Getting to the point: An exploration of sustaining engagement in non-essential occupations

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A thesis submitted to Otago Polytechnic in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Occupational Therapy

2013
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Acknowledgements

I wish to thank my supervisors Linda Wilson and Clare Hocking for their support in the writing of this thesis. Linda’s enthusiasm for the project has been a huge encouragement and motivator, and Clare’s depth of understanding about occupation has been invaluable. I feel incredibly privileged to have had such knowledgeable and inspiring supervisors.

I also want to acknowledge the participants in this study, who willingly talked to me about their passions.

Family and friends have helped to make the writing of this thesis possible. Thank you to Mum for the time you have put into giving me space to get this done, for looking after Benjamin, and for the feedback you provided. Thank you to Dad for your help with the diagrams. Thanks to Rita for valuable discussions about doing, and to Pamela for providing feedback. And last but not least thank you to Marcus for washing the dishes and the nappies when I was otherwise occupied.
Abstract

Getting to the point: An exploration of sustaining engagement in non-essential occupations

Relatively little has been described by occupational therapists and occupational scientists about motivational processes underpinning the ongoing doing of non-essential occupations. Knowing about factors contributing to sustained engagement will provide a base for effective interventions in situations where individuals experience functional problems related to motivation.

This qualitative, interpretive descriptive study sought to understand factors motivating the sustained engagement in non-survival occupations. Ten participants, each of whom have a passionate interest in an occupation they do not need to do, were recruited using purposive snowball sampling. Semi-structured interviews were conducted about their motivations for initiating and sustaining their doing. Data analysis occurred concurrently with data collection, using coding, and then grouping of codes into categories. Data analysis was guided by broad questions, to keep a focus on the overall data set.

Participants were motivated to sustain their doing by complex interactions between a range of push and pull factors that ultimately result in positive feelings or contribute to a sense of inner strength. Three key factors operated. These were the attraction to what one values and enjoys, the anticipation of reaching a point in their doing (including achieving something), and doing because it is what one does. Individuals continued doing even when it was not always enjoyed due to the anticipation of achievement.

The quality and intensity of drive towards doing varied between participants. Compelling pull and committed push underpinned motivation in differing degrees. Individuals could be passionate about their doing even when they did not feel compelled to do, and often there was effort involved in continuing.

Occupational involvement was not repetitious but developed over time, helping to sustain interest and prevent boredom. Participants faced varying levels of challenge
in their occupations. Challenge could be interesting and enjoyable, or demanding. Participants persevered through challenging circumstances and challenges contributed to further engagement by providing opportunities for a sense of achievement.

Therapists need to be mindful of the importance that reaching a point of achievement has in motivating individuals. Understanding how compulsion and commitment can underlie doing may also help to guide assessment and intervention. It is recommended that future research explores motivation in less passionate individuals, and those who experience issues impacting on their motivation to do. It should also explore the relationship between compelling doing and committed doing, and cross multiple occupations.
Chapter One: Introduction

None of these things are sensible. It doesn't make any sense at all to do martial arts, to do motor racing, to climb mountains, to do flower arranging. There's no sense in sewing because you can buy it from China, you know. None of this stuff has got any sense to it (study participant).

Introduction to the Study

This study is concerned with why people sustain their engagement over time in non-essential occupations. By non-essential occupations, I mean those which go beyond the need for survival. Polatajko (2010) points out that there is a belief, supported by the media, that “the basic reason for occupational engagement is survival” (p. 73). While historically occupations largely revolved around the immediate need to survive, as conditions developed the purposes of occupations developed to meet other human needs (Polatajko & Davis, 2010). We need only to reflect on the opening quotation, from one of the study participants, to see that occupations go far beyond meeting survival needs. Fundamentally, for example, sewing may be necessary for protection from the elements, but in many societies now the skill of sewing is not necessary, yet it is still done for other reasons. There is a vast difference between a mother of seven in the past sewing a patchwork bedspread from old garments, for the purpose of keeping her family warm, and someone today sewing an elaborate quilt made of purpose-produced patchwork fabric and designed to be displayed on a wall. It is this latter type of doing that is of interest in this project.

How This Topic Relates to Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy

In a profession that is concerned with enabling engagement in occupations, it is essential that factors influencing doing are understood. As stated by Harvey and Pentland (2010) “To facilitate healthy and satisfying occupational behaviour, we must understand those factors that influence 'doing', that is, the complex interactions between individual characteristics and the environment that result in human occupational behaviour” (p. 109). Harvey and Pentland recognise that explaining why humans do what they do is highly involved. However, we need to work at unravelling the evident complexities, and because motivation is part of the complexity of doing,
underlying everything people do in some way (Reeve, 2009), research needs to include a focus on motivation.

Occupation questions that require investigation have been categorised into six basic areas of inquiry around who, what, when, where, how, and why (Polatajoko, 2010). One area that occupation research must focus on is the complex question of why people do what they do (Harvey & Pentland, 2010; Polatajoko, 2010). The question of why has often been indirectly addressed from the point of view of the meaning underlying occupation, both in terms of the meaning that occupations create (Christiansen & Townsend, 2010; Hasselkus, 2011), and the meaning that is embedded within occupation (Boerema, Russell, & Aguilar, 2010; Reed, Hocking, & Smythe, 2011), but it is less common to directly consider motivation for doing.

A focus within occupational science and occupational therapy research on why people do what they do, with the view to more fully understanding motivation, will ultimately enable therapists to address functional problems that have a motivational component. Although motivation is not at the core of the occupational therapy profession, occupational engagement difficulties can include performance components related to motivation, therefore the concept is highly relevant within an occupational viewpoint.

**Defining and Studying Occupation**

In a broad and simple sense, occupation is everything that people do in the course of their life. On a deeper level it is very much more complex than this, having a number of intertwining elements. Hocking (2000) presented the conceptualisation of occupation being “the multiple, interwoven processes which occur as the actor and the environment interact, and the occupation progresses” (p.61). This study reflects these interwoven processes.

Differentiating between the terms occupation, activity, and task has been inconsistent within the occupation literature, and while in this project I do not seek to enter that debate, a clear viewpoint on definitions and use of words is required, so they can be applied consistently. For the purposes of this research, the taxonomic code for understanding occupation (Polatajko et al. 2004; Polatajko et al. 2007) will be drawn
on, which is a five level framework describing and classifying human occupational
activity. Occupation, sitting at the top of the hierarchy, consists of a set of activities.
Activities are composed of sets of tasks, which in turn are made up of actions that
have an endpoint or outcome. Actions are viewed as being made up of voluntary
movements and mental processes. The definition of occupation within the code, that
will be used within this project to distinguish ‘occupation’ from other occupational
words, is “An activity or set of activities that is performed with some consistency or
regularity, that brings structure, and is given value and meaning by individuals and a
culture” (Polatajko et al. 2007, p. 19). An exception will be when theorists outside of
occupation domains have used terms in other ways, and in those cases, words will be
used that are consistent with their explanations.

As already stated, the particular area of interest in this project is those occupations
that individuals engage in that they do not have to do. One way of categorising types
of occupations is as obligatory, necessary, or chosen. Chosen occupations are at the
discretion of the individual, and do not have to be done (Christiansen & Townsend,
2010). Another categorisation was presented by Persson, Erlandsson, Eklund and
Iwarsson (2001). According to these authors, occupations can sit within four
overlapping categories. Maintenance occupations are those that meet ones’ basic
needs, and work occupations are those needing to be done to support people. Play
occupations are “experienced as joyful and satisfying in their own right” (p. 12), and
they demand attention and can lead to absorption, and relaxing occupations that are
done because they are liked. Those fitting within the categories of chosen
occupations (Christiansen & Townsend, 2010), and play and relaxing occupations
(Persson et al. 2001) form the focus of the study, because these types of occupations
are non-essential.

Although there does not seem to be an agreed professional categorisation of
occupation, there are various ways of grouping occupations in considering their
particular properties. One is in relation to who they are done with. Solitary
occupations do not obviously involve others, shared are done in parallel rather than
being interactive, and co-occupations are interactive and aimed at a common goal,
such as singing in a choir (Jacob, Guptill and Sumsion, 2009).


Defining Motivation

Motivation is considered broadly here, rather than drawing on and exploring all of its complexities from a psychology viewpoint. As my focus is on ongoing engagement in what people do, I draw on the psychology literature only where it has relevance to why people do non-essential occupations. Motivation is a construct that considers the forces both internal and external to the individual that energises and directs behaviour (Reeve, 2009), and “To be motivated means to be moved to do something.” (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p. 54). Individuals vary in their level of motivation, and also in what their motivation is oriented towards.

A highly relevant psychological theory in considering motivation from an occupational point of view is that of self-determination theory (Ryan and Deci 2000a; Ryan and Deci 2000b), which distinguishes between different types of motivation. People can be motivated to perform an activity because it is valued by the individual in some way and because of the satisfaction that is inherent in the activity (intrinsic motivation), or because of environmental consequences or incentives (extrinsic motivation) (Reeve, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Aside from encompassing these views around intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, according to self-determination theory, there are three psychological needs that lie beneath human action. These needs are 1) autonomy, or the need to experience self-direction in the regulation of behaviour; 2) competence, that is the need to interact effectively with the environment, and 3) relatedness, or the need to establish emotional bonds with others. The theory states that individuals are intrinsically motivated to seek out experiences that will satisfy these three areas, with the goals that people hold in carrying out the occupations that they choose to do being driven by these underlying psychological needs (Vallerand & Losier, 1999). A fourth dimension within the theory is amotivation, literally meaning without motivation (Reeve, 2009). This study draws on self-determination theory due to its relevance in considering motivation from an occupational viewpoint and because of its link with the Dualistic Model of Passion, (Vallerand et al., 2003) which came into view as the study progressed.

My Interest in This Study – Personal and Professional

I entered this research while working as an occupational therapy lecturer. My interest in the topic began prior to that, while I was working with clients with chronic pain,
and studying theoretical perspectives in occupational therapy. I became interested in the volition subsystem of the Model of Human Occupation (Kielhofner, 2008), and in particular the volition cycle, which reasons that motivation to engage in occupation is influenced over time by occupational experiences, and by the sense that people make of those experiences. The question of what happens when an ongoing factor, in this case chronic pain, affects individuals’ experience of occupations and the sense they make of these experiences, intrigued me. It seemed to follow that an interfering factor could minimise positive emotions that come through doing, and it would then follow that an individual would be less likely to seek out a similar occupational experience again. Following this I began reading about another occupational process, Carlson’s (1996) theory of the self-perpetuation of occupations, which I was fascinated by. The theory postulates that occupations can have a self-perpetuating property – that through participating in an occupation, future involvement in the occupation may increase. It made sense to me that one’s experiences in doing would affect future doing, often providing momentum.

I became increasingly observant of people who show a strong drive to do something, and began asking myself questions about what may contribute to their ongoing engagement. What is it that has captured my father so much with his violin making during the past 22 years that he will spend approximately 400 hours patiently working alone on the highly technical and involved processes that contribute to a finished violin? Why has my nine year old niece developed a strong interest in highland dancing? In observing her at a lesson, I wondered to what degree encouragement from her family, feedback from her teacher, her natural ability and skill and perhaps own recognition of her ability, her achievement in competitions, and her enjoyment of the actual engagement contribute to her interest in this occupation. I wonder if she will take this interest into her future, and if so what influences will be present to shape that.

I also spent time reflecting on my own engagement in certain occupations. I am a creative person who enjoys occupations such as sewing, crafts, and bread making. I come from a family who encouraged involvement in music, and play the violin. At times I have experienced a particularly strong desire to do certain occupations. In reflecting on my reasons for engagement, I think back to my childhood and have fond
memories of sitting with boxes full of fabric and the hours of pleasure I had producing various products from them. It seems that I had a strong inner drive to want to create. Later in life I continue to create, and see my creativity as part of my identity. But what is it, exactly, that makes me want to sit for hours making cards or boxes, or sew a dress for a friend’s baby? For me there is both a sense of excitement that can capture me prior to starting a project, and a huge amount of satisfaction in producing an end product, even if I don’t always feel intensely absorbed or experience high levels of enjoyment during the actual process of creating itself. I am also aware that the encouragement I receive from others is significant in boosting my confidence and sparking future doing.

The question of ‘why’ and my observations further inspired me to want to find out what may underlie sustained engagement. I came to the study with an expectation that, regardless of what occupation an individual keeps pursuing, there may be a generic process that underlies the engagement of individuals. I thought this may be strongly related to an individual’s pleasure or enjoyment of their ‘in the moment’ experiences – that when someone has an experience of doing that they enjoy, this will lead them to engage again because they will seek out a similar type of experience. I also thought that feedback from other people, and ones’ recognition of their own level of skill, may be significant. This thinking was influenced both by Kielhofner’s (2008) and Carlson’s (1996) propositions about influences on doing. I was attracted to studying highly motivated people sustaining non-essential doing, so that occupational therapists may be able to understand how people with motivational problems can be more effectively assisted.

