's specific like cyclists, like, is that your bike, so you are a cyclist, you are outdoors, you like cycling right, it's something you would look for to go and do, so walking is exactly the same. I love my bike I just find it so boring to sit on one indoors.	638 639 640 641 642 643 644 645
R	What I find interesting though is when you have someone who isn't interested in going outdoors to make that shift to more healthy behaviour so that their health improves. Because you are right, we don't need to worry about the people who are walking to RH, they are doing OK, how do you get that change?	646 647 648 649 650
D	That's the money question isn't it?	651
S	It is isn't it, if that, then we wouldn't have all these programmes setting things up, because you could just reach them then couldn't you.	652 653

R	But it's that preventative work that you are talking about, it's the referral from the GP saying, you know what your blood pressure is too high, you need a life change before you are in hospital deciding you need a life change.	654 655 656 657
S	Its education	658
P	And they don't at the moment, at the moment it's not geared up to do that, the prevention side, it's much more geared up to secondary care. But that will change, it is changing and it will have to change. You know we can't afford the services so they will have the pressure put on them to make sure they know what is going on and to encourage people to come and try. Those people who have never done anything, for who, a half an hour walk would be hard for, particularly these folk who would struggle may be to do a 30 minute walk and not be on a scooter going everywhere. It's something much quicker but you are not actually sorting the problem out by giving someone a mobility scooter.	659 660 661 662 663 664 665 666 667 668
S	Oh yeah, no. They are the worst things in the world you can give somebody, they are. The less you do the less you can do.	669 670
P	Exactly.	671
S	And these people are not dealing with or facing the problem, they are making it worse. One they are not moving so their weight increases, their circulation, their heart, everything!	672 673 674
R	But you are right, that is the person that you need to do the short walk.	675
S	26 people said yeah love to come down, and how many have we got, 6. 26 people and they all know they are in danger. But you are going into areas where education needs to come first when they are small and growing up, you are talking about people who will have their drink and their fags before nutrition comes into it, so these are the people you want to aim at which we are at the moment, but telling them that you are likely to drop down dead, if that is not enough then what is? But then we've got to motivate these people, we've got to keep them for 10 weeks and we work like crazy to encourage them and give them the confidence. And how many have we got? We've got two at A out of 7. 2 of them we've got, 4 started, 2 are left.	676 677 678 679 680 681 682 683 684 685 686
Z	Yes because they are expensive programmes and we have to justify this cost, I know we are struggling with the MM project.	687 688
P	But it's got to be built into the city hasn't it? It's got to be the exercise, the green bit, it's got to be built into people's daily activities so it's not an extra thing you have to do, it is something you have to do to get to the shops or to get to do that bit of exercise.	689 690 691 692
S	And school is another good one, because people, if parents are walking to school and you have a meeting point, and what you have to do is educate the child as well because a lot of parents do not, they will get in the car	693 694 695
D	90% of people drive to school	696
S	Yeah they do, and where I live, people	697
P	It's about making it hard to drive the car really	698
S	Yeah its 20 minutes in the car in fumes which is not as healthy,	699

	people would rather drive to school than walk their children to school but isn't that a good place to start? Set the walking group up at the school so that is encouraging the children and then you have got right across the board then haven't you? Because schools know no bounds do they you've got, in MP you've got beautiful houses and then right across the road you've got NP, it's a cross section of the community.	700 701 702 703 704 705
P	It's about it being something that you are not so aware of, because I think as soon as you see the health police coming along I think people, it's like health eating, people are ahrrh! ( <i>Laughing</i> ) It's about making it attractive enough and families wanting to do it and it being cheap or free, that is what we do try and say. You know, you've got these wonderful places on your door step, take a picnic, you've got the whole day, it won't cost you anything except from the bus fare to get there, or walk, or however far it is, the children will be knackered by the end of the day so they won't be troublesome when you get home. But it is all of that side of it, to try to get over to people, but places like the H in NP are great because they do lots of family activities in the summer, but it also in a way creates a dependency, because those families will then look to the H, to say well where are you taking us this year? Instead of saying, well actually they do do ones where they get people to go by themselves, but generally it is almost like there is this dependence on someone else to sort out the problems, it's not my problem. Or it's genetic, or I am going to have diabetes because my dad had diabetes, or I've got diabetes in my family, its fatalistic, it's like actually there are things you could do to get yourself out of diabetes, there are things you could do. And it is such a cultural thing. I went on a conference last week, with my colleague, and it is that behaviour change, it's not one behaviour, its behaviour that is embedded in the community that you live in. Everything is not just you as an individual, well of course it is you, but if you try to look at something like smoking it is one behaviour amongst so many other behaviours and you can't ignore where that person is at, so it's a whole raft of things. So where we are based up in SB it is full of take-aways, and you get an empty pub, go fill it with another take-away. It's not actually supporting people to cook for themselves, or to go and buy fresh fruit and veg from somewhere. They just say oh yeah its fine to have another pizza place in the square, we've already got five, we can have another one. So it's, well what we are trying to do is really kind of coal face stuff when there is a lot more really, well it's the same for you, if local authority and health and, because when we moaned about those shops and the tanning shop going in, they say well its jobs for people and that is really all we are interested in at the moment, but what a tanning shop and another pizza shop? It just makes our job even harder.	706 707 708 709 710 711 712 713 714 715 716 717 718 719 720 721 722 723 724 725 726 727 728 729 730 731 732 733 734 735 736 737 738 739 740 741
Z	Well it goes back to partnership working doesn't it, and why partnership working is so important. Because there is such a wide impact, like you say, you have to have loads of partners working together to make sure that they do things that are more joined up.	742 743 744 745
P	Yeah. Because while people say oh we want people to be more healthy, until we are actually saying, yes it is to everybody's	746 747

	benefit, while we are doing bariatric surgery at Dd now, that is an option isn't it? It didn't used to be there, people had to go up to T so it was more difficult, but now its here, well I'll have some of that thank you, so we are coming at it from the wrong end. So now we have to have surgeries that have wider doors and wider trolleys, and bigger buses for bigger bus drivers to sit, and it has been health and safety so now they have bigger busses so that bigger bus drivers can sit behind the wheel so there tummies don't touch the steering wheel, so we are accommodating obesity instead of saying	748 749 750 751 752 753 754 755
S	They are encouraging it	756
P	We've been working with the buses because, that is where HL have been working, they have large bus drivers who are overweight because they are sedentary all day and they don't eat very well, it is quite stressful, so they are a great target group to work with, but if they just get a bigger bus and so they can sit and have a bit more room then, so we are not helping ourselves.	757 758 759 760 761 762
S	I find that most bizarre, I can't get my head round it.	763
P	But we are we're adapting	764
D	Because it is changing for them they don't see it as so much of a problem, it's catered for.	765 766
P	No they are in the majority	767
S	It's the same with the mobile scooter things, people would have walked up town, they would have struggled, they would have stopped three or four times, it would have been a bit of exercise, but now you see them and I just think to myself you shouldn't be in that, you shouldn't be in that unless you can't walk literally, you know what I mean, but it's just encouraging people to do less and less. Twenty years ago, well it isn't, its five years ago, these are the people you would see stopping on the seats going through town.	768 769 770 771 772 773 774 775
D	Yes they drive up, park by McDonalds, walk in and then jump back onto their scooters	776 777
S	You just think, oh goodness!	778
R	So can I put to you, what would you like me to do? Because when we started, you sort of commissioned three focus groups with walking group participants and a focus group with staff. And effectively this is the focus group with staff and we've had lots of lovely information and	779 780 781 782
S	I thought you were coming to our phase fours,	783
R	Well that is what I am putting to you, what do you want the report to look like, what are you commissioning, what do you want it to look like? So absolutely, I can come to that and that would be the third group effectively and that would be lovely, but who is the report for and what do you want it to look like because initially it was a report for GPs so that they would refer people into your cardiac rehab walking group but that doesn't exist now, so who do you want the report to and what do you want it to say? Or don't you want it and that is fine.	784 785 786 787 788 789 790 791
Z	Well it isn't is it? Well it is but	792
R	Well it's an option, I mean I am very happy to write up the report	793



Z	It's an expensive option	794
R	Well who do you want it to be to and what do you want it to say?	795
Z	I don't know	796
R	Because it is interesting because we've, well is it that the GPs need to have information and an evidence base for being proactive and preventative	797 798 799
Z	Yes that is right, ideal.	800
R	Or is that we want it to be a report for people to pick up in the surgery to think about walking? What do we want?	801 802
S	Well if you are going to do that you are going to need to have a big list or access to walking, and you are going to have to have the internet on it, and everybody has got the internet and needs to be walking of that age group. So would it be the doctors that you give it to and then they would have to say, or; you've got the report to the doctor, and you want him to pass it on then that is	803 804 805 806 807 808
R	Well I'm just saying what do you want?	809
S	Well if you do it for the doctor then there has got to be another step from the doctor on, else it's a waste of time	810 811
Z	I think we needed for the health and wellbeing commissioning boards to demonstrate that utilisation of green space for exercise, health and wellbeing groups can work, that it does work and we have evidence of it working across the city but that it needs funding, it needs long term commitment, long term funding, it needs qualified staff or health champions, community involvement, it needs, so basically people can then go to the commissioners and say this works, its works locally but we need money to deliver it. Because we do and at the moment the only way we will be able to run these programmes is if we get money and at the moment the most likely people we are going to be able to get money from because of, under the health outcomes framework, is potentially through the new health and wellbeing commissioning board. So if we can use this report to, because public health keep telling me, we need local evidence, and um, because we keep saying we have the evidence that shows that being outdoors improves your health, you know, so why do you need anything? Oh no we need local evidence from P. OK, if this can demonstrate through focus groups with other groups that it does work but that it needs X amount of staff input, well then we can go to commissioning boards and say well look, we've got the evidence that it works, and we've also got the evidence of why it costs this much, and you know, partners on board and whatever, I kind of think that might be the most useful, do you? I mean we are struggling to	812 813 814 815 816 817 818 819 820 821 822 823 824 825 826 827 828 829 830 831 832 833
P	Um, yeah. I mean obviously this is part of a wider programme of prevention isn't it? So it fits in, not isolated and on its own, it's part of that whole thing we have just been talking about, it may be about making it harder for people to drive and easier for people to walk so that they don't have to think about it or join a special group or anything, that is about infrastructure in the city.	834 835 836 837 838 839
Z	So it doesn't get sit in isolation essentially	840
P	No it's together and then there is ownership from the local authority and the city centre and everything to make it more pleasant to walk	841 842

	and it's more difficult to park, or you might have to park further away or it's all of that really.	843 844
Z	Because that is another interesting point as well actually because, if you think about H woods as well you know we have got funding from transport because it's got a highway running through it, um and, so yeah it is different organisations working together, and the other thing that I would hope in the future, seeing as health is like the only place we can see any funding coming from for the moment, but it is that I hope that the health department would pay to put a new path in to the woods so we don't pay for capitol works, because in a woodland you can demonstrate that the impact on health because of increased use, because of that new path, so it's worth putting the path in. So it's both ways, that kind of health doing things a bit differently but it is also making sure that the other	845 846 847 848 849 850 851 852 853 854 855 856
P	Well public health goes onto the local authority from next April, responsibilities will lie with P city council; which makes sense because parks are part of the city and they will be getting the funding.	857 858 859
R	So you want the report to be written to the council?	860
P	I think so yes.	861
Z	Well I think it's the health and wellbeing board isn't it? Well for the council to present to the health and wellbeing board. But H woods would have other stake holders wouldn't it.	862 863 864
S	It starts right at the top then	865
P	And then it is to encourage GPs to refer to local walking programmes, and if there are risk assessments that need to be done in terms of somebody's health, if they are a higher risk than Jo Bloggs who isn't any risk, then that needs to be, that is where the money bit is, because the expensive bit is having S or R as qualified, that it the bit, because you need that for vulnerable groups of patients, other groups won't need that. You know they might need their blood pressure checking before they go out or whatever but they don't need a crash trolley or oxygen. So there is a pyramid really, so those that are at the top of the pyramid who are more sick and need more costly interventions. By the time you get down here it should be much cheaper because these things should be more available.	866 867 868 869 870 871 872 873 874 875 876
S	You won't need any of those things, anybody could do the walk.	877
P	Yeah, at the end of the day people walk don't they, they walk to their car, to the shop, it's a low risk intervention in itself, except when you are talking about some groups that are high risk.	878 879 880
S	You could even put it across P like you have the, like you have going around different areas, you could just go smack, right, this month, tell people to meet at this school, this month for 10 weeks we are going to meet outside this place, you know what I mean, if you could have them at different places, hit different areas, because, HH, that is normally quite busy isn't it, loads of people, but if you say use that, and they are dealing with so much there. If you were down there and said right this walking group is going to be for 10 weeks every Tuesday and we're going to go out, bang done.	881 882 883 884 885 886 887 888 889

R	So do you think that way in the same way as you have a 10 week movable clinic, that kind of 10 week programme, so if you were doing that here, where would you do it from? If one of your 10 weeks was in H woods, where would they come from, where would you advertise that? Is there a GP like the other side of the woods or something? Or where would that be?	890 891 892 893 894 895
S	It's difficult because it's not an area that they target people we are looking for. A lot of people around here are working, they are doing their thing they are coming into the gym. The target areas I'm talking about are people that don't, don't do anything, that need intervention so you would have to maybe, for want of a better word you would have to go to the rougher, poor side of here	896 897 898 899 900 901
P	Yes and the deprived neighbourhoods are generally on the west side of P. So W, right the way down the riverside, down to D, the city centre and Ed	902 903
S	And on the back end of H there	904
P	Which is where the neighbourhoods where we are doing HL are in those areas, it goes with the turf really.	905 906
S	And then they go and they do health checks before, but like I said, hit the school	907 908
R	Hit the schools?	909
S	Hit one of the schools, so at least you are targeting one of the schools this week. If you know there is a drop in centre, if you know that this week they are trying to bring the community in together, you would hit that place, go bang right, I'm going to go here and then you put the advertising just in that area. But then you've got, after they have done the walk, then now they have the option of where else they could go after that so it's up to them So you would have the website, so that's your area, look up that, that's where your walks are. You don't have to then struggle to put on walks because or you can go right there you go search which one you want, it's done then, it's done for you.	910 911 912 913 914 915 916 917 918 919
P	So of you like we are like stepping stones aren't we, and that is what the community gyms are, we're stepping stones too, some people are perfectly happy to stay on their stepping stone and others are like, well if I go to this gym, then I know how you behave in a gym and use the equipment, then I might go to the life centre, if someone could show me around then I won't feel like an idiot because I will know what the training machines are for. So for some people if they don't want that, if community gyms are keeping people more happy, because we are doing more questionnaires and people are saying well I like coming here because it is sociable and friendly, I like the instructor, if that is where they are going to do it that is fine, but those are fairly expensive as well to run. And because P now has got the life centre, its huge but that won't suit everybody and it doesn't.	920 921 922 923 924 925 926 927 928 929 930 931 932
S	But one hit there is price isn't it. A lot of people we have got, although its only the 5 – 6, every single one of them now has taken up the gym down there now haven't they on a regular basis, so that for us is like brilliant, they are not going to travel all the way out here, they haven't got the money to do that, and also it is outside of	933 934 935 936 937

	their comfort zone, they don't like to travel out because there is nothing out, because there is nothing outside Devonport apart from town, so they are not going to get on two buses to get here. If they are going to feel like comfortable and they are going to be encouraged to exercise they have got to do it on their doorstep. And we were surprised, they said oh yeah I've been to the gym three times last week, and we said, oh that's brilliant, absolutely brilliant, bingo, mission accomplished.	938 939 940 941 942 943 944
R	They have gone to the life centre from you?	945
S	No, they won't go to the life centre from over here, they don't have the money, they are going to the gym there. There is lots going on there, what I am saying is that these people are coming to our group, these are the people that have stayed, out of those, all of them have now taken up extra or additional exercise in that week, which is, you know, that is a hundred per cent.	946 947 948 949 950 951
R	And those are people that were referred to you before a heart attack as opposed to after? You worked with those people initially because they were referred to you because they were high risk?	952 953 954
S	Yes high risk, none of them have had an event, none of them.	955
R	That is brilliant	956
S	This is the group that are going into	957
R	That is it then isn't it, that is the group you are trying to target	958
S	You are and that group is very hard work, exceptionally hard work, out of 26 we had 6.	959 960
R	Well that is a really big achievement	961
S	Of course it is but its hard work to get in there, like you said, it's not a case of oh you've got to give up smoking, eat healthy,	962 963
R	But that is nearly a quarter I think you've done really well.	964
S	Yeah we are quite proud of it aren't we?	965
R	Yes that is amazing for a hard to reach group.	966
P	Yes but you have to prove, as Z said, its times now it's all about commissioning, so all of our community gyms now, it's like evidence that we work, we need figures we need this and that, and they can see quite small figures but when you're working with people, no that is actually quite a good figure.	967 968 969 970 971
S	Well where we have a hundred percent uptake, I think it's brilliant, so your message has got across so they will go back into the community after we've gone and they will still be, oh I'm just going up the gym.	972 973 974
P	But then you start the process so if they start with the hearty lives, do their exercise programme, then come along to our TP which is healthy lifestyles so they learn more about food, because you don't necessarily get because they are doing the exercise bit here, I'm sure you do give food, but it's about that change for that person, its ongoing isn't it?	975 976 977 978 979
S	It's more structured	980
P	And then coming through TP, and then they are saying oh what can we do after this? And that has been an issue, because they are like, 10 weeks isn't long enough, we need to do more, but we can't, so this is when you need partnerships so we can say well this is what you then need, here is an array of things that you can	981 982 983 984 985

	go and try because they can't keep coming to a TP club. This is, I know people go on with weight watchers for years and years and years, ours is a 10 week programme and that's to give you the skills and the tools and you don't need to buy a weight watchers brownie or whatever, but they still need support. They can still come back and do the exercises in the gym, come of them the gym isn't for them, so I recognise that we still need to have things and the other end, partnerships that can hold those people to reinforce the same things that we've been saying. So you come here and then you go to D and then you go and buy your big pasty or your chocolate bar and what message is that? You've burnt off 600 calories in the gym and now you can just go and fill up and have 600 calories, so all of us, NHS, you know, need to be thinking about what messages we are giving out to people.	986 987 989 990 991 992 993 994 995 996 997 998
Z	And that is really important as well, because I assume that with limited funding that health commissioning is going to want to focus on the most risky groups, whereas we need to say, yeah that is fine but actually, we also need	999 1001 1002 1003
D	It's three times more expensive that way	1004
Z	Yeah, also in terms of long term behavioural change you need to have sign posting	1005 1006
P	They have to look at prevention because now we've got to stop this at D, it's got to stop, you know there is motorways of people going into D surgery for health related, obesity related, you are not going to fix the problem, your knee might need to be replaced but you need a new knee because you are overweight, you need to lose weight and then your knee problems should resolve, a new knee isn't going to do that whilst you are still over weight so. And they are recognising that, but it takes a long time to turn it around because in the past, the NHS, if the PCT, if P Primary Care finished in the black, anything left over would just go to sort out their funds, but that is not going to happen in the future. The PCTs won't exist by April next year, so and D is a foundation trust or whatever it will be, and we've got hospitals up in L who have got administrators in, so this is what its going to be like, this the facts, its going to be, we've got to invest far more into public health interventions, and that is public health totally broad, its housing, health, jobs, everything, because all of that has an impact on why that person doesn't exercise or doesn't prioritise exercise. Because too many other things get in the way before me, you know well going to the gym is all about me and I've got five kids or I'm not working. And we always assume, or wrongly assume that people will value their health and they often don't really.	1007 1008 1009 1010 1011 1012 1013 1014 1015 1016 1017 1018 1019 1020 1021 1022 1023 1024 1025 1026
S	That's quite clear with the groups that we are dealing with now, people don't.	1027 1028
P	It's not a priority	1029
S	No it's not. It's definitely a priority for us, for people that do, find it very difficult to understand but when you listen to them and their mind set, and the way they are programmed you think, well I'm not surprised you think like that.	1030 1031 1032 1033
P	Its cultural, it's a cultural thing and I think you are not going to get to make big changes just by intervention like this, it has got to be	1034 1035

