

**DETERMINING THE SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL REASONS FOR THE  
EMERGENCE OF PARKOUR AND FREE RUNNING – AN INTERPRETIVE  
PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS.**

**MATHEW BRENDAN PAUL WALLACE**

**DOCTORATE OF PHILOSOPHY**

**UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD, SALFORD, MANCHESTER, UK**

**SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES**

**OCTOBER 2013**

## CONTENTS PAGE

<b><u>CONTENTS</u></b>	<b><u>Page</u></b>
<b>CHAPTER 1 - Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CHAPTER 2 - Literature Review.....</b>	<b>13</b>
Overview.....	13
<b>2.1 - Extreme Sports.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2.2 - Literature on Parkour and Free Running.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2.2.1 - What is Parkour.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>2.2.2 - Parkour Origins.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.2.3 - The Development of Parkour and Free Running.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.2.4 - Environmentalism and Transcendentalism.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>2.2.5 - Parkour Training and Practise.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>2.2.6 - Meanings and Motivations.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>2.2.7 - Belonging.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>2.2.8 - Pure Play Spirit.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>2.2.9 - Flow.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>2.2.10 - Aesthetics.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>2.2.11 - Standardisation, Regulation and Sportisation.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>2.2.12 - Globalisation.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>2.2.13 - Reinventing the Use of City Space.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>2.2.14 - Resistance.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>2.3 - Psychological Considerations.....</b>	<b>30</b>

# Content

---

2.3.1 - Personality.....	30
2.3.2 - Meaning and Motivation.....	31
2.3.3 - Dangerous Sports and Flow.....	32
2.4 - Sociological Considerations.....	33
2.4.1 - Professional Sport.....	33
2.4.2 - Post Sport.....	34
2.4.3 - Subculture Identity and Status.....	35
2.4.4 - Globalisation.....	36
2.4.5 - The Commodification of Extreme Sport.....	37
2.4.6 - Counter Culture and the Media.....	38
2.4.7 - Authenticity in Extreme Sport.....	39
2.4.8 - Resistance.....	40
Summary.....	41
<b>CHAPTER 3 - Methodology.....</b>	<b>42</b>
Overview.....	42
3.1 - Exploring Parkour and Free Running: A Qualitative Research Approach.....	42
3.1.1 - Legitimising Qualitative Research.....	43
3.1.2 - Evaluating Qualitative Research Techniques.....	45
3.1.3 - Questionnaires.....	45
3.1.4 - Focus Group.....	45
3.1.5 - Face to Face Semi-Structured Interviews.....	46
3.1.6 - Behavioural Observations.....	48

# Content

---

<b>3.2 - The Chosen Method of Data Generation/Information Analysis: Phenomenology.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>3.2.1 - Procedure: IPA.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>3.2.2 - The Structural Process of Phenomenology: familiarisation process.....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>3.2.3 - Systematic Production of Themes and Clusters.....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>3.2.4 - Systematic Overview.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>3.2.5 - Master Themes.....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>3.2.6 - Integrating Themes.....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>3.2.7 - Validation.....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>3.2.8 - Pilot Study.....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>3.3 - Emerging Considerations and Key Issues.....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>3.3.1 - Questions.....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>3.3.2 - Interviews.....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>3.3.3 - Setting.....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>3.3.4 - Ethics.....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>3.3.5 - Transcribing the Data.....</b>	<b>65</b>
Summary.....	66
<b>CHAPTER 4 - Analysis One.....</b>	<b>67</b>
Overview.....	67
<b>4.1 - Familiarisation Process.....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>4.1.1 - Participant A.....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>4.1.2 - Participant B.....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>4.1.3 - Participant C.....</b>	<b>79</b>

## Content

---

4.2 - Systematic Production of Themes and Clusters.....	86
4.2.1 - Participant A.....	87
4.2.2 - Participant B.....	96
4.2.3 - Participant C.....	101
4.3 - Identifying Themes.....	107
4.3.1 - Participant A.....	108
4.3.2 - Participant B.....	118
4.3.3 - Participant C.....	123
4.4 - Systematic Overview.....	128
4.5 - Master Themes.....	135
Summary.....	138
<b>CHAPTER 5 - Analysis Two.....</b>	<b>139</b>
Overview.....	139
5.1 - Familiarisation Process.....	140
5.1.1 - Participant D.....	141
5.1.2 - Participant E.....	145
5.1.3 - Participant F.....	149
5.1.4 - Participant G.....	151
5.1.5 - Participant H.....	154
5.2 - Systematic Production of Themes and Clusters.....	159
5.2.1 - Participant D.....	160
5.2.2 - Participant E.....	164

## Content

---

5.2.3 - Participant F.....	168
5.2.4 - Participant G.....	170
5.2.5 - Participant H.....	174
5.3 - Identifying Themes.....	178
5.3.1 - Participant D.....	179
5.3.2 - Participant E.....	183
5.3.3 - Participant F.....	186
5.3.4 - Participant G.....	188
5.3.5 - Participant H.....	192
5.4 - Systematic Overview.....	198
5.5 - Master Themes.....	207
5.6 - Core Themes.....	212
5.7 - Validation.....	235
Summary.....	242
<b>CHAPTER 6 - Discussion.....</b>	<b>244</b>
Overview.....	244
6.1 - Themes.....	244
6.1.1 - Social.....	244
6.1.2 - Environment.....	245
6.1.3 - Training.....	246
6.1.4 - Challenge.....	247
6.1.5 - Thrill Seeking.....	248

## Content

---

<b>6.1.6 - Mastery</b> .....	249
<b>6.1.7 - Enjoyment</b> .....	249
<b>6.1.8 - Risk</b> .....	250
<b>6.1.9 - Being in the Present</b> .....	251
<b>6.1.10 - Aesthetics</b> .....	252
<b>6.1.11 - Health and Fitness</b> .....	252
<b>6.1.12 - Perception</b> .....	253
<b>6.1.13 - Spirituality</b> .....	254
<b>6.1.14 - Philosophy</b> .....	254
<b>6.1.15 - Addiction</b> .....	255
<b>6.1.16 - Comparing and Contrasting Themes</b> .....	256
<b>6.2 - Social and Psychological: Reasons for Involvement</b> .....	259
<b>6.2.1 - Social - External Influences on Initial Participation</b> .....	260
<b>6.2.2 - Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Reasons for Participation</b> .....	260
<b>6.2.3 - Psychological - Participant Motivations</b> .....	261
<b>6.2.4 - Normative Motives</b> .....	262
<b>6.2.5 - Hedonic Motives</b> .....	262
<b>6.2.6 - Efficacy Motives</b> .....	263
<b>6.2.7 - Simple Risk and Thrill</b> .....	264
<b>6.3 - Social and Psychological: Reasons for Maintaining Involvement</b> .....	265
<b>6.3.1 - Risk and Training</b> .....	265
<b>6.3.2 - Psychological - Increasing Efficacy</b> .....	267

## Content

---

6.3.3 - Psychological - Mastery and Status.....	268
6.3.4 - Emotion - Flow and Catharsis.....	270
6.3.5 - Personal Identity and Personal Meaning.....	271
6.3.6 - Normalising Risk.....	273
6.3.7 - Managing Risk and Pleasure.....	275
6.3.8 - Social - Communitas.....	276
6.3.9 - Social - Subculture and Shared Experiences.....	276
6.3.10 - Social - Group Polarisation and Authenticity.....	278
6.3.11 - Spirituality.....	278
6.3.12 - Philosophy.....	279
6.3.13 - Addiction.....	280
Summary.....	281
<b>CHAPTER 7 - Conclusion.....</b>	<b>282</b>
<b><u>Appendices</u></b>	
<b>Appendix A - Feasibility.....</b>	<b>302</b>
<b>Appendix B - Participant Information Sheet.....</b>	<b>303</b>
<b>Appendix C - Consent Form.....</b>	<b>307</b>
<b>Appendix D - Participant A: Semi-Structured Interview Transcript.....</b>	<b>310</b>
<b>Appendix E - Participant B: Semi-Structured Interview Transcript.....</b>	<b>323</b>
<b>Appendix F - Participant C: Semi-Structured Interview Transcript.....</b>	<b>329</b>
<b>Appendix G - Participant A: Line Numbers.....</b>	<b>337</b>
<b>Appendix H - Participant B: Line Numbers.....</b>	<b>347</b>

## Content

---

<b>Appendix I - Participant C: Line Numbers</b> .....	351
<b>Appendix J - Semi-Structured Interview Transcript</b> .....	356
<b>Appendix K - Participant D: Line Numbers</b> .....	374
<b>Appendix L - Participant E: Line Numbers</b> .....	377
<b>Appendix M - Participant F: Line Numbers</b> .....	379
<b>Appendix N - Participant G: Line Numbers</b> .....	381
<b>Appendix O - Participant H: Line Numbers</b> .....	383

**LIST OF FIGURES**

**2.1 - Classification of Extreme Sports.....** 13

**3.1 - Labels Used For Classification of Phrases.....** 54

**3.2 - Identifying Themes.....** 55

**3.3 - Developing Clusters.....** 55

**3.4 - Summary Table.....** 55

**3.5 - List of Master Themes.....** 56

**4.1 - Participant A: Clusters and Emerging Themes.....** 95

**4.2 - Participant B: Clusters and Emerging Themes.....** 100

**4.3 - Participant C: Clusters and Emerging Themes.....** 106

**4.4 - Participant A: Summary Table.....** 129

**4.5 - Participant B: Summary Table.....** 131

**4.6 - Participant C: Summary Table.....** 133

**4.7 - List of Master Themes: Participants A, B and C.....** 136

**4.8 - Participant Themes.....** 138

**5.1 - Participant D: Clusters and Emerging Themes.....** 163

**5.2 - Participant E: Clusters and Emerging Themes.....** 167

**5.3 - Participant F: Clusters and Emerging Themes.....** 169

**5.4 - Participant G: Clusters and Emerging Themes.....** 173

**5.5 - Participant H: Clusters and Emerging Themes.....** 177

**5.6 - Participant D: Summary Table.....** 199

**5.7 - Participant E: Summary Table.....** 200

## List of Figures

---

<b>5.8</b> - <i>Participant F: Summary Table</i> .....	202
<b>5.9</b> - <i>Participant G: Summary Table</i> .....	203
<b>5.10</b> - <i>Participant H: Summary Table</i> .....	205
<b>5.11</b> - <i>List of Master Themes: Participants D, E, and F</i> .....	208
<b>5.12</b> - <i>List of Master Themes: Participants G and H</i> .....	210
<b>5.13</b> - <i>Participant Themes</i> .....	242
<b>5.14</b> - <i>Number of Participants Attributed To Each Theme</i> .....	243

**BIBLIOGRAPHY.....386**

## Acknowledgments

---

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

I would like to thank the supervisors who have provided expertise when it was needed and offered guidance and support throughout. In particular, I would like to thank Lindsay Dugdill for her input and Pauline Adair for her encouragement during the interim assessment. I also thank Tom Fawcett for his continued support and expertise and Peter Eachus for his sincere efforts on my behalf. I express gratitude to my friends, Michael, Patricia, Sam and Jasmine for their moral support and friendship. I owe my deepest gratitude to my parents, Janet and Paul and thank them sincerely for their support on every level.

### **ABSTRACT**

Parkour and free running are newly emerged high risk urbanised activities still relatively understudied. They don't appear to be subject to rules and regulations with aims and objectives being unclear. There are no distinct signs of competition and yet competitors are extremely trained, highly ordered, thriving on the danger and adrenaline participation produces. The participants perform dangerous gymnastic movements utilising awkward obstacles without the use of protective clothing and don't appear to be concerned with the welfare of people in the vicinity. The activities are associated with self-improvement, endurance, discipline, strength, flexibility and balance. Parkour and free running videos are frequently posted on the self broadcast website, YouTube. Here participants can be seen leaping from high buildings, climbing walls and jumping between handrails.

This thesis presents the results of a phenomenological study of eight parkour and free running participants. A systematic IPA procedure was incorporated into the study to enter into a participant's reality to obtain experiences of parkour and free running. Through IPA interviews participants describe their experiences of the phenomenon being studied. It was discovered that participation provides emotional, physical and psychological development, health benefits, the development of new skills (e.g., pushing personal boundaries), an increased sense of individuality, an opportunity to acquire status and develop a new personal identity, the generation of personal meaning (philosophy, spirituality and aesthetics) and an increased sense of belonging (distinct group norms, subculturally shared experiences and a unique sense of authenticity).

The participants explained that they were initially motivated by thrill seeking, risk, improved health and enjoyment. They asserted that participation provides physical and mental training, a sense of mastery and personal challenge. Regular practise and commitment furnishes a participant with a sense of being in the present and a deepened sense of spirituality and enjoyment. The unique characteristics of parkour and free running (e.g., philosophy, environment, spirituality, perception and aesthetics) are linked to the characteristics of extreme sport which indicates that parkour and free running are part of a counter culture.

### CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

Deciding what to research and how to research it was not an easy task. Many meetings were spent with the supervisors deliberating over new ways to explore sport. We eventually managed to narrow the focus down to a full investigation into parkour and free running (Gratton and Jones, 2004). We were fairly confident that this would provide the kind of new insights that we were looking for. A preliminary investigation into parkour and free running supported this claim and so the researcher set out to structure the research around these activities (Gratton and Jones, 2004).

A comprehensive exploration into the activities via the internet and local and national newspapers was completed as part of the preliminary research (Gratton and Jones, 2004). It was discovered during the planning and evaluation stage that parkour and free running were new urbanised activities that had few or no rules at all. No one appeared to be controlling the flow of the activities with aims and objectives being unclear (The Independent, 11th November 2008). There were no obvious signs of competition and yet competitors were highly trained, highly organised, thriving on the danger and adrenaline it produced. Daredevil parkour and free running videos are often posted on the self broadcast website, YouTube. Here you can see participants jumping from high buildings, scaling walls and jumping between handrails.

The participants seek out danger by jumping up and down awkward obstacles without the use of any protective clothing and don't appear to be concerned with pedestrians in close proximity (The Independent, 11th November 2008). The activities are heavy on discipline, self-improvement, endurance, strength, flexibility and balance. Sebastian Foucan (founder of free running) performed impressive stunts on Casino Royale, the James Bond remake. David Belle (founder of parkour) performs complex parkour moves in Luc Bessons's film, District 13. Madonna (world famous singer/entertainer) hired a group of free runners to perform during a recent tour (The Independent, 22nd April 2007).

David Belle would like to see it included in the Olympics. The founder of free running, Sebastian Foucan explains that parkour emphasises efficiency whilst free running embodies complete freedom of movement and includes many acrobatic manoeuvres (The Independent, 11th November 2008). He adds, “both are physical art forms that have aesthetically pleasing ways of moving through structures with focus on freedom and beauty”. Urban Freeflow, based in the UK is one of the world's premier free running organisations. EZ (one of the founders of this organisation) confirms that the activity has more than four thousand followers in Britain and twenty thousand worldwide. He says that it is one of the most spectacular activities to emerge in recent years because of its “raw” element (The Independent, 22nd April 2007). Britain has a growing number of free running training centres and after-school classes in most cities. Dvir Rozen, the twenty six year-old leader of the Israel Parkour Team (Jerusalem Post, 17th Jan 2008, p. 2) explains, “There are so many negative influences and temptations out there - alcohol, drugs, etc - so it's great to see kids being pulled away from negativity and toward something positive, to something with purpose”.

Setting the research aim and objectives was a vital part of the research process. They provided overall clarity on the work to be undertaken and became a fundamental guide throughout the entire research process (Gratton and Jones, 2004). The research aim that was devised helped facilitate the development of the research methodology (Mason, 2002). Being a critical component of the research design the researcher had to make sure that the aim of the research was coherent, logical, clearly phrased and realistic.

### Research Aim

- *To determine the major social and psychological reasons for the emergence of parkour and free running as urban activities.*

The research required vast and extensive amounts of work to ensure that it provided clarity on the important issues (Gratton and Jones, 2004). The high volume of literature in the form of archives, journal articles, newspaper reports and books had to be searched, reviewed and critically analysed.

This was completed on a regular basis with consistent work in the public and university libraries, at the office and at home (Gratton and Jones, 2004).

### Research Objectives

- *To explore the emergence of parkour and free running as an alternative activity to traditional physical activity.*
- *To identify the major social reasons for the emergence of parkour and free running.*
- *To identify the major psychological reasons for the emergence of parkour and free running.*

A set of research questions that were exploratory in nature were formulated and became a vital part of the process as the researcher had no prior knowledge of parkour or free running (Mason, 2002). These urbanised sports were an unclear, ambiguous and under investigated area of the sports domain. The research questions provided the study with a sense of structure, focus and increased general understanding on the phenomenon being investigated (Gratton and Jones, 2004).

### Research Questions

- *What are the origins of parkour and free running?*
- *How have the activities developed?*
- *What are participant motives for adoption in the activities?*
- *What are the motives for continued engagement in the activities?*
- *What is the role of aesthetics in parkour and free running?*
- *Are parkour and free running part of a counter-movement?*
- *What is the relevance of danger, risk taking, thrill seeking and free flowing movement?*
- *What is the link between the activities and the environment?*

Establishing the aims, objectives and a set of research questions for the study made it possible to identify potential participants who could be questioned (Mason, 2002). An interpretative and humanistic approach was maintained throughout the research process and incorporated semi-structured interviews to illicit the required information (Moustakas, 1994). Interviews were organised to take place at a location that was convenient for everybody taking part (Mason, 2002). Participants were asked to recall and describe in detail specific experiences of parkour or free running. For example, what were the participant feelings before and after taking part? This activity was supplemented with open ended questions designed to inspire participants to expand on their initial accounts (Moustakas, 1994). The qualitative approach that was adhered to provided participants with the opportunity to respond in a descriptive manner (Mason, 2002).

The participants were under no obligation to take part in the research and had an option to withdraw from the study without notification if they felt so inclined (Mason, 2002). It was explained to participants that throughout the interview particular care and attention would be given to any sensitive issues that arose (Mason, 2002). It was explained that if that occurred the interview would be stopped so that the issue could be addressed until the participant felt able to continue.

Parkour and free running were an academically under investigated, hidden and profound area of the sports domain. The researcher was seeking rich individual descriptions on the phenomenon being investigated (Moustakas, 1994). It was explained to the participants that they played a vital role in the formal discovering process of why these activities had emerged. The researcher adopted the role of detached observer and conducted an observation by attending a parkour event that took place on the 17th September, 2009 at Manchester Piccadilly Gardens (Mason, 2002). Entering more closely into the social setting of the phenomenon under investigation facilitated a deeper understanding of its social context and contributed towards producing a more compelling study (Mason, 2002).

The participants were required to read and sign a consent form to formally agree the outlined conditions of the study as part of the recruitment process (this was completed at the beginning of the interview). The participants were informed about the purpose of the study and what was required of them (a brief statement on the nature of the research was provided to each participant). The researcher endeavoured to maintain the confidentiality of all participants (Gratton and Jones, 2004). Their identity was withheld at all times unless they were happy to be named as themselves. If they require it they received a research code (known only by the researcher) which ensured their identity remained confidential and anonymous (Gratton and Jones, 2004). Research participant names and contact details were password protected on a computer that could only be accessed by the researcher. Transcripts and recordings remained anonymous and were coded (Mason, 2002). Paper copies were stored in a locked filing cabinet within a locked room accessed only by the researcher (Mason, 2002). Electronically stored information was password protected and any data stored on CD's and USB memory sticks remained anonymous and identified with a code. Data protection and confidentiality was assured to the participants at all times.

A qualitative research approach was selected so that emphasis could be placed on flexibility, allowing for greater spontaneity between the researcher and participants (Mason, 2002). The research approach is interpretative in that it seeks to understand an individual's experience. Implementing qualitative activities made it possible to gather insights, meanings and feelings on the experience of participation in the phenomenon being studied (Moustakas, 1994).

Ongoing consultation with relevant data sources identified the required emerging patterns, trends and themes (Smith, 2004). The material gathered from the ongoing literature review deepened understanding on the emergence of parkour and free running. Participant information was used to reiterate important issues that emerged as a result of the examination of the literature and to add an extra dimension by providing a greater depth of knowledge (Mason, 2002). Adhering to a carefully constructed methodology ensured that the research questions were appropriately answered and revealed new knowledge within the sport and exercise domain (Mason, 2002).

### Research Strategy Overview

- *Research Approach: Qualitative.*
- *Data Generation: Phenomenology and ongoing literature review.*
- *Number of Participants: Eight.*
- *Interviews: IPA semi-structured.*
- *Procedure: IPA.*
- *Information analysis: IPA.*
- *Ethics: Consent Forms, Participation sheets and Data Protection.*

The literature review chapter provides established facts in the academic literature on extreme sports, parkour and free running. It begins with an outline of what extreme sports are and includes a table that classifies extreme sports according to whether they are based on the land, the air or water (Tomlinson, 2004). The chapter then focuses on the academic literature on parkour and free running and what is known about them in general terms. This is followed with a more specific investigation into their origins and subsequent development (Atkinson, 2009). As part of the exploration into reasons for their emergence the chapter identifies their particular nuances and abstract modes of existence (Ameel and Tani, 2011). The chapter then returns to a general look at extreme sports and the psychological reasons for participant adoption and engagement in high risk activities (Willig, 2008). In particular the middle section of the chapter identifies extreme participants and the motivations they have for participation in dangerous sports. Some studies have been completed on meanings and motivation for participation in extreme sports. For example, Larkin and Griffiths (2004) analysed the accounts of five bungee-jumpers on their involvement in the sport and Celsi *et al.* (1993) conducted an ethnographic study of skydiving.

Extreme sports are a relatively new phenomenon and so little research had been carried out (Willig, 2008). The publications that were reviewed focused on personality, meanings and motivations behind high risk behaviour. Studies into personality focused on the relationship between the practise of extreme sport and certain personality traits (Willig, 2008). Some of the personality studies utilise Zuckerman's Sensation Seeking Scale (SSS) to validate their findings.

Perhaps the most closely related research to this study was conducted by Dr Carla Willig of City University, UK. Hers was a phenomenological investigation into taking part in extreme sports. She clearly demonstrates the fundamental nature of this kind of research and how best to generate themes using its phenomenological methods. The focus of Dr Willig's research into extreme sports is "the experience of taking part".

The latter part of the chapter is concerned with how parkour, free running and extreme sports function within society. It begins with an explanation on the professionalisation of sport and the concept of post sports (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). This part of the literature chapter comments on the relevance of subcultural activities including identity, status and authenticity. It highlights the impact of globalisation on sport and the associated changes within the sporting landscape (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). Some of the changes discussed include media influences on subcultural sports, the commodification of sports, the specularisation of sports and the subsequent resistant reactions to these processes (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). The literature review stimulates ideas, arguments and became an ongoing resource throughout the research process.

The methodology chapter provides a detailed account of how the data needed for the study was obtained (Gratton and Jones, 2004). The chapter begins with an evaluation of the various qualitative research techniques available and an explanation on why a qualitative approach was incorporated into the study (Gratton and Jones, 2004). This includes an evaluation of focus groups, behavioural observations, questionnaires and face-to-face semi-structured interviews. The chapter develops into a more specific look at phenomenology as a research method within the qualitative research domain (Hunter and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). It begins by providing a detailed account of what phenomenology is and how it originated and gives examples of studies that have been carried out using this method.

Husserl (1970) and Heidegger (1977) significantly contributed to the development of phenomenology as a qualitative research method. It is concerned with the study of experience from the perspective of the individual. Exploring a phenomenon in this way gets to the heart of the matter by overriding the assumptions associated with it (Moustakas, 1994).

Linking this approach with qualitative methods (interviews and a participant observation) was a particularly effective way to develop understanding on the recent emergence of parkour and free running. The methodology chapter then identifies IPA as being an appropriate procedure for information analysis given the nature of the topic being addressed (Smith *et al.*, 2009). IPA analysis is concerned with interpreting the complexity of meanings rather than measuring their frequency (Smith *et al.*, 2009). The chapter provides considerable insight into the procedure and structure of IPA and highlights the use of IPA for the researcher. For example, it is explained that IPA is one of the variants of phenomenology and when applied reveals in-depth insight into how a person in a particular context understands a given phenomenon (Smith *et al.*, 2009). The methodology chapter explains that IPA focuses on the experiences of a small number of individuals in relation to the phenomenon being investigated and that the validated material is assimilated into a wider theoretical context.

Participants are sampled purposively so that meaningful perspectives are generated on the phenomenon being investigated (Smith *et al.*, 2009). The IPA semi-structured interview facilitates rapport and empathy to maximise the rich data that is produced (Smith *et al.*, 2009). The detailed participant accounts obtained for this study needed to be proven credible and trustworthy. This was achieved using cross validation with designated participants asked to re-examine extracted essences of the phenomenon (Willig, 2008). Throughout the methodology chapter details are provided on ethics, interview style, structure, technique, setting, question design, participant recruitment, recording data, transcribing data and the validation of retrieved data (Smith *et al.*, 2009). The researcher maintained an interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA) throughout the research process into parkour and free running.

The first of the analysis chapters is an account of the interviews that took place with the first three participants. These participants were part of a pilot study that was designed to check that everything established in the methodology section was appropriate for the data that was being sought. The pilot study played a role in assessing the selected qualitative approach (Gratton and Jones, 2004). It was important to check that the research design was able to produce data that would allow for full interpretation in the thesis. The pilot study functioned as a trial run and was conducted in preparation for the full scale study (Gratton and Jones, 2004).

The pilot highlighted the main strengths and weaknesses of the research strategy. This included a check on the interview style and structure, the length of the interview, the ability of the interviewee to articulate their experiences and the appropriateness of the material gathered (Gratton and Jones, 2004). The pilot study demonstrated that the research approach, research design and data analysis were able to generate theoretical connections in the form of phenomenological themes (Smith *et al.*, 2009).

The chapter begins with an explanation of a need for the researcher to familiarise himself with the transcripts. It is established in stage one of the IPA procedure that a systematic approach must be adhered to at all times with the familiarisation process for each participant being clearly articulated and set out (Willig, 2008). As part of the systematic IPA research procedure every line in all transcripts were numbered. Coding participant transcripts enabled the researcher to identify precise words, phrases and insightful comments throughout both analysis chapters (Willig, 2008). Accurately identifying appropriate words and phrases increased the validity of the themes that were produced and the validity of the information contained in the tables throughout the analysis chapters.

Stage two involved the systematic production of clusters and the formation of invariant components of the experience (Willig, 2008). To illustrate the findings of the stage two process a table is provided at the end of this part of the analysis. To maintain a systematic approach a display table was allocated to each of the three participants. The resultant work of stage one and two produced themes that captured the essence of the phenomenon under investigation. Stage three of the IPA process is concerned with the formation of themes for each participant (Willig, 2008). A summary table for each participant is the focus of stage four.

The summary table gives a clear and systematic overview of the quotes, keywords, constituent themes and clusters discovered during the IPA semi-structured interview process (Willig, 2008). The last stage of the IPA process involves the production of master themes (Willig, 2008). The master themes represent the core findings and are clearly illustrated in the tables that are provided for each of the participants (Willig, 2008).

Chapter five is a systematic account of the interview findings that were conducted with the remaining five participants (Willig, 2008). To maintain a systematic approach throughout the analysis each of the stages were completed in the same manner as those outlined in chapter four. A key element to this chapter is that the findings significantly add to the pilot study knowledge base. Analysis of participant interviews in chapter five substantiated thematic analysis conducted during the pilot study and provided the required insight into the parkour and free running phenomenon (Smith, 2004). The core themes that were produced as a result of rigorous analysis with participant data are presented in this chapter. Chapter five provides a statement that was produced and issued to designated participants for validation of the findings. The statement captures the essential essences of all of the themes that were produced and therefore the phenomenon being studied (Willig, 2008). Having produced the required themes from the rich data that was retrieved from the participants it was necessary to provide an explanation on the implications of the findings (Willig, 2008).

Chapter six is concerned with the relevance of the themes that were produced and in particular how they illuminate the phenomenon under investigation. Each theme is explained in relation to parkour and free running and how the theme provides insight into the psychological and sociological reasons for their emergence (Willig, 2008). For example, the social theme that was produced illustrates the point that several participants were initiated into the activities as a result of watching the Jump Britain documentary in 2005. The thrill seeking theme that was generated suggests that initial involvement is connected to the thrill of completing a jump and the adrenaline that this produces (Le Breton, 2000). The environment theme indicates that the quality of an environment was a contributing factor to the quality of the experience (Mould, 2009).

The challenge theme that was produced highlights the point that participants view parkour and free running as way of overcoming mental and physical obstacles (Atkinson, 2009). The mastery theme that was generated explains that progression and the acquisition of skill levels act as indicators of ability amongst peers within the subculture (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). The perception theme that was produced revealed a unique parkour term called parkour vision. Parkour vision describes a situation when a participant would overlook an area and mentally process the moves to be undertaken (Ameel and Tani, 2011).

As part of the broad account that this chapter provides the researcher draws on existing literature within the field and elicits extracts from the themes that were produced (Smith, 2004). The inclusion of extracts is part of the IPA process and importantly links the findings from the analysis with the developing argument in the discussion chapter (Smith, 2004). The extracts are utilised in a manner that is designed to exemplify a particular expression or point. For example, the researcher refers to specific extracts when talking about self-efficacy motives. The comments selected included; “it’s the fact that you are trying to get past an obstacle and not trying to avoid it. People get more confident because they are not ignoring the fact that they are trying to get past the difficulty. It makes people think more confidently. They become more willing to solve problems rather than ignore them” (Smith, 2004).

When discussing the relevance of pushing personal boundaries the researcher utilised extracts that included; “doing parkour helps you find your own limits and identifies any personal barriers you might have. It helps you find your own personal way to get past that. Parkour is about developing yourself and how to progress by becoming stronger, jumping further and running a bit faster. This is the hook that keeps me coming back. I think parkour helps you fight your barriers both physical and mental. It does that more than any other sport because it’s so varied” (Smith, 2004). The purpose of this chapter is to address the aims and objectives of the research into parkour and free running so that conclusions can be drawn (Smith, 2004).

Free running and parkour harbour highly individualised and unique operating codes. They are original and creative activities that are “outside” the mainstream and in one sense underground. Discovering how they function provides new insights into the belief systems of these ultra modern activities (Mason, 2002). The perspectives, meanings and experiences of the designated research participants significantly unearth what was hidden, deep and elusive information (Mason, 2002). The psyches, social relations and underlying mechanisms of the participants validate the core arguments of the research. This information significantly contributes towards understanding the major social and psychological reasons for the emergence of parkour and free running (Mason, 2002).

No formal attempts had been made to explain the recent emergence of parkour and free running; “Sport has been a hitherto under-explored field of enquiry for mainstream social scientists and global study specialists” (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2007). The research strategy devised by the researcher for this study generates new knowledge on what was an under investigated, hidden and profound topic. Completing the research programme has significantly developed the researcher’s skills and expertise as an independent social science researcher in the field of sport.

### CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Overview

The literature review chapter provides established facts in the academic literature on extreme sports, parkour and free running. It begins with an outline of what extreme sports are and then focuses on the academic literature on parkour and free running and what is known about them in general terms. This is followed with a more specific investigation into their origins and subsequent development (Atkinson, 2009). The chapter then returns to a general look at extreme sports and the psychological reasons for participant adoption and engagement in high risk activities (Willig, 2008). The latter part of the chapter is concerned with how parkour, free running and extreme sports function within society.

#### 2.1 Extreme Sport

Extreme sport is a term used to describe activities that are considered to have a high level of inherent danger, unconventional rules and techniques that differ from team sports (Puchan, 2005). The activities are known to require extraordinary levels of personal achievement. Tomlinson (2004) has provided a full classification of extreme sports into those that take place in the air, land and water (see figure 2.1). They are sometimes referred to as action sports, alternative sports, adventure sports, lifestyle sports and free sport. Participation usually requires speed, height and a high level of physical exertion involving a serious risk of physical injury or even death (Rinehart and Sydnor, 2003).

**Figure 2.1:** *Classification of Extreme Sports*

#### **Air sports:**

Base jumping, bungee jumping, gliding, hand gliding, hire wire, ski-jumping, sky-diving, sky-surfing and sky-flying.

### **Land sports:**

*Indoor climbing, adventure racing, aggressive inline skating, BMX, caving, motocross, extreme skiing, freestyle skiing, land and ice yachting, mountain biking, mountain boarding, outdoor climbing, sand-boarding, skateboarding, snowboarding, snowmobiling, speed biking, speed skiing, scooters and street luge.*

### **Water sports:**

*Barefoot water skiing, cliff-diving, free-diving, jet-skiing, open water swimming, powerboat racing, round the world yacht racing, scuba diving, snorkelling, speed sailing, surfing, wakeboarding, white water kayaking, windsurfing and kite-surfing.*

Extreme athletes participate at their own pace and usually outdoors and incorporate Olympic ideals of faster, higher and stronger on an individual basis. Extreme sports are often considered to be part of a counter culture that has a rejection of authority and the status quo (Wheaton, 2004). They are considered to uphold sport values that are associated with fierce individualism, defiance, alienation and a degree of inner focused aggression (Frederick and Ryan, 1993). The youths who form this subculture often reject the more traditional sports values such as character building, moral courage, loyalty, the capacity to act fairly and take defeat well. Rinehart (2000) describes extreme sports as any sport that involves intense physical and mental activities that are not formally recognised as being legitimate sports. Tomlinson (2004) explains that extreme sports involve dangerous actions that transcend the limits of human existence.

## **2.2 Literature on Parkour and Free Running**

Academic research into parkour focuses on parkour as a form of collaborative learning (O’Grady, 2012); aesthetic performance and personal freedom (Ameel and Tani, 2011); parkour as a form of environmentalism (Atkinson, 2009); the relationship between the activity and the environment (Daskalaki *et al.*, 2008) and injuries caused through participation (Miller and Demoiny, 2008; Mclean *et al.*, 2006). The injuries that were caused through participation included tendon damage, cartilage deterioration, bone fractures, torn ligaments and joint pain.

O’Grady (2012) points out that deaths caused through participation are often exaggerated and that most parkour training occurs at ground level where injuries are rarely life threatening. O’Grady (2012) interviewed participants aged between sixteen and thirty two years old over a six month period in 2011 using semi-structured interviews. O’Grady (2012) argues for parkour to be used as a form of situated learning which is when the learning that takes place occurs in the same context in which it is applied.

O’Grady (2012) points out that parkour group training sessions are linked to theories of social learning (e.g., Lave, 2009; Wenger, 1998; Bandura, 1977). Ameen and Tani (2011) implemented in-depth interviews with participants in Finland, Helsinki, and Jyväskylä. They found that participants were inspired by environments that had solid structures with different height that had a good grip. Concrete was found to be the most suitable material and often it was the dull areas that were considered as being useful.

Atkinson (2009) conducted an ethnographic study with twelve participants in Toronto, Canada and conducted open ended interviews on their experiences of being involved. Atkinson (2009) explored parkour as an urban environmental movement and he draws on Heidegger's (1977) critique of technology and Schopenhauer's (1903) understanding of the will to interpret the practice of parkour as a form of urban deconstruction.

### **2.2.1 What Is Parkour?**

Parkour has been described as a counter culture, a philosophy, an art form, a sport, a discipline, a leisure activity and an emerging anarcho-environmental movement (O’Grady, 2012). Bavinton (2007, p. 393) describes parkour as a form of creative play that reinterprets the city as a place of playful possibility and about revealing the inner child and taking the interesting way rather than the easiest route. Rawlinson and Guralda (2011, p. 21) say it is a declaration of creative potential and the playing with the spirit of mankind. Atkinson (2009) explains that parkour is an expression of concern towards the capitalist city and its impact on society, culture, spirituality and environmental ethics.

Atkinson (2009) says that it is a physical cultural practise of criticism that seeks to highlight the contradictions prevalent in modern society.

### Contradictions in Modern Society

- *Technology and nature.*
- *Growth and destruction.*
- *Consumption and conservation.*
- *Freedom and surveillance.*

### **2.2.2 Parkour Origins**

Atkinson (2009) attributes Georges Hebert's natural method of physical exercise as being where parkour originated. It was an intense form of physical training that was developed in the French navy before the First World War. Atkinson (2009, p. 170-171) notes that Herbert believed that the natural method would equip a person with skills (e.g., athletic strength and discipline) that would make them useful in society. Herbert believed that regular practise would lead to mastery of any terrain or obstacle and would also help participants manage psycho-emotional problems of fear, doubt, aggression and exhaustion (Atkinson, 2009).

### **2.2.3 The Development of Parkour and Free Running**

Herbert tutored at the college of Rheims where he developed the natural method of physical disciplining (Atkinson, 2009). It was to be practised in open environments that contained a variety of landscapes and obstacles. The participant would be able to run, walk, climb, jump, lift and balance and regular practise would improve energy levels and will power (Atkinson, 2009). Dealing with a variety of psycho - emotional states (e.g., aggression, anxiety, fear, doubt, and exhaustion) during training provided valuable experience that created a sense of inner peace when they were overcome (Atkinson, 2009).

The government honoured Herbert with the Legion of Honour in 1995 for his commitment to physical exercise. The training method was adopted by the French army during the 1960's and by French soldiers who had to deal with awkward terrain and cope with the psychological difficulties of the Vietnam War (Atkinson, 2009). Raymonde Belle was a French soldier in the Vietnam War and when he returned passed on his knowledge of Georges Hebert's natural method to his son David Belle (Atkinson, 2009).

David Belle developed the natural method with his friend Sebastian Foucan. At the age of fifteen Belle and Foucan developed their own style of the natural method and called it parkour (Atkinson, 2009). David Belle and his friend Sebastian Foucan popularised it by performing in the *Jump Britain* (2005) and *Jump London* (2003) documentaries. The documentaries demonstrated that considerable athletic skill was needed to complete jumps, rolls and flips (Atkinson, 2009). The documentaries provided insight into the parkour philosophy that is concerned with an emotional relationship with the environment (Ameel and Tani, 2011).

The difference between parkour and free running has been attributed to the breakup of friendship between David Belle and Sebastian Foucan over issues surrounding the core values of parkour (Atkinson, 2009). It is suggested in the literature that free running is going in a different direction and that it is concerned with the spectacle of its complex tricks, flips and spins. O'Grady (2012) explains that over the last ten years parkour and its alternative form have developed into a highly visible culture. O'Grady (2012) argues that it is a subcultural phenomenon that has links with art, performance and branches of education.

### **2.2.4 Environmentalism and Transcendentalism**

Atkinson (2009) suggests that Herbert's natural method and the variation parkour closely resemble environmentalism and American Transcendentalism. Transcendentalism reveals spiritual truths on natural phenomena in a symbolic manner when studied from a social, environmental, spiritual and individual perspective.

Henry David Thoreau (1854) is accredited with being the first North American environmentalist. He applied a transcendental approach during his emersion into nature when researching material for his book called *Walden*. Atkinson (2009) argues that parkour philosophies have significantly similar ideology with Thoreau's environmentalism and transcendentalism.

### Thoreau's Philosophies

- *Thoreau was determined to live his life absorbed in nature and refused on principle to take part in the modernist industrial way of life and instead preferred to criticise it in a transcendental manner.*
- *Thoreau (1849) insists that individuals have a moral obligation and spiritual duty to resist. He explains that this is essential for maintaining spiritual integrity and to set a moral example to others. He says that small acts of noncompliance can stimulate social awareness, debate and change.*

Atkinson (2009) suggests that participants of parkour collectively resist the social arrangements of the city in a non violent way and stimulate a critique of urban life in the modern world.

### **2.2.5 Parkour Training and Practise**

Parkour group training sessions function according to a process of observing, mentoring, peer to peer coaching, encouragement, comparison and role modelling (O'Grady, 2012). The group encourage individuals to work as hard as possible towards achieving their goals. Group training is fundamentally a social activity that is conducted in a mutually supportive manner (Atkinson, 2009). Often participants will work in pairs with someone who has a similar level of ability or someone who they have connected with. These pairs then form part of a larger team who will train together at different training sessions where knowledge and experience is shared. The sessions include the forming of friendships, the practise of physical techniques and networking (O'Grady, 2012).

Most parkour groups encourage new participants to attend a designated meeting point to train within the public space of the city. The participant seeks unrestricted movement within the city incorporating various moves (e.g., palm spins, vaults, tic-tac, kong, cat leap, monkey vault and cat balance) that include jumping, sliding, diving, vaulting and climbing. Identifying moves and allocating names to them helps the participant to evaluate how to affectively approach an obstacle (O’Grady, 2012).

Bavinton (2007) comments that there are consequences associated with misjudging a jump and as part of the training process the participant will seek to overcome this. During a training session moves are practised repeatedly in a playful manner to maximise the chances of fluid movement over each obstacle (O’Grady, 2012). Bavinton (2007, p. 403) explains that it is like water flowing down stream and around obstacles to keep moving rather than crashing into them. Any emotions of dejection, disappointment, fear and frustration are accepted and considered to be fundamental to the psycho-emotional aspect of training. O’Grady (2012) suggests that the self regulated parkour training group might harbour values that are both disciplining and resistant at the same time.

### **2.2.6 Meanings and Motivations**

O’Grady (2012) discovered that the participants that she interviewed considered parkour to be a way of life and a way of expressing who they were. Bavinton (2007) looked at the subjective experience of parkour and suggests that participation is concerned with internal space and physical strength. Bavinton (2007, p. 402) asserts that practise (jumping, rolling and running) is of great importance but the physical elements are merely the outward visible expression of the underlying philosophy. Parkour philosophy emphasises the use of spectacular forms of running and gymnastic movement for intense self-introspection and awareness. Lyng (1990) suggests that participants seek to examine the nature of their own will, wants and desires because their true nature is corrupted by processes of consumerism.

The participants in O'Grady's (2012) research talked about their personal development as well as improvements to their physical ability. One participant said that most of his improvements were psychological. O'Grady (2012) explains that the role of psycho-emotional and physical play is central to the performance of parkour. Improved mental efficiency and strength were considered to be transferable skills that were associated with overcoming personal obstacles, growing self awareness and confidence building (O'Grady, 2012). A participant talked about how preparation for a big jump provided insight into knowing personal boundaries (O'Grady, 2012).

Saville (2008, p. 892) states that the emotional aspects of parkour and repeated practise sessions are concerned with overcoming psychological obstacles. Saville (2008, p. 893) suggests that parkour is as a process that involves overcoming emotions and continuous learning towards confronting fear as a lived experience. Atkinson (2009) suggests that traceurs (parkour participants) place themselves in patterned contexts of suffering.

### Patterned Contexts of Suffering

- *Physical.*
- *Mental.*
- *Emotional.*
- *Social.*

Atkinson (2009) argues that this provides an opportunity for participants to reflect on what creates suffering in their lives. Atkinson (2009) suggests that it is possible to deconstruct a participants desire to understand the extent of their suffering using Schopenhauer's (1903) understanding of the human will. Schopenhauer (1903) argues that most lived experience has suffering that is caused by motivations of the human will. Schopenhauer (1903) predicted that western culture would become disconnected from nature, commodity orientated and fragmented.

Schopenhauer (1903) predicted that desire for social power and material goods would produce widespread human suffering. Schopenhauer (1903) explains that freedom from suffering occurs when a person resists the human will that is driven by external desires. Denying the urges of the human will can provide a person with space to see the nature of their suffering and therefore be liberated from it (Atkinson, 2009).

Atkinson (2009) discovered that the participants in his study prevented the pressures of materialism and the fears associated with it from entering their minds whilst practising parkour. This enabled them to move uninhibitedly within the city in a liberated manner. Schopenhauer (1903) suggests that people can encounter their life drive by looking internally at themselves to discover how desire, fear and suffering are connected. Atkinson (2009) explains that participants master the art of letting go physically and psychologically by repeatedly completing dangerous moves. They begin to trust the mind and body instinctually and move without being conscious of their fears and social desires.

### **2.2.7 Belonging**

O’Grady (2012) says that an important motive for participation in group sports is affiliation because of its psychological health benefits. Belonging to a subculture can increase a person’s self esteem and sense of self worth. Haggan and Chatzisarantis (2005) suggest that within group dynamics is a group norm concept whereby acceptable behaviours are established amongst the group. O’Grady (2012) in her research identified a set of parkour group and training norms.

#### Parkour Group Norms

- *Non hierarchical.*
- *Non competitive.*
- *Inclusive and supportive.*

### Group Norms for Parkour Training

- *Mutual support and collaboration.*
- *Community spirit and inclusion.*

O’Grady (2012) discovered that group norms were arranged in a horizontal hierarchical manner. Atkinson (2009) identified a similar set of parkour group norms in his research.

### Parkour Group Norms

- *A physical culture that values human spirituality.*
- *Process orientated and holistic.*
- *Community-orientated.*
- *Morally aware, green and spiritual.*
- *Cooperative and non competitive.*
- *Social inclusion and not hierarchical.*
- *Physical and emotional development through athleticism and not medical, technical, power or performance.*

#### **2.2.8 Pure Play Spirit**

Ameel and Tani (2011) say that the participants in their study experienced a feeling of being the focus of curiosity whilst they maintained a childlike and playful approach in their environments. Atkinson (2009 p. 184) observes that participants frequently use the word playground to describe how they perceive the built environment.

Through play participants capture their sense of space and place within the city and make creative use of the streets, buildings and obstacles that surround them (Atkinson, 2009). According to Geyh (2006) parkour recreates urban space into a place of movement and free play amongst the cities architectural obstacles and its inhabitants. Atkinson (2009); Stevens (2007) and Geyh (2006) emphasise the playful and lucid nature of parkour.

### **2.2.9 Flow**

The Hungarian psychologist Csikszentmihalyi (1975) describes the flow state as being a fusion or immersion at the time of high concentration. Csikszentmihalyi (1975) explains that for a participant to experience flow their abilities must match the psychological and physical challenge. Le Breton (2000) has observed that participants usually associate flow with being experienced outdoors in natural environments. Le Breton (2000) argues that this is indicative of modern anxiety and isolation with participants wanting to escape urban life. O’Grady (2012) suggests that the ultimate aim of the participant is to let go physically and psychologically. To achieve this state continuous and regulated training must take place. Atkinson (2009) explains that a participant will only experience flow if they reflect upon the restricting and pathological nature of the urban environment. Atkinson (2009, p. 178) argues that when this happens the conscious and conceptual mind are dissolved and the mind and body become one.

### **2.2.10 Aesthetics**

Ameel and Tani (2011) explain that participants in their study talked about seeing the environment in a specific way and this was called parkour eyes. Participants would see areas that would normally appear unattractive as attractive with enticing details that presented opportunities for parkour practise. Ameel and Tani (2011) discovered that the practise of parkour makes visible ordinary surroundings and illuminates their aesthetic qualities. It is a process that re-evaluates what is considered to be of aesthetic value in everyday life and what isn’t.

Haapala (2005) argues that forming a unique bond with the everyday environment is an essential part of aesthetic appreciation and that familiarity and a sense of belonging are the basis for everyday aesthetics. He says that it is this that makes the experience qualitatively different from the aesthetic experiences of unfamiliar surroundings.

Lam (2005) says that participants see rails, walls, fences, stairs and benches as opportunities for use in playful ways and that they will be evaluated according to their usability and aesthetic value. Lam (2005) explains that an environmental setting must provide stimulating opportunities for participants. Ameel and Tani (2011) discovered that participants had preferences in their everyday surroundings including objects, structures (stable and solid) and spatial conditions.

Saville (2008) suggests that parkour is not always quick movement from one place to another. The process involves getting to know the physical surroundings by testing the surfaces and practising a variety of moves. This strengthens the affiliation that a participant will have with the environment. Saville (2008) and Haapala (2005) explain that participants acquire a personal environmental knowledge base (complex emotional and aesthetical values) that is developed during engagement with the environment. Haapala (2005) has identified familiarity and strangeness as two terms with which a person approaches the world. According to Haapala (2005) strangeness creates an appropriate setting for aesthetic consideration. Being a stranger somewhere causes outsider curiosity which is a fundamental feature of aesthetics.

Ameel and Tani (2011) suggest that some locations might lose their attraction over time as the participant skills evolve. They also suggest that a participant might return to a familiar place to find new opportunities. Ameel and Tani (2011) say that seeing through parkour eyes opens up new possibilities in everyday mundane environments that contain spatial structures. These places become aesthetically pleasing providing opportunities for emotional attachment with participants experiencing freedom and playfulness.

Ameel and Tani (2011) suggest parkour is not only a discipline that trains the body and mind but also the imagination. The participant develops an acute sense of place and a sense of everyday aesthetics that is based on an environment's potential usability. The participant is able to see beauty in everyday surroundings that may appear dull and ordinary to an outsider. With parkour eyes they see external physical conditions as having lots of potential for an innovative and playful use of space (Ameel and Tani, 2011). Atkinson (2009) says that moves can appear aesthetically beautiful like water flowing over rocks. Atkinson (2009) comments that the sense of connection parkour has with the urban landscape is purely aesthetic.

### **2.2.11 Standardisation, Regulation and Sportisation**

(PKUK) is a UK national governing body for parkour and it aims to manage the administration, development and promotion of both parkour and free running (O'Grady, 2012). The organisation has qualified instructors that provide professional and standardised instruction on parkour and free running. Gilchrist and Wheaton (2011) note that parkour is part of the social inclusion agenda with parkour related activities being introduced into the UK's national curriculum for physical education. O'Grady (2012) suggests that regulated parkour programmes will benefit physical education and aid social cohesion but remains concerned that this might harm the essence of the subcultural activity.

Belle and Foucan had followers in Paris and Europe throughout the 1990's. The media in France, United Kingdom and Netherlands portrayed the practice of it as being a life style urban youth counterculture. They were not concerned with its core and philosophical ideologies (Atkinson, 2009). As part of the commercialisation process the media images focused on the spectacular aspects of parkour. It became a style and commodity culture movement with many aspects of it becoming commodified (e.g., parkour language, jargon, clothing, language and moves) (O'Grady, 2012).

Foucan was happy to sell parkour to global audiences through television commercials, movies, documentaries, training schools, clothing, video games and international parkour competitions (Atkinson, 2009). This caused Foucan and Belle to disagree over the purpose and meaning of parkour. Belle wanted to adhere to the original essence of the natural method and Foucan was developing an aesthetically driven parkour (free running). Belle remained more resistant to spectacularisation and sportisation processes whereas Foucan continued to develop free running with emphasis on entertainment value and spectacle.

Atkinson (2009) explains that in the last thirty years many resistant alternative sports have been victims of incorporation into mainstream sports cultures. They become institutionalised, formal, vertically hierarchical and exist according to intense competition, social exclusion and domination of others. Heidegger (1977) suggests that technology controls the city which functions according to capitalist ontological, rationalized rules and standards that maintain the flow of products and services. He suggests that humans are systematically subordinated to serve technology and that technology uses humans more than humans use technology.

### **2.2.12 Globalisation**

David Belle and Sebastian Foucan disagreed about the meanings and purpose of parkours core values. This caused local, global and demographic distinctions to emerge within the subculture (Atkinson, 2009).

#### Subcultural Distinctions

- *Participants who adhere strictly to Herbert's original style and believe that this is the only true method of practice that must be conducted in the wild.*
- *Natural method traditionalist participants who believe that training can be done in the urban environment with both social and psychological benefits to be gained.*

- *Free runners who follow Foucault's interpretation of parkour and understand the spiritual and moral underpinnings of parkour but prefer the entertainment and commodification aspects of freerunning.*

Atkinson (2009) identifies competitive free runners as being the largest demographic within the parkour global network. The participants are usually white males, residing in urban environments and come from lower middle to upper working class backgrounds (Atkinson, 2009).

It is suggested that some will engage in the practice on a casual basis to be associated with the image of free running and not follow it as a way of life (Atkinson, 2009). Atkinson (2009) explains that participants without a level of commitment and an appreciation of core values might be inclined to move from one alternative sport experience to the next. Atkinson (2009) suggests that western capitalist global design oppresses the human spirit and impairs environmental awareness. He argues that reconnecting with the environment can lead to moral, spiritual and cultural change.

### **2.2.13 Reinventing the Use of City Space**

Rawlinson and Guaralda (2011) in their research investigate into whether underground forms of play are reinterpreting the use of city space and whether this will have any impact on the design of a city. Mould (2009) looks at the relationship participants have with their environments and argues that participation is not a violent attack against urban structures and values. Atkinson (2009) explains that their actions are open to interpretation as deviant because they refuse to comply with the original function of public space. O'Grady (2012) explains that most public spaces are out of bounds to forms of play and that participants find unconventional ways of moving through the city. Operating outside of the accepted rationalised standards of being in the city can alert the attention of the authorities (O'Grady, 2012).

Atkinson (2009) has interpreted the practise of parkour as form of environmental criticism. He suggests that it is a recent version of flaneurism with participant activities resembling those of the flaneur who used to walk the streets of Paris interacting with them in their own particular way. Atkinson (2009) argues that participants are expressing contempt towards contained, authoritarian, competitive and consumer-based cultural experiences. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) in their research note that the city functions according to strict regulations and forms of confinement that starkly contrast with the values attributed to the practise of parkour and free running.

Kytta (2002) focuses on the potentiality of an environment in relation to the extent that it can be manipulated by participants in a playful manner. Ortuzar (2009) and Bavinton (2007) point out that parkour participants actively reinterpret the environment. They argue that participants see the city in a fragmented way that is properly interpreted through movement. Ortuzar (2009); Dovey (2007) and Geyh (2006) explain that mobility in urban space is pre-arranged for special types of movement. Franck and Stevens (2007) discuss the concept of tight space. Saville (2008) in his ethnographic study into parkour is concerned with emotional environments and the emotions a participant experiences during interaction with it.

Ameel and Tani (2011) suggest that parkour is a playful way of attaching positive emotions to everyday environments. Ameel and Tani (2011) and Saville (2008) look at how participants interact with the environment and talk about parkour vision that describes a deepening familiarity with the space around them. Ameel and Tani (2011) say that having parkour eyes involves a unique way of visualising space and a new way of attaching feelings to everyday environments. They explain that a participant creates an emotional bond with the environment in a child like way to use it for emotional, physical and psychological development. Ameel and Tani (2011) discovered that participants wanted to recapture local city space that is used for commercial interest and is publicly controlled by surveillance cameras.

The participants described the urban environment as being a cold, artificial, fragmented and impersonal place. Atkinson (2009) argues that sociologists have overlooked how traceurs resist the late modern capitalist way of life through forms of athleticism.

### **2.2.14 Resistance**

Academic research into parkour suggests that it is a form of resistance that challenges the realities of urban life and the hierarchical control of planned public space (Archer, 2010; Atkinson, 2009; Saville, 2008; Daskalaki *et al.*, 2008; Bavinton, 2007; Geyh, 2006). Atkinson (2009) explains that participation penetrates the commercial hegemony of the city which raises awareness on its social construction and the movement within it.

Bavinton (2007) and Rojek (1995) comment that most leisure activities are performed within a limited setting including a football pitch, tennis court, skate park or a golf course. They explain that parkour challenges traditional sports conventions by treating the city as an urban playground without limits or boundaries. O’Grady (2012) says that in the open air parkour operates as a process of resistance as well as a form of discipline. Saville (2008) suggests that participants are contesting systems of control and resistance. Gilchrist and Wheaton (2011) suggest that parkour participants are perhaps people who have been marginalised away from the mainstream. O’Grady (2012) acknowledges in her research that parkour has a potentially resistant status as a counter culture, but argues it is a system of learning for individuals who have been excluded from traditional sports. Atkinson and Young (2008) suggest that resistance to commodity hedonism and environmental destruction might be represented by symbolic participation in intense physical activity.

Atkinson (2009) states that subcultural research for more than four decades has shown that the core ideological messages of counter cultural movements are unnoticed, misunderstood or co-opted into popular culture. Atkinson (2009) notes that despite being new physical cultures free running and parkour might not have a significant impact on urban thinking or spatial use.

### 2.3 Psychological Considerations

To contextualise parkour and free running it was necessary to assess the extent to which the literature identifies the psychological aspects of high risk sports in general (Gratton and Jones, 2004). The journal articles that were reviewed focused on personality, meanings and motivations behind high risk behaviour.

#### 2.3.1 Personality

Studies into personality focus on the relationship between the practise of extreme sport and certain personality traits. They suggest that extreme sport practitioners prefer novel and high risk activities (Diehm and Armatas, 2004; Franques *et al.*, 2003; Shoham *et al.*, 1998; Rowland, *et al.*, 1986). Most of these studies compare scores obtained from experimental and control groups using Zuchermans Sensation Seeking Scale (SSS) to validate their findings. For example; Diehm and Armatas (2004) implemented a quasi-experimental design and used the Sensation Seeking Scale to validate their findings. Rowland, *et al.* (1986) administered the Sensation Seeking Scale to twenty members of a University mountaineering club and twenty one control volunteers to validate their findings. Zuckerman (1979) defines sensation seeking as “the need for varied, novel and complex sensations and experiences and the willingness to take physical and social risks for the sake of such an experience” (Zuckerman, 1979, p. 10).

Willig (2008) conducted phenomenological research into the experience of taking part in extreme sport with eight extreme practitioners. She interviewed three male skydivers, two male mountaineers, a female mountaineer and a female and male who practiced a range of extreme sports. Willig (2008) discovered that skydivers tended to focus on the social (camaraderie) aspects of the experience whereas for the mountaineers it was flow (emotional benefit) that was more central. She suggests that the personality trait has only a modest influence on whether a person will participate in dangerous physical activities.

Greenfeld *et al.* (1999) suggest that many Americans deliberately seek risk and that risk seeking may be psychological. They explain that risk-seeking is a uniquely human trait whereby a person deliberately overcomes their normal instincts to take unnecessary risks. The type of person that does this has been identified as having a Type T personality. Koerner (1997) says that thrill seeking personalities are creative individuals who crave novelty and excitement and are naturally extrovert.

Type T positive physical individuals seek physical outlets and Type T positive mental personalities seek mental thrills. Type T negatives are inclined towards drugs, promiscuity and violent crime. Koerner (1997) argues that novelty seekers possess a gene that makes them particularly responsive to dopamine which is linked to feel good sensations. He says that promiscuity, drug abuse and extreme sports keep dopamine levels high.

Greenfeld *et al.* (1999) argue that some people can enjoy life only when they are committed to the search of thrills. They support the claim that extreme practitioners tend to be sensation seekers. They suggest that some enter high risk sports impulsively and self destructively but declare that most enter with positive motivation. Koerner (1997) points out that these personalities often have reduced levels of monoamine oxidase (MAO). MAO regulates the brains serotonin level which influences feelings of well being and anxiety. Csikszentmihalyi (1975) explains that social arrangements often fail to provide adequate challenges for teenagers so they seek alternative channels for creativity and meaning.

### **2.3.2 Meaning and Motivation**

A few qualitative studies have been completed on the meaning and motivation for participation in extreme sports. For example, Larkin and Griffiths (2004) analysed the accounts of five bungee-jumpers on their involvement in the sport and Celsi *et al.* (1993) conducted an ethnographic study of skydiving. Celsi *et al.* (1993) identified a dynamic process of motivational change as participants progressed from novice to experienced skydiver.

At the inter and intrapersonal levels of motivation participants seek to move from the normative motivations of thrill seeking to the efficacy motives of mastery and to the more abstract levels of identity and community (Celsi *et al.*, 1993). In both studies the participants benefited emotionally (flow) and socially (mastery of the activity leading to increased confidence and self-esteem). The studies show that extreme sport can be understood as being a meaningful and purposeful activity.

Willig (2008) suggests that participation in extreme sport is a way of extending the range of life experiences which ultimately enriches the quality of life for a participant. In her study participants talked about how extreme activities grounded them and got rid of negative energy and that this lifted them to another level. The studies into meanings and motivations for involvement in high risk sports indicate that participation can be interpreted as being a dynamic process of motive evaluation and risk acculturation that leads to the formation of a high risk identity (Celsi *et al.*, 1993). These studies have provided insight into why individuals take part in high risk activities when most people would consider them to be unnecessary.

### **2.3.3 Dangerous Sports and Flow**

Academic research into dangerous sports activities suggest that they function as mood modifiers and a way of re-establishing psychological balance (e.g., Larkin and Griffiths, 2004; Franques *et al.*, 2003). Willig (2008) argues that a participant's desire to go up to and past their physical and psychological limits could be construed as being therapeutic as it allows the participant to transcend the self (e.g., the experience of flow). Other researchers (e.g., Le Breton, 2000; Celsi *et al.*, 1993; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975) have also identified a state of mind and body known as flow. They believe flow has a major influence on keeping participants involved with extreme sport. Celsi *et al.* (1993) discovered from the data that was retrieved that flow was the ultimate aim and purpose of the practise of skydiving. For Celsi *et al.* (1993) it was the flow state that was found to be potentially addictive and not thrills and excitement.

It is clear in the literature that a factor that motivates participants to take risks is the thrill and excitement that result from risk taking. Willig (2008) explains that initially participants will be concerned with developing trust in their own ability. Once this is achieved the participant will move onto the development of skill and achievement. The participant will be learning to create and manage the risk context which is ultimately very empowering (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). In the literature participants of high risks sports explain that participation restores and transports them to new heights of feeling and of existing (Willig, 2008). The quick rush of adrenaline generates a sense of internal strength that is almost ecstasy (Shoham *et al.*, 1998). They reach a level of fullness of being that instantly justifies all their previous efforts.

### **2.4 Sociological Considerations**

To contextualise parkour and free running it was necessary to assess the extent to which the literature identifies the sociological aspects of high risk sports in general (Gratton and Jones, 2004). The journal articles that were reviewed focused on the professionalisation of sport, globalisation, subcultures, post sports and the media.

#### **2.4.1 Professional Sport**

On a professional level sport has become a way of earning a living and as a consequence become more controlled. The concept of professionalism in sport was generated during the 1860's which increased the intensity towards winning (Horne, *et al.*, 1999). Weber (cited in Cashmore, 2000) believes that modern societies are typified by rational forms of society action. He says that emotional bases of action were replaced by rational motivated actions. Rational action had narrow aims and objectives that were geared towards providing a means to an end or obtaining value for money. The driving force of modern society became calculation about how best to achieve a required outcome (Horne *et al.*, 1999).

Professionalism meant the introduction of specialist coaches, trainers, in-depth planning, organising, image portrayal and a significant shift from self-discipline to managerial discipline. Ritzer (2010) suggests that individual personalities and sensitivities have been gripped and dominated by a need to be efficient, predictable, standardised and uniform in codes of conduct. Ritzer (2010) explains that this has occurred to ensure that tasks are performed efficiently and uniformly to guarantee the desired results are achieved. Maguire (1999) argues that these processes produce sport performances that are homogenised, one dimensional, artificial, stifled and unattractive.

Simon (1985) suggests that competitors in professional sport are considered as being obstacles to be overcome and not as fellow participants. Waddington (2000) explains that the mechanisation of exercise can make it a laborious activity and expensive when joining a gym. Simon (1985) says that competition requires players to perform according to strict quantitative evaluation processes to meet standards and expectations without having any relevance for self-improvement. Csikzentmihalyi (1990) comments that the amateur spirit and values relating to quality of experience have been replaced by the need for achievement and quality of performance.

### **2.4.2 Post Sports**

Guttman (2000, p. 256) suggests that we have entered a postmodern era with sports being characterised by spontaneity and playfulness and not rationality and standardisation. Dunning (1992) explains that free activities are activities that are outside traditional ordinary life and are usually informal whilst at the same time participants are fully absorbed in the activity. Kellner (cited in Wheaton, 2000) comments that self identity is usually based on features of traditional society including work, age, gender, ethnicity and religion. Kellner (cited in Wheaton, 2000) explains that late modernity has impacted upon self identity whereby it has become more individual, fluid, self critical and innovative.

Booth (cited in Wheaton and Beal, 2003) suggests that the extreme sport of windsurfing with the individual working against the environment represents a resistance towards competition and commercialism. Wheaton (2004) explores the sociological meaning of lifestyle sports that are outside the mainstream and where danger and excitement drive the activities forward. She points out that many of these individualised sports are anti-competitive, high risk, anti-establishment and dominated by sense of personal freedom, self-expression and individualist attitudes (e.g., style of clothing worn). Farmer (cited in Wheaton, 2000) suggests that risk taking opposes the values of the dominant culture.

Wheaton (2004 p.15) explains that, “traditional climbers see authentic dwellings as the proper use of nature which translates into the preservation of the cliff environment. The climbers resist the overwhelming processes of commercialisation and rationalisation by deliberately seeking to maintain high levels of risk and uncertainty and by partaking in the natural act of climbing itself”. She suggests that sports like this are growing in number as a direct opponent to the professionalisation of sport. Fiske (cited in Wheaton, 2000) says that danger, excitement and a disregard of safety are vital components of the extreme sport experience. Wheaton and Beal (2003) explain that windsurfers value the sense of escaping from society and the association with danger. Borden (2001) suggests that skateboarding challenges the design and intended purpose of a city. Participants reject the formal rationalising of urban space with unconventional behaviour that is spontaneous and creative. Wheaton and Beal (2003) explain that many new sports cultures have an anti mainstream ethos.

### **2.4.3 Subcultural Identity and Status**

Wheaton (2000) says that identity is concerned with belonging, sharing a common interest with people and also what differentiates people from one another. Donnelly and Young (cited in Wheaton, 2000) explain that a new participant will develop from being on the outside to being on the inside of the group as part of the process of becoming an extreme participant.

The emphasis of the participant's identity will change from an external display of participation to one that seeks recognition from members within the subculture.

Wheaton (2000) discovered that skill, attitude and commitment to the windsurfing activity were central to attaining subcultural status. Participants with low levels of commitment did not receive full subcultural status. Wheaton and Beal (2003) explain that people create a self identity that is substantiated by the products they purchase, display and the lifestyle choices they make. In post modern society people choose their identities according to visual signs of dress and expressed commitment to specialist activities (Wheaton, 2000). Wheaton and Beal (2003) note that windsurfing is not just a media spectacle or a form of casual recreation but a complex subculture. For the committed participant it becomes a way of life that centres on freedom and self expression. Wheaton (2000) says that for core members of windsurfing major life decisions will revolve around their windsurfing way of life. Wheaton (2000) comments that in postmodern society, identities persistently incur new forces and influences from the media.

#### **2.4.4 Globalisation**

The thrust of commercialism relates to the intermingling of media, marketing, sponsors and sports organisations on a global scale (Maguire, 1999). Globalisation is evidenced by sport symbols for example; the football club Manchester United is recognised all over the world, the introduction of soccer to the United States and the spread of American Football around the globe (Whannel, 2000). Wertheim (2004) explains that the National Basketball Association with its basketball league has the largest international television spectatorship. Its broadcast of the 2004 NBA finals was received by two hundred and five countries in forty two different languages.

Bero Rigauer (cited in Horne, *et al.*, 1999) comments that modern sports are characterised by their association with large corporations. He says that large organisations have penetrated and taken over sport. He notes that sport governing bodies were instrumental in developing commercialism in sport.

Much of the transformation of sport came from opportunists, mavericks and entrepreneurs who established themselves as sports agents. For example, Dassler of Adidas and Rupert Murdoch of News Corporation.

Wheaton and Beal (2003) discovered in their research into the authentication of alternative sports that niche magazines for windsurfing were often produced nationally and some were produced in other countries. Some magazines were informed by transnational global processes. National, international and local extreme sport participants appear in windsurfing and skateboarding niche magazines (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). The niche magazines informed readers about the local and global aspects of the sport and were an external visual sign to others of association with the sport. The colourful media adverts tended to project the institutionalised and commodified aspect of windsurfing (Wheaton and Beal, 2003).

### **2.4.5 The Commodification of Extreme Sports**

Wheaton and Beal (2003) argue that processes of consumerism, commodification and commercialisation create products for consumption (e.g., clothing and equipment), enhance subcultural meanings and diffuse cultural knowledge. Crouch and Tomlinson (1994) explain that postmodern sports have been dominated by commercial processes that focus on the spectacle. Wheaton (2000) says that extreme sports are presented in a highly visual manner in the media. For example, Red Bull associate their products with images of extreme sport. Wheaton and Beal (2003) comment that several participants in their study did not resist materialistic processes but were concerned about loss of power in being able to define their own meanings. Wheaton and Beal (2003) suggest that it is a political struggle between the subculture and media in an attempt to establish an accurate representation of the activity.

### 2.4.6 Counter Culture and the Media

Rinehart and Sydnor (2003) suggest that media corporations like ESPN have been instrumental in developing extreme sport practises and identities. Wheaton and Beal (2003) argue that the counter culture associated with extreme ESPN's X Games and NBC's Gravity Games is largely co-opted between the event organisers and participants.