**The Importance of This Topic**

There are many angles from which the importance of this topic can be illustrated. The importance of this topic can be seen, for example, in relation to chronic pain. People who experience ongoing pain can take on unhelpful activity patterns that may exacerbate symptoms. It is common for individuals to decrease participation in activity in order to prevent pain, as well as to engage in patterns where periods of very high activity are interspersed with prolonged rests (Birkholtz, Aylwin & Harman, 2004). Pain is highly complex and multi-faceted experience that affects occupations (Fisher et al. 2007), and understanding how the motivation towards doing can be
affected when persistent pain is a part of that doing may provide knowledge that can enhance interventions.

Another angle relates to the fact that the elderly population in New Zealand is about to rapidly increase - by 2051, 25% of the population will be over the age of 65 (Ministry of Health, 2002). Durie (2011) argues that older people are societal assets who have the potential to make highly valuable contributions, which is in contrast with societal perceptions of ageing being associated with diminishing ability (Wilcock, 2007b). It is in the interests of society that this sector of the population is active and engaged. If we work on the assumption that being occupied affects health in positive ways, then if elderly people continue to be meaningfully occupied when they are not in paid employment, this will in turn place less strain on health care resources. Key New Zealand Government public health priorities include increasing physical activity, decreasing depression, and decreasing social isolation and loneliness in the elderly (Ministry of Health, 2002). Although not stated within the Health of Older People Strategy (Ministry of Health, 2002), it can be reasonably assumed that if elderly individuals remain motivated to do valuable occupations and are therefore active within and contributing to their communities, this will have an impact around each of these areas. Less strain on the population as a whole would result from increased health outcomes.

A third important angle relates to mental health. Because motivation is a component of doing that can be significantly affected by mental illness, and low levels of motivation can be pervasive in affecting function (Mee & Sumsion, 2001), it is essential that occupational therapists working in mental health understand more about motivation so that occupational performance issues can be more effectively addressed. Mee and Sumsion identified a requirement for “studying the nature of occupation and its application to occupational therapy’s practice in mental health” (p. 127). Although this study is not directly concerned with mental health application, it is strongly concerned with the nature of occupation, and it will potentially lead to further research that can more directly apply to this population, not just clinically but potentially at a mental health promotion level (Durie, 2011).
I refer above to working on the assumption that being occupied affects health. While occupational scientists often claim that there is a limited evidence base to provide support for the relationship between occupation and well-being (Law, Steinwender & LeClair, 1998; Wright, Sadlo & Stew, 2007) we need only to take a short time to browse the research outside of our own disciplines to see that the evidence is ample. Wilcock (2007b) stated “Evidence for health through occupation is everywhere. Evidence is all around us” and that one place to look is in “hidden or central aspects of other disciplines” (p. 5). Throughout the study I began looking at these areas within other disciplines, which will be referred to particularly within the discussion.

As this study unfolded, it increasingly considered occupational therapy theory and how the findings may inform theory and help it to develop. Gaining a fuller understanding of why people do what they do is necessary to in turn ensure theory on which practice is based is accurate. In carrying out this research I have considered and critiqued existing theory. This is in line with what Hammell (2009) called for in saying “fostering a culture of healthy scepticism within our profession will enable us to challenge the veracity of our assumptions, contest the universality of their application, and insist on a supportive evidence base for our theories that is derived from a broad range of perspectives” (p. 11).

**Overview of the Thesis**

Following this introduction I move in chapter two to the literature review. Boundaries were placed on the literature review in order that it did not become too extensive. Primarily I consider literature that has emerged from either an occupational therapy or occupational science context. Within chapter three I explain the methodological approaches and processes that were used. Details are provided on the research purpose and questions, I explain and justify the use of an interpretive descriptive research design, outline the steps taken during the phases of the research process, and discuss ethical considerations. The findings of the study are presented in chapter four. A discussion based on the findings, in relation to literature from both within occupational science and occupational therapy, and from outside of those disciplines, is then presented in chapter five. Attention is drawn to findings of particular interest because they illuminate, or add to, what is already known. The chapter then critiques the quality and value of this study, considers application to practice, and areas for
future research. Chapter six presents concluding thoughts and reflections about the study.

Summary

It is my intention in this study to begin to fill the gap in the current occupational and occupational science research by focusing on the processes underlying the sustained doing of a range of occupations. Ultimately this may lead to occupational science having a better understanding of why people do what they do, and occupational therapists more effectively working with people who find it difficult to sustain their doing.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction
This review of the literature has the purposes of both providing background to key theoretical concepts, and considering relevant research, which will lead to the presentation of the justification for this study. The review will begin by defining key terms. It will then consider conceptualisations of motivation within the occupation literature, as well as from psychology as they relate to the occupational concepts being studied. Research that includes a focus on reasons for engaging in specific occupations, which has been sourced from the occupational science and occupational therapy literature, will then be considered. The review will conclude with a summary of gaps in the literature, the rationale for this study, and the research questions.

Search Strategies
The literature search used three main methods. First, electronic databases were searched. Combinations of key words were used in databases including CINHAL, PsychINFO, Proquest and Google Scholar. Search terms included occupation, engagement, leisure, motivation, motivational, volition, and process. Second, manual searching was undertaken, which involved hand-searching of reference lists, and skimming of journal indexes. Third, books with an occupational science focus were searched. The manual searching strategies located the bulk of literature, due to the variety of terms that are relevant to a motivational perspective on doing. Searching was restricted primarily to occupationally focused literature, to contain the review and maintain an occupational perspective on motivation. Two main types of literature were located – that which considers motivation for occupation from a theoretical stance, and research that includes a focus on motivation.

Defining and Conceptualising Leisure
Definitions and categorisations of occupation were presented in the introduction chapter, and here definitions are considered further in relation to leisure occupation. Many theorists and researchers have pointed out difficulties with defining leisure, with no single definition being adequate in every situation (Lloyd, King, McCarthy, &
Scanlan, 2007). According to Lobo (1999) leisure includes the elements of time being used according to one’s own judgement and choice, and being pleasurable and satisfying and done for its own rewards. Leisure is seen to be intrinsically satisfying and rewarding and it is equated with enjoying life (Haines, Smith & Baxter, 2010; Jacob, Guptil & Sumision, 1999; Lobo, 1999). Occupation literature has not generally distinguished between different types of leisure. However, within sociology, Stebbins (2001) differentiates casual from serious leisure. Whereas casual leisure is short-lived and pleasurable, offers immediate intrinsic rewards, and does not require training to do it, serious leisure is long-lasting, captivating, uses skills, and presents challenges.

**Conceptualising Motivation**

Conceptualisations of motivation in the occupation literature encompass a range of elements including the influence of experience, environmental factors, and a link to skill development. Motivation was extensively considered by Kielhofner (2008) within the Model of Human Occupation (MOHO), and his viewpoint emphasises the centrality of experience to making choices about occupational engagement. The term volition is used to refer to the motivation for occupation. Volition is conceptualised as a system of self-knowledge and dispositions that influence the choices people make towards occupations. It also encompasses occupational experience and the interpretation of that experience. Kielhofner (2008) recognises that a universal drive towards action is experienced by humans, but that this drive manifests itself differently from person to person, being affected by the values that are held, perceived competence in doing, and the experience of satisfaction in doing. The volition cycle (Kielhofner, 2008) is central to the volition subsystem. It demonstrates that motivation to engage in activities is influenced over time by the experiences that individuals have in activity, as well as the sense they make of that experience. An individual’s personal causation (sense of competence), values (what they find meaningful and important), and interests (what is enjoyable and satisfying) will all impact on occupational choices. The cycle shows these elements being woven together within a dynamic process, where individuals experience, interpret, anticipate, and choose their occupations. In this regard there is a self-propelling tendency within occupations, as it is seen that volition tends to perpetuate itself. Hocking (2000) recognises that Kielhofner’s views of volitional choices have not been researched. In particular she points out that the volitional process has been outlined theoretically, but
not systematically studied, implying that considering the process within research could be useful for occupational science.

Carlson (1996) also proposed that occupations have a ‘self-perpetuating’ property, and like Kielhofner (2008) he emphasises the experience of doing on future doing. He defines occupational perseverance as “prolonged engagement in an occupation that is directly or indirectly related to prior engagement within the occupation in question” (p. 145). Occupational perseverance is presented as a feedback loop, where an initial decision process and performance of occupation can lead to cognitive, affective and physical changes, which then influence subsequent decisions to carry out the occupation. He argues that the phenomenon is hard to overestimate because “its operation substantially determines the fabric of our being.” (p. 145) A range of other determinants can also promote repeated engagement in any given occupation, including personality, the need for satisfaction, and external factors such as responses from others (Carlson, 1996).

Scheerer, Cahill, Kirby and Lane (2004) drew on Carlson’s (1996) theory in their study of the meaning and motivation in cake decorating, and they observed in participants, as Carlson had proposed, that the meaning attached to the occupation by an individual influenced the degree to which the occupation would be continued, which in turn for the cake decorators resulted in occupational repetition and perseverance. This study goes some way to supporting the theory of occupational self-perpetuation, but a literature search revealed no other research on the concept, aside from one very small preliminary study (Carlson, 1996). Russell (Russell, 2008), however, refers to Carlson's theory in a discussion on the meanings behind the occupation of tagging. In reference to the theory, she suggests that individuals who discover in their doing that they are skilled at tagging “might strive to perpetuate this sense of mastery” (p. 92), and in their ongoing involvement set themselves greater challenges and develop their skill even further.

Flow theory, which although emerging from psychology is relevant within occupation fields due to its direct relationship with doing, also emphasises experience in doing. Flow is a subjective state linked with being absorbed in an activity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993; Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). The intense and focused concentration
produced causes the individual to become 'lost' in the pursuit, and in this state the awareness of time disappears, and the experience of the activity in itself will be intrinsically rewarding (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993). The activity must present the right level of challenge to the individual, because it is when the activity challenges the person’s skills in an optimum way that attention narrows in on a defined goal (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). It is proposed to influence ongoing engagement in occupations because it is such an enjoyable state and “experiencing flow encourages a person to persist at and return to an activity because of the experiential rewards it promises” (Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 92).

Flow theory has been considered widely within occupation literature (Scheerer, Cahill, Kirby & Lane, 2004; Wright, Sadlo & Stew 2007). Wright et al. pointed out that “A challenge for occupational science is to understand the flow process, meaning what happens before, during and after a flow experience, because the construct of flow is still evolving and the extent to which the characteristics and process of flow are unique and or similar to those of other positive, psychological states remains unclear” (p. 136). While much research has provided support for flow theory, the concept has also been criticised by occupation theorists for the difficulty there can be with distinguishing between different states of consciousness (Wright, Sadlo, & Stew, 2007), not recognising that challenging occupations can be experienced as other than satisfying (Morgan, 2010), and for implying that a state of flow is “the only valuable experience in human occupation” (Jonsson & Persson, 2006 p. 63). While Carlson (1996) recognises that flow may promote occupational repetition, he argues that it is not necessary for it to be present for occupational perseverance to take place.

Theories recognise not only the influence of experience in doing on future doing, but the effect of the environment on motivation. Kielhofner (2008) states that one’s volitional structure is influenced by an ongoing process of people encountering their human and non-human contexts. Polatajko and Davis (2010) in considering motivation from an occupational development viewpoint, emphasise the environmental influence on motivation. Exposure to occupations, and expectations around performance, they state, affect the likelihood of uptake, with innate drive being a factor only in some situations. They consider that contexts shape the occupations in which people engage, emphasising they are pivotal in forming ones
occupational repertoire (Davis, Polatajko, & Ruud, 2002). They do observe the need, however, for congruence between the environment and other factors, with the view taken that “Motivation occurs when there is a fit between an individual’s abilities, his or her environment, and the occupation” (Polatajko & Davis, 2010, p. 149). Conceptualisations from occupational development have emerged in relation to research on children, therefore it is unclear whether these definitions are applicable to the adult population.

In addition, Polatajko & Davis (2010) suggest a strong link between motivation and skill development, as do other theorists. They state that the stronger the motivation people have toward an occupation, the more likely it is they will engage and hence develop the competencies necessary for their doing to develop. Skill development is emphasised, too, in flow theory, because in order to experience flow people must be engaged in an activity where the opportunities for action balance with the skill of the performer (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). This then leads to people developing their abilities, with Csikszentmihalyi (2010) stating that “the fact that some people climb mountains whereas others make up tunes at a piano or push chess pieces across a board is in a sense incidental to the fact that they are all exploring the limits of their abilities and trying to expand them” (p. 30).