	much bigger, you know, in terms of what food people eat, what is available, what is cheaper, what is more expensive and all of that, people can do the exercise programme and still be eating junk, so it is about making sure that the changes are	1036 1037 1038 1039
Z	I'm just wondering in terms of if we are looking at this as a case study I think it would be interesting to look at the friends group who are going strong and how being part of the friends group is actually encouraging them to come out and use the woods, because I know for example the chap who was out this morning with us R, he's got mobility issues but he is out there, he is like Mr Vigilante, he is down there shouting at people to pick up their dog poo, he goes down there with a plastic bag and picks up rubbish, he will walk around the houses and knock on doors to tell people about events that are going on. There is another guy called J who is retired again and I think the woods is his life so having a friends group is now legitimising the kind of things he was doing anyway which was clearing bramble and searching for mammals. So now he has got a whole group of people who think he is great and he is out there even more now, and so in terms of that kind of health benefits, I wonder if we are looking at H woods as a kind of case study	1040 1041 1042 1043 1044 1045 1046 1047 1048 1049 1050 1051 1052 1053 1054
P	Health champions again	1055
Z	Whether that, and other kind of family events that we run down there, whether that	1056 1057
S	You have just had a beautiful salad but look at your container, clotted cream ice cream! <i>(All laugh)</i>	1058 1059
Z	It's balance! Life is a balance! I ate that for breakfast! The family events that we run down there, the fact that parents are having to walk down there, they wouldn't before, that is impacting on their regular use of the site, so that it actually looks at it more holistically rather than just a woodland walking group, but actually	1060 1061 1062 1063 1064
R	Yes so you have a H woods group that meets?	1065
Z	Yes we are meeting for a social meeting on Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> July at half past five.	1066 1067
P	I think it's about looking at ways that will work and ways that don't work.	1068
R	I think so, yes.	1069
P	So it didn't work because of X,Y, Z, this might be a route to do it, through the friends group, you know, look at what is working and focus on that.	1070 1071
R	Well in terms of data I think it is really useful but it highlights the point that we are talking about a hard to reach group and there are lots of reasons why they are hard to reach, and lots of reasons why we still need to reach them.	1072 1073 1074 1075
P	Yes.	1076
R	And that is fine. And maybe, doing a report that we can then circulate, maybe then we can then get to a point where we can establish a group.	1077 1078
P	Yes	1079
S	Brilliant.	1080
R	So are you happy with that? So in terms of time scales, I'm afraid I will be in France the weekend after next so I won't be able to be	1081 1082

	with your group, but is it this Saturday or was it next Saturday you were talking about your next walking group after that?	1083 1084
S	Oh the next one is the 17 <sup>th</sup> is that a Saturday?	1085
R	Or it may be that at your next group you could tell them about when I am coming to visit if that is all right?	1086 1087
S	I will just see what time it is	1088
Z	From our perspective, particularly because, when they are doing all their plans	1089 1090
R	Who?	1091
Z	The health people, interestingly the last discussion that we had was about mental wellbeing and stepping stones, some of stepping stones delivery outputs are now part of the mental health intervention plan which therefore explicitly admits that use of green space for mental health. In the discussions that we had, interestingly it seems that mental health is seen as the one health aspect that public health can really see that green space can have an impact on.	1092 1093 1094 1095 1096 1097 1098
S	Oh it's this Thursday one, 19 <sup>th</sup> July and its C to RH this is the group that is set up on Thursdays.	1099 1100
R	I think it might be about me giving the group information and then me coming along after, do you know when there is one after?	1101 1102
S	Yeah the next one after that will be Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> August at DT	1103
R	And one after that?	1104
S	The one after that is CC on the 16 <sup>th</sup> August.	1105
R	Yep I am on holiday I'm afraid and I have work booked in next week	1106
S	Yes well we will have another one after that	1107
R	The 16 <sup>th</sup> August might be OK, is that a Thursday, the 16 <sup>th</sup> August?	1108
S	Yes	1109
R	Yes, OK that might work for me. I'll be in touch with you about that one then.	1110 1111
S	Mine haven't started yet because of the bad weather.	1112
R	OK and are you happy with that, because that would then be three groups, is that enough evidence or do you want another group as well?	1113 1114
Z	I think it might add a different angle to it, it depends how we are going about it because if we are providing, it depends when you look at the evidence as well, what way you think the report is going?	1115 1116 1117
R	I think we will need to meet again to decide on that	1118
Z	Yes I mean I think it would be useful because we are looking at H woods to see what is working there, because it is working	1119 1120
R	Yes	1121
Z	Because if we are having to demonstrate to potential funders, what works and what doesn't work, it kind of seems to be happening, because what we are saying is that really, really hard to reach groups, the cardio vascular patients we can't do them outside because it's not working, but actually the prevention work that we are doing does seem to be working better and so maybe that is something that would justify a different kind of programme.	1122 1123 1124 1125 1126 1127 1128
P	Well the BHF that is a three year project so what will happen with	1129

	that so G will go back and revisit those 10 neighbourhoods and see what impact we have had in terms of awareness raising and I know in Keyham, some of the health impact work in Keyham, some of the things that have been discovered that wouldn't have been is that people would not have gone to their GPs until much further down the line, people with diabetes and all sorts which would not have been noted because that person wouldn't have had that check so there was a bit about GPs doing preventative health checks or vascular checks as they are called to identify people earlier. Someone in their thirties with high blood pressure, OK, before we go and put you on medication, so it is about stepping in that bit earlier rather than leaving it until they are 50 and have had a stroke or something. So we will have that evidence but not for a while yet because G is only half way through her BHF. But BHF have funded that role and that is really interesting in that it is a community based role working with our teams where we already know where people who are hard to reach are so she has been able to reach straight in, and she hasn't had to waste any time really identifying where that is, so it has to be, the very targeted stuff does have to be very targeted, cause other people can go on their ramble, or afford the life centre or go out to Dartmoor, some of this is very targeted so that is where the cost will be, but the prevention stuff is much more education and	1130 1131 1132 1133 1134 1135 1136 1137 1138 1139 1140 1141 1142 1143 1144 1145 1146 1147 1148 1149 1150
R	So I am just thinking our evidence isn't going to offer evidence about preventative work, its going to offer evidence about why they don't work and why they do work, and some literature about why we think it is useful for them to work, and I think that is all it can offer as it is structured at the moment. It can just say, if you do this groups don't work and if you do this they do, and this is why it is important. I think that is all we can hope for from it. But it would then go alongside some of the other data you have got coming out, does that sound reasonable?	1151 1152 1153 1154 1155 1156 1157 1158
Z	Yeah.	1159
R	And perhaps you and I need to meet up at some point to map it out a little bit.	1160 1161
Z	Yeah.	1162
R	Maybe once I have met with the other group and certainly once I have met with the group next Tuesday, to see what kind of data we have coming up from it. I think we can predict what we have coming from it but	1163 1164 1165 1166
Z	I think, I wonder as well whether with the draft report if it is worth sending it to Sarah Wyatt to say look, is this kind of useful?	1167 1168
P	Yes she will tell you what you need.	1169
R	Who would that be sorry?	1170
P	Sarah Wyatt, she is head of health improvement for public health	1171
R	Yes, OK.	1172
Z	So that would see in terms of the evidence that public health are looking for	1173 1174
R	Yes, is this the kind of evidence that you need?	1175
Z	Yes.	1176
R	Yes, OK, all right. Can I just get you to sign the consent forms?	1177



	This is part of the project, there is an information sheet at the back and this is the consent form. And when you say, I know now id the answer, but realistically with time scales?	1178 1179 1180
Z	Well it will be the Autumn now won't it?	1181
R	Yes, is that going to be OK? ... should we meet in September?	1182
	Shall we make a date?	1183
Z	That sounds sensible.	1184

Appendix 20. Transcription of focus group 3: school parents walking group

School Walking Group

Transcript July 2012

E	Are we not going for a walk today?	001
D	I was very hopeful that it was going to be better than this	2
J	There is fog forecast until 2 o'clock this afternoon	3
C	It was throwing it down with rain out there but not quite so bad here again	4
E	It's the fog!... it's just miserable	5
A	Did you hear that? Because we didn't walk last week we all went for a swim	6
D	Well there you are we need to record this then!	7
A	Oh I don't know, we got a freebie through British Gas so we all went last week	8
J	We had a free swim	10
D	That is what we need to capture then!	11
R	Was that up at the (leisure) centre?	12
A	oh no, British Gas had a thing where you could down load a free swim voucher so we all did it...it was fairly busy but it was alright, so we swam 30 and then we were in the coffee shop till quarter to one	13 14 15
D	Yes, nice!	16
R	So do you, is this your usual walk day?	17
D	Yes but we are not walking today, unfortunately, it's a shame isn't it, it's a coffee morning instead, which is what this summer is turning into isn't it!	18 19
A	Yes one of the main incentives is coffee; we will go anywhere if we can get coffee afterwards!	20 21
S	Yes we will go anywhere if we can get a coffee after!	22
D	Remember in December when it was freezing wasn't it and we had been down in the woods, we were down there, and here we are in July and you can't see anything! We've got some pictures look	23 24 25
C	It helps me sleep	26
A	And another incentive is that it's not going to be too fast, we have a lot of sort of rests.	27 28
J	It's nice isn't it we walk through the woods at our own pace.	29
S	And we go somewhere different every time we go out, one week one way and then the next way.	30 31
A	There we are, look.	32
R	Oh isn't that lovely it looks like one of those beautiful bright cold days	33
A	It was freezing	34
D	Remember I took these pictures?	35
S	It was cold.	36
R	That is a beautiful picture.	37
D	Yeah, it was lovely down there.	38
A	It was freezing that morning wasn't it?	39
E	Cup of tea?	40
R	Thank you that's brilliant, thank you.	41

D	There we go then having a coffee	42
R	So where is that then?	43
D	That is down in W wood, the one near the school, the one that has been and had a lot of work done by Stepping Stones on it	44 45
R	Do you think that has made a difference?	46
D	What is W woods, what do you think of that? That's the one down the bottom where we walked	47 48
A	It's nice because there are proper paths so you are not going to get too muddy even if you come in slightly unsuitable shoes, if you wear something like this which is comfortable.	49 50 51
D	We are doing um	52
A	We've got wellies for doing it	53
D	Yeah we started doing that	54
R	You have got wellies for the group?	55
D	Yeah, we started off as an incentive yeah,	56
A	We did three walks and then you got wellies	57
R	I see Ribena are doing something like that aren't they?	58
D	Yes very nice Ribena wellies, oh yeah	59
R	Yes I don't know if you have to collect tokens or something?	60
D	Yes I think you must do, I've seen it on billboards yeah	61
S	Ribena for a pair of wellies? What has that got to do with Ribena?	62
D	Well thank you for coming.	63
R	Yes thank you, thank you	64
B	It was a bit last minute wasn't it?	65
D	It was	66
E	But it's nice, even to have a get together before S has her baby. Because the good thing about it is it's so accessible she can use the pushchair if she wants to come again can't you!	67 68 69
S	I've got a three wheeler and its all-terrain, it will be good. And I've got a back pack.	70 71
A	You've got to bond with your baby by carrying it around for three years it said on the TV this morning!	72 73
S	Three years! I won't be carrying mine around after like three months! They get so heavy!	74 75
B	Yeah yours will be	76
S	Yeah, break my back!	77
R	So do you meet every Tuesday?	78
D	No we tend to do it once a month.	79
R	Oh OK.	80
D	Once a month, yes. So we would book a day, you know we have our meeting and then we book a date, normally a month, about four weeks on, yeah, put it in our diary and hope the weather is alright!	81 82 83
E	But then from this, you've, they've started to meet regularly to go for a swim and things like that which has been really good, as a little group so it is not just the walk and coffee it's also extended to other things.	84 85 86
A	Swimming and coffee.	87
D	Yeah	88
J	Coffee features a lot!	89
A	We did Zumba as well.	90
D	Yeah, we did get quite active didn't we, we did Zumba classes as	91

	well.	
C	oh yes, zumba and coffee	92
J	Tai chi and coffee	93
S	but then the teacher started being a bit um	94
A	Absent!	95
S	Yeah, unreliable, unfortunately.	96
C	We did Tai Chi didn't we?	97
D	Yes that was out at um, the church, yeah, SC, yeah, we had like a W, we always have a W, since we've been working here we will try to get people more active really yep, so.	98 99 100
R	And are you always a group of five or have you got some others that come as well?	101 102
S	The Zumba we had a few others didn't we?	103
J	We have had a few others haven't we.	104
D	we did, yes	105
S	there was another lady who came who did your PTA?	106
A	that was S.	107
D	Long hair? She came on a couple of walks didn't she?	108
A	She has gone now	109
D	Oh yeah, right.	110
A	Say no more	111
D	Oh right, oh yeah.	112
A	But yes it has mostly been the five.	113
S	I mean J you text it out, do you do it to anybody else now, or not?	114
J	Well we put it in the news letter	115
R	Is that the school newsletter?	116
J	My PSA newsletter which I send out once a month and I just put it on the bottom, the next walking group will be and everybody is welcome.	117 118
R	So that goes out to all parents?	119
J	Yes, and if they want to come along they can.	120
S	Texts are good as well, especially if it is cancelled	121
J	Yes. I think because the group is so small, it's just really sort of word of mouth at the moment with this group, because it is really difficult, especially here, you know D, with being in W, to try and engage people, and new people as well, I mean this group, we all get on quite well and are very, very keen and motivated, but a lot of the time we don't get that so that is quite difficult here. So actually to have a long standing group which we have had over quite a few months now,	122 123 124 125 126 127
R	Yeah.	129
J	And with people sticking to it as well, is really, really positive.	130
R	And once you have got an established group it is then easier for other people to join, then isn't it.	131 132
J	Yeah.	133
C	But there are some other mums who would like to join there are a few like friends but they work so they can't make it.	134 135
R	Of course, yeah.	136
C	Otherwise they would, they'd be delighted to come.	137
A	And C come to practice her English	138
C	Yes as well, just the best English lesson, the teachers are really	139

	good! They give me extra one to one, my husband will say, make sure the English people do their job properly!	140 141
A	Because talking to us is another good way?	142
C	Yeah but, but the teacher is teaching me the letters and reading stories properly, but sometimes I don't speak the sentence properly, that is why I come, she is really good.	143 144 145
R	The class teacher?	146
C	No, open door teacher, she teach in some community and the mummy and the children as well, that is the way together with a bigger group that is there. Every week we bring some food, and someone looks after the children as well, it's a good group yes.	147 148 149 150
R	Sounds great, so that is in W as well?	151
C	No in Greenbank, in a community centre there.	152
B	But when we do meet we just chat don't we, we just talk about.	153
S	Yes, what is going on yes.	154
J	There are some things going on in the half term in the summer holidays, because I met with Z yesterday about this new education project that they are hoping to do, at various places. Well obviously I haven't received any of that stuff so could you email it to me?	155 156 157 158
D	No I haven't but yeah, I will do	159
J	I will get it on my personal email.	160
D	Yes because I am still getting kicking back from your work one, it must be trying to do it I think.	161 162
J	P council are, there is something wrong with the server.	163
D	Yes because it keeps coming back, yeah. So I have noticed that I think it is probably stuff from a long time ago but it's not getting the message coming through as it's not been delivered to you.	164 165 167
R	So did you say that you go on different walks every time?	168
D	We try to, I mean we have gone down to Woodland woods and we've gone different ways.	169 170
J	We went the C way one day didn't we?	171
D	Yeah. And then of course there is another wood at the top which we've done too.	172
A	That was a lovely day wasn't it, W woods	174
R	Oh yes, did you say W woods?	175
A	Yes, we were going to all go in the holidays go on a walk to L.	176
R	Where is that then?	177
A	Well it's at T we would walk to L and then get the train back.	178
B	It's a beautiful walk	179
D	Did you go?	180
B	We did yes, in the pouring rain.	181
A	It was absolutely pouring with rain.	182
D	It was horrendous weather and I was surprised they went ahead with it actually because of the weather because it was.	183 184
B	No it wasn't that bad.	185
R	You went on your own?	186
B	Well a few of us were going to go	187
S	We'd booked hadn't we	188
J	Well it was in the holidays and we had booked to go but the weather was so bad.	189
D	It was foul it was horrendous yes.	191

B	And stepping stones were going to pay for everybody for a free train back.	192
R	Great	193
B	But the trains were cancelled because the weather was bad and we were stuck!	194
E	We were stuck there, we missed the last one, well there were trains but because there was an accident, um so, it was a bit of an adventure that day but well	196 197
D	I have been questioned would I do that walk again and I have asked D my colleague from the community health improvement team who does the walk leader training etc if we could organise a LD walk in September.	199 200 201
R	Yes because we are going to have an Indian summer aren't we?	201
J	Are we?	202
R	Oh yes.	203
J	Oh sorry I thought you actually meant it	204
J	It will be sunny for the rest of the year won't it?	205
D	Well probably.	206
B	It would be really, really nice if we can when we come back in September	207
C	Once the holidays are over it would be good.	208
D	We've been meaning to go down that way haven't we?	209
J	Yes to E	210
D	Yes down this side	211
R	Well it's a beautiful view isn't it?	212
D	Yes but we haven't get that far yet because of the weather, like you say for the last, three, five? It has just been awful weather, so, you know if you are only doing it once a month	213 214 215
R	So you have missed about 3 months?	216
A	We missed two, it wasn't that long ago that we met up and it was beautiful.	217
B	Some of us missed one but then we went the following week,	218
E	I think it would be really nice for us to try other woods so we can say we've done them all then	219 220
A	Yes but even doing the same woods again, I mean obviously, it's OK really because it is easy for us to just turn up and we're here.	221 222
C	We sometimes do the same ones but a different theme, like if we were looking at bugs, but some of us were not so keen on doing that!	223 224
E	Oh yes we loved doing that.	225
S	Oh yeah remember with the bugs.	226
A	Yes we were looking at bugs, we enjoyed doing that.	227
E	And bush craft.	228
S	Yes we did a bit of bush craft.	229
R	What did you do?	230
S	We built fires and we made stick men.	231
A	We made little men out of mud and wood and logs and twine and bind weed	232
R	With the children?	233
A	No it was for us!	234
S	For us to then share with the children.	235