Wheaton and Beal (2003) say this is an age of lifestyle branding and that media and consumer industries have seized extreme sports to sell their products. Thornton (1995) argues that the mass media have an influence on subcultures that is co-opting in nature and that it redefines subcultures by challenging their core values. She says that the media play a key role in the creation and development of subcultures. Thornton (1995) explains that the media are instrumental in defining a culture and distributing cultural knowledge. They diffuse information about its activities and circulate subcultural meanings and symbols as part of the commercialisation process.

Muggleton (cited in Wheaton and Beal, 2003) contends that subcultures are counter hegemonic responses to subordinated working class status that has changed values from being a site of originality to one of resistance to commercial incorporation. Wheaton and Beal (2003) explain that the media play an important role in providing cultural knowledge and participants are better informed on equipment and brands and therefore more affective in displaying subcultural identity. Symbolic association is displayed via clothes worn and group jargon. This form of association is what distinguishes them from other sport cultures and the mainstream. Wheaton and Beal (2003); Whannel (2000) and Jacques (1997) attribute the growth of new extreme sports to an increase of individualism in sport participation and consumption.

### **2.4.7 Authenticity in Extreme Sport**

Barker (cited in Wheaton and Beal, 2003) states that authenticity refers to recognised peer social respect. Widdicombe and Wooffitt (cited in Wheaton and Beal, 2003) suggest that subcultural involvement is connected to a participants need to reveal a true inner self that provides authenticity. Muggleton (cited in Wheaton and Beal, 2003) says that a participant's sense of status within a hierarchy is challenged and assessed according to status and legitimacy. Existing ethnographic research into extreme (alternative or lifestyle) sports indicate that authentic membership status is dependent on commitment, attitude, gender, class, and race.

Wheaton (2000) discovered that practising commitment to an extreme sport was an important factor associated with authenticity. Wheaton and Beal (2003) explain that authenticity is related to a participant's ability to understand the subtle aesthetics of their sport and through participation. Thornton (1995) suggests that the media play a key role in authenticating popular cultural practises. She explains that it is not a simple process of incorporation followed by a resistance and struggle to it or instant cooperation. Thornton (1995) suggests that subcultures are not victims of commercialism but have an active role to play in reinventing the images and meanings circulated by the media.

Wheaton and Beal (2003) state that UK windsurfing is a marginal extreme sport with participants acquiring a sense of exclusivity by being different. Extreme sport participants often distance themselves from the standards of the dominant traditional sport culture. Their sense of individuality is reaffirmed by partaking in training sessions that are non-hierarchical in comparison to traditional sports (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). Borden (2001) says that in the 1970's supervised skate parks came to an end and the urban environment became the new place to skate. Practising in these easily accessible public spaces creates a sense of authenticity.

Companies intentionally use the insider mentality of subcultures to enhance the authenticity of their adverts. Wheaton and Beal (2003) discovered that insider knowledge within the windsurfing magazines consisted of weather, techniques, value systems and general discussions. Wheaton and Beal (2003) also discovered a lifestyle ritual amongst participants of watching the weather forecast, where they were based.

### **2.4.8 Resistance**

Maguire (1999) says that global incorporation and domination often create local resistance. Wheaton and Beal (2003) discovered that resistance to commercial practises coexisted within the windsurfing subculture. Wheaton and Beal (2003) explain that during the late 1980's and early 1990's in the UK surf style entered into the mainstream men's fashion industry. When this happened the distinctiveness and sense of exclusivity of the subculture style decreased. Wheaton and Beal (2003) consider this process a formal form of symbolic resistance to the introduction of surf style into mainstream fashion and its commercialisation.

Wheaton and Beal (2003) observed in their ethnographic study that windsurfers did purchase branded clothing but didn't want to be thought of as doing so to follow fashion. Wheaton (2000) explains that image and style play a part in subcultural identity but commitment to the activity was more important. Wheaton (2000) suggests that some sections of society have increased freedom to alter their identities and that postmodern identities are made up of the images, tastes and styles that are manipulated by the media. Wheaton (2000) explains that this represents a coexistent aspect of the post modern experience. Whereby a sense of subcultural authenticity and localised resistance towards mass consumption and materialism exist together. Borden (2001) argues that skateboarding is dismissive of authority and has a rebellious status that exists as a collective act of resistance against the planned and stifling city. He says that skateboarding is oppositional in nature and part of a resistant culture.

Wheaton (2000) says that extreme sport accommodates a cultural space that exists between the oppositions of production and consumption. Crouch and Tomlinson (1994) suggest that in the post modern era people are constructing their own subcultures and developing new identities. Lash (cited in Wheaton, 2000) mentions that popular postmodernist culture intensifies consumerist values that often weaken the work ethic. Lash (cited in Wheaton, 2000) suggests that postmodern sports are not always associated with individualism but are more localised collective identities based on the work ethic or the community.

### **Summary**

The information obtained from the literature review has strengthened understanding on the emergence of parkour and free running. The literature review has stimulated ideas, arguments and has become a constant resource. The important issues that have arisen have added an extra dimension by providing a greater depth of knowledge (Mason, 2002).

### CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

#### Overview

The chapter begins with an account of qualitative research, an evaluation of the various qualitative research techniques available and an explanation on why a qualitative approach was incorporated into the study (Gratton and Jones, 2004). The chapter develops into a more specific look at phenomenology as a research method within the qualitative research domain (Hunter and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The methodology chapter then highlights the appropriateness of IPA as a procedure for information analysis (Smith *et al.*, 2009). The chapter provides considerable insight into the procedure and structure of IPA and emphasises the use of IPA for the researcher. Throughout the methodology chapter details are provided on ethics, interview style, structure, technique, setting, question design, participant recruitment, recording data, transcribing data and the validation of retrieved data (Smith *et al.*, 2009).

#### 3.1 Exploring Parkour and Free Running: A Qualitative Research Approach

Qualitative research seeks to explore phenomenon whereas quantitative research seeks to confirm hypothesis about phenomenon (Gratton and Jones, 2004). With qualitative research emphasis is placed on flexibility, allowing for greater spontaneity between the researcher and participants. A qualitative approach provides participants with the opportunity to respond elaborately and with greater detail often generating unanticipated responses. Probing questions and elaboration prompts are often used during qualitative interviews by the researcher (Kvale, 1996).

Qualitative research can increase the sense of meaningfulness that the participant and the researcher experience (Willig, 2008). Like most methodological approaches, qualitative research attempts to find out what is happening within a given field. Its approach is interpretive in that it seeks to understand people's individual and collective views to form a concept or developing theme (Moustakas, 1994). Sparkes (2002) observes that, "one of the emerging innovations in qualitative methodology has been the increasing importance that researchers have placed on reflexivity". Smith (1996, p. 195) says that reflexivity is an inevitable consequence of engaging in research with people. He explains that the researcher's mere involvement with participants can influence the direction of the research.

Smith (1996) suggests that a reflexive approach and awareness of the researcher's presence can improve the quality of the research process. Sword (1999) suggests that reflecting on the research process itself can enhance the legitimacy of the findings.

### **3.1.1 Legitimising Qualitative Research**

Biddle *et al.* (2001) assert that different legitimisation criteria are needed for both qualitative and quantitative research because they do not share the same epistemological principles. Biddle *et al.* (2001) state that epistemological issues are concerned with assumptions about types of knowledge, how to access knowledge and the different ways of acquiring knowledge. Sparkes (2002) says that an awareness of the epistemological assumptions that underline paradigms is important when completing qualitative research. Sparkes (2002) and Holloway (1997) explain that throughout the process of interpretative research, the researcher is the main research tool.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend that qualitative researchers consider the aspects of ontology, epistemology and the paradigmatic location of the research. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) the two main features that underline any social research are the positivist and the interpretative paradigms. Sparkes (2002) and Jackson (1995) say that a paradigm is similar to being a particular set of lenses through which to view the world and to make sense of it in different ways. Jackson (1995) explains that reality is viewed as a social construction and is perceived in different ways by different people. The positivist paradigm has been the dominant perspective for research in the sports domain (Lyons, 1999; Jackson, 1995). It is based on assumptions that there is a reality out there that can be objectively studied free from individual bias and is waiting to be discovered by the scientist (Jackson, 1995). The ontological perspective of the positivist paradigm is based on an external-realist approach that views reality as mind-independent (Sparkes, 2002). The interpretative paradigm has a fundamentally different perspective of the world than the positivist paradigm (Lyons, 1999).

The interpretative paradigm supports the belief that reality is constructed by subjective perception and predictions cannot be made. Researchers who adhere to this paradigm are interested in the social construction of meaning. They believe that people should be studied as active agents because they have free will, purposes, goals and intentions (Biddle *et al.*, 2001). Ontologically, it views the mind as central and therefore mind dependent. These paradigms have become a standard for qualitative research in sport when using semi-structured interviews and inductive content analysis.

Inductive content is a form of analysis whereby the researcher doesn't impose a prior framework (Holloway, 1997 p. 35). With deductive content analysis, the researcher utilises his/her prior knowledge to construct a theoretical analytical framework. Krane *et al.* (1997) explain that it is unrealistic for a researcher to tackle a study without some prior knowledge towards understanding the phenomenon under consideration. Hamersley (2000) and Krane *et al.* (1997) argue that all qualitative analysis incorporates elements of deductiveness. They point out that after any inductive primary analysis a deductive analysis is conducted as part of a validity check.

Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 226) explain that there isn't a set of criteria that can evaluate all qualitative research. Popay, *et al.* (1998, p. 44) add that there isn't an absolute list of criteria as to what constitutes good qualitative research. Some qualitative researchers suggest that trustworthiness is suitable (e.g., Hardy *et al.*, 1996). Sparkes (2002) and Biddle *et al.* (2001) suggest that any criteria used must be fundamentally consistent and clear. Sparkes (2002, p. 374) suggests that the emergence of a multitude of criteria for judging the qualitative research process indicates that there isn't a rigid approach. He explains that there are no recipes or single formulas to use. He says that different validation procedures or sets of criteria may be better suited to certain situations, types of representation and requirements for legitimisation.

### **3.1.2 Evaluating Qualitative Research Techniques**

As part of the research process it was necessary to become familiar with the various available qualitative research techniques (Mason, 2002). Some of the following qualitative tools were tested and evaluated to see whether any could be utilised for this study.

### **3.1.3 Questionnaires**

An in-depth questionnaire was designed to elicit a basic social profile from potential participants. The questions were concerned with age, gender, occupation and reasons for participation (Gratton and Jones, 2004). It was planned to distribute these via a web blog in conjunction with the organisers of the activity. However it was concluded at an early stage that this would not be an appropriate way to investigate the parkour and free running phenomenon.

The researcher was aware that epistemologically questionnaires often attempt to control bias through their design with questions being asked in a standardised manner (Mason, 2002). The researcher considered this form of analysis as perhaps being more suited for studies that required comparability between accounts of participants. The researcher considered questionnaires as being a more empirical and inductive method of generating data that was not required for this study (Mason, 2002).

### **3.1.4 Focus Group**

Initially it was felt that a focus group would help supplement a questionnaire and give the participants an opportunity to reflect and recall experiences interactively and not necessarily consensually (Mason, 2002). It was anticipated that their responses would trigger contrasting views and interesting perspectives amongst those participating. A focus group style was something that was perceived as being a useful tool to be implemented for the study.

Focus groups are group discussions designed to explore specific topics and began in the 1920's (Kitzinger, 1994). They are managed by the researcher (in an academic setting) who coordinates the group and the data collection process. Essentially, the members of the group fully explore a given topic and have the opportunity to clarify views with their peers (Morgan, 1998). Carey (1994, p. 224) explains that the group dynamic assists participants with giving information about their perceptions. Kitzinger (1994) says that focus group discussions often generate critical comments that help elicit information on sensitive topics. Kitzinger (1994, p. 109) explains that group dynamics can reveal dimensions of understanding that remain hidden when explored using one-to-one interviews or questionnaires.

Carey (1994, p. 235) notes that a possible disadvantage of the focus group is a loss of control. For example; a few individuals may dominate the discussions so that some members are unable to take an active part. To minimise this risk the researcher must manage the flow of communication as fairly as possible so that participants have the ability to talk freely. The exchange of views must occur as naturally as possible with the group maintaining focus on the topic being discussed (Krueger, 1998).

### **3.1.5 Face to Face Semi-Structured Interviews**

It was established at an early stage that this particular qualitative tool would significantly aid the research process. Qualitative interviewing is associated with in-depth, semi-structured or unrestricted types of interviewing. Qualitative interviews can refer to one-to-one interactions, group interviews or focus groups (Mason, 2002). They can occur on a face-to-face basis, over the internet or by phone. They are designed with a more lucid and flexible format that incorporates an informal conversational style of open dialogue. Qualitative interviewing operates within a framework that assumes that knowledge is constructed rather than removed (Mason, 2002).

A qualitative interview must incorporate an appropriate setting so that focus can be on retrieving knowledge that is required. Meanings and understandings are generated through the interaction that takes place between the interviewer and interviewee. This process involves a subtle construction and reconstruction of knowledge (Kvale, 1996). Qualitative interviews were selected because ontologically the researcher considered understandings, interpretations, experiences and interactions of people as meaningful characteristics of social reality (Mason, 2002).

A humanistic approach was maintained when evaluating the research questions to maximise access into the social world of the participants. Epistemologically speaking the researcher considered that asking questions, listening to interviewee accounts and subsequent analysis as a necessary process of obtaining knowledge (Mason, 2002). The researcher was aware that the interviewee would need to be able to verbalise, interchange information, conceptualise and remember. The researcher wanted the interview to bring into existence the social experiences and meanings of the interviewee's (Mason, 2002). The researcher was aware of a need to be flexible and sensitive to interaction dynamics. For example, the interview could potentially be guided by the narrative initiated by the interviewee (Mason, 2002). Qualitative interviews were considered to be appropriate because emphasis is placed on depth of experience.

A qualitative researcher is required to take an active and reflexive role during the process of data generation. The researcher anticipated that a qualitative interview would provide for a richer representation of the interviewee's experiences and furnish interviewees with more control to express themselves (Mason, 2002). The researcher understood that a qualitative interview was not a therapeutic encounter but an informal conversation with a purpose that required hard work to maintain structure and flow (Mason, 2002). Intellectual and social skills are required with an ability to think on your feet. A qualitative researcher makes immediate decisions about content and sequence of interview questions as the interview progresses.

Ultimately the researcher is responsible for managing the social dynamics of the non-rigid qualitative interview. This involves mental reasoning and an ability to make quick, considered and strategic decisions whilst interviewing (Mason, 2002).

### **3.1.6 Behavioural Observations**

Observation methods infer that a researcher has an epistemological position that suggests that knowledge or evidence of the social world can be generated by observing a real life setting (Mason, 2002). A researcher is not solely reliant on written responses to questionnaires, verbal responses in an interview or written text (Mason, 2002). To develop understanding on parkour and free running the researcher wanted to witness the social phenomena in the context of its actual setting. It was felt that this would embed knowledge on its physical, spatial and social arrangement and bring an element of originality to the study. It was an alternative approach towards understanding and a way of developing empathy with a participant that would add depth and balance to the study (Mason, 2002).

As part of the research process a parkour event that was taking place in Manchester Piccadilly Gardens was attended. The performers were part of a touring troop called; The Urban Playground. Viewing parkour in its usual social context provided insight into some of the moves that the traceurs performed and some of the objects that they used to navigate themselves around. This behavioural observation was an important part of the research process. It provided some necessary general insights and a basic grounding and platform from which the researcher could work (Gratton and Jones, 2004).

### **3.2 The Chosen Method of Data Generation/Information Analysis: Phenomenology**

Phenomenology focuses on the structure of experience and the principles that give form and meaning to the lived experience (Lavery, 2008). It is concerned with the study of experience from the perspective of the individual. Nesti (2004) explains that it is a way of looking at reality and concerned with articulating our experience of the world. Phenomenology seeks to reveal the essences of specific structures as they appear to the consciousness. It aims to make the invisible - visible (Silverman, 2009; Lavery, 2008; Mason, 2002).

There have been relatively few phenomenological studies specifically within the sport and exercise domain (Nesti, 2004). Examples of these include; Dale (1996) who utilised a phenomenological interview method in his work with sports performers, Kerry and Armour (2000) discussed how phenomenology could be used to improve understanding within sport science, Czech *et al.* (2005) used phenomenology to investigate Christian prayer in sport and Nesti (2004) explored spirituality in sport psychology. He states that phenomenology provides a particularly suitable and appropriate method for collecting data from the athletes "lived" world.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty was a respected phenomenologist in the 1960's. He believed that the lived human experience is best experienced and understood through the body (Hunter and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). He explains that the body and its human senses are information channels to worldly experience. Without them he suggests we become an island unto ourselves, lacking the ability to interact with the world. He sees the body as providing a platform for consciousness. In his view, phenomenology emphasises the importance of the lived experience and provides concepts to describe and delineate the process of human experience (Hunter and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

The phenomenological concept of intentionality provides a useful tool for investigating human experience on an individual basis (Hunter and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Intentionality is a philosophical concept that refers to a person's unique perception of the world. It is concerned with the subjective structure of experience. For example, two different people perceiving the same object may experience different reactions due to their particular state of mind (Hunter and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Intentionality implies that perception passes through an individual's interpretative lenses and is influenced by their beliefs, experiences and cultural bias. For example, a proud United Kingdom citizen might visualise the Union Jack flag when he sees the colours white, blue and red. In the mind of a patriotic Parisian it might trigger a sense of freedom, equality and brotherhood. For a Thailand citizen it might generate pride about the homeland (Hunter and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). While the colours may be the same, the associations that people have with them may be different.

An awareness of intentionality is useful when examining the influence of how we perceive things and it is also helpful in describing what we perceive (Hunter and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). To illustrate this point it is possible to compare the differing accounts that participants might provide on remembering their first encounter with the activity.

### Awareness of Intentionality

- *One participant might recall entirely picturesque impressions. For example; colours of historic buildings, works of art and architectural structures.*
- *For another participant none of this will exist and will recall distances covered whilst running, number of successful jumps and other statistical facts.*
- *Whilst the third might only recall a few moves that they completed.*

These differing sense impressions reiterate the point that each individual possess particular sensitivities that are unique to them (Hunter and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). They reveal both the qualities of places visited and the qualities of each participant's perceptions. In addition to this, intentionality refers to the fact that people also learn about themselves through the encounters and reactions of others.

Phenomenological research is descriptive in nature. It focuses on the structure of experience and the principles that give form and meaning to the lived experience (Lavery, 2008). It is concerned with the study of experience from the perspective of the individual. Nesti (2004, p. 38) explains that it is a way of looking at reality and concerned with articulating our experience of the world. Gathering an individual's personal meanings, beliefs and experiences is especially affective at gaining access into their specific motivations and actions (Moustakas, 1994). Exploring in this way and linking this approach with qualitative methods (interviews, discussions and participant observations) is a particularly effective way to develop understanding on the recent emergence of parkour and free running. Phenomenology seeks to reveal the essences of specific structures as they appear to the consciousness (Moustakas, 1994).

Heidegger (1977) and Husserl (1970) have significantly contributed to the development of phenomenology as a qualitative research method. Edmund Husserl was the founder of phenomenology which began as a philosophical movement during the first half of the twentieth century (Lavery, 2008). Husserl (1970) explains that phenomenology is a philosophical method based on the reflective and descriptive study of consciousness. It is conducted with a view to creating a sure foundation for knowledge.

Husserl (1970) suggests that the researcher brackets out the outer world and any individual bias about the phenomenon. Suspending personal beliefs and bracketing out judgements is done to help see the phenomenon more clearly (Husserl, 1970). He explains that the researcher must see things intuitively and as they actually are to protect the research from imposing assumptions or bias. According to Spinelli (2005) the purpose of bracketing is to maximise the truthfulness of the account given of an event or a person's experience. It is accepted that the process of bracketing is never complete (Nesti, 2004 p. 42). The aim is to remove as many obstacles as possible to obtain direct engagement with a particular phenomenon. Nesti (2004) states that the aim is to describe as far as possible the intentional experience as uncontaminated by foreknowledge, bias and explanation.

Martin Heidegger (1977) developed the phenomenological research approach by applying it to the meaning of being and the structure of human existence. Smith *et al.* (2009); Willig (2008); Dale (1996); Moustakas (1994); Calaizzi (1978) and Van Kaam (1969) have provided detail on the structural process of phenomenology. They explain that a researcher will need considerable technical skill and a feeling for the process overall. Nesti (2004, p. 46) says that the more artistic elements of phenomenology will require imagination, intuition, and the ability to sense what is being said.

According to Polkinghorn (1989) the phenomenological method investigates the area between human consciousness and the world. For example, parkour and free running are universally experienced phenomenon, but how they are encountered and what it means to a participant is something only they can articulate with any validity. Polkinghorn (1989) states that phenomenology is more interested in the experience of the individual rather than groups. It differs from other types of qualitative research because it focuses on a person's experience of a specific thing or event. Most qualitative approaches are focused on the descriptive account provided by people about their behaviours and actions. With phenomenology the emphasis is on trying to capture what a particular experience means to the individual (Moustakas, 1994).

Distinction between qualitative and phenomenological approaches can be further illuminated by considering the feelings of isolation associated with the experience of an injury that prevents participation in parkour or free running (Moustakas, 1994). A general qualitative approach might involve an attempt to get the individual to describe how the injury has altered their general aims and how they are trying to cope with its impact on participation. This might lead to a rich, detailed, in-depth qualitative account on how the injury happened, how they felt during it and what sort of challenges they were now facing as a result (Nesti, 2004). With the phenomenological approach, the researcher must focus only on getting the injured person to describe the thoughts and feelings in relation to the injury. No attempt to examine its causes or possible ways to deal with it must be made. Nesti (2004) explains that all efforts must be directed towards staying true to the pure description of the raw meaning of the injury.

He explains that a phenomenological researcher must not produce some kind of explanation of the event. It is important that the phenomenological researcher maintains attention on the phenomenon under consideration. They must not move away from this and try to account for its existence or speculate on a future impact (Nesti, 2004).

### 3.2.1 Procedure

IPA is one of the variants of phenomenology and it was decided to incorporate this form of analysis into the study (Smith *et al.*, 2009). The purpose of IPA is to reveal in-depth insight into how a person in a particular context understands a given phenomenon (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Qualitative analysis is a personal process whereby the researcher adheres to their own way of working with the analysis being the interpretation work itself (Smith *et al.*, 2009).

As a qualitative methodology IPA is post positivist and aims to reveal the uniqueness of human experience. IPA is hermeneutic in how it interprets the data that is retrieved (Willig, 2008). Heidegger (1977) asserts that interpretation is at the heart of humanity and that a human cannot not interpret. IPA data collection methods can include the use of interviews, diaries and lived experience descriptions (Willig, 2008). IPA analysis is idiographic and concerned with interpreting the complexity of meanings rather than measuring their frequency (Smith *et al.*, 2009). The analysis can become very expansive when the interpretative work is written up (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Often, IPA focuses on the experiences of a small number of individuals in relation to the phenomenon being investigated (Smith *et al.*, 2009). This is purposefully done to increase the quality of data collected by producing very detailed material with richer individual descriptions (Moustakas, 1994). Fundamentally, IPA research is flexible and open-ended in nature whereby the researcher adopts an inquisitive outlook and investigative demeanour (Smith *et al.*, 2009).

It was decided to stay true to the paper or hand method of analysis (Morgan, 1998). It was felt that using a computer package (e.g., NVIVO or NUDIST) for data analysis would be outside the natural process of the research and might even contaminate the data in some way. It was important to maintain contact with the data to be in keeping with the phenomenological process (Moustakas, 1994). This ensured that its development was monitored at every stage and nothing was missed or overlooked. Morgan (1998) and Smith (1996) comment that a computer programme facilitates quick searching and categorising of codes but does not conduct the analysis for the researcher. To fully complete the analysis the following IPA structural process was adhered to.

### 3.2.2 The Structural Process of Phenomenology: Familiarisation Process

To begin the analysis the researcher engages with each participant transcript in an unfocused manner making notes on first impressions of what is being said. A classification of each phrase provided by each participant can be labelled (Willig, 2008). This helps to identify every expression relevant to the experience.

**Figure 3.1:** *Labels Used For Classification of Phrases*

• <i>Experience/Descriptive.</i>
• <i>Experience/Evaluative.</i>
• <i>Experience/Clarifying.</i>
• <i>Experience/Reflective.</i>

### 3.2.3 Systematic Production of Themes and Clusters

Becoming familiar with the text enables the researcher to implement a systematic approach with each participant's comments (components) being gathered together under appropriate emerging themes. A constant reading and rereading of each participant's comments makes it possible to identify patterns in the form of invariant components of the experience (Willig, 2008).

**Figure 3.2: Identifying Themes**

<b>Theme label 1</b>	
<i>Quote/Keywords</i>	<i>Line numbers</i>
<b>Theme label 2</b>	
<i>Quote/Keywords</i>	<i>Line numbers</i>
<b>Theme label 3</b>	
<i>Quote/Keywords</i>	<i>Line numbers</i>

Examining the themes in relation to one another enables the researcher to produce clusters of the themes that capture categories of meaning. The themes and clusters that are produced must relate to the original data (Willig, 2008).

**Figure 3.3: Developing Clusters**

<b>Cluster 1 label: themes (1 and 2)</b>
<b>Cluster 2 label: themes (2 and 3)</b>
<b>Cluster 3 label: themes (1 and 3)</b>

### 3.2.4 Systematic Overview

To provide a clear and systematic overview of the quotes, keywords, constituent themes and clusters the researcher produces a summary table for each participant (Willig, 2008).

**Figure 3.4: Summary Table**

<b>Cluster label 1</b>		<b>Lines</b>
<i>Theme label</i>	<i>Quote/Keywords</i>	<i>Line numbers</i>
<i>Theme label</i>	<i>Quote/Keywords</i>	<i>Line numbers</i>
<b>Cluster Label 2</b>		
<i>Theme label</i>	<i>Quote/Keywords</i>	<i>Line numbers</i>
<i>Theme label</i>	<i>Quote/Keywords</i>	<i>Line numbers</i>

<b>Cluster Label 3</b>		
<i>Theme label</i>	<i>Quote/Keywords</i>	<i>Line numbers</i>
<i>Theme label</i>	<i>Quote/Keywords</i>	<i>Line numbers</i>
<b>Cluster label 4</b>		
<i>Theme label</i>	<i>Quote/Keywords</i>	<i>Line numbers</i>
<i>Theme label</i>	<i>Quote/Keywords</i>	<i>Line numbers</i>
<b>Cluster label 5</b>		
<i>Theme label</i>	<i>Quote/Keywords</i>	<i>Line numbers</i>
<i>Theme label</i>	<i>Quote/Keywords</i>	<i>Line numbers</i>

### 3.2.5 Master Themes

A list of master themes is produced to capture the quality of the participant’s experience of the phenomenon under investigation and to provide insight into the essence of the phenomenon (Smith *et al.*, 2009).

**Figure 3.5:** *List of Master Themes*

	<u><b>Participant A</b></u>	<u><b>Participant B</b></u>	<u><b>Participant C</b></u>
<b>Master Theme 1:</b>			
Constituent theme	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no
Constituent theme	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no
Constituent theme	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no
<b>Master Theme 2:</b>			
Constituent theme	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no
Constituent theme	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no
Constituent theme	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no
Constituent theme	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no
<b>Master Theme 3:</b>			
Constituent theme	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no
Constituent theme	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no
Constituent theme	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no	Quote/Line no

### **3.2.6 Integrating Themes**

Having identified emerging themes in the information provided by the participants it is possible to merge the data and components of the experience into a shared group of isolated core themes (Willig, 2008). For example, master theme one elicited from participant A's transcript is merged with participant B's clustered comments that were identified as being master theme one. This process is carried out with all of the participants until a definitive set of core themes is produced (Willig, 2008).

### **3.2.7 Validation**

Smith *et al.* (2009) explain that the IPA research approach is concerned with exploring the meaning that specific experiences have on individuals. IPA is focused on the detail pertaining to both the social and individual world of the individual. The detailed participant accounts will need to be proven credible and trustworthy to maintain the balance between phenomenological description and insightful interpretation (Willig, 2008). This can be achieved by using triangulation or cross validation. Designated participants are asked to re-examine the extracted essences of the phenomenon to validate the overall trustworthiness of the study (Willig, 2008). The validated material can then be assimilated into a wider theoretical context (e.g., resistance to the globalization of sport).

### **3.2.8 Pilot Study**

A pilot study with three of the participants is to be conducted in preparation for the full scale study (Gratton and Jones, 2004). It is anticipated that the pilot study will highlight some similarities and differences in the data gathered and the main strengths and weaknesses of the research strategy being utilised (Gratton and Jones, 2004). This includes a feasibility check on the interview style, structure, the length of the interview, the ability of the interviewee to articulate the experience and the appropriateness of the material gathered (see appendix A).

Capturing the personal meanings and rich descriptions of participants in the pilot study will enable completion of thematic analysis with each new reading having the potential to reveal new insights (Smith *et al.*, 2009). A pilot study provides a knowledge base towards addressing the aims and objectives set for the main study into parkour and free running (Gratton and Jones, 2004).

### 3.3 Emerging Considerations and Key Issues

- *Who to ask?*
- *How to ask?*
- *Where to ask?*
- *Type of questions?*

The researcher was aiming to interview between five and twelve participants aged eighteen and over for the study who had experience with the phenomenon being investigated (Smith and Osborne, 2003). The fundamental requirement being that they possessed the ability to articulate their experiences (Smith and Osborne, 2003). Participant belief systems, psyches, social relations, and underlying mechanisms were to play a key role in understanding the phenomenon being studied (Lavery, 2008).

Lavery (2008) explains that the fundamental aim of participant selection in phenomenology is to select participants who have lived experience with the phenomenon being investigated. She explains that participants must be able and willing to talk about their experiences. She advises that a diverse range of participants will increase the chances of obtaining rich and unique descriptions. Lavery (2008) suggests that a methodology is not a correct method to follow, but a creative approach to understanding. She suggests that we use whatever approach is responsive to particular questions and subject matter. The various ways available to recruit participants were carefully evaluated.

### Recruiting Participants

- *Telephone.*
- *Post.*
- *Email.*
- *Internet Website.*
- *A web blog in conjunction with the organisers of the activity.*

It was discovered during preliminary investigations that parkour and free running had spread mainly by daredevil videos posted on the self-broadcast website, YouTube. It was concluded that placing adverts on parkour forums and free running websites across the country about the nature of the study would be the most successful method. Participants for both a pilot and a full scale study would be recruited in this way (Gratton and Jones, 2004). It was the Northern Parkour website that generated the most interest and so attention was focused here: <http://www.northernparkour.com>. This website is very popular with parkour enthusiasts from around the country. As a platform, it was possible to get in contact with potential participants of different ages ranges, backgrounds and levels of experience. Maintaining correspondence with potential participants for several months provided an opportunity to discuss the relevant aspects of the research (Moustakas, 1994).

### **3.3.1 Questions**

Considerations for questions centred on content, style, order and range (Mason, 2002). They were designed to penetrate into the lived experience of the participant and not into hypothetical sequences or abstract concepts. It was important that questions to be used during interviews were connected to the research questions that had been set (Gratton, and Jones, 2004). This involved an analysis of the relevance of each part of the interview interaction. Contemplation was on how to engage with particular issues in depth and how to broadly cover a range of topics (Mason, 2002). Working out how to ask questions involved an assessment of how to phrase them and what words to use.

The objective was to generate a qualitative and meaningful discussion. The researcher had to compile questions that would be understood by interviewees and related to their circumstances and experiences (Mason, 2002). Smith and Osborne (2003) note that a successful interview will incorporate both general and specific questions on the phenomenon and how it appeared to the participants.

The questions are designed to encourage openness during the interview and to enter into the social life world of the participant (Smith and Osborne, 2003). IPA questions must stay as close to the lived experience as possible with a focus on description (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Emphasis is placed on structuring the questions so that the participant is fully engaged during the interview (Kvale, 1996). Questions are focused on what, how and not why (Van kaam, 1969). Nesti (2004) explains that phenomenological questions are designed to discover what has been experienced by an individual. The researcher is concerned with an individual's description of how some "thing" was experienced (Nesti, 2004). This natural scientific approach utilises a naturalistic style of questioning and is often presented in an open-ended and non-standard way.

### Questions

**Q1** *How would you describe parkour to somebody who knows absolutely nothing about it - a complete novice? Give it to me as it is - the background, from your own perspective. Give it to me in its raw terms - the basics, what's it all about?*

### **Prompts:**

*When did you start?*

*Why did you start?*

*How did you find out about it?*

*Where did you do it and do you do it?*

*Is it easy?*

**Q2** *Why do you do it, what attracts you to it, what inspires you about it, what is it about parkour that motivates you to do it, what does it do for you?*

**Prompts:**

*Risk.*

*Danger.*

*Thrill seeking.*

*Mental and physical challenges.*

**Q3** *Do you think it attracts people in different ways or is there a consensus?*

**Q4** *Tell me about the interesting aspects of parkour.*

**Prompts:**

*Freedom of expression.*

*Adrenaline.*

*Thrills.*

**Q5** *Can you talk about the first time you tried it and give examples of your experience?*

**Q6** *What have you learnt?*

**Prompts:**

*New skills.*

*Balance.*

*Agility.*

**Q7** *Is it an individual thing or more of a social thing?*

**Q8** *Is parkour environmentally and socially influenced?*

**Q9** *Could you live without it?*

During the IPA interview participants can be asked to recall and describe in detail specific experiences of parkour or free running.

### Specific Experiences

- *What were your feelings before, during and after taking part?*
- *Please describe your best and worst experiences?*
- *Please describe the qualities and meanings that you associate with the specific experience?*

This activity can be supplemented with open-ended questions designed to “draw out” as much relevant information as possible.

### Open Ended Questions

- *Does parkour and free running play a big part in your life?*
- *Can you tell me how you became involved?*

Some activity specific questions might be included.

### Activity Specific

- *Do you consider yourself a sporty type?*
- *Can you describe the environments you choose?*

Throughout the IPA interview process elaboration prompts can be utilised if and when necessary.

### Prompts

- *Is there anything we haven't covered?*
- *Can you explain in more detail?*

The questions will not be disclosed to the participants beforehand to be in keeping with the phenomenological research approach (Moustakas, 1994).

Prompts (outlined above) will be available for use that will help elicit information on the essence of the phenomenon being studied (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Each participant is to be asked each question separately. Responses will be recorded using a digital voice recorder and stopped when a participant has finished talking and then the next participant will be asked the same question (Smith *et al.*, 2009). When a participant has finished answering the recording will be stopped. This process will continue until all questions have been asked and recorded (Smith *et al.*, 2009). It is anticipated that face-to-face interviews of this kind will significantly help illicit the necessary psychological and sociological material that is being sought (Smith *et al.*, 2009).

### **3.3.2 Interviews**

Dale (1996) suggests that the phenomenological interview is more like a conversation between the researcher and the person being interviewed. The researcher must work towards reducing any perceived hierarchical barriers. Nesti (2004) explains that empathy and genuine dialogue are central to authentic communication and that the researcher has the responsibility to guide the process. Nesti (2004) explains that the researcher must let the data emerge spontaneously and not follow conventional closed, forced and directive means.

According to Spinelli (2005) no attempt must be made during the interview to interpret, re-order or analyse the described material. The researcher can engage in the spontaneous, passionate and emotional experience and treat the participant as a co-researcher and an equal (Dale, 1996). With the phenomenological interview the individual is encouraged to describe an event or experience to elucidate meaning.

IPA research requires flexible data collection instruments and it is recommended that semi-structured interviews be used to collect data (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Interviews need to be conducted at a mutually agreeable location with the interviews lasting approximately one hour. The IPA semi-structured interview facilitates rapport and empathy to maximise the rich data that is produced (Smith *et al.*, 2009). The IPA interviewer is able to probe unexpected areas that are discussed. IPA semi-structured interviews need to be topic centred, thematic, flexible and interactive in nature with words being the primary data source (Smith *et al.*, 2009). It is understood that the objective of the interview is to obtain each participants experience of being involved with the phenomenon (Willig, 2008). Dale's (1996) study into the lived experience of elite decathletes was able to capture personal meanings and rich descriptions on memorable performances. According to Dale (1996) the phenomenological interview generates descriptive data based on personal experience. This is then organised into appropriate themes and structured.

Asking the questions in a slow and deliberate manner might encourage participants to be descriptive (Dale, 1996). As part of the interaction process verbal gestures of agreement can be interjected. It is anticipated that simple and consistent acknowledgements will be highly effective in keeping the conversations flowing (Dale, 1996). In conjunction with these simple techniques affirmative body language can be incorporated, to indicate feelings on what is being said (Moustakas, 1994).

### **3.3.3 Setting**

It is anticipated that the respondents will act according to the surrounding in which they are being interviewed (Moustakas, 1994). It is anticipated that a University library will be an ideal setting for the phenomenological semi-structured interview and therefore contribute to holding the process together (Smith *et al.*, 2009). The formality of this interview setting will help ensure that participants remain focused on the task at hand (Dale, 1996).

### **3.3.4 Ethics**

It is important to undertake the study in a manner that reflects good principles of ethical research practice to be in accordance with the ethical clearance provided by the University (Gratton and Jones, 2004). On arrival each participant will be signed in. It will be explained that a device is being used to record the interview for future analysis (Gratton and Jones, 2004). Each participant will be given an opportunity to voice any objections they might have. It will be made clear that care and attention will be given to any sensitive issues that might arise (Smith *et al.*, 2009).

At the interview each participant is given a participation sheet (see appendix B) and consent form (see appendix C) to sign. The participation sheet is designed to provide a better understanding of what is required. The consent form is for participants to sign to formally agree the outlined conditions of the study as part of the recruitment process (Gratton and Jones, 2004). Having checked and collected the consent forms an explanation of the structure of the interview will be provided.

### **3.3.5 Transcribing the Data**

The researcher must engage in an interpretative relationship with the transcript that is at the semantic level (Smith *et al.*, 2009). The material recorded is saved on wav files in the device. The wav files can be easily transferred onto the computer for analysis. They are saved in word format and the recordings can be played back and carefully transcribed verbatim (Smith *et al.*, 2009).

### **Summary**

Smith *et al.* (2009) explain that IPA is almost a free textual analysis as there are no rules about what is commented on. They explain that the researcher might want to focus on similarities and differences, a rich description or it might be on specific associations or connections. Smith *et al.* (2009) note that the skill is on being able to find expressions during thematic analysis that are clear enough to make theoretical connections. IPA analysis is on-going because it is significantly expanded when interpretation of thematic analysis is written up in the main study (Smith *et al.*, 2009). This usually takes the form of a narrative argument that includes verbatim extracts from the transcripts. The written interpretation is completed within the context of the literature associated with the phenomenon being studied. Smith *et al.* (2009) note that the process of sustained interpretation and extended analytical commentary is a creative feature of IPA.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS ONE**

### **Overview**

Three participants aged between eighteen and thirty for the pilot study were recruited from the Northern Parkour Website. The semi-structured IPA interviews were conducted in the Allerton Building at the University of Salford library (Smith and Osborne, 2003). The interviews with the participants were conducted together in a room. Each participant was asked each question separately. Once completed the next participant was asked the same question only stopping the recording when he had finished answering. Each participant was given an opportunity to voice any objections they might have (Smith and Osborne, 2003). The data that was retrieved was saved on the recording device during the interview so that it could be transcribed for thematic analysis.

It was important to check that the research design was able to produce data that would allow for full interpretation in the thesis (Gratton and Jones, 2004). It was necessary to conduct analysis on the data to establish whether it was possible to produce phenomenological themes. Ultimately the pilot study provided a knowledge base on the research approach, research design and data analysis (Gratton and Jones, 2004).

### **4.1 Familiarisation Process**

To begin the analysis the researcher engages with each participant transcript (see appendix D, E and F) in an unfocused manner making notes on first impressions of what is being said. Each line in the transcript is numbered as part of the analysis (see appendix G, H, and I). A classification of each phrase provided by each participant can be labelled as outlined in the methodology (Smith *et al.*, 2009). This helps to identify every expression relevant to the experience.

**4.1.1 Participant A: Familiarisation Process**

**Experience/Descriptive** (Lines 1-5)

*Oh ok, to me, parkour is an efficient way of training to getting from point A to point B. There's parkour and free running. Free running in very literal terms, free running could be based around a more expressionist form, with acrobatics involved a lot more. Parkour being more about training for every situation in a very efficient way. So we sort of like switch between the two, oh yeah that's up to me really.*

**Experience/Evaluative** (Lines 95-100)

*Interesting aspects of parkour, it's very expressionist, it allows people to - oh for many people it's a stress relief, definitely for me it's a stress relief. If you have a hard day in college or if you have a hard day in work. You go out and jump around and obviously in biological terms you have dopamine and serotonin released into the blood - you know, pain relieving, you know, types of morphine. In a sense you become very docile and become happy.*

**Experience/Clarifying** (Lines 42-47)

*That was the motivation. It was born out of doing it. You know the inspiration came out of me going around and jumping around, it was very spiritual in nature. You know it was like people who climb to the top of a mountain and look over the scenery and they realise something that's always been there but they've never seen it. It was like that and suddenly I could look at myself from a distance and realised that I had changed. That was definitely my inspiration, yeah.*

**Experience/Reflective** (Lines 47-49)

*In terms of risk about parkour, it was never the adrenalin rush for me, right at the beginning. It wasn't about the adrenalin. I was thinking about showing off, thinking I could do anything.*

**Experience/Evaluative/Clarifying** (Lines 124-131)

*For me that's the most interesting aspect. When I jump around I don't try and deny I'm acting like a child and its fun because children have a different view on the world than adults do. How many adults do you see walking along the wall. Yet how many children do you see wanting to jump up onto a wall and go yeah, you know and be up there? It's half the time we train and we say we are walking along the wall and we're not ashamed to say there's lava on the ground. It presents a new fun aspect to it all. So it doesn't have to be conditioning and training yourself, it can be fun. It can be really, really liberating to most people. Yeah that's my most interesting aspect.*

**Experience/Evaluative/Clarifying/Observational** (Lines 181-200)

*We jump around buildings for fun but, I'm going to retract that statement. We don't jump around buildings for fun, we don't, that's very risky and unsafe, but we - it's taught me about movement. I find it interesting after doing parkour for six years I would gladly sit down and watch a cat walk across the room because they have such a wide range of movement. We're inferior to that range of movement. If you look at a cat, a cat can jump three times its height easily and you look at them and it's like, why can't I do that. It's taught me about the way the body works, the physiology, the biology. It's taught me about the way the body acts and reacts and the cause and effect of it. You realise the body is a fantastically tuned machine. Like any fantastically tuned machine you have to keep it oiled. You have to replace the parts, not in the literal sense, that would be quite messy with the human body. You've got to take care of it. I think the most important thing - going back to the spirituality of it, the most important thing parkour has taught me is how to mentally cope. If I can quote another free runner; Blaine, Chris Blaine, he said that it helped him in his life. Say, if you're doing a presentation, you stand in front of that presentation group and you think to yourself alright this is a scary situation. Then it jumps into your head all of a sudden that this is nowhere near as scary as doing that eleven foot jump you did yesterday.*

*There isn't any death involved in this. There isn't any possibility of breaking limbs, what's the point of being scared, it teaches you to fight your fears in every way possible. To fight your barriers, both physical and mental. I think parkour does that more than any other sport because it's so varied.*

**Experience/Evaluative/Clarifying/Observational** (Lines 202-221)

*Parkour varies between the two. Once again I'd be sort of quoting. I don't know if you need a reference, for a runner called Sebastian Foucan. Who was one of the original traceurs in France. He said, when your with people you gain a different kind of confidence. The jumps there, bang you do the job and it's wonderful. Everybody cheers you on. When you're on your own a barrier gets involved. You don't have any positive peer pressure. You have to do it yourself. I think in order for true progression to happen in parkour it has to be an individual thing. As someone has said before nobody else can teach you a move. So it doesn't matter if you're in a group of thirty or forty or a hundred people who can all do the move it won't help you one bit. In parkour, you can be the only person in the crowd of a hundred people because you're the only person breaking through your own barriers. You're not breaking through anybody else's. I think true progression only happens when you're on your own. Although I do believe it's that social aspect that makes parkour so appealing. So many other people, so many like minded people all striving for one goal to better themselves. God it motivates you, it does something to you. You hear about Parkour Jams - a meeting of people and you want to go so much. Even if you can't, you spend your entire day in work thinking to yourself, why don't I quit this job and just go free run with them. It's so motivating to know there are so many people who have as much passion as you. So yeah it's definitely social but individual is what provides the progression.*

**Experience/Descriptive** (Lines 223-230)

*I'll do one thing at a time, so I don't confuse myself. Environmentally influenced parkour is definitely - because without the environment you're not doing parkour. The different landscapes require a different type of parkour. Running through a city is absolutely nothing like running through a forest, running through a forest is nothing like running across open ground. The environment influences what mind set you will have and what movement you'll implement. I think definitely. I mean in terms of environmentally influenced you take a certain pride in your surroundings; you will not, we try our best not to damage anything and if we do damage something then we own up to it straight away.*

**Experience/Evaluative** (Lines 231-239)

*Because the way that we view it is if we break something then we won't be able to use it again, that's a very important factor. It's not about using it and hoping that nobody else cares. It's about using it and knowing that you can go back there and use it again. It's about that long lasting which is part Method Unnatural. What applies to the person applies to the environment - everything has to last. The social angle of it - the only reason parkour is what it is today is because of the people of Lisses allowed it to be so. If the people of Lisses in France had said no to the boys jumping around, if they'd quashed that desire, parkour would not be there. I truly believe parkour and free running relies solely on the respect of the community.*

**Experience/Evaluative/Clarifying** (Lines 239-258)

*If the community as a whole doesn't like you, you'll be frowned upon. As far as I know only one place, Morton in Liverpool has banned free running on threat of having an asbo. That's because, a few bad apples are destroying the whole bunch. People won't heed the whole batch of apples now. You will never see in the majority of the country a sign that says you can't do parkour.*

*You'll see a sign that says you can't go skate boarding or you can't skate or you can't ride your bike here but you'll not see something that says you can't do parkour here. It's because parkour protects it environment.*

*It requires it to carry on, as long as we have the good respect of the community. Now's the time for parkour because it's so new. Now's the time to make its reputation. It's now that you have to be nice to people. If somebody asks us to move from a particular place, no argument, zero argument, we say we're very sorry and we leave. There's one place in Southport. There's a supermarket, a department store in Southport that we train round the back of. It's a wonderful area to train and sometimes people ask us to move in which case we say, "yeah wonderful". We've actually had it quite a few times people come out and say, "ah you're doing that parkour thing do you want us to refill your water"? It's wonderful. They allow us to train there and if they want us to move - no problem. It's that level of respect. We show respect to them about respecting their environment and respecting their property and they show respect to us, its basic human nature. So parkour and free running is definitely socially and environmentally influenced.*

**Experience/Evaluative/Clarifying** (Lines 260-276)

*No, I think, that's a very emotional question for me - not like I'm going to cry or anything. That question means a lot to me because I often think to myself what if I break a leg or really hurt myself. Parkour has become such a way of life for me, that it's imagining having somebody there for the whole of your life and suddenly there not. It's become such the norm. It's become such a stress relief, like when people become addicted to exercise, but it's not an addiction. I couldn't live without it because I couldn't live with the fact that I had that freedom and now I don't. I couldn't live knowing that I could no longer move like that. Parkour encompasses so many things and if I think to myself what if I lose my leg or if I lose my arm? There are one armed free runners, there's a one armed free runner you know.*

*At the recent world free run championships, somebody tore their knee ligament very badly and he was very badly injured. Yet at the end of one of his videos recently it showed all the old footage and everybody supporting him. It showed him training with his cast on his leg, just upper body stuff.*

*Parkour is so wide ranging. I think it would be almost impossible for me to ever be able to quit. Whatever the situation, other than death I couldn't stop doing it and that's why it means so much to me. In the literal sense, saying it is impossible not to be able to do it – yes in a literal sense. I wouldn't be able to live without doing parkour. I could do it all the time.*

**4.1.2 Participant B: Familiarisation Process**

**Experience/Descriptive** (Lines 1-11)

*Well to me it started off, you're literally training to get from A to B using every physical movement possible. You train for every situation, every motion and every obstacle. It slowly becomes more based around getting to know yourself and your environment. That's all I can really think of. Well I started - one night there was a documentary on TV - Jump Britain. I think it was the night after it was on I went out with (name omitted) and we had a jump around and stuff like that. We started doing it in high school on a little wall we found round the back and we used to hop around on our lunch break, just playing, just messing about. I stopped and went onto aggressive in line skate. I did that for a while. At the time it was only playing around, it was nothing serious. I skated for a couple of years. I hurt my leg then I had to stop. As it recovered I found I'd lost interest in it.*

**Experience/Reflective/Evaluative** (Lines 12 -23)

*I got back in touch with (name omitted) and (name omitted) who were still doing it, so I got into it then. I was much more grown up and physically developed. There was more to do. I was more capable than I was and it just became less physical and more about the mental side of it. I've really found myself doing things that back when, I don't know when, I would have called impossible and now here I am doing them and its fantastic and I love it. Truth be told, when I was little, I was a bit of a super hero buff. I used to absolutely love the stuff and doing the stuff we're doing now, I feel a little bit like a super hero. It's given me the means to help people, friends and family. If there in trouble - I have developed the mental capacity to deal with the situation and the physical everything. So that's really what inspires me. Is that I can help people out. As with the risk side of it, I like there to be a bit risk involved. I don't know about the other two? They are slightly more down to earth but I think with my background with my skating and stuff like that I prefer an adrenalin kick every so often.*

**Experience/Evaluative/Clarifying/Observational** (Lines 24-27)

*Well I've noticed through my years of training parkour a lot of practitioners seem to have the same personality type. They all seem to be kind people. I'm not saying horrible people don't but they seem to have a very similar personality. So I think it tends to be more those type of people attracted to parkour and free running due to something within in them.*

**Experience/Descriptive** (Lines 28-30)

*It's hard to describe. Its often very creative people who tend to put others before themselves. People with a very deep outlook on life who are looking for something more, if you see where I'm coming from.*

**Experience/Evaluative/Clarifying/Reflective** (Lines 31-47)

*Well for me personally the most interesting thing about parkour is my body itself and just doing this sport or discipline as some people like to refer to it. I've learnt so much about my body, the way my muscles work. The way they develop and the way my tendons work. It's made me more in touch with me physically and mentally. I'm still learning about my body and I'm still absolutely intrigued by it and the different things it is capable of. Well, the first time I tried parkour was with (name omitted). We just went round town, just bouncing about happily and at the time I fell in love with it because I felt like I was six again, it was fantastic, just running along walls, you know. I loved it to bits just climbing on everything we could see for no particular reason. It was great getting some fantastically weird looks off people but it was fantastic. Oh yeah, but the most noted thing about my first time is something we mention to everyone. The day after, when you wake up and muscles you never knew existed hurt - it was fantastic, it was progression, you were proud of the fact that your body hurt ready for the next time you go out to pretend that you're six. Well, most importantly I learnt my own limits, physically and mentally. I've also learnt how to push them and give myself greater physical and mental strength. Which has really helped me through life in a lot of different aspects - yeah really did.*

**Experience/Descriptive** (Lines 48-49)

*Well both, individual and social training play an important part in the traceur's (parkour participant) progression, the individual side is very much about yourself.*

**Experience/Evaluative/Clarifying/Reflective** (Lines 49-62)

*Finding your own limits, barriers and finding your own personal way to get past that. But I feel when you're with a group you have to be very careful. The positive pressure can be great, very appealing and very motivating but at the same time it can be quite dangerous. If people are cheering you on to do a jump or a gap you know you're not ready for, but you do it just to kind of show off then the risk increases to a point where you're not comfortable. You don't feel in control with it, it can be very positive but in that respect it's about your individual look at it. You have to know even when you're with a group whether to say yes I'll do this or no, I can't. With the social side it reminds me of when we went to France, to Lisses, the birth place of parkour and we met traceurs from all over the world. There were people from Finland, people from America, people from France and the second you meet these people it's like you've known them your entire life. Everyone is so happy to see you and wants to teach you things that they've learnt. You teach them things you've learnt and spread your knowledge around. It's a fantastic feeling, it's absolutely beautiful.*

**Experience/Descriptive** (Lines 63-70)

*Yes, ha-ha. I think it's definitely influenced by the environment, because not the whole but most of the discipline is based on getting around it, navigating around it, through it and so on. Different landscapes call for different movements. You've got forests; you've got cityscapes and the more suburban areas that have fewer obstacles. Its more open ground, I think that all does really influence the way we train. Because you have to really learn how to adapt to environments and you train in many different environments.*

*Ranging from running down the sand dunes, endurance running, to climbing trees in the forest, to just bolting a wall round the back of an outlet store.*

**Experience/Reflective/Observational** (Lines 71-74)

*Socially, I've seen a lot of different social responses from different people on the street. I've had some fantastic people come up. There was an old elderly lady in the centre of Southport and she approached and said, "I love what you do. I love to sit down and watch you guys jumping around, it's absolutely fantastic".*

**Experience/Evaluative/Clarifying/Reflective** (Lines 75-80)

*We were training one day and someone walked past and said, "at your age you should know better". It was kind of, I don't know, there's a lot of different looks on what we do. I think some people might associate jumping around on walls with hooligans and stuff like that. Yet it's nice that there are people that really respect what we do. It's nice that there are people like that still knocking around the community. It means we do have hope to build something positive, as opposed to getting an automatic look down on everything.*

**Experience/Evaluative/clarifying/reflective** (Lines 81-86)

*No not at all. I don't even feel that's an option anymore. There was a point in my training and I know when I hit it as, I said it to (name omitted), it's no longer what I do it's who I am. The way you move and the way you think. Even if I was physically incapable - mentally I've learnt so much on how to cope with situations, which is still to me part of my parkour. That said, I could lose an arm or a leg and I would just learn to adapt. I'd learn to train without, it's just like I said, it's who I am.*

**4.1.3 Participant C: Familiarisation Process**

**Experience/Descriptive** (Lines 1-15)

*It seems for most people, it can be very particular to a person. You got the basic way to train, to understand your body and understand how to move and to be able to move through areas. There's a goal of being able to move as the sparrow fly's - as the crow fly's sorry. Through a straight line, to go here to there, not faltering due to any obstacle, but there's the personal element of what it does for you. With parkour there is a philosophical side to it which is really helpful to some people. You can train your body but also train your mind, which you can apply to other parts of your life. Well, when I started it was around six years ago, just over six years (name omitted) came to me and said, "do you remember that thing a week ago Jump Britain that was on the T.V". I remember seeing that program going around with free runners that came from France, who were going around with people from the London community. At the end it showed people from all over the world and it was a community. I thought I'd like to be a part of that (name omitted) said come along after school to meet me by this church and we'll jump around a little. I got there and (name omitted) was there and I started that night, doing little jumps and little things.*

**Experience/Evaluative/Clarifying/Reflective** (Lines 16-32)

*We joked later, "look at those walls, we won't be jumping over those walls – nah, I don't think so! I'm really skinny, I won't have the strength". Some things are only easy as you train. There are always more difficult things. Then you always look back at the things which are easy now that weren't once. I think I found out about how it was with parkour when I went on the internet. I found a specific sight and spent hours reading and being fascinated. Well, when I started, I was at first, physically and socially incapable really. I had no social life and no strength and even in school, in the little groups we were in, I would be the quite one who stood there listening to everyone else, never saying a word, not even in class.*

*Through meeting (name omitted) and (name omitted) I'd be training. I'd go and pretty much the first time I'd say anything like, "I like this, its fun", they were almost shocked that I had a voice. And it really brought me out of my shell. I'm know where near the person I was six years ago. I wouldn't have said boo to the ghost of a fly, I was that shy. Physically and mentally it's helped me develop into a person and overcome physical challenges. In terms of risk, I'm not really seeking an adrenalin kick - am not. I don't really go just to get a thrill, although it's fun sometimes when there's that danger. You realise that it was a bit close but I'm out alive. Its more, I overcame that and you think how you did it and you can saver that and use it in your life. It's being able to be physically ready, but mentally and socially able for any situation. It's almost like all over life training for me.*

**Experience/Reflective/Observational** (Lines 33-43)

*There is a certain genre of people that will come to it more than most. You get the odd others that come and go. You're not sure why they train; they just want to show off or maybe want to use it for other means, that you may think be slightly sinister. It's not like the whole movie thing, where you have the good guy training one thing and the bad guy training the same thing but for different reasons. Mostly you have genuine nice people who want to do it to improve themselves or help people. Everyone has their own personal reasons, some people want to make a difference to their mind and body or maybe they want to do it as career. We know a couple moving towards sponsorship and several others who are actually currently sponsored and are working. While there is a sort of foundation of personality of what free runners are, what brings you to it is very personal. Everyone has their own reason and their own motivation and purpose for it.*

**Experience/Evaluative/Clarifying/Reflective** (Lines 44-55)

*For me personally, what is most interesting is the escapism of it. When I first found it, it was a way of leaving my problems behind. I started six years ago, I was half way through high school, mid teens and it was a time that was full of depression. Once or twice I broke down into tears in the middle of class. It made it worse that it was an all boys school.*

*It would really hit hard. I found parkour and I would jump around. I would start focusing on what I was doing and everything else would disappear. I developed a new personality. I became a new person. I wasn't (name omitted) or (name omitted) anymore. I took on my other name. I became (name omitted) and they knew me as (name omitted) and every time I went and jumped and ran, I was (name omitted) who didn't have (name omitted) problems. I could do what I wanted. I didn't have to worry and that was fantastic and eventually I just became (name omitted) entirely. What is interesting about it is that it has provided not just a way out but eventually a solution and it's allowed me to become me.*

**Experience/Descriptive** (Lines 56-58)

*The first time I tried it was a day or two after (name omitted) told me about it, as he'd seen it in the program on television. It was after school in October, it was dark, and he said, "meet us at the church". I went along to meet them. I was looking for them, I'm only fourteen or fifteen at the time.*

**Experience/Reflective/Observational** (Lines 58-71)

*I'm a bit nervous walking up and down on this road, thinking where are they? Where are they? Not being able to see anything, next thing, I see this white top go from one thing to another, only a few feet away. I jumped a little, then I looked closer and recognised (name omitted) shape and (name omitted) face, he was shaven, I found him. "So I wonder where (name omitted) is". I was jogging along (name omitted) hair, his iconic hair, ha-ha.*

*I remember jogging towards (name omitted) thinking, “where’s (name omitted) where’s (name omitted)?” Then (name omitted) flies out of the bush at me but whoa, straight at that moment I thought this is fun.*

*Already I’ve not even started and was thinking this is fun - they look like they’re having fun. I remember there was a very small jump. We tell everyone this is the very first jump, when people start to ask, we tell people the size. I explain that the distance is something like when I step when I walk normally. When we started we couldn’t do it for all we tried - for all our efforts, for the amount of times we tried, we kept failing and failing. But we tried and tried, there was such fun. It was a great place to be spiritually. To be doing that. It was the morning after when you ached, “why did I do that”? Then you’d do it at school and say, “I remember, I like this”.*

**Experience/Evaluative/Clarifying/Reflective** (Lines 72-81)

*One of the key things I’ve definitely learnt is confidence. It’s taught me to be. I can learn a move myself, I have to figure it out myself, and most people can tell me how or show me. Yet I have to personally realise where my hands are going and where my feet are going and I’ve figured out how my body works. It’s more mental for me, more spiritual. I figured out that I can be what I want. It’s sort of a Matrix type of thing of how, if you want it, take it, if you want to be it, make it happen. A good example would probably be - shortly after I started training with them, I started doing this. It was a couple of weeks after - it was when me and (name omitted) were out. When (name omitted) met up with a girl he was dating at the time, she brought along a friend, at one point he started hugging her and we were all just stood there. I thought well why don’t I hug her. I did, it gave me a social life and a love life.*

**Experience/Reflective/Observational** (Lines 81-83)

*The female community is still sort of small compared to the male community but it’s growing, definitely growing. We’re trying to encourage that in our home town ourselves. It’s just taught me to be outward and live life.*

**Experience/Evaluative/Clarifying/Reflective** (Lines 84-99)

*It plays to both areas I think. Everyone's got their own personal path they take. There's a thing we call, PK Vision. PK is short for parkour and it's when you look at something and you look at an area and you think to yourself and you look and you don't need to even make an effort anymore, "I go over this to there, up that, along this, down there, through there, under that, around that little thing and then I'm there". Or someone else looking will go, "okay, I'll go up this bit, around there and round there". Everyone finds their different way. That individual vision is a great sense of individuality, but at the same time we are a community. It isn't just between three people or thirty people, but thirty nations or more. People from all over the world. There's a language that's developed between everyone, that isn't even English. You'll meet somewhere and there's three or four walls and you'll see someone and go "ah, wush, tik, fump, ahdadat, ning, ha-ha". Everyone else will know what you mean, it's truly fantastic. Everyone has their own individual path and some individuals rise to the limelight but we're all a part of one giant community and it's fantastic. Most definitely, talking about environmentally, the environment definitely influences parkour. There's umm a little motto. I'm not sure who said it, It maybe Teekay 17. He said, "the obstacle comes before the movement".*

**Experience/Descriptive** (Lines 99-104)

*There's a basic movement called the Kong, which is where you go over the wall forward, you place your hands on the wall and leap forwards. But you can't do that on every wall the same way. Some walls are wider, some are thinner, some are taller and the area around each wall is different. So you have the basic movement but it has to be adapted for every separate environment. The same applies to my personal balance training.*

**Experience/Evaluative/Clarifying/Reflective** (Lines-104-130)

*If I ever find a new type of rail, as long as the surrounding area is safe I will practise parkour. I won't do it at the side of a motorway. I will balance on a rail because I believe my balance isn't as good as it can be until I've done it on every different type of rail. You can walk on one square rail a couple of inches wide and be fine but that doesn't mean you can walk on something half an inch wide, that's slightly rounded. You have to be trained for every environment and train in every environment to be ready. In terms of socially, both in and out of the social parkour network, it's definitely influenced. We couldn't learn without each other posting tutorials and videos on the internet. How I learnt personally was with pictures and paragraphs on a website. I look at the picture, read the associated paragraph and figure it out. That helps you to teach and to learn but outside of that community, there are very mixed reactions. There are people who applaud you when you do something. You'll do something and yeah, I'll turn to (name omitted) and say, "I did that, wasn't that amazing" and he'll say, "yeah you did it, bravo". Then they'll be people ten or twenty feet away. They'll applaud - they can see the look on your face, "you did it", then you look just past them. You see someone shaking their head. A fella said to me, "you are deeply hurt, you're messing around, stop it" and it really deeply hurt me. Please let me explain, we're not what we seem from that view. No, completely, definitely unequivocally no. Parkour has given me - me. I definitely couldn't give it up. It's something I could not choose to stop one day, it's not even a thought that crosses my mind. I did once, that was a couple of months in. I hurt my arm and I thought I don't think this is for me (name omitted) told me, "keep going, you'll get better" and I did. It's become a part of my life, it's become my life, it is me, parkour - it is me and my life. Everyone knows me by that nickname that I had. Apart from my family, a handful of people know me as (name omitted). I don't know what I would be if I stopped. I feel like I'd be an empty shell sitting in a room staring at an Xbox or something, like some sort of robot.*

*I wouldn't be alive, it is the blood in my veins and it's me. I couldn't give up and no matter how much a person insisted or circumstance demanded it wouldn't make me - I wouldn't.*

### **4.2 Systematic Production of Themes and Clusters**

Becoming familiar with the text enables the researcher to implement a systematic approach with each participant's comments (components) being gathered together under appropriate emerging themes. A constant reading and rereading of each participant's comments makes it possible to identify patterns in the form of invariant components of the experience (Smith *et al.*, 2009).