**Motivation in Relation to Meaning**

In the occupation literature, aspects of motivation are sometimes addressed, often indirectly, when meaning is considered. Meaning is a strong focal point in the current literature (Hasselkus, 2011; Hocking, Wright-St. Clair, & Bunrayong, 2002; Persson, Erlandsson, Eklund, & Iwarsson, 2001; Russell, 2008). Sources of meaning are found within occupation, and reciprocally, occupation is seen to contribute significantly to the meaning in one’s life (Hasselkus, 2011), with different meanings being derived from the same occupation by different individuals (Park, Guptill, & Sumsion, 2007; Riley, 2008). Meaning can also develop and vary over time (Christiansen & Townsend, 2010; Hocking, 2000) and this unfolding contributes to the formation of one’s identity (Haines, Smith, & Baxter, 2010; Scheerer, Cahill, Kirby, & Lane, 2004). Although not often recognised, there appears to be a close relationship between motivation and meaning because people tend to want to do that which holds meaning for them. Scheerer et al. (2004) concluded that the meaning of initial occupational
engagement in cake decorating strongly related to the motivation to continue that engagement. The meaning or value placed on the occupation provided initial motivation, the motivation to continue was then fuelled, and continued doing then resulted in further meaning. They thus determined that there is “a relationship between the subjective meanings occupations hold for individuals who participate in them, and their motivation to continue to participate” (p. 74), and suggested further research is required to support their proposal. They are, however, one of the few groups of authors within occupation domains who have explicitly pointed out this relationship.

**Psychology Theory**

In addition to self-determination theory, discussed on page 12 of the introduction chapter, passion is a further relevant concept, due to its focus on how people approach occupations. Passion is defined in the Dualistic Model of Passion (Vallerand et al. 2003) as “a strong inclination toward an activity that people like, that they find important, and in which they invest time and energy” (p. 757). According to Vallerand, passion fuels motivation. Another relevant psychology concept is that of interest, which is a source of intrinsic motivation having the function of motivating individuals to learn and explore (Silvia, 2008). Interest can arise from attraction to an occupation, and can develop over time into an enduring disposition, as attention becomes directed toward an occupation (Reeve, 2009). Interest has a self-propelling property – it motivates people to learn, in turn giving them the knowledge required to have a continued interest in something (Silvia, 2008).

**Research on Motivation for Engaging in Occupations**

There have in recent years been several studies generated from within the occupation research that focus on the engagement of individuals in a specific occupation. These studies tend to consider the meaning underlying engagement, and the experience in doing, but have sometimes indirectly revealed something about motivation. Only two such studies located directly focus on motivation for doing in non-disability populations, with Jacob, Guptill and Sumson (2009) exploring the experience of participating in a leisure based choir, and Scheerer, Cahill, Kirby and Lane (2004) focusing on motivation and meaning in the aforementioned phenomenological study.
Other studies have focused primarily on meaning, and experiences in doing. (Tonneijck, Kinebanian, & Josephsson, 2008; Wensely & Slade, 2012; Wright-St. Clair., Bunrayong, Vittayakorn, Rattakorn, & Hocking, 2004). This group of studies on specific occupations will be discussed in relation to the groups of themes that emerge from the pieces of research. First, aspects that are more internal in their orientation will be considered, followed by those more external to the individual.

Research shows that individuals can have a very strong desire to continue their engagement in an occupation of choice one they start. Riley (2008) reported that textilers have an intrinsic need, or strong inner drive, to create – it was seen to be “something that individuals must do” (p. 67) at points in their life. In line with this an “addictive power of participation” (p. 164) was recognised as a key reason for ongoing participating in theatre (Fox & Dickie, 2010). The exact nature of this addiction varied from individual to individual, but in some cases related to the transformative power of theatre, flow, and the opportunity to escape. One individual compared the excitement of being on stage with drug addiction, and reported being hooked into the occupation. In Howie, Coulter and Feldman’s (2004) study focused on book clubs, identified interests were shown to be embedded in the self, ingrained in the identity of participants, and were viewed by individuals as a desire that would always be with them.

The literature indicates that people can be motivated by the desire for accomplishment, and the challenge required to achieve something. In singing in a choir, challenge acted as a motivator, providing direction, focus, and the opportunity for group mastery (Tonneijck, Kinebanian, & Josephsson, 2008). In a separate choir singing study (Jacob, Guptill & Sumson, 2009), there was a desire communicated by participants for the choir to sing well, and doing so led to enjoyment, although challenge was a less evident factor than in Tonneijck et al.’s (2008) research. Comparably, an ethnographic study of skateboarders showed that participants sought challenges in the form of learning a new ‘trick’, and then practiced to perform the trick successfully (Haines, Smith & Baxter, 2010). They were seen as “engaging in the skateboarding occupation in order to progress to meeting the challenge” (p. 241). There is said to be an optimum level of challenge in doing, which generates flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2010). In support of this Reynolds and Prior (2006) found that
women artists living with cancer welcomed the challenges that came through their occupations, and they communicated that the art-making engaged in should not be too stressful nor too easy. Creative work happened “on a cusp between stimulation and frustration” (p. 258).

The desire to achieve also appears to motivate individuals despite barriers. McCready and Reid (2007) found in a study on the experience of occupational disruption among student musicians, participants continued to play through pain, because they desired to play to their full potential. Russell (2008) proposed that in the occupation of tagging the desire for a sense of mastery leads to risk taking, and that individuals who are skilled hence take greater risks in order to achieve greater skill.

Connected with achievement, learning is a key component of some occupations. Hocking (2009) postulates that the very point of engaging in occupation may be to exercise one’s capacities or acquire knowledge or skill. Aligning with this viewpoint, Dickie (2003) stated “A need to learn, as well as curiosity and exploration within a domain of interest, generates human activities that connect individuals with each other and with the physical world they inhabit” (p. 128). Learning is certainly demonstrated within research as a factor that keeps people motivated within some occupations. For example, in Riley's (2008) ethnographic study of textile makers, the learning of skills strongly influenced engaging in the occupation, and a study of people’s reasons for taking up arts and crafts after retirement showed enthusiasm for learning to be one of a number of influential factors (Reynolds, 2009b). Dickie (2003), in seeking to understand the process, outcomes, and experience of quilt making, found learning to be a highly significant factor in people’s doing. Although the focus of the study was not specifically on motivation for involvement, it was implicit in the study results that individuals were driven to continue their engagement due to a desire to learn.

Haines, Smith and Baxter (2010), in referring to Dickie’s (2003) study, point out that learning tends to occur in social environments. While studies have established that learning does indeed occur in social contexts and occupations - for example choir singing (Jacob, Guptill & Sumsion, 2009), and art classes (Bedding and Sadlo, 2008) – it is not necessarily a reasonable assumption that learning primarily occurs in groups or with others. However, more solitary occupations have not been a focus of this type
of research. Learning is thus a core feature of some occupations, but it is not entirely clear the extent to which it is a motivator, or how it features in occupations aside from those which have been studied.

Emotional responses are often cited as a part of engaging in leisure occupations. The opportunities occupation offers to manage negative emotions, as well as feelings of pleasure, satisfaction and enjoyment that come via doing, contribute to continuation. Positive feelings can come from engaging with a process that is part of the actual carrying out of the occupation. Scheerer, Cahill, Kirby and Lane (2004) found that participants enjoyed cake decorating and found it fun, reporting they ‘loved it’ and were very happy when creating. A passion for the processes involved in textile making was observed by Riley (2008) to be closely linked with powerful feelings of satisfaction, pleasure and enjoyment, which came from the rhythm involved with working equipment such as a spinning wheel.

Leading on from emotional responses, research on various occupations has also shown that meaning and motivation is derived from full engagement in activity, or a state of flow (Fox & Dickie, 2012; Scheerer, Cahill, Kirby & Lane, 2004; Wright, Saldo & Stew 2007). This was shown to be influential in cake decorating, with Scheerer et al. (2004) finding that participants experienced a sense of becoming lost in their own world. This in turn formed part of the meaning and motivation to engage in the occupation. The influence of flow was also demonstrated in relation to theatre (Fox & Dickie, 2012), with flow being one of the factors that led to the addictive power of the occupation.

Doing can also relieve stress levels and lift mood. Stress relief, enhancement of mood, increased energy or the feeling of a ‘high’ were feelings associated with singing in a choir (Jacob, Guptill & Sumson, 2009), although it is not clear whether these feelings directly contributed to participants motivation as such. A sense of escape from everyday life and management of stress levels were cited as reasons for participating in a walking group in a study that aimed to understand the meaning of walking as a leisure activity (Wensley & Slade, 2012).
In a separate study focused on a group of older adults, that used a mixed methods approach to investigate motivation for engagement in leisure activities, satisfaction was an often-reported reason for keeping individuals doing (Ball, Corr, Knight & Lowis, 2007). Enjoyment and pleasure were also strong findings, although the specific sources of those emotions were not reported. Satisfaction is closely associated with challenge. In a study that explored the perspective of retirees who were involved in community art classes (Bedding & Sadlo, 2008), it was concluded that “achievement appears to result from seeing improvement over time, meeting a challenge successfully and producing an end product of which the person was proud” (p. 376). Meeting challenges can provide a sense of mastery and accomplishment, from which positive feelings emerge (Haines, Smith & Baxter, 2010; Tonneijck, Kinebanian & Josephsson, 2008). Members of a walking group portrayed a sense of mastery and achievement in reaching their goals (Wensley & Slade, 2012). In Tonneijck et al.’s (2008) study, it was found that challenge could be a particularly demanding factor that generated negative feelings, but that meeting it led to satisfaction.

Turning now to more externally based factors, relationships with others, and experiencing a sense of belonging, are clearly established reasons for doing. Sometimes occupations are done for the purpose of meeting people. Book club members attended groups to fulfil a desire to meet and connect with other women (Howie, 2003), and similarly, for walking group members, being able to meet people was one of the main motivators for participants (Wensley & Slade, 2012). A sense of togetherness can come around an occupation and become a motivator. Tonneijck, Kinebanian & Josephsson (2008) found that the choir was a platform that supported relationships, and helped to create a strong degree of togetherness, which was reported to motivate individuals. Jacob, Guptill and Sumsion (2009) found not only that most participants looked forward to seeing fellow choir members each week, but that many referred to a sense of community that was reported to be common across choirs. In McReady and Reid’s (2007) study of musicians, participants felt connected to others and part of a creative team, and being part of a group contributed to their enjoyment of playing.
Two studies that explored women's experiences of food-centred occupations also showed connection with others as being an important meaning underlying the occupation (Hocking, Wright-St Clair & Bunrayong, 2002; Wright-St Clair, Bunrayong, Vittayakron, Rattakorn & Hocking, 2004). In these cases connectiveness was not only evident with those around them, but with the generations before them. The first of these studies focused on cooking and recipe work for older Thai and New Zealand women at Songkran (Thai New Year) and Christmas (Hocking et al., 2002), and a subsequent study explored Thai women's experiences of food preparation (Wright St-Clair et al., 2004). Both pieces of research uncovered aspects of the meaning underlying women's involvement in these occupations. In studying older Thai women, the idea of a collective consciousness was strongly evident: “Each woman expresses a sense of confidence in knowing that in every house, in every village, other women are doing the same as she is” (Wright St-Clair et al., 2004, p. 117). Both studies showed that one of the meanings underlying women's involvement in their food-related activities was connecting with previous generations who had done the same.

The desire to continue tradition can be highly significant (Wright-St. Clair, Bunrayong, Vittayakorn, Rattakorn, & Hocking, 2004), and was central in activities related to food preparation in Thai women. According to the researchers the “meaning of preparing and giving foods at Songkran is rich with the women's resolve to preserve and serve the ritualised food traditions of Songkran as a means of making merit and contributing to a good Thai society” (p. 117). Similarly, in Hocking, Wright-St Clair & Bunrayong’s (2002) study, the participants showed a respect of long-standing traditions in following food practices, and undertook the handing on of traditions to younger generations as a serious responsibility. The women strove to preserve the tradition involved with the food preparation. There was a strong sense of obligation described in continuing to follow tradition, but this desire seemed to be “natural and wilful” (p. 117). In a similar way, continuity with the past was reported to be a significant element for textile workers in Riley’s (2008) study. This happened through the handing on of skills, and was shown to foster a sense of belonging with past textile crafters.
The motivation to connect with others appears to sometimes be inseparable from other factors. For example, in Haines, Smith and Baxter’s (2010) study, ‘becoming’ a skateboarder was shown to only be achieved through meeting challenges (mastering tricks), and Tonneijck, Kinebanian and Josephsson (2008) showed that the want to accomplish was common and inextricably linked with being part of a group, as there was a strong desire evident to achieve as a group as a whole.