E	It was lovely and I have	236
D	Well normally we do things like that when, for the children and then it's quite nice for the parents to actually do it	237 238
E	Definitely	239
D	To get some ideas for what they can do with the children really	240
J	They weren't very keen this lot on the bug hunting ( <i>laughing</i> )	241
E	I loved doing my stick man.	242
E	It would be really nice to go back down there with the hot chocolate	243
C	That's right you know.	244
R	Can I ask you then what impact the group has had on you, what do you think has been good about it what's	245 246
E	Well everything is good about it, it's positive, it gets you out in the fresh air, meet up with people, it's healthy, we do actually, despite what you have just heard, and we do actually walk! We don't run or anything but we do walk. In fact once you got out your pedometer and I can't remember how many steps you counted on the day?	247 248 249 250 251
B	Yeah!	252
E	So we do tally up the steps!	253
J	It was nice to actually, for people to actually see the woodland if they hadn't ever seen it before.	254 255
E	Exactly	256
J	And to know what is around and so accessible to them	257
R	Yes	258
E	And learn about stuff and information, like now it has got CC TV	259
A	Yes because people might think oh I'm not taking my children in there, and then saying oh well it's nice, there are paths and open spaces, there are tables, I can bring a picnic.	260 261 262
B	Exactly	263
A	So you learn that if you've got a preconceived idea then that is dispelled	264
R	Yes	265
A	It is not something I would do on my own, but with people.	266
J	Well I do it every day on my own, with walking the dogs and I feel absolutely I feel really, really safe.	267 268
A	It is not a question of safety, it is more a question of being motivated, if I am in a group then I am happy to go along, on my own it's like, yeah I'll do it but.	269 270
S	Going on your own is one thing, but going with others is much, much nicer.	272
A	Exactly and find a little cafe on the way.	273
J	I've got to go ladies I have to be somewhere by 9:30 but see you this afternoon, I apologise that I have got to leave.	274 275
R	No that is fine.	276
C	It's the English wood, I tried when I was walking with my friend, we really wanted to walk in there again, and when we have the children I just want to go in there again, I really want to go there again those top woods.	277 278 279
A	Yes I think the weather has got to be nice for it.	280
C	Yes for when you look down, I was just feeling great.	281
J	Yes, D you know the fun day, maybe they would take a group up to the woods?	282

D	Um, well we were asked if we would do walks from there but we do find that on those events that people quite like to stay on site really, so I think we were going to promote basically what is going on with Stepping Stones really rather than actually take people off site with that one because we have tried it a couple of times in W to do a walk at an event and it's not really been good.	284 285 286 287 288
J	Yes, are you going?	290
S	Yes I'm going to bring the baby if she is out by then!	291
J	Oh she will be!	292
C	When you have a baby you don't stay home and rest?	293
S	I don't plan to!	294
C	In China when you have a baby you rest for one month, you do nothing, with the family cooking for you, you can even get out of washing the dishes!	295 296
S	Wow that is amazing	297
C	Because you are too tired, I don't understand!	298
S	You are yes but it doesn't make any difference, well I need to work on that then	299
D	Well apparently you should	301
C	Well your body needs to recover	302
R	So can I ask are the walks mainly in woodland or do you do walks outside of woodland?	303 304
S	Mostly woodland and we walk from the school to wherever we are going so there is a bit of street walking as well.	305 306
A	We haven't done anywhere you meet somewhere else in the car	307
S	No	308
A	We haven't got in the car although we have all got cars.	309
R	So what is it about the woods then, why do you walk in woods?	310
E	It's peaceful isn't it?	311
S	Yeah its healthy	312
E	It's away from cars	313
C	It's a haven	314
A	The weather is nicer in the woods. We could try driving out to D or driving to C or P woods or something, those places which are not too far away.	315 316
D	Yes, I think we are quite lucky here because we have got such nice open spaces, you know where we are able to walk to them. So you know really we have got something nice on site, you know we don't need to go too far because of our time scales involved really. It seems to work well doing it right as school starts when everybody has just brought their children so that works well.	317 318 319 320 321
R	And do you think it has had a knock on impact to any other aspect of your life? You know like you were saying that you've been baking, doing healthy baking?	323 324
A	Its meals, it's a meals book, they are all under £5 and its simple meals, so my children who are 13 and 9, they have chosen a recipe and put the ingredients that we haven't got in the house on a shopping list and then they've made it on Saturday.	326 327 328 329
R	And you have circulated the book?	330
A	I think you have given the book to anyone that asks haven't you?	331
D	Well yes because I come from a health point of view, basically yes, I	332



	come here and try to promote change for life information as well so like I say, I circulate activities that are going on in the city, local events that might be of interest.	333 334
A	Because that book is one of the few that is for children that is savoury recipes for them to do and it's not expensive, because when you say to them oh let's do cooking they immediately want to make a cake, so when I said no you are going to make dinner tonight, which recipe would you really like to do? It's much better because eventually they are going to be living away from home, and they have got to do something, they can't live on cakes alone. Especially when there is someone with diabetes in the house, that would not go down well!	336 337 338 339 340 341 342
E	A lot of teenagers would do that quite happily wouldn't they, eat cake, live on fat and sugar.	343 344
D	Burgers, it is a problem.	345
A	And also, the recipes are brilliant because my son is quite fussy, well not fussy, he says I don't like this, I don't like that, but when it is all in together he eats the lot, especially if he's made it.	346 347 348
R	So do you think, I mean obviously that is something that you have brought to the group as well, but do you think there is something about walking that has then had a knock on effect to other areas of your life?	349 350 351
A	Yes because you do, you talk about other things, you talk about, well it might be the difference between China and the UK and somebody else has got	352 353 354
C	It's really hot in China in the summer, it's scary I prefer it in England.	355
A	Because we are all parents going through the same situation	356
C	In the summer, I prefer it in England. But we don't have a choice, we can only go in her school holiday we have got to go to China	357 358
E	Yes, it is only going to rain here for the school holiday, for the next 6 weeks anyway!	359 360
B	Exactly, you'll be fine, I'll go to China, you stay here.	361
S	I have found it, that it was nice to know that walking wasn't so boring, because it is almost like, oh I should go for a walk but (sigh). And I never understood why my mum and dad did so much of it, they would go on moorland walks and everything. I mean they'd do miles and I would be like, why? And then I started doing it and I was like well actually yeah this is like	362 363 364 365 366
E	Thoroughly enjoyable!	367
S	It is really nice because you just forget everything, you can switch off because the path is all the same, you are not looking out for traffic, and you are not doing that sort of things so it, more the nature walks for me, I could just walk and switch off and it was just brilliant, and I wouldn't have to worry, apart from the odd pot hole, that I didn't fall into anything!	368 369 370 371 372
A	That's nice.	373
E	Can you make sure that you can see him?	374
S	Yes its fine they can just run off and its fine. And I think its nice as well to go with other mums or adults rather than taking your children with you because it's just a more of a	375 376 377
E	Its relaxed, less stressful	378

B	Yeah it is.	379
S	It's just, because when you are with the children as well if you are going through the woods and you are on a hill you are like looking and thinking oh don't fall down that hill or they are running miles ahead and you can't see them, so it is really relaxing and nice	380 381 382 383
A	It is.	384
S	To be with other adults to enjoy like the peace and quiet really.	385
A	And supervise or not supervise them really, because children feel that you are not on them all the time to go here go there and yet you know that everybody will look out for everybody else.	386 387 388
R	So do you meet up and walk with the kids as well then?	389
S	We have done.	390
A	We have done yes, but a couple in the holidays have been cancelled because of the weather, but we were going to	391 392
B	Yeah we had planned to.	393
R	And has doing more walking together as a group meant that you have been doing more walking on your own outside of the group?	394 395
A	I already did a lot anyway.	396
R	You did anyway?	397
E	I have started doing running with my friend, so	398
R	Wow	399
E	Because we sort of walk and then we do a bit of running.	400
R	Was that to do with starting walking?	401
E	It's all to do with thinking you know, you're getting on now, I'd better do this healthy stuff, that's it, you know the feeling! <i>(laughing)</i>	402 403
B	I spend a lot of time in the car, because I live in O and the kids are over here and I am back and forwards so I am in the car constantly so it is quite a nice release just to not have to get in the car and drive, just to go for a walk.	404 405 406
R	And you sorry, you were saying you use the car less for shorter journeys.	407
S	Yes because at the start of term, I mean obviously we have had the bad weather anyway but I live on the next Crescent and I would drive down to drop J to school. Now when its not raining I am thinking why on earth am I doing that? Because there is just no point, there are steps all the way down, so I find now I will walk because I think well, I would walk further than that if I went on a walk, so what is the difference.	408 409 410 411 412 413
E	Well saying that I've done that too, I've walked not to school but from.	414
S	It's just like you get in the habit like walking to the shops, but when I learnt to drive it went out of the window a bit.	415 416
A	Well and its time, it's making sure you allow a bit more time to walk, particularly with the way the fuel costs, I think are there places I could walk to, well yes there are. Most places are half an hour away or you allow half an hour.	417 418 419
C	I did a lot of walking for three or four years I did a lot of walking, I felt really full of energy, and then because of a year at home I didn't do anything just sitting down eating and that is why I had no energy, I thought I should go out for a run but I don't feel like it. But now I am enjoying running after a year of doing nothing.	421 422 423 424 425

A	You are more energised when you have been out, it doesn't make you any more tired, I think it does by bedtime; I am always tired by bedtime anyway.	426 427
S	Yes well I found these days, especially in the last month or so with this pregnancy if I'm doing nothing literally by 10 o'clock if I have got nothing planned, I am ready to go back to bed because my body just wants to shut down. But if like I have taken J to school and I go on and do something walking or something, it keeps you going. Even yesterday, but it is proper exhaustion, and I am like, I suppose I just have to stop it coming in.	428 429 430 431 432 433
C	I know walking is good for you.	434
S	It keeps you awake a bit longer.	435
C	I know that is the year I changed, before I just had skin so tight, no muscle, just lazy, I put on weight	436 437
S	The kind of things you feel like eating changes as well when you start doing more walking and exercise, normally I would be like, I went to town the other day and I thought oh I am really hungry and normally obviously in town you are just surrounded by everything that is quick and easy and I went on purpose to find fruit, whereas normally you just find what is quick, but then I really do fancy fruit, which for me is a change of diet. I fancy eating fruit and yoghurts.	438 439 440 441 442 443
E	And I think if you are going to the same place as well like if you go into the woods it is quite interesting seeing the different seasons down there. You know how the woods change from when we were down there in the freezing cold. And then spring starts, I think we missed the blue bells up there didn't we, we wanted to get up there for the blue bells but, it is quite nice to see all the leaves come out, and then eventually it will be autumn it's just nice watching all the different, seasons really, it was quite fruity up in those woods, berries and other things, deer, there are deer up there, yes because when I took the dogs out I thought there was another dog bounding towards us but oh no actually it was a deer, I don't know if that is any better actually! It ran off but yes, that was kind of wild, wild woods up there; they really are, just left to nature so to speak.	445 446 447 448 449 450 451 452 453 454 455 456
R	Um, well, this is my last question now, if you um, wanted to sort of make recommendations for a long term, what makes a group sustainable long term, what keeps a group going? What recommendations would you make to another group to help them to keep going long term what do you think needs to, what keeps this group going?	457 458 459 460 461
S	Not too serious I think is one of the things for me	462
C	Being flexible	463
S	Well obviously I have been poorly on and off through the pregnancy and not having the pressure of having to be there, and when I do come it's not like I haven't gone for a few months, there is no difference in the way you are treated or anything like that, because I have found with some groups before if you miss a couple you are made to feel like you have missed a couple! You know, you feel, and they are ringing you, so yes just the casualness, if you want to go, go and it is very enjoyable.	464 465 466 467 468 469 470
E	I think it's finding the balance really with how many times you do it	471

	really isn't it. Like for us it seems to work once a month, if it was every week or perhaps every other week it might not be, it would be too much, whereas once a month everybody quite looks forward to that and then maybe we do organise something outside of that you know.	472 473 474 475
A	Different activities.	476
E	Yes, too much the same is boring isn't it or can be boring.	477
A	But even finding the time, you've got to get organised. For me everybody looks forward to the once a month thing.	478 479
R	Yes.	480
A	As far as this group is concerned as you say, we might go walking at other times, with other people or whatever, but just this group here, yes.	481 482
R	Yes and I mean this is a report that is going to go to health commissioners, is there anything else that you would say to GPs just to say, you know, actually getting people walking is a good idea.	483 484 485
A	It's just encouraging people to do it because it has got benefits for everybody. I don't think I have ever been to the doctor and they have said	486 487
S	Fancy a walk?	488
A	No! What do you do in your spare time, do you get outside or.	489
E	It's usually go to the gym isn't it from the GP point of view. Like we can book you in at the gym and that is not everybody's' cup of tea so and it's expensive as well, there is a cost.	490 491 492
A	Maybe they should think more about it. I do go to the gym as well but that is different.	493 494
C	I've been here eight years, my doctor say you never been here, one time I was going to china for an injection and I had never been before.	495 496
A	I don't know why healthy living has to be so expensive really.	497
All	Yes	498
A	I think any health clubs should discount people, maybe discount parents, to use the pool for a reduced rate in the term time when the children are at school or to make it just a little bit less expensive.	499 500 501
S	I spoke to T earlier up at the youth centre and for the youth from W to go to the life centre swimming once was about £5 each if they get the bus, he said but then they can buy a valium and two or three bottles of cider for less than that and that is what most of them seem to do on a Friday night, it such a shocking contrast isn't it, instead of swimming which they want to do but mum and dad won't give them the extra 30 or 40p on top of the £5 or whatever to go swimming, I was really quite saddened by that.	502 503 504 505 506 507 508
A	It is saddening isn't it, the fact that they can get valium like that! And if you've got more than one child to go swimming it is just so expensive, and you only do 20 minutes when you go swimming. Children get good value out of a swimming pool but not adults.	509 510 511 512
E	It is not very accessible due to price	513
A	It isn't at all.	514
S	When they shut SB for swimming that was a shame for the people of W round here, yes, from MH you could just walk up there.	515 516
A	But it is so expensive, its £3.50 a time and I certainly don't want to	517

	be in the pool for more than half an hour, it takes your skin off, you go all prune-like don't you.	518
R	Yes so that is something about walking isn't it, at least it's free.	520
A	Yes, and you don't get shrivelled up.	521
S	Yes it is just making that more interesting in terms of what you do	522
R	Yes, what makes it more interesting?	523
S	I don't know everyone is different really; it's what people want out of what you are doing.	524 525
D	Do you think it is good to have like, something in the woods to be doing? Like the changes down there really?	526 527
S	Yeah, I mean, I take J down there.	528
D	I mean obviously it takes a bit of work to keep kids interested.	529
A	Yes like an activity.	530
S	Mine are alright as long as they can climb up something, tree to climb or something.	531 532
D	Yes that is what I mean, if they have got some kind of outdoor play area	533
S	You certainly don't say right we are going for a walk, J would be like, no I'm not, if you say you are going for a walk they are like, can I take my scooter, can I take my bike, can I take a ball, no we are going for a walk.	534 535 536
D	Take the park!	537
S	No I am not carrying your bike half way round the woods, no.	538
D	So that is where you can make it more interesting where you have a bag or something, say they got to collect something.	539 540
All	Yeah	541
S	I think once you have done it the first time and make that first time noticeable to them, yes.	542 543
D	And then they pick up that it's a place to be doing things	544
E	It's good when they have got other children to keep each other company and play with each other.	545 546
S	As you say like bug hunts and stuff, it's a walk but it's a bug hunt and it's the bug hunt title that catches the kids.	547 548
D	Yes and I do the same with adults actually	549
S	It's a walk but you find something that you are purposefully going there for, listen to the audience!	550 551
E	Yes it's that first step, its getting people interested to start with and then they find that they enjoy it and want to do it again.	552 553
D	Then they want to do it anyway, yes.	554
R	Yep. Brilliant, thank you so much that is all just great, really, really helpful, thank you um. It sounds like you have got a lovely group here, I wish I lived closer! Its great really lovely and I really appreciate it and it's really helpful.	555 556 557 558
D	Yes.	559
R	What are you plans now then? This is the last week of term	560
E	Yes last day tomorrow, leavers mass today, last end of term mass on Thursday	561 562
S	And Friday morning, bed!	563
A	But one of the things that puts me off exercise groups is that it is so expensive, and I think as a non-working person to then be spending £5 just to keep myself fit for 20 mins it just doesn't seem right.	564 565 566

D	That's why walking is good, and also when they put these outdoor gyms in the parks and things like that, then again it doesn't cost you.	567 568
A	Which is great.	569
D	One thing we didn't say then, I mean obviously here, I just keep on coming, I don't know, would you do that? You were just saying about the YMCA walking group dropping off and what have you, but I don't know what the leaders were like who were running the group, do you find it helps having somebody come and	570 571 572 573
E	Yes it does.	575
D	We didn't say any of that did we, I don't mean me particularly or whether you would do it yourself or	576 577
E	No it definitely makes you more confident.	578
A	I don't think it would have continued without you.	579
R	Thank you, and if you want me to send you a copy of the report I can.	580
A	It would be really interesting	581
D	I think also it's those little texts that remind people as well because again with the YMCA, whether they would have reminded people that there was a walk going on? It helps motivation.	582 583 584
C	I have got another text about swimming, lets organise it now.	585
E	There were parents up at the children centre that set up a running group.	586
D	Well goodbye and thank you.	587

## Appendix 21

### Questions to ask of the Autobiographies

1. Identify a section containing the author's summary within the text (compare with reader's summary). Identify significant big stories, small stories and links to the core story.
2. What is the context of the author, the reader and the outdoor culture when written (including historical context)?
3. What is the impact for the author of writing the autobiography (story for self about self)? Identity as male/female adventurer? Opportunity to write an exciting story?
4. What is the impact for the author of engagement in the adventure activity? What is the reason for exploring? Risk taking?
5. What is the evidence of author finding meaning from engagement in the activity? What is meaningful to the author? What motivates the author to engage? What does the author consider to be the purpose of this engagement? Has the author overcome adversity to engage or through engagement?
6. What is the evidence of relationship with self (including self esteem, self perception, values, drive, identity and identifying with the culture and context of the activity)? What does it mean to the author to be an adventurer or an explorer?
7. How does the author describe his/her relationship with risk (including achievement, challenge, fear and impact on others of risk taking behaviour)?
8. How does the author describe his/her relationship with the outdoors (including connection with nature, animals, earth, rock, time, God, self in space)?
9. How does the author describe his/her relationship with others (including team working, groups, partnership, others present, others absent, family, partners, impact on others of time commitment and risk taking)?

Appendix 22. Example of Autobiography Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

**Riches' Narrative ONE (pg13 - 15)**

Riches, S., Riches, V. (1998) *Frigid Women*. London: Eye Classics.