**4.2.1 Participant A: *Emerging Themes and Clusters***

**1. Parkour movement** (*Lines 1-2, 4-5*)

*Oh ok, to me, parkour is an efficient way of training to getting from point A to point B. With parkour being more about training for every situation in a very efficient way. We sort of like switch between the two.*

**2. How I started** (*Lines 6-9*)

*Well, I started off about six years ago and there was a programme on channel 4 called Jump Britain and Jump Britain was a sequel to Jump London and Jump London revolved around a few French free runners who could parkour. It began in France in a small town in called Lisses.*

**3. Improved fitness level** (*Lines 31-39*)

*I used to have no self confidence, I never did any sport. My body was terrible. I had no fitness level what so ever. When I began I never thought about improving myself. It didn't come into my head. One day, when I was bored I decided to pick up the tiny little weights in our house (1.5 kilograms). I picked them up and just started lifting my arms outwards again and again. I didn't realise it was working the top of my shoulders. One day I was getting into the shower and I looked in the mirror and was literally shocked. I jumped a little because I had grown muscle. That was a new thing for me because I was so skinny that had never happened. After that the motivation really kicked in. Seeing the change that it had was inspirational.*

**4. Risk factor** (*Lines 47-49, 67-68 and 268-271*)

*In terms of risk about parkour, it was never the adrenalin rush for me, right at the beginning it wasn't about the adrenalin. I was thinking about showing off, thinking I could do anything. I mean I understand people who want to do it for that risk and I can understand that feeling of adrenaline. At the recent world free running championships somebody tore their knee ligament very badly. He was very badly injured, yet at the end of one of his videos recently it showed him training with his cast on his leg.*

**5. More than a hobby** (Lines 52-54)

*And then after I realised that - it would become part of my life. I realised that it was about becoming ready for every situation - to help people.*

**6. Helping people** (Lines 54-55)

*Because for all three of us, that's a big motivating factor about our parkour - being able to help people.*

**7. Deleting the risk** (Lines 62-63)

*So it became I wasn't searching for the risk anymore. I was searching for deleting the risk.*

**8. Practise** (Lines 22-29, 63-64 and 90-91)

*I went through a period about three years ago when I was thinking about quitting. I'd be training and somebody would come by and say, "I can do that it's really easy" and they would do it. I'd get really disheartened and think to myself, "I've been training for three years and these people can do it". I came to the realisation that when people say, "I can do it" - I must say to them, "great do it again". I'd be promoting it instead of being disheartened. It was at that point it changed from wanting to jump around for that moment to being able to jump around for the rest of my life. I would be doing a move a thousand times over so that I wouldn't hurt myself. You have to be timed to stay in one place and do the move again and again. That's the training for getting from point A to point B.*

**9. Search for thrills** (Lines 67-68)

*I mean I understand people who want to do it for that risk and I can understand that feeling of adrenaline.*

**10. Philosophy/Technique** (Lines 74-78, 108-111, 113-119)

*We went to France recently where they began free running and we came back with a philosophy of, “if you do any jump, you have to do it three times”. The first time is easy, the first time you don’t think about it. The second time is a little bit harder and you’re thinking a little bit more about your technique. The third time is the hardest because you’ve done it so many times you’re wondering maybe this is the time you’ll hurt yourself. He actually rescued about three hundred of the town’s folk through using his training. So he decided this is fantastic. He decided to apply it to the military and it was taken on whole heartedly by the French military. Every French military person practiced something called Parkour Dus Combat which basically means to combat obstacles. These ideas were taken on by somebody called Raymond Bell. Raymond Bell was a fire fighter who also practiced Parkour Dus Combat. He practised it in a forest outside his home near Calais. His son David got involved and practiced Method Unnatural. They moved to a little town called Lisses outside the city of Avery, thirty five kilometres south of Paris. It was a new town but there was nothing to do, so David Bell and his friends did the only thing that they could do and bounced around this town.*

**11. What is parkour** (Lines 2-4, 40-41 and 100-103)

*Free running in very literal terms could be based around a more expressionist form with acrobatics involved a lot more. You hear about people who had drug problems and violence problems and suddenly they took up free running and everything disappeared. It’s interesting aspects - of parkour? You know personally I think one of the most interesting aspects of parkour would be its origin. I mean it began with something called Method Unnatural, which was coined by a French, it’s not a philosopher, I can’t think of the word. It was a French guy called Georges Hébert.*

**12. Stress relief** (Lines 95-100 and 119 -122)

*Interesting aspects of parkour, it's very expressionist, it allows people to - oh for many people it's a stress relief, definitely for me it's a stress relief. If you have a hard day in college - if you have a hard day in work, you go out and jump around and obviously in biological terms, you have dopamine and serotonin released into your blood. You know, pain relieving - you know types of morphine. In a sense and you become very docile and become happy. It became a phenomenon to them. It was something that could allow them to free themselves from this nothing. They had nothing to do. So it allowed them to be children. It allowed them to act as the super heroes they wanted to be.*

**13. Sense of fun** (Lines 14-15, 84, 86, 205, 124-131, 202, 203-205)

*I wanted to just jump around. I just wanted to do what they did, I knew I would never be good enough but I wanted to just have a go. Most free runners refuse to get into the politics, simply because they enjoy the movement of it. Free running I think for the most part people enjoy the showing off factor. Everybody cheers you on. For me that's the most interesting aspect. When I jump around I don't try and deny I'm acting like a child and its fun because children have a different view on the world than adults do. How many adults do you see walking along a wall. Yet how many children do you see wanting to jump up onto a wall and be up there? Half the time when we train and are walking along the wall, we're not ashamed to say there's lava on the ground. It presents a new fun aspect to it all. So it doesn't have to be conditioning and training yourself. It can be fun, it can be really, really liberating. Yeah, that's my most interesting aspect. Parkour varies between the two. A runner called Sebastian Foucan is one of the original traceurs in France. He said when you are with other people you gain a different kind of confidence. The jump is there and bang you do the job. It's wonderful.*

**14. Individual competition** (Lines 17-22, 26-29, 212-213, 169, 181-182, 199-200, 205-213 and 220-221)

*I've never been very sporty. My first free running was jumping over a wall just using my hands. I never thought I could do it and then realised how easy it was. Every day I would train behind this supermarket called B and N Bargains. Eventually I would move out and spread across the whole town. Suddenly I could free run. Look at me I can do it. I'd turn to them and they would say, "great, do it again" and I'd be wanting to be promoting it instead. It was at that point it changed from simply wanting to jump around for that moment, to being able to jump around for the rest of my life. I think true progression only happens when you're on your own. The first time I did free running I had the biggest grin on my face because it wasn't pain it was progression. We don't jump around buildings for fun because that's very risky and unsafe. I think parkour helps you fight your barriers, both physical and mental. It does that more than any other sport because it's so varied. When you're on your own a barrier gets involved. You don't have any positive peer pressure. You have to do it yourself. Nobody else can teach you a move. It doesn't matter if you're in a group of thirty or forty people who can all do the move it won't help you one bit. You're the only person breaking through your own barriers. You're not breaking through anybody else's. I think true progression only happens when you're on your own. It's definitely a social thing but it's the individual aspects that provide the progression.*

**15. Spiritually uplifting** (Lines 43-45)

*It was very spiritual in nature, you know, it was like people who climb to the top of a mountain and look over the scenery and they realise something that's always been there but they've never seen it.*

**16. Reliant on the environment** (Lines 224-226)

*Without the environment you're not doing parkour. The different landscapes require a different type of parkour. Running through a city is absolutely nothing like running through a forest and running through a forest is nothing like running across open ground.*

**17. A way of life** (Lines 265-266)

*I couldn't live without it, because I couldn't live with the fact that I had that freedom and now I don't.*

**18. Changing perspective** (Lines 144, 148-150, 172-180, 182-191 and 193-198)

*It was shortening that distance but also in your mind. Everything shortens, everything becomes a lot smaller, so I did the jump again, realising how big it was and this time landed on my feet very, very happy. I've learned about how to move. That's the most important thing - that you learn how to move. People move everyday with such a limited range of motions. They lift something, they walk, they'll run and they'll probably swim. What they completely miss is jumping; crawling, climbing, walking backwards, walking on their hands and skipping. Skipping is a fantastic way to work on your length jumps. Alright you're going to look a bit strange doing it but it's not as if we don't look strange doing other things. Parkour has taught me about the movement of the body. I've been doing parkour for six years and would gladly just sit and watch a cat walk across a room. They have such a wide range of movement. We're inferior to that range of movement. A cat can jump three times its height easily and you look at them and it's like why can't I do that. Parkour has taught me about the way the body works, the physiology and the biology. It's taught me how the body acts and reacts and the cause and effect of it. You realise the body is a fantastically tuned machine. Like any fantastically tuned machine you have to keep it oiled. You have to replace the parts. Not in the literal sense. That would be quite messy with the human body.*

*Free Runner, Chris Blaine said that parkour and free running helped him in his personal life. He said that if you're doing a presentation in front of a group and you think to yourself alright this is a scary situation. Then it jumps into your head all of a sudden that this is nowhere near as scary as doing that eleven foot jump you did yesterday. There isn't any death involved in this. There isn't any possibility of breaking limbs. What's the point of being scared. It teaches you to fight your fears in every way possible.*

### **19. Emotional relationship the environment** (Lines 152-154)

*A rail, a wall, a very weird combination of grass and gravel - you know, marking lines on the ground, like parking lines became the start and end. You jump from one line to the other.*

### **20. Personal development** (Lines 9-17 and 133-140)

*In the video, French runners come to London and are jumping all over the landscape of London. A few years later they were invited back again by Channel 4 and they did Jump Britain. Because of Jump London the whole sport grew and evolved, whereby a lot more people knew about it. I watched Jump Britain as a complete novice and that night went out and just decided to do it. I know it was a very childish thing. The next day I woke up and my body hurt. I've never had ache like that in my life and it was wonderful. It was self improvement. It was knowing that I had moved forward. First time I tried it was on a wall that was higher on one side than it was on the other. I didn't realise how high it was and I jumped over this wall and proceeding to fall longer than I expected. I landed and rolled onto my back and sort of like lay there for a moment completely winded. I can specifically remember getting back up and (name omitted) was with me (name omitted) looked over the wall and said are you okay and I said, "I'm fine, I'm just a little winded".*

**21. Sense of community** (Lines 156-163, 166-169 and 213-215)

*We moved onto Southport College and we found this little wall. We were jumping over it and a person came by about our age. He looked at us for a moment and said, “ah mate, you’re doing that parkour thing - that thing I saw last night on the television”. He was associating me with what he saw. I went home feeling great. I got home and sat down and my dad had been wondering where I’d been all night. I explained that I’d been doing parkour. He said, “you’re going to break your neck” in a very exaggerated way. I rode into school the next day and it was painful. With all this aching and with something close to humiliation at causing myself to be like this, I had trouble just locking my bike up. I do believe it’s that social aspect that makes parkour so appealing. So many other people, so many like minded people, all striving for one goal, to better themselves.*

**22. Way of life** (Lines 191-193, 262-264, 217-220 and 275-276)

*I think the most important thing going back to the spirituality of it is that parkour has taught me how to mentally cope. Parkour has become such a way of life for me, that it’s imagining having somebody there for the whole of your life and suddenly there not. It becomes such the norm. God it motivates you. It does something to you. You hear about Parkour Jams, a meeting of people and you want to go so much. Even if you can’t - you spend your entire day in work thinking to yourself, “why don’t I quit this job and just go free run, with them”. It’s so motivating to know there are so many people who have as much passion as you. I could do it all the time.*

**Figure 4.1: *Participant A: Clusters and Emerging Themes***

<b>Cluster 1:</b> Training (themes 1, 2 and 8)
<b>Cluster 2:</b> Risk (themes 4 and 7)
<b>Cluster 3:</b> Philosophy (themes 10 and 11)
<b>Cluster 4:</b> Being in the present (themes 5, 12 and 19)
<b>Cluster 5:</b> Enjoyment (themes 13 and 20)
<b>Cluster 6:</b> Challenge (themes 14 and 20)
<b>Cluster 7:</b> Spirituality (themes 13, 15 and 22)
<b>Cluster 8:</b> Environment (themes 16 and 19)
<b>Cluster 9:</b> Addiction (themes 12 and 22)
<b>Cluster 10:</b> Perception (themes 18 and 19)
<b>Cluster 11:</b> Aesthetics (themes 18 and 19)
<b>Cluster 12:</b> Mastery (themes 14 and 20)
<b>Cluster 13:</b> Health Fitness and Wellbeing (theme 3)
<b>Cluster 14:</b> Thrill Seeking (theme 9)
<b>Cluster 15:</b> Society (theme 21)

**4.2.2 Participant B: Emerging Themes and Clusters**

**1. Parkour movement** (Lines 1-3)

*You're literally training to get from A to B using every physical movement possible and you train for every situation and every motion for every obstacle. It slowly becomes more based around getting to know yourself and your environment.*

**2. Emotional relationship with the environment** (Lines 2-3, 31-35 and 67-70)

*It slowly becomes more based around getting to know yourself and your environment. For me personally the most interesting thing about parkour is my body itself. Through just doing this sport or discipline as some people like to refer to it. I've learnt so much about my body. The way my muscles work and the way they develop. The way my tendons work. It's made me more in touch with me physically and mentally. I'm still learning about my body and I'm still absolutely intrigued by the different things and what it's capable of. You have to really learn how to adapt to environments and you train in many different environments. Ranging from running down the sand dunes, endurance running, to climbing trees in the forest, to just bolting a wall round the back of an outlet store.*

**3. Helping friends** (Lines 18-21)

*It's given me the means to help people, friends and family. If there in trouble I have the mental capacity to deal with the situation and the physical everything. So that's really what inspires me - that I can help people out.*

**4. Risk factor** (Lines 21, 23 and 50-56)

*I like there to be a bit risk involved, I prefer an adrenalin kick every so often. But I feel when you're with a group you have to be very careful with the positive pressure. It can be very appealing and very motivating whilst at the same time quite dangerous.*

*If people are cheering you on to do a jump you know you're not ready for it but you do it, just too kind of show off. Then the risk increases to a point where you're not comfortable.*

*You don't feel in control with it. It can be very positive but in that respect it's about your individual look at it. You have to know even when you're with a group whether to say, "yes, I'll do this or no, I can't".*

### **5. Spiritual in nature** (Lines 24-30)

*I've noticed through my years of training that a lot of practitioners seem to have the same personality type. They all seem to be kind people. I'm not saying horrible people don't do it but they seem to have a very similar personality. So I think it tends to be those people attracted to parkour due to something within them. It's often very creative people, who a lot of which tend to put others before themselves. People with a very deep outlook on life who are looking for something more.*

### **6. Community spirit** (Lines 57-62 and 71-80)

*It reminds me of when we went to France, to Lisses, the birth place of parkour. We met traceurs from all over the world. There were people from Finland, America and France. The second you meet these people, it's like you've known them your entire life. Everyone is so happy to see you and wants to teach you things that they've learnt. You teach them things you've learnt and spread your knowledge around. It's a fantastic feeling. It's absolutely beautiful. Socially, I've seen a lot of different social responses from different people on the street. I've had some fantastic people come up and speak to me. There was an elderly lady in the centre of Southport who approached and said, "I love what you do, I love to sit down and watch you guys jumping around, it's absolutely fantastic". But we were also training one day and someone walked past and said, "at your age you should know better". I don't know there's a lot of different looks on what we do.*

*I think some people might associate jumping around on walls with hooligans and stuff like that. But it's nice that there are people that really respect what we do. It's nice that there are people like that still knocking around the community. It means we do have hope to build on something positive rather than get an automatic look down look on everything.*

**7. A way of life** (Lines 29-30 and 81-82)

*People with a very deep outlook on life who are looking for something more, if you see where I'm coming from. No, not at all, I don't even feel that's an option anymore, there was a point in my training and I know when I hit it as I said it to (name omitted) it's no longer what I do it's who I am.*

**8. Personal development** (Lines 12-16, 33-35 and 43-44)

*I got back in touch with (name omitted) and (name omitted) who were still doing parkour and got into it then. I was much more grown up and more physically developed. I was more capable than I was and it became less physical and more about the mental side of it. I've really found myself doing things that back then I would have called impossible. Now here I am doing them and its fantastic and I love it. It's made me more in touch with me physically and mentally and I'm still learning about my body and I'm still absolutely intrigued by it and the different things and what it's capable of. You were proud of the fact that your body hurt - ready for the next time you go out to pretend that you're six.*

**9. Sense of fun** (Lines 5-8 and 37-40)

*One night there was a documentary called Jump Britain on television. I think it was the night after it was on I went out with (name omitted). We had a jump around and stuff like that. We started doing it in High School on a little wall we found round the back. We used to hop around on our lunch break just playing and just messing about. I fell in love with it because I felt like I was six again. It was fantastic just running along walls, you know.*

*I loved it to bits just climbing on everything we could see for no particular reason. It was great getting some fantastically weird looks off people - it was fantastic.*

**10. Individual competition** (45-47, 14-16 and 48-50)

*I've also learnt how to push them and give myself greater physical and mental strength which has really helped me through life in a lot of different aspects - yeah really did. I've really found myself doing things that back when, I don't know when, I would have called impossible and now here I am doing them and its fantastic and I love it. Both individual and social training play an important part in the traceur's progression. The individual side is very much about yourself. Doing parkour helps you find your own limits and identifies any personal barriers you might have. It helps you find your own personal way to get past that.*

**11. Reliant on the environment** (Lines 36-40 and 64-65)

*Well the first time I tried parkour was with (name omitted). We had just gone round town and were just bouncing about happily. At the time I fell in love with it because I felt like I was six again. It was fantastic, just running along walls. I loved it to bits climbing on everything we could see for no particular reason. It was great getting some fantastically weird looks off people. It was fantastic. Most of the discipline is based on getting around it, navigating around it, through it and so on. Different landscapes call for different movements.*

**12. More than a hobby** (Lines 81-86)

*There was a point in my training and I know when I hit it as I said it to (name omitted) "it's no longer what I do it's who I am". Even if I was physically incapable, mentally I've learnt so much about the way I move, the way I think and how to cope with situations. I could lose an arm or a leg and I'd just learn to adapt. I'd learn to train without my leg. It's like I said it's who I am.*

**Figure 4.2:** *Participant B: Clusters and Emerging Themes*

<b>Cluster 1:</b> Training (themes 1 and 2)
<b>Cluster 2:</b> Risk (theme 4)
<b>Cluster 3:</b> Being in the present (themes 6 and 11)
<b>Cluster 4:</b> Enjoyment (theme 9)
<b>Cluster 5:</b> Challenge (themes 8 and 10)
<b>Cluster 6:</b> Spirituality (theme 5)
<b>Cluster 7:</b> Environment (themes 2 and 11)
<b>Cluster 8:</b> Addiction (themes 7 and 12)
<b>Cluster 9:</b> Aesthetics (themes 2 and 11)
<b>Cluster 10:</b> Mastery (themes 8 and 10)
<b>Cluster 11:</b> Society (theme 6)

**4.2.3 Participant C: Emerging Themes**

**1. Parkour movement** (Lines 1-3)

*You got the basic way to train to understand your body and understand how to move and to be able to move through areas. There's a goal of being able to move as the sparrow fly's - as the crow fly's sorry.*

**2. Philosophy/technique** (Lines 4-8 and 30-32)

*There's the personal element of what it does for you. The philosophical side of parkour is really helpful to some people. You can train your body and train your mind. You can apply that to other parts of your life. You think how you did it and you can save that and use it in your life. It's being able to be physically ready but mentally and socially able for any situation. It's almost like all over life training for me.*

**3. Element of danger** (Lines 28-32)

*I don't really go just to get thrill, although it's fun sometimes when there's that danger, you realise that was a bit close, but I'm out alive, its more I overcame that. You think how you did it and you can save that and use it in your life. It's being able to be physically ready but mentally and socially able for any situation. It's almost like all over life training for me.*

**4. Risk factor** (Lines 27-30)

*In terms of risk, I'm not really seeking an adrenalin kick. It's fun sometimes when there's that danger. You realise that was a bit close but I'm out alive. It's more I overcame that.*

**5. Practise** (Lines 20-26 and 33-43)

*When I started, I was physically and socially incapable really. I had no social life and no strength. Even in school in the little groups we were in, I would be the quite one who stood there listening to everyone else, never saying a word not even in class.*

*Through meeting (name omitted) and (name omitted) I'd go training. Pretty much the first time I'd say anything, "I like this, it's fun". They were almost shocked that I had a voice.*

*Training really brought me out of my shell. I'm know where near the person I was six years ago. I wouldn't have said boo to the ghost of a fly. I was that shy. There is a certain genre of people that will come to it more than most. You get the odd others that come and go. You're not sure why they train. They just want to show off or maybe want to use it for other means that are perhaps slightly sinister. It's not like the whole movie thing where you have the good guy training one thing and the bad guy training the same thing but for different reasons. Mostly you have genuine nice people who want to do it to improve themselves or help people. Everyone has their own personal reasons. Some people want to make a difference to their mind and body or maybe they want to do it as career. We know a couple moving towards sponsorship and several others who are actually sponsored and are working. While there is a sort of foundation of personality of what free runners are, what brings them to it is very personal. Everyone has their own reason and their own motivation and purpose for it.*

**6. Personal development** (Lines 9-15, 16-19 and 38-43)

*I started around six years ago. I remember seeing a programme on television with free runners that came from France going around with people from the London community. At the end of the programme it showed people from all over the world. The programme had a community spirit that I wanted to be part of. I started that night doing little jumps and little things. I remember thinking, "I won't be jumping over those walls because I don't have the strength". Some things only become easy once you have trained and there are always going to be more difficult things to accomplish. You always look back at the things which are easy now which were once very difficult. Everyone has their own personal reasons. Some people want to make a difference to their mind and body or maybe they want to do it as career.*

*We know a couple moving towards sponsorship, several others who are currently sponsored and are working. While there is a sort of foundation of personality of what free runners are, what brings you to it is very personal. Everyone has their own reason and their own motivation and purpose for it.*

**7. Stress relief** (Lines 44-45 and 48-55)

*For me personally what is most interesting is the escapism of it. When I first found it - it was a way of leaving my problems behind. I started six years ago. I would start focusing on what I was doing and everything else would disappear. I developed a new personality. I became a new person. I took on my other name. I became (name omitted) and they knew me as (name omitted). Every time I went and jumped and ran I was (name omitted) who didn't have (name omitted) problems. I could do what I wanted. I didn't have to worry and that was fantastic. Eventually I just became (name omitted) entirely. It provided not just a way out but eventually a solution and it's allowed me to become me.*

**8. Sense of fun** (Lines 64-71)

*I thought this is fun and they look like they're having fun. I remember we were doing a very small jump. The distance was only about one step when you walk normally but when we first started we couldn't do it. We tried with all our effort and even with the amount of times we tried we kept failing. There was such fun involved with doing that. It was the morning after when you ached and wondered why you did it and you would say, "I remember - I like this".*

**9. Spiritually up lifting** (Lines 69-70)

*There was such fun. It was a great place to be spiritually, to be doing that.*

**10. Individual competition** (Lines 26-27 and 72-75)

*Physically and mentally it's helped me develop into a person and overcome physical challenges. One of the key things I've definitely learnt is confidence.*

*People can tell me how or show me and I can learn a move myself. I can learn a move myself, I have to figure it out myself, most people can tell me how or show me but I have to personally realise where my hands are going and where my feet are going. I've figured out how my body works.*

**11. Spiritual in nature** (Lines 75-76 and 84)

*It's more mental for me. I figured out that I can be what I want. If you want to be it, you can make it happen. It's a sort of Matrix type of thing. Everyone's got their own personal path they take.*

**12. Changing perspective** (Lines 84-90)

*It plays to both areas I think. Everyone's got their own personal path they take. There's a thing we call, PK Vision. PK is short for parkour and it's when you look at something and you look at an area and you think to yourself and you look and you don't need to even make an effort anymore, "I go over this to there, up that, along this, down there, through there, under that, around that little thing and then I'm there". Or someone else looking will go, "okay, I'll go up this bit, around there and round there". Everyone finds their different way and that individual vision is a great sense of individuality.*

**13. Community spirit** (Lines 80-81, 90-96 and 110-113)

*It gave me a social life, a love life. At the same time we are a community. It isn't just between three people or thirty people, but thirty nations or more, people all over the world. There's a language that's developed between everyone, that isn't even English. You'll meet somewhere and there's three or four walls and you'll see someone and go, "ah, wush, tik, fump, ah dad at, ning", ha-ha and everyone else will know what you mean. It's truly fantastic. Everyone has their own individual path and some individuals rise to the limelight, but we're all a part of one giant community and it's fantastic. In terms of socially - both in and out of the social parkour network, it's definitely influenced. We couldn't learn about each other without posting tutorials and videos on the internet.*

*How I learnt personally was with pictures and paragraphs on a website. I would look at the picture, read the paragraph associated and figure it out.*

**14. Reliant on the environment** (Lines 97-99)

*Most definitely, talking about the environment, the environment definitely influences parkour. There's a little motto. I'm not sure who said it. It maybe Teekay 17 again. He said that, "the obstacle comes before the movement".*

**15. Emotional relationship the environment** (Lines 1-4, 102 -103 and 104-109)

*You've got the basic way to train which helps develop understanding on how the body moves through different obstacles and environments. There's a goal of being able to move as the crow flies and in a straight line. It involves moving from one place to another without faltering because of an obstacle. So, you have the basic movement, but it has to be adapted for every separate environment. If I ever find a new type of rail, as long as the surrounding area is safe, I won't do it at the side of a motorway. I will balance on it because I believe my balance isn't as good as it can be until I've done it on every different type of rail. You can walk on one square rail a couple of inches wide and be fine but that doesn't mean you can walk on something half an inch wide that's slightly rounded. You have to be trained for every environment and train in every environment to be ready.*

**16. Way of life** (Lines 121-129)

*No I definitely couldn't give up parkour. It's something I could not choose to stop one day. It's not even a thought that crosses my mind. I did once think about giving up. That was a couple of months in. I hurt my arm and I thought, "I don't think this is for me" (name omitted) told me to keep going and said that I would get better and I did. It's become a part of my life, it's become my life. It is me and my life. Everyone knows me by the nickname that I have. Apart from my family, a handful of people know me as (name omitted). I don't know what I would be if I stopped.*

*I feel like I'd be an empty shell sitting in a room staring at an Xbox or something. Like some sort of robot. I wouldn't be alive. It's the blood in my veins. It's me. I couldn't give up. I wouldn't.*

**Figure 4.3: Participant C: Clusters and Emerging Themes**

<b>Cluster 1:</b> Training (themes 1 and 5)
<b>Cluster 2:</b> Risk (theme 4)
<b>Cluster 3:</b> Philosophy (theme 2)
<b>Cluster 4:</b> Being in the present (theme 7)
<b>Cluster 5:</b> Enjoyment (theme 8)
<b>Cluster 6:</b> Challenge (theme 6)
<b>Cluster 7:</b> Spirituality (themes 9 and 11)
<b>Cluster 8:</b> Environment (themes 14 and 15)
<b>Cluster 9:</b> Addiction (theme 16)
<b>Cluster 10:</b> Perception (theme 12)
<b>Cluster 11:</b> Aesthetics (theme 15)
<b>Cluster 12:</b> Mastery (theme 10)
<b>Cluster 13:</b> Society (theme 13)
<b>Cluster 14:</b> Thrill Seeking (theme 3)

### **4.3 Identifying Themes**

Examining the themes in relation to one another enables the researcher to produce clusters of the themes that capture categories of meaning. The themes and clusters that are produced must relate to the original data (Willig, 2008).

### 4.3.1 Participant A: Themes

#### **Challenge**

*I started off about six years ago and there was a programme on channel 4 called Jump Britain. Jump Britain was a sequel to Jump London. Jump London revolved around a few French free runners who did parkour. Parkour began in France in a small town in called Lisses (Lines 6-9). In the video, French runners come to London and are jumping all over the landscape of London. A few years later they were invited back again by Channel 4 and they did Jump Britain (Lines 9-11). Because of Jump London the whole sport grew and evolved, whereby a lot more people knew about it. I watched Jump Britain as a complete novice and that night went out and just decided to do it. I know it was a very childish thing (Lines 12-14). First time I tried it was on a wall that was higher on one side than it was on the other. I didn't realise how high it was and I jumped over this wall and proceeding to fall longer than I expected. I landed and rolled onto my back and sort of like lay there for a moment completely winded (Lines 133-136). I can specifically remember getting back up and (name omitted) was with me (name omitted) looked over the wall and said are you okay and I said I'm fine, I'm just a little winded (Lines 138-140).*

#### **Training**

*Parkour is an efficient way of training from getting to point A to point B (Lines 1-2). There's parkour and free running (Lines 2). With parkour being more about training for every situation in a very efficient way. We sort of like switch between the two (Lines 4-5). I went through a period about three years ago when I was thinking about quitting. I'd be training and somebody would come by and say, "I can do that it's really easy" and they would do it. I'd get really disheartened and think to myself, "I've been training for three years and these people can do it". I came to the realisation that when people say, "I can do it" - I must say to them, "great do it again". I'd be promoting it instead of being disheartened.*

*It was at that point it changed from wanting to jump around for that moment to being able to jump around for the rest of my life (Lines 22-29). You have to be timed to stay in one place and do the move again and again. That's the training for getting from point A to point B (Lines 90-91).*

### **Perception**

*Instead of going around the wall to get back on the top I went over the wall. I climbed back up that wall and got back onto the other side and that was the interesting thing. Not taking the long route. It was shortening that distance but also in your mind. You think if somebody walks down the street and they see a wall they'll go around the wall. If somebody's walking to a field and there's a path around the field. They'll follow the path regardless of the fact that the fastest way is to go across the grass. It was a very big thing for me to suddenly have that moment of realisation, when everything shortens, everything becomes a lot smaller. I did the jump again realising how big it was and this time landed on my feet very, very happy (Lines 142-150). Free runner, Chris Blaine said that parkour and free running helped him in his personal life. He said that if you're doing a presentation in front of a group and you think to yourself alright this is a scary situation. Then it jumps into your head all of a sudden that this is nowhere near as scary as doing that eleven foot jump you did yesterday. There isn't any death involved in this. There isn't any possibility of breaking limbs. What's the point of being scared. It teaches you to fight your fears in every way possible (Lines 193-198).*

### **Enjoyment**

*I wanted to just jump around. I just wanted to do what they did. I knew I would never be good enough but I wanted to just have a go (Lines 14-15). Most free runners refuse to get into the politics, simply because they enjoy the movement of it. Free running I think for the most part people enjoy the showing off factor (Lines 84-86). Everybody cheers you on. For me that's the most interesting aspect.*

*When I jump around I don't try and deny I'm acting like a child and its fun because children have a different view on the world than adults do. How many adults do you see walking along a wall. Yet how many children do you see wanting to jump up onto a wall and be up there?*

*Half the time when we train and are walking along the wall, we're not ashamed to say there's lava's on the ground. It presents a new fun aspect to it all. So it doesn't have to be conditioning and training yourself. It can be fun, it can be really, really liberating. Yeah, that's my most interesting aspect (Lines 124-131). Parkour varies between the two. A runner called Sebastian Foucan is one of the original traceurs in France. He said when you are with other people you gain a different kind of confidence. The jump is there and bang you do the job. It's wonderful (Lines 202-205).*

### **Mastery**

*The next day I woke up and my body hurt. I've never had ache like that in my life and it was wonderful. It was self improvement. It was knowing that I had moved forward (Lines 15-17). I've never been very sporty. My first free running was jumping over a wall just using my hands. I never thought I could do it and then realised how easy it was. Every day I would train behind this supermarket called B and N Bargains. Eventually I would move out and spread across the whole town. Suddenly I could free run (Lines 17-22). I'd never been experienced in anything in anyway. So it was nice that I could do something that not many other people could do. I realised that it would become part of my life. I realised that being ready for every situation and being able to help people was a big motivating factor. Going back to that super hero. Wanting as a child to be able to save people. You can help them now. You can do it. You can't be superman but you can get close. It's a nice feeling to have (Lines 51-57). The first time I did free running I had the biggest grin on my face because it wasn't pain it was progression (Line 169). We don't jump around buildings for fun because that's very risky and unsafe (Lines 181-182).*

*I think parkour helps you fight your barriers, both physical and mental. It does that more than any other sport because it's so varied (Lines 199-200). When you're on your own a barrier gets involved. You don't have any positive peer pressure. You have to do it yourself. I think in order for true progression to happen in parkour it has to be an individual thing.*

*Nobody else can teach you a move. It doesn't matter if you're in a group of thirty or forty people who can all do the move it won't help you one bit. You can be the only person in the crowd of a hundred people but you're the only person breaking through your own barriers. You're not breaking through anybody else's. I think true progression only happens when you're on your own (Lines 205-213). It's definitely a social thing but it's the individual aspects that provide the progression (Lines 220-221).*

### **Philosophy**

*Free running in very literal terms could be based around a more expressionist form with acrobatics involved a lot more (Lines 2-4). You hear about people who had drug problems and violence problems and suddenly they took up free running and everything disappeared (Lines 40-41). We went to France recently which is where free running began. We came back with a philosophy of having to do any jump you do three times. The first time is easy because you don't think about it. The second time is a little bit harder and you're thinking a little bit more about your technique. The third time is the hardest because you've done it so many times, you're wondering maybe this is the time you'll hurt yourself. After you've done all of those jumps you get really annoyed because the person next to you say's, "one more jump for the family". I've never hated my family so much in my life. You're so scared of doing that jump and you don't want to do it again. Then you realise you're doing it for them. It's not you anymore more. It's for them (Lines 74-82). I think one of the most interesting aspects of parkour would be its origin. I mean it began with something called Method Unnatural which was coined by a French guy called Georges Hébert. Whilst working in the army he decided to create a training regime that was completely natural.*

*It worked on ten schools of movement. Along the lines of swimming, running, jumping, fighting, crawling under something and vaulting something. It basically evolved around natural people. He was based near the Volcano; Krakatau I believe (Lines 100-107). He actually rescued about three hundred of the town's folk through using his training. So he decided this is fantastic. He decided to apply it to the military and it was taken on whole heartedly by the French military.*

*Every French military person practiced something called Parkour Dus Combat which basically means to combat obstacles (Lines 108-111). These ideas were taken on by somebody called Raymond Bell. Raymond Bell was a fire fighter who also practiced Parkour Dus Combat. He practised it in a forest outside his home near Calais (Lines 113-115). His son David got involved and practiced Method Unnatural. They moved to a little town called Lisses outside their city of Avery, thirty five kilometres south of Paris. It was a new town but there was nothing to do, so David Bell and his friends did the only thing that they could do and bounced around this town (Lines 116-119).*

### **Aesthetics**

*A very weird combination of grass and gravel, you know for the first time in my life parking lines became the start and end, you jump from one line to the other (Lines 152-154). I've learned about how to move. That's the most important thing - that you learn how to move. People move everyday with such a limited range of motions. They lift something, they walk, they'll run and they'll probably swim. What they completely miss is jumping; crawling, climbing, walking backwards, walking on their hands and skipping. Skipping is a fantastic way to work on your length jumps. Alright you're going to look a bit strange doing it but it's not as if we don't look strange doing other things (Lines 172-180). Parkour has taught me about the movement of the body. I've been doing parkour for six years and would gladly just sit and watch a cat walk across a room. They have such a wide range of movement. We're inferior to that range of movement.*

*A cat can jump three times its height easily and you look at them and it's like why can't I do that. Parkour has taught me about the way the body works, the physiology, and the biology. It's taught me how the body acts and reacts and the cause and effect of it. You realise the body is a fantastically tuned machine. Like any fantastically tuned machine you have to keep it oiled. You have to replace the parts. Not in the literal sense. That would be quite messy with the human body (Lines 183-191).*

### **Health, fitness and wellbeing**

*I used to have no self confidence, I never did any sport. My body was terrible. I had no fitness level what so ever. When I began I never thought about improving myself. It didn't come into my head. One day, when I was bored I decided to pick up the tiny little weights in our house (1.5 kilograms). I picked them up and just started lifting my arms outwards again and again. I didn't realise it was working the top of my shoulders. One day I was getting into the shower and I looked in the mirror and was literally shocked. I jumped a little because I had grown muscle. That was a new thing for me because I was so skinny that had never happened. After that the motivation really kicked in. Seeing the change that it had was inspirational (Lines 31-40).*

### **Spirituality**

*That was the motivation for it. It was born out of doing it. The inspiration came out of me going around and jumping around. It was very spiritual in nature. It was like people who climb to the top of a mountain and look over the scenery and they realise something that's always been there but they've never seen it. It was like that and suddenly I could look at myself from a distance and realised that I had changed. That was definitely my inspiration (Lines 42-47). I think the most important thing going back to the spirituality of it is that parkour has taught me is how to mentally cope (Lines 191-193).*

### **Being in the present**

*It's very expressionist. It's a stress relief. Definitely for me it's a stress relief. If you have a hard day in college or if you have a hard day in work. You go out and jump around and obviously in biological terms you have dopamine and serotonin released into your blood. Its pain relieving – a kind of morphine in a sense. You become very docile and become happy (Lines 95-100). It became a phenomenon to them. It was something that could allow them to free themselves from this nothing. They had nothing to do. So it allowed them to be children. It allowed them to act as the super heroes they wanted to be (Lines 119-122).*

*We proceeded to walk around the entire town just jumping around. Just finding things we never thought were important like a rail and a wall or a very weird combination of grass and gravel. Parking lines became the start and end. You jump from one line to the other instead of something slotting nicely in between them. You were forging your own path (Lines 151-155).*

### **Addiction**

*God it motivates you. It does something to you. You hear about Parkour Jams, a meeting of people and you want to go so much. Even if you can't - you spend your entire day in work thinking to yourself, "why don't I quit this job and just go free run, with them". It's so motivating to know there are so many people who have as much passion as you (Lines 217-220). I often think to myself, "what if I break a leg or really hurt myself". Parkour has become such a way of life for me, that it's imagining somebody there for the whole of your life and suddenly there not (Lines 261-263). I could do it all the time (Lines 275-276).*

### **Environment**

*Parkour is definitely environmentally influenced. Without the environment you're not doing parkour. The different landscapes require a different type of parkour. Running through a city is absolutely nothing like running through a forest.*

*Running through a forest is nothing like running across open ground. The environment influences what mindset you will have and what movement you'll implement. You take a certain pride in your surroundings. We try our best not to damage anything and if we do damage something then we own up to it straight away. If we break something then we won't be able to use it again. That's a very important factor. It's not about using it and hoping that nobody else cares. It's about using it and knowing that you can go back there and use it again. Parkour protects its environment (Lines 223-233).*

### **Society**

*We moved onto Southport College and we found this little wall. We were jumping over it and a person came by about our age. He looked at us for a moment and said, "ah mate, you're doing that parkour thing - that thing I saw last night on the television". He was associating me with what he saw. I went home feeling great. I got home and sat down and my dad had been wondering where I'd been all night. I explained that I'd been doing parkour. He said, "you're going to break your neck" in a very exaggerated way (Lines 156-163). I rode into school the next day and it was painful. With all this aching and with something close to humiliation at causing myself to be like this, I had trouble just locking my bike up (Lines 166-169). I do believe it's the social aspect that makes parkour so appealing with so many other like minded people all striving for one goal to better themselves (Lines 213-215). The only reason parkour is what it is today is because of the people of Lisses allowed it to be so. If the people of Lisses in France had said no to the boys jumping around - If they'd quashed that desire, parkour would not be there. I truly believe parkour relies solely on the respect of the community. If the community as a whole doesn't like you, you'll be frowned upon. As far as I know only one place has banned free running with the threat of an asbo and that's Morton in Liverpool (Lines 236-241). You will never see in the majority of the country a sign that says you can't do parkour. You'll see a sign that says you can't go skate boarding or you can't skate or you can't ride your bike here. But you'll not see something that says you can't do parkour here (Lines 242-245).*

*As long as we have the good respect of the community parkour will carry on (Line 246). If somebody asks us to move from a particular place, there is zero argument. We say we're very sorry and we leave (Lines 249-250). We've actually had it quite a few times where people come out and acknowledge that we are doing parkour and offer us drinks. They allow us to train and if they want us to move - no problem. It's that level of respect. We show respect to them about respecting their environment and respecting their property. They show respect to us. It's basic human nature (Lines 253-257).*

### **Risk**

*It was never the adrenalin rush for me (Lines 47-48). If I went for the adrenalin then that would cloud my senses. If I'm doing a very large jump and the adrenalin clouds my senses, I increase the risk. If I increase the risk I won't be able help people. I wasn't searching for the risk anymore I was searching for deleting the risk. I will do a move a thousand times over so that I wouldn't hurt myself if I ever did have an accident. A traceur said it perfectly when he said, "a traceur who practices parkour has to be able to think on his feet, even when his feet are busy". Fantastic phrase and that's it. It's about deleting that risk in order to have the best possible outcome (Lines 60-67). At the recent world free running championships somebody tore their knee ligament very badly. He was very badly injured, yet at the end of one of his videos recently it showed him training with his cast on his leg (Lines 268-271).*

### **Thrill Seeking**

*At the beginning it wasn't about the adrenalin. I was thinking about showing off. Thinking I could do anything (Lines 48-49). I understand people who want to do it for that risk and I can understand that feeling of adrenaline. But after a while it's like if you have a lot of coffee, eventually you become immune to the effects of it. I think I've filled myself up with so much adrenalin. I'm constantly on adrenalin now it doesn't affect me anymore.*

*I've done so many big things. You do this massive jump and you would be shaking afterwards. You land and you say, "my footing was off, I'm going to do it again". It's that perfection that you have got to go for (Lines 67-73).*

**4.3.2 Participant B: Themes**

**Training**

*You're literally training to get from A to B using every physical movement possible and you train for every situation and every motion for every obstacle. It slowly becomes more based around getting to know yourself and your environment (Lines 1-3).*

**Mastery**

*I got back in touch with (name omitted) and (name omitted) who were still doing parkour and got into it then. I was much more grown up and more physically developed. I was more capable than I was and it became less physical and more about the mental side of it. I've really found myself doing things that back then I would have called impossible. Now here I am doing them and its fantastic and I love it (Lines 12-16). Truth be told, when I was little, I was a bit of a super hero buff. I used to absolutely love the stuff and doing the stuff we're doing now, I feel a little bit like a super hero. It's given me the means to help people, friends and family. If there in trouble, I have the mental capacity to deal with the situation and the physical everything. So what really inspires me is that I can help people out (Lines 17-21). But the most noted thing about my first time which is something we mention to everyone is the day after. When you wake up and muscles you never knew existed hurt. It was fantastic because it was progression. You were proud of the fact that your body hurt, ready for the next time you go out to pretend that you're six. Well most importantly I learnt my own limits, physically and mentally. I've also learnt how to push them and give myself a greater physical and mental strength which has really helped me through life, in a lot of different aspects (Lines 41-47). Both individual and social training play an important part in the traceur's progression. The individual side is very much about yourself (Lines 48-49).*

### **Risk**

*I like there to be a bit of risk involved. I don't know about these two - their slightly more down to earth. I think with my background of skating and stuff like that I prefer an adrenalin kick every so often (Lines 21-23). But I feel when you're with a group you have to be very careful with the positive pressure. It can be very appealing and very motivating whilst at the same time quite dangerous. If people are cheering you on to do a jump you know you're not ready for it but you do it, just too kind of show off. Then the risk increases to a point where you're not comfortable. You don't feel in control with it. It can be very positive but in that respect it's about your individual look at it. You have to know even when you're with a group whether to say "yes, I'll do this or no, I can't" (Lines 50-56).*

### **Spiritual**

*I've noticed through my years of training that a lot of practitioners seem to have the same personality type. They all seem to be kind people. I'm not saying horrible people don't do it but they seem to have a very similar personality. So I think it tends to be those people attracted to parkour due to something within them. It's often very creative people, who a lot of which tend to put others before themselves. People with a very deep outlook on life who are looking for something more (Lines 24-30).*

### **Aesthetics**

*It slowly becomes more based around getting to know yourself and your environment (Lines 2-3). For me personally the most interesting thing about parkour is my body itself. Through just doing this sport or discipline as some people like to refer to it. I've learnt so much about my body. The way my muscles work and the way they develop. The way my tendons work. It's made me more in touch with me physically and mentally. I'm still learning about my body and I'm still absolutely intrigued by the different things and what it's capable of (Lines 31-35).*

**Being in the present**

*Well the first time I tried parkour was with (name omitted). We had just gone round town and were just bouncing about happily. At the time I fell in love with it because I felt like I was six again. It was fantastic, just running along walls. I loved it to bits climbing on everything we could see for no particular reason. It was great getting some fantastically weird looks off people. It was fantastic (Lines 36-40). Different landscapes call for different movements (Line 65).*

**Enjoyment**

*One night there was a documentary called Jump Britain on television. I think it was the night after it was on I went out with (name omitted). We had a jump around and stuff like that. We started doing it in High School on a little wall we found round the back. We used to hop around on our lunch break just playing and just messing about (Lines 5-8). I fell in love with it because I felt like I was six again (Line 37).*

**Challenge**

*It's made me more in touch with me physically and mentally and I'm still learning about my body and I'm still absolutely intrigued by the different things and what it's capable of (Lines 33-35). You were proud of the fact that your body hurt - ready for the next time you go out to pretend that you're six (Lines 43-44). Doing parkour helps you find your own limits and identifies any personal barriers you might have. It helps you find your own personal way to get past that (Lines 49-50).*

**Social**

*It reminds me of when we went to France, to Lisses, the birth place of parkour. We met traceurs from all over the world. There were people from Finland, America and France. The second you meet these people, it's like you've known them your entire life.*

*Everyone is so happy to see you and wants to teach you things that they've learnt. You teach them things you've learnt and spread your knowledge around. It's a fantastic feeling. It's absolutely beautiful (Lines 57-62).*

*Socially, I've seen a lot of different social responses from different people on the street. I've had some fantastic people come up and speak to me. There was an elderly lady in the centre of Southport who approached and said, "I love what you do, I love to sit down and watch you guys jumping around, it's absolutely fantastic." But we were also training one day and someone walked past and said, "at your age you should know better". I don't know there's a lot of different looks on what we do. I think some people might associate jumping around on walls with hooligans and stuff like that. But it's nice that there are people that really respect what we do. It's nice that there are people like that still knocking around the community. It means we do have hope to build on something positive rather than get an automatic look down look on everything (Lines 71 – 80).*

### **Environment**

*I think it's definitely influenced by the environment. Not the whole but most of the discipline is based on getting around it. Navigating around it, through it and so on. Different landscapes call for different movements. You've got forests, you've got cityscapes and you've got more suburban areas that have fewer obstacles. It's more open ground. I think that all does really influence the way we train. You have to really learn how to adapt to environments. You train in many different environments ranging from running down the sand dunes and endurance running, to climbing trees in the forest or just bolting a wall round the back of an outlet store (Lines 63-70).*

**Addiction**

*There was a point in my training and I know when I hit it as I said it to (name omitted) “it’s no longer what I do it’s who I am”. Even if I was physically incapable, mentally I’ve learnt so much about the way I move, the way I think and how to cope with situations. I could lose an arm or a leg and I’d just learn to adapt. I’d learn to train without my leg. It’s like I said it’s who I am (Lines 81-86).*

### 4.3.3 Participant C: Themes

#### **Aesthetics**

*You've got the basic way to train which helps develop understanding on how the body moves through different obstacles and environments. There's a goal of being able to move as the crow flies and in a straight line. It involves moving from one place to another without faltering because of an obstacle (Lines 1-4). I have to personally realise where my hands and feet are going and I've figured out how my body works (Lines 73-75). So, you have the basic movement, but it has to be adapted for every separate environment (Lines 102-103). You have to be trained for every environment and train in every environment to be ready (Lines 108-109).*

#### **Challenge**

*I started around six years ago. I remember seeing a programme on television with free runners that came from France going around with people from the London community. At the end of the programme it showed people from all over the world. The programme had a community spirit that I wanted to be part of. I started that night doing little jumps and little things (Lines 9-15). I remember thinking, "I won't be jumping over those walls because I don't have the strength". Some things only become easy once you have trained and there are always going to be more difficult things to accomplish. You always look back at the things which are easy now which were once very difficult (Lines 16-19). Everyone has their own personal reasons, some people want to make a difference to their mind and body (Lines 38-39).*

#### **Philosophy**

*There's the personal element of what it does for you. The philosophical side of parkour is really helpful to some people. You can train your body and train your mind. You can apply that to other parts of your life (Lines 4-8). You think how you did it and you can save that and use it in your life. It's being able to be physically ready but mentally and socially able for any situation. It's almost like all over life training for me (Lines 30-32).*

**Spirituality**

*It is a great place to be spiritually (Line 70). It's more mental for me. I figured out that I can be what I want. If you want to be it, you can make it happen. It's a sort of Matrix type of thing (Lines 75-76). Everyone's got their own personal path they take (Line 84).*

**Perception**

*There's a thing we call, PK Vision, PK is short for parkour. It's when you look at something and an area and you think to yourself and you look and you don't need to even make an effort anymore. You think, "I go over this, to there, up that and along this, down there and through there, under that and around that little thing and then I'm there". Or someone else looking will say, "okay, I'll go up this bit around there and round there." Everyone finds their different way (Lines 84-89).*

**Thrill Seeking**

*It's fun sometimes when there's that danger, you realise that was a bit close, but I'm out alive. It's more I overcame that (Lines 29-30).*

**Risk**

*In terms of risk, I'm not really seeking an adrenalin kick (Lines 27-28). It's fun sometimes when there's that danger. You realise that was a bit close but I'm out alive. It's more I overcame that (Lines 29-30).*

**Being in the present**

*For me personally what is most interesting is the escapism of it. When I first found it - it was a way of leaving my problems behind. I started six years ago (Lines 44-45). I would start focusing on what I was doing and everything else would disappear. I developed a new personality. I became a new person. I took on my other name. I became (name omitted) and they knew me as (name omitted) Every time I went and jumped and ran, I was (name omitted) who didn't have (name omitted) problems. I could do what I wanted. I didn't have to worry and that was fantastic.*

*Eventually I just became (name omitted) entirely. It provided not just a way out but eventually a solution and it's allowed me to become me (Lines 48-55).*

### **Training**

*When I started, I was physically and socially incapable really. I had no social life and no strength. Even in school in the little groups we were in, I would be the quite one who stood there listening to everyone else, never saying a word not even in class. Through meeting (name omitted) and (name omitted) I'd go training. Pretty much the first time I'd say anything, "I like this, it's fun". They were almost shocked that I had a voice. Training really brought me out of my shell. I'm know where near the person I was six years ago. I wouldn't have said boo to the ghost of a fly. I was that shy (Lines 20-26). There is a certain genre of people that will come to it more than most. You get the odd others that come and go. You're not sure why they train. They just want to show off or maybe want to use it for other means that are perhaps slightly sinister. It's not like the whole movie thing where you have the good guy training one thing and the bad guy training the same thing but for different reasons. Mostly you have genuine nice people who want to do it to improve themselves or help people. Everyone has their own personal reasons. Some people want to make a difference to their mind and body or maybe they want to do it as career. We know a couple moving towards sponsorship and several others who are actually sponsored and are working. While there is a sort of foundation of personality of what free runners are, what brings them to it is very personal. Everyone has their own reason and their own motivation and purpose for it (Lines 33-43).*

### **Social**

*It gave me a social life and a love life. The female community is still small compared to the male community. It is definitely growing. We are trying to encourage that in our home town ourselves. Parkour has taught me to be outward and live life (Lines 80-83) and given me a great sense of individuality whilst at the same time we are a community.*

*It isn't just between three people or thirty people. It's thirty nations or more and people from all over the world. There's a language that's developed between everyone. It isn't even English. You'll meet somewhere and there's three or four walls and you'll see someone and say, "ah, wush, tik, fump, ahdadat, nice". Everyone will know what you mean. It's truly fantastic (Lines 90-94). Everyone has their own individual path and some individuals rise to the limelight. But we're all a part of one giant community and its fantastic (Lines 95-96). In terms of socially, both in and out of the social parkour network, it's definitely influenced. We learn about each other by posting tutorials and videos on the internet. How I learnt personally was with pictures and paragraphs on a website. I look at the picture, read the paragraph associated and figure it out (Lines 110-113).*

### **Enjoyment**

*I thought this is fun and they look like they're having fun. I remember we were doing a very small jump. The distance was only about one step when you walk normally but when we first started we couldn't do it. We tried with all our effort and even with the amount of times we tried we kept failing. There was such fun involved with doing that. It was the morning after when you ached and wondered why you did it and you would say, "I remember - I like this" (Lines 64-71).*

### **Mastery**

*Physically and mentally it's helped me develop into a person and overcome physical challenges (Lines 26-27). One of the key things I've definitely learnt is confidence. People can tell me how or show me and I can learn a move myself (Lines 72-73).*

### **Environment**

*There's a little motto that states that the obstacle comes before the movement. There's a basic movement called the Kong, which is where you go over the wall forward. You place your hands on the wall and leap forward. You can't do that on every wall the same way.*

*Some walls are wider, some are thinner, some are taller and the area around each wall is different. So you have the basic movements but they have to be adapted to the environment. I believe my balance isn't as good as it can be until I've done it on every type of rail, as long as the surrounding area is safe. I won't do it on the side of a motorway. You can walk on one square rail a couple of inches wide and be fine but that doesn't mean you can walk on something half an inch wide that's slightly rounded. You have to be trained for every environment and train in every environment that is available (Lines 97-109).*

### **Addiction**

*No I definitely couldn't give up parkour. It's something I could not choose to stop one day. It's not even a thought that crosses my mind. I did once think about giving up. That was a couple of months in. I hurt my arm and I thought, "I don't think this is for me" (name omitted) told me to keep going and said that I would get better and I did. It's become a part of my life, it's become my life. It is me and my life. Everyone knows me by the nickname that I have. Apart from my family, a handful of people know me as (name omitted). I don't know what I would be if I stopped. I feel like I'd be an empty shell sitting in a room staring at an Xbox or something. Like some sort of robot. I wouldn't be alive. It's the blood in my veins. It's me. I couldn't give up. I wouldn't (Lines 121-130).*

#### **4.4 Systematic Overview**

To provide a clear and systematic overview of the quotes, keywords, constituent themes and clusters the researcher produces a summary table (Willig, 2008).

**Figure 4.4: Participant A: Summary Table**

<b>Summary Table: Participant A</b>		
<b>Cluster 1: Training</b>		<b>Lines</b>
• Parkour movement: “efficient way of training”.		1
• How I started: “programme on channel 4 called Jump Britain”.		6-7
• Practise: “doing a move a thousand times over”.		63
<b>Cluster 2: Risk</b>		
• Risk factor: “I understand people who want to do it for that risk”.		67
• Deleting the risk: “I was searching for deleting the risk”.		62-63
<b>Cluster 3: Philosophy</b>		
• Parkour technique: “we came back with a philosophy”.		74-75
• What is parkour: “interesting aspects of parkour would be its origin”.		100-101
<b>Cluster 4: Being in the Present</b>		
• More than a hobby: “become part of my life”.		53
• Stress relief: “it’s very expressionist”.		95
	“it’s a stress relief”.	96
<b>Cluster 5: Enjoyment</b>		
• Sense of fun: “wanted to just jump around”.		14
• Personal challenge: “I had the biggest grin on my face”.		169
<b>Cluster 6: Challenge</b>		
• Individual competition: “look at me I can do it”.		26
• Personal development: “a wall higher on one side than the other”.		133
<b>Cluster 7: Spirituality</b>		
• Spiritually uplifting: “it was very spiritual in nature”.		43
• Sense of fun: “I wanted to just have a go”.		15
• A way of life: “I wouldn’t be able to live without doing parkour”.		275
<b>Cluster 8: Environment</b>		
• Reliant on the environment: “without the environment you’re not doing parkour”.		224
• Emotional rel. with the environment: “you jump from one line to the other”.		154

## Chapter 4 – Analysis One

---

<b>Cluster 9: <i>Addiction</i></b>		
• A way of life:	“I wouldn’t be able live without doing parkour”.	275
• Stress relief:	“it’s a stress relief”.	96
<b>Cluster 10: <i>Perception</i></b>		
• Changing perspective:	“shortening that distance but also in your mind”.	144
• Emotional rel. with the environment:	weird combination of grass and gravel”.	152-153
<b>Cluster 11: <i>Aesthetics</i></b>		
• Emotional relationship the environment:	“parking lines became start and end”.	154
• Changing perspective:	“everything shortens, everything becomes a lot smaller”.	148-149
<b>Cluster 12: <i>Mastery</i></b>		
• Individual competition:	“I can do it”.	26
• Personal development:	“it wasn’t pain it was progression”.	169
<b>Cluster 13: <i>Health Fitness and Wellbeing</i></b>		
• Improved fitness:	“I had grown muscle and that was a new thing for me”.	38
<b>Cluster 14: <i>Thrill Seeking</i></b>		
• Searching for thrills:	“I mean I understand people who want to do it for that risk and I can understand that feeling of adrenaline”.	67-68
<b>Cluster 15: <i>Society</i></b>		
• Sense of community:	“I do believe it’s that social aspect that makes parkour so appealing”.	213-214

**Figure 4.5: Participant B: Summary Table**

<b>Summary Table: Participant B</b>	
<b>Cluster 1: Training</b>	<b>Lines</b>
• Parkour movement: “you’re literally training to get from A to B”.	1
• Emotional rel. with the environment: “slowly becomes more based around getting to know yourself and your environment”.	2-3
<b>Cluster 2: Risk</b>	
• Risk factor: “I like there to be a bit risk involved”.	21
<b>Cluster 3: Being in the Present</b>	
• Community spirit: “everyone is so happy to see you”.	60
• Reliant on the environment: “different landscapes call for different movements”.	65
<b>Cluster 4: Enjoyment</b>	
• Sense of fun: “I fell in love with it”.	37
<b>Cluster 5: Challenge</b>	
• Personal development: “in touch with me physically and mentally”.	34
• Individual competition: “give myself a greater physical and mental strength”.	46
<b>Cluster 6: Spirituality</b>	
• Spiritual in nature: “people with a very deep outlook on life”.	29
<b>Cluster 7: Environment</b>	
• Emotional relationship with the environment: “you have to really learn how to adapt to your environments”.	67-68
• Reliant on the environment: “most of the discipline is based on getting around it”.	64
<b>Cluster 8: Addiction</b>	
• A way of life: “it’s no longer what I do, it’s who I am”.	82
• More than a hobby: “it’s just like I said it’s who I am”.	85-86

<b>Cluster 9:</b> <i>Aesthetics</i>		
• Emotional rel. with the environment:	“it slowly becomes more based around getting to know yourself and your environment”.	2-3
• Reliant on the environment:	“different landscapes call for different movements”.	65
<b>Cluster 10:</b> <i>Mastery</i>		
• Personal development:	“it’s made me more in touch with me physically and mentally”.	33-34
• Individual competition:	“I would have called impossible and now here I am doing them and its fantastic and I love it”.	15-16
<b>Cluster 11:</b> <i>Society</i>		
• Community spirit:	“it’s a fantastic feeling, it’s absolutely beautiful”.	62

**Figure 4.6: Participant C: Summary Table**

<b>Summary Table: Participant C</b>	
<b>Cluster 1: Training</b>	
	<b>Lines</b>
• Parkour movement: “you got the basic way to train to understand your body”.	1-2
• Practise: “people who want to do it to improve themselves”.	37-38
<b>Cluster 2: Risk</b>	
• Risk factor: “it’s fun sometimes when there’s that danger”.	29
<b>Cluster 3: Philosophy</b>	
• Philosophy/technique: “parkour gave us a philosophical side to it”.	5
<b>Cluster 4: Being in the present</b>	
• Stress relief: “what is most interesting is the escapism of it”.	44
<b>Cluster 5: Enjoyment</b>	
• Sense of fun: “I thought this is fun”.	64-65
<b>Cluster 6: Challenge</b>	
• Personal development: “some people want to make a difference to their mind and body”.	38-39
<b>Cluster 7: Spirituality</b>	
• Spiritually up lifting: “it was a great place to be spiritually”.	70
• Spiritual in nature: “it’s more mental for me”.	75
<b>Cluster 8: Environment</b>	
• Reliant on the environment: “the obstacle comes before the movement”.	98-99
• Emotional relationship the environment: “if I ever find a new type of rail as long as the surrounding area is safe, I won’t do it at the side of a motorway. I will balance on it”.	104-105
<b>Cluster 9: Addiction</b>	
• Way of life: “I definitely couldn’t give it up. It’s something I could not choose to stop one day. It’s become my life, it is me, parkour, it is me and my life”.	121-122, 125

<b>Cluster 10:</b> Perception	
• Changing perspective: “there’s a thing we call, PK Vision, PK short for parkour and it’s when you look at something and you look at an area and you think to yourself and you look and you don’t need to even make an effort anymore”.	84-87
<b>Cluster 11:</b> Aesthetics	
• Emotional relationship the environment: “you have to be trained for every environment and train in every environment to be ready”.	108-109
<b>Cluster 12:</b> Mastery	
• Individual competition: “I can learn a move myself, I have to figure it out myself”.	72-73
<b>Cluster 13:</b> Society	
• Community spirit: “it gave me a social life, a love life”.	80-81
<b>Cluster 14:</b> Thrill Seeking	
• Element of danger: “it’s fun sometimes when there’s that danger, you realise that was a bit close, but I’m out alive, it’s more I overcame that”.	29-30

#### **4.5 Master Themes**

A list of master themes is produced to capture the quality of the participant's experience of the phenomenon under investigation and it provides insight into the essence of the phenomenon (Willig, 2008).

**Figure 4.7: Participant A, B and C: List of Master Themes**

	<b>Participant A</b>	<b>Participant B</b>	<b>Participant C</b>
	<b>Lines</b>	<b>Lines</b>	<b>Lines</b>
<b>Master Theme 1: Training</b>			
Parkour movement	1	1	1-2
How I started	6-7		
Practise	63		37-38
Emotional rel. with the environment		2-3	
<b>Master Theme 2: Risk</b>			
Risk factor	67	21	29
Deleting the risk	62-63		
<b>Master Theme 3: Philosophy</b>			
Parkour technique	74-75		5
What is parkour	100-101		
<b>Master Theme 4: Being in the Present</b>			
More than a hobby	53		
What is parkour			
Community spirit		60	
Reliant on the environment		65	
Stress relief	95-96		44
<b>Master Theme 5: Enjoyment</b>			
Sense of fun	14	37	64-65
Personal challenge	169		
<b>Master Theme 6: Challenge</b>			
Individual competition	26	46	
Personal development	133	34	38-39
<b>Master Theme 7: Spirituality</b>			
Spiritually uplifting	43		70
Sense of fun	15		
A way of life	275		
Spiritual in nature		29	75

<b>Master Theme 8: <i>Environment</i></b>			
Reliant on the environment	224	64	98-99
Emotional rel. with the environment	154	67-68	104-105
<b>Master Theme 9: <i>Addiction</i></b>			
A way of life	275	82	121-122, 125
Stress relief	96		
More than a hobby		85-86	
<b>Master Theme 10: <i>Perception</i></b>			
Changing perspective	144		84-87
Emotional rel. with environment	152-153		
<b>Master Theme 11: <i>Aesthetics</i></b>			
Emotional rel. the environment	154	2-3	108-109
Changing perspective	148-149		
Reliant on the environment		65	
<b>Master Theme 12: <i>Mastery</i></b>			
Individual competition	26	15-16	72-73
Personal development	169	33-34	
<b>Master Theme 13: <i>Health Fitness and Wellbeing</i></b>			
Improved fitness	38		
<b>Master Theme 14: <i>Thrill Seeking</i></b>			
Searching For thrills	67-68		
Element of danger			29-30
<b>Master Theme 15: <i>Society</i></b>			
Sense of community	213-214		
Community spirit		62	80-81

**Summary**

The pilot study demonstrated that the research approach, research design and data analysis were able to generate theoretical connections in the form of phenomenological themes (Smith and Osborne, 2003). All of the criteria set as part of the feasibility study were met and consequently the material obtained in the pilot study was used to substantiate the main study findings. Capturing the personal meanings and rich descriptions of the participants in the pilot study enabled completion of thematic analysis with each new reading having the potential to reveal new insights (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Thematic analysis resulted in participant A having fifteen themes, Participant B with eleven themes and Participant C having fourteen themes.

**Figure 4.8:** *Participant Themes*

<b>Participant A: 15 Themes</b>	<b>Participant B: 11 Themes</b>	<b>Participant C: 14 Themes</b>
Training	Training	Aesthetics
Challenge	Mastery	Challenge
Perception	Risk	Philosophy
Enjoyment	Spiritual	Spirituality
Mastery	Aesthetics	Perception
Philosophy	Being in the present	Thrill Seeking
Aesthetics	Enjoyment	Risk
Health, fitness and wellbeing	Challenge	Being in the present
Spirituality	Social	Training
Being in the present	Environment	Social
Addiction	Addiction	Enjoyment
Environment		Mastery
Society		Environment
Risk		Addiction
Thrill Seeking		

### **CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS TWO**

#### **Overview**

Establishing that the research approach and design was capable of producing themes for analysis meant that it was possible to carry out a full investigation into parkour and free running (Gratton and Jones, 2004). A further five participants aged between eighteen and thirty were recruited from the Northern Parkour Website. The semi-structured IPA interviews were conducted in the Allerton Building at the University of Salford library (Smith and Osborne, 2003). Each participant was asked each question separately. Each participant was provided with an opportunity to raise any objections they might have at the start of the interview (Smith and Osborne, 2003). The data that was retrieved was saved on a recording device during the interview so that it could be transcribed for thematic analysis.

### **5.1 Familiarisation process**

To begin the analysis the researcher engages with the transcript (see appendix J) in an unfocused manner making notes on first impressions of what is being said. Each line in the transcript is numbered as part of the analysis (see appendix K, L, M, N and O). A classification of each phrase provided by each participant can be labelled as outlined in the methodology (Smith *et al.*, 2009). This helps to identify every expression relevant to the experience.