Responses from others can provide impetus to continue non-essential occupations. Tonneijck, Kinebanian and Josephsson’s (2008) study revealed that some participants experienced pleasure while performing, and enjoyed attention and positive feedback given from an audience. According to the authors the “appraisal of others caused feelings of satisfaction, enjoyment, and were enriching” (p. 176), although again it is unclear if this specifically fuelled continuation. In Scheerer, Cahill, Kirby and Lanes’ (2004) study, participants described an appreciation of compliments received, which was reported to motivate individuals to continue their cake decorating.

The above discussion does not cover all of the themes that are evident within the considered studies. For example, previous experiences, often from childhood, also significantly influence later involvement in occupations (Howie, Coulter & Feldman, 2004; Jacob, Guptill & Sumsion, 2009; Riley, 2008). Other factors underlying motivation, which came through less prominently when the studies are considered as a whole, included the desire to take risks (Haines, Smith & Baxter, 2010), connecting with nature (Wensely & Slade, 2012), and the expression of creativity (Blanche, 2007; Haines et al., 2010).

**Motivational Processes**

A range of factors, then, may contribute to motivation in varying degrees, but most research located and discussed does not consider how components may work together to sustain engagement. Exceptions to this are three studies that make specific reference to a process at play that keeps individuals coming back to an occupation, and these require attention here. Haines, Smith & Baxter (2010) observed a process of ongoing doing in relation to the occupation of skateboarding. The challenge required to perform particular moves motivated individuals, and the intrinsic reward gained when a goal was reached kept participants coming back. It was reported that
“Once the occupation has been mastered, the skateboarder experiences feedback in the form of achieving individual best which compels them to seek out another challenge” (p. 243). This is similar to the process already referred to from Scheerer, Cahill, Kirby and Lane’s (2004) study, that found that the meaning an individual placed on the occupation initially motivated engagement, compliments and the expression of caring provided the motivation to continue, and continued engagement generated further meaning. In both of these cases the individual can be seen to be fuelled by feedback – in one case the feedback comes from the internal source of achievement, in the other the feedback is from the external source of compliments. A process was also shown to be at play in choir singers’ ongoing doing (Tonneijck, Kinebanian, & Josephsson, 2008). The challenge provided by choir singing was a catalyst for engagement. The doing in turn continued to provide further challenges, and meeting them together led to a feeling of unity and belonging through doing, which led to ongoing engagement.

These research-grounded cycles offer some understanding of what happens to sustain engagement in some occupations. Challenge is a common factor across two of these processes, but in the creative occupation of cake decorating different influences can be seen to operate. This raises the questions of how important challenge may be in repeated engagement across different types of occupations, and whether processes that occur vary widely in nature depending on what occupation is being done, or whether there is one broad, universal process that operates. While the research goes some way to answering questions about ongoing participation, processes underlying sustained doing have been considered most substantially and directly from a theoretical viewpoint, in Carlson’s (1996) and Kielhofner’s (2008) theories.

Summary of Findings from Literature and Need for Further Research

Overall, there is a gap in research that directly addresses motivation for doing non-essential occupations, and what has been determined in this review comes largely from studies that primarily focus on other factors. Very few of the studies considered have directly posed questions about motivation, and none have asked about what keeps people coming back. Lloyd, King, McCarthy & Scanlan (2007) similarly point to a void in research focused on motivations for leisure participation. Motivation is a fundamental component of occupation, yet it has been studied little from an
occupational viewpoint.

Research that has indirectly revealed findings about motivation, as well as the few studies where motivation has been directly addressed, indicate that an array of components contribute to sustaining non-essential occupational engagement. It is not clear, however, the extent to which some aspects are important, and whether they are common across occupations. For example, the desire to accomplish and to learn are established as being influential, but questions remain. Are these factors fundamental to motivating people, or can motivation still be strong when they are not involved? Similarly, positive emotions are reported as an important part of experience in doing, but it is not clear the degree to which they draw people back. As occupations have generally been studied in isolation it is difficult to draw firm conclusions about common motivational processes. A more feasible conclusion from the research considered is that motivating factors are vast, complex, and variable.

The understandings offered by a generic motivation perspective for occupational science are likely to be limited because the discipline does not directly address the complexities of occupation and the nuances involved in the relationship between aspects of the person, the occupation, and the environment. What has been revealed about motivation from research within occupation domains has tended to be concerned with meaning, and/or the experience of engagement, which due to its links to motivation has sometimes drawn useful conclusions about why people do non-essential occupations. However, because these conclusions have been a by-product of studies, many questions remain. Due to the lack of research there are theoretical ideas that are not evidence based, and many of the conceptualisations have not been sufficiently tested. Hence, where there have been attempts to explain motivation from an occupational point of view, they are not all underpinned by research.

I have also shown in this literature review that there has come to be a rather consistent approach within occupational science where one occupation is studied in-depth. This approach fails to fully address commonalities and differences between motivational processes across occupations, hence understandings about motivation that may be generated from considering a range of occupations side by side are missing.
Considering diverse occupations together is required to look at some of the commonalities that may exist that we do not currently know about.

Also missing from the literature are studies that have asked research questions focused on why people *keep coming back*. Studies have pointed to motivational processes that occur, but none to my knowledge have directly explored a ‘coming back’ aspect. Hence we do not fully understand, from an occupation perspective, why it is that people return to things that they do not have to do. We know something about the experiences they have in doing, but not how the experiences in doing are influential in drawing back into further doing.

Furthermore, while studies may have included people who are highly passionate about what they do, such a population, to my knowledge, has not been actively sought within studies. There has been a tendency to study people within one particular group carrying out an occupation (such as a single choir or craft group), and it is likely that levels of interest vary between people within such groups. Capturing the motivations of people who are highly passionate about what they do and have stayed engaged may reveal further useful understandings about sustained engagement. This needs to be understood from an occupation perspective, not a generic motivation perspective.

To date, then, there is no research that has crossed multiple occupations, that has a specific focus on why highly passionate people do what they do over an extended period of time. In light of the gaps that are evident, this study is not going to repeat what others have done in examining engagement in one specific occupation – it is going to look at multiple occupations at once. It is not going to focus only on the meaning of these occupations or on the experience of the engagement, but is going to directly consider motivation. In doing so it will include people who are passionate about what they do, and who have stayed engaged over time. Capturing why highly passionate doers, across a range of occupations, keep returning to what they do may uncover more in-depth knowledge about sustained engagement in non-essential occupations.

**Research Questions**

The research questions are therefore:
What influences individuals to continue to engage in occupations that they do not have to do, over time?

and

What processes are operating in the sustained doing of non-essential occupations?

Knowing more about the processes that underlie motivation, and how different factors may interact to keep people coming back to that which they have a passion for, may contribute to a richer understanding of motivation as it relates to occupational science and occupational therapy. If occupational scientists can understand more fully what keeps people coming back, people who do not sustain their doing may be more effectively helped. Understanding motivation and reasons for persevering in occupations may be useful in providing interventions that can impact on patterns or cycles that are in some way maladaptive. This has potential application to those who have low levels of motivation, those who have difficulty maintaining a steady stream of engagement within occupation, and those who experience factors that impact on their motivation, such as depression or chronic pain. As stated by Carlson (1996) “a more systematic understanding and appreciation of the factors that are conducive to the persistence of occupations in patients’ lives has the capacity to enhance the potency and long-term impact of therapy” (p. 158).

On a broader level, a fuller understanding of occupation, including knowing more about why people do what they do, and the processes involved, is required. As Hocking (2000) recognised, “Understanding what actually happens as individuals and groups engage in occupation demands further research into the dynamic processes and subjective experience of doing things” (p. 64). Dickie (2003) points out that there are few studies focused on a category of occupation, that sit outside of the context of therapy and disability. She calls for more studies with such a focus “to ensure that theories of occupation and occupational interventions are grounded in more than our personal experience and conjecture” (p. 121). This study, in a broad sense, seeks to contribute to a fuller understanding of the complexities of occupation.
Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

This chapter presents the research purpose and questions, explains and justifies the use of an interpretive descriptive research design, outlines the steps taken during the phases of the research process, and explains how ethical considerations were addressed. Strategies used to enhance credibility have been drawn from Thorne's recommendations (Thorne, 2008; Thorne, Kirkham, & MacDonald-Emes, 1997) in order to align with the research design. These principles are presented after the use of the research design is justified, and referred to in considering the stages of the research process.

Research Methodology

Justification for methodology.

The study was located within the qualitative paradigm. Qualitative research seeks to explore, discover, and interpret, and is carried out on the assumption that the world consists of subjectively experienced realities, and that interpretation is essential in exploring and understanding social phenomena (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010; Patton, 2002). It can be distinguished from that which emerges from the positivist paradigm, which takes the view that life consists of observable and measurable facts (Parahoo, 2006; Polatajko, 2010). Occupational science research needs to include qualitative studies, because in many cases a conceptual, in-depth understanding of individuals’ experiences in carrying out occupations is required, which cannot be obtained from scientific enquiry based around measurement. I reasoned that an appreciation of why people are motivated to engage in occupations can be achieved most fully by finding out about the experience of individuals, engaging with them and exploring their individual experiences. In support of this viewpoint, (Lloyd et al., 2007) stated that a qualitative approach to studying leisure motivation may lead to a more meaningful understanding than a quantitative approach. Specifically, an interpretive descriptive framework has guided the study, which is a non-categorical approach to description that includes an analytical dimension (Thorne, 2008; Thorne, Kirkham, & MacDonald-Emes, 1997), and extends “beyond mere description and into the domain of the ‘so what’ that drives all applied disciplines” (Thorne, 2008 p. 33).
I initially considered using other methodologies, such as grounded theory and case study, but recognised that what I wanted to explore did not fit with interpretive methodologies widely used within occupational therapy and occupational science. I felt frustrated by the prospect of 'forcing' a fit between my research aims and an existing methodology, and was keen to avoid producing research that did not truly align with the stated methodology (Sandelowski, 2000). Qualitative description (Sandelowski, 2000) was also given serious thought, and I was initially drawn to the simplicity of a design that would in essence 'describe' participants’ experiences. I also began to see at this point that whereas researchers using qualitative descriptive methodologies stay close to the data and include only low inference interpretation (Sandelowski, 2000), examining patterns and processes at play in sustaining individuals’ motivation required a degree of interpretation, analysis and theorising. It was the analytical slant that initially attracted me to using interpretive description.

**Introduction to interpretive description.**

Interpretive description aims to generate research outcomes that may inform clinical understanding relevant to the context of applied health disciplines and ultimately guide disciplinary thought (Hunt, 2009; Thorne, Reimer Kirkham, & O'Flynn-Magee, 2004). The methodology developed within the field of nursing, out of the recognition that there is a mismatch between traditional qualitative research methodologies (such as grounded theory, phenomenology, and ethnography), and many of the questions that health research seeks to answer (Thorne, 2008). The 'rules' of these methodologies that were designed for fields such as anthropology and sociology often proved to be constraining when applied to many types of health problems. Interpretive description, therefore, aims to address questions that emerge from health contexts, but that cannot be easily answered with other qualitative methods (Hunt, 2009). The intent of studies that apply the methodology should be to answer questions of relevance to clinical practice, with their product being “a coherent conceptual description that taps thematic patterns and commonalities believed to characterise the phenomenon being studied” (Thorne, Reimer Kirkham, & O'Flynn-Magee, 2004), while also accounting for individual variation.

Interpretive description is related to, yet distinct from, the aforementioned qualitative description. Whereas generic qualitative description aims for straight description of
phenomena (Sandelowski, 2000), interpretive description moves into the realms of explanation and understanding, and includes “explanatory” interpretive analysis (Thorne, 2008). The methodology also acknowledges that researchers bring with them to a project a theoretical and practical knowledge related to clinical practice, which is seen as a foundation for the investigation, and assists to orient the design (Hunt, 2009; Thorne et al., 1997). This knowledge acts as a beginning point, rather than an organising structure, and may be challenged by the researcher as the research process proceeds (Thorne et al., 1997).

Thorne (2008) does not offer a prescriptive approach to carrying out the research process. There are, however, core steps and considerations that are strongly recommended. Advice for what should happen at the various stages of the process is considered in the later sections, where I outline the steps I took in applying the research design.