<b>EMERGING THEMES:</b>	<b>NARRATIVE ONE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTIVE COMMENTS</b>	<b>LINGUISTIC COMMENTS</b>	<b>CONCEPTUAL COMMENTS</b>
	<b>Prologue: SUE</b>			
Women Luck On-going benefits	<b>To have been privileged enough to take part in the first All Woman's Expedition to the North Pole was something that I am still benefitting from.</b>	Privileged to do 1 <sup>st</sup> all women expedition to north pole, benefits	Privileged – lucky, fortunate (/upbringing); All women – female achievement; Benefits - on-going	All women On-going benefits
Shared achievement Meaning after	<b>Victoria and I started off not really understanding the Artic, or even what we would achieve from the expedition, and now, a decade plus on, we are still learning from our experiences there.</b>	Starting before understanding what could achieve, still learning.	Victoria and I – together, shared achievement; Understanding the artic – huge!; What we would achieve – also huge?; Still learning	Together Learning Achievement Still learning
Approach	<b>We approached the expedition from very different angles</b>	Different approach	Approach – philosophical standpoint and way forward/ of moving, starting points	Different meaning
Luck Reaffirmation of life	<b>I had just recovered from breast cancer – I was lucky and had a full recovery, and so for me the expedition was</b>	Recovered from cancer Lucky	Reaffirmation – to feel alive again after near death experience; new beginning – fresh start,	Linking life events in interpretation of meaning



	<b>a reaffirmation of life and a new beginning.</b>	Reaffirmation of life	chance of life	Richness of life
Inspiration	<b>I would like to inspire those who are suffering from breast cancer and show how cancer helped me to find a goal, which may at the time have been seen as unachievable.</b>	Want to inspire people; cancer gave me a goal	Inspire others – inspiration, offer hope	Hope Inspiration
Goal	<b>However, with enthusiasm and work these goals can become possible.</b>	Enthusiasm and work	Hard work towards goals	Goals
Positive thought	<b>For me, positive thought helped, as I knew deep down, that I would get better.</b>	Positive thought	For me – ownership; deep down – strong beliefs	Positive thought
Altruism, sharing wisdom	<b>However, I am aware that positive thought is not necessarily the way forward for everyone.</b>	Not for everyone	However – sensitivity to others; Way forward – progression	Altruism, sharing wisdom
Restoration	<b>Not everyone has the luck that I had, but I do believe that our expedition helped in my healing process...</b>	Lucky Expedition helped healing	Our expedition – together; My healing	Healing Luck
Change	<b>Without doubt our lives changed.</b>	change	Our – shared experience;	Shared and changing experiences

			Changed – meaning after	
Achievement	<b>Who could come back from this kind of expedition without feeling a huge sense of achievement?</b>	Achievement	Anyone would – challenging reader; Huge achievement	Achievement
Altruism Challenge Feminism Permission	<b>To suddenly realise that by going out and talking about our experiences to other people we could perhaps inspire and encourage them to push themselves a tiny bit further, and to take on some project which had been lurking in their minds for some time.</b>	Encourage others	Suddenly realise – unexpected outcome; Meaning from inspiring others to challenge themselves; additional vicarious achievement; Lurking – back of a dark cupboard, embarrassed or lacking confidence to dare? Women? Permission for experience?	Altruism Inspiration Daring  Permission – paying debt
	<b>VICTORIA</b>			
Permission	<b>When we were first asked to write the story of our expedition, over a decade ago now, my life was very different to how it is now.</b>	10 years ago, life changed	Asked to write story – at someone else’s request, almost apologetic, or excusing self-indulgence; Very different - change	Self-depreciating
Forgiveness	<b>I was young, free and single, living in Oxford and training to be a Primary school teacher.</b>	Single and training	Young, free – care free - ?reckless; no responsibilities – excusing behaviour?	Excusing self
Female Retrospective meaning Identity Dreams	<b>Being a part of the first all women’s expedition to the North Pole had given me an inner confidence, a self-belief, the courage to give up</b>	Expedition gave courage for change	First all women – emphasising female achievement; given me – grateful; confidence, self-belief, courage –	Female Retrospective meaning Identity Dreams

	<b>my career in London and pursue a dream to work with children.</b>		retrospective meaning, identity, formative experience. Follow dreams	
Direction	<b>Since then my life has seen many more changes; I am now married, living near Bath, have a five year old son and a new career in educational publishing.</b>	Changed, son, career	Educational publishing – new career pursued after realisation of the benefits of sharing stories to change lives? Son/married – ability to share.	Direction Altruism
Retrospective meaning	<b>However, where I am today has, again, been totally shaped by my experiences in the Arctic.</b>	Arctic shaped direction	Shaped - structured, given form, formative experience, retrospective meaning, direction	Formative experience giving future direction, identity and meaning
Self-belief	<b>If I've faced a challenge during the last decade, and have, many times, I have been safe in the knowledge that I can work around a problem and that I do have the necessary willpower.</b>	I know I can work around a problem	Safe – experience of risk has given safety and confidence; work around problem – confidence and determination; will power – self-belief and determination	Risk Direction Self-belief Determination
Limits	<b>While in the Arctic we were tested to our limits and beyond, yet somehow we found an inner strength that we didn't know we had and carried on.</b>	Tested to limits, found strength	Tested to limits – found parameters of ability; inner strength – found it, self-awareness previously unknown	Self-awareness Knowledge of limitations and potential Strength
Self-belief	<b>Over the past few years I have faced challenges that have ranged from the</b>	Faced challenges with self-belief	Mundane – boring, tedious, lack of adventure;	Learning about people and self, incentives and internal control

	<b>mundane to the heart breaking but with the tools learned from our expedition my ever-growing inner self-belief has kept me going.</b>		Heart breaking – relationships, group; ever-growing – expedition was just the start; inner self-belief – ownership, internal control, autonomy.	
Retrospective meaning Compromise	<b>At times our mantra “anything is possible” has got in the way, and I have had to learn the very difficult lesson that sometimes anything is not possible and I’ve had to let go.</b>	Learnt to let go	Mantra – religious chant, strong belief, learnt flexibility; when to let go, compromise, share	Team work Beliefs Lessons
Strength of character	<b>I have come to appreciate that saying “no” is not necessarily failure or indeed a sign of weakness but rather another strength.</b>	Learnt to say no	Appreciate – appreciation of complexity, others; Failure – perception changed in light of success; strength in compromise	Character strength Ability to change and compromise
Heroes	<b>Shackleton is my all time hero and I think about him a lot when I’m making tough decisions.</b>	Shackleton hero	Shackleton – polar exploration hero, inspiration	Heroes Decision making
Hero Hardship	<b>He was determined to take an expedition to the South Pole but they had a horrendous time and due to conditions beyond his control they had to abandon their ship.</b>	South pole expedition abandoned	Determined – focussed, drive; horrendous time – suffering, damage; beyond his control – powerless victim, unforeseen	Determination Hardship
Altruism	<b>Rather than persevere with his original dream of</b>	Changed goal to rescue crew	Persevere with dream – selfish desire;	Heroes Altruism

	<b>reaching the Pole, he recognised that it was acceptable to change the goalposts and concentrated instead on getting every member of his crew back home safely.</b>		recognised – a truth; crew back safely – altruistic (values altruism in others – reinforcing personal view of need to help others) link to context of feminist narrative need to excuse personal gains by reasoning benefits to others/altruism	Reinforcing feminist narrative
Altruism vs competition in feminist narrative	<b>In my eyes that made him more of a hero than if he had reached the South Pole.</b>	More of a hero	Ability to change and put others first valued more highly than reaching competitive goal.	Heroes Feminism competition
Character strength  Managing change	<b>To accept defeat but rethink your strategy and to carry on and reach your new goal takes guts.</b>	To rethink new goal takes guts	Accept defeat – acceptance of circumstance; your strategy – prompting reader to reflect; change direction to new goal – flexibility Guts – strength of character, stamina, humbleness	Humble hero Direction Goal Re-focus Change
Being the hero	<b>People often say to us, “You are amazing” or “I couldn’t do what you did”.</b>	People admire us	People say – lack of self-flattery	Uncomfortable with admiration
Reluctance to be the hero	<b>The last thing we want to be seen as are super heroes, or people doing something impossible.</b>	Not what we want	We – group/shared ownership; last thing – uncomfortable	Not wanting compliments

Educating others Inspiring	<b>Whenever we give a talk we always say that you don't have to take part in an expedition to the North Pole in order to achieve something special.</b>	Give talks You can achieve	Give a talk – value in ability to educate others; meaning from inspiring; Achieve something special – achievement (proud)	Achievement More comfortable with inspiring others.
Adventure Charity	<b>It could be as simple as learning to swim, or it could be raising money for charity by doing the London-Brighton bike ride, or it could be an amazing, epic adventure.</b>	You could do many things	Simple – swim, bike ride (patronising?); Amazing epic adventure – long and action packed	Meaning from inspiring others
Focus	<b>It doesn't matter what you do.</b>	Doesn't matter	...just do something!	Drive
Accepting self-appraisal by inspiring others	<b>If, as a result of succeeding, you can walk tall, hold your head up high and feel proud, then that is your North Pole.</b>	Feel proud	Evident that she feels proud, needs others to in order to accept her own higher self-appraisal	Confidence
Comfortable with achievement	<b>We hope that by reading this book you will be inspired to find your North Pole, whatever or wherever it is.</b>	Find your north pole	We hope – shared message; to inspire; evident that they feel impressed by what they have done and need an altruistic motive to enable them to be comfortable with it. Meaning from self-acceptance and ability to help others.	Inspiring others Altruism Self acceptance

Riches' Narrative TWO (pg 153 - 154)

Riches, S., Riches, V. (1998) *Frigid Women*. London: Eye Classics.

<b>EMERGING THEMES:</b>	<b>NARRATIVE TWO (Sue)</b>	<b>DESCRIPTIVE COMMENTS</b>	<b>LINGUISTIC COMMENTS</b>	<b>CONCEPTUAL COMMENTS</b>
	<b>What a day.</b>	What a day	Seems longer – so much happened	Big event
Observing light	<b>It started off as a normal Artic day, a very flat light and weak sun.</b>	Started normal	Started off – emphasising what happened next; flat, weak – non-threatening	Started normal
Floating	<b>We had floated six miles during the night and had four and a half mile drift east.</b>	Floated	Floated – part of “normal” bit – matter of fact (frustrating?)	Floating
Sky	<b>It was rather a misty sort of day, the sun eventually just about disappeared, but because of the lack of sun the ice appears bluer with a diffused light.</b>	Misty, ice is blue	Misty – mysterious; dull, quiet – calm before storm; blue, diffused – atmospheric, moody, calm, gentle?	Calm light
Ice	<b>There were rubble pans, then some semi-frozen leads, all right to cross quickly, but the ice was soft.</b>	Ice soft	Rubble pans, leads – obstacles; all right but – building to a problem; soft – gentle – but problematic here	Ice conditions
Sea	<b>After about five hours we came to more and more open water, which caused a sea mist to form because the sea is warmer than the air, about -2 degree C.</b>	5 hours, open water, sea mist	More and more – concerning, building risk; sea mist – more unnerving; sea warmer	Water, mist, Building atmosphere

Ice conditions Safety	<b>Matty crossed a frozen lead, it was softish ice, but OK to cross.</b>	Crossed – OK	Soft – unstable, concerning; but OK	Soft ice
Danger	<b>A sort of solid slush, a kind of jumble of ice chunks held together by the ice floes on each side, both of which were fairly large.</b>	Soft ice	Solid slush, ice chunks – like drink; jumble – chaotic; fairly large – starting to sound ominous	Ominous Danger Ice
Risk	<b>Very much the kind of frozen lead that we had crossed countless times before without a second thought.</b>	We had crossed before	Very much, countless times, – rationalising as a reasonable risk; second thought – usually carefree	Rationalising risk
Fear	<b>I was behind Denise when suddenly Matty said, “It’s moving, go, go, go”.</b>	Its moving	Behind – not leading, hard to see; go – emphasising panic	Panic Fear Risk
Fell in Danger	<b>Black water appeared on the bank on her side and suddenly I was in.</b>	I was in	Black water – dark, frightening, unknown; suddenly in – announces suddenly reader not expecting it.	Fell in Unexpected
Danger Ice	<b>My skis were not on the ice any longer but in the Arctic.</b>	Skis in the arctic	Skis not on ice – visual image, dependent for moving forward; in the Arctic – not just any water!	Fear Cold Water
Fear	<b>Every lump of ice I got hold of broke, but in a strange way I did not feel it was me.</b>	Ice broke	Lump of ice – unhelpful; Not feel me – unreal experience	Unstable Strange Fear
Survival	<b>When you are trying to save</b>	Trying to survive	You - telling reader	Survival skills



Limits	<b>yourself you do not think of the danger, it is just survival – but swimming in skis was quite difficult!</b>		important point; focussed on survival – life and death experience; swimming in skis – coping with humour	Humour Danger
Hope	<b>Then I found a small floater.</b>	Found floater	Small floater – saved by something small	Hope
Humour	<b>By now a boot and ski had come off, so I climbed on aboard.</b>	Climbed up	By now – matter of fact; boot and ski off – easier now but what about later	Humour
Fear	<b>The floater then disintegrated under me... so another swim.</b>	It disintegrated	Disintegrated – collapsing, humour hiding fear	Humour, Fear
Anxiety	<b>Then I found a bigger one, which was only the size of a very small kitchen table and felt distinctly wobbly.</b>	Found another	Kitchen table – contrast of domestic comfort; Distinctly wobbly – sense of wobbly anxiety	Anxiety
Optimism	<b>Strangely enough the sea did not feel as cold as you would have thought.</b>	Not as I thought	Strange – unexpected Not as cold – warmer than air, positive spin, optimistic	Meaning in appearing calm, capable, optimistic
Fear	<b>By now the lead was quite big and seemed to be getting still larger.</b>	Lead getting larger	Big, larger – more frightening, less hopeful	Threatening
Logical Practical	<b>I was still attached to my pulk, which was probably a good thing.</b>	Still attached	Pulk – valuable resources, pulling under?	Practical considerations
Coping	<b>Victoria at this stage was swimming too.</b>	Victoria also in	Swimming – as if an intended activity	Humour
Impact of	<b>She had fallen in trying to</b>	Fell in, considering	Jeremy – impact on	Impact of risk on others

risk on others Guilt	<b>rescue me, thinking that Jeremy would be furious if anything happened!</b>	father	others of risk taking; Furious – anger at reckless behaviour – shouldn't be there anyway?	Anger Guilt
Hope	<b>She managed to find a bigger floater than mine.</b>	She found bigger one	Floater – sounds precarious, like toy	Hope
Humour	<b>She suddenly asked me to throw her my camera, I thought she was being kind and rescuing my film.</b>	Asked for camera	Thought – however...	Humour
Coping with humour	<b>Not a bit, she took a photograph!</b>	Took photo	Not a bit – not kind, funny	Humour
Capable	<b>She then got hold of my pulk rope and pulled my floater to her lump of ice.</b>	Pulled me over	Got hold, pulled – confident, calm, not panicking	Calm, capable
Guilt	<b>I crawled across, having removed my remaining ski, feeling rather idiotic with one boot and one thin M&amp;S cotton sock.</b>	I crawled across	Remaining ski – emphasising missing ski; M&S – home comforts in alien environment; feeling idiotic – blaming self, guilt, embarrassed	Embarrassed Self-critical
Danger Fear	<b>I was very worried about frostbite by this stage.</b>	Worried about frost bite	Very worried - genuine concerns highlighted as really when so calm about everything else	Realistic Danger Frost bite
Coping	<b>The extraordinary thing was that I did not feel cold.</b>	Not cold	Extraordinary – unreal, not ordinary	Unexpected Coping
Minimising achievement	<b>I was wet up to my neck (and now realised why they had tested our swimming during the selection weekend), but because my body was so</b>	Wet but warm	Up to my neck – in a deep problem!; tested swimming – humour; heat remained – rational, optimistic	Minimising problems, finding strength to cope, minimising achievements

	<b>warm when I fell in, the heat had remained.</b>			
Rationalising	<b>So, for those who think you die after one minute in the frozen Arctic, you do not!</b>	You don't die	Those of you – well rehearsed story, everything is all right really,	Minimising risk
Competent Able	<b>Matty then threw a line to us, Victoria caught it, and she pulled us in.</b>	Matty threw line	Threw, caught – capable, prepared, able to cope	Prepared Competent
Problem solving	<b>However there was an overhang on her bank, so we had to put my pulk between Victoria's floater and the bank.</b>	Over hang on bank, Pulk as bridge	Overhang – obstacle; had to put – practical, capable, logical problem solving	Competence Problem solving
Practical	<b>We stood on the pulk and got out onto dry land.</b>	Stood on pulk	Stood on - didn't sink?! Bridge – practical Dry land – wet ice but solid in comparison	Practical
Perception of limits	<b>Even at this stage we referred to the ice as land; because it felt safe it was land in our minds.</b>	Referred to ice as land	Even now – now we know it's really just floating! Felt safe – perception of danger	Appreciation of perspective, limits, land

**Riches' Narrative THREE (pg)**

Riches, S., Riches, V. (1998) *Frigid Women*. London: Eye Classics.