**5.1.1 Participant D: Familiarisation process**

**Experience descriptive** (Lines 1-6)

*Parkour is a way of movement primarily and a training system used to get past physical obstacles and normally you need to get past obstacles in your life. It started off in Paris about twenty years ago with a group of youngsters who were bored and had nothing to do in the place. They just carried on like normal with the games that kids play chasing about but they had nothing else to do. They developed it as an adult form of some kind of kid's game which is kind of moving around.*

**Experience descriptive** (Lines 6-14)

*Okay I started about six years ago just after seeing some guys from France, on the TV. Yeah, I saw it on the television and thought that is pretty amazing and the first time I really thought it was some kind of special effects. The first clip I saw was on BBC One, of someone jumping between rooftops and I thought that was just stunts or whatever. First day I started I went out in Manchester on some of the really low walls. Just kind of two or three feet high really and just tried to get over them in different kind of ways. I just tried to copy what I had seen really because when I started there wasn't really anyone that I could speak to who had any experience and understanding of how to get started.*

**Experience/observational** (Lines 15-17)

*Basically parkour is a fun way to improve yourself and develop ability. Every time you get past an obstacle, you get a sense of success. Having that, it makes you become free and makes you be able to do anything you want to do.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective** (Lines 17-28)

*Risk is always going to be part of it and with parkour you have to always work out what you can do and what you can't do. So that is like working around between what you can do and what you can't do. It's a boundary of definitely knowing what you can do and what you can't do. So there is always going to be some risk around, cause you are working in that risk area. It's important that you enjoy what you are doing, so there is no point in restricting yourself to something that will be boring and you are not going to stick with. Thrill seeking as a specific word phrase is irrelevant really. If it's something that is difficult you are going to feel good about yourself. You don't need to physically go looking for the thrills, they are there in any kind of movement that you are doing. There is a huge range of benefits you can get from parkour and we can sit here for a day and list them all. So there are many benefits that people can focus on during training of parkour and how you can find freedom without obstacles limiting you.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective/observational** (Lines 29-35 and Lines 40-49)

*I am a parkour coach, so I find everything interesting about parkour. For me the important thing is the affect it has on each person's personality and the art of getting past any obstacle and difficulty. It's just the fact in that you are trying to get past and not trying to avoid it. So people get more confident and don't ignore the fact that they are trying to get past the difficulty. It makes people think more confidently and willing to solve problems rather than ignore them. It increases physical fitness and helps people change their fitness through parkour (Lines 29-35). Okay, I found that with parkour compared to martial arts in the past, there seems to be various people doing it, coming from different backgrounds and money isn't an issue really. Like you can be twelve years old or in your thirties or forties and at any level of fitness, as parkour is about making yourself fitter and to develop. I guess if you had an older lady in their sixties or seventies, you could show her how to get upstairs in the best fashion.*

*So you adapt parkour, to your own self, then it can be really interesting. It's really good to teach and show the movements that you can do and break it down for them, which I do personally and they can use this. It's great when you see that they have cracked it and they use their own movement as well (Lines 40-49).*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective/observational (Lines 35-40 and Lines 49-56)**

*Yep the first time I tried it was in the central Manchester area and there was just one guy there, just the two of us. We started off with volts and they were very small but back then they were really big to us. You see things much larger, when you have been practicing for six years and practicing in public places. There were two or three teenagers riding into you on skate boards and its daunting trying something new and you have to be quite brave to do this, unless you have other people around you (Lines 35-40). I have learnt more than I thought I could and had the impression that I was small and pretty weak, also kind of scared and not a confident person. Now I can do all kinds of things that I thought I couldn't do and work out more than before. The main thing is the confidence and yes, the confidence to do whatever you want to do and not let other people opinions affect you. So you have people round you saying don't be stupid but they don't understand, yeah you are forced into dealing with it and do all these things. Which is the main point fundamentally and the key thing is you just have to keep going and get past it. You eventually will get past it you know and then enjoy the experience and understand it (Lines 49-56).*

**Experience descriptive/clarifying/evaluative/reflective/observational (Lines 56-70)**

*It's a discipline through the environment and that is one of the reasons you get regional trends, so people are forced to train in different ways. Yeah, it's environmentally and socially influenced. More people are practicing and continue to practice, once they realise the deeper aspects of the physiological and mental side of things. They identify with the way it socially operates.*

*They don't think from right to left or think about problems like confidence issues and people practise and try and improve things, with the environment they have. No one else is involved and it's just you and the environment, the walls and trees. That part of it is so good at forcing you to develop your own ability. You can rely on your coach or get technical help but to get your feeling and perceptions, you have to do it yourself. You can get help for them and not everyone can do it on their own and need some help from someone else but the bulk of it is individual. Having started it, no it would be impossible to stop parkour, the things that I have done through parkour. The changes it has made, I cannot stop in the changes it has made in the past. I wouldn't want to live without it and it's the best way I have found to keep fit and healthy and obviously now I am earning a living from it. So I can't get away from it really.*

**5.1.2 Participant E: Familiarisation process**

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/clarifying** (Lines 1-8)

*Okay, as (name omitted) stated it is the art of movement primarily, it is used as a way of overcoming obstacles, the challenges that you face in life, mentally and physically. It is a good training method that you can apply in everyday life. I mean, you know, there is a challenge, you build up to it. I mean you might not be able to do it at the moment but you can build up to it and overcome obstacles in time and it's like you have eliminated the fears associated with that. So, if I was to describe it to a complete novice, yeah I would just say that it is a way of training yourself to become better and more confident as a person.*

**Experience descriptive/observation/clarifying** (Lines 8-13)

*I started in January 2005 after I saw a programme called Jump Britain on TV. I thought it was interesting and unique and it is the simplicity as well. For most sports you have to have discipline with a set training system and a place that you got to and do it or special equipment to do it. Whereas with parkour everyone can do it. All you need is a pair of trainers, gloves and mentality. I do it just round my local town in Wakefield and Leeds because I found out that there were some other people that did it, so I met up with them.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective** (Lines 13-18)

*I do it to better myself. I used to eat lots of crap food and stuff and now I try to feel healthy about myself. When I wake up in the morning I am getting stronger with reaching goals that I have set for parkour. When you go, it's like a very relaxed environment as everyone is not jumping around all hyper. Everyone is not serious and everyone is just chilled out and relaxed and doing stuff that they want to do, stuff like that.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective/observational** (Lines 18-23)

*Do you mean the type of people it attracts? alright okay, well I think usually you have to have an open mind previous to finding out about it, otherwise you would not have discovered it. People like it because it looks fun and until you get training for it - it's not just for fun, it's a sport and a discipline. It's comparative to martial arts really. It has its philosophical side and it expands your mind when you are training.*

**Experience/clarifying** (Lines 23-29)

*The interesting aspects of parkour - every practitioner has the same mentality created through the practice of it really. Yeah, you have talked about creativity - every person has their own different style and they focus on different parts. The focus you get from it comes because you have to dedicate a lot of time to it. It's like movement and the challenge. It affects the challenges in life and it affects work or anything really - getting past opinions. You have that focus and drive. So I think that is really interesting and inspires me to keep progressing.*

**Experience descriptive** (Lines 29-33)

*First time I tried it was following the Jump Britain documentary. I went out with a friend skateboarding previously to that. We thought it looked exciting and we went around the town and basically jumped on a wall and rail just to replicate what we had seen. Just something small really. We didn't understand the philosophy at that time and just did small things because of our capabilities.*

### **Experience evaluative/clarifying** (Lines 33-39 and Lines 47-49)

*Yeah, I have learned many things, to express myself and not to listen to other people's perceptions and that there is a limit to what you can do when you practise it. You can't go on private property of course. It just allows you to express yourself creatively. The learning process comes from the new moves. You learn through errors or when you misjudge something. You know, when you replicate this you can learn from your mistakes and you can remember what you learnt last time (Lines 33-39). You won't make the same mistake in every situation you are in and you are able to deal with it and not fall and injure yourself. That is a large part (Lines 47-49).*

### **Experience descriptive** (Lines 39-47)

*It's more of an individual thing. You are in control of your movement and you don't have a personal coach and you make the decisions. You are vulnerable and no one is there to push you. You have to provide that yourself. There is a parkour community but it is not a teenage sport. You get people that help each other and yeah, if there are a lot of people out you get people helping each other. They combine together and pull each other up walls. You work in a team or in a group and yeah there are different communities in the UK. Each city has its own community and way of training and it is a social thing. People who do parkour have their own mindset as well and they live a sort of same life style. Some are employees and some are friends.*

### **Experience descriptive/evaluative/clarifying/reflective** (Lines 49-57)

*Yeah it's environmentally influenced. It is allowed to be practised in urban or rural landscapes. You can engage with these areas and you have concrete areas and yeah people in different areas are influenced by the architecture of the environment. People who live in Newcastle - they are really urbanised and their training has more concrete obstacles and rural trees are available to them.*

*Socially, yeah I think it is - people practise it together and they meet other people in training or see them in real life (name omitted) mentioned people not being free and not discovering the city that they live in and that they are clones that follow each other without looking up or around them. They are missing so much and they don't take it all in.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective/observational/clarifying**  
(Lines 57-62)

*No because of all the things I have achieved from it and even if I stopped it physically then the mentality will still be there. Then you get experience so that you can help others as well by passing on knowledge. It's the learning process that keeps the drive to keep practicing it and it gives me confidence which opens my eyes. I would not be where I am now and I am so much more confident now. I have developed physically, so it's the health and fitness part of it and yeah and I can't think my life without parkour.*

**5.1.3 Participant F: Familiarisation process**

**Experience descriptive** (Lines 1-5)

*It's like moving around in the environment and there is like obstacles in your way and you are just getting over it to be quicker. To be more efficient, rather than be slow and you follow the system. I started six months ago. Somebody told me about it and I thought I might be interested in it. I came and met up with people that do it already and I got into it.*

**Experience observational/clarifying** (Lines 5-10)

*I think it attracts people differently. Some people think it is to do with flips and come to do parkour. Some people think it's to do with other things - flips that are totally different. For me, it's attractive because we try to be stronger and in Manchester you do more conditioning and if you don't like that then you won't like what we do in Manchester. Yeah like in different places they train differently and everyone is different because they train differently.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative** (Lines 10-14)

*I think it is interesting and it's something new to do and something programmed. You start off small and you move onto something else and it keeps your interest. You want to do it and you get stronger and set yourself goals in the day. You try and try really hard and you just carry on because it motivates you and gives you confidence to get something out of the situation.*

**Experience evaluative/clarifying/reflective** (Lines 23-26)

*I think in some ways its individual to yourself because you are learning what your body can do and you are speaking to different people and making friends but if no one else is out there they won't train. Some people can learn on their own and don't need people to push them and so it's easy for them.*

**Experience evaluative/reflective** (Lines 14-19)

*The first time I tried it was six months ago and I met up with some people from Manchester and they were very experienced. They didn't know what to do with me first time but they told me to try the wall and to limber up by starting small. It's quite important to warm up and use your muscles. If you fall and you land in an awkward position you are warmed up so you won't injure yourself.*

**Experience evaluative/clarifying** (Lines 19-21)

*Doing parkour you have to learn the mentality of it and not do the big things. To change who I am, I must be patient with things because if it's going to take time then, you have to take time and build up to things.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective/observational/clarifying**  
(Lines 26-39)

*Yeah the area will affect it - rural trees and grass and urban concrete. If the setting of it has small walls then you can do volts or for high walls you can run up the walls like that. Socially – how the people are affected by it - I don't know. Like the police can move you on so you can't train as much because of the police. Police have a preconception of us that we just vandalise and that can give us a bad name. Maybe skateboarders have their own groups who are cocky and stuff so the police think we are the same stuff. The police will say that they have had bad experiences with them and that we should be all treated equally. Obviously I could live without parkour but with my mindset, I would be walking down the street and think I could run up that and you can just think it walking down the street and I can just do that. It just feels good I guess and it releases stress and you don't think of anything else. I suppose, no I couldn't give it up but I said yeah? He-he, but the mindset of it will always be there. You would still run up that wall and people would say you are crazy but you learn to see what human limits are.*

**5.1.4 Participant G: Familiarisation process**

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective/clarifying** (Lines 1-11)

*Right, when I first started in parkour I was a bit unaware of what parkour was about with the tricks, jumps and things like that. So I used to tell people that it was like skateboarding without a skateboard. You are sort of in an urban environment and jumping off rails and following over walls and things. I moved into it more and I started to listen to and watch videos and I realised it was a lot more about personal training and making yourself stronger and more efficient. You find new routes to get through the environment more quickly and safely. So when I am training I always make sure that am moving around safely and know my abilities and limits. You know, sometimes I push my limits which is good for the mental side of parkour. If something is bothering me and scaring me I think how I can overcome the obstacle physically.*

**Experience descriptive** (Lines 11-18)

*There was a documentary on TV called Jump Britain and I saw that one and I heard about Jump London as well. So I watched that one and then looked out for parkour in Manchester. I did a Google search and Northern Parkour in Manchester came up. So I eventually got the coach down and met up with the other guys. I thought it is going to be full of kids and everyone is going to be way better than I am. I eventually got the coach to get out there and eventually met (name omitted) and (name omitted) from there.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective** (Lines 18-21)

*Yeah it is easy to start off with, yeah because they show people the basics and like a small jump or something, to see how it can be. Like anything from jumping from one curb to another curb with no height and no fear or learning the techniques and the skills that you need and then build up from there.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective/observational** (Lines 21-35)

*I have been into fitness and sports activities since I was fourteen and doing martial arts, kick boxing and things like that and a little bit of weight lifting and Capoeira. Capoeira is similar sort of thing to parkour and is about expressing yourself through movement. So I moved from the martial art sort of thing over to this, thinking it could be interesting going to parkour. I found it more interesting because it gave more freedom to express. Capoeira is a Brazilian martial art sort of a dance. It's something that was used to trick guards because they would think they were doing dancing when they were actually doing martial arts, like break dancing. It's all about movement, with cart wheels and handstands. So when I first started parkour I thought it was like those kind of things. After that, I learnt it was more about developing yourself and how to progress in becoming stronger and jumping further and running a bit faster. That's the hook that keeps me coming back. As you learn the movement you think you can do this one as well. You are pushing yourself to another level of movement and it is ongoing and you are also finding new spots to move.*

**Experience evaluative/reflective/observational** (Lines 35-38)

*I think most people - I don't really know. I think it's for health benefits but probably not. I think it's for the adrenaline and then you get people who do it more for the mind and body really. I don't really know what to say, ha-ha.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/clarifying** (Lines 38-45)

*First time I came into parkour I expected to see everyone on the roof tops and looking at stair cases, climbing the stairs cases but I couldn't find anyone. I found out that it's not what I thought it was after watching Jump Britain. I spoke to (name omitted) and then I went to town thinking there was going to be loads of kids and I was apprehensive about it. When I came down they were all a similar age like and I felt at ease.*

*Possibly because I had experience of martial arts I was quicker at getting to a good level and found the buzz from there. I need to focus on myself and develop myself and then I can help develop others.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/clarifying/reflective** (Lines 52-60)

*The practice of parkour is an individual thing that develops your body and your muscles. You are moving and training in a group and learning from other people. You see someone doing something and you try and imitate them or you try that style of movement or something that you have seen before. I mean me and (name omitted) have a condition that we meet up and practise together because we are of a similar strength level. I know he is watching what I am doing. I am pushing much harder and he is going to push even harder. This then helps push everyone. Not in a competitive way but to be better than I could have been and I can still push harder.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective/observational** (Lines 60-65)

*What facilities you have in the area - if there are loads of walls and things but you do not have any rails and things, then the balance side of things will suffer. If you have spots that have rails that skateboarder's use, your flow will be different. So like, Manchester will be different than Sheffield because the volts and environment will be different and how we practise will be different, than how they practise in Leeds.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective/clarifying** (Lines 65-72)

*I need to eat and sleep and once you have parkour in your blood it will always stay there. It could be as simple as you are walking down the street and there is a rail there on your right hand side and instead of walking around the normal way, you go over the rail and do it because it's in your way rather than walk around it. You are always seeing how you can interact with the environment. So even if you are not physically practising the volts you would just practise how your body is going to move or volt over something really high. I am sure I can find something that my body can do another way to move effectively.*

**5.1.5 Participant H: Familiarisation process**

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective** (Lines 1-9)

*Okay well parkour is a physical discipline but there is also a philosophical side to it as well. The most obvious implementation that you see people practicing is as a means of navigating through the environment quickly and effectively. You can use it to travel through any given thing and you can also see it practiced in an urban environment. There is no reason why you can't apply those skills into different settings like more rural settings. On the philosophical side of it, it's not just about the physical aspect, so yeah you might want to get over a wall that is six foot tall and that is one aspect but also it is about overcoming other obstacles and they could be more mental based.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective/clarifying** (Lines 9-16)

*I do some lecturing in the school of sound recording, where I talk about audio post production. Basically when I actually started lecturing I was really apprehensive about it and even the prospect of seeing only five or six people my hands would be shaking and I would talk nonsense at some point. Then some time later, a year later when my parkour became slightly more advanced, I found myself in a situation where I was standing in front of two hundred people, addressing the whole audience. Strangely it was absolutely fine and that was definitely down to parkour.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective/observational** (Lines 17-28)

*Personally, I suppose the reason why I got into parkour was because like all people I saw the documentaries in 2005 and it was, I don't know, something about freedom. Personally I practice it due to the confidence and the physical aspects of things. I wasn't interested in physical sports when I was at school. I was the last one chosen to join in a group and I hated it and had no interest. I found parkour really appealing and I don't know if I have mentioned that it is not competitive and that is a really important aspect of it.*

*Like if you go out then you are not competing with other people, that is not what parkour is. You are in your own space and you are just trying to jump in your own space. You might go out and do a jump and the next week you might be closer to accomplish it. Its personal progression that attracts me to parkour and to see these visible achievement and to stay fit and healthy as well.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective/observational** (Lines 29-40)

*I think initially it will attract people in different ways. Let's assume some people have seen some videos and get into it because it's great for health and this might be a reason why they show off. Some might get into it because they will look good. The attraction might be initially for various reasons. This is a generally agreed view point. For people who practice it on a longer term basis it might be about personal progression and not about showing off and making videos to show your mates. It's about bettering yourself physically and helping others as well. There is a phrase that we use in parkour which is, "to be strong, to be useful" and it is from the Method Unnatural. Basically we follow the premise of it and to be stronger in many situations. For example, with the frost recently you might find someone trying to get out of the frost and can't get any grips. So if you are trying to push the car with them and if you are stronger, then you can succeed in moving it, so it can be things like that really.*

**Experience descriptive/ evaluative/clarifying** (Lines 40-47)

*Parkour changes your perception of a given environment which means that you will see an area where there is wall with a rail and the more you practise the more you will see it like a vault or you will ascertain a type of jump and a potential movement. You seen it in a strange way and then you will see it in another way, even if you have been practicing their for years. There are several spots that we have been training in for years and we still go back there. Someone will suggest something and you will think that you haven't thought about it properly, so you see it from another perspective.*

**Experience descriptive** (Lines 47-54)

*First time I tried it was after seeing the TV documentary Jump Britain. After seeing that I looked on the internet to find out where to free run and I didn't know the difference between free running and parkour. I found the parkour website that (name omitted) set up, like a discussion forum and I went out on a Sunday and met up with fifty odd people (name omitted) was there and other people and parkour and free running was around. Some of the people had been doing it for about six months and I was just learning. Basically doing stuff for three or five hours and my legs were aching and I could barely walk up stairs.*

**Experience evaluative/clarifying** (Lines 55-63)

*Okay I have learnt two sides really: a physical and mental side. The physical side of it, yeah, being aware through the practice of parkour and on a simple level balance is a fundamental aspect. You do become good at climbing. People don't see the mental aspect but they are aware that you are becoming more confident and believing in other aspects of life. I have learnt more about people in a strained way with people saying what the norm is. People will still choose to walk around the metal rail even if it takes one second to go over it. For some reason they have some preconceived perceptions of how things should be and how they should be and give it rationally.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/clarifying/reflective** (Lines 63-77)

*Most people don't like difficulty and avoid challenge and try to keep confident by avoiding difficulty. Going back to what (name omitted) was saying about pushing each other. This is about a mindset. You can train under your own motivation without external influence but I am not sure if anyone can truly push themselves to the max under their own influence. I mean we bought gymnastic rings and practise holding ourselves up on them and it's called the iron cross. The arms aren't that straight and we have been training lowering the arms to build strength.*

*We were drilling in a set of ten each and I said I think I will do thirty and (name omitted) said I do fifty as a rule. If something will be done then you have no option but to do fifty ha-ha. The point that I wanted to make about the country and around the world is that they are training in their own group. You do get regional trends that influence how people practice. I went to France and they were great in jumping across-the-board and we were better in strength based training. Their training was in their aspect and we were in ours so you get your regional differences. Younger participants follow the fashion based trends and wear a type of trainer or where tracksuits with their hair grown long.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective/observational/clarifying**  
(Lines 78-90)

*Yeah because it is you who practises in an environment and so it is impossible to ignore the environment you are practicing in. Parkour is strongly influenced by the environment and you are training to be good in that environment. If you don't understand that you do not understand the real purpose of parkour. People around the world are practicing in the environment that they have available to them. Parkour is socially influenced. We haven't had any problems the police. When they have come up to us and asked, "what are you doing lads?" We explain and they say "okay carry on". Security guards are funnier about it. You describe it to them and their response to you is predetermined before they even talk to you. They will come out and they will say, "move on" which is a predefined thing they say. Sometimes you ask for a reason and they just say, "don't get cocky with us now". They will mention the facts about insurance and health and safety is normally cited.*

**Experience descriptive/evaluative/reflective/observational/clarifying**  
(Lines 90-98)

*I think you can't get away from what you have learnt in parkour and you can't just stop it and lose all the mental stuff you have learnt. It's hard to answer really. When I started to practice parkour I was locked out of the house.*

*I had to wait five hours to open the door in the cold because I hadn't been practicing. I didn't think that I could climb up the wall to the bathroom window. Then a couple of years later, the same thing happened and I just went through the bathroom window. So I will always find a situation when I can use parkour. There is no way of getting away from it really. You can put a ban on it but never take away what I have learnt and how to utilise it.*

### **5.2 Systematic Production of Themes and Clusters**

Becoming familiar with the text enables the researcher to implement a systematic approach with each participant's comments (components) being gathered together under appropriate emerging themes. A constant reading and rereading of each participant's comments makes it possible to identify patterns in the form of invariant components of the experience (Smith *et al.*, 2009).

**5.2.1 Participant D: Emerging Themes and Clusters**

**1. What is parkour** (Lines 1-2)

*Okay parkour is a way of movement primarily and a training system used to gets past physical obstacles and normally you need to get past obstacles in your life.*

**2. How I started** (Lines 6-10)

*Okay I started about six years ago just after seeing some guys from France on the TV. Yeah I saw it on the television and thought that is pretty amazing and the first time I really thought it was some kind of special effects. The first clip I saw was on BBC One of someone jumping between roof tops and I thought that was just stunts or whatever.*

**3. Sense of fun** (Lines 2-3, 5-10, 15-17 and 21-23)

*Parkour started off in Paris about twenty years ago with a group of youngsters who were bored and had nothing to do. They developed the idea of kids chasing around. I started about six years ago just after seeing some guys from France on the TV. I saw it on the television and thought that is pretty amazing. The first time I saw it I really thought it was some kind of special effects. The first clip I saw was on BBC One of someone jumping between roof tops and I thought that was just stunts or whatever. Basically parkour is a fun way to improve yourself and develop ability and every time you get past an obstacle you get a sense of success. It makes you become free and makes you able to do anything you want to do. It's important that you enjoy what you are doing so there is no point in restricting yourself to something that will be boring and you are not going to stick with.*

**4. Risk factor** (Lines 17-21 and 38-40)

*Risk is always going to be part of it and with parkour you have to always work out what you can do and what you can't do, so that is like working around what you can do and what you can't do.*

*It's a boundary of definitely knowing what you can do and what you can't do so there is always going to be some risk around cause you are working in that risk area. Sometimes you can get two or three teenagers riding into you on skateboards. It's daunting trying something new. You have to be quite brave to do this. It helps if you have other people around you.*

### **5. Searching for thrills** (Lines 23-24)

*Thrill seeking as a specific word phrase is irrelevant really. If it's something that is difficult you are going to feel good about yourself.*

### **6. Personal development** (Lines 10-14, 23-26 and 29-34)

*The first day I went out in Manchester was on some of the really low walls. They were kind of two or three feet high and I just tried to get over them in different kind of ways. I started off with volts. I just tried to copy what I had seen. When I started there wasn't really anyone that I could speak to who had any experience or understanding of how to get started. If it's something that is difficult you are going to feel good about yourself when you overcome it. You don't need to physically go looking for the thrills. They are there in any kind of movement that you are doing. I am a parkour coach so I find everything interesting about parkour. The important thing is the affect it has on each person's personalities. It's the fact that you are trying to get past an obstacle and not trying to avoid it. People get more confident because they are not ignoring the fact that they are trying to get past the difficulty. It makes people think more confidently. They become more willing to solve problems rather than ignore them.*

### **7. Improving fitness level** (Lines 41-44, 34-35 and 69-70)

*There seems to be various people doing it coming from different backgrounds. You can be twelve years old or in your thirties or forties and at any level of fitness. Parkour is about making yourself fitter and to develop. It increases physical fitness and helps people change their fitness through parkour. I wouldn't want to live without it and it's the best way I have found to keep fit and healthy.*

**8. Parkour movement** (Lines 46-49)

*It's really good to teach and show the movements that you can do and break it down for them which I do personally and they can use this. It's great when you see that they have cracked it and they use their own movement as well.*

**9. Practise** (Lines 37-38 and 59-60)

*You see things much larger when you have been practising for six years and practising in public place. More people are practicing and continue to practice once they realise the deeper aspects. They identify with the physiological, mental and social side of things and the way it operates.*

**10. Emotional relationship with the environment** (Lines 30-31, 56-58 and 61-63)

*It's the art of getting past any obstacle and difficulty. It's a discipline practised through your relationship with the environment. That is one of the reasons you get regional trends. People are forced to train in different ways. People practise and try to improve their parkour and don't think about confidence issues and try and improve things with the environment they have. No one else is involved and it's just you and the environment, the walls and trees.*

**11. Individual competition** (Lines 62-67)

*No one else is involved and it's just you and the environment, the walls and trees. That part of it is so good at forcing you to develop your own ability. You can rely on your coach or get technical information but to get your feelings and perceptions right you have to do it yourself. Not everyone can do it on their own and will need some help from someone else but the bulk of it is individual.*

**12. Way of life** (Lines 15-17, 26, 28 and 67-69)

*Every time you get past an obstacle you get a sense of success. This success makes you become freer and means you can do anything you want to do. There are a huge range of benefits that people can focus on.*

*Parkour helps you realise that you can find freedom without obstacles limiting you. Having started it, no it would be impossible to stop parkour. The things that I have done through parkour and the changes it has made. I cannot stop in the changes it has made in the past.*

**Figure 5.1: Participant D: Clusters and Emerging Themes**

<b>Cluster 1:</b> Training (themes 1 and 9)
<b>Cluster 2:</b> Risk (theme 4 )
<b>Cluster 3:</b> Being in the present (theme 12)
<b>Cluster 4:</b> Enjoyment (theme 3)
<b>Cluster 5:</b> Challenge (themes 6 and 11)
<b>Cluster 6:</b> Environment (theme 10)
<b>Cluster 7:</b> Addiction (theme 12)
<b>Cluster 8:</b> Aesthetics (theme 10)
<b>Cluster 9:</b> Mastery (themes 1 and 7)
<b>Cluster 10:</b> Health Fitness and Wellbeing (theme 7)

**5.2.2 Participant E: *Emerging Themes and Clusters***

**1. Parkour movement** (*Lines 1-2*)

*It is the art of movement primarily. It is used as a way of overcoming obstacles, the challenges that you face in life, both mentally and physically.*

**2. What is parkour** (*Lines 3, 7-8, 15-16 and 37-41*)

*It is a good training method and you can apply it in everyday life. I would just say that it is a way of training yourself to become better and more confident as a person. I am getting stronger by reaching the goals that I have set through parkour. You learn through errors or when you miss-judge something. When you replicate this you can learn from your mistakes and you can remember what you learnt last time. It's more of an individual thing - you are more in control of your movement, you don't have a personal coach and you make the decisions. You are vulnerable and no one is there to push you. You have to provide that yourself.*

**3. How I started** (*Lines 8-11*)

*I started in January 2005, after I saw a programme called Jump Britain on TV. I thought it was interesting and unique and it is the simplicity as well. Like most sports you have to have discipline and a set training system and a place that you got to do it.*

**4. Personal development** (*Lines 1-2, 13-15, 3, 23-24, 29-33, 40-41 and 62*)

*It is used as a way of overcoming obstacles. The challenges that you face in life, mentally and physically. I do it to better myself like I used to eat lots of crap food and stuff and now I try and feel healthy about myself. It is a good training method and you can apply it in everyday life. Every practitioner has the same mentality created through the practice of it. First time I tried it was following the Jump Britain documentary. I went out with a friend skateboarding previously to that.*

*We thought it looked exciting and we went around the town and basically jumped on a wall and rail - just something small. Just to replicate what we had seen. We didn't understand the philosophy at that stage. We only understood small things about our capabilities. You are vulnerable and no one is there to push you. You have to provide that yourself. It's the health and fitness part of it.*

### **5. Stress relief** (Lines 15-16 and 33-35)

*When I wake up in the morning I am getting stronger with reaching goals that I have set for parkour. I have learnt many things: how to express myself, not to listen to other people's perceptions and that there is a limit to what you can do when you practise it.*

### **6. Sense of fun** (Lines 16-18 and 19-22)

*It's a very relaxed environment as everyone is not jumping around all hyper and serious. Everyone is just chilled out and relaxed and doing stuff that they want to do. I think you have to have an open mind previous to finding out about it. Otherwise you would not have discovered it. People like it because it looks fun and until you get training for it - it's not just for fun, it's a sport and a discipline, its comparative to martial arts really.*

### **7. Parkour technique** (Lines 21-23)

*It's not just for fun. It's a sport and a discipline. It's comparative to martial arts really. It has its philosophical side and it expands your mind when you are training.*

### **8. Individual competition** (Lines 25-29 and 39-41)

*The focus you get comes because you have to dedicate a lot of time to it and its like movement and the challenge. It affects the challenges you have in life and it affects work or anything really, like getting past opinions. You have that focus and drive which is really interesting and it inspires me to keep progressing. It's more of an individual thing.*

*You are in control of your movement and you don't have a personal coach and you make the decisions. You are vulnerable and no one is there to push you. You have to provide that yourself.*

**9. Helping people** (Lines 42- 44)

*If there are a lot of people out you get people helping each other. They combine together and pull each other up walls. You work in a team or in a group and yeah, there are different communities in the UK.*

**10. Community spirit** (Lines 17-18 and 41-46)

*Everyone is just chilled out and relaxed and doing stuff that they want to do - stuff like that. There is a parkour community. It is not a teenage sport. You get people that help each other. If there are a lot of people out doing it they help each other. They pull each other up walls and work as team or a group. There are different communities in the UK. Each city has its own community that train in their own way. It's a real social thing. Those who do parkour have their own mindset. They live a sort of same life style.*

**11. Reliant on the environment** (Lines 25 and 49-53)

*Every person has their own style and they focus on different parts of parkour. It is allowed to be practised in urban or rural landscapes. You can engage with these areas and you have concrete areas and yeah people in different areas are influenced by the architecture of the environment. People who live in Newcastle - they are really urbanised and their training has more concrete obstacles and rural trees are available to them.*

**12. Practise** (Lines 9-13, 36-37, 53-54 and 59-60)

*Like most sports you have to have discipline. A set training system and a place that you go to and do it. There isn't any specialised equipment. All you need is a pair of trainers, gloves and a positive mentality. I do it just round my local town in Wakefield and Leeds. I found out that there were some other people that did it so I met up with them. The learning process comes from practising new moves.*

*People practise it together and they meet other people in training or see them in real life. It's the learning process that keeps the drive to keep practicing it and it gives me confidence which opens my eyes.*

**13. More than a hobby** (Lines 57-58 and 62)

*No because of all the things I have achieved from it and even if I stopped it physically then still the mentality will be there. I can't think of my life without parkour.*

**Figure 5.2: Participant E: Clusters and Emerging Themes**

<b>Cluster 1:</b> Training (themes 1, 2 and 12)
<b>Cluster 2:</b> Philosophy (theme 7)
<b>Cluster 3:</b> Being in the present (theme 5 )
<b>Cluster 4:</b> Enjoyment (theme 6)
<b>Cluster 5:</b> Challenge (themes 4 and 8)
<b>Cluster 6:</b> Environment (theme 11)
<b>Cluster 7:</b> Addiction (theme 13)
<b>Cluster 8:</b> Aesthetics (theme 11)
<b>Cluster 9:</b> Mastery (themes 1 and 2)
<b>Cluster 10:</b> Health Fitness and Wellbeing (theme 4)
<b>Cluster 11:</b> Society (theme 10)

**5.2.3 Participant F: *Emerging Themes and Clusters***

**1. Parkour movement** (*Lines 1-3 and 8-9*)

*It's like moving around in the environment and there is like obstacles in your way and you are just getting over them to be quicker - to be more efficient, rather than be slow and you follow the system. In Manchester we do more conditioning and if you don't like that then you won't like what we do in Manchester.*

**2. How I started** (*Lines 3-5*)

*Somebody told me about it and I thought I might be interested in it and came and met up with people that do it already and I got into it.*

**3. Changing perspective** (*Lines 9-13, 20-22 and 23-24*)

*There are different places to train. Everyone is different and so we train differently. I think parkour is interesting and it's something new to do. You start off small and you move onto something else and it keeps your interest because you want to do it and you get stronger and set yourself goals in the day. If you haven't got something set for the rest of the day but haven't quite got it then you try and try really. I realise that you have to be patient with things and that it's going to take time. You have to take time and build up to things. I think it will take two years to train and learn from basic level to a more advanced level. I will get stronger and keep learning. I think in some ways its individual to you. You are learning what your body can do.*

**4. Personal development** (*Lines 5-6, 13-14, 14-19 and 37-39*)

*Some people think it's to do with flips. It motivates you and gives you confidence to get something out of the situation. The first time I tried it was six months ago. I met up with some people from Manchester who were very experienced. They didn't know what to get me to do the first time. They told me to try the wall. They told me to limber up and start by starting small. Warming up is quite important because you will be using your muscles.*

*If you fall and you land in an awkward position - warming up will help ensure that you don't injure yourself. You will run up a wall and people will say you are crazy. You learn about what human limits are.*

**5. Individual competition** (Lines 23-24)

*I think in some ways its individual to yourself because you are learning what your body can do.*

**6. Reliant on the environment** (Lines 26-28)

*The area will affect parkour. It might be a rural area with trees and grass or an urban concrete area. You might be using small walls so that you can do volts. Or you might be using high walls for running up them.*

**7. Stress relief** (Lines 35-36)

*It just feels good I guess and it releases stress and you don't think of anything else.*

**8. More than a hobby** (Lines 33-35 and 36-37)

*Obviously I could live without it. But my mindset would mean that I would be walking down the street and I would think I could run up that wall. You can literally just think it walking down the street and I do. I suppose no I couldn't give it up.*

**Figure 5.3: Participant F: Clusters and Emerging Themes**

<b>Cluster 1:</b> Being in the present (theme 7)
<b>Cluster 2:</b> Challenge (themes 4 and 5)
<b>Cluster 3:</b> Environment (theme 6)
<b>Cluster 4:</b> Addiction (theme 8)
<b>Cluster 5:</b> Mastery (themes 1 and 3)
<b>Cluster 6:</b> Society (theme 2)

**5.2.4 Participant G: Emerging Themes and Clusters**

**1. What is parkour** (Lines 2-4, 31-32 and 9-11)

*I used to tell people that it was like skateboarding without a skateboard. You are sort of in an urban environment and jumping off rails and following over walls and things. It was more about developing yourself and how to progress - becoming stronger and jumping further and running a bit faster. I push my limit sometimes which is good for the mental side of parkour. If something is bothering me and scaring me I think about how I can overcome the obstacle physically.*

**2. Personal development** (Lines 5-11)

*I realised it was a lot more about personal training and making yourself stronger and more efficient. You find new routes to get through the environment more quickly and safely. So when I am training I always make sure that I am moving around safely and know my abilities and limits. You know sometimes I push my limit which is good for the mental side of parkour. Like if something is bothering me and scaring me – I think about how I can overcome the obstacle physically.*

**3. How I started** (Lines 11-18)

*There was a documentary on TV called Jump Britain and I saw that one and I heard about Jump London as well. So I watched that one and then looked out for parkour in Manchester. I did a Google search and Northern Parkour in Manchester came up. So I eventually got the coach down and met up with the other guys. I thought it was going to be full of kids and that everyone was going to be way better than I am. I eventually got the coach to get out there and eventually met (name omitted) and (name omitted) from there.*

**4. Improving fitness levels** (Lines 21-25)

*I have been into fitness and sports activities since I was fourteen and doing martial arts, kick boxing and things like that and a little bit of weight lifting and Capoeira.*

*Capoeira is a similar sort of thing to parkour which expresses the self through movement. So I moved from the martial art thing over to this, thinking it could be interesting going to parkour.*

**5. Parkour movement** (Lines 18-21, 32-35 and 45-52)

*It is easy to start off with because they show people the basics like a small jump or something. They show you how it can be done. Like jumping from one curb to another curb with no height and no fear. They teach the techniques and the skills that you need and then build up from there. That's the hook that keeps me coming back. As you learn the movement, you think you can do this one as well. So you are pushing yourself to another level of movement and it is ongoing and you are also finding new spots to move. I focus on basic movements and learn how to react to a situation. For example, if you are doing a jump and you realise in mid air you only have a couple of seconds to avoid injuries. With parkour you learn how to get stronger and harden your body armour and to absorb things. You gain more balance and spatial awareness. If someone is running by and he doesn't know you are going to cross his path, you will be looking out for loose breaks, textures and grip. To see if there is anything I can do to counter act this.*

**6. Searching for thrills** (Line 36-37)

*I think it's for the adrenaline.*

**7. Mind and body** (Lines 37-38)

*You get people who do it more for the mind and body. Really, I don't really know what to say.*

**8. Community spirit** (Lines 13-17 and 42-44)

*I looked out for parkour in Manchester and did a Google search and Northern Parkour came up. So I eventually got the coach to meet up with the other guys. I thought, "it is going to be full of kids and everyone is going to be way better than I am". I eventually got the coach to get out there and met (name omitted) and (name omitted).*

*I came down and they were all a similar age. I felt at ease and possibly because I had experience of martial arts. I was quicker at getting to a good level and found the buzz from there.*

**9. Individual competition** (Lines 44-45)

*I need to focus on myself and develop myself.*

**10. Practise** (Lines 52-60)

*The practice of parkour is an individual thing that develops your body and your muscles. You are moving and training in a group and learning from other people. You see someone doing something and you try and imitate them or try that style of movement on something that you have seen before. I mean me and (name omitted) have a condition that we meet up and practise as we are of a similar strength level. I know he is watching what I am doing. I am pushing much harder and he is going to push even harder. That helps push everyone. It's not a competition but I want to be better than I could have been and I can see he is still going, so I push harder.*

**11. Reliant on the environment** (Lines 6-7 and 60-62)

*It's about finding new routes to get through the environment more quickly and safely. If there are loads of walls but no rails and things then the balance side of things will suffer.*

**12. Emotional relationship the environment** (Lines 62-65)

*If you have spots that have rails that skateboarders use your flow will be different. Manchester will be different than Sheffield because the volts and environment will be different. How we practise in Manchester will be different than how they practise in Leeds.*

**13. A Way of life** (Lines 65-72)

*No I couldn't. I need to eat and sleep and once you have parkour in your blood, it will always stay there. It could be as simple as you are walking down the street and there is a rail there on your right hand side and instead of walking the normal way, you go over the rail. You do it because it's in your way rather than walking alongside it. You are always seeing how you can interact with the environment. So even if you are not physically practicing the volts you would just practise how your body is going to move or volt over something really high. I am sure I can find something that my body can do another way to move effectively.*

**Figure 5.4: Participant G: Clusters and Emerging Themes**

<b>Cluster 1:</b> Training (themes 2 and 10)
<b>Cluster 2:</b> Being in the present (theme 13)
<b>Cluster 3:</b> Enjoyment (theme 8)
<b>Cluster 4:</b> Challenge (themes 2 and 9)
<b>Cluster 5:</b> Spirituality (theme 7)
<b>Cluster 6:</b> Environment (themes 11 and 12)
<b>Cluster 7:</b> Addiction (theme 13)
<b>Cluster 8:</b> Aesthetics (theme 12)
<b>Cluster 9:</b> Mastery (themes 1 and 5)
<b>Cluster 10:</b> Health Fitness and Wellbeing (theme 4)
<b>Cluster 11:</b> Thrill Seeking (theme 6)
<b>Cluster 12:</b> Society (theme 8)

**5.2.5 Participant H: *Emerging Themes and Clusters***

**1. What is parkour** (*Lines 1-4*)

*A physical discipline but there is also a philosophical side to it as well. The most obvious implementation that you see people practicing is as a means of navigating through the environment, quickly and efficiently.*

**2. Parkour technique** (*Lines 4-9*)

*So you can use it to travel through any given thing and you can also see it practiced in an urban environment. There is no reason why you can't apply those skills into different settings like more rural settings. On the philosophical side of it, it's not just about the physical aspect so yeah, you might want to get over a wall that is six foot tall and that is one aspect. It is also about overcoming other obstacles and they could be more mental based.*

**3. How I started** (*Lines 17-22*)

*Personally I suppose the reason why I got into parkour was because like all people I saw the documentaries in 2005. It was, I don't know, something about freedom. I practice it due to the confidence and the physical aspects of things. I wasn't interested in physical sports when I was at school. I was the last one chosen to join in a group and I hated it and had no interest but parkour I really found appealing.*

**4. Individual competition** (*Lines 23-27*)

*It is not competitive and that is a really important part of it. Like if you go out then you are not competing with other people that is not what parkour is. You are in your own space and you are just trying to jump in your own space. You might go out and do a jump and the next week you might be closer to accomplishing it.*

**5. Personal development** (*Lines 27-28*)

*Its personal progression that attracts me to parkour and to see these visible achievements and to stay fit and healthy as well.*

**6. Helping people** (Lines 34-40)

*It's about bettering yourself physically and helping others as well. There is a phrase that we use in parkour which is, "to be strong to be useful". It was from the Method Unnatural but basically we follow the premise of it and to be stronger in many situations. For example, with the frost recently you might find someone trying to get out of the frost and can't get any grips so if you are trying to push the car with them - if you are stronger then you can succeed in moving it. So it can be things like that really.*

**7. Changing perspective** (Lines 40-43)

*Parkour changes your perception of a given environment. You will see an area where there is wall with a rail and the more you practise, the more you will see it like a vault or you will ascertain a type of jump and a potential movement.*

**8. Community spirit** (Lines 50-54)

*I found the parkour website that (name omitted) set up, like a discussion forum and I went out on a Sunday and met up with fifty odd people (name omitted) was there and other people and parkour and free running was around. Some of the people had been doing it for about six months. I was just learning basic stuff for three or five hours and my legs were aching and I could barely walk up stairs.*

**9. Emotional relationship the environment** (Lines 43-47 and 60-63)

*You see it in a strange way and then you will see it in another way even if you have been practicing there for years. There are several spots that we have been training in for years and we still go back there. Someone will suggest something and you will think that you haven't thought about it properly, so you see it from another perspective. People will still choose to walk around the metal rail even if it takes one second to go over it. For some reason they have some preconceived perceptions of how things should be and give it rationally.*

**10. Improving fitness level** (Lines 67- 71)

*We bought gymnastic rings and practise holding ourselves up on them and it's called the iron cross. The arms aren't that straight and we have been training lowering the arms to build strength. We were drilling in a set of ten each and I said I think I will do thirty and (name omitted) said I do fifty as a rule. If something will be done then you have no option but to do fifty.*

**11. Reliant on the environment** (Lines 79-83)

*Parkour is strongly influenced by the environment and you are training to be good in that environment. If you don't understand that you do not understand the real purpose of parkour. People around the world are practicing in the environment that they have available to them.*

**12. Way of life** (Lines 90-91)

*I think you can't get away from what you have learnt in parkour and you can't just stop it and lose all the mental stuff you have learnt.*

**13. More than a hobby** (Lines 97-98)

*You can put a ban on it but never take away what I have learnt and how to utilise it.*

**Figure 5.5: *Participant H: Clusters and Emerging Themes***

<b>Cluster 1:</b> Training (themes 9 and 11)
<b>Cluster 2:</b> Philosophy (theme 2)
<b>Cluster 3:</b> Being in the present (themes 9 and 12 )
<b>Cluster 4:</b> Challenge (themes 4 and 6)
<b>Cluster 5:</b> Environment (themes 9 and 11)
<b>Cluster 6:</b> Addiction (themes 12 and 13)
<b>Cluster 7:</b> Perception (theme 7)
<b>Cluster 8:</b> Aesthetics (themes 7 and 9)
<b>Cluster 9:</b> Mastery (themes 5 and 6)
<b>Cluster 10:</b> Health Fitness and Wellbeing (theme 10)
<b>Cluster 11:</b> Society (theme 8)

### **5.3 Identifying Themes**

Examining the themes in relation to one another enables the researcher to produce clusters of the themes that capture categories of meaning. The themes and clusters that are produced must relate to the original data (Willig, 2008). Repetitive, vague or repeated expressions were eliminated or presented in a more precise manner (Moustakas, 1994).

### 5.3.1 Participant D: Themes

#### **Mastery**

*Parkour is a way of movement primarily. A training system used to get past physical obstacles. Normally you need to get past obstacles in your life (Lines 1-2). There seems to be various people doing it coming from different backgrounds. You can be twelve years old or in your thirties or forties and at any level of fitness. Parkour is about making yourself fitter and to develop (Lines 41-44). You adapt your parkour to your own self so it can be really interesting. It's really good to teach and show the different movements you can do and break it down for them. It's great when you see that they have cracked it and they incorporate their own movement as well. I have learnt more than I thought I could. I got the impression that I was small and pretty weak also kind of scared and not a confident person. Now I can do all kinds of things that I thought I couldn't do. The main thing is the confidence to do whatever what you want to do and not let other people opinions affect you (Lines 45-53).*

#### **Being in the Present**

*Every time you get past an obstacle you get a sense of success. This success makes you become freer and means you can do anything you want to do (Lines 15-17). There are a huge range of benefits that people can focus on (Line 26). Parkour helps you realise that you can find freedom without obstacles limiting you (Line 28). The things that I have done through parkour and the changes it has made (Line 67-68).*

#### **Health and Wellbeing**

*It increases physical fitness (Line 34). I also work out more than before (Line 51). It's the best way I have found to keep fit and healthy (Lines 69-70).*

### **Risk**

*Risk is always going to be part of parkour. You have to always work out what you can do and what you can't do. It's a boundary of definitely knowing what you can do and what you can't do. There is always going to be some risk around because you are working in that risk area (Lines 17-21). Sometimes you can get two or three teenagers riding into you on skateboards. It's daunting trying something new. You have to be quite brave to do this. It helps if you have other people around you (Lines 38-40).*

### **Enjoyment**

*Parkour started off in Paris about twenty years ago with a group of youngsters who were bored and had nothing to do. They developed the idea of kids chasing around (Lines 2-5). I started about six years ago just after seeing some guys from France on the TV. I saw it on the television and thought that is pretty amazing. The first time I saw it I really thought it was some kind of special effects. The first clip I saw was on BBC One of someone jumping between roof tops and I thought that was just stunts or whatever (Lines 6-10). Parkour is a fun way to improve yourself and develop your personal ability (Line 15). It's important that you enjoy what you are doing. There is no point in restricting yourself to something that will be boring and you are not going to stick with (Lines 21-23).*

### **Aesthetics**

*It's the art of getting past any obstacle and difficulty (Lines 30-31). No one else is involved and it's just you and the environment, the walls and trees (Lines 62-63).*

### **Training**

*You see things much larger when you have been practicing for six years and practicing in public place (Lines 37-38). More people are practicing and continue to practice once they realise the deeper aspects. They identify with the physiological, mental and social side of things and the way it operates (Lines 59-60).*

### **Challenge**

*The first day I went out in Manchester was on some of the really low walls. They were kind of two or three feet high and I just tried to get over them in different kind of ways. I started off with volts. I just tried to copy what I had seen. When I started there wasn't really anyone that I could speak to who had any experience or understanding of how to get started (Lines 10-14). If it's something that is difficult you are going to feel good about yourself when you overcome it. You don't need to physically go looking for the thrills. They are there in any kind of movement that you are doing (Lines 23-26). I am a parkour coach so I find everything interesting about parkour. The important thing is the affect it has on each person's personalities. It's the fact that you are trying to get past an obstacle and not trying to avoid it. People get more confident because they are not ignoring the fact that they are trying to get past the difficulty. It makes people think more confidently. They become more willing to solve problems rather than ignore them (Lines 29-34). No one else is involved and it's just you and the environment, the walls and trees. That part of it is so good at forcing you to develop your own ability. You can rely on your coach or get technical information but to get your feelings and perceptions right you have to do it yourself. Not everyone can do it on their own and will need some help from someone else but the bulk of it is individual (Lines 62-67).*

**Environment**

*It's a discipline practised through your relationship with the environment. That is one of the reasons you get regional trends. People are forced to train in different ways (Lines 56-58). People practise and try to improve their parkour and don't think about confidence issues and try and improve things with the environment they have. No one else is involved and it's just you and the environment, the walls and trees (Lines 61-63).*

**Addiction**

*Having started it no it would be impossible to stop parkour. The things that I have done through parkour the changes it has made. I cannot stop the changes it has made in the past. I wouldn't want to live without it (Lines 67-69).*

### 5.3.2 Participant E: Themes

#### **Aesthetics**

*It is the art of movement primarily (Line 1). Every person has their own style and they focus on different parts of parkour (Line 25). You can engage with these areas and you have concrete areas and yeah people in different areas are influenced by the architecture of the environment (Lines 50-51).*

#### **Challenge**

*It is used as a way of overcoming obstacles. The challenges that you face in life, mentally and physically (Lines 1-2). It is a good training method and you can apply it in everyday life (Lines 2-3). Every practitioner has the same mentality created through the practice of it (Lines 23-24). The focus you get comes because you have to dedicate a lot of time to it and its like movement and the challenge. It affects the challenges you have in life and it affects work or anything really, like getting past opinions. You have that focus and drive which is really interesting and it inspires me to keep progressing (Lines 26-29). First time I tried it was following the Jump Britain documentary. I went out with a friend skateboarding previously to that. We thought it looked exciting and we went around the town and basically jumped on a wall and rail - just something small. Just to replicate what we had seen. We didn't understand the philosophy at that stage. We only understood small things about of our capabilities (Lines 29-33). You are vulnerable and no one is there to push you. You have to provide that yourself (Lines 40-41).*

#### **Training**

*Like most sports you have to have discipline. A set training system and a place that you go to and do it. There isn't any specialised equipment. All you need is a pair of trainers, gloves and a positive mentality. I do it just round my local town in Wakefield and Leeds. I found out that there were some other people that did it so I met up with them (Lines 9-13). The learning process comes from practising new moves (Lines 36-37).*

*People practise it together and they meet other people in training or see them in real life (Lines 53-54). It's the learning process that keeps the drive to keep practicing it and it gives me confidence which opens my eyes (Lines 59-60).*

### **Mastery**

*It is the art of movement primarily and it is used as a way of overcoming obstacles, the challenges that you face in life mentally and physically. It is a good training method and you can apply it in everyday life (Lines 1-3). I am getting stronger by reaching the goals that I have set through parkour (Lines 15-16). You learn through errors or when you miss-judge something. When you replicate this you can learn from your mistakes and you can remember what you learnt last time (Line 37-39). It's more of an individual thing - you are more in control of your movement, you don't have a personal coach and you make the decisions. You are vulnerable and no one is there to push you. You have to provide that yourself (Lines 39-41).*

### **Health and Well Being**

*I used to eat lots of poor food and stuff. Now I try and feel healthy about myself when I wake up in the morning (Lines 14-15). It's the health and fitness part of it. I have developed physically (Lines 61-62).*

### **Enjoyment**

*It's a very relaxed environment as everyone is not jumping around all hyper and serious. Everyone is just chilled out and relaxed and doing stuff that they want to do (Lines 16-18). I think you have to have an open mind previous to finding out about it. Otherwise you would not have discovered it. People like it because it looks fun (Lines 19-21).*

### **Philosophical**

*It's not just for fun. It's a sport and a discipline. It's comparative to martial arts really. It has its philosophical side and it expands your mind when you are training (Lines 21-23).*

### **Being in the present**

*When I wake up in the morning I am getting stronger with reaching goals that I have set for parkour (Lines 15-16). I have learnt many things: how to express myself, not to listen to other people perceptions and that there is a limit to what you can do when you practise it (Lines 33-35).*

### **Social**

*There is a parkour community. It is not a teenage sport. You get people that help each other. If there are a lot of people out doing it they help each other. They pull each other up walls and work as team or a group. There are different communities in the UK. Each city has its own community that train in their own way. It's a real social thing. Those who do parkour have their own mindset. They live a sort of same life style (Lines 41-46).*

### **Environment**

*Parkour is environmentally influenced. It can be done in an urban or rural landscape. People in different areas are influenced by the architecture of the environment. People who live in Newcastle have very urbanised areas. Their training has more concrete obstacles and is more rural with trees (name omitted) mentioned that people are not free to discover the city that they live in. They are clones that follow each other. They don't look up or around and are missing so much. They don't take it all in (Lines 49-57).*

### **Addiction**

*No because of all the things I have achieved from it and even if I stopped it physically then still the mentality will be there (Lines 57-58). I can't think of my life without parkour (Line 62).*

### 5.3.3 Participant F: Themes

#### **Challenge**

*It's moving around the environment with the obstacles in your way. You are just getting over them to be quicker. To be more efficient rather than be slow (Lines 1-3). Some people think it's to do with flips (Lines 5-6). The first time I tried it was six months ago. I met up with some people from Manchester who were very experienced. They didn't know what to get me to do the first time. They told me to try the wall. They told me to limber up and start by starting small. Warming up is quite important because you will be using your muscles. If you fall and you land in an awkward position - warming up will help ensure that you don't injure yourself (Lines 14-19). You will run up a wall and people will say you are crazy. You learn about what human limits are (Lines 37-39).*

#### **Mastery**

*In Manchester we do more conditioning and if you don't like that then you won't like what we do in Manchester (Lines 8-9). There are different places to train. Everyone is different and so we train differently. I think parkour is interesting and it's something new to do. You start off small and you move onto something else. It keeps you interested because you want to learn to do it properly so that you get stronger. You set yourself goals in the day (Lines 9-13). If you haven't got something set for the rest of the day but haven't quite got it then you try and try really. You just carry on really until you get it. You get someone to help you do it. They help motivate you so that you become more confident about the situation (Lines 11-14). I realise that you have to be patient with things and that it's going to take time. You have to take time and build up to things. I think it will take two years to train and learn from basic level to a more advanced level. I will get stronger and keep learning (Lines 20-23). I think in some ways its individual to you. You are learning what your body can do (Lines 23-24).*

### **Environment**

*The area will affect parkour. It might be a rural area with trees and grass or an urban concrete area. You might be using small walls so that you can do volts. Or you might be using high walls for running up them (Lines 26-28).*

### **Social**

*Somebody told me about parkour because they thought that I might be interested. They told me to come and meet up with people that do it and I really got into it (Lines 3-5). In some ways it's social because you are speaking to different people. If no one else is out there you won't train. Some don't need people to push them and others do (Lines 24-26). The police can move you on which means you can't train as much (Lines 29-30). There are skateboard groups who might be arrogant and the police might think that we are the same. Sometimes the police have said that they have had a bad experience with them. We should be treated equally (Lines 31-33).*

### **Addiction**

*Obviously I could live without it. But my mindset would mean that I would be walking down the street and I would think I could run up that wall. You can literally just think it walking down the street and I do (Lines 33-35). I suppose - no I couldn't give it up (Line 36-37).*

### **Being in the present**

*It just feels good I guess. It's a release of stress and you don't think of anything else while you're doing it (Lines 35-36).*

**5.3.4 Participant G: Themes**

**Challenge**

*When I first started in parkour I was a bit unaware of what it was with its tricks, jumps and things like that. So I used to tell people it was like skateboarding without a skateboard. You are sort of in an urban environment and jumping off rails and following over walls and things (Lines 1-4). I need to focus on myself and develop myself (Lines 44-45).*

**Training**

*I started to watch videos and realised it was a lot more about personal training and making yourself stronger and more efficient (Lines 4-6). The practice of parkour is both an individual thing and a group thing. The development of your body and your muscles is an individual thing but you are moving and training in a group (Lines 52-54). I mean me and (name omitted) have a condition that we meet up and practise as we are of a similar strength level. I know he is watching what I am doing. I am pushing much harder and he is going to push even harder. That helps push everyone. It's not a competition but I want to be better than I could have been and I can see he is still going, so I push harder (Lines 56-60).*

**Mastery**

*I push my limit sometimes which is good for the mental side of parkour. If something is bothering me and scaring me I think about how I can overcome the obstacle physically (Lines 9-11). It is easy to start off with because they show people the basics like a small jump or something. They show you how it can be done. Like jumping from one curb to another curb with no height and no fear. They teach the techniques and the skills that you need and then build up from there (Lines 18-21). Parkour is about developing yourself and how to progress by becoming stronger, jumping further and running a bit faster. This is the hook that keeps me coming back. As you learn one movement, you then think I can do this one as well.*

*You are pushing yourself to a higher level of movement. It is ongoing and you are finding new spots to move (Lines 31-35). I focus on basic movements and learn how to react to a situation. For example, if you are doing a jump and you realise in mid air you only have a couple of seconds to avoid injuries. With parkour you learn how to get stronger and harden your body armour and to absorb things. You gain more balance and spatial awareness. If someone is running by and he doesn't know you are going to cross his path, you will be looking out for loose breaks, textures and grip. To see if there is anything I can do to counter act this (Lines 45-52).*

### **Health and Wellbeing**

*I have been into fitness and sports activities since I was fourteen. I've been doing martial arts, kick boxing and things like that. A little bit of weight lifting and capoeira which is similar sort of thing (Lines 21-24).*

### **Being in the Present**

*I moved from the martial art sort of thing over to this and found it very interesting because it gave more freedom to express (Lines 24-26). I need to eat and sleep and once you have parkour in your blood, it will always stay there. It could be as simple as you are walking down the street and there is a rail there on your right hand side and instead of walking the normal way, you go over the rail. You do it because it's in your way rather than walking alongside it. You are always seeing how you can interact with the environment. So even if you are not physically practicing the volts you would just practise how your body is going to move or volt over something really high. I am sure I can find something that my body can do another way to move effectively (Lines 65-72).*

### **Enjoyment**

*I had experience of martial arts and so was quicker at getting to the higher level and found the buzz from there (Lines 43-44).*

### **Environment**

*It's about finding new routes to get through the environment more quickly and safely (Lines 6-7). You have to think about what facilities you have in the area. If there are loads of walls and things but no rails, the balance side of things will suffer. You have other sports that use the rails, like skateboarders who take up your space and flow. Manchester would be different than Sheffield because the volts and environment would be different (Lines 60-64).*

### **Thrill Seeking**

*I think it's for the adrenaline (Line 36-37).*

### **Spirituality**

*You get the people who do it for the mind and body (Line 37).*

### **Social**

*I looked out for parkour in Manchester and did a Google search and Northern Parkour came up. So I eventually got the coach to meet up with the other guys. I thought, "it is going to be full of kids and everyone is going to be way better than I am". I eventually got the coach to get out there and met (name omitted) and (name omitted) (Lines 13-18). The first time I came to practise parkour I expected to see everyone on the roof tops. Looking at stair cases and climbing the stairs but I couldn't find anyone. I found out that it's not what I thought it was (Lines 38-40). I came down and they were all a similar age. I felt at ease and possibly because I had experience of martial arts (Lines 42-43).*

### **Aesthetics**

*If you have spots that have rails that skateboarders use your flow will be different. Manchester will be different than Sheffield because the volts and environment will be different. How we practise in Manchester will be different than how they practise in Leeds (Lines 62-65).*

**Addiction**

*No I couldn't live without parkour. I need to eat and sleep and once you have parkour in your blood it will always stay there. You might be walking down the street and there is a rail there on your right hand side and instead of walking around the normal way you go over the rail. So even if you are not physically practicing the volts you would just practice it in your mind. You will be thinking how your body is going to move or volt over something really high. I am always trying to find something that my body can do another way or to move more efficiently (Lines 65-72).*

**5.3.5 Participant H: Themes**

**Philosophical**

*Parkour is a physical discipline but there is also a philosophical side to it as well (Lines 1-2). On the philosophical side of it, it's not just about the physical aspect you might want to get over a wall that is six foot tall and that is one aspect. It is also about overcoming other obstacles and they could be more mental based (Lines 6-9). There is a phrase that we use in parkour, "be strong to be useful" and it originates from Method Unnatural (Lines 35-36). What people don't see is the mental aspect of parkour (Lines 57-58).*

**Being in the present**

*It was something about personal freedom (Line 19). You see it in a strange way and then you will see it in another way even if you have been practicing there for years (Lines 43-45). You can't get away from what you have learnt in parkour (Lines 90-91).*

**Environment**

*The most obvious implementation that you see people practicing is a means of navigating through the environment quickly and effectively. You can use it to travel through any given thing. You can also see it practiced in an urban environment. There is no reason why you can't apply those skills into different settings, like more rural settings (Lines 2-6). You see it in a strange way and then you will see it in another way even if you have been practicing there for years. There are several spots that we have been training in for years and we still go back there. Someone will suggest something and you will think that you haven't thought about it properly, so you see it from another perspective (Lines 43-47). People will still choose to walk around the metal rail even if it takes one second to go over it. For some reason they have some preconceived perceptions of how things should be and give it rationally (Lines 60-63).*

### **Perception**

*Parkour changes your perspective of the given environment. You will see an area where there is wall and a rail. As you practise more, then you will see it like a vault or ascertain a type of jump and a potential movement. You see it in a strange way and then you see it in another way, even if you are practicing for years. There are several spots that we have been training in for years. We still go back there. Someone will suggest something and then you think you haven't thought about that so you see it from another perspective (Lines 40-47). People just go along with the norm. People will choose to walk around the rail even if it takes one second to go over it. For some reason they have some preconceived perception of how things should be, giving it rationality (Lines 60-63).*

### **Training**

*You often practise in your own space and are just trying to practise a jump in that space (Lines 25-26). After seeing the TV documentary, Jump Britain I went on the internet for more information about the difference between free running and parkour. I found the parkour website that (name omitted) set up. It had a great discussion forum where you could arrange meet ups. I went out on a Sunday and met up with fifty odd people (name omitted) was there and other people. Some had been doing it for around six months. I was just learning stuff basically for three or five hours. My legs were aching and I could barely walk up stairs (Lines 48-54). We bought gymnastic rings to practise holding ourselves up on them. This is called the iron cross. We were drilling in a set of ten each. I said, "I think I will do thirty" and (name omitted) said, "I will do fifty". The rule is that you have no option but to do fifty (Lines 67-71). Throughout the country and around the world they are training in their own groups so you do get regional trends. It's how people practise. When I went to France they were great at jumping. We were better in strength based training (Lines 72-75).*

*You get regional differences because it's impossible to ignore the environment you are practicing in. You are training to be good in that environment or you do not understand the real purpose of it (Lines 78-81).*

### **Mastery**

*It's not just about the physical aspect. You might want to get over a wall that is six foot tall. That is one aspect. It's also about overcoming other obstacles that are more mental based (Lines 7-9). The next week you might go out and do a jump and you might be closer to accomplish it. Its personal progression that attracts me to parkour and to see this visible achievement (Lines 26-28). If you practise it on a longer term basis it's becomes more about personal progression. It's not about showing off and making videos to show your mates (Lines 32-34). It's about bettering yourself physically and helping others as well. There is a phrase that we use in parkour which is, "to be strong to be useful". It was from the Method Unnatural but basically we follow the premise of it and to be stronger in many situations. For example, with the frost recently you might find someone trying to get out of the frost and can't get any grips so if you are trying to push the car with them - if you are stronger then you can succeed in moving it. So it can be things like that really (Lines 34-40). It is a kind of mindset. You can train under your own motivation without external influences. But I'm not sure anyone can truly push themselves to the max under their own influence (Lines 65-67).*

### **Health and Wellbeing**

*It's the best way I have found to keep fit and healthy (Line 28). Parkour is about bettering yourself physically and helping others as well (Lines 34-35). You might find someone trying to get their car out of the frost and they can't get any grip. If you are stronger then you can push the car with them and succeed in moving it (Lines 38-40). You become more confident and start believing in other aspects of your life. I have learnt more about people in a way (Lines 58-59). We bought gymnastic rings and practise holding ourselves up on them and it's called the iron cross. The arms aren't that straight and we have been training lowering the arms to build strength. We were drilling in a set of ten each and I said I think I will do thirty and (name omitted) said I do fifty as a rule. If something will be done then you have no option but to do fifty (Lines 67-71).*

### **Challenge**

*I do some lecturing in the school of sound recording where I talk about audio post production. When I actually started lecturing I was really apprehensive about it. Even if it is in front of a group of five or six people my hands would be shaking. I would start talking nonsense. A year later I found myself standing in front of two hundred people addressing the whole audience. There was no chance I could have done that if it wasn't for practicing parkour (Lines 9-17). I suppose the reason why I got into parkour was because like all people I saw the documentaries in 2005. I practice it due to the confidence and the physical aspects of things. I wasn't interested in physical sports when I was at school. I was the last one chosen to join in a group. I hated it and had no interest. Parkour I really found appealing. It's not competitive and that is a really important part that I like. If you go out then you are not competing with other people. That is not what parkour is about (Lines 17-25). I have learnt that parkour has a physical and mental side to it.*

*The mental side is about being aware through the practice of parkour. On a simple level it's about balance and you do become good at climbing (Lines 55-57).*

### **Addiction**

*I think you can't get away from what you have learnt in parkour. You can't just stop it and lose all the mental stuff you have learnt. I remember before I started to practice parkour - I was locked out of the house. I had to wait five hours to open the door because I hadn't been practicing. I didn't think I could have climbed up the wall to the bathroom window. Then a couple of years later the same thing happened. I climbed the wall and went through the bathroom window. I will always find a situation when I can use parkour. There is no way of getting away from it even if you put a ban on it. You could never take away what I learnt (Lines 90-98).*

### **Aesthetics**

*You will see an area where there is wall with a rail and the more you practise the more you will see it like a vault or you will ascertain a type of jump and a potential movement. You see it in a strange way and then you will see it in another way even if you have been practicing there for years (Lines 41-45). Younger participants are more concerned with the fashion based trends you get. They wear a type of trainer or where a tracksuit with a parkour logo or grow their hair long (Lines 76-77).*

### **Social**

*I found a parkour website that (name omitted) set up like a discussion forum and I went out on a Sunday and met up with fifty odd people (Lines 50-51). We haven't had any problems with the police. They sometimes come up to us and say, "what are you doing lads"? We explain and they say, "okay, carry on". Security guards are funnier about it. They will mention health, safety and insurance issues.*

*Their response to you is predetermined before they even talk to you.  
They will come out and say, “move on” (Lines 84-87).*

#### **5.4 Systematic Overview**

To provide a clear and systematic overview of the quotes, keywords, constituent themes and clusters the researcher produces a summary table (Willig, 2008).

**Figure 5.6: Participant D: Summary Table**

<b>Summary Table: Participant D</b>		
<b>Cluster 1: Training</b>		<b>Lines</b>
• What is parkour:	“a training system”.	1
• Practise:	“practising in public space”.	38
<b>Cluster 2: Risk</b>		
• Risk factor:	“risk is always going to be part of it”.	17
<b>Cluster 3: Being in the Present</b>		
• Way of life:	“it would be impossible to stop parkour”.	67
<b>Cluster 4: Enjoyment</b>		
• Sense of fun:	“It’s important that you enjoy what you are doing”.	21-22
<b>Cluster 5: Challenge</b>		
• Personal development:	“people get more confident”.	32
• Individual competition:	“develop your own ability”.	64
<b>Cluster 6: Environment</b>		
• Emotional relationship with the environment:	“ it’s just you and the environment, the walls and trees”.	62-63
<b>Cluster 7: Addiction</b>		
• Way of life:	“it would be impossible to stop parkour”.	67
<b>Cluster 8: Aesthetics</b>		
• Emotional relationship with the environment:	“ it’s just you and the environment, the walls and trees”.	62-63
<b>Cluster 9: Mastery</b>		
• What is parkour:	“you need to get past obstacles in your life”.	2
• Personal development:	“people get more confident”.	32
<b>Cluster 10: Health and Fitness</b>		
• Personal development:	“it increases physical fitness”.	34

**Figure 5.7: Participant E: Summary Table**

<b>Summary Table: Participant E</b>		
<b>Cluster 1: Training</b>		<b>Lines</b>
• Parkour movement:	“a way of overcoming obstacles”.	1-2
• What is parkour:	“it is a good training method”.	2-3
• Practise:	“people practise it together”.	53-54
<b>Cluster 2: Philosophy</b>		
• Parkour technique:	“it has its philosophical side”.	22
<b>Cluster 3: Being in the Present</b>		
• Stress relief:	“I am getting stronger with reaching goals”.	15
<b>Cluster 4: Enjoyment</b>		
• Sense of fun:	“people like it cause it looks fun”.	20-21
<b>Cluster 5: Challenge</b>		
• Personal development:	“I do it to better myself”.	13-14
• Individual competition:	“you are in more control of your movement”.	39
<b>Cluster 6: Environment</b>		
• Reliant on the environment:	“it is allowed to be practised in urban or rural landscapes”.	49-50
<b>Cluster 7: Addiction</b>		
• More than a hobby:	“I can’t think my life without parkour”.	62
<b>Cluster 8: Aesthetics</b>		
• Reliant on the environment:	“you can engage with these areas”.	50
<b>Cluster 9: Mastery</b>		
• Parkour movement:	“overcoming obstacles, the challenges that you face in life”.	2
• What is parkour:	“good training method and you can apply it in everyday life”.	3

<b>Cluster 10:</b> <i>Health and Fitness</i>		
•	Personal development: “now I try and feel healthy about myself”.	14-15
<b>Cluster 11:</b> <i>Society</i>		
•	Community spirit: “it is a social thing”.	45

**Figure 5.8: Participant F: Summary Table**

<b>Summary Table: Participant F</b>		
<b>Cluster 1: <i>Being in the present</i></b>		<b>Lines</b>
• Parkour movement:	“it just feels good”.	35-36
<b>Cluster 2: <i>Challenge</i></b>		
• Personal development:	“It motivates you and gives you confidence”.	13-14
• Individual competition:	“you are learning what your body can do”.	23-24
<b>Cluster 3: <i>Environment</i></b>		
• Reliant on the environment:	“you can run up the walls”.	28
<b>Cluster 4: <i>Addiction</i></b>		
• More than a hobby:	“no I couldn’t give it up”.	36-37
<b>Cluster 5: <i>Mastery</i></b>		
• Parkour movement:	“just getting over it to be quicker”.	2
• Changing perspectives:	“you get stronger and set yourself goals in the day”.	12-13
<b>Cluster 6: <i>Society</i></b>		
• How I started:	“met up with people that do it already and I got into it”.	4-5

**Figure 5.9: Participant G: Summary Table**

<b>Summary Table: Participant G</b>		
<b>Cluster 1: Training</b>		<b>Lines</b>
• Personal development:	“I realised it was a lot more about personal training”.	5-6
• Practice:	“the practice of parkour is an individual thing”.	52-53
<b>Cluster 2: Being in the present</b>		
• Way of life:	“your are always seeing how you can interact with the environment”.	69
<b>Cluster 3: Enjoyment</b>		
• Community spirit:	“getting to a good level and found the buzz from there”.	44
<b>Cluster 4: Challenge</b>		
• Personal development:	“sometimes I push my limits which is good for the mental side”.	9
• Individual competition:	“I need to focus on myself and develop myself”.	44-45
<b>Cluster 5: Spirituality</b>		
• Mind and body:	“do it more for the mind and body”.	37
<b>Cluster 6: Environment</b>		
• Reliant on the environment:	“there are loads of walls”.	60-61
• Emotional rel. with the environment:	“If you have spots that have rails that skateboarders use - your flow will be different”.	62-63
<b>Cluster 7: Addiction</b>		
• A Way of life:	“once you have parkour in your blood it will always stay there”.	65-66
<b>Cluster 8: Aesthetics</b>		
• Emotional rel. with the environment:	“Manchester will be different than Sheffield because the volts and environment will be different”.	63-64

<b>Cluster 9: <i>Mastery</i></b>		
• What is parkour:	“It was more about developing yourself and how to progress”.	31-33
• Parkour movement:	“you are pushing yourself to another level of movement”.	34
<b>Cluster 10: <i>Health and Fitness</i></b>		
• Improved fitness level:	“I have been into fitness and sports activities since I was fourteen”.	21-22
<b>Cluster 11: <i>Thrill Seeking</i></b>		
• Searching for thrills:	“I think it’s for the adrenaline”.	36-37
<b>Cluster 12: <i>Society</i></b>		
• Community spirit:	“they were all a similar age”.	42-43

**Figure 5.10: Participant H: Summary Table**

<b>Summary Table: Participant H</b>		
<b>Cluster 1: Training</b>		<b>Lines</b>
• Emotional rel. with the environment:	“there are several spots that we have been training in for years”.	45
• Reliant on the environment:	“you are training to be good in that environment”.	80
<b>Cluster 2: Philosophy</b>		
• Parkour technique:	“on the philosophical side of it, it’s not just about the physical aspect”.	6-7
<b>Cluster 3: Being in the present</b>		
• Emotional rel. with the environment:	“people will still choose to walk around the metal rail even if it takes one second go over it”.	60-61
• Way of life:	“you can’t get away from what you have learnt in parkour”.	90-91
<b>Cluster 4: Challenge</b>		
• Individual competition:	“it is not competitive and that is a really important part of it”.	23-24
• Personal development:	“to see these visible achievements and to stay fit and healthy as well”.	28
<b>Cluster 5: Environment</b>		
• Emotional rel. the environment:	“there are several spots that we have been training in for years and we still go back there”.	45-46
• Reliant on the environment:	“parkour is strongly influenced by the environment”.	79-80
<b>Cluster 6: Addiction</b>		
• A Way of life:	“you can’t just stop it and lose all the mental stuff you have learnt”.	91
• More than hobby:	“you can put a ban on it but never take away what I have learnt and how to utilise it”.	97-98

<b>Cluster 7: Perception</b>		
• Changing perception:	“parkour changes your perception of a given environment”.	40-41
<b>Cluster 8: Aesthetics</b>		
• Changing perception:	“you will ascertain a type of jump and a potential movement”.	43
• Emotional rel. the environment:	“you see it in a strange way and then you will see it in another way”.	43-44
<b>Cluster 9: Mastery</b>		
• Personal development:	“Its personal progression that attracts me to parkour”.	27
• Helping people:	“It’s about bettering yourself physically and helping others as well”.	34-35
<b>Cluster 10: Health and fitness</b>		
• Improving fitness level:	“we were drilling in a set of ten”.	69-70
<b>Cluster 11: Society</b>		
• Community spirit:	“I went out on a Sunday and met up with fifty odd people”.	51

### **5.5 Master Themes**

A list of master themes is produced to capture the quality of the participant's experience of the phenomenon under investigation and it provides insight into the essence of the phenomenon (Willig, 2008).