**Suitability of interpretive descriptive methodology for this research.**

Very few occupation based studies have been carried out using interpretive description – only two published studies were located (Klein & Liu, 2010a, 2010b). However, this is not an indicator that the methodology does not align with the aims of occupational therapy and occupational science studies. It was considered a legitimate methodology to use in this case, in that interpretive description can generate knowledge of relevance to clinical practice, through explanation and analysis of behavioural patterns or experiences (Thorne, 1997). This is strongly reflective of what much occupation-focused research seeks to do. The analytical angle taken in applying the methodology aligned with my intent of uncovering patterns and processes. I also recognised that I came to this research with strong theoretical understandings and ideas, and an understanding of specific models that I knew would influence the project. Interpretive description invites researchers to bring an existing perspective to a project, rather than bracketing all existing ideas (Thorne, 2008).

The focus of the current study is perhaps more removed from a clinical context than research that applies interpretive description would ordinarily be. According to Thorne (2008), however, such research requires a practice goal, and although this study has not directly addressed a specific clinical context or problem, understanding
motivation can be related to the broader practice goal of providing interventions in situations where there are functional problems related to motivation. This has potential application to people who have low levels of motivation, difficulty maintaining a steady stream of engagement in occupation, or who experience factors reducing their motivation, such as depression or chronic pain.

**Credibility evaluation criteria.**
Thorne (Thorne, 2008; Thorne, 1997) advocates for the use of four specific evaluation criteria to guide the design of a study and the decisions made throughout. These are used here in preference to other widely applied principles – for example Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) four elements of trustworthiness – due to their alignment with Thorne’s methodology. The first principle is epistemological integrity, which refers to the presentation of a clear line of reasoning, i.e. there should be consistency between the research question and the epistemological position taken, and the knowledge produced needs to be consistent with the design used. The second is representative credibility, where theoretical claims made need to be consistent with the sampling technique. To achieve this, prolonged involvement, maximal variation in sampling, and methodological triangulation are encouraged. The third principle is analytic logic, in which the reasoning of the researcher is made clear, and there needs to be evidence of that logic within the report. The fourth is interpretive authority, which refers to the researcher’s interpretations being trustworthy, and illustrating a truth that is external to their bias or experience, and here there must be systems in place to check reactivity. Measures taken to enhance credibility within the project will be referred to when I describe the steps taken in the research process.

**Overview of Research Process**
The research questions were stated at the end of the literature review, on page 38. These questions are consistent with the methodological approach with which they will be answered (Thorne, 2008). They are stated in a manner that goes into the domain of interpretive explanation, requiring a focus on examining patterns and relationships (Thorne, 2008).

Following Treaty of Waitangi consultation and gaining ethics approval, participants were located using purposive sampling, with individuals who participated in one or
more occupations that they feel passionate about being sought. A variety of types of occupations were included. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews, where interviewees were asked about their motivations for participating in their occupation of interest. Data was transcribed by a paid transcriber, and data analysis was then carried out.

**Ethical considerations.**
An ethics application was approved by the Otago Polytechnic Research Ethics Committee on 31 August 2010 (Appendix A), subject to two minor changes being made to documents, which were subsequently completed. This committee was applied to because I was a student at the institution, and because there were no features of the participants or the project that necessitated applying to another committee.

**Voluntary participation and informed consent.**
To ensure informed consent, potential participants were provided with clear and detailed information about the project by way of an information sheet (Appendix B) which included my contact details and those of my supervisor. Project details were also explained to potential participants verbally, and they were encouraged to ask any questions they may have about the research prior to providing consent. Individuals agreeing to participate were required to complete a consent form (Appendix C) prior to the interview taking place. Involvement in this project was entirely voluntary, with steps taken to ensure that individuals did not feel coerced to participate (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010). For example, if a response to an email inviting participation was not received, follow-up contact was not made (with one exception where the intermediary indicated that follow-up was appropriate). Participants could decline to answer any questions within the interview. They could also choose to stop participating at any time, and withdraw information provided without giving reasons, up to 10 days following the return of the interview transcripts for review.
Confidentiality and anonymity.
To protect confidentiality, identifying information was not displayed on any documents. A confidentiality statement was signed by the transcriber (Appendix D). Raw data that included personal information about participants was stored securely, in a place accessible to the researcher, and was only shared with my primary supervisor. Raw data will be kept in a secure place for seven years. Names of participants are not used within this thesis, and in reporting findings details that may identify participants have been omitted.

Minimisation of harm.
Due to this project’s focus on non-sensitive issues, it was not anticipated that harm to participants would result, and participants were not identified as vulnerable (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010). However, in order to minimise discomfort and possible harm, interviewees were invited to bring a support person to the interview and could decline to answer any questions and/ or have the recorder turned off during the interview process (neither were requested). A relevant ethical consideration was potential power relationships (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010). I was working in a role teaching undergraduate students, and where staff had a direct reporting relationship to me. Staff within this team, and students, were therefore excluded.

Details of Research Process

Data collection method and process.
Before data collection began, much consideration was given to the ideas I held around what I was investigating, particularly processes underlying motivation. These are captured in the introductory chapter. This is in accordance with Thorne's (2008) recommendations that ideas, theories, and frameworks taken into a study should be carefully noted, and returned to throughout, to reduce unintended influence on what is observed.

Recruitment process.
Purposeful sampling was used, with the intention of locating individuals from whom I considered I could learn a large amount and who would have valid insights and
experiences to share (Patton, 2002). Multiple strategies were used under the umbrella of purposeful sampling. The strategy of snowball sampling was employed (Patton, 2002; Thorne, 2008), where individuals were asked to identify others who had a passionate interest and would have the ability to articulate and reflect on their reasons for engaging in the occupation. The snowball method of sampling is considered appropriate for locating information-rich cases (Patton, 2002). Thorne, Kirkham, and MacDonald-Emes (1997) advocate for seeking out articulate individuals, recognising that some people are more able to explain and convey thoughts and experiences than others. In line with recommendations for interpretive descriptive research, theoretical sampling was also used. Here, sampling continued as data analysis began, enabling purposeful recruitment of individuals as themes begin to emerge (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010). This can assist maximal variation, and facilitate more complex interpretation of patterns (Thorne, 2008; Thorne et al., 1997).

To assist with the recruitment process, and in order to work towards maximal variation, a table was developed in which I outlined occupations and their properties, ages, sex and ethnicity of potential participants. A range of types of occupations were sought for inclusion. Whilst consideration was initially given to restricting the focus to an occupational area (for example craft or food preparation), I reasoned that the processes underlying involvement may be most richly explored through examining engagement in a variety of occupations. Different characteristics can be observed across the occupations that people engage in. In addition to those referred to in chapter one, many occupations that people do out of choice have a concrete end product, others do not. Involvement in many occupations is physically active, but others have a creative or intellectual focus. Some occupations include a competitive element. Effort was made to focus on a range of occupations that include a range of properties.

Once the first interviews had been carried out, gaps in types of occupations were considered. For example, it was recognised following the fifth interview that only one occupation explored to that point included a concrete end product. Further participants were therefore sought to ensure that additional information could be obtained relating to occupations with this property. A further example of a step taken to assist maximal variation relates to the first interviewee who had been participating
in his occupation for 25-30 years. Self identity emerged as an important factor underlying his engagement. Self identity was not as evident in further interviews, and an individual was therefore sought who had had life-long involvement in an occupation, with the thought that identity may in some way relate to long engagement. These steps helped to develop the representative credibility of the project (Thorne, 1997).

Ten participants were recruited in total, and all potential participants who were approached agreed to participate. While in the literature much attention has been paid to the idea of reaching saturation point, from Thorne's (2008) point of view the term is inaccurately applied, with researchers often inaccurately claiming saturation point has been reached. As data analysis progressed, I recognised that saturation point would unlikely be reached with ten participants, due to wide variation in data and emergent categories. However, this number of interviews was considered sufficient for a masters’ level project, even if data saturation was not achieved.

**Inclusion/ exclusion criteria.**

Articulate, reflective, insightful individuals, (Thorne, Kirkham, & MacDonald-Emes, 1997), who are passionate about one or more of the activities that they engage in, were sought for inclusion. The sample included adults who have had long involvement in one or more occupations, and those who have taken up a new occupation within the past ten years. This was to help to ensure that individuals could recall reasons for taking up their occupations, as well as capturing elements around occupations that may be life-long.

The following exclusion criteria were applied:

Individuals who have significant health problems that affect engagement in the occupation of focus. This was to ensure that the focus was on normal engagement, rather than how a health issue or disability may impact on that individual’s engagement (Dickie, 2003).
Individuals whose primary occupation or occupations the researcher considered to be detrimental (such as gambling or criminal activity). While such a focus could offer useful insights, this study was centred around ‘healthy’ motivation.

Individuals who cannot converse fluently in English. This is because the use of interpreters was beyond the scope of this project, and participant fluency in English helped to ensure that participants could clearly communicate about their involvement.

**Other sampling considerations.**

Two occupational therapists were included in the sample. The inclusion of a maximum of three occupational therapists was deliberately sought, as it was recognised that with the knowledge they hold around occupation, they may be able to articulate reasons for engaging more overtly (Wilson, 2010). This maximum number was set as it was recognised that occupational therapists would bring a different perspective, shaped by their professional understandings and experiences, than other individuals, and that inclusion of a higher number may lead to a different focus within the data.

**Treaty of Waitangi and acknowledgement of Maori Knowledge.**

Although this project did not actively seek Maori individuals, the design allowed that Maori participants may be included. A consultation took place in May 2011 with an individual who identifies as Maori and sits as a non-lay person on a local research committee. The purpose of the consultation was to seek advice to ensure that the project design meets the needs of any Maori participants who may be included, in order to uphold principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. The following recommendations were made:

That I ensure there are opportunities for Maori to participate within the project (without necessarily deliberately targeting Maori). It was advised that it may be appropriate to actively seek one or more Maori participants through the snowball sampling technique if I choose to do so.
That any individuals who may participate are given the opportunity to give full consideration to their participation, including consulting with others, before committing.

That the rights to confidentiality are respected.

That people are encouraged to bring a support person to the interview if they wish to do so.

This individual acknowledged that the intended research design was appropriate from the point of view of meeting the needs of Maori participants, and did not recommend any changes to the overall design. However he agreed that information about participation in the interview should inform participants that they are encouraged to bring a support person to the interview if they wish to do so. Following the conversation changes were made accordingly to the Participant Information Form (Appendix B) and the Consent Form (Appendix C).

**Interview process.**

Individual interviews were used to obtain data. Interviews are a frequently used method of data collection within interpretive description, although multiple data sources are encouraged to provide triangulation (Hunt, 2009; Thorne, 2008). Only one data collection method was used in this project, due to the constraints of a project of this size.

I entered the data collection process aware that although I was experienced in carrying out clinical interviews, I had never conducted research interviews. The purpose and orientation, and therefore techniques used in research interviews are different from those that take place for a clinical purpose, and it has been pointed out that interviewers need to 'undo' their communication techniques (Hunt, Chan, & Mehta, 2011). I therefore ensured I read texts that advised on qualitative interviewing strategies, had discussions with my supervisor, and carried out a pilot interview. The pilot interview was undertaken with an occupational therapist colleague who has research experience at masters’ level. Following the interview I reflected on the interview with the interviewee, and separately with my supervisor. On the basis of
these discussions and further reading, I adjusted my planned questions to word them more simply and clearly, and developed a jottings sheet for my interview to enable me to cover more effectively the intended questions. I focused on reducing the use of paraphrasing, and increasing my use of short periods of silence to gather my thoughts.

Once interviewing of participants began, an interview guide, containing open-ended questions that were adapted for each occupation, was used (Appendix E) to help ensure that the same fundamental lines of inquiry were pursued with each interviewee (Patton, 2002). Interviews were approached in such a way as to encourage participants to freely report on their motivation for their occupation. The interviews began with a broad question that asked the participant to describe their involvement. Once I had established details about what the person does I moved on to questions relating to why and how the person got involved, such as “Can you describe to me how you first got involved in your artwork”. Questions were then asked about why the person sustains their involvement. From here the thread of conversation was followed, with probing and follow-up questions added (Liamputtong, 2009), as well as re-ordered use of my prepared questions. As the data collection process progressed, I continued to reflect on my interviewing techniques, independently and with my supervisor. This included recording written notes to capture any problems that I saw and potential changes that I may need to make. The interview guide was further developed and adjusted as the overall interview process continued, where it was determined that there were gaps, and questions that could be more effectively phrased.