<b>EMERGING THEMES:</b>	<b>NARRATIVE ONE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTIVE COMMENTS</b>	<b>LINGUISTIC COMMENTS</b>	<b>CONCEPTUAL COMMENTS</b>
Frustration	<b>The plane kept dipping down and trying runways, but just as you thought they had landed it took off again.</b>	Plane dipping then off again	Kept dipping down – frustration, anticipation; just as you thought – prompting reader to think too, building expectation	Frustration
Disappointment	<b>They were about to go back as their fuel was getting low.</b>	About to return	Getting low – disappointment	Disappointment
Excitement	<b>Eventually we saw the plane, miles away trying a strip, down twice and up again, then down – and we waited, and waited, then the roar of reversing engines.</b>	Then landed miles away	Eventually – long wait; waited, waited – emphasising; roar of reversing – roar like cheer, excitement, relief	Excitement
Relief	<b>They had landed.</b>	Landed	Short sentence to emphasis significance	Relief
Hope	<b>We stood for a few seconds hardly daring to believe it.</b>	Stood for few seconds	Hardly daring – hope and excitement	Excitement Hope
Excitement	<b>Then wild excitement, we took a bearing and hoped we had got it right.</b>	Excited, took bearing	Wild excitement delight, wild in the wild; hope	Excitement Hope
Urgent	<b>We took the tent down in double quick time and we were off.</b>	Took down tent quickly	Double quick time - urgency	Urgent
Isolated Efficient	<b>I do not think anyone has moved as fast as us!</b>	Moved fast	Anyone – not many people have been there; fast – urgency	Isolated Urgent
Speed	<b>They had landed about two</b>	Landed 2 miles, got	Fastest mile in the arctic	Urgency

	<b>miles away, and it took an hour for us to get there, it must have been the fastest mile ever done in the Artic.</b>	there in an hour	– so few people been, so desperate to get there	Isolation Achievement
Team united	<b>When we got to the final pressure ridge we agreed that we should all go round the corner together.</b>	Went round final corner together	We agreed – pulling together as a team at the end; we should – the right way to end, ritualistic; together – team work, strength in partnership, ceremonious.	Team united Ceremonious
Emotional	<b>It was a very emotional moment seeing the others.</b>	Emotional to see other team	Very emotional – mixed?, release of tension, relief; moment – temporary then had to concentrate on moving	Emotional
Appreciation Wonder Memory	<b>It was a glorious day, very sunny, much colder, all we had been praying for, but a wonderful start for Delta and a wonderful day to have as our last memory of the ice.</b>	Sunny, cold start for next team and our end	Glorious – beautiful, achievement, deserving admiration like them; praying for – answer to prayer; wonderful – repeated for emphasis; last memory – momentous image matching mood	Beauty Achievement Wonder Appreciation Memory
Ending	<b>I would never be so far north again.</b>	Never here again	I – as opposed to we, that is it for me; so far North –far as possible	Achievement Ending
Team help	<b>We helped change all the equipment, including skis.</b>	Changed equipment	Helped – pulling together as team; change skis – personal, final	Team Ending
Extreme	<b>The plane engines had to</b>	Engines wrapped	Wrapped up – keeping	Extreme conditions

conditions	<b>be wrapped up the whole time we were on the ice.</b>		warm, emphasising how cold	
Anticipation	<b>One is kept running the whole time, except for refuelling.</b>	One kept running	Kept running – still going, waiting, not finished just yet	Extreme conditions Anticipation
Friendship Impact on family	<b>Matty gave me all her correspondence and asked me to ring her husband Paul and tell him how she was.</b>	Matty gave me her correspondence	Gave all her – trusting, sharing, depending; ring her husband – personal, intimate, substitute; impact on others	Partnership Friendship Impact on others, family
Friendship Sadness Loss	<b>It was a very sad moment saying goodbye, particularly to Denise, with whom we had become especially close.</b>	Sad to say goodbye	Very sad moment – high emotion; especially close – intimate friendship through shared experience; ?indicating not so close with others, challenging relationships	Team work Emotion Friendship
Ceremonial	<b>We took photographs of the team and handing over the penguin our relay baton.</b>	Took photos, handed baton	Took photos, baton – ritualistic, momentous, putting to memory, marking the occasion; penguin - biscuit sponsor mascot?	Achievement Ending Ceremonious
Empathy	<b>The others seemed to be in really good order, despite the long wait.</b>	Others well	Others seemed – concern for wider team, sharing; despite wait – considering their experience of the delay	Team Sharing Concern for others Supporting
Coping	<b>Carl and Amy, the pilots, refuelled the aeroplane, but when everyone had climbed out and the fuel cans had been removed the whole</b>	Pilots refuelled, plane tipped over	But – not there yet; whole plane – not just small problem, including people; tipped on tail – like emotions from one	Managing set backs Coping Emotions Extremes

	<b>plane tipped up onto its tail.</b>		extreme to the other	
Team	<b>Someone had to go and stand in the front for it to get level again.</b>	Stand in front to get level	Someone had to – working together, team task, negotiating;	Team Compromise
Departure	<b>We left at about 8.30pm.</b>	Left	Took all day, evening, closure.	Ending
Reflection Retrospective meaning	<b>Looking down it was hard to believe that it was such hard work walking.</b>	Hard to believe how hard	Repetition to emphasise hard, looking down – perspective, reflection; Work – not easy/ holiday	Difficult Reflection Meaning after
Loss	<b>We were sad, but relieved to be off the ice, yet the second we took off was dreadful, as none of us wanted to go now.</b>	Sad, relieved but don't want to go	Sad, relieved – hard task over, risk gone; the second – immediately, dreadful – fear, mixed emotion, loss	Loss Ending Emotion
Sadness Beauty	<b>Looking down on the leads, ridges, pans and amazing variety of terrain I felt an incredible sadness.</b>	Looked down at terrain	Amazing variety – impressed by beauty (when no longer danger); sadness - loss	Beauty Loss
Beauty Grateful	<b>I knew I would never be there again, never see those sights again, and how lucky I had been.</b>	Never again, feeling lucky	Never/never – final, loss; I – others may, personal interpretation as opposed to we; see those sights – inspired by beauty; lucky – grateful, fortunate, humbled	Loss Personal reflection Lucky Grateful
Senses Connection with life	<b>How few people have ever been there, seen it, experienced the colours, the sounds, the lack of smell, the fear, the sheer enjoyment and thrill when you feel that you really will</b>	So few people experience this	How few – feeling special, fortunate; experienced – lived; colours, sounds, smell – different, unusual, now familiar; enjoyment/ thrill – excitement, extreme;	Emotions Senses Extreme Excitement Being alive Knowing limits Temporary, transient

	<b>burst with happiness.</b>		fear – contrast, aliveness, extremes; burst – extreme experience, hard to contain or hold, transient, short lived like bubble.	Loss
Spiritual connection	<b>I definitely felt a lot closer to God and my faith became stronger.</b>	Closer to God	God, faith – religious experience, spiritual, personal, intimate; closer, stronger – self-aware, conscious	Spirituality Strength Personal
Grateful	<b>I feel very appreciative of what I have, and what I had seen and been allowed to see.</b>	Feel appreciative	Appreciative –towards God?, gain; seen – beauty; been allowed – permission, grateful	Beauty Grateful ?guilty
Change	<b>I think that we have all left something of ourselves behind – and I think that none of us will ever be the same again.</b>	Never the same again	Left something – loss, growth, change; none of us – group; ever – extreme; same again – permanent change from temporary experience	Sense of time Change Loss Benefit
Enormity of nature  Being small	<b>We all have a new sense of wonder now, realising the sheer power of nature.</b>	Realise power of nature	We all – group experience; new sense of wonder – amazement, appreciation; realising – fresh awareness; sheer power – feeling small against vastness; nature	Appreciation Being small Connection with nature
Change  Achievement	<b>I certainly felt different, and looked down on the Arctic ice realising what we had done; not much compared</b>	Felt different, ordinary people, great achievement	I felt different – change; realising done – recognition of end; not much – humble; very	Change Engaging reader Meaning from inspiring others



Dream Ambition Goal Focus	<b>to some expeditions, but we were very ordinary people, and I think that we showed others that you can have a dream – and achieve it.</b>		ordinary – trying to identify with reader; we showed – team; you can – desire to prompt reader to share; dream – ambition, goal, focus; achieve – proud, accomplish challenge.	Dream Goal Achievement
Male dominant Relationship with environment	<b>The strange thing was that however hostile the landscape, however frightening the events, however alien man is here, we did not feel threatened.</b>	Didn't feel threatened	Strange, hostile, alien – building fear to contrast; not threatened – not personal, separating events from environment; trust; relationship with environment.	Relationship with environment
Connection with environment, time, place, sense of self in the world	<b>We did not feel that the Arctic was against us, or at least more against us than anything else, considering this was not man's natural environment.</b>	Arctic not against us	"Man" (and above) coming from male dominant social narrative; (what about women's natural environment?); not against us – for us? Held by connection with nature, sense of time and place.	Connection with environment, time, place, sense of self in the world, perspective Male dominant context
Alone	<b>We sat in a single row seats with the very smelly oil drums next to us.</b>	Sat next to oil drums	Single rows – now separating from group; smelly – in contrast to lack of smell on ice;	Change Ending
Senses	<b>As we took off they started banging.</b>	Banging	Bang – noise in contrast to silence on ice, like guns, final; reawareness of senses; change	Change Ending Senses

Disappointment	<b>We had been told that food had been left on the plane for us – it was shortbread!</b>	Shortbread on plane	Food - expectation; shortbread – disappointment, emphasising hunger	Senses Loss
Senses	<b>It was very noisy, there was frost on the inside of the window for the first hour, then it was too warm.</b>	Noisy, frost, then too warm	Noticing windows, then heat (both different)	Change Reintegration to civilisation
Connection with nature, environment, time, creation, power	<b>Ellesmere looked amazing: fjords, glaciers, the sea pushing up against the land and the ridges formed going forever into the distance.</b>	Amazing view of land, sea, ice	Amazing – beauty; pushing up – force, power; forever - connection with time, creation	Connection with nature, environment, time, creation, power
Time, space	<b>There were endless mountains, the sun still shining on them at 10.30pm.</b>	Mountains and late sun	Endless – time, space, vastness; self in space; sun shining –evening	Ending Endless Time, space
Relief	<b>What a landscape, but it was nice to be above the land!</b>	Nice to be above	What – exclaiming!, land – ice on sea	Relief



Riches: Emerging themes and superordinate themes  
November 13


<b><i>Narrative 1 EMERGING THEMES:</i></b>	<b><i>Narrative 2 EMERGING THEMES:</i></b>	<b><i>Narrative 3 EMERGING THEMES:</i></b>	<b><i>Combined themes:</i></b>
		Frustration	Frustration
Women Luck On-going benefits	Observing light	Disappointment	Women Luck On-going benefits Observing light
Shared achievement Meaning after	Floating	Excitement	Disappointment Shared achievement Meaning after
Approach	Sky	Relief	Floating
Luck Reaffirmation of life	Ice	Hope Relief	Excitement Approach Sky
Inspiration	Sea	Excitement	Relief
Goal	Ice conditions Safety	Urgent	Hope Inspiration
Positive thought	Danger	Isolated Efficient	Luck Reaffirmation of life
Altruism, sharing wisdom	Risk	Speed	Ice conditions Sea Safety
Restoration	Fear	Team united	Urgent
Change	Fell in Danger	Emotional	Altruism, sharing wisdom
Achievement	Danger Ice	Appreciation Wonder Memory	Risk Speed Restoration
Altruism Challenge Feminism Permission	Fear	Ending	Fear Team united Change Fell in
	Survival Limits	Team help	Danger Appreciation
Permission	Hope	Extreme conditions	Wonder Memory
Forgiveness	Humour	Anticipation	Altruism
Female Retrospective meaning Identity Dreams	Fear	Friendship Impact on family	Challenge Feminism Permission Ending Survival
Direction	Anxiety	Friendship Sadness Loss	Limits Team help Extreme conditions
Retrospective	Optimism	Ceremonial	Forgiveness

meaning			Coping, with Humour
Self-belief	Fear	Empathy	Anticipation
Limits	Logical Practical	Coping	Female Retrospective meaning
Self-belief	Coping	Team	Identity
Retrospective meaning Compromise	Impact of risk on others Guilt	Departure	Dreams Fear Friendship
Strength of character	Hope	Reflection Retrospective meaning	Anxiety Direction Loss
Heroes	Humour	Loss	Optimism
Hero Hardship	Coping with humour	Sadness Beauty	Ceremonial Self-belief
Altruism	Capable	Beauty Grateful	Compromise Empathy
Altruism vr competition in feminist narrative	Guilt	Senses Connection with life	Departure Impact of risk on others, family Guilt Reflection
Character strength Managing change	Danger Fear	Spiritual connection	Strength of character Heroes Hardship Sadness
Being the hero	Coping	Grateful	Beauty Altruism
Reluctance to be the hero	Minimising achievement	Change	Capable Grateful
Educating others Inspiring	Rationalising	Enormity of nature Being small	Senses Connection with life Altruism vr competition in feminist narrative
Adventure Charity	Competent Able	Change Achievement Dream Ambition Goal Focus	Character strength Managing change Danger Fear Spiritual connection
Focus	Problem solving	Male dominant Relationship with environment	Reluctance to be the hero Minimising achievement Change
Accepting self- appraisal by inspiring others	Practical	Connection with environment, time, place, sense of self in the world	Enormity of nature Being small Rationalising Educating others
Comfortable with achievement	Perception of limits	Alone	Inspiring Adventure Charity
		Senses	Competent
		Disappointment	Able
		Senses	Change
		Connection with	Achievement

		nature, environment, time, creation, power	Dream Ambition Goal Focus
		Time, space	Male dominant
		Relief	Relationship with environment Problem solving Accepting self-appraisal by inspiring others Practical Connection with environment, time, place, sense of self in the world Alone Senses Perception of limits Disappointment Comfortable with achievement Connection with nature, environment, time, creation, power, space Relief

Super-ordinate themes:

	<b>Connection:</b>	
Frustration Disappointment Fear Ending Loss Sadness Departure Safety Urgent Risk Fell in Danger Survival Limits Extreme conditions Fear Anxiety Hardship	<b>Environment:</b> Connection with life Direction Spiritual connection Enormity of nature Being small Relationship with /connection with environment, time, place, sense of self in the world, nature, time, creation, power, space Permission Ceremonial Floating Sky Ice conditions Sea Observing light Beauty Senses	Luck On-going benefits Retrospective meaning Identity Change Dreams Adventure Ambition Goal Focus
		<b>Context:</b> Women Feminism Female Male dominant Alone
Excitement Relief Hope Inspiration Reaffirmation of life Restoration Appreciation Wonder Memory Anticipation Optimism Self-belief Reflection Strength of character Heroes Relief Challenge	<b>Others:</b> Shared achievement Altruism, sharing wisdom Team united Team help Forgiveness Friendship Compromise Empathy Impact of risk on others, family Guilt Altruism Grateful Altruism vr competition in feminist narrative Reluctance to be the hero Educating others Inspiring Charity Accepting self-appraisal by inspiring others	Speed Coping, with Humour Capable Character strength Managing change Minimising achievement Rationalising Competent Able Change Achievement Problem solving Practical Perception of limits Comfortable with achievement

<p><b>PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY</b> <b>FACULTY OF HEALTH &amp; HUMAN SCIENCES</b></p>	<p><b>Application No:</b>  (for FREC use)</p>
 <p><b>Faculty Research Ethics Committee</b> <b>APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL OF RESEARCH</b></p> <p><i>Title of research:</i> The Meaning of Outdoor Adventure Activities</p>	
<p><b>1. Nature of approval sought (Please tick relevant boxes)</b></p> <p>(a) PROJECT*: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>                      (b) PROGRAMME*: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>If (a) then please indicate which category:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funded research project <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• MPhil/PhD project <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• Other (please specify): <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul> <p><i>*Note: In most cases, approval should be sought individually for each project. Programme approval is granted for research which comprises an ongoing set of studies or investigations utilising the same methods and methodology and where the precise number and timing of such studies cannot be specified in advance. Such approval is normally appropriate only for ongoing, and typically unfunded, scholarly research activity.</i></p>	
<p><b>2. Investigators/Supervisors</b></p> <p>Principal Investigator (staff or postgraduate student)*: Name: Rosi Raine - PhD student and PU staff member Email: <a href="mailto:Rosi.raine@plymouth.ac.uk">Rosi.raine@plymouth.ac.uk</a> Address for written correspondence: Occupational Therapy, School of Health Professions, Faculty of Health and Human Sciences, Peninsula Allied Health Centre, Derriford Road, Plymouth, PL6 8BH</p> <p>Director of Studies/other supervisors (only where Principal Investigator is a postgraduate student): Dr Katrina Bannigan Associate Professor (Reader) of Occupational Therapy, School of Health Professions, Faculty of Health and Human Sciences, Peninsula Allied Health Centre, Derriford Road, Plymouth, PL6 8BH <a href="mailto:Katrina.bannigan@plymouth.ac.uk">Katrina.bannigan@plymouth.ac.uk</a></p>	



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*Please indicate Department of each named individual, including collaborators  
external to the Faculty:*

*\*Note: Principal investigators are responsible for ensuring that all staff employed  
on projects (including research assistants, technicians and clerical staff) act in  
accordance with the University's ethical principles, the design of the research  
described in this proposal and any conditions attached to its approval.*

**3. Funded Research**

Funding body (if any) NA

Is there a potential conflict of interest in the research arising from the source of  
the funding for the research (for example, a tobacco company funding a study of  
the effects of smoking on lung function)?

Yes

No

If the answer to the above question is yes, please outline the nature of the  
potential conflict of interest and how you will address this:

**4 Duration of project/programme with dates\*:**

Project will be carried out between July 2016 and September 2017.

*\*Approval is granted for the duration of projects or for a maximum of three years  
in the case of programmes. Further approval is necessary for any extension of  
programmes.*

**5. Research Outline:**

*Please provide an outline of the proposed research. Note that this should be  
sufficient to enable the committee to have a clear understanding of the project. It  
should normally be a maximum of 2,000 words. While this should be written in a  
way appropriate for your research you should address the following areas:*

*Background: situating the study within its research area, including references,*

*and, where appropriate, within relevant policy and practice developments or professional agendas*

*Aims/Key Questions: should be stated clearly, including how the researcher anticipates their fulfilment will move forward knowledge and, where appropriate, policy or practice*

*Recruitment: of participants – including where and how participants will be recruited; any inclusion or exclusion criteria; justification of the sample size*

*Methodology: the application should contain a clear outline of methodology, including both data collection and data analysis processes. This should include a description, including references of the particular methodology being used; how it will be employed in relation to this study; which techniques of analysis will be used once data are collected and how this will be applied to the particular data set.*

## **Background**

Occupational science is concerned with the relationship between occupational engagement, meaning and wellbeing. Occupational scientists have consistently identified a need for critical perspectives of human occupation as a means of enhancing the theoretical underpinnings of the occupational therapy profession (Pollard et al, 2010). Despite defining core concepts that occupations are uniquely experienced, purposefully chosen and influence identity construction, there remains a need for deeper examination of subjective experiences (Watters et al, 2013). Studies exploring the meaning of occupational engagement have ranged from engagement in food related occupations (Absolom and Roberts, 2011; Beagan and D'Sylva, 2011; Bundgaard, 2005; Hocking et al, 2002; Scheerer et al, 2004); music (Roberts and Farrugia, 2013; Jacob, et al, 2009); flower arrangement/ikebana (Watters et al, 2013); computer use (Aguilar et al, 2010); skateboarding (Haines et al, 2010); walking (Wensley and Slade, 2011) and tagging (Russell, 2008) to broader clusters of occupations associated with spirituality (Beagan and Etowa, 2011); family routines (Koome et al, 2012) and social activism (Fox and Quinn, 2012). However, despite this breadth, there appear to be some commonly occurring shared concepts of meaning around identity, purpose, achievement, social connection and wellbeing.

Outdoor adventure activities have been used in therapeutic and educational contexts for a number of purposes. For this study, outdoor adventure activities will be defined as human-powered activities in a natural environment (Dickson et al, 2008) with an element of risk management. Examples of activities may therefore include rock or ice climbing, mountaineering, caving, mountain biking and paddling (in a kayak or canoe) on moving water (Association of Experiential Education, 2015). Benefits associated with being in the outdoors, connecting with nature, managing risk and increased levels of physical activity have been identified. Many authors have described the therapeutic value and restorative aspects of the outdoors (Hoyer, 2012). Exercise outdoors compared to indoor exercise has been associated with greater feelings of invigoration, energy and positive mood; and lower levels of tension, depression and tiredness (Depledge, 2011). Thompson Coon et al (2011) suggested that due to this restoration and higher levels of enjoyment, people are more likely to sustain engagement in exercise where they experience connection with nature.

It is well documented that exercise is linked to improved health and wellbeing and evidence consistently recommends moderate regular exercise for all (Ogilvie et al, 2007). World Health Organization's action plan for non-communicable diseases (World Health Organization 2013) states the target of reducing the global prevalence of insufficient physical activity by 10% by 2025. Inactivity has been identified as the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality (World Health Organisation, 2015). Changing behaviour in relation to physical activity could reduce premature death, illness and costs to society, by avoiding a substantial proportion of cancers, vascular dementias and circulatory diseases (Her Majesty's Stationary Office Government 2010). Evidence suggests that established behavioural change models from psychologists such as Prochaska and Diclemente's model of change (1986) considering readiness, and Bandura's model of self-efficacy (1977) continue to be used successfully within physical activity programmes (Martín-Borràs et al 2014, Voskuil and Robbins 2015). However, in the current epidemic of sedentary behaviour, Biddle et al (2010) present the case that understanding further mechanisms for achieving change in relation to physical activity participation is still a priority area for investigation.

