Reflections on Transformation: how New Zealand outdoor educators construct programmes to address (non-religious) spiritual growth

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to understand how outdoor education programmes in New Zealand address spirituality. Spirituality is about seeking and experiencing that which is sacred. Spirituality can be theistic (God/s attributed) or non-theistic (not attributed to God/s). Spirituality is transformational. It results in a person having a greater sense of who they are and what they are capable of. It results in stronger connections to others and a deeper connection to that which is not-human. In non-theistic spirituality, this is most often a connection to nature.

There is very little literature that examines spirituality in New Zealand outdoor education programmes, or the thoughts of New Zealand outdoor educators. These shortcomings are addressed by this thesis. It asks whether outdoor educators recognize spiritual transformation in their students. It asks if there are components of programmes that influence this transformation. It does so in order to understand how a programme structure might be aligned more closely to this purpose, and what such a structure might look like.

A post qualitative approach was taken. This enabled a bricolage of methods, whereby interview excerpts and journal writing were woven with autobiography and the philosophy of Deleuze. Interviews with nine experienced practitioners showed that their programmes were secular. While a Māori world view was acknowledged, it was the values espoused in Māori lore that resonated. The interviews showed that non-theistic spiritual transformation in students was able to be recognized during a programme and afterwards. The interviews suggested that a programme contributed to this by having components that actively 'do' things, components that strengthen a sense of place, and components that encourage the inner development of the student. A key part of a programme was having multi-skilled staff whose values and philosophy aligned with programme purpose.

Deleuzean concepts revealed how staff developed their philosophy. The journey to becoming-outdoor educator was replete with significant moments called thresholds, whereby not only their life direction but their sense of self was altered. When they had

influence over an outdoor programme, the staff sought to replicate these significant moments for their students.

This thesis suggests that a programme aligned towards spirituality, has thresholds that are purposeful, numerous, and recurring. They occur when students interact with other people and with nature, and with the encouragement to examine the self. The student repeatedly goes away from themselves into these other domains, but always comes back to re-examine their self, each time being changed a little. Such a programme is spirographic in movement rather than linear. Spirographing enhances the possibility of spiritual transformation. Moreover, such a programme has a feel of happiness to it, created by the alignment of values, pedagogy, programming, people and place.

The significance of this study is that it is a new way of thinking about programming. It releases New Zealand outdoor educators from discourses that have dominated. It raises the possibility of crafting transformational experiences. It archives the insights and experiences of some of the shape makers of New Zealand outdoor education.

Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Appendices

Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

February 16, 2022

Signature   Date

Acknowledgements

Ethics Approval

The ethics application 18 /107 was approved on 30 April 2018 by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Preamble

> I am comforted by Jacques Derrida's (1974) simple instruction that we can only begin 'wherever we are; in a text where we already believe ourselves to be'
>
> (St. Pierre, 2001, p. 141)

This is a story about a research journey. I am in this story because, as the excerpt from St. Pierre above suggests, there was no other way I could tell it. The story of this research is both formal and logical, but also creative, stratified, and elliptical. Sometimes meaning is implied and requires interpretation *from* the reader, rather than translation *for* the reader. As I look back at this story from the end, it appears as a *bricolage*, in that autobiography and non-academic literature (that had resonated with me for my entire professional career), weave around passages of more formal academic writing and are (occasionally) interspersed with poetry, music history and journal reflections. Sometimes writing that seems isolated, is picked up again at a later date; 'the fold' stories for example, comprise their own thread through this research journey.

Both the story and the topic opened out as I went in; they seemed in a continuous state of coming-to-blossom, what I came to understand as a term the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) called '*becoming*'. Deleuze, by himself and with Felix Guattari (1930-1992) evolved the concept of becoming over the duration of his / their writing. While it is possible to microscopically analyse the philosophical lines that led to becoming and the ways in which it was used throughout his / their writing (see for example, Bankston, 2017), I avoid doing so; this is not a philosophical examination of Deleuze but an exploration of outdoor education programming and its relationship with spirituality. Though I choose to use only the one word of becoming throughout this research journey, I am aware that at different times, in different works, the word had different shades. If one needed a sharper definition, then 'sensory becoming' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1991 / 1994) would serve:

> Sensory becoming is the action by which something or someone is ceaselessly becoming-other (while continuing to be what they are) ...sensory becoming is otherness caught in a matter of expression (p. 117)

Deleuzean concepts were used in this exploration. Abide with me as I come and go in the writing, as the writing unfolds and re-folds, as I am visited by insights and reminded of moments passed. In this story, the journey to get to the research question was as important as the question itself; the historic moments of my own story continually folded into the reading and writing and thinking of the research. 'Reflections on transformation: how New Zealand outdoor educators construct programmes to address (non-religious) spiritual growth', became the topic and the line of flight. The topic enabled me to record the stories of experienced outdoor educators but it was the death of one of them that had spurred the topic in the first place. It was the post qualitative writing of St. Pierre that introduced me to Deleuze (and Guattari and others) and shifted the reading and the writing, and reminded me of questions and stories from long ago. As Wattchow and Brown (2011) noted about the styles of writing they employed to discuss place-responsiveness, writing about context, situation and story, is a signal that these things matter.

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Chapter 1 Beginnings

This chapter describes how this research was provoked and the rationale for it. It (often) follows a first-person narrative style and places the researcher in the research. It explains the research topic. It explains the 'arc' of the study and the 'climate' within which the research was conducted; in the text, as St. Pierre (2001) says, where I believed myself to be. But first, it introduces the convention of 'The fold', which is a term with multiple meanings.

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The fold

In geology, a fold occurs when layers of rock strata, laid down on the ocean floor, consolidated and metamorphosed by heat and pressure, are subjected to enormous tectonic forces that bend and reshape the horizontal deposits, often uplifting them to the surface. Figure 1 illustrates this from the top to the bottom.

Figure 1

Folding and Unfolding
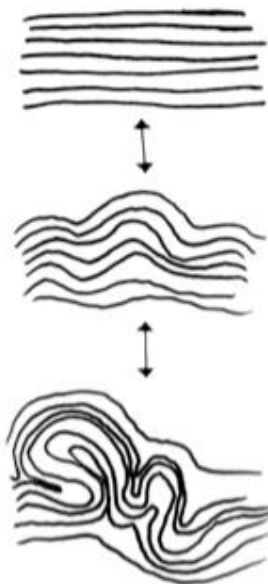
Note. From Brueggemann, V., Bludau, M.-J., & Dork, M. (2020). The Fold: rethinking interactivity in data visualization. *DHQ: Digital Humanities Quarterly, 14*(3). http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/14/3/000487/000487.html

I have occasionally used a rug to teach such a process. A rug has top, middle, and bottom layers or surfaces. When the rug is pushed from opposite edges, it moves and

buckles, rises into a hill, then folds over upon itself. Here, there is a point where the top layer becomes the bottom layer; but, also, the top layer re-touches the top layer at a different place on the rug. For Deleuze (1993 / 2006) 'the fold' was about our understanding of ourselves repeatedly being folded by time and provocations, resulting in a layering or building up of understanding or a continual (irregular) re-working. Deleuze called this process 'complication'.

The top layer of where we are now in time and space, touches a deeper top layer in memory. But the fold also unfolds (Figure 1 read from the bottom to the top) and refolds (Figure 1 read from the top to the bottom) as provocations occur in time, as understanding deepens or is changed, so perhaps rather than a rug, a more accurate analogy might be a blanket, as a blanket allows for multiple folds and repeated folding, unfolding and refolding. In doing so, the blanket draws *in* what is initially *outside* the blanket; the fold has the outside forces now inside; effect become affect. Moreover, there is a creative space in-between the fold, the space where the un-thought waits to be thought.

The fold in the context of this study, is a dynamic writing process that explores meaning. It is a re-telling of a story, triggered by the creative un-thought space (often from a dream state); a story that is a reminder of something from the past, a story that links to a conceptual thread in the present exploration of the study. Each fold has an exploratory purpose; as I thought and wrote, these re-emerged from my own 30+ years of practice as an outdoor educator.

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1.1   The fold: a late-at-night petrol station encounter

One weekend, early summer, I had driven from Auckland to Kinloch on the shores of Lake Taupo, and sea kayaked with Marlow, an ex-student friend, out to a series of ignimbrite cliffs. We had stashed the boats on a sandy beach, and spent two days joyously rock climbing moderate routes, exulting in the sun and the movement and the thrill of having the whole place to ourselves. There was bird song in the bush all around, and the rock felt like it hummed. Camping was easy – a flat patch in the bush and a hammock between trees. Dinner was simple and delicious, cooked on a lightweight Trangia stove. Life felt good, even the effort of the paddle back. In the dark

we had to refuel the car, so pulled into a petrol station just outside of Taupo. Marlow went to use the facilities and I was left on my own on the forecourt, pumping the gas. I noticed, out of the corner of my eye, a hulking figure in the shadows. As the petrol gauge ticked over, the figure came out of the shadows and moved towards me. It was a large man wearing a camouflage bush shirt, with a hood that hid his face.

"Holy crap," I thought, feeling very unsafe, "if he comes too close, I'm going to spray him with petrol and run". The man stopped at the front of the car and said in a deep voice: "Are you Ray Hollingsworth?"

I was confused but managed to stutter "Um, yes?"

The big man flicked his hood off and held out his right hand.

"I'm Peter, you taught me at Tihoi. I thought it was you. I just wanted to say thanks".

I had not seen Peter for ten years, and my memory of him was of a small, shy, slightly scared boy. He explained that he had always appreciated the care I had shown him, how he had felt looked after, and that his Tihoi experience had stayed with him. He had just returned from several years of living overseas, determined to start a business doing something in the outdoors. He walked away as Marlow reappeared. As we drove North, I couldn't help but wonder what it was that he was thanking me for, what it was that happened during that 18-week programme.

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1.2   The arc

> None of us knows his or her final destination, but all of us can know about the shape makers of our lives that we can choose to confront, embrace or ignore.
>
> (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 967)

Stories of the fold happened regularly in this research journey, though the arc of this study began earlier from a conventional framework. An interpretive descriptive study from a social constructionism perspective, meant I would do this then this then this – most of which I found restrictive and prescriptive. The study really took flight when these conventions were challenged by St. Pierre's post qualitative exhortation to put methodology aside, in order to write the seductive glimmer of the not-yet rather than

the what-is (St. Pierre, 2019). St. Pierre became a shape maker and as I wrote my way through this research story, I exposed others. I understood what St. Pierre was saying about the inherent restrictions of methodology, thought hard about it, but resisted the totality of this exhortation. I elected to keep some of the work begun conventionally, but use two aspects, discovered via St. Pierre, to enhance the study. The first, was that from that point, the thinking-writing nexus became the place where the not-yet was embraced, ideas were tried out, disregarded or crafted. Creative writing became a method. The *bricolage* of writing styles aided the exploration of ideas and prompted the renewal (and unpicking) of old stories and old questions - what *did* work in outdoor education? Why did it work? Conceptual thinking was able to be worked out in writing that included the styles of autobiography and 'folds'.

The second aspect, was to re-think from a Deleuzean perspective, what I had already uncovered in the literature and via the interviews. This allowed the Four Domains of Spiritual Health and Wellbeing model (Fisher, 2011) to be considered beside Deleuze and Guattari's *plane of immanence* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1991 / 1994). The Outward Bound process model (Walsh & Golins, 1976) could be considered in light of *becoming*. Outdoor education programmes could be viewed with regard to *assemblage*. With this bricolage approach, and with the validity offered by St. Pierre, I could acknowledge the effect of the writers I admired (Lopez, Leopold, Least Heat Moon, Abbey) and whose ideas I had used in my practice. While I had not intended to be beholden to one particular theorist or theory, as was acceptable in my original descriptive interpretive approach (Smythe, 2012), it was St. Pierre's post qualitative exhortations to immerse oneself in philosophy and to write without restriction, that led me to the philosophy of Deleuze, Deleuze and Guattari, and to a lesser extent, (back to) Foucault. These philosophers did not provide a process to follow; rather, they gave me lenses with which to (re)view literature and richly storied interviews. The writing styles were held together by the conceptual threads supplied by theory and philosophy.

I had read and reviewed literature, then interviewed nine experienced outdoor practitioners to gain their thoughts on spirituality in outdoor education programmes. As I analysed these interviews, I realized that I too was in this story (sometimes I was in their story), and so wrote myself deeper into the study. I had used the *reflexive thematic analysis* method espoused by Braun and Clarke (2006), Braun et al. (2018),

and Terry et al. (2018) which advocated a (mostly) traditional approach to interviews that involved familiarization, coding and developing themes. The reflexivity was in returning, again and again, to not just the original interviews but to the literature, as connections were made, and themes were (re)constructed. Journaling illustrated the construction of the thinking, while the whole process resembled a *folding and re-folding*, where each iterative return to the literature or a transcript or to an earlier piece of writing, seemed to spark an insight that took the study deeper. It was this reflexiveness that uncovered St. Pierre and led me to Deleuze.

I realized too, as I began to understand Deleuze's term *multiplicities*, that the interviews were not 'data' so much as fragments of complex life stories, and that I could only ever understand part of what they were telling me. But that part was useful and powerful, and I needed to honour their sharing, their willingness. I wanted to bear witness. I came to see that the interviews were not just the lived experience recounted, they were also the invisible forces made visible – the times in their lives where their personal philosophy was shaped, and how that philosophy then went on to shape the outdoor programmes that they led. These people were, and are, examples of shape makers that Richardson and St. Pierre speak of.

The Deleuzean concepts of *immanence* and *becoming* (Deleuze, 2001; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) became another layer in thinking about the interviews. 'Results' and 'findings' would not be what I found. Sometimes my role in this study became less about being a 'researcher' and more about being a scribe and witness. My role was to tell the participants' story, and in doing so, perhaps uncover something about a profession's purpose. My role was to try and make sense of where (and how) the ineffable, ethereal concept of spiritual transformation, resided in the concrete programme structure of outdoor education in New Zealand. In this sense-making, I came to see that while New Zealand outdoor education programmes are primarily a product of imported ideas, the New Zealand-ness involved something that had evolved over the duration of my own career: an appreciation of Māori values and cosmology. The Māori world – te ao Māori – had its own approach to spirituality and, while I explored this in some depth (and recognized some cross-over), it was a non-theistic explanation of spirituality that I was looking for, as this had alignment with the praxis of the outdoor education programmes I had experience with, and that the interviews

referred to. My understanding of spirituality in outdoor programmes was guided by Fox (1999), Gookin (2006), Hubball and West (2008), Robinson (2007b) and others. The Four Domains of Spiritual Health and Wellbeing model (Fisher, 2011) provided a way of understanding spirituality and spiritual development. The model suggested it could be observed in an outdoor programme, and even developed via a spirographing movement through the domains.

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1.3   The climate of the study

This study was conducted in a time of historical change, both in outdoor education in New Zealand, in the health of the nation, and in global economic and political stability. This point is important because the study could not stand outside of the turmoil of events taking place: in a short period of time New Zealand experienced a massacre in a mosque, a serious volcanic eruption with loss of life, and a series of border (and societal) 'lock downs' caused by a global pandemic that was killing people on a scale not seen for a hundred years. Consequently (and seemingly inconsequential in comparison), adventure tourism was decimated and the ability of outdoor education programmes to function was compromised. The conversations between myself and the interview participants were not just co-constructed explorations of topics, they were shaded by these larger events. For several of us in this research journey, the fragility of both employment and health was topical; for all of us, the emotion of anxiety about events beyond our control but impacting upon us, was prevalent at some point.

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1.3.1   A background of anxiety

In March 2019, the murder of over 50 innocent people praying in a Christchurch mosque, by a single gunman, felt to many people like a loss of innocence; this was something only ever seen before on television, in a foreign country. Then the Covid-19 viral pandemic swept the globe in 2020, and forced the New Zealand government to close its borders in March and commit its citizens to 'lockdown'. Stay at home, be safe and be kind were the promoted messages in the face of widespread anxiety. This was an amplification of existing anxiety caused by not only the Christchurch gunman, but

the economic sabre-rattling of the preeminent superpowers China and the USA, the dangerous and perplexing politics played by North Korea and Russia, the earlier destabilizing of the Middle East with war in Syria and the resulting movement of millions of refugees to Europe, and of course the barely believable utterances and behaviour of President Trump and his administration in the USA. Closer to home, the summer of 2019 /2020 was long and hot and the spectacular sunrises and sunsets were more than natural beauty – they were clear signals that Australia was burning on a scale not seen before and the topic of climate change was (finally) on everyone's mind. These events were the background to conversations, and the topics broached within conversations with the research participants. For myself, these events were also the source of a difficult question: 'what was the point of outdoor education in such a world?'

Meanwhile, but also over the timeframe of this study, the outdoor education profession in New Zealand had been undergoing upheavals of its own. The majority of outdoor adventure / outdoor education students were trained in New Zealand polytechnic institutes. A government analysis recommended that there were too many polytech courses and sought to reduce these. This duly happened and in 2020 all polytechs running a programme (including any outdoor programme) had to run the same programme. This forced two institutes to combine (Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology and Aoraki Polytech became the Ara Institute of Canterbury) and the remainder to be uniform in their delivery. Elsewhere, the award-winning outdoor education programme at Kahunui /St Cuthberts appeared to be devalued with a change of school leadership; Otago University closed its outdoor education programmes; and the outdoor programmes at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT) were restructured and the long running DORL course (Diploma of Outdoor Recreation and Leadership) ceased to exist after 24 years of operation. At the end of 2019, I was made redundant after 20 years of teaching outdoor education at AUT.

In August 2020, after a hundred days of no community transmission, another Covid outbreak occurred and the country went into a heightened lockdown phase. During this time, the Chris Heaphy painting (see Figure 2) came up for sale at the Webbs auction house. While it was painted in a different decade (but contemporaneous with the Global Financial Crash of 2008), it seemed to illustrate the state of mind of many

people though its symbols, colours, graphic busy-ness and its skull form, were open to interpretation. For myself, it captured the unrelenting pressure of being confined from normality, and the anxiety of the unseeable killer patrolling the country's borders, wreaking havoc in other parts of the world.

Figure 2

'Inside', a Painting by the Artist Chris Heaphy

Note. 'Inside' was offered for sale by Webbs auction house in 2020 (Heaphy, 2008)

In New Zealand these Covid-19 lockdowns forced many providers of adventure tourism activities (like caving or white water rafting) or providers of outdoor activities (like a mountain biking day or staff for a tramping trip, or an entire school camp), into economic retrenchment. It also forced many providers of outdoor programmes (like polytechs) to teach online, a task at odds with many of the philosophies of outdoor education: teaching and learning experientially; teaching and learning in and through

an outside (nature) space; growing the individual or group via adventurous activities; or discovering the complexity of ecosystems. In the first lockdown, I taught an outdoor education module online for Wintec Polytech, my son received outdoor education modules online from the Ara Institute, my wife taught science online at a local high school and my daughter received her year 13 classes online. My ex-colleagues at AUT did similar things. For all of us it was difficult, but a word that cropped up repeatedly was 'wellbeing'. Wellbeing had links to health and spirituality.

The wellbeing of people, the emotions of anxiety and fear, and the feeling of larger forces shaping the world, were both background and foreground to this study. What I was interested in was spiritual growth of a non-religious nature, and whether or not a transformative thing like this could be (or was) included in New Zealand outdoor education programmes. But my journey to this sphere of interest had been a long one, and so it makes sense to go back to its beginning.

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1.4   In the beginning…

Actually, there are two beginnings, two threads to this project, two starting places separated by decades but joined by curiosity and a growing awareness of the old truism being true: the more I know, the less I understand.

The first beginning was on a pleasant summer evening in 2014, standing on the footpath outside AUT University, talking with a man about Mongolia. Lyndsay Simpkin was in good spirits and looked in robust good health in his jeans and fleece jacket, the 'smart casual' dress code for an outdoor man in the city. His tall frame didn't carry much fat, his expressive hands punctuated our conversation, but it was his face that really grabbed you, the grey beard and short-cropped hair framing sparkling eyes, and he alternated between a thoughtful expression and joyous laughter. He was so… *alive* that evening, as we talked about work and mountaineering and our kids. I hadn't seen him for a while, and he gleefully told me he'd just come back from Mongolia where he had trekked to a remote peak and taken pleasure in the *otherness* of that fascinating country. Then he said he had cancer but that it was surreal to him, "I'm feeling good, like I could do cartwheels," he said and waved his arms around, smiling. Six weeks later he was dead.

The speed of the decline and the loss of the man was shocking to me. Not just for the obvious reasons but also because I had a sense of how this man was a taonga, a man with mana who held wisdom and knowledge. We had talked many times about the state of outdoor practice in New Zealand, about the history of how organisations had come into being, and the complex interactions and power-plays that seemed to unfold from time to time. He had an understanding of this like few other people I had met. Often thrown together by our work needs – he was both the director of, and instructor for, Adventure Specialties, an adventure education provider; I taught outdoor education at AUT - we had shared stories of our own adventures over cups of tea, and talked extensively about the canyoning tragedy at OPC /Mangatepopo.

Lyndsay was a committed Christian, while I was not a follower of any faith. He had infused his organization with values of kindness and community and respect. These were things that I consciously strove to have in my world too. His employees – some of them ex-students I had taught – didn't make a big deal about their beliefs, but the collective ethos of the organization was one of caring and making meaning in what they did. These things were why I contracted them, whenever possible, to help run the practical outdoor pursuits trips for AUT, especially the four-day tramping trips in the mountainous Kaimanawa ranges of the Central North Island of New Zealand.

We were both striving to find ways to help people have meaningful experiences in the outdoors, with the outdoors, with themselves and others. There was some interweaving of place and adventure and group 'feel', some element of time and risk and guidance, that would make magic. Often the students appeared different at the end of these trips – not just smelly and filthy – but different in themselves, like something had shifted within them. And stayed shifted in the weeks and months that followed. The subsequent classroom conversations with their tramping buddies were more willing to go to deeper places, sprinkled of course, with humour and sparring. I found myself pondering, as I often had over the years of witnessing this, what it was that makes this shift in people.

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1.5   Finding a language

The story about meeting Peter (in section 1.1) was one example of feeling like something profound had just been shown to me, but there were others. The questions, once I started thinking about them, arrived in a procession. Why, for instance, in the middle of a snowstorm on a multi-day university-sanctioned hike, did the woman sit down and decide she needed to change her life? Why did the schoolboy tramper later turn his energies to setting up a forest restoration project, wrapped in an adventure tourism business?

Eventually, I found the word I was looking for was *transformation*, and this became the broad focus of my inquiry. I wasn't so much interested in physical transformation (like fitness or capability) or mental transformation (like resilience or skills acquisition), but the type of transformation that enables a deeper sense of self and a connection to things outside the self. Lyndsay and I were both striving to help people connect - with themselves, with other people, and with the places we found ourselves in. We were both aware of a dimension of 'otherness' in these connections, as in 'beyond human' or 'divine'. But I was not interested in those claims from a religious perspective; my curiosity was secular.

At his funeral, amid the sadness, I kept thinking of the scale of his knowledge and what a loss it was to the outdoor profession in New Zealand. I wondered how many other wise people there were, key figures, where it would be tragic if their stories, their influence, was not recorded for posterity. So, I set out to do something about it.

I found a language to help my curiosity, starting with the literature of the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), via John Gookin's field notes on how to teach 'non-religious spirituality'.

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1.5.1   Non-religious spirituality

Gookin's 'non-religious spirituality' (Gookin, 2002, 2006) is an example of transformation where an individual feels more self-aware, energized, connected to themselves, others and place, and empowered about their future possibilities, than they did before the programme. Reading Gookin made sense to me and was

compatible with earlier discoveries of the work of Martin on the Human-Nature relationship (Martin, 2004), and the field of ecopsychology (Roszak et al., 1995); these had inspired me to both experiment with practical applications of these writings – how can I teach someone to love a place? - and to delve deeper into the literature. This type of transformation is described (although in different words) in the wider literature dealing with the outdoors in New Zealand, in both organisational histories, for example Hollingsworth (1999), Moodie (1998), and in personal reflections, for example, Charles et al. (2004), Dingle (2005), Deavoll (2011). The trans-alpine tramping (hiking) reflections of Spearpoint (2019) are typical:

> The mountains help to support and define us. An intense emotional connection develops for many trampers and mountaineers with places in the wilds. This isn't about scenery or just observing. It is a spiritual connection that has long since replaced formal religion for many. For me, it is where I go for solace, to reflect and meditate on the world, for friendship in the company of fellow outdoor folk, as well as for adventure (p. 13).

Gookin was the entry point for the subsequent reading on spirituality that happened. Eventually, I came to use the terms theistic and non-theistic, meaning oriented towards a view of God as proposed by a religion or not oriented towards religion.

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1.6   Placing the researcher in the research

While my thinking was provoked by Lyndsay's death, I realized there had been a beginning earlier in chronological time: my interest in this topic also stemmed from over 30 years of working as an outdoor instructor /outdoor educator, and being involved in the complexity of programming. I had witnessed first-hand the impact of these programmes and the important changes that individuals seemed to make, some of which were described above. My own career trajectory had felt decidedly non-linear, apart from an initial goal of 'getting better at everything', and everything was mainly technical outdoor pursuits – rock climbing, white water kayaking, mountaineering, tramping. This goal broadened to 'how do I teach these skills effectively?' and then, eventually, 'how do I make a difference?'.

My non-linear trajectory started in New Zealand in 1986, post-university, when I was a less-than-excited soil science research assistant, and cleaning toilets on the side to make extra money. At a party I met an old school friend who enthralled me in a conversation about the adventurous work he was doing. This pivotal conversation spurred me to volunteer at the Tihoi Venture School, a residential wilderness campus nestled into the Pureora Forest west of Lake Taupo, where 14 year old boys from St Paul's Collegiate in Hamilton would spend half of their school year. Tihoi had a school curriculum but it also had an after-school fitness programme, a multi-pursuit outdoor programme on 'weekends' that culminated in an expedition, and it had boys living in houses without adults, learning to cook and clean for themselves. In my first week I was taught how to abseil and was then asked to help 'unfreeze' a boy half way down a cliff. I nervously abseiled down a second rope, under the smiling gaze of my old school friend. I remembered how to wrap the rope around my legs to make myself 'safe'. I talked calmly with the schoolboy on the other rope and eventually, together, we moved downwards. A light bulb went off in my head and I wanted to know how to 'do' this work.

This took me to the only outdoor instructor training course in New Zealand, the 16-week Outdoor Educators course at the Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Pursuits Centre of New Zealand (in the past abbreviated to OPC, it changed its name after 2008 to Hillary Outdoors). I was keen but I quickly discovered that I knew nothing about everything. I struggled my way through the intense course, desperately trying to learn the technical skills and retain the remains of my shattered esteem; where once I had been an accomplished athlete, now I was less than competent.

The OPC course *did* connect me to like-minded people and it gave me enough skills to go adventuring in the outdoors. So that is what I did for the next year: mountaineering, rock climbing, tramping and kayaking my way around the South Island, going to Pakistan on an Operation Raleigh expedition, and being a nature guide for the new organisation called the Department of Conservation.

All of this led me back to Tihoi in 1988, now as an outdoor instructor and teacher, finally earning some money, finally where I wanted to be. But I was a young man in a hurry; a year at Tihoi led to a year in England (with six months as a caregiver in a

children's home) and most of two years in North Carolina in the USA (working as a wilderness counsellor with 'troubled youth', and learning how to speak with a slow twang). Eventually I found myself back in New Zealand, where OPC provided stability for a couple of years, working on the one-week adventure programmes for high school students. OPC allowed for more adventuring, including a six-month climbing and kayaking trip through the western USA. I became the Chief Instructor at Tihoi in 1994, responsible for 60 boys and 10 staff operating in the outdoors. This was a step-up in intensity and an insight into managing such places, and how programmes could be constructed.

In 1997, my partner and I walked through Fiordland, a journey of 50+ days that was as much mentally challenging as it was desperately physical. I witnessed first-hand, in both of us, a sharpening of perceptions. This was less about finding deer tracks in the forest to help with navigation (for example), and more about a strange barrier-less sensation of melding, where the terrain we were moving through was inside us as well as outside. We were attuned to the nuances of leaf colour and bird sound, and moving with economy through difficult terrain, day after day. Something changed within us but, at the time, I didn't have a language to describe it.

Freelance writing and outdoor instructing became the norm for the next few years, until, at the turn of the new millennium, AUT university offered me a more settled role as an outdoor education lecturer and instructor on the two and three-year outdoor programmes. AUT would provide a stability to my life that enabled not only personal evolution (home, family, marriage, cat) but a professional evolution too – aside from acquiring more industry qualifications, it gave me an opportunity to really examine outdoor education practice and to think about, and experiment with, what 'works'.

Part of this examination of practice was spurred by the multi-death canyon tragedy at OPC / Mangatepopo river, in 2008. My Master's degree thesis (Hollingsworth, 2011) examined this tragedy using a Foucauldian lens and looked at the taken-for-granted elements and hidden forces embedded in the practice. Other organisations were interested in this too and sought my perspectives on safety in the New Zealand outdoors, and especially the paperwork that was now ever-present. In this vein, I presented at several conferences.

In 2020 I worked for the polytechnic Wintec, creating and teaching an outdoor education module that had to shift to an online space when the Covid-19 pandemic hit. Throughout the years, I had retained a membership and interest in the NZ Outdoor Instructors Association (NZOIA), and undertaken many professional development courses, including first aid and NZOIA level two awards in rock and bush. I graduated from the first NOLS instructor course held in New Zealand. I continued to have many personal outdoor adventures, increasingly oriented to a growing family.

Thus my career traversed a variety of organisations and roles. The programmes I had worked in were all different from one another, even though they were operating in the same outdoor education 'field'. The programme elements were different between organisations, but with some things in common – like the use of outdoor pursuits. The length of the programmes varied - OPC /Hillary Outdoors had one week, Tihoi had six-months, AUT had two or three years - yet some transformative 'thing' often happened on these programmes that changed people. I wondered what the people who had to construct outdoor programmes, had to say about this. I was aware that other programmes alluded, in their marketing, to this transformative 'thing' too.

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1.7 Assumptions and beliefs

Our ways of looking at the world and making sense of it, our belief systems, influence the choices we make and the actions we take. We cannot separate actions from beliefs (Knight, 1998), and we cannot remove the person from the teacher (Palmer, 1998). The researcher cannot be objective, because what the researcher believes about how research should be conducted, will influence how the research is conducted and how it is interpreted (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). My own background bears witness to this. I wanted to make a difference in the world and eventually felt confident that teaching in an outdoor context was the best way to do that. This lead me to seek training and employment in outdoor organisations. Eventually my curiosity about the roots of an outdoor tragedy lead me to undertake research into that tragedy. I was growing, according to Cooperider and Whitney (2005), in the direction that I was consistently asking questions about. What I became curious about, involved asking questions about the assumption that outdoor programmes transform people.

Hammond (1998) stated that assumptions are "the set of beliefs shared by a group, that causes the group to think and act in certain ways" (p. 13). They are statements or rules that are not often verbalised or visible, that may also explain the context of the group's choices. Research by Zink and Boyes (2007) suggested that in New Zealand outdoor education, one of the assumptions was that outdoor programmes need to be dominated by outdoor pursuit activities, in order to cause change in the participants. A second assumption, proposed by Williams (2002) and Davidson (2004), was that formal risk management processes were beneficial to, and necessary for, an outdoor programme. My own research suggested these were unhealthy assumptions and taken-for-granted positions (Hollingsworth, 2011), and that outdoor programmes would be better off by making these things visible, then questioning them.

The assumptions and beliefs held within outdoor programmes are not always obvious to the onlooker. Since the late 1980's, New Zealand outdoor education programmes have been dominated by the discourses of risk management and outdoor pursuits, and the need to fit in to a neoliberal economy. What is most visible is the structure of a programme – where people sleep, what they do on a day to day basis. Some examples of the marketing of outdoor programmes are offered, as a way of seeing the visible and the not-so-visible.

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1.7.1   The hidden and the visible in outdoor programmes

The structure of outdoor programmes involves elements that are readily apparent to the observer, and those that are not obvious at all, but are deeply influential. The readily apparent elements would include those physical residential structures that address human needs - like eating and drinking, toileting, and where to sleep. In outdoor centres these are made visible by houses where participants live (e.g. Tihoi Venture School) or dormitories where participants stay temporarily (e.g. Outward Bound), and by communal dining rooms and toilets. The readily apparent elements also include the non-residential, like outdoor pursuit trips lasting for hours or days. These address those same human needs too, but in a way that is aligned with outdoor practices (e.g. using tents, cooking on small stoves, digging holes in the ground for toileting).

The chronological structure of an outdoor programme can be apparent too, because it is often part of the promotional material of the organization. For example, Outward Bound, for its Mind Body Soul course, signals the intent - the number of days, the types of challenges - on its website without giving too many specifics:

> We don't like to give too much away at Outward Bound, in fact we take pride in throwing you a few curve balls! What we can tell you is that over **21 days** you'll experience **bush expeditions, water challenges, sea voyages and height activities** in stunning scenery. You'll spend your time between the school in Anakiwa, and the bush, mountains and waterways of the Marlborough Sounds. (Outward Bound NZ, 2020, emphasis added)

In contrast, Tihoi Venture School not only gives a general description but also makes the actual intake calendar available (the first half of the first intake at Tihoi for 2020 is seen in Figure 3 below). The calendar for Tihoi on the St Pauls website is very specific about what the programme looks like, with the green colours representing the engagement with various outdoor pursuits. In addition, the website describes the nature of the programme:

> Tihoi Venture School is New Zealand's only 18-week back-to-basics outdoor programme designed specifically for St Paul's Collegiate School Year 10 boys… Each week they spend three days in the outdoors and four days in the classroom…
> (St. Paul's Collegiate, 2020)

Sometimes the philosophical structure of an outdoor programme is apparent too. For example, in Figure 4, Outward Bound Our Kaupapa describes organizational values (compassion, respect, courage, responsibility, integrity), course objectives (self-discovery, empowering people) and design principles (learning through experience, shared adventures in the outdoors, a safe and supportive environment).

What is often invisible to both staff and participants (at least initially), is why a programme is constructed the way it is, and what works within that programme to meet the programme aims.

Figure 3

A Typical Tihoi Venture School Timetable

TIHOI INTAKE 1/2020

Month	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Jan			1	2	3	4	5
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Jan Feb	27 *Auckland Anniversary*	28 Start on intake 1 - arrive 10 - 11am	29 HOUSE TRAMP	30 HOUSE TRAMP	31 HOUSE TRAMP	1 Centre Orientation	2
	3	4	5 KAYAK ROCK N ROPES SURVIVAL	6 KAYAK ROCK N ROPES SURVIVAL	7 KAYAK ROCK N ROPES SURVIVAL	8	9
	10	11 Morning tea at SPC 10am	12 KAYAK ROCK N ROPES SURVIVAL	13 KAYAK ROCK N ROPES SURVIVAL	14 KAYAK ROCK N ROPES SURVIVAL	15	16
	17	18	19 KAYAK ROCK N ROPES SURVIVAL	20 KAYAK ROCK N ROPES SURVIVAL	21 KAYAK ROCK N ROPES SURVIVAL	22	23
March	24	25	26 **Boys depart 1pm**	27	Feb 28	Feb 29	March 1
	2 **Boys return 5pm to Tihoi**	3	4 ROCK 2 WW KAYAK TRAMP 2	5	6	7	8
	9	10	11 ROCK 2 WW KAYAK TRAMP 2	12	13	14	15
	16	17 ROCK 2 WW KAYAK TRAMP 2	18	19	20 **Boys depart Tihoi at 10am**	21	22
	23 **Boys return 5pm**	24	25 ALPINE SEA KAYAK MTB	26 ALPINE SEA KAYAK MT BIKE	27 ALPINE SEA KAYAK MT BIKE	28	29

Note. Received from C. Smith, personal communication, January 15, 2020.

Figure 4

Outward Bound Our Kaupapa

Note. From https://www.outwardbound.co.nz/about-us/about-outward-bound/

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1.8   Rationale for the study

The personal discussions I had had with students from the aforementioned programmes, suggested that their experiences had an impact on their thinking, their self-belief, and how they saw themselves in the world. But each of those programmes was quite unique, with the participants differing in age and gender and motivation, and I was left wondering what it was that was the catalyst for their transformation. I wondered whether it was possible to construct a programme that specifically sought to provide a transformative experience. Lyndsay's death became the spur to action; informed by my personal work journey and philosophical ponderings, I eventually settled on a research topic and questions to explore.

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1.9   The research topic

The topic of this study became 'Reflections on transformation: how New Zealand outdoor educators construct programmes to address (non-religious) spiritual growth'.

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1.9.1   The research questions

There were two research questions investigated:

1. What do experienced outdoor educators, who have been in charge of outdoor programmes, have to say about recognizing transformation in their students?

2. What do those educators have to say about the influence of programming on student transformation?

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1.9.2   Benefits

The benefits to the research field are, first, an insight into programming outdoor education experiences - what the experienced practitioners think works and what doesn't and why. This information is rarely shared between organisations, so is an opportunity to learn from each other. Second, I anticipated that the participants would enjoy the opportunity to share their own stories and insights. Third, I expect that this

research helps generate not only academic discussion, but thought-provoking, pragmatic reflections that would be useful for practitioners involved in organisational programming. It could be useful because they may want to more clearly understand their own programme; they may be interested in how other programmes address the topic; they may be unaware that spiritual growth is possible or happens; or because if they see the topic as having value in their organisation, then they can adjust their programme accordingly.

Fourth, the participants readily agreed to being filmed in the interview. As per AUTEC requirements (18 /107), they received a Consent and Release form, and a Participant Information sheet that clearly outlined the intention of the study, and their rights. These filmed interviews become historic documents, capturing a moment in time and offering insights into the thinking of the experienced participants. They become an archive. In the field of outdoor education in New Zealand, there are very few visual records or oral histories. In addition, participants all gave their permission for the filmed interviews to be made available to future researchers. This has the potential to benefit viewers, in the same way that the filmed interviews of (the now deceased) Sir Peter Blake informed Orams (2010) monograph on leadership. This 'future use' would be set up after the current project and it would probably require some funding. Either AUT or the National Library of New Zealand would hold this archive and there would be protocols around its use. The comment below attests to the desire to accumulate such archival material:

> The Legal Deposit Office, of the National Library of New Zealand is responsible for collecting material such as books, magazines, DVDs and sound recordings, published in New Zealand. Publications include those published in both physical and digital formats. Deposited publications become part of the national heritage collections for the use of present and future generations and provide material for research into all aspects of New Zealand life and culture. (personal communication, L. Makirere, New Zealand ISBN Agency, National Library of New Zealand, February 23rd, 2018).

Fifth, it is expected that the findings of the research are of interest not only to the organisations represented in the research, but also to organisations that have not been part of the research and have an interest in the topic. This study may well inform how those organisations construct or re-construct their programmes.

Sixth, there is an international interest in spiritual development, especially in the fields of education and organisational management, for example Anderson (2007), Aslan and Korkut (2015), Mehl-Madrona et al. (2013), Neal (1997), Puchalski et al. (2014). This research would be widely received, because there is very little literature from a New Zealand perspective, dealing with non-religious spiritual growth. New Zealand outdoor educators would therefore contribute a unique voice.

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1.9.3   A Note about Oral History

In the introduction to the third edition of *The Oral History Reader* (Perks & Thomson, 2016), there is reference to an African saying: 'Every old man that dies is a library that burns'. This research project was impelled by one man dying in 2014, a wise outdoor educator named Lyndsay Simpkin. While Lyndsay had many great stories, he also had important insights to offer, as he was present (as I was) at the creation of NZOIA in the late 1980's and at subsequent developments in the field of outdoor education in New Zealand. Sadly, most of these insights were never recorded for posterity. The field of oral history offers a structure that can help to capture those insights. Fyffe (1994) suggests oral history also "gives a voice to those previously denied the chance to contribute to the recording of history" (p. 1). Although this research project is not formally Oral History, the material from the primary-sourced interviews has importance as an enduring resource for future researchers.

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The next chapter is titled 'St. Pierre's train: research philosophy and design'. It provides more details about the participants in the research and how the process of interviewing them was conducted. But it also describes how the research approach was disrupted by the discovery of a different way of thinking about research, of thinking about how we live in the world. This is the impact of St. Pierre's train. This next chapter introduces the Deleuzean concepts of becoming and immanence. My own story and research journey weaves through this via the writing convention of 'the fold' and the introduction of two other conventions: Pondering and Accompanying.

Chapter 2 St. Pierre's train: research philosophy and design

This study initially had a typical qualitative research approach. This involved following a methodology (descriptive interpretive), reviewing literature, conducting interviews and a reflexive thematic analysis, in order to have 'findings'. This 'line of flight' was interrupted by discovering the post structural /post-qualitative writing of St. Pierre and Deleuze (and others). Each discovery provided a deepening of my understanding and shifted the 'line of flight'. The 'research design' then, is more layered or spiralled, than linear. The exploration in the writing is part of the design.

In the first part of this chapter, I tell the story of how the post-qualitative ideas of St. Pierre (2001; 2013, 2018, 2019, 2020a, 2020b) re-designed the research design, and shaped the thinking-writing nexus as a method. St. Pierre led to Deleuze (2001) and these two writer /philosophers enabled new ways of considering the research topic, with the onto-epistemological concepts of *becoming* and *immanence*. Immersing myself in their writing attuned me to things that had heretofore been hidden: the power of my own stories, the way memory and time folds and offers insight and re-orientation for the future. This attunement also offered a fresh way of understanding the interviews, as the discourse became threaded with stories of *becoming*. Writing became an important method for this study, as writing was often an enactment of *becoming*. The writing styles in this chapter, introduce two conventions. The first convention is 'Accompanying'. This is where the ideas and provocations from authors, long held in my mind and absorbed into my professional decision making (and life journey), are brought to the surface. Accompanying is also an example of 'the fold'. The second convention is 'Pondering'. These are thoughts from my journals that are relevant to the research.

The second part of this chapter presents a more traditional shape, in that it introduces the interviews with the nine experienced outdoor practitioners, and the reflexive thematic analysis engaged to explore what they were saying.

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2.1 Part One: St. Pierre's train

The writing of St. Pierre smashed into my PhD like a train unable to stop before it takes out the (passenger-less) bus stalled on the tracks. I could not un-read what I had read. The direction and intention of the study was compelled to consider a different style, a different way of thinking about what I was doing, what I had done, shifted by the force of the ideas and the shock of the impact.

> The post-qualitative researcher, must *live* the theories (will not be able not to live them) and will, then, live in a different world enabled by a different ethico-onto-epistemology
>
> (St. Pierre, 2018, p. 604)

In her research journey she had interviewed people, but had Foucault's voice in her head, saying he wasn't interested in the speaking subject. I was reminded, as though I had forgotten (Oh! Of course), of Foucault's power / knowledge in the Arundhati Roy essays I was reading, in the self-censorship of the scientists dealing with climate change in the media, and in current class discussions. St. Pierre transcribed interviews and used these as the basis of her knowledge claims - data - but she had Derrida in her head, discussing the 'economy' of language, how meaning cannot be contained in language, how it always escapes. How words and their opposites 'trade' back and forth in meaning and in existence: no shadow without light. I had been thinking about the interview stories I had collected, and how risk was portrayed in outdoor education and adventure tourism; how the word was inevitably painted with the 'bad brush' of loss, damage, hurt, yet there was a 'good brush' in risk, of exploration, possibilities, opportunities, and gain. She had been enchanted with Deleuze and Guattari's *rhizome*, an anti-method concept, yet here she was following a prescription. I too was following a prescription, but both spirituality and outdoor programmes, let alone the people that I had interviewed already, seemed like living, mobile, reactive, responsive organisms. She went straight to applying methodology because she had been taught that is what you do. She had never considered the possibility of no methodology at all. She had come late to understanding philosophy, had not let it guide her initial inquiries, but eventually learned to trust the thinking-writing creative nexus that brought her fresh perspectives.

I resolved to trust myself too, because I could see that 'thought happened in the writing' (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 970). Where St. Pierre advocated for immersion in philosophy, the 'long preparation' (St. Pierre, 2018, p. 604), I agreed but I could also see that I was immersed already, that I had been immersed in thinking about how the world *is* for a long time, thinking about transformation in outdoor education programmes – what worked? Why did it work? – since the start of my career. "Experience, " said St. Pierre, "is not the origin of our exploration, but that which we want to explain" (St. Pierre, 2001, p. 141, citing Scott, 1992). My experience counted, I realized; my thoughts and journal scribblings counted too.

Every article brought a gem of insight. "Inquiry," said St. Pierre (2018, p. 607), "should begin with the too strange and the too much. The rest is what everyone knows". Here was the direction to look in and it was fascinating and potentially fun (fun!) to write about. One must choose, said St. Pierre (2020a) to commit either to a qualitative study *or* to a post-qualitative study, because "a study cannot be both at the same time" (p. 2).

One does this by rejecting pre-existing research methodologies and embracing poststructural philosophy; by reading philosophy until its intensity re-orients thought. Poststructural philosophers, like Foucault and Deleuze,

> refused pre-existing, formalized, systematized, procedural methods and methodology because they over-determine thought and practice, closing off what *might be* thought and done in favor of doing, thinking, finding and representing *what is*, what exists
>
> (Ibid; emphasis added)

By immersing oneself in poststructural or postmodern philosophy, said St. Pierre (2020a), "one learns that it is a philosophy of immanence...concerned not with what *is* but what is *not yet, to come*" (p. 1, italics in original). I was cognizant of Foucault but St. Pierre pushed me towards other philosophers, other writers. Due (2007) stated "representation and immanence are mutually exclusive" (p. 6). Carlson (2020) citing Bhaktin, Foucault, and Derrida, suggested that "language is shadowy, shifty, and completely unstable" and that "the post-structuralist thinkers established that language cannot represent data" (p. 1) and because of this, meaning is always called into question. I acknowledged this. I also understood that the way forward in this

research, then, was not to represent, not to 'over determine', but to craft a presentation that enabled the reader to be in the process, that enabled the reader to engage with "the emotional and vibrational endeavor" (ibid). That which is uncertain and ineffable is embraced and the writer invites the reader to do more than skim for results; instead offering "felt impressions" and "extends a process of becoming" (p. 2).

The thinking and writing I had already undertaken was brought into a different focus by the post-qualitative direction. But I felt like I had discovered a lot via the interviews already and was reluctant to discount this. I considered that perhaps there was a 'third way' that sat between representation and immanence, whereby working with a (porous) template of a methodological structure, rather than the strict (and confining) adherence to it, enables the process to blossom. In the same way that understanding the principles of light and function and load, enable the architect to create plans in order to construct a building. The principles don't have to hold back the creative process. An illustration of this can be seen in an episode ('Copper Curve') of the television programme 'Grand Designs NZ' (Media Works, 2020). There is a scene where the architect, Michael O'Sullivan, is trying to capture the spirit of the clients vision for their new home, and the potential (and inspiration) of a physical site at Cass Bay that overlooked the sea. He does this not by adhering to what is known and normal, but by sketching and painting the possibilities, so as to bring forth that which was yet-to-be. The pragmatic knowledge he had was secondary to his creative vision, but still helped the vision to manifest.

Like O'Sullivan, I wanted to acknowledge what was pragmatic in my research - how do I find out what they think unless I ask? - yet at the same time, be free to explore the 'too strange' through the act of creative writing. To attune, as Carlson (2020) said, to the subtle and nuanced parts of language and "to the felt impressions of life-in-motion" (p. 2). I saw that doing both – having a little structure but focusing on the creative, the unfolding - something fresh could emerge

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2.2   Pondering: the un-thought arising

In my writing process, I rose at dawn, fed the cat, drank coffee and drifted along in a dream-like state between being truly awake and mostly asleep. Often, prior to getting

up, some thought or image relating to the research project, had seeped into my brain. I recorded these things, these *ponderings*. I didn't know if what I was thinking and recording was particularly profound or not – I was in a vacuum – so I wrote 'idea' and 'note' in my journals and wondered where these things fitted. I read more of St. Pierre and found myself saying "yes":

> 'Instead of asking for the conditions of possible experience (what is going on here? How did this happen?) it looks for the conditions under which something new, as yet unthought, arises'. Its focus is not on things already made but on things in the making.
>
> (St. Pierre, 2018, p. 604, citing Rajchman, 2000)

I wanted to safeguard the stories of these outdoor educators. I wanted to know what they thought but I also knew that what they thought and said was only a part of the story. That most of them lived in their place of work, were immersed in it, committed to it, and so embodied *dasein*, Heidegger's concept of both being and belonging to a place, in a time. Where 'place-based education' was a 21st century trend in outdoor education, these people had actually lived it. I sensed, via these early morning dream states, something deeper, more expansive, perhaps something profound, was waiting (though I had been warned not to expect that my research would change the world).

> These measures belong to the order of dreams... drunkenness and excess. We head for the horizon, on the plane of immanence, and we return with bloodshot eyes, yet they are eyes of the mind.
>
> (Deleuze & Guattari, 1991 / 1994, p. 41)

My ponderings became important. Creativity became important. My own teaching experience became a valid site to explore. Exploring the small byways of thought and writing, felt like uncovering a portal into something more complex. Thinking and writing about art was now potentially relevant, as was the influence of an array of writers beyond the academic. Storytelling was already a legitimate tool in education, and now I felt its possibilities for research.

As I considered what spirituality was in an outdoor education setting, what moments of transformation actually were, Deleuze's *immanence* and *folding* assumed greater importance and it seemed right to consider this alongside Fisher's Four Domains of Spiritual Health and Wellbeing model (Fisher, 2011). But it also seemed right to

consider Buddhism and the Māori concepts of *mauri* and *wairua.* As I re-pondered Walsh and Golins (1976) Outward Bound Process model, and the structure of different outdoor programmes, Deleuze's *assemblage* and *multiplicities* came into focus. St. Pierre, while a secondary source for Deleuze (and others), became a primary source for opening up the possibilities.

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2.2.1   The fold: teaching contemporary issues

I was preparing to teach two classes on ethics for a Contemporary Issues in Sport and Recreation paper, bringing together the formal aspects of ethics – the origins, how ethics and morality differ, how they are still relevant today – and finding digestible, compelling examples for an easily distracted audience. The classes were designed to address part of the graduate profile of a Sport and Recreation student: they should know about these things. At the same time, I was reading two books that I found deeply disturbing: Arundhati Roy's collection of essays about Indian (Hindi) politics 'My Seditious Heart' (Roy, 2019), and David Wallace-Wells 'The Uninhabitable Earth' (Wallace-Wells, 2019), an investigation into climate change science and what was being shared (or not shared) in the media. These books were (are) deeply disturbing because they spoke directly to the worst traits of human behaviour: unrestrained greed, manipulation of people and whole economies in order to benefit an elite few, willful destruction of the environment, and intimidation of ordinary people by the mechanisms in society that were designed to protect the people - the police, the army, the law and the judiciary. Roy's depiction of oppression, and Wallace-Wells highlighting of media caution feeding repetitive stupidity and selfishness, helped me understand helplessness in the face of overwhelming odds. This was what I was seeing, daily, in the students I was teaching.

The books acknowledged the brutality of what was happening, but also the resistance to the brutality, sometimes armed resistance, sometimes peaceful protests, scientists and activists desperate for people to know what was actually going on, desperate for people to act. The dignity of the resistance (in both books) was set against the stark reality that their backs were against the wall: where does one move to when one's forest and fertile land is being drowned for a mega-dam? What does one do in the face

of an unstoppable atmospheric temperature rise across the whole planet? Not driving a car seemed pathetic. I could not un-read what I had read; it dwelled. When I raised the Roy book with some international students from India, in a post-graduate seminar, they dismissed her as a 'whiner'. I was amazed. I saw instantly what she – and the planet – was up against.

For the class, I elected to show ethics and morality via two key stories. The first story explained the politics and reality of the mega-dam projects in India and explored whether that type of situation – ignoring laws, re-writing laws, ignoring the advice of experts (engineers, geologists), dismissing the analysis of economists and electricity experts, driving people off the land against their wishes and with little or no compensation, selling the 'product' to multinational companies - had happened in New Zealand. The class was fascinated (dismayed?) to see that it had (the Clyde dam).

The second story covered the outpouring of alarm about the dangerous overcrowding of a climbing route on Mt. Everest, and how it was a direct (and deadly) and predictable result of recreation succession and development creep. I even found a model that predicted it: Butler's Model of Tourism development (Butler, 1980). I explored the evolution of tourism in Nepal, what compelled people to go there. I discussed the considerable sum of money needed in order to climb that mountain, then I highlighted third-world wage disparity, benefits and impacts of tourism, possible drivers of such behaviour. I linked such behaviour to other contexts, like climate change, technological advances (air travel) and neoliberalism. When I asked the class(es) about New Zealand examples of overcrowding, of deliberate promotion at the expense of the valued resource, they had no trouble compiling a long list: 'Clean, Green New Zealand' and '100% Pure' marketing, the Tongariro Crossing, Milford Sound, the Routeburn track, Rotorua mountain biking, the Bay of Islands, the local beaches in Auckland, Waitomo caves, the entirety of Queenstown... It was as though they finally had a language for their emotional turmoil.

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2.3   How one might live

I replay this story of teaching - this fold - because the philosophical forces at play, at the time, were conscious to me. I had read Foucault's ideas on power /knowledge in my masters' degree, some years earlier, and I could not help but see the power / knowledge relationships rife in the two books, the two main stories and in these two classes. The realization that I thought in power /knowledge terms was late in dawning, yet I was immersed in power /knowledge relationships in my job, in both good and bad connotations. I knew ideas were powerful, that books were important because they transmitted ideas, but Deleuze's idea of books as 'abstract machines', and people as 'multiplicities' was revealed only after St. Pierre's train. It was St. Pierre who showed me I was immersed in (and acting from) philosophy.

St. Pierre reminded me of Foucault and drew me to Deleuze (and others); I read these philosophers directly and through secondary sources. May (2005) pointed out that Foucault had rejected formal abstract ontology because being in the world is politically charged and historically contingent. That Derrida's rejection was based around the impossibility of language to define accurately. Both Foucault and Derrida rejected the ontological drive to say ultimately what there 'is'; they rejected the idea of an "unchanging pure nature or essence" (May, 2005, p. 15). They rejected 'representation' and they rejected the phenomenological stance of knowing the world through understanding 'being':

> To address the question of *being* by means of an account of what there *is* would seem to constrain human behaviour to a narrow conformity. It would fail to keep alive the question of how one *might* live.
>
> (ibid; emphasis added)

Due (2007) suggested Deleuze wasn't looking for a coherent framework that explained the universe and which put everything in its place. His philosophy rejected this way of thinking with its external focus on identity, identifying, classifying and judging, on statically representing. But Deleuze, on his own and with Guattari, did not reject ontology. How one *might* live implies possibilities and creativity and action, and this is the direction that he took. When Deleuze and Guattari (1991 / 1994) said that "becoming is the action by which something or someone is ceaselessly becoming-other

(while continuing to be what they are)" (p. 117), they are saying that the forces shaping how one *is*, are internal forces of creation and realization as opposed to the conscious filtering of the external world. When I reviewed the interview transcripts, becoming was a concept that resonated strongly with the participants' life journeys.

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2.4   Immanence

Creative and conceptual thinking, according to Deleuze and Guattari (1991 / 1994), required some kind of non-thinking to precede it, that allowed the unfurling of ideas and visions to proceed and blossom, like rapidly changing clouds in the sky. They called this non-conscious before-thinking, 'pre-philosophical' (p. 40) and it was part of the mind-space they called 'the plane of immanence'. To access this plane required unusual means:

> It implies a sort of groping experimentation and its layout resorts to measures that are not very respectable, rational or reasonable. These measures belong to the order of dreams, of pathological processes, esoteric experiences, drunkenness and excess. We head for the horizon, on the plane of immanence, and we return with bloodshot eyes, yet they are eyes of the mind (p. 41)

What I take from this, is that immanence is what happens before thought, that leads to thought, and it is where an insight that shocks, occurs. The insight might be a concept or a lone thought. Immanence creates the thought, creates the linkage that produces concepts. Immanence assists becoming. Deleuze and Guattari (1991 / 1994) described the plane of immanence in very geographical ways. For example, in reading this passage, I have an image of an ocean, with waves rolling across its surface, provoked by the underlying land (a reef, a shallowing of the continental shelf), and on into the shore. It reminded me of sailing from New Zealand to Australia on a 60-foot (20 metre) ketch, and, far beyond the sight of land, feeling the ocean breath up and down:

> Concepts are like multiple waves, rising and falling, but the plane of immanence is the single wave that rolls them up and unrolls them
>
> (Deleuze & Guattari, 1991 / 1994, p. 36)

And this passage, more terrestrial but still conveying a vast space:

> The plane is like a desert that concepts populate without dividing up.
> The only regions of the plane are concepts themselves, but the plane
> is all that holds them together (ibid).

Moreover, where rationalism privileged knowledge based on reason, and 'transcendence' meant going to an 'other' place that contained the 'essence' of reality (such as Heaven), for Deleuze (and others), knowledge and transcendence meant something else entirely. Their term 'transcendental empiricism' was about an enlightening knowledge based on senses and based on the reality of interacting with the world, that actively unfolds (transcends) within a person, in the mind, in the plane of immanence. Transcendence, then, is the eruption of new knowledge and insights, about the self. It is the opening up to the outer world and the outer world entering the inner space.

> Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object
> not of recognition but of a fundamental encounter... it can only be
> sensed.
>
> (Deleuze, 1968 / 1994, p. 139)

As I considered spirituality, as I thought about the interplay of Fisher's spiritual domains, as I dwelled on my own experiences of working in outdoor programmes and the stories I had gathered, Deleuze's strange concepts - strange because they were not part of an everyday language in outdoor education practice - began to make sense: immanence is a mind-space that exists before thought and out of which ideas and concepts arise; immanence is the opposite of representational in that it explains not what 'is' but what might be, what is coming into being. In this it is not inductive, not reductive, and not rational; immanence is a way of seeing that the world is always in the process of 'becoming', that non-linear rhizomatic responding to forces.

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2.5   The fold: teaching outdoor philosophy

In 2019, at the start of an Outdoor Philosophy class, my students and I watched a couple of clips from the movie 'An Inconvenient Truth' (Guggenheim, 2006), that

showed some of the impacts of climate change. The class was interested in the visuals – most were unaware of the movie – but detached; it was all 'somewhere else'.