**Figure 5.11: Participants D, E and F: List of Master Themes**

	<b>Participant D</b>	<b>Participant E</b>	<b>Participant F</b>
	<b>Lines</b>	<b>Lines</b>	<b>Lines</b>
<b>Master Theme 1: Training</b>			
Parkour movement		1-2	
How I started			
Practise	38	53-54	
Emotional rel. with environment			
What is parkour	1-2	2-3	
<b>Master Theme 2: Risk</b>			
Risk factor	17		
Deleting the risk			
<b>Master Theme 3: Philosophy</b>			
Parkour technique		22	
What is parkour			
<b>Master Theme 4: Being in the Present</b>			
More than a hobby			
What is parkour			
Community spirit			
Reliant on the environment			
Stress relief		15	
Way of life	67		
Parkour movement			35-36
<b>Master Theme 5: Enjoyment</b>			
Sense of fun	21-22	20-21	
Personal challenge			
<b>Master Theme 6: Challenge</b>			
Individual competition	64	39	23-24
Personal development	32	13-14	13-14
<b>Master Theme 7: Spirituality</b>			
Spiritually uplifting			
Sense of fun			
A way of life			

Spiritual in nature			
<b>Master Theme 8: Environment</b>			
Reliant on the environment		49-50	28
Emotional rel. with the environment	62-63		
<b>Master Theme 9: Addiction</b>			
A way of life	67		
Stress relief			
More than a hobby		62	36-37
<b>Master Theme 10: Perception</b>			
Changing perspective			
Emotional rel. with environment			
<b>Master Theme 11: Aesthetics</b>			
Emotional rel. the environment	62-63		
Changing perspective			
Reliant on the environment		50	
<b>Master Theme 12: Mastery</b>			
Individual competition			
Personal development	33-35		
What is parkour	2	3	
Parkour movement		2	2
Changing perspective			12-13
<b>Master Theme 13: Health, Fitness and Wellbeing</b>			
Improved fitness			
Personal development	34	14-15	
<b>Master Theme 14: Thrill Seeking</b>			
Searching for thrills			
Element of danger			
<b>Master Theme 15: Society</b>			
Community spirit		45	
How I started			4-5

**Figure 5.12: Participants G and H: List of Master Themes**

<b>Participant G</b>	<b>Participant H</b>
<b>Lines</b>	<b>Lines</b>
<b>Master Theme 1: Training</b>	
Parkour movement	
How I started	
Practise	52-53
Emotional rel. with environment	45
What is parkour	
Personal development	5-6
Reliant on environment	80
<b>Master Theme 2: Philosophy</b>	
Parkour technique	
	6-7
What is parkour	
<b>Master Theme 3: Being in the Present</b>	
More than a hobby	
What is parkour	
Community spirit	
Reliant on the environment	
Stress relief	
Way of life	69
	90-91
Parkour movement	
Emotional rel. with environment	60-61
<b>Master Theme 4: Enjoyment</b>	
Sense of fun	
Personal challenge	
Community spirit	44
<b>Master Theme 5: Challenge</b>	
Individual competition	
	44-45
Personal development	9
	28
<b>Master Theme 6: Spirituality</b>	
Spiritually uplifting	
Sense of fun	
A way of life	
Spiritual in nature	

Changing perspective		
Emotional rel. with environment		
Mind and body	37	
<b>Master Theme 7: <i>Environment</i></b>		
Reliant on the environment	60-61	79-80
Emotional rel. with the environment	62-63	45-46
<b>Master Theme 8: <i>Addiction</i></b>		
A way of life	65-66	91
Stress relief		
More than a hobby		97-98
<b>Master Theme 9: <i>Perception</i></b>		
Changing perspective		40-41
Emotional rel. with environment		
<b>Master Theme 10: <i>Aesthetics</i></b>		
Emotional rel. the environment	63-64	43-44
Changing perspective		43
<b>Master Theme 11: <i>Mastery</i></b>		
Personal development		27
What is parkour	31-33	
Parkour movement	34	
Helping people		34-35
<b>Master Theme 12: <i>Health, Fitness and Wellbeing</i></b>		
Improved fitness	21-22	69-70
Personal development		
<b>Master Theme 13: <i>Thrill Seeking</i></b>		
Searching For thrills	36-37	
Element of danger		
<b>Master Theme 14: <i>Society</i></b>		
Community spirit	42-43	51

### **5.6 Core Themes**

Having identified emerging themes in the information provided by the participants it was possible to merge the data and components of the experience into a shared group of isolated core themes (Smith *et al.*, 2009). For example, the theme mastery elicited from participant A transcript is merged with participant's B clustered comments that were identified as being mastery. This process was carried out with all of the participants until a definitive set of core themes was produced.

### Mastery

- I have learnt more than I thought I could. I got the impression that I was small and pretty weak also kind of scared and not a confident person. Now I can do all kinds of things that I thought I couldn't do. The main thing is the confidence to do whatever what you want to do and not let other people opinions affect you.
- If I was to describe it to a complete novice I would just say that it is a way of training yourself to become better and more confident as a person. I do it to better myself.
- You learn through errors or if you miss judged something. You can remember what you learnt last time and you won't make the same mistake again.
- You become able to deal with it and not fall and injure yourself. That is large part of it. You are more in control of your movement.
- You start off small and you move onto something else. It keeps you interested because you want to learn to do it properly so that you get stronger. You set yourself goals in the day.
- If you haven't got something set for the rest of the day but haven't quite got it then you try and try. You just carry on really until you get it. You get someone to help you do it. They help motivate you so that you become more confident about the situation.
- I realise that you have to be patient and that it's going to take time to build up to things. I think it will take two years to train and learn from basic level to a more advanced level. I will get stronger and keep learning.
- You can be doing a jump and you realise in mid-air you only have a couple of seconds to avoid injuries. With parkour you learn how to get stronger and harden your body armour and to absorb things. You gain more balance and spacial awareness.
- If another participant is running by and he doesn't know you are going to cross his path you need to think quickly. You will be looking out for lose breaks, textures and to see if the area has good grip. You will be looking for ways to counter act the situation.

- It is easy to start off with because they show people the basics like a small jump or something. They teach the techniques and the skills that you need and then build up from there.
- Parkour and free running is about developing yourself and how to progress by becoming stronger, jumping further and running a bit faster. This is the hook that keeps me coming back.
- As you learn one movement you then think I can do this one as well. You are pushing yourself to a higher level of movement. It is on-going and you are finding new spots to move.
- You might want to get over a wall that is six foot tall. That is one aspect. It's also about overcoming other obstacles that are more mental based. If you practise it on a longer term basis it's becomes more about personal progression.
- It is a kind of mind-set. You can train under your own motivation without external influences. But I'm not sure anyone can truly push themselves to the max under their own influence.
- The next week you might go out and do a jump and you might be closer to accomplish it. It's personal progression that attracts me to free running and to see the visible achievements.
- The next day I woke up and my body hurt. I've never had ache like that in my life and it was wonderful. It was self-improvement. It was knowing that I had moved forward.
- I'd never been experienced in anything in anyway. So it was nice that I could do something that not many other people could do. I realised that it would become an important part of my life.
- I realised that being ready for every situation and being able to help people was a big motivating factor. Going back to that super hero and wanting as a child to be able to save people. You can help them now. You can do it. You can't be superman but you can get close. It's a nice feeling to have.

- The first time I did free running I had the biggest grin on my face because it wasn't pain it was progression.
- When you're on your own a barrier gets involved. You don't have any positive peer pressure. You have to do it yourself.
- You can be the only person in the crowd of a hundred people but you're the only person breaking through your own barriers. You're not breaking through anybody else's. I think true progression only happens when you're on your own.
- It was fantastic - it was progression. You were proud of the fact that your body hurt ready for the next time you go out to pretend that you're six.
- Most importantly I've learnt my own physical and mental limits. I've also learnt how to push them and give myself greater strength which has really helped me in different areas of my life.
- I am more capable than I was and it just became less physical and more about the mental side of it. I've really found myself doing things that back then I would have called impossible. Now here I am doing them and its fantastic and I love it.
- One of the key things I've definitely learnt is confidence. People can tell me how or show me and I can learn a move myself. Physically and mentally it's helped me develop into a person and overcome physical challenges.
- When I started lecturing I was really apprehensive about it. Even if it was in front of a group of five or six people my hands would be shaking. I would start talking nonsense. A year later I found myself standing in front of two hundred people addressing the whole audience. There was no chance I could have done that if it wasn't for practicing parkour.

### **Being in the present**

- Every time you get past an obstacle you get a sense of success. This success makes you become freer and means you can do anything you want to do.
- There are a huge range of benefits that people can focus on. It helps you realise that you can find freedom without obstacles limiting you.
- I have learnt many things: How to express myself, not to listen to other people perceptions and that there is a limit to what you can do when you practise it.
- It just feels good I guess. It's a release of stress and you don't think of anything else while you're doing it.
- You can use it to travel through any given thing.
- I moved to parkour because I found it gives more freedom to express.
- You express yourself through movement. I went from the martial arts sort of things over to this thinking it could be interesting.
- It was something about freedom personal. It became a phenomenon. It was something that could free you from this nothing. They had nothing to do. So it allowed them to be children.
- It allowed them to act as the super heroes they wanted to be. It's very expressionist. It's a stress relief. If you have a hard day in college or if you have had hard day in work you go out and jump around and obviously in biological terms you have dopamine and serotonin released into your blood. Its pain relieving – a kind of morphine in a sense. You become very docile and become happy.
- We proceeded to walk around the entire town just jumping around. Just finding things we never thought were important like a rail and a wall or a very weird combination of grass and gravel. Parking lines became the start and end. You jump from one line to the other instead of something slotting nicely in between them. You were forging your own path.

- At the time I fell in love with it because I felt like I was six again and it was fantastic just running along walls. I loved it to bits climbing on everything we could see for no particular reason. It was great getting some fantastically weird looks off people.
- For me personally what is most interesting is the escapism of it. It was a way of leaving my problems behind. I started six years ago. I was half way through high school mid-teens and it was a time full of depression. Once or twice I broke down into tears in the middle of class. It made it worse that it was an all boy's school and it would really hit hard. But I found this and I would jump around. I would start focusing on what I was doing and everything else would disappear.
- I developed a new personality. I became a new person. I took on my other name. I became (name omitted) and they knew me as (name omitted). I could do what I wanted. I didn't have to worry and that was fantastic. Eventually I just became (name omitted) entirely. It provided not just a way out but then eventually a solution and it's allowed me to become me.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

- I used to have no self-confidence, I never did any sport. My body was terrible. I had no fitness level what so ever. When I began I never thought about improving myself.
- I work out more than before. It increases physical fitness.
- I used to eat lots of poor food and stuff. Now I try and feel healthy about myself when I wake up in the morning.
- It's the health and fitness part of it. I have developed physically. I have been into fitness and sports activities since I was fourteen. I've been doing martial arts, kick boxing and things like that and a bit of weight lifting.
- It is about bettering yourself physically and helping others as well. You become more confident and start believing in other aspects of your life. I have learnt more about people in a way.
- It's the best way I have found to keep fit and healthy.

### Risk

- Risk is always going to be part of it.
- You have to always work out what you can do and what you can't do. It's a boundary of definitely knowing what you can do and what you can't do.
- There is always going to be some risk around because you are working in that risk area. Sometimes you can get two or three teenagers riding into you on skateboards.
- It's daunting trying something new. You have to be quite brave to do this. It helps if you have other people around you.
- At the recent world free running championships somebody tore their knee ligament very badly. He was very badly injured yet at the end of one of his videos recently it showed him training with his cast on his leg.
- It was never the adrenalin rush for me. If I went for the adrenalin then that would cloud my senses. If I'm doing a very large jump and the adrenalin clouds my sense I increase the risk. If I increase the risk I won't be able help people.
- I wasn't searching for the risk anymore I was searching for deleting the risk. I will do a move a thousand times over so that I wouldn't hurt myself if I ever did it.
- "A traceur who practices parkour has to be able to think on his feet even when his feet are busy". Fantastic phrase and that's it. It's about deleting that risk in order to have the best possible outcome.
- I like there to be a bit risk involved. With my background of skating and stuff like that I prefer an adrenalin kick every so often.
- If people are cheering you on to do a jump you know you're not ready for but you do it just to kind of show off. Then the risk increases to a point where you're not comfortable. You don't feel in control with it. It can be very positive but in that respect it's about your individual look at it. You have to know even when you're with a group whether to say yes I'll do this or no, I can't.

- It's fun sometimes when there's that danger. You realise that was a bit close but I'm out alive. It's more I overcame that. In terms of risk I'm not really seeking an adrenalin kick.

- We don't jump around buildings for fun because that's very risky and unsafe.

### **Enjoyment**

- It's important that you enjoy what you are doing. There is no point in restricting yourself to something that will be boring and you are not going to stick with.

- Parkour started off in Paris about twenty years ago with a group of youngsters who were bored and had nothing to do. They developed the idea of kids chasing around/moving around.

- It is a fun way to improve yourself and develop your personal ability.

- I saw it on the television and thought that is pretty amazing. The first time I saw it I really thought it was some kind of special effects. The first clip I saw was on BBC One of someone jumping roof tops and I thought that was just stunts or whatever.

- I had experience of martial arts and so was quicker at getting to the higher level and found the buzz from there.

- I wanted to just jump around. I just wanted to do what they did. I knew I would never be good enough but I wanted to just have a go.

- Most free runners refuse to get into the politics simply because they enjoy the movement of it. Free running I think for the most part people enjoy the showing off factor.

- A runner called Sebastian Foucan is one of the original traceurs in France. He said when you are with other people you gain a different kind of confidence. The jump is there and bang you do the job. It's wonderful. Everybody cheers you on.

- When I jump around I don't try and deny I'm acting like a child and its fun because children have a different view on the world than adults do. How many adults do you see walking along a wall? Yet how many children do you see wanting to jump up onto a wall and be up there? Half the time when we train and are walking along the wall we're not ashamed to say there's lava on the ground. It presents a new fun aspect to it all.
- It doesn't have to be about conditioning and training yourself. It can be fun, it can be really, really liberating.
- We started doing it in high school on a little wall we found round the back. We used to hop around on our lunch break just playing and just messing about. At that moment I thought this is fun and they look like they're having fun.
- I remember we were doing a very small jump. The distance of the jump was only about one step when you walk normally but when we first started we couldn't do it. For all we tried and for all our efforts and the amount of times we tried. We kept failing and failing. It was such fun. It was the morning after when you ached and wondered to yourself, "why do I do this?" Then you'd say, "I remember - I like this".

### **Aesthetics**

- It's the art of getting past any obstacle and difficulty. You are learning from other people. You see someone doing something and you try and imitate or try that style of movement.
- Younger participants are more concerned with the fashion based trends you get. They wear a type of trainer or wear a tracksuit with a logo or grow their hair long.
- It is the art of movement primarily. Every person has their own style and they focus on different parts of parkour and free running.
- It has taught me about the movement of the body. I've been doing it for six years and would gladly just sit and watch a cat walk across a room. They have such a wide range of movement. We're inferior to that range of movement. A cat can jump three times its height easily and you look at them and it's like why can't I do that.

- It has taught me about the way the body works, the physiology, and the biology. It's taught me how the body acts and reacts and the cause and effect of it.
- You realise the body is a fantastically tuned machine. Like any fantastically tuned machine you have to keep it oiled. You have to replace the parts. Not in the literal sense. That would be quite messy with the human body.
- I've learned about how to move. That's the most important thing is that you learn how to move. People move everyday with such a limited range of motions. They lift something, they walk, they'll run and they'll probably swim. What they completely miss is jumping; crawling, climbing, walking backwards, walking on their hands and skipping. Skipping is a fantastic way to work on your length jumps. Alright you're going to look a bit strange doing it but it's not as if we look strange doing other things.
- For me personally the most interesting thing about my parkour is my body itself.
- I've learnt so much about my body. The way my muscles work, the way they develop. The way my tendons work.
- It's made me more in touch with me physically and mentally. I'm still learning about my body. I'm still absolutely intrigued by it and what it's capable of.
- You've got the basic ways to train to understand your body and understand how to move and be able to move through areas.
- There's a goal of being able to move as the crow flies and in a straight line from one place to another without faltering because of an obstacle. I have to personally realise where my hands and feet are going and I've figured out how my body works.
- I think in some ways its individual to you. You are learning what your body can do.

### **Training**

- More people are practicing and continue to practice once they realise the deeper aspects. They identify with the physiological, mental and social side of things and the way it operates.
- Like most sports you have to have discipline, a set training system and a place that you go to and do it. There isn't any specialised equipment. All you need is a pair of trainers, gloves and a positive mentality. I do it just round my local town in Wakefield and Leeds. I found out that there were some other people that did it so I met up with them. The learning process comes from practising new moves.
- First time I tried it was following the Jump Britain documentary. I went out with a friend skateboarding previously to that. We thought it looked exciting and we went around the town and basically jumped on a wall and rail - just something small. Just to replicate what we had seen.
- I started to listen to and watch more videos and realised it was a lot more about personal training and becoming stronger and more efficient.
- I often meet up and practise with people of a similar strength level. I know they are watching what I am doing. I am pushing much harder and they are going to push even harder. That helps push everyone. It's not a competition but I want to be better than I could have been and I can see they are still going so I push harder.
- The practise of it is both an individual thing and a group thing. The development of your body and your muscles is an individual thing but you are moving and training in a group.
- Every day I would train behind the supermarket. Eventually I moved out and spread across the whole town. Suddenly I could free run.
- Throughout the country and around the world they are training in their own groups so you do get regional trends. When I went to France they were great at jumping. We were better in strength based training.

- We bought gymnastic rings to practise holding ourselves up on them. This is called the iron cross. We were drilling in a set of ten each. I said I think I will do thirty and (name omitted) said I will do fifty. The rule is that you have no option but to do fifty.
- You have to be timed to stay in one place and do the move again and again to improve balance.
- You're literally training to get from A to B using every physical movement possible and you train for every situation and every motion for every obstacle.
- It's no good forcing it. You have to want to develop your ability. You can rely on your coach for technical skills. They can help you get your feeling and perceptions right but the bulk of it is individual.
- I met up with some people from Manchester who were very experienced. They didn't know what to get me to do the first time. They told me to try the wall. They told me to limber up and start by starting small. Warming up is quite important because you will be using your muscles. If you fall and you land in an awkward position - warming up will help ensure that you don't injure yourself.
- It's really good to teach and show the different movements you can do and break it down for them. It's great when you see that they have cracked it and they incorporate their own movement as well.

### **Challenge**

- I watched a programme on channel 4 called Jump Britain as a complete novice and that night went out and just decided to do it. I know it was a very childish thing.
- First time I tried it was on a wall that was higher on one side than it was on the other. I didn't realise how high it was and I jumped over this wall and proceeding to fall longer than I expected.
- Doing it helps you find your own limits and identifies any personal barriers you might have. It helps you find your own personal way to get past that.

- Some things are only easy as you train. You always look back at the things which are easy now which weren't once.
- I am getting stronger by reaching the goals that I have set through it. It affects how you handle the challenges in life. You have increased focus and drive which is the thing I find really interesting.
- If it's something that is difficult you are going to feel good about yourself when you overcome it.
- It's the fact that you are trying to get past an obstacle and not trying to avoid it. People get more confident because they are not ignoring the fact that they are trying to get past the difficulty. It makes people think more confidently. They become more willing to solve problems rather than ignore them.
- The first day I went out in Manchester was on some of the really low walls. They were just kind of two or three feet high really and I just tried to get over them in different kind of ways. I started off with volts.
- I just tried to copy what had seen really. When I started there wasn't really anyone that I could speak to who had any experience and understanding of how to get started.
- It is used as a way of overcoming obstacles and the challenges that you face in life mentally and physically. It is a good training method and you can apply it in everyday life.
- You are just getting over obstacles to be quicker and to be more efficient rather than be slow. Some people think it's to do with flips. You will run up a wall and people will say you are crazy. You learn about what human limits are.
- I was a bit unaware of what it was about with all the tricks, jumps and things like that. I used to tell people it was like skate boarding without a skateboard. I got into it because I saw these documentaries in 2005.

- I practice it due to the confidence and the physical aspects of things. I wasn't interested in physical sports when I was at school. I was the last one chosen to join in a group. I hated it and had no interest. Parkour I really found appealing. It's not competitive and that is a really important part that I like. If you go out then you are not competing with other people. That is not what parkour is.
- I have learnt that there is a physical and mental side to parkour. The mental side is about being aware through the practice of it. On a simple level it's about balance and you do become good at climbing. These are the fundamental aspects of parkour.
- I push myself to the limit sometimes which is good for the mental side of it. If something is bothering me and scaring me I think of ways to overcome the obstacle physically. I focus on basic movements and learn how to react to situation.

### **Environment**

- You are sort of in an urban environment and jumping off rails and following over walls and things.
- It's moving around the environment with the obstacles in your way.
- It's a discipline practised through your relationship with the environment. That is one of the reasons you get regional trends. People are forced to train in different ways. People practise and try and improve things with environment they have.
- It can be done in an urban or rural landscape. People in different areas are influenced by the architecture of the environment. People who live in Newcastle have very urbanised areas. Their training has more concrete obstacles and is more rural with trees.
- People are not free to discover the city that they live in. They are clones that follow each other. They don't look up or around and are missing so much. They don't take it all in.
- It's about finding new routes to get through the environment more quickly and safely. You have to think about what facilities you have in the area. If there are loads of walls and things but no rails the balance side of things will suffer. You have other sports that use the rails like skateboarders who take up your space and flow.

Manchester would be different than Sheffield because the volts and environment would be different.

- You can see it practiced in an urban environment. There is no reason why you can't apply the skills needed to practice there to a different setting. Perhaps one that is more rural.
- It is definitely environmentally influenced. Without the environment you're not doing it.
- It protects its environment. You take a certain pride in your surroundings. We try our best not to damage anything and if we do damage something then we own up to it straight away. If we break something then we won't be able to use it again. That's a very important factor. It's not about using it and hoping that nobody else cares. It's about using it and knowing that you can go back there and use it again.
- It slowly becomes more based around getting to know yourself and your environment.
- Different landscapes call for different movements. You've got forests, you've got cityscapes and you've got more suburban areas which have fewer obstacles. It's more open ground. I think that all does really influence the way we train. The environment influences what mind set you will have and what movement you'll implement.
- You have to really learn how to adapt to environments. You train in many different environments ranging from running down the sand dunes and endurance running to climbing trees in the forest or just bolting a wall round the back of an outlet store.
- There's a little motto that says, "the obstacle comes before the movement". There's a basic movement called the Kong, which is where you go over the wall forward. You place your hands on the wall and leap forward. You can't do that on every wall the same way. Some walls are wider, some are thinner, some are taller and the area around each wall is different. So you have the basic movements but they have to be adapted to the environment.

- My balance isn't as good as it can be until I've done it on every different type of rail as long as the surrounding area is safe. I won't do it on the side of a motorway. You can walk on one square rail a couple of inches wide and be fine but that doesn't mean you can walk on something half an inch wide that's slightly rounded. You have to be trained for every environment and train in every environment that is available.
- You get regional differences because it's impossible to ignore the environment you are practising in. You are training to be good in that environment or you do not understand the real purpose of it.

### **Addiction**

- It would be impossible for me to give it up. The things that I have done through parkour. The changes it has made. I cannot stop the changes it has made in the past.
- No I could not give it up. I have achieved so many things from it and even if I stopped it physically then mentally I could not give it up. I can't think of my life without it.
- Obviously I could live without it. But my mind set would mean that I would be walking down the street and I would think I could run up that wall. You can literally just think it walking down the street and I do.
- No I couldn't live without it. I need to eat and sleep and once you have it in your blood it will always stay there. You might be walking down the street and there is a rail there on your right hand side and instead of walking around the normal way you go over the rail.
- I found it to be something different and I got addicted. I wouldn't want to live without it. Obviously now I am earning a living from it so I can't get away from it really.
- You can't get away from what you have learnt. You can't just stop it and lose all the mental stuff you have learnt. I will always find a situation when I can use it.
- There is no way of getting away from it even if you put a ban on it. You could never take away what I have learnt.

- God it motivates you. It does something to you. You hear about Jams, a meeting of people and you want to go so much. Even if you can't - you spend your entire day in work thinking to yourself, "why don't I quit this job and just go free run with them". It's so motivating to know there are so many people who have as much passion as you.
- I often think to myself what if I break a leg or really hurt myself. It has become such a way of life for me, that it's imagining somebody there for the whole of your life and suddenly there not.
- It's no longer what I do it's who I am. Even if I was physically incapable, mentally I've learnt so much about the way I move and the way I think. I could lose an arm or a leg and I'd just learn to adapt. I'd learn to train without my leg. It's like I said it's who I am.
- I couldn't give it up. It's something I could not choose to stop one day. It's not even a thought that crosses my mind.
- It's become a part of my life. It's become my life. It is me and my life. I don't know what I would be if I stopped. I feel like I'd be an empty shell sitting in a room staring at an Xbox or something. Like some sort of robot. I wouldn't be alive. It's the blood in my veins. It's me. I couldn't give up. No matter how much a person or the circumstance demanded it I wouldn't give up.

### **Philosophy**

- It's not just for fun. It's a sport and a discipline. It's comparative to martial arts really.
- It has its philosophical side and it expands your mind when you are training.
- It is a physical discipline but there is also a philosophical side to it as well.
- There is a phrase that we use in parkour, "be strong to be useful".
- What people don't see is the mental aspect.
- Parkour originates from something called Method Unnatural which was coined by a French guy called Georges Hebert.

- You hear about people who had drug problems and violence problems and suddenly they took up free running and everything disappeared.
- We went to France recently which is where free running began. We came back with a philosophy of having to do any jump you do three times. The first time is easy because you don't think about it. The second time is a little bit harder and you're thinking a little bit more about your technique. The third time is the hardest because you've done it so many times you're wondering maybe this is the time you'll hurt yourself.
- The philosophical side of parkour is really helpful to some people. You can train your body and train your mind. You can apply that to other parts of your life. You think how you did it and you can save that and use it in your life.
- It's being able to be physically ready but mentally and socially able for any situation. It's almost like all over life training for me.
- We didn't understand the philosophy at that stage. We only understood small things about our capabilities. Then there is the experience of being able to help others as well by passing on the knowledge you have. It's an on-going learning process that keeps the drive to keep practising it.
- Every practitioner has the same mentality created through the practise of it.

### **Social**

- The only reason it is what it is today is because the people of Lisses allowed it to be so. If the people of Lisses in France had said no to the boys jumping around - if they'd quashed that desire, parkour and free running would not be here.
- As far as I know only one place has banned free running with the threat of an asbo and that's Morton in Liverpool. You will never see in the majority of the country a sign that says you can't do parkour. There are signs that say you can't skateboard or ride your bike but not something that says you can't do parkour. If somebody asks us to move from a particular place there is zero argument. We say we're very sorry and we leave.

- I've seen a lot of different social responses from people on the street. There was an elderly lady in the centre of Southport who approached and said, "I love what you do, I love to sit down and watch you guys jumping around, it's absolutely fantastic". It's nice that there are people that really respect what we do in the community. It means we do have hope to build on something positive rather than get an automatic look down look on everything.
- We've actually had it quite a few times where people come out and acknowledge that we are doing parkour and offer us drinks. They allow us to train and if they want us to move - no problem. It's that level of respect. We show respect to them about respecting their environment and respecting their property. They show respect to us. It's basic human nature.
- We were training one day and someone walked past and said, "at your age you should know better". There's a lot of different looks on what we do. I think some people might associate jumping around on walls with hooligans and stuff like that.
- The police can move you on which means you can't train as much. There are skateboard groups who might be arrogant and the police might think that we are the same. Sometimes the police have said that they have had a bad experience with them. We try to build good relationships under the circumstances.
- Security guards are funnier about it. They will mention health, safety and insurance issues. Their response to you is predetermined before they talk to you. They will come out and say move on.
- I do believe it's the social aspect that makes parkour so appealing with so many like-minded people all striving for one goal - to be the best they can be. As long as we have the good respect of the community parkour will carry on.
- We went to the birth place of parkour in France and met traceurs from all over the world. There were people from Finland, America and France. The second you meet these people it's like you've known them your entire life. Everyone is so happy to see you and wants to teach you things that they've learnt. You teach them things you've learnt and spread your knowledge around. It's a fantastic feeling. It's absolutely beautiful.

- There's a language that's developed between everyone. It isn't even English. You'll meet somewhere and there's three or four walls and you'll see someone and say, "ah, wush, tik, fump, ahdadat, nice". Everyone will know what you mean. It's truly fantastic.
- It is not a teenage sport. If there are a lot of people out doing it they help each other. They pull each other up walls and work as team or a group.
- When I started, I was physically and socially incapable really. I had no social life and no strength. Even in school in the little groups we were in I would be the quite one who stood there listening to everyone else. Parkour really brought me out of my shell. I'm know where near the person I was six years ago. I wouldn't have said boo to the ghost of a fly. I was that shy.
- Parkour has taught me to be outward and live life and given me a great sense of individuality. Everyone has their own individual path and some individuals rise to the limelight. Whilst at the same time we are a community. It isn't just between three people or thirty people. It's thirty nations or more and people from all over the world.
- The social networking sites on the internet connect the community around the world. Here people post tutorials and videos to keep everybody up-to-date. I personally learnt about the social aspects of parkour and free running in this way. I would look at the pictures and read the paragraph associated with it and figure it out.
- There are different communities in the UK. Each city has its own community that train in their own way. It's a real social thing. Those who do parkour have their own mind set. They live a sort of same life style.
- The first time I came into parkour I expected to see everyone on the roof tops. Looking at stair cases and climbing the stairs and I couldn't find anyone. I found out that it's not what I thought it was.
- I thought there were going to be loads of kids and I was apprehensive about it. When I discovered they were all a similar age I felt at ease.
- The female community is still small compared to the male community. It is definitely growing. We are trying to encourage that in our home town ourselves.

### **Thrill Seeking**

- I think it's for the adrenaline.
- I was thinking about showing off. Thinking I could do anything. I understand people who want to do it for the risk and I can understand that feeling of adrenaline.
- I think I've filled myself up with so much adrenalin that I'm constantly on adrenalin now and it doesn't affect me anymore. It's like when you have a lot of coffee eventually you become immune to the effects of it. You do this massive jump and you would be shaking afterwards. You land and notice that your footing was off and want to do it again. It's the perfection that you go for.
- I don't really go just to get a thrill.
- You don't need to physically go looking for the thrills. They are there in any kind of movement that you are doing.

### **Spirituality**

- You get the people who do it for the mind and body.
- The motivation for it was born out of doing it. The inspiration came out of me going around and jumping around. It was very spiritual in nature.
- It was like people who climb to the top of a mountain and look over the scenery and they realise something that's always been there but they've never seen it. It was like that and suddenly I could look at myself from a distance and realised that I had changed. That was definitely my inspiration.
- I think the most important thing going back to the spirituality of it is that it has taught me how to mentally cope.
- People who practise parkour tend to be people with a very deep outlook on life who are looking for something more.
- It's more mental for me and more spiritual. I figured out that I can be what I want to be.

- It's a sort of matrix type of thing. Everyone's got their own personal path they take. It was a great place to be spiritually.
- More people are practising and continue to practise once they realise the deeper aspects. They identify with the physiological, mental and social side of things and the way it operates.

### **Perception**

- Parkour changes your perspective of the given environment. You will see an area where there is wall and a rail. As you practise more then you will see it like a vault or ascertain a type of jump and a potential movement. You see it in a strange way and then you see it in another way even if you are practicing for years.
- People just go along with the norm. People will choose to walk around the rail even if it takes one second to go over it. For some reason they have some preconceived perception of how things should be and rationalise everything.
- It was shortening the distance but also in your mind.
- It was a very big thing for me to suddenly have that moment of realisation when everything shortens everything becomes a lot smaller.
- If you're doing a presentation in front of a group and you think to yourself alright this is a scary situation. Then it jumps into your head all of a sudden that this is nowhere near as scary as doing that eleven foot jump you did yesterday. There isn't any death involved in this. There isn't any possibility of breaking limbs. It teaches you to fight your fears in every way possible.
- There's a thing we call, PK Vision. PK is short for parkour. It's when you look at something and an area and you think to yourself without any effort, "I go over this to there, up that and along this, down there and through there, under that and around that little thing and then I'm there". Or someone else looking will say, "okay, I'll go up this bit, around there and round there". Everyone finds their different way.

- Even if you are not physically practising the volts you would just practise it in your mind. You will be thinking how your body is going to move or volt over something really high. I am always trying to find something that my body can do another way or to move more efficiently.

### **5.7 Validation**

The detailed participant accounts had to be proven credible and trustworthy to maintain balance between phenomenological description and insightful interpretation (Willig, 2008). Designated participants were asked to re-examine extracted essences of the phenomenon in the form of a statement. The essences were extracted from descriptive sections of the core themes that were produced. Those selected confirmed that the statement accurately captured the essence of the phenomenon being studied (Willig, 2008).

### **Statement**

It's a way of movement primarily. A training system used to get past physical obstacles. It's the art of getting past any obstacle and difficulty. You see someone doing something and you try and imitate it or try that style of movement. It is about developing yourself and how to progress by becoming stronger, jumping further and running a bit faster. As you learn one movement you then think I can do this one as well. You are pushing yourself to a higher level of movement. It is on-going. You might want to get over a wall that is six foot tall. That is one aspect. It's also about overcoming other obstacles that are more mental based. Normally you need to get past obstacles in your life. It is a kind of mind-set. You can train under your own motivation without external influences. I think in order for true progression to happen it has to be an individual thing. You can be the only person in the crowd of a hundred people but you're the only person breaking through your own barriers. It helps you fight your barriers both physical and mental. It does that more than any other sport because it's so varied.

It's definitely a social thing but it's the individual aspects that provide the progression. I've learnt about my own limits; physically and mentally. I've also learnt how to push them and give myself a greater physical and mental strength. Both individual and social training play an important part in the traceur's progression. I've really found myself doing things that back then I would have called impossible. Now here I am doing them and it's fantastic and I love it. One of the key things I've definitely learnt is confidence. Every time you get past an obstacle you get a sense of success. This success makes you become freer and means you can do anything you want to do. It helps you realise that you can find freedom without obstacles limiting you. I've learnt how to express myself and not to listen to other people's perceptions. It just feels good I guess. It's a release of stress and you don't think of anything else while you're doing it. You express yourself through movement. It is something about personal freedom. It is something that can free you from this nothing. It allows you to become children and to act as the super hero. I fell in love with it because I felt like I was six again. It is fantastic just running along walls. I love it to bits climbing on everything we can see for no particular reason. It's great getting weird looks off people. It's the escapism of it. It's very expressionist. It's a stress relief.

You jump around and in biological terms you have dopamine and serotonin released into your blood. It's pain relieving – a kind of morphine in a sense. You become very docile and become happy. We would jump around the entire town and find things we never thought were important like a rail and a wall or a very weird combination of grass and gravel. Parking lines become the start and end. You jump from one line to the other instead of something slotting nicely in between them. You were forging your own path. I would start focusing on what I was doing and everything else would disappear. I could do what I wanted. I didn't have to worry and that was fantastic. It provided not just a way out but eventually a solution and it's allowed me to become me.

I work out more than before and have increased my physical fitness. I used to eat lots of poor food but now I try and feel healthy about myself. It's the best way I have found to keep fit and healthy. Risk is always going to be part of it. It's a boundary of definitely knowing what you can do and what you can't do. It's daunting trying something new. You have to be quite brave to do this. It helps if you have other people around you. I wasn't searching for the risk anymore I was searching for deleting the risk. It's about deleting the risk in order to have the best possible outcome. I like there to be a bit of risk involved and prefer an adrenalin kick every so often. You have to know when you're with a group whether to say yes I can do this or no I can't. It's fun sometimes when there's that danger. You realise that it was a bit close but are out alive. It's more about overcoming it. We don't jump around buildings for fun because that's very risky and unsafe.

It's important that you enjoy what you are doing. There is no point in restricting yourself to something that will be boring and you are not going to stick with. A runner called Sebastian Foucan is one of the original traceurs in France. He said when you are with other people you gain a different kind of confidence. The jump is there and bang you do the job. It's wonderful. Everybody cheers you on. It doesn't have to be about conditioning and training yourself. It can be fun, it can be really, really liberating. Younger practitioners are more concerned with the fashion based trends you get. They wear a type of trainer or wear a tracksuit with a logo or grow their hair long. Every person has their own style and they focus on different parts of it. It has taught me about the way the body works; the physiology and the biology.

It's taught me how the body acts and reacts and the cause and effect of it. I would gladly just sit and watch a cat walk across a room. They have such a wide range of movement. We're inferior to that range of movement. A cat can jump three times its height easily. The most important thing is that you learn how to move. You've got the basic way to train to understand your body and understand how to move and be able to move through areas. There's a goal of being able to move as the crow flies in a straight line. To go from here to there without faltering because of an obstacle. People move everyday with such a limited range of motions.

Like most sports you have to have discipline and a set training system. You need a place to do it. There isn't any specialised equipment. All you need is a pair of trainers, gloves and a positive mentality. The learning process comes from practising new moves. The practise of it is both an individual thing and a group thing. The development of your body and your muscles is an individual thing but you are moving and training in a group. It's no good forcing it. You have to want to develop your own ability. A traceur who practises has to be able to think on his feet even when his feet are busy. You can rely on your coach for technical skills. They can help you get your feeling and perceptions right but the bulk of it is individual. There's a little motto that says, "the obstacle comes before the movement". Most of the discipline is based on getting around the environment. Navigating around it, through it and so on. You've got forests, you've got cityscapes and you've got more suburban areas which have fewer obstacles. Running through a city is absolutely nothing like running through a forest. Running through a forest is nothing like running across open ground. Different landscapes call for different movements like running down the sand dunes and endurance running to climbing trees in the forest or just bolting a wall round the back of an outlet store. I think that all does really influence the way we train.

The environment influences what mind set you will have and what movement you'll implement. It protects its environment. You take a certain pride in your surroundings. We try our best not to damage anything. It's about using it and knowing that you can go back there and use it again. Without the environment you're not doing it. It slowly becomes based around getting to know yourself and your environment.

Doing it helps you find your own limits and identifies any personal barriers you might have. It helps you find your own personal way to get past that. Some things are only easy as you train. You always look back at the things which are easy now which weren't once. It's the fact that you are trying to get past an obstacle and not trying to avoid it. It makes people think more confidently. They become more willing to solve problems rather than ignore them. You are just getting over obstacles to be quicker. To be more efficient rather than be slow. Some people think it's to do with flips. You will run up a wall and people will say you are crazy. You learn about what human limits are. It's not competitive. You are not competing with other people. If something is bothering me and scaring me I think how I can overcome the obstacle physically. I focus on basic movements and learn how to react to situation.

There's a thing we call, PK Vision. PK is short for parkour. It's when you look at something and an area and you think to yourself, "I go over this to there, up that and along this, down there and through there, under that and around that little thing and then I'm there". Or someone else looking will say, "okay, I'll go up this bit around there and round there". Everyone finds their different way. Even if you are not physically practising the volts you would just practise it in your mind. You will be thinking how your body is going to move or volt over something really high. I am always trying to find something that my body can do another way or to move more efficiently. It changes your perspective of the given environment and expands your mind when you are training. You will see an area where there is wall and a rail and as you practise more you will start to see it like a volt or ascertain a type of jump and a potential movement. You see it in a strange way and then you see it in another way even if you have been practicing for years. The philosophical side of it is really helpful to some people. You can train your body and train your mind. You can apply that to other parts of your life.

You think how you did it and you can save that and use it in your life. It's being able to be physically ready but mentally and socially able for any situation. It's almost like all over life training. It's not just for fun. It's a sport and a discipline. It's comparative to martial arts really.

You hear about people who had drug problems and violence problems and suddenly they took up free running and everything disappeared. It's an on-going learning process that keeps the drive to keep practicing it. Every practitioner has the same mentality created through the practice of it.

You don't need to physically go looking for the thrills. They are there in any kind of movement that you are doing. You do this massive jump and you would be shaking afterwards. You land and you say my footing was off I'm going to do it again. It's that perfection that you've got to go for. I don't really go just to get a thrill. The motivation for it was born out of doing it. The inspiration came out of me going around and jumping around. It was very spiritual in nature. It was like people who climb to the top of a mountain. They look over the scenery and realise something that's always been there but they've never seen it. It was like that. Suddenly I could look at myself from a distance and realise that I had changed. That was definitely my inspiration. People who practise it tend to be people with a very deep outlook on life who are looking for something more. It's more mental for me more spiritual. More people practise and continue to practise once they realise the deeper aspects. They identify with the physiological, mental and social side of things and the way it operates.

I've seen a lot of different social responses from different people on the street. As far as I know only one place has banned free running with the threat of an asbo and that's Morton in Liverpool. You will never see in the majority of the country a sign that says you can't do it. If somebody asks us to move from a particular place there is zero argument. We say we're very sorry and we leave. We've actually had it quite a few times where people come out and acknowledge that we are doing it and offer us drinks. It's that level of respect. We show respect to them about respecting their environment and respecting their property. They show respect to us. It's basic human nature. We went to France, to Lisses the birth place of parkour. We met traceurs from all over the world. There were people from Finland, America and France.

The second you meet these people it's like you've known them your entire life. Everyone is so happy to see you and wants to teach you things that they've learnt. You teach them things you've learnt and spread your knowledge around. It's a fantastic feeling. It's absolutely beautiful. There's a language that's developed between everyone. It isn't even English. You'll meet somewhere and there's three or four walls and you'll see someone and say, "ah, wush, tic, frump, ah ha, nice". Everyone will know what you mean. It's truly fantastic. We're all a part of one giant community. The social networking sites on the internet connect the community around the world. Here people post tutorials and videos to keep everybody up-to-date. There are different communities in the UK. Each city has its own community that train in their own way. It's a real social thing. We haven't had any serious problems with the police. They sometimes come up to us and say, "what are you doing lads"? We explain and they say, "okay carry on". Security guards are funnier about it. They will mention health, safety and insurance issues. Their response to you is predetermined before they even talk to you. They will come out and say, "move on".

You can't get away from what you have learnt. You can't just stop it and lose all the mental stuff you have learnt. God it motivates you. It does something to you. You hear about Jams, a meeting of people and you want to go so much. It's so motivating to know there are so many people who have as much passion as you. I need to eat and sleep and once you have it in your blood it will always stay there. You might be walking down the street and there is a rail on your right hand side and instead of walking around the normal way you go over the rail. It's no longer what I do it's who I am. Mentally I've learnt so much about the way I move and the way I think. I could lose an arm or a leg and I'd just learn to adapt. I'd learn to train without my leg. It's like I said it's who I am. It's become a part of my life. It's become my life. It is me and my life. I don't know what I would be if I stopped. I feel like I'd be an empty shell sitting in a room staring at an Xbox or something. Like some sort of robot. I wouldn't be alive. It's the blood in my veins. It's me. I couldn't give up. No matter how much a person or the circumstance demanded it I wouldn't give up.

**Summary**

Thematic analysis resulted in participant D having ten themes, participant E with eleven themes, participant F having six themes, participant G having twelve themes and participant H with eleven themes.

**Figure 5.13:** *Participant Themes*

<b>Participant D: 10 Themes</b>	<b>Participant E: 11 Themes</b>	<b>Participant F: 6 Themes</b>
Training	Training	Challenge
Challenge	Mastery	Being in the present
Enjoyment	Health, fitness and wellbeing	Social
Mastery	Philosophical	Mastery
Aesthetics	Aesthetics	Environment
Health, fitness and wellbeing	Being in the present	Addiction
Being in the present	Enjoyment	
Addiction	Challenge	
Environment	Social	
Risk	Environment	
	Addiction	
<b>Participant G: 12 Themes</b>	<b>Participant H: 11 Themes</b>	
Training	Training	
Challenge	Mastery	
Enjoyment	Health, fitness and wellbeing	
Mastery	Philosophical	
Aesthetics	Aesthetics	
Health, fitness and wellbeing	Being in the present	
Being in the present	Challenge	
Addiction	Social	
Environment	Environment	
Social	Addiction	
Spirituality	Perception	
Thrill Seeking		

Figure 5.14: *Number of Participants Attributed To Each Theme*

<b>Themes</b>	<b>No of Participants</b>
Challenge	8
Mastery	8
Being in the present	8
Environment	8
Addiction	8
Training	7
Aesthetics	7
Society	7
Enjoyment	6
Health, fitness and wellbeing	5
Perception	3
Philosophy	3
Spiritual	3
Risk	3
Thrill Seeking	2

**Total Participants: 8**

**Total Themes: 15**

## CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

### Overview

Having produced the required themes from the rich data that was retrieved from the participants it is necessary to provide an explanation on the implications of the findings (Willig, 2008). This chapter is concerned with the relevance of the themes that were produced and in particular how they illuminate the phenomenon under investigation.

### 6.1 Themes

Each theme is explained in relation to parkour and free running and how the theme provides insight into the psychological and sociological reasons for their emergence (Willig, 2008).

#### 6.1.1 Social

The participants explained that parkour and free running wasn't just between three people or thirty people but between thirty nations or more and people from all over the world. They said that everyone had their own individual path and some rose to the limelight but they we're all a part of one global community (Atkinson, 2009). The participants commented that parkour was not a teenage sport and that within the community participants helped one another (O'Grady, 2012). They mentioned that the subculture had its own mindset and its members adhered to a communal lifestyle (Atkinson, 2009).

Some of the participants said that they started in January 2005 after seeing the television programme Jump Britain on television. Some of them had travelled to Lisses in France, to visit the birth place of parkour and to meet traceurs (parkour participants) from all over the world. They mentioned that there were people from Finland, America and France and that the second they met these people it felt like they had known them all their lives (O'Grady, 2012). They observed that the people were very happy to see them and wanted to teach them new moves. They reciprocated this behaviour by teaching them the things that they had learnt in England and the parkour knowledge was spread between everybody in this way.

It was discovered that there existed a language that had developed between everyone within the subculture that wasn't even English. Only those within the parkour community understood its meaning (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). The participants explained that they were proud to be part of a global community that was connected by the social networking sites on the internet. It was discovered that traceurs posted tutorials and videos onto the internet to keep everybody up-to-date (O'Grady, 2012). The participants explained that there were different parkour communities throughout the UK that each had their own way of training. The participants said that they felt that the social element was an important part of the parkour phenomenon with many other like-minded people all striving to better themselves (Atkinson, 2009).

Some of the participants asserted that parkour had given them a social life and in some cases a love life. The participants explained that the female parkour community was small but growing. The participants stated that parkour had taught them to be outward and live life. They explained that participation had given them a great sense of individuality whilst at the same time provided a subcultural community that they were proud to be part of (O'Grady, 2012). A participant said that parkour really brought him out of his shell and that he had completely changed from the person he was six years ago (Wheaton, 2000).

### **6.1.2 Environment**

The environment relates to the conditions that need to be met for the experience of parkour or free running to be possible or at least fully appreciated (Mould, 2009). The quality of the environment was a contributing factor towards the resulting quality of the experience. The weather and social conditions such as the presence of other people were an important factor (Celsi *et al.*, 1993). The need for space and independence was a necessary component of the activity. The presence of others had the potential to impinge on the experience and spoil the required ambience (Ameel and Tani, 2011).

It was discovered that most of the activities were based on navigating through and around the environment and that the environment influenced the way they trained (O’Grady, 2012). The participants mentioned that parkour and free running can be practised in forests, in the city and in suburban areas that have fewer obstacles. It was discovered that running through a city requires a set of skills that are different from the skills needed to run through a forest or open ground (Ameel and Tani, 2011). They contrasted running down sand dunes and endurance running with the need for agility and dexterity skills when climbing trees in the forest. They explained that the environment influenced their mind set and the movement to be implemented (O’Grady, 2012).

It was discovered that the participants were keen to protect the environment in which they practised and maintained pride in their surroundings. They asserted that they did their utmost to not damage anything because after using it they would want to go back there and use it again. The participants said that the practise of parkour and free running gradually becomes an activity based on knowing the environment on an intimate level (Ameel and Tani, 2011).

### **6.1.3 Training**

The participants mentioned that parkour and free running were disciplines that had set training systems. They explained that all that was required was a place to do it, a pair of trainers and a positive mentality (Atkinson, 2009). The participants stated that there were coach’s who could provide assistance with the development of technical skills, feelings and perceptions but were adamant that the bulk of training was an individual concern (Bavinton, 2007). They asserted that training develops understanding on how the body moves through different areas. The participants mentioned a goal of being able to move as the crow flies and in a straight line. They said that the objective is to travel from one place to another without faltering because of an obstacle (Geyh, 2006).

The participants explained that the learning process for parkour came from practising new moves and the ongoing learning process was the drive to keep practising it (O’Grady, 2012). They commented that they were timed to stay in one place and that they would do a move again and again. They explained that they would practise in their own space and practise a jump repeatedly (Bavinton, 2007). It was established that practising parkour moves could not be forced and that participants had to want to develop their individual skills and ability.

The participants stated that training involved helping others and passing on knowledge to them that they had acquired which involved watching parkour and free running videos. Participants often trained in pairs with people of a similar strength level to push themselves as much as possible. They explained that training was not competitive but a way to stretch individual capabilities (O’Grady, 2012). They observed that the development of the body and muscles was an individual thing but were moving and training in a group. They mentioned that the training of the body and mind in parkour can be applied to other parts of their lives. They said that training enables a participant to be physically, mentally and socially able for any situation (Bavinton, 2007).

### **6.1.4 Challenge**

It was discovered that participants view parkour and free running as a chance to stretch themselves both physically and mentally (Willig, 2008). It was the challenge of overcoming a basic fear, like jumping off a high wall. It was a complex process of learning, from initiation to mastering the sports and the ongoing process of learning the associated manoeuvres (Larkin and Griffiths, 2004). Engaging in parkour and free running helped participants to overcome longstanding fears and challenged individual limitations. The participants developed new skills that created a sense of achievement that produced feelings of satisfaction and pride (Larkin and Griffiths, 2004).

They commented that the practice of parkour and free running was both an individual and a group activity (O’Grady, 2012). They explained that the development of the body and muscles was an individual thing but moving through the landscape and training was a group activity. They asserted that it was important not to force progression and that there had to be a desire to develop personal ability. They mentioned a need to be able to think on your feet even when the feet were busy.

The participants expressed the belief that participation helped to identify individual limits and personal barriers and that committed training increased skill levels so that they could be overcome (O’Grady, 2012). They said that a key challenge was striving to get past an obstacle and not to avoid it and to be more willing to solve problems rather than ignore them. They stated that on a physical level participation is concerned with getting over obstacles to be quicker and to be as efficient as possible. The participants explained that it is about learning what human limits are (Le Breton, 2000). They asserted that it is not competitive because you are not competing with other people. The participants stated that if something was bothering them mentally or scaring them they would think about how to overcome the obstacle physically. They explained that they would mentally focus on the basic movements and think about how to react positively to the situation.

### **6.1.5 Thrill Seeking**

It was discovered that participants did not need to physically go looking for the thrills as they were there in any kind of movement that they were doing (Puchan, 2005). They stated that after doing a large jump they would be shaking afterwards. They mentioned that after landing they would analyse the jump and if their footing was off they would do it again. They said that they were seeking the perfect jump (Celsi *et al.*, 1993). The participants explained the motivation was born out of doing it and the inspiration came from the thrill of doing the jumps. The participants commented that initially people want to get involved because of the risk and the adrenaline it produced when the risk was overcome (Celsi *et al.*, 1993).

They explained that over time they became used to the adrenaline and that thrill seeking became a less important part of the experience.

### **6.1.6 Mastery**

It was discovered that the manoeuvres participants performed required specialist skill and knowledge that was gained through training (Willig, 2008). Progression and the acquisition of skill levels as the participant gained in experience was an important part of the activity. It was established that these skills acted as identifiers of ability in relation to their peers (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). Skill appeared to be internal where a sense of achievement was assessed according to personal progress. It was discovered that as the participant became competent in one movement they quickly developed the belief that they could do another one as well. They pushed themselves to a higher level of movement and this process was ongoing (Willig, 2008).

They explained that participation involved overcoming both physical and mental challenges and they associated this personal development with getting past obstacles in their everyday life (O'Grady, 2012). It was discovered that participation provided insight into personal physical and mental limitations and how to stretch them to their full potential. This was identified as being a particular mindset (Saville, 2008). The participants identified with doing things now that they would have considered impossible in the past. Confidence was found to be a pleasurable outcome of attaining set goals by overcoming both physical and mental obstacles (O'Grady, 2012).

### **6.1.7 Enjoyment**

It was discovered that participation in parkour and free running was a way to access feelings that were unobtainable in everyday activities (Willig, 2008). The participants frequently talked about becoming childlike in their behaviour and made references to super heroes.

They mentioned the escapism element and that they loved running along walls for no particular reason (Ameel and Tani, 2011). They said that they would jump around the entire town and over things like a rail, a wall or a very weird combination of grass and gravel. They explained that parking lines would become the start and end and that they would jump from one line to the other. They said that they were forging their own path (Ameel and Tani, 2011). The participants stated that you do the jump and when you are successful it's wonderful. They often mentioned that it wasn't just about individual conditioning and training but that it was a fun and truly liberating activity to be involved with (Ameel and Tani, 2011).

### **6.1.8 Risk**

It was discovered that the possibility of injury, being arrested or even dying contributed to the experience of participation (Koerner, 1997). It was discovered that risk was a large part of the experience and that it was important that the participants knew their boundaries of what they could and couldn't do (Le Breton, 2000). They were aware of the daunting aspects of participation and that they had to be brave to participate. It was discovered that having other participants around generally aided the risk situation. They explained that sometimes the risk increased when in a group because of a need to be clear with the group as to whether it was possible to do the jump or not. They asserted that often danger made the experience more enjoyable because they realised that it was a risky situation but managed to get out of it alive (Koerner, 1997).

The participants explained that the search for risk was soon replaced with a need to delete the risk to ensure the best possible outcome. It was discovered that it was necessary for risk to be present to produce the required adrenalin kicks (Willig, 2008). The participants stated that they adopted a safe approach whilst practising. For example, they mentioned that they didn't jump around buildings for fun because that would be very risky and unsafe.

They asserted that the element of risk prevented the activity from becoming boring and helped ensure that the participants remained committed (Wheaton and Beal, 2003).

### **6.1.9 Being in the Present**

Le Breton (2000), Celsi *et al.* (1993) and Csikszentmihalyi, (1975) suggest that flow has a significant influence on a participant's decision to commit to an extreme sport. Their research demonstrates that "being in the present" provides a unique sense of release from everyday worries and produces feelings of liberation. The participants explained that they considered the experience of participation as enjoyable yet very necessary. Ultimately it provided them with a creative way of managing emotional wellbeing (Le Breton, 2000).

It was discovered that taking part on a regular basis was experienced as being therapeutic (Willig, 2008). Successfully overcoming physical and mental obstacles provided the participants with a sense of freedom without limitations. When in this state they believed that they were fully expressing themselves and not concerned with other people's perceptions. They explained that these pleasurable feelings were a form of stress relief and that they didn't think of anything else whilst doing it (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). It was discovered that the participants expressed themselves through movement and that this sense of personal freedom was an important aspect of the activity (Atkinson, 2009).

They mentioned that jumping around and practising moves produced dopamine and serotonin which was released into their blood. They commented that this sensation was a form of pain relief that was similar to morphine that made them become docile and happy (Le Breton, 2000). They stated that focusing intensely on what they were doing meant that everything else disappeared and that they could do what they wanted without worrying (Celsi *et al.*, 1993). It was discovered that participation provided a way out and a solution to problems so that they could become the person they wanted to be.

### **6.1.10 Aesthetics**

It was discovered that participation was the art of movement and a training system used to get past physical and mental obstacles (Atkinson, 2009). The younger participants were concerned with the fashion based trends and tended to wear a particular type of trainer, a tracksuit with a logo and often had long hair (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). It was discovered that this element was of less concern to the older participants. It was mentioned that every participant had their own style and focused on parts of the activity that were of interest to them (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). The participants would see a traceur doing something and they would try and imitate that style of movement.

The participants said that the activities had taught them about the physiology and biology of the human body. They explained that participation had made them aware of how the body acts and reacts to complex situations (Haapala, 2005). Some of the participants compared their range of movement to that of a cat. They proclaimed that the cat had an astonishing range of movement and that it could jump three times its own height. They asserted that they were very much inferior to the cat's range of dexterity. They also observed that people conduct everyday activities with a limited range of motions (Ortuzar, 2009).

### **6.1.11 Health and Fitness**

It was discovered that participation was about personal development and a need to be stronger, jump further and to run as fast as possible (O'Grady, 2012). It was established that participation increased physical fitness and that participants worked out more in the gym to keep physically fit. The participants also became more aware of their diet and a need to eat healthy foods (O'Grady, 2012). Theories of health behaviour within the health psychology domain suggest that good health is a globally shared desire and that people are motivated by the pursuit of health and longevity.

### 6.1.12 Perception

The participants explained that when they were not physically practicing the volts they practiced them in their mind. They described a mental process called, PK Vision. PK was short for parkour and is when they look at area and mentally process the moves they will undertake to transverse the terrain (Saville, 2008). For example, they contemplate how the body is going to react when they volt over something high (Ameel and Tani, 2011).

They stated that they continually strive to stretch their physical and mental capabilities to be as efficient as possible in the environment that they are practising. The participants explained that this involved changing their perspective of the given environment (Atkinson, 2009). For example, they commented that their perception of an area that had a wall and a rail changed the more they practised in that area. They said that in their mind they ascertain a particular volt, jump and potential movement very quickly (Lam, 2005). They commented that they would physically shorten the distance to be covered to be as efficient as possible but also shorten the distance in the mind to increase confidence. They explained that they were aware of a moment of realisation when everything shortens in the mind and the moves they need to perform become clear (Saville, 2008).

They commented that they were always trying to find something new that the body could do to maximise the efficiency of movement (Ameel and Tani, 2011). They suggested that most people conform to set norms in the urban environment and choose to walk along the footpath rail in the designated way, even if it takes just seconds to go over it. The participants protested at the preconceived perceptions that people held on how things should function in the city and that everything was rationalised according to pre-arranged authoritarian patterns (Ortuzar, 2009).

### **6.1.13 Spirituality**

The participants mentioned that participation was very spiritual in nature (Atkinson, 2009). That it was like people who climb to the top of a mountain and look over the scenery and realise something that's always been there but they've never seen it. They stated that all of a sudden they could look at themselves from a distance and realise that they had changed (Atkinson, 2009). They explained that this was very inspirational.

They commented that people who practise parkour tend to be people with a very deep outlook on life who are looking for something more (Haapala, 2005). They mentioned that participation was more mental and had spiritual meaning. They explained that more people practise and continue to practise once they realise the deeper aspects. They identified the deeper aspects of the parkour phenomenon as being the physiological, mental and social elements of the way it operates (Atkinson, 2009). The participants commented that people participated for the mind and body benefits and that the inspiration emerged from the simplicity of being involved and doing the jumps. The participants explained that on a spiritual level parkour had taught them to mentally cope and that they could be what they wanted (Atkinson, 2009). The participants emphasised the point that it was a great place to be spiritually.

### **6.1.14 Philosophy**

It was discovered that participants had developed similar mentalities and values through the practice of parkour (O'Grady, 2012). They often referred to the phrase, "be strong to be useful" when describing its philosophy. They explained that it originated from something called, Method Unnatural which was coined by a French physical educator called, Georges Hebert (Atkinson, 2009). The participants were fully aware of parkours origins and frequently mentioned its founders, David Belle and Sebastian Foucan (Atkinson, 2009). They regularly referred to some of their personal quotes when describing the philosophy of the activity.

The participants were aware of people who had drug problems and violence problems that disappeared once they started to free run and practise parkour. The participants explained that an understanding of the philosophical side of parkour helped to train the body and mind (Atkinson, 2009). They purposively recalled occasions when they successfully overcame a difficulty in parkour so that they could apply that philosophy to other areas of their lives (Atkinson, 2009).

The participants said that they went to France to meet other participants and came back with a philosophy of having to do any jump three times (Atkinson, 2009). They explained that the first time is easy because they don't think about it. The second time is harder because they are thinking about technique. The third time is the hardest because they have done it so many times and become concerned that this is the time they will hurt themselves. They stated that parkour was a form of life training that had enabled them to be physically, mentally and socially prepared for any situation. They expressed the belief that it was not just for fun but a sport and discipline comparative to martial arts (O'Grady, 2012).

### **6.1.15 Addiction**

It was discovered that parkour and free running was something that participants were unable to do without (Willig, 2008). Participation was considered vital for generating positive energy and had functional properties in that it was able to resolve complex personal difficulties (Willig, 2008). Being unable to participate caused unpleasant emotional states. Some participants explained that they would probably resort to sitting in front of an Xbox all day to manage their emotional needs (Willig, 2008).

The participants commented that they could not just suddenly stop participating because of the physical and mental skills they had acquired. They stated that Jams and meeting like minded people was very motivating (O'Grady, 2012). They commented that once parkour was in their blood it would always stay there. They were insistent that it was no longer what they did but defined who they were.

They said that they could lose an arm or a leg and would still continue to participate (Le Breton, 2000). They explained that they would adapt and learn to train without a leg or an arm. They asserted that they did not know what they would be if they stopped and said that regardless of whatever circumstances demanded they would not give up (Le Breton, 2000).

### **6.1.16 Comparing and Contrasting Themes**

The above themes provide a complete account of the quality, arrangement and essence of parkour and free running. Comparing and contrasting them with the body of knowledge in the literature on parkour and high risk sports can highlight significant similarities and differences (Willig, 2008). For example, the environment theme that emerged corresponds with the findings in the literature that suggest that the environment plays a vital role in the practise of parkour and freerunning. Ameel and Tani (2011) implemented in-depth interviews with parkour participants in Finland, Helsinki and Jyväskylä to understand the relationship parkour has with its environment. They discovered that parkour participants were inspired by specific environments and developed a unique familiarity whilst interacting within them. Similarly Borden (2001) who documented the rise of skateboarding explains that participants casually interact with the urban environment in pursuit of adventure and thrills. Ramps, stairways and paths are manipulated in an adhoc manner to convert the city into an adventure playground. Borden (2001) argues that a central feature of skateboarding is the transformation of a designated physical area into something for use that is other than its originally intended use.

Atkinson (2009) conducted an ethnographic study with twelve participants in Toronto, Canada utilising open ended interviews to obtain their experiences of being involved. He discovered that parkour is a social activity that functions in a supportive manner which corresponds with the features of the social theme that was produced. Similarly Willig (2008) in her research with eight extreme participants discovered that skydivers tended to focus on the social (camaraderie) aspects of the experience.

Wheaton (2000) suggests that windsurfing participants value support and camaraderie above winning and competition which opposes the characteristics of professionalised dominant sports.

It became evident that training was a key aspect of the parkour phenomenon as the theme began to emerge. This discovery is consistent with the literature on parkour that explains that group training sessions include the forming of friendships, the practise of physical techniques and networking (O'Grady, 2012). The literature indicates that extreme participants avoid formal external validation and set criteria's of judgement believing that it undermines camaraderie.

O'Grady (2012) interviewed parkour participants aged between sixteen and thirty two years old over a six month period in 2011 using semi-structured interviews. Her research emphasised the importance of personal development as well as improvements to physical ability which corresponds with the health and fitness theme that was produced. Linked with this theme are the challenge and mastery themes which are concerned with the development of skill and achievement. Similarly O'Grady (2012) in her research discovered that improved mental efficiency and strength were associated with conquering personal obstacles, self assurance and confidence building.

The global sports domain now includes participants who actively seek out experiences of risk and danger (e.g., parkour, free running, rock climbing, cave diving, mountaineering, bungee jumping and snowboarding). It is evident in the literature that a factor that motivates participants to take risks is the thrill and excitement that occurs as a consequence of risk taking (e.g., Willig, 2008; Le Breton, 2000; Celsi *et al.*, 1993; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). This finding corresponds with the risk and thrill seeking themes that emerged in this study.

The philosophy theme that became apparent reflects the findings of Bavinton (2007) who explains that the philosophy of parkour is concerned with running and gymnastic movement that leads to personal self-evaluation. Atkinson (2009) argues that parkour philosophies harbour similar ideologies to Thoreau's environmentalism and transcendentalism. Closely linked with the philosophy theme is the spirituality theme that was produced. In the literature Rawlinson and Guralda (2011) suggest that parkour is concerned with creative potential and testing the spirit of mankind which corresponds with the features of the spirituality theme. The fun theme that emerged accords with the findings in the literature on parkour. For example, Atkinson (2009); Stevens (2007) and Geyh (2006) emphasise the playful and lucid nature of parkour. Geyh (2006) comments that parkour transforms an environment into a place of free play.

It was discovered in this study that participants often experienced a sense of escapism and a feeling of liberation (flow) when fully immersed in the present and concentrating on the task at hand. Willig (2008) discovered that flow (emotional benefit) was a central theme of the mountaineering experience which does not appear to be the case for parkour and free running. The being in the present theme that became apparent is consistent with the literature that indicates that the experience of flow is a reason for participation (e.g., Willig, 2008; Le Breton, 2000; Celsi *et al.*, 1993; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). The aesthetic and being in the present themes that emerged are closely related to each other and consistent with Ameel and Tani's (2011) discoveries that parkour is concerned with aesthetic performance and personal freedom. Ameel and Tani (2011) explain that the practise of parkour makes visible ordinary environments and illuminates their aesthetic qualities and Atkinson (2009) suggests that the relationship parkour has with the landscape is purely aesthetic. Similarly Borden (2001) observed a specific artistic sensibility with skateboarding in that it often occurred in derelict places, underpasses and abandoned industrial wastelands laden with graffiti.

Skateboarders also utilise challenging obstacles within the environment as part of the activities inventiveness (Borden, 2001). For example, a drained swimming pool with its curved sides would be ridden around with participants perceiving the pool as something dangerous to be mastered. Borden (2001) notes that skateboarding incorporates surf related moves and argues that it is concerned with repositioning the urban landscape whereas surfing more closely represents a form of escapism.

The literature indicates that parkour and free running are serious disciplines with subtle shades of meaning for the participant. For example, O’Grady (2012) discovered that participants considered parkour to be a way of life and a way of expressing who they were which is consistent with the features of the addiction theme that was produced for this study.

### **6.2 Social and Psychological Reasons for Involvement in Parkour and Free Running**

Participants of parkour and free running get involved for a variety of reasons, including curiosity, thrill seeking, social compliance and a desire for adventure (Shoham *et al.*, 1998). Many of the participants gained awareness and initial motivation through the mass media.

#### Awareness

- *I saw it on the television and thought that is pretty amazing.*
- *The first time I saw it I really thought it was some kind of special effects.*
- *The first clip I saw was on BBC One of someone jumping between roof tops and I thought that it was just stunts or whatever.*

### **6.2.1 Social - External Influences on Initial Participation**

The following extracts taken from the themes that were produced suggest that that the mass media, society and technology intertwine to create a context that is conducive for parkour and free running to take place (Wheaton and Beal, 2003).

#### Media Influence

- *After seeing the TV documentary Jump Britain I went on the internet for more information about the difference between free running and parkour.*
- *I found the parkour website that (name omitted) set up. It had a great discussion forum where you could arrange meet ups. I went out on a Sunday and met up with fifty odd people.*
- *I watched a programme on channel 4 called Jump Britain as a complete novice and that night went out and just decided to do it.*
- *The social networking sites on the internet connect the community around the world. Here people post tutorials and videos to keep everybody up-to-date. I personally learnt about the social aspects of it in this way. I would look at the pictures and read the paragraph associated with it and figure it out.*

The above extracts taken from the themes that were produced show that the media motivates participation in the activities and influences an individual's decision to get involved. Media exposure also reinforces commitment to parkour and free running (Wheaton and Beal, 2003).

### **6.2.2 Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Reasons for Participation**

Other reasons for involvement were found to be at the interpersonal and intrapersonal levels. A small number of studies have focused on the interpersonal and intrapersonal processes that define participation in extreme sports (e.g., Larkin and Griffiths, 2004; Celsi *et al.*, 1993).