Individual interviews were conducted across a period of eight months. This enabled in-depth thought to be given to the recruitment of participants, allowing careful selection of information-rich cases, and variation in the topic areas and types of participants. In addition, this period of time allowed the data analysis process to begin while data collection was still occurring. Interviews varied from 34 to 58 minutes in length. They were conducted in locations that were the choice of the interviewee. In six cases this was the interviewee’s home. One was conducted in a quiet café, and one in which the interviewee was well known to me was carried out in my home. Two interviews were carried out over the telephone. There were no
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Length of time participating</th>
<th>Background information on occupational involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Maori</td>
<td>Kapa Haka</td>
<td>25 years</td>
<td>Performs to tourists, and competes nationally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>Horse riding</td>
<td>25 years</td>
<td>Owns and trains a horse. Attends to horse twice daily. Has previously ridden competitively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>European NZ</td>
<td>Artwork</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>Paints in acrylic and mixed media. Paints independently, previously ran children’s art classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Triathlons</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>Competes in triathlons, trains with her partner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-60</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>European NZ</td>
<td>Martial Arts</td>
<td>25-30 years</td>
<td>Teaches a classical form of Japanese martial arts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-60</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>European NZ</td>
<td>Surfing</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>Surfs non-competitively, alone as well as in groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-70</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Theatre</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>President of an amateur dramatic society. Takes on a range of other roles including on stage and back stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-70</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>European NZ</td>
<td>Playing the violin</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Recently retired school teacher. Is a pupil at a children’s music school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-70</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>European NZ</td>
<td>Quilting</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>Is involved in two quilting groups. Enters ‘challenges’ where she produces competition pieces to certain criteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-90</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>European NZ</td>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td>75 years</td>
<td>Gardens alone, has an interest in a range of types of plants.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Overview of Information about Participants
significant differences noted between the quality of the telephone interviews in comparison to those that were conducted face to face.

**Participant overview.**

An overview of information about participants is shown in table 1.

**Post interview process.**

**Data transcription**
The recorded interviews were transcribed by a secretarial service. The argument that when the researcher transcribes their own data this helps with data immersion (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010) was considered, and to compensate for this interviews were listened to while scripts were being read and analysed. Scripts were returned to the participants for the checking of accuracy following the interviews. One participant pointed out minor changes to be made, five confirmed the accuracy of content, and four participants did not reply.

**Data analysis.**
While in straight description a researcher can gather data and then analyse it, some degree of concurrent data collection and analysis is required in interpretive description, to explore emerging conceptualisations (Thorne, 2008). After each interview, broad impressions of key points were captured (example contained in Appendix F). A more in depth analysis of the first six transcripts was carried out once they had been transcribed, so that insights from the analysis of the earlier interviews could guide the final phase of data collection.

Thorne (2008) recommends avoiding the use of highly detailed coding, pointing out that this can lead to an intense focus on details and therefore detract from the ability of the mind to see patterns, and reason logically with the overall data set. Rather, broad, general questions that aim to reveal categories, links, relationships or patterns can be used (Hunt, 2009). Thorne (2000) suggests moving in and out of the detail and asking repeatedly “What is happening here?” In this case the process began with underlining text and writing marginal notes in pencil. Once this had been completed with the first transcripts, colour coding was used to begin identifying possible broad
areas or initial categories (Appendix G). Throughout this process 55 initial categories were identified (Appendix H). Once multiple scripts had been read, a table was used to bring potentially similar ideas together, and to observe possible patterns across the interviews (section contained in Appendix I). The initial categories were listed, and information from each participant was summarised under the headings, and direct quotes recorded. This was then added to and developed as the final transcripts were analysed. Attention was paid to stepping back from the details of the script, as recommended by Thorne (2008), to focus on the fuller picture rather than details. Constant comparison was used, as also recommended by Thorne (2008). In applying this technique, categories were developed from the first interviews, and incoming data was checked against existing data, by comparing it with all other data that may be similar or different (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010; Thorne, 2000). An example of its application is that where new categories were identified from the later scripts, earlier scripts were re-read to check for the possible presence of data that fitted these categories, and information added to the table. Once initial categories had been identified these were placed into potential groupings. This was done manually by cutting and pasting printed text, and the groups were electronically recorded. An example is contained in Appendix J. Deliberate attempts were made to see potential groupings in alternative ways.

Other techniques were used to step back and assist with seeing the emerging patterns and themes as a whole. Unmarked copies of each script were re-read and notes made on separate sheets with the aims of seeing information that and points that may not have been noted on earlier readings, and of seeing data in different ways. ‘I wonder if’ statements were recorded in a journal as I progressed with data analysis. These were more global statements about what may be happening, such as “I wonder if connecting with others and the influence of others is a highly important factor that helps drive people”. Broad potential themes were also recorded on sticky notes and placed on large sheets of paper. Diagrams representing what may be happening were hand-drawn as data collection progressed. These related both to the overall data set, and to factors that may be operating in individual cases. An example of a diagram is contained in Appendix K.
Throughout the data analysis stage measures were taken to increase credibility. My supervisor read a transcript to identify potentially emergent categories, and these were compared with what I had identified to check the degree of consistency. In addition, notes were made in a journal, capturing emergent thoughts and potential influences on those thoughts. This included tentative statements as I began to see patterns emerging.

Alternative conceptualisations of the results were considered. For example, consideration was given to 'situating other people' as a separate category. As more in-depth consideration was given, it was seen that this was a factor that weaves through all of the themes. Similarly, 'beginnings' was initially placed as a separate category, but then incorporated into the whole. The representation presented was chosen because after thorough consideration of alternatives it was deemed to have the best fit, and most clearly portray the dimensions underlying doing that are indicated within the results.

**Summary**

This chapter justified the use of the chosen methodology, and outlined steps taken and strategies applied within the research process. The results obtained will be reported in the next chapter.
Chapter Four: Findings

Introduction

The experiences of and influences on sustained doing that were described by participants were multifaceted. Various components of an occupation and factors within the individual and the environment led participants into their doing, and were significant in keeping participants coming back to their occupations over time. Doing was bound up with feeling and aligned with what participants valued. Experiential aspects moved participants towards points – peaks in their performance - that they wished to reach. Aspects of the occupation pulled participants into their doing, and a push towards doing that came from within was also evident. Doing expanded over time, and individuals faced and worked through challenges presented.

The findings are presented in four themes, an overview of which is provided in table 2. The first theme is concerned with influences on doing. The quality and intensity of the forces influencing doing are considered in the second theme. Theme three relates to the impetus to continue, and considers expansion of doing, and the importance of challenge in ongoing doing. Theme four is concerned with the finding that positive experience in doing is not a perquisite for sustained doing over time. Although the findings are discussed within contained themes, the various factors that influence doing are not isolated or linear in their arrangement – they weave in and out and intersect, and therefore some factors influencing doing are referred to under multiple themes. Theme 4 has a strong degree of overlap with other themes, which is intentional.

Participants’ words are used to provide evidence for the argument presented within the themes, and direct participant quotations are italicised. Minor edits to quotations have been made for clarity, and do not affect the intended meaning. In reporting the results I refer to participants in relation to their occupations, for example ‘the martial artist’. This is due to the focus on a distinct occupation for each participant, and so the reader is not distracted by the use of pseudonyms. Referring to participants in this way is not intended to encompass the notion of self identity. An overview of information related to participants was shown in table 1 in the methodology chapter.
Table 2: Themes and sub-themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 1: Forces influencing doing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attraction to what one values and enjoys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attraction to reaching a point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attraction to doing that generates positive feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement perpetuated by what one does</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 2: Quality and intensity of the force</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compelling pull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commited push</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluctuation in the intensity of desire to do</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 3: Impetus to continue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expansion – not about repetition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demanding challenge and perseverance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 4: Positive experience in doing is unnecessary for sustained engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment of all doing is not necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate reward is not necessary for continued doing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Theme One: Forces Influencing Doing

There are multiple interwoven influences on doing revealed in the data. Different types of forces were described and reflected in participants’ accounts of their doing. Forces internal and external to the individual operated to push and pull individuals into their doing in various ways. These forces were intertwined with aspects of the person, occupation and the environment.
Attraction to what one values and enjoys.

Participants showed a desire to participate in, and derived enjoyment from, doing something that they valued and that held meaning for them. The attraction to doing what individuals valued led to initiation of, and to sustained engagement in, occupations. Often there was one relatively enduring dimension of the occupation which predominated, that participants enjoyed and saw as having worth. These included connecting, being creative, being in nature, and passing on tradition.

The central aspect that attracts the actor and sustains his interest is connecting with others. He both values, and derives enjoyment from, this dimension of his doing:

It’s just a fun, really sociable sort of group. And I think I was missing that to be honest because the three years after leaving the Royal Navy where everything was sociable – ah you worked together and you played together and you went out in groups together ... And it was – really missed all of that – and so... I bounced back in the other direction and was just searching for something.

In the very uptake of his occupation he was seeking the opportunity to be sociable. The element of connecting is the most important part of his occupation - more important than the actual occupation itself. For other participants connecting was also an aspect of their involvement. It was an important motivator for the martial artist in the early stages of his doing:

it was also the camaraderie that kept me going ... the camaraderie between people, it was very close ... between the three students, the three young guys and the junior instructor who was also a young guy, we had a real male bond thing going and that was a very strong motivation.

For others connecting was a benefit that came from their doing, and which contributed to the overall picture of their continuation:

it’s like that wherever you go that ... you seem to have a bit of a bond ... it’s like that in the quilting world. And you’ve only got to find someone who’s a quilter and you’ve got a common interest and a friendship can form very quickly and easily.
The possibility of creating is attractive to the artist. She does her artwork as a creative outlet, and described her enjoyment of the texture and freedom involved in mixed media: “it's almost like there are no rules in a way. You can use cut outs from books, you can cut up things - I mean it's amazing what you can do and you end up with some very rich textures, and I love textures and the way colours play together”. The significance of creating for the gardener lies in putting something of herself into an existing form: “that's what gardening's all about to me, it's about looking after plants and I will do other things – I will try and create more beauty and different shapes and things”. The quilter, who said “the creating is a big part of it, seeing what you can come up with”, values ‘owning’ the process of her doing. She does not work to patterns, and compared what she does with individuals who do: “A lot of people like to get a pattern and they know what their end result is going to be”, but that “it's so much nicer if you worked it out and designed it yourself”. She values and finds enjoyment and pleasure in being able to use her own ideas, rather than working through a series of steps toward a pre-defined end product. The actor, who identified creating as another important dimension to his doing, values bringing something new into existence: “I just like to put things together...and I find this great because you can start from scratch with nothing and then you put together a show”. He went on to say “it’s all to do with creating something from nothing”. Although what individuals valued in creating was subtly different from participant to participant, for all of these individuals there is value in, and attraction toward, the creative aspect of their doing.

An aspect of the experience that was powerful in continuing to draw the surfer back was being in nature. He enjoys being in a wild, natural environment:

*Just being part of nature. Really, really it's quite powerful, and the ocean draws people to walk on the beach...that's already making it and giving you an incentive to get out there. And then to be on the water and doing that is just so much more, it's just an extra gift if you like. Really it's pretty special.*

*It’s not until you get out on the water and look back on the land – and you’re sitting in water that’s a different colour out there. The nature side is very, very strong. You can just look at this beautiful coastline and you think you can’t appreciate that from being on the beach – you’ve got to be in the*
water to look back and appreciate that. And in the mean time you’re catching some pretty wild waves because it’s a lot more exposed there and the swell is a lot more unpredictable, so there’s also that. There’s always that kind of adrenalin thing that’s in the background, and then you might get the odd dolphin or something cruise past or something.

Inseparable from the whole experience of this individual’s doing is the appreciation of his environment while he is doing. He feels drawn by the wildness and unpredictability of the ocean which enhances his experience.

What participants valued also showed itself in what they worked toward and reached. The kapahaka performer places deep value on his doing because of the contribution it can make to his people, and holds goals related to this. These involve doing for others, keeping tradition alive, and getting the younger generation involved in something positive: “in the long run I’m hoping to return back to [my home town] and then teach there, help everyone back home. So that’s my motivation, thinking of everyone back home”. He is primarily concerned with “handing it down to the next generation so it doesn’t die out.” The value he places on tradition is shown in his doing, as he finds it satisfying seeing the occupation kept alive within his culture: “I think that’s the biggest buzz about doing kapa haka, doing it with your family, enabling that your language doesn’t die, and it’s just continuously shared to the kids.”

While some valued and enjoyed a particular aspect of their doing, others were drawn to something that was not specific to the occupation. The violinist found meaning in her doing in part because it offered the opportunity to do something personally satisfying in her retirement. Her desire to play an instrument from a young age had not previously been met. She said:

Well this is something that I can have a go at and if I do it for a year I could always say that I’ve had a go and be pleased about that…I really just wanted to achieve something for me that was going to be personally satisfying.