Then I gave them two written excerpts to read (and time to do so). The first was from Tim Flannery's 'The Weather Makers' (Flannery, 2005), about the history of climate change science and its future impact, an exhortation to act differently; the second was from the book 'The Uninhabitable Earth' (Wallace-Wells, 2019) mentioned earlier. When they had all finished the reading (or mostly finished), I asked the class 'what has changed between the first book and the second?' As the discussion warmed up and unfolded, mostly itemizing negative things though they felt there was increased awareness now about the issues, I held up yet another book from my collection entitled '50 simple things you can do to save the Earth' (The Earthworks Group, 1989). "The knowledge," I said, "has been around since before most of you were born". More discussion, this time with an edge of righteousness and betrayal, along the lines of 'the (expletive) in power have known this for how long? And done nothing about it?'

Eventually I wrapped up that part of the class with a quote from Wallace-Wells, writ large on a whiteboard:

> Eating organic is nice... but if your goal is to save the climate your vote is much more important. Politics is a moral multiplier.
>
> (Wallace-Wells, 2019, p. 187)

Then we all went for a walk, to a local patch of remnant forest that had been cut in half by a motorway. We would return to this patch to explore our relationship with it, and to these conversations, again and again and again.

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2.6   Writing as becoming

> Writing is struggling, writing is resisting
> Writing is becoming; writing is mapping
> (Deleuze, 1988, cited in Conley, 2005, p. 175)

Discovering St. Pierre and Deleuze shifted my thinking about how to transmit my ideas, how to write creatively in a formal way, for an academic process (the PhD) that had appeared to be rigid and prescriptive. In reading St. Pierre, I saw articulated that with

which I had been struggling, which was fitting in to a structure that seemed to leave little room for my 30+ years of teaching, instructing, thinking, reading and writing. I considered myself a writer as well as a reader, a teacher as well as an outdoor instructor (as well as a husband, son, father, climber, tramper, kayaker, good neighbor, part-time handy man, art collector, song writer, ex-athlete, developmentally stalled guitarist, closet poet...). I considered my internal world to be more nuanced and more complex than what I showed to the outside world, and I believed that my interview participants were similar, so I was troubled by how I could possibly *represent* them and their ideas, fully. I could not.

I considered myself as someone who thinks about things that happen, whether past or present, someone who sees the connections between historic moments and what is happening in the present. I see because I am curious. I write to explore and make sense of what I see. But, deeply involved in the analysis of interviews, which I considered had yielded rich and rewarding stories and statements, I had a nagging feeling that I was missing something important.

> Writing is a question of becoming, always incomplete, always in the midst of being formed, and goes beyond the matter of any livable or lived experience
> (Deleuze, 1993 / 1997 cited in St. Pierre, 2018, p. 604)

It felt like my own way of being in the world was suddenly validated by St. Pierre and Deleuze. All of the influential moments of my own journey, all of those inspiring readings from my childhood and into adulthood, all of those encounters with people that gained significance over time, now they counted for something. I had been assembling what felt like 100 essays on different topics, all at the same time in my head (and in my journals); assembling a *bricolage* of important readings and quotes and memories of moments, as well as the stories from the interviews. I noticed more frequently the use of outdoor images in consumer advertising, the signifier and the signified. I swam in the mud of all of this (completely normal for a sizable research project, I was often told), yet felt restricted by whatever methodology I read about (even though I had received approval for one). I followed Braun and Clarke's reflexive thematic analysis method (Braun & Clarke, 2006) in order to make sense of the data, yet its encouragement to move iteratively between interviews and literature,

provoked black holes to open and swallow me. The more I saw in the interviews, the more I wrote (and thought) about what I saw and the more I was returned to the literature out of curiosity. The more I immersed myself in the literature, the wider the range of topics that I 'needed to read' became, but I couldn't see how they fitted into the formality of the structure.

I came to realize that foremost in the structure of the research, embedded in it, integral to it, shaping the structure itself, is the writing. The writing is the means by which to make thought - and ideas, concepts, possible 'findings' – visible. It is the process by which the answers come to the questions asked. As the study unfolded, I wrote more freely and in the hope, as Richardson and St. Pierre suggest below, that *all* of it would be worthwhile in the reading:

> Just as a piece of literature is not equivalent to its 'plot summary', qualitative research is not contained in its abstract. Qualitative research has to be read, not scanned; its meaning is in the reading.

> (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 960)

****

2.6.1 Four important ideas in writing

Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) suggest there are three important ideas in writing (they state 'from a poststructural perspective' but the ideas are relevant to St. Pierre's post-qualitative exhortations too). The first is that it requires the writer /researcher to know themselves, to know the particular position they are writing from. The second is that writing this way frees the writer "from trying to write a single text in which everything is said once to everyone" (p. 962). For Richardson and St. Pierre, nurturing our own voices (rather than a 'scientific' voice) makes the act of writing itself a valid method of knowing. Moreover, and third, writing was used to think:

> I wrote my way into particular spaces I could not have occupied by sorting data with a computer programme or by analytic induction. This was rhizomatic work (Deleuze & Guattari, 1986/87) in which I made accidental and fortuitous connections I could not foresee or control... Thought happened in the writing.

> (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 970)

But there is a fourth important idea that writing captures, which is 'witnessing'. For McMahon (2010) in her stories of oppression in the Australian swimming system, witnessing happens when we engage with the stories of other people, when we participate and consciously try to know and learn. Witnessing acknowledges the experience of the other person; it says 'I see you':

> Our bodies, hearts and souls are changed and renewed by what we witness in our lives – witnessing is powerful.
>
> (McMahon, 2010, p. 60)

Witnessing involves writing too, and writing about interview participants, according to Richardson and St. Pierre (2005), was less about 'objects that can be known', and more about the participants being provocateurs. The participants are a 'line of flight' that take the researcher somewhere (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). To fully 'represent' the participants was impossible and so, Richardson and St. Pierre suggest, the focus needed to shift to 'subjectivity' (ibid, p. 971), whereby the participants are both their own identity *and* the embodied form of the culture that their identity has been subjected to.

With these four ideas about writing, I felt further justified in shifting my approach. First, I definitely knew myself: I was a habitual journal keeper and an experienced outdoor practitioner in the twilight of a career, having written and reflected on my profession. Second, I was adequate at academic writing but I was drawn to creative writing. I had started out wanting to explain everything about the topic, including making a documentary, but eventually realized I could not do everything. But I knew that I could write well, in a variety of styles. Third, writing and thinking went hand in hand, though often it was unclear what exactly it was that I was thinking or what style I was writing in (is this poetry?). Writing was definitely one way that I worked out what I thought. Fourth, as I interviewed these people, I felt like I was acknowledging them and their hard work, by being there, willing to record their stories. It definitely felt like 'witnessing' – hearing, sharing, reliving. I was totally engaged with them in our conversations and felt an enormous obligation and responsibility to their stories, because they felt important.

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2.6.2 Accompanying: Lopez

> No author can be read essentially for herself or by himself, since each
> author we have read accompanies us to meet the next.
>
> <div align="right">(St. Pierre, 2001, p. 150)</div>

While there have been people on my journey who shaped me and my professional approach to (and in) outdoor education, some of whom I have discussed already, I have also been mentored by strangers. They are the writers that accompany, whose ideas have not only stuck with me but provoked some response, some embedded affect. Accompanying me on my life journey, my outdoor education journey, for such a long time, has been Barry Lopez, an American writer whom I greatly admire. In his collection of essays 'Crossing Open Ground' (Lopez, 1988), there is one story, 'Searching for Ancestors', where Lopez is standing in the office of Robert Euler, a research anthropologist in the Grand Canyon National Park in Arizona. They have been discussing 8000 years of cultural history in the area, and especially the Anasazi culture - Anasazi being a word that comes from the Navajo *anaasázi*, meaning 'someone's ancestors' - that seemed to disappear over 800 years ago (For someone raised in New Zealand, the last large landmass to be discovered and populated by humans in about 1300 A.D., these are staggering numbers). Lopez and Euler are planning an exploration of a little visited area in the park, to look for archeological remains, especially old timber for dendrochronology (dating timber by boring holes and studying the tree-ring patterns). Lopez notices that on the wall of Euler's office, is a quote from a classics scholar of a different era, Gilbert Highet:

> These are not books, lumps of lifeless paper, but minds alive on the shelves. From each of them goes out its own voice, as inaudible as the streams of sound conveyed day and night by electric waves beyond the range of our physical hearing; and just as the touch of a button on our set will fill the room with music, so by taking down one of these volumes and opening it, one can call into range the far distant voice in time and space, and hear it speaking to us, mind to mind, heart to heart
>
> <div align="right">(Lopez, 1988, p. 169)</div>

This concept of transmitting across time and space, of respect for the ideas of other cultures and other minds, of being able to see inside someone else's head to understand what they are thinking, was a powerful revelation for me when I read it in

Lopez' story (much later I would read Deleuze's thoughts on books as machines that transmit). I received those transmissions: from Highet to Euler, from Euler to Lopez, from Lopez to me. It was an affirmation that seemed to explain part of my fascination with books and particular authors, especially those that had something to say that resonated. Lopez was one of these authors. His writing blended scientific curiosity and fact accumulation and analysis, with the awe of discovering aspects of the natural world hitherto hidden. His essays are a culmination of his investigations into the history of a landscape and the people that lived there. His monumental undertaking to record the history, the biodiversity, the landscape, the tragedies, even the quality of the light, in 'Arctic Dreams' (Lopez, 1986), was inspiring and made me want to not only write, but to explore a place deeply and thoroughly. Barry Lopez directly prompted me to walk the length of Fiordland; he prompted me to write.

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2.6.3 Accompanying: Least Heat Moon

There are others who 'came before', of course, each shifting something in my thinking. The anthropologist Richard Nelson's 'The Island Within', with its quest for deeply knowing a wild place and the subsequent consciousness-shifting moment with a tree (Nelson, 1991). Norman Maclean's depiction of a deep love for a river, and the perfection of the art of fly fishing, in 'A River Runs Through It' (Maclean, 1976). William Least Heat Moon, in 'Blue Highways' (1982), had echoes of Kerouac's 'On the road' from a previous generation, when he shed one life and discovered another, by travelling the country in an old van:

> Beware thoughts that come in the night. They aren't turned properly; they come in askew, free of sense and restriction, deriving from the most remote of sources... That night, as I lay wondering whether I would get sleep or explosion, I got the idea instead
>
> (Least Heat Moon, 1982, p. 3)

The attraction in Least Heat Moon's writing, is to witness him randomly stop in places and strike up conversations with strangers – dialogues – to try and (surreptitiously) uncover the essence of their lives, or the life of the small town where they resided. Somehow people reveal details about themselves that capture something about the place; in doing so, they seem to add to Least Heat Moon's life. Here, an interminable

wait for breakfast in a diner brings out Least Heat Moon's skill and humour (ibid, p. 70):

> I was counting grains of rice in the saltshaker (this *was* the South) when Brenda pushed a breakfast at me, the check slick with margarine...The food was good and the sense of the place fine, but Brenda was destined for an interstate run-em-thru. Early in life she had developed the ability to make a customer wish he'd thrown up on himself rather than disturb her

I read the book many times over the years; it always seemed to add something to my life. There was no clear purpose to his driving around the USA on the old highways (that are blue on the road maps), apart from a sense of exploring the real heart of the country. In doing so, his own life (recently full of trauma) begins to make more sense. Here, a conversation with Brother Patrick, a Trappist monk in the Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Georgia, begins with a phrase that has stayed with me, ever since I first read it (ibid, p. 90):

> I begin with this broken truth that I am. I start from the entire broken man – entire but whole. Then I work to become empty. And whole. In looking for ways to God, I find parts of myself coming together. In that union, I find a regeneration

There were times in my life where I, too, had felt like 'a broken truth'. As a child I sensed that I had a beautiful physical and spiritual self, that I belonged to something, but as I grew older, as doubt settled in along with adolescence, I felt damaged in some way I could not illuminate. It was Least Heat Moon that planted the seed of the idea of helping others, which led to me living as a wilderness counselor in North Carolina. It was that job and that place that began the reconciliation - the revisiting and healing - of a broken relationship within my own family.

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2.6.4 Accompanying: Abbey

In complete contrast (of styles, stories and pace), Edward Abbey's anarchic depiction of a semi-fictional group (The Monkey Wrench Gang) resisting progress in the deserts of the American south-west by blowing things up, by deliberately sabotaging

machinery, was both hilarious and inspiring (Abbey, 1982). It also palpated with anger and was the catalyst for the real-life eco-activist group 'Earth First!' to burst into existence, creating mayhem for developers and advocates of progress in the western USA. Abbey's call to 'resist much, obey little' settled into my mind quietly, urging me on. The book was given to me by Brian Staite, an outdoor instructor of an older generation, who was my mentor when I was learning how to be an outdoor instructor (at OPC / Hillary Outdoors). He thought it was important for me to read. Reading this, I became aware that it was possible to resist what appeared to be overwhelming peacetime economic and political forces. This led directly to discovering the New Zealand examples of Manapouri and Pureora. Years later, I too would give the book to aspirant instructors.

But there was more to Abbey than cantankerous attitude. His depiction of the desert landscapes in 'Desert Solitaire' (Abbey, 1968) and the timeless quality of the daily living of the creatures that inhabited those places, was more than just insightful, it was beautiful, and it spoke volumes about how much the man had actually looked, how much he was connected to those places.

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2.6.5 Accompanying: Leopold

Aldo Leopold's 'A Sand County Almanac' (Leopold, 1949 /1966) is rightly held in high regard by environmentalists and writers alike. When he writes "only one acorn in a thousand ever grew large enough to fight rabbits; the rest were drowned at birth in the prairie sea..." (p. 8), it speaks of the complex beauty in the ordinariness of common landscapes, of the secret life of creatures. Another example of this is Leopold ruminating on the life of an old oak tree as it lies horizontally, downed by lightning, seasoned for a summer, being cut for firewood and timber:

> We sensed that these two piles of sawdust were something more than wood: that they were the integrated transect of a century; that our saw was biting its way, stroke by stroke, decade by decade, into the chronology of a lifetime, written in concentric annual rings of good oak (p. 10)

'A Sand County Almanac' advocates for conservation and for knowing. It was Leopold that inspired me to rise at dawn and, with a cup of coffee in hand, to listen to birds and try and identify them through their voice. Years later, this was precisely the task that I got my students to do in the middle of a Covid-19 lockdown (having to teach outdoor education via the internet and Zoom, was a head spinning paradigm shift for all of us). It was Leopold that got me to think about the idea of layers, of the sedimentation of history upon a landscape.

It was, predominantly, Leopold, Lopez and Abbey that pushed me to observe more on my adventures, to take the time to record nature's small details in my daily journals. As my practice of being an outdoor instructor expanded and deepened, the voices of Leopold, Lopez and Abbey, their transmissions, urged me to enact these things with my students, to have those conversations, to encourage them to look and listen, to make time for quiet reflection beside a stream or in a bush clearing. To write poetry. Sitting atop a mountain became more than just an accomplishment of physical effort; it became an opportunity.

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2.7   Part Two: The (initial) research design

This second part introduces the outdoor practitioners, the interview methods, and the reflexive thematic analysis method initially engaged to explore what they were saying.

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2.7.1   Participant group and criteria

The focus of this study was the reflections on transformation within outdoor education programmes in New Zealand, and more specifically, how spirituality is enhanced or encouraged in a programme. New Zealand is a small country and the professional outdoor education fraternity is small too, but the programme variety is large. I wanted to deliberately examine programmes that were well established in their communities, and that were longer than one week in length - research from, for example, Stringer and McAvoy (1992), Fox (1999), and Ungar et al. (2005) showed that programmes of a longer duration influenced the possibility of some transformational experience occurring in the programme's participants (see Chapter 4). Purposive sampling - that is,

purposely selecting the sample - offered the greatest opportunity to learn the most, and this "potential for learning is a different and sometimes superior criterion to representativeness" (Stake, 2005, p. 451). Using my 30+ years of experience in this profession, I made a list of prominent New Zealand outdoor education programmes and then a list of people I knew (or knew of) who had created, or actively helped shape, those programmes. I did this in order to capture as much territory - both geographical and programming - as possible. If one person had been influential in different programmes, then that made them more attractive as a participant than one person who had been influential in only one programme. Moreover, I wanted to ensure that the programmes covered the geographic spread of the country and to be a mix of men and women.

The participants met the following inclusion criteria. First, they had many years of experience of working in outdoor education in New Zealand, and had been (or are) involved in programme development of programmes longer than one week. Second, they had a perspective on transformation, or the development of spirituality, that made their input meaningful for the outdoor education profession. Third, they agreed to have their interview filmed so as to contribute to an archive of New Zealand outdoor educators. Their contributions would not be anonymous.

From an initial list of about 30 people, nine participants were invited. These people covered the variety of programming and geographic terrain mentioned earlier. All accepted. Their career arcs meant that they had been significant contributors to a wide variety of outdoor programmes, including the stand-alone centres at Outward Bound Anakiwa, the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) NZ branch, the Taranaki Outdoor Pursuit and Education Centre (TOPEC), Tihoi Venture School (a rural campus of St Paul's Collegiate school), Kahunui (a rural campus of St Cuthbert's College), Te Haerenga (a rural campus of Dilworth school), and the Motutapu Outdoor Education Camp (an island-based, residential outdoor centre, that services a distinct cluster of schools). The programmes also included those that existed within larger institutions: Kristin School, Otago Polytechnic, Auckland University of Technology, the University of Otago, and the Ara Institute of Canterbury. Seven of these programmes were situated in the North Island, five were situated in the South Island.

Other outdoor organisations had benefited from these people, though not necessarily in a programming capacity, including the New Zealand Defence Force, OPC / Hillary Outdoors, Education Outdoors New Zealand (EONZ) a national professional organisation supporting the pedagogy of education outside the classroom (EOTC), and the New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association (NZOIA). While there were other schools and other polytechnics that had outdoor programmes, I considered that the territory was similar and that the nine participants would be sufficient.

The participants self-identified as Pākehā (a Māori term for New Zealanders of European descent). One was an immigrant from England, two were first generation New Zealanders with immigrant parents from Britain. Three were female, six were male. One had a PhD, three had a Master's degree, seven had teaching degrees or diplomas, five had a degree in a subject other than teaching, one had no tertiary qualification. While their parents paid employment covered a range from farming to building to accounting, the salient note about the participants' upbringing was that it had a two-parent stability, the family had sufficient money and education was clearly valued. In the participant's stories nobody went hungry. All of the participants are married and have one or more children.

The participants (and their occupation at the time of the interview) were:

Alastair Burns – Deputy Head-Outdoors at Dilworth Te Haerenga. Alastair has also worked at Tihoi Venture School, Blue Mountain Adventure Centre, and St Cuthbert's Kahunui. He was a founding staff member at Te Haerenga and Kahunui and is a trained occupational therapist and enthusiastic hunter.

Andy Thompson – Manager of Otago Polytech student village, though at the same time Andy was also a self-employed photographer, outdoor instructor and NZOIA assessor. Andy has been a past President of NZOIA and in 2018 was made a Life Member. He has worked for Otago Polytech, the Hamilton Skills Centre, OPC / Hillary Outdoors, the NZ Defense Force and Antarctica NZ. He has run his own adventure company.

Christine Furminger – Recently retired co-Director of Kahunui. Christine had been instrumental in establishing Kahunui with her husband John and the St Cuthbert's College Principal, Lynda Reid. A trained teacher, prior to Kahunui, Christine was co-

Director at Tihoi Venture School. She is a celebrator of ideas and a marriage celebrant. Under the Furminger's guidance, both the Tihoi (2002) and Kahunui (2009) programmes received the 'Excellence and Innovation in Education' award from EONZ. In 2016, John and Christine jointly received the Skills Active Aotearoa 'Supreme Award for Outstanding Leadership', and the Ministry for the Environment's 'Green Ribbon Award in Leadership and Communication'.

Cyn Smith – Director of Tihoi Venture School. Prior to being the sole Director, Cyn had been co-Director with her husband Chris Wynn, during which time the school had been awarded 'Best Outdoor Facility' at the 2007 NZOIA excellence awards. An enthusiastic distance runner, Cyn has also been a skiing instructor in Japan, a physed teacher at Reporoa College and Rotorua Girls High School, and an instructor at OPC / Hillary Outdoors and Tihoi.

Jean Cory-Wright – Senior Lecturer at the Ara Institute of Canterbury, on the bachelor and diploma programmes in Sustainability and Outdoor Education. An internationally renowned orienteer, prior to working at Ara, Jean helped develop the outdoor programmes at AUT and the University of Cumbria.

John Furminger – Recently retired Co-Director of Kahunui. Prior to Kahunui, John was co-Director at Tihoi Venture School, resident teacher at the Motutapu Island Outdoor Education Camp, and influential in the development of outdoor programmes at Waharau Outdoor Education Camp and Rosehill College. John is an avid fisherman and duck hunter. Both the Tihoi (2002) and Kahunui (2009) programmes received the 'Excellence and Innovation in Education' award from EONZ. In 2016, John and Christine jointly received the Skills Active Aotearoa 'Supreme Award for Outstanding Leadership', and the Ministry for the Environment's 'Green Ribbon Award in Leadership and Communication'. In 2017, John was awarded the 'Tall Totara for Excellence in Outdoor Leadership' by NZOIA.

Jonathan Taylor (JT) – Head of Outdoor Education at Kristin School. A keen hunter, a trained teacher and raft guide, prior to Kristin JT had worked as an outdoor instructor for Otago University, a youth development trust, and AdventureWorks. During JT's tenure, Kristin received the EONZ 'Excellence and Innovation in EOTC' award, 2018.

Mike Boyes – Associate Professor at Otago University, Sport and Exercise Science, School of Physical Education. For decades Mike has been at the forefront of New Zealand research into outdoor education and outdoor recreation. He has been a Head of Department – and thereby influenced strategic direction and curriculum development – at the Dunedin College of Education, Wanganui Boy's College and Okato College. A trained teacher, Mike has also been a physed advisor for the Taranaki Education Board and helped establish the Taranaki Outdoor Pursuits and Education Centre (TOPEC). In 2009, Mike was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for his services to outdoor recreation and mountain safety. Mike is a life member of the executive board of Education Outdoors New Zealand (EONZ), has made significant contributions to Outdoors New Zealand (ONZ) and the Mountain Safety Council (MSC) and received the SPARC 'Supreme Award for Outdoor Recreation' in 2007.

Rob MacLean – CEO Marlborough Lines Stadium. Prior to this role, Rob had been a long serving wilderness leadership instructor for the USA-based organization NOLS (National Outdoor Leadership School), a job that took him all around the world. Rob eventually helped established the New Zealand branch of NOLS and became the Programme Director. This led to being the School Director at Outward Bound Anakiwa. A keen hunter, tramper and skier, Rob has also been a self-employed project manager, and an ambulance officer for St John New Zealand.

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2.7.2 Interview process

The interviews happened at a place where the participant was comfortable. For some it was a quiet classroom at the place where they worked. Others invited me to their homes and we found a similarly quiet and suitable place to talk. For each of these interviews, there were other people around but the interview space was our own. Often there was a cup of tea and a social chat before the interview itself. This was consistent with the qualitative approach I was following, that of creating a relaxed atmosphere in order to have meaningful discussions; of doing as Fontana and Frey (2005) suggest, which is when interviewing, treat people as people and they will work

with us. I recorded all but one interview, with video camera and digital audio recorder. For the other one, the first interview, I hired a professional videographer who was discrete (and was an outdoor enthusiast too so had rapport with the participants). While I had a list of possible questions to ask, each interview started with questions about upbringing and how they had got into working in the outdoors. This led easily into the sharing of stories and a deepening of questions, which is the nature of a semi-structured interview. The participants had been informed (written and spoken) that they could avoid any topics that they deemed too sensitive, and that they could stop the interview at any time. Very few interviews were interrupted and no one declared a topic 'off limits'. Most went for about an hour. All were invited to bring photos to talk with, as per Loeffler's photo elicitation approach (Loeffler, 2004), but only some did.

While there is a range of approaches to interviewing, from unstructured through to highly specific questionnaires, the semi-structured approach was selected as suitable because asking similar open-ended questions across multiple interviews allowed for consistency, yet the participants are enabled to identify and discuss the points that they feel are significant (Bryman, 2016). Furthermore, such semi-structured qualitative interviewing allows for a back-and-forth conversation between interviewer and participant. It brings a flexibility and responsiveness that holds the possibility of both deepening the research topic and nudging it into new directions.

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2.8   The beginning of analysis

The interviews were initially 'analysed' using the reflexive thematic analysis method (Braun et al., 2018). In a typical qualitative analysis, narratives (and photographs) would be examined for relevant phrases / categories, then themes would 'emerge' from the common threads and links would be made to literature (Smythe, 2012). In the approach of Braun et al. (2018), the interview 'data' is examined in six phases. Codes, and eventually themes, are constructed. Nothing 'emerges' – it is a conscious, wilful process that links back iteratively to the literature and the research question itself. The reflexive part of the approach is to keep returning to the conversations (transcripts), keep returning to the literature, but also to follow the new threads that come up in this approach – the new literature spaces, the trails from one author to

another. Reflexivity here, is a moving away and a coming back, in order to deepen the understanding.

However, the discovery of, and move towards, a more Deleuzean framework of understanding, in the midst of one of the reflexive dives into the literature, shifted my thinking about the interviews. I could see that what had appeared to be conscious and wilful, was actually, first, emergent from the volume of words on the page, before it is consciously selected. This contradicted Braun's work of course, but it made more sense to me. I elected to pause and re-orient my study, but I retained what had been constructed in the reflexive thematic analysis, in order to see it anew with a Deleuzean lens. The research design extensively utilized writing-as-method when I re-commenced.

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2.8.1   A note about terminology

Some interview participants used the term 'clients' when discussing the people who participated in the programmes they were running. Others used the term 'students'. Rather than using both, as in 'clients /students', I elected to just use 'students' knowing that it could be swapped for 'clients' if readers needed to make that distinction.

This study uses the term 'outdoor education', though it recognizes that in New Zealand outdoor education is a 'contested notion' (Hill, 2010, p. 30), simply because of the variety of programmes that are made to fit into this term. Moreover, I acknowledge that there is a plethora of descriptive terms that are variations on outdoor education, including (but not limited to): adventure education and outdoor learning (e.g. *The Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning)*; adventure education (Neill & Dias, 2001), outdoor and environmental studies (Riley, 2014); outdoor experiential education (Martin et al., 2020); and wilderness adventure experience (Stringer & McAvoy, 1992). This point is visited again in Chapter 4.

****

2.9   Summary thoughts

The initial forays into the research process, followed by the new 'lines of flight' provoked by St. Pierre and Deleuze, prompted a returning to the literature again and again. This had the effect of an ever-expanding crystallization of information, one of those science experiments that happen in school with a jar full of super-saturated solution. One of the lines of flight was in the word 'spirituality'. I came to realize that every connotation of the word 'spirituality' needed some attention, and that attention uncovered facets that were not previously considered with enough focus. I also realized that the New Zealand context of outdoor education required me to examine Māori spirituality and whether this overlapped into a practice that was predominantly non-Māori in origin. Often these realizations came to me in the night and were clarified via journal pondering, a case of immanence into thought into action.

St Pierre and Deleuze changed how I thought about the interviews. They changed how I wrote, what I wrote. They validated creative writing as a method to uncover the nuanced, the too strange. They validated my years of professional experience and the writers that had accompanied and inspired me.

****

The next two chapters present the review of literature. Chapter 3 considers spirituality. Chapter 4 considers outdoor education in New Zealand. Both of these chapters are sizable as each topic is enormous. Yet at the end of it I felt like I was still only scratching the surface. I felt I could not do justice to them within the confines of the study, but what I present sheds some light upon them.

Chapter 3 Spirituality

This chapter considers spirituality because spirituality is in the topic: 'how New Zealand outdoor educators construct programmes to address (non-religious) spiritual growth'. Spirituality is a vast and complex subject. It is a subject with a history as old as humanity, and a field of contested notions like national identity, organizational authority and personal power. Some of this is broached in this chapter but much is not. What is here sheds light on what is to come in the chapters that follow. The following topics are discussed: the difference between religion and spirituality; the meaning of the words spirit, spirituality and spiritual transformation; and frameworks that help place spirituality in practical contexts.

The root word within spirituality is spirit, and the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) is a useful starting place for unpicking the torrent of meanings and uses of this word. The key meanings of spirit are examined here: spirit as God in the world, spirit as ghosts or supernatural beings, and spirit as an animating or vital life force. These three meanings of spirit have relevance to outdoor education in New Zealand, in that they influence or shade the different approaches in outdoor programmes.

While outdoor education in the New Zealand context is discussed in Chapter 4, it would be remiss to discuss this without also discussing te ao Māori (a Māori world view) and the influence of mātauranga Māori, the knowledge system of the Māori world incorporating philosophy, world view and practice (McAllister et al., 2019). Many of the New Zealand outdoor education programmes mentioned earlier, currently include elements of mātauranga Māori, like prayer (*karakia*), or the self-reflective knowledge of personal origins and affiliations (*pepeha*), but this was not always the case.

Te ao Māori is discussed from section 3.3. The discussion includes the terms *tapu, mauri*, *mana* and *wairua*. These are concepts integral to understanding spirituality from a Māori perspective. Te whare tapa whā (Durie, 1984, cited in Pitama et al., 2007) explains what health looks like by utilizing mātauranga Māori. Te whare tapa whā is used in the field of mental health. The Mental Health Foundation, Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research, and the Kura Kaupapa schools are New Zealand examples of the

successful inclusion of mātauranga Māori into organisational governance and practice. They represent a coming together of Western science and indigenous perspectives, including perspectives on spirituality (section 3.4).

The Four Domains of Spiritual Health and Wellbeing model (Fisher, 2011), is a conceptual tool that looks at how a spiritual transformation might be enabled to happen. The first three domains (personal, communal, environmental) are reflexive and recursive and set up the possibility for the fourth (transcendental) to take place. In Chapter 8, this model provided a lens to view the outdoor education programmes examined in the interviews.

Quite where and how spiritual transformation happens, is explored via the work of Fox (1999), Lasenby (2003), Robinson (2007c), Stringer and McAvoy (1992) and others. The fields of psychology (Pargament, 2006) and extreme sports (Karinch, 2000) also have something to offer. At first glance it may seem odd to include extreme sport (and a little of high-performance sport) but it has much in common with outdoor education. They both engage with nature, often with commitment and time; the outside space requires a level of fitness and a degree of technical competence (skills) in interaction, such that an individual (or group) thrives rather than 'survives'; this competence can be learned and built upon, such that mastery can be achieved; this mastery can lead to ease of performance such that the person can be open to 'the other'; and there is a degree of risk involved in the outdoor activities undertaken.

Throughout this chapter, the Deleuzean concepts of immanence and transcendence (Deleuze, 2001) imbue my understanding of spiritual transformation that arose from the exploration of spirit and spirituality. My conventions of 'Pondering' and 'The fold' occur several times in this chapter. Pondering comes from the journaling undertaken during the exploration of the topic, and allows the provocations and puzzles that arose when contemplating spirituality, to be voiced. The fold are stories from my own lived experience, that are relevant to the research; one of these stories now leads us into spirituality.

****

3.1   The fold: a tramping story 1

As a Pākehā, that is, a non-Māori New Zealander (Riley, 2006) growing up in the cow-oriented town of Hamilton, with a lapsed-Catholic mother and determinedly atheist father, neither spirituality or religion played a decisive part in my moulding. The two words were one and the same. Irregular visits to the Catholic church in Ngaruawahia, for family funerals, meant that occasionally I would witness things that were foreign to my everyday world, things like chanting, back and forth calling between the congregation and a man in a dress, a smoking ball attached to a chain being waived in people's faces, and a pattern of phrases and words that bounced around the cold cavern of the building and seemed to resonate with some of the people – 'our Lord, Jesus Christ', 'the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit'. What was 'a holy ghost'? I had no idea. Songs with strange cadences were sung and everyone seemed to know the words but me. I would watch as aunties, uncles, cousins and people I didn't know, listened to stories from the Bible and received what appeared to be words of wisdom, though often the point was too obscure for me to get. It seemed like the older they were, the more they got out of the ceremony. At other times, visiting my cousins, they often had to get ready for a thing called 'mass' but it was never made clear to me what happened there. Weddings (on that side of the family) were similar but the food was better.

When I was 16 my father took me deer stalking. It was a thing he had done with my three older brothers at the same age. Later I would see it as a 'rite of passage' but at the time it felt like an honour and a very scary thing. There would be just the two of us, it was winter and very cold where we were going, I would be carrying a pack that seemed ridiculously heavy (my father's was worse – I couldn't even lift it), and there was an expectation that we would find and kill a deer.

As we parked the car beside the river and entered the Kaimanawa Forest Park, I was excited. This felt important, not least of all because we were going somewhere that I had heard described by my father, when talking to visitors, in tones that were reverent, awed. The rain started almost immediately. Years later, when I re-traced the same route with students, I counted the number of river crossings. There were 88. That day with my father, I was not prepared for the continual immersion in the cold water, nor the drowned rat feeling that crept upon me as the rain penetrated my

layers. Going through what Dad described as 'the last gorge' my voice rose to an embarrassing squeak as the river came to my waist. I was grateful for his supporting arm but I was mentally and physically shattered by the time we stopped.

Being the competent man that he was, he quickly made camp, got me into the tent and a sleeping bag, then set about finding some standing dead timber and chopping it to bits with an axe to get a fire going. It seemed both an agonising wait and no time at all before there was a hot, sweet cup of tea and a bowl of stew in my hand. But the rain got heavier. For three days our little camp, snuggled into a stand of beech trees, was an island surrounded by roaring water as every stream in the valley burst and the main Waipakihi river surged. We were trapped. Dad kept me busy finding firewood and occasionally we would venture as far as we could 'for a walk' with our rifles, before being repulsed by one wall of water or another. I couldn't see how we would get out and the gorge was now clearly impassable.

On the fourth day, something was different. I couldn't quite place it. I walked out of camp and into the river flat where big tussocks grew like hairy mushrooms. I climbed on top of one, balanced and looked around. The sky was still a heaving ominous blackness, but there was no wind. The valley was quiet, even the river that had roared day and night, was now silent. The silence was loud, it wrapped around me and brought something into focus. I noticed the frozen water droplets on every tussock stalk, the epaulettes of tiny plants, trails of rabbit droppings. Then, out of the bulging dark sky, snow began to fall. I had never seen snow before. Soon the entire river valley was draped in the cloth of falling white fragments of light. It took my breath away. Perched atop the tussock, I held out my hands and they were filled with tiny bits of something that vanished as soon as they landed. My head, which for days had been filled with anxious commentary, was quiet and calm. I don't know how long I stood there but when I eventually looked around, there was my Dad standing at the bush edge, watching me. He didn't say anything or make any gesture. He just raised his eyebrows in that very New Zealand way of acknowledgement, and turned back to camp.

The cold reduced the amount of water going into the river and Dad knew it was our opportunity to escape. Strangely, when I think of this years later, I have no recall of the

pain of those cold, deep river crossings. What I do see, is that that moment of stillness and snow was a moment that connected my father and me across years of conflict. That the difficulty we had with each other as I moved through adolescence and then adulthood, was tempered by the knowledge that we had shared something. That 'something' was an insight into the raw beauty of the place, the power of it, the majesty. The 'otherness' of it. When I took my own students to that valley, I watched their anxious voices drop away and the struggle of getting there be rewarded by that same beauty. The place and the power of it had not changed. This was something I did not get in a church.

<div align="center">********</div>

3.2 Religion and spirituality

The 'otherness' experienced in the tramping story above, *showed* me that there is a difference between religion and spirituality. Literature concurs. Writing from the fields of theology and anthropology, Hefner and Koss-Chioino (2006) explain that "religion is attached to social institutions and corporate practices" but spirituality "is reserved to refer to individual experience" (p. 4). Religion, however, includes spiritual practices that seek to enhance or develop spirituality, so the two concepts have an overlap.

This dichotomy is clarified further by Gautam (2020), who investigated spirituality in older adults in Nepalese health care facilities. Gautam contends that:

> Religion involves a shared social system of belief and rituals practiced by certain groups; whereas spirituality is searching for the meaning of life, which is not necessarily based on religion
>
> (Gautam, 2020, p. 28, citing Gautam et. al., 2019)

Gautam suggests that there is little consensus in the health field around a universal definition of spirituality, because it can mean different things to different people (ibid, p. 27). This distinction, between religion and spirituality, is typical of the literature but also common in the marketing of organisations whose practice specifically involves an exploration of spirituality for mental health benefits. For example, in the following two excerpts, we can see this distinction, and also that components of spirituality include an inward, personal process (as opposed to an external social one), an experience of connection, and that it involves searching, especially for meaning.

From Reach Out, an Australian mental health organization for young people:

> **Religion** is a specific set of organized beliefs and practices, usually shared by a community or group. **Spirituality** is more of an individual practice, and has to do with having a sense of peace and purpose. It also relates to the process of developing beliefs around the meaning of life and connection with others, without any set spiritual values.
>
> (Reach Out, n.d)

From The Chopra Center, an American health provider:

> **Religion** is a personal set or institutionalized system of religious attitudes, beliefs, and practices; the service and worship of God or the supernatural…
>
> On the whole, a formal religion is often an *object-referral* experience. In other words, there is usually a greater focus on the externals: Houses of worship (e.g., a church), books of scripture, eternal rituals and observances.
>
> **Spirituality** on the other hand, connotes an experience of connection to something larger than you; living everyday life in a reverent and sacred manner… Spirituality is an inward journey that involves a shift in awareness rather than some form of external activity.
>
> (Brady, 2019)

Robinson (2007b), writing from the field of sport science, concurs with all of this. In addition, he states that religion may provide motivation for spiritual development but it is possible for motivation to be self-directed; that spirituality can influence ethics and morality through a heightening of awareness of 'the other'; and that spirituality evolves with practice and experience. In this sense, spirituality is dynamic and interactive. It involves doing and experiencing and reflecting and developing. Spirituality, says Robinson," is not about fantasy worlds where everything is resolved and all are happy. It starts from the reality of relationships and seeks to find meaning in those relationships" (p. 37).

****

3.2.1 Pondering: what is spirituality?

Spirituality is a change

That makes you see everything, especially yourself, in a new light

How long does the change last?

Spirituality is a quest

To understand the purpose and meaning in your life.

<p align="center">*********</p>

3.3   Spirit(s)

And what of the word within the word, the spirit within spirituality? The word comes from the Latin *spiritus*, meaning breath, wind, life principle (Robinson, 2007b) or "breath of life" (Heintzman, 2009, p. 72). Neal (1997) contends it comes from the Latin *spirare* meaning 'to breathe', meaning that spirit is what inhabits us when we are alive and breathing, a life force. But there is more to this word. Consider these different ways in which the word spirit is conveyed:

> We were trying to create a brand, I said, but also a culture. We were fighting against conformity, against boringness, against drudgery. More than a product, we were trying to sell an idea – a spirit.
>
> (Knight, 2016, p. 250)

> ...because no good thing can be done by any man alone, I will first make an offering and send a voice to the Spirit of the World, that it may help me to be true.
>
> (Black Elk in Neihardt, 1932 /1974, p. 13, capitals in original)

> Spirit is the immaterial aspect of living beings.
>
> (Hufford & Bucklin, 2006, p. 28)

> Spirit is not primarily about ideas but about lived experience.
>
> (Robinson, 2007b, p. 23)

> I must be feeling low I talked to God in a phone box on my way home
>
> I told you my answer
>
> I left you my dreams on your answer machine
>
> Come on

Let the spirit inside you don't wait to be found

(The Verve, 1997, lyrics to 'Come on')

These excerpts expose the variety of meanings held in the word 'spirit'. Phil Knight was the founder of the shoe company Nike. The Knight quote above, explaining the origins and philosophy of the company, suggests people striving to establish a shared purpose for the company's existence beyond the product, a shared feeling and recognition of themselves as unique and united. This striving is often captured in the term 'team spirit'.

Black Elk was a Lakota Sioux holy man (Neihardt, 1932 /1974). The Black Elk quote suggests a singular deity – the Spirit of the World – that can be connected with, and rituals that enable that connection. However, in other sections of Neihardt's work, Black Elk pays respects to other spirits – the spirits of each wind (or compass direction), the voices of animals (eagles) and weather (thunder spirits) and the dead (the voices of the grandfathers). Black Elk identifies everyday objects used in his ceremonies - the herb sage, the smoking pipe, paint, feathers – as sacred. This raises an inquiry into the relationship between what 'spirit' is, and what 'sacred' means (both of which are examined later in this chapter). The Lakota tradition emphasised reciprocity and relationship in dealing with the spirit world; it was (is) an arrangement of giving and paying respect.

The Hufford and Bucklin (2006) excerpt, from the academic disciplines of psychology and religious studies, appears definitive. But immaterial can be incorporeal - not made of matter - or unimportant, or flimsy, depending on the context (OED, 2021c). Immaterial alludes to that which is ethereal, not physical, but still part of what makes a living (human) being. This definition is lacking, in that 'thought' could be described the same way but thought and spirit have two quite different connotations.

Where Robinson (2007b) stated that the 'spirit is not primarily about ideas but about lived experience', he was referring to the thing that is vital to and animates the self; he was suggesting that spirit is the quality of aliveness that exudes from a person when they are physically and mentally in tune, and in tune with the space they are in. While his examples of spirit revolved around the context of football, his point was relevant - spirit is dynamic.

The Verve were an influential British band of the 'Britpop' sound of the late 1990's. Talking to God in a phone box is hardly normal (especially in the second decade of the 21st century when the phone box no longer exists because of technology) and the lyrics here imply a desperate search for something, or a plea for help, or a personal connection to an omnipotent deity. As such, they are typical of four approaches to spirit and spirituality often seen in popular music (in the western world at least): they reflect a searching for meaning; they reflect a cynicism about orthodox religion; they convey a force (spirit) that is internal and waiting to be unleashed; or they suggest an external spiritual force (God) that can be connected with. These approaches offer a rich vein for musicians to mine, and songs about spirit encompass a variety of genres from gospel to rock to rap, permeate the history of modern music and are example of the common ground that binds us as humans. Consider this excerpt, from an academic musicologist discussing the rapper Eminem, a most unlikely candidate, and genre, for spirituality:

> His music can be seen as a dynamic sphere of spiritual activity in terms of guilt-purification-redemption, love-hate, and relationship-awareness. While paying attention to Eminem's sonic spirituality began as a personal exercise, it now represents an important part of understanding how spirituality operates culturally and is just like sound: recognizable, uncontainable and elusive.... Here's the revelation: sonic spirituality is a listening attitude, a personalized relationship with music that allows us to mark time, experience the intangible, track movement, engage otherness and, in the end, encounter more honest versions of ourselves (Dawkins, 2013)

When Dawkins says that spirituality is about listening, about experiencing the intangible, about engaging with an 'otherness', when she says "spirituality is just like sound – recognizable, uncontainable and elusive", she uses language that has parallels with the language used earlier to address spirituality by Brady (2019) – "spirituality is an inward journey... there is a shift in awareness" and Gautam (2020) "searching for meaning". Dawkins "personalized relationship" is the same as Gautam's "different things to different people". There are also religious overtones in Dawkins 'guilt-purification-redemption', which has parallels to the overlapping space between religion and spirituality, of Hefner and Koss-Chioino (2006).

Neal (1997) noted that spirituality is hard to define and "many of the people writing on spirituality... don't even attempt to try". Neal's (2013) Handbook of Faith and Spirituality in the Workplace, contains discussions on spirituality and religion and practice yet does not expose the different facets of the word 'spirit'. From the five exerpts that this section started with (Knight, Black Elk, Hufford & Bucklin, Robinson, The Verve) we can see that the word 'spirit' has multiple facets to it; understanding which facet of spirit is being discussed would help the reader's understanding of spirituality. Literature on spirituality tends to acknowledge only one or two of these facets, such as the personal search for meaning in the world (Anderson, 2007), the independent, infinite and immaterial nature of the self (Hogan, 2009) or the attribution of meaning to the presence of a deity (Neal, 2013). Most often the word 'spirit' goes unacknowledged – for example, Lasenby (2003) mentions spirituality over 500 times yet does not dig into the facets of the word 'spirit'. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, usually a source of insight, offered confusion not clarity. Heintzman (2009), in a meta analysis of research on spirituality in outdoor education, noted that the *content* of spiritual expressions (e.g. words of prayer) differs from the spiritual *process* (e.g the act of praying), and the process may be similar across different traditions or cultures, but gave no understanding of the facets of the word 'spirit' beyond its Latin root. A starting point for examining these facets is needed. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) provides that starting point.

3.3.1   Spirit according to the OED

The Oxford English Dictionary is arguably the pre-eminent source of etymology for the English language. It is certainly one of the oldest having been established since 1857. The literature that it examines for etymology includes the oldest manuscripts, religious texts, and words from other languages. It is also a living entity, as words (and definitions of those words) are added each year as they come into regular use. The definitions of the word Spirit, found in the OED, provided the clearest explanation (and examples) of a word with multiple meanings. Other sources, including those mentioned above, were either less clear or did not supply the range of meanings that the OED did. The OED lists six facets or 'branches' for the word spirit:

1. An animating or vital principle; the soul; the immaterial or sentient element of a person.

2. An incorporeal, supernatural, rational being, and extended uses.

3. Breath, and related senses.

4. The divine nature or essential power of God.

5. A guiding or governing principle or power, and related senses.

6. A substance, essence, etc formerly believed to animate or provide life; a volatile substance esp. one extracted by distillation (OED, 2021a)

Some of these OED branches can be disregarded because they don't relate to the purpose of this inquiry: the 'guiding principle' branch seems to relate to concepts like 'team spirit' where people share the same purpose or attitude; this is what the Knight example above was referring to. The 'substance' branch seems to (mostly) relate to alcoholic drinks but shares an intimation of the 'vital principle' from #1. 'Breath' seems to relate to the act or action of being alive. That leaves the 'animating or vital principle', sometimes known as the soul; supernatural beings (like ghosts); and the divine nature or essential power of God.

****

3.3.2 Spirit as God in the world

Which branch plays out within the word spirituality? The answer to that depends on what you believe. If you believe in a religious deity – God or Allah for example – then the spirit of spirituality refers to that connection to the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost or "God as spiritually active in the world" (OED, 2021a)

> In the Western world the Christian church has dominated spirituality, relating it directly and exclusively to religion
>
> (Robinson, 2007a, p. 9)

Robinson goes on to state that spirituality in the Church was about adherence to doctrine and developing a relationship with the Holy Spirit. Religion was (and is) based on faith, emotions, intuition and a weaving of stories and divinely oriented spirits into daily existence. The Judeo-Christian theology that came to dominate Western Europe (and subsequently spread outwards via a colonising philosophy, eventually arriving in New Zealand in the late 18th century), incorporated much of this into its practice until the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century forced a split in thinking:

> The Catholic world was permeated by supernatural manifestations: miracles, saintly intercessions, even the sacraments themselves. Direct interventions by the heavenly realm were normal, expected (even invocable) features of reality in Catholic eyes. Protestantism denied most of them. The God it portrayed would not grant such 'popish' boons to a mankind as utterly, frightfully fallen as Luther and Calvin believed
>
> (Cerullo, 1982, cited in Hufford & Bucklin, 2006, p. 32)

According to Hufford and Bucklin (2006), perhaps initially provoked by the Protestant Reformation, philosophers from Hume (1711-1776) and Kant (1724-1804) to Marx (1818-1883), rejected the belief in divinely oriented spirits because they had developed a greater belief in a science based on reason and observable facts.

> The result of these parallel developments in very different intellectual traditions was the distinctly modern separation of the spiritual from the observable world
>
> (Hufford & Bucklin, 2006, p. 33)

This separation of spirits from what was observable, was also a separation of that which had been explained by story, magic, awe and wonder, and that which could be understood by technology and measuring and calculation. This was the 'disenchantment of the world' (ibid) according to the historian and sociologist Max Weber (1864-1920), meaning the world was no longer enchanted; that modern (Western) thinkers used rationality, not magic and spirits and myths, to explain the world. In a similar vein (though many decades later), Mander (1991), Roszak et al. (1995), and Suzuki (1997) all suggested that it was the dominance of rationality in Western societies, and accompanying arrogance of that position, coupled with an overconfidence in technology to solve problems, that was causing great harm to indigenous cultures and was at the heart of much that was wrong with the modern world. Stewart et al. (2020) would reframe this dominance and overconfidence in terms of Euro-American colonialism and 'Whiteness'.

In the middle of the Twentieth century, the Protestant theologian Rudolf Bultmann found this view of the world - that it could be explained by story, magic, awe and wonder - had persisted, though he railed against it:

> The mythical view of the world is obsolete.... now that the forces and the laws of nature have been discovered, we can no longer believe in

> spirits, whether good or evil... it is impossible to use electric light and the wireless and to avail ourselves of modern medical and surgical discoveries, and at the same time to believe in...spirits
>
> (Bultmann, 1953, cited in Hufford & Bucklin, 2006, p. 34)

Is that exasperation and contempt in Bultmann's words? How upset he would be then to read Hufford and Bucklin's conclusions about life in the Twenty-first century: belief in the spirit world, and in intervention in human life by spirits, still persists.

Bultmann could not have foreseen what happened after the 1950's. Robinson (2007a, p. 20) contends that "spirituality broke free of religion in the late twentieth century", provoked by postmodernism and by the rise of New Age movement of the late 1960's which promoted spirituality as an individual development. Moreover, Robinson contends that this had the effect of raising awareness of spiritual matters, not just in the wider population but in the institutions beyond the Church – that the fields of education, medicine, and mental health (especially) began to consider and integrate nontheistic spirituality in some form. Spirit as God in the world – as defined by the Church – was no longer sufficient.

Spirit as God in the world also relates to the divine in nature, that is, the presence of God seen in the natural beauty (and phenomena) of the world. To the proponents of the sublime in the artistic flowering of the Romantic period of the 18th and 19th centuries, the quest was to capture, in paint or verse, that which was beyond human understanding, that which was of exalted status, above the ordinary (Riding & Llewellyn, 2013). In 1757 the philosopher Edmund Burke described the sublime in seven aspects that occurred in the natural world:

> Darkness – which constrains the sense of sight (primary among the five senses)
>
> Obscurity – which confuses judgement
>
> Privation (or deprivation) – since pain is more powerful than pleasure
>
> Vastness – which is beyond comprehension
>
> Magnificence – in the face of which we are in awe
>
> Loudness – which overwhelms us
>
> Suddenness – which shocks our sensibilities to the point of disablement
>
> (Riding & Llewellyn, 2013)

The point was to provoke a reaction, a strong emotion, and in that way be elevated above ordinary sensations, to have a transcendent experience. People (usually those that could afford it) also did this by travelling to dramatic and beautiful landscapes. In Europe this was inevitably the Alps, though the Lake District of England, volcanic eruptions, avalanches, and a storm-tossed sea were considered appropriate subjects too. While Burke's seven aspects seem a little restricted now, the idea of using the phenomena of the natural world to confuse and overwhelm or create a state of dissonance, is an idea that has been subsumed into outdoor education practice. Striving to find (or re-create) that sense of awe and wonder, in order to bring people out of themselves and into the world, is another aspect of outdoor education practice. For outdoor adventurers and outdoor educators of the 20th and 21st centuries, experiencing the divine in nature was not a history lesson, but rather both a quest and an everyday occurrence. What that transcendent experience was attributed to, depended on their beliefs.

****

3.3.3   Spirit as ghosts or supernatural beings

The 'supernatural' branch of 'spirit' appears to be about those entities that were once living, called ghosts, and their lifelike appearance. The expanded OED definition describes this:

> An incorporeal, supernatural, rational being, of a type usually regarded as imperceptible to humans but capable of becoming visible at will, and frequently (esp. in early use) conceived as terrifying, troublesome, or hostile to mankind. Often with modifying word or phrase indicating the nature or character of the being, or the context or environment with which it is associated. Often with *the*, denoting a particular being (OED, 2021a)

These supernatural beings, who can come and go as they choose, who interact with the living for some purpose (warnings, predictions for future success, meddling), have been part of human story telling for a long time. They are the bread and butter of the modern horror-movie genre (for example, The Exorcist, 1973; The Shining, 1980; The Sixth Sense, 1999) and captured in some of the oldest literature of the Western tradition. The plays of Shakespeare, written between 1590 and 1613, contain many ghosts, for example, the ghost of Hamlet's father in Hamlet, the ghosts of Richard's

victims in Richard III, and the ghost of Banquo in Macbeth. In older stories, these
visitations were (also) often understood as interventions by gods. Greek gods weave in
and out of Homer's story of 'The Odyssey', written in the 7th or 8th century BC. For
example, the goddess Athena enters the human world and visits Odysseus' son
Telemachus; Calypso is ordered to release Odysseus by the god Hermes; Odysseus
visits the underworld following instructions from Circe, a witch-goddess (Homer,
1996). These visitations were normal and instructional, accepted easily as devices by
the writers and as plausible events by the audience. Spirit(s) in this sense are the
ghosts of dead people or they are gods come to interject themselves in the affairs of
humans.

<center>*********</center>

3.3.4   Spirit in indigenous cosmology

But spirit(s) pre-dates writing as a metaphor for explaining the world and its myriad
phenomena. Indigenous cosmologies came before literature, before the
industrialization of societies. Each indigenous society evolved their own way of
explaining the world. The deep history of the world is infused with a belief in spirits
that weave into everyday life. Consider again, the words of the Lakota holy man, Black
Elk, whose life traversed the tribal, nomadic, horse and buffalo oriented world that
existed in the Great Plains Indian cultures until the 1890's, and into the rationalist,
Christian, Manifest Destiny obsessed juggernaut that became the United States of
America. The 'One', the 'Great Spirit' in the following examples, are pre-Western pre-
Christian connections:

> But these four spirits are only one Spirit after all, and this eagle
> feather here is for that One, which is like a father, and also it is for
> the thoughts of men that should rise high as eagles do. Is not the sky
> a father and the earth a mother, and are not all living things with feet
> or wings or roots their children?
>
> (Neihardt, 1932 /1974, p. 14, capitals in original)

> Hey hey! Hey hey! Hey hey! Hey hey!

> Grandfather, Great Spirit, you have been always, and before you no
> one has been. There is no other one to pray to but you. You yourself,
> everything that you see, everything has been made by you...
>
> (ibid, p. 15, capitals in original)

What Black Elk conveys is the deep and relational way of knowing the world, what Robinson (2007b) calls "the familiar social network of belonging" (p. 27). This way of knowing the world is also explored in a conversation between William Least Heat Moon (one of the writers that accompanied me, metaphorically, on my outdoor education journey, as described in Chapter 2), and a Hopi man named Fritz. Typical of Least Heat Moon, he struck up a conversation with this man when they randomly met in a café in a small town in Utah, and the conversation offered insight into understanding the world (Least Heat Moon, 1982). Fritz explained the Hopi Way, and the Four Worlds which humanity had evolved through and which were the heart of the Hopi religion. Least Heat Moon writes that "the key seemed to be emergence" (p. 192) and that there was a symbol for it (Figure 5).

The symbol represented the journey a person followed as they go through life, as they pass through birth, death and rebirth –

> The emergence symbol is a kind of map of the wandering soul, an image of a process; but it is also, like most Hopi symbols and ceremonies, a reminder of cosmic patterns that all human beings move in.
>
> (Least Heat Moon, 1982, p. 192)

Figure 5

Symbol for The Hopi Way
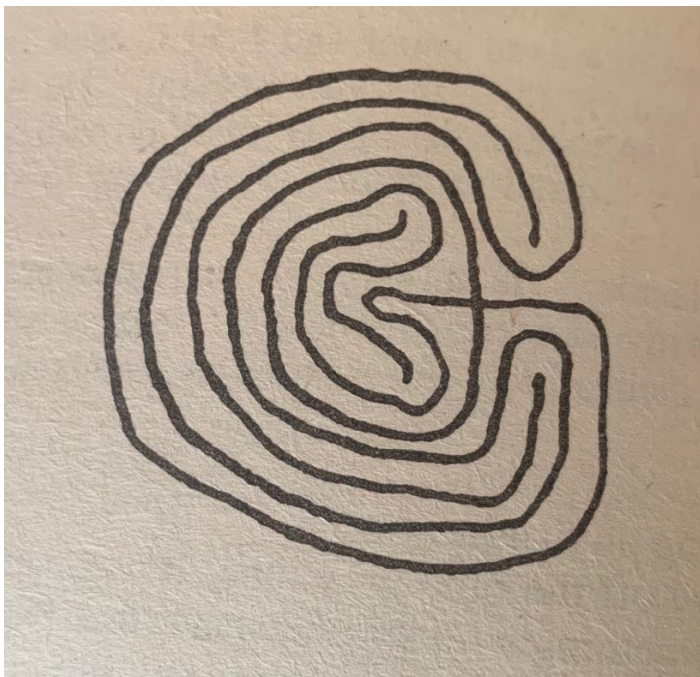
Note. Illustration by Least Heat Moon (1982, p. 192)

Fritz explained to Least Heat Moon that the Hopi Way reminds them that people "aren't just will and thoughts" and that "you learn to respect everything because you *are* everything" (p. 193, italics in original). That people are also rain and sand and wind and thunder, that they are all of those things, and because of that knowledge all things need to be respected. But more than this, if they are not respected, then people will disappear from the world.

Straddling both the dis-enchanted, rational world of modern science, and the pre-literate indigenous world of spirit belief like that expressed by Black Elk and discussed in Least Heat Moon, geneticist and environmentalist David Suzuki contends that all cultures have a foundational belief in life beyond death, in power beyond human power.

> In our modern world we see matter and spirit as antithetical, but our myths reveal a different understanding. They describe a world permeated by spirit, where matter and spirit are simply different aspects of the same totality: together they constitute "being" (Suzuki, 1997, p. 188)

The natural world in this case, is inhabited by a sacredness that surrounds the people, that promotes a being-with and a sense of belonging. Suzuki contends that 'traditional cultures live in an animated world' (ibid). That natural objects and phenomena – the forests, rocks and mountains, the wind, the sun, the lakes, rivers and sea – all may contain, or be, spirits. In addition, he suggests that "the spirits of the dead or of the unborn, may be eternally present, acting powerfully in the living world..." (p.189). This interconnectedness, this belong to nature not separate from it, this mixing of sacredness, nature and people, is what modern humans (urban dwellers especially) seldom notice. Louv (2005; 2011), echoing the conversation between Least Heat Moon and Fritz, suggested that a consequence of not noticing is nature-deficit disorder and subsequent poor physical and mental health.