It has been suggested that an occupational science perspective of population health is required to address problems linked to human occupations as both cause and cure (Frank 2014). Greater understanding of the meaning and wellbeing associated with occupational engagement, may offer an alternative to the psychology perspectives cited above. In addition, a focus on outdoor adventure activities may offer some opportunities for understanding features of occupations that promote health, wellbeing and sustained engagement, for use within health promotional practice in occupational therapy. In the UK occupational therapy is considered to be an integral part of the public health workforce, with a significant role to play in relation to promoting physical activity (Public Health England 2015).

### **Rationale**

A number of areas of occupational science and occupational therapy practice where further research has been recommended or gaps in evidence have become apparent, these are:

- The need for studies exploring the meaning of engagement in occupation as a means of developing the evidence base for the profession (Pollard, 2010).
- Consideration of the factors influencing engagement in healthy activity would be valuable to the practice of occupational therapy (Townsend & Polatajko, 2007) and health promotion. Engagement needs to be explored in terms of initiating and sustaining engagement; and returning to engagement after an interruption.
- The potential benefits of outdoor adventure activity in terms of personal development and sustained engagement (Depledge, 2011) has been acknowledged, but requires further evidence for use within occupational therapy practice.

This study aims to address these gaps by considering the meaning that outdoor

adventure activities hold for participants from an occupational science perspective; the factors that influence engagement; and identify the potential opportunities this offers for occupational therapy and health promotion practice. The **research question** is therefore: What is the meaning of outdoor adventure to participants?

### **Research objectives:**

- Identify meaning experienced by participants engaging in outdoor adventure activities.
- Critically explore how this meaning relates to initiating and sustaining engagement; and returning to engagement after an interruption.
- Consider how these features can inform health promotion and occupational therapy practice, where the goal is to support others to engage in healthy behaviour including outdoor adventure activity.

### **Methodology**

As a study of meaning, this research necessarily requires an inductive in-depth exploration of lived experience and thus a phenomenological methodology will be used. An inductive approach is required to generate rich data and allow scope for exploration of multiple versions of reality (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Qualitative phenomenological research is recommended as a mechanism for exploring the meaning of occupational engagement for application to practice (Scheerer et al, 2004; Russell, 2008) rather than to categorise or explain behaviour (Finlay, 2011). Interpretive phenomenology goes beyond description of core concepts, to consider meaning embedded in narratives produced by those engaged in occupations (Smythe et al, 2008). Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) has the capacity to focus on the structure, meaning and processes of lived personal experiences (Brocki and Weardon, 2006). IPA is described as a double hermeneutic, where the participant is trying to make sense of their world and the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant making sense of their world (Smith and Osborn, 2003). This study will adopt a qualitative interpretive phenomenological approach and participants will be invited to take part in semi-structured interviews.

### **Method**

#### **Semi-structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews will be held with individual participants who engage in outdoor adventure activities, with the aim of exploring the value and meaning they attribute to this. The findings of a prior exploration of published adventure biographies have informed the semi-structured interview guide, see appendix 1. Light refreshments will be available for interviewees at the researcher's expense.

#### **Sample**

Purposive sampling will be used to establish a rich sample, to include adults (over 18 years old) who engage in a range of outdoor adventure activities. The aim is for a fairly homogenous sample (Smith et al, 2009) in terms of

engagement in outdoor adventure activity; but with scope for rich discussion from a range of perspectives.

This may include any person, disabled or non-disabled, who engages in outdoor adventure and is able to offer a description of the meaning it gives them.

Participants may be from across the life course. Participants may identify with either gender or none. Participants may consider themselves to be from any cultural context or social group. 6-8 participants will be recruited to enable a small enough sample for in-depth ideographic exploration of the data (Smith et al, 2009).

### **Recruitment**

Participants will be recruited using private email and word of mouth advertising through 'gatekeepers' from the National Parks organisations and the lead researcher's personal contacts within the outdoor adventure industry. Once a few relevant interviewees have been established, they will be asked for additional contacts for others who can offer another perspective, by way of chain sampling (Patton, 2015). Care will be taken to ensure that the participants are not known personally to the researcher prior to interviews and that they are not coerced to take part. Where research is focussed on occupational phenomena, natural surroundings relating to the occupation are recommended (Josephsson and Alsaker, 2015) to prompt reflection associated with these. Interviews will be held in a public place, related to outdoor adventure activities, that is mutually convenient, such as a national park visitor centre café or where an outdoor adventure activity club meets. It is hoped that a spread of locations would prompt a rich sample of people who engage in a range of outdoor adventure activities. For example, Cornwall offers opportunities for outdoor adventure activities associated with the sea, such as sea-cliff climbing and sea-kayaking; whereas the Lake District offers opportunities for mountaineering and lake-sports.

### **Informed consent**

Participants will be given an information sheet with details of the study and an explanation of their rights; including the right to withdraw and maintenance of confidentiality (see section 6). This will be sent to proposed participants in advance of making arrangements to meet, by email or post. It will be made clear that the choice to participate in the research, or not, will have no bearing on the relationship with the researchers, Plymouth University, the gatekeeper or the organisation providing the interview venue. The consent forms will be signed in advance, and confirmed on the day of the interview and stored separately from the research data. A pseudonym will be used to enable removal of a participant's data if requested. Care will be taken to ensure that participants do not feel coerced to attend the interviews. The interviews will be facilitated, audio recorded, transcribed and analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis by the lead researcher. Confidentiality will be maintained, ensuring that data is made anonymous by removing all names and storing in password protected files or locked cabinet. Transcriptions will be available for individuals of their own data only. Participants will be asked to check transcriptions for accuracy. Data arising from the research will otherwise only be available to participants in the final written report. Real names will be replaced with pseudonyms in the write-up where verbatim text is used.

### **Data analysis**

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) will be used to focus on personal meaning and sense-making in context (Smith et al, 2009). The underpinning principles of IPA are phenomenology (focus on lived experience), hermeneutics (interpretation) and ideography (individual perspective) (Smith et al, 2009). In the first stage, individual transcripts will be considered in terms of their descriptive, linguistic and conceptual content. Emerging and super-ordinate themes will then be identified for each individual. In the second stage, the participants' interpretation of their experience will be considered within a wider context. Then the researcher's interpretation of the experience of the participant and the context in which this interpretation has been made will be considered (Smith et al, 2009). Each individual case will be examined in detail with exploration of their unique ideographic perspective. Following this, a cross-case analysis will examine differences and similarities across the participant's responses (Smith et al, 2009).

### **Trustworthiness and ethics**

In addition to establishing ethically sound relationships with participants, the researcher also has a responsibility to ensure ethically sound research throughout the whole process (Braun and Clarke, 2013). This includes non-discriminatory practice, accurate representation of data and honesty as to the positioning of the researcher (Braun and Clarke, 2013). In an arena dominated by male stories (Naylor, 2010), care will be taken to represent differing gender perspectives. A reflective diary will be kept throughout the research process for reflexive recognition of the primary researchers' subjective influence on the research (Finlay, 2011).

### **Outcomes**

This research will contribute to a larger PhD research study from which it is hoped there will be a number of publications and conference presentations. It is hoped that this research will lead to future intervention studies.

*(Please expand to requirements)*

6. **Where you are providing information sheets for participants please INSERT a copy here. The information should usually include, in lay language, the nature and purpose of the research and participants right to withdraw:**

*Research information sheet*

Dear potential participant

### **Re: The Meaning of Outdoor Adventure Activities**

This is an invitation to participate in an interview to discuss your engagement in outdoor adventure activity. I would like to understand the meaning that engagement in outdoor adventure activities holds for you and any influence this has on your health and wellbeing. The findings from this research will inform my PhD thesis. The **research question** is: What is the meaning of outdoor adventure to participants?

I am interested in why you started to engage in outdoor adventure activities and why and how you continue to engage, in relation to the meaning that it gives you. If you have had a break in your engagement, I would like to know why and how you returned following this interruption.

All information provided by you during the interview will be stored by the researchers to protect your confidentiality. The interview will be recorded with digital audio recorders and transcribed with your permission. Electronic data will be stored in password protected files and paper copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet, these will only be accessible to the research team. You will also have the opportunity to read a transcript of your interview to check for accuracy.

Information from the study will be collated and structured into a research article. A copy of this will be made available to all participants on completion. The research article will focus on the meaning gained from engagement in outdoor adventure activity and its impact on health and wellbeing. The research article will not name any individuals.

Your participation in the study is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw information you have provided at any time, up to the analysis being completed, without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect your relationship in any way with the researchers, Plymouth University or the organisation providing contact details or the interview venue. If you do decide to take part you will be given a copy of the information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form.

### **Questions you may have about the study:**

#### *Why have I been chosen?*

You have been invited to take part in this study because I would like to ask for your opinion about your participation in outdoor adventure activity and the meaning that it has for you.

#### *What is the overall aim of the study?*

The aim of the study is to consider the meaning that engaging in outdoor adventure activities holds for participants with a view to making recommendations for occupational therapy and health promotional practice where the goal is to support people to engage in healthy occupations.

#### *What would I have to do if I take part in the study?*

If you would like to take part in the study you will be asked to read this information sheet and sign a consent form agreeing to take part in the study. You would then take part in an audio-recorded interview lasting up to an hour. Your participation in the study is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw information you have provided at any time before data analysis completion, without giving a reason.

#### *Do I have to take part?*

You do not have to take part in this study. A decision not to take part or a

decision to withdraw at any time up to the completion of the data analysis, will not affect your relationship in any way with the researchers, Plymouth University or the organisation providing contact details or the interview venue.

*Will my records be confidential?*

Yes, your name and any identifying information will be removed from the transcript. All information provided by you during the interview will be stored confidentially by the researchers. All interviews will be recorded with digital audio recorders and transcribed. Electronic data will be stored in password protected files and paper copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet, these will only be accessible to the research team. You will also have the opportunity to read and verify the transcript to check for accuracy. Your contact details will be used to arrange the interview and to send you a copy of the transcript and final report if you wish, they will then be deleted. The final research article summarising the findings from all the interviews (up to 8) will not name any individuals. The research report will state that participants were recruited via gatekeepers at venues across the UK. Within the report individual participants will be given a pseudonym (which may imply gender and can be self-chosen) and there will be an indication of life stage by decade. Participants will otherwise not be identifiable.

*What are the potential benefits of taking part in the study?*

We hope that you will enjoy taking part in a discussion about your participation in outdoor adventure activities. Your responses will inform a report that we hope will influence future occupational therapy and health promotion practice.

*What are the possible disadvantages of taking part in the study?*

Attending the interview will take up some of your time. It is anticipated that the interview could last between 1-1<sup>1/2</sup> hours, but it will not continue for longer than an hour and a half and you are free to leave whenever you wish. Light refreshments will be available.

*Who is organising the study?*

The study has been organised by Plymouth University researchers.

*Who has reviewed this research study?*

This study has been ethically approved by the Health Research Ethics Committee at the Faculty of Health and Human Sciences, Plymouth University. The research ethics proposal was written by Rosi Raine.

*How will I hear about the results of the study?*

Information from the study will be collated and structured into a research article. A copy of the final article can be made available to all participants on completion, by requesting it from the researchers.

*What if I have a query, concern or complaint?*

If you have any other query or concern, or if you wish to make a complaint, or if you would like to withdraw, please contact the principal researcher Rosi Raine in the first instance (see below). You may also contact the director of studies, Katrina Bannigan (Katrina.Bannigan@plymouth.ac.uk ) or the Research Administrator to the Faculty Research Ethics Committee.



If you have any further questions or you would like a follow-up or debrief meeting please contact Rosi Raine on: [rosi.raine@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:rosi.raine@plymouth.ac.uk) .

Thank you for your time.  
Yours sincerely

Rosi Raine, Project Lead, Occupational Therapy, Plymouth University.

*Consent form:*

**Re: The Meaning of Outdoor Adventure Activities**

Please read each statement carefully and initial the box if you agree.

- I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study and had the opportunity to ask questions to clarify any points.
  
- I am willing to discuss my participation in outdoor adventure activities with a researcher from Plymouth University in an interview.
  
- I agree to the interview being digitally audio-recorded and transcribed, with written data being retained by the researchers.
  
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time before the data analysis is completed, without prejudice and that if I withdraw from the study any information provided by me will be destroyed.
  
- I understand that my decision to take part or withdraw from this study will not negatively affect my relationship with the researchers or Plymouth University.
  
- I agree to the presentation, publication and dissemination of a report of the findings in which I will not be personally identified.
  
- I agree to take part in the study.

Participant name:  
Signature:  
Date:

Lead researcher:  
Signature:  
Date:

**7. Ethical Protocol:**

Please indicate how you will ensure this research conforms with each clause of Plymouth University's *Principles for Research Involving Human Participants*. Please attach a statement which addresses each of the ethical principles set out below. Please note: you may provide the degree of detail required. Each section will expand to accommodate this information.

(a) **Informed consent:**

*i. How will informed consent be gained?*

An information sheet and consent form will be used for all participants. The information sheet and consent form will be given to all participants prior to the interview; the consent form will be signed and collected at the start of the interview and given to the researcher. The interviewee will receive a verbal reminder of this consent prior to the interview starting. The participant will be required to sign two copies of the consent form; one for them to keep and one to be returned to the researcher at the interview. These will be stored in a secure location for the duration of the study and kept securely, along with the data, in accordance with university policy on completion of the study.

*ii. Are there any issues [e.g. children/minors, learning disability, mental health] that may affect participants' capacity to consent? If so how will these be resolved?*

No

*iii. Will research be carried out over the internet? If so please explain how consent will be obtained*

No (other than private email).

(b) **Openness and honesty:**

*i. How will you ensure that participants are able to have any queries they have answered in an open and honest way?*

All information and interaction will be conducted in an open and honest manner with no attempt of deception. Participants will be kept informed of the aims of the study. Participants will be provided with contact details of the lead researcher and director of studies and may present queries before, during or after data collection.

*ii. Is deception being used? No*

*If so, please indicate which of the following is relevant to its use*

*Deception is completely unavoidable if the purpose of the research is to be met*

*The research objective has strong scientific merit*

*Any potential harm arising from the proposed deception can be effectively neutralised or reversed by the proposed debriefing procedures*

*iii. (If deception is being used) please describe here why it is necessary for your research*

(c) **Right to withdraw:**

- i. *Please indicate here how you will enable participants to withdraw from the study if they so wish [where this is not research carried out over the internet]*

All participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the research study at any time before the completion of data analysis, without any implications for their participation in the activity or their relationship with owners of the interview venue or Plymouth University staff. Data will be identifiable by pseudonym by the researchers so that information can be removed if required.

- ii. *Is the research carried out over the internet? If so please explain how you will enable participants' withdrawal.*

No.

(d) **Protection from harm:**

*Indicate here any vulnerability which may be present because:*

- *of the participants (they may for example be children or have mental health issues)*
- *of the nature of the research process. Indicate how you shall ensure their protection from harm.*

**Please note** - researchers contacting children as an aspect of their research must be subject to DBS/CRB checks. These can be arranged through Human Resources.

*Does this research involve:*

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <i>Vulnerable groups</i>  | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <i>Sensitive topics</i>   | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <i>Permission of a gatekeeper for initial access</i>  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Deception or research which is conducted without full and informed consent</i>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <i>Research that will induce psychological stress, anxiety or humiliation or cause minimal pain</i>         | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <i>Intrusive intervention (eg, the administration of drugs, vigorous physical exercise or hypnotherapy)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

Permission of a gate keeper for initial access to participants is required for this study. It is not anticipated that this study will cause harm to the participant. However, some discussion may arise that could potentially be uncomfortable. For example, outdoor adventure activities can involve risk to personal safety and the participant may have experienced loss or bereavement in association with this. Should the participant become distressed or upset during the study, they may choose to withdraw from the interview and the researcher (who is an experienced occupational therapist) will offer support in the moment. The researcher may signpost the participant to their General Practitioner or a mental health support service such as MIND, employee assistance, the Samaritans or Relate. The participant will be provided with email addresses and a phone number so they can contact the researcher or supervisor in the period following the study should an issue arise after data collection has taken place. The researcher will explain how the data will be analysed (Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis) and that the findings will contribute to a final

project; that will be submitted as part of a PhD thesis and for publication in a relevant peer-reviewed journal. Where a potential participant responds to the recruitment strategy, who is personally known to the researcher or a close family member, the researcher will explain that this could cause a conflict of interest and will therefore sensitively decline the offer.

Will your samples include **students whose coursework will be assessed by the researcher(s)** (for example you are recruiting students for your study which includes some that will be assessed by you as part of their degree/diploma)?

Yes

No

If **Yes**, please answer the following

**(1) Student participation in research for pedagogic purpose**

*Where recruitment of the research sample involves participants who are being academically assessed by the researcher but whose participation forms part of the overall assessment for their degree/diploma*

- (i) *does participation in the research form part of the students' own assessment as part of their degree/diploma (e.g. psychology students who can opt to participate in a research project as part of their assessment for their degree)?*
- (ii) *If this is the case please describe how assessment follows from this research and alternative arrangements available for those who decide not to participate*

**(2) Student participation in research for non-pedagogic purposes**

*Where recruitment of the research sample involves participants who are being academically assessed by the researcher but whose participation does not form part of their assessment for their degree/diploma*

*Please state where and how you will ensure students understand that their participation is entirely voluntary and that they can participate or withdraw at any time without prejudice to their relationship with the University or any staff, and without prejudice to their assessment of academic performance.*

**(e) Debriefing:**

*Describe how you will debrief participants*

At the end of the interview the participant will be invited to talk through anything that may have caused them to feel distressed if they wish. Any debriefing related to the research process will be provided by the researchers. Participants will be given contact details of the research lead should further information, support or debriefing be required. This is stated on the information sheet. Should a participant wish to seek further support they will be encouraged to speak to their General Practitioner or a mental health support service such as MIND, employee assistance, the Samaritans or Relate.

**(f) Confidentiality:**

*How will you ensure confidentiality and security of information?*

All data arising from the interviews will be kept confidential. All names, dates and geographic details will be removed from transcripts and replaced with

pseudonyms; these will be stored separately from the consent forms. This will enable identification if required for withdrawal from the study, but not by anyone other than the researchers. Participants will be given the transcript of the interview they attended to approve prior to data analysis, if they wish. All audio data and written transcripts will be stored in accordance with Plymouth University policy, in password protected files in electronic format and in a locked filing cabinet when in paper format on Plymouth University premises. This study will conform to the principles of the Data Protection Act (1998).

(g) **Anonymity**

*How will you ensure anonymity of participants?*

Participants will be informed that the research report will state that participants were recruited via gatekeepers at venues across the UK. Within the report individual participants will be given a pseudonym (which may imply gender and can be self-chosen) and there will be an indication of life stage by decade. Participants will otherwise not be identifiable.