At the inter and intrapersonal levels of motivation participants seek to move from the normative motivations of thrill seeking to the efficacy motives of mastery and to the more abstract levels of identity and community (Celsi *et al.*, 1993). Several of the free running and parkour participants first jumped with friends. Some of them would not have got involved at all had it not been for the support of friends.

### Interpersonal Influence

- *Somebody told me about parkour because they thought that I might be interested. They told me to come and meet up with people that do it and I really got into it. I went out with a friend skateboarding previously to that.*

### **6.2.3 Psychological - Participant Motivations**

Celsi *et al.* (1993) explain that any analysis of motives will incorporate three general categories that can provide insight into any high risk behaviour.

#### Motives

1. Normative
2. Hedonic
3. Self-Efficacy

Each motive can be considered to represent the participant's personal value and linked to the high risk activity itself (Guttman, 2000; Olson and Reynolds, 1983). Celsi *et al.* (1993) say that the interrelated properties of motive categories are highly abstract and interrelate in complex ways. For example, flow is a hedonic property that is linked to pleasure and is the primary experience of thrill and linked to efficacy, which is concerned with freedom from self-awareness (Celsi *et al.*, 1993).

The following insights into participation of parkour and free running focus on patterns of motive evolution including levels of involvement and the motivational attributes that underlie participation in the activity over time.

### **6.2.4 Normative Motives**

The most likely motivational reason for initial participation in parkour or free running (high risk behaviour) is normative. Celsi *et al.* (1993) suggest that a desire to meet the expectations of others is a key reason for early involvement. They explain that normative motives play an important role throughout participation but their fundamental attributes change. Young (cited in Wheaton, 2000) explains that participant identity will change after the first experience. Emphasis will shift from being an external display of membership to a need for formal identification within the subculture (Wheaton and Beal, 2003).

#### Maintaining Association

- *God it motivates you. It does something to you. You hear about Jams, a meeting of people and you want to go so much. Even if you can't - you spend your entire day in work thinking to yourself, why don't I quit this job and just go free run with them.*
- *It's so motivating to know there are so many people who have as much passion as you.*

### **6.2.5 Hedonic Motivates**

The hedonic motives evolve from being a search for thrill seeking through to a desire to experience pleasure and fun with an end result being an experience of flow. Celsi *et al.* (1993) explain that the thrilling properties of high risk activities (excitement and adrenaline) are always present but they don't reach ultra-high levels. Celsi *et al.* (1993) suggest that this is because over time the participant normalises fear and develops specific skills. Mastering the thrill in this way often increases the sense of pleasure and fun (Shoham *et al.*, 1998).

As part of the process of developing mastery the participant becomes free from self-awareness. It is the intertwining processes of the hedonic motives that evolve to include transcendent flow states (Celsi *et al.*, 1993).

### Flow and Catharsis

- *It just feels good I guess. It's a release of stress and you don't think of anything else while you're doing it.*
- *It's pain relieving – a kind of morphine in a sense. You become very docile and become happy.*
- *I would start focusing on what I was doing and everything else would disappear.*

### **6.2.6 Efficacy Motives**

Willig (2008) explains that in the beginning concerns of safety and reducing risk dominate the high risk activities. She says that initially participants will be concerned with developing self belief. Once this is achieved the participant will move onto the development of skill and achievement as part of the self-efficacy motive.

The participant will be learning to create and manage the risk context which is ultimately very empowering (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). The development of control, achievement and mastery all help to build participant self-confidence.

### Control

- *If people are cheering you on to do a jump or a gap you know you're not ready for but you do it just to kind of show off. Then the risk increases to a point where you're not comfortable. You don't feel in control with it.*

### Self Confidence

- *I will do a move a thousand times over so that I wouldn't hurt myself if I ever fell. You learn how to get stronger and harden your body armour and to absorb things.*
- *You gain more balance and awareness.*
- *It's the fact that you are trying to get past an obstacle and not trying to avoid it.*

The efficacy motive of the participant also (as with the hedonic motive) ends with the transcendence of an old self for a new sub-cultural identity. Celsi *et al.* (1993) suggest that to fully understand the motives and meaning of high risk activities an understanding of risk is necessary.

They say that the risk perceptions of participants evolve with experience and become normalised when they adopt the high risk identity. The following participant comment reflects this dynamic in that it's no longer the thrill that is important.

### Deleting the Risk

- *I wasn't searching for the risk anymore I was searching for deleting the risk.*

#### **6.2.7 Simple Risk and Thrill**

It is clear that a factor that motivates participants to take risks is the thrill and excitement that result from risk taking itself (Shoham *et al.*, 1998). The thrill participants experience is directly associated with the extent to which they frighten themselves. Willig (2008) asserts that risks to a participant's health and safety are a necessary dimension of the experience.

### Simple Risk and Thrill

- *If it's something that is difficult you are going to feel good about yourself when you overcome it.*

- *You don't need to physically go looking for the thrills. They are there in any kind of movement that you are doing.*

### 6.3 Social and Psychological Reasons for Maintaining Involvement in

#### Parkour and Free Running

Celsi *et al.* (1993) explain that commitment to high risk sports and investment into the associated processes will mean that a participant will encounter specific experiences.

#### Participant Experiences

<b>Psychological:</b>	Sense of Mastery and Increased Efficacy.
<b>Emotion:</b>	Flow and Catharsis.
<b>Social:</b>	Communitas and Inclusion.

#### 6.3.1 Risk and Training

Training in risk activities is important in that human error has serious consequences. Willig (2008) explains that acculturation to the belief that high risk activity is psychologically manageable is necessary for the participant. Linked with this process is the intense training undertaken by participants that increases the belief they have in themselves (O'Grady, 2012).

#### Training

- *The next week you might go out and do a jump and you might be closer to accomplish it.*
- *It's personal progression that attracts me to parkour and to see the visible achievement. Some things are only easy as you train. You always look back at the things which are easy now which weren't once.*

Training is very important if mastery is to be attained and it provides a basis for insights into how participants view and deal with issues of risk and death (Le Breton, 2000). Le Breton (2000) observes that amateur sportsmen in the West have started to undertake long intensive ordeals to test their capacity to endure personal suffering. For example, triathlon or trekking are ordeals in which people are committed to improving resistance and stamina regardless of the amount of pain involved (Le Breton, 2000).

### Pushing Boundaries

- *Parkour is about developing yourself and how to progress by becoming stronger, jumping further and running a bit faster. This is the hook that keeps me coming back.*
- *I think parkour helps you fight your barriers both physical and mental. It does that more than any other sport because it's so varied.*

Le Breton (2000) suggests personal endurance tests are designed to test a participant's strength of character, courage and personal resources. He says that pushing on to the end of a self-imposed task provides legitimacy to life. It's not competitive and has a focus on personal will power and an ability to overcome suffering by pushing the limit of a personally set goal. Le Breton (2000) explains that a legitimacy of surviving a symbolic game with pain, death and bodily injury generates an ultimate truth that is normally inaccessible. Traversing difficult terrain is part of a challenge that produces suffering and requires incredible strength of character (Le Breton, 2000). The intensified relationship with the body represents a search for truth. Close interaction with nature significantly intensifies the value of life for the participant. The long intensive ordeal can be interpreted as being a symbolic form of physical activity that brings about a new awareness of life. Le Breton (2000) explains that death is waiting for the participant who overestimates their ability to achieve.

### Managing Risk

- *The next day I woke up and my body hurt. I've never had ache like that in my life and it was wonderful. It was self improvement. It was knowing that I had moved forward.*
- *The first time I did free running I had the biggest grin on my face because it wasn't pain it was progression.*
- *More people are practicing and continue to practice once they realise the deeper aspects. If it's something that is difficult you are going to feel good about yourself when you overcome it.*

### **6.3.2 Psychological - Increasing Efficacy**

Wheaton (2000) explains that an important motivation to continue with high risk activities is the desire to develop technical skill for both personal satisfaction and social status within the subculture.

### Developing Skill

- *If you practise it on a longer term basis it's becomes more about personal progression. As you learn one movement you then think I can do this one as well.*
- *You are pushing yourself to a higher level of movement. It is on-going and you are finding new spots to move.*

As high risk participants gain experience they become more concerned with skill development and the perceptions others have of their skills. Wheaton and Beal (2003) state that perceived competence within the subculture is an important part of the process. As a participant's mastery of the activity increases so does the standard by which competence judgements are made. Ultimately achievement is vital if the participant is to attain higher order level values (mastery, self-efficacy and flow).

Celsi *et al.* (1993) discovered that it was achievement of experiences that transcended the everyday experiences that motivated the more experienced participants. Celsi *et al.* (1993) explain that an understanding of higher order values increases understanding on how high risk performers perceive risk. The higher level motives take the participant beyond thrill seeking. The participant will need to exercise some creative control in order to attain mastery, self-efficacy and flow. Celsi *et al.* (1993) explain that it is for this reason that high risk participants usually perceive risk as being multi-dimensional.

### Multi-Dimensional Risk

- *It's about finding new routes to get through the environment more quickly and safely.*
- *You have to think about what facilities you have in the area. If there are loads of walls and things but no rails the balance side of things will suffer.*
- *The environment influences what mind set you will have and what movement you'll implement.*
- *My balance isn't as good as it can be until I've done it on every different type of rail - as long as the surrounding area is safe. You can walk on one square rail a couple of inches wide and be fine but that doesn't mean you can balance on something half an inch wide that's slightly rounded.*
- *You have to be trained for every environment and train in every environment.*

### **6.3.3 Psychological - Mastery and Status**

Wheaton and Beal (2003) explain that attaining mastery helps to differentiate between the novice and the experienced participant. Differentiating provides a participant with a sense of status and attention within the subculture.

### Sense of Status

- *It's really good to teach and show the different movements you can do and break it down for them. It's great when you see that they have cracked it and they incorporate their own movement as well.*

Shoham *et al.* (1998) explain that high risk activities offer a well-defined context for personal change. They say that with high risk activities the way to achieve is clear and accessible with specific guidelines for their accomplishment. Wheaton (2000) explains that the participant is ultimately recognised for their overall mastery and long term commitment to the practise of it. The wish to create a new identity is clearly linked to the participants striving for mastery and status. Wheaton and Beal (2003) say that building a new identity requires commitment to a new set of subcultural values. Celsi *et al.* (1993) explain that the path to achievement within the high risk community is carefully arranged and has confirmed standards for evaluation.

### Mastery

- *I realise that you have to be patient with things and that it's going to take time.*
- *You have to take time to get stronger and build up to things. I think it will take two years to train and learn from basic level to a more advanced level. You start off small and you move onto something else.*
- *It keeps you interested because you want to learn to do it properly and get stronger.*
- *If you practise it on a longer term basis it's becomes more about personal progression.*

### 6.3.4 Emotion – Flow and Catharsis

Flow (being in the present) is considered to be a significant influence in keeping participants involved with the activity because of the feelings of liberation and satisfaction that they derive (e.g., Le Breton, 2000; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Flow describes the experience of total absorption in an activity or situation. When a participant is experiencing flow the everyday worries are forgotten. Willig (2008) discovered that producing the experience of flow is a way of managing tensions within a participant in a creative and purposeful manner. She discovered that participation and the experience of flow is a way experiencing existence in a novel way and not about self-destruction or a symptom of unresolved psychic conflicts (Willig, 2008). When experiencing flow the future and the past are driven away with an intense focus on the present. Le Breton (2000) suggests that flow is not rooted in religious fever but is related to the sacred. He says that flow is a personal generation of meaning that occurs as a result of a disorientation of the senses that creates an acute sensation of being at one with the world. Le Breton (2000) explains that flow forms such a strong memory that participants will do everything possible to relive it.

#### Flow and Catharsis

- *It just feels good I guess. It's a release of stress and you don't think of anything else while you're doing it.*
- *Its pain relieving – a kind of morphine in a sense. You become very docile and become happy.*
- *For me personally what is most interesting is the escapism of it. I found this and I would jump around. I would start focusing on what I was doing and everything else would disappear.*

Csikszentmihalyi (1975) says that decisions follow one after the other with an internal drive that nothing can interfere with and time loses importance. He explains that a participant dissolves into movement and is far from the worries that normally weigh on him.

There is a melting of self into the action for example, a deep bonding with a rock face while climbing it or whilst running a marathon (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Csikszentmihalyi (1975) explains that the flow experience requires that there be equality between participants, resources and the field in which they are operating. If the demands of the undertaking exceed a participant's capabilities they will experience a sensation of being destroyed by the activity. Willig (2008) and Celsi *et al.* (1993) explain that for flow to occur the right balance between challenge and comfort is needed.

### **6.3.5 Personal Identity and Individual Meaning**

According to Le Breton (2000) a participant of high risk activities deliberately concocts situations that create fear in others. A participant must be able to find meaning in an almost sacred way in order to see himself as the master of his activity. Le Breton (2000) suggests that a participant is, "playing on the razors edge" by putting their life on a par with death for an instant to be able to obtain some of its power. Le Breton (2000) explains that certain physical activities emerge as a result of a sincere search for sensation, emotion, and physical contact with the world. A symbolic game with death in some of these high risk activities is what gives deep meaning to the experience. Le Breton (2000) asserts that without the sense of risk taking, the activity would fail to provide enjoyment. He says that these experiences are not religious but are moments that can be understood as being trance like states. Ultimately, they are a modern form of wild mysticism arising out of disciplined intimacy with the world (Le Breton, 2000).

Celsi *et al.* (1993) explain that initially a participant will experience a sense of being different from everybody else outside of the community. Continued participation in a high risk subculture often leads to the formation of a new personal identity altogether (Schouten, 1991). Gaining a new identity is a powerful motive for a commitment to the mastery of high risk activities (Willig, 2008).

### New Identity

- *I developed a new personality. I became a new person. I wasn't (name omitted) or (name omitted) anymore. I took on my other name. I became (name omitted) and they knew me as (name omitted). Every time I went and jumped and ran I was (name omitted) who didn't have (name omitted) problems. I could do what I wanted. I didn't have to worry and that was fantastic.*
- *Parkour really brought me out of my shell. I'm know where near the person I was six years ago. I wouldn't have said boo to the ghost of a fly. I was that shy. It's helped me develop into a person and overcome physical challenges.*

Celsi *et al.* (1993) explain that the development of high risk identity involves a process of deviance neutralisation. It is a transformation whereby a participant moves from perceiving the high risk activity as extraordinary to normal. When the processes are complete and full acculturation is achieved a participant is able to manage the high risk situation and as a consequence obtains insider status (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). By this stage the risk experience is normalised. With a reduction in fear the participant starts to view parkour and free running as activities to be enjoyed like any other (Willig, 2008). Taking part becomes the norm with there being full acceptance of the high risk identity. Taking risks are understood to be the norm and are not questioned unless there is an injury within the community (Celsi *et al.*, 1993).

For the participant it's no longer a hobby but a way of life and sometimes a way of death (Le Breton, 2000). It is the high risk identity of the acculturated participant that distinguishes them from the outsider who cannot understand why they take part. For a participant the injuries that occur are accepted as being part of the subcultural way of life but for the outsider they are highly questionable (Celsi *et al.*, 1993).

### 6.3.6 Normalising Risk

Celsi *et al.* (1993) explain that normalising risk is linked to the motivation towards the behaviour. It is this combination that generates the high risk identity. It is the creativity of the risk behaviour that provides catharsis for the participant and a way to experience life in a novel way (Willig, 2008). Willig (2008) and Celsi *et al.* (1993) say that the relationship between a participant and context is an important part of extreme sport. Celsi *et al.* (1993) explain that experienced high risk performers will seek risk contexts that are controllable so that their abilities can be challenged. They do this for authentication and for self-efficacy.

#### Challenging Ability

- *Me and (name omitted) have a condition that we meet up and practise as we are of a similar strength level. I know he is watching what I am doing. I am pushing much harder and he is going to push even harder. That helps push everyone.*
- *It's not a competition but I want to be better than I could have been and I can see he is still going so I push harder.*

Celsi *et al.* (1993) explain that ability is often assessed according to a participant's skill at being able to manage an unexpected event, for example a slip.

#### Managing the Unplanned

- *You can be doing a jump and you realise in mid air you only have a couple of seconds to avoid injuries.*
- *With parkour you learn how to get stronger and harden your body armour and to absorb things. You gain more balance and awareness.*

A participant who successfully does this will gain status and be perceived as a survivor particularly if they faced serious injury or death. Wheaton and Beal (2003) explain that status is given to a participant who has proven that they are capable of controlling both planned and unplanned aspects of context.

Situations that are too easily mastered retain little interest to experienced participants (Celsi *et al.*, 1993). The parkour participants explained that for parkour to occur the context within which they are operating must be challenging. Willig (2008) and Celsi *et al.* (1993) explain that participants continually balance personal ability with the environment and must not be overwhelmed otherwise abilities will not be tested.

### Matching Ability with Challenge

- *You have to think about what facilities you have in the area. If there are loads of walls and things but no rails the balance side of things will suffer.*
- *Different landscapes call for different movements. You've got forests, you've got cityscapes and you've got more suburban areas that have fewer obstacles. I think that all does really influence the way we train. There's a little motto that says, "the obstacle comes before the movement".*
- *There's a basic movement called the Kong, which is where you go over the wall forward. You place your hands on the wall and leap forward. You can't do that on every wall the same way. Some walls are wider, some are thinner, some are taller and the area around each wall is different. So you have the basic movements but they have to be adapted to the environment.*

Wheaton (2000) explains that this process requires both skill and commitment to the task. She says that it takes place over time and as a participant gains in expertise they achieve status which is recognised within the subculture.

### 6.3.7 Managing Risk and Pleasure

Klauser (cited in Le Breton, 2000) explains that some participants in extreme activities seek out stress deliberately as part of a quest for strong emotions. Fear and excitement emotions are derived through the exposure of the self to an extreme situation. The feelings of giddiness or panic push the emotion to the limit. It is the increase in the emotion panic that totally thrills a participant. Le Breton (2000) says immersion in these situations captures a sense of pleasure and is what a participant is seeking. Le Breton (2000) points out that it is important that a participant has a sense of control over the situation. If a participant is forced against their will into a dangerous or odd situation the emotions felt are typically stressful in the ordinary sense.

Le Breton (2000) suggests that intense and extended activities that require commitment from a participant sees the body become an alter ego that has its own will. The body is forced into a personal and fierce struggle to generate the emotion fear to ensure that the experience is extremely powerful. Le Breton (2000) says that muscular pain is confirmation that the participant has fully committed to the task.

#### Commitment

- *The first time I did free running I had the biggest grin on my face because it wasn't pain it was progression.*
- *The next day I woke up and my body hurt. I've never had ache like that in my life and it was wonderful. It was self improvement. It was knowing that I had moved forward.*

Le Breton (2000) explains that it is being open to nature's limits and mingling the body with the world whilst maintaining the self that increases the value of the experience. It is the challenge, effort and endurance that harmonises a participant with the limits of time and space.

Le Breton (2000) suggests that at the heart of suffering is the path that leads to the heart of the world. He argues that extreme exhaustion and ecstasy bind a participant with the cosmos. Memories of the experience and the special benefits a participant derives add personal value to the magical moment (Le Breton, 2000).

### **6.3.8 Social - Communitas**

Communitas is a Latin noun that refers to a sense of community that transcends ordinary social conventions (Belk *et al.*, 1989). It relates to the camaraderie that occurs when individuals from all walks of life share a common bond of experience. This bond of experience will be considered sacred or special by all of the participants (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Ultimately it is the spirit of communitas that emerges from a shared ritual experience that transcends mundane everyday life (Belk *et al.*, 1989).

#### Shared Experiences

- *There is a parkour community. If there are a lot of people out doing it they help each other. They pull each other up walls and work as team or a group.*
- *Those who do parkour have their own mind set. They live a sort of same life style.*
- *I do believe it's the social aspect that makes parkour so appealing. So many other like minded people all striving for one goal to better themselves.*

Celsi *et al.* (1993) describe communitas as being a sense of belonging and a sharing of transcendent information.

### **6.3.9 Social - Subculture and Shared Experiences**

Binding the high risk subculture together is a unique form of communication that is also transcendent (Wheaton, 2000). It is a mixture of shared experience and technical language that transcends ordinary meaning.

As a communal language it links the members of the cultural community together. It is rarely understood by people outside of the subculture and is therefore held in high esteem and is a sign of cultural membership for those within the group (Wheaton, 2000).

### Cultural Membership

- *There is a phrase that we use in the parkour community, “be strong to be useful”.*

Malinowski (1923) describes this special form of communication within specific cultural groups as phatic communion. It provides group members with unique verbal and nonverbal prompts to create and help substantiate their own worldview. It is a transcendent form of communication in that it transcends ordinary understanding. It is often lucid in construction and functions to bind the subculture together.

Fishman (1960) notes that phatic communion usually occurs amongst groups that share intimate and heightened experiences. The concept of phatic communion captures the unique communication of shared ritualistic experiences between members of groups and subcultures (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). Malinowski (1923) explains that phatic communion is both transcendent and sacred in that it operates outside the scope of ordinary existence and binds the subcultural members in a sacred way.

Parkour language contains different layers of meaning that will be incomprehensible to people outside of the group. Much of the unique language is probably sensory information that is relative to participants at specific moments (Malinowski, 1923).

### Parkour Language

- *There’s a language that’s developed between everyone. It isn’t even English. You’ll meet somewhere and there’s three or four walls and you’ll see someone and say, “ah, wush, tik, fump, ahdadat, nice”. Everyone will know what you mean. It’s truly fantastic.*

### 6.3.10 Social - Group Polarisation and Authenticity

Sharing memorable experiences with others suggests group polarisation. Group polarisation is a phenomenon in which there is a change from a mildly positive attitude to a very positive one in the presence of peers (Myers and Lamm, 1976). Wheaton and Beal (2003) argue that recognised peer social respect is associated with authentic membership status. Wallach *et al.*, (1962) note that group polarisation produces increased risk acceptance in group decision contexts.

#### Risk Acceptance

- *If people are cheering you on to do a jump or a gap you know you're not ready for but you do it just to kind of show off. Then the risk increases to a point where you're not comfortable. You don't feel in control with it. It can be very positive but in that respect it's about your individual look at it. You have to know even when you're with a group whether to say yes I'll do this or no, I can't.*

### 6.3.11 Spirituality

Le Breton (2000) explains that high risk participants obtain a heightened sense of spirituality as a consequence of the ordeal or activity. Commitment to high risk activities provides a participant with insight into the essence of their being and the deepest values by which they live. Heightened spiritual experiences reveal to the participant an inner life that is ordinarily inaccessible. An increased awareness of spirituality can become a tremendous source of inspiration (Le Breton, 2000).

### Heightened Sense

- *It was like people who climb to the top of a mountain and look over the scenery and they realise something that's always been there but they've never seen it. It was like that and suddenly I could look at myself from a distance and realised that I had changed. That was definitely my inspiration.*
- *People who practise parkour tend to be people with a very deep outlook on life who are looking for something more.*
- *More people are practicing and continue to practice once they realise the deeper aspects. They identify with the physiological, mental and social side of things and the way it operates.*

### **6.3.12 Philosophy**

The abstract feelings of flow, communitas, and phatic communion culminate together as confirmation of the subculture and become part of the parkour and free running philosophy (Celsi *et al.*, 1993). The participants share the understood values with each other to reaffirm its meaning. The philosophy will not translate well to those outside of the community.

### Parkour Values

- *Parkour originates from something called Method Unnatural which was coined by a French guy called Georges Hebert.*
- *It's being able to be physically ready but mentally and socially able for any situation.*
- *It's almost like all over life training for me.*

The strong sense of camaraderie amongst participants is intensified with the belief that they are part of something that is “outside of the norm”. Participants accept that outsiders don't fully understand why they do it and that only a participant truly understands (Wheaton and Beal, 2003).

### Unique Experience

- *I'd never been experienced in anything in anyway. So it was nice that I could do something that not many other people could do.*

### **6.3.13 Addiction**

Solomon (1980) suggests that motives for thrill seeking and other addiction behaviours are acquired over time. He explains that they have a hedonic nature and conform to the laws of addiction. Opponent process theory is concerned with extreme emotions such as pain and pleasure and what happens when one is removed or produced. Solomon (1980) explains that over time an individual can become conditioned to such an extent that absence of the behaviour is unpleasant.

Participants develop a predilection towards leaping from one wall to the next and crave it when they are away from it because they associate the subsequent thrill with the initially frightening act itself (Franques *et al.*, 2003). The opponent process model and related addiction models predict that participants will become addicted to the high risk association of the jumps and flips (Mule, 1981).

### Way of Life

- *I often think to myself what if I break a leg or really hurt myself. I could lose an arm or a leg and I'd just learn to adapt. I'd learn to train without my leg. It's like I said it's who I am. No I could not give it up.*
- *I have achieved so many things from it and even if I stopped it physically then mentally I could not give it up. I can't think of my life without parkour.*
- *No I couldn't live without parkour. I need to eat and sleep and once you have parkour in your blood it will always stay there.*
- *I found parkour to be something different and I got addicted. I wouldn't want to live without it. It's become a part of my life. It's become my life. It is me and my life.*

- *I don't know what I would be if I stopped. I feel like I'd be an empty shell sitting in a room staring at an Xbox or something. Like some sort of robot. I wouldn't be alive.*
- *It's the blood in my veins. It's me. I couldn't give up. No matter how much a person or the circumstance demanded it I wouldn't give up.*

The addiction models also indicate that participants will seek increasing amounts of risk situations as what was initially thrilling quickly becomes the norm (Mule 1981). The models suggest that a participant will view risk as positive rather than something to be avoided.

### A Need for Risk

- *I like there to be a bit risk involved. With my background of skating and stuff like that. I prefer an adrenalin kick every so often.*
- *It's fun sometimes when there's danger. You realise that was a bit close but I'm out alive.*

### **Summary**

As part of the broad account that the chapter has provided the researcher has drawn on existing literature within the field and has elicited extracts from the themes that were produced (Smith, 2004). The extracts have been utilised in a manner that is designed to exemplify a particular expression or point. The inclusion of extracts is part of the IPA process and importantly links the findings from the analysis with the developing argument within the thesis (Smith, 2004). This chapter has addressed the aims and objectives of the research into parkour and free running so that appropriate conclusions can be drawn (Smith, 2004).

### CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

Parkour and free running are globally experienced phenomenon, but how they are encountered and what they mean to a participant is something only they could articulate with any validity. Implementing a phenomenological methodology enabled the researcher to enter into a participants reality to obtain their experience of the phenomenon being investigated (Lavery, 2008). Acquiring their convictions, meanings and experiences provided access into their explicit motivations and actions. The artistic moments of phenomenology required imagination and quick insight to perceive what was being described (Nesti, 2004). Technical skill and sensibility for the IPA procedure was necessary when interpreting intricate participant meanings (Smith, 2004). Ultimately the research made the invisible - visible (Lavery, 2008; Silverman, 2005; Mason, 2002).

The research was a personal process that focused on the experiences of eight individuals who were recruited from the Northern Parkour website (Gratton and Jones, 2004). The participants were male and aged between eighteen and thirty. The fundamental requirement was that they had experience with the phenomenon being investigated and possessed the ability to articulate experiences. The research approach was flexible and unrestricted with the researcher maintaining an exploratory attitude at all times (Smith and Osborne, 2003). The face-to-face interviews were conducted at a consensually agreeable location to help ensure that the respondents remained motivated on what was required. The University library was an ideal formal setting in that it enhanced the harmonious environment that the researcher was seeking (Smith, 2004). The objective was to maximise the quality of data by acquiring detailed rich individual descriptions (Moustakas, 1994).

Asking the questions in an intentional manner encouraged participants to be non-restrictive in their responses (Dale, 1996). The question design assisted open dialogue during the interview and provided access into the life world of the participant (Smith and Osborne, 2003). The IPA questions concentrated on the lived experience and were concerned with maximising the descriptive accounts being provided (Smith, 2004). The carefully composed questions on “what and how” ensured that the participant was fully engaged during the interview and drew out the relevant information. Throughout the IPA interview process elaboration prompts were incorporated as and when necessary (Smith, 2004).

The phenomenological interview was similar to a conversation between the researcher and the person being interviewed (Dale, 1996). The researcher worked at reducing any envisaged obstructions to conversation and was responsible for directing the interview. It was necessary to let the data arise naturally and not to obtain it in a forced manner (Smith, 2004). In accordance with this approach the researcher did not rationalise the described material during the interview. The researcher actively engaged in compelling and emotional expressions of the experience and regarded the participant as an equal (Dale, 1996).

The participants were encouraged to describe their experiences as entirely as possible during the interview. Clear unmistakable verbal gestures of agreement were incorporated as a form of acknowledgement and were thoroughly effective in developing the conversations (Dale, 1996). This was combined with straightforward body language to indicate feelings on what was being said (Moustakas, 1994). This included a head nod of agreement and a smile to express concordance at what a participant was saying. The objective was to get the participant to talk honestly and in a free flowing descriptive manner (Smith and Osborne, 2003). It was vital that the IPA semi-structured interview had a harmonious atmosphere and environment to maximise the quality of the data that was produced (Smith and Osborne, 2003). Sensitivity towards participant needs facilitated interview interaction and helped orchestrate a conversation with a purpose between the interviewer and participant. The IPA interviewer was able to inquire into unforeseen areas and the interviews were focused, flexible and interactive in structure with words being the principal data source (Smith, 2004). The purpose of the interview was to obtain the participants experience of the phenomenon under investigation (Willig, 2008).

Interviewing was an enjoyable aspect of the research process that required considerable intellectual and social skill whilst an interview was in progress (Mason, 2002). For example, the researcher was listening to what was being said, interpreting it, checking what they were saying was appropriate and implementing an original way of developing what was needed to be known (Mason, 2002). The social skills required remembering what was being said and achieving balance between talking and listening.

Considerable skill in observing both verbal and non verbal clues was needed along with the practicalities of interviewing, including note taking and competent use of a digital recorder (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Repeated readings of participant responses helped to identify patterns that formed components of the experience (Smith *et al.*, 2009). A methodical approach was maintained when gathering participant comments (components) under appropriate emerging themes (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Comparing themes enabled the researcher to develop categories of meaning. The summary tables that were provided give a clear overview of the established quotes, keywords and constituent themes (Willig, 2008). The master themes that were produced captured the quality of the participant's experience of the phenomenon under investigation and provided insight into the emergence of the parkour and free running phenomenon (Willig, 2008). The themes formed a knowledge base towards addressing the aims and objectives set for the study (Gratton and Jones, 2004). To add to the knowledge base the study was significantly expanded when interpretation of the thematic analysis was written up in the discussion chapter (Smith *et al.*, 2009). The written interpretation in the discussion chapter was completed within the context of the literature associated with the phenomenon being studied (Smith *et al.*, 2009).

Phenomenology does not include the history, social world and significant past events of the participant as part of the investigation (Willig, 2008). In some instances this might limit understanding on a participant's full experience of the phenomenon being studied. From a broader perspective IPA limited the researcher's ability to document the demographic developments of parkour and free running. Although, not having this information did not hinder or negatively affect the ability of the researcher to explore and document the emergence of parkour and free running.

IPA is concerned with understanding experiences and meanings with language being the tool used to describe experiences (Smith, 2004). It might be that a person possesses a wealth of experience but has limited ability in articulating the experience in a verbal manner (Willig, 2008). This can be problematic when recruiting participants and also during the interview with a participant becoming unexpectedly inarticulate. In this situation a participant might be inclined to construct the experience and not factually describe it (Willig, 2008). For this study such limitations were not encountered.

Parkour and free running are new alternative activities within the sport and exercise domain. Exploring their origins, how they developed, reasons for adoption, engagement, the role of aesthetics, the relevance of danger, risk taking, thrill seeking, free flowing movement, the link between the activities and the environment and whether they are part of a counter culture generated the required insight into the major psychological and sociological reasons for their emergence (Mason, 2002).

### Major Social and Psychological Reasons for the Emergence of Parkour and Free Running

- *An ability to manage risk.*
- *Acquiring a new personal identity and a sense of individuality.*
- *Being able to normalise risk.*
- *Gaining status.*
- *The development of new skills and a sense of achievement.*
- *Health benefits.*
- *Experiencing a pure play spirit.*
- *Emotional, physical and psychological development.*
- *Pushing personal boundaries.*
- *Acquiring a personal sense of spirituality.*
- *The attainment of an obscure emotion – flow.*
- *Belonging: establishing a set of unique group norms, communitas, subculturally*
- *shared experiences, group polarisation and a unique sense of authenticity.*
- *Generation of personal meaning – philosophy and aesthetics.*
- *Addiction to thrill.*
- *Challenging traditional physical practice.*
- *Challenging mainstream sports.*
- *A form of environmental criticism.*
- *A counter culture that is resisting a dominant culture.*

Parkour originated from Georges Hebert's natural method of physical exercise (Atkinson, 2009). It was an intense form of physical exercise that was used in the French navy before the First World War.

Herbert believed that the natural method would equip people with athletic strength and discipline that would prepare them for life in society (Atkinson, 2009). Raymonde Belle was a French soldier in the Vietnam War and when he returned passed on his knowledge of Georges Hebert's natural method to his son David Belle (Atkinson, 2009). David Belle developed the natural method with his friend Sebastian Foucan. They developed their own style of the natural method and called it parkour (Atkinson, 2009). David Belle and his friend Sebastian Foucan popularised it by performing in the documentary *Jump London* (2003) and *Jump Britain* (2005).

Belle and Foucan had a loyal following in Paris and Europe throughout the 1990's. The media in France, United Kingdom and Netherlands depicted the practice of it as being a life style urban youth counterculture (Atkinson, 2009). As part of the commercialisation process the media images concentrated on the spectacular aspects of parkour. It became a style and commodity culture movement with many features of it becoming commodified (e.g., parkour language, clothing, jargon and moves) (O'Grady, 2012). Foucan was happy to sell parkour to global audiences through movies, television, commercials, training schools, documentaries, international parkour competitions, clothing and video games (Atkinson, 2009). Foucan and Belle had different opinions on the purpose and meaning of parkour. Belle was devoted to the original format of the natural method whilst Foucan was developing an aesthetically driven parkour (free running). Belle remained more resistant to spectacularisation and sportisation processes. Foucan continued to expand free running and placed special importance on entertainment value and spectacle (Atkinson, 2009).

David Belle and Sebastian Foucan's disagreements on the meanings and purpose of parkour's core values caused local, global and demographic distinctions to emerge within the subculture (Atkinson, 2009). The main distinctions were between the natural method traditionalist participants who adhered strictly to Herbert's original style, the free runners who preferred the entertainment and commodification aspects of the activity and those who practised on a casual basis to be associated with the image without following it as a way of life (Atkinson, 2009). Competitive free runners are currently the largest demographic within the parkour global network (Atkinson, 2009). The participants are usually lower, middle to upper working class white males living in urban areas (Atkinson, 2009).

(PKUK) is the UK national governing body for parkour that manages the administration, growth and promotion of both parkour and free running (O’Grady, 2012). The organisation has qualified instructors who provide professional and standardised guidance. Parkour is now part of the social inclusion agenda with parkour related pursuits being introduced into the UK's national curriculum for physical education (Gilchrist and Wheaton, 2011). Regulated parkour initiatives have the potential to invigorate physical education and improve social interactions (O’Grady, 2012).

Some participants of extreme pursuits deliberately partake in stressful situations as part of a quest for powerful emotions. The fear and excitement emotions are obtained through the exposure of the self to an extreme situation (Le Breton, 2000). The frivolous and sensational feelings that are experienced exert the emotion to the limit. It is the intensifying of the emotion panic that completely delights a participant. Immersion in this state is perceived by a participant as being a heightened state of pleasure which is what is being sought (Le Breton, 2000). For this to be achieved a participant must have a sense of control over the situation. For example, if a dangerous situation is imposed upon a participant in an unexpected manner the emotions experienced will be stressful in the ordinary sense (Le Breton, 2000).

As part of the quest for strong emotions a participant is learning to create and manage the risk context which is ultimately very empowering (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). The participants explained that for the activities to occur the context within which they are operating must be challenging. Situations that are too easily mastered retain little interest to experienced participants (Celsi *et al.*, 1993). Training in risk activities is important in that it minimises the risk of serious injury as a consequence of human oversight. Training is how a participant manifests the belief that high risk activity is psychologically manageable (Willig, 2008). Ability is often assessed according to a participant’s skill at being able to manage an unexpected event such as a slip (Celsi *et al.*, 1993).

In the modern age people are forming their own subcultures and within this are cultivating new personal identities that are more individual, fluid, self critical and innovative (Wheaton, 2000). Subcultural involvement is connected to the participants need to unveil a true inner self that seeks personal authenticity.

Parkour accommodates well-defined conditions and principles for personal change. The way to achieve is clear and accessible with specific guidelines for their fulfilment. Being associated with the activities furnishes a participant with a sense of exclusivity by being different. The participant intentionally completes moves that cause concern in people outside the subculture. To anyone outside of the subculture participation might appear to be a reckless and impulsive activity in pursuit of thrills (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). The new member recognises that their activities in the outside world are not significant within the subculture (Wheaton and Beal, 2003).

The participant experiences a transformation in their own self perception and how they interact with non-members (Celsi *et al.*, 1993). Interaction with them is intermingled with the counterbalancing of the changing self concept. As the new personal identity forms the bond with the subculture gets stronger whereby dangerous behaviour becomes the norm (Celsi *et al.*, 1993). As part of this social bond the participant gradually evolves from being an outside to an insider. It is the ongoing participation that affords the participant a passage to a new personal identity (Celsi *et al.*, 1993). A fully acculturated participant will no longer share their experiences and rationalise them with non members. For the participant it's no longer a pastime but a way of life and sometimes a way of death (Le Breton, 2000). For a participant the injuries that occur are tolerated as being part of the subcultural way of life. For the non member they are a highly dubious consequence of participation (Celsi *et al.*, 1993).

It is the new personal identity of the acculturated participant that distinguishes them from the non member who cannot comprehend why they take part. Part of acquiring a new identity requires the participant to find significance in participation in a devoted manner (Le Breton, 2000). Self belief is a crucial attribute of the high risk identity. The novice is often reminded of this fact when overhearing the experienced participant's views on being actively involved (Willig, 2008). Acquiring a new identity is a powerful motive for commitment to acquiring expert skill and knowledge (Willig, 2008). The desire to create a new identity is linked to a participant's strenuous efforts for mastery and status (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). The growth of a participant's identity is an integral part of risk acculturation, motive evolution and a function of experience and socialisation (Celsi *et al.*, 1993).

The creation of a new personal identity involves a process whereby a participant moves from perceiving the high risk activity as extraordinary to normal (Celsi *et al.*, 1993). The relationship between the participant and context has considerable impact on normalising risk. The participant pursues risk contexts that are controllable so that individual competencies can be challenged (Celsi *et al.*, 1993). Participants unceasingly balance individual ability with the environment and avoid being overwhelmed to ensure they are fully tested (Willig, 2008; Celsi *et al.*, 1993). With a reduction in fear the risk experience is normalised and the participant views parkour and free running as being joyful activities (Willig, 2008). Taking risks becomes the norm with there being full acceptance of the high risk identity.

Status is attributed to a participant who has proven that they are capable of controlling both the planned and unplanned aspects of the context in which they are practising (Wheaton, 2000). The process of acquiring skill and being committed to participation takes place over time and is an important part of obtaining status within the subculture (Wheaton, 2000). Participants who successfully manage risk achieve status especially if they are a survivor who has faced serious injury or death (Le Breton, 2000). Participants must not only accommodate risk but become acculturated to it as part of motive evolution (efficacy and identity formation). When the processes are complete and full acculturation is attained a participant is able to control the high risk situation and as a result achieves insider status (Wheaton and Beal, 2003).

An important motivation to continue with parkour and free running is the need to acquire technical skill for both personal satisfaction and social status within the subculture. Perceived competence within the subculture is an important part of the process. As the participant skills grow there is a refocusing of attention from physical risk to performance concerns (Celsi *et al.*, 1993). As participants become more experienced they become more aware of individual skill development and the perceptions others have of their skills. When personal mastery of the activity increases so does the standard by which competence judgements are made (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). The attainment of achievement is vital if a participant is to experience the abstract levels of the higher order values (mastery, self-efficacy and flow). Accomplishing mastery helps to differentiate between the novice and the experienced participant.

It is the differentiating that intensifies a participant's sense of status and belonging within the subculture. It also establishes a clear boundary between the novice participant and participant audiences (O'Grady, 2012).

Training is vital if mastery is to be attained as it provides a basis for insights into how participants view and cope with issues of risk and death (Le Breton, 2000). Developing skill, having an appropriate attitude and maintaining commitment were found to be central to attaining subcultural status (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). Participants with low levels of commitment do not receive full subcultural status (Wheaton, 2000). Participants without a level of commitment and an appreciation of core values might be inclined to move from one alternative sport experience to the next (Atkinson, 2009).

An important motive for participation in parkour and free running is affiliation because of its psychological health benefits which reflects the theories on health behaviour that suggest that the most rational choices are thought to be the healthful ones (Lupton, 1995). Theories on health behaviour within the health psychology domain suggest that good health is a globally shared desire and that the actions of people are motivated by the pursuit of health and longevity (Lupton, 1995). Belonging to a subculture can increase a person's self esteem and perceived sense of self worth (O'Grady, 2012).

It is suggested in the literature that we have entered a postmodern era with new sports being associated with spontaneity and playfulness as opposed to the rationalised and standardised characteristics of many traditional sports (Rawlinson and Guralda, 2011; Atkinson, 2009; Stevens, 2007; Geyh, 2006; Guttmann, 2000). New sport activities are often informal whilst at the same time participants are fully absorbed in the activity. The participants explained that they maintained a childlike and playful approach when in their environments (Ameel and Tani, 2011). The participants frequently used the words playground to describe how they perceive the built environment. They emphasised the playful and lucid nature of parkour in that participation revealed their inner child. Through play participants captured their sense of space and place within the city and made creative use of the streets, buildings and obstacles that surround them (Atkinson, 2009). Participation recreates urban space into a place of movement and free play amongst the architectural obstacles and its inhabitants.

The role of psycho-emotional and physical play is central to the performance of parkour and free running. The participants create an emotional bond with the environment in a child like way to use it for emotional, physical and psychological development (Ameel and Tani, 2011). They recapture local city space that is used for commercial interest and described the urban environment as being an impersonal, cold, artificial and fragmented place (Atkinson, 2009). The participants talked about their personal accomplishments as well as improvements to their physical ability.

One participant said that most of his improvements were psychological (O’Grady, 2012). Improved mental efficiency and strength were considered to be transferable skills that were associated with overcoming personal obstacles, growing self awareness and confidence building (O’Grady, 2012). Participants talked about how preparation for a big jump provided insight into knowing personal boundaries (O’Grady, 2012). The emotional aspects of participation and repeated practise sessions were concerned with overcoming psychological obstacles. The participants explained that parkour and free running are practises that involve overcoming emotions and continuous learning towards confronting fear as a lived experience (Saville, 2008). Participants place themselves in contexts of suffering that include; physical, mental, emotional and social which provides an opportunity for them to reflect on what creates suffering in their lives (Atkinson, 2009).

Personal endurance tests are designed to test a participant’s strength of character, courage and personal resources. Vigorous and persistent efforts to complete a self-imposed task provides legitimacy to life (Le Breton, 2000). The intense activities force the body into a personal and ferocious struggle to generate the emotion fear to ensure that the experience is powerful (Le Breton, 2000). These experiences provide a participant with an opportunity to assess the extent to which they are committed towards improving resistance and stamina regardless of the amount of pain and suffering involved. Participation is not competitive and has a focus on personal will power and an ability to overcome suffering by pushing the limit of a personally set goal. With this type of challenge the more severe the suffering the greater the sense of achievement with a participant being driven by resisting the temptation to give up (Le Breton, 2000).

Surviving a symbolic game with pain, death and bodily injury generates an ultimate truth that is normally inaccessible (Willig, 2008). Completing dangerous jumps and crossing awkward urban landscapes as part of the challenge produces suffering and requires incredible strength of character to overcome it (Le Breton, 2000). Muscular pain is confirmation that the participant has fully committed to the task. The significance of the challenge is recognised on completion with feelings of euphoria, ecstasy, elation, jubilation and of being in absolute harmony with the world. The need to be self composed is essential with recognition of the sacrifice and suffering on the part of the participant (Le Breton, 2000). Participants obtain a heightened sense of spirituality as a consequence of the ordeal or activity (Le Breton, 2000). The symbolic game with death in some of the jumps and manoeuvres completed is what gives deep meaning to the experience (Le Breton, 2000).

Some of the physical activities that participants complete are as a result of a passionate search for sensation, emotion, and physical contact with the world. Being open to nature's limits and intermingling the body with the world whilst maintaining the self is what increases the value of the experience. It is the challenge, effort and endurance that harmonises a participant with space, time and the environment (Le Breton, 2000). Participants attain a level of completeness that justifies all of their efforts. Commitment to parkour and free running provides a participant with insight into the essence of their being and the deepest values by which they live (Le Breton, 2000). How the performance is perceived by an audience is of secondary importance and of value to the individual only. Heightened spiritual experiences reveal to a participant an inner life that is ordinarily inaccessible. An increased awareness of spirituality can become a considerable cause for inspiration (Le Breton, 2000).

Flow describes the experience of total absorption in an activity or situation (Willig, 2008; Le Breton, 2000; Celsi *et al.*, 1993; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). When experiencing flow the future and past are removed from the mind and there is an intense focus on the present. Flow is related to the sacred in that it is a personal generation of meaning associated with immersion during total concentration (Le Breton, 2000). Instinctual judgements are made one after the other whereby nothing can interfere with concentration and time loses importance.

A participant becomes absorbed in movement and completely removed from the worries that normally concern him. Flow (being in the present) is a significant influence in keeping participants committed to parkour and free running because of the feelings of liberation and satisfaction that they derive (Willig, 2008; Le Breton, 2000; Celsi *et al.*, 1993; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Flow forms such a strong memory that participants will often do everything possible to relive it (Le Breton, 2000). Participation on a regular basis is a way of accessing experiences and meanings that are ordinarily unobtainable (e.g., the experience of flow). Producing the experience of flow can be construed as being a creative way of managing tensions within a participant (Willig, 2008). The experience of flow extends a participant's range of life experiences, enriches their quality of life and improves levels of self-esteem and self-confidence (Willig, 2008). A participant's determination to exceed their physical and psychological limits can be interpreted as being therapeutic as it enables them to transcend the self (Willig, 2008).

Within group dynamics is the concept of the group norm whereby acceptable behaviours are established amongst the group (Haggard and Chatzisarantis, 2005). The group norms for parkour are considered to be, non hierarchical, non competitive, inclusive and supportive. The group norms for parkour training are considered to be, mutual support, collaboration, community spirit and inclusion (O'Grady, 2012). Parkour group training sessions function according to a process of observing, mentoring, peer to peer coaching, encouragement, comparison and role modelling (O'Grady, 2012).

Group training is fundamentally a social activity that is conducted in a mutually supportive manner (O'Grady, 2012). Often participants will work in pairs with someone who has a similar level of ability or someone who they have connected with. These pairs then form part of a larger team who train together at different training sessions where knowledge and experience is shared (O'Grady, 2012). The sessions include the forming of friendships, the practice of physical techniques and networking. The parkour subculture is considered to harbour values that include; human spirituality, process orientated, holistic, community orientated, spiritual, morally aware, green, cooperative, social inclusion, physical and emotional development through athletics, technical power and performance (Atkinson, 2009).

Communitas is a Latin noun that refers to a sense of community that transcends accepted social conventions (Belk *et al.*, 1989). It relates to the camaraderie that occurs when individuals from different social backgrounds share a common bond of experience. This bond of experience will be considered sacred or special by all of the participants (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). The memories of unique experiences and the special benefits a participant derives add personal value to the magical moment. For example, overcoming an intensive ordeal can symbolically bring about a new awareness of life, especially when death is waiting for the participant who overestimates their ability to achieve (Le Breton, 2000). It is the creativity of the risk behaviour that provides catharsis for a participant and a way to experience life in a novel way (Willig, 2008). It is the spirit of communitas that emerges from shared ritual experiences that transcend the mundane of everyday life that generates a strong sense of belonging (Belk *et al.*, 1989). For example, while the experience of flow is transcendent at the individual level, common knowledge of flow stimulates a bond between the members.

A unique form of communication that is also transcendent adds coherence to the parkour subculture (Wheaton, 2000). It is a transcendent form of communication in that it transcends commonplace understanding and is often lucid in construction. It is the composition of shared experience and technical language (e.g., parkour vision) that transcends ordinary meaning. As a communal language it links the members of the subculture together. It is rarely understood by people outside of the subculture and is therefore held in high esteem and is a sign of cultural membership for those within the group (Wheaton, 2000). This special form of communication within specific cultural groups is called phatic communion. It provides group members with unique verbal and nonverbal prompts to create and help substantiate their own perspective (Malinowski, 1923). Phatic communion usually occurs amongst groups that share intimate and heightened experiences (Fishman, 1960). It is a unique communication of shared ritualistic experiences between group members (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). Phatic communion is both transcendent and sacred in that it operates outside the scope of ordinary existence and binds subcultural members in a sacred way (Malinowski, 1923). Much of the unique language is sensory information that is relative to participants at specific moments.

The sharing of memorable experiences amongst participants suggests group polarisation (Myers and Lamm, 1976). Group polarisation is a phenomenon in which there is a shift from a mildly positive attitude to a very positive one in the presence of peers. Recognised peer social respect is linked to a struggle for authentic membership status and legitimacy (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). Group polarisation produces increased risk acceptance in group judgement situations (Wallach *et al.*, 1962). This form of symbolic association within the parkour and free running subcultures is what distinguishes them from other cultures and the mainstream. Rolling, running and jumping are the physical components of the activity and the visible artistic expressions of the philosophy (Bavinton, 2007). The underlying philosophy that contains the amalgamated abstract concepts of flow (being in the present), *communitas* and phatic communion act as confirmation of the subculture (Celsi *et al.*, 1993). The participants share the understood parkour and free running values with each other to reaffirm subcultural meaning (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). The robust camaraderie amongst the participants is intensified with the belief that they are part of something that is “outside of the norm”.

Participants accept that outsiders don't fully comprehend why they do it and that only a participant truly understands (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). Participants see an environment in a specific way and they called this parkour eyes (Ameel and Tani, 2011). Participants consider areas that would normally appear as unattractive as attractive with appealing details that present opportunities for parkour practise. Seeing through parkour eyes opened up new possibilities in everyday mundane areas that contain bland spatial structures. These places become aesthetically enticing providing opportunities for emotional attachment with participants experiencing freedom and playfulness (Ameel and Tani, 2011).

The practise of parkour and free running makes visible ordinary environments and illuminates their aesthetic qualities. It is a process that re-evaluates what is considered to be of aesthetic usefulness in everyday life and what isn't (Ameel and Tani, 2011). The participant develops an acute sense of place and a sense of everyday aesthetics that is based on an environment's potential usability (Ameel and Tani, 2011). The participant is able to see beauty in their everyday surroundings that may appear dull and ordinary to an outsider. With parkour eyes they see physical conditions that surround them as having lots of potential for an innovative and playful use of space (Ameel and Tani, 2011).

An environment must provide invigorating opportunities for participants. They see rails, walls, fences, stairs and benches as opportunities for use in playful ways and they will be evaluated according to their usability and aesthetic value (Lam, 2005). Parkour and free running is not just rapid movement from one place to another. Participants have preferences in their everyday surroundings including objects, structures (solid and stable) and spatial appreciation (Ameel and Tani, 2011). Familiarity with the conditions that surround them is achieved by testing the surfaces and practising a variety of moves. This deepens the affiliation a participant will have with the environment (Saville, 2008). Participants acquire a personal environmental knowledge base (complex emotional and aesthetical values) that is formed during engagement with the physical surroundings (Haapala, 2005). For example, some locations lose their appeal overtime as participant abilities evolve and sometimes participants return to a familiar place to find new possibilities (Ameel and Tani, 2011).

Authenticity is related to a participant's ability to understand the subtle aesthetics of their activity and through participation (Ameel and Tani, 2011). Parkour and free running are not only disciplines that train the body and mind but also the imagination with moves appearing aesthetically beautiful like water flowing over rocks. During a training session moves are practised repeatedly in a playful manner to maximise the chances of fluid movement over each obstacle (O'Grady, 2012). The participant seeks uninhibited movement within the city incorporating various moves (e.g., tic tac, palm spins, vaults, kong, cat leap, monkey vault and cat balance) that include sliding, jumping, diving, vaulting and climbing. Allocating names to moves helps the participant to evaluate how to affectively approach an obstacle (O'Grady, 2012). The sense of connection parkour has with the urban landscape is essentially aesthetic (Atkinson, 2009).

Opponent process theory and related addiction models suggest that participants will form emotional attachment to the thrill of high risk jumps and flips and therefore long for participation when away from it (Solomon, 1980). The theory indicates that participants will endeavour to experience parkour and free running manoeuvres of increasing difficulty and perceive risk as being something positive to be experienced rather than something to be minimalised (Solomon, 1980).

It is suggested in the literature that new sport activities are occurring because of an increase in individualism in sport participation (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). Also social arrangements often fail to provide adequate challenges for teenagers so they seek alternative channels for creativity and meaning (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Extreme sport participants distance themselves from the standards and values of the dominant traditional sport culture. Their sense of individuality is reaffirmed by partaking in training sessions that are non hierarchical in comparison to traditional sports (O'Grady, 2012). The self regulated parkour and free running training groups harbour values that are both disciplining and resistant at the same time (O'Grady, 2012). For example, parkour and free running challenge traditional sports conventions by treating the city as an urban playground without acknowledging the established confines within it (Bavinton, 2007; Rojek, 1995). Most sports are performed within a restricted setting including a football pitch, tennis court, or a golf course. Parkour and free running operate as a process of resistance as well as a form of discipline with participants contesting systems of control and resistance (O'Grady, 2012).

In the last thirty years many resistant alternative sports have been incorporated into global mainstream sports cultures (e.g., skateboarding and windsurfing). This represents a coexistent aspect of the post modern sporting experience whereby alternative sport subcultures and localised resistance towards mass consumption and materialism exist together (Wheaton, 2000). It is no longer a distinctive process of mainstream incorporation followed by a resistance and struggle on the part of the subculture that is being blended into the mainstream (Thornton, 1995). For example, when alternative sports become incorporated into the mainstream they become institutionalized, formal, vertically hierarchical and exist according to intense competition, social exclusion and domination of others (Atkinson, 2009).

Western capitalist design can be construed as having an oppressive affect on the human spirit and contribute to the desensitising of an individual's environmental awareness (Atkinson, 2009). For example, technology controls the city which functions according to capitalist rationalised rules and standards that maintain the flow of products and services. Within this humans are systematically subordinated to serve technology (Heidegger, 1977). Resistance to commodity hedonism and environmental destruction might be represented by symbolic participation in intense forms of physical activity.

Most public spaces are out of bounds to forms of play and yet participants find unconventional ways of moving through the city. Participant actions within the city can be construed as being deviant because they do not comply with the designated functions of public space (Atkinson, 2009). Participation penetrates the commercial hegemony of the city which raises awareness on its social construction and the movement within it. It also raises awareness on its impact on society, culture, spirituality and environmental ethics (Atkinson, 2009). Parkour and free running are physical cultural practises of criticism that highlight the contradictions that exist in modern society between technology and nature, growth and destruction, consumption and conservation and freedom and surveillance (Atkinson and Young, 2008). Reconnecting with the environment through the practice of parkour and free running can lead to spiritual, moral and cultural change (Atkinson, 2009).

Academic research into parkour suggests that it is a form of resistance that challenges the realities of everyday urban life and the hierarchical control of planned public space (Archer, 2010; Atkinson, 2009; Saville, 2008; Daskalaki *et al.*, 2008; Bavinton, 2007; Geyh, 2006). Participants of parkour and free running collectively resist the social arrangements of the city in a non violent way and stimulate a critique of urban life in the modern world. Danger, excitement and a disregard of safety are vital components of the parkour and free running experience. Participants value the sense of escaping from society and the association with danger which represents a resistance towards competition and commercialism (Atkinson, 2009). Risk taking opposes the values of the dominant culture with many new sports having an anti-mainstream ethos (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). Yet the media play a key role in the authentication of popular cultural practises (Wheaton and Beal, 2003). Perhaps parkour and free running will not be victims of commercialism but have active roles to play in reinventing the images and meanings circulated by the media (Thornton, 1995; Redhead, 1993).

Striving for social power and material goods often causes widespread human suffering (Schopenhauer, 1903). Freedom from suffering can occur when a person withstands the human will that is motivated by external desires (Schopenhauer, 1903). Denying the urges of the human will can facilitate a person with space to observe the nature of their suffering and therefore be liberated from it (Atkinson, 2009).

Participants avert the pressures of materialism and the fears associated with it from entering their minds whilst practising parkour (Atkinson, 2009). Participants conquer the art of letting go psychologically, physically and socially by repeatedly completing hazardous moves. They begin to trust the mind and body instinctually and move without being conscious of their fears and social desires (Atkinson, 2009).

Subcultural research for over forty years suggests that the core ideological messages of counter cultural movements are ineffective (e.g., too alternative to warrant mainstream attention), misunderstood (e.g., perceived as being a novel form of entertainment) or co-opted into popular culture (e.g., skateboarding or windsurfing). Despite being new physical cultures parkour and free running might not have a significant impact as a counter culture (Atkinson, 2009). Analysing the perspectives, meanings and experiences of the designated research participants made it possible to extract the essences of the phenomenon being studied (Smith, 2004). Distilling this information to produce themes as part of the IPA process crystallised the knowledge on parkour and free running and has significantly added to what is known in the literature on extreme activities. This newly acquired knowledge can also be used to help contextualise future studies of emerging interest within the sports domain.

The themes indicate that participants of parkour and free running are motivated by thrill seeking, risk, health and enjoyment. This discovery supports the literature findings on meanings and motivation for participation in high risk activities (Willig, 2008; Larkin and Griffiths, 2004; Celsi *et al.*, 1993). The themes: being in the present (flow), mastery, training and challenge correspond with the findings in the literature that indicate that high risk activities are meaningful and purposeful practices (O’Grady, 2012; Atkinson, 2009; Willig, 2008; Saville, 2008; Bavinton, 2007; Larkin and Griffiths, 2004; Celsi *et al.*, 1993; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). The themes: enjoyment, being in the present and spirituality support the literature findings that suggest that participation in high risk activities can be a way of re-establishing psychological balance (Willig, 2008; Larkin and Griffiths, 2004; Celsi *et al.*, 1993). The themes: philosophy, environment, spirituality, aesthetics and perception that were discovered are linked to the characteristics of extreme sports. This suggests that parkour and free running are part of a counter culture (O’Grady, 2012; Atkinson, 2009; Saville, 2008; Bavinton, 2007; Giulianotti and Robertson, 2007; Wheaton and Beal, 2003; Maguire, 1999; Rojek, 1995).

It is recommended that future studies into parkour and free running are completed within both the qualitative and quantitative fields (Gratton and Jones, 2004). New phenomenological studies will add to the knowledge base that has been accrued as part of this study (Lavery, 2008). Qualitative studies into parkour and free running will significantly enhance and add to what is now known about them from a phenomenological standpoint (Mason, 2002). For example, it was noticed during the completion of this study that the female contingency is growing. Perhaps a study on how growing female interest affects the dynamics of parkour and free running would be useful.

It has been highlighted that the personal history, social world and relevant past events of the participant are not part of the IPA investigation (Willig, 2008). An in-depth quantitative study might fill in this gap in the literature by producing material that would supplement the qualitative findings of this study. A quantitative study might most affectively be utilised when seeking detailed general demographical statistics (Gratton and Jones, 2004). The information being sought might include age, sex, class, ethnicity, disabilities, employment status, regional, national and global trends of those participating. This material would embed the findings of this study and broaden understanding on the recent emergence of parkour and free running.

**APPENDICES**

## Appendices

---

### **Appendix A:** Feasibility

Feasibility	Yes/No
Interviewer:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Are the questions appropriate?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Is the device used appropriate for the interview and the setting?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Can a group setting be managed?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Can the flow of communication during interview be managed?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Can the device properly operated?	
Interviewees:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Were the travel arrangements properly planned?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Did the interviewees respond negatively to the questions with excessive nervousness?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Were they on time?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Were the participants sufficiently articulate?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Did they provide lots of rich descriptions with their answers?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Were the participants respectful towards the aims of the interview?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Did they become bored during the interview process and display a lack of interest?	
The setting and the mechanical devices used:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Did the device fail during the interview?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Was the material recorded on the device of good quality and easily understood?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Was the chosen location and appropriate setting?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Was it too noisy an environment?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Were there too many distractions?	

### **Appendix B:** Participant Information Sheet:

#### **Participant Information Sheet**

**Study Title:** A Phenomenological Exploration of Parkour and Free running

#### Invitation paragraph

I am looking to recruit a number of participants for my educational research study into Parkour and Free running as part of my PhD. The information contained in this sheet is designed to provide a better understanding of what will be required of you as a participant. Please read all of the information very carefully before making a decision.

#### **What is the purpose of the study?**

To explore the emergence of Parkour and Free running as an alternative activity to traditional physical activity.

To identify the major social reasons for the emergence of Parkour and Free running.

To identify the major psychological reasons for the emergence of Parkour and Free running.

#### **Why have I been invited?**

I am looking to recruit between 2 and 5 participants for the pilot study and between 2 and 10 for the main study who have experience in Parkour and Free running. I will be looking to gather rich individual descriptions on the phenomenon being investigated. I will organise interviews that will take place at a location that is convenient for everybody taking part. The interviews will last approximately one hour and will be tape recorded.

#### **Do I have to take part?**

You are under no obligation to take part as the research is being conducted on a voluntary basis. You can withdraw your participation from the study without notification if you feel so inclined.

### **What will happen to me if I take part?**

IPA is one of the variants of phenomenology; its purpose is to reveal in-depth insight into how a person in a particular context understands a given phenomenon. Often, IPA focuses on the experiences of a small number of individuals in relation to the phenomenon being investigated. Fundamentally, IPA research is flexible and open-ended in nature whereby the researcher adopts an inquisitive outlook and investigative demeanor. As a participant you will be asked to recall and describe in detail specific experiences of Parkour or Free running. For example, what were your feelings before and after taking part? What are your best/worst experiences? What qualities and meanings do you associate with a specific experience? This activity will be supplemented with approximately fifteen open ended questions that will encourage you to elaborate on your initial accounts. Designated participants will be asked to re-examine the extracted essences of the phenomenon to validate the overall trustworthiness of the project.

### **Expenses and Payments?**

No expenses or payments will be needed.

### **What will I have to do?**

You must have experience with the phenomenon being investigated and possess the ability to articulate your experiences. You will be required to read and sign a consent form to formally agree the outlined conditions of the project as part of the recruitment process (this will be completed at the beginning of the interview.) If you require anonymity you will receive a research code (known only by me) which will ensure that your identity remains confidential and anonymous.

### **What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?**

Phenomenology is concerned with the study of experience from the perspective of the individual. I will be looking to gather your personal views, beliefs, specific motivations and reasons for taking part. Throughout the interview particular care and attention will be given to any sensitive issues that might emerge and cause unforeseen distress. The interview will be stopped at that point so that the issue can be addressed until you feel able to continue.

### **What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

Parkour and Free running is currently an academically under investigated, hidden and profound area of the sports domain. They are highly original and creative activities that are “outside” the mainstream. As a participant you will play a vital role in the formal discovering process of how these ultra modern sports function. Your belief systems, psyches, social relations, attitudes, and underlying mechanisms will significantly contribute towards understanding the emergence of Parkour and Free running.

### **What if there is a problem?**

Please approach me at any point during the research process and I or my supervisors (their contact details are at the end of the information sheet) will endeavour to address any unforeseen concerns that you might have. If this does not rectify the problem you can contact Salford University directly to log a formal complaint. The contact details are: Website address: [www.salford.ac.uk/](http://www.salford.ac.uk/) (Please follow instructions for complaints) Telephone Number: 0161 295 4545.

### **Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?**

If you require anonymity you will receive a research code (known only by me) which will ensure that your identity remains confidential and anonymous.

Transcripts and tapes will remain anonymous and coded. Any paper copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet within a locked room accessed only by me.

Electronically stored information will be password protected.

Data stored on CD's and USB memory sticks will be anonymous and identified with a code.

If the research is published your identity will be disguised unless you give prior consent.

Data will be stored and archived for a minimum of 3 years to allow verification from external sources and if necessary used in further research.

### **What will happen if I don't carry on with the study?**

The information you have provided will be destroyed and your name, address and contact details removed from the research files.

### **What will happen to the results of the research study?**

The participant descriptions captured during the interviews will be used to generate closely linked themes that will contribute towards producing a final statement about Parkour and Free running. Designated participants will be asked to check that the statement accurately describes the essences of the phenomenon being investigated.

### **Who is organising or sponsoring the research?**

I am responsible for organising the interviews as a requirement for my PhD.

Further information and contact details:

For any general enquiries please contact me or either of my supervisors directly. The contact details are:

Dr Tom Fawcett

B.Ed, M.Ed, Ph.D

Accredited Sports Psychologist

BASES (Scientific Support)

Senior Lecturer - Sport & Exercise Psychology

Directorate of Sport

School of Health Care Professions

University of Salford

M6 6PU

Tel: 0161-295-2161

Researcher contact details: Mathew Wallace

Email: [vazmat@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:vazmat@yahoo.co.uk)

University of Salford

Greater Manchester

M5 4WT

07977441017 (m)

# Appendices

---

## **Appendix C:** Consent Form:

### Research Participant Consent Form

**Title of Project:** A Phenomenological Exploration of Parkour and Free running

RGEC Ref No:

**Name of Researcher:** Mathew Wallace

(Delete as appropriate)

I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study and what my contribution will be.

Yes	No
-----	----

I have been given the opportunity to ask questions (face-to-face, via telephone and e-mail)

Yes	No
-----	----

I agree to take part in the interview

Yes	No	NA
-----	----	----

## Appendices

---

I agree to the interview being tape recorded

Yes	No	NA
-----	----	----

I agree to digital images being taken during the research exercises

Yes	No	NA
-----	----	----

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can  
withdraw from the research at any time without giving any reason

Yes	No
-----	----

I agree to take part in the above study

Yes	No
-----	----

Name of participant .....

...

Signature .....

## Appendices

---

Date .....

Name of researcher taking consent    Mathew Wallace

Researchers e-mail address            vazmat@yahoo.co.uk

## Appendices

---

### **Appendix D: Participant A:** Semi-Structured Interview Transcript

Interview File: VN550001.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.1)** Ok, so how would you describe parkour to somebody who knows absolutely nothing about it, you know a complete novice?

**ANS:**

Oh ok, umm, it's a, to me, parkour is an efficient way of training to getting from point A to point B, umm, there's parkour and Free Running. Free running in very literal terms, free running could be based around a more expressionist form, umm with acrobatics involved a lot more, with parkour being more training for every situation in a very efficient way, so umm as we sort of like switch between the two, oh yeah that's up to me really.

INT: Mathew Wallace

Good answer, okay.

Interview File: VN550004.WMA

INT: Mathew Wallace

Prompt: So can you tell when did you start? Why did you start? How did you find out about it? You know was it Face book or something like that, where did you first do it? And where do you do it now? And is it easy?

**ANS:**

Well, urr, I started off about six years ago and there was a programme on channel 4 called Jump Britain and urr jump Britain was a urr, a sequel to Jump London, and Jump London revolved around a few French free runners who could parkour, began in France in a small town in called Lisses. Umm French runners coming to London and jumping over the emm. landscape of London really then a few years later they were invited back and again by Channel Four and they did Jump Britain.

## Appendices

---

At that point through Jump London the whole sport had grown and evolved into a lot more people knew about it, so I watched jump Britain, complete novice and that night went out and just decided, I know it was a very childish thing, I wanted to just jump around, I just wanted to do what they did, I knew I would never be good enough but I wanted to just have a go. The next day I woke up and my body hurt, I've never had ache like that in my life and it was wonderful, it was self-improvement it was knowing that I had moved forward. Cause I've never been very sporty and umm, my first free running was jumping over a wall, and it was I just using my hands and I never thought I could and realised how easy it was and.

It started off every day I would train behind this supermarket called B and N bargains umm and eventually it would move out, it moved out and spread across the whole town, suddenly everything I could free run and I went through a period about three years ago when I was thinking about quitting. Because I'd be training and somebody would come by and they'd say oh I can do that, you know it's really easy and they do it.