****

3.3.5 Te ao Māori

Suzuki's contention, that 'traditional cultures live in an animated world', aligns in New Zealand with Māori ontology. Smith (2000, p. 45) states there are three beliefs implicit in te ao Māori, the Māori world: the view that everything in existence is connected;

the belief that all things are living; the belief that unseen worlds can be mediated by humans. What is 'unseen' in the Western world view, is 'seen' in the Māori world. Māori talk to the dead quite often, but this is viewed by Pākehā as irrational (p. 48). Smith uses the example of *whakapapa* to explain these beliefs.

3.3.6 Whakapapa

Smith (2000) explains how whakapapa is usually translated as genealogy but it is more than a means of establishing identity, it is an explanation of the interconnectedness of all things, not just the lineal descent of humans.

> Whakapapa provides explanation for existence and also articulates the human role within that existence. Within whakapapa there are origins and explanations for trees, birds, parts of the human body, words and speaking, the cosmos, the gods, karakia, the moon, the wind and stones. (p. 45)

Whakapapa is not just an examination of connections, it is also a verb. On formal occasions, such as speaking on a marae, a traditional ritual space for groups to meet (Ka'ai & Higgins, 2004) , a speaker would recite their whakapapa to the gathered audience:

> To whakapapa allows the speaker and listeners to negotiate the terrain of both seen and unseen experience (Smith, 2000, p. 45)

Reilly (2004) outlines what a highly detailed, formal whakapapa would contain. Māori ascribe the starting point of creation to the supreme deity, Io, so a formal whakapapa might therefore start with acknowledging Io, and move to a recitation of the thirteen levels of creation, before explaining the emergence of the sky (Rangi-nui) and the earth (Papa-tūā-nuku), and the spirit world. This would then be followed by acknowledging the gods (*atua*) of the natural world, and eventually move to a recitation of their human lineage. This would be a very long recitation for an audience to hear (I have heard of one lasting over two hours), but In this way, whakapapa displays the interconnectedness of all things, including the unseen.

Smith (2000) contends that the three beliefs implicit in the Māori world were commonly held views by people around the world, but the processes of colonisation negatively impacted both the views and the people.

These ideas were ridiculed and regarded as primitive, irrational and unscientific

(p. 46)

In this way, Smith aligns with the views of Mander (1991), Roszak et al. (1995), and Suzuki (1997) mentioned earlier, in that a complex indigenous belief system was negated by colonialism and the dominance of a Western scientific viewpoint. Section 3.4 gives some examples of how this has changed recently in New Zealand; how indigenous perspectives have been incorporated into models of governance.

3.3.7 A two world system

According to Ka'ai et al. (2004), in te ao Māori (a Māori world view), the natural world is interwoven with gods or *atua*. Each atua is manifested in an aspect of the natural world. The parents of the atua were Rangi-nui and Papa-tūā-nuku. Rangi and Papa were also the creators of all of the natural world, including people, which means that each aspect of the world and each atua, is related to the other aspects and atua:

Tāne in the forest

Tangaroa in the sea and marine life

Haumia-tiketike in uncultivated foods such as bracken root (aruhe)

Rongo-mā-tāne in the sweet potato (kūmara) or cultivated foods

Tāwhiri-mātea in the winds

Rū-au-moko in earthquakes and volcanic activity

(Ka'ai & Higgins, 2004, p. 14)

In their creation stories, Māori people are descended from the atua Tāne because Tāne not only pushed the sky and land apart to bring light into the world, Tāne also made the first woman and originated human procreation. Māori trace this connection to Tāne via their genealogy or *whakapapa*. Moreover, as people live within the natural world, they have a relationship with that natural world and the atua who manifest in each aspect. Te ao Māori, then, is "a 'two world system' where:

The world of the atua is not separated absolutely from the world of everyday activities, from the secular world. Rather, the two worlds are closely linked, all activities in the everyday world being seen as coming under the influence of spiritual powers

The term used to describe the influence of atua over all things animate (like people, insects or animals) and inanimate (like mountains, rivers or canoes) is *tapu*.

3.3.8 Tapu

> Tapu is something that teaches you how to respect the whole of nature, because Māori things involve the whole of nature
>
> (Ngoi Pewhairangi, cited in King, 1975/1992, p. 10)

Tapu is one of the primary cultural concepts of the Māori world (Ka'ai & Higgins, 2004, p. 13). The influence of atua – the tapu - is manifested by a system of protective prohibitions or restrictions, around what people can do in the natural world. Tapu also alludes to a specialness that needs protecting and nourishing. An example of tapu would be a *rahui*, or temporary restriction, on food gathering at a place. This may be because some tragic event has occurred, like a drowning at a beach or in a part of a river, but a rahui might also be placed on an area because it is recognized that the food resource is becoming depleted.

Tapu is also a specialness attributed to something, like a physical place, or attributed to a practical understanding, like knowledge. Tapu is to be respected:

> I remember a boy stood up at a seminar I was at. He said he had in his possession books that had belonged to his ancestors and that had been handed down through his father to him. He didn't know how he should handle them. I stood up and replied to the speeches and I said to him, 'These books are valuable, they hold your whakapapa and your tapu. If you want to learn from them, take them away from food and clothing that belongs to women, to somewhere surrounded by nature. When there is just you and your books and nature you can recite and learn all those things. That way you can preserve the tapu that your ancestors have placed on those books. In time, you will find you will be inspired to carry on what they have left for you'
>
> (Te Uira Manihera, cited in King, 1975/1992, p. 9)

Tapu is a sense that something is sacred, important. Te Uira Manihera also notes that knowledge that is treated with disrespect or contempt, has lost its life, lost its tapu (ibid). Marsden in King (1975/1992) also aligns tapu with sacred and holy, but not with the aspect of moral righteousness that comes with the origins of those words (p.119).

Marsden concurs with Te Uira Manihera, in that a tapu object 'is sacred and any profane use is sacrilege, breaking the law of tapu' (ibid). Because of these characteristics, tapu surrounds a thing with restrictions; tapu becomes a means to protect. In addition, the 'antidote' to tapu is a concept called *noa*, which is sometimes described as being the 'antonym of tapu' i.e. 'unclean, unrestricted or profane' (Ka'ai & Higgins, 2004, p. 15) or seen as the lifting of the tapu (these purification rituals are also known as *pure*). An example of this would be visiting a cemetery or *urupā*. An urupā is a sacred site where one's ancestors are buried. It is duly accorded respect; that respect is shown by the mindfulness with which one approaches the entering of the urupā, the prayer or *karakia* one would say in order to enter that space, and the actions within that space. Then, as one leaves that space, actions would involve another karakia and a washing of the hands, because water is a physical manifestation of the cleansing of the tapu or the lifting of the restrictions, in order to re-enter everyday life. Tapu, then, is a thing that one can go in and out of – tapu and noa.

Shirres (1992), cited in Ka'ai and Higgins (2004, p. 16) notes that noa relates to the restrictions created by tapu – the rules around it – rather than the tapu that is intrinsic. This is important because it alludes to the sense, in Māoridom, that things have inherent value in and of themselves, and they have perceived value, as in their relationship to other things.

Tauroa and Tauroa (1986, p. 151) further expand our understanding of tapu. Tapu is a matter for the individual, because it requires certain disciplinary responses, but "it is more than mere native superstition; it acts as a means of social control". Tapu regulates behaviour:

> Antisocial behaviour should not take place because of the consequences of tapu relating to such behaviour... Some activities governed by tapu appear nothing more than common sense and the respect for people and property; others have a very deep emotional and spiritual base. Sadly, the strict controls that were previously effected by tapu have not been replaced in today's world

According to Patterson (1998), observing rituals, like tapu and noa, in everyday life provide a significant link between the past and the present. The specialness or sense of the sacred surrounding a concept like tapu, is subject to the laws that govern the

rituals. To omit the ritual is not just to transgress 'the law' of the ritual, but it invites trouble:

> What we do will not be taken seriously, and it is likely to fail badly... unless the rituals are performed on appropriate occasions, the world will not function properly... this is not seen as an historical event that is over and done with; part of the idea is that it must be ritually re-enacted from time to time if the *mauri* of the world is to continue to flourish
>
> (Patterson, 1998, p. 70, emphasis in original)

3.3.9 Mauri

Patterson's quote brings us to another major concept in te ao Māori: the idea of life force or *mauri*. Patterson describes mauri as having many meanings: it is a life force, an essence, a uniqueness; it is the thing that unites everything, the thing that gives life to everything; it is the value inherent within a thing (e.g. a totara tree, a flax bush) that must be respected and acknowledged by doing good work, by making quality things (e.g. a wood carving, a flax basket). Ka'ai and Higgins (2004) note that mauri could be strengthened, diminished or transmitted, and that it could be focused into a material object:

> Carved mauri stones were buried in tribal lands to maintain the mauri, or fruitfulness of crops under Rongo (p. 18)

An example of this is found in central Auckland, in Cornwall Park. Figure 6 and Figure 7 show a volcanic stone representing the mauri of the atua Rongo. While the language on the plaque is dated, and the stone is above ground, not buried, the plaque states that the stone is a talisman, meaning that it is imbued with the influence of Rongo in order to grow healthy kumara.

Figure 6

The Cornwall Park Mauri Stone

Figure 7

The Mauri Stone Plaque
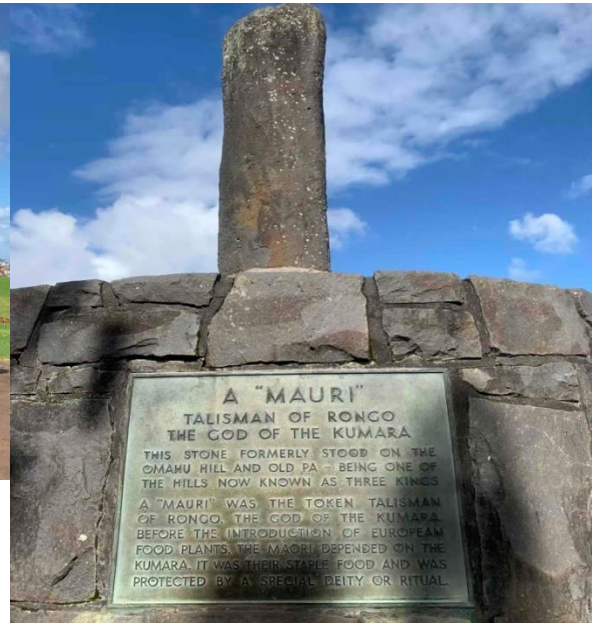
Note. Both photographs are author's own.

Just as the theologian Bultmann struggled with the idea of spirits, so Western science struggles with the concept of life force or mauri, because it is antithetical to that which can be observed and measured. But there is another aspect of mauri that science can grasp and that is ethics; see, for example, Patterson (1999). In this instance, the ethics would involve respecting a thing (a tree, a rock, a flax bush, a river) enough, that when wanting to use that thing, one would strive to make a quality object, or to want to do a good job, or strive to safeguard the resource by treating it with care. Ethics involves knowledge which influences mindfulness, which in turn influences actions taken.

3.3.10 Mana

Mana is another primary, foundational concept of the Māori world. It is closely linked to the concept of tapu (Ka'ai & Higgins, 2004). Mana means authority, power, prestige, respect (Riley, 2006). It also means control, influence (Ka'ai & Higgins, 2004), and status, though Tauroa and Tauroa (1986) suggest that none of these capture the degree of humility associated with mana. Mana may be acquired by simply being the senior member of the family, or because of certain talents a person has; it is felt more than seen, a quality that is recognized by other people as opposed to a status that an individual can work for or demand (Tauroa & Tauroa, 1986). Mana could be inherited from direct ancestors and passed to descendants (Mahuika in King, 1975/1992):

> The son of a chief inherited from his father the mana of his ancestors as well as that his father acquired. The mana of the chief gave him the authority to control and direct the activities of the tribe or sub-tribe (ibid, p. 45)

The relationship between mana, atua and the natural world (*taiao*) is explained by Ka'ai and Higgins (2004): mana originates from the atua, atua are manifested in all of the natural world, therefore Māori people - who live in the natural world – are connected to the atua. Mana is delegated by the gods to their human agent, so "man (sic) remains always the agent or channel, never the source of mana" (Marsden in King, 1975/1992, p. 119).

3.3.11 Interconnectedness

The cosmology of the Māori world convey interconnectedness. It says that within our actions there sits multiple layers of concepts, and at the heart of it is a way of seeing the world. This belief system includes a concept of a life force in all things (mauri), that connects all things. It acknowledges a specialness (tapu) that needs protecting and nourishing. It acknowledges an authority or power that is attributed to all things (*mana*) because of what they are and what they connect with and help with, or how useful they are to people. Knowledge of these concepts influences thinking (mindfulness), which in turn, influences actions.

Interconnectedness of belief and action can be seen within each layer. Mauri (life force) is inextricably woven with mana (prestige, authority, respect), and tapu (sacredness), and has its roots in cosmological whakapapa (genealogy). The most visible part of tapu are the actions of a group or an individual, due to restrictions on activities and acceptable behaviour around special (tapu) objects, places and events. These restrictions result in behaviour modification, but are the result of following the rules and customs surrounding tapu. These rules and customs are taught and passed along by individuals or in a society, and are the result of knowledge and mindfulness. At the heart of the concept of tapu, is the insistence that the life force inherent within the thing itself, has value and is to be respected.

An example of Tauroa and Tauroa's (1986) 'common sense' and an example often seen in outdoor education in New Zealand, is that of toileting in the bush. If a camp is to be established near a water source like a stream, then that water source should be

respected because of the value of water to people (for drinking, for cooking, for washing, for swimming, for its calming influence) and to the creatures that live in it and drink of it, and to the ecosystem surrounding it that depends on it. Toileting, while necessary, is rightly to be kept away from water sources, so as to not pollute the water source (especially with faecal matter) and cause harm to the people, the creatures and the ecosystem. A scientific viewpoint, manifested for example in the New Zealand Department of Conservation 'care code', or 'leave no trace' promotions, would impose a rule saying 'do not toilet within 50 metres of a water source', and attribute the rule to health reasons (Department of Conservation, 2021a). The 'leave no trace' approach has its philosophical roots in a North American approach to caring for wilderness, that posits, at its core, an ethic of care and respect for place, but also acknowledges a separation of humans from place (see for example, Cronon (1995), Louv (2005), Roszak et al. (1995), meaning that people are visitors to nature, or worse, intruders. A Māori viewpoint, exemplifying the 'traditional cultures' approach mentioned earlier by Suzuki, would impose a similar rule, also attributed to health, but also acknowledging the wider (deeper) philosophical layers of mauri and tapu, and the position that humans belong in, and are a part of, nature, and that this inter-connectedness brings a responsibility for care.

Typically, in an outdoor education context, the actions taken would be a raising of mindfulness (discussing with the group where to go to the toilet), followed by the actions of selecting a suitable site (for a latrine hole or trench to be dug), a discussion of how to go to the toilet in the bush (including what to do with toilet paper), and when to go or not to go (being careful of stumbling around in the bush at night and getting lost). A discussion about the importance of washing hands would be followed by the action of setting up a wash station (a bowl with soap, a water bottle and a towel) away from the water source. Discussions could also be had about the soil layer that breaks down the waste products, the benefits to the ecosystem of composted waste, and burying the latrine at the end of the camp (which then becomes the action), in order to minimise the trace. The actions come from the mindfulness, which comes from the knowledge, which is attributed to belief(s). The variety and depth of discussion depends on the viewpoints being acknowledged or adhered to.

****

3.3.12 Spirit as animating or vital principle; soul

The expanded first branch of the OED definition, describes spirit as:

> The animating or vital principle in humans and animals; that which gives life to the body, in contrast to its purely material being; the life force, the breath of life (OED, 2021a)

We see 'the breath of life' in New Zealand Māori culture too: 'Tihe Mauri ora', literally 'this sneeze is the sign of new life' (Marsden, in King, 1975/1992, p. 125), is often the phrase with which a speech starts. A different spelling, and further meanings, can be found in Tauroa and Tauroa (1986):

> Tihei mauriora: a term used to draw attention to oneself when wishing to speak. May be variously translated as 'the breath or sneeze of life, 'behold, I live', 'listen, I speak' (Tauroa & Tauroa, 1986, p. 165)

In te ao Māori, this animating spirit, this life force pronounced as present by tihei mauriora, this life force summoned to the moment, is not only mauri but *wairua*.

3.3.13 Wairua

Wairua, according to Ka'ai and Higgins (2004, p. 18) is:

> A term describing a spiritual life principle of a person and the relationship they have with the world around them. *Wairua* crosses between the physical and spiritual dimensions and includes the various levels of consciousness that drive certain behaviour in certain situations. Associated cultural concepts include *mauri* and *tapu* (italics in original).

Wairua is the spiritual aspect of a person, that continues even after death, according to Higgins and Moorfield (2004) and Tauroa and Tauroa (1986). Wairua is "a force over which people have no control... closely related to the Christian 'soul'" (Tauroa & Tauroa, 1986, p. 154). Wairua is also 'the spiritual relationships of the learner with the world around them' (Ka'ai, 2004, p. 210) and includes levels of consciousness, and feelings that drive certain behaviour. Funeral ceremonies (*tangihanga*) deliberately address and farewell the wairua, as though the person was still alive, encouraging them to move into the 'world of the dead' (Higgins & Moorfield, 2004, pp. 88-89). In te ao Māori, the spirit is part of the person, even when they are dead.

It is cogent that a person behaves in the world in a manner that reflects their view of the world; if they are mindful that the world is composed of objects that contain a life force which is to be respected, then their actions would reflect that respect. Both Higgins and Moorfield (2004) and Tauroa and Tauroa (1986) state that an animating life force is still present when the person has died. How can this be so? If one believes this to be so, then the answer must be that this life force is separate from the physical body or able to be separated. In the Western tradition, this is an idea with roots in the philosophy of Plato, whereby the spirit was that which was pure or incorruptible and immortal, while the body was corruptible and of a lesser value (Robinson, 2007b). The concept links closely to the Christian 'soul', as Tauroa and Tauroa (1986) have said, and also to those ghosts expressed in the aforementioned Western literature.

****

3.3.14 Pondering: what is spirituality?

Spirituality is a relationship between you and God

> Or you and the gods
> Or you and the Great spirit
> Or you and the spirits, who may be dead ancestors
> Or you and the life forces inherent in nature

****

3.4   Spirituality: a search for the sacred

The nontheistic literature on spirituality, has much in common with the theistic literature. It too encompasses concepts of transcendence, boundlessness (Pargament, 2006), a deep sense of connection to nature, e.g. Martin (2004) and Riley (2014), or an altered state of mind such that an individual has an enhanced sense of themselves and their place in the universe, e.g. Fox (1999) and Kochetkova (2007).

From the field of psychology, Pargament (2006) defines spirituality as "a search for the sacred" (p. 12) and goes on to explain that sacred is not simply about a God or gods or spirits, but about "what is set apart from the ordinary and worthy of veneration and respect" (p. 13). Pargament acknowledges the earlier work of Durkheim (1915), in

describing that what is sacred can encompass anything - rocks, trees, a pebble, a piece of wood, a house...

> Sacred objects include time and space (the Sabbath, churches); events and transitions (birth, death); materials (wine, a crucifix); cultural products (music, literature); people (saints, cult leaders); psychological attributes (self, meaning); social attributes (compassion, community); and roles (spouse, parent, employer, or employee).
>
> (Pargament, 2006, p. 13)

An even larger sacred object is acknowledged by Benson (2020), writing in the New York Times about the wonders (and horrors) of satellite technology. The technology allowed him to watch, on a planet-scale, the enormous forest fires in Australia and Brazil and California, in 2020 (see Figure 8 below). Earth was burning in real time, and Benson, unconsciously and perhaps unknowingly, echoed Suzuki and Black Elk and te ao Māori, in suggesting that the Earth itself is a sacred object:

> The views they provide are astonishing. The planet shines spectacularly in steady sunlight... there's something sacred to this sight. As the source of all life, as the birthplace of our species, it deserves veneration. It follows that any harm done to it – and we're doing plenty – is a desecration

Figure 8

Bushfire Smoke
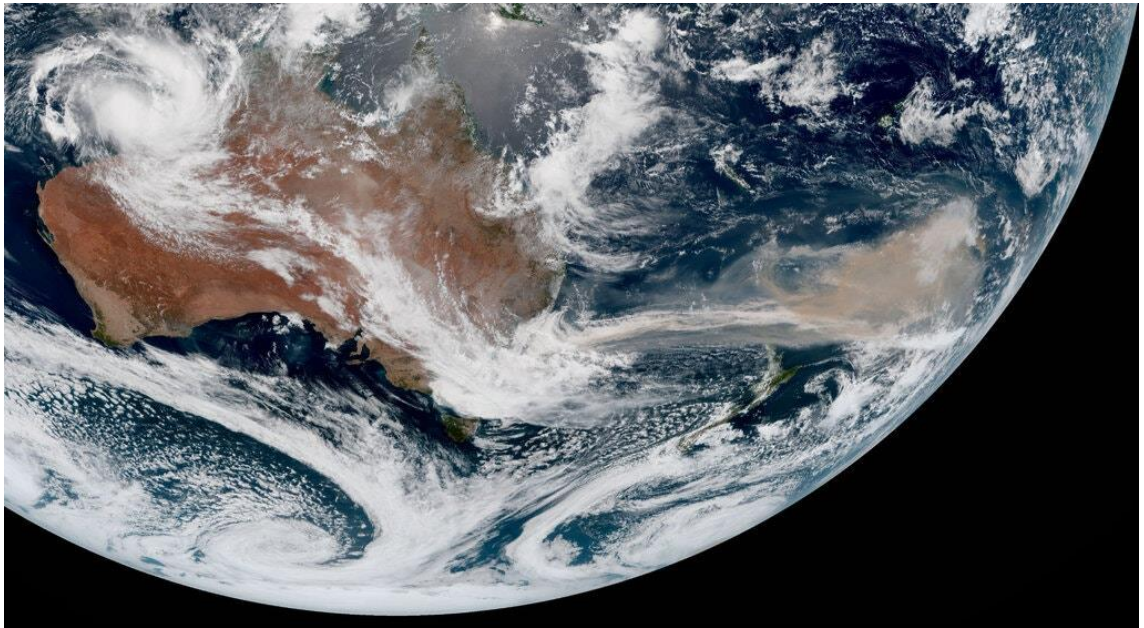
Note. A satellite photograph of the smoke plume extending out of Australia, caused by the bush fires of the summer of 2020. From Benson, M. (2020, December 28). Watching Earth burn. *New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/28/opinion/climate-change-earth.html?action=click&module=Opinion&pgtype=Homepage

Pargament (2006, p. 16) contends there are three processes involved in the search for the sacred. The first is the search for, and discovery of, something of spiritual value, something sacred. The second process is attempting to hold on to it, to keep experiencing it, "to integrate it more fully into their lives". These attempts at sustaining spirituality might include prayer, meditation, joining similarly oriented groups, or re-visiting the place or activity that first accorded something sacred to be revealed. Third and last, Pargament notes that people may struggle to hold onto what is sacred due to events that occur in their lives, like trauma or loss. "Old sources of value and meaning may stop working" (ibid). This struggle results in a re-working of their understanding of what is sacred. Pargament calls this last process 'transformation'.

However, contrary to Pargament, we see in the work of Fox, Lasenby and others involved in researching spirituality in outdoor education, that spiritual transformation is more often described as being only about the *discovery* of the sacred, that transforms what the individuals life was like up to that moment. Occasionally that research explores the transference of the moment into everyday life, but rarely does it

capture any challenge to, or re-working of, what had been deemed sacred to that individual. In other words, it is a more restricted view in outdoor education (as opposed to Pargament's definition), and this may well be a reflection of the length of time that participants spend in an outdoor programme, as opposed to the length of time an individual may receive psychological counselling (or the length of time a researcher may have spent with someone willing to discuss spirituality).

All of this suggests to me that spirituality is not static, it is an active process. It involves a searching for, a striving towards, what is sacred. What is sacred are those things deemed worthy of veneration. From a God-centred (theistic) perspective, what is sacred encompasses concepts of the Divine and the symbolic manifestations associated with this. From a nontheistic (or secular) perspective, what is sacred encompasses objects, life forms and ecosystems. The entire planet can be seen as sacred.

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3.4.1 Spirituality in guiding frameworks of governorship

Mātauranga Māori, is a knowledge system incorporating Māori philosophical thought, worldview and practice (McAllister et al., 2019). Writing in the Journal of Ecology, McAllister et al. (2019) note that until recently, mātauranga Māori was mostly unappreciated by New Zealand ecologists and land managers but that ecologists now see that -

> [It] is vital for understanding and managing Aotearoa New Zealand's ecosystems (p. 1)

And that -

> Partnering with Māori and incorporating mātauranga into ecological research offers an additional dimension to neoclassical science, which we argue leads to better outcomes for society and the environment (ibid).

What McAllister et al. are acknowledging, is a move towards acceptance of an indigenous world view, by a different, dominant culture. In New Zealand the dominance comes from Pākehā of European (mainly British) origin, over the

indigenous Māori tribes. The last two hundred years of New Zealand history describes this rise to dominance, and the resistance to it. The nineteenth century provided a clash of world views (Park, 1995) and complex reasons for a treaty that include protection from inter-tribal warfare, desirability of new technologies, and international trading opportunities (Olssen & Reilly, 2004). A treaty (the Treaty of Waitangi, 1840) was written in two languages with different meanings that inevitably resulted in conflict (Sinclair, 1975 / 1992). There was a swamping influx of settlers, all eager for land and a new start (Olssen & Reilly, 2004). There was a gold rush, duplicitous Pākehā business dealings, and successive governments (generally) unsupportive to Māori, all resulting in land wars in several regions, and a generally worse outcome for Māori than Pākehā (Ka'ai, 2004; King, 1975/1992; 2003). The twentieth century had similar themes, though the establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal in 1975 (fully empowered in 1985), set up to deliberate and rule on alleged treaty breaches, provided the catalyst for Māori resource claims against the Crown. These claims, and subsequent settlements, would reinvigorate tribal activity and change the face of New Zealand life (King, 2003). Olssen and Reilly (2004) said that, at the time of the Treaty of Waitangi, there existed a willingness of both Māori and Pākehā to adapt to new technologies and learn from each other's cultures. In the twenty-first century, King (2003) noted the same:

> The Māori culture of the twenty-first century is not Māori culture frozen at 1769, nor at 1840. Nor should it be. It changed and grew dynamically according to changing needs and circumstances... and it continues to do so in the twenty-first century. Similarly, Pakeha (sic) culture continues to borrow and learn from Māori
>
> (p. 519)

In New Zealand, according to McAllister et al. (2019) the science of ecology has begun to adopt Māori knowledge into its understanding of ecosystems. This is an example of what King was referring to. Three further examples of appreciation for the knowledge offered by a Māori worldview, and how that is incorporated into organisational practice, can be found in the fields of health (Te Whare Tapa Whā), education (Te Aho Matua) and ecology (Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research). These are offered as a counterpoint to New Zealand outdoor education history and practice, which is discussed in Chapter 4.

3.4.2   Te whare tapa whā

Underpinning policy about Māori health in New Zealand, is Te whare tapa whā or the four dimensions of wellbeing model, as developed by Sir Mason Durie in the early 1980's (see Figure 9).

Figure 9

Te Whare Tapa Whā Model

Note. Durie, a psychiatrist and professor of Māori studies, uses the symbol of a house (or *whare*) to show the four 'walls' of health that support the whole person. They are physical wellbeing (*taha tinana*), mental wellbeing (*taha hinengaro*), spiritual wellbeing (*taha wairua*) and family wellbeing or social relationships (*taha whānau*). These 'walls' sit on the fifth dimension, which is the land and roots of a person (whenua and whakapapa). To live well, the model says, one needs to pay attention to all of these dimensions (Health Navigator New Zealand, 2021; Mental Health Foundation, 2021).

Pitama et al. (2007) describe this model as having allowed for a wider understanding of the holistic nature of Māori mental health to be developed, and that the model has infiltrated both policy and delivery services. The Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand has adopted this model, and uses it to help people identify their wellbeing and for the organisation to identify where individuals might need support (Mental Health Foundation, 2021). In this model, the definition of spirituality is wide ranging:

> Spirituality is expressed through beliefs, values, traditions, and practices, that support self-awareness & identity. It provides a sense of meaning and purpose as well as experiencing a sense of connectedness to self, whānau, community, nature and the

significant or sacred. It does not necessarily mean practising religion. (Mental Health Foundation, 2021)

Durie's model essentially asks the question "what supports you in the world?", and the five dimensions provide the answers. Remove one of those dimensions, and the house ceases to be stable; remove two and the house collapses.

3.4.3   Te Aho Matua and Kura Kaupapa Māori

The second example is the Te Aho Matua document (New Zealand Gazette, 2008), which lays down the principles by which children in Māori language immersion schools (Kura Kaupapa Māori) will be treated. It also explains the role that family and community play in supporting the child, and the correct perspectives that teachers should bring to the child and to the assessment of the programme. The document specifically addresses the physical and the spiritual aspects involved in nurturing the education of a child. The following excerpt makes plain the belief that lines of spirit energy emanate from 'the supreme deity, Io-matua' and are embedded in the child from the moment of conception:

> ...The spirits of human beings derive from the Rangi Tuhaha, the twelve dimensions of enlightenment in which spirit entities dwell until physical life is desired and to which spirit entities return after physical death. The inference is at the moment of conception the physical and spiritual potential of the human being becomes an individual entity endowed with the spirit qualities of *mauri, tapu, wehi, mana* and *ihi*; the spirit receptor-transmitters... and the iho *matua*, which is the umbilical cord of spirit energy which links that single entity through his ancestral lines to the primal energy source which is Io.

> (New Zealand Gazette, 2008, p. 741, italics in original)

Ihi is the personal magnetism that radiates from a person, while wehi is the awe or fear in the presence of the ihi of a person, or of the mana and tapu of the gods (Marsden in King, 1975/1992, pp. 118-121). The Te Aho Matua document continues:

> The spirit qualities referred to here can best be described as emanations of energy, the strength or weakness of which is determined by the condition of the receptor-transmitters where feelings, emotions, intelligence, consciousness, conscience and all other non-physical characteristics of human personality dwell.

Here, spirit is an emanation of energy, meaning it comes from within the person. The strength of these emanations depend upon the characteristics of the person.

> Most often referred to as *taha wairua*, these aspects of the human spirit are considered as important as physical attributes, not to be dismissed as the domain and responsibility of church or religion, but regarded as an integral part of human personality and, therefore, are responsive to and affected by teaching and learning (New Zealand Gazette, 2008, p. 741, italics in original)

From this excerpt we can see that wairua is a vital part of being alive, and that this vitality can be nurtured, molded, or damaged.

3.4.4 Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research

The third example offers a moving together of science and te ao Māori. In New Zealand, the crown research institute (CRI) known as Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research (Landcare), is the organization tasked with conducting research on, and advising on policy about, the land environment and biodiversity. The following excerpts highlight a subtle shift in the amalgamation of indigenous knowledge and science. The mātauranga Māori definition is expanded a little here to specifically include traditional knowledge of land, plants, and ecosystems, passed down through ancestral and tribal lines.

> Mātauranga Māori can be defined as 'the knowledge, comprehension, or understanding of everything visible and invisible existing in the universe' and is often used synonymously with wisdom.
>
> (Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research, 2016)

The knowledge referred to above, includes the past and the present, the local and the national. It includes how the knowledge is held and passed on, and it includes Māori goals, aspirations and issues from a tribal and pan-tribal perspective. Landcare develop this definition further by examining inter-connectedness:

> In the Māori worldview, humans are connected physically and spiritually to land, water, air, forests; people are an integral part of ecosystems and ecosystems are an essential part of people's heritage or genealogy (whakapapa). Such holistic thinking can be at odds with reductionist science approaches.
>
> (Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research, 2016)

More recently, Landcare has developed a 'Vision Mātauranga' policy and is an example of te ao Māori becoming embedded within a government entity, that then influences government policy and underpins actions:

> CRIs are now *required* to enable the innovation potential of Māori knowledge, resources and people as part of their operating principles
>
> (Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research, 2021, italics added)

The 'reductionist science approach' mentioned earlier has shifted: Landcare specifically state they will acknowledge, encourage and use indigenous knowledge in order to better enable *kaitiakitanga* – guardianship – to be practiced. The range of projects Landcare is involved with, is vast: from trying to protect Kauri trees from a deadly pathogen, to developing pandemic responses in the face of Covid-19; from wetland restoration to soil and water management; from digital mapping systems to threatened species restoration. All of these responses have, at some early point, the acknowledgement of things Māori, which includes those aspects of spirit and spirituality discussed above.

What Landcare demonstrates is a way for a Western science-based organisation to approach its understanding of the land, that is inclusive of a non-Western epistemology, by building relationships and incorporating the values and knowledge of the indigenous people. By doing this, the land becomes more than just where the plants grow and what the soil is, more than just one form of heritage; it is also the repository of stories, and of specialness, be that physical remains or knowledge that resides in the metaphysical but influences actions.

The Mental Health Foundation, Landcare and the Kura Kaupapa schools are successful New Zealand examples of a coming together of Western science and indigenous perspectives, including perspectives on spirituality.

However, if one does not align with the theistic view of the world espoused in te ao Māori (or Christianity), it is harder to accept descriptions like 'spirit energy' as described in Te Aho Matua, that links the single (human) entity with ancestors and determines the emotional and cognitive facets of a person. This 'spirit energy' could be ascribed to genetics under the purview of science. If one does not align with a theistic view of the world but did believe that life force exists and persists after (human) death,

as described in Patterson (1998) or Ka'ai and Higgins (2004), then life force would be attributed to something else. That something else is arguably the energy cycles of the natural world, the patterns of ecosystem growth and decay, the transfer of energy across the complex biodiversity within ecosystems. The dying of one creature enables the vital life force to be consumed by another creature. In this way, new plants spring from the death and decay of old tree; bacteria, fungi, plants and animals benefit from the decay of flesh. What people note as the wellbeing of the land or spiritual qualities of a place (or a plant), could be attributed to (and a reflection of) the in-balance quality of natural cycles and natural phenomena, in and on that land. In this way, an intact old growth forest has more balance and more qualities of spirit (vital, animating) than a logged forest or a regenerating forest. The plants in that old growth forest are more diverse, more robust, because the biome is more balanced.

Of these three examples, the broad definition of spirituality offered by the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand, has the most alignment to the nontheistic approach to spirituality offered in the fields of psychology and outdoor education:

> Spirituality is expressed through beliefs, values, traditions, and practices, that support self-awareness & identity. It provides a sense of meaning and purpose as well as experiencing a sense of connectedness to self, whānau, community, nature and the significant or sacred. It does not necessarily mean practising religion.
>
> (Mental Health Foundation, 2021)

Connectedness and the search for what is sacred are key themes in the next section. Once again, what one believes about the world, influences what they see in that world. What one attributes 'spirit' to, will influence how they think about 'spirituality'.

****

3.4.5 Spirituality in outdoor education: awakenings

> Imagine an empty vase. The space inside is exactly the same as the space outside. Only the fragile walls of the vase separate one from the other. Our buddha mind is enclosed within the walls of our ordinary mind. But when we become enlightened, it is as if that vase shatters into pieces. The space 'inside' merges instantly into the space 'outside.' They become one: There and then we realize they were never separate or different; they were always the same.
>
> (Rinpoche, 2002, cited in Lasenby, 2003, p. 12)

Lasenby is a New Zealand outdoor educator who investigated 'episodes' of spiritual experiences, as described by Outward Bound New Zealand (OBNZ) participants. These episodes were like the shattering of the vase in the quote from Rinpoche. Lasenby examined whether there might be a mechanism through which an outdoor programme could stimulate a spiritual experience. What he found was that, rather than a mechanism, there was instead a '*period of build-up*', which enabled the individual to be 'more open to an experience occurring' (Lasenby, 2003, p. 71). This build-up was a common factor for the participants of Lasenby's study. It involved both adventurous activities and some degree of hardship that created discomfort, including, but not limited to, fatigue, hunger, hard physical exertion, the negative emotions of self-doubt, anxiety, fear, and insights into the participants own behaviour and self-concept.

Lasenby was guided in his work by the definition of spirituality provided by Fox (1999), who worked in Australian and North American contexts. Spirituality, for Fox, is:

> An altered state of consciousness where an individual may experience a higher sense of self, inner feelings, inner knowledge, awareness and attunement to the world and one's place in it, knowledge of personal relations and relationship to the environment, or a belief in a power greater than imaginable.
>
> (Fox, 1999, p. 455)

Fox (1999) contended that while spirituality was often associated with religion, it need not be; spirituality is a fundamental aspect of human nature and in outdoor programmes needed to be more consciously nurtured. Fox said that experiences of spirituality are about moments of transcendence, characterized by feelings of enrapture, or sudden '*awakenings*' to natural beauty or something previously inexplicable. These moments, occurring over time, are rarely planned but result in a change in a person's world view. Furthermore, these moments are 'triggered through events', and enhanced by self-awareness, the culture of the group, and the natural environment in which the moments occur. These moments occurred when the participants 'felt safe in their environment, relaxed and open to new situations' (Fox, 1999, p. 459)

> Through time in nature to explore or watch, listen and absorb, the participants developed a strong connection feeling with nature… and began to appreciate the beauty (ibid).

Fox's '*time in nature to explore or watch*' and '*feeling safe, relaxed and open'* are quite different descriptions to Lasenby's *period of build-up,* which seemed to have many hard moments for the student. They may not necessarily be incompatible, however, as it is possible for an individual or group to have a tough time with conditions, like stormy weather for example, but the experience brings people closer together because it is a shared experience. This in turn could lead to trust and fellowship, and being open to those '*awakenings*'.

It also follows that to get to this safe place, any fears and anxieties would need to be addressed and overcome, and a level of comfort with the group, the natural place and the programmed activities, would need to be established. This suggests that skilled facilitation of the emotions generated through the experiences would be needed, in order to establish a level of safety and comfort, and help the student make meaning of their experience.

<p style="text-align:center">********</p>

3.4.6   Fox's four stages of a spiritual experience

Where Lasenby has that important *period of build-up* before **a moment of transcendence** (a spiritual experience) occurs, in Fox's study, that moment *is* the starting point. The moment follows an event of some kind (rather than a build-up) that could be, for example, a deep reflection, seeing something of natural beauty, or a sudden close encounter with nature. This moment provides a trigger, and is the first of four stages to a spiritual experience. This would be followed by (the second stage) **immediate feelings and emotions** like 'awe, wonderment, timelessness and absorption'. Later, a third stage happens characterised by **delayed feelings** of 'tranquillity, calmness, elation and peacefulness'. The fourth and last stage, that of 'spiritual growth', is where there is a **new sense of awareness** of themselves, of inner strength, of feeling empowered, and an enhanced sense of connection to self, others and nature (Fox, 1999, p. 459). Moreover, Fox noted that spiritual growth seemed to

enhance positive transference into everyday activities and influenced behavioural change:

> The participants carried their inner strength and feelings of self-control (from the feelings of empowerment, clarity, inner peace) into their workplaces, their families (as positive role models) and their lives (feeling more in control and stronger towards personal goals, roles in life and other relationships)
>
> (Fox, 1999, p. 459)

In a similar vein, Lasenby's participants found that what emanated from their experience, were feelings of 'profound relaxation, release or sense of peace' and that for some, these feelings continued long after the experience had passed (Lasenby, 2003, p. 4). Thus, while there appears to be a different starting point for the occurrence of a transcendent moment, there is much in common between the work of Lasenby in New Zealand, and Fox in Australia and North America.

Fox (1999) built on the earlier work of Stringer and McAvoy (1992), who investigated (via adult backpacking and canoeing trips in North America) the link between wilderness and spirituality. Stringer and McAvoy suggested that while the adventure education experience might have differed for each participant, there were attributes in common that helped define what a spiritual experience was: group closeness; an awareness of an authority or power greater than themselves; clarity of their self-knowledge; feelings of peace, oneness or strength; awareness of the world and one's place in it; and an awareness of the way the person relates to others and to the environment. They also noted that the experience was somehow intangible, that words couldn't quite describe it.

Stringer and McAvoy listed the attributes, emotions and feelings, as described by the participants, associated with a spiritual experience. The attributes included: awareness, attunement, connection, a sense of wholeness and a sense of peace. The emotions and feelings included: calm, joy, optimism, awe, peace, accomplishment, and clarity. Figure 10, below, lists those factors that participants had said contributed to or inhibited spiritual experiences (Stringer & McAvoy, 1992)

Figure 10

Stringer and McAvoy's Factors Contributing to or Inhibiting Spiritual Experiences

Contributing factors

Prior awareness of one's own spirituality

Camaraderie / unusually close bonds between people

Needing to confront and deal with personal questions

Physical activity

Predisposition to spiritual reflection and/or experiences

Previous spiritual experiences

Prompting by other participants or leaders

The natural environment /wilderness

Sharing with the people on the trip – thoughts, opinions, backgrounds, experiences

Time off – from activities or from the group

Structure /components of the trip – changing paddling & tent partners, having an opportunity to teach a lesson, food, lack of responsibility for planning and leading, physical challenges, relaxed atmosphere, weather, leadership styles.

Inhibiting factors

Not enough time to feel, see, and /or process experiences

Not having enough time or enough time off or enough alone time

Not looking for spiritual experiences

Too large a group.

However, these contributing factors could be reconfigured into three groupings:

- **Factors that a person came with** (prior awareness of own spirituality, predisposition to spiritual reflection, previous spiritual experiences, personal questions needing addressing);
- **People in the group factors** (camaraderie, prompting, sharing); and
- **Programmable factors** (physical activity, the natural environment, time, and structure /components of a trip).

This has some synergy with the later research of Sibthorp (2003) who found, while examining the Outward Bound process model, that what the person brought to a programme and how much support they received on a programme, influenced what they got out of the programme. Sibthorp's point might appear somewhat obvious, but

the key alignment with Stringer and McAvoy is that openness to an experience because of a predisposition towards that type of experience, combined with a combination of elements that include the group, the place, the leadership and the activities, *makes it more likely* that the participant will get something meaningful out of a programme.

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3.4.7   Spirituality in outdoor education: connection

Anderson (2007) argued that:

> Spirituality is a fundamental, everyday life process, involving a connection to self, others, nature… to a larger purpose, [a] joy of living, sacrifice for others and love… it is about the mystery and wonder in our lives (p. 14)

For Anderson (2007), spiritual transformation arises from connection. Connection results in taking control of one's life, seeking out the things that are sacred to us, and seeking out the meaning of life.

Connection is at the heart of the work of others too. Both Louv (2005; 2011) and Martin (2004) point out that when people regularly connect with nature, their relationship with nature changes from passing through to caring for. Health benefits accrue from this regular connection; Louv also argued that without nature, the health of people suffers, what he termed nature-deficit disorder. Both argue, moreover, that the health benefits can transcend the personal, and be societal as well. In this context, transformation has regular immersion in nature as a catalyst, and transformation depends on the quality of the human / nature relationship.

Ungar et al. (2005), in their study of at-risk populations, rejected the idea of transformation resulting from formulaic or compartmentalized programming. Instead, they reiterated that it is the context of the outdoors, and the length of the programme, that allowed for positive personal transformation. They suggested that the outdoor context allowed for an immersion in, and intensity of, the experience that produced natural and direct consequences of actions, and stronger relationships built within a group and to nature. They also suggested these factors enhanced health and

built the desirable quality of resilience. They called this 'connectedness' and argued that connectedness is a *step towards* spiritual awakening:

> Connecting to a group and nature breaks the artificial boundary between one's self and something larger than one's individual self. When this connection is nurtured in a natural environment, nature too is experienced as an extension of the individual (p. 333)

In contrast, Gookin (2006) suggested that this connection to self, others and nature, is not a 'step towards,' but rather *resulted in* spirituality. That it comes "from the everyday events that provide spirituality for people". He described such connection as a non-religious quality, and describes spirituality as emerging from a deep human experience, that is, transformational self-knowledge:

> Spirituality refers to the tacit knowledge that makes a person feel more energized and connected. This includes an insightful relationship with yourself and others, a strong personal value system, and meaningful purpose in your life. There are character traits associated with spiritual wellbeing, like self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-comfort, and self-reliance. A spiritually strong person feels empowered to influence the universe and can think and act in a calmer state of mind… people feel like part of some things that are bigger than themselves (p. 33)

Gookin's definition of spirituality aligns with the Hubball and West (2008) offering of 'spiritual wellness,' in that it is a "complex process toward heightened awareness and connectedness with self, others and all things in the natural environment" (p. 12) and not to be confused with religious or faith-based practises.

A focus on connection – to self, others and nature - as espoused by these outdoor education writers, is a precursor to, or the essence of, spiritual experiences.

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3.5   Spiritual transformation: the territory

If we consider the term 'spiritual transformation' by the plethora of historic names, events and practices associated with it, then the territory is vast. It might encompass interpretations of 28,000 year-old Australian Aboriginal rock drawings in Arnhem Land, or the 16,000 year-old cave paintings of Lascaux. It would encompass key moments in the lives of the founders of major religions, and the survival of shamanism into modern

times. It would encompass visionaries, saints, mystics, healers, and psychologists. Even if we restrict ourselves to considering just the literature from the start of the Twentieth century, we would have to traverse a field that encompassed William James 'The Varieties of Religious Experience' (1902), John Muir's essays on his epiphanies in the Sierra Nevada ranges (1911 /2003), John G. Neihardt's conversations with a Sioux Holy Man (Black Elk Speaks, 1932), tales of experiments with psychoactive substances (the novels of Ken Kesey or Carlos Castenada), works by Herman Hesse (Sidhartha, 1922), Richard Bach (Jonathan Livingston Seagull, 1970), M. Scott Peck (The Road Less Travelled, 1978), Paulo Coelho (The Alchemist, 1988), and on and on, into Freud, Jung, Eckhart Tolle, The Dalai Lama, the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, and an array of journals from the fields of (at least) psychology, psychotherapy, ecopsychology, and religious studies.

Sometimes these fields overlap in their approach. Watts (2006) noted there was common ground between psychology and theology. Psychological approaches to personal transformation range from Skinner's *behaviourism*, that sees "people transformed by the rewards and punishments", to Jung, who saw people as striving to understand themselves and "transformed through their engagement with the archetypes of the collective unconscious" (Watts, 2006, p. 152). The Christian religious tradition offers Gospel stories of personal change, the tools of repentance and forgiveness (with its overlap into modern cognitive-behaviour therapy "abandoning limited or maladaptive patterns of behaviour and thinking" (ibid, p. 155), and the support (fellowship) of others.

Watts also notes that transformation requires preparation before a change, a context more easily noticed in psychology or psychotherapy than in religious conversions. Robinson (2007a, p. 18) notes that Seligman's 'positive psychology' approach from the start of the twenty-first century, arose out of a concern for spirituality in mental health; positive psychology focuses on the preparation of realising what one's habitual mental patterns are, and then consciously working to shift them towards a more positive state. These approaches provide a theoretical template for change and the tools to achieve it. Both preparation before change, and the support of others, are also recurring themes in the outdoor education research that explores transformation.

However, both Pargament (2006) and Robinson (2007b) are careful to point out that not all transformation is spiritual.

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3.5.1 Spiritual transformation: what it is and is not

Pargament (2006) offers a solution to what transformation is and is not. It is not doing more of the same thing. It has nothing to do with statistical significance but aligns more closely with clinical significance where "changes are large enough to hold practical and more profound implications for human functioning" (p. 17). Transformation is not necessarily positive, nor is it necessarily spiritual:

> People can make profound changes in many aspects of their lives – career, residence, spouse, political affiliation, or values... but significant as they may be, none is necessarily a spiritual transformation unless it involves in some fashion, the sacred (p. 18)

Transformation is change, from one thing to another. Pargament (2006) suggests that for change to be spiritual, it needs to be about moving towards, or redefining, what is sacred for the individual, having "new configurations of strivings" (p. 19). He suggests that there are two orders of spiritual transformation, primary and secondary:

> Spiritual transformation refers primarily to a fundamental change in the place of the sacred or the character of the sacred as an object of significance in life, and secondarily to a fundamental change in the pathways the individual takes to the sacred (p. 21)

What this means, is that the 'place of the sacred' becomes more important in the life of an individual. This may mean shifting from a self-centred striving to a God-centred striving. Or it may mean discovering and committing to a cause of universal concern that connects the individual to something bigger than themselves, as Martin Luther King did, for example, with civil rights in the United States of America. A change in the 'character of the sacred' may involve redefining their relationship with what they hold as sacred, because their definition has been challenged by events. Pargament (2006, p. 19) gives the example of a Rabbi whose child has died. The grieving and soul-searching shifted the Rabbi's construction of an all-powerful God, to a loving but limited God who could not intervene directly in people's lives. In a similar vein, a modern introduction to the writing of the environmental activist, hiker and journalist, John

Muir, (Muir, 1911 /2003), notes that Muir's advocacy for the Californian wilderness to be preserved, and his writing in a way that "feasted on transcendental natural beauty" (p. xviii), was a reaction to his strict Scottish Calvinist upbringing, to "an enslaved childhood and a tyrannical father" (p. xix). Muir had shifted what was sacred, from God to the Californian wilds.

The Dalai Lama (2002) offers another facet to understanding transformation. In Buddhism, the principle of interdependent origination means that:

> All conditioned things and events in the universe come into being only as a result of the interaction of various causes and conditions. This is significant because it precludes two possibilities. One is that things can arise from nowhere, with no causes and conditions, and the second is that things can arise on account of a transcendent creator. Both these things are negated (p. 16)

What this means is that, for Buddhists, a theistic view of the world is incompatible with the reality of the world. Spirituality and transformation are a result of a deep understanding of the world and a deep awareness of how the parts compose the whole. This is the underlying (though rarely vocalized) philosophy embedded within outdoor education. Further examples of this deepening of understanding of the world and shifting towards the sacred because of a transformational experience, can be seen in the realm of extreme sports.

****

3.5.2 Spiritual transformation and extreme sports

> We spend our lives seeking a transcendent experience
> (Jim McCormick, world record skydiver, cited in Karinch, 2000, p. 252)

Extreme sports are things like mountain or rock climbing, snowboarding, big wave surfing, skydiving, multi-day adventure racing, or free diving. They could be competitive or non-competitive. They most often took place in challenging natural environments – like mountains, ocean surf, rivers with waterfalls or deserts – but not always. Extreme sport athletes liked doing these sports because they were different from normal sports. They liked the 'adrenaline pump' but were not addicted to it and they really liked the feeling of competence that resulted from their achievements. They liked pushing their physical and mental limits because it often led to moments of

self-discovery; they loved the environment in which they played, they sought a relationship with that environment, and they sought to enter it with respect, to honor it (Karinch, 2000). The upshot of all of this, according to Karinch, is that extreme athletes lived with passion, they cherished the moments of intensity in their lives, the moments where they gained insight into themselves and the natural world. Note that some of these sports are outdoor pursuits that are often used in outdoor education programmes, but not taken to extremes. It is common, for example, to have low level kayaking, mountaineering, orienteering or rock climbing activities as part of a programme package at Outward Bound.

Kochetkova (2007) investigated the link between extreme sports and spirituality. She described those 'moments where they gained insight' as a *spirituality of seeking* as opposed to a *spirituality of dwelling*. The difference is that the latter had specific beliefs, practices and organized structures, embedded in a community, while the former was dominated by personal choice and expressed itself as 'a quest to overcome human limits' played out in natural environments.

> Spirituality... focuses on feelings of connectedness to a higher power, on beliefs and their integration into everyday life, positive inner affective states, and personal growth… Here we understand spirituality as a feeling of connectedness to the uncanny reality beyond one's rational understanding, be it God or an unnamed power
>
> (Kochetkova, 2007, p. 303)

Kochetkova's "feeling of connectedness to the uncanny reality beyond one's rational understanding" aligns with what the Dalai Lama was explaining about Buddhism – that it is an awakening to the deep understanding of the reality of the world.

Spiritual experiences in extreme sports also appear to be associated with physical deprivation and high risk. Kochetkova organizes these experiences into three categories:

- **An altered state of mind**, where the mind and body perform together at a level previously thought unreachable, often triggered by dangerous circumstances like falling down a mountain.

- **The meaningful coincidence** or being synchronous with the environment such that harm is avoided, like asking for a sign and seeing something that affirms a decision.

- **Seeing visions** or having phantom companions who guide, encourage or energize. Peter Hillary, for example, grimly trekking on foot to the South Pole with two human companions, received solace from the ghosts of dead friends and relatives, who trekked beside him and enabled him to keep going (Hillary & Elder, 2003)

However, the factors at play in extreme sports – risk, tremendous physical effort, deprivation, high focus on achieving a goal – do not automatically lead to a spiritual experience. Nor does one extreme sport have a monopoly on having a spiritual experience, though sports that occur at high altitudes have a higher frequency. Kochetkova offers interpretations for these spiritual experiences in extreme sports:

The neurophysiological interpretation suggests there is a biochemical response to circumstances, whereby the body is stimulated or stressed enough to produce chemicals that, for example, decrease pain and increase speed of response and alertness. But because these spiritual experiences occur randomly among participants and across a variety of sports, physiology alone does not account for the experience.

The psychological interpretation, is that spirituality is akin to being in the optimal performance zone that athletes strive for, where the body is conditioned and ready, the specific techniques and skills are highly refined, the mind is focused and calm, and the high performance seems effortless because the circumstances have unleashed hyperarousal and massive energy reserves.

This psychological interpretation is also congruous with Csikszentmihalyi's 'Flow' state in high-performance athletes in more traditional sports:

> The best moments usually occur when a person's body or mind is stretched to its limits in a voluntary effort to accomplish something difficult and worthwhile. Optimal experience is thus something we *make* happen
>
> (Czikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 3)

In sports, 'Flow' is an elusive state; in extreme sports, this state can be associated with survival situations. In Jungian terms, the ego state that we most often dwell in, full of conscious thoughts and the noise in our head, drops away and allows the unconscious state of 'the Self' to emerge, full of "superior mind-body integrity" (Kochetkova, 2007, p. 306). This is likely the state that John Muir was experiencing when he shifted his sense of the sacred away from God and into the wilderness, and what the surfer Mendelsohn hints at in the following quote:

> Spirituality is watching the sun rise as you catch a wave
> (Mendelsohn, 2004, cited in Kochetkova, 2007, p. 308)

This quote suggests there is yet another factor at play here. Performing extreme sports in beautiful places – climbing mountains, kayaking rivers, surfing waves – offers the participant an aesthetic relationship that is itself stimulating and integral to the experience. This is not just viewing the natural world in a beautiful site, but includes knowing how to use, and being in, the forces of that natural world. For example, kayaking a river puts the participant *in* the river, they have to use and respond *to* the river's hydrology, and done well, these factors seem to promote a unity with nature and lead to intense feelings about the experience.

In many ways, extreme sports (and their popularity) are a modern version of the God in Nature argument about searching for the sacred: spiritual experiences are 'out of the ordinary' or transcendent; these experiences invoke intense feelings and emotions, including calm and joy; and they produce an altered state of mind that often is hyper-aware of surroundings and understanding itself at a new and deeper level. However, one of the major differences between spiritual transformation in extreme sports versus other realms, is that the transformative experience is often triggered by a survival situation or a situation of high-risk. This is certainly something that outdoor education programmes, and practitioners, try to avoid.

****

3.6   God in nature and art

What does Deleuze (and what do his interpreters) have to say about spirituality or spiritual transformation? They rarely use those terms, as the following quote shows, preferring instead to describe the concepts of immanence and transcendent empiricism.

> Immanence is a metaphysical concept *opposed* to transcendence. It characterizes the theology and cosmology of Spinoza's philosophy of 'divine nature'. In Spinoza's system, there is no God outside of reality, 'transcending' nature. The only God there is for Spinoza is a principle of creation that is inherent to, immanent within, divine nature… divine nature expresses itself in all things.
>
> (Due, 2007, p. 7; emphasis added)

These concepts, created in the 20th century and grounded in the European tradition of philosophical thinking, built upon the earlier conceptual work of Nietzsche (1844-1900) and particularly Spinoza (1632-1677), who had refuted an orthodox religious transcendence (the 'soul' rising up, leaving the corporeal, going to 'Heaven'), and instead had ascribed transcendence to getting closer to God via the natural world.

The rediscovery in the 19th century, by European philosophers, of the idea of God in Nature was both a moving away from the rationalist account of reality provided by philosophers like Descartes (1596-1650; 'I think therefore I am') and a philosophic refutation of the moral authority of the religious Judeo-Christian teaching, whereby mankind has Dominion over the Earth. A succession of European wars, and the environmental devastation being exercised by the industrial revolution, provoked this moving away (Schama, 1995). God in Nature was also the basis of the Romantic movement in art and literature of the 19th century. Romanticism was perhaps first visible in the paintings of the German, Casper David Friedrich, who blended sacred art (of and about the church) with landscape art (e.g. The Cross in the mountains, 1808, or Winter landscape, 1811). Friedrich in turn inspired a plethora of artists over the next century, especially from the United States of America, who were trying to capture what they called 'the sublime', that is, a figurative depiction of nature (as opposed to the churches or cathedrals) as being the place where God was most visible. These artists including the painters Thomas Cole, Fredrick Church and Albert Bierstadt

(collectively known as The Hudson River school), and photographers like Carleton Watkins and Ansel Adams. "In the last analysis," wrote Adams –

> Half Dome is just a piece of rock... [but] there is some deep personal distillation of spirit and concept which moulds these earthly facts into some transcendental emotional and spiritual experience

<div align="right">(Adams cited in Schama, 1995, p. 9)</div>

 It was art that re-claimed a non-religious spiritual link to nature, in the sense that the art was no longer funded (solely) by or ascribing to, a hierarchical, Church-driven view of God, or the place of nature in the world of humanity. By the 1890's "at the apogee of imperialist confidence" (Schama, 1995, p. 208), nature religions were generally held to be primitive or pagan rituals to be dismissed "as mistakes committed in the grip of ignorance and fear" (ibid, p. 209), a view extolled by the anthropologist Sir James Frazer, or they were "highly complex systems of understanding with the power to generate and determine social behaviour" (ibid), as championed by the writers Thoreau, Muir and Coleridge and (later) recounted by participants like Black Elk. According to Schama (1995), in the previous centuries, nature and especially the wild forest, had been the enemy, the habitat of barbarian tribes (in Europe) or Godless Indians (in the USA), and -

> To make a Godly settlement required that both the wilderness and the wild men be comprehensively cleared. Beauty lay in clearance; danger and horror lurked in the pagan woods (p. 191)

This was a theme played out in New Zealand too, with the influx of settlers from (primarily) Britain in the nineteenth century, bringing with them the philosophy that land was useless unless used, a philosophy that would devastate the forest ecosystems and set up a conflict with Māori who had a completely different world view (Park, 1995).