(h) **DBS/CRB Checks**

*Do researchers require DBS/CRB checks? If so, how will this be managed?*

The lead researcher and whole research team have up to date Disclosure and Barring Service checks completed with Plymouth University human resources. The participants will not be from a vulnerable group.

(i) **Professional bodies whose ethical policies apply to this research:**

The lead researcher is a member of the College of Occupational Therapists and is registered with the Health and Care Professions Council and will adhere to ethical policies arising from these.

(j) **Participant Contact – Queries, Concerns or Complaints**

The following will normally be provided on an Information Sheet for Participants.

Please note that all participants should be given a named person to whom they can address any queries concerns or complaints (in the first instance) or whom they can inform of their intent to take up their right to withdraw. This will be a member of the research team, normally the Director/Principal Researcher in the project.

Please note also that participants should also be informed of a contact to whom a complaint about the conduct of the research may in the first instance be directed as it relates to them. This will normally be the Research Administrator to the Faculty Research Ethics Committee.

Please Confirm the following:

I/we have provision to furnish participants with a named individual to whom they can address any queries concerns or complaints (in the first instance) or whom they can inform of their intent to take up their right to withdraw

I/we have provision to furnish participants with a contact to whom a complaint about the conduct of the research may be directed

<p><b>8 Researchers' Safety</b></p> <p>(a) <b>Are there any special considerations in relation to researchers' safety?</b>  Lone working: the risks to the researchers' safety are minimal; researchers will ensure that colleagues and the host venue centre staff are aware of their whereabouts. Interviews will be conducted in a public space, this will be chosen to attempt to maintain confidentiality, such as a secluded side room of a café.</p> <p>(b) <b>If so what provision has been made (for example the provision of a mobile phone, or a clear recording of movements)</b>  The interviewer will ensure that a colleague or friend is aware of their whereabouts and would raise an alarm if unable to contact by mobile phone at an agreed time.</p>														
<p><b>9. Declaration:</b></p> <p>To the best of our knowledge and belief, this research conforms to the ethical principles laid down by Plymouth University and by the professional body specified in 6 (g).</p> <table> <tr> <td>Principal Investigator:</td> <td>Signature</td> <td>Date</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rosi Raine</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other staff investigators:</td> <td>Signature(s)</td> <td>Date</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Director of Studies (only where Principal Investigator is a postgraduate student):</td> <td>Signature</td> <td>Date</td> </tr> </table>			Principal Investigator:	Signature	Date	Rosi Raine			Other staff investigators:	Signature(s)	Date	Director of Studies (only where Principal Investigator is a postgraduate student):	Signature	Date
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## **Semi-structured Interview Guide**

### **Introductions:**

To include an introduction to the research and revisit the research information sheet, consent form and a reminder that the interviewee is free to withdraw at any point.

**Question 1.** What outdoor adventure activities do you take part in?

**Question 2.** Please can you tell me about your involvement in *the activity/ies*?

*Prompts:*

*How long have you been involved in this particular activity?*

*How long have you been involved in adventure activity (more broadly)?*

### **Initiating engagement**

**Question 3.** What inspired you to start?

**Question 4.** Were you involved in activities like this when you were a child?

*Prompts:*

*Did any childhood stories inspire you?*

*Do you have any adventure heroes or heroines?*

### **About the activity**

**Question 5.** Tell me about what you do when you take part in *the activity*?

*Prompts:*

*How does the activity usually run?*

*Do you use different routes each time?*

*What works well/not so well?*

*How often do you take part in the activity?*

*Do you usually go out in a group or on your own?*

*What equipment do you need?*

**Question 6.** Can you tell me any stories about your adventures?

*Prompts:*

*Have you had any eventful expeditions?*

*Any big achievements?*

*What was your favourite trip or day on the hills/water?*

### **Meaning associated with the activity**

**Question 7.** What do you find meaningful about *the activity*?

*Prompts:*

*How do you feel before, during and after the activity?*

*What do you enjoy the most about the activity?  
What do you dislike most about the activity?*

**Question 8.** Do you think the activity has had any influence on your health or wellbeing? If so what?

*Prompts*

*What are the benefits?*

*Has the activity had any impact on any other area of your life/lifestyle? For example diet, smoking, drinking, stress management, or other exercise?*

**Question 9.** Do you have any thoughts about being outdoors as opposed to being indoors?

*How would you describe your relationship with the outdoors?*

**Question 10.** Do you think that relationships with other people influence your engagement in the activity, if so how?

**Question 11.** Do you think that taking part in the activity has changed your relationship with yourself or the way you see yourself?

**Question 12.** Is there anything that you find difficult?

*Prompts:*

*What competes for your time?*

*What do other people think about your involvement in the activity?*

*What is the impact of your involvement in this activity on others?*

*How would you describe your relationship with risk?*

*Have you overcome adversity to engage or through engagement?*

*How does it fit in with your other commitments eg work and family?*

*Do any of your family members/friends also take part?*

*What might prevent you from continuing to take part in the activity?*

### **Sustainability of engagement**

**Question 13.** Do you see yourselves as a climber/walker/kayaker/*or identity linked to the activity?*

*What does it mean to you to be an adventurer or an explorer?*

*Do you think it is a different experience to be a male/female adventurer?*

*Do you engage with the culture associated with the activity?*

*Are there any particular books, magazines, clothes that you buy?*

**Question 14.** Has the meaning you gain from the activity changed over time?

**Question 15.** What keeps you engaged?

*Prompts:*

*Do you think you will continue with the activity long term?*

*Have you done it in the past?*

### **Returning to engagement after an interruption**

**Question 16.** Have you ever had a break and then come back?

*Prompts:*

*If so why did you come back?*

**Question 17.** If you wanted to inspire someone else to take part in the activity what would you tell them?

### **Concluding comments**

**Question 18.** Is there anything else that you would like to discuss?

*Prompts:*

*Would you like to be sent a copy of the final article?*

*Do you have any questions about the research study?*

That is the end of the interview. I'm aware that some of the discussion we have had could have touched on some personal issues or distressing topics, do you want to talk through anything now that the recorder has been turned off by way of a debrief?

Thank you all so much for your time, if you have any further questions or concerns please feel free to contact me.

Appendix 25. Example of transcript

Transcription of interview 1:

Introductions until 3:45 minutes; finish at 34.19 minutes.

RR	So um, what kind of outdoor adventure activities do you take part in? What do you like doing?	1
Q1		2
A	OK, well, um, I will maybe tell you a bit of a story then, so when I was younger, when I was in my twenties, like when I was about twenty, I got into down-hill mountain biking, and	3
03:45		4
		5
RR	OK	6
A	And I was racing all over the world basically, for a couple of years, and I was really, that was my only focus. Um, but growing up as a kid I was always, you know, out on the fells with my mum, fell walking and going camping and things like that. Um, but then mountain biking really took over and that was like a real focus point if you know what I mean. I didn't do anything else then. And then when I moved up here, because I used to live in south *****, then I was in ***** for Uni.	7
		8
		9
		10
		11
		12
		13
RR	Oh yes	14
A	But then I moved up here and started sort of hiker biking, if that makes sense. So like doing, I'd carry my bike up the fells here. And then I did less and less racing because it was more of a social thing with my friends. Um and now, since I got my collie dog, I probably do a lot more fell running than mountain biking	15
04:38		16
		17
		18
		19
RR	Yeah	20
A	But I still do a fair bit of mountain biking. I like to climb every now and then, so I dabble in climbing	21
05:11		22
RR	Yep	23
A	And I'm also qualified to be, I'm a tree climber	24
RR	OK yes	25
A	So I count that as my outdoor activities, because, even though I work as a tree climber, it's kind of a hobby	26
05:20		27
RR	Is that cutting trees down?	28
A	Yeah, so um , yeah	29
RR	Yes	30
A	And I just do, I'm totally up for anything outdoorsy really	31
RR	Yep	32
A	Um, but probably, fell running, mountain biking, a bit of lake swimming, um, a bit of road biking	33
		34
RR	Yes	35
A	But yes, is that alright?	36
RR	Yep! I mean, I was going to say, but you have already covered some of it already, I was going to say what inspired you to start, but you've, I guess you did different things when you were a kid maybe or	37
05:55		38
Q2		39
A	Yes. I think, I've always wanted to mountain bike, and then I think I'm a bit of a an adrenaline junkie and when I just sort of threw myself into down-hill mountain biking, I realised there is a real scene of people who are quite similar to me and	40
		41
		42
		43
RR	Yes	44

A 06:17	And I just really enjoyed the social aspect of racing, but also I just seemed to like, be able to sort of, put the speed down. And I don't, I was doing quite well, fairly quickly, so I think I just got quite addicted to it, and yeah, it was good.	45 46 47 48
RR	So was it like the competitive element do you mean?	49
A 06:36	Yes, definitely, like I was quite, I was really competitive with it, but also, um, the social aspect was a big thing. Because downhill mountain bike racing, you go for the whole weekend and you are like practising, um, all Saturday, and you camp there for the weekend and then, there is like 300 people there, so	50 51 52 53 54
RR	Oh wow	55
A 07:00	So often you see the same people at each race, and I was probably racing every other weekend, all over the country	56 57
RR	Yes	58
A	And it was like a camping weekend and a bit of a social as well as the actual race, so	59 60
RR	Brilliant	61
A	Yeah, it was yeah, so definitely a big social element as well as the competitive element that was drawing me in there	62 63
RR	Yes	64
A	But then, once I got to a level, like once I was at an elite level and I was like starting to do sort of world cup stuff, I found the pressure too much	65 66
RR	Wow, OK	67
A	Because you have so much pressure on you to hit these huge jumps, which are really scary, (laughs)	68 69
RR	Wow	70
A 07:48	And you see so many people hurting themselves! And there is that pressure to beat those people that you've beaten in the past.	71 72
RR	Yes	73
A 08:00	Every time, and sometimes, you know if you've come away, and someone's beaten you and it's like huh, why did they beat you? And oh I normally beat them, and it's quite a downer, so I think, a mixture of things. And also the financial aspect of racing, because at that time in my life I was buying a house	74 75 76 77 78
RR	Yes	79
A 08:13	All those things combined, made me think, actually, and then meeting my friends that I have in ***** that I go out with, who go out every week and do a really big adventure, I was like, actually this can replace racing for me, I don't need racing, and to spend all the money on it and things and have the pressure, because obviously, going out with your friends there is no pressure so,	80 81 82 83 84 85
RR	So were you employed as a mountain biker then?	86
A	Well I wasn't actually getting paid, I was just, I had sponsors that would sort of provide my kit and things, but I still had to pay my race entries and sort all the transport out and things, so you know it was still quite a big financial outlay to do all that racing	87 88 89 90
RR	Yeah, yeah, good fun though	91
A	Yes, absolutely, I don't regret it for a minute, but I think, I finished it, I did three years of really solid racing and that was enough for me, and I don't ever feel like, well I do dabble in racing every now	92 93 94

	and then	
RR	Yes	95
A 09.21	And now I like to maybe go back, sort of, put a sneaky result in, but I don't really, I don't feel that I need to be competitive and prove myself in the way that I did (laughs)	96 97 98
RR	Yes	99
A	If you know what I mean.	100
RR 09:24	Yes. So what do you think sort of inspired you, maybe like a childhood story or any heroines or heroes or what do you think kind of started you in the first place?	101 102 103
A	With the mountain biking or	104
RR	Well	105
A 09:43	I mean my mum used to take us out as children, youth hostelling and camping and walking all the time, so it was just really our life style	106 107
RR	Yes	108
A	And I think, moving away from the ***** to then go to University made me realise how much it meant to me. Recently I've started fell-running, quite a lot, and I went to see a talk by Joss Naylor and I found that really inspirational for fell running. Because the things he's achieved in his life time and the way he passionately talks about his whole life style, not just his fell running	109 110 111 112 113 114
RR	Yep	115
A	Well, and the fact that he's 80 and he's still going, and he only lives just over the hill from me, I find it incredible	116 117
RR	Yep	118
A	He's really, you know, he's like truly sort of *****, he's really born and bred in the ***** and I think that makes it more inspirational because he's literally just over the hill from where I live so	119 120 121
RR	Definitely	122
A 10.40	So I think that was a good sort of bit of inspiration, and I use it at work you know, because one of my favourite parts of my job is like, my rehab classes and, I've not got one at the moment I'm just setting one up, but the ones I've done in the past, I'll be like, oh have you heard about Joss Naylor he's doing this and you know, it just goes to show that you know, that you can do, you can keep going and you can keep active and that. And I try and use his stories to sort of inspire my patients to stay active because I think a lot of people,	123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130
RR	Yep	131
A 11.18	Lose that sort of motivation at that age and it's hard to, because I'm mostly dealing with elderly people, it's hard to sometimes motivate them, because, they all think, oh I'm past a certain age, I should just sit on the sofa all day, you know,	132 133 134 135
RR	Yes	136
A	So I like to use his stories to inspire them, and I think, quite often they do listen	137 138
RR 11.49	Definitely, that's amazing. OK so you have talked about the social side, is there anything else that you would say that you found really meaningful about mountain biking as an activity?	139 140 141
A	I think just getting up into the hills	142



RR	Yep	143
A	I feel it's my freedom, I feel, you know, because I often go out on my own as well as with friends, um, you know, I just feel at one with nature, nature is a massive thing for me, I really struggle to work five days a week inside, so I don't do that anymore, and hence why I feel like tree work is good for me, because I like to be outside and I am a very physical person, so physical work suits me	144 145 146 147 148 149
12.04		
RR	Yeah	150
A	You know, I feel it's kind of a meditation in a way, it's quite spiritual. Just, I'm not one for busy society, you know I like to escape, and feel like I am out in the wilderness with nature. That's a big part of what I do you know, um. I think I do struggle to live in towns or cities, like I have to be in a little village up in the mountains (laughs)	151 152 153 154 156
12:40		
RR	Yes, definitely, that's lovely thank you. Have you got any stories about sort of adventures that you've had or any kind of big trips or expeditions?	157 158 159
13.02		
Q		
A	Yeah, um, OK. Well, I mean I've recently been um, living in a camper can in Canada for three weeks, mountain biking all over, so, but I mean that's our standard holiday really, is to, pack our van up, we've got that van over there the tree services one, that we use for work, we just chuck a mattress in and put the bikes in a go round the alps normally, you know we've lived in that van for weeks at a time you know for a lot, so	160 161 162 163 164 165 166
RR	Brilliant	167
A	But Scotland as well, you know. Scotland is probably my favourite place to go actually	168 169
13.41		
RR	Whereabouts?	170
A	Oh it just depends, wherever really, just the mountains, I like Torridon, but also the Hebrides you know, getting out to the beaches and things	171 172
RR	So did you hire a van over in Canada then?	173
A	Yeah, we actually got a posh one because it was our honeymoon, so it was a treat! (laughs)	174 175
RR	Oh nice, oh what a lovely honeymoon! Perfect.	176
A	Yeah, I don't know about, do you mean like specific stories	177
RR	No, no, I mean sometimes people have like, I don't know, like a story of a particular epic adventure, or something, I don't know?	178 179
A	Yeah, well yeah, I've had a few. I mean, we went out to Chamonix and I've never done any alpine climbing and I'd only been ice climbing about twice or three times out in Scotland, and we went and did Cosmix ridge, Cosmix Arete without a guide or anything. We didn't really know what we were doing, and that was a scary day, that was intense, like, um, perfect weather, good conditions, but winter so a lot of snow, and um, yeah, cos **** and I don't climb outside very often, I think we kind of cowboied it and it kind of made me realise actually we probably had, we pretty much, well nearly soloed it really, which is a bit silly because it, er, well do you know it?	180 181 182 183 184 185 186 187 188 189
RR	No	190

A	Well it's like um, well do you know the um midi station in Chamonix?	191
RR	Yes	192
A 15.19 15.34	Well it's the ridge that goes along to it, and well I mean the drop is just like 1500 metres, you know, um, and there are some technical-ish bits on it, and we didn't really know what we were doing, and we got back to the lift station, 10 minutes before the last lift shut and it was the middle of winter, so it would have been cold if we'd had to sleep up there and	193 194 195 196 197 198
RR	Yeah	199
A	And I was so like, intensely concentrating on what I was doing all day that I didn't eat a single thing from, like, maybe half nine getting out of the lift to three o'clock getting back into the lift station. It was intense. But it was good, like a real sense of achievement for us, but	200 201 202 203
RR	Yep	204
A 16.11	Ice climbing is the thing that scares me the most, I have nightmares about avalanches after every ice climb (laughs)	205 206
RR	Definitely	207
A	It's quite, er, I mean climbing, well I'm not really a climber so, you know, but yeah it was good, we survived it, yeah	208 209
RR	I bet it was amazing though	210
A	Yeah it was, yeah, but it did make me think twice about alpine climbing	211
RR	Yeah, I bet it is beautiful though	212
A	Yes it was good, and I like to do things without a guide, I hate to get a guide because I feel like its cheating, like, I don't know, well it's kind of cheating, but also it doesn't feel as exciting because someone is showing you the way	213 214 215 216
RR	Yep	217
A 16:49	Whereas if you can go and experience a route, it kind of feels untouched in a way, you don't know if. Well I mean you know other people have been, but you can't see the evidence of it you know.	218 219 220
RR	Yeah definitely.	221
A	So that's one quite good story (laughs)	222
RR	You survived it	223
A	Yeah	224
RR	Ok, and do you think that climbing, or mountain biking, do you think that it has an influence on your health and wellbeing? You've touched on that already, but do you think that	225 226 227
A 17.10	Massively, yeah, I think, just, I think generally being outside does, um, actually, I've not always been of good health, to be honest, I do struggle sometimes. Two years ago I had, over the summer, I don't know what it was, but I was ill for 10 or 11 weeks. They suspected it could have been Limes disease, but we had no evidence of it and I kind of get these periods of time when I get heavy fatigue, and tiredness and I can't really concentrate and I still don't know what it is, um, I think I am just recently coming out of one really, but it has only lasted like three weeks, um, so but I mean I've been still working this time, but you know, I was really	228 229 230 231 232 233 234 235 236 237

	poorly a couple of summers ago, like sleeping like 20 hours a day, so, sorry what was the um?	238
RR	Well no, it was just whether you think the activity has an influence on your health and wellbeing?	239 240
A	Well yes, I mean I have had times out and I think it affects my mood generally. If I don't get out I really notice it. Um, I try not to be too obsessive over fitness and things	241 242 243
RR	Yes	244
A 18:28	But I do, I am quite strict on my diet. I was experimenting with being vegan from September last year, and probably over the last year I have been vegan for maybe seven or eight months of it	245 246 247
RR	Yes	248
A	But I have kind of come to a balance of, I eat vegan at home and then I'll get out, I do think it's important to have a bit of meat so I will maybe eat it when I'm out, so I'm not being awkward (laughs)	249 250 251
RR	Yes	252
A 19:03	So I tend to find I eat meat maybe once or twice a month. But I think part of that is, a lot of its to do with how I feel it affects me health wise	253 254
RR	Yes	255
A	And I feel actually fitter and stronger having eaten less saturated fat, um, and leaner for running, I think it's quite a good diet for running	256 257
RR	Yes, do you think the fell running inspired you then?	258
A	Yes, well I read a book about a fell runner and it was really good so	259
RR	Oh OK	260
A 19:56	So that inspired me there, um, but also I think I'm quite aware of sort of, um environmental factors and farming, just like animal, well how farming is affecting, I just think the way farming is going is terrible, you know like mass factory farms and the way meat is produced, so it's an awareness of that as well	261 262 263 264 265
RR	Yes	266
A	But yes, I mean I think, sometimes though the amount of exercise I do, maybe actually, in the long term it's going to damage my health, rather than be good to it, because, I do bash myself about (laughs)	267 268 269
RR	Yes it's a fine line isn't it?	270
A 20.40	Yes I think I do push myself quite hard, but I have gone from doing maybe little tiny fells and never having run up many of the fells, to then this year doing like a, a ran the Ennerdale horseshow which is 24 miles of fells, so like a third of the Bob Graham	271 272 273 274
RR	Wow, yep.	275
A	(Laughs) which was 7 hours, so, yeah	276
RR	You've done the Bob Graham?	277
A	No it's like a third of it, ish, but you know what I mean, it's like I've gone from doing none to like that in a few months, so yeah I think I push myself and power on, and maybe that's not good. But in a way it's quite a freedom to focus on something. Not that I don't enjoy work, but I think that because it's so busy you just need that bit of, sort of, stress release valve so to speak you know.	278 279 280 281 282 283