Her doing is less about the specific occupational experience than it is about taking up something that she has always wanted to do.
What attracted people often linked with what they had done in their past, with a continuation of values between prior and current doing evident. For example, the violinist had been a teacher, which provided a natural progression towards her involvement in a children’s music school. A similar progression is shown in the creativity of the occupations that the artist chooses: “That desire to create has always been with me I think.” She feels “fulfilled by, by being able to create stuff, and I always have done. Ever since I was a kid I used to like to make things, and I think it’s just a natural process, a natural progression of that”. Similarly, the importance the actor places on socialising is a continuation from his past doing. He misses this aspect of being in the navy, and was “searching for something” that aligns with what he values.

**Attraction to reaching a point.**

Participants wanted to reach particular points in their doing. Points were peaks in performance that individuals directed their doing towards. These included mastering a skill, producing an end product, and gaining a place in a competition. For example, the martial artist’s doing is directed towards “getting to that point” of being in a zone where the intensity of his doing heightens. The surfer’s doing is directed “to that point of getting up” on his board. Some occupations involved distinct points that participants worked towards – the concert performance that was the culmination of weeks of practice, the finished quilt, gaining a placing in a triathlon. Other occupations had a range of possible points that prior activities made possible. For example, the points reached in gardening included planting something, creating a wall display, and giving plants away. Sometimes the end points or experience of peak performance were frequently reached in the doing, and sometimes less frequently. Although participants could enjoy the process of the doing itself, they constantly did towards a goal or experience.

An example of reaching a point is that of the surfer catching waves. Whilst he enjoys being out in nature, he strives towards the point, or goal, of standing up on a wave with his board each time he surfs. This point is a central component of his doing that draws him to continue to engage. When asked what it is that grabs him so much about surfing he said “it’s catching waves. You’re on the board, all of a sudden
you’re in the wave [it] catches you so all of a sudden you’re in the power of the wave”. Working towards, and anticipating this point is what is focus and concentration is on when he is surfing: “at the time you’re centred on catching waves”.

While the surfer was focused on reaching the point of catching waves, the martial artist returning to his doing to have a different type of experience. Although emphasising the difficulty with articulating the nature of that experience, he explained that for him this has to do with getting into a mode or being in a zone, and that when you are there

*there’s a feeling that you can't put a foot wrong and that everything is inevitable and that's kind of fun. So you can't put a foot wrong, everything you're doing is absolutely on the money and you can't put a foot wrong and it's kind of neat.*

He stated “that’s why I keep coming back, for that”.

**Desire to reach a point of achievement.**
The actual point was very often the point of achieving something specific. All participants portrayed a desire to achieve something, which contributed to their ongoing participation. This desire merged with their values - participants aimed for goals that were meaningful for them.

Often there was an intense pull toward a goal in the early stages of occupational involvement that provided impetus for doing. The surfer worked towards the point of catching a wave for six months:

*The idea of then thinking if I can stand up and – and start doing something with the board and do something on the wave – and then to get to that standing up period takes quite a while...and it didn’t matter what the conditions were because to try and get over that hurdle of standing up on your board – so that was a huge motivator to get out there as much as possible.*

The intense desire to reach this goal pulled him to continue doing, despite environmental barriers presented by conditions. When the goal felt closely within his reach, he wanted to continue to do more: “you just know yourself that ooh I nearly – I
just felt I nearly had it then so you go back for more”. The anticipation of what would come if he continued trying to achieve drew him in to further doing.

The quilter showed a similar determination that kept her motivated in working towards the point of completing her first quilt. She took on a vast initial project which took 18 months to finish:

*it was a much bigger project than I thought but...I'd decided that because I'd set out to do it and I'd put a lot of money into it, that I would keep at it, and also the fact that so many people were watching what I was doing and the progress, I felt that I wasn't going to fail in front of them and then the sheer determination just made me go on and on.*

Her words show an internal desire to reach a particular point that she directed her doing towards. She went on to say “a fear of failing was the fact that I could see that they were all watching the progress that I was making, and they were amazed to think that somebody would start on one big quilt like that”. She had set out to produce an end product, and was committed to getting to that point, but her desire to achieve was also influenced by the environmental factor of other people.

A gradual moving towards something can be evident when there is a desire to reach a point of achievement: “If you can deposit as many sessions in the bank, it’s that whole consistency you know that you’re making towards that eventual goal. You’ve got that goal you know at the back of your mind”. The triathlete moves in her doing towards a specific goal, and the progress she senses toward getting there is significant. She went on to say: “I knew that I could do better than this”, comparing where she was with where she wanted to be at.

The progression towards a desired skill level can assist continuation. When the surfer sensed that he “nearly had it”, and was close to achieving what he wanted to, he went back for more. For the violinist, she looked ahead to where she wanted to be:

*often when I was practicing it was working on the hard bits and all that kind of stuff and maybe overcoming sort of little hurdles and what not. But if I – often I’d sort of say to myself well look back at last month or where do you think you might be in a month’s time or two months time. So I did rather than just sort of getting bogged down in just one particular practice session*
and saying well this is too hard, can’t do this, or I’d rather go and do something else, just trying to gently remind myself that yeah it’ll all sort of fit together in the end.

Thus seeing progress, and observing progress through comparing their current level to where they wanted to be at, enticed participants on in their doing. Not only the desire to achieve, but a sense of moving towards getting there, was often highly significant in drawing individuals in to further doing.

Individuals were motivated not only by the progress they observed in getting to the point of achievement, but by the potential of improving their performance in an occupation. The triathlete showed a desire to better her own times. She said:

you’re thinking oh I could have done better here – or you know I could have saved myself you know a bit of time if I’d done this a bit faster. You’re always beating yourself up. It’s interesting how ... each race you do you may not achieve exactly where you wanted to be, so there is that sort of beating up side of things. But you still go for more.

When her performance is not as good as she believes she is capable of, she does not experience the sense of achievement that she is aiming for, and this entices her into further doing.

Being goal-directed happened in the early stages, and continued throughout involvement. For some ‘the point’ of achievement was in the distant future, while for others it could be reached many times within one session. Once the surfer learnt how to catch a wave, he could reach that point multiple times within a short period. Others described significant points within their doing that only came occasionally – such as playing within an orchestra at an end of year performance.

When participants were pulled towards long term goals, they often experienced little short term satisfaction or immediate reward. The kapahaka performer held several goals, all of which could only be reached after putting in considerable effort. For him there was significance in the

journey of getting to that final place [of the competition], yeah and that’s just for that short term goal. But in the long run it’s just keeping it going, handing it down, sharing it with friends, family, and the world.
Goals around keeping tradition alive were a core part of his motivation, and the pull towards his goals meant that enjoyment of doing was not important. Rather, keeping his goals in view sustained his doing.

**Reaching a point leads to further doing.**

It is not only the potential of reaching a point that provides impetus for further doing, but the actual reaching of a point pulls into further doing. Reaching a point invited participants to take another step. First achievements were important in this way. The martial artist felt that achieving a yellow belt was significant in the early stages of his involvement. He thought that he was “wonderful” because of this achievement (although viewing this now as a complete misapprehension) and said “that was a totally motivating thing, that got me carrying on”. It was a significant achievement for the quilter having her work exhibited for the first time, and this led to her involvement developing, expanding, and growing:

> It made me quite excited about seeing my work exhibited for the public to see, because it – it just makes you realise that your work is up to standard. It was exciting to have it accepted, not winning prizes, just to have it out on display, and so that then became a yearly thing, entering into this craft show, and then it just got bigger and bigger, and going into ah other exhibitions, and it's just gone on from there.

For the surfer, reaching the point of catching his first wave was highly significant in perpetuating his involvement. He reflected the relationship between achieving, and wanting to achieve more, in the following words:

> It's a bit like conquering Everest really. That you’ve done it, you’ve reached it, what you wanted to do was stand up and catch that wave, and then after that you start this whole new journey of where can this take me.

Thus, although elated with reaching the goal, he had been working toward for six months, he did not want to stop there – rather this event made him feel excited about the prospect of further doing.
Support from others to reach a point of achievement.
The environmental aspect of other people is significant in supporting individuals to achieve goals. Whilst the triathlete initially began training by herself, her partner then took up the occupation:

> And so now it’s great because we both do it together and so from a motivation point of view it’s much easier to drag yourself outdoors because chances are when one is feeling a sort of low you know in terms of oh I can’t be bothered doing that, the other one will probably chivvy that person on … Got that push.

She described a difficult event at the beginning of her training where her partner was significant in supporting her to continue:

> I was doing breaststroke halfway through this race cause I couldn’t breathe and it was so choppy. And I do remember coming out and I was literally one of the last people to exit the water and sitting at transition my partner was you know going come on, come on, get ready you know, and I said but I can’t do this … oh it was terrible. It’s just like oh no I can’t do this, and you think no you can, you can, and so persuaded me to get on the bike and continue.

Other participants, too, found the care and encouragement provided by their partner significant. The artist receives encouragement from her husband, who is also creative and artistic, and the violinist’s response from her husband to her wanting to play was important in the initial stages. People who were involved in the same occupation were sometimes influential. The advice she was given at the time of producing her first quilt from others in her club supported her towards completion:

> if I hadn't had somebody experienced like that to tell me these things I would never have finished so that's one of the good things about being in a club that you can get the support of other people who are experienced and can help you through.

Feeling inspired by others or what they do was a further factor in helping individuals to set and achieve goals, both at the uptake of an occupation and as involvement continued. For example, the artist saw a piece of artwork early on and thought she would love to be able to paint like that, and the violinist was inspired by what her
family had achieved with their involvement in music. For the triathlete, too, seeing the achievements of others sparked her into working towards a goal: “going over and watching you know the age groupers doing their thing and all the elite racing ... was so inspiring it was like yeah right I’m going to get back into this.” She wants to continue when she sees others achieving:

You get inspired by these older people that are competing and it blows my mind to see men and women competing in their 70’s doing what we’re doing you know? That’s incredible. And that’s what you know inspires us to say there’s absolutely no reason why we couldn’t continue with this.

While sometimes it was other individuals who helped to sustain motivation, for the kapa haka performer this was about a group as a whole being engrossed in the same occupation, working towards the same point. There is a sense in the following words of being in unity, spurring each other on, at once supporting and inspiring:

in the haka where the high intensity heightens, it’s looking at your mate next to you on the left, on the right, in front of you, just seeing them give it their everything, just picks you up a little bit more...it’s just giving it that, emptying the tank, giving it everything.

**The process of doing is bound up with reaching a point.**

Enjoying the process of doing was not completely distinct from an actual or anticipated point in one’s doing. Whilst what participants engaged in was often enjoyable and immediately satisfying, the enjoyment was intertwined with anticipated points. In this sense the experience that occurred throughout the doing was difficult to distinguish from the points of the doing. Being in nature is bound up with reaching points in the surfer’s doing because while he appreciates being in nature, his doing is also about “harnessing” nature:

You’re on the board ... the wave catches you so all of a sudden you’re in the power of the wave, and you realise there’s something about nature to be harnessed here if you can stand up and stay on that wave. Yeah that’s how I would describe it, it’s harnessing a piece of nature.

Just as the surfer both wanted to experience nature and reach the point that involved harnessing a piece of nature, other participants demonstrated that the experience and the point of achievement can go hand in hand. For those who valued a creative
dimension within their doing, there was often a move toward bringing together an end product, or to take something pre-existing and enhance it. The actor, for example, likes to “build things and end up with something which I didn’t have before from lots of parts”. When asked what she loves so much about her occupation the gardener said “it’s creating... I like the colours and the beauty of it all, and the fact that I have prepared the soil and – and created something”. The process of creating is tied up with what will come as a product or result of the doing. What these individuals do is directed toward ending up with something - a looking forward to bringing something into existence. There is a constant move towards a tangible outcome.

**Attraction to doing that generates positive feelings.**
The experience of doing was for most participants intertwined with feelings which varied in intensity and quality. Doing could provide a sense of calm, or it could be more uplifting and invigorating. Positive emotions occurred during the process of doing, at points associated with doing, and could also be significant after the activity, lifting one’s overall emotional state. Positive emotions drew individuals back to further doing, contributing to ongoing engagement.

**Feelings through the process.**
Positive feelings can be a response to a specific aspect of an occupational process. The creativity involved in doing is exciting for the artist. She used the words “lifted”, “euphoric”, and “liberated” to describe how creating feels. For the horse rider feelings during doing largely emerge from experience of being in nature. This is in part about her relationship with the horse:

> I think everybody dreams of that special horse that you really get that close bond with, that the communication is just perfect and you know that you’re just sort of in harmony with each other you know, and that’s with such a big animal, you know that’s just amazing.