But art re-discovered the mythic archetypes, the pre-Enlightenment primal connection between humanity and nature. This became interwoven in the complexity of national identities (e.g. the ancient battle in the Teutoburger forest between Romans and the tribes of Germania, with modern Germany). In the USA, having reduced to fragments the vast Eastern forests, the 'discovery' by American settlers of the Western forests

(long lived in by indigenous tribes), and especially the big Sequoia trees of California, added propulsion to the idea of a unique American republic:

> The Big Trees were thus seen as the botanical correlate of America's heroic nationalism, at a time when the Republic was suffering its most divisive crisis since the revolution
>
> (Schama, 1995, p. 187)

The 'crisis' was, of course, the American civil war of 1860-1865. In the middle of this war, President Abraham Lincoln found time to set aside those trees for the benefit of all, for all time. Thirty years later, inspired by the advocacy of John Muir, who wrote about (and advocated for) the sublime beauty of the Sierra Nevada range, President Teddy Roosevelt declared the Yosemite Valley a National Park. God in Nature had moved beyond philosophy, into art and symbolic representation, and then into the embodiment of identity.

3.6.1 Land and identity in New Zealand

A similar view about land and identity was made visible in New Zealand at about the same time, with the establishment of the Tongariro National Park in 1894. The volcanoes of Tongariro were gifted to the people of New Zealand by the Tuwharetoa tribe in 1887, but only after settler farmers began encroaching on the land and the tribe had had to defend its connection to the mountains in the land courts of the day. The mountains were considered by the Tuwharetoa tribe to be deeply connected to their identity, and interwoven with their ancestral stories that described the interplay of people and gods on the land, none more so than their ancestor Ngatoroirangi calling forth the volcanic fire (Tongariro National Park Board, 1981; Williams, 1985). The gifting of the mountains was a declaration of how sacrosanct the area was for the Tuwharetoa people, but partnership with the Crown was a conscious act to ensure the continued protection of Tongariro (Department of Conservation, 2021b).

That protection was needed at all was a sign of the complexity and turmoil of the previous eighty years. Olssen and Reilly (2004) describe the early nineteenth century interactions between Māori and Pākehā, as being both positive and negative: trade goods, new food crops and ideas being weighed against disease, and inter-tribal conflict resulting from obtaining muskets.

> An almost self-conscious process of hybridisation went on at both ends of the country, only to be swamped when the influx of the Victorian era arrived (p. 150)

Section 3.4 briefly described the next hundred years of New Zealand history after the gifting of Tongariro. At the end of the Twentieth century, Temple (1998) crafted an anthology of New Zealand writing on nature and landscape that covered the period 1770 to 1995. It showcased the developing relationship between settlers and the land that echoed the change observed in the USA almost a century before with Yosemite: the relationship between Pākehā and the New Zealand landscape had begun with fear, then moved to exploitation, and on to a desire to protect the land, resulting in the development of a sense of place and identity.

3.6.2   New Zealand art and spirituality

God in Nature, that mix of art, land connection, and identity, had always been woven into the Māori world via wood carving, tattooing (*moko*) and the wall panels that graced buildings (*tukutuku* weaving). Ancestral figures are often carved in wooden posts (pou) and found in marae buildings; they embody wairua or, like the stones mentioned earlier, they embody mauri (section 3.3) and signify connection to place. The Māori word for both land and placental afterbirth is *whenua*, a deliberate acknowledgement of interconnectedness and responsibility (Park, 2006).

The European artistic traditions of painting and writing were adopted by Māori artists, especially from the late Twentieth century; see for example, the Toi Tū Toi Ora exhibition of contemporary Māori art at the Auckland Art Gallery (2021). God in Nature was woven into the Pākehā artistic world too: "the great New Zealand painters of the second half" of the Twentieth century (King, 2003, p. 421), Colin McCahon, Toss Woollaston and Hotere, explored the land and their faith in their art (McCahon was Catholic, Woollaston was Christian, Hotere was Māori). But for a host of others, a nontheistic spiritual aesthetic was alive and kicking, and exploring place and identity. This approach can be seen, for example, in the landscape photography of Craig Potton and the bird paintings of Don Binney.

3.6.3 Spirituality and Deleuze

With Deleuze, as with Nietzsche, there is no God, neither in Heaven nor in nature. One does not transcend to; there is not an upward /outward propulsion. Nor is there a 'place' to go to be close to this divine 'other' of God. The propulsion, if that is the right word, is a heightened awareness from inside the mind to what is outside the body (the world), and from outside the body coming into the mind:

> Transcendence is always a product of immanence
>
> (Deleuze, 2001, p. 31)

Transcendence as a product of immanence mirrors the Buddhist principle of interdependent origination: that things "come into being only as a result of the interaction of various causes and conditions" (The Dalai Lama, 2002, p. 16). Deleuzean transcendence occurs in that pre-thought space termed immanence, and is based on the senses, the emotions, that are provoked by an interaction with reality, which he termed transcendental empiricism. When Deleuze (2001) writes that transcendence appears as -

> a pure stream of a-subjective consciousness, a qualitative duration of consciousness without a self (p. 25)

- it reminds me of the story of the mountain climber, Rob Schultheis, falling down a steep mountain face and only just being able to stop himself from certain death (Kochetkova, 2007). His fall triggered an out-of-body experience, an awareness, a non-thinking consciousness from the climber of climbing without effort, of being part of the mountain, of connecting to everything. He began climbing at a level he had previously thought impossible. When Deleuze (2001) says –

> Were it not for consciousness, the transcendental field would be defined as a plane of pure immanence, because it eludes all transcendence of the subject and of the object. Absolute immanence is in itself: it is not in something, to something; it does not depend on an object or belong to a subject (p. 26)

- it makes me consider that pure immanence exists beyond things, beyond people and places, beyond the material world. But it is everywhere. The religiously inclined might call this 'God'. It is something that is at once incorporated and separated from

everything – rocks, people, trees, chairs. Māori ontology might call this *mauri*, the lifeforce. It makes me consider too, that transcendence comes into 'being' via something, some event, some provocation, some moment of realization. But immanence is constant. Transcendence is the moment of understanding or the time when understanding is revealed to oneself, by oneself. According to Due (2007), for Deleuze, immanence came to mean -

> any manner of thinking that dispenses with an external or transcendent viewpoint... immanence means that the mind is part of reality and unfolds as an activity within the force field of reality as a whole (p. 21)

In reading Deleuze's posthumously published essay 'Immanence: A life' (Deleuze, 2001), I am struck by several things at once: the first is how Buddhist the description of 'pure immanence' is, with its insistence that all knowledge is grounded in reality, and that transcendence (enlightenment) comes from within. The second, is how 'pure immanence' is congruent with the Māori concept of mauri; these states of metaphysical continuity that link all things, like the desert links one oasis to another. The third, is how this transcendent state also resonates with descriptions of the transformative state of 'flow' from the high-performance sport world. The fourth, is that access to this state of pure immanence has similar descriptions in the writing about extreme sports, especially the catalytic life-threatening situations arising in mountaineering.

The following personal story illustrates the transcendent moment, grounded in the reality of an approaching storm and steep terrain needing to be navigated. I had been reading Coelho's 'The Alchemist' at the time of writing this story; it too seemed to fit the Deleuzean concepts of immanence and transcendence.

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3.7   The fold: a tramping story 2

> The boy was beginning to understand that intuition is really a sudden immersion of the soul into the universal current of life, where the histories of all people are connected, and we are able to know everything, because it is all written there.
>
> <p align="right">(Coelho, 1993, p. 76)</p>

My training in outdoor pursuits had taught me that intuition was not a 'hunch', it was the brain and body subconsciously receiving vibrational signals, clues, from the environment around me. Receiving them, comparing them with the past experiences I'd had, and preparing me for what was about to happen. I had observed a mountaineer turning back from walking on a snow slope because it didn't 'feel' right, and then have it avalanche minutes later. I had surged forth in a rapid without realizing I was acting, to place myself in the spot where I 'knew' the beginner kayaker would lose control and tip over. These occasions could be explained as experience-based-judgement. But there had been other occasions that were less easily explained. Once, deep in Fiordland, I'd had to decide which way to ascend to a mountain pass, on a steep, bush-clad, trackless face. I was tired and hungry, and an urgent storm was rolling in. I paused at the bottom and looked. I silently asked to be shown the way (who or what was I asking?). I noticed the colour of the trees, each colour signaling a different species, each species known to me as more or less bound to the earth, and thus useable as hand holds, climbable. In pausing and looking, my anxiety fell away, and I became calm. I 'felt' my way up the face before I touched it. I was assured in my route before I began, because a 'voice' in my head had said 'this is the way, it will be alright'. Was this moment a 'sudden immersion of the soul into the universal current', like the boy in Coelho's story had experienced? Or was it experience-based-judgement? Having ascended, my partner and I then faced the descent, equally daunting but less visible. We could not see the whole way down and now the storm was upon us. Yet the same sensation occurred. The knowing-ness of the moment had come from within. It had revealed itself via the activity of route finding in a physically demanding place, prompted by the storm. Conscious thought was the end point of some kind of internal vibrational journey.

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3.8   Fisher's four domains of spiritual health and wellbeing model

An internal vibrational journey, as expressed in the short tramping story above, was what this next model appeared to me to be describing. Fisher (2011) conducted research in the Australian schooling system, about spirituality. Like Hefner and Koss-Chioino (2006) before him, and Gautam (2020) after him, Fisher contends that spirituality is distinct from religion, which is essentially a social activity that focuses on

ideology and the rules wrapped up in that ideological system. Unlike Gautam, Fisher (2011, p. 18) suggests that the literature *is* in agreement about the nature of spirituality, in that:

- it is innate, an inbuilt feature of the human species.

- it is emotive, "it touches people's hearts because it deals with the essence of being"

- it is dynamic because people are always questing, whether they realize it or not.

While these two perspectives may reflect the splintering of the field over the space of a decade, there is still much they have in common. For example, for Fisher, spirituality is:

> concerned with a person's awareness of the existence and experience of inner feelings and beliefs, which give purpose, meaning and value to life (ibid, p. 20).

Fisher contends that spirituality helps individuals find peace and the ability to love others and live in harmony with the environment. Spirituality can involve a transcendent encounter, which may occur in or out of the context of organized religion. It is a dimension of health, possibly the most important dimension, and sits beside the physical, mental, emotional, social and vocational dimensions. It permeates and integrates all of these other dimensions.

Fisher offers the Four Domains of Spiritual Health and Wellbeing model, as a way to understand what contributes to spirituality and spiritual health, and as a way to make sense of the difference between religion and spirituality (see Appendix A). In this model, spiritual health can be understood by how well developed the relationships are within each domain, whereby "internal harmony depends on intentional self-development... which often eventuates from personal challenges" (p. 22). In this model, the worldview that people hold filters the knowledge aspects, and the beliefs that they hold filter the inspirational aspects. Both of these aspects are distinct yet interrelate.

In this model, the Personal domain is where the individual seeks knowledge of the meaning and purpose in their life. This seeking is what Fisher calls 'self-consciousness'. This self-consciousness helps an individual recognize how their values have been

constructed (or it helps them re-construct these things). This knowledge is expressed as self-worth, identity and a raft of emotions that relate to knowing one's self and being happy with that knowing.

In this model, the Communal domain is shown in the quality of the relationships the individual has with other people. These relationships are outward expressions of inner personal values, demonstrating love, forgiveness, trust, hope and a belief in humanity's capacity to do good. This is the domain wherein resides culture, morality and religion.

The Environmental domain, is not only about understanding and caring for the physical biological world, but it is where a sense of wonder can be discovered (and incorporated). For some this entails a sense of unity with or duty towards, the environment.

The Transcendental domain is the relationship of the self "with some-thing or some-One beyond the human level" (ibid, p. 22). This relationship invokes what Fisher calls "faith towards, adoration and worship of, the source of the Mystery of the universe" (ibid).

> The quality, or rightness, of the relationship that a person has with themselves, with others, with nature and/or with God constitutes a person's spiritual well-being in those four domains

3.8.1 Progressive synergism

Fisher suggests that there is a *'progressive synergism'* at play here, whereby as the levels of spiritual well-being are combined, the result is greater than the sum of its parts; the domains contribute to each other and strengthen each other. Progressive synergism has the development of the Personal domain as the precursor to the other domains.

However, I think a few alterations would make this model more coherent. First, in the Personal domain, rather than 'self-consciousness' as the inspirational aspect, I think 'self-awareness' would be a better fit. Self-consciousness has overtones of shyness and embarrassment. I would favor 'individual' rather than 'personal' as the column title, as it has more emphasis on what is discrete and specific and singular. 'Personal' has more

emphasis on what is special or private or subjective; a group (e.g. a rugby team) may also hold personal information or stories. In this domain the 'I' is considering the 'I': who am I? What do I believe? Individual does not negate consideration of the collective; the collective is considered in the Communal domain.

Second, in the Environmental domain, what Fisher has as knowledge, reads more like a 'produced effect' (expression) of knowledge. The knowledge aspect of an environment is knowledge of biological and ecological systems, or the geomorphology of a place, or the flora and fauna than can be found in that environment. What Fisher has is care, nurture and stewardship – but this is better placed as the expression of the spiritual, the thing that happens as a result of knowledge and raised awareness and connection to a place.

Third, under the transcendental domain, the knowledge aspect could be clarified by saying 'had a transcendent experience'. This would result in the knowledge that 'there is an 'other''. This change would mean that a person knows that there is an 'other' force or power greater than humanity, because they have had an experience that showed them this knowledge. This would then feed into the inspirational aspect of 'faith' and is expressed via feelings of 'oneness', being 'in-tune' with the universe. Thus, if I know there is an 'other', then I have greater faith in nature / Creator / God; this leads to worship, adoration, or an expression of duty or care towards what is considered sacred. It also feeds back into purpose and meaning in one's life.

Which is what the model purports to say: that the sum is greater than the individual parts, that self-awareness and purpose, and connection to others and nature, end up growing the spirit and enhancing the sense of 'the other'. An adjusted model would then look like this (Table 1):

Table 1

Adjusted Four Domains of Spiritual Health and Wellbeing Model

Domains /Aspects	Individual	Communal	Environmental	Transcendental
Knowledge aspect	Meaning, purpose and values	Morality, culture (and religion)	Biological & ecological systems, geomorphology, flora & fauna	Had a Transcendent experience; experienced the 'Other'
Inspirational aspect	Self-awareness	In-depth inter-personal relationships	Connectedness with nature /Creation	Faith
Expressed as	Joy, fulfilment, peace, patience etc.	Love, forgiveness, justice, hope & faith in humanity, trust	Sense of awe & wonder Valuing nature /Creation Care, nurture, stewardship	Adoration & worship. Being at one with Creator. In tune with God. Connection to the essence of the universe. Care of sacred.

Note. From Fisher, J. (2011). The Four Domains Model: Connecting Spirituality, Health and Well-Being. *Religions, 2*(1). https://doi.org/10.3390/rel2010017

Fisher also notes that there may be cultural differences regarding the degree of awareness of the environment, especially between people from Western societies and those from an Indigenous society. Differences too, in ascribing the transcendent experience to its source: for believers in a religion and a deity, this would no doubt be ascribed to God. For non-believers, this experience could be a transcendent moment of connection to something sacred. I concluded that this model would be a useful lens with which to consider the interviews.

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3.8.2 Pondering: what is spirituality?

Spirituality is a moment

That occurs after a challenging build up

What sort of challenge?

- Physical and mental

Spirituality is an experience

That makes you feel emotional, makes you feel a heightened sense of connection

A connection to what?

- To self, others and place; to something sacred.

Spirituality is a revelation

Of the 'other', the non-human world; of how much more you are capable of

What is the 'non-human world'? The world of spirits?

- The physical world, the life force of other creatures,

the mystery of the interconnectedness of life

- The Divine

- The sacredness within objects, places, realms.

Spirituality is a search

For the sacred.

Spirituality is a desire

To belong.

Spirituality is a state of power

Which contains an enhanced ability to act.

Spirituality is a state of being

Where you have become settled. Focused. Connected to, and aware of, the sacred.

That may be challenged by life events.

That may need continual conservation.

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3.9   Summary of spirituality

Table 2 Spirituality Summary, is a table that offers a summary of spirituality explored thus far. Section 3.3 presented the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) definitions of the root word spirit, the starting point for understanding spirituality. There were six definitions or 'branches' of the word spirit (OED, 2021a); of these six, three of them are relevant to understanding spirituality in outdoor education programmes in New Zealand. They are: 1. An animating or vital principle; the soul; 2. An incorporeal, supernatural, rational being; ghosts; and 4. The divine nature or essential power of God. Table 2 presents these three definitions. They are colour coded and branch #4 has further subdivisions.

3.9.1   If – Then logic

What this table shows is an if-then logic. If one accepts that, primarily, spirit is an animating or vital principle, commonly known as the 'soul', infusing all living things, then it follows that this animating vitality exists in nature. If one accepts this, then spirituality is the knowledge of that animating vitality and the relationship one has with it. Spiritual behaviour then becomes about acknowledging, honouring and respecting the animating vital quality in nature. The animating vitality becomes sacred – a thing to be venerated and respected -and because it permeates nature, nature itself becomes sacred. Spiritual behaviour also becomes about seeking out the 'other': either relationships with other humans or relationships with the non-human parts of nature, that contain this animating vitality, in order to improve one's relationship with it (and by extension, improve oneself). One further step would be to enact care towards this animating vital force.

Similarly, if one accepts that, primarily, spirit is about those incorporeal, supernatural entities, commonly known as ghosts or spirits, that represent or are the manifestations of (for example) deceased ancestors, then it follows that there is a possibility of interacting with these ghosts /spirits. Spirituality then is an awareness or knowledge of an 'other' realm where these ghosts /spirits exist, and the knowledge that these entities can enter 'this' realm, and usually for a purpose. Spiritual behaviour becomes about seeking (or avoiding) the interaction (or relationship) with these ghosts /spirits. It becomes about paying attention to 'signs' and messages from these entities. It

becomes about permission seeking or listening to or fear of or right behaviour towards, these entities.

If one accepts that, primarily, spirit is about the divine nature or essential power of God, then spirituality is attributed to God, spirituality is striving for a connection to God, and spirituality is defined by religion. Spiritual behaviour becomes about searching for, or acknowledging, the sacred – those things worthy of respect and veneration – as defined by a religion that defines God. Spiritual behaviour becomes about paying attention to the customs and rules associated with that religion. Moreover, nature is deemed to be the work of God, therefore natural phenomena (scenic beauty, plants, mountains, storms etc) are seen as manifestations of the omnipotence of God.

The last two (blue) subdivisions are a separation of the previous belief in God, into either a belief in gods or a belief in a Great Spirit and lesser spirits. This is something that the OED definitions don't quite make clear. These two subdivisions capture the pre-monotheistic religious conceptual arrangements of the world. In the first subdivision, if one believes in the divine nature and essential power of gods (as opposed to a single God), then spirituality is attributed to those gods as their influence manifests in daily life. Spirituality is attributed to the relationship one has with those gods, and nature becomes both a backdrop for the gods to enact their influence, and a manifestation of the gods that inhabit nature. Spiritual behaviour, then, is about paying attention to the personalities of the gods, paying attention to the customs and rules associated with those gods. Spiritual behaviour is about interacting mindfully between the realm of the gods and the realm of humanity, and understanding the expectations of either realm. Spiritual behaviour is venerating what is sacred to each god. With this view of spirituality, natural phenomena are seen as manifestations of the behaviour and influence of gods.

In the second subdivision, if one believes in an overarching Great Spirit and lesser spirits, then spirituality is attributed to the interaction and relationship between humans and the Great Spirit and lesser spirits. Spirituality is also the knowledge that spirits animate natural processes and objects, like the weather or particular geologic formations. Spiritual behaviour is about paying attention to the expectations, customs

or rules associated with those spirits. Spiritual behaviour is about paying attention to nature because it is a manifestation of those spirits (manifestation in the sense that spirits both created nature and influence its current shape). It is about interacting mindfully with natural processes and venerating what is sacred – those things that allow the spirits to manifest. With this view of spirituality, natural objects and phenomena are seen as manifestations of the Great Spirit and as under the influence of lesser spirits. Spiritual behaviour becomes about seeking to understand the interplay between the two worlds.

Across these divisions of spirit and spirituality, there exists for humans a motivation in common, which is seeking a meaning and purpose to one's life, and searching for the sacred in order to have it in one's life. It also holds that should one not believe in spirit or spirituality, then searching for meaning and purpose can still be a factor in one's life; it would, however, not have anything to do with what is sacred.

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Table 2

Spirituality Summary

What is Spirit?	What is Spirituality?		
(OED definitions)	**If you believe:**	**Then spirituality is:**	**Then spiritual behaviour is mostly:**
1. An animating or vital principle; the soul	That this animating vitality infuses and animates all living things, and that it exists in Nature	The knowledge of that animating vitality and the relationship one has with it; seeking a meaning and purpose to one's life.	Acknowledging, honouring and respecting the animating vital quality of 'the other' in Nature; seeking the relationship.
2. An incorporeal, supernatural, rational being; ghosts	In the possibility of interaction with supernatural beings (ghosts, spirits)	An awareness of an 'other' realm.	Seeking (or avoiding) the interaction with supernatural beings /ghosts /spirits; paying attention to 'signs' and messages; permission seeking or listening to or fear of or right behaviour towards.
4. The divine nature or essential power of God.	In a God (e.g. Christianity, Islam)	Attributed to God; striving for a connection to God; defined by religion.	Searching for or acknowledging the sacred – those things worthy of respect and veneration – as defined by a religion that defines God; Paying attention to the customs and rules associated with that religion; seeing natural phenomena as manifestations of the omnipotence of God.
	In many gods (e.g. ancient Greeks, Māori)	Attributed to those gods as their influence manifests in daily life; attributed to the relationship with those gods.	Paying attention to the personalities or expectations or customs and rules associated with those gods; interacting mindfully between the realm of the gods and the realm of humanity; venerating what is sacred to each god; seeing natural phenomena as manifestations of the behaviour and influence of gods.
	In an overarching Great Spirit with lesser spirits (e.g. Sioux)	Attributed to the interaction and relationship with those spirits and the Great Spirit; the knowledge that spirits animate natural processes and objects.	Paying attention to the expectations, customs or rules associated with those spirits; interacting mindfully with natural processes; venerating what is sacred – those things that allow the spirits to manifest; seeing natural phenomena as manifestations of the realm where spirits reside and the interplay between the two worlds.

Chapter 4 Outdoor education in New Zealand

> We can be ethical only in relation to something we can see, feel, understand, love, or otherwise have faith in
>
> <div align="right">(Leopold, 1949 /1966, p. 251)</div>

The topic of this study is 'Reflections on transformation: how New Zealand outdoor educators construct programmes to address (non-religious) spiritual growth'. This chapter considers the parts of the topic that are about outdoor education in New Zealand. Like the Leopold quote above, outdoor education promotes seeing, feeling, touching and doing, in order to understand and to love. It is experiential. The previous chapter presented models, definitions and stories that were useful for understanding spirituality. For an outdoor education programme, Durie's model could potentially be used to guide the structure, as it suggests the major elements (the walls) that a healthy programme (house /whare) needs. But Fisher's model is more aligned to this study because it specifically guides how to develop spirituality, and then what might happen as a result of that development (transcendent experience). This chapter includes other models that had contributions to make about outdoor education and programming. These are the Experiential Learning Cycle of Kolb (1984), the Outward Bound Process Model of Walsh and Golins (1976), and the Influential Social Fields model of Boyes (2012). The nature of outdoor education in New Zealand is examined, including its roots, the language and many descriptions of practice, and the influence from the mid-1980's of neoliberal economic theory. Abbot (1990), Boyes (2012), Brown (2012), Chisholm and Shaw (2004), and Lynch (2003) all note the history of outdoor education in New Zealand conveys a practice that was captured by adventurous activities and the discourse of risk management. Straker (2014) noted the 'the outdoors' is itself a phrase full of assumptions and different meanings for people. Programming that would enable the growth of spirituality, is examined in the last section of this chapter.

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4.1   The roots of outdoor education in New Zealand

The deep roots of outdoor education reside in the skills needed to live off the land and travel through it. Hunting, fishing, foraging, shelter making, fire lighting, navigating on foot or by watercraft – all of these things were enacted successfully by people the world over. They established trade routes, built communities and societies, created new technologies, and addressed natural phenomena through storytelling and the construction of religion(s) - see for example Henderson (2005); Lopez (1986); Mears (2005); Schama (1995). In New Zealand, Māori enacted these things, first learned in the islands of Polynesia and then adapted to a more temperate climate when they arrived sometime between the twelfth and thirteenth century (Flannery, 1994; Ka'ai et al., 2004). Europeans arrived en masse in the nineteenth century, bringing a different cosmology and different technologies (King, 2003; Park, 1995). As the two worlds learned to live together, Māori often provided the wherewithal for the European explorers and religious representatives to travel and survive off the land (Barnett & Maclean, 2014). By the late-nineteenth century, the discovery of gold and the influx of settlers had created tension and sparked warfare in many parts of the country. The land confiscations, duplicitous dealings and ecological trauma of that era are still being addressed today (Ka'ai, 2004; King, 2003; Olssen & Reilly, 2004; Pawson & Brooking, 2002; Sinclair, 1975 / 1992). This history is the ground on which modern outdoor education of the twentieth century was placed, yet it was largely ignored because outdoor education in New Zealand was (mostly) full of ideas imported from other countries.

As part of my Master's degree that examined a multi-death tragedy in the Mangatepopo canyon in 2008 (Hollingsworth, 2011), I provided an overview of New Zealand outdoor education history. In this overview, the work of Lynch (1998) and Stothart (1993) was prominent in helping me understand early twentieth century practice. Nature study had been established in primary schools in 1904, possibly as a reaction to an increasingly urbanised Pākeha population and the belief that being outside was beneficial. Up until the mid-1950's, teachers were encouraged, generally by more skilled School Inspectors, to take pupils outside whenever possible. Equipping teachers with the skills to take pupils outside began in earnest when camping was introduced as an activity for physed students at Otago University in 1949, and when

nature study specialist training began at Christchurch Teachers College in 1950. Port Waikato was established as the first permanent school camp in 1956 and it ushered in an era of residential facilities being established around the country. Peripheral to these but influential upon the popularity of tramping and mountaineering as acceptable pastimes, was the widely lauded 1953 ascent of the highest mountain in the world, Mt Everest, by the New Zealander Ed Hillary and the Sherpa Tenzing Norgay.

Each decade, from the 1950's onwards, contained events that were significant for moving outdoor education into being an accepted profession in New Zealand. These events included establishing Outward Bound in 1962, the NZ Mountain Safety Council (MSC) in 1966, and the Outdoor Pursuits Centre of New Zealand (OPC, later Hillary Outdoors) in 1973. These organisations remain prominent today in terms of career opportunities and dispersal of educational ideas. The philosophy and pedagogy that is Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC) was established in 1975 and became embedded in schools via guidelines published by the Ministry of Education, the last iteration being in 2016 (Ministry of Education, 2016). The first outdoor education training for secondary school teachers commenced in 1976 at the Christchurch College of Education. Tihoi Venture School came into existence in 1978, requiring the year ten boys (14 years old) to spend half the school year there; it was the first long-stay residential secondary school campus that had outdoor education prominently in its curriculum. The New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association (NZOIA) was formed in 1987 in order to provide a professional pathway for training and assessing outdoor instructors; by the late 1990's NZOIA would be vying for dominance with the MSC and a government funded industry training organisation (SFRITO). Project K was created in 1996, a programme designed to help youth reach their potential and one which utilised journeys in the outdoors. Project K was the first of several outdoor programmes that eventually were held under the umbrella organisation called the Foundation for Youth Development in 2003, which then morphed into the Dingle Foundation in 2016.

One of the produced effects of these events, was that from the 1990's onwards there were enough outdoor centres and outdoor programmes operating that outdoor instructing was feasible as a career choice. It is possible that the rise of these organisations, training pathways and outdoor centres, reflected a consistent local and

national engagement with the values espoused in outdoor education and demonstrated by the continued presence of school camps. In 1991, the Hillary Commission listed 45 providers of outdoor education training (Stothart, 2012). By the turn of the millennium there were 26 tertiary level courses, offering variations of outdoor leadership training (Hollingsworth, 2011). In 2021 there were 21 such tertiary level courses (NZQA, 2021). These course reflected the move away from learning-on-the-job or through clubs, to learning-before-a-job.

There are other trends to note. Ryan and Watson (2018) point out that in New Zealand, by the end of the twentieth century, an increase in disposable income for many and escalating globalisation had resulted in a wider range of leisure activities being available, with a concurrent decrease in participation in sports and clubs. The "cooperative social habits" (p. 284) of the civically-minded generation that had experienced war and depression or been shaped by their parents experience of those things, had probably been a factor in the enthusiasm for school camps and the establishment of outdoor centres from the 1950's through to the 1990's. These generations "were gradually replaced by generations of less socially involved individuals without the same overarching imperative to cooperate" (ibid).

In 2020, Hill et al. (2020) identified that the outdoor education practiced in schools as EOTC was still valued but had considerable challenges. There was a shortage of teachers who were skilled and experienced at EOTC. There was often a shortage of funding to employ outdoor professionals to enable an experience. New teaching graduates had little or no training in EOTC. Opportunities for professional development were limited, and there were time constraints "either because of the heavy workloads of teachers or the reluctance of other teachers to release students from 'more important' classes" in order to participate (p. 9). Behind the scenes, safety systems had become a major focus and resulted in increased anxiety about being blamed in the aftermath of an accident; "there was a perception that legislation is not making students safer but rather creating a barrier to EOTC through increased documentation" (p. 10). There was an awareness of the inability of some students to pay for EOTC opportunities, and a general sense that EOTC was under resourced.

An increase in the paperwork necessary to run an outdoor programme, because of changes in legislation, had been noted by participants in my earlier research (Hollingsworth, 2011). They considered that the volume of paperwork required was negatively impacting their outdoor programmes. In 2020, this same theme remained, as can be seen in the following extract:

> The principal and teachers do however have increased worries about health and safety legislation and what this might mean for personal liabilities in the event of an accident. This has led to a noticeable increase in worry and stress which is not well understood by the BOT [Board of Trustees] and community who are made up of mostly farmers who are very against this kind of "pc bulls***" as they call it. (Hill et al., 2020, p. 58).

The participant quoted here, also noted that the staff felt a need to resist what they called 'over-the-top' health and safety paperwork. They felt it impacted negatively on student learning and the staff felt the weight of potential punishment hanging over them, if anything went wrong; that the 'common sense' approach to working in the outdoors, was being lost in the paperwork:

> There is a strong feeling that common sense is being whittled away by exercises in documenting our safety on paper (ibid).

A decade after my own research into the Mangatepopo tragedy had revealed the impact of paperwork on practice, and the contribution to deaths by a blind trust in a paperwork-based system, the same factors are present in those extracts from Hill et al. (2020).

4.1.1   Summarizing the field

While the comprehensive history of outdoor education in New Zealand has yet to be written, several other authors have summarised the profession or 'field' at various points, including Hill (2010), Lynch (2003, 2005, 2006) , Stothart (1993, 2012), Straker (2014, 2020) and Zink and Boyes (2007). Several efforts have been made to place the New Zealand 'field' into an international context, including Abbot (1990), Priest and Gass (1997), and Wattchow and Brown (2011). The effort by Boyes (2012) covered the ocean voyages of the Polynesians / Māori which resulted in the settlement of Aotearoa New Zealand by the late thirteenth century, the translocated hunting, fishing and

equal opportunity desires of the immigrants from Britain in the nineteenth century, and the government-induced nature studies curricula and health camps of the first half of the twentieth century. In doing so it correlates with the broader social history work of King (2003) and Ross (2008).

Straker (2020) also traversed this terrain but connected outdoor education to the importance of the Treaty of Waitangi (1840). This treaty created a dual perception, whereby the British believed they had ascertained sovereignty while Māori believed they had saved their country from being overrun. This tension resulted in war, land confiscations, 180 years of suppression and "the continual structural undermining of Māori through the dismissal of their stories and alienation from their land" (p. 5). The re-telling of these stories is a way that outdoor education practice could aid the resolution of history. Moreover, when Straker's interview participant explained his connection to, and understanding of, the outdoors using Māori cosmology and concepts, they stressed that it is actually a human issue not a cultural one, in that all students need help feeling valued and "For him, appreciating the bonds and connections we form with the land are integral to understanding who we are and how we should live respectfully with the planet" (p. 7). Living off the land became less about food gathering and more about connecting with the land and the ancestors that had gone before him. For Straker, tikanga Māori offered a way to "resist the homogenizing forces of Western colonisation" (p. 11).

The Wattchow and Brown (2011) summary of outdoor education in New Zealand noted the impact of colonialism on the indigenous peoples of Australia and New Zealand, how connection to a place contributed to identity formation, and that many outdoor education programmes were not cognizant of this. In a similar vein, Straker (2020, p. 2) echoing the work of Park (1995), noted that Western colonial settlers brought with them "the discourse that people and nature are separate entities". When outdoor education practice today focuses on activities at the expense of stories and knowledge of place, then it continues to manifest this discourse. Reconciling this dominant view in New Zealand outdoor education remains a challenge. This too was noted by Straker (2020, p. 2):

> A challenge for outdoor education is to offer opportunities to build connections with the outdoor environment so that we can live in ways that are less harmful to the wider world.

Straker noted that building these connections is often not easy. It produces tension because it requires people to challenge their own belief systems that value, for example, rationality over lived bodily experiences, or considering the non-human world and its right to exist versus the demands of the human world. It may require an awareness that the place they are trying to connect with is itself a product of colonization and contains a suppressing narrative; the establishment of National Parks can be an example of this. This is where the 'doing' of outdoor education has value (ibid, p. 8):

> Belonging to the environment in an embodied way disrupts rational discourses of control and separation from the environment, and builds a strong sense of cohesiveness.

Most of these summaries note the rise of interest in the outdoors via Scouts and school camps, the expansion in the 1970's of residential centres catering for the interest in personal growth via adventurous activities, and the move towards professionalism from the late 1980's provoked by neoliberalist economic policies. The opportunity to learn outdoor skills gradually moved away from clubs and into polytechnics. Wattchow and Brown (2011, p. xix, citing Lugg, 1999), noted a "major shift" in the discourse from the mid-1990's, encouraging a move away from pursuits and risk management and towards "educating for an environmentally sustainable future". However, it would take decades before that type of educational purpose manifested regularly in the practice and the dominance of those earlier discourses would linger.

For example, Papprill (2018, p. 4), in a resource for school camps funded by Education Outdoors New Zealand (EONZ) and the Ministry of Education, described school camps as a collection of activities:

> Typically, students will engage in a number of activities over the time they are with a provider such as high ropes, archery, kayaking, rock climbing, river crossings, and perhaps a wilderness tramp. The aim of such camps is to enable the students to develop outdoor skills, while also enhancing their social and personal development. There may

also be some element of environmental awareness included in the package.

Papprill noted the concern that outdoor experiences had become like a theme park "Rainbow's End rides in a landscape unrelated to anything else they may do" including what they do at school or at home (ibid).

Neoliberal thinking had motivated the establishment of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) in the early 1990's as part of an extensive - and some would say unnecessary, see for example Kelsey (1997) - overhaul of the education system. With this overhaul came the NZ Qualifications Framework which systematized all qualifications from secondary school through to PhD level. A Targeted Review of Qualifications (TRoQ) was instigated by NZQA in 2008. On a 10-tier system, secondary schools are at levels 1-3, and tertiary programmes levels 4-10; the 4610 available qualifications at level 1-6 were culled to approximately 1200 in order to reduce duplication and increase clarity for someone wishing to choose a pathway (NZQA, 2017).

By 2020, via TRoQ, the content of outdoor courses being offered at polytechnics was being rationalised and homogenised. One of the key pieces of legislation in the last decade was the Health and Safety in the Workplace act (2016) which resulted in the Health and Safety at Work (Adventure Activities) regulations 2016. This required organisations that ran identified 'adventurous activities' to be registered and to pass a safety audit, but did allow for exemptions to schools, tertiary providers and clubs (Worksafe, 2021). Even with these exemptions, the produced effect of legislation like this was for organisations *including* schools, tertiary providers and clubs, to meticulously document how they safely run their outdoor programmes. Straker's observation (2014, p. 251) is still accurate: where health and safety and economic imperatives are key drivers, then "industry qualifications are an efficient way to meet the requirements of audits and accountability" because they can be measured.

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4.2   Understanding the language

Outdoor education is a diverse field of practice and can be found as a subject, as a pedagogy, and as a context for learning. It is a contested space (Hill, 2010) with

multiple modes of practice. Hill (2012) suggested outdoor education practice would benefit from a socio-ecological approach to address issues of environmental degradation and social injustice. He suggested four key points in such an approach: take action, as no amount of knowledge or reflection on its own would result in tangible progress; have a framework that enables and guides the decisions to be made and allows measurements of progress to be taken; teachers and students have to learn how to take action and so they need to have multiple opportunities to develop action competence; educators must operate in politically astute ways, identifying what is worth fighting for and recognising that change takes place slowly and incrementally. When I came to consider how spirituality might present in an outdoor programme, Hill's points about action and the slow and incremental way that change takes place, were useful.

Cosgriff (2008) suggested outdoor education is a profession with an historic lack of semantic agreement about terms. Straker (2014) agreed and noted that even the words 'the outdoors' contains multiple meanings and assumptions about what the space is and what the practice encompasses. The educators she interviewed had a variety of philosophical purposes in their practice, from encouraging resilience or critical thinking, to challenging oneself through adventure activities, from interacting intimately with the environment to actualizing existing potential. These educators were inspired to help young people develop, to light a fire under them, to achieve things that are meaningful to them, to overcome fear. The meaning people derived from interacting in and with the outdoors was personal and often evolved during discussions that helped interpret the world around them. Making sense of the world does not happen in a vacuum but rather, as Straker (2014) suggests, through telling stories, sharing photos, listening to stories and interpreting the world that they are experiencing.

In a similar vein, Boyes (2012) asked what constituted legitimate knowledge in outdoor education: "Is a river a playground for extreme sports or a place for slow pedagogy?" (p. 27) and concluded that it is not the activity that is contested so much as the underlying logic of the outcomes.

4.2.1 Outdoor education and related concepts

Straker (2014) identified that the term 'outdoor education', used widely in New Zealand, had alternative names in other parts of the worlds. Outdoor education encompassed the following concepts, but sometimes these concepts were used in some situations as an alternative description for the practice itself:

Experiential Education, a process involving a learning cycle, a way of engaging learners via emotion and physical movement.

Education Outside the Classroom, or EOTC, is a style of education that uses natural (outdoor) environments to enhance the curriculum. It is a term that was "an attempt to encompass more teachers and move the emphasis away from camping and outdoor pursuits" (p. 63);

Adventure Education and *Outdoor Adventure Education,* are terms often used in Britain, whereby adventure activities are used to create challenging situations in order to encourage some sort of personal or group development. These challenging situations necessitate risk management and give rise to the tension of enhancing a feeling of risk while maintaining safe operating practices. The popularity of this approach, the trend to increase safety legislation, and the promotion of adventure activities in New Zealand tourism, all contributed to adventure (via outdoor pursuits and surrounded in risk management processes) as the dominant discourse in the New Zealand outdoors.

Outdoor Environmental Education, generally focused on ecological or conservation issues. It became popular in the 1960's but was subsumed by the dominance of adventure and the goals of personal or social development. More recently there has been a trend towards integrating more global issues (like climate change) or issues around social justice, and this shift is captured in the phrase 'education for sustainability' with one of its key goals being living within environmental limits.

Place-responsive Outdoor Education evolved from place-based education, and advocates for "a closer connection to the local environment through community work projects and developing a stronger sense of place by being more knowledgeable and intimately connected" to a place or several places (p. 72). A place-responsive approach

moves outdoor education away from a sequence of activities and to a way of viewing relationships between people, and between people and place.

Each of these terms and concepts are valid and regularly used, sometimes interchangeably. The danger in such variety (or lack of agreement) is that both the practice and the purpose can become confused or confusing. For example, Wattchow and Brown (2011), writing from an Australian and New Zealand perspective, argue that the practice of outdoor education has often been abstract, disconnecting people from where they live, but it can be grounded in ways that are responsive to what is local and storied and connecting:

> These outdoor places are more than mere sites of human activity. They make us and we make them. They are the source of our identities (p. ix).

They go on to say that recognizing the importance of place in making us, also makes links to an indigenous way of looking at the world and of living more in harmony with ecological systems of that place. It is an act of reconciliation with the indigenous people. Moreover, focus on place compels a re-evaluation of outdoor education approaches that were (mostly) taken for granted and based on imported ideas and practices.

4.2.2   Authenticity, agency, uncertainty, mastery

Papprill (2018) acknowledging the work of Beames and Brown (2016), notes that re-focusing outdoor education towards place, entails acknowledging and using four terms (concepts) in order to shape a programme: authenticity, agency, uncertainty, and mastery:

Authenticity is what feels real, about being true to one's self. Interactions are purposeful and result in some personal relevance: "the educators role is to choose settings in which such stimulating interactions can occur naturally" (Papprill, 2018, p. 16). Authenticity includes continuity, "the notion that experience is a many layered thing" (ibid), that interactions and connections are built up over time.

Agency is "the capacity and propensity to take purposeful action... It is the opposite of helplessness" (p. 17). Enabling students to take responsibility and make decisions also requires educators to share power and to be careful how they frame any critique.

Uncertainty is not the same as risk. Rather, it is "an opportunity for purposeful team work using critical reflection and creative thinking to overcome obstacles or solve problems" (ibid). The educators role is to guide the thinking and reflection and to develop competencies that enable them to cope. To this end, having a group space that is safe and supportive is important.

Mastery is about having multiple opportunities to practice and acquire competence at something. Working towards mastery builds confidence and competence, but "it does not mean there is nothing more to learn" (ibid). Whatever challenges are present in an outdoor education programme must be aimed at the right level of ability for the individual and the group, so as to maintain the progress of confidence and competence.

4.2.3   A starting point to understand the field

A broad but useful starting point, is to consider outdoor education as a subset of experiential education, in that it sits within this philosophical approach that advocates learning by doing, whereby "a learner constructs knowledge, skill and value from direct experience" (Ives & Obenchain, 2006, p. 65). Outdoor pursuits are often used to provide this direct experience. Outdoor pursuits are low-impact activities conducted in an outdoor setting, like rock climbing, walking, sailing and caving (Priest & Gass, 1997). Priest and Gass have been two of the more dominant researchers in this field, and for them, outdoor education has two often inter-related subsets: *adventure education*, which focuses on interpersonal relationships and intrapersonal growth, often through the medium of adventurous outdoor pursuits; and *environmental education* which focuses on issues of sustainability and connectedness. Straker (2014) noted that these subsets were interwoven for most of the twentieth century history of New Zealand outdoor education but were split apart as the trend for more physical activities emerged in the late 1970's and "environmental aims became subsumed by those of personal and social development" (p. 70).

While nature studies flourished early in the twentieth century, by the late twentieth century the majority of New Zealand outdoor education ideas, as practiced in schools and outdoor centres, primarily came from Britain and the USA. e.g. Outward Bound, the use of high-ropes courses for personal development, the focus on outdoor pursuits. Some have their roots in British militarism e.g. Scouts and Guides. As such, it could be argued that the New Zealand outdoor education practice has been colonised and that a more local or indigenous approach is now necessary. This is the direction acknowledged in the place-responsive approach promoted by Apiata (2016), Heke (2016), Martin et al. (2020), Straker (2014, 2020), Wattchow and Brown (2011) and the shift in programming at places like Outward Bound and Dilworth, that have seen a greater emphasis on journeying and knowing a place deeply.

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4.3   Neoliberalism and identity

The influence of neoliberalism on New Zealand outdoor education has been examined by Boyes (2012), Chisholm and Shaw (2004), Hollingsworth (2011), Zink (2003), Zink and Boyes (2007), Zink and Burrows (2008), and Zink and Leberman (2003). Neoliberalism has, as its central tenets, the primacy of the individual over the community, a commitment to free-market economics, and a belief in self-regulation. In neoliberal education, schools are run as businesses, managerialism is dominant, workers are disposable and knowledge is discretely compartmentalised. In neoliberal education, the curriculum emphasises technical knowledge and the skills and competencies required to secure employment. As New Zealand politics aggressively adopted neoliberalist policies from the late 1980's onwards, it resulted in the outdoor education field being dominated by the discourses of outdoor pursuits and risk management.

The enthusiasm for school camps and for taking pupils outside as part of an education programme, also encountered this neoliberal obstacle in the mid-1980's. From that point onwards, school camps and outdoor education in general had to have a defined structure with clearly measurable outcomes. In outdoor education it was easier to measure skills development than environmental awareness (or any number of other possibilities), and this was a factor in establishing the privileged position of outdoor

pursuits within outdoor programmes (Zink, 2003) and the dominance of the discourse of risk management (Zink & Leberman, 2003). Cosgriff (2008) noted that outdoor pursuits fitted easily with physical education in the school system due to its emphasis on movement, but "the unique histories, geographies and cultural understandings and traditions associated with any rock, river, lake or area of bush, tend to be overlooked or not seen to be integral..." (p. 21).

My own research (Hollingsworth, 2011) noted that neoliberalism had encouraged a systems-dependent approach that was pervasive in New Zealand outdoor education programmes and centres by 2008. This approach, with its emphasis on paperwork over apprenticeship, and its emphasis on compartmentalised units of learning and responsibility, actually prevented the sharing of information and was one of the hidden causal factors of the Mangatepopo tragedy of that year.

The roots of the decades-long antipathy between the three New Zealand organisations that provided the bulk of the training and assessment pathways for outdoor instructors, could also be attributed to neoliberalism: The Sport Fitness Recreation Industry Training Organisation (SFRITO, later to become SkillsActive Aotearoa) was a government organisation, established in the early 1990's and fully funded; the Mountain Safety Council (MSC) was established in the 1960's by community groups concerned about the post-war spate of accidents in the outdoors, and was government subsidized; and the New Zealand Outdoor Instructor Association (NZOIA) was established and funded primarily from its members but had to increasingly depend on funding from government to survive. Shaw et al. (2014), investigating governance in New Zealand outdoor organisations, noted that neoliberalism influenced how these organisations (and others) ran their programmes but also how organisations worked together (or not) across the sector: "This is a feature of neoliberal influenced funding agreements; isolation and differentiation lead to an inward organisational focus rather than a wider sector view" (p. 1550). They had to compete for primacy, they each thought their structure was the best, they struggled to construct agreements or common approaches, and each had to maintain a good relationship with the key funding agency, Sport New Zealand (Sport NZ), thereby acknowledging the power that Sport NZ held over the outdoor sector (but not SFRITO / SkillsActive, whose funding came from a different source). "There was a strong feeling

of being 'owned' by Sport NZ, which did not allow for a frank exchange of ideas" (p. 1550) and "We can never say anything that's against Sport NZ... if we are critical of Sport NZ they cut our funding" (p. 1552).

4.3.1   Identity – the challenge of sport and funding

Sport NZ began life as the Hillary Commission for Sport, Fitness and Leisure which was established in 1987. The commission was significant in that it was the first organisation to oversee the funding and promotion of sport, fitness and leisure in New Zealand, and as such offered the potential for outdoor organisations to gain a more direct path to government funding, but outdoor education was a minor part of its remit. The Hillary Commission would evolve over time into Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC) in 2002, and then Sport NZ in 2012. Each of these iterations would channel government funding into organisations that enabled physical activity, but sport always dominated the budget allocations. This was especially so after the Graham Report of 2002, which identified sport "as a central element of New Zealand identity" (Ryan & Watson, 2018, p. 289). There was political capital to be gained by promoting sport and with its easily assessed performance criteria, established and funded infrastructure, and television-friendly appearance, sport was seen as a way of promoting good citizenship. Ryan and Watson stated that "sport is arguably even more important as a symbol of national achievement and unity today than it has ever been" (p. 312) and that participation in sport produces "a feeling of investment and identification with national achievements that is not present in cultural or intellectual endeavours" (p. 315).

4.3.2   Identity – the value of tramping and school camps

However, recreating outdoors and outdoor education itself, could also be argued as a central element of New Zealand identity. Sir Edmund Hillary, in the foreword of Kiwi Outdoors, the first publication by the Hillary Commission that exclusively promoted outdoor education (The Hillary Commission, 1995), said:

> I have always believed that outdoor New Zealand is one of the best available classrooms... I also believe that our outdoors contributes to the type of person we are. It is important to our sensitivity, spirituality, identity and perspective. Without it New Zealanders would lose a vital part of their culture and character (p. 1).

While quantitative data about participation in New Zealand outdoor education programmes is scarce, evidence exists that being outside for health, education, recreation or spiritual purposes was (and is) valued. Interviews with experienced outdoor educators during my own research (Hollingsworth, 2011) had shown that prior to the impact of neoliberalism on education in New Zealand, school camps brought together a community of teachers and parent volunteers to provide exactly those benefits, that is, the hard-to-quantify benefits of increased social cohesion, personal development, opportunities for individuals to shine at something, and the development of positive relationships between students and between teachers and students. Camps provided opportunities for pupils to be seen in a different light, other than their behaviour in the classroom. It is feasible that school camps were seen as locally symbolic acts of unity, as many people contributed to make them happen and make them worthwhile for the pupils. Stothart (1993) estimated some 7000 pupils had attended school camps in 1968 and by 1972 that number had grown to 26,000. Lynch (2002) puts the number of school campers in the early 1970's at 73,000. Lynch (2003, 2005) noted that outdoor education was a grass-roots development that was able to grow by being valued in local communities rather than depending on support from government departments.

Tramping is an example of grass-roots growth and has strong links to outdoor education. With the establishment of the Tararua Tramping Club in 1919 and the explosion of tramping clubs in the 1930's, the activity of tramping helped break down social restrictions between the sexes, the promulgation of tracks and huts in the back country promoted exploration and adventure, and the pre and post-war governments encouraged the activity as a means of increasing the overall health of the nation (Ross, 2008). Tramping became accepted and normalised as a social recreation. Barnett and Maclean (2014, p. 17) note that going tramping for the day or overnight or longer, became an integral activity in many outdoor education programmes from the 1940's and "played an increasingly important role in introducing young people to tramping". They also note (p. 18) the change that occurred in the 1980's:

> Since the 1980's school outdoor education has become increasingly professionalised, with trained instructors leading a range of outdoor pursuits, including tramping. Their purpose is to provide experiences

that involve fun and adventure as well as teamwork and personal growth.

Barnett and Maclean (2014, p. 20) note a 2012 Department of Conservation (DOC) survey found that "14 per cent of New Zealanders had tramped a Great Walk in the past year and 13 per cent had stayed at a DOC hut or lodge". Barnett (2021) suggests that tramping be considered our true national sport. He describes tramping as "one of New Zealand's most popular activities, with participation far exceeding that of traditional sports like rugby, cricket and netball" (p. 14) and trampers as a thriving cultural subset of society.

It is difficult to get consistent quantitative data across long periods of time for participation in school camps or for tramping. However, four analyses of tramping support Barnett's assertion of tramping's popularity. In the period 2004 - 2015, the average number of people tramping in New Zealand was 630,000 locals and 514,000 international visitors (MSC, 2016). In 2017, over 1.5 million people engaged in tramping (1,539,133), of which 936,367 were locals, the rest being overseas visitors (MSC, 2018). Statistics NZ has different data, though in general the trend (pre-Covid) was upwards. The data for domestic visitors undertaking a walk or hike, only covers the period 1999 to 2012. In 1999 there were 6.1 million domestic visitor days walking or hiking somewhere in New Zealand; in 2008 this number dropped to 3.7 million and then rose by 2012 to 5.4 million (Statistics NZ, 2021a). There was no domestic visitor data for this activity after this date. While the time periods for the data are different, the trend for international visitors to New Zealand was the same. In 1997, nearly 700,000 international visitors went for a walk or tramp. This rose to 1.6 million in 2012 then 2.37 million in 2019 (Statistics NZ, 2021b). The point here is the data overall asserts the popularity of tramping and walking for both domestic and international tourists.

In contrast, as an example of a sport considered an integral part of New Zealand identity, Ryan and Watson (2018, p. 309) report that the number of rugby players nationally increased from 123,000 in 1997 to 149,978 in 2013 but more recent data showed a decline in part of the picture, with the New Zealand Secondary School Sports Council data reporting a drop in registered rugby players from 28,607 in 2009 to

24,731 in 2019 (Tso, 2020). Though it is difficult to draw comparisons between these data sets, or correlations between participation in outdoor programmes and participation in tramping, the point here is about claims of what symbolizes national identity: tramping shows a greater scale of participation than rugby and outdoor education programmes provide gateway experiences to tramping.

4.3.3   Identity formation – the subtle influence of outdoor education

Two examples of the influence of outdoor education on young people, and how it can be a catalyst for a life direction, can be seen in the life trajectories of the Nelson publisher Robbie Burton, and the mountaineer Pat Deavoll. Burton (Like Hillary and Dingle before him) attributed school tramping trips as being formative in his development. The tramping trips helped shape his character and outlook on the world because they required resilience, self-reliance and the skills to get out of trouble. For Burton, the rugby-dominated 1970's society of his upbringing was anathema and tramping provided an alternative means of expressing his physicality and developing toughness. These were attributes that would later underpin his trans-alpine tramping trips and the challenges of the commercial world of publishing (Barnett, 2021; Barnett & Maclean, 2014; Potton, 2016).

In the following excerpt from her autobiography, the New Zealand mountaineer Pat Deavoll (2011, p. 20) conveys the mystery surrounding the school tramping club and her excitement at being able to finally join and go on excursions. The joy and sense of increased capability is present here; Deavoll is part of a group of pupils tramping to, and then climbing, their first mountain under the guidance of an adult (the mountaineer Norman Hardie) while on a school tramping trip:

> 'Look, there's the summit. Why don't you go on ahead while I wait for the others?'
> 'Really! I can go on?' I hesitated, wary.
> 'Go on,' he said, waving his arm.
> I turned towards the top. Wow! Was I actually going to climb this mountain? I began to move, hesitantly at first, then my feet took flight. I flew upward to the stony summit... I knew something profound had happened. I was soaring...

For Deavoll, those outdoor trips with the school tramping club provided the impetus for a life exploring mountains and becoming a world-renowned alpinist with many first ascents in the high mountains of the world. It provided an identity. But it also provided an insight into the influence and provocative power of outdoor education. I would meet Pat decades later when we were both instructing at OPC /Hillary Outdoors.

4.3.4 Identity – the catalyst provided by outdoor centres

The establishment of outdoor centres like OPC /Hillary Outdoors, Outward Bound and Tihoi Venture School are also indications that outdoor education was valued by communities. The following quote from Tony Hart, the Headmaster of St. Paul's Collegiate at the time of the establishing of Tihoi Venture School in 1979, conveys this:

> A residential venture school offered what, as a boy (and later as an overgrown boy), I had longed for. A sort of desert island where you could build your house, cut your own wood, cook your own food and see how you could really survive on your own two feet, to sleep out in a tent, paddle a canoe, climb a hill and lie exhausted in the grass on top (Hollingsworth, 1999, p. 5).

But Hart's vision was not about some sort of utopian survivalist adventure, it was about education and the development of the whole person:

> On long summer days the classroom seemed claustrophobic. Surely one could let a boy spread his wings for a spell and live, at the very worst it might produce actual happenings to write essays about? (ibid).

A similar 'whole person' theme was conveyed by Graeme Dingle (Dingle, 1981, p. 185) when writing about the establishment of the centre that became OPC /Hillary Outdoors:

> It is clear to me that the challenges and companionship of the outdoors would be a panacea for many of the problems caused by the lack of direction, challenge and leadership of our modern society.

This panacea would continue to be promoted by Dingle via the establishment of Project K and later, the Dingle Foundation. Some forty years after these quotes, this continued affirmation of value can be seen in two media statements. The first is from

the Education Gazette, the source of news and career development for New Zealand teachers. In 2019 it featured the 'Institute of Awesome', a re-imagined school camp programme in Raglan (The Education Gazette, 2019):

> We wanted to develop a school camp that is less about playing in the outdoors and more about learning in the outdoor environment. It became really apparent to us that it would be a perfect place to show the relevance of technology and we could demonstrate how kids could use it to solve real-world problems.

While 'playing in the outdoors' might be construed as somewhat derogatory, using the outdoors as a space for learning and especially learning about technology and real-world problems, has been a consistent theme across the decades. The second excerpt, from 2021, is from Recreation Aotearoa, an organisation that advocates for outdoor professionals in New Zealand. In their 'Outdoor education and school camps Covid-19 advice' (Recreation Aotearoa, 2021) they state :

> The 'Why' of our work is all about building communities, growing young people, developing resilience, supporting healthy lives...School Camps and other Outdoor Activities / Education are an important part of the New Zealand School Curriculum and way of life.

This excerpt promotes the outdoors as a space for personal development but it also signals that outdoor education has been integrated into schooling for a long time. Both of these quotes continue to affirm the value widely held but not often quantified, that being outdoors is beneficial for people.

While outdoor education has been overshadowed by the behemoth that is sport in New Zealand, outdoor education continues to inspire individuals and be valued at both a local and national level. One example that did attempt to quantify value, was the national review of Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC) in New Zealand schools (Hill et al., 2020). The review concluded that EOTC remained an integral part of the fabric of schools, with learning experiences occurring in activities like school camps and curriculum enrichment trips to places such as museums, parks and the sea shore. The data was collected via a national questionnaire completed by school leaders and EOTC coordinators (n=523), interviews with students, school leaders, teachers and EOTC providers, and an inventory from a sample of 23 schools. Schools saw EOTC as a

vehicle to develop the interconnected themes of curriculum enrichment, student engagement, personal and social skills and connections, and a sense of something new. As such, "EOTC continues to be highly valued in schooling" and the phrase "EOTC brings the curriculum alive" was a common description from the participants (p. 8).