RR	Yeah	284
A	So I think it helps with stress relief. I think mental health wise its very good, a. for the social side; b. for the endorphins and just how satisfied you feel following exercise; and just getting out into the fells	285 286 287
RR	Yeah	288
A	Here we are so lucky because it is so accessible. I think for your mental wellbeing its incredibly important, but yeah, the other side of it is I think, I probably bash myself about a bit, like mountain biking wise I've had some fat crashes (laughs)	289 290 291 292
RR	Yeah	293
A 21:58	And you just don't know how that will affect you in the long term, but it's worth it (laughs)	294 295
RR 22:04 Q	Yeah. Is there anything that you find difficult? Like different things compete for your time of maybe things that stop you going out and doing the things that you want to do, or?	296 297 298
A 22:11	Energy probably, sometimes is the main limiting factor, um, I do sometimes struggle for energy I just go through phases, and then I get, I don't know what it is, you know, um. I dunno, just, I mean its work isn't it? At the end of the day. I think that is why, I mean I have looked at my working hours and whereas I used to work full time, and then I reduce it to 32 hours and now I do 30 hours.	299 300 301 302 303 304
RR	Yep	305
A 22:44	But also where I work, I used to work out on the coast where there's no mountains and one of the big factors for coming here to ***** to work was I'm literally, can run out of work and up a fell, but also with our business you know, **** is often in the area so we can meet up after work or he can drop the dog off with me and off we go, so you know, yeah, I think it's just locating yourself in the right place as well.	306 307 308 309 310 311
RR	Yeah definitely	312
A 23:14	Um, yeah, I'd probably say they're the main limiting factors to be honest, just, you know, life in general, (laughs) there is always stuff you've got to get on with isn't there but I do get out quite a lot, um, like when I have got my full energy, probably, I try and be out, I'm out six days a week easily, like for at least an hour if not more	313 314 315 316 317
RR	Do you, um well obviously we have covered some of this already, but, um, I was wondering whether you may be like engage with the culture? You did talk about the culture around mountain biking, whether that is something that drew you in? You were saying it did really weren't you but what would that be? Are there any particular books or music or magazines?	318 319 320 321 322 323
A	OK	324
RR	Do you kind of engage in any of the outdoor culture, do you know what I mean?	325 326
A 24:16	Yeah, yeah I think I do, like I like to go to the social events like mountain festivals that they have on and things like that	327 328
RR	Yeah	329
A	And I do definitely read a lot of outdoor books, um ranging from like, technical stuff telling you what to do, like walking and climbing guides	330 331

RR	Yep	332
A 24:29	Or gear and stuff, or actual peoples stories or. I do quite like to read about people's stories, that can be quite inspirational, and often I like to read somebody's book and then go and visit their area and really like see, you know like	333 334 335 336
RR	Oh brilliant	337
A	I read a book about someone who was on helicopter rescue on Stornoway and then it's nice to go and have a look at the Hebrides and then like think oh yeah that's where they did whatever	338 339 340
RR	Who was that?	341
A	Oh what was his name? I can't remember, but yeah	342
RR	Oh it doesn't matter	343
A	It's called winch man the book	344
RR	Oh brilliant	345
A	Yeah it's a good book, it's worth reading, I bought it on the ferry over to Stornoway (laughs)	346 347
RR	Oh perfect, and then you went visiting	348
A 25:18	Yeah, yeah, it was quite cool. Um, yeah, I read another one about a winchman who works at the rescue in Chamonix as well.	349 350
RR	Oh OK	351
A	But yeah. So yeah I think reading books, sorry go back to your question again	352 353
RR	Yes that's it, I think, well I was going to say do you see yourself as a mountain biker, but we've kind of covered that already	354 355
A	Oh right culture wise yeah	356
RR	And do you identify with anything to do with the culture	357
A 25:40	Yeah I think I do, like when I was a mountain biker I definitely liked the clothes, I liked to have the mountain biker look, you know you like to be identified	358 359 360
RR	Yeah	361
A 25:49	Like when I was really into it, I'm not so much now, but I do still wear outdoorsy clothes like with the outdoor brands (laughs) still	362 363
RR	yeah	364
A	You kind of succumb to it don't you? But yeah definitely sort of yeah, I think I do like to identify with it and identify myself through having the clothes I wear, I dunno, yeah	365 366 367
RR	Yeah	368
A	And a culture wise like, just going on the mountain bike holidays and having the gear and yeah I think there is definitely a bit of the culture sort of going for a few beers after mountain biking or whatever, you know, yeah it's good to do that, yeah	369 370 371 372
RR 26:33	Um, and has the meaning that you get from the activity changed over time?	373 374
A	Yeah, massively, it's like I'm totally different to when I was in racing, obviously that was all about the results and but also my friends; and that was all about pushing and getting faster and going, just riding like an idiot and hitting crazy jumps, which I still do, because when I went to Canada I was pushing and riding and when I have time to focus, because I think obviously life has changed, I am now 27 so, like things change from 20 to 27 with responsibilities and stuff, so I don't feel I can channel all my	375 376 377 378 379 380 381 382

28:05	energy into one thing which I used to do. It was all about that one thing, but when I go away for a week mountain biking, I can go back to that and can pick it up again. However because I have responsibilities and things I feel like it's now more of my escape and my relaxation as opposed to my focus to push harder. But I still have goals. I think there's always got to be a challenge and I think that is one reason why I've gone from fell running, like to fell running from mountain biking, like because I'd carried my bike up most of the fells in the ****, it wasn't really new anymore and I started fell running with a friend and she was keen to set the similar goals to me and we just started like you know a new fell to run up that I'd never run up before it's a good challenge and I think that, I still like to have those challenges to apply something new, whether it's a new sport or just doing something new, you know, like running up a hill you've not run up before or whatever, I think I still have to have that drive you know	383 384 385 386 387 388 389 390 391 392 393 394 395 396
RR	Yep, yeah definitely	397
A	But I'm still happy to go up ones I've been up before, of course	398
RR	Yep	399
A 28:32	I still enjoy it, but it's nice to have that new challenge and you feel that sense of achievement rather than just repeating something you've done before	400 401 402
RR 28:35	Yes and then now I was going to say what keeps you engaged but that's it isn't it, finding new challenges	403 404
A	Yeah	405
RR Q	And then again, but maybe you've covered this, I was going to say have you ever had a break and then come back to it? And if so what brought you back, do you know what I mean?	406 407 408
A 28.48	Yeah, well when I was poorly for a long time, a couple of years ago, um, a felt well, the thing is I was sort of sat in bed a lot and just couldn't really do anything, I had no energy whatsoever, I could hardly open my eyes, but at the times of day when I could I was watching mountain bike videos, and	409 410 411 412 413
RR	Yep	414
A 29:10	I don't really watch mountain biking videos when I'm well, because I don't need the motivation or I don't need the, 'cos I'm doing it myself, but when I was ill I watched that a lot, and actually when I came back from my illness, I was riding faster than I've ridden for a long time.	415 416 417 418
RR	Yeah	419
A	And my friends were just like, woe (laughs) what's gotten into you?! I was just so eager to get back to it and really like, I had just missed it so much so I think I just threw myself back into it, 110% you know, so in a way, the break made me more hungry for it	420 421 422 423
RR	Yep, yep. I'm nearly there	424
A	That's alright, no rush	425
RR 29:54	Um, so if you wanted to inspire someone else to take part in this activity or an activity like this, what would you tell them?	426 427
A 30:22	Yeah, it's difficult isn't it, because sometimes it's like, if they've not got it, they've got to want to get involved haven't they, um, I think I would just want to tell them about the really sort off, fulfilling sense	428 429 430

30:51	of satisfaction that I feel from it and show them how beautiful the mountains are, I think I'd really, you know you kind of want to take them there, so maybe, I mean if you can't take them there yourself, like show them pictures or, you know, just share experiences and feelings about it and how exciting it was and what you got out of it and how good it is to do it with your friends and, I mean it would depend on the person, you know, but like I say sort of with patients at work, I try to, you know, tell them all these like amazing stories about Joss Naylor and how he's still going at 80, and still probably running further than I can manage. Not to make them feel like they've got to do that but to make them realise that they can do something towards it, or a little bit more than what they are doing at the minute and you know	431 432 433 434 435 436 437 438 439 440 441 442
RR	yeah	443
A	And just take that step towards it, um, does that make sense?	444
RR 31:26	Yeah absolutely and I mean you are coming from the same place as me aren't you?	445 446
A	Yes (laughs)	447
RR	And that was it, I was just going to ask if there is anything else you want to sort of share or discuss but you, you know, you're coming from the same place as I am that, how do you as a therapist get someone to, you know, what is that process of engagement, why do some people find things really meaningful and do them, and others don't?	448 449 450 451 452
A	Yeah	453
RR 31:57	How do you get somebody to that point? How do we support someone to become obsessed with mountain biking or whatever it is they want to do? How do you support someone?	454 455 456
A 32:58	They've got to have a goal in that direction so, I mean, going back to sort of elderly patients, maybe thinking about, I know I had a patient recently who wasn't walking but then it was like she was wanting to go on holiday, so we used that holiday goal to really inspire her to actually, and she could do it physically it was just like this whole mental block against it, so we helped her to realise that actually if she just gave it a bit more of a go, she would get to her goal. And it's that motivation, its having that motivator and that challenge, isn't it, and its finding what makes someone tick, to get them there, rather than just spouting off on your own story about how you feel about something it's like well you could do this and you could feel like this and I can show you it if you could let me help you, rather than just saying well I did this, you know. It's like telling someone how they could do it as well	457 458 459 460 461 462 463 464 465 466 467 468 469
RR	Yep	470
A	I think that's important	471
RR	Yep, although I am sure you would inspire them with your story, you know, it is an inspiring story isn't it?	472 473
A 33:20	Yeah well (laughs) you know what I mean, yeah so, I think that's probably how I work anyway, when I'm trying to motivate people, but also I am a great believer in group motivation like, it's definitely, that's my favourite part of my job, it's getting people together in a group and then they just bounce off each other you	474 475 476 477 478

34:05	know and they all sort of, they see each other doing well and then they are like, oh if so and so can do that, well I can do that (laughs) competitive but also just sort of, people behave differently in a group setting, if you are just a health care professional going in and it's like, oh well it doesn't matter if the physio sees me messing this up, whereas if it's a whole group of their peers are there they don't want to look like they can't do it, so they all just get on and do it and it's great motivation and they enjoy it more, so yeah.	479 480 481 482 483 484 485
RR	Yeah, no definitely, oh that's brilliant	486
A	Is that OK?	487
RR	Yes that's fantastic, thank you	488
A	Yeah no problem, yes sorry I've got to dash off	489
RR	No not at all I am so grateful	490
A	I hope that is helpful?	491
RR	That's perfect, thank you.	492



## Appendix 26

### Establishing Emerging Themes

Competition	Racing I was able to put the speed down, doing well quite quickly Competitive to prove myself	45 46 97
Social connection	I realised there is a real scene of people similar to me Social aspect of racing Weekend of camping at races Biking with friends no pressure	43 45 53 85
Location	Moved up here (North Lakes) Moving away for University, missed it Locating yourself in the right place So accessible	12 13 311 289
Routine	Meet after work, drop dog off	310
Outdoor identity	I'm totally up for anything outdoorsy Out in the wilderness with nature a big part of what I do I'm not really a climber Identify myself through the clothes I wear	31 154 208 366
Influence on employment	Tree-climbing and tree-surgery Moved to a work location close to mountains Struggle to work five days a week inside tree-work suits me reduce work hours	24 13 146 147 304
Level of engagement	I dabble in climbing Mountain biking – real focus, didn't do anything else, three years solid racing Now dabble, sneaky result	22 11 93 96
Risk - adrenaline junkie verses fear	Pressure to hit huge jumps, so many people hurting themselves Ice climbing scares me the most, nightmares about avalanches We survived it	71 72 206 209
Injuries	People hurting themselves	71
Finance	Financial aspect of racing Sponsorship for kit, but I paid for race entries and transport	77 88
Heroes and heroines	Joss Naylor – passion, lifestyle, fell running, inspire my patients Lives just over the hill from me – relating Born and bred in the Lakes using stories to inspire others Another book about fell runner influencing diet Helicopter rescue in Hebrides, go and see Chamonix winchman, visit	111 130 121 119 259 339 350
Influencing other people	Physiotherapist working with patients, Joss Naylor stories Sharing amazing stories, group motivation	130 428 460

	Used holiday as a goal Group of peers	483
Escapism and spirituality	Getting up into the hills	142
	It's my freedom	144
	On my own	145
	Meditation, spiritual	151
	Like to escape	152
	Struggle to live in towns	154
Experiencing nature	Feel at one with nature, a massive thing for me	146
	How beautiful the mountains are	431
Owning a dog	Since I got my collie dog I do a lot more fell-running	18
Reducing engagement	Pressure of racing	66
	Finances, trying to buy a house	77
Holidays/trips	Camper van in Canada	160
	Mattress in the van round the alps	164
Exploring	Not so exciting if someone shows you the way, guide	216
Physical health	Being outside impact on health	228
	Try not to be obsessive over fitness	243
	Influence on other aspects of health - diet, vegan, leaner for running	245
	Amount of exercise damaging health, bash myself about	267
	I push myself to power on, maybe not good	280
	I've had some fat crashes Long term impact not known, worth it	292
Mental health	It affects my mood, notice if I don't get out	241
	Freedom to focus on something, stress release valve	283
	Mental health, good for social, endorphins, feeling satisfied, just getting out	286
Environmental awareness	Mass factory farming	264
Limiting factors	Energy, work, location	299
Engaging with outdoor culture	Mountain festivals	328
	Outdoor books, reading people's stories then visit	335
	Mountain biker look, like to be identified	360
	outdoorsy clothes	363
	mountain bike holidays, having gear, few beers after	371
Change in meaning over time	When racing, all about results, hitting crazy jumps	378
	Now responsibilities, can't channel energy to one thing	382
	Now my escape and relaxation	385
Setting goals, sustaining engagement	Fell running with friend with shared goals	390
Returning to engagement	Mountain biking videos inspired me when I was ill	412
Change in meaning over time	Most people start with walking then climbing, I started climbing then walking to climb, younger show boating;	395
	now it's about being efficient	404
		405
Competence	Being efficient, making right decisions	408

Appendix 27. Establishing super-ordinate themes:

A: The process of engaging in outdoor adventure

A1. Factors that prompted or enabled initial engagement

Initial themes:	Participant:	Emergent themes:	Super-ordinate themes:
Childhood influences (camping, walking, hostelling with mum)	Amy	<p><b>Family attitudes and experiences:</b> Amy, Craig and Dave talked about their parents love of the outdoors and how they took them walking and camping. Ben, Ed, Fran and Hannah described their families as not being into the outdoors, but then went on to describe being taken sailing or to nature reserves. Craig and Ed talked about being at grandparents' homes climbing trees and watching David Attenborough. Gill talked about growing up by the beach.</p> <p><b>A teacher or subject at school:</b> Gill and Dave described their enjoyment of physical education at school. They also both described subjects that prompted them to</p>	<p><b>Childhood influences</b></p> <p>Support from parents and grandparents to explore and take part in outdoor activities contributed to childhood and consequently adulthood engagement.</p>
Childhood influences (not outdoors but: living on a farm)	Ben		
Childhood influences (walking, support for climbing from mum; trees at grandparents)	Craig		
Childhood influences (camping and hillwalking as a kid)	Dave		
Childhood influences (not outdoors but nature reserves as a kid; David Attenborough programmes at my Nan's; avid keeper of animals)	Ed		
Childhood influences (not outdoors but sailing)	Fran		
Childhood influences (lived by the beach)	Gill		
Childhood influences (un-outdoorsy family but did learn to sail when quite young)	Hannah		
Childhood influences (teacher at school; being awful at rugby)	Craig		
Childhood influences (built my own kayak at school)	Dave		
Childhood influences (Geography and Biology at school; rugby)	Ed		

Childhood influences Contrast – hated PE	Fran	explore the world around them. By contrast Fran and Craig did not enjoy physical education and came to outdoor adventure activities as an alternative. Dave's introduction to outdoor adventure came when he built his own kayak at school.	
Childhood influences (netball and hockey; Botany and zoology to A-level)	Gill		
Childhood influences (Young Ornithologist Club; natural history museum letter; cubs, air cadets)	Ed	A club or an organisation	
Childhood influences (outdoor adventure course; camped with the guides; guides to rangers; Duke of Edenborough's award)	Fran		
Childhood influences (I was always on the beach... I was in the surf life-saving club... volleyball in the hall)	Gill		
Childhood influences (climbing alone and with friends as a child)	Craig	Friendship and independence	
Childhood influences (fishing by bike alone and with friends as a child)	Ed		
Childhood influences (off with a friend around East Anglia on a bike)	Fran		

Initial themes:	Participant:	Emergent themes:	Super-ordinate themes:
Childhood influences (Lord of the Rings, Huckleberry Finn)	Craig	Childhood books	Forming aspirational identity from stories and images
Childhood influences (Scouting for Boys, Baden Powell; Life on	Ed		

Earth, David Attenborough; dad wrote a book; building shelters and fires and learning from books)			
Childhood influences (book as a prize for botany or zoology and it was about a botanist some woman with big skirts back in the day; I had this idea of being married to... the missionary doctor David Livingstone, but I would be the famous botanist)	Gill		
Books in adulthood (Joss Naylor)	Amy	Books read in adulthood	
Books in adulthood (sport and the meaning for women, Anna Kessel; two middle-aged ladies in Andalucía, Penelope Chetwode; Buddhist books; queen of the desert; wild)	Gill		
Childhood influences: (pen and ink drawing from artist friend of my dad's)	Craig	Pictures	
Childhood influences (Paddles up on TV – slalom)	Dave	Films and programmes on television	
Childhood influences (David Attenborough programmes, always wanted to go on expeditions)	Ed		
Film: queen of the desert	Gill		