And I'd get really disheartened, cause I'd think to myself I been training for three years and these people can do it, I then I came to the realisation that you know when they say I can do it, look at me I can do it, I'd turn to them and say great, do it again and I'd be wanting to promoting it instead and it was at that point it changed simply about from being wanting to jump around for that moment to being able to jump around for the rest of my life.

Interview File: VN550007.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.2)** So, yeah, can you tell me: Why do you do it? What attracts you to it? What inspires you about it? What is it about parkour that motivates you to do it? What does it do for you personally?

**ANS:**

Umm, I used to be, I used to have no self-confidence, I never did any sport, my body was terrible I had no fitness level what so ever and so when I began, I never thought about improving myself it didn't pop, come into my head.

## Appendices

---

And emm one day I decided, we had these tiny little weights in our house 1.5 kilograms and I picked them up and I was bored, and so I decided to Umm do some weights with them just lifting my arms outwards again and again and again and I didn't realise it was working the top of my shoulders. And one day I was getting into the shower and I looked in the mirror and I literally shocked I jumped a little, because I had grown muscle, that was a new thing for me, cause I was so skinny that had never happened.

INT: Mathew Wallace

Yeah, yeah.

**ANS:**

And it was after that the motivation really kicked in, that was the inspiration, of seeing the change that it had. You know you hear about people who had drug problems and violence problems and suddenly they took up free running and everything disappeared. And that was, the motivation for it was born out of doing it, you know the inspiration came out of me going around and jumping around it was very spiritual in nature, you know it was like people who climb to the top of a mountain and look over the scenery and they realise something that's always been there but they've never seen it. It was like that and suddenly I could look at myself from a distance and realised that I had changed that was defiantly my inspiration, yeah.

INT: Mathew Wallace

Yeah, brilliant.

Interview File: VN550010.WMA.

**ANS:**

In terms of risk about parkour; Umm it was never the adrenalin rush for me, right at the beginning I wasn't about the adrenalin I was thinking about showing off, thinking I could do anything.

## Appendices

---

INT: Mathew Wallace

Really.

**ANS:**

Anything at all, I'd never been experienced in anything in anyway and so it was nice that I could do something that not many other people could do. And then after I realised that it would become part of my life. I realised that with becoming ready for every situation to help people, because that for all three of us, that's a big motivating factor about our parkour being able to help people. Going back to that super hero wanting as a child to be able to save people, you know you can help them now, you can do it, you can't be superman but you can get close. You know, it's a nice feeling to have that, so when I realised that, if there was any risk involved in it. If I went for the adrenalin then that would cloud my senses Umm, say if I'm doing a very large jump if the adrenalin clouds my sense I increase the risk and if I increase the risk I won't be able help people. So it became I wasn't searching for the risk anymore I was searching for deleting the risk, doing a move a thousand times over so that I wouldn't hurt myself if I ever did it. You Umm, Adoser Teekay 17 who said it perfectly when he said a traceur who practices parkour, has to be able to think on his feet even when his feet are busy.

Fantastic phrase and that's it, it's about deleting that risk, in order to have the best possible outcome. I mean I understand people who want to do it for that risk and I can understand that feeling of adrenaline, but after a while its like if you have a lot of coffee eventually you become immune to the effects of it. And I think I've filled myself up with so much adrenalin, I'm constantly on adrenalin now it doesn't affect me anymore. I've done so many big things, afterwards you're shaking, you can't believe you've done that, now you land, you do this massive jump that you would be shaking afterwards and you land and you say my footing was off I'm going to do it again, it's that perfection that you got to go for.

We went to France recently where they began free running and we came back with a philosophy of if you do any jump you have to do it three times. The first time is easy the first time you don't think about it, the second time is a little bit harder and you're thinking a little bit more about your technique. The third time is the hardest because you done it so many times you're wondering maybe this is the time you'll hurt yourself.

## Appendices

---

And then afterwards after you've done all of those you get really annoyed because the person next to you say's you have to do one for the family, one more time for the family. Yet I've never hated my family so much in my life, you're so scared of doing that jump, you don't want to do it again but then you realise you're doing it for them it's not you anymore more, it's for them.

Interview File: VN550011.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.3)** So do you think it attracts people in different ways or is there a consensus about parkour?

**ANS:**

Umm, alright, that's are very difficult question because you have parkour and you have Free running, now if you want to get into the politics, most free runners refuse to get into the politics simply because they enjoy the movement of it. But if you want to get into the politics, free running I defiantly think for the most part people enjoy the showing off factor, I definitely believe that.

INT: Mathew Wallace

Performer.

**ANS:**

Yeah, even though I have no objection to it, I mean, so parlour is from getting from point A to point B and you have to be timed to stay in one place and do the move again and again and again and again, that's the training for getting from point A to point B, so the lines begin to blur, I think for most people, It's a very half and half split, people who want to improvement themselves and help people for the other half they want to impress people.

Interview File: VN550014.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.4)** Tell me about the interesting aspect of parkour please?

## Appendices

---

**ANS:**

Umm, clarify, interesting aspect?

INT: Mathew Wallace

Prompt: Yeah well, when I think of it, I think of freedom of expression I do think of it as an adrenalin buzz, pushing boundaries, pushing yourself, you know this sort of thing, over to you.

**ANS:**

Interesting aspects of parkour, Umm it's very expressionist, it allows people to, Umm oh for many people it's a stress relief, defiantly for me it's a stress relief, if you have a hard day in college if you have a hard day in work. You go out and jump around and obviously in the biological terms you have dopamine and serotonin released into you're the blood you know, pain relieving you know types of morphine in a sense and you become very docile and become happy. Its interesting aspects of parkour, you know personally I think one of the most interesting aspects of parkour would be its origin. I mean it began with something called Method Unnatural which was coined by a French, Umm, it's not philosopher, Umm I can't think of the word.

INT: Mathew Wallace

Revolutionist.

**ANS:**

Umm, It was a French guy called Georges Hébert, whilst working in the army he decided to create a training regime that was completely natural that worked on ten schools of movement, along the lines of swimming, running, jumping, fighting, crawling under something, vaulting something and it basically evolved around natural people, it actually allowed him, he was near the Volcano Krakatoa I believe.

INT: Mathew Wallace

Yeah.

**ANS:**

He actually rescued about three hundred of the town's folk through using his training. So he decided this is fantastic, you know this works so he decided to apply it to the military and it was taken on whole heartedly by the French military; every French military person practiced something called parkour dus combat, which basically means combat obstacles, so if you're in the combat environment you can move efficiently through your environment, either on your way or through to intercept your enemy.

That was taken on by somebody called Raymond Bell and Raymond Bell was a fire fighter who also practiced parkour dus combat and he practised it in a forest outside his home near Calais, after that, whilst he was doing that his son David got involved and David practiced Method Unnatural.

When they moved to a little town called Lisses outside their City of Avery 35 kilometers South of Paris emm; it was a new town, there was nothing to so David Bell and his friends did the only thing that they could do so they bounced around this town, it became a phenomenon to them, you know it was something that could allow them to free themselves from this nothing, they had nothing to do you know, so it allowed them to be children you know, it allowed them to act as the super heroes they wanted to be. For me that's the most interesting aspect, when I jump around I don't try and deny I'm acting like a child and its fun because children have a different view on the world than adults do.

How many adults do you see walking along the wall, yet how many children do you see wanting to jump up onto a wall and go yeah, you know and be up there? Its emm half the time we train and we say walking along the wall and we're not ashamed to say there's Lava's on the ground, it presents a new fun aspect to it all, so it doesn't have to be conditioning and training yourself it can be fun, it can be really, really liberating to most people, yeah that's my most interesting aspect.

Interview File: VN550017.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.5)** Can you talk about the first time you tried it and give examples of your experience?

### ANS:

First time I tried it, it was a wall that was higher on one side than it was on the other and I didn't realise how high it was and I jumped over this wall and proceeding to fall longer than I expected. Landed and rolled onto my back and sort of like lay there for a moment completely winded, I went, ah what's going on. I had no idea; it was dark, it was middle of winter, it was about six a clock at night, so six o clock pitch black, I had no idea what was going on and I got back up and I can specifically remember getting back up and James was with me and James looked over the wall and said are you okay and I said I'm fine, I'm just a little winded in a very wheezed out voice that you have like somebody punching you in the gut.

And then I did something that I never thought about and it remains with me to this day, instead of going around the wall to get back on the top I went over the wall. I climbed back up that wall and got back onto the other side and that was the interesting thing, not taking the long route and it was shortening that distance but also in your mind. You think if somebody walks down the street and they see a wall, they'll go around the wall, if somebody's walking emm like to a field and there's a path around the field, they'll follow the path, regardless of the fact if they're trying to get some where the fastest way is to go across the grass. And it was a very big thing for me to suddenly have that moment of realisation when everything shortens everything becomes a lot smaller, so I did the jump again realising how big it was and this time landed on my feet very, very happy.

And then we proceeded to walk around the entire, entire town just jumping around just finding things we never thought were important, you know a rail a wall, a very weird combination of grass and gravel you know, marking lines on the ground. For the first time in my life, like parking lines became start and end, you jump from one line to the other, instead of something slotting nicely in between them it was very, you were forging your own path. Then we moved onto Southport College and emm we found this little wall and we were jumping over it and a person came by about our age and he looked at us for a moment and he went in a very thick scouse accent. He said, 'ah mate you're doing that parkour thing, you know that thing I saw last night on the T.V'. And it was like he's associating me, ah yes I do parkour, it was like yes I'm associated with this and I went home and was I feeling great and I got home and sat down my Dads been wondering where the hell I've been all night, oh I just been doing this parkour thing, that thing that was on the T.V last night.

## Appendices

---

He said, you're going to break your neck in a very exaggerated way I put my leg up on the chair, oh me poor legs, I'm getting achy in my old age. Went up to bed next day I was achy in my old age, I remember I stepped out of bed and I fell over, I slept on the top bunk of a bunk bed, so imagine getting out of bed like that, I just fell on my face. I rode into school that day and it was painful, so painful, I had trouble just locking my bike up but with all this pain with all this achy-ness and with all this absolute something close to humiliation at causing myself to be like this, I had this biggest grin on my face because it wasn't pain it was progression, yeah that was my first time free running and it was the best.

Interview File: VN550020.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.6):** So what have you learned from doing parkour?

**ANS:**

Umm, to be very blunt about it, I've learned about how to move, that's the most important thing is that you learn how to move, people move everyday with such a limited range of motions, that they forget that they've got everything else. You know if you list what people go through every day, you lift something, they walk, if they go to the gym, they'll run and they'll lift something again and they'll probably swim, that's about five, six. What they completely miss is jumping; crawling, climbing you know walking backwards, walking on their hands you know, skipping. Skipping if you didn't know skipping is a fantastic way to work on your length jumps, if you skip everywhere alright you're going to look a bit strange doing it but you know it's not as if we look strange doing other things.

We jump around buildings for fun but Umm, I'm going to retract that statement, we don't jump around buildings for fun, we don't, that's very risky and unsafe; but we emm it's told me about the movement, I find it interesting after doing parkour for six years I would gladly sit down and watch a cat walk across the room because they have such a wide range of movement, its we're inferior to that range of movement, if you look at a cat, a cat can jump three times its height easily and you look at them and it's like why can't I do that. It's taught me about the way the body works, the physiology, the biology it's taught me about the way how the body acts and reacts, the cause and effect of it.

## Appendices

---

You realise the body is a fantastically tuned machine, like any fantastically tuned machine you have to keep it oiled, you have to, you have to replace the parts, not in the literal sense, that would be quite messy with the human body emm.

But you've got to take care of it; I think the most important thing going back to the spirituality of it, the most important thing parkour has taught me is how to mentally cope. If you can quoting another free Runner again, Blaine, Chris Blaine Roate, he said that it helped him in his life, because say, if you're doing a presentation you stand in front of that presentation group and you think to yourself alright this is a scary situation, then it jumps into your head all of a sudden that this is nowhere near as scary as doing that 11 foot jump you did yesterday, there isn't any death involved in this, there isn't any possibility of breaking limes, what's the point off being scared, it teaches you to fight your fears in every way possible to fight your barriers, physical or mental, I think parkour does that than any other sport because it's so varied.

Interview File: VN550023.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.7)** Is it an individual thing or is it more of a social thing?

**ANS:**

Umm, parkour, varies between the two, once again I'd be sort of quoting I don't know if you need a reference, for a runner called Sebastian Foucan; which was one of the original tracers in France. He said it, when your with people you gain a different kind of confidence the jumps there, bang you do the job it's wonderful. And everybody cheers you on, when you're on your own a barrier gets involved you have to, you don't have any positive peer pressure, you have to do it yourself, I think in order for true progression to happen in parkour it has to be an individual thing.

As Anthony said before em you can't nobody else can teach you a move, so it doesn't matter if you're in a group of 30 or 40, a hundred people who can all do the move it won't help you one bit. In parkour, you can be the only person in the crowd of a hundred people because you're the only person breaking through your own barriers; you're not breaking through anybody else's.

## Appendices

---

I think true progression only happens when you're on your own, although I do believe it's that social aspect that makes parkour so appealing, so many other people, so many like-minded people all striving for one goal to better themselves.

That, God it motivates you, it does something to you, you hear about parkour Jams, a meeting of people and you want to go so much. Even if you can't you spend your entire day in work thinking to yourself, why don't I quit this job and just go free run with them, it's so motivating to know there's so many people who have as much passion as you, so yeah it's defiantly social but individual is what provides the progression.

Interview File: VN550026.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.8)** Is parkour environmentally and socially influenced?

**ANS:**

Uh, oh, that's a good question, is parkour environmentally and socially influenced.

INT: Mathew Wallace

Yes.

**ANS:**

Emm I'll do one thing at a time, so I don't confuse myself. Environmentally influenced parkour is definite, because without the environment you're not doing parkour. The different landscape require a different type of parkour, running through a City is absolutely nothing like running through a forest, running through a forest is nothing like running across open ground. The environment influences what mind set you will have; what movement you'll implement, emm I think defiantly I mean in terms of environmentally influenced you take a certain pride in your surroundings, you will not, we try our best not to damage anything and if we do damage something then we own up to it straight away.

Because the way that we view it is if we break something then we won't be able to use it again, that's a very important factor, it's not about using it and hoping that nobody else cares.

## Appendices

---

It's about using it and knowing that you can go back there and use it again it's about that long lasting, in the same way the part of Method Unnatural, and that's for the person and the same thing implies to the environment everything has to last.

The social angle of it, the only reason parkour is what it is today is because of the people of Lisses allowed it to be so. If the people of Lisses in France had said no to the boys jumping around if they'd quashed that desire, parkour would not be there, I truly believe parkour relies solely on the respect of the community.

If the community as a whole doesn't like you, you'll be frowned upon, as far as I know only one place, Morton in Liverpool has banned free running on threat on having an asbo. But that's because, a few bad apples is destroying the whole bunch, people won't heed the whole batch of apples now, you will never see in the majority of the country a sign that says you can't do parkour, you'll see a sign that says you can't go skate boarding or you can't skate you can't ride your bike here because but you'll not see something that says you can't do parkour here. Because parkour protects its environment, it requires it to carry on, as long as we have the good respect of the community.

Now's the time that parkour because it's so new, now's the time to make its reputation, it's now that you have to be nice to people, if somebody asks us to move from a particular place, No argument, zero argument, we say we're very sorry and we leave. There's one place in Southport, there's a supermarket, a department store in Southport that we train round the back of, emm wonderful area to train, and sometimes people ask us to move in which case we say yeah wonderful.

And at some points we've actually had it quite a few times people come out and say ah you're doing that parkour thing would you want us to refill your water, wonderful. And they allow us to train there and if they want us to move no problem, and it's that level of respect, we show respect to them about respecting their environment and respecting their property, they show respect to us its basic human nature, so environmentally and socially defiantly influence parkour.

Interview File: VN550029.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.9)** Could you live without parkour?

**ANS:**

Umm No, umm I think, that's a very emotional question for me not like I'm going to cry or anything, that question means a lot to me because I often think to myself what if I break a leg or really hurt myself, Parkour has become such a way of life for me, that it's imagining Umm having somebody there for the whole of your life and suddenly there not. Its becomes such the norm, it becomes such a stress relief, like when people become addicted to exercise, but it's not an addiction, I couldn't live with it, because I couldn't live with the fact that I had that freedom and now I don't. I couldn't live with that knowing that could no longer move like that, parkour encompasses so many things, that if I think to myself if I lose my leg if I lose my arm, there's one armed free runners, there's a one armed free runner you know.

At the recent world free run championships, somebody tore their knee ligament very badly, and he was very badly injured, and yet at the end of one of his videos recently that showed all the old footage and everybody supporting him, it showed him training with his cast on his leg, just upper body stuff. parkour is so wide ranging, I think it would be almost impossible for me to ever be able to quit, for any situation to happen other than death that I could stop doing it, and that's why it means so much to me, because In the literal sense, saying that's impossible not to be able to do it in a literal sense, I wouldn't be able to live without doing parkour, I could do it all the time.

### **Appendix E: Participant B:** Semi-Structured Interview Transcript

Interview File: VN550002.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.1)** So how would you describe parkour to somebody who knows absolutely nothing about it, give it to me as it is, the background from your own perspective, you know in its raw terms, the basics, what's it all about?

**ANS:**

Well to me it started off very, you're literally training to get from A to B using every physical movement possible and you train for every situation, every motion every obstacle it slowly become more based around getting to know yourself and your environment that's all I can really think of emm.

Interview File: VN550005.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

Prompt: When did you start? Why did you start? How did you find out about it? Where do you do it, start off? And where do you do it now? And is it easy?

**ANS:**

Well I started emm, One night there was a documentary on Jump Britain, I think it was the night after it was on I went out with Mat and we had a jump around and stuff like that, and we started doing it in high school on a little wall we found round the back and we used to hop around on our lunch break, just playing, just messing about. I stopped and went onto aggressive in line skate I did that for a while, at the time it was only playing around it was nothing serious, I skated for a couple of years, I hurt my leg then I had to stop, as it recovered I found I'd lost interest in it.

I got back in touch with Mat and Tony who were still doing it, so I got into it then, I was much more grown up and physically developed there was more to do, I was more capable than I was and it just became less physical and more about the mental side of it, I've really found myself doing things that back when, I don't know when, I would have called impossible and now here I am doing them and its fantastic and I love it.

## Appendices

---

Interview File: VN550008.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.2)** So why do you do it? What attracts you to it? What inspires you about it? What is it about parkour that motivates you to do it? What do you do it for? How important is risk, danger, thrill seeking, the mental and physical challenges that sort of thing?

**ANS:**

Truth be told, when I was little I was a bit of a super hero buff, I used to absolutely love the stuff, and doing the stuff we're doing now I feel a little bit like a super hero, it's given me the means to help people friends, family, if there in trouble both the mental capacity to deal with the situation and the physical everything. So that's really what inspires me that I can help people out, as with the risk side of it, I like there to be a bit risk involved, I don't know about these two, their slightly more down to earth, but I think with my background with my skating and stuff like that I prefer an adrenalin kick every so often.

Interview File: VN550012.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.3)** Do you think parkour attracts people in different ways or is there a consensus about it?

**ANS:**

Well I've noticed through my years of training parkour a lot of practitioners seem to have the same personality type, they all seem to be kind people, I'm not saying horrible people don't, but they seem to have a very similar personality so I think it tends to be more those people attracted to parkour due to something in them.

INT: Mathew Wallace

Prompt: You say kind, what other things, what type of person?

**ANS:**

It's hard to describe, its often very creative people, who a lot of which tend to put others before themselves, people with a very deep outlook on life who are looking for something more, if you see where I'm coming from.

## Appendices

---

INT:

Mat, mentioned spirituality before, yeah thanks.

Interview File: VN550015.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.4)** Can you tell me about the interesting aspects of parkour please?

**ANS:**

Well for me personally the most interesting thing about my Parkour is my body itself through just doing this sport or discipline as some people like to refer to it. I've learnt so much about my body, the way my muscles work the way they develop the way my tendons work, it's made me more in touch with me physically and mentally and I'm still learning about my body and I'm still absolutely intrigued by it the different things and what it's capable of.

Interview File: VN550018.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.5)** Can you tell me the first time you tried parkour and can you give examples of your experience please?

**ANS:**

Well the first time I tried Parkour was with Mat, we just gone round town, just bouncing about happily and at the time I fell in Love with it because I felt like I was six again it was fantastic, just running along walls you know, I loved it to bits just climbing on everything we could see for no particular reason, it was great getting some fantastically weird looks off people but it was fantastic.

INT: Mathew Wallace

You liked that.

## Appendices

---

**ANS:**

Oh yeah, but the most noted thing about my first time that something we mention to everyone is the day after, when you wake up and muscles you never knew existed hurt it was fantastic but as Mat said it was progression, you were proud of the fact that your body hurt ready for the next time you go out to pretend that you're six.

Interview File: VN550021.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.6)** What have you learned through doing parkour?

**ANS:**

Well most importantly I learnt my own limits, physically and mentally, but I've also learnt how to push them and give myself a greater physical and mental strength which has really helped me through life in a lot of different aspects yeah really did.

Interview File: VN550024.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.7)** Is it an individual thing or is it more of a Social thing?

**ANS:**

Well both, individual and social training play an important part in the tracer's progression, uh the individual side is very about yourself, finding your own limits, barriers and finding your own personal way to get past that. But I feel when you're with a group you have to be very careful although the positive pressure can be great, very appealing, very motivating, at the same time it can be quite dangerous. If people are cheering you on to do a jump or a gap you know you're not ready for, but you do it just too kind of show off then the risk increases to a point where you're not comfortable.

You don't feel in control with it, it can be very positive but in that respect it's about your individual look at it, because you have to know even when you're with a group whether to say yes I'll do this or no, I can't.

## Appendices

---

Umm with the Social side it reminds me of when we went to France, to Lisses the birth place of parkour and we met tracers from all over the world, there were people from Finland, people from America, people from France and the second you meet these people it's like you've known them your entire life, everyone is so happy to see you and wants to teach you things that they've learnt and you teach them things you've learnt, spread your knowledge around, it's a fantastic feeling, its absolutely beautiful.

Interview File: VN550027.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.8)** Is parkour environmentally and socially influenced?

**ANS:**

Yes, hahaha I think it's defiantly influenced by the environment cause not the whole but most of the discipline is based on getting around it, navigating around it through it and so on, different landscapes call for different movements. Like Mat said, you've got forests you've got Cityscapes you've got more Suburban, which is you know there's less obstacles, its more open ground, I think that all does really influence emm the way we train cause you then you have to really learn how to adapt to environments and you train in many different environments.

Ranging from running down the sand dunes, endurance running to climbing trees in the forest to just bolting a wall round the back of an outlet store. Socially I've seen a lot of different social responses from different people on the street, I've had some fantastic people come up, there was an old elderly lady in the centre of Southport and she approached and said, I love what you do, I love to sit down and watching you guys jumping around, it's absolutely fantastic.

INT: Mathew Wallace

Really.

**ANS:**

But we were also training one day and someone walked past and said at your age you should know better.

## Appendices

---

It was kind of, I don't know, there's a lot of different looks on what we do, I think some people might associate jumping around on walls with hooligans and stuff like that, but it's nice that there are people that really respect what we do, it's nice that there are people like that are still knocking around the community, means we do have hope to build something positive as oppose to get an automatic down look on everything.

INT: Mathew Wallace

Fantastic.

Interview File: VN550030.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.9)** Could you live without parkour?

**ANS:**

No, not at all, I don't even feel that's an option anymore; there was a point in my training and I know when I hit it as I said it to Mat, it's no longer what I do it's who I am, the way you move and the way you think, even if I was physically incapable mentally I've learnt so much how to cope with situations which is still to me part of my Parkour. So that's said I could lose an arm or a leg I'd just learn to adapt, I'd learn to train without, it's just like I said it's who I am.

## Appendices

---

### **Appendix F: Participant C:** Semi-Structured Interview Transcript

Interview File: VN550003.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.1)** How would you describe parkour to somebody who knows absolutely nothing about it, a complete novice, give it to me as it is, the background from your own perspective, you know its raw basics, what's it all about?

**ANS:**

It seems for most people it can be very particular to a person, you got the basic way to train to understand your body and understand how to move and to be able to move through areas, there's a goal of being able to move as the sparrow fly's as the crow fly's sorry. Through a straight line to go here to there not faltering due to any obstacle, but there's the personal element of what it does for you. Cause there a with parkour gave us a philosophical side to it which is really helpful to some people.

INT: Mathew Wallace

Prompt: What is the philosophical side to it can you explain that?

**ANS:**

You can train your body but training your mind does also and you can apply that to other parts of your life.

Interview File: VN550006.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

Prompt: So, when did you start? Why did you start? How did you find out about it? You know was it on the Internet? Was it this sort of thing? Where do you do it? And where do you do it now? And is it easy?

**ANS:**

Well, when I started it was around six years ago, just over six years, Mat came to me and said do you remember that thing a week ago Jump Britain was on the T.V. I remember seeing that program going around with free runners that come from France going around with people from the London community and at the end it showed people all over the world and it was a community, I thought I'd like to be a part of that. And Mat said come along after school meet me by this church and we'll be jump around a little, I got there and James was there and I started that night doing little jumps and little things. We joked later, look at those walls we won't be jumping over those walls nah I don't think so! I'm really skinny I won't have the strength. Some things are only easy as you train there's always more difficult things, then you always look back the things which are easy now weren't once. I think I found out about how it was I went on the internet, found a specific sight and spent hours reading and fascinated.

INT: Mathew Wallace

Brilliant.

Interview File: VN550009.WMA.

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.2)** Why do you do it? What attracts you to it? What inspires you about it? What is it about Parkour that motivates you to do it? What do you do it for? Can you talk about risk, danger thrill seeking, mental and physical challenges, does that play a part?

**ANS:**

Well when I started, I was first, physically and socially incapable really I had no social life and no strength, and emm even in school in the little groups we were in I would be the quite one who stood there listening to everyone else never saying a word not even in class. And through meeting Mat and James, I'd be training I'd go, pretty much the first time I'd say anything, I like this, it's fun, they almost shocked that I had a voice.

## Appendices

---

And it really brought me out of my shell, I'm know where near the person I was six years ago, I wouldn't have said Bo to the ghost of a fly I was that shy, physically and mentally its helped me develop into a person and overcome physical challenges, in terms of risk I'm not really seeking an adrenalin kick am not em..

INT: Mathew Wallace

You're not.

**ANS:**

I don't really go just to get thrill, although it's fun sometimes when there's that danger, you realise that was a bit close, but I'm out alive, its more I overcame that. And you think how you did it and you can saver that and use it in your life, its being able to be physically ready but mentally and socially able for any situation it's almost like all over life training for me.

Interview File: VN550013.WMA. Respondent:

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.3)** Do you think it attracts people in different ways or is there a consensus about it?

**ANS:**

There is a certain genre of people that will come to it more than most, you get the odd others that come and go, you're not sure why they train, they just want to show off or maybe want to use it for other means you may think may be slightly sinister, it's not like the whole movie thing. Where you have the good guy training one thing and the bad guy training the same thing but for different reasons, mostly you have genuine nice people who want to do it to improve themselves or help people.

However everyone has their own personal reasons, some people want to make a difference to their mind and body or maybe they want to do it as career, we know a couple moving towards sponsorship, several others who are actually are currently sponsored and are working. While there is a sort of foundation of personality of what free runners are, what brings you to it is very personal everyone has their own reason and why their own motivation and purpose for it.

## Appendices

---

Interview File: VN550016.WMA. Respondent:

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.4)** Can you tell me about the interesting aspects of parkour please?

**ANS:**

For me personally, what is most interesting is the escapism of it, when I first found it, it was a way of leaving my problems behind, I started six years ago, I was half way through high school mid teens, I thought and it was a time I was full of depression. Once or twice I broke down into tears in the middle of class it made it worse that it was an all boy's school it would really hit hard. But I found this and I would jump around, I would start focusing on what I was doing and everything else would disappear.

I developed a new personality, I became a new person I wasn't Antony or Tony anymore took on my other name, I became Parker and they knew me as Parker and every time I went and jumped and ran I was Parker. Who didn't have Toney's problems I could do what I wanted I didn't have to worry, and that was fantastic and eventually I just became Parker entirely, it's interesting about it, provided not just a way out but then eventually a solution and it's allowed me to become me.

Interview File: VN550019.WMA. Respondent:

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.5)** Can you talk about the first time you tried parkour and give examples of your experience please?

**ANS:**

The first time I tried it was a day or two after Mat told me about as he'd seen it in the program on Television, it was after school in October, it was dark, he said meet us at the Church, I went along to meet them, I was looking for them, I'm only 14, 15 at the time. I'm a bit nervous walking up and down on this road, thinking where are they? Where are they, not being able to see anything next thing I see this white top go from thing to another only a few feet away. I jumped a little then I looked closer and recognised Mat's shape and Mat's face, he was shaven, I found him.

## Appendices

---

So I wonder where James is, I was jogging along, Mats hair, his iconic hair haha, and I remember jogging towards Mat thinking where's James, where's James? And James flies out of the bush at me, but whoa, straight at that moment I thought this is fun, already I've not even started this is fun they look like they're having fun. I remember there was a very small jump, we tell everyone this is the very first jump, when people start we tell people the size. I take that distance, is something I stepped when I walked normally, but when we started we couldn't do it, for all we tried for all our efforts for the amount of times we tried, we kept failing and failing. But we try and try, there was such fun, it was a great place to be spiritually, to be doing that, and it was the morning after when you ached, why did I do that? Then you do it at school and say I remember, I like this.

Interview File: VN550022.WMA. Respondent:

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.6)** What have you learnt through doing parkour?

**ANS:**

One of the key things I've defiantly learnt is confidence, Its taught me to be, I can learn a move myself, I have to figure it out myself, most people can tell me how or show me, I have to personally realise where my hands are going my feet are going and I've figure out how my body works. But its more mental for me more spiritual, I figured out that I can be what I want, it's sort of Matrix type of thing of how, if you want it take it, if you want to be it, make it happen!

A good example would probably be, shortly I started training with them I started doing this; it was a couple of weeks after it was when me and James were out, when James met up with a girl he was dating at the time, she brought along a friend, at point he started hugging her and we were just stood there so I thought well why don't I hug her. And so I did, it gave me a social life, a love life and..

INT: Mathew Wallace

Prompt: Are there lots of girls who do it?

**ANS:**

The female community is still sort of small compared to the male community, but it's growing, defiantly growing, we're trying to encourage that in our home town ourselves, it's just taught me to be outward and live life.

Interview File: VN550025.WMA. Respondent:

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.7)** Is parkour an individual thing or a social thing?

**ANS:**

It plays to both areas I think, everyone's got their own personal path they take, there's a thing we call, PK Vision, PK short for Parkour, and it's when you look at something, and you look at an area and you think to yourself and you look and you don't need to even make an effort anymore. I go over this to there, up that along this, down there through there under that around, that little thing and then I'm there. Or someone else looking will go okay, I'll go up this bit around there and round there, everyone finds their different way. And that individual vision is a great sense of individuality, but at the same time we a community isn't just between three people or thirty people, but thirty nations or more, people all over the world.

There's a language that's developed between everyone, that isn't even English, you'll meet somewhere and there's three or four walls and you'll see someone and go ah, wush, tik, fump, ahdadat, ning, hahaha and everyone else will know what you mean it's truly fantastic, everyone has their own individual path and some individuals rise to the limelight, but we're all a part of one giant community and its fantastic!

Interview File: VN550028.WMA. Respondent:

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.8)** Is parkour environmentally and socially influenced?

### ANS:

Most defiantly, talking about environmentally, the environment defiantly influences, there's umm a little moto, I'm not sure who said it, It maybe Teekay 17 again. He said the "the obstacle comes before the movement", there's a basic movement called the kong, which is where you go over the wall forward, you place your hands on and leap forwards. But you can't do that on every wall the same way, some walls are wider, some are thinner some are taller and the area around each wall is different. So you have the basic movement, but it has to be adapted for every separate environment, and I've got same in my personal balance training.

If I ever find a new type of rail as long as the surrounding area is safe, I won't do it at the side of a motorway, I will balance on it, cause I believe my balance isn't as good as it can be until I've done it on every different type of rail. You can walk on one square rail a couple of inches wide and be fine but that doesn't mean you can walk on something half an inch wide that's slightly rounded, you have to be trained for every environment and train in every environment ready. In terms of socially, both in and out of the social parkour network, its defiantly influenced, we couldn't learn about each other posting tutorials and videos on the internet, how I learnt personally was pictures and paragraphs on a website, look at the picture, read the paragraph associated and figure it out.

But that helps you to teach and to learn but outside of that community; there are very mixed reactions, there are people who applaud you when you do something's. You'll do something and yeah, I'll turn to James and say, I did that wasn't that amazing and he'll say yeah you did it Bravo. And then they'll be people 10 or 20 feet away they'll applaud they can see the look on your face, you did it, then you look just past them, you see someone shaking their head a fella said to me you it deeply hurt, you're messing around, stop it and it really deeply hurt me, please let me explain we're not what we seem from that view.

Interview File: VN550031.WMA. Respondent:

INT: Mathew Wallace

**Q.9)** Could you live without parkour?

### **ANS:**

No, completely, defiantly unequivocally no, it's given me, me. I defiantly couldn't give it up it's something I could not choose to stop one day, it's not even a thought that crosses my mind, I did once, that was a couple of months in, I hurt my arm and I thought I don't think this is for me, Mat told me keep going, you'll get better and I did. It's become a part of my life, it's become my life, it is me, parkour it is me and my life. Everyone knows me by that nickname that I had Parker, apart from my family a handful of people know me as Tony, I don't know what I would be if I stopped, I feel like I'd be an empty shell sitting in a room staring at an Xbox or something, like some sort of robot, I wouldn't be alive, it is the blood in my veins, it's me, I couldn't give up and no matter how much a person or circumstance wouldn't make me I wouldn't!

### **Appendix G:** Participant A: Line Numbers

1 Oh ok, umm, its a, to me, Parkour is an efficient way of training to getting from point A to  
2 point B, umm, there's Parkour and Free Running. Free running in very literal terms, free  
3 running could be based around a more expressionist form, umm with acrobatics involved a  
4 lot more, with Parkour being more training for every situation in a very efficient way, so  
5 umm as we sought of like switch between the two, oh yeah that's up to me really.

6 Well, urr, I started off about six years ago and there was a programme on channel 4 called  
7 Jump Britain and urr jump Britain was a urr, a sequel to Jump London, and Jump London  
8 revolved around a few French free runners who could Parkour, began in France in a small  
9 town in called Lisses. Umm French runners coming to London and jumping over the emm..  
10 landscape of London really then a few years later they were invited back and again by  
11 Channel 4 and they did jump Britain.

12 At that point through Jump London the whole sport had grown and evolved into a lot more  
13 people knew about it, so I watched jump Britain, complete novice and that night went out and  
14 just decided, I know it was a very childish thing, I wanted to just jump around, I just wanted  
15 to do what they did, I knew I would never be good enough but I wanted to just have a go. The  
16 next day I woke up and my body hurt, I've never had ache like that in my life and it was  
17 wonderful, it was self improvement it was knowing that I had moved forward. Cause I've  
18 never been very sporty and umm, my first free running was jumping over a wall, and it was I  
19 just using my hands and I never thought I could and realised how easy it was and....

20 It started off every day I would train behind this supermarket called B & N bargains umm and  
21 eventually it would move out, it moved out and spread across the whole town, suddenly  
22 everything I could free run and I went through a period about three years ago when I was  
23 thinking about quitting. Because I'd be training and somebody would come by and they'd say  
24 oh I can do that, you know it's really easy and they do it. And I'd get really disheartened,  
25 cause I'd think to myself I been training for three years and these people can do it, I then I  
26 came to the realisation that you know when they say I can do it, look at me I can do it, I'd  
27 turn to them and say great, do it again and I'd be wanting to promoting it instead and it was at  
28 that point it changed simply about from being wanting to jump around for that moment to  
29 being able to jump around for the rest of my life.

30

31 Umm, I used to be, I used to have no self confidence, I never did any sport, my body was  
32 terrible I had no fitness level what so ever and so when I began, I never thought about  
33 improving myself it didn't pop, come into my head. And emm one day I decided, we had  
34 these tiny little weights in our house 1.5 kilograms and I picked them up and I was bored, and  
35 so I decided to Umm do some weights with them just lifting my arms outwards again and  
36 again and again and I didn't realise it was working the top of my shoulders. And one day I  
37 was getting into the shower and I looked in the mirror and I literally shocked I jumped a little,  
38 because I had grown muscle, that was a new thing for me, cause I was so skinny that had  
39 never happened. And it was after that the motivation really kicked in, that was the inspiration,  
40 of seeing the change that it had. You know you hear about people who had drug problems  
41 and violence problems and suddenly they took up free running and everything disappeared.  
42 And that was, the motivation for it was born out of doing it, you know the inspiration came  
43 out of me going around and jumping around it was very spiritual in nature, you know it was  
44 like people who climb to the top of a mountain and look over the scenery and they realise  
45 something that's always been there but they've never seen it. It was like that and suddenly I  
46 could look at myself from a distance and realised that I had changed that was definitely my  
47 inspiration, yeah. In terms of risk about Parkour; Umm it was never the adrenalin rush for  
48 me, right at the beginning It wasn't about the adrenalin I was thinking about showing off,  
49 thinking I could do anything.

50

51 Anything at all, I'd never been experienced in anything in anyway and so it was nice that I  
52 could do something that not many other people could do. And then after I realised that it  
53 would become part of my life. I realised that with becoming ready for every situation to help  
54 people, because that for all three of us, that's a big motivating factor about our Parkour being  
55 able to help people. Going back to that super hero wanting as a child to be able to save  
56 people, you know you can help them now, you can do it, you can't be superman but you can  
57 get close. You know, it's a nice feeling to have that, so when I realised that, if there was any  
58 risk involved in it.

59

## Appendices

---

60 If I went for the adrenalin then that would cloud my senses Umm, say if I'm doing a very  
61 large jump if the adrenalin clouds my sense I increase the risk and if I increase the risk I  
62 won't be able help people. So it became I wasn't searching for the risk anymore I was  
63 searching for deleting the risk, doing a move a thousand times over so that I wouldn't hurt  
64 myself if I ever did it. You Umm, Adoser Teekay 17 who said it perfectly when he said a  
65 tracer who practices Parkour, has to be able to think on his feet even when his feet are busy.

66 Fantastic phrase and that's it, it's about deleting that risk, in order to have the best possible  
67 outcome. I mean I understand people who want to do it for that risk and I can understand that  
68 feeling of adrenaline, but after a while it's like if you have a lot of coffee eventually you  
69 become immune to the effects of it. And I think I've filled myself up with so much adrenalin,  
70 I'm constantly on adrenalin now it doesn't affect me anymore. I've done so many big things,  
71 afterwards you're shaking, you can't believe you've done that, now you land, you do this  
72 massive jump that you would be shaking afterwards and you land and you say my footing  
73 was off I'm gona do it again, it's that perfection that you got to go for.

74 We went to France recently where they began free running and we came back with a  
75 philosophy of if you do any jump you have to do it three times. The first time is easy the first  
76 time you don't think about it, the second time is a little bit harder and you're thinking a little  
77 bit more about your technique. The third time is the hardest because you done it so many  
78 times you're wondering maybe this is the time you'll hurt yourself. And then afterwards after  
79 you've done all of those you get really annoyed because the person next to you say's you  
80 have to do one for the family, one more time for the family. Yet I've never hated my family  
81 so much in my life, you're so scared of doing that jump, you don't want to do it again but  
82 then you realise you're doing it for them it's not you anymore more, it's for them.

83 Umm, alright, that's are very difficult question because you have Parkour and you have Free  
84 running, now if you want to get into the politics, most free runners refuse to get into the  
85 politics simply because they enjoy the movement of it. But if you want to get into the politics,  
86 free running I defiantly think for the most part people enjoy the showing off factor, I  
87 definitely believe that.

88

## Appendices

---

89 Yeah, even though I have no objection to it, I mean, so Parkour is getting from point A to  
90 point B and you have to be timed to stay in one place and do the move again and again and  
91 again and again, that's the training for getting from point A to point B, so the lines begin to  
92 blur, I think for most people, It's a very half and half split, people who want to improvement  
93 themselves and help people for the other half they want to impress people.

94

95 Interesting aspects of Parkour, Umm it's very expressionist, it allows people to, Umm oh for  
96 many people it's a stress relief, definitely for me it's a stress relief, if you have a hard day in  
97 college if you have a hard day in work. You go out and jump around and obviously in the  
98 biological terms you have dopamine and serotonin released into your the blood you know,  
99 pain relieving you know types of morphine in a sense and you become very docile and  
100 become happy. It's interesting aspects of parkour, you know personally I think one of the  
101 most interesting aspects of parkour would be its origin. I mean it began with something called  
102 Method Unnatural which was coined by a French, Umm, it's not philosopher, Umm I can't  
103 think of the word. Umm, It was a French guy called Georges Hébert, whilst working in the  
104 army he decided to create a training regime that was completely natural that worked on ten  
105 schools of movement, along the lines of swimming, running, jumping, fighting, crawling  
106 under something, vaulting something and it basically evolved around natural people, it  
107 actually allowed him, he was near the Volcano Krakatoa I believe.

108 He actually rescued about three hundred of the town's folk through using his training. So he  
109 decided this is fantastic, you know this works so he decided to apply it to the military and it  
110 was taken on whole heartedly by the French military; every French military person practiced  
111 something called Parkour dus combat, which basically means combat obstacles, so if you're  
112 in the combat environment you can move efficiently through your environment, either on  
113 your way or through to intercept your enemy. That was taken on by somebody called  
114 Raymond Bell and Raymond Bell was a fire fighter who also practiced Parkour dus combat  
115 and he practised it in a forest outside his home near Calais, after that, whilst he was doing that  
116 his son David got involved and David practiced Method Unnatural. When they moved to a  
117 little town called Lisses outside their City of Avery 35 kilometers South of Paris emm; it was  
118 a new town, there was nothing to do so David Bell and his friends did the only thing that they  
119 could do so they bounced around this town, it became a phenomenon to them, you know it

## Appendices

---

120 was something that could allow them to free themselves from this nothing, they had nothing  
121 to do you know, so it allowed them to be children you know, it allowed them to act as the  
122 super heroes they wanted to be.

123

124 For me that's the most interesting aspect, when I jump around I don't try and deny I'm acting  
125 like a child and its fun because children have a different view on the world than adults do.

126 How many adults do you see walking along the wall, yet how many children do you see  
127 wanting to jump up onto a wall and go yeah, you know and be up there? Its emm half the  
128 time we train and we say walking along the wall and we're not ashamed to say there's Lava's  
129 on the ground, it presents a new fun aspect to it all, so it doesn't have to be conditioning and  
130 training yourself it can be fun, it can be really, really liberating to most people, yeah that's  
131 my most interesting aspect.

132

133 First time I tried it, it was a wall that was higher on one side than it was on the other and I  
134 didn't realise how high it was and I jumped over this wall and proceeding to fall longer than I  
135 expected. Landed and rolled onto my back and sought of like lay there for a moment  
136 completely winded, I went, ah what's going on. I had no idea; it was dark, it was middle of  
137 winter, it was about six a clock at night, so six o clock pitch black, I had no idea what was  
138 going on and I got back up and I can specifically remember getting back up and James was  
139 with me and James looked over the wall and said are you okay and I said I'm fine, I'm just a  
140 little winded in a very wheezed out voice that you have like somebody punching you in the  
141 gut. And then I did something that I never thought about and it remains with me to this day,  
142 instead of going around the wall to get back on the top I went over the wall. I climbed back  
143 up that wall and got back onto the other side and that was the interesting thing, not taking the  
144 long route and it was shortening that distance but also in your mind. You think if somebody  
145 walks down the street and they see a wall, they'll go around the wall, if somebody's walking  
146 emm like to a field and there's a path around the field, they'll follow the path, regardless of  
147 the fact if they're trying to get some where the fastest way is to go across the grass. And it  
148 was a very big thing for me to suddenly have that moment of realisation when everything

## Appendices

---

149 shortens everything becomes a lot smaller, so I did the jump again realising how big it was  
150 and this time landed on my feet very, very happy.

151 And then we proceeded to walk around the entire, entire town just jumping around just  
152 finding things we never thought were important, you know a rail a wall, a very weird  
153 combination of grass and gravel you know, marking lines on the ground. For the first time in  
154 my life, like parking lines became start and end, you jump from one line to the other, instead  
155 of something slotting nicely in between them it was very, you were forging your own path.  
156 Then we moved onto Southport College and emm we found this little wall and we were  
157 jumping over it and a person came by about our age and he looked at us for a moment and he  
158 went in a very thick scouse accent. He said, 'ah mate you're doing that Parkour thing, you  
159 know that thing I saw last night on the T.V'. And it was like he's associating me, ah yes I do  
160 Parkour, it was like yes I'm associated with this and I went home and was I feeling great and  
161 I got home and sat down my Dads been wondering where the hell I've been all night, oh I just  
162 been doing this Parkour thing, that thing that was on the T.V last night. He said, you're going  
163 to break your neck in a very exaggerated way I put my leg up on the chair, oh me poor legs,  
164 I'm getting achy in my old age. Went up to bed next day I was achy in my old age, I  
165 remember I stepped out of bed and I fell over, I slept on the top bunk of a bunk bed, so  
166 imagine getting out of bed like that, I just fell on my face. I rode into school that day and it  
167 was painful, so painful, I had trouble just locking my bike up but with all this pain with all  
168 this achy-ness and with all this absolute something close to humiliation at causing myself to  
169 be like this, I had this biggest grin on my face because it wasn't pain it was progression, yeah  
170 that was my first time free running and it was the best.

171

172 Umm, to be very blunt about it, I've learned about how to move, that's the most important  
173 thing is that you learn how to move, people move everyday with such a limited range of  
174 motions, that they forget that they've got everything else. You know if you list what people  
175 go through every day, you lift something, they walk, if they go to the gym, they'll run and  
176 they'll lift something again and they'll probably swim, that's about five, six. What they  
177 completely miss is jumping; crawling, climbing you know walking backwards, walking on  
178 their hands you know, skipping. Skipping if you didn't know skipping is a fantastic way to

## Appendices

---

179 work on your length jumps, if you skip everywhere alright you're going to look a it's not as if  
180 we look strange doing other things.

181 We jump around buildings for fun but Umm, I'm going to retract that statement, we don't  
182 jump around buildings for fun, we don't, that's very risky and unsafe; but we emm it's told  
183 me about the movement, I find it interesting after doing Parkour for six years I would gladly  
184 sit down and watch a cat walk across the room because they have such a wide range of  
185 movement, its we're inferior to that range of movement, if you look at a cat, a cat can jump  
186 three times its height easily and you look at them and it's like why can't I do that. It's taught  
187 me about the way the body works, the physiology, the biology it's taught me about the way  
188 how the body acts and reacts, the cause and effect of it. You realise the body is a fantastically  
189 tuned machine, like any fantastically tuned machine you have to keep it oiled, you have to,  
190 you have to replace the parts, not in the literal sense, that would be quite messy with the  
191 human body emm. But you've got to take care of it; I think the most important thing going  
192 back to the spirituality of it, the most important thing Parkour has taught me how to mentally  
193 cope. If you can quoting another free Runner again, Blaine, Chris Blaine Roate, he said that it  
194 helped him in his life, because say, if you're doing a presentation you stand in front of that  
195 presentation group and you think to yourself alright this is a scary situation, then it jumps into  
196 your head all of a sudden that this is nowhere near as scary as doing that 11 foot jump you did  
197 yesterday, there isn't any death involved in this, there isn't any possibility of breaking limbs,  
198 what's the point off being scared, it teaches you to fight your fears in every way possible to  
199 fight your barriers, physical or mental, I think Parkour does that than any other sport because  
200 it's so varied.

201

202 Umm, Parkour, varies between the two, once again I'd be sought of quoting I don't know if  
203 you need a reference, for a runner called Sebastian Foucan; which was one of the original  
204 traceurs in France. He said it, when your with people you gain a different kind of confidence  
205 the jumps there, "bang" you do the job it's wonderful. And everybody cheers you on, when  
206 you're on your own a barrier gets involved you have to, you don't have any positive peer  
207 pressure, you have to do it yourself, I think in order for true progression to happen in Parkour  
208 it has to be an individual thing. As Anthony said before em you can't nobody else can teach  
209 you a move, so it doesn't matter if you're in a group of 30 or 40, a hundred people who can

## Appendices

---

210 all do the move it won't help you one bit. In Parkour, you can be the only person in the crowd  
211 of a hundred people because you're the only person breaking through your own barriers;  
212 you're not breaking through anybody else's. I think true progression only happens when  
213 you're on your own, although I do believe it's that social aspect that makes parkour so  
214 appealing, so many other people, so many like minded people all striving for one goal to  
215 better themselves.

216

217 That, God it motivates you, it does something to you, you hear about Parkour Jams, a meeting  
218 of people and you want to go so much. Even if you can't you spend your entire day in work  
219 thinking to yourself, why don't I quit this job and just go free run with them, it's so  
220 motivating to know there's so many people who have as much passion as you, so yeah it's  
221 definitely social but individual is what provides the progression.

222

223 Emm I'll do one thing at a time, so I don't confuse myself. Environmentally influenced  
224 Parkour is definite, because without the environment you're not doing parkour. The different  
225 landscape require a different type of parkour, running through a city is absolutely nothing like  
226 running through a forest, running through a forest is nothing like running across open ground.  
227 The environment influences what mind set you will have; what movement you'll implement,  
228 emm I think definitely I mean in terms of environmentally influenced you take a certain pride  
229 in your surroundings, you will not, we try our best not to damage anything and if we do  
230 damage something then we own up to it straight away.

231 Because the way that we view it is if we break something then we won't be able to use it  
232 again, that's a very important factor, it's not about using it and hoping that nobody else cares.  
233 It's about using it and knowing that you can go back there and use it again it's about that long  
234 lasting, in the same way the part of Method Unnatural, the same way it's to be into last and  
235 that's for the person and the same thing implies to the environment everything has to last.  
236 The social angle of it, the only reason parkour is what it is today is because of the people of  
237 Lisses allowed it to be so. If the people of Lisses in France had said no to the boys jumping  
238 around if they'd quashed that desire, parkour would not be there, I truly believe parkour relies  
239 solely on the respect of the community. If the community as a whole doesn't like you, you'll

## Appendices

---

240 be frowned upon, as far as I know only one place, Morton in Liverpool has banned free  
241 running on threat on having an asbo. But that's because, a few bad apples is destroying the  
242 whole bunch, people won't heed the whole batch of apples now, you will never see in the  
243 majority of the country a sign that says you can't do parkour, you'll see a sign that says you  
244 can't go skate boarding or you can't skate you can't ride your bike here because but you'll  
245 not see something that says you can't do parkour here. Because parkour protects its  
246 environment, it requires it to carry on, as long as we have the good respect of the community.

247

248 Now's the time for parkour because it's so new, now's the time to make its reputation, it's  
249 now that you have to be nice to people, if somebody asks us to move from a particular place,  
250 No argument, zero argument, we say we're very sorry and we leave. There's one place in  
251 Southport, there's a supermarket, a department store in Southport that we train round the back  
252 of, emm wonderful area to train, and sometimes people ask us to move in which case we say  
253 yeah wonderful. And at some points we've actually had it quite a few times people come out  
254 and say ah you're doing that parkour thing would you want us to refill your water, wonderful.  
255 And they allow us to train there and if they want us to move no problem, and it's that level of  
256 respect, we show respect to them about respecting their environment and respecting their  
257 property, they show respect to us its basic human nature, so environmentally and socially  
258 definitely influence Parkour.

259

260 Umm No, ummm I think, that's a very emotional question for me not like I'm going to cry or  
261 anything, that question means a lot to me because I often think to myself what if I break a leg  
262 or really hurt myself, Parkour has become such a way of life for me, that it's imagining Umm  
263 having somebody there for the whole of your life and suddenly there not. Its becomes such  
264 the norm, it becomes such a stress relief, like when people become addicted to exercise, but  
265 it's not an addiction, I couldn't live with it, because I couldn't live with the fact that I had that  
266 freedom and now I don't. I couldn't live with that knowing that could no longer move like  
267 that, parkour encompasses so many things, that if I think to myself if I lose my leg if I lose  
268 my arm, there's one armed free runners, there's a one armed free runner you know. At the  
269 recent world free run championships, somebody tore their knee ligament very badly, and he  
270 was very badly injured, and yet at the end of one of his videos recently that showed all the old

## Appendices

---

271 footage and everybody supporting him, it showed him training with his cast on his leg, just  
272 upper body stuff. Parkour is so wide ranging, I think it would be almost impossible for me to  
273 ever be able to quit, for any situation to happen other than death that I could stop doing it, and  
274 that's why it means so much to me, because In the literal sense, saying that's impossible not  
275 to be able to do it in a literal sense, I wouldn't be able to live without doing parkour, I could  
276 do it all the time.

277

278

### **Appendix H:** Participant B: Line Numbers

1 Well to me it started off, you're literally training to get from A to B using every physical  
2 movement possible and you train for every situation, every motion every obstacle it slowly  
3 becomes more based around getting to know yourself and your environment. That's all I can  
4 really think of emm.

5 Well I started emm, One night there was a documentary on Jump Britain, I think it was the  
6 night after it was on I went out with Mat and we had a jump around and stuff like that, and  
7 we started doing it in high school on a little wall we found round the back and we used to hop  
8 around on our lunch break, just playing, just messing about. I stopped and went onto  
9 aggressive in line skate I did that for a while, at the time it was only playing around it was  
10 nothing serious, I skated for a couple of years, I hurt my leg then I had to stop, as it recovered  
11 I found I'd lost interest in it.

12 I got back in touch with Mat and Tony who were still doing it, so I got into it then, I was  
13 much more grown up and physically developed there was more to do, I was more capable  
14 than I was and it just became less physical and more about the mental side of it, I've really  
15 found myself doing things that back when, I don't know when, I would have called  
16 impossible and now here I am doing them and its fantastic and I love it.

17 Truth be told, when I was little I was a bit of a super hero buff, I used to absolutely love the  
18 stuff, and doing the stuff we're doing now I feel a little bit like a super hero, it's given me the  
19 means to help people, friends, family, if there in trouble both the mental capacity to deal with  
20 the situation and the physical everything. So that's really what inspires me that I can help  
21 people out, as with the risk side of it, I like there to be a bit risk involved, I don't know about  
22 these two, their slightly more down to earth, but I think with my background with my skating  
23 and stuff like that I prefer an adrenalin kick every so often.

24 Well I've noticed through my years of training Parkour a lot of practitioners seem to have the  
25 same personality type, they all seem to be kind people, I'm not saying horrible people don't,  
26 but they seem to have a very similar personality so I think it tends to be more those people  
27 attracted to Parkour due to something in them.

## Appendices

---

28 It's hard to describe, its often very creative people, who a lot of which tend to put others  
29 before themselves, people with a very deep outlook on life who are looking for something  
30 more, if you see where I'm coming from.

31 Well for me personally the most interesting thing about my Parkour is my body itself through  
32 just doing this sport or discipline as some people like to refer to it. I've learnt so much about  
33 my body, the way my muscles work the way they develop the way my tendons work, it's  
34 made me more in touch with me physically and mentally and I'm still learning about my  
35 body and I'm still absolutely intrigued by it the different things and what it's capable of.

36 Well the first time I tried parkour was with Mat, we just gone round town, just bouncing  
37 about happily and at the time I fell in love with it because I felt like I was six again it was  
38 fantastic, just running along walls you know, I loved it to bits just climbing on everything we  
39 could see for no particular reason, it was great getting some fantastically weird looks off  
40 people but it was fantastic.

41 Oh yeah, but the most noted thing about my first time that something we mention to everyone  
42 is the day after, when you wake up and muscles you never knew existed hurt it was fantastic  
43 but as Mat said it was progression, you were proud of the fact that your body hurt ready for  
44 the next time you go out to pretend that you're six.

45 Well most importantly I learnt my own limits, physically and mentally, but I've also learnt  
46 how to push them and give myself a greater physical and mental strength which has really  
47 helped me through life in a lot of different aspects yeah really did....

48 Well both, individual and social training play an important part in the tracer's progression, uh  
49 the individual side is very much about yourself, finding your own limits, barriers and finding  
50 your own personal way to get past that. But I feel when you're with a group you have to be  
51 very careful although the positive pressure can be great, very appealing, very motivating, at  
52 the same time it can be quite dangerous. If people are cheering you on to do a jump or a gap  
53 you know you're not ready for, but you do it just too kind of show off then the risk increases  
54 to a point where you're not comfortable. You don't feel in control with it, it can be very  
55 positive but in that respect it's about your individual look at it, because you have to know  
56 even when you're with a group whether to say yes I'll do this or no, I can't.

## Appendices

---

57 Umm with the social side it reminds me of when we went to France, to Lisses the birth place  
58 of Parkour and we met tracers from all over the world, there were people from Finland,  
59 people from America, people from France and the second you meet these people it's like  
60 you've known them your entire life, everyone is so happy to see you and wants to teach you  
61 things that they've learnt and you teach them things you've learnt, spread your knowledge  
62 around, it's a fantastic feeling, it's absolutely beautiful.

63 Yes, hahaha I think it's definitely influenced by the environment cause not the whole but  
64 most of the discipline is based on getting around it, navigating around it through it and so on,  
65 different landscapes call for different movements. Like Mat said, you've got forests you've  
66 got Cityscapes you've got more Suburban, which is you know there's less obstacles, its more  
67 open ground, I think that all does really influence emm the way we train cause you then you  
68 have to really learn how to adapt to environments and you train in many different  
69 environments. Ranging from running down the sand dunes, endurance running to climbing  
70 trees in the forest to just bolting a wall round the back of a outlet store.

71 Socially I've seen a lot of different social responses from different people on the street, I've  
72 had some fantastic people come up, there was an old elderly lady in the centre of Southport  
73 and she approached and said, I love what you do, I love to sit down and watching you guys  
74 jumping around, it's absolutely fantastic.

75 But we were also training one day and someone walked past and said at your age you should  
76 know better. It was kind of, I don't know, there's a lot of different looks on what we do, I  
77 think some people might associate jumping around on walls with hooligans and stuff like  
78 that, but it's nice that there are people that really respect what we do, it's nice that there are  
79 people like that are still knocking around the community, means we do have hope to build  
80 something positive as opposed to getting an automatic down look on everything.

81 No, not at all, I don't even feel that's an option anymore; there was a point in my training and  
82 I know when I hit it as I said it to Mat, it's no longer what I do it's who I am, the way you  
83 move and the way you think, even if I was physically incapable mentally I've learnt so much  
84 how to cope with situations which is still to me part of my Parkour. So that's said I could lose  
85 an arm or a leg I'd just learn to adapt, I'd learn to train without, it's just like I said it's who I  
86 am.



## Appendices

---

### **Appendix I:** Participant C: Line Numbers

1 It seems for most people it can be very particular to a person, you got the basic way to train to  
2 understand your body and understand how to move and to be able to move through areas,  
3 there's a goal of being able to move as the sparrow fly's as the crow fly's sorry. Through a  
4 straight line to go here to there not faltering due to any obstacle, but there's the personal  
5 element of what it does for you. Cause parkour gave us a philosophical side to it which is  
6 really helpful to some people.

7 You can train your body but training your mind does also and you can apply that to other  
8 parts of your life.

9 Well, when I started it was around six years ago, just over six years, Mat came to me and said  
10 do you remember that thing a week ago Jump Britain was on the T.V. I remember seeing that  
11 program going around with free runners that come from France going around with people  
12 from the London community and at the end it showed people all over the world and it was a  
13 community, I thought I'd like to be a part of that. And Mat said come along after school meet  
14 me by this church and we'll be jump around a little, I got there and James was there and I  
15 started that night doing little jumps and little things.

16 We joked later, look at those walls we won't be jumping over those walls nah I don't think  
17 so! I'm really skinny I won't have the strength. Some things are only easy as you train there's  
18 always more difficult things, then you always look back the things which are easy now  
19 weren't once. I think I found out about how it was I went on the internet, found a specific site  
20 and spent hours reading and fascinated. Well when I started, I was first, physically and  
21 socially incapable really I had no social life and no strength, and emm even in school in the  
22 little groups we were in I would be the quite one who stood there listening to everyone else  
23 never saying a word not even in class. And through meeting Mat and James, I'd be training  
24 I'd go, pretty much the first time I'd say anything, I like this, it's fun, they almost shocked  
25 that I had a voice. And it really brought me out of my shell, I'm know where near the person I  
26 was six years ago, I wouldn't have said Bo to the ghost of a fly I was that shy, physically and  
27 mentally its helped me develop into a person and overcome physical challenges, in terms of  
28 risk I'm not really seeking an adrenalin kick am not em, I don't really go just to get thrill,  
29 although it's fun sometimes when there's that danger, you realise that was a bit close, but I'm  
30 out alive, its more I overcame that. And you think how you did it and you can saver that and

## Appendices

---

31 use it in your life, its being able to be physically ready but mentally and socially able for any  
32 situation it's almost like all over life training for me.

33 There is a certain genre of people that will come to it more than most, you get the odd others  
34 that come and go, you're not sure why they train, they just want to show off or maybe want to  
35 use it for other means you may think may be slightly sinister, it's not like the whole movie  
36 thing. Where you have the good guy training one thing and the bad guy training the same  
37 thing but for different reasons, mostly you have genuine nice people who want to do it to  
38 improve themselves or help people. However everyone has their own personal reasons, some  
39 people want to make a difference to their mind and body or maybe they want to do it as  
40 career, we know a couple moving towards sponsorship, several others who are actually are  
41 currently sponsored and are working. While there is a sort of foundation of personality of  
42 what free runners are, what brings you to it is very personal everyone has their own reason  
43 and why their own motivation and purpose for it.

44 For me personally, what is most interesting is the escapism of it, when I first found it, it was a  
45 way of leaving my problems behind, I started six years ago, I was half way through high  
46 school mid teens. It was a time I was full of depression. Once or twice I broke down into  
47 tears in the middle of class it made it worse, that it was an all boy's school it would really hit  
48 hard. But I found this and I would jump around, I would start focusing on what I was doing  
49 and everything else would disappear.

50 I developed a new personality, I became a new person I wasn't Antony or Tony anymore I  
51 took on my other name, I became Parker and they knew me as Parker and every time I went  
52 and jumped and ran I was Parker. Who didn't have Tony's problems I could do what I  
53 wanted I didn't have to worry, and that was fantastic and eventually I just became Parker  
54 entirely, it's interesting about it, provided not just a way out but then eventually a solution  
55 and it's allowed me to become me.

56 The first time I tried it was a day or two after Mat told me about as he'd seen it in the  
57 program on Television, it was after school in October, it was dark, he said meet us at the  
58 Church, I went along to meet them, I was looking for them, I'm only 14, 15 at the time. I'm a  
59 bit nervous walking up and down on this road, thinking where are they? Where are they, not  
60 being able to see anything next thing I see this white top go from thing to another only a few  
61 feet away. I jumped a little then I looked closer and recognised Mat's shape and Mat's face,

## Appendices

---

62 he was shaven, I found him. So I wonder where James is, I was jogging along, Mats hair, his  
63 iconic hair haha, and I remember jogging towards Mat thinking where's James, where's  
64 James? And James flies out of the bush at me, but whoa, straight at that moment I thought  
65 this is fun, already I've not even started this is fun they look like they're having fun. I  
66 remember there was a very small jump, we tell everyone this is the very first jump, when  
67 people start we tell people the size. I take that distance, is something I stepped when I walked  
68 normally, but when we started we couldn't do it, for all we tried for all our efforts for the  
69 amount of times we tried, we kept failing and failing. But we try and try, there was such fun,  
70 it was a great place to be spiritually, to be doing that, and it was the morning after when you  
71 ached, why did I do that? Then you do it at school and say I remember, I like this.

72 One of the key things I've definitely learnt is confidence, Its taught me to be, I can learn a  
73 move myself, I have to figure it out myself, most people can tell me how or show me, I have  
74 to personally realise where my hands are going my feet are going and I've figure out how my  
75 body works. But its more mental for me, I figured out that I can be what I want, it's sought of  
76 Matrix type of thing of how, if you want it take it, if you want to be it, make it happen! A  
77 good example would probably be, shortly after I started training with them I started doing  
78 this; it was a couple of weeks after it was when me and James were out, when James met up  
79 with a girl he was dating at the time, she brought along a friend, at point he started hugging  
80 her and we were just stood there so I thought well why don't I hug her. And so I did, it gave  
81 me a social life, a love life and the female community is still sought of small compared to the  
82 male community, but it's growing, definitely growing, we're trying to encourage that in our  
83 home town ourselves, it's just taught me to be outward and live life.

84 It plays to both areas I think, everyone's got their own personal path they take, there's a thing  
85 we call, PK Vision, PK short for parkour, and it's when you look at something, and you look  
86 at an area and you think to yourself and you look and you don't need to even make an effort  
87 anymore. I go over this to there, up that along this, down there through there under that  
88 around, that little thing and then I'm there. Or someone else looking will go okay, I'll go up  
89 this bit around there and round there, everyone finds their different way. And that individual  
90 vision is a great sense of individuality, but at the same time we a community isn't just  
91 between three people or thirty people, but thirty nations or more, people all over the world.  
92 There's a language that's developed between everyone, that isn't even English, you'll meet  
93 somewhere and there's three or four walls and you'll see someone and go ah, wush, tik,

## Appendices

---

94 fump, ahdadat, ning, hahaha and everyone else will know what you mean it's truly fantastic,  
95 everyone has their own individual path and some individuals rise to the limelight, but we're  
96 all a part of one giant community and its fantastic!

97 Most definitely, talking about environmentally, the environment definitely influences, there's  
98 umm a little motto, I'm not sure who said it, It maybe Teekay 17 again. He said the "the  
99 obstacle comes before the movement", There's a basic movement called the Kong, which is  
100 where you go over the wall forward, you place your hands on and leap forwards. But you  
101 can't do that on every wall the same way, some walls are wider, some are thinner some are  
102 taller and the area around each wall is different. So you have the basic movement, but it has  
103 to be adapted for every separate environment, and I've got some in my personal balance  
104 training. If I ever find a new type of rail as long as the surrounding area is safe, I won't do it  
105 at the side of a motorway, I will balance on it, cause I believe my balance isn't as good as it  
106 can be until I've done it on every different type of rail. You can walk on one square rail a  
107 couple of inches wide and be fine but that doesn't mean you can walk on something half an  
108 inch wide that's slightly rounded, you have to be trained for every environment and train in  
109 every environment to be ready.

110 In terms of socially, both in and out of the social parkour network, it's definitely influenced,  
111 we could learn about each other posting tutorials and videos on the internet, how I learnt  
112 personally was pictures and paragraphs on a website, look at the picture, read the paragraph  
113 associated and figure it out. But that helps you to teach and to learn but outside of that  
114 community; there are very mixed reactions, there are people who applaud you when you do  
115 something's. You'll do something and yeah, I'll turn to James and say, I did that wasn't that  
116 amazing and he'll say yeah you did it Bravo. And then they'll be people 10 or 20 feet away  
117 they'll applaud they can see the look on your face, you did it, then you look just past them,  
118 you see someone shaking their head a fella said to me you it deeply hurt, you're messing  
119 around, stop it and it really deeply hurt me, please let me explain we're not what we seem  
120 from that view.

121 No, completely, definitely unequivocally no, it's given me, me. I definitely couldn't give it  
122 up it's something I could not choose to stop one day, it's not even a thought that crosses my  
123 mind, I did once, that was a couple of months in, I hurt my arm and I thought I don't think  
124 this is for me, Mat told me keep going, you'll get better and I did. It's become a part of my  
125 life, it's become my life, it is me, Parkour it is me and my life. Everyone knows me by that

## Appendices

---

126 nickname that I had Parker, apart from my family a handful of people know me as Tony, I  
127 don't know what I would be if I stopped, I feel like I'd be an empty shell sitting in a room  
128 staring at an Xbox or something, like some sought of robot, I wouldn't be alive, it is the  
129 blood in my veins, it's me, I couldn't give up and no matter how much a person or  
130 circumstance wouldn't make me I wouldn't!

## Appendices

---

### **Appendix J:** Semi-Structured Interview Transcript

Interview Matthew Wallace

MW: Dave emm how would you describe parkour emm to somebody who knows absolutely nothing about it? Yeah, like a complete novice, emm give it to me as it is – it's background, from your own prospective and give it to me in its raw terms, the basics of what it is all about please Dave?