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4.4 Frameworks for understanding outdoor education

While there are many models that help explain outdoor education or parts of it (see for example Papprill, 2018), the three that follow are ones that I found personally useful and clear. These are Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle model (with a variant from Neil), Boyes Influential Social Fields model, and the Outward Bound Process model from Walsh and Golins.

4.4.1 Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle model

Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle model (Kolb, 1984) provided a theoretical basis to many outdoor programmes, in that it emphasized 'learning by doing' as the first step in a cycle of learning (see Figure 11). The concrete experience happens first, followed by guided reflection, out of which crystalizes insights or learning. While Kolb's model was criticized for lacking empirical data, distorting original theorists work, and having terminology that was vague e.g. Morris (2020), it has also been described as the most influential model in experiential learning theory (Seaman et al., 2017).

Figure 11

Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (1984)
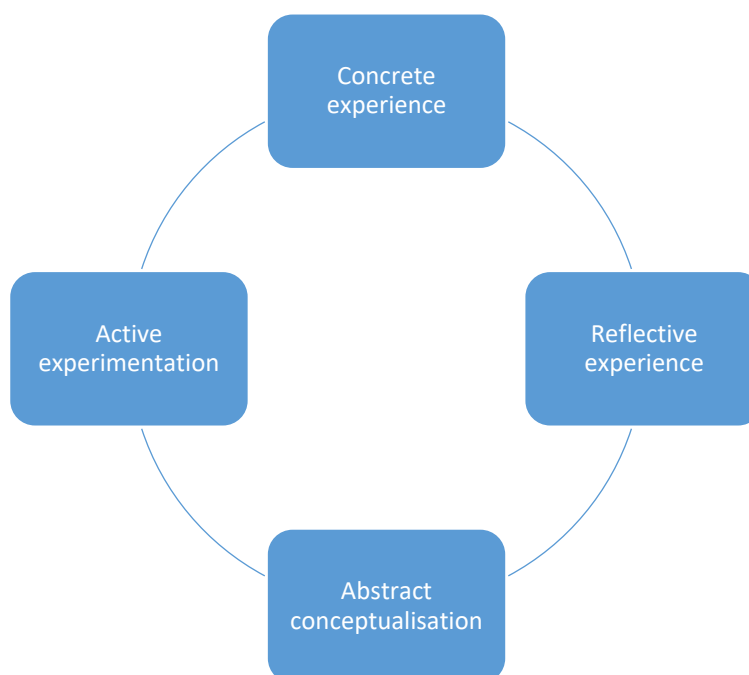
Note. From Kolb, D. (1984). Experiential learning: experience as the source of learning and development. Prentice-Hall.

Neill (2013) provided a more user-friendly variation on Kolb's experiential learning cycle (see Figure 12). In Neil's variation, not only are the words more action-oriented, but the cycle spirals off to a transference stage. It still follows the same cycle, of starting with an experience, then reviewing what happened, thinking about it and coming to some conclusions, before embarking on planning for the next experience. The transfer occurs when the context changes – a new group, a new physical element, or even the same element and group but a different context. An example of this would be learning the skills of rock climbing with a group: a belay partner might change, the difficulty of the climb (or the style of climbing) might change as the pair move around a crag and try new things, or the group might go to a different crag. Each experience offers a new iteration of the learning cycle. Similarly, group work like problem solving, or conflict resolution, can follow the same cycle.

This is a key message of outdoor education – that what is 'learned' by active participation in a programme, can be transferred to the next stage of the programme or to a life beyond. For example, Holman and McAvoy (2005) noted numerous benefits that were transferred from their wilderness adventure programme to participants' wider life. These included increased coping skills, increased confidence in their

abilities, being more respectful and trusting of others, and having a better understanding of people with disabilities. These benefits are often called personal growth or transformation.

Figure 12

Neill's Variation of Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle
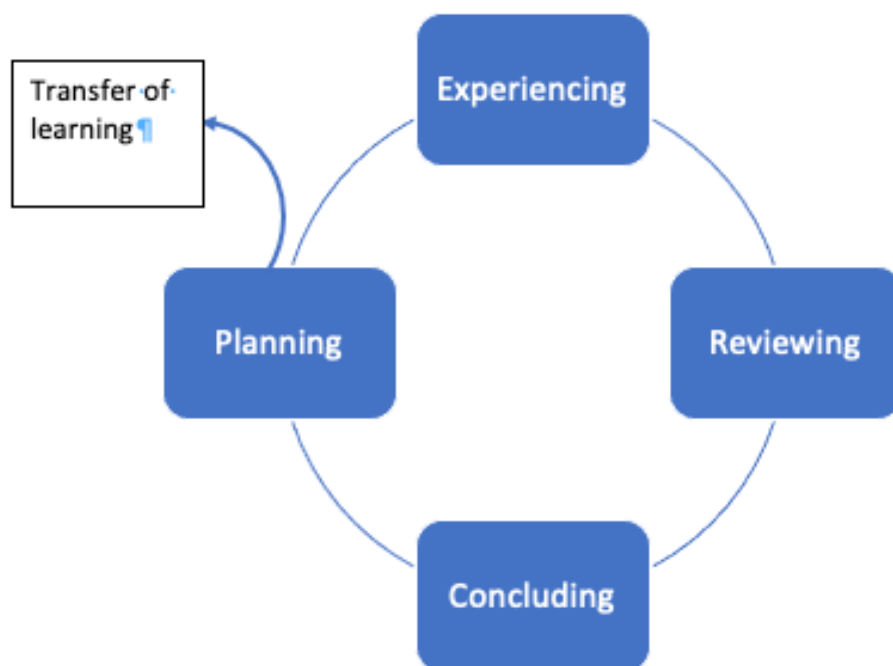
Note. Neill, J. (2013). *Experiential learning cycle*. Retrieved 1.3.2013 from http://wilderdom.com/experiential/elc/ExperientialLearningCycle.htm

Kolb's model was acknowledged by Robinson (2007c) in examining the spiritual journey from a sporting context. Robinson used terms that were different again from both Kolb and Neill, yet captured the same intent: **articulation** - of a narrative in response to an experience; **reflection** – on, and testing of, meaning; **development** of meaning; and finally, **response**, leading to a new experience. Robinson's terms would provide useful guides in examining the interview transcripts for clues about spiritual journeys.

Internationally, Kolb (1984) and Priest and Gass (1997) have been influential in providing frameworks for understanding outdoor education. However, Boyes (2012) brought more of a New Zealand-oriented lens to this overview, and saw outdoor education comprised of three sub-fields: two that compete (Outdoors-as-adventure and Outdoors-as-learning), both influenced by neoliberalism, with the potential for a third sub field, that of 'Education for sustainability (see Figure 11).

4.4.2   Boyes Influential Social Fields model: Outdoors-as-adventure and Outdoors-as-learning

Though practiced in one form or another for decades, outdoor education in New Zealand, with a focus on adventure activities and outdoor pursuits, only appeared as a key learning area, in the Health and Physical Education syllabus (HPE), in 1998. In Figure 13, Outdoors-as-adventure relies on risk taking behaviour, which is valued "as a radical form of escape from societal conditions that deaden the human spirit" (Boyes, 2012, p. 37). Adventure taps into a New Zealand identity, champions the individual especially via the media interest of extreme sports, has an alluring link to technology, and feeds the consumerist impulse at the heart of neoliberalism. It is, according to Boyes, a "juggernaut" with "anthropocentric environmental perspectives" (p. 39) and unsustainable practices, where the environment is viewed as something to be used from an economic perspective. Moreover, "the focus on skill learning and personal development in outdoor programmes is consistent with this approach" (ibid, p. 38).

Figure 13

Influential Social Fields and Influences on Legitimate Forms of Outdoor Education
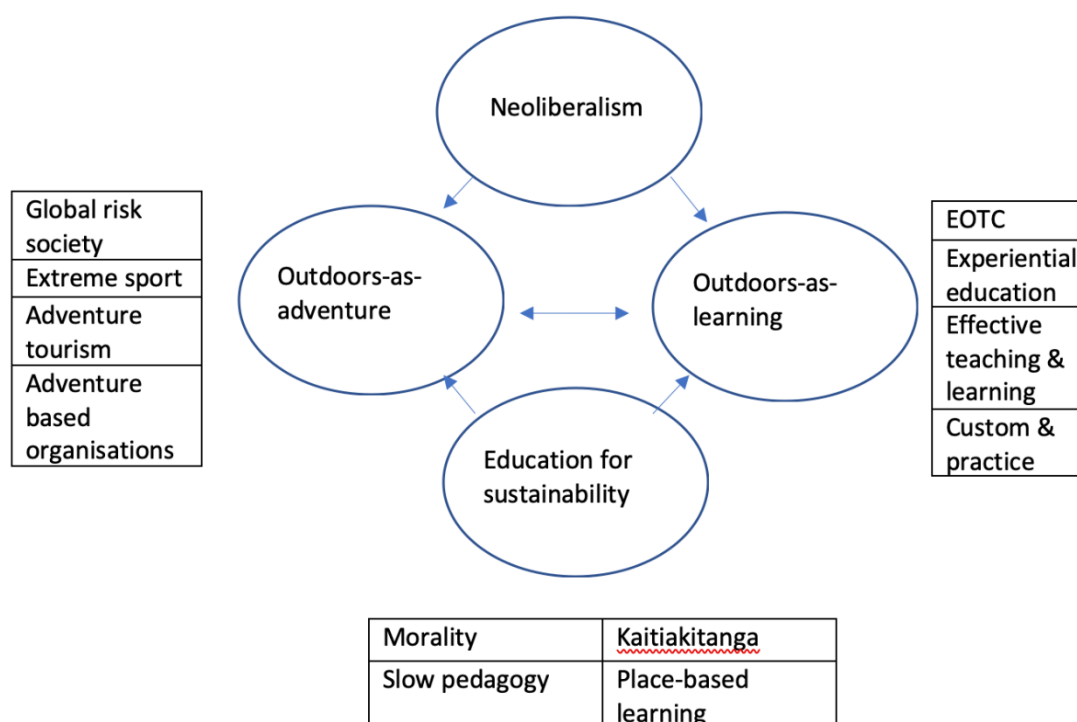
Note. From Boyes, M. (2012). Historical and contemporary trends in outdoor education. In D. Irwin, Straker, J., & Hill, A (Ed.), *Outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand*. CPIT.

In Figure 13, 'Outdoors-as-learning' is a sub field that positions the outdoors as the space where you go and learn about the environment, but the space can be used as a

mechanism to learn about other curricula areas, like science and geography. However, "once outdoor education was defined in the Health and Physical Education syllabus as adventure, the term was increasingly left to the HPE area" (ibid, p. 38), and going outdoors to learn became marginalized. Seeing the outdoors as the space to have adventures, provided a disincentive to other curricula areas. There was some guidance for these other curricula areas about how to use the outdoors as a learning space, and this was were broadly captured in the term Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC). EOTC is a government sanctioned series of guiding documents that was set up to allow for curriculum development of subjects by utilizing the outdoor space. Outdoors-as-learning is a sub field that has always contested the primacy of adventure and risk.

There is a third sub field that Boyes hoped would provide a challenge to the other two, and shift the field overall. It is the sub field of 'Education for sustainability'. In this sub field, climate change, the degradation of natural systems, the threats to biodiversity as well as the beauty of the natural world, are addressed. In this sub field, place-based learning (where people create an attachment to a place by not only 'doing' things in that place but by consciously 'being' in it) and 'slow pedagogy' (with its emphasis on immersion and slow time), enables greater opportunities "to build quality connections and deep engagement with local environments" (ibid, p. 40). This is also the sub field where Māori concepts of eco-connectedness can reside, including the concepts of mauri, where everything has a life force; *kaitiakitanga* or stewardship (or guardianship) of the environment; and *manaakitanga* or relational caring. Boyes points out that these concepts have a morality that is not obvious in the other sub fields.

In this orientation of the field of outdoor education in New Zealand, Boyes does not specifically offer a place where spirituality is addressed, though the 'Education for sustainability' sub field has promise. This is typical of the literature. There has been a movement in New Zealand towards more 'place-based' programmes and literature, see for example Brown (2008), Brown (2012), Jones (2011), Straker (2009, 2020), Wattchow and Brown (2011), but there remains an absence of literature that overtly investigates spiritual transformation, from the perspective of the people who construct New Zealand outdoor programmes.

4.4.3   The Outward Bound Process model

Outward Bound is an international network of outdoor education schools that focus on personal development (Martin et al., 2020). The Outward Bound Process Model (Walsh & Golins, 1976) describes the key elements of the Outward Bound programme that would result in an individual having a greater sense of worth, a greater sense of their own ability to achieve (what is known as self-efficacy), and a re-focused meaning to their life. Priest and Gass (1997) contend that this model works, regardless of whether the intent of the programme was about growing the individual, developing the social group, or mastering technical skills. Martin et al. (2006, p. 64) state that it is "one of the most influential models in outdoor programming". Sibthorp (2003, p. 101) describes it as being "seminal" and a solid place to begin to understand what happens in these types of programmes.

The model has seven key elements (see Figure 14): a learner (1) is placed into prescribed physical environments (2) and prescribed social environments (3). They are then given problem-solving tasks (4) that are challenging but staircased in such a way as to encourage success. As the tasks become more challenging, the learner enters a state of dissonance (5), whereby they may struggle to cope or succeed and their self-image, or self-narrative, is under attack ('I can't do this', 'I am useless').

Figure 14

The Outward Bound Process Model
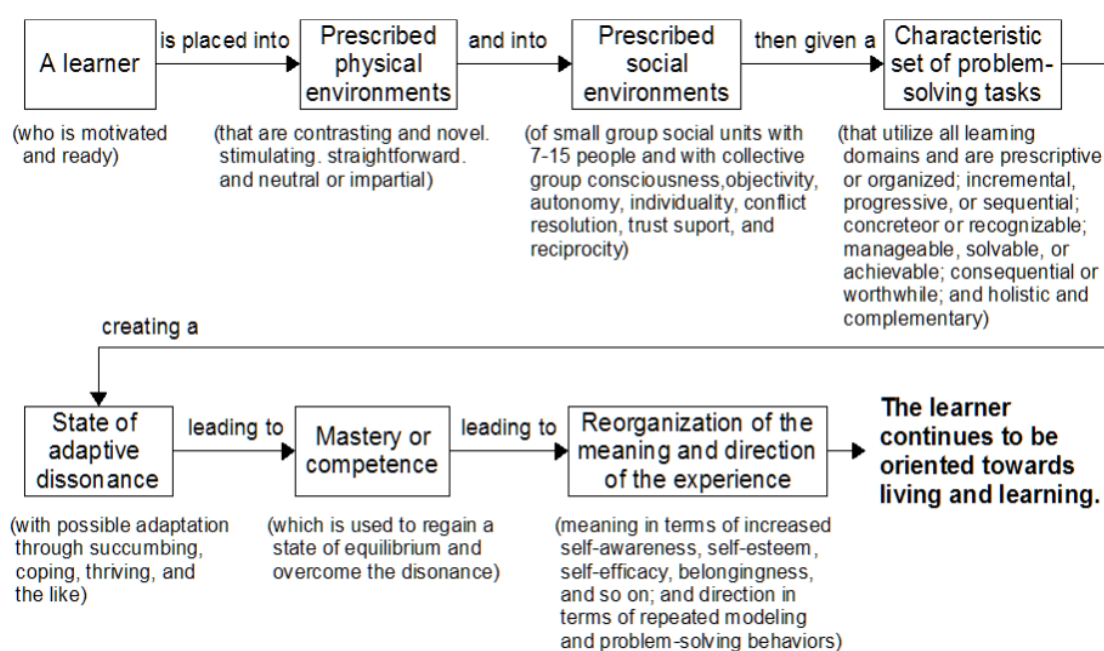
Note. From Walsh, V., & Golins, G. (1976). Model of the Outward Bound process. In S. Priest, & Gass, M (Ed.), *Effective leadership in adventure programming*. Human Kinetics.

With skilled guidance, this state of dissonance leads to a breakthrough, whereby mastery (6), or at least competence, provides a new narrative to the learner ('I can do this'). In turn, this new self-narrative helps the learner overcome the state of dissonance and leads to a greater sense of their own ability, a heightened sense of belonging to the group, and a working knowledge of how to overcome challenges if they arise again in the future. This element is about finding the meaning in the experience (7) and a skilled guide will enable the learner's new meaning, new sense of self, to be carried forward or transferred, into other contexts.

A direct critique of this model has been made by Sibthorp (2003) and McKenzie (2003), while Martin et al. (2020) critiqued the model as part of a review of fifty years of Outward Bound courses in New Zealand.

Sibthorp (2003) noted that while this model resonated with practitioners, the interrelationships between those seven elements were poorly understood. Sibthorp focused on the realization that learners actually bring their past with them onto a programme – their gender, their life experiences, their beliefs, their motivation levels. This was termed '*antecedent variables*'. Another focus was the '*characteristics of the experience*' variables, which emerge during a programme. These variables include

perceptions of the social environment, how much support they receive, and how empowered they feel during the programme. Sibthorp sought to uncover any relationship that might exist between those two variables and a third, that of changes in self-efficacy.

Sibthorp showed that students who felt empowered during the programme, and for whom the learning they received was relevant, indicated a greater ability to self-regulate their lives. The converse was also found – less empowered students felt less capable at the end of the programme. The study showed that the antecedent variable of the students, as signaled by motivation to attend, expectation to learn, and expectation to change, influenced what they got out of the programme. In other words, the attitude of the person influenced how invested they were and how much relevance they attributed to the programme upon its completion. Sibthorp noted that attitude can be influenced by pre-commencement screening, with conversations about expectations, and by the programme design itself addressing the subject. He also cautioned that programmes are often too distinctive in nature to offer generalizations. This may be because of the unique mix of personalities at any one time, or the logistical constraints of a programme or the physical setting itself.

McKenzie (2003) also critiqued the Walsh and Golins (1976) model, noting it was quite linear, and the focus on the individual undermines one of Outward Bound's core tenets, which was to develop compassion. She noticed that the relationships between staff and students influenced the outcome for the students, and went on to suggest several changes: add 'course instructors' and 'service' as key components of student learning; make 'reflection' a key capstone component; and replace 'characteristic set of problem-solving tasks' with 'course activities' to reflect that a variety of activities influence student learning (e.g. solo and service) not just those centred on problem-solving.

Martin et al. (2020) noted that the New Zealand Outward Bound course retains the "physically demanding and socially challenging outdoor adventure activities, as advocated by the Walsh and Golins (1976) model" (p. 4). The process advocated for in the model was still relevant, even though the clientele had changed over time. Perhaps the greatest impact on the model, has been the refocusing of the underlying values of

the organization to better reflect its social and cultural context, while still retaining the core philosophy. The original ten values espoused by its founders, were streamlined to three very New Zealand and Māori orientated values (*Kaupapa)*: "greatness, compassion, and *kaitiakitanga* – respecting, preserving and living in harmony with the environment" (p. 13).

The addition of Sibthorp's antecedent variables and the amount of support a student received on a course, and McKenzie's recognition of a wider set of activities, the influence of staff and the power of reflection, served to strengthen the model, not diminish it. While the later analysis by Martin et al. did not specifically state that those suggestions for change had been implemented, the shift in emphasis via the values would suggest that they had been.

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4.5   Benefits of outdoor programmes

The benefits to participants of outdoor education programmes are diverse. Long-term benefits cited include that programmes challenge the assumptions of self and others, create strong peer relationships, and positively influence career directions (Gass et al., 2003). They create an increase in sense of place or connection to a place, and better social skills (Austin et al., 2009; Wattchow & Brown, 2011). They have been cited to increase resilience (Neill & Dias, 2001) or create opportunities for adolescents to experience a modern rite of passage (Bell, 2003). Beyond learning outdoor skills like campcraft or navigation, outdoor education programmes can enable people to be more responsible for themselves (McKenzie, 2003), learn social skills and social responsibility (Nicol, 2014), facilitation skills (Sugerman, 2001) or leadership approaches (Martin et al., 2006). The impact on the formation of values and identity has been noted in section 4.3, with the quotes from Dingle, Hillary and Deavoll helping to illuminate this.

McKenzie (2003), in examining Outward Bound courses, noted that some of the benefits of outdoor programmes came from being outdoors in wilderness spaces. She was in agreement with the literature, e.g. Hattie et al. (1997), stating that this setting "helped increase students self-awareness, self-concept, self-responsibility as well as facilitate their personal restoration" (McKenzie, 2003, p. 18). While there were other

course components that positively affected what the course was trying to achieve (activities, relationship with instructors), one component that negatively impacted students was failing to achieve success. This impacted their self-concept, motivation and inter-personal skills.

Fox (1999) cautioned that while outdoor education programmes provided many opportunities for personal development because they were experiential in nature and they utilized adventurous elements, very little was known about the effect of these things on spiritual development. Furthermore, both (Fox, 1999) and Riley (2014) observed, in North American and Australian contexts, that outdoor programmes that focused on pursuit competence and physical challenges, missed the opportunity to develop a more holistic approach incorporating spiritual health and wellness. In Riley's re-telling of an outdoor trip, one group (Group A) had been led in a manner that used journal writing and meditation practice during a multi-day hike, in order to "promote self-awareness and an exploration of connections with others (including nature)" (Riley, 2014, p. 23). Riley noted that for these Group A members, "a strong connection had been forged" with each other and toward the place they had been in. They were a cohesive group that appeared "rejuvenated, uplifted and inspired" (ibid, p. 24). The other group (Group B), did not use this approach, instead the leaders focused on fast times between campsites (ibid):

> It became evident that students in Group B were not provided with the same means to experience the natural world in which they were travelling through. And for them, the hiking component of the 'adventure' was the only purpose of this expedition [...] Some [Group B] students were thrilled by their demonstrations of physical efficacies, further propagating their competitive 'wins'. Others were less enthusiastic and appeared disengaged and utterly exhausted and deflated.

Outdoor environments and outdoor programmes can be utilized for more therapeutic purposes, including countering anti-social behavior and addressing health problems (Clark et al., 2004; English Outdoor Council, 2010; Russell et al., 2000). While programmes differ in length, Hattie et al. (1997) and Ward and Yoshino (2007) show that both long and short programmes have a statistically noticeable positive effect on participants, especially on intrapersonal relationship skills.

A review of EOTC programmes across New Zealand (Hill et al., 2020) showed that teachers, school leaders and students considered EOTC to be valuable because it fostered interpersonal skills and relationships between students and between staff and students. "Significantly, these enhanced relationships positively impacted learning back at school" (p. 9). Moreover, the variety of EOTC experiences generated excitement and engagement. EOTC allowed for a "more relaxed dynamic" and benefitted a more group-based and interactive teaching pedagogy. Papprill (2018), acknowledging the nature-deficit disorder work of Louv (2005), noted that most schools valued school camps as part of the wider curriculum, because "quality outdoor education programmes can go some way toward bridging the divide between the urban, digital lifestyles of many people and nature" (p. 4). School camps, for Papprill (p. 8),

> ... provide opportunities for educators to develop in their students, confidence and resourcefulness, establish positive connections with peers, teachers and communities, take action, and take their experiences into their lived lives.

Outdoor education is full of opportunities: it can provide optimism and resilience in the face of a changing world, it can help people develop a sense that they can contribute to positive change, and it can build a connection to and wonder in, the natural world.

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4.6   Programming for spirituality in outdoor education

The Martin et al. (2020) analysis of Outward Bound New Zealand also offered an important question for programmers: what do we want the students to walk away with? This is an example of how philosophy influences programming, in that the inclusion of values championed by Māori, provided for a more authentic experience, which in turn made it more likely for the personal and organisational goals to be met.

The models of Boyes (2012), and Walsh and Golins (1976) offered broad brush strokes about outdoor education programming. The benefits of outdoor education programmes offered finer brush strokes, and have been mentioned already, but quite how those benefits came to be realized is an important consideration. Programming that would enable the growth of spirituality, is the focus of this section.

Morgan (1994) cited in Heintzman (2003) was sceptical about the claim that people who participate in outdoor and adventure recreation have a spiritual relationship with nature, as there was no empirical research to support it. That may well have been the spur to researchers in the subsequent decades to investigate that link, including Daniel (2007), Fox (1999), Fredrickson and Anderson (1999), Heintzman (2003), Hubball and West (2008), and Riley (2014).

Daniel (2007) investigated the life significance of a Christian-based, multi-day wilderness expedition. Trip components included backpacking, climbing, camping, canoeing and solo. The overwhelming majority of the 227 participants believed that the trip had made a difference in their lives (90%), and that the significance had increased over time. The key factors uncovered by Daniel, were: the uniqueness of the experience, the timing of the expedition in the lives of the participants, and the extent to which expedition memories were connected to later life experiences (note that this is the transference stage advocated earlier by Neill (2013), as the addition to Kolb's learning cycle). However, the additional factors noted by Daniel, have implications for programming: the power of the wilderness setting, the relationship with the staff, and the challenges encountered on the trip. Daniel's research revealed two other important points. The first was that the expedition "encouraged a sense of something greater" within the participants (p. 338), a greater awareness of God, a greater awareness of the interconnectedness of the natural world, and of their own abilities and beliefs. The second was that this greater awareness increased their faith and trust in God and in a supernatural or spiritual dimension. In other words, what they attributed to depended on what they believed.

Fox (1999) provided clear definitions of spirituality, and a four-stage framework for understanding the spiritual experience. Fox did not prescribe particular events that triggered moments of transcendence, but did list 32 programme recommendations about actions for practitioners to consider (see Appendix B *Fox's Programme Recommendations to Enhance Spiritual Opportunities*). While it is difficult to see contemporary New Zealand outdoor programmes allowing nudity, Fox's programming recommendations (to enhance spiritual opportunities) could be reconfigured along similar lines as the Stringer and McAvoy (1992) reconfiguration earlier (in section 3.4).

Stringer and McAvoy had 15 factors contributing to or inhibiting spiritual experiences and I had recombined these into three groupings:

- **Factors that a person came with** (prior awareness of own spirituality, predisposition to spiritual reflection, previous spiritual experiences, personal questions needing addressing);
- **People in the group factors** (camaraderie, prompting, sharing); and
- **Programmable factors** (physical activity, the natural environment, time, and structure /components of a trip).

I reconfigured Fox's work into groups of similar recommendations. The 32 recommendations became four groupings:

- **Factors that involve *time*** (for solitude, reflection, relaxation, exploring nature, alone time, time for sharing, being artistic or creative)

- **Factors that encourage *deep thinking and deep sharing*** (developing open-mindedness, nurturing a respectful attitude, a place for a retreat, talking – especially in small groups, being involved emotionally with people and place, yoga and meditation, fasting)
- **Factors that involve *connecting to a place*** (journeying, celebrating, experiencing natural rhythms of the day, doing art, expeditioning, exploring from a base, extended camping, adapting indigenous practices)
- **Factors that *empower*** (sharing decisions, reducing competition and stereotypical role adoption, sharing feelings, encouraging trust, encouraging group bonding, experimenting)

These groupings made it easier to compare Fox's factors with Stringer and McAvoy's. It was possible to see outdoor programming, that acknowledged spirituality, taking shape.

Fredrickson and Anderson (1999) were less focused on the activities offered on programmes and more interested in the influence of the setting. They noted that 'place' is more than just a backdrop upon which events play out, but rather that it embodied, and encouraged, meaning making. The participants in their study ascribed

immersion in the wilderness (remote area backpacking and canoe trips), where they had to look after themselves (an authentic experience) as contributing to a growth in awareness of the power of nature, like, for example, feeling small in an expansive landscape. This awareness then influenced their perceptions of spirituality (p. 37):

> By far it was the wild and untamed aspects of the wilderness environment that spoke to most participants at a very deep level and left them open to perceiving the place as more of a transcendent reality.

As their meaning making and connection to place grew, so did the shift in perception change, from nature being outside the person, to nature being inside the person. Fredrickson and Anderson raise a question (but leave it unanswered) about which comes first: the individual feeling emotionally secure within their social setting, or the individual feeling secure within the outdoor setting that then leads to feeling secure in the social setting. How outdoor programmers answered that question, would contribute to how much time would be allocated to those different contexts in a programme.

This idea of a shift in perception developing from a deepening connection to place, is also raised in the work of Straker (2014). Acknowledging the earlier work of Hiss (1991), Straker notes that a person generally blots out the environment and focuses on their own thoughts (termed 'pinpoint perception') until "something happens that opens the person up to the environment and allows for a range of sensations to infiltrate" (p. 7). This is termed 'simultaneous perception' and a person shuttles between the two of these modes, but "slowing down and feeling safe enhances simultaneous perception" (ibid).

Heintzman (2003, 2009), in meta-analyses of the link between North American wilderness and spirituality in recreation users, confirmed that the majority of visitors gained spiritual benefits from the place, and those benefits were more likely to occur in natural settings, in nature-oriented activities, and when a person is alone. But he also saw a paradox in that research into the subject was undertaken on people that recreated in wilderness areas; only a small percentage of the population visits wilderness areas.

Hubball and West (2008) offered strategies to promote spirituality in an outdoor education context, and how to realize the transformational potential. Their factors (what they called strategies) included:

- create a safe and inclusive culture,

- convey your enthusiasm,

- plan for authentic experiences

- have guided 'friendly silence' and reflection activities

- have appropriate activities that encourage sharing and collaboration

- recognize valuable contributions,

- link the classroom to the outdoor experiences.

Riley (2014), observed it was rare for programmes to acknowledge the 'place' in the title of a trip or expedition, rather it was the 'activity' that was foregrounded. Yet it was 'place' that was central in the human-nature relationship, and this relationship was the key component in any outdoor programme. It was the opportunity to grow this relationship that was the essence of human spiritual health, and shifted the view of the world from being anthropocentric (humans as the most important species) to biocentric (where humans are but one part of a complex system).

While not directly looking at spirituality, Ungar et al. (2005) offered that it was the context of immersive, intense experiences in the outdoors, and the length of the programme, that allowed for positive personal transformation and strong relationships to be built within a group and to nature. McKenzie (2003) also noted the power of the relationship between staff and students, which influenced what the student got out of the programme. The more success at activities, the more guided reflection, the greater the likelihood the student would feel the experience was worthwhile. Time in wilderness was another important factor for McKenzie, as this allowed for spaces for meaningful self-reflection (like solo), challenges to be undertaken (climbing, camping, kayaking), and self-responsibility to develop. While neither piece of literature directly addresses spirituality, the conditions for success that they found, set up the possibility of a spiritual moment (or many) to occur.

Many of these programming factors advocate for the use of nature as a context for, and a spur to, insight. Many of these programming factors are factors about the

qualities and attributes of the staff on the programme. The staff are the people who intercede, guide, encourage and influence. The staff enable the circumstances and the cultural space within which a transformative experience may occur. The structural components are the framework within which the staff operate – the types of activities that promote community, introspection, digging deep, overcoming challenges, sharing of resources – these are less specific though there is a consistent (and not unexpected) thread of being active, and being outside in nature for a long enough length of time that enables these factors to happen.

These sources (and factors) provided the programming lens with which the research interviews were viewed. The next chapter contains the first analysis of the interviews. The preamble explains why the first analysis was retained even though the line of flight of the study had veered in a different direction.

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Chapter 5 The first analysis

This chapter presents the first analysis of the interviews. This first analysis utilized the reflexive thematic analysis approach (rTA) of Braun and Clarke (2006, 2020), Braun et al. (2018), and Terry et al. (2018), to organize the interviews and make sense of them. In the rTA there are six 'phases' carried out in a sequence: Familiarization, Generating Codes, Constructing Prototype Themes, Reviewing the prototype themes, Defining and Explaining the themes, then finally, reintegrating the themes with the literature and Writing Up the whole document.

I used a journal to help organize both the interviews and my thoughts around them. I was thinking about the interviews as I was writing about them. The 'reflexive' part of this approach was the encouragement to keep going back to the literature, back to the interviews, back to the research question, such that the back and forth nature helped focus the analysis.

5.1 Preamble to analysis

However, before I explain the rTA further, there are three points I wish to make. The first is about a few technical matters that can do with an explanation. The second is about the language and implications of gender titles. The last is an excerpt from a Barry Lopez story (Lopez, 1988), that helped me realize some things about the relationship between people and place.

5.2 A few technical matters

The interviews with the nine participants covered a wide range of topics and were full of rich stories. So full that, at the end, I was left wondering how to respectfully acknowledge what they had willingly shared, without leaving out too much. There was so much I could take, so many lines of flight from their stories, but I had to choose. I had to discipline myself (and remind myself many times) to stick to the main research topic. What follows is an analysis in two parts.

The first analysis occurred in a typical place in the research journey, which turned out to be about the middle. This analysis is in the form of an edited electronic journal. It explains the process of working through the reflective thematic analysis (rTA) phases

(Braun & Clarke, 2006). I elected to keep this first analysis because even though it was methodically systematic, it also contained a great amount of thinking and reflection, much of which was still useful as I considered the more immanent second analysis. The second analysis involved re-thinking the process entirely. It re-presents the first analysis, in light of the influence of the writing of St Pierre (2001; 2013, 2018, 2019, 2020a, 2020b) and other post qualitative writers including Benozzo (2020), Carlson (2020), Kuntz and St. Pierre (2020), Le Grange (2018), and Mark (2020). These writers led to the philosophy of Deleuze (2001), Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 1991 / 1994) and the interpreters of their work, including Carlson (2020), Conley (2005), Due (2007), and May (2005). The apparent conflict between the post qualitative philosophical approach and a method often used within a pre-determining methodology, is explained in the introduction to the second analysis.

Where an excerpt has been taken from a transcript, it is presented with the person's initials at the start of the excerpt. Occasionally I included questions from myself in the excerpt, to help the reader understand the answer from the participant, but also to convey the back and forth exploration of ideas happening in each interview. In the following excerpt, the conversation between myself and Christine Furminger (CF) is an example of this back and forth:

> **RH   Why did you want them to develop a relationship with nature?**
>
> *CF   Mainly because I loved it... You find out about yourself, you find out about others, you find out about the cycles of nature that we sit oblivious to when we're sitting in four walls. But when you're out there, you actually see the moon come up, you see the sun go down, you see the sunrise, you see the crabs digging holes in the mud once the tide's gone out. All those processes of nature are going on every day but we're mostly oblivious to it.*

As per the AUT Ethics application (18/107) process, and the Consent and Release form approved on April 30th, 2018, the interview participants willingly consented to have their names visible in this research. Alastair Burns and John Furminger were interviewed together, because it was convenient for them to do so, but had an individual interview segment too. All others had individual interviews. While I do use their full name in the text, for efficiency, I have elected to most often use their initials:

AB = Alastair Burns

AT = Andy Thompson

CF = Christine Furminger

CYS = Cyn Smith

JCW = Jean Cory-Wright

JF = John Furminger

JT = Jonathan Taylor

MB = Mike Boyes

RMc = Rob MacLean

5.3 A Note about gender titles

In the single-sex outdoor programmes that cater for adolescents, like those at Tihoi and Kahunui, the terms 'boys' (at Tihoi) and 'girls' (at Kahunui) are often used. These terms are not used as a pejorative, but rather as an expression of a person who is not yet an adult but no longer a child. The staff use these terms freely, as do the students themselves. The terms, however, do not acknowledge the possibility of those who are non-binary or gender-flux, that is, not-boys or not-girls, or those who have a fluid gender. Similarly (and somewhat oddly), when calling a group to come together the term 'guys' is sometimes heard in both of those single-sex programmes. It is used by both staff and students, yet guys has a distinctly male resonance to it. This may be a symptom of habit or a lack of awareness. It is possible that the adolescents in these programmes are aware of these terms but not empowered to challenge their use. Alternatives exist, like 'people' or 'folks' or 'everybody' or 'team'. In the mixed-gender adult outdoor programmes, like Outward Bound or the polytech courses, it would be unusual to hear 'boys' or 'girls', but 'guys' is common there too. Nevertheless, what to call a group, either formally or informally, is worthy of consideration.

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5.4   The two landscapes of Barry Lopez

Lopez (1988) begins his essay 'Landscape and Narrative' by recounting a discussion about the behaviour of wolverines, held by a group of indigenous hunters in the remote Brooks Range of Alaska. They are pondering a story from a fellow hunter, about following wolverine tracks through the snow, on a snowmobile, when the animal appeared and leaped onto the hunter, pushing him off the snowmobile, then stood over him, glowering, before walking away. The man had not been bitten or scratched. He thought of reaching for his gun but did not. When the stories were over, Lopez and some others walked out of the home of their host and looked at the land around them. It seemed alive because of the stories. He felt exhilarated and a sense of purpose had been renewed. He considers how the land and its physicality is reflected within a person.

> I think of two landscapes - one outside the self, the other within. The external landscape is the one we see - not only the line and colour of the land and its shading at different times of the day, but also its plants and animals in season, its weather, its geology… (p. 64)

Lopez describes the way the earth crumbles when he touches it, how it feels to walk in sand, the sound of a black-throated sparrow, the quality of the light – how all of these elements together make up a landscape. But more than knowing the names of things, there is another factor that is vital to understanding.

> One learns a landscape finally not by knowing the name or identity of everything in it, but by perceiving the relationships in it (ibid)

Relationships, he says, have a purpose and an order, even if they are unknown to humans.

> The second landscape I think of is an interior one, a kind of projection within a person of a part of the exterior landscape... (p. 65)

Lopez suggests that what goes on in the mind of a person, the speculations, intuitions and ideas, are also a set of relationships, some of which are obvious and many that are not.

> The shape and character of these relationships in a person's thinking, I believe, are deeply influenced by where on this earth one goes,

> what one touches, the patterns one observes in nature - the intricate history of one's life in the land, even a life in the city, where wind, the chirp of birds, the line of a falling leaf, are known. These thoughts are arranged, further, according to the thread of one's moral, intellectual, and spiritual development. The interior landscape responds to the character and subtlety of an exterior landscape; the shape of the individual mind is affected by land as it is by genes (ibid)

Lopez' two landscapes are relevant in several ways. The first, is that when I read this for the first time, it resonated with me deeply. Prior to this, I did not have the language to describe what I instinctively knew, which was that the land affected me; that what was external to me had become internalised. The second relevancy, was how evocative the story of the wolverine had been, and as a consequence, how much more impact the 'two landscapes' passage that followed, had. It was one of the first times I had consciously noticed that story *was* teaching. It would be decades before I would read something that had a similar sentiment:

> Place is suggestive of both the imaginative and physical reality of a location and its people, and how the two interact and change each other
>
> (Wattchow & Brown, 2011, p. xxi)

Wattchow and Brown (2011) were developing an argument for place-responsive outdoor education practice, but they were echoing writers that I had long admired, like Lopez, and a practice well known to indigenous peoples. With these things in mind, we can return to the rTA.

<p style="text-align:center">*********</p>

5.5   The first analysis

This first analysis is captured in the form of an edited electronic journal. It explains the process of working through the reflective thematic analysis (rTA) phases. It is an 'edited' journal because I would make initial entries and then re-work them for coherence or revisit them at a later date to see if they still contributed what I wanted to say. Having interviewed the participants and transcribed the interviews, I wanted to understand what they had said about the research topic and journaling was a way towards understanding. Deleuze accurately depicted the dimensions of writing, the joy and pain and exploration:

> Writing is struggling, writing is resisting;
>
> Writing is becoming; writing is mapping.
>
> (Deleuze, 1988, cited in Stivale, 2005, p. 175)

I felt all of these at some point, sometimes all together. Moreover, in journaling, assumptions can be examined, and different views expressed at different times. The writer (and the reader) gets to see the construction in action. Journaling links to what Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) said were the two important ideas in writing from a poststructural perspective: that the writer has to know the perspective they are writing from, and that the act of writing is a valid method of knowing. I discovered the writing of St Pierre (2001; 2013; 2018, 2019, 2020a, 2020b) during Phase three of the rTA (Constructing Prototype Themes). Through St Pierre, I had gone on to read Deleuze (2001), Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 1991 / 1994) and their interpreters. All of their writing would push my own writing, and the analysis of the interviews, in a different direction. This is explained further at the start of the second analysis.

<p style="text-align:center">********</p>

5.6   The rTA phases

Phase one (Familiarization) of the rTA involved reading each transcript and noting anything of interest; Phase two (Generating Codes) was about reading the transcripts more closely, and noting words, phrases or intent that could be ascribed to a code. These items were also noted as being semantic codes, that is, the words themselves described the code, or latent codes, meaning that the words refer to something not immediately obvious. Phase three (Constructing Prototype Themes), had two steps to it. The first step was what I termed *seeing the pattern*. In this step, the codes within a transcript were rationalized into like-minded groupings or clusters. Where there were multiple codes saying the same thing, then that could be reduced to a single item but where there was enough of a difference between codes, then each would be retained. Constructing a visual 'jigsaw' was beneficial here, in order to allocate a code to a cluster and further examine any patterns in the codes. The jigsaw allowed for codes to be moved around, to be attached or detached from a cluster, in order to get the best fit. Each cluster was given a Central Idea which could become it's prototype theme (or

prototheme). The jigsaw provided a visual way of understanding the Central Ideas for that participant.

The second step in Phase three, was what I termed *convergence*. It sought to compare the Central Ideas across all of the participants, to see if there were similarities. If so, these were combined into one cluster, and called a prototheme. Again, if there were codes that said the same thing, they were rationalized, and differences were retained. If there were Central Ideas with no similarities across participants, they were not discarded, but rather put to one side for the moment, to be revisited later. The rationalization process was not about quantifying the data, it did not give more weight where there was a greater number of codes making up a prototype theme. At the end of Phase three, there were three protothemes that related to the research topic. These were: 1. The nature of the relationship between staff and students; 2. Signs of success; and 3. Structural components that matter.

From here, the rTA method encouraged three more phases. Phase four (Reviewing) was about reviewing the prototype themes, checking the alignment between the protothemes and the research questions, and deciding if they were to be retained as themes. Phase five was about defining and explaining the themes. Phase six was about reintegrating the themes with the literature and writing up the whole document. However, during Phase four I returned to the research questions and the literature, spurred on by the need to define words more closely and the sense that I was missing something in the development of my themes. It was at this point that I found St Pierre. As I worked through the writing of the whole research project, and visited the transcripts again and again, I felt that the work of the rTA phases was still relevant, because it still captured the first flashes of insight, the thinking in the writing.

5.6.1   The interviews

The interviews captured more than the stories and comments of individuals, or the constructed meanings via the back and forth flow of conversation. McMahon (2010), in an examination of a brutal high performance swimming regime in Australia, said that interviews also conveyed the transmission of ideas and practices within the culture, meaning that what was conveyed was sometimes wider than the individual, it was also about how things were done in an organisation (or any combination of people that

generated a culture within it) and what the drivers were for that organisation. My journal writing sought to capture this transmission.

The interviews were conducted where the participants felt comfortable to meet. For most it was a quiet room at their workplace. For some it was their house; other people were present but not involved. After interviewing the participants, I had the audio records transcribed. The audio files were often transcribed in segments aligned to a natural break in the interview. Each segment had a number code, e.g. JT5 related to the Jonathan Taylor (JT) interview, 5th segment. The interview process occurred over several months and so the hardcopy transcriptions also took some time to collate. When the entire set of transcripts were available, I started the research analysis by keeping a handwritten journal of my thoughts and notes.

5.6.2   The journals

I read the transcripts and made initial comments on the pages. By the second pass through the transcripts, my notes in the margins were abundant. These notes were about the participant's comments or stories, that captured something interesting, and things that really spoke directly to the research topic (see Figure 15).

Figure 15

Extract From Hardcopy Journal
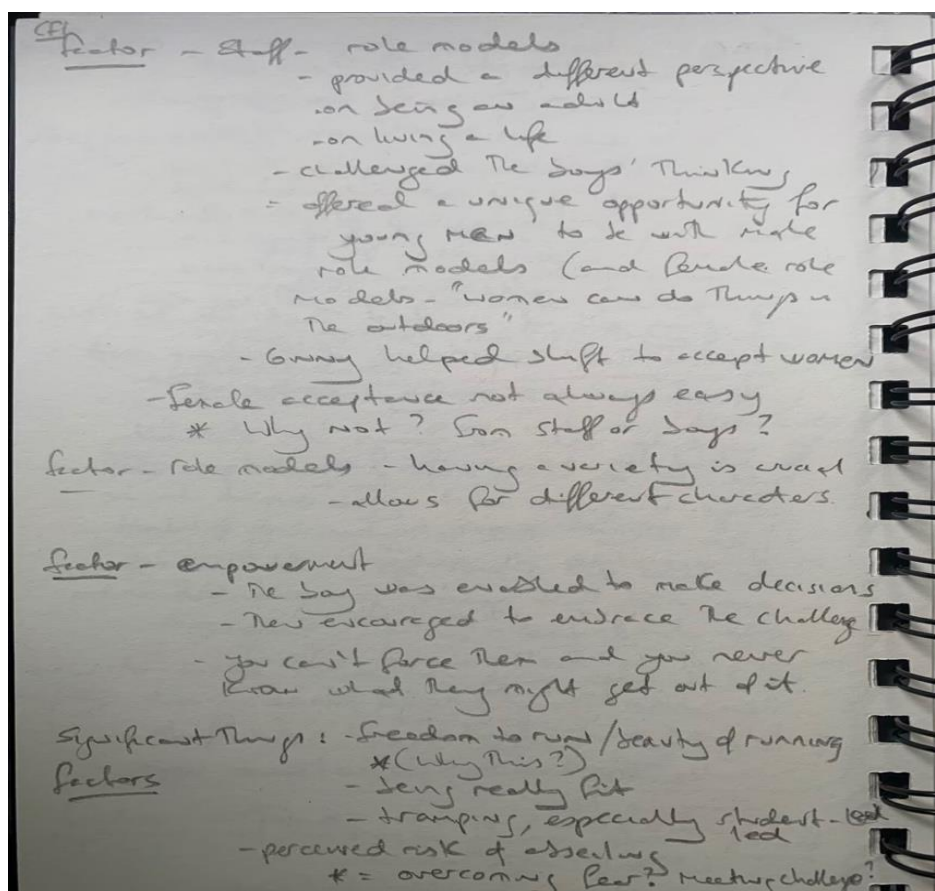
The journal also allowed me to expand on ideas that had been provoked while reading. These notes sometimes included the word 'Note' or 'Idea' or 'Factor' to record an idea or potential connection as it occurred to me, but also so that I could revisit it. For example, this note was my response to a story about a particular student:

> *Story of destructive student =* <u>*Relationship*</u>*: staff provided a non-judgmental ear; staff provided acceptance; Programme provided TIME to 'work with him'; Success = student saying 'thanks'.*

By Phase two, I had filled the first journal, so elected to switch to an electronic version (e-journal). The e-journal allowed for the inclusion of examples, easy editing, and for moving the data around in a way that enabled understanding. What follows are descriptions of the decision making that occurred during the phases of the rTA.

****

Phase One: Familiarization

Each participant spoke directly about changes they had seen in a student. Sometimes this was a direct response to a question, but they also spoke indirectly about it, via stories. They discussed what they thought about when adjusting an existing programme (as many had), or things they would like to do in a new programme if the chance came around. Some participants had been given that chance. My notes also began to have the word 'Factor' wherever I was struck by something they said that might relate to something about transformation.

In Figure 16: Extract from JT5 interview, I asked Jonathan Taylor (JT) a question in two parts, about whether the school actively promoted the outdoor programme in terms of a student becoming a better person, and whether he had an example of such a student change. My notes in the margins are an example of the Familiarization phase at work. There are six notes and a quote. My first note 'Value of OE to schools' is a quick reference to catch the eye and telling me what this part of the transcript will be about. The next two are about what the school chooses to be good at and then they resource that, and how that is a challenge to outdoor education in schools. This implies that schools don't often choose to be good at, or resource, outdoor education. There is a quote re-written in the margin, of something that I thought was too important to forget.

There are four notes with circles beside them. (The circle is to catch the eye. The circle was actually added in the next phase when I reviewed the familiarization notes). Each note is there because something in the text is an important point. For example, the last two notes (with circles) are 'demand high quality of the programme, always look to improve' and 'An OEd programme + high quality takes a lot of time + passion + effort' (OEd is shorthand for outdoor education; + is shorthand for 'and'). These are direct extracts from what JT is saying. They are valuable information about the school, but they also reveal part of JT's philosophy of practice, which is why there is an underlined note there too, called 'Factor – Philosophy'. In the next phase, I would decide whether to have these notes as codes or not, and if they are codes, whether they are semantic (surface or direct) or latent (the words imply something deeper).

In this manner, all of the pages received notes and symbols, for all of the transcripts. My notes and symbols and quotes and capitalized words (like 'Factor') became the starting point for the next phase of generating codes.

Figure 16

Extract from JT5 interview

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Phase Two: Generating Codes

Codes were generated in Phase two and there were many. They were generated (handwritten) on the original transcript and linked to my journal notes for that transcript. I made little symbols on the transcript to denote the difference between an earlier note and what I now deemed to be a code e.g. circles. Sometimes I kept my original comment as a code, e.g. *Outdoors represents freedom from rules and constraints*. Sometimes a short quote seemed to capture a code as eloquently as anything I could create. Sometimes I generated a code but kept a short quote beside it. Thinking about codes in terms of semantic (surface /obvious) and latent (deeper /

hidden) was useful. I realized that, in order to keep a semblance of order, an electronic version would be helpful. I typed my handwritten codes (and sometimes the comments) onto an electronic copy of each transcript (see Table 3 Extract from JF1 interview). I also created a spreadsheet that had a page for each participant. The generated codes on each e-transcript were then easily extracted, placed on the appropriate spreadsheet page, in its own box, ready to be examined more closely.

Table 3

Extract From JF1 Interview

Codes / Comments	Timecode	
	0.05 Interviewer	How did you get into the outdoors, John?
Outdoors was a new freedom. Attraction of rugged / wild places	0.09 Respondent (JF)	In the last couple of years of high school, a couple of mates and I; I don't know what the motivation was but we joined the Heretaunga Tramping Club based in Hastings and all three of us just loved it. We got in with some older folk and every weekend they'd take us out and we'd have day trips or weekend trips, multi-day trips. There was the basis of what we did. We found the Kaweka's, the Ruahine's, the Kaimanawa's, just beautiful places.
Outdoors represents freedom from rules and constraints. Older people looked after us and showed the way to thrive in the outdoors. 'A great sense of being out there' = delight at spending time in the place		There was a little bit of motivation from my father, he was a deerstalker and he'd been to a lot of the places that we'd been to like Waipawa Saddle and so on but I guess it was freedom. We didn't have a whole lot of hard and fast rules; these folk looked after us, these folk got us there and got us home and gave us handy hints along the way but once you were out there and you were either cooking in the group or whatever, it was just a great sense of being out there and not having a whole lot of constraints or anything.

The generated codes on the spreadsheet, for each participant, were sorted alphabetically and then rationalized. Where there were many codes that were the same, one was kept and the rest were culled, but any finer distinctions (e.g. specific meaningful quotes that were subtly different but within the same code cluster) were retained. These were then used in Phase three to construct prototype themes; initially for each participant, then later similar protothemes were brought together.

****

Phase Three: Constructing Prototype Themes

I began Phase three by looking at the generated codes from Phase two. I was again struck by the rich quality of the stories. In Phase two it had seemed worthwhile to include, where necessary, small quotes as part of the generated code. This would prove useful as I constructed the protothemes, because it helped make the pithy codes clearer, and I often cycled back to these original extracts. Given the quantity of generated codes (over 1100 across the nine interviews), I decided that it would be easier to analyse this in small chunks. I started a new spreadsheet for each interview, titled 'Prototheme'. In this spreadsheet, the generated codes from Phase two were re-sorted into what I thought were semantic and latent codes. Table 4 below, has a small sample of codes from RMc's Phase two spreadsheet (note: each column is independent, with no deliberate correlation between where the codes are placed in the other column).

Table 4

Extract From RMc Prototheme First Attempt

RMc – semantic codes	RMc – latent codes
Career Path leads to more responsibility	Being Valued, having skills
Changing the Narrative: you can be someone new	Competent outdoor people have mastery of outdoor skills
Doctrine and indoctrination	Doing something special
Fence Riding: guarding the territory	Experiences the tension of the contrasting ways people use nature / the outdoors
Key element - Client - progression to independence	External forces shape life direction
Key factor - in wilderness programmes: Staff with skills	Finding your purpose:
Little leaps consciously shared:	Fitting in & not fitting in - finding identity in the outdoors
Moments of change	Friendships from shared experiences

As I examined the semantic and latent codes, I thought about what the main ideas were that were being displayed. For example, in Table 4 above, several of the semantic codes could be clustered together: changing the narrative, progression to independence, little leaps, and moments of change. One idea being expressed in this

cluster, is about the purpose of a programme to create these elements. Another idea is that these are elements in a programme that staff need to have skills at guiding. Sometimes I had to go back to the transcript to gauge the nuance of the code before I decided on the Central Idea that captured the intent of the grouping.

****

5.7   Seeing the Pattern: The Jigsaw Puzzles

At this point, I constructed 'jigsaw puzzles' for each participant, because I was overwhelmed by the volume of codes and struggling to see patterns. A jigsaw provided a visual way of seeing the patterns and of being able to shuffle codes, so 'like' sat beside 'like'. Similar codes were given the same colour. When all of the 'like' codes were together in a coloured cluster, it was easier to understand the connections and to construct the Central Idea that linked them all. For example, in the interview RMc had stories of adventuring in the outdoors, one of which became the code 'NZ conditions are tough'; he had comments about his own philosophy ('valuing seeing the bones of the planet'); what the outdoor industry in New Zealand expected ('high technical skills to enable safety'); and comments about the particular skills staff needed (camping, navigating, facilitation) and so on. After considering this RMc clustering, I determined that the Central Idea that provided the link between those codes, was that 'Staff are multi-skilled' (see Figure 17).

Figure 17

Example of a Jigsaw Puzzle: RMc Central Idea #3: Staff are Multi-Skilled

		More than just a Walk: running multi-faceted outdoor activities		
		Recognising Moments of change		
Industry expectation is for high technical skills to enable safety		Little leaps consciously shared: Staff can facilitate growth		NZ Conditions are tough
	Competent outdoor people have mastery of outdoor skills	Central Idea #3: Staff are multi-skilled	Key factor: Staff being comfortable in the terrain.	Staff are able to live and work in the terrain
		Staff have a Personal Philosophy		
	Personal Philosophy: loving connecting with nature	Personal Philosophy: discovering what you love then doing it	Personal Philosophy: valuing seeing the bones of the planet	

Three of the codes from Table 4 were placed in the Jigsaw in Figure 17. 'Competent outdoor people have mastery of outdoor skills' (colour coded light blue) is an obvious fit in a Central Idea of staff being multi-skilled. The other two codes required re-reading the place in the transcript, to understand that the code was about the skills or attributes staff needed. 'Moments of change' became 'Recognizing moments of change'; 'Little leaps consciously shared' (both colour coded yellow) now included the addition, from the original part of the transcript, of the insight that 'staff can facilitate growth'.

In this reflexive way, the codes were refined. The colouring of similar codes helped establish them into clusters and then clusters that seemed to have something in common, were placed together. Finally, a Central Idea was constructed to capture the linkages between similar clusters. This was not entirely a reductive process. The point was not to make the interview data smaller, but instead make it clearer.

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5.8   Convergence

All interviews now had several 'jigsaws' made for them. The next step was to bring these jigsaws together and look for common ground. The Central Idea's in common were placed together on a single spreadsheet. This enabled an overview of what the participants had said about that Central Idea. It also allowed sub-themes to be seen that were contributing to the Central Idea.

This convergence resulted in the allocation of the title 'Prototheme' to some of the Central Ideas. Other Central Ideas were set aside for a variety of reasons, e.g. not being immediately applicable to the research topic. Some were recombined in a different way. At the end of this convergence step, I had determined three protothemes. These were: The nature of the relationship between staff and students; Signs of success; and Structural components that matter. This next section examines the protothemes more closely.

Prototheme #1 The nature of the relationship between staff and students

All of the interviews had garnered a lot of codes on this prototheme, which suggested it was an important factor in any programme. I examined the jigsaws. What I saw were coding clusters that suggested lists of inherent attributes, acquirable relationship-building skills, and deeper-level philosophical positions that are desirable for staff to have. These were distinctly separate from 'technical skills' or 'outdoor skills'. I decided that these were separate sub-themes that contributed to the overall prototheme #1.

The codes said that staff needed to have attributes that allowed them to be empathetic, understanding, and concerned with student wellbeing (I considered these to be mainly inherent, though it would be possible to apply oneself to learn these). Those attributes were important because they conveyed trust and believability and inspired the student into a relationship. The staff role-modeled behavior and thinking for the student, so the student understood what was expected.

The codes said that the staff had skills, or needed to gain skills, that enabled the relationship with students to develop. If the staff had these skills, they could further clarify or amplify expectations, because the relationship with the student allowed for this. These skills included the ability to listen, to facilitate conversations, to challenge

behaviour, to challenge thinking, and to teach, especially using the Socratic method which involves guiding the student's thinking by asking questions rather than giving answers.

Deeper level skills, or skills that take a longer time and a variety of experiences to develop, included the ability to guide reflective conversations, to teach initiative, to help the student transfer learning and potential to a new setting, and to address emotions, especially anxieties. My own reflection at this point, was that in order to be successful at teaching, guiding, facilitating and role modelling, the staff person needed to be settled in their own identity and have their values in alignment with the values of the programme. It would be too hard to work in a programme if this were not the case. Moreover, it would be advantageous for staff to have had a lived experience similar to what the students had had, as this would allow them to be empathetic, and to offer students insights from their own experience. Being instinctively inclined to encourage and be positive, would be beneficial, as these things helped build relationships. It also occurred to me, that if the staff had personally had a transformational experience in the outdoors, it would make their integrity easier to believe in. Their lived experience may make it easier for them to recognize those 'moments of change'. They could thus guide the student to that moment and through it. I concluded that prototheme #1 was robust and worthy of retaining.

The following table (Table 5) presents the sub-themes of prototheme #1 The nature of the relationship between staff and students. These sub-themes are: The inherent attributes of staff (they have these already); Relationship skills & abilities (able to be learned); and Philosophical desirabilities.

Table 5

Sub-themes of Prototheme #1 The Nature of the Relationship Between Staff and Students

Inherent Attributes of Staff (they have these already)	Relationship Skills & Abilities (able to be learned)	Philosophical Desirabilities
Empathetic towards, and genuinely interested in, people	Can apply counseling skills: able to listen; able to use non-judgmental language; able to constructively address heightened emotions, especially anxiety; can defuse tense situations; can be empathetic	They have a lived experience that offers insight that they can use to help the students make sense of the world
Naturally positive	Can help the student to see their potential	They role model desirable values.
Supportive	Able to teach, and especially use the Socratic teaching method	They have integrity in their daily actions
Able to share power	Able to accept the student as they are	Their values align with the values of the organization
Encouraging	Able to empower others	They can identify key moments of change for the student /client
Able to have fun & play	Can help with goal setting; Can help with decision making	They readily seize 'the moments of change' in order to help the student progress.
Caring attitude	Can construct & enable steps to independence	They understand what a 'safe space' or 'safe culture' looks like and they actively create these
Able to convey trust	Can facilitate individual and group conversations	
	Can facilitate tricky conversations	
	Can use facilitation techniques like frontloading and framing the experience	
	Can encourage a positive attitude about accepting responsibility, rising to the challenge, motivation	
	Can use guided reflection techniques	
	Able to guide subtly – enabling with a watchful eye	
	Can offer insight	
	Can constructively challenge thinking or behavior	
	Can construct small steps of success that lead to bigger successes or mastery	

Prototheme #2 Signs of Success

This prototheme provided the evidence of a programme positively impacting students. These codes captured the direct emotions of the staff as they interacted with students and the observed emotions of the students while on the programme (e.g. joy, tears, singing). The codes described observed change in behaviour on the programme (e.g. getting fit, having a wonderful time, more motivated). The codes also pertain to the revelations that the students had expressed about themselves to the staff, often via mechanisms like reflective journals or letters. After the programme had ended, the staff noticed that the graduates of their programmes often kept in touch, and sometimes expressed the value of what they had been through (e.g. saying thanks).

The interview participants gave clear signs of success of their programmes, which were also signs of positive personal change in the students.

Prototheme #2 Signs of Success therefore had four sub-themes that contributed: Expressions of Positive Emotions, Observed Behaviour of students on programme, Student Revelations, and After programme. Of these, the Observed Behaviour provided the most evidence of success. The following four tables are the Sub-themes of Prototheme #2 Signs of success.

Table 6

Sub-theme 1- Expressions of Positive Emotions

Expressions of Positive Emotions		
Buzz of clients positive response made it a special experience	Having success - getting down the river without shitting themselves, then thinking 'I want to do that again'	Reliving the experience in the retelling of it, rekindles the emotion and the connection
"Joy in doing, rather than trying to be someone"	Impact of programme – receiving a positive letter	Skills taught then put into practice provokes joy of achievement
Developing a passion for the environment they are in	Impact of programme – tears when leaving	
Joy, laughter, singing, excitement, contentment in their wellbeing	Pride and purpose and pleasure	

Sub-theme 1 is about the emotions expressed by the interview participants about their students, or the emotions being conveyed by the students during the programme. Emotions, according to Fox (1999), occurred immediately after a moment of

transcendence. Emotions were the second stage in Fox's four-stage model: a moment of transcendence generates feelings and emotions. Sometime later there are delayed feelings like calmness, elation, peace, and last, there is a feeling of a new sense of awareness of themselves, of inner strength and an enhanced connection to self, others and nature.

Table 7

Sub-theme 2 - Observed Behaviour of Students on Programme

Observed Behaviour of students on programme		
Changing their Narrative: being someone new	Girls noticed & played in nature when given the chance	Students getting inspired by and through social media about the outdoors
Progressing to independence solving problems with little input from teacher, self-generated study	Camaraderie between peers, good friendships made, meeting like-minded people, sharing experiences	Students giving and receiving feedback
Getting fit	Students acquiring practical skills, organisational ability, leadership skills and willingness, self-care, reflection skills, care of others	Students had the confidence and skills to go and explore the place
Micro-level mastery of an activity		Students making decisions
More motivated, the attitude to ask questions and make stuff happen		Variety of pursuit and 'shining' at one contributes to social cohesion because they develop respect for one another
Having a wonderful time in the outdoors, reconnecting with nature	Students change - those with low confidence & low skills step up to become capable, then go on to get a job and do a good job, others come in with high skills & become leaders	Verbalised insights at the last night forum
Students rise to achieve		Working in teams built social cohesion
Doing things they don't normally do		

Sub-theme 2 is what the participants have seen occur on their programme. A change in attitude of a student – more motivated, asking questions – suggests something has shifted in their internal narrative about what they can and can't do. Becoming more self-confident or self-sufficient is another marker of change, as are the signs of caring for others. There is a lot going on in this sub-theme and factors like progressing to independence have hidden layers of being successful at something, being encouraged to give things a go, being supported in trying things and learning how to work with others.

Table 8

Sub-theme 3 - Student Revelations

Student Revelations		
Personal Reflections tell of growth: exploring their own connections, understandings and meanings Guided Self-awareness comments - they can see they are a better person, they've learned about others, learned resilience, independence, to speak up & express themselves	Little leaps consciously shared Revelations include appreciation of natural places, appreciation of parents, running a household Seeing students make sense of their world Had become 'a man' – had grown up in his own eyes	Students have an enhanced sense of capability The realisation that they can actually do something Stories of positive change - "I've never felt so good about myself"

The student revelations in Sub-theme 3, come to the staff by way of journals, casual conversations, and more formal 'debriefing' situations. Some outdoor programmes require students to hand in written reflections as an assignment. What they say and write is powerful. "I've never felt so good about myself" was a direct quote that came from a staff person running beside a student as they both ran a half-marathon. The student who felt he had 'become a man', was sharing this insight after he had graduated from the programme, after he had left school. That student was willing to share that profound insight about his time on the programme, because of the relationship he had built with that staff person. These revelations demonstrate change – the students see things differently now, they appreciate more.

Table 9

Sub-theme 4 - After Programme

After programme		
Students realising potential - they've become adventurous, they continue with active lifestyles It boosted where they were already going, gave them skills, helped them "grab it and run with it"	People remember the experiences and moments that were significant Value of mixing groups - creates brotherhood later	Relationships continue after programme (stud to stud, stud & staff) Students saying thanks

The After Programme sub-theme is about the interview participants meeting the students some time later, sometimes years later, and having conversations. Often the student has deliberately sought them out to say hello, and to share what they have

been doing. This sub-them also contains observations from the staff about the student, for example, that the students still retain friendships with others that have been through the programme because of the bond they created on the programme

Prototheme #3 Structural components that matter

All interview participants had important things to say about the structure of a programme, and many of them discussed the purpose and philosophy that guides the shape of a programme. When I reviewed the codes of this prototheme, it appeared that there were many sub-themes contributing to the structure of a programme. Many of these were about practical things to do, such as have outdoor pursuits. Some were about the living arrangements of the programme, and the value of residential living in particular.

Many more, however, were less prescriptive and more guiding. For example, the sub-theme 'residing in a place' had codes about 'Being in nature' with a brief differentiation attached to each of those codes: it gives immediate and uncompromising feedback; it allows us to understand what sustains us; it is aesthetically pleasing. Being in nature adds value for a programme, but *where* to be in nature was not as explicit as *how* to be in nature and *why* a programme benefits by having nature-based experiences. 'Being in nature' was linked to the physically active outdoor pursuits (tramping, mountain biking, sea kayaking) but also to the less physically active and more 'character building' outdoor activity 'survival'. 'Being in nature' was also linked to the reflective activities of solo, seeing a sunrise, and doing environmental art. 'Being in nature' offered immediate feedback to actions, immediate interaction with the weather, opportunities for personal development, opportunities to care for others, and opportunities to develop outdoor skills to the point of mastery (like camping). 'Being in nature', therefore was an example of a high-value, multi-dimensional structural component.

The 'Structural components that matter' prototheme had ten sub-themes. This immediately suggested either something big was going on, or that the prototheme could be split up. The ten sub-themes were physical activities, being in nature, reflections skills, residential living, time, rituals, relationship building components, capability building components, philosophy of programme, and a sub-theme 'other'

that collected a few codes that did not seem to fit. The two sub-themes that had the most codes, were philosophy of programme (34 codes) and reflection skills (24 codes). Capability building components (18), physical activities (18) and time (17) also garnered multiple codes. While the quantity is not as important as the rich expression captured by a code, it is instructive in that all interview participants had something to say about those five aforementioned sub-themes, but not all had things to say about rituals or relationship building (as a component of a programme) or residential living.

I considered that there was another way of looking at this. The sub-themes could be rearranged into four instead of ten. The first sub-theme is about 'doing' things, which includes physical activities like running or outdoor pursuits, but also encompasses the 'doing' of more sedentary activities like camping. The second sub-theme is about residing in a place, in the sense of spending considerable time in a place. These codes included the multi-dimensional components Being in Nature and Residential Living. The third sub-theme is about developing the person (reflection skills, relationship building, capability building). The fourth is about components that guide the programme (rituals, time, philosophy of programme). The four sub-themes can be seen in Table 10, Table 11, Table 12, and Table 13. Some generated codes were identified as being similar in intent and so were merged. The 'other' sub-theme was set aside at this point. The following four tables are the Sub-themes of Prototheme #3 Structural components that matter.

Table 10

Sub-theme 1 - Components About 'Doing' Things

Components about 'doing' things		
Activities that test competence	Running	Pursuits that staircase in complexity & adventurousness
5-day trips	Bush /tramping trips and skills	
Journeys	Fitness activities	Camping
Expeditions	A variety of pursuits	Outdoor trips
Pursuits that are multidimensional		

These 'doing' components are the most easily seen (visible) aspects of a programme. Photographs of these components are often found in promotional material. These components provide the visible excitement and obvious structure and are readily

graspable by the general public. Outdoor pursuits are the dominant 'doing' component.

Table 11

Sub-theme 2 - Components About Residing in a Place

Components about residing in a place		
Being exposed to weather	Able to touch / be in / explore nature	Having local adventures
Sunrise as spiritual tool	Being outdoors enables teachable moments	Outdoor spaces engage emotions
Being in Nature - it gives immediate & uncompromising feedback	Outdoor vivid experiences that are remembered	Being able to connect with nature
Being in Nature - it allows us to understand what sustains us	Food – not eating crap	Living in houses
Being in Nature - it is aesthetically pleasing	Formal vs informal learning	Doing chores
Being in Nature - it provides a 'blank page' to reinvent yourself		Residential Living – learning how to live with others
		Doing things together
		Everyone on the same level

These components are possibly less visible to those outside a programme. They are multi-dimensional, especially the component 'Being in Nature', though even something as seemingly simple as 'Food – not eating crap' alludes to more than just nutrition or cooking skills. It possibly suggests something about what a healthy life might look like, or even a connection being made about food as an enabler for the 'doing'. The majority of these components are also identifying 'place' as outside.

Table 12

Sub-theme 3 - Components About Developing the Person

Components about developing the person		
Developing reflection skills	Solo, mini solo	Facilitation of reflection opportunities
Having reflection time	Learning about 'self' moments	
Letter writing	Environmental art	Facilitation of programme process
Letter to future self	Having experiences then having time & place for reflecting on them e.g. a campfire	Debriefing
Writing: poetry, journals		Giving meaning to their stories, helping people understand
Sharing reflections		
Influence of relevant reading	Mixing of the group	The Golden Nugget times - walking and talking one on one
Having Opportunities for clients to Make Sense of the World	Outdoor living	
Staff /student relationship - Developing Authentic relationships	Activities that promote self-belief	The Package: small social groups, positive social context
	Activities with perceived risk	
Develop a Culture of permission	Survival activity	Outdoor skills
Opportunities for empowerment, leadership, and mastery of a skill	Outdoor trips: foster resilience	Having a progression to independence
	Pursuits: foster passion & independence	

Sub-theme 3 brings together quite diverse and complex components. It presents the variety of ways to 'develop a person'. It suggests that many of these components are a small part integrated into a much larger play, for example, opportunities for leadership requires some idea of what leadership looks like, and it requires others to be willing to follow. Moreover, leadership can happen in many different settings and occur multiple times. Some of these components are quite specific, for example, 'letter writing' is a clear task, and 'debriefing' is one facilitation tool among many. The majority of these components are less specific and broader in their brush strokes. For example, 'developing reflection skills' or 'having reflection time' doesn't prescribe which skills and what time or when that component happens; it says, 'have them because they are important' and leaves the rest open.

Table 13

Sub-theme 4 - Components That Guide the Programme

Components that guide the programme		
An alternate world which ENABLES the student to focus on their identity	Programme has steps to build maturity via independence and freedom	Time to build relationships
Outdoors as Alternate living - getting away from normal school curriculum, 'not the norm' is meaningful	A staircasing of difficulty	Time frame influences what could be achieved /expected
	A good programme includes having a good diet, doing some exercise, having some success at something	Time - for students to think about self, to get away from old self, to get away from 'trappings' and pressure to conform
Take away the distractions and ask the hard questions	Adventuring allows the students to shine at something	
Capture a variety of emotional triggers – freedom, challenge, empowerment	Remove distractions	Time - deliberately put in unstructured time
Space away from parents & cell ph & noise & expectations	Ambitious programme needed highly skilled outdoor staff	A long programme needs lots of structure but provides opportunity to see growth
Technology: limited or none	Rite of Passage and "making a significant moment"	Have little downtime if boys have lots of energy
Provide Life-long recreation skills	Learning by doing real things	Time - on a long programme home is rest
Formula - hard trips, then reflection	Technology: reduced social media contributes to wellness	Time - free time and access to gear equals letting people 'follow their passions'
Pushing people	Cyclical nature of programme - ends in a place-responsive camp and symposium (student-led)	Time - unstructured time allows for creativity and freedom of choice
Change is about Culture		
Emotional Border - people learn best when there is not too much stress	Play	Time - being able to do things multiple times, to fail and have another go
Emotional Border is a good place to learn in	Reading to students - picture books tap into mother /child relationship moment	Time in nature
Programming for diversity		Time for relationships
Drawing out attributes & skills	Rituals: understanding their meaning & history	Quiet time
Experiential learning - engaging all the senses, direct experiences	Telling & sharing stories	Have spaces with nothing going on
	Doctrine and indoctrination: understanding intent and assumptions	Time - in place
Holistic approach - all curricula feeds into outdoor trips	Understanding the theory behind the programme	Time - group values come with longer time, personal development comes with longer time
Accommodating difference by adapting tasks /activities to fit the client group	Connecting people to place	Key things - flesh out the package, focus on personal development, self-determination, strive for competence, autonomy, relatedness = social connections
Different camps, different ingredients, same philosophy	The package is what creates good outcomes	

Prototheme #3: Structural components that matter, is dominated by sub-theme 4 'Components that guide the programme'. Though a small number of these codes could arguably be in another sub-theme, the majority of the elements of this sub-theme (the generated codes) are different from the sub-themes about 'doing' and 'residing' or 'developing the person', in that they are less about a specific task or activities, and more about an awareness that shapes (guides) the overall programme.

This sub-theme stems from senior staff – the leaders, the people in charge of creating the programme – but its messages suggest that awareness must also be conveyed to other staff, in order to have effect. In this way, it is not just the programme being guided, but the staff and the students. It occurred to me that this sub-theme was so large that perhaps it should be its own prototheme. I would revisit this thought in the next phase.

The sub-theme 'Components that guide the programme' is about building culture via a philosophical approach. Both 'culture' and 'philosophy' are difficult things to identify or give a concrete or coherent shape to. But we can see them in the generated codes. For example, in 'Adventuring allows the students to shine at something', adventuring is a *mindset* that seeks activities that have a bit of risk in them (this is mostly perceived risk, with low real risk e.g. abseiling), where the outcome may be a little uncertain, where the individual may be (temporarily) out of their comfort zone. The risk in 'adventuring' also has a more positive connotation, that of the opportunity to gain something (the reward). In this generated code, the reward is 'shining at something'; shining means doing well but it also connotes gaining the respect of peers. It links to an attitude of being willing to try. 'Shining' links to relationship building, to building self-respect or self-esteem, to trusting and being trusted, to making steps towards competence. Adventuring and shining thus contribute to the culture of a programme. Adventuring can be undertaken in many different ways but the important thing here is that there is some, because it is seen as a richly nuanced component that contributes positively to a programme.

At the end of Phase Three, the three protothemes were:

1. The nature of the relationship between staff and students

    Sub-themes: Inherent attributes of staff (they have these already)

    Relationship skills and abilities (able to be learned)

    Philosophical desirabilities

2. Signs of Success

    Sub-themes: Expressions of positive emotions

    Observed behavior of students on programme

    Student revelations

    After programme

3. Structural components that matter

    Sub-themes: Components about doing things

    Components about residing in a place

    Components about developing the person

    Components that guide the programme

At this point I paused the data analysis and sought input from Gareth Terry, one of the researchers working and writing about reflexive thematic analysis. He agreed my approach was suitably 'reflexive' and was able to see that via the journal writing. He agreed that the thematic 'jigsaw puzzles' were a useful tool and they also helped him understand my thinking. I felt I was using the method correctly, so moved on to the next phases in the reflexive thematic analysis.

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Phase 4: Reviewing the themes

This phase is about looking at how the themes relate to each other and making sure there was clear alignment between the data, the themes and the research questions. The re-working of the prototype themes, as described earlier, was a sign that the analysis had already edged into the Phase four, 'reviewing the themes'. Reflecting on

the volume of codes in a prototheme, and trying to refine them so as to make more sense of them, was about seeking clarity not about data reduction. At the end of the prototheme phase, with that reworking, I had three themes that could now be cross-checked with the research questions to make sure I was looking for the right things in the data.

To recap: the topic of this study is 'Reflections on transformation: how New Zealand outdoor educators construct programmes to address (non-religious) spiritual growth'.

There were two research questions being investigated:

1. What do experienced outdoor educators, who have been in charge of outdoor programmes, have to say about recognizing transformation in their students?
2. What do those educators have to say about the influence of programming on student transformation?

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5.9   Addressing the first research question

The answer to question one appears to be that they have lots to say. First, in Prototheme #2: Signs of success, each experienced outdoor educator was able to give examples of students who had noticeably changed over the course of their programme. The educators bore witness to this. Second, these 'signs of success' were varied and some were more subtle than others. Some evidence came from observed behaviour change, some from the mouths of students themselves, perhaps via reflective writing. Some signs were more apparent after the programme had finished - the students were 'unleashed' in some way or the students made an effort to convey the impact that the staff person and / or the programme had had.

It is possible that each 'sign' along the way, was a clue to the staff that something was going on with that student; an accumulation or succession of 'signs' as the programme unfolded, might suggest that meaningful change was being developed.

Third, four of the outdoor education programmes linked to the interview participants, were in schools that had an overtly religious framework supporting their school culture, but aspects of religion were very rarely mentioned in the interviews. However,

there were multiple codes that were coherent with the definition of non-religious spirituality (Gookin, 2006) where an individual feels more self-aware, energized, empowered, and connected to self, others and place, than they did before the programme. These appear in Prototheme #2: Signs of success, and Prototheme #3: Structural components that matter, where we see codes about observing personal growth in students, students reflecting with delight about their expanded capability, growth in relationships, belonging, the power of Being in Nature and others. The educators were not just recognizing that a change was taking place (or had taken place) in the student, but the language they were using to describe these changes was in accord with Gookin's (2006) non-religious spirituality.

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5.10 Addressing the second research question

The second research question is about about the influence of programming on student transformation. It raises further questions: If the educators recognize that transformation has happened, what do they attribute this to? Are there programmable elements that are catalysts in transformation? If they are not programmable, then what are they?

5.10.1 Spending time in Nature

Prototheme #3: Structural components that matter, addresses some of these questions. This prototheme has sub-themes about 'doing' and 'residing' and about 'developing the person', all of which are relevant. For example, Table 11: Sub-theme 2 - Components About Residing in a Place, contains 'Being in Nature'. This has several codes attached to it but one of them clearly refers to transformation when it adds 'provides a 'blank page' to reinvent yourself'. 'Being in Nature' is a clue to transformation, recognized and attributed as such by the educators, and a component in a programme that can be planned for.

5.10.2 Having a worthy experience

Another code - 'Having experiences then having time and place for reflecting on them e.g. campfire' (from Table 12: Sub-theme 3 - Components About Developing the Person) - offers another clue. It tells us that having an experience worthy of reflecting

on, is important. It suggests the use of the Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984; Neill, 2013) whereby experience plus reflection equals learning. What 'learning' would happen around a campfire? All manner of things depending on the experience that was being reflected upon. For example, the quality of the meal, the amount of food for how hungry they were, group or individual fitness levels, the challenging moment of the day, the funniest thing that happened, the weather, or what happens tomorrow. Of course, some of this is merely conversation. But some could be being processed at a deeper level: the campfire and the conversation *provokes* the inward turn. If a moment in the day was challenging and the student rose to the challenge, that may well be an important event that shifts how the student thinks about themselves, or how others perceive that student.

But this code also suggests staff competency in guiding such reflections, and reflection itself being valued and encouraged because it has some greater purpose. This code sits in the 'Developing the Person' sub-theme, but it also has connections to the other sub-themes, in that sitting around a campfire implies 'residing' in a place (like the bush) that allows for that, and having the time (a 'guiding' sub-theme code) and skill to 'do' the campfire activity. This one code suggests that the experience (e.g. a tramp), the place (e.g. the bush), the time, the 'doing' activity (campfire), and the 'developing' activity (guided reflection), are all programmable components that collectively contribute to creating the *potential* for a transformational moment.

5.10.3 Relationship as liminal catalyst

What then to make of Prototheme #1: The nature of the relationship between staff and students? A point to note here, is that 'staff' in this prototheme has two meanings. It refers to what the research participants think *all* of the instructional staff operating in the outdoor programme have or need to develop; and it refers to the research participants themselves.

At first glance this prototheme did not address the research questions directly, yet the relationship was clearly important to the research participants because they said so in the generated codes. The relationship between the staff and the students was key because the staff were trying to help the students develop their potential, feel good about themselves, develop skills and more. Eventually I considered that 'the nature of

the relationship between staff and students' *was a catalyst*, because it was so multi-dimensional, so influential. It was less a structural component of a programme and more a liminal influence.

I was initially satisfied with my review of the protothemes. There was something important in Prototheme #1 that needed further inspection, which was the role of staff as guide or mentor. There was a question about whether a transformational moment needed a human relationship at all. Overall, the protothemes were independent yet linked to each other. There was much that linked them to the research questions, yet still space to ponder and to synergize with literature.

5.10.4 The staff

The Signs of Success are noticed by the staff, but they are generated, in part, by the relationship the staff have with the student(s) and the awareness the staff have of the students and their capabilities (the other part of the generating comes from the students themselves). The staff know where the students have come from, and how they have changed through the programme, *because* they are interested in the wellbeing of that student and because the programme has allowed enough *time* for change to become apparent. The staff encourage, guide, challenge, and create opportunities for the student to have success. The student responds to this input. The value of staff and the complexity of training staff for outdoor programmes, is noted by Straker (2014, p. 252):

> Training outdoor educators requires balancing vocational awards, health and safety concerns, personal experience, educational theory and practice, and broad holistic knowledge. This calls for valuing experience as well as qualifications, educational skills as well as technical skills, and innovation as well as efficiency.

The staff work with the structural components of the programme. They run the activities that 'do' stuff, like the kayaking, rock climbing and tramping. They have what RMc referred to in the jigsaw example earlier, which is mastery of outdoor skills, which then allows them to be comfortable in the difficult New Zealand outdoor terrain. They utilize what is important about the place they and the students are in, by, for example, sharing the history, teaching about plants or ecology, foraging or making art. They develop the person by seizing teachable moments, by being aware of the needs of the

individual, by creating opportunities for discussion and reflection and play, by teaching reflection skills. They make use of the relationship they have with the student, in ways that align with the guiding philosophy of the programme.

5.10.5 The philosophy of the programme

The philosophy of the programme is shaped by what the leaders are trying to achieve, what they believe. Allied to this is what the organization is trying to achieve; this organizational philosophy may be the same as the personal philosophy, but not necessarily. An organizational philosophy that challenged the individual by pushing them to their limit physically and mentally, as, for example, Outward Bound sought to do in its post-World War Two period -

> OBNZ was particularly militaristic in its early years. The program was intended to shock students into more wholesome behaviours and greater discipline in a similar way to military basic training
>> (Ex-Outward Bound director Dj, cited in Martin et al., 2020, p. 5)

> We were pretty rough and physical by today's standards . . . it was stress education . . . individually or collectively
>> (Ex-Outward Bound director DI, cited in Martin et al., 2020, p. 6)

- would be different from the philosophy of a leader that sought to challenge the individual by giving them regular experiences that made them a little uncomfortable, by enabling them to experience success at a range of activities, by empowering the student, and by getting them to reflect a lot (which is more in line with Outward Bound today).

> Each new day has to be a safe challenge with perceived but managed risk. It's that incremental challenge . . . that has to keep on ratcheting up.
>> (Ex-Outward Bound director Dm, cited in Martin et al., 2020, p. 5)

Therefore, a programme whose philosophy was about challenging the individual to reach their potential (e.g. Outward Bound), would necessitate having structural components that challenge, as well as staff that were competent at and comfortable with those components. The staff would also need to be able to facilitate whatever emotional response the student had to that challenge.

5.10.6 Theme #1 The Value of the Guide

At the end of this reviewing phase, it appeared that the transformational moments occurred in the alignment of seemingly disparate elements, and these elements influenced each other – they were reflexive and recursive. It also appeared that a key element in all of this was the staff. For this reason, I decided to rename Prototheme #1 as 'The Value of the Guide', (which was a phrase from one of the interviews) as it was the staff that responded to how students were on any given day. It was the staff that encouraged, and guided reflection and 'giving things a go'. The staff were competent at outdoor skills and comfortable in the terrain, such that they enabled the 'doing' of activities. It was the staff who were invested in the relationship and guided the student through the programme.

This theme retained the sub-themes of staff skills and attributes and desirable philosophical qualities. If a staff person had these and consciously seized the opportunities for interaction, as they occurred in the structured programme, then those interactions generated the possibility of a meaningful relationship with a student. It is the nature of this relationship that guided the student and was often the catalyst for transformational growth to occur. That growth had occurred was evidenced by the Signs of Success.

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5.11 Summary thoughts

At this point, I recognized many connections with the literature on outdoor education described in Chapter 4. The concepts within a place-responsive approach, of authenticity, agency, uncertainty, and mastery (Papprill, 2018; Wattchow & Brown, 2011) were apparent when I considered the second research question. The interconnectedness of those concepts was paralleled by the interconnectedness of relationships, time and worthy experiences. The benefits of outdoor education could be seen in the Signs of Success, and these signs also had overlaps with earlier discussions on identity. Tramping was a consistent presence in the programmes discussed by the participants, and is an example of a grass-roots recreation activity valued for its many educational opportunities, including identity formation and competence building. Also present were the ideas raised by Fredrickson and Anderson

(1999) and Straker (2014), about 'slowing down' and 'feeling safe' which in turn allowed for a shift in perception (simultaneous perception).

As I entered the last phases of the rTA, I recognized that I was feeling stifled by the rTA approach, even though it had been exciting reading and re-reading the transcripts and making sense of what the people were saying. Adherence to a prescribed qualitative methodology started to seem that the findings would be predictable. A nagging feeling persisted that I was missing something, that *how* a programme worked was more than the configuration and impetus of components or the influence of talented staff. The transcripts and the rTA had shown me a lot, but quite how a programme worked to create moments of spiritual transformation was eluding me still. I started thinking about how I might uncover what was invisible to me, and remembered that Foucault had been useful in uncovering invisible forces in the New Zealand outdoors (see Hollingsworth, 2011). I was not directed to do so but my reading turned in that direction. I began reading general texts on postmodernism and post-structuralism e.g. Crotty (1998) and Belsey (2002). Not long after this turn, I encountered St Pierre's work on post qualitative writing, and then Deleuze's concepts including immanence, becoming, and the fold. It changed my thinking, my approach to analysis. However, the change in analytical approach did not diminish what I had found already, as it had arisen from the unknown space (pre-interview) into the known space (the interview) and then into the creative space, provoking questions about what was important, what was relevant.

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Chapter 6 The second analysis

AB = Alastair Burns

AT = Andy Thompson

CF = Christine Furminger

CYS = Cyn Smith

JCW = Jean Cory-Wright

JF = John Furminger

JT = Jonathan Taylor

MB = Mike Boyes

RMc = Rob MacLean

The reflexivity of the first analysis method serendipitously exposed me to the philosophical writing of St. Pierre, and then Deleuze and Guattari and their interpreters. Having been exposed to the ontology of immanence while conducting the first analysis, I recognized the problem: that while the first four phases of the reflexive Thematic Analysis (rTA) had enabled me to make (partial) sense of an enormous amount of rich 'data', the word 'data' was too prescriptive, too restrictive, too laden with binary and reductive intent. The interviews had been full of sharing and laughter and quiet nods of understanding; the transcripts were comprised of stories and insights and statements that had latent meaning. I could not possibly *represent* what they said.

> It is in vain that we say what we see; what we see never resides in what we say
>
> (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, cited in St. Pierre, 2020b, p. 4)

I understood what Deleuze and Guattari, and St Pierre, were saying: I could only re-present what they had to say, knowing that what they had to say was a product of all of their lived experience, all of their shaping by that experience and the invisible forces beyond their control; it was even a product of what we said together during the interview, as one train of thought stimulated another. And yet, what they had to say was captivating to me. The stories were enthralling. Their experiences often resonated

with my own, yet our upbringings were (mostly) completely different in time, geography, and social stratification. I elected, consciously, and with some apprehension, to only partially heed the exhortations of St Pierre...

> Poststructural scholars using an ontology of immanence were quite clear that they refused pre-existing methods and methodologies

(St. Pierre, 2020b, p. 7)

...because I believed that my journal writing, with its initial sense-making of the interviews, and its creative, ponderings, was not prescriptive, nor overly restrictive. I often started writing at dawn, like Aldo Leopold used to do (Leopold, 1949 /1966), listening to the waking birds with a cup of coffee in my hand, crafting the writing. My thinking was further challenged when I read -

> The point here is that philosophical concepts like Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome or agencement cannot be 'applied' to the actual, to real experience, to organise and represent it.

(St. Pierre, 2019, p. 7)

However, the rTA method and the writing that accompanied it, for me, had a sense of immanence about it: I did not know what I was going to get, I was not looking for anything in particular apart from what they had to say about the topics of programming and spirituality. While the rTA was methodical, the sense of exploration and excitement that I got in the interviews, and received again in reading the transcripts, coupled with the *pondering* in my journals that was enabled by the writing-as-method, showed me that I was not being prescriptive or dogmatic. I felt open to what was forthcoming. It felt like stories were waiting for the right moment to emerge; they often came out in the small hours before dawn. I wrote and discarded, tried different genres of writing to try and capture the exploration, the insights. After a period of dissonance, I elected to retain the first analysis as it had captured some insights, and use it as a starting point for further thinking, for the yet-to-come. My writing was an example of "abandoning assumptions of a singularly coherent meaning", as Straker (2014, p. 241) had also had to do, in order to better understand the practice. But where Straker's participants "still felt they failed to fully articulate the learning potential of the outdoors" (ibid), even after the story sharing, I did not have the same sense of my participants; I felt they had shared fully, described in enough

detail for me to understand. The complexity of understanding was mine to grapple with.

What resulted was a second analysis. There are three parts to this analysis, called re-presentations because they were re-looking at what the interviews contained, in ways that absorbed concepts like immanence, becoming, thresholds and assemblage, from Deleuze (2001) and Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 1991 / 1994). These concepts I found difficult to understand but I was spurred on by St Pierre to read harder, to absorb the philosophy until it made sense, until it colored what I saw and what I wrote. Strangely, for a research topic looking at non-religious spirituality, I had to have *faith* that as I wrote, something meaningful would emerge from the un-thought state. What emerged was painful and sporadic thinking, much like the dog below:

> If thought searches, it is less in the manner of someone who possesses a method than that of a dog that seems to be making uncoordinated leaps
>
> (Deleuze & Guattari, 1991 / 1994, p. 55)

The leaping dog has echoes of Straker (2014, p. 245), when she describes the complexity of learning, especially student-focused learning, "which often occurs in non-linear and seemingly random leaps and bounds", and seemingly provoked by a state of uncertainty.

The three re-presentations contain three elements that are common across all the participants: the foundational connection to the outdoors, the drive to become established in the profession, and the urge to replicate for their students that which had been powerful in their own journey.

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6.1 The first re-presentation: the case study

Analyzing the entirety of the interviews showed that, while each participant was unique, there were things in common, including the arc of their career. The first re-presentation is a case study of one participant, Rob MacLean (RMc), looking at that arc. It acknowledges St Pierre's (2019) point that the arc and the career exist "only because of singular virtual conditions that cannot be reproduced" (p. 5).

The case study contains two commonalities for the participants. The first commonality was that the initial forays into the outdoors set up a foundational connection with the outdoors. How they were introduced to the outdoors was followed by the subsequent influence of significant activities, people and organisations to shape their ambition and to impel their direction. The second commonality was the drive to establish oneself, which involved getting the skills, building their experience, and immersing themselves in the job. What was also being formed here, was their identity. The case study presents those moments of change in a life, where insight occurred, which, in turn, compelled a different direction to be taken.

6.2   The second re-presentation: the fold

The third commonality is that each of the participants told stories that described how their own upbringing had replayed itself, in some positive way, in their adult life. Sometimes their descriptions conveyed an intent to reproduce the conditions they felt had been beneficial for their own arc in life. This is the concept of 'the fold'. Sometimes it influenced not only their career choice, but the decisions they made when programming. The fold is the second re-presentation.

6.3   The third re-presentation: thresholds and little leaps

The research topic was specifically looking at transformation of students, on outdoor education programmes. This is approached in the third re-presentation, via the concept of thresholds and little leaps. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) state "a self is only a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities (p. 249). Thresholds, in the Deleuze and Guattari sense of the word, are less about membranes to cross and more like a state of dissonance that the individual enters into and re-emerges from. It is the dissonance, and the processing of it, that shifts their understanding of who they are and what they are capable of. Thresholds don't apply only to students of course and the interviews reveal the participants own encounters. Outdoor education is rife with opportunities to create states of dissonance, for example abseiling off a cliff. But these states can be reached merely from stepping out of what is normal and comfortable, and some excerpts from interviews acknowledge this.

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6.4 Case study: Identity, connection and the arc of a career

Rob MacLean's (RMc) trajectory into the outdoors, what we might call his 'arc', and the career that he forged that utilized the outdoors, is unique. The arc and the career exist, as St. Pierre (2019, p. 5) suggests "only because of singular virtual conditions that cannot be reproduced". They exist, to paraphrase Deleuze (1968 / 1994, p. 139), because "something in the world forced him to think". This something was irregular encounters with people and situations, whose importance at the time could only be sensed. The thinking came after the encounter, after the sensing.

RMc's arc is presented in this section, as a case study. It has commentary, to illustrate the (singular) moments of revelation and change that occurred along the way. These changes, what he later called 'little leaps' when discussing students on his programmes, produced an arc, but he does not see the arc until much later in time; he only feels the compulsion rising within him, the beast with bloodshot eyes, as Deleuze and Guattari say, compelling him to act:

> We head for the horizon, on the plane of immanence, and we return
> with bloodshot eyes, yet they are eyes of the mind.
>
> (Deleuze & Guattari, 1991 / 1994, p. 41)

6.4.1 The first commonality: being introduced to the outdoors

Yet there *are* aspects of RMc's arc that he has in common with the other interview participants. The first commonality is how they started being interested in the outdoors. It was one of three approaches, or a combination of these, occurring in their lives when they were young: free play as a child, in a local environment; being involved in a club or similar group (like Scouts or Boy's Brigade) that provided supervised low-risk adventures; or a family structure that had outdoor activities like walking, hunting or orienteering embedded as recreation.

6.4.2 The family recreating together

For RMc, it was the family recreating together that propelled him into the outdoors, but the act of playing in the outdoors was also about identity, about finding his place in the world. RMc's arc through life echoes his parents search for a place to be. He was born in Christchurch, the third child of immigrant parents. His parents originated from

Scotland and Holland, and they had travelled across the world to Western Australia and then settled in New Zealand.

> RMc   Part of the reason they came to New Zealand was because of
> the mountains. My father had been a mountaineer. My mother had a
> real affinity with the coastal landscape where she grew up and
> New Zealand seemed like a really good place for them to come. From
> a young age we were always taken on walks, particularly in the
> Port Hills up behind Christchurch. My mother wasn't one for really
> steep country but my father dragged her up the hills nonetheless.
> Starting a family meant he didn't really mountaineer anymore but
> throughout my childhood we had lots of family drives, lots of walks
> and some of the places I found most interesting were hill country with
> forest and that's what I was interested in. We had a large back
> section with trees and I had a real strong connection with trees. I was
> really quite fixated on trees and forests. A big part of my life growing
> up was living in the city but desperately wanting to get out into the
> open country, desperately wanting to get into the mountains. Sitting
> at intermediate school looking over the back fence at the Southern
> Alps on a winter's day, it just seemed like a realm full of possibility.
> That's part of where my interest came from but a lot of it was
> influenced by my parents and their interest in the outdoors.

Here RMc acknowledges, as many of the interview participants did, that the interests of the parents and the family trips that ensued, became an influential factor that motivated the arc of his life. An affinity for trees, being able to see the mountains out of a classroom window, knowing his father had been a mountaineer, these things provided the foundational impulses to join in, to do more.

6.4.3   The impact of Scouts

As he got older, there were other forces shaping him. In the following excerpt, he explains the impact of being in the Scouts association:

> RMc   But, to be honest, my biggest exposures to the outdoors came
> through two things. In the Scouts I did some of my first tramping trips
> and I remember going up the Crow [valley] one stormy night in the
> snow. Coming into a hut in the middle of the night, my first tramp, in
> the dark, in the rain and the snow and staying the night there. Just
> really vivid and intense memories of that as a young person...
> Wearing uniforms and saluting flags and things wasn't really my gig.
> But the adventure and the camping and spending time in the
> backcountry with mates was really important.

The militaristic side of Scouts he found repugnant because of his mother's stories of life under the Nazis. Structured school outdoor activities, like camps, played a minor part in the development of RMc's sense of connection and identity. He found it instead, in tramping and camping with people of the same age, under supervision and then on their own. The "really vivid and intense memories" comment, signaled a significant moment from his upbringing that contributed to his arc. He would search for these moments again.

6.4.4   The influence of hunting

The second important force was hunting. He was introduced to this at school, then later found mates with similar interests to go off hunting with. What is astounding in this re-telling of his hunting origins, was the freedom that existed for boys with guns, at that point in time:

> RH   **Did you do anything at school that encouraged that interest?**
>
> *RMc   Yeah, there were school camps; it was just the standard third form camp [Year 9] and then I think we had a sixth form safari [Year 12]. At Papanui High School we had a teacher, Barry Dalkie, who has probably influenced quite a lot of teachers I think. He'd been a deer culler and a carpenter on the West Coast and he set up, along with one of the Māori teachers at the school, the Papanui High Hunting, Eeling and Wilderness Club.*
>
> *Picture this in your EOTC Risk Management Handbook: A bunch of 13 year old boys, armed to the teeth with semi-automatic 22 [calibre] rifles and shotguns, out spotlighting on a North Canterbury farm on a nor 'west night in a howling wind. And some poor rabbit has the misfortune to cross the fence line in front of us and the shock and awe and fury of the lead going down range and this poor little bunny, who probably survived. I can remember someone letting go with a shotgun right next to my ear. From a risk management point of view it gives me the heebie jeebies now, but those experiences still sit with me.*

Even then, RMc could see that hunting held more for him than playing with guns, or killing:

> *RMc   Something I quite liked about hunting was that you weren't just looking at the track in front of you, you were looking at other things. The imperative of hunting was something that also connected me with the outdoors; it's quite elemental. Throughout my later teen years, that was how I individuated myself, that was how I established*

my identity. We were off in the hills chasing deer, who proved to be really elusive. I was not a terribly good shot and I had this terrible old 303 that kicked like a mule. It took me about three years before I actually got my first animal. But the point was that we were out there, we were independent, we had a purpose and there was just something about it.

Hunting was a powerful force in RMc's youthful years. His ability to make sense of the past is apparent in the next excerpt.

RMc   I think as a young man you seek out challenges that define you, that you think are worthwhile and exciting. And that comes in a whole variety of different forms and that happened to be the particular form that I took in that part of my life. Through my late teens right up until I was my early twenties, hunting was a huge part of my life and I think that was really what cemented my connection with the outdoors. Combination of parents, Scouting, hunting.

Hunting encouraged him to look at the land. The adventure of it, the primal nature of it, fed his growing sense of identity, as did discovering that he had some ability at outdoor activities.

6.4.5   Searching for connection

The mountains felt like a natural habitat for him to be in. He found the freedom of the hills was also the freedom to be a person different from the one at home and at school; in those places he identified as being a migrant. Feeling like he didn't fit in but wanting to, was a third important force compelling him into the outdoors:

RMc   I think it was also being a migrant. Going and participating in New Zealand culture, like the Merivale Papanui Rugby Club, I wasn't really in my habitat, I didn't really know how to interact with that side of New Zealand culture. But out in the mountains, I felt that I did have a bit of a script, I did have a way of fitting in and I was good at that and it was, I suppose, my habitat and I defined myself by being good at that.

His connection to the outdoors, that sense of belonging, was what he was looking for in a job after leaving school. But what he encountered was a large external force called The Economy that shifted his arc:

RMc   When I left Papanui High School, I would've been 18 so it must have been 1988. We were right in the throes of 20% unemployment,

huge interest rates and the impact of the fourth Labour Government. I really wanted to work for the Forest Service and I'd taken summer jobs trying to find work with forestry companies and conservation work. All the jobs that had existed when I started high school, and that I was really looking forward to doing, by the time I got there the economy had slowed down, and those jobs were in such high demand. The Department of Conservation, as the Forest Service had become, was not really hiring snotty-nosed 18 year olds out of high school at the time.

This setback made him realize that he had specific things that he wanted to do, and to not do, in the outdoors. This first paragraph has echoes of the writing of Barry Lopez, in wanting to immerse himself in a landscape and know it at a deep level:

RMc   I didn't really have much of an affinity for conservation per se, other than that it was important to me that these areas were protected. I wanted to interact with the land in a different way. I wasn't that interested in just taking photos and looking at sunsets; I wanted to actually go out and interact with it by hunting and being part of the land rather than just walking across the surface of it taking photos. I think that was quite influential at that time.

I also inherently felt that I wanted to contribute something back to society. I was incredibly angry at the continued destruction of native forest in New Zealand, which was still happening at that time. There were a lot of areas of native beech which were being still converted to pine, even up until the late eighties, I think. That used to really annoy us but it wasn't what I wanted to do as a job. I realized that I had quite an interest in going farming and then that changed to forestry.

Like many young people he wasn't exactly sure of where he was going in life, but he was feeling his way intuitively. He was sensing the need for change rising within him:

RMc   When I started university, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life, I just knew I wanted to work in the outdoors. I had a good head on me, I'd done reasonably well at school and I went into my first year in Forestry. Then all of a sudden they realized I didn't have any biology papers, so they had me do a couple of soil science papers and then I did a bunch of ecology papers.

At the same time, I was working my summers for forestry companies and I was doing a lot of work alone ... a lot of silviculture or mensuration studies, which is forest measurement and I didn't really enjoy that so much. I didn't realize it at the time but I'm an extroverted personality, I get my energy from being around people, and a lot of that was quite individual work, quite lonely, quite boring.

> *And there were very few girls out there. There's a whole variety of reasons why I just got turned off it at the age of 19.*

At this point, RMc's arc was influenced by switching out of forestry and into ecology. He realized he wanted to know the land at some intimate level, but that wasn't necessarily about conservation. He needed something different and he needed people. It was here he came under the influence of a charismatic microbiology lecturer, Laurie Greenfield.

6.4.6 The influence of a teacher

As he approached the end of his 3rd year at university, it was Greenfield that offered him the opportunity to go to Antarctica as a field assistant in the Dry Valleys. The enthusiasm RMc had for the environment, and the depth of his ecological knowledge, is evident in the next excerpt.

> *RMc   I was doing a project on lake foam which was an incredibly tedious subject, really. But I just loved where I was. When a wind blows across a lake that has a lot of suspended organic matter in it, quite often it forms a foam and it's organic surfactant, like natural detergents. In the Dry Valleys, the thing that stops life is the lack of water, it's not the lack of nutrients, it's not even the lack of temperature, it's just simply the lack of water. You get these hanging glaciers where the sun would hit them, and there'd be a trickle of water throughout the short months of summer and they'd just come alive with algae. It's the closest thing that the Antarctic has to a rain forest, these algae and lichen forests that grow under these little rocks. Forests about this high.*

That excerpt also shows an ability to tell stories, that break down complex processes into digestible bits for others to understand. Antarctica enabled RMc to gain a first class Honours degree. Coupled with a desire to see the world, he applied for research fellowships overseas. The only people hiring were the Americans, and RMc opted to go to the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Institute of Arctic Biology. He was there for about five years, studying nitrogen and carbon dioxide dynamics in the soil and atmosphere, work that was foundational in understanding climate change. But it wasn't enough. Slowly his self-reflective nature enabled him to see what was happening in his life:

> *RMc   But I kept repeating this pattern. I hadn't recognized that really what motivated me, was being with people in the outdoors. Doing something that was compelling, in the outdoors, with teams of people.*

It was a moment of revelation but he wasn't yet able to turn that into change. It would take a near-death experience to shift his arc again.

6.4.7   The moment that provokes a change

The following excerpt displays RMc's story telling abilities and deep understanding of science. This is a story with a powerful figure in it, but to illustrate the figure RMc first sketches what this person does:

> *RMc   I was on a caribou hunting trip with a friend, Jim Lawler. He was a Colorado boy who'd been a NOLS Instructor [National Outdoor Leadership School]. He was working on his PhD about musk ox farts. He'd literally take musk ox into this little room and measure the atmosphere in the room and work out the metabolic efficiency of the musk ox by the methane and CO2 levels. Which is a scientific way to describe sitting in a room for seven years measuring musk ox farts. That was all part of the climate change thing. The amount of fartage [sic] that comes out of livestock is a reasonably significant contributor to greenhouse gasses.*

The story then dives into the hunting trip and RMc sketches the wildness of the place and the joy he felt at being there. 'Lining a canoe' means pulling the canoe using ropes, usually up river. Disaster through overconfidence is just around the corner:

> *RMc   We did this caribou hunting trip where we lined a canoe up a river called the Sagavanirktok and up this tributary called the Ribdon. It was beautiful out there in the tundra. That trip we saw musk ox in the wild, we saw grizzly bear, we saw caribou, we saw moose, we shot some caribou. When we started to bring them out, a front came through and it started raining and the river came up really quickly. We were lining the boat full of caribou meat down this river and we just got a bit lazy and we thought, we can paddle this, we got this, so we just jumped in and started paddling down. But we didn't have a lot of freeboard because we probably had about 200/300 kilos of caribou in the boat with us. We got swamped and we lost control and we ended up going through a few stopper waves, and eventually the boat just filled up with water and turned turtle.*
>
> *The thing about that was that it's 0 degree water. It's coming straight off the permafrost and we weren't wearing dry suits, we were just*

> *wearing hunting clothes so we were very lucky not to die. We got the*
> *boat to the side of the river with what was left of our muscle function.*
> *We were really lucky because the Sagavanirktok, the river that we*
> *were going into, was in full spate. If we'd gone into there with a semi-*
> *swamped boat, we would've been dead. There was no way you*
> *could've swum to the side in that water, with that flow.*

Now the story becomes something else. It is an illustration of the immediacy of the feedback that natural forces can give, and the power of the right words at the right moment:

> *RMc We were lucky, we missed a bullet, nearly died. We were sitting*
> *on the side of the river and I was just grizzling on as I was wont to do*
> *as a young man in my twenties who wasn't quite happy with his life,*
> *and I wasn't happy with my PhD and where it was taking me, and he*
> *said, "Why don't you quit and go and become a NOLS instructor?"*
> *Having just had a near death experience, I'm thinking, "yeah okay".*
> *So that's what I did.. I got out of academia; never looked back, never*
> *regretted it.*

What is important here, is that RMc was periodically re-shaping his life, periodically reflecting and thinking "this isn't what I want to be doing", and then doing something about it. His arc also reflects how serendipitous life can be – how moments and chance meetings with people can have an import far beyond what they seem. If he had not got bored by the forestry work, he would not have gladly switched studies to ecology; if he had not met one lecturer he would not have got to Antarctica, nor would he have completed an Honours degree; the Honours degree enabled him to gain a fellowship overseas, which resulted in field work in Alaska; it was in Alaska that he ran out of steam for a higher degree, and coincidentally had a near-death experience and a conversation which prompted him to do a NOLS course.

6.4.8   The influence of NOLS

NOLS shaped RMc's identity in ways that he found deeply satisfying. The following excerpt describes the sense of a young man who has finally found the thing that he wants to be doing in life. Everything that came before led him to this; everything that came before hadn't quite been enough. He immersed himself in NOLS and explored the world. His work provided adventures and challenges that he found immensely satisfying:

> *RMc   On the way to the NOLS course in the Wind River Range, I did my first ever Wilderness First Responder Course with the Wilderness Medicine Institute, and that was a real life changing thing. I really loved that, really got into teaching outdoor first aid, just something really practical. A lot of what I'd been doing had been very scientific, very removed from the real day-to-day world. Then working for NOLS, that was my path.*
>
> *I hit it fairly late in my life and I worked for NOLS around the world. I started off working for them in Mexico and Northern British Columbia and Alaska. Then worked for them in Central Idaho, Wyoming, North Cascades in Washington State. Along the way did some language training in Guatemala and Mexico. Then got a chance to work a semester in Patagonia out of a little town.*

But Patagonia also reminded him of his upbringing. Something was rising up in him, becoming quietly insistent that he belonged somewhere, not everywhere:

> *RMc   But when I was in Patagonia, it was like going back to an image of New Zealand in the twenties. You still had people working paddocks that were full of the stumps of recently felled native timber. The timber was very similar to New Zealand, they've got totara in Patagonia, they've got kowhai trees, they've got beech trees. It's like New Zealand except that you've got this overlay of Spanish culture. You still had these pobladores [settlers] as they're called, people working in these remote valleys, literally ploughing their fields with oxen. You go from Santiago, which feels like a first world city, to a 1900's kind of technology with these folks living off two pigs, what they can pull out of the river, and what they can plough and that's about it.*
>
> *When I was there I realized actually it was time to head back to New Zealand. It took me five years to go through my twenties, figuring out where I was going in my life. It took me another five years to really establish myself as a professional outdoor instructor, at least in the US context.*

In the last part of that excerpt, what occurs is the conceptual thought rising up from the un-thought, making itself known: after so long away, it was time to go home. Having made a career in the outdoors overseas, it was time to re-establish himself back in New Zealand.

6.4.9   The second commonality: establishing yourself

Establishing yourself was the second commonality of the interview participants. They had all journeyed from knowing very little about things like technical outdoor pursuit skills, instructing, pedagogy, or risk management, into positions where they were managing staff and making programming decisions and financial decisions. Beyond the first commonality of initial forays into the outdoors, mentioned above, all of them had aspects in their background that were useful in outdoor education. Things like a teaching diploma or developing a single technical pursuit to a high level. RMc's extensive background in hunting and tramping and science, especially field biology, enabled him to quickly become an established NOLS instructor, not only running a slow-moving classroom in remote and wild places of the world, but teaching others how to do it. His lessons became part of the NOLS literature (see Gookin & Wells, 2002). NOLS forged RMc's identity, in ways that hunting and field biology had not. His sense of self expanded as his career developed with NOLS, and the following excerpt captures that pride:

> RMc   I really love that format of the travelling backcountry classroom, I absolutely love that. The freedom and ability just to teach what the environment puts in front of you. But also the realness and the immediacy of just being in the environment and that being your best teacher. One of the core elements, especially in the wilderness programmes, is to navigate, to find your way through terrain and to be comfortable in that terrain with just such a simple set of skills. This also took a long time to refine... I really loved that. I really thrived on teaching that and thrived because I had this ecology background, looking at the land and trying to introduce students to see the language of the land... There's no question that some of the best campers in the world have been trained at NOLS. You can camp the shit out of anything if you've been a NOLS Instructor because you're out there for so long. You're out there in all weather, you're travelling slow, you're travelling heavy and you just get your arse handed to you if you can't figure out how to set up a tent and keep yourself dry. It's just that simple.

6.4.10 Re-establishing: a clash of cultures

But returning to New Zealand showed RMc that there was more than one way to practice outdoor education, as the NOLS way was not well known and not understood. For the first time he saw a cultural difference in how outdoor education was practiced. When the weather was bad, NOLS groups tended to wait, so, aside from camping, RMc

did not develop the ability to work with groups in that adverse weather. One consequence was when he sat a New Zealand sea kayak assessment for the first time, he failed:

> RMc   I could paddle the stuff myself but I'd no idea how to manage it. I absolutely got my arse handed to me by the Assessors because I completely stuffed it up and fair cop, too, they completely nailed it. It was just really interesting how that reflected the difference in cultures between the way in which the Americans approach the outdoors, which is more of a 'be in the space, wait out the weather' as opposed to the Kiwi approach, which was more technically competent but less about sitting and enjoying and appreciating...

His reflective nature enabled him to process that set back and to adjust his approach to instructing. It also enabled him to pinpoint the cultural difference in approaches to teaching in the outdoors:

> RMc   I think the New Zealand culture of interacting with the back country is very much, wait for the weather system, boom, get in, get out, get the job done, go hard, achieve the technical objective and then move it before you get spanked. The ability to sit and reflect and to connect with the landscape has been a relatively recent realisation for many in the sector.

Coming back to New Zealand allowed RMc to help establish a NOLS base in the South Island, and to recruit New Zealand staff. Eleven years with NOLS was followed by six years as Director at Outward Bound Anakiwa, before moving to Blenheim to manage a recreation facility. Being in senior leadership roles in these organisations, and having to step out of the institutional environment for recruitment or training or marketing purposes, exposed him to other ideas. He found his conceptual frameworks challenged:

> RMc   That was another jump for me. That idea that what I'd been indoctrinated with, within those institutions, wasn't the world. It was very easy to make sense of the world with that framework but actually it wasn't the world.

Paradoxically this enabled RMc to deepen his understanding of what he was involved with. He saw what was important about the components of a programme, and the underlying philosophy of each programme became clearer.

RMc's life and career was a unique arc. It contained singular moments of connection with places and influential conversations with people. He had acquired a deep understanding of earth systems through scientific field work, and had acquired outdoor skills through adventuring. His arc was a restless search for something meaningful. These things impelled him on a journey that, eventually, through NOLS and Outward Bound, he found deeply rewarding.

And while his arc was unique, there were aspects that were in common for other people. First, the initial forays into the outdoors that set up a foundational connection. This was followed by the influence of significant activities, organisations and people, to shape an ambition and to impel a direction. The second commonality was what they had to do to get established. This usually involved immersion in the job until a high skill level was attained. For some, high skill was about outdoor pursuits and gaining qualifications; but for most, the jobs they were in were so multi-dimensional that other skills, like the ability to facilitate discussions, were equally valuable. For all, finding the career that made sense to them, that informed their sense of identity, that contributed something meaningful to the world, was deeply satisfying.

6.4.11 The third commonality

Their career afforded them the opportunity to also re-create what had been powerful and influential in their own life. In this way, the third commonality was how their own upbringing folded in time, and influenced not only their career choice, but the development of their personal philosophy of practice. This philosophy influenced the decisions they made when programming. The concept of *the fold* is the second re-presentation.

<p align="center">********</p>

6.5   The fold: affirming the past, provoking the future

The interviews showed that the trajectory of a life, the arc of a career, has moments in it where a situation is repeated and there is a sense of an awakening to what has passed before. Sometimes there is a re-visiting of something known but deliberately put away. Sometimes it is a desire that rises to the surface of consciousness to make itself known. This is *the fold:* time and memory has folded; the present is being

touched by the past (see also Chapter 1). One way of thinking about the fold is to consider it in terms of geological layers, shifted by tectonic forces:

> Mental landscapes do not change haphazardly through the ages... It is true that very old strata can rise to the surface again, can cut a path through the formations that covered them and surface directly on the current stratum to which they impart a new curvature
>
> (Deleuze & Guattari, 1991 / 1994, p. 58)

This 'rise to the surface' of the old strata, may occur when revisiting a place of importance, such that what comes out is re-working of memories, and a construction of a new space, or even an affirmation of the old space. This can be seen in Cyn Smith (CYS) describing the influence of the landscape on people, and the visits by ex-students of Tihoi:

> **RH   Are there sites within Tihoi itself that you think are significant?**
>
> *CYS   I think it's the space of Tihoi. The surrounding peaks create a memorable landscape in an area. You've got all the rock faces and the farmland and the forest at the other side. I think the openness of the space and wherever you look, you've got a pretty stunning view. It's a really beautiful place to live... A lot come back. They just drive in and they have a little drive round, come see the place and then head off again.*

The ex-students driving in and having a look around, is the fold in action: the reworking of memory through the revisiting, confirms the transformation that happened in the past. The smell of the old wooden houses at Tihoi used to provoke an emotional response in the older generations of ex-students, and prompt them to recount what life was like there, for them. In other contexts, the emotion surfacing in the fold may be spurred by a song that was prominent at the time or in the John Furminger (JF) example that follows, the impact of a letter:

> *JF   I've had the standout letter that you would hope for once in your lifetime to get. [At Kahunui] when they are on their solo, I invite them to write a letter to themselves, that I'll post seven years later on, around about their 21st birthday. On a couple I wrote, "Love to hear how this letter affects you," and this little girl wrote back to me and she said, "Oh, my God. What you've done to me by sending this letter and me reading about my 14 year old self and now I'm thinking about how to respond to your question."*

The adult woman can now recognize the significance of a place and time and guide, in the life of the adolescent that they once were.

> JF   She wrote that she'd always been the quiet one to the side, and sure enough, you look in the intake photo and there she is, standing a little bit to the side and quietly in the back, not making any waves. She said, "When I reflected on myself, while I was happy with that person, I was determined to do more than that." She started to list what she'd done. She was in her fifth year at Medical School and she'd led the Environmental Group in the Med School. It was just a huge list of achievements. She had included a photo of herself and a couple of friends coming over the Gillespie Pass in the South Island. Tramping with her pack on her back and having fun with the group. She said, "It gave me space away from parents and cell phones and noise and things like that, to actually think about myself, and what I'm doing and how I'm going to do it and what's going to change in my life for me."