Dave: Okay parkour is a way of movement primarily and is emm a training systems used to gets past physical obstacles emm system and normally you need to get past obstacles in your life. Emm background is a modern noise and you kind of practise through it. It started off in Paris about 20 years ago with a group of youngsters who were bored and had nothing to do in the place and emm yeah they just carried on like normal with the games that kids play chasing about but they had nothing else to do - there play developed into an adult form of some kind of kids game which is kind of moving around and then..

MW: Okay, so when did you start?

Dave: Okay I started about 6 years ago just after seeing some guys from France emm on the TV.

MW: Okay so was that emm why you started - from watching the television?

Dave: Yeah I saw it on the television and thought that is pretty amazing and the first time I really thought it was some kind of special effects...

MW: How did you find out about it?

Dave: The first clip I saw was on BBC 1 of someone jumping between roof tops and I thought that was just stunts or whatever...

MW: Oh you saw them doing it from the roof tops - so when did you do it? When did you practise?

Dave: I started, first day I went out in Manchester on some of the really low walls there and just kind of 2 or 3 feet high really and just tried to get over them in different kind of ways. I just tried to copy what had seen really because when I started there wasn't really anyone that I could speak to who had any experience and understanding of how to get started.

## Appendices

---

MW: Okay thanks Dave. Okay Martin same question how would you describe parkour to somebody who knows absolutely nothing about it and who is a complete novice, give it to me as it is, the background from your own prospective. And give it to me in its raw terms and basics of what it is all about?

Martin: Okay emm as Dave stated it is the art of movement primarily emm it is used as a way of overcoming obstacles, the challenges that you face in life mentally and physically emm and it is a good training method and you can apply it in everyday life. I mean emm you know there is a challenge you emm build up to that. I mean you might not be able to do that at the moment, but you can build up to it and overcome obstacle in time and it's like you have eliminated the fears associated with that. So if I was to describe it to a complete novice emm yeah I would just say that it is a way of training yourself to become better and more confident as a person...

MW: Okay, so when did you start?

Martin: Emm I started in January 2005 after I saw a programme called jump Britain on TV.

MW: So what made you start, what was it about that programme that inspired you to take it up?

Martin: Emm I thought it was interesting and unique and it is the simplicity as well. Like most sports you have to have a discipline as well as a set training system and a place that you go to and do it. You don't need special equipment to do it with parkour everyone can do it all you need is a pair of trainers, gloves and mentality.

MW: Where did you do it?

Martin: Emm just round my local town Wakefield and Leeds because I found out that there was some other people that did it so I met up with them.

MW: Okay thanks, Adam same question how would you describe parkour to somebody who knows absolutely nothing about it and who is a complete novice, give it to me as it is - the background from your own prospective. Give it to me from its raw terms and basics of what it is all about?

## Appendices

---

Adam: Emm it's like moving around in the environment and emm like emm oh there is like emm an obstacle in your way and emm and you are just getting over it to be quicker to be more efficient rather than be slow and follow the system standing emm.

MW: When did you start?

Adam: Emm 6 months ago.

MW: Oh you have only be doing it 6 months ago, right I see and emm how did you find out about it?

Adam: Emm somebody told me about it and emm and thought I might be interested in it and I came and met up with people that had done it already really and I got into it.

MW: Right okay, emm Dean same question how would you describe parkour to somebody who knows absolutely nothing about it and who is a complete novice, give it to me as it is, the background from your own prospective. Give it to me from its raw terms and basics of what it is all about?

Dean: Right when I first started in parkour I was a bit unaware of what parkour was about with the tricks, jumps and things like that. So I used to tell people that it was like skate boarding without a skateboard and you are sort of in an urban environment and jumping off rails and emm and following over walls and things. I then moved into it and I started to listen and watch more videos and realised it was a lot more about personal training and making yourself stronger and more efficient. You are like finding emm new routes to get through the environment more quickly and safely. So when am training I always make sure that am moving around safely and know my abilities and my limits. Emm you know I push my limits sometimes which is good for the mental side of parkour as well as things like if something is bothering me and scaring me I think about how can I overcome the obstacle physically.

MW: When did you start?

Dean: Probably around 4 years ago

MW: Oh 4 years ago and again why did you start?

## Appendices

---

Dean: There was a documentary on TV called Jump Britain and I saw that one emm and I heard about Jump London as well. So I watched that one and then looked out for parkour in Manchester and did a Google search and emm Northern Parkour in Manchester came up.

So I emm eventually got the coach to get down and emm met up with the other guys and I thought is it going to be full of kids? and is everyone going to be way better than I am? I eventually got the coach to get out there and then eventually met Dave and Paul from there.

MW: Is it easy?

Dean: Yeah it is easy to start off with, yeah because they show people the basics and emm like a small jump or something to see how it can be. Like anything from jumping from one curb to another curb with no height and no fear. They are teaching the techniques and the skills that you need and then you build up from there.

MW: Okay thanks Dean, Paul can I ask you the same question, how would you describe parkour to somebody who knows absolutely nothing about it and who is a complete novice; give it to me as it is, the background from your own prospective. And give it to me from its raw terms and basics of what it is all about?

Paul: Okay well parkour is as we have already mentioned a physical discipline but there is also emm a philosophical side to it as well so the most obvious implementation that you see people practicing is a means of navigating through the environment quickly and effectively. So you can use it to travel through any given thing and you can also see it practiced in an urban environment and there is no reason why you can't apply those skills into different settings like more rural settings for example. On the philosophical side of it, it's not just about the physical aspect so yeah you might want to get over a wall that is 6 foot tall and that is one aspect but also it is about overcoming other obstacles and they could be emm more mental based.

Emm confidence. If you are not confident in talking in front of a group of people or I mean the practice of parkour when done properly is done for those kind of things. I have used it myself, for example I do some lecturing in the school of sound recording where I talk about audio post production and basically emm when I actually started lecturing I was really apprehensive about it and even the prospect of being in front of a group of 5 or 6 people emm my hands would be shaking and emm and emm I would be talking nonsense at some point

## Appendices

---

but then some time later a year later when my parkour became slightly more advanced as well. I found myself in a situation where I was standing in front of 200 people addressing the whole audience. Strangely it was absolutely fine and that was definitely down to parkour.

MW: Really

Paul: There was no chance I could have done that if it wasn't for practicing parkour.

MW: Right okay, thanks Paul so move on question 2 to Dave. What motivates you to do it, what does it do for you?

Dave: Emm that's going to take a long time to answer from me

MW: He-he

Dave: Ha-ha basically parkour is a fun way to improve yourself and develop an ability and every time you get past an obstacle you get a sense of success and having that it makes you become freer and makes you do anything you want to do.

MW: So is that so - where does risk come into it?

Dave: Risk is always going to be part of it and with parkour you have to always work out what you can do and what you can't do, so that is like working around between what you can do and what you can't do. It's a boundary of definitely knowing what you can do and what you can't do, so there is always going to be some risk around cause you are working in that risk area.

MW: How important is thrill seeking? The thrill of it - the adrenalin, that sort of thing?

Dave: It's important that you enjoy what you are doing so there is no point in restricting yourself to something that will be boring and you are not going to stick with. Thrill seeking as a specific word phrase is irrelevant really. If it's something that is difficult you are going to feel good about yourself. You don't need to physically go looking for the thrills because they are there in any kind of movement that you are doing.

MW: Thanks Dave, Martin why do you do it, what attracts you to it, what inspires you about it, what is it about parkour that motivates you to do it and what does it do for you?

## Appendices

---

Martin: I do it to better myself - like I used to eat lots of crap food and stuff and now I try and feel healthy about myself. When I wake up in the morning and am getting stronger with reaching goals that I have set for parkour. What was the question?

MW: Martin why do you do it, what attracts you to it, what inspires you about it, what is it about parkour that motivates you to do it and what does it do for you?

Martin: Emm cause when you go it's like a very relaxed environment as everyone is not jumping around all hyper and everyone is not serious and everyone is just chilled out and relaxed and doing stuff that they want to do emm stuff like that.

MW: Okay thanks, Dean same question, why do you do it, what attracts you to it, what inspires you about it, what is it about parkour that motivates you to do it and what does it do for you?

Dean: I have been into fitness and sports activities since I was 14 and emm doing martial arts, kick boxing and things like that and a little bit of weight lifting and Capoeira which is a similar sort of thing which is about expressing yourself through movement. So I went from the martial arts sort of things over to this thinking about how we are going to move thinking it could be interesting. So eventually I went to parkour because I found it more interesting and gives more freedom to express. Capoeira is a Brazilian martial art sort of a dance ha-ha really. It's something that was used to trick the guards when they would think they were dancing they were actually doing martial arts. It's like break dancing ha-ha cause it's all about movement with cart wheels and handstands. So when I first started parkour I thought it was like those kind of things. After that I learnt it was more about developing yourself and how to progress to become stronger and jump further and run a bit faster and things. So it's that hook that keeps me coming back - as you learn one movement then you think you can do this one as well. So you are pushing yourself to a level of movement and it's ongoing and you are finding new spots to move.

MW: Thanks, Paul why do you do it, what attracts you to it, what inspires you about it, what is it about parkour that motivates you to do it and what does it do for you?

Paul: Personally I suppose the reason why I got into parkour was because like all people I saw these documentaries in 2005 and emm and it was I don't know something about personal freedom. I practice it due to the confidence and the physical aspects of things. I wasn't

## Appendices

---

interested in physical sports when I was at school - I was the last one chosen to join in a group and I hated it and had no interest but parkour I really found appealing and I don't know if I haven't mentioned that it is not competitive and that is a really important part of it. Like if you go out then you are not competing with other people that is not what parkour is. You are in your own space and you are just trying to jump in your own space. You might go out and do a jump and the next week you might be closer to accomplish it.

It's personal progression that attracts me to parkour and to see these visible achievement and to stay fit and healthy as well.

MW: Okay thanks, thanks.

MW: Dave do you think it attracts people in different ways or is there a general consensus about parkour and does it attract people in different ways?

Dave: Emm there is a huge range of benefits you can get from parkour and we can sit here for a day and list them all. There are that many benefits that people can focus on and the training of parkour and how you can find freedom without obstacles limiting you.

MW: Same question Martin, do you think it attracts people in different ways or is there a general consensus about parkour and does it attract people in different ways?

Martin: Do you mean the type of people it attracts alright okay, well I think usually you have to have a open mind previously to finding out about it otherwise you would not have discovered it. People like it because it looks fun and until you get training for it, it's not just for fun it's a sport and a discipline. It's comparative to martial arts really - it has its philosophical side and it expands your mind when you are training.

MW: Okay thanks Martin

MW: Adam, do you think it attracts people in different ways or is there a general consensus about parkour and does it attract people in different ways?

Adam: I think attracts some people with different things am not telling emm with flips and people come to do parkour as they think it's to do with flips that are totally different. For me I am attracted to the idea of being stronger and in Manchester you do more conditioning and if you don't like that then you won't like what we do in Manchester.

## Appendices

---

MW: Really

Adam: Yeah like the in different places they train differently and everyone is different because we train differently.

MW: So you don't think there is a consensus and you think it attracts people in different ways then?

Adam: Yeah

MW: Dean same question - do you think it attracts people in different ways or is there a general consensus about parkour and does it attract people in different ways?

Dean: I think most people - I don't know really, I think it's for health benefits but probably not, I think it's for the adrenaline and then you get people who are more for the mind and body really. I don't really know what to say ha-ha.

MW: Paul do you think it attracts people in different ways or is there a general consensus about parkour and does it attract people in different ways?

Paul: I think initially it will attract people in different ways. Let's assume some people have seen some videos - some people would get into it because it's great for health and it gives some a reason to show off. Some would get into it because they would look good and in terms of is there is consensus that means looking into what constitutes getting into parkour. The attractions might be initially for various reasons – this is a generally agreed view point.

MW: You talk about that view point what do you think it is?

Paul: Philosophy at the moment. So really people who practise it on a longer term basis - it's about personal progression and not about showing off and making videos to show your mates. It's about bettering yourself physically and helping others as well. There is a phrase that we use in parkour "be strong to be useful" and it was from another discipline called "method un natural" but basically the premise of it is the same that you are stronger in many situations. For example with the frost recently you might find something trying to get out of the frost and can't get any grips. If you are trying to push the car with them and you are stronger then you can succeed in moving it - so it can be things like that really.

MW: Thanks Paul moving on back to Dave.

## Appendices

---

MW: Dave please tell me about the interesting aspects of parkour?

Dave: Can you be more specific?

MW: Things like freedom of expression, creativity, adrenaline that is what comes to my mind when I think of parkour?

Dave: Emm. Well for me I am a parkour coach so I find everything interesting about parkour. Emm but for me an important thing is the affect it has on each person's personality. It's the art of getting past any obstacle and difficulty. It's just the fact that you are trying to get past and not trying to avoid it. People get more confident and are not ignoring the fact that they are trying to get past the difficulty. Emm it makes people think more confidently and be willing to solve problems rather than ignore them. It helps people that have had difficult experiences and helps them develop favourites and so on. It increases physical fitness and people change their fitness through parkour.

MW: Thanks, Martin same question about the interesting aspects of parkour?

Martin: The interesting aspects of parkour - emm every practitioner has the same mentality created through the practice of it really. Yeah you have talked about creativity every person has their own style and they focus on different parts. The focus you get from it comes because you have dedicated a lot of time to it. It's like movement and the challenge emm and it affects the challenges in life. It affects work or anything really -getting past opinions. You have that focus and drive - so I think that is really interesting and inspires me to keep progressing.

MW: Adam tell me about the interesting aspects of parkour please?

Adam: I think it is interesting and it's something new to do and something programmed so you start off small and you move onto something else and it keeps you interested because you are wanting to do it – to get stronger and you set yourself goals in the day. If you haven't got something set for the rest of the day then you can keep at it and try and try really ha-ha. You just carry on really and you try and get something out of it and you are motivated and become more confident to get something out of the situation.

MW: Dave can you tell me about the interesting aspects of parkour please?

## Appendices

---

Dave: Okay I found that with parkour compared to martial arts in the past there seems to be a variety of people doing it coming from a various backgrounds. Money isn't an issue really or where you come from really. Like you can be 12 years old or 30s or in your 40s and be of any level of fitness as parkour is about making yourself fitter and to develop. I guess if you had a older lady in her 60 or 70's you could show her how to get upstairs in the best fashion so you adapt parkour to your own self then it can be really interesting.

It's really good to teach and show the movements that you can do and break it down for them which I do personally. This is how use it and when you see that they have cracked it and they use their own movement as well it's great.

MW: Okay thanks, Paul tell me about the interesting aspects of parkour?

Paul: The way that parkour changes your perspectives of a given environment. You will see an area where there is wall and a rail and as you practice more then you will see it like a volt or ascertain a type of jump and a potential movement. You see it in a strange way and then you see it in another way even if you are practicing for years. There are several spots that we have been training in for years and emm we still go back there. Someone will suggest something and then you think that you haven't thought about that so you see it from another perspective.

MW: Thanks, Dave back to you. Can you tell me about the first time you tried parkour and give examples of that please?

Dave: Yep the first time I tried it was in the Manchester central area and there was a guy there - just the two of us and we started off with volts. It was very small but back then it was really big and you see things much larger when you have been practicing for 6 years and practicing in public place. There were 2 or 3 teenagers riding into you on skate boards and its daunting trying something new and you have to be quite brave to do this unless you have other people around you.

MW: Martin can you give me examples of the first time you tried it and your experience?

Martin: First time I tried it was following the Jump Britain documentary I went out with a friend skate boarding previously to that and we thought it looked exciting and we went around the town and basically jumped on a wall and rail just to replicate what we had seen -

## Appendices

---

just something small really. We didn't understand the philosophy at that time and just did small things because of our capabilities.

MW: Okay Adam can you talk about the first time you tried it and your experience?

Adam: Emm the first time I tried it was 6 months ago and I met up with some people from Manchester who were very experienced. They didn't know what to do first time but they told me to try the wall and to limber up by starting small.

Emm yeah it's quite important - warming up and using your muscles so emm again if you fall and you land in an awkward position. It is good to warm up so you don't injure yourself.

MW: Did you enjoy it?

Adam: Yeah something it was something different and I got addicted

MW: Okay great, Dean can you tell me about the first time you tried it and tell me about your experience?

Dean: First time I came into parkour I expected to see everyone on the roof tops and looking at stair cases or climbing the stairs cases and I couldn't find anyone. I found out that it's not what I thought it was after watching Jump Britain. I spoke to Paul and then I went to town. I thought there was going to be loads of kids there and was apprehensive about it. When I came down they were all a similar age like and I felt at ease and possibly because I had experience for martial arts and was quicker at getting to the level and found the buzz from there. I was moving on and taking a step back freely. I got the strength and just needed the technique. I need to focus on myself and develop myself and then others.

MW: Paul can you tell me about the first time you tried it and give examples of your experience?

Paul: First time I tried it - back to the TV documentary Jump Britain. It was after seeing that. I went on the internet to find out where to free run and I didn't know the difference. So I found another Parkour website that Dave set up - like a discussion forum and I went out on a Sunday and met up with 50 odd people. Dave was there and other people were around and they were doing it for around 6 months. I was just learning basic stuff for 3 or 5 hours and my legs were aching and I could barely walk up stairs.

## Appendices

---

MW: Dave what have you learnt doing parkour?

Dave; I have learnt more than I thought. I had the impression that I was small and pretty weak also kind of scared and not a confident person so now I can do all kinds of things that I thought I couldn't do and I work out more than before. The main thing is the confidence and yes the confidence to do whatever what you want to do and not let other people opinions affect you. So you have other people around you saying that you know don't be stupid and they don't understand.

Yeah you are forced into dealing with it and do all these things. Which is the main point fundamentally - the key thing is that you just have to just keep going and get past it. You eventually will get past it and know it and then you will have experience and an understanding of it.

MW: Martin can you tell me what you have learnt doing parkour?

Martin: Yeah I have learnt many things - to express myself and not to listen to other people perceptions and that there is a limit to what you can do when you practice it. You can't go on private property of course. It just allows you to express yourself being creative and emm well I have learnt to emm that the learning process comes from learning new moves. You learn through errors or when you miss judge something, you know that you can replicate this and learn from your mistakes. You can remember what you learnt last time and you won't make the same mistake again whatever situation you are in. You are more able to deal with it and not fall and injure yourself - that is large part.

MW: Thanks Adam what have you learnt in doing parkour?

Adam: Emm doing parkour I have learnt the mentality of it emm not worrying about doing big things and doing what you want to do to change who I am. I was impatient and impatient with things now and if it's going to take time then I will have to take time and build up to things.

MW: You must be still learning?

Adam: Yeah 2 years to train to learn from basic level and to get stronger and keep learning

MW: Moving on Dean can you tell me what you have learnt doing parkour?

## Appendices

---

Dean: Basic movements and learning how to react to situation. For example, if you are doing a jump and you realise in mid air you only have a couple of seconds to avoid injuries if you are getting stronger and harder you will have more body armour to absorb things.

MW: Can you be more specific about balance and how important is balance and ultimately is that the skill you have acquired through doing it?

Dean: Yeah you gain more balance and spacial awareness and if another one is running by and he doesn't know you are going to cross his path you will be looking out for lose breaks and textures to see if it is gripping and whether there is anything that I can do to counter act that.

MW: Okay thanks Paul what have you learnt through doing Parkour?

Paul: Okay emm I have learnt two side to it really: the physical and mental side. The physical side of it yeah as Dean mentioned it is being aware through the practice of parkour and on a simple level it is about balance. These are the fundament aspects and you do become good at climbing. What people don't see is the mental aspect. They are aware that you are becoming more confident and believing in other aspects of life. I have learnt more about people in a strained way with people saying what the norm is, for example people chose to walk around the rail even if it takes 1 second to go over it. If it's a metal rail it easy to go over it but for some reason people have some preconceived perceptions of how things should be and give it rationally.

Group Most people don't like difficulty and avoid the challenge and try to keep confident.

MW: Dave back to you is parkour an individual thing or is it a social thing?

Dave: No one else is involved and it's just you and the environment: the walls and trees - that part of it's so good at forcing you to develop your own ability. You can rely on your coach for technical things and to get your feeling and perceptions but you have to do it yourself. You can get help for them and not everyone can do it on their own and needs some help from someone else but the bulk of it is individual.

MW: So Martin is it an individual thing or a social thing?

Martin: More of individual thing - you are more in control of your movement and you don't have a personal coach and you make the decisions.

## Appendices

---

You are vulnerable and no one is there to push you – you have to provide that yourself. There is a parkour community although it is not a teenage sport. You get people that help each other and yeah if there is a lot of people out you get people, helping each other who combine together to pull each other up walls. You work in a team or a group and yeah there are different communities in the UK. Each city has its own community and way of training. It is a social thing.

People who do parkour have their own mind set as well and they live a sort of same life style. I meet lots of employees and have a lot of friends.

MW: Thanks Martin, Adam is it an individual thing or a social thing?

Adam: I think in some ways it's both individual to yourself and you are learning what your body can do. You are speaking to different people and you are making new friends. It's individual to most people. If no one else is out they won't train. Most people can learn to do moves and some don't need people to push them and easy for them.

MW: Dean what's your take on it - is it a individual thing or a social thing?

Dean: The practice of parkour is individual thing because you are developing your body and your muscles but you are also moving and training in a group and learning from other people. You see someone doing something and you try and imitate or try that style of movement on something you have seen before. You have also got a group of people that are doing it. I mean me and Paul have a condition that we meet up and train. We have a similar strength level. I know he is watching what am doing so I am pushing much harder and he is going to push harder. That then helps push everyone. It's not competitive but I want to be better than I could have been and I can see still see he is going so then I push even harder.

MW: Thanks, Paul is it an individual thing or a social thing?

Paul: Emm as Adam mentioned it's both. Going back to what Dave was saying about pushing each. It would be ideal if you had a mindset that meant you could train under your own motivation without external influences but I am not sure that anyone can truly push themselves to the max under their own influence. I mean for example, we bough gymnastic rings and were holding ourselves up on them and it's called the iron cross. The arms aren't that straight and we have being training lowering the arms and it's for the strength.

## Appendices

---

We were drilling in a set of 10 each and I said I think I will do 30 and dean said I do 50 as a rule. If something is to be done then you have no option but to do 50 ha-ha.

And the point that I wanted to make is that throughout the country and around eh world they are training in their own group so you do get regional trends in the way people practise. When I went to France they were great at jumping across-the-board and we were better in strength based training. There training was in that aspect and we were in ours and so you get your regional differences.

Younger participants are more concerned with the fashion based trends and wear a type of trainer or wear a tracksuit with a parkour logo or have their hair grown long.

MW: Thanks, Dave is parkour environmentally and socially influenced?

Dave: It's a discipline through the environment that is one of the reasons you get regional trends so people are forced to train in different ways. Yeah it's directly and socially influenced. More people are practicing and continue practice once they realise the deeper aspects of the physiological and mental side of things and they identify with the way sociality operates. They don't think to the right or left or think about problems like confidence issues. People practise and try and improve the things with environment they have.

MW: Martin is parkour environmentally and socially influenced?

Martin: Yeah it's environmentally influenced because it allowed to be practiced in urban or rural landscapes. You can engage with the areas that have concrete areas and yeah people in different areas are influence by the architecture of the environment. People who live in Newcastle are really urbanised in their training as it has more concrete obstacles and rural trees are available to them. Emm socially eahh phhooo yeah I think it is. People practise it together and they see them in training and see them in real life. Dave mentioned that people are not free to discover the city that they live in and are clones that follow each other. They don't look up or around and they are missing so much and they don't take it all in.

MW: Adam is parkour environmentally and socially influenced?

Adam: Yeah like Martin said the area will affect the practise of parkour. It might be rural trees and grass or urban concrete. If the setting of it has lots of small walls then they can do volts or if it is high walls they can practise running up the walls. How people are affected by

## Appendices

---

it socially - I'm not sure. I mean the police can move you on so you can't train as much because of the police.

Group: Police have a preconception of us that we just vandalise which gives us a bad name like other people are the same as us.

Adam: Maybe skate boarders have their own groups who are cocky and stuff and the police think we are the same as them so the police say that they have had a bad experience with them and we should be treated equally. We want to friendships with them under the circumstances.

MW: Thanks, Dean is it mentally and socially influenced?

Dean: What facilities you have in the area influences it. If there are loads of walls and things but don't have any rails and things then the balance side of things will suffer. If you have spots that have rails that skate boarders use your flow will be different. So like Manchester will be different than Sheffield because the volts and environment will be different. Leeds will be different because the environment will be slightly different.

MW: Paul is parkour environmentally and socially influenced?

Paul: Emm yeah because it is you who practises in an environment and it is impossible to ignore the environment you are practicing in. Parkour is strongly influenced by the environment. You are training to be good in that environmental and you are not understanding the real purpose of it if you don't understand this. People from around the world are practicing in their environment and that use what they have available to them and socially emm its influenced partly going back to what I said about groups and influence on others.

But I want to mention what Adam was saying about police we haven't had any problems and they have come up to us and said what are you doing lads? We explain and they say "okay carry on". Security guards are more funny about it and act like it's a jobs worth. You describe it and their response to you is predetermined before they even talk to you. They will come out and say "move on". They have a pre defined thing that they say but don't explain properly.

Group: Sometimes you ask for a reason and they just say don't get cocky with us now.

## Appendices

---

Paul: They will mention the fact of insurance. Health and safety is normally in cited and they will just - you know.

MW: Last question Dave could you live without parkour?

Dave: Having started it no - it would be impossible because of the things that I have done through parkour and the changes it has made. I cannot stop the changes it has made in the past.

Group I wouldn't want to live without it and it's the best way I have found to keep fit and healthy. Obviously now I am earning a living from it so I can't get away from it really.

MW: Martin, could you live without parkour?

Martin: No - all the things have I have achieved from it and even if I stopped it physically then still the mentality will be remain. The experience you get can help others as well. You can pass on knowledge and you have so much to pass on. The learning process is ongoing and that is the drive that keeps you practicing it. It gives me confidence and opens my eyes with that. I would not be where I am now and I am so much more confident now and the development physically. So it's the health and fitness part of it and yeah and I can't think of my life without parkour.

MW: Thank you Martin, Adam same question can you live without Parkour?

Adam: Obviously I could live without it but my mind set will be that you would be walking down the street and think I could run up that and you can just think it walking down the street. I can just do that - it just feels good I guess and a release of stress and you don't think of anything else and you just focus on what you are doing what was the question again? Emm basically no because - I said yeah before he-he. I could not live without the mind set of it. You would still run up that wall and people would say you are crazy but you learn to see what human limits are!!

MW: Dean could you live without it?

Dean: No I couldn't. I need to eat and sleep and once you have parkour in your blood it will always stay there and it could be as simple as you are you are walking down the street and there is a rail there on your right hand side and instead of walking around the normal way you go over the rail. You have to do it because it's in your way and easy and safe rather than walk

## Appendices

---

around it. It's like people are stood at a crossing when it a green light and if you planned your route and walk across traffic - you are always seeing how you can interact with the environment. So even if you are not physically practicing the volts. It could be something like - you know and yeah you would just practise and how your body is going to move and age isn't a restriction. You can volt over something really high but I am sure I can find something that my body can do another way - to move effectively.

MW: Okay Paul last question - could you live without parkour?

Paul: Emm I think you can't get away from what you have learnt in parkour and you can't just stop it and lose all the mental stuff you have learnt.

It's hard to answer really shortly. When I started to practice parkour I was locked out of the house and I had to wait 5 hours to open the door in the cold and because I hadn't been practicing I didn't think that I could have actually climbed up the wall to the bathroom window emm but then later – a couple of years later the same thing happened and I just went through the bathroom window. So if someone physically said to me - I will still find situation when I can use parkour. So no way of getting away from it really. So you can put a ban on it but never take what I have learnt and how I utilise it.

## Appendices

---

### **Appendix K:** Participant D: Line Numbers

1 Okay parkour is a way of movement primarily and is emm a training system used to get past  
2 physical obstacles and normally you need to get past obstacles in your life. It started off in  
3 Paris about 20 years ago with a group of youngsters who were bored and had nothing to do in  
4 the place and emm yeah they just carried on like normal with the kind of games that kids  
5 play, chasing about but they had nothing else to do. They developed it as an adult form of  
6 some kind of kids game which is kind of moving around. Okay I started about six years ago  
7 just after seeing some guys from France emm on the TV. Yeah I saw it on the television and  
8 thought that is pretty amazing and the first time I really thought it was some kind of special  
9 effects. The first clip I saw was on BBC 1 of someone jumping between roof tops and I  
10 thought that was just stunts or whatever. I started, first day I went out in Manchester on some  
11 of the really low walls there and just kind of two or three feet high really and just tried to get  
12 over them in different kind of ways. I just tried to copy what had seen really because when I  
13 started there wasn't really anyone that had I could speak to who had any experience and  
14 understanding of how to get started. Emm that's going to take a long time to answer from me.  
15 Ha-ha basically parkour is a fun way to improve yourself and develop an ability and every  
16 time you get past an obstacle you get a sense of success and having that it makes you become  
17 free and makes you to do anything you want to do. Risk is always going to be part of it and  
18 with parkour you have to always work out what you can do and what you can't do, so that is  
19 like working around what you can do and what you can't do. It's a boundary of definitely  
20 knowing what you can do and what you can't do so there is always going to be some risk  
21 around cause you are working in that risk area. It's important that you enjoy what you are  
22 doing so there is no point in restricting yourself to something that will be boring and you are  
23 not going to stick with. Thrill seeking as a specific word phrase is irrelevant really, if it's  
24 something that is difficult you are going to feel good about yourself. You don't need to  
25 physically go looking for the thrills they are there in any kind of movement that you are  
26 doing. Emm there is a huge range of benefits you can get from parkour and we can sit here  
27 for a day and list them all so there are that many benefits that people can focus on and train  
28 for in parkour. How you can find freedom and without obstacles limiting you. Emm. Well  
29 for me I am a parkour coach so I find everything interesting about parkour emm but for me  
30 the important thing is the affect it has on each person's personalities and the art of getting

## Appendices

---

31 past any obstacle and difficulty. It's just the fact that you are trying to get past and not trying  
32 to avoid it so people get more confident and don't ignore the fact that they are trying to get  
33 past the difficulty. Emm it makes people think more confidently and they are more willing to  
34 solve problems rather than ignore them. It increases physical fitness and it helps people  
35 change their fitness through parkour. Yep the first time I tried it was in the central  
36 Manchester area and there was just one guy there just the two of us. We started off with volts  
37 and they were very small but back then they were really big to us. You see things much larger  
38 when you have been practicing for six years and practicing in public place. There were two or  
39 three teenagers riding into you on skate boards and its daunting trying something new and  
40 you have to be quite brave to do this unless you have other people around you. Okay I found  
41 that with parkour compared to martial arts in the past there seems to be a various people  
42 doing it coming from different backgrounds and money isn't an issue really. Like you can be  
43 twelve years old or in your thirties or forties and any level of fitness as parkour is about  
44 making yourself fitter and to develop. I guess if you had an older lady in their sixties or  
45 seventies you could show her how to get upstairs in the best fashion. You adapt parkour to  
46 your own self then it can be really interesting and it's really good to teach and show the  
47 movements that you can do and break it down for them which I do personally and they can  
48 use this. It's great when you see that they have cracked it and they use their own movement  
49 as well. I have learnt more that I thought I could and had the impression that I was small and  
50 pretty weak also kind of scared and not confident person. Now I can do all kinds of things  
51 that I thought I couldn't do and work out more than before. The main thing is the confidence  
52 and yes the confidence to do whatever you want to do and not let other people opinions affect  
53 you. So you have people round you saying don't be stupid but they don't understand yeah  
54 you are forced into dealing with it and do all these things. Which is the main point  
55 fundamentally and the key thing is you just have to keep going and get past it. You eventually  
56 will get past it you know and then enjoy the experience and understand it. It's a discipline  
57 practised through the environment and that is one of the reasons you get regional trends so  
58 people are forced to train in different ways. Yeah it's environmentally and socially influenced  
59 and more people are practicing and continue to practice once they realise the deeper aspects  
60 of the physiological and mental side of things and they identify the way it socially operates.  
61 People practise and try to improve their parkour and don't think about confidence issues and  
62 try and improve things with the environment they have. No one else is involved and it's just  
63 you and the environment the walls and trees. That part of it is so good at forcing you to

## Appendices

---

64 develop your own ability. You can rely on your coach or get technical information but to get  
65 your feelings and perceptions you have to do it yourself. You can get help for them and not  
66 everyone can do it on their own and does need some help from someone else but the bulk of  
67 it is individual. Having started it no it would be impossible to stop parkour. The things that I  
68 have done through parkour the changes it has made I cannot stop in the changes it has made  
69 in the past. I wouldn't want to live without it and it's the best way I have found to keep fit  
70 and healthy and obviously now am earning a living from it so I can't get away from it really.

## Appendices

---

### **Appendix L:** Participant E: Line Numbers

1 Okay emm as Dave stated it is the art of movement primarily emm it is used as a way of  
2 overcoming obstacles, the challenges that you face in life mentally and physically emm and it  
3 is a good training method and you can apply it in everyday life. I mean emm you know there  
4 is a challenge you emm build up to that I mean you might not be able to do that at the  
5 moment, but you can build up to it and overcome obstacles in time and it's like you have  
6 eliminated the fears associated with that. So if I was to describe it to a complete novice emm  
7 yeah I would just say that it is a way of training yourself to become better and more confident  
8 as a person. Emm I started in January 2005 after I saw a programme called Jump Britain on  
9 TV. Emm I thought it was interesting and unique and it is the simplicity as well. Like most  
10 sports you have to have discipline as well and a set training system and a place that you go to  
11 do it or special equipment to do it whereas parkour everyone can do it. All you need is a pair  
12 of trainers, gloves and mentality. Emm just round my local town Wakefield and Leeds  
13 because I found out that there was some other people that did it so I met up with them. I do it  
14 to better myself like I used to eat lots of crap food and stuff and now I try and feel healthy  
15 about myself. When I wake up in the morning I am getting stronger with reaching goals that I  
16 have set for parkour. Emm cause when you go it's like a very relaxed environment as  
17 everyone is not jumping around all hyper and everyone is not serious and everyone is just  
18 chilled out and relaxed and doing stuff that they want to do em stuff like that. Do you mean  
19 the type of people it attracts alright okay, well I think usually you have to have a open mind  
20 previous to finding out about it otherwise you would not have discovered it. People like it  
21 cause it looks fun and until you get training for it - it's not just for fun it's a sport and a  
22 discipline, its comparative to martial arts really. It has its philosophical side and it expands  
23 your mind when you are training. The interesting aspects of parkour emm every practitioner  
24 has the same mentality created through the practice of it really, yeah you have talked about  
25 creativity every person has their own different style and they focus on different parts. The  
26 focus you get comes because you have to dedicate a lot of time to it and its like movement  
27 and the challenge. It affects the challenges in life and it affects work or anything really  
28 getting past opinions. You have that focus and drive, so I think that is really interesting and  
29 inspires me to keep progressing. First time I tried it was following the Jump Britain  
30 documentary. I went out with a friend skate boarding previously to that and we thought it

## Appendices

---

31 looked exciting and we went around the town and basically jumped on a wall and rail just to  
32 replicate what we had seen. Just something small really, we didn't understand the philosophy  
33 at that time and just did small things because of our capabilities. Yeah I have learned many  
34 things, to express myself and not listen to other people's perceptions and there is a limit to  
35 what you can do when you practise it. You can't go on private property of course. It just  
36 allows you to express yourself creatively. The learning process comes from practising the  
37 new moves. You learn through errors or when you miss-judge something. You know when  
38 you replicate this you can learn from your mistakes and you can remember what you learnt  
39 last time. It's more of an individual thing - you are more in control of your movement and  
40 you don't have a personal coach and you make the decisions. You are vulnerable and no one  
41 is there to push you. You have to provide that yourself. There is a Parkour community but it  
42 is not a teenage sport and you get people that help each other and yeah if there is a lot of  
43 people out you get people helping each other. They combine together to pull each other up  
44 walls. You work in a team or in a group and yeah there are different communities in the UK.  
45 Each city has its own community and way of training and it is a social thing. People who do  
46 parkour have their own mind set as well and they live a sort of same life style. Some are  
47 employees and some are friends. What you learnt last time and you won't make the same  
48 mistake in every situation you are in and you able to deal with it and not fall and injure  
49 yourself that is a large part. Yeah, it's is environmentally influenced. It is allowed to be  
50 practised in urban or rural landscapes, you can engage with these areas and you have concrete  
51 areas and yeah people in different areas are influenced by the architecture of the environment.  
52 People who live in Newcastle - they are really urbanised and their training has more concrete  
53 obstacles and rural trees available to them. Socially yeah I think it is - people practise it  
54 together and they meet other people in training or see them in real life. Dave mentioned  
55 people not being free and not discovering the city that they live in and that they are clones  
56 that follow each other without looking up or around them. They are missing so much and  
57 they don't take it all in. No because of all the things I have achieved from it and even if I  
58 stopped it physically then still the mentality will be there. Then you get experience so that  
59 you can help others as well by passing on knowledge. It's the learning process that keeps the  
60 drive to keep practicing it and it gives me confidence which opens my eyes. I would not be  
61 where I am now and I am so much more confident now and I have developed physically so  
62 it's the health and fitness part of it and yeah and I can't think my life without parkour.

## Appendices

---

### Appendix M: Participant F: Line Numbers

1 Emm its like moving around in the environment and emm like emm oh there is like emm  
2 obstacles in your way and emm and you are just getting over it to be quicker to be more  
3 efficient rather than be slow and you follow the system. Emm 6 months ago. emm somebody  
4 told me about it and emm and thought I might be interested in it and came and met up with  
5 people that already do it and I got into it. I think it attracts people differently some people  
6 think it is to do with flips and come to do parkour as some people think it's to do with other  
7 things flips that are totally different. For me it's attractive because we try to be stronger and  
8 in Manchester you do more conditioning and if you don't like that then you won't like what  
9 we do in Manchester. Yeah like in different places they train differently and everyone is  
10 different because we train differently. I think it is interesting and it's something new to do  
11 and something programmed so you start off small and you move onto something else. It  
12 keeps your interest because you want to do it and you get stronger and set yourself goals in  
13 the day. You try and try really hard and you just carry on because it motivates you and gives  
14 you confidence to get something out of the situation. Emm the first time I tried it was six  
15 months ago and I met up with some people from Manchester and they were very experienced  
16 and they didn't know what to do with me first time but they told me to try the wall and to  
17 limber up by starting small. Emm yeah its quite important to warm up and use your muscles  
18 so emm again if you fall and you land in a position you are warmed up so you don't injure  
19 yourself. Yeah something different and I got addicted. Emm doing Parkour you have to learn  
20 the mentality of it emm and not do the big things. To change who I am I must be patient with  
21 things because if it's going to take time then you have to take time and build up to things.  
22 Yeah two years to train and learn and move from basic level and get stronger and keep  
23 learning. I think in some ways its individual to yourself because you are learning what your  
24 body can do and you are speaking to different people and you are making friends but if no  
25 one else is out their they won't train. Some people can learn on their own and don't need  
26 people to push them and so it's easy for yourself. Yeah like Martin said that the area will  
27 affect it - rural trees and grass and urban concrete. If the setting of it has small walls then you  
28 can do volts or for high walls you can run up the walls like that. Socially – how the people  
29 are affected by it - I don't know. Like emm the police can move you on so you can't train as  
30 much because of the police. Police have a preconception of us that we just vandalise and that

## Appendices

---

31 can give us a bad name. Maybe skateboarders have their own groups who are cocky and stuff  
32 so the police think we are the same stuff. The police will say that they have the bad  
33 experience with them and that we should be all treated equally. Obviously I could live  
34 without parkour but with my mind set I would be walking down the street and think I could  
35 run up that. You can just think it walking down the street and I can just do that. It just feels  
36 good I guess and it releases stress and you don't think of anything else. I suppose no I  
37 couldn't give it up but I said yeah he-he but the mind set of it will always be there - you  
38 would still run up that wall and people would say you are crazy but you learn to see what  
39 human limits are!

### Appendix N: *Participant G: Line Numbers*

1 Right when I first started in parkour I was a bit unaware of what parkour was about  
2 and the tricks, jumps and things like that. So I used to tell people that it was like skate  
3 boarding without a skateboard. You are sort of in an urban environment and jumping  
4 off rails and emm and following over walls and things. I moved into it more and I  
5 started to listen to and watch videos. I realised it was a lot more about personal  
6 training and make yourself stronger and more efficient. You find emm new routes to  
7 get through the environment more quickly and safely. So when am training I always  
8 make sure that am moving around safely and know my abilities and limits. Emm you  
9 know sometimes I push my limits which is good for the mental side of parkour. With  
10 things like if something is bothering me and scaring me how can I overcome the  
11 obstacle physically. Probably around 4 years ago. There was a documentary on TV  
12 called Jump Britain and I saw that one emm and I heard about jump London as well.  
13 So I watched that one and then looked out for parkour in Manchester. I did like a  
14 Google search and emm and Northern Parkour in Manchester came up. So I emm  
15 eventually got the coach to get down and emm meet up with the other guys. I thought  
16 is it going to be full of kids? And is everyone going to be way better than I am and I  
17 eventually got the coach to get out there and eventually met Dave and Paul from  
18 there. Yeah it is easy to start off with yeah because they show people the basics and  
19 emm like a small jump or something to see how it can be - like anything from  
20 jumping from one curb to another curb with no height and no fear and learning the  
21 techniques and the skills that you need and then build up from there. I have been into  
22 fitness and sports activities since I was 14. Emm doing martial arts, kick boxing and  
23 things like that and a little bit of weight lifting and cappara wera which is similar sort  
24 of thing to parkour which expresses our self through movement. So I moved from the  
25 martial art sort of things over to this thinking it could be interesting going to parkour.  
26 I found it more interesting because it gave more freedom to express. Cappara warea  
27 is a Brazilian martial art sort of a dance ha-ha and really it's something that was used  
28 to trick the guards because they would think they were doing dancing when they were  
29 actually dong martial arts like break dancing haha. It's all about movement with cart  
30 wheels and handstands. So when I first started parkour I thought it was like those kind  
31 of things, After that I learnt it was more about developing yourself and how to  
32 progress becoming stronger and jumping further and running a bit faster. That's the  
33 hook that keeps me coming back. As you learn the movement you think you can do  
34 this one as well. So you are pushing yourself to another level of movement. It is  
35 ongoing and you are also finding new spots to move. I think most people I don't know  
36 really know - I think it's for health benefits but probably not. I think it's for the  
37 adrenaline. Then you get people who do it more for the mind and body really I don't  
38 really know what to say ha-ha. First time I came into parkour I expected to see  
39 everyone on the roof tops and looking at stair cases, climbing the stairs cases and I  
40 couldn't find anyone. I found out that it's not what I thought it was watching Jump

41 Britain and I spoke to Paul and then I went to town thinking there was going to be  
42 loads of kids and I was apprehensive about it and when I came down they were all a  
43 similar age like and I felt at ease. Possibly cause I had experience for martial arts I  
44 was quicker at getting to a good level and found the buzz from there. I need to focus  
45 on myself and develop myself and then I can help develop others. You practise the  
46 basic movements and learn how to react to situations, for example if you are doing a  
47 jump and you realise in mid air you only have a couple of seconds to avoid injuries -  
48 the getting stronger and harder you are means you have more body armour and to  
49 absorb things. Yeah with parkour you gain more balance and spacial awareness and if  
50 another one is running by and he doesn't know you are going to cross his path you  
51 can quickly look out for lose breaks and textures and whether the surrounding surface  
52 is gripping and is there anything that I can counter act that. The practice of parkour is  
53 an individual thing that develops your body and your muscles. You are moving and  
54 training in a group and learning from other people and you see someone doing  
55 something and you try and imitate them or try that style of movement or on something  
56 that you have seen before. I mean me and Paul have a condition that we meet up and  
57 practise together because we are of a similar strength level. I know he is watching  
58 what I am doing. I am pushing much harder and he is going to push even harder this  
59 then helps push everyone. Not in a competitive way but to be better than I could have  
60 been and I can see still push harder. What facilities you have in the area - if there are  
61 loads of walls and things but do not have any rails and things then the balance side of  
62 things will suffer. If you have spots that have rails that skateboarders use your flow  
63 will be different. So like Manchester will be different than Sheffield because the volts  
64 and environment will be different. How we practise will be different than how they  
65 practise in Leeds. No I couldn't. I need to eat and sleep and once you have parkour in  
66 your blood it will always stay there. It could be as simple as you are walking down the  
67 street and there is a rail there on your right hand side and instead of walking the  
68 normal way you go over the rail and do it cause it's in your way rather than walking  
69 alongside it. You are always seeing how you can interact with the environment. So  
70 even if you are not physically practicing the volts you would just practice how your  
71 body is going to move or volt over something really high. I am sure I can find  
72 something that my body can do another way to move effectively. Age isn't a  
73 restriction.

### **Appendix O: *Participant H: Line Numbers***

1           Okay well parkour is as we have already mentioned a physical discipline but there is  
2           also emm a philosophical side to it as well so the most obvious implementation that  
3           you see people practicing is as a means of navigating through the environment  
4           quickly and efficiently. So you can use it to travel through any given thing and you  
5           can also see it practiced in an urban environment and there is no reason why you can't  
6           apply those skills into different settings like more rural settings. On the philosophical  
7           side of it, it's not just about the physical aspect. So yeah you might want to get over a  
8           wall that is six foot tall and that is one aspect but also it is about overcoming other  
9           obstacles and they could be emm more mental based. I do some lecturing in the  
10          school of sound recording where I talk about audio post production and basically  
11          emm when I actually started lecturing I was really apprehensive about it and even  
12          with the prospect of seeing it in front of a group of five or six people emm my hands  
13          would be shaking and emm talking nonsense at some point. Then some time later - a  
14          year later when my parkour became slightly more advanced I found myself in a  
15          situation where I was standing in front of 200 people addressing the whole audience.  
16          Strangely it was absolutely fine and that was definitely down to parkour. There was  
17          no chance I could have done that if it wasn't for practicing parkour. Personally I  
18          suppose the reason why I got into parkour was because like all people I saw these  
19          documentaries in 2005 and emm and it was I don't know something about freedom.  
20          Personally I practice it due to the confidence and the physical aspects of things. I  
21          wasn't interested in physical sports when I was at school. I was the last one chosen to  
22          join in a group and I hated it and had no interest but parkour I really found appealing.  
23          I don't know if I have mentioned that it is not competitive and that is a really  
24          important part of it. Like if you go out then you are not competing with other people  
25          that is not what parkour is. You are in your own space and you are just trying to jump  
26          in your own space and you might go out and do a jump and the next week you might  
27          be closer to accomplishing it. Its personal progression that attracts me to parkour and  
28          to see these visible achievements and to stay fit and healthy as well.

29          I think initially it will attract people in different ways. Let's assume some people have  
30          seen some videos and get into it because it's great for health and this might be a  
31          reason why they show off. Some might get into it because they will look good. The  
32          attraction might be initially for various reasons is a generally agreed view point. For  
33          people who practice it on a longer term basis it might be about personal progression  
34          and not about showing off and making videos to show your mates. It's about  
35          bettering yourself physically and helping others as well. There is a phrase that we use  
36          in parkour which is to be strong to be useful and it was from the method un natural  
37          but basically we follow the premise of it and to be stronger in many situations. For  
38          example, with the frost recently you might find someone trying to get out of the frost  
39          and can't get any grips so if you are trying to push the car with them - if you are

40 stronger then you can succeed in moving it so it can be things like that really. Parkour  
41 changes your perception of a given environment. This means that you will see an area  
42 where there is wall with a rail and the more you practice the more you will see it like  
43 a volt or you will ascertain a type of jump and a potential movement. You see it in a  
44 strange way and then you will see it in another way even if you have been practicing  
45 there for years. There are several spots that we have been training in for years and  
46 emm we still go back there. Someone will suggest something and you will think that  
47 you haven't thought about it properly so you see it from another perspective. First  
48 time I tried it was after seeing the TV documentary Jump Britain. After seeing that I  
49 looked on the internet to find out where to free run and I didn't know the different  
50 between free running and parkour. I found a parkour website that Dave set up like a  
51 discussion forum and I went out on a Sunday and met up with fifty odd people. Dave  
52 was there and other people and parkour and free running was around. Some of the  
53 people had been doing it for about six months and I was just learning basically stuff  
54 for three or five hours and my legs were aching and I could barely walk up stairs.  
55 Okay em I have learnt two sides really: a physical and mental side. The physical side  
56 of it, yeah, being aware through the practice of parkour and on a simple level balance  
57 these are the fundament aspects. You do become good at climbing. People don't see  
58 the mental aspect but they are aware that you are becoming more confident and  
59 believing in other aspects of life. I have learnt more about people in a strained way  
60 with people saying what is the norm. People will still choose to walk around the metal  
61 rail even if it takes one second to go over it. For some reason they have some  
62 preconceived perceptions of how things should be and how they should be and give it  
63 rationally. Most people don't like difficulty and avoid the challenge and try to keep  
64 confident by avoiding difficulty. Going back to what Dave was saying about pushing  
65 each other. This is about a mindset that you can train under your own motivation  
66 without external influences but am not sure if anyone can truly push themselves to the  
67 max under their own influence. I mean an example - we bought gymnastic rings and  
68 practise holding ourselves up on them and it's called the iron cross like. The arms  
69 aren't that straight and we have being training lowering the arms to build strength. We  
70 were drilling in a set of ten each and I said I think I will do thirty and Dean said I do  
71 fifty as a rule. If something will be done then you have no option but to do fifty ha-  
72 ha. The point that I wanted to make through the country and around eh world is that  
73 they are training in their own group. You do get regional trends that influence how  
74 people practise. I went to France and they were great in jumping across-the-board and  
75 we were better in strength based and there training was in that aspect and we were in  
76 ours and you get your regional differences. Younger participants follow the fashion  
77 based trends and wear a type of trainer or where tracksuits with their hair grown long.  
78 Emm yeah because it is you who practises in an environment and so it is impossible to  
79 ignore the environment you are practicing in. Parkour is strongly influenced by the  
80 environment. You are training to be good in that environment. If you don't understand  
81 that you are not understanding the real purpose of parkour and the people around the  
82 world and people who are practicing in the environment that they have available to

83           them. Parkour is socially influenced and I want to mention what Adam was saying  
84           about police. We haven't had any problem and they have come up to us and say what  
85           are you doing lads and we explain and they say okay carry on. Security guards are  
86           more funny about it like you describe it and their response to you is predetermined  
87           before they even talk to you and they will come out and they will say move on which  
88           is a pre defined thing they say. Sometimes you ask for a reason they just say don't get  
89           cocky with us now. They will mention the facts about insurance and health and safety  
90           is normally cited. Emm I think you can't get away from what you have learnt in  
91           parkour. You can't just stop it and lose all the mental stuff you have learnt. It's hard  
92           to answer really shortly. When I started to practise parkour I was locked out of the  
93           house and I had to wait 5 hours to open the door in the cold and because I hadn't been  
94           practicing I didn't think that I could have actually climbed up the wall to the  
95           bathroom window. Emm but then a couple of years later the same thing happened and  
96           I just went through the bathroom window. So I will always find situation when I can  
97           use parkour so no way of getting away from it really. You can put a ban on it but  
98           never take away what I have learnt and how to utilise it.

## Bibliography

---

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Ameel, L. and Tani, S. (2012) 'Everyday aesthetics in action: Parkour eyes and the beauty of concrete walls', *Emotion, Space and Society*, 5 (3), pp. 164-173.

Archer, N. (2010) 'Virtual poaching and altered space: reading parkour in French visual culture', *Modern and Contemporary France*, 18 (1), pp. 93-107.

Atkinson, M. (2009) 'Parkour, anarcho-environmentalism, and poiesis', *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 33 (2), pp. 169-194.

Atkinson, M. and Young, K. (2008) *Deviance and social control in sport*. Champaign: Human Kinetics.

Bandura, A. and McClelland, D.C. (1977) *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Bavinton, N. (2007) 'From obstacle to opportunity: Parkour, leisure, and the reinterpretation of constraints', *Annals of Leisure Research*, 10 (3-4), pp. 391-412.

Belk, R., Wallendorf, M. and Sherry, J. (1989) 'The sacred and the profane in consumer behavior: Theodicy on the odyssey', *Journal of Consumer Research*, 16 (1), pp. 1-38.

Biddle, S., Markland, D., Gilbourne, D., Chatzisarantis, N. and Sparkes, A. (2001) 'Research methods in sport and exercise psychology: quantitative and qualitative issues', *Journal of Sports Science*, 19 (10), pp. 777-809.

Bignell, P. and Sharp, R. (2007) 'Jumped-up plan to stage world competition sees free runners falling out', *The Independent on Sunday (London)*, 22 April [Online]. Available at: <http://infoweb.newsbank.com>. (Accessed 11-04-2009).

## Bibliography

---

Borden, I. (2001) *Skateboarding, space and the city: Architecture and the body*. Oxford: Berg Publishers.

Calaizzi, P. (1978) *As the phenomenologist psychological research views it: Existential-phenomenological alternatives for psychology*. New York: OUP.

Carey, M. (1994) 'The group effect in focus groups: planning, implementing, and interpreting focus group research', *Critical Issues in Qualitative Research Methods*, pp. 225-241.

Cashmore, E. (2000) *Sport culture*. London: Routledge.

Ceils, R., Rose, R. and Leigh, T. (1993) 'An exploration of high-risk leisure consumption through skydiving', *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20 (1), pp. 1-23.

Crouch, D. and Tomlinson, A. (1994) 'Collective self-generated consumption: Leisure, space and cultural identity in late modernity'. In: L, Henry (Ed.), *Leisure, modernism, postmodernism, and lifestyles: Leisure in different worlds*. Eastbourne: LSA Publications, pp. 309-21.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1975) *Beyond boredom and anxiety*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Dale, G. (1996) 'Existential phenomenology: Emphasizing the experience of the athlete in sport psychology research', *Sport Psychologist*, 10(4), pp. 307-321.

Daskalaki, M., Stara, A. and Imas, M. (2008) 'The parkour organisation: inhabitation of corporate spaces', *Culture and Organisation*, 14 (1), pp. 49-64.

Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1987) *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

## Bibliography

---

Diehm, R. and Armatas, C. (2004) 'Surfing: an avenue for socially acceptable risk-taking, satisfying needs for sensation seeking and experience seeking', *Personality and Individual Differences*, 36 (3), pp. 663-677.

Dovey, K. and Polakit, K. (2007) 'Urban slippage: smooth and striated streetscapes in Bangkok'. In: Franck, K. and Stevens, Q. (Eds.), *Loose space: Possibility and diversity in urban life*. London: Routledge, pp.113-131.

Dunning, E. (1992) 'Culture, civilization and the sociology of sport innovation', *The European Journal of Social Science Research*, 5 (4), pp. 7-18.

Fishman, J. (1960) 'A systematization of the whorfian hypothesis', *Behavioural Science*, 5 (4), pp. 323-339.

Franck, K. and Stevens, Q. (2007) *Loose space: Possibility and diversity in urban life*. London: Routledge.

Franques, P., Auriacombe, M., Piquemal, E., Verger, M., Brisseau-Gimenez, S., Grabot and Tignol, J. (2003) 'Sensation seeking as a common factor in opioid dependent subjects and high risk sport practicing subjects: A cross sectional study', *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 69 (2), pp. 121-126.

Frederick, C. and Ryan, R. (1993) 'Differences in motivation for sport and exercise and their relations with participation and mental health', *Journal of Sport Behaviour*, 16 (3), pp. 124-146.

Geyh, P. (2006) 'Urban free flow: a poetics of parkour', *M/C Media Culture Journal* 9 (3), 4.

## Bibliography

---

Gilchrist, P. and Wheaton, B. (2011) 'Lifestyle sport, public policy and youth engagement: examining the emergence of parkour', *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 3 (1), pp. 109-131.

Giulianotti, R. and Robertson, R. (2007) 'Recovering the social: Globalization, football and transnationalism', *Global Networks*, 7 (2), pp. 166-186.

Gratton, C. and Jones, I. (2004) *Research methods for sport studies*. London: Routledge.

Greenfeld, K., Dowell, W., Rawe, J., Fulton, G., Krantz, M., Maloney, J., Marshall, E., Roche, T. and Woodbury, R. (1999) 'Life on the edge', *Time*, 154 (10), pp. 28-36.

Guttman, A. (2000) 'The development of modern sports'. In Coakley, J and Dunning, E (Eds.), *Handbook of sport studies*. London: Sage, pp. 248-259.

Haapala, A. (2005) 'On the aesthetics of the everyday. Familiarity, strangeness and the meaning of place'. In: Light, A and Smith, J. (Eds.), *The aesthetics of everyday life*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 39-55.

Hagger, M. and Chatzisarantis, N. (2005) 'First and higher-order models of attitudes, normative influence and perceived behavioural control in the theory of planned behaviour', *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 44 (4), pp. 513-535.

Hammersley, M. (2000) 'The relevance of qualitative research', *Oxford Review of Education*, 26 (3-4), pp. 393-405.

Hardy, L., Jones, G. and Gould, D. (1996) *Understanding psychological preparation for sport: theory and practice of elite performers*. Chichester: Wiley.

## Bibliography

---

Heidegger, M. (1977) *The question concerning technology and other essays*. New York: Harper and Row.

Holloway, I. (1997) *Basic concepts for qualitative research*. London: Blackwell Science.

Horne, J., Tomlinson, A. and Whannel, G. (1999) *Understanding sport: An introduction to the sociological and cultural analysis of sport*. London: E and FN Spon.

Hunter, J. and Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000) 'The phenomenology of body-mind: The contrasting cases of flow in sports and contemplation', *Anthropology of Consciousness*, 11(3-4), pp. 5-24.

Husserl, E. (1970) *The crisis of european sciences and transcendental phenomenology: An introduction to phenomenological philosophy*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Jackson, S. (1995) 'The growth of qualitative research in sport psychology'. In: Morris, T. and Summers, J. (Eds.), *Sport Psychology Theory, Applications and Issues*. Milton, QLD: Wiley, pp. 575-591.

Jackson, S. and Hanin, Y. (2000) *Joy, fun and flow state in sport*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Jacques, M. (1997) 'Worshipping the body at the altar of sport', *The Observer*, 13 July, pp. 18-19.

Kerry, D. and Armour, K. (2000) 'Sport sciences and the promise of phenomenology: Philosophy, method, and insight', *Quest*, 52 (1), pp. 1-17.

## Bibliography

---

Kitzinger, J. (1994) 'The methodology of focus groups: the importance of interaction between research participants', *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 16 (1), pp. 103-121.

Koerner, B. (1997) 'Extreeme: The peril, the thrill, the sheer rebellion of it all. High risk sports add spice to the humdrum of American lives', *US News and World Report*, 30 June, 122, pp. 50-59.

Krane, V., Andersen, M. and Stean, W. (1997) 'Issues of qualitative research methods and presentation', *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 19 (1), pp. 213-218.

Krueger, R. (1995) 'The future of focus groups', *Qualitative Health Research*, 5 (4), pp. 524-530.

Kusz, K. (2003) 'BMX, extreme sports, and the white male backlash'. In: Rinehart, R and Sydnor, S. (Eds.), *To the extreme: alternative sports, inside and out*. Albany: State University of New York Press, pp. 153-175.

Kvale, S. (1996) *Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research writing*. London: Sage.

Kyttä, M. (2002) 'Affordances of children's environments in the context of cities, small towns, suburbs and rural villages in Finland and Belarus', *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 22 (1), pp. 109-123.

Lam, J. (2005) 'Joanne Lam explores the architecture of the city in a dynamic new way through parkour', *Canadian Architect*, 50 (2), pp. 38.

Larkin, M. and Griffiths, M. (2004) 'Dangerous sports and recreational drug-use: rationalizing and contextualizing risk', *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 14 (4), pp. 215-232.

## Bibliography

---

Lave, J. (2009) *Contemporary theories of learning: learning theorists in their own words*. London: Routledge, pp. 200-208.

Laverty, S. (2008) 'Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology: A comparison of historical and methodological considerations', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2 (3), pp. 21-35.

Le Breton, D. (2000) 'Playing symbolically with death in extreme sports', *Body and Society*, 6 (1), pp. 1-11.

Lincoln, Y. and Guba, E. (1985) *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Lupton, D. (1995) *The imperative of health: Public health and the regulated body*. London: Sage.

Lyng, S. (1990) 'Edgework: A social psychological analysis of voluntary risk taking', *American Journal of Sociology*, 94 (4), pp. 851-886.

Lyons, A. (1999) *Qualitative health psychology: Theories and methods*. London: Sage.

Maguire, J. (1999) *Global sport: Identities, societies, civilizations*. Polity Press: Cambridge.

Malinowski, B. (1923) 'The problem of meaning in primitive languages'. In: Ogden, C and Richards, I. (Eds.), *The meaning of meaning: A study of the influence of language university presson thought and of the science of symbolism*. New York: Brace and Company, pp. 296-336.

Mason, J. (2002) *Qualitative researching*. London: Sage.

## Bibliography

---

McLean, C., Houshian, S. and Pike, J. (2006) 'Paediatric fractures sustained in parkour (free running)', *Injury*, 37 (8), pp. 795-797.

Miller, J. and Demoiny, S. (2008) 'Parkour: a new extreme sport and a case study', *The Journal of Foot and Ankle Surgery*, 47 (1), pp. 63-65.

Morgan, D. (1998) *The focus group guidebook*. California: Sage.

Mould, O. (2009) 'Parkour, the city, the event', *Environment and Planning: D, Society and Space*, 27 (4), pp. 738-750.

Moustakas, C. (1994) *Phenomenological research methods*. London: Sage.

Mulé, S. (1981) *Behaviour in excess: An examination of the volitional disorders*. New York: Free Press, pp. 164-189.

Myers, D. and Lamm, H. (1976) 'The group polarization phenomenon', *Psychological Bulletin*, 83 (4), pp. 602-607.

Nesti, M. (2004) *Existential psychology and sport: Theory and application*. London: Routledge.

O'Grady, A. (2012) 'Tracing the city-parkour training, play and the practice of collaborative learning', *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training*, 3 (2), pp. 145-162.

Olson, J. and Reynolds, T. (1983) 'Understanding consumers, cognitive structures: Implications for advertising strategy'. In: Percy, L and Woodside, A. (Eds.), *Advertising and Consumer Psychology*. Lexington, Mass: Lexington Books, pp. 77-90.

## Bibliography

---

Ortuzar, J. (2009) 'Parkour or l'art du déplacement: A Kinetic Urban Utopia', *The Drama Review*, 53 (3), pp. 54-66.

Polkinghorne, D. (1989) 'Phenomenological research methods'. In: Valle, R. and Halling, S. (Eds.), *Existential-phenomenological perspectives in psychology*. New York: Plenum Press.

Popay, J., Rogers, A. and Williams, G. (1998) 'Rationale and standards for the systematic review of qualitative literature in health services research', *Qualitative Health Research*, 8 (3), pp. 341-351.

Puchan, H. (2005) 'Living extreme: Adventure sports, media and commercialisation', *Journal of Communication Management*, 9 (2), pp. 171-178.

Rawlinson, C. and Guaralda, M. (2011) 'Play in the city: Parkour and architecture'. In: *The first international postgraduate conference on engineering, designing and developing the built environment for sustainable wellbeing*, Queensland University of Technology, 27-29 April 2011, Brisbane: Qld.

Redhead, S. (1993) *Rave off: Politics and deviance in contemporary youth culture*. Aldershot, England and Brookfield, Vt: Ashgate.

Rinehart, R. and Sydnor, S. (2003) *To the extreme: Alternative sports, inside and out*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Ritzer, G. (2010) *The McDonaldization of society* 6. London: Sage.

Rojek, C. (1995) *Decentring leisure: Rethinking leisure theory*. London: Sage.

## Bibliography

---

Rowland, G., Franken, R. and Harrison, K. (1986) 'Sensation seeking and participation in sporting activities', *Journal of Sport Psychology*, 8 (3), pp. 212-220.

Saville, S. (2008) 'Playing with fear: parkour and the mobility of emotion', *Social and Cultural Geography*, 9 (8), pp. 891-914.

Ser, S. (2008) 'Leap of faith', *The Jerusalem Post*, 17 January [Online]. Available at: <http://www.jpost.com/>. (Accessed 24-04-2009).

Schopenhauer, A. (1903) *On the fourfold root of sufficient reason and on the will in nature*. London: George Bell and Sons.

Schouten, J. (1991) 'Personal rites of passage and the reconstruction of self', *Advances in Consumer Research*, 18 (2), pp. 49-51.

Shoham, A., Rose, G. and Kahle, L. (1998) 'Marketing of risky sports: From intention to action', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 26 (4), pp. 307-321.

Shreeve, J (2008) 'The world is my gym - why slog it out on the treadmill when vaulting, jumping and climbing is so much fun'. *The Independent (London)*, 11 November [Online]. Available at: <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/>. (Accessed 24-04-2009).

Silverman, D. (2009) *Doing qualitative research*. London: Sage.

Simon, R.L. (1985) *Sports and social values*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Smith, J.A. (1996) 'Evolving issues for qualitative psychology'. In: Richardson, J. (Ed.), *Handbook of research methods for psychology and the social sciences*. Leicester: BPS Books.

## Bibliography

---

Smith, J. (2004) 'Reflecting on the development of interpretative phenomenological analysis and its contribution to qualitative research in psychology', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 1(1), pp. 39-54.

Smith, J., Flowers, P. and Larkin, M. (2009) *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research*. London: Sage.

Smith, J., Osborn, M. and Smith, J. (2003) *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*. London: Sage.

Solomon, R. (1980) 'The opponent-process theory of acquired motivation', *American Psychologist*, 35 (8), pp. 691-712.

Sparkes, A. (1994) 'Research paradigms in physical education: Some brief comments on differences that make a difference', *British Journal of Physical Education Research Supplement*, 14, pp. 11-16.

Sparkes, A. (2002) *Telling tales in sport and physical activity: A qualitative journey*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Stevens, Q. (2007) *The ludic city: exploring the potential of public spaces*. London: Routledge.

Sword, W. (1999) 'Accounting for presence of self: reflections on doing qualitative research', *Qualitative Health Research*, 9 (2), pp. 270-278.

Thoreau, H. (1971) 'Walden. 1854', In: Shanley, J. (Ed.), *The writings of Henry David Thoreau: Walden*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

## Bibliography

---

Thornton, S. (1995) *Club cultures: music, media and subcultural capital*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Tomlinson, J. and Leigh, E. (2004) *Extreme sports: in search of the ultimate thrill*. Buffalo, New York: Firefly Books.

Van kaam (1969) *Existential foundations of psychology*. New York: Image Books.

Waddington, I. (2000) *Sport, health and drugs: A critical sociological perspective*. London: E and FN Spon.

Wallach, M., Kogan, N. and Bem, D. (1962) 'Group influence on individual risk taking', *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 65 (2), pp. 75-86.

Watson, N. and Czech, D. (2005) 'The use of prayer in sport: implications for sport psychology consulting', *The Online Journal of Sport Psychology*, 7 (4), pp. 26-35.

Wenger, E. (1998) 'Communities of practice: Learning as a social system', *Systems Thinker*, 9 (5), pp. 2-3.

Wertheim, L. (2004) 'Globalisation in sports: The whole world is watching', *Sports Illustrated*, 100 (24), pp. 72-86.

Whannel, G. (2000) 'Sport and the media'. In: Coakley, J and Dunning, E. (Eds.), *Handbook of sport studies*. London: Sage, pp. 291-308.

Wheaton, B. (2000) 'Just do it: consumption, commitment, and identity in the windsurfing subculture', *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 17 (3), pp. 254-274.

## Bibliography

---

Wheaton, B. (2004) *Understanding lifestyle sport: Consumption, identity and difference*. London: Routledge.

Wheaton, B. and Beal, B. (2003) 'Keeping It Real: Subcultural Media and the Discourses of Authenticity in Alternative Sport', *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 38 (2), pp. 155-176.

Willig, C. (2008) *Introducing qualitative research in psychology*. Maidenhead: McGraw Hill: Open University Press.

Willig, C. (2008) 'A Phenomenological investigation of the experience of taking part in extreme sports', *Journal of Health Psychology*, 13 (5), pp. 690-702.

Zuckerman, M. (1979) *Sensation seeking: Beyond the optimal level of arousal*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.