Moreover, JF, in creating the space for letter writing in the Kahunui programme, then posting the letter some years later and then receiving a reply, was experiencing time folding just as the young woman had:

> JF   It was just a blow-away letter. It was like, "Oh, my God". I'm sure everybody, to a lesser or greater extent, has made something about those experiences. When you meet a Tihoi boy later in life, they can tell you exactly what house they were in and everything. It's a significant part of their growing up. Even the boys that haven't liked it, and I think they are the minority, they will reflect on that and think about why they didn't.

An example of the fold and folding can be seen with Christine Furminger (CF). CF grew up in Taranaki in the 1960's and recalled a childhood of free play with her brothers in the nearby paddocks, and family trips to the sea. When her own children were small, she took them exploring in nature. It happened automatically, reflexively. In many ways, raising her kids on Motutapu island must have been re-creating her own upbringing.

> RH   **You said you took your kids into the outdoors. What did you want them to get out of that?**
>
> CF   I wanted them to get that sense of freedom, that sense of just you and your resources and being with nature and enjoying beautiful places. We lived on Motutapu Island and Andy was only really small and we would just get on our bikes and go swimming or sailing or canoeing or fishing or playing on the rocks. I just wanted them to get

that real sense of wonder about nature. They spent hours in the rockpools just playing, exploring and adventure. I just wanted that but, most of all, that sense of freedom and fresh air and resourcefulness that 'I can do this'. I can bike this far, I can walk this far, I can get up on the hills and feel the wind in my hair and the wind on my face.

Many years later, CF created the Kahunui programme and purposefully built 'play in nature' into the programme. In the following excerpt, CF and I discuss the Kahunui girls and the development of a relationship with nature.

RH **Why did you want them to develop a relationship with nature?**

CF   Mainly because I loved it... You find out about yourself, you find out about others, you find out about the cycles of nature that we sit oblivious to when we're sitting in four walls. But when you're out there, you actually see the moon come up, you see the sun go down, you see the sunrise, you see the crabs digging holes in the mud once the tide's gone out. All those processes of nature are going on every day but we're mostly oblivious to it.

RH **Did the girls at Kahunui notice? Did you see that developed awareness of nature?**

CF   Absolutely and they loved it.

RH **What did it look like?**

CF   They loved playing. We'd go down to the river and staff would do the normal risk management thing and then the girls would just play. They'd just sit or they'd do hair flicks or they'd do underwater swimming or they'd get a rock and just carry it and throw it and just play. It was just the most magic time.

Playing in nature was present in CF's childhood, and in the childhood of her own kids. She sought that experience for the students of her programmes, because it had been powerful for her and she wanted others to experience that power, to have those experiences of interacting with nature and feeling the lure of independence, exploration, joy.

A last example of the fold, is one that occurred during an interview itself. We had been discussing how Andy Thompson (AT) had got into mountaineering. As he cycled back through stories, he recalled the moment high in the Tararua ranges, on one of his first

tramping trips as a teenager, of witnessing a sunset, that seemed to capture
everything about what he wanted his life to be like:

> AT   *I was with people that were adventurous and didn't want to sit
> in a hut all day; they wanted to get out. So we went up and saw the
> most beautiful sunset over Kapiti Island and I took that photo. That's
> where photography got born for me...*

He jumped up and led me to another room – he still had the photograph, proudly
displayed.

> AT   *The photo means so much to me in the sense of how beautiful it
> was and I was up high and you could drink in the views and the
> colours and the smells of the world, so it was all authentically real to
> me and so amazing.*

As we discussed it, AT recalled that it reminded him of family trips boating over to
Kapiti island, and watching his Dad go diving. The photograph had become more than
an image from a tramp, it had become symbolic in his life:

> AT   *There's lots of connection in this image. [Tramping] was helping
> me identify who I wanted to be because my Mum and my Dad and my
> sister and my brother didn't do this stuff, so it was paving a way for
> me being an individual, in some ways. This is the time that you are
> going through, to find where you want to be in the world and it was
> signing me up. There's so much in this image that speaks to me and
> resonates with me and I've still hung on to it.*

We resumed our conversation, but another memory was triggered:

> AT   *In the morning we left Kime hut, went over Fields Peak and then
> down and up to Mt Hector for the sunrise. Oh, my God, it's actually
> the first sunrise I'd ever seen in my life. It was the most amazing
> sunrise because as the sun came up, flares joined on the horizon. It
> was a crispy winter morning. These flares joined and slowly the sun
> came up and it was the most beautiful, spiritual moment where our
> jaws were just dropped on the ground just going, "Wow, wow, wow."
> It wasn't just that, it was the people that I was with as well, making
> those deeper relationship connections.*

In that one moment of conversation AT had described the moment of alignment, of
time and place and people and effort, coupled with the impact of an encounter that
shocks the senses, that can produce something empirically transcendent. That is, the
great insight that wells up from within, provoked by the senses opening up to the

reality of the world. The great flow of connection, back and forth, between the world and the inner self. And in that connection, the possibilities for the future. Reading his words later, replaying his emotional connection to that moment, I was reminded of Deleuze:

> Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental encounter... it can only be sensed
>
> (Deleuze, 1968 / 1994, p. 139)

AT's sense of connection to the other people on that trip, was enhanced by that sunrise. His sense of accomplishment was enhanced. His attraction to nature and photography was spurred by both the first sunset and that first sunrise. In many ways that trip crystallized the template of his identity, affirming his need for adventure and competence in the outdoors. It was a fundamental encounter that shaped the trajectory of AT's life. The senses came first; the conscious thinking happened later.

This folding of time and space was a recurrent theme across the interviews. All of the participants had occasions in their story sharing, where memory intersected with the present and caused an emotional response or a newly considered perspective.

Memory is not the only thing that intersects with the present. Other people do too. Sometimes, the situation in front of us is new or challenging in some way. Both of these – situations and people – have the potential to create a state of dissonance, what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) called a threshold. This is the focus of the next section.

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6.6   Thresholds and little leaps

Deleuze and Guattari (1991 / 1994), assert that concepts do not exist on their own in time and space. Instead, they have a history, they have connections to other concepts, they have components that construct the concept, and there is an infinity of possibilities for concepts to be created. But they are never created from nothing; they arise from the pre-conscious thought, what Deleuze and Guattari called the plane of immanence, into the conscious thought space. Conceptual thinking then grows

rhizomatically, organically, like the roots of certain plants where every small piece has the capability to grow in any direction, depending on what it encounters.

In the same way, people have a history, they have a connection to other people, they have a multitude of things that make them who they are, and they have the potential to grow in any number of directions at any given time. People come from somewhere, have familial connections to others and have affinities with places; describing this is the purpose of a *pepeha*, that oratory protocol in Māoridom that introduces a person to an audience. Where a person comes into contact with another person (which may be physically in the same space or mentally in the same space, as in reading a book) there exists a potential for a person to grow, like the rhizomatic root, in some organic non-hierarchical way. I have witnessed a pepeha being given in a formal meeting and an audience member responding with surprise as they realized they were related. Laughter and a more relaxed conversation followed; the interaction changed the tone of the meeting.

In another exchange, it may be that a first person says something that is hurtful or, conversely, compassionate. This action of saying something is the outward effect of a thought or feeling held by that first person; the action is the internal state made visible and conscious. This internal state is the affect; when it goes out of the person it becomes the effect, which may be in the form of a verbal message or a physical action. In such a way is the feeling of friendship towards someone turned into a friendly greeting or pat on the back. Or, conversely, the feeling of anger turned into the behaviour of lashing out. Moreover, the receiver of the pat on the back or the lashing, then internalizes that effect; they feel happy or defensive (or any number of emotions) as the effect becomes the affect. They are changed in some way by that contact. But so is the first person.

The meeting of two people, then, has the potential for one to have an effect on the other, or vice versa. In this way, in any given meeting, there is a fluidity of interaction across a membrane of self, and into a *threshold*, a state of dissonance where there is a continuously evolving concept of one's self and one's capabilities.

> A self is only a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities

(Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 249)

The multiplicities that Deleuze and Guattari speak of above, are the person that existed before entering the dissonant space, the threshold, and the person that exists after emerging from it.

The students, in the High School outdoor education programmes discussed in the interviews (Kahunui, Tihoi Venture School, Dilworth, Kristin), are adolescents encountering the world and growing in multiple ways towards adulthood. But the *becoming* they encounter on these programmes is not so much about becoming-an-adult but rather, an adolescent vibrating in their search for self and connection and purpose and belonging. This vibration is like a movement towards and retreat from, ideas, situations and people, a back-and-forth until something establishes itself. We see this in the testing of friendships. We see this in the testing of ideas through position statements ("I think that..."), through a willingness to lead peers or challenge peers, or a willingness to support and follow. We see this vibration in the dissonance created via new situations, especially prominent in the outdoors, where the adolescent has to leave behind what they know, trust their guide, and enter an unknown space, a threshold.

We see this, for example, when people go abseiling for the first time. The conscious sensible brain is telling the person not to go towards the cliff edge ("you're going to die") but the effect of the guide is to encourage, reassure, hold the belay rope, remind them that they have practiced this skill on the ground and so on. A successful abseil results in emotions (relief, excitement), a sense of accomplishment (they did it) and a future sense (they could do it again if they chose to) that did not exist before they started. They have engaged with a *threshold*, an in-between state of dissonance, that precedes the changes taking place. They have been affected. What they were has been replaced by what they now temporarily are; what they are in this new moment, will eventually be challenged by a new threshold. In an outdoor programme, the student is regularly encountering thresholds, that they have to adjust to, as they are becoming.

This excerpt from the Cyn Smith (CYS) interview, shows a student who began the Tihoi programme with no idea that they could run or even an inclination to be fit, yet ran a

half marathon in the last days of the programme, declaring something profound in doing so:

> RH   **Can you think of a boy from Tihoi that has dramatically changed?**
>
> *CYS   Yeah. A boy we had last intake, a very arty boy, highly cultural. Tihoi was always going to be a big challenge for him. I ran the half marathon with him on the second to last day and on the run, I said, "Oh, man, you're so different from when you started. You're enjoying all this outdoor stuff and you hadn't done any of it before and you voluntarily did the half marathon," because they don't have to, they can do a 14km. He just turned to me and said, "I've never felt so good about myself." He'd never really been pushed physically but he got all the benefits from that and he found outdoor pursuit things that he liked; he got respect from a lot of the kids because he gave everything a go and he certainly wasn't the best at everything outdoors because he wasn't a physical boy. I thought that was a massive message: I've never felt so good about myself.*

The excerpt shows the student at the end point of the programme, feeling good about themselves because of what they feel they have achieved. But it also gives clues about the thresholds the student has had to face up to and cross into: they were not physically oriented but had to engage with a fitness programme; they found one or more outdoor pursuits that they could be good at, but there must have been some that they were not good at; they were respected by the other boys for their attitude and willingness to try things. By the end, this student was willing to push themselves to undertake the half marathon, something they had never done before, crossing into that threshold, into the unknown space, believing that something good would come out of it because that is what had happened before.

The CYS excerpt suggested a well-balanced individual who had not had (or not taken) the opportunity to physically extend themself to see what they were capable of. But this next excerpt, from the Christine Furminger (CF) interview, is about a student who was not well-balanced; in fact, they were having tremendous mental health issues. While the eventual end point is similar to the CYS example, in that the student had a positive sense of themselves, the starting point and the thresholds this student had to face and cross into, were markedly different from the previous example:

RH   **Can you think of a girl or a boy that captures the change that we've been talking about, where they'd come in as one person and they leave as a different person?**

CF   *I certainly can and the boy I want to talk about arrived at Tihoi, [but] didn't want to come. He hadn't been to school for a year and a half because he'd been so bullied, so he'd stayed at home with his Mum. We had a psychologist working with him who suggested that Tihoi would be the place for him. I remember he arrived with his hood pulled right over his head, dark glasses on and the first three weeks he wouldn't get out of bed. In the end, we had to physically get him out of bed, and he'd come and sit in my class with his hood on and his dark glasses on. It was a real challenge for the boys living with him, of course, because he never pulled his weight. Then he found rock climbing and he was very, very good at rock climbing. Once he found rock climbing, he was running the cross country, he sat up in class, he did everything. He helped in the house, he chopped wood, he cooked the dinners. He was unbelievable.*

RH   **What was it about climbing that was the catalyst?**

CF   It was individual so he wasn't competing against anybody. Probably the instructors that worked with him encouraged him and helped him make sense of where he was in his life, and that there was more out there in life. He just loved it.

The CF excerpt shows that sometimes it just takes one thing to change the direction of an individual. For this individual it was discovering rock climbing but in order to be successful at climbing, that student had to develop trust in the belayer, that they would not drop them; trust in the climbing instructor, that the instructor had set up the equipment safely and they knew what they were doing; and trust in the group who were climbing, that he would not be belittled for his efforts. For that student, with that background, these were tremendous barriers to cross and the dissonance must have been intense.

While the two excepts above are about boys in the 18-week Tihoi programme (separated by years), each of the interview participants had similar stories of student change but from different programmes. Change was not gendered or related to age or maturity. It was an internalized process encouraged by external forces. Those forces included the staff working on the programme, and the opportunities for crossing into a threshold, a state of dissonance, that the programme presented. Rob MacLean (RMc),

who had worked many years for NOLS before becoming Director at Outward Bound, spoke directly to this, describing internal narratives being provoked by trial and error:

> *RMc   I think probably the best model about how Outward Bound works, comes from cognitive behavioural therapy. The idea that people have narratives about what they can and what they can't do. That when you encourage or compel people to step outside of that narrative, and to try something that's outside of who they think they are, and they succeed, that sets up cognitive dissonance around their sense of identity. And that little battle continues to rage until such time as they resolve it by accepting that they can actually do more than they thought they could.*

RMc expanded his thinking into how people learn...

> *RMc   I have a probably fairly pop psychology understanding of what goes on, but my understanding is that we learn by seeing, by trial and error, we learn by experimentation and the feedback of trying something new and different and surviving that or coming through it.*

And then into the significance of that learning, the significance of the dissonance:

> *RMc   Realising we have the capacity to handle a new situation is fundamental to how we evolve from children to adults. It's fundamental for how we evolve as people. That willingness to step outside and challenge ourselves is critically important, because it sets up that constant dissonance between what we thought we could do and what we now see that we can do. And that's how we drove change.*

RMc described how people came to Outward Bound with an identity but they were essentially strangers to their group. What happened on the course resulted in a reputation within their group, not constrained by the old identity. That experience could result in a new identity; they could become something else, someone else:

> *RMc   Life is made up of those little leaps. I think what is cool about outdoor education, is that we can compress a lot into a single space. At Outward Bound, NOLS, we can pack years' worth of those little leaps into a single 30-day, 21-day course. The shorter the course the less impactful it is I think, but sometimes even into a two-week or a week or even a four day.*

Here, RMC's 'little leaps' are the threshold entering moments and the re-imagining of the self, that both CF and CYS described earlier, and that the Deleuze and Guattari quote captures:

> A self is only a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities
>
> (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 249)

Moreover, RMc links the opportunity for 'little leaps' directly to the length of time that a programme has.

6.6.1 Becoming-outdoor educator

But what of the staff – the interview participants themselves and the other staff contributing on the programme? Are they not also becoming? They are, crossing thresholds as they interact with people and situations. Having recounted a story about how anxious she was going on a caving trip, Christine Furminger (CF) directly and inadvertently, addresses this threshold state and why it is important:

> CF   I think it is really, really important that we have instructors who constantly put themselves out of their comfort zone, so they know actually what it feels like. So that when they're encouraging and talking with the students they can talk from a place of experience

Andy Thompson (AT) regularly put himself out of his comfort zone because he wanted his life to be adventurous. He made it so, starting with enthusiastic tramping and cycling trips as a teenager, including carrying a dinghy over the Tararua ranges, with mates, just for the sheer hell of it. Sometimes there were little leaps prompted by people at key moments:

> AT   When I was in my first year as a Ranger Trainee, I met a guy who told me about Mount Cook and he said, "Andy, you've got to go there, this will be you." He described it to me and he said, "There are these open roads and you can just open up the throttle and go. You get down there and it's an amazing place and then you look for climbing partners." And I thought, that's me!

Sometimes the little leaps were prompted by surviving life-threatening situations, as he was learning the skills:

> *AT   We went to Ngāwaapurua, Fulljames rapid. I went paddling and I had a wicked, wicked swim. I didn't know how to roll. I remember holding on to the bow of the boat and getting sucked down and not being able to get back up. It was a bit of a scary experience. I was quite shaken by it. I thought, "far out, I really don't understand what I'm doing here".*

Learning to roll and surviving his own trips, eventually led to a job as a kayak photographer, which led to a job as a kayak instructor and a new state of dissonance:

> *AT   When I was kayaking for Adventure Photography, doing the photography, someone said to me, "Oh, Andy you can kayak. I've got the Army who want a 10-day kayak course, would you be willing to do it?" and I said, "Okay." I had no instructional skill, I had nothing... Every day it was just epic and I had no understanding of instruction and probably little on safety. I remember saying to myself "There must be a much more efficient way of doing this, I'm exhausted."*

This experience led to AT doing a course at OPC /Hillary Outdoors to find that more efficient way, which led to further adventures instructing people in the outdoors, gaining qualifications, and eventually running a programme.

In contrast, Al Burns (AB) recalled how disillusioned he was with the profession he had spent years getting qualified for, and two moments in particular that sparked him up and changed the direction of his life:

> *AB   I just found the healthcare system awful – underfunded and horribly depressing. I didn't last in that long and I dropped out and went on the dole and my brother took me climbing and that was it... I was like, "This is awesome,"... and I'm working with youth, I was looking at them and going, "Man, they would just get so much out of coming out and doing stuff with me," so I started dragging them out to cliffs.*

For AB, climbing led to a desire to learn more skills and get qualified in this new direction, which led to working in outdoor centres and so on; the arc of his life and career began to be shaped in that moment at the rock climbing wall.

But their life trajectory, their arc, was more than one moment of insight. For all of the participants there was a prelude to that moment of insight, which was a time of searching for something in their life. This was then followed by a continuous desire for attainment and affirmation from that moment onwards, through other moments, on

and on. This searching and desire is what made them susceptible to chance encounters, quiet suggestions, work opportunities; listening to the call of these possibilities encouraged them to acquire skills (e.g. NZOIA qualifications or teaching diplomas), or apply for jobs that at first glance seemed beyond them (e.g. AB going to Tihoi; AT going to Antarctica; CYS going to OPC /Hillary Outdoors; RMc leaving field work in Alaska and going on a NOLS course).

Sometimes it appeared that an event from long ago had provided a spur, conscious or otherwise, to shape their trajectory and create change. Here CF recalls the casual misogyny of a tramp when she was a university student

> CF   Then we had to go on a self-tramp in a small group. We had a
> group of students join us from Ardmore, and they were blokes and
> back in those days you always gave in to the blokes, the blokes
> always were the ones that made the decisions. I kept saying to them,
> "It's the wrong way, we're going the wrong way." "Oh, no, no, no,
> no, it'll just be around the corner." And, of course, it wasn't around
> the corner and we never met the spot that we were meant to meet.
> Lots of discussions and, of course, they never admitted that they were
> wrong. It was always a battle to get your voice across, that maybe
> you did know a little bit more.

Then at a later part of the interview (and some years later in her life), in talking about the programme at Kahunui, she expressed the desire for young women to have the same opportunities as young men, to not stand back and let males dominate the decision making:

> CF   We tried to get a model by the end, by the last week, where
> they were totally independent doing things, managing things.
> Initiative was something we tried to teach. Girls never wanted to
> make a mistake, they never wanted to fail... They did not want to look
> like they didn't know, so that stopped their creativity, it stopped them
> experimenting.

In this way, CF's past, of not being heard, not feeling empowered, was re-visited and re-worked in the present. That reworking set a trajectory for the future, for those Kahunui girls.

As they sat with me in the interview setting, our conversation provoked them in some way, pushed their thinking, nudged their memory, shone a light on something they had

not thought about in a while: the interview itself was a becoming; it vibrated with its own emotions (anxiety, remembered joy, sadness of times passed, or people gone); it moved into dissonant spaces with the simple act of asking "tell me about...?".

The case study arc of RMc's life and career, exemplified *becoming* but more specifically, *becoming-outdoor educator*, and, as someone who thought deeply about his profession and what worked, *becoming-outdoor philosopher*. In their own way, all of the participants shared this trajectory, this arc.

The participants recounted moments in their life where they had to grapple with thresholds, those states of dissonance. Like the quote from Deleuze below, they recounted moments that had inspired their thinking, moments where their thinking had caused them to change direction in their life.

> Modes of life inspire ways of thinking; modes of thinking create ways of living.
>
> (Deleuze, 2001, p. 66)

These moments were powerful, but they were also emotional, and it was the emotion that provoked the thinking. As they recounted their life journey, to where they were at the singular point of the interview, there was a linearity to their recounting of their story, but their story was not linear; there were meetings with people that shifted them in some way, situations they found themselves in that they had to react to, ambitions that arose, opportunities to go in a particular direction, perhaps unforeseen until that moment.

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6.7   Where is the spiritual growth?

All of this leads to here: what to say now about the research topic and research questions?

To recap: the topic of this study is 'Reflections on transformation: how New Zealand outdoor educators construct programmes to address (non-religious) spiritual growth'.

There were two research questions being investigated:

1. What do experienced outdoor educators, who have been in charge of outdoor programmes, have to say about recognizing transformation in their students?

2. What do those educators have to say about the influence of programming on student transformation?

6.7.1   Signs of success

All of the participants could recall students who had changed over the time frame of the programme. Jonathan Taylor (JT) was no exception, but he also recalled an entire year group of 24 senior school students, who had taken charge of their learning and become self-organizing, running their own adventures, organizing trips through social media, checking in with staff to see that their thinking was ok in terms of risk management.

> JT   *The biggest change I saw in most of the students, is they were motivated to make stuff happen and to learn about how to make that happen. [They] pushed me beyond what I thought I was capable of delivering. It felt like I was on their wave. It never felt like I was teaching; I was just always running to keep up with their curiosity and passion and they didn't seem to worry so much about the assessment but they really valued the learning and they were totally engaged as a cohort.*

JT's students were unrecognizable from the people they were three years earlier, who had expected discrete blocks of learning to be handed to them. A fire of motivation had been lit.

> RH   **How big a part did the camping and outdoor trips play in that change in motivation?**
>
> JT   *Huge, because through the failures they were getting a lot of success and a lot of satisfaction from doing it themselves.*

JT noticed that these students were learning from their failures of navigation and campcraft; at some point, having been encouraged to try again, they were no longer afraid of failure:

> JT   *You can be a good tramper, but as soon as you go off-track the game changes. [But] as soon as you become comfortable off-track and not worried about getting lost so much, all of a sudden your attitude extends beyond just the normal pathway on the map. My kids started asking, "What's off the dotted line?." They developed the*

> *confidence to tackle and attempt what's off the dotted line...They*
> *were no longer satisfied with just the standard.*

The first analysis showed that the interview participants recognized that the students had changed on the outdoor courses, been transformed in some way. They recognized these changes via the 'signs of success' that included observed behaviour change, reflective writing from the student, attestation of change from the students themselves, or post-programme trajectories, as though the students potential had been unleashed. The programmes had impact; students visited staff years later to attest to this. The second analysis showed this too but in a different way; the signs of success were also about the participants own career journey. For example, CF's reflection on anxiety before a caving trip was a sign of success, in that it was a moment of insight for her about how debilitating anxiety can be; It was also an insight about the need for staff to regularly experience dissonance, so that they can relate to the students. When RMc stated that he loved the slow-moving classroom of NOLS, that he loved teaching, it was a sign of success – he had changed from being a restless, dissatisfied person into one who was settled in what he was doing.

6.7.2 Components that had influence

The first analysis showed that the interview participants thought that there were components of a programme, that had great influence upon the students. These components were about doing things, residing in a place, and developing the person. A fourth component guided the programme through philosophy and purpose. Clues to where transformational moments might happen in these components, were offered in comments about having a worthy experience, the power of nature, and time. The Value of the Guide corralled staff skills and attributes, along with the relationship created between the staff and the students. The staff embodied and enacted the philosophy and values of the programme.

The second analysis was more subtle, in that some of the components of a programme appeared to be reflections on, or re-creations of, the conditions that led to transformation from the participants own upbringing. For example, Andy Thompson (AT) 'pushing' his polytech students hard reflected his own adventurous arc through life. He had benefited by being pushed and having 'epics', so his students probably

would too. His programme components reflected that. It took several years before AT thought differently about this. Cyn Smith (CYS) and Jean Cory-Wright (JCW) had personally benefitted from the connection between health and fitness, and both consciously sought to keep 'running' integrated into their programmes. All of the participants discussed the benefits of spending time in nature, so it was easy to select components that allowed for this, like multi-day tramping trips.

6.7.3   The language is an indicator

Both the first *and* the second analysis, identified that the language of non-religious spirituality (Gookin, 2006; Gookin & Wells, 2002), was being used to describe the moments where a transformative experience had occurred. Gookin described spirituality as:

> …The tacit knowledge that makes a person feel more energized and connected. This includes an insightful relationship with yourself and others, a strong personal value system, and meaningful purpose in your life. There are character traits associated with spiritual wellbeing, like self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-comfort, and self-reliance. A spiritually strong person feels empowered to influence the universe and can think and act in a calmer state of mind… people feel like part of some things that are bigger than themselves... it is not an academic explanation of the human experience that provides spiritual growth. It is the deep human experience that provides spiritual growth (Gookin, 2006, p. 33)

The language in the interviews included words, phrases, and stories about a greater awareness of self (e.g. AT surviving various kayaking trips; the student running a half marathon with CYS), and one's future capabilities (the letter to JF; RMc revealing he really thrived on teaching), a greater sense of connection to other people (brotherhood, mates), and a sense of connection to the place or to nature (AT's moment of sunrise on a tramp).

6.7.4   The personal philosophy helps shape the programme

The first analysis collected statements of belief that showed what the participants were trying to do, their purpose in running the outdoor programme, for example:

MB   I'm trying to produce eco warriors, absolutely, unabashedly

AT   I believe in people learning about their physical and mental potential

JCW   I think, in the era of phones, kids need to get out and do some adventures

JT   The point of my programme would be develop skills to be a doer, be a thinker

Although some of this purpose came from the organization they were working for, the second analysis expanded upon the statements, and showed that this purpose was predominantly based upon their personal philosophy, which was *generated* by the arc, the fold, the thresholds and little leaps in the participants' lives. Their personal philosophy then went on to shape the programme, that they had responsibility for. They wanted to have particular things in their programme, because they saw them as powerful, as transformative.

Moreover, the stories the participants told, about their arc and their little leaps, the stories they told about their students, had echoes of the experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984; Neill, 2013), and also what Robinson (2007c) had said about spiritual journeys and how people make sense of their world, which is that people articulate a narrative in response to an experience (articulation**)**; they reflect on that experience and test its meaning (reflection); they solidify what it meant to them (development); and finally, they shift how they are in the world, leading to a new experience (response**)**. Robinson's terms can be seen especially in the arc of RMc's career, and in how AT absorbed adventure as part of his identity making and used it to shape his personal and professional development.

A complex picture began to unfold. The next chapter is about making sense of the many threads emanating from the interviews. It starts with looking for suitable metaphors to describe outdoor education programming. It examines how and where a spiritual transformation might take place.

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Chapter 7   Making sense

One of the threads that came out of the previous two chapters, was that the outdoor programmes discussed in the interviews were not religious in nature, even though three of the programmes resided in parent organisations which espoused Christianity as a core principle. I observed that the interview participants did not refer to religious affiliations or a Māori cosmology in the interviews, though values *were* referred to, like guardianship / kaitiakitanga. The spirituality being examined in the outdoor programmes was nontheistic and appeared to be rooted in the definition of spirit that was animating and vital (OED, 2021a). What was sacred was to be found in the reality of the world, most clearly, according to the interviews, in nature. But in my outdoor career, few of the models that were used to explain an outdoor education programme addressed the sacred in nature, or spirituality, or spiritual transformation. Deleuzean concepts like thresholds and becoming were not in common use.

This chapter has five sections. The first section, 'Visualizing thresholds', examines what a model of an outdoor education programme might look like, if it acknowledged thresholds, and was oriented towards spiritual transformation. This section traverses the terrain of other models (Bricks and mortar, The Whare) and the factors of compartmentalization and interdependency. Māori perspectives on developing spirituality were considered. Fisher's (2011) Four Domains of Spiritual Health and Wellbeing model was selected because it focused on how spiritual transformation might be induced to happen. This model could be theistic or non-theistic, depending on its attribution. It had resonance with the Deleuzean concepts of thresholds, becoming and transcendence. It allowed for the seemingly chaotic, non-linear human development, as described in the interviews. The movement within and across each domain of this model, is explained as a spirograph.

The second, third and fourth sections of this chapter each begin with 'Spirographing through…' and explain the spirographic movement through the first three domains of Fisher's (2011) model: The Individual, Communal, and the Environmental. Although this was not discussed directly, the participants, via their stories of practice, suggested ways an outdoor programme contributed to spiritual development in each domain. What I observed were examples of Gookin's (2006) description of spirituality:

>Spirituality refers to the tacit knowledge that makes a person feel more energized and connected. This includes an insightful relationship with yourself and others, a strong personal value system, and meaningful purpose in your life. There are character traits associated with spiritual wellbeing, like self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-comfort, and self-reliance. A spiritually strong person feels empowered to influence the universe and can think and act in a calmer state of mind… people feel like part of some things that are bigger than themselves (p. 33)

Each domain is discussed with excerpts from the interviews that resonated with the concepts of thresholds and becoming. The fifth section considers the fourth domain of Fisher's model, the Transcendental. It poses a subtly different perspective, that of 'towards' rather than 'through', because this domain is not a physical object (a person, a group, a forest) that one can go to and work with. The space for the fourth domain emerges from the reflexive and recurring interaction of the other three domains.

<div align="center">********</div>

7.1   Visualizing thresholds

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) assert that a threshold is a state of dissonance. A person enters a threshold when they encounter, for example, a new situation or have to learn new skills or have to deal with a challenge. Each threshold is an opportunity for personal development because it shifts the person's perception of what they are capable of and who they are.

An outdoor programme has many thresholds. This became apparent in the interviews. Activities that 'do', like climbing, allow each person to test themselves physically and mentally.

>*JF   At Tihoi, in the 18 weeks we could do maybe eight different pursuits to various levels. A whole range of outdoor pursuits. The reason I liked that, was that it lends itself to letting every student come to the top in some form, and test themselves in some form. So the little skinny guy often turned out to be a really good rock climber, he had his chance to shine.*

The John Furminger (JF) excerpt mentions the student becoming "a really good rock climber", but it does not mention how physically difficult the other pursuits were for that student, nor what the student went through mentally to meet the challenges

provided. Each of these situations would have provided a threshold for that student. The excerpt also tells us that activities provide the opportunity for the student to shine at something, to have that pleasure of attaining competence and being recognized by their peers for it. A repetition of an activity, like a series of tramping trips of different lengths over a period of time, can allow for both an increase in independence and a progression towards mastery. These are key elements of programming that Rob MacLean (RMc) noted:

> RMc   It can be really hard to do it in programming because you end up with a group of people with a range of abilities and capacities. But I think that progression to independence, that progression to mastery, that sense of capacity, that realisation that they can actually do something, for me, that's been a really essential part of programming.

Success and progression towards mastery, are also linked to thresholds. RMc mentions the "realization that they can actually do something". This implies trying and failing and trying again, until they have success. This is the threshold shifting the perception of self.

An outdoor programme has many thresholds for the student, especially at the beginning. This is because every situation is new and therefore brings a certain amount of stress; for example, one of the first things Outward Bound students had to do at Anakiwa, was jump off the boat and swim to shore. Every encounter with other people is an encounter with the self, in terms of values and belief systems and raises questions for the self like 'what is fair in this situation?' An outdoor programme deliberately creates these thresholds. When asked what helped social coherence, Cyn Smith (CYS) described the value of constantly mixing the groups:

> CYS   They're in house groups or in class groups. They're remixed for outdoor groups, they're in different tent groups so they're constantly exposed and have to work pretty closely with different people. It might be people that you don't usually associate with but, actually, they find common bonds and they build friendships... I've seen that already in this group; kids saying things like, "I didn't even know him," or "I thought he was a bit of a … but actually after tenting with him, he's a pretty good guy and we talked about this together."

The CYS description of a student coming to understand another person because they had to share a space with them, is an example of a student coming through a threshold with a different sense of themselves and of others.

An outdoor programme has many thresholds for the student, but this changes as the programme progresses. It may be that the number of threshold moments decreases as the students become comfortable with the situation or more competent at the tasks. Or it may be that the type of threshold changes, perhaps becoming less frequent but more intense. For Christine Furminger (CF), what a student was capable of at the end of a programme, was more than just 'doing' tasks or activities.

> CF   Yes, they could paddle a river, yes, they could climb a rock but they could be independent in their living too. They could make their bed, they could cook food on a coal range, they could chop wood, they could care for each other, they could organise a team, they could lead themselves through the bush and look after themselves. The learning and the growth was just exponential.

Each of the tasks mentioned in the CF excerpt, required an introduction, followed by practice, such that a degree of competence was achieved. As competence was achieved, the stress diminished and the person did not enter a threshold about that task, because they were comfortable. However, being comfortable then raised the possibility that attention could be placed elsewhere. For Jonathan Taylor (JT), competency at outdoor pursuits enabled the student to look outside of themselves and see where they were; going to wild places became an act of appreciation

> JT   We're looking at different aspects using pursuits, and it opens up a bigger world of looking at how cool the environment is that you're operating in, because you've got the skills... I just want you to experience that vertical world of that amazing cliff face and how it came here and why it's important

Alastair Burns (AB) described the potential internal movement of students across the duration of a programme. This alludes to the shift in self-perception of who they are and what they are capable of.

> AB   There's this movement that comes with time and immersion, where you go from wanting to get out and conquer it, to just appreciating it, to protecting it.

He recalled students from his Hokitika programme who went out of their way to see him in Auckland. They had been adventuring around the world. The internal movement here was in terms of their capabilities and what they wanted to do in the world.

> AB   I don't know if that was the outdoor programme changing them, but I think it really helped them to grow into who they were and what they wanted to do... [The outdoor programme] just boosted where they were already going. [It] just gave them the skills and helped them to run with it, how they wanted to.

An outdoor programme has many thresholds. But what does an outdoor programme, that acknowledges thresholds, actually look like, especially one oriented to spiritual transformation? How would it work? I needed to find a way of visualizing thresholds in an outdoor programme. The first explanation of an outdoor programme I had encountered, was the bricks and mortar metaphor.

7.1.1   Bricks and mortar

In the mid 1980's, when I first went to OPC / Hillary Outdoors, a summer programme typically had Monday as a water day for the students; this meant kayaking on a lake in the morning, and kayaking down a river in the afternoon. Tuesday was rock day; this meant doing some climbing on an artificial wall in the morning, and going to an outdoor crag in the afternoon. Wednesday was bush or mountain, Thursday was overnight camp, Friday was reflecting, cleaning and leaving. The pattern changed slightly for the seasons, or with a specific group, but it was mostly the same. It was explained to me as 'bricks and mortar', whereby each activity or technical skill (or 'hard' skills as the phrase used to be), was a discrete brick, and a programme had a series of bricks arranged in a row, or stacked upon each other in a staircase towards mastery, with the people skills (or 'soft' skills) acting as the mortar. This compartmentalization was how a programme was constructed. The metaphor of bricks and mortar was the first metaphor I was introduced to, that sought to describe an outdoor programme.

7.1.2   The lure of compartmentalization

Ungar et al. (2005), writing from the field of social work and exploring the use of nature to promote resilience in troubled youth, stated that outdoor programming

needed to avoid "the lure of compartmentalization" (p. 332). Instead, programming should appreciate the "significance of interdependency" (ibid) between different aspects, and examine what aspects provide a depth of connection.

> There are dimensions of these programmes that offer unique health-related outcomes because of the context in which they take place. These include immersion and flow; rites of passage that address the maturity gap; and finding meaning and spirituality (ibid)

The 'lure of compartmentalization' to avoid, in the Ungar et al. (2005) excerpt, was about the bricks and mortar that I had encountered as a new outdoor instructor. However, the metaphor had already ceased to work because my experiences after OPC /Hillary Outdoors had shown me that an outdoor programme was more complex than that.

7.1.3 Interdependency

Complexity is the direction that the excerpt takes us: it says that a programme has an interdependent nature, and it infers that something as complex as health can be an outcome of context. Interdependency more accurately describes what happens on an outdoor programme: the challenges and failures, the encouragement and role modelling of the staff, the consequences of behaviours and decisions... none of this is captured in discrete bricks of knowledge. Interdependency needed a different metaphor or model.

Interdependency here is similar to Straker's 'interconnectedness' in that it emphasises the need to "appreciate embodied knowing, holistic development and serendipitous learning alongside the rational, pre-planned and cognitive modes of education practiced in many secondary schools" (Straker, 2014, p. 206). Both words imply a complex network of relationships, something that is both difficult to articulate from the inside of a programme, and difficult to see from the outside.

Interdependency and the 'unique health-related outcomes' of outdoor programmes, are present in the stories of the interview participants. Section 7.6 Thresholds and little leaps, conveys stories from the interviews where health occurs because of the programme, though the programme is not aimed at health. It is there in the Cyn Smith (CYS) story of the Tihoi boy who ran a half-marathon for the first time. It is there in the

Christine Furminger (CF) story of the boy suffering from what sounded like depression, slowly emerging into socialisation via the discovery that he liked rock climbing.

7.1.4 Health as an outcome of context: Atua to Matua

In a similar vein, interdependency and the 'unique health-related outcomes' are present in the praxis of Heke (2016), who created an approach to health for Māori, which integrated outdoor education, indigenous knowledge, and Systems Science (Systems Science uses computer modelling to work out relationships between factors, like, for example, understanding the spread of disease). Heke described this approach as the 'Atua to Matua Māori Heath Framework', advocating learning about indigenous knowledge in an active and environmentally focused way, and improving the health of those communities in doing so.

> People are not the target of this approach. An indigenous /cultural system allows, in effect, health to become a by-product of pursuing environmental science as ancestral knowledge in a contemporary location (p. 21)

An example of this was a mountain bike journey that stopped at places of significance along the way, in order to investigate the health of that local environment (e.g. streams), and tell the stories of place, be they stories of plant communities or food sources or sites of historic warfare, and so on. The places to tell the stories were reached by journeying; the health of the people was a secondary, but no less important, by-product of keeping the stories alive and investigating the current state of the environment. Heke used aspects of one context (outdoor education via pursuits, journeys, environmental knowledge) to come sideways at the goal of improving health (increased physical capacity, increased connection to place and sense of belonging).

Interdependency was a concept that made sense from my own experience, and having absorbed the stories from the interviews. Heke's indirect approach to health might also work as an approach to spirituality. Another approach that advocated interdependency but was more direct in its approach to spirituality, was Spiller and Stockdale's (2013) 'touchstones', a Māori perspective for working in business.

7.1.5 The touchstones

Spiller and Stockdale's (2013) 'touchstones', are practices that integrate spirituality in the workplace. They are based around five values that encompass indigenous knowledge: Whakapapa / genealogy, Wairua /spirituality, Mana / inherited and endowed authority, Mauri / life force, and Hau / reciprocity (most of these concepts are explained in Chapter 3). For example, the Whakapapa / genealogy touchstone suggested that when someone first started a job in the workplace, other people should take the time to get to know them. This relationship building honours what the person comes with – their history and network of relationships. They suggest that supporting that person's family, and building community, helps "weave people around a shared purpose" (p. 167). Similarly, the Wairua / spirituality touchstone looked for opportunities in the workplace for people to connect and contribute meaningfully (including through prayer and song). It sought to empower people to develop their integrity. It encouraged people to reflect on how their thoughts, actions and intentions permeated their own spirituality.

Each touchstone contributed meaning and actions, and together, the five touchstones created an interdependent approach that enabled spirituality, from a Māori perspective, to be present in a business environment. But an outdoor education programme was not a business environment, and while the touchstones had much that was useful (explained in chapter 8) it was not a model for spiritual transformation in an outdoor programme.

7.1.6 The Whare: beyond bricks and mortar

A model that did address interdependency and spirituality was Durie's (1984) Te whare tapa whā, used for example, by the Mental Health Foundation (2021), and Pitama et al. (2007). It is a model about Māori health in New Zealand. It uses the symbol of a house (or *whare*) as a metaphor, to show the four 'walls' of health that support the whole person (the roof). The walls are physical wellbeing (*taha tinana*), mental wellbeing (*taha hinengaro*), spiritual wellbeing (*taha wairua*) and family wellbeing or social relationships (*taha whānau*). The foundation for these 'walls', is the land and roots of a person (whenua and whakapapa). To live well, the model says, one needs to pay attention to all of these elements (see section 3.4).

In Te whare tapa whā, the house resides within the Māori cosmology, recognizing the atua (gods) that reside in, and have influence over, the various parts of the natural world. The moment of transcendence here, may be that affirmation of the presence of a particular god, in the realm of that moment (e.g. while residing in the forest, feeling a connection to the atua Tāne).

However, while I agreed with the holistic approach to health, and I appreciated the approaches of Heke (2016) and Spiller and Stockdale (2013), for non-believers in that cosmology there needed to be a different model. My examination of the definitions of spirit and spirituality, (Chapter 3, especially section 3.9) led me to understand that the outdoor education programmes described in the interviews were non-theistic, even when embedded within a school that espoused a Christian sentiment. The spirituality expressed in these outdoor programmes was that of an animating vitality, and seeking a meaning and purpose to one's life.

7.1.7   Fisher's (2011) Four Domains of Spiritual Health and Wellbeing model

The Four Domains of Spiritual Health and Wellbeing model (Fisher, 2011) provided the visual explanation that I was seeking. It offered useful insight and could be applied in a non-theistic setting (see section 3.8). It too had interdependency within its structure. The domains are reflexive and recurring, meaning that one domain effects the other as the person passes in and out, back and forth between the domains of the Individual, Communal, and Environmental. The back and forth are feedback loops occurring in each domain, sometimes multiple occurrences in a single domain before a loop will encompass the next domain or the next two (see Figure 18).

Figure 18

Fisher's (2011) Four Domains of Spiritual Health and Wellbeing model
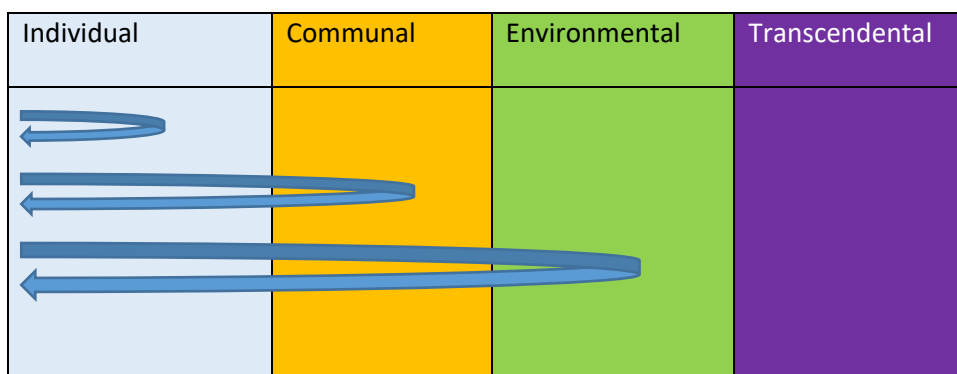
However, Figure 18 seemed too simplistic. There was more going on than a simple feedback loop. The critique by Sibthorp (2003) of the Outward Bound Process model had shown that each person brought their own background (family, upbringing) and emotions (anxiety, confidence) to a programme. These antecedent variables were unique for each person. And outdoor programmes did not visit these domains just once, they had multiple visits over the time frame of the programme. Moreover, an outdoor programme contained 'embodied knowing' (Straker, 2014, 2020; Wattchow & Brown, 2011), that is, understanding something through doing and reflecting so that the experience, and emotional response, is internalized. I began to visualize Fisher's model, metaphorically, as a spirograph flower.

7.1.8   Multiple feedback loops: The Spirograph flower

A spirograph is a drawing tool that creates patterns (see Figure 19). A small cog with holes inside it, is moved around the inside of a larger cog by a person pushing a pen in one of the holes of the smaller cog. The holes are offset, which causes the small cog to rotate as it is being moved. In this way a line is formed that loops and returns to its beginning, but each time is moved slightly by the way that holes and the cogs are aligned.

Figure 19

The Spirograph Drawing Tool

Note. Image from https://www.etsy.com/nz/listing/978635007/vintage-original-1967-kenners
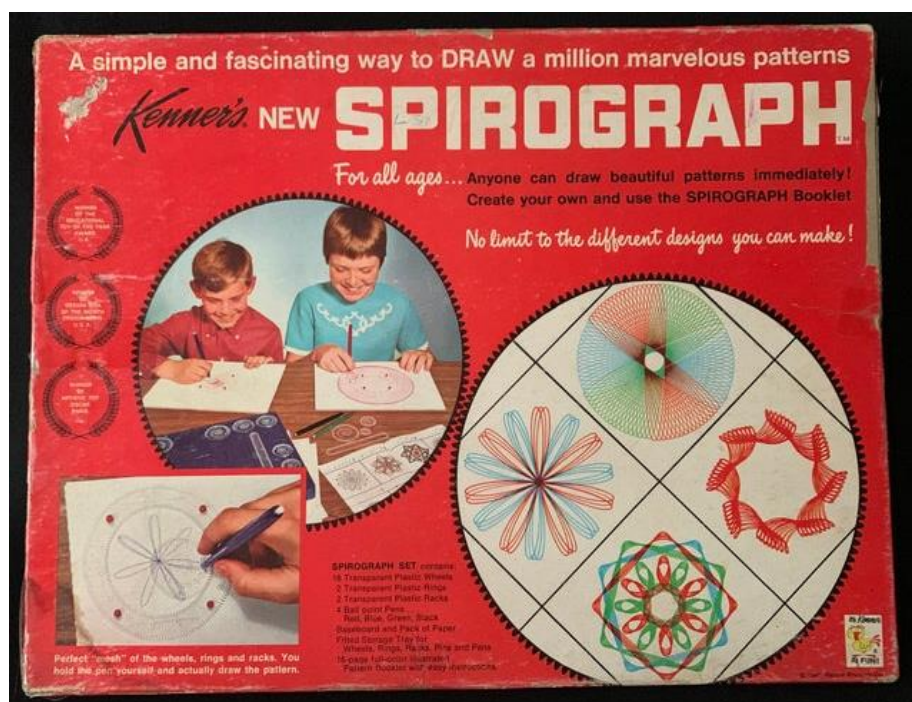
In the spirograph, the small cog represents a person. The rotation within the larger cog, represents the person interacting within the first domain, encountering other people (meeting a staff person) or new situations (first night away from home) then returning to their own internal space, their self, to reflect or assimilate new knowledge. The Communal domain engages the small cog in a slightly different pattern, perhaps a longer ellipse; this pattern represents the person engaging with a group of people. It might be a team situation, or a sailing 'watch', or a classroom group, or a tramping group. Each rotation could represent a different group or iterations of the same group. The small cog, the person, always returns to the beginning, but the beginning has changed slightly. Each arc of the spirograph, each iteration of the person engaging with a group, subtly shifts the pattern, subtly influences the persons self-concept or self-esteem because of the thresholds the person has to contend with along the way.

Another shift in pattern occurs when the person (the small cog) engages with the third domain, the Environmental. This may be a solitary engagement, like a cross country run across farmland, or a group engagement, like a multi-day tramping trip in the bush with nine other group members. The pattern of the spirograph goes out and back, out and back, always shifting slightly. The person engages with others, then comes back to themselves, engages then comes back, engages with nature, then comes back. The person in the outdoor programme, is always moving back and forth, between these domains, as the external forces (the programme components) are applied. The person is continuously doing, reflecting, and developing, encountering thresholds and reconfiguring their internal landscape.

Figure 20 has a sample of the vast number of spirograph patterns that can be created. Perhaps the one that best approximates the use of Fisher's Four Domains model, is number 6. This shows the out and back, out and back concept. However, each person would have different antecedent variables, different behaviours, and reactions to situations, so each person would likely have a different pattern.

Figure 20

Spirograph Designs

Spirograph designs
janel5@gmx.net
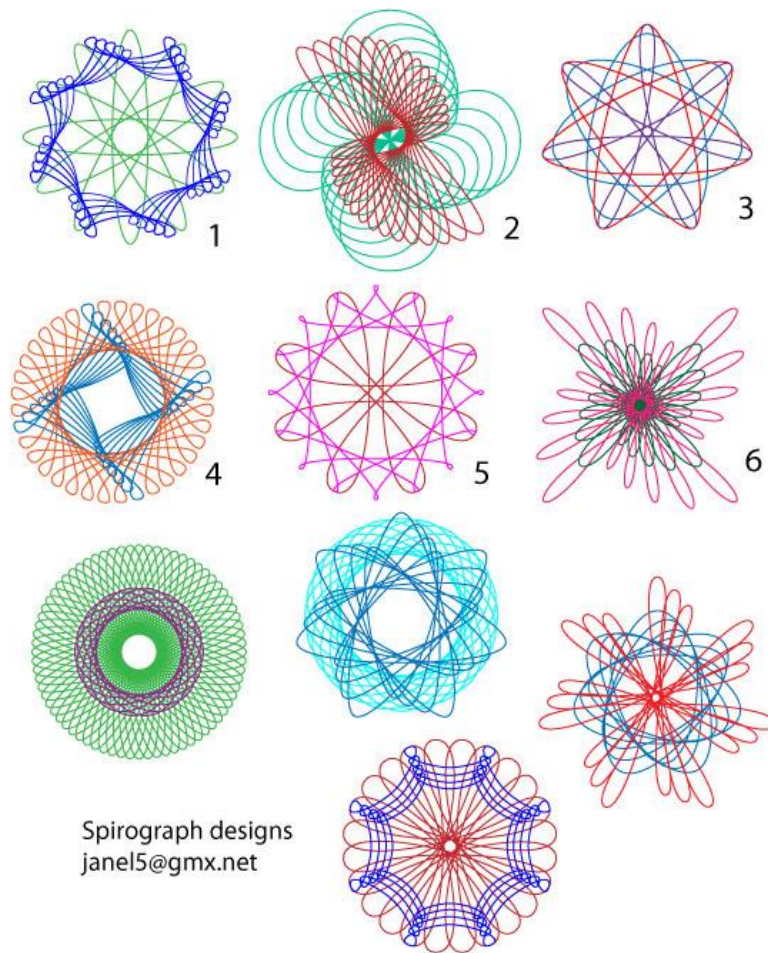
Note. Spirograph design images from
https://design.tutsplus.com/tutorials/how-to-create-vector-spirograph-designs--vector-1140

Which leads us to the fourth domain, the Transcendental. This is where a moment of transcendence occurs, a moment of deep connectedness between mind, body and place. Fisher's model says that the moment is informed, and created, by the back and forth movement of a person through the previous domains. The person enters Fisher's fourth domain when their self 'opens up'. There is no guarantee that the process leads to transcendence; it is a model about creating conditions for that moment to occur. Fox (1999) suggests the moment of transcendence occurs, followed by emotions and then a state of calm. In the spirograph metaphor, the Transcendental domain is represented by the pattern in its entirety. The person sees what has been created, with themselves at the centre.

7.1.9   The transcendent moment for the non-religious person

Transcendence also relates to belief. In a person with religious inclinations, that moment of transcendence may be attributed externally to God. But for a non-religious person, that moment may be attributed to the self, opening up to the reality of the world as it interacts with the world, seeing their connectedness with a sharp focus. Deleuze (2001) suggests the person opens up to the world and the world enters the person; transcendence is to what lies within. This aligns with Fox's (1999) definition of spirituality:

> An altered state of consciousness where an individual may experience a higher sense of self, inner feelings, inner knowledge, awareness and attunement to the world and one's place in it, knowledge of personal relations and relationship to the environment, or a belief in a power greater than imaginable (p. 455)

This 'altered state' is the transcendent moment and what comes after. This is what Karinch (2000) and Kochetkova (2007) describe in extreme sports, often when there is an immediate threat to life – the mind and body work at a new, effortless level, with greater awareness of surroundings and a slowing down of time. This liberation of the mind and body, is what Czikszentmihalyi (1990) alluded to in high performance sport as 'flow'. Connection with nature was an important facet in the transcendent moment in extreme sports, but extreme sports don't have the monopoly on nature: Neal (1997) investigating spirituality in management, noted that the most frequently mentioned spiritual practice in a workplace, was spending time in nature (further discussion of transcendence and extreme sports can be found in the Chapter 3 literature review).

The back and forth in the domains, is the effort needed to get to that point where the moment occurs, though the moment itself is not preordained. The back and forth in the first three domains, is similar to what the literature says about transformational moments: a person is predisposed to think in a spiritual way (Sibthorp, 2003; Stringer & McAvoy, 1992). They are searching, consciously or unconsciously, for the sacred (Pargament, 2006). They enter an outdoor programme that is complex: it challenges them physically, compels them to bond with a group, and situates them in the natural environment for significant chunks of time. It challenges their ideas about who they are (Anderson, 2007; Gookin, 2006; Hubball & West, 2008; Ungar et al., 2005). This is

preparation for a change (Watts, 2006). The natural world provides a non-human 'otherness' that helps shift a person's perceptions, and contributes to a preparedness for change (Louv, 2005; Martin, 2004).

All of this feels hard (Lasenby, 2003) though they are supported throughout the experience, encouraged to reflect upon who they are and how they relate to others and how they relate to the world (Anderson, 2007; Sibthorp, 2003; Watts, 2006).

Then 'a moment' happens (Fox, 1999): they experience 'the other'; they discover the sacred (Pargament, 2006). They feel highly emotional about the moment and have a different sense of time, and awareness of the way they relate to others and to the environment (Fox, 1999; Lasenby, 2003; Stringer & McAvoy, 1992). These emotions evolve into calm, peace, joy (Fox, 1999; Stringer & McAvoy, 1992) and, eventually, a sense of change surrounds the person. There is a heightened awareness of the world and their place in it and what they are now capable of (Lasenby, 2003; Stringer & McAvoy, 1992). They have an altered state of consciousness (Fox, 1999). From that point, they consciously seek to retain what they have found (Pargament, 2006).

7.1.10 The vital, animated quality of the lived experience

Robinson (2007b), writing from the field of sport science, concurs with all of this. In addition, he states that religion may provide motivation for spiritual development but it is possible for motivation to be self-directed; that non-religious spirituality can influence ethics and morality through a heightening of awareness of 'the other'; and that spirituality evolves with practice and experience. In this sense, spirituality is dynamic and interactive. It involves doing and experiencing and reflecting and developing. Spirituality, says Robinson,

> is not about fantasy worlds where everything is resolved and all are happy. It starts from the reality of relationships and seeks to find meaning in those relationships (p. 37)

The spirit in spirituality, says Robinson (2007b, p. 23), is about the lived experience, it is about the thing that is vital and animates the self. Spirituality is the quality of holistic aliveness that exudes from a person when they are physically and mentally in tune, and in tune with the space they are in. This holistic aliveness is clearly seen in the stories of the interview participants. For example, the numerous adventures of Andy

Thompson (AT), kayaking, mountaineering, guiding in Antarctica, 'pushing' students - these are stories full of energy, punctuated by laughter and animated hands. The vitality of each story, each moment, is clear. Another example, is the seeking of Rob MacLean (RMc), whose life arc led to a near-death canoeing experience in Alaska, and then to the satisfaction of working for NOLS – something settled in him when he discovered NOLS, as though the pieces of his own puzzle had fallen into place. The doing came first, as part of the experience; in turn this led to reflecting and then developing.

7.1.11 Reality, Buddhism, and Transcendence

Robinson's 'reality of relationships' is similar to the Buddhist principle of interdependent origination. This principle says that things "come into being only as a result of the interaction of various causes and conditions" (The Dalai Lama, 2002, p. 16). The principle is grounded in what is real, what exists interdependently *with* people (like an ecosystem), not independent *from* people (like the idea of Heaven). For the non-religious person, the moment of transcendence is to what lies within, and how it connects to the reality of the world. This is also what Deleuze was saying, that the moment of insight (transcendence) rises up from within, from the state of pre-thought (immanence), roused by something in the world that impacts the senses, stirs strong emotions, and later is crystallized in thought.

> Transcendence is always a product of immanence... All transcendence is constituted solely in the flow of immanent consciousness that belongs to this plane... The plane of immanence is itself actualized in an object and a subject to which it attributes itself
>
> (Deleuze, 2001, p. 31)

There is another contribution Buddhism makes here. I spoke with an experienced Theravāda Buddhist practitioner, known in her ordained life as the senior nun Sister Thaniya (personal communication, May 15, 2020). She said that Buddhism is not a religion in the way of other religions. It does not promote a God. It seeks to *move the fragmented nature of human consciousness into a united and calmer awareness.*

The flow state written about in high performance sport, the transcendent experiences of the extreme sports people, the descriptions of immanence and empirical transcendence - those moments are similar to the Buddhist state of calm awareness

that unites the fragmented state. Sister Thaniya said that this state is reached by prolonged and focused meditation, coupled with sustained practice at being aware of the moment, every moment. In an outdoor programme the mechanism may be different (i.e not meditation but activities), but the idea of sustained practice at something (i.e activities that require effort to master, activities that produce layers of interaction with nature) and raised awareness through guidance and practice, is relevant.

The Four Domains model (Fisher, 2011) helps make sense of what Hubball and West (2008) called 'spiritual wellness', which was:

> a complex process toward heightened awareness and connectedness with self, others and all things in the natural environment (p. 12).

It was not clear that the interview participants knew of Fisher's model, but what they were saying resonated with the domains and with the spirographing. What follows are examples from the interviews, that show this resonance. The examples also capture the evolution of the participants thinking and the shift in their practice; their becoming.

<center>********</center>

7.2 Spirographing through a programme: how the interviews resonated with the model

The first domain is that of the Individual. In this domain, especially with adolescents, the individual is seeking knowledge about themselves, striving to understanding themselves, their identity and values, what they can do, what their purpose is in life. Having success at a task builds self-esteem; having multiple successes builds competence, identity and possibilities for the future. In an outdoor education programme, the domain of the Individual can be addressed in multiple ways, including being physically active and partaking in adventure pursuits. For example, while some researchers (Boyes, 2012; Wattchow & Brown, 2011) had suggested that adventure pursuits added to the disconnection between people and place, in contrast Straker (2014, p. 244) found that these activities "may be an important part of developing connectedness and pro-environmental behaviour" (p. 244). In this study, the repetition of adventure pursuits contributed to the spirographic movement of individuals, and

each threshold crossed enabled the layering of competence and progression towards mastery for skills.

7.2.1 Activities that staircase a progression to mastery

One programming component to link with the first domain, is the activities that are offered. Earlier (section 8.1) JF had explained that activities like outdoor pursuits are important because they provide every student with an opportunity to shine at something. RMc had noted that repetition of activities allowed for independence and mastery to be developed. RMc recognized the link between the internal aspirations (success, mastery, independence) and the external components, like activities, that provided the opportunities for attainment. Moreover, the repetition of those activities contributes to the back and forth spirographing through the different domains. These activities provide thresholds for the individual to enter and move through and grow.

7.2.2 Understanding the complexity of people and time

When asked whether time was important, in terms of seeing change in a person, AT stated that it definitely was but that there was no defined amount of time, that it was specific to the person because of what they brought with them. The complexity of working with a person, the skill needed in guiding them in a programme and recognizing moments of change, those little leaps, is apparent in this excerpt.

> *AT   There's so many factors involved: where they've come from, how willing they are to listen. How much do they want to change? What's their world view? What's their personality? How much are they trying to work through themselves? There's lots of things in there. Then for that person, how much time do you need? That person might need a lifetime, might need a week, might need two days, it's arbitrary. When are you open to change?... There is always a point for a person and they need to find where that point is.*

That point of recognition that AT mentions, in the Māori world is called wā; it is the space and time moment where someone is open to change, to learning. The challenge for both the staff and the student, is to recognize that moment.

Being open to change relates to the mindset of the person, and each person is a complex mixture of variables, including history, habits, aspirations and worries. The consideration of these variables is what Sibthorp (2003) had noticed was lacking from

the Outward Bound Process model (Walsh & Golins, 1976). But the complexity of a person isn't only about their life before they entered a programme; as AT pointed out, people are complex while they are in the programme too. Striving to understand them is an important role for staff, in order to build a relationship, in order to help the person become what they want to be.

7.2.3   Using stress but not trauma

The Four Domains model isn't just about adolescents. Adults experience these domains too. Here AT describes a harrowing moment of self-examination on a caving trip, when he was an adult student on a tertiary level outdoor programme in the late 1980's. Harwood's Hole is a cave in the South Island. It requires a 175 metre abseil (or rappel) at the start, then navigating through a series of sinuous limestone tunnels. On this trip, the cave began to flood. Eventually they had to swim the parts where the water was touching the cave roof.

> AT   We went through with the water up to our neck... basically, we were on a one-way trip; we couldn't go back because you couldn't get back... we're in this bell [cavern], we're all shivering because it is really cold, standing out of the water. Mick goes through and I remember getting in the water and going to go underneath and it was so cold I just lost all my breath. I had to come back up. It was that defining moment where you go, "Pull your act together, Thompson". You had to get it together because you didn't want to stay there.

What is apparent in this caving story, is how extreme the dissonance was. AT, and probably the rest of the students, were not sure they were going to get out. He had to 'pull himself together' to overcome fear in those moments of rising water; he had to push himself physically and mentally to complete the trip. There didn't appear to be much facilitation of the experience by the staff person. It may have been the approach of 'letting the experience speak for itself' that was common in the late 1980's, but the story suggests that the learning was hindered by the doing, in that there was too much risk for the students, too much stress.

Jean Cory-Wright (JCW) is not a supporter of this approach. Having people too far out of their comfort zone means the brain is in fight or flight mode:

> JCW   A stressed brain doesn't learn. You've got these central instincts, the fight and flight part, and if it's firing off, they're not

going to learn... a lower key thing is swimming in the rocks [a coast steering activity] where the stress levels are excited, just on that border, so the emotions are heightened but the fight and flight mechanism is not firing off.

She acknowledged that some stimulation was good, that perceived risk helped excite the brain and provided opportunities for meaningful discussions. She also reflected that the fight or flight mechanism was a meaningful evolutionary adaptation, but that how people live today, with busy lives and demanding workplaces, means that they have to find ways to manage living with stress for longer periods of time.

For JCW, some stress is good, enough to excite the brain but not enough to tip it in to a survival mode. It took AT years to completely process that caving trip, whereas for JCW, the often occurring but low key stress of getting ready for a multi-day tramping trip, was easily processed by the brain, and the trips she ran were not deliberately stressing. But stress might be present in the student before they begin a programme. RMc pointed out that people bring their past to a programme and sometimes that past is full of struggles with health. Pushing someone who is already struggling with health isn't helpful:

> *RMc   If you're pushing people really hard and they're getting short on sleep and you've got a bunch of people in your group who are on antidepressants or struggling with depression, you've got to be really careful how hard you push those people. Because you don't want to push them so far outside their comfort zone that they're actually getting traumatised. They're not getting exhilarated by that, they're simply getting traumatised.*

Programming, for this first domain, was about providing opportunities for the individual to have success, opportunities for the students to explore their inner workings. Sometimes these reflections were guided by staff. The interviews suggested that 'doing' activities were useful. So were naturally occurring situations (like rain and cold) that tested the individual so they could find out about themselves, but not test so that they were traumatized.

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7.3 Spirographing through the second domain

The second domain is the Communal. In this domain, the individual interacts with others in a group setting, and develops relationships. Often, on an outdoor programme, this interaction is facilitated by staff. But not always; unstructured time is important too. The relationships help the individual test what they think about subjects like morality, and what it is like to work in a group, or build a team. This domain holds a (metaphoric) mirror up to an individual's inner workings, as being in a group tests concepts of fairness, equity, compassion and forgiveness.

Being good at something and then sharing that skill with someone else, offers a chance to build the self-esteem of both parties. Helping others and working together is an aspect often promoted on outdoor programmes. So is learning skills together: a tramping situation calls for a group to walk together, support the least fit, make consensus decisions, construct a campsite and meals that benefit all of them, share leadership and so on. In an outdoor education programme, the domain of the Communal can be addressed in multiple ways, including deliberately mixing the groups, and providing opportunities, and a safe space, for guided group conversations about beliefs and morality. Staff in this domain facilitate these group conversations. They provide support to the group (and to individuals), they instruct the physical activities that a group engages in, and they look for opportunities to build relationships between students and with the students.

7.3.1 Mixing the groups: deterritorializing and reterritorializing

In residential centres like Tihoi, where the students live in houses, keeping the house group the same but mixing the jobs every week in the house, is important for fairness and it offers opportunities to develop leadership. But mixing the group happens in other elements of the programme too. CYS described the value of constantly mixing the groups, that having to work with different people (and traverse thresholds in doing so) helped a student find common bonds and build friendships. But the mixing and friendship forming had an effect beyond the immediate programme too:

> CYS   *It builds for a wonderful cohort in our senior school because there's that mutual respect and kind of a brotherhood.*

Mixing the groups produces the effect of bonding or brotherhood. This was also expressed by John and Christine Furminger. They recalled being invited to weddings of ex-students, and watching the wedding party re-living their outdoor programme experiences from years before. Mixing the groups is an example of what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call deterritorializing and reterritorializing. In the Tihoi example above, a boy starts at Tihoi and is put into a house with (up to) eight other boys. This is the territory that the boy inhabits for the duration of the intake, approximately 18 weeks. That house group (territory) is broken up (deterritorialized) when the boys are put into streamed academic classes for maths or social studies etc. This class is their new territory (reterritorialization) for the duration of that class. The process will happen again and again, per class, per tramping group, per kayaking group and so on. The effect of the deterritorialization and reterritorialization is for the boy to regularly engage with thresholds, those states of dissonance where the self is challenged. The self is challenged by the tasks in the new territory (e.g. being able to abseil on a climbing weekend, being able to plant trees in a working group) and by the new relationships being negotiated in the new group. But the purpose of this, is revealed in both the CYS excerpts above, and the observation of the Furmingers at the weddings: the mixing of the groups helped build social coherence, which in turn developed a 'brotherhood' that lasted beyond the Tihoi experience and influenced the culture of the wider school.

7.3.2   Deep conversations

JCW recalled an outdoor trip she had set up, that had very little to do with outdoor pursuits and a lot to do with students working out their morality. The student group was split into smaller groups, representing new societies. The groups had to compete or negotiate for different resources, that would help them overcome challenges, and enable them to thrive over the duration of the trip. There were various rules in play, but one year she introduced a plastic gun. In her words, it was a 'moment of gold':

> JCW   The group who got the plastic gun started shooting everyone else to take them out of the game, so that they would win the food basket. We had someone who'd been on an exchange to the US, so they had experience about that...

The skill and creativity of the programming had created a situation of real tension, of real emotions, that the group could benefit from via an open, safe conversational space.

> JCW We had this really good discussion around guns and gun laws and what it was doing to American society. The person who'd just come back from there, was quite flabbergasted that her peers [in the US] were quite blown away that she didn't have a gun and she didn't want a gun. She felt the difference between New Zealand society and their society, was in terms of that fear, constantly on your back and [you've] got your gun. Those sorts of things are gold. They think they were just playing around with the gun, it was just a bit of fun to start with. But it got really serious as soon as they started using it.

That intense discussion was not something that could always be deliberately engineered. It emerged out of the activity and it depended on the background of the individuals, what they brought to the situation. The group was a melting pot and the situation was a catalyst. The skill of the staff person was to create the situation where tensions arose in the group, and then engage in the deep conversations that followed. Moreover, the situation allowed for personal stories to be shared; it is through stories that sense-making can happen. Stories capture and convey and in this sense they are, as Lopez (1988) points out, transmitters through time. Stories, as Straker (2020, p. 2) notes, are "powerful vehicles for constructing meanings about practices and physical places"; they are a way of knowing and a way of influencing how the world is perceived.

7.3.3 The group supports the group

At another point, JCW mentioned the growth of a socially difficult student over the duration of a programme. She was asked whether it was the structure of the course or his peers, or something else that helped that growth.

> JCW It's a combination. What we do, the peer group, how the tutor facilitates the session to help the peer group nurture the person who is struggling. You can as a teacher help them and you can give them feedback. We teach the students how to give and take feedback, but it's about the culture of your group. If they're supportive, rather than turning against someone who's maybe a little bit harder work, then they will help that person to grow.

The willingness of the group to support one of its own, enabled that student to change. But the group was supported by the skills they had learned from the staff. This aligns with what Gookin (2006) noted about group work:

> It is so important that each and every student feels like they are part of the group, not only to help them individually achieve higher levels of performance, but to help the group achieve higher levels of performance (p. 34).

The staff are the key element in the Communal domain. They provide the physical safety during activities and the psychological safety during group conversations. They teach the social skills needed to reflect, address conflict, and become a compatible team. They guide the student directly in conversation or indirectly via role modelling. And they teach the outdoor activities that make the group work possible.

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7.4   Spirographing through the third domain

The third domain is the Environmental. In this domain, the individual seeks (or is presented with) knowledge about nature. Again, staff are key, helping identify the plants and animals in the area, explaining the landforms that are around them, revealing the myriad connections within the immediate ecosystem – these are all aspects of knowledge that are applicable in an outdoor programme. If absorbed by the student, the potential is for a deepening of understanding and a developing connectedness. One aspect of literature that I thought would appear in this domain, was that of Martin (2004), who suggested a way to develop the human /nature relationship was to visit a place multiple times, do different activities in the same place, and encourage looking with a different lens each time, in order to build layers of meaning and connection.

7.4.1   The interpretation skills of the staff

Ascending a mountain in the Central North Island, it is hard to escape the fact that the landscape has been shaped by volcanic forces, nor the fact that the mountain one is climbing is considered geologically active. The signs are obvious there but not all landforms are so prominent. Groups benefit from having an interpreter of landforms,

an explainer of ecological interdependence. RMc noted that ecology is easier to understand when you are immersed in it.

> *RMc   I think when you're out in the natural environment and wild country, fundamentally, you see the bones of the planet, you see how the place works. Especially when you study ecology, you see the fundamental building blocks of life and you understand that everything we are, every complex thought, every beautiful thing we create in terms of civilisation, at some point rests on some fundamental natural process.*

An interpreter can guide people's connections to the land, help them see those 'fundamental natural processes'. Connecting with nature was a recurrent theme in the interviews. Unsurprising perhaps, as the participants were outdoor educators. But it wasn't just about the outdoors as a context for adventure; their answers were more varied and nuanced. Here AT reflects that while urban adventures can be beneficial, the wilder places have something else:

> *AT   I think that when you go into those wilderness places and you go in for a period of time, it has the ability to get into your veins a lot deeper and the drinking of the surroundings and the feeling of remoteness has a bigger impact.*

That 'bigger impact' was also what JF recognized. It was easier to have impact in wild places than in an urban environment:

> *JF   The lack of distractions is one thing. But another thing is the physical beauty in a place, and the value to lie back and look up through ponga fronds and up to the top of totara and kahikatea, it just sort of brings you back to who you are and the significance of you in the whole place. I guess it's just easier.*

Interpretation is a skill born of love, of reverence. It is a knowledge that is intimate, that takes patience to acquire. Writers like Lopez, Leopold and Abbey were interpreters of the outdoors. Their words reach across time and gift us with stories and insight:

> The quickest door to open in the woods for a child is the one that leads to the smallest room, by knowing the name each thing is called. The door that leads to the cathedral is marked by a hesitancy to speak at all, rather to encourage by example a sharpness of the senses. If one speaks it should only be to say, as well as one can, how

wonderfully all this fits together, to indicate what a long, fierce peace can derive from this knowledge

(Lopez, 1988, pp. 150-151)

Here Lopez makes it clear that the names of things are only a beginning. A skilled outdoor educator is an interpreter who opens the door to the cathedral.

7.4.2 Wild places have impact

AT had experienced the impact of a wild place as a teenager, on a tramping trip where he climbed a peak to see the sunrise:

> AT   *...slowly the sun came up and it was the most beautiful,*
> *spiritual moment where our jaws were just dropped on the ground*
> *just going, "Wow, wow, wow."*

For AT, the beauty of the place was enhanced by the effort it had taken to get there, and the people he was with. That moment stayed with him and inspired not only a desire to have that experience again, but to enable his students to have a similar experience. Alastair Burns (AB) recognized the impact of wild places too, and how an attitude like resilience occurs naturally when adventuring in the outdoors. In an urban environment, he thought that he would have to construct a situation to promote resilience. AB came to see that how wild a place was, had a bearing on the amount of impact. On one occasion, he had taken his students tramping in a local patch of bush and the students had enjoyed the tramp, but AB knew that they didn't really understand what they were looking at:

> AB   *I see bush where the neighbor lets cows into it; it's ripped out,*
> *regenerating bush and I'm just frustrated with it. And then I take*
> *those people on another trip, take them into the Whirinaki where it*
> *hasn't been cut at all, and their mind is just "oh wow". The*
> *appreciation is so much more.*

When asked if there were specific activities to have in a programme to promote connection to the land, he said it wasn't so much about the activities but more about the land, especially the bush;

> AB   *I do struggle to connect to urban land. For me it's trees and*
> *plants, animals, that brings the land to life. The bush, the water, the*
> *moana in some way whether that's the sea, lake or rivers, that would*
> *probably be a good starting point for me. Any activity, perhaps, in*

*those, but more about that you are going and you are touching and
feeling and you're part of, and you're there for a period of time
experiencing that. I think that's a big part of it.*

Using the senses to connect with the land, touching and feeling, 'being part of', was important for all of the interview participants, and their expressions of joy at the aesthetics of a place had echoes of the conservationist and writer, Aldo Leopold:

> We can be ethical only in relation to something we can see, feel, understand, love, or otherwise have faith in
>
> (Leopold, 1949 /1966, p. 251)

Leopold told stories about the creatures that lived in the countryside. He understood interdependency. He understood the complexity of biotic pyramids, with soil at the base and a layer over that of plants, then insects, then birds and rodents and so on up to the apex of the pyramid, which consists of the larger carnivores. These pyramids were a tangle of food chains –

> *... so complex as to seem disorderly, yet the stability of the system
> proves it to be a highly organised structure. Its functioning depends
> on the cooperation and competition of its diverse parts (ibid, p. 253)*

A skilled outdoor educator understands this. They seek to let the students see the order in the disorder, firstly by identifying and naming, so as to become familiar, and then they open the door, as Lopez said, to the cathedral, showing the myriad connections, the hidden relationships that exist. This is what the third domain addresses.

But revealing these things harbours an assumption that the knowledge will make people care. This is not necessarily so. Hill (2019, p. 5, citing Orr, 2004) points out that the outcome of education to date, had been to make us "more effective vandals of the earth". Mike Boyes (MB) recognized this disconnect between knowledge and positive action on behalf of the environment. He deliberately sought to use the impact of wild places to motivate people to act. He deliberately asked his university students what they could do in their practice to support the war against climate change; "I'm trying to produce eco-warriors, absolutely, unabashedly".

The interviews said that using pursuits to go to wild places, to have adventures in wild places, is an opportunity for students to experience something not controlled by humanity. Moreover, it takes effort to get to these places, and a variety of skills to move around and be comfortable in them. A skilled interpreter understands this too, and looks to acknowledge these, as well as provide a reason for people to care.

7.4.3   Providing a purpose for connecting people to the land

Understanding the knowledge aspects of the Environmental domain is an important step for connecting people to the land. But the *purpose* of that connection also needs to be revealed in the educating. Hill (2019, p. 8) uses the term ecological literacy, which suggests an ability to act as well as to know, but act with a purpose:

> Educating for a sustainable future is more than simply incorporating zero-waste, recycling, and planting trees into outdoor programmes. It means rethinking outdoor learning experiences so that they build a critical awareness for students and a sense of ecological literacy

Which is where the concept and practice of guardianship / kaitiakitanga becomes relevant, and not just at a local scale, though this is where outdoor education programmes are. But at a national or global scale, because the global environmental biotic pyramids are also interconnected, and in peril; see, for example, Wallace-Wells (2019). Connecting people to the land in order to promote kaitiakitanga, was certainly expressed in the interviews, and role modelling caring was a way of influencing the growth of ecological literacy. AB discussed caring arising from time and immersion in a place. JF described having a conversation with a group, about a seedling that was in the middle of the flat spot where they wanted to camp, that it too had a right to life; he encouraged the group to think about their actions and how the group was only going to be there one night.

Caring is not the only purpose for connecting people to the land. Smith (2000, p. 50) writing from a Māori perspective, stated that "identity and place are intimately linked". Wattchow and Brown (2011) writing from an outdoor education perspective, agree: "These outdoor places are more than mere sites of human activity. They make us and we make them. They are the source of our identities" (p. ix). With this view,

Smith, Wattchow and Brown echo Schama's (1995) work about the link between place and (national) identity mentioned in Chapter 3.

7.4.4   Time as a factor in connection

Several AB comments mention the connection between the kinaesthetic doing of an activity, and the need for a period of time experiencing the environment in which they are being active. For AB, time is a component of connection. When I shared my own story about not understanding, as a teenager plodding up a cold river, why my father loved going to the Kaimanawa ranges, but 'getting it' years later when I would take students on multi-day tramps in the same area, AB quietly offered:

> AB   *You didn't see the first time. It took time and it took being re-exposed, and you needed to build those ideas and your understanding.*

Here was the link to Martin (2004) – the layering, over time, of understanding about a place. Time, as a factor in connection, was brought up in many interviews. In the midst of a wilderness journey with students, AT would deliberately programme solo time, and notice their awareness of the environment developing:

> AT   *People would come out a lot calmer, a lot more reflective and a lot more connected to the sounds and the rhythms... It was really neat for people to wake up with the dawn chorus and then go to sleep when it got dark instead of flicking a light on and staying up for another three or four hours.*

Time was important for a different reason, on another trip AT ran with polytechs students. The group had slowly been ascending a mountain range and a storm came in faster than the students realized. What resulted was an intense experience with real consequences for the decisions they had made:

> AT   *I remember standing on the top with a vicious storm coming in, six o'clock at night and them realising "Oh, shit, we should've gone faster". It was epic. I think we ended up stopping at three in the morning. I had to hold on to a student because it was so windy. But it was fantastic, they loved it and it was always talked about afterwards!*

By his own admission, AT took people to the edge a little bit. That intensity created memorable experiences, emotionally provocative experiences. But there was always a philosophy and purpose behind what he did:

> AT   I guess the programming always was around trying to transform people but also connect people into the places that we were going. More and more as I grew with my outdoor experience and professionalism, it was less about taking people kayaking; it was more about connecting people to the land and connecting people to place... not using the outdoors as an outdoor gym.

7.4.5   Refining the facilitation tool

Connecting people to place had become a factor in AT's programming. But it had not always been like that. In order to establish himself and to feed his sense of identity, AT had for many years been focused on adventure and technical skills, and pushing himself and others hard. But things change. Transformation was not only for students:

> AT   As I've grown a little older, I'm realising that you don't have to go a hundred miles an hour all the time. That stopping and reflecting is as important and, actually, more important. It's like training for a race – if you don't do active recovery and rest, you don't perform very well

For AT, facilitation skills had evolved to become the most important tool in his toolbox:

> AT   Facilitating is the crux to making sure that those people stay in a safe place, but they can explore their own connections and their own understandings, and transform their own stories into their own meanings.

Facilitation was key for JCW too. When asked what she would include in a new programme, it was the first element she mentioned. This was followed by having a range of activities that provided opportunities for people to shine and grow, and also interact with nature, like planting trees. In a similar vein, for Jonathan Taylor (JT), learning about the environment was what he wanted his students to do, and accessing the environment was through activities:

> JT   Pretty much over the 10 years that I've developed the programme, it's become very little about pursuits. Even though we pursuit a lot, I'm not assessing a pursuit. What we're doing is we're using that pursuit to explore the environment we're in.

Fisher's third domain, Environmental, immerses the individual and the group, in nature. Residing in nature, doing things in nature, builds connection between all three domains and builds the knowledge aspect within each domain. The interview participants consistently mentioned that they had changed, that their thinking had evolved. These are statements of becoming and show that it is not just the students who experience thresholds. The interviews also mentioned time, and quality of staff, as two factors that contributed to the impact of the third domain. As AB said about my own Kaimanawa ranges experience, I needed time to *see.* I didn't understand the interdependency of the ecological realm because I was cold and hungry and didn't have the internal resources to care. I needed time to see but I also needed a guide to introduce me to the land and show me why I should care.

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7.5   Spirographing towards the fourth domain

The fourth domain is the Transcendental. This is where a transformative experience occurs, where a person has experienced 'the other', a force or power greater than humanity, or an opening up to the universe. Fisher's model does not guarantee that such an experience will occur. What it depicts is the increased opportunity that is set up by the reflexivity of the domains; how understanding one's self can aid in helping understand other people, and how both the self and the group can benefit by being immersed in nature.

All of the interview participants were able to give examples of students that had changed significantly on their outdoor programme. They were all able to offer thoughts on what had contributed to the student change. What resonated in the interviews was getting back to basics and minimizing technology; encouraging students to see failure as contributing to success; considering time as an important part of learning about a place, or experiencing an environment, or developing an appreciation of a place; and having staff who were multi-talented, not just in their ability to run different activities, but in how they could build relationships, and guide the multi-dimensionality of experiences in nature.

7.5.1 Getting back to basics; minimizing technology

CYS talked about the whole package contributing to the success of a student, the components of a programme, the down time in between the activities, that it was all connected:

> *CYS   I think it's a combination of all. You've got to have the experiences to have the things to reflect on. You've got to have the highs and the lows to learn and you need the highs to recognize the lows and the other way around. You need the in-betweens. I think they're all within a balance.*

This aligns with what Robinson (2007b) said about spirituality: that it involved the cycle of doing, experiencing, reflecting and developing. Without the doing, there was nothing to reflect on. The hard moments are offset by the pleasant moments, while the in-between moments offer space for play, reflection and processing. When asked if there were specific catalysts, if she understood how change happened, she replied that the heart of it was doing away with the non-essentials:

> *CYS   For me, it's back to basics – less is more. For instance, everyone has the basic gear that's required, and we all go out and have a couple of days in the bush. Everyone's on the same playing field... you've got to rip back all the rubbish that life is cluttered with more and more now and, for these guys, that's digital technology, flash clothes, the attitudes, the social media profiles, all that stuff. Take all that away and get back to the heart of people. The transformation is in the kids actually going back to who they are and what they value in their lives. That's probably how it works.*

While MB recognized both the attraction of technology and (sometimes) its usefulness, he also thought, like CYS, that the outdoors was a place that could provide a counterbalance to the prevailing influence of media and technology. These comments show that the fourth domain begins in the first domain. Getting back to basics, decluttering, spending time without technology, finding it within you to help set up camp after a tiring day: these all helped the student understand things about themselves and what was important in their life.

7.5.2   Failure contributes to success

JT thought self-motivation had been a big factor in student change, but what caused the change in motivation? He had consciously fostered an attitude, in his students, of looking differently at failure:

> JT   I think I also talk hugely about me not knowing everything, and me failing as well. Failure's a great way of looking at success, I reckon... Allowing them to fail and have an absolute shocker and celebrate having a shocker, and the ability to get up, dust yourself off and get stuck in again as a whole group, not just one person.

His comment about failure also gave another clue about what caused a change in student motivation – it was aided by the safety net provided by the staff, and by being empowered:

> JT   I think the freedom of giving students lots and lots of responsibility, under the watchful eye obviously and some guidance. So long as they're set up for success, failing was great and I think you couldn't call yourself an adventurer if you didn't fail. Failure was a big part of that success.

Failing contributed to success, as long as the act of failing was set up with a positive mindset taught by the staff. Being allowed to fail also meant having the time to have another go. Being able to do things multiple times was important to JT. Multiple times meant opportunities to develop competence then mastery. Multiple times meant opportunities to shine and to help others. In this way, time and failing were connected with the success of the student, which was manifested by an increase in self-motivation.

7.5.3   The impact of time

Time was noted as an important factor in personal development, and in programming, by all of the interview participants. And not just for the students; for example, RMc felt that what was really important in his own development, was the combination of spending time in the backcountry with mates, having adventures and camping. When asked if the length of time of a programme was important, MB was very clear that it was:

> *MB   Yeah, I think that is a critical element. A two hour session is not as effective as the weekend, and the weekend isn't as good as the seven day expedition... I believe that the longer the better, but I think probably a minimum is at least two nights.*

MB also acknowledged that *learning* about a place, or *experiencing* an environment, or *developing* an appreciation of a place, takes time:

> *MB   At the end of the day, because our environmental knowledge and appreciation is based on being there, and experiencing nature and knowing nature, then even the two hour session has value.*

A two-hour session may have value, but, he pointed out, such a short amount of time precludes other benefits developing:

> *MB   In terms of environment, I think even a one hour session sitting on the grass is valuable. But I don't think it'll develop those group values, or possibly even some of the personal development values, that come from a longer programme.*

An outdoor education programme required time to staircase skills to mastery, time to progress individuals to independence. Time was needed to allow staff to build relationships with students, students to build relationships with other students, and students to build relationships with the place they were in. A student also needed time to understand themselves, and a spiraling, reflexive series of activities, over time, to enable that understanding to be seen. How much time? AB noted that 21 days at Kahunui was a deep immersion that intensified the experience, that spending a lot of time in a place was what helped people start to care about that place. JF noted that the length of time needed to be long enough to develop a depth of relationship; time to notice, time to have a chat with a student at a crucial moment.

Time was a factor *within* outdoor activities too: one of AT's stories showed that if a group walked up the mountain too slow, or they hadn't paid enough attention to the time it was taking, then the weather change might catch them out. Time was a factor in the real consequences of that groups actions. AT realized that time to reflect was valuable, that a programme did not need to "go a hundred miles an hour all the time". It took time alone on solo for some students to appreciate the natural rhythms of nature, getting up with the dawn, going to bed when it got dark.

There were other comments about time: the moment in time, the wā, where someone is open to learning; the amount of time an individual needs to make their changes; the different sense of time after a transformational moment. These were all mentioned in the interviews. Christine Furminger (CF) thought unstructured time, to enable play, was important. JT thought unstructured time with senior students was valuable if they were ready for it, if the work had been done to make sure that they saw that time as valuable.

JT's comments also note the need for the teaching plan to be flexible enough to allow for the unplanned moment, to being responsive to what the students need in the moment, or what the moment brings to the students. In this sense, unstructured time is not abandonment or an abdication of responsibilities from the staff. It is freedom with guidance.

7.5.4 Staff who wear many hats

Freedom with guidance implies a guide, a staff person overseeing quietly in the background, providing a safety net if needed. JT was asked if there was something in a programme that helped foster a positive attitude in students:

> JT   *I think the freedom of giving students lots and lots of responsibility, under the watchful eye obviously and some guidance.*

His answer recognizes the other potential in freedom with guidance, which is for students to be empowered. This was one of the many roles for staff, that were noted in the interviews. Staff are the quiet force operating via role modelling, encouraging, guiding, teaching. They are present in the structural components of a programme – running the activities, teaching in the formal classroom – and in the unstructured liminal moments, when a walk is more than just a walk, it is an opportunity for a quiet conversation.

This is consistent with the literature. The view of Spiller and Stockdale (2013) is that leaders can be catalysts for transformation, because they can help others connect to themselves, by building relationships with other people, with culture, with ancestors, and with nature. For Spiller and Stockdale, transformation occurs in relationships. Papprill (2018) noted the importance of authenticity in staff, and that this helped

develop both agency and mastery in students. Staff also enabled students to cope with uncertainty. These elements are present in the JT quote above.

Fox (1999) had recommendations that would allow programmes to enhance the spiritual opportunities. These included recommendations for staff actions, like sharing, encouraging, celebrating, and allowing time for particular things. Some research acknowledged staff tangentially: Stringer and McAvoy (1992) listed factors that *inferred* input from staff, like changing paddling and tenting partners, building camaraderie, learning leadership; things that generally require managing or facilitation, from someone other than a group member. Lasenby (2003) noted the role of the Outward Bound instructor as being a guide to the spiritual experience. The instructor, if they had had a personally transformative experience, role modelled that knowledge consciously or unconsciously, and the students picked up on that.

> The fact that they have 'been there and experienced that', helps students to understand the meaning of their experiences, even without offering potential interpretations to the student (p. 72)

Moreover, if the instructor is empowered to adjust the programme, and has the skills to facilitate the conversations that arise, they can take advantage of situations (like a full moon rising), in order to add value to activities, and "they can help to create a group culture that works at a deep level and is supportive of spirituality" (ibid). Staff creating a group culture is also something that AT noted:

> *AT   When you go away for a week, you create your own culture within that week. It is down to the individual [staff] to create a trusting culture, where people can explore for themselves what it means to be in that location, and what that means to their life, and to have the opportunity to be able to reflect and transform that into their own lives. I think it's very important.*

Staff wear many hats and they make things happen. Staff facilitate the creation of culture. Staff instruct activities. Staff encourage, guide, interpret, challenge. Staff play, and in playing, role model. Staff are entrusted, staff enable. Staff define the boundaries and the acceptable behaviours. Most important, staff build relationships with students and encourage students to build relationships with each other and the environment. Relationships, CYS points out, are key to improving academic performance too:

> *CYS Yeah, most do better [academically] because it's applied, you're going outside, you're talking about it. The key to success is generally the relationship between student and teacher and they're generally fairly good here because you get to know everyone better and you can follow stuff up.*

As AB pointed out, on a programme with a longer time frame, the staff get to know the students at a deeper level, because they get to see them in many different situations. They get to know the students strengths and weakness, and can see that moment where the student is open to learning:

> *AB I think a lot of my conversations are around coaching a particular aspect, life coaching... you know who they are, and go "you have more to you in this area that you are not letting out," ... it takes time to see that ...to have built a relationship where you are able to say something, and them respect it enough that it actually makes a difference. It impacts.*

For staff, there are many roles to master in an outdoor education programme, many hats to wear. But probably the most important thing, in terms of a spiritually transformative moment (the fourth domain), is the development of a positive relationship with the students. Straker (2020, p. 9) noted this too:

> For Wiremu, walking a group down to the river, throwing sticks and watching them float away, provided an opening for students to start talking about their lives. It is not always about teaching stuff, facts and figures–building relationships comes before any learning can happen, Wiremu reiterated, outdoors you walk and talk side-by-side, which is less confrontational

Hill (2012) in promoting a socio-ecological approach to outdoor education, noted the importance of action, that is, doing something that helps enact the knowledge, but based on a clear understanding of purpose. In the spirograph model there are multiple points of action for both staff and students, points that embed knowledge, enact knowledge, explore possibilities or personal boundaries. Hill's point about having a framework with which to base decisions around, and that helps to monitor progress, is relevant here too; if staff understand the spirographic movement of a student through a programme, then decisions and guidance can come from a more informed place.

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Figure 21

Structural Components that Matter

Outdoor Skills
Experience & judgement
Teaching, interpreting
Role modelling
Guiding conversations
Encouraging & praising
Rule keepers
Reflection teachers
Provide agency, help with uncertainty
Enact & Embody programme values

Authentic experiences
Activities for fitness, team building, skills
Activities that provide nature immersion
Repetition to develop comfort / thriving
Repetition to develop competence
Staircasing: Steps to Mastery
Finding something to excel in

Self-reflection activities
Conflict-resolution skills
Teamwork
Leadership opportunities
Decision-making opportunities

Do

Develop
(the person)

STAFF:
The Value of
the Guide

Key ingredient: The nature
of the relationship between
the staff and students

Allows for play
Allows for liminal spaces
Community building
Living / camping skills
Builds connection with
place & people
Time in nature

Reside

Expressions of
positive
emotions

After
programme

Guide

Time – length of programme
Time – on activities
Time – in nature
Reflection tasks
Repetition / cycle of activities
Mixing groups

Observed
behaviour of
students on
programme

Student
revelations

Philosophy /Purpose:
What are you trying
to do? Why are you
trying to do that?

At this point I can summarize the research with two diagrams. The first is Structural Components that Matter (Figure 21). These are the things that are important to have in a programme, as indicated by the experienced outdoor educators that I interviewed, but they are also the components of an outdoor programme that could contribute to spirituality. This diagram also illustrates why staff are so important in any programme, because they enact the myriad tasks within the programme and embody the values and philosophy that animate the programme. The nature of the relationship that staff have with students is evidenced by the signs of success.

The second diagram is the Spirograph (Figure 20). This is a model that allows for thresholds and a developing spirituality but I acknowledge that becoming is not neat and tidy. It is inconsistent and chaotic. Spirographing through an outdoor programme that has resonance with this model, is an expression of an individual who is, on a daily basis, always yet-to-blossom but always more than what they were. In an outdoor programme, thresholds are purposeful, numerous, and recurring. The thresholds provided each day, through each encounter with one or more domains, are not linear reference points but a temporal intensification of rhizomatic growth. This is true for both students and staff.

The sense making in this chapter now leads to the last chapter, Endings. Here the conventions of pondering and the fold are utilized one last time, each in their own way contributing to the blossoming of the author, and the realisation that there is a tenth participant in the research. There are two endings explored in this last chapter, one emergent and one academic. Each in their own way contribute to the vibrational tone of the research and address the research questions.

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Chapter 8 Endings

This chapter begins with one last story of the fold. It then offers two endings to the research project. The first ending arose from thinking about the spirographic movement described in the previous chapter. It considers what such a movement would cause a programme to feel like; if everyone, staff and students, are engaging with thresholds, spirographing through the domains, what is the produced effect? The surprising answer emerged from a re-examination of the interviews: the produced effect was an alignment that felt like happiness.

The second ending has a more academic tone. It revisits the research topic and questions, and offers an answer to each of those questions. This ending suggests that the experienced outdoor educators recognized that spiritual transformation occurred, and a key factor was the quality of the staff. Specific programming components were harder to ascribe, because the programmes were so different from each other, but Fisher's (2011) Four Domains model suggested a useful way of thinking about the junction of spirituality and programming.

The chapter has one last early morning pondering. Both 'the fold' stories from my own past and the 'pondering' reflections, were important ways of working out ideas during the research, and understanding my own journey to here. They were stories, and I came to see story in a new light as I journeyed through this research process. Of course, none of this is definitive; I am *becoming* just as those interview participants are *becoming*, just as each of those programmes change slightly, year after year, in response to the people that are in it and running it. The chapter and the project, conclude with limitations and further research ideas.

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8.1   The fold: driving to Tihoi

After the interview, I turn west out of Kinloch and drive the winding road though a small, forested gorge, emerging onto farmland. I wind down the window. The breeze brings the smell of cut grass, maybe silage. The long low pyramid of Mt Pureora brings a feeling of familiarity, like coming home. This was the landscape that I hitch-hiked through in 1986, after I'd finished university and re-met an old school friend, Dave

Bailey, at our house party. That one conversation changed my whole life. Dave's description of rock climbing and kayaking sounded like freedom. 'Why don't you come and be a volunteer?' said Dave. In the blink of an eye, I'd quit my soil science job, put a relationship on hold and stuck out my thumb. Hamilton to Tokoroa was easy enough but finding a vehicle going west from Tokoroa took hours. Finally, an elderly couple picked me up and dropped me in Whakamaru, a place I'd never heard of at an intersection of two roads I hadn't known existed. I waited at the intersection. And waited. I built little towers in the gravel. I threw gravel at fence posts. Then I got really bored, so I started to walk. I had seen no cars turn down this road south, yet it was more appealing than standing in the sun waiting.

It is 26 kilometres from Whakamaru to Tihoi Venture School, my destination that day, and I walked at least half of it before the school bus rumbled into view behind me, going my way. I fell to my knees and put my hands together. "Please stop," I called out. The bus slowed, then stopped. A dust cloud moved around me. The door gasped open and the driver, a Māori woman, said she was really sorry but she couldn't give me a lift. The door gasped closed, the bus rumbled off, and the dust cloud resumed its trailing. I watched the bus until it turned a corner. The rumble faded. A slight breeze, a few bird calls, but mostly nothing. For someone brought up in the city, this was a new experience. I waited, looked north, looked south again, waited a bit more, then started walking. It felt better to do something rather than nothing. By late afternoon, the heat was shimmering the parched fields and I had run out of water and was considering far off farmhouses and more begging. I had seen cows in the distance being guided by a figure on a motorbike. Then a noise. A car and it was going my way. My heart lifted. I assumed the begging pose. The car stopped, a station wagon with a driver and a cargo of boxes. The window went down, and the driver said "I never pick up hitchhikers, but you are in the middle of nowhere! Where are you going?" When I said Tihoi he said jump in, so I did. The man wasn't much of a talker but was happy enough to drive the side road to Tihoi and drop me off. I thanked him, got out and looked around.

There were old wooden houses with corrugated iron roofs. Young men walked by dressed in checked wool shirts, striped rugby jerseys and shorts. Most wore gumboots on their feet. There was a tractor beside an old wooden house on a hill; Dave was standing beside it and he gave me a wave. I smelled woodsmoke. In the near distance,

a forest. Then Dave was walking towards me. He hugged me welcome, something I wasn't used to, then led me to one of the wooden houses. "This is Villa," he said, "you can stay here". I was the only patron of the three-bedroomed house. Each bedroom had wooden bunkbeds. The sparse dining room had chairs with metal legs and a plywood base, a yellow formica-topped rectangular table, and a mural hand-painted on the wall: Neil Diamond, Hot August Night. The kitchen had a coal range and a wall of faded peach-coloured wooden cupboards with latches you put your finger into. The tiny bathroom had a toilet, a cheap plastic shower, and a mirror with a crack across one corner. It smelled damp. The floor of the house was wooden planks, deeply worn and ingrained with dirt. The walls and ceiling in the kitchen had the shadow and smell of smoke deeply embedded. There wasn't a single wall or door that didn't have a hole somewhere. "It'll be one of your jobs while you are here," said Dave, "fixing the holes". I had no idea how to do that.

I had no idea how to do most of the things that needed doing at Tihoi: mending broken windows, unblocking septic tanks, fixing rotten window frames, using the vintage lawn mower, mending the holes in the fiberglass kayaks, rigging the yachts, controlling a mob of feral teenagers. The whole place seemed old and falling to bits, apart from the people. They seemed really *alive*.

I was introduced to a steel pipe about a metre long, with an axe head welded to it. Welded. They were heavy and dangerous and unnecessarily unbreakable, I thought, until I saw how ruthlessly uncaring the boys were in using them to chop wood. I was introduced to *bouldering*, moving across a cliff face just a few feet off the ground. This was a joyous discovery combining athleticism (trying not to fall off) with the chess-puzzle of working out hand and feet sequences. It made me feel good and left me wanting more. The days slipped into evenings, sitting around the instructor house, sipping green ginger wine, riding with the conversations and being immersed in the place... it all felt *important* in a way that my soil science job never had.

Tihoi made me feel useless. It humbled me every day of the two months that I stayed there, showing me, again and again, how few practical skills I had. But I was willing to learn and the staff there were willing to show me. Like something lumbering out of the darkness, the idea that I could be an outdoor instructor slowly dawned on me, if only I

could acquire the skills, if only I could understand how to do these things I was seeing. It fitted with the idea of what I wanted to become: someone leading a life that was not ordinary, having a job with a sense of adventure in it. Making a difference. Tihoi became my creation story. In years to come, re-telling the story of my own journey, I would whakapapa to it. I was living proof that the outdoors could transform a life.

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8.2   An emergent end point

Writing the 'driving to Tihoi' story reminded me of what the place *felt* like back then, how the experience of being challenged and excited and desperate to learn had reverbrated through me. In pondering the spirographic movement of an individual through thresholds, through the domains, through a programme, I realized that if all of the individuals were doing this, the space and place would have a feel to it, a kind of vibrational quality induced by movement. Would an outdoor programme feel chaotic, out of control? Would it be full of anxiety and tension? That would be untenable, surely, for staff, let alone students or parents? The opposites of chaos and anxiety would be order and calm. I returned to the interviews to look for clues.

The interviews had many comments about signs of success of transformational change. These had been gathered in the first analysis (Chapter 5). There were also comments about staff emotions, often about their own professional journey – Andy Thompson (AT) and his 'wow' moment with a sunrise; Christine Furminger (CF) 'loving' taking her own kids to the beach and playing. There were comments that spoke of staff evolution of thought, becoming a different person practising differently, listening more, placing more emphasis on process than achieving goals. Many of these had been gathered in the second analysis (Chapter 6) with links between the interview participants personal experiences and the Deleuzean concepts of the fold, thresholds and becoming.

Finally I found passages that addressed the feel of an outdoor programme. They emerged slowly from the Mike Boyes (MB) interview.

MB had shaped the outdoor education programme at Otago University for several decades. When asked how he knew that the programme was a good one, he said it

was 'the whole package', that a programme had power when it was holistic and well-structured. He also acknowledged how difficult it was to pin down particular components as being the catalyst for transformative experiences:

> MB   *I think this is like the question, "what's in the black box?" We get these outcomes but how the hell do we get them? How do we get these wonderful outcomes around energised, connected and empowered people?*

For MB, the 'whole package' included encouraging a positive social context, allowing for self-determination, and encouraging the students to care for the environment. He spoke about Education-for-sustainability (see Chapter 4), with its emphasis on slow pedagogy. He acknowledged Māori values in a New Zealand outdoor programme:

> MB   *I think also, over time, I've engaged in Māori perspectives... seeing how this could provide a uniquely New Zealand philosophy of environmental engagement, which is what I push all the time. So things around kaitiakitanga, turangawaewae and those sort of basic concepts, mauri, manaakitanga and so forth. I integrate that and use it as a framework to build around our relationships with the environment.*

MB acknowledged that Māori values provided a "uniquely New Zealand philosophy of environmental engagement", but thought the force of the concepts were universal. They addressed the world in a way that acknowledged interdependency and responsibility. He identified why the pedagogical approach of 'learning by doing' leads to success. It engaged the senses and it was real not theoretical. It had real consequences for the actions taken. The 'whole package' utilized the natural environment as the background, and as the context for those direct experiences.

> MB   *You've got the whole experiential learning thing; engaging all the senses in that learning environment, the direct experiences, the richness of the environment, the impact of nature. It's meaningful, it's contextual, all those things that underpin experiential education are taking place. When you're out there, we don't break it up and say, "Oh, this is learning by the senses. Oh, this had an impact on nature." We're out there having a good time, so it's holistic.*

'Having a good time' was definitely a clue. He didn't mean partying, he meant enjoying the place and the people and the engagement with whatever they were doing. MB then offered a part of the package that I had not considered before:

MB   Then I think it's based around happiness. I think that it gives people feelings of pride and purpose and pleasure; I think it makes them feel joy, excitement, contentment in their wellbeing. That's all happiness. That is part and parcel of a well-structured outdoor teaching session.

Here was the feel of an outdoor programme, that I had been looking for: the 'whole package' is based around happiness. Happiness, as MB described it, was the accumulation of other emotions that were generated by the 'learning by doing'. Pride came from successful completion of tasks or the way the group performed. Pleasure came from that too but may also have been about having fun along the way. Purpose may have been the group task ahead of them (complete a multi-day tramp) or it may have been about the crystallization of a purpose for themselves. Contentment, joy, excitement, these were all signs, to MB, that something (the programme) was working. I was reminded of a passage from Straker (2014, p. 247): that her participants felt that an outdoor programme generated wellbeing and that "personal good health and happiness appeared to engender respect and care for the environment". Happiness was the result of an alignment between values, pedagogy, programming, people and place. Which means all of the spirographing interactions and engagements with thresholds going on in an outdoor programme, contributed to happiness too.

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8.3   An academic endpoint

Heintzman (2009) had called for research that connected outdoor programme components to spiritual outcomes. This study goes some way to addressing that call. The topic of this study was 'Reflections on transformation: how New Zealand outdoor educators construct programmes to address (non-religious) spiritual growth'.

There were two research questions being investigated. The first question was 'What do experienced outdoor educators, who have been in charge of outdoor programmes, have to say about recognizing transformation in their students?'. The second was 'What do those educators have to say about the influence of programming on student transformation?'

Nine participants were interviewed, two analyses were conducted. The first followed the reflexive thematic analysis method (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun et al., 2018; Terry

et al., 2018), for four of the six phases proposed in the method. This method encouraged a return to both the interviews and the literature, a deepening of understanding through continued reading. However, at that point, I discovered the post qualitative writing of St Pierre (2001; 2013, 2018, 2019, 2020a, 2020b), and other post qualitative writing, including Benozzo (2020), Carlson (2020), Kuntz and St. Pierre (2020), Le Grange (2018), and Mark (2020). This led to the philosophy of Deleuze (2001), Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 1991 / 1994) and the interpreters of their work, including Conley (2005), Due (2007), and May (2005). The first analysis was halted and a second, different analysis was begun. The first analysis was still useful because it showed, via the words of the participants, what many of the influential factors were in a programme. These included components that 'do' things, components about residing in a place, and components about developing the person. The value of staff as guides in the process was immense. Much of this aligned with the literature. The second analysis examined the interviews anew, and saw that these factors were themselves influenced by the arc of the participant's life and career, the thresholds they had crossed in order to become the person they were, and how they sought to replicate their own transformational experiences, for the benefit of the students in their care.

Although three of the programmes discussed in the interviews resided in organisations which espoused religious principles, the outdoor programmes themselves were not religious in nature. Nor did the interview participants refer to religious affiliations or a Māori cosmology in the interviews, though values *were* referred to, like guardianship / kaitiakitanga. The spirituality being examined in the outdoor programmes was nontheistic and appeared to be rooted in the definition of spirit that was animating and vital (OED, 2021a).

In answer to the first question, the participants clearly recognized that many of their students had had a transformational experience. They observed behaviour change, they read student reflections, the students told them. Some students made an effort to visit them after the programme, sometimes years after, often to acknowledge how important the programme (and the staff) had been in their life. The interview participants described these transformational experiences in ways that aligned with the definitions of spirituality provided by Fox (1999), Gookin (2006), Hubball and West (2008), and Robinson (2007b).

For the second question, the staff were definitely key factors in student transformational experiences, but the influence of programming was harder to ascertain. Each programme was different from the other programmes, in time, components, outdoor activities, gender, staff, parent organisation, location, geography of where they operated etc. But when these variables were amalgamated with the (adjusted) Four Domains of Spiritual Health and Wellbeing model (Fisher, 2011) and compared with what was said in the interviews, it was possible to see how a programme might resonate in spirographic ways, and provide opportunities for a transformational experience.

8.3.1 So?

Seeing an outdoor programme in terms of individuals (and collections of individuals) spirographing through Fisher's domains, and experiencing thresholds, is a new way of thinking about programming. It releases the New Zealand outdoor educator from the discourses that have dominated (outdoor pursuits and risk management) and provides another reason (if one is needed) for engaging with indigenous ways of thinking, even in a non-theistic setting. It provides an insight into the complex working of an outdoor programme. It raises the possibility (and excitement) of crafting transformational experiences. This study also highlights the importance of staff who understand this layering of deeper connections and its influence on health and wellbeing. Staff with aligned values and philosophical understanding, are important as guides to this deepening. This study has collected the insights and experiences of some of the shape makers of New Zealand outdoor education. These people are taonga and this study acknowledges that.

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8.4   Pondering and folding: trying to say goodbye

This is a story about a research journey. I am in this story. There was no other way I could tell it. So began a writing journey that was a rollercoaster of emotions and insights. I never quite knew what was going to emerge in the wee hours before dawn. Grief and anxiety were ever present companions. The beginning of the inquiry into spiritual transformation on outdoor education programmes, was the death of a friend

and work colleague, Lyndsay Simpkin. The middle of the inquiry had the death of my Mother-in-law, Gwen Reid and the end of my 20-year career as a university lecturer.

The Covid-19 pandemic burst through a great deal of the pages. In April 2020, an emergency room doctor described the psychological impact of having to make life or death decisions about people, having to choose between this person or that person to get the last ventilator, because there was not enough equipment to keep them all alive (Ouyang, 2020). She wondered how long she could wear the same mask, because there weren't enough masks to be able to change after seeing every patient. "It is better to be lucky than good," she said. As I write this, nearly a year after reading Ouyang's diary, the world has just ticked over 124 million people infected and 2.73 million deaths. New Zealand has had 2,462 infections and 26 deaths. We have been lucky to have had a proactive government.

Two outdoor programmes linked to this inquiry weren't so lucky. Otago University culled its outdoor education programme, and AUT its DORL programme (Diploma of Outdoor Recreation Leadership). Both had been around for decades. Two interview participants lost their jobs. Three others changed their jobs; one of these moved out of outdoor education altogether.

My daughter was lucky. About two thirds of the way through this inquiry, she was bucked off her horse and landed on her neck. Six months of concussion added to the anxiety she already felt and derailed the final exams of her last year in high school. She didn't get to say goodbye to her classmates, in class. Still, she was lucky, which means we were lucky too.

Barry Lopez died as I edged towards the end of the journey. Many times, I had thought about writing to him and telling him how much I admired his writing, his sense of place, the way he blended science with a deep love for the natural world... but I never did and now I never can. I have most of his books, I can still fold time to listen to his wisdom.

In this research journey, I tried to write clearly, with creativity and authenticity. I tried to keep the reader in mind, whomever they might be, whenever that might happen. I shared the dawn with coffee and bird song, and thought of Aldo Leopold doing the

same, writing in his notebook while I wrote in my journal the thoughts that had caused my sleep to be so restless. I wrote poetry and rambling prose. I wrote questions and tried to craft answers. Some of them made the cut, and I called them 'Ponderings'. I wrote a self-interview. I wrote biographical pieces about the people I had interviewed, culled them, then reinstated them. I wrote autobiographical stories called 'the fold' and found places for some of them. I played out an idea from a dream and wrote a magic realism account of a road trip: I was driving, and Deleuze and Foucault were in the back seat, quipping at each other as the three of us discussed Deleuze's concepts. It all made sense at the time. As I write this, I'm not sure it's going to be in the final cut. That decision has yet to emerge. Emerge. *Becoming* and *immanence* were exciting discoveries on this journey; *thresholds* and *folding* gave me a language to describe what I had experienced and observed. They helped make sense of the world. What I see now, is that I have been the 10th interview participant. My stories are intertwined with their stories. I was telling my story as I was telling theirs. The writing was helping me understand my own journey.

The arc of this journey has been long; I'm still not sure what I am bending towards. I am still becoming. I am trying to say goodbye to something, with grace. I'm not really sure what the 'something' is: the habit? (writing); the freedom? (to sit and think and write all day, every day, for weeks on end); the burden? (of responsibility to honour the conversations and shared stories). A strange grief and anxiety still swirl around. What I do know, is that I must end this pondering by revisiting the beginning, and asking myself "what do I know *now*?"

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8.5   Limitations

This research journey had two agendas. One was to understand whether it was possible to construct an outdoor programme that addressed spirituality, that is, a programme whose outcome was a transformational experience of a spiritual nature. The second was to capture the voices of respected New Zealand outdoor educators. Using this group to explore the first agenda seemed a sensible approach.

One of the limitations was the number of educators that I could reasonably interview in the time frame I had available. Many of the people I admired were becoming

advanced in years; some had serious health issues. I wanted to interview them all because they all were repositories of knowledge, and historical changes, that seemed important to me. But I could not interview them all, and only managed perhaps a third of my original list.

Discovering the writing of St Pierre and then Deleuze was both exciting and frustrating; changing the research approach became a limitation as it ate into the time alloted to the study. It was also invigorating, especially the use of writing as method; paradoxically this became a limitation as I wrote alot, and not always what was most useful to the inquiry.

Perhaps the biggest limitation was the sheer scale of information available, about the three main parts in the research topic: outdoor education programmes, spirituality, and transformation. Each of these parts has an enormous amount of literature behind it, and I did my best to read widely but I could not hope to read it all.

I am not Māori. The interview participants did not identify as Māori in the interviews. Finding Māori outdoor education programmes was not as easy as finding non-Māori programmes. That could, of course, say something about my own knowledge and the professional circles I move in, as opposed to the ease of finding those programmes. Not having a Māori perspective on the research topic was a limitation but perhaps it is also an entire research project in itself.

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8.6   Further research

This research did not set out to quantify how many staff identified as Māori, nor how many spoke te reo (the Māori language). These two factors would undoubtedly influence the attribution of spirituality. The work of Warren (2002) would be a useful starting place for investigating the lack of Māori role models and lack of te reo speakers, in the outdoor education programmes identified in the interviews. Of course a wider approach could also be taken, that examined the diversity of ethnicities (or lack of) in New Zealand outdoor education programmes. A kaupapa Māori approach to research would be a useful starting point for this topic.

It would certainly be interesting to see if Fisher's model had programming benefits for Māori outdoor education programmes, or if the cosmology of a Māori programme would make the model redundant. The same question could be asked of the overtly Christian outdoor programmes operating in New Zealand.

The practice of outdoor education in New Zealand appears to have been captured by wealthy schools. It did not start out like this. An examination from this perspective would be worthwhile.

The key factors of Time and Nature could be examined further, in outdoor programmes across New Zealand: is there an ideal amount of time to meet the programme objectives? Is there an ideal amount of immersion in nature that helps meet these objectives? If so, what is the style of immersion that has most benefit? (e.g. active immersion like tramping, kayaking, or more reflective immersion like camping and solo). Wattchow and Brown (2011) would be a useful starting place for that inquiry.

8.7   Last comments

It is feasible that I have lived through a 'golden age' of outdoor education. What happens next is uncertain, and the post-Covid world – whenever that happens – may recognize the need for meaningful experiences in nature, healing experiences, to be more completely integrated into education, workplaces, and people's lives in general.

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Appendices

Appendix A *Fisher's Four Domains of Spiritual Health and Wellbeing Model*

Domains /Aspects	Personal domain	Communal domain	Environmental domain	Transcendental domain
Knowledge aspect	Meaning, purpose and values	Morality, culture (and religion)	Care, nurture, stewardship	Transcendent Other
Inspirational aspect	Self-consciousness	In-depth inter-personal relationships	Connectedness with nature /Creation	Cosmic force / Faith
Expressed as	Joy, fulfilment, peace, patience, freedom, humility, identity, integrity, creativity, intuition, self-worth	Love, forgiveness, justice, hope & faith in humanity, trust	Sense of awe & wonder Valuing nature /Creation	Adoration & worship. Being at one with Creator. In tune with God. Of the essence of the universe.

Note. From Fisher, J. (2011). The Four Domains Model: Connecting Spirituality, Health and Well-Being. *Religions, 2*(1). https://doi.org/10.3390/rel2010017

Appendix B *Fox's Programme Recommendations to Enhance Spiritual Opportunities*

Allow time for relaxation
Time for solitude, personal reflection time
Time to explore and interrelate with nature alone
Developing a theme of open-mindedness towards spirituality
Increase a nurturing approach and respect for all living and non-living things
Encourage voluntary simplicity
Permit flexible schedules to allow for alterations and time in reflection
Time to think, reflect and share with group members, on a personal level
Develop a special place for retreat
Celebrate group and individual events and achieving goals
Share spiritual experiences verbally
Time to write and draw through a reflective journal
Allow a sense of newness into a programme: schedule, goals, and environment
Foster emotional involvement and extend emotional limits
Involve participants in interpretations of history and ecology of place
Allow personal spiritual journeys
Adapt an indigenous approach to environment and culture of programme
Encourage creativity and drawing
Exposure to nature's beauty (e.g. utilize sunsets, night sky and sunrise as special times)
Meditation and yoga
Share inspirational feelings
Deviate away from normal routine
Encourage group bonding and openness and trust
Encourage single-gender groups
Encourage talking about fears and rationalizing fears
Reduce power and competition between group members
Encourage people into nature's pace and time (e.g. remove watches)
Encourage small groups (e.g. groups of 6-10 is ideal)
Reduce stereotypical role playing, allow people to be themselves, reverse role plays
Encourage fasting
Allow nudity where appropriate
Encourage extended solitude, expeditioning, or base camping (e.g. 2-plus days)

Note. From Fox, R. (1999). Enhancing spiritual experience in adventure programs. In J. Miles

& S. Priest (Eds.), *Adventure programming* (pp. 455-461). Venture.