The surfer also experiences positive feelings that came from doing his occupation in a natural environment. There is a sense of excitement about the unpredictability, and the potential of what might happen when he is out on the water.

Engaging in occupations induced feelings of relaxation. The rhythm and repetition involved in quilting is significant in this way:
with the freehand quilting that I do, you can sit for hours and you're not actually having to think, well I don’t have to think too much about what I’m doing if I’m just filling in and quilting. I’m not up and measuring and working out and taxing the brain or anything. I’m sitting there and quite relaxed, just like sitting knitting. I’m sitting and machining. (quilter)

The quilter engages in a process that she is familiar with and that she can do almost without having to think. There is a quality about this process that mentally relaxes her. The gardener similarly relaxes with an aspect of her doing: “I’m more relaxed and I’m working physically and I’m enjoying it – the physical aspect ... I like digging and doing, and pruning”. Like the quilter, she is doing something repetitive and familiar, and becoming absorbed in the process. However, both of these participants are absorbed in something that is working towards. The gardener’s digging and pruning will lead to a point of completion, and the quilting will lead to the end point of having a competition piece ready or completing a project as a gift.

There is a link between deep absorption and positive emotions. The artist portrayed a sense of intense engagement in the following words: “there have been times where I’ve probably you know forgotten about – for two or three hours I’d be just stuck into something and it’s – I’m very engaged and actually I’m not always aware of the time passing”. The horse rider also indicated that when she engages in a specific process within her occupation her focus becomes intense to the point of blocking out everything else: “you’re sitting on top of that animal and you’re controlling it and it does what I want it to do in you know anything else at that stage is just not important”.

Positive emotions in doing can be connected with feeling absorbed:

When I did that succulent thing down there my daughter said “You’ve been out there for two and a half hours”. I said “rubbish, nonsense, I have not”. She said “we’ve been keeping an eye on you Mum and you’ve been out there for two and a half hours”, but I was having a great old time. (gardener)

Absorption in doing led to forgetting ones problems. The focus demanded by doing means “I can block out everything else. No matter how crappy my day has been or what’s happening in my life, as soon as I’m riding I can focus on my riding and it’s
really relaxing” (horse rider). Positive emotions arise both during and following doing, and improve her overall emotional state.

Positive emotions from being absorbed can intertwine with achieving something. The gardener referred to feeling absorbed in her gardening and then said:

*And I was out there for ages and ... my family all know me and they left me to it because they knew that I would come in and feel restored. Which I did. I came in ... very happy [with] filthy dirty hands and stuff, and I had planted out all these succulents and got rid of a whole messy lot of mess*.  

The gardener described her experience in terms of the restoration it leads to. But she also refers to what she accomplished during the doing – the completion of tasks. Positive feelings emerging are at once connected with the process of doing, and with the end point of the doing.

**Feelings on reaching a point.**

While sometimes feelings occurred as part of the process that was directed towards a point, they also occurred on reaching a point. Feelings of satisfaction could emerge upon reaching something that held value for an individual. For example, the gardener experiences pleasure and satisfaction with giving her bromeliads away, as well as with growing vegetables for her family. For the violinist satisfaction came from playing in an orchestra for the first time: “*just to hear a group of a lot of children and a few older adults sitting down and that ... sense of wow you know we’re just about ready to go, and everybody’s sort of getting organised and the conductors up the front*”. She went on to say: “*just to play something that is recognisable. I mean to be able to participate with a group and performing to other people...it’s a good feeling...deeply satisfying*”.

When a point was reached excitement was also experienced. For example, the horse rider explained that “*at the end when you’re at the competition and you win prizes and you know it’s just awesome*”. For the artist feelings upon reaching a point came in the form of “*a creative buzz and um a sense of achievement actually, um and a job well done I suppose ...you feel like a sense of achievement*”. The quilter felt excitement when seeing her work displayed for the first time, and referred to “*the
There is intense excitement for the surfer in catching waves. As well as saying his first experience of doing so was like “conquering Everest”, he used the words “elation”, “exhilaration”, “feeling of freedom”, and “adrenalin” to describe the feelings involved in continuing to reach this point. For him reaching a point occurs frequently in his doing. It is so thrilling that it can occur over and over and continue to make him feel good.

The triathlete clearly demonstrated the way in which the feelings that occur on reaching the point of achievement are significant, and entice her though racing and training that is not enjoyed: “It’s not enjoyable in terms of the actual racing, or if you’re doing a really hard training session, but it is afterwards. It’s the feeling that you get after you’ve done it ... the feeling of achievement after the race”.

Feelings go beyond the doing.

There was a lingering of emotion for the horse rider. Attending to the animals, even when she does not want to be outside, is a worthwhile investment because “after you’ve done it you come off and it’s so nice; you feel refreshed and you’ve cleared your mind”. Being with animals lifts her mood, because when she is grumpy or sad they are happy to see her: “And I think that can just give you that change in your emotional state”. The surfer’s doing in the moment, and the excitement coming from that, is difficult to distinguish from the excitement that lives on after the doing is over:

> it’s the feeling, it’s the pleasure, it’s the, it’s what it leaves you with, it’s what it gives you during, it’s a, such a total package experience that it only leaves you, you know it takes you a day to stop thinking about the day I had yesterday – so the buzz lingers on.

Thus one can feel good not just in the moment of doing, but the feeling good can last after the doing has finished.

The feelings that came from engaging went beyond the short term, and helped individuals cope with difficult life situations: “I’ve been through depression as well so I find sometimes that doing will actually lift me out” (artist). The gardener’s doing is a form of escapism and helps her to feel restored: “I solve all my problems. All of a sudden an answer will come into my head. I’m more relaxed and I’m working
physically and I’m enjoying it – the physical aspect. And it solves problems and I – I’m at peace with myself. She went on to state that: “Sometimes if things haven’t been happy or well which happens in everyone’s life I have found it – it’s um restoring – just handling soil and um improving it.” Her absorption in this aspect of doing has the effect of relaxing her, and this seeps out into the rest of her life. But the restoration comes from doing something that is, again, directed toward – she enjoys improving the soil, there is an element of achieving something wrapped up in it.

**Feelings draw back into doing.**
Feelings that came from doing were significant in keeping individuals coming back to their occupations. Riding and having control over an animal gives the horse rider a feeling that she wants to keep experiencing: “they give you such an amazing feel, just the whole movement and the rhythm ... And you know, and once you know that feeling what it feels, how it can be, you want to achieve that feeling every time”. Thus this feeling, although difficult to articulate, is so pleasurable that there is a sense of anticipation around wanting it to occur again. For the surfer, the thrill from his doing can be so significant that the feelings linger on and then pull him in to wanting to do again. He is not happy to stop at the experience he has had, but this entices him toward further doing. In referring to the buzz lingering on he then said “and then you get to the point where you’re actually hanging out to do it all again”. This doing makes him feel so good that he re-seeks the feeling that is generated by the doing, through doing again. His words show a sense of anticipation. He went on to say: ”I couldn’t wait for the next session. I couldn’t wait”, clearly demonstrating the way in which positive feelings can perpetuate involvement.

**Involvement propelled by self identity and routine.**
Sometimes people persisted because an occupation had become an important part of their life and themselves. When this was evident, it was not about striving for something (although that could happen alongside), but people kept going because the occupation had become bound up with their identity, and their routines. There was a sense in this aspect of the doing of a steady, persistent force. Continuation was unquestioned, because to not continue would mean loosing an important part of oneself.
Self identity emerged as a very strong propeller of doing for the martial artist. His involvement in his occupation is largely about who he is, and this sustains his engagement. This individual continues not because of any sense of enjoyment that comes from his doing, but because being a martial artist is who he is and doing martial arts is what he does: “it penetrates into your 24 hour personality, you know self identity is a part of that, but it’s also the fact that you’re this kind of person”. His identity intertwines with his doing: He was explicit about the way that self-identity motivates him. His doing is “bound up in self-identity, because this is the person I am”. For this individual, the pain and intense effort has been worthwhile, because his occupation is what he values and has shaped him into the person he is. The prospect of doing other occupations thus lacks meaning:

I could have got a dog, I would have done better, I wouldn’t have broken fingers by now. But there’d be something missing [if] I got fit by walking my dog I wouldn’t have broken fingers but then I wouldn’t be me.

The martial artist’s identity that he has through his doing gives him a sense of personal strength: “Part of my self-identity is bound up in being a martial arts teacher and it gives me some strength and it gives me a bit of extra power to get up in the morning”. This also seems to relate to the impact of reaching a point in his doing: “That point informs everything else around it … there was a moment where I had it, where I was totally firing on all cylinders but somehow there’s a quality and all of that has seeped out into the rest of my life.”

The horse rider’s words also show the way in which doing can continue because it has become an important part of a person: “if I don’t have animals around me I don’t feel like my full me. You know they’re part of me, they’re part of my life”. She went on to describe times when she has questioned her ongoing involvement because of the time and cost involved but said “but what else am I going to do you know”. Just as for the martial artist there would be “something missing” in the person he is if it weren’t for the occupation, for the horse rider there is a sense that she would feel lost without her doing.

Group rather than individual identity was strong for the kapa haka performer. His doing is part of a whole that involves other people. When asked what he finds
satisfying about kapa haka he said it’s “performing with your sister, performing with your Mum, performing with your family”. He identifies strongly as Maori, and his occupation is inseparable from his identity as a Maori person. Contributing to his people and culture drives his doing: “it’s … making our culture stronger and better”.

Occupations become part of ones’ life - what one does - not just in contributing to self-identity, but in providing structure and routine. The horse rider’s occupation “makes a really important impact on your day because it is part of your routine”. Routines can provide a structure to the extent that not having those routines is disquieting:

“We spend so much time in routines that suddenly it’s like having a holiday ... suddenly you don’t have any structure to your day and it can be – well I find that personally a bit disconcerting initially not to have that routine ... You can almost go on autopilot cause you’ve got it all planned out. Then suddenly not to have that you know, like this break just now, on the one hand it’s great cause we can do all these projects that we’ve not had time to do you know when we’ve been training, but on the other hand it’s a little bit like ew this feels a bit odd. And maybe we should go for a little run.”. (triathlete)

These words also demonstrate that the degree to which an occupation is self-defining becomes apparent when it is no longer there. When an occupation has become so much a part of life, intensely drawing an individual in, there is emptiness when it is absent, and it can feel ‘disconcerting’ and ‘odd’. The gap left for others when their occupation was not available to them was also apparent:

“even now with [my horse] being away ... it’s like this massive gap. Because all the time you normally allocate to do stuff with him all of a sudden it’s like oh what am I going to do with my time? (horse rider)

I wondered how I could ever manage going away for five weeks and not being able to do any stitching, and when we go away to the bach I always take my sewing machine, and we had one trip recently where I didn’t take my sewing machine and I wondered how I could survive without having my sewing machine. (quilter)
The kapa haka performer faced a long gap in his doing. He grew up in a community that immersed him in kapa haka, but went to a high school that operated by very different values, with only three Maori students. This led him to feel “starved”, which resulted in a yearning to again immerse himself in this occupation in an ongoing manner. He said “It was that missing five years of kapa haka which really made me realise what I’d missed out on”. He went on to say “I was fortunate enough to be brought up in the Maori world, so it was strong enough to get me through those five years.” And through that time his “heart was with kapa haka”. While for other participants the emptiness was formed by an absence of routine, there was a sense that a piece of this individual had been taken away.

**Theme Two: Quality and Intensity of the Force**

Theme two of the findings focuses on the intensity and quality of the forces that operated to sustain the participants’ involvement in their occupation. Sometimes doing was unstoppable, and other times, although participants were strongly interested in their occupation, it required significant effort.

The forces that operated in moving participants toward their occupations varied in its intensity and qualities. For some there was a drawing into their doing:

“I think [being starved of kapa haka] drew me in, pretty much told me I wanted to do kapa haka” (kapa haka performer).

“It’s just something that keeps drawing me back to it” (quilter).

“Really, really it’s quite powerful, and the ocean draws people” (surfer).

The violinist described a sense of drawing toward a perceived call. She saw an advertisement offering violin lessons and “it just seemed to be saying this is for me – do it”. In a similar way people felt pulled towards their occupations. There was a strong intensity of pull evident for the surfer: “the hunger, the passion, the desire to go out and do it was just very strong”. Other times there was a push evident, and this
came from within. The triathlete alluded to the strong push that can come from within: “You are pushing, you are seeing how far you can push yourself”.

A compelling pull, which comes from the occupation, results in a compelling desire, which comes from within the individual. When there was a strong pull evident, the prospect of doing could be compelling, to the extent that one’s doing became addictive or obsessive. However it was not always so – commitment was in many situations significant in underlying sustained doing, and this aligned more with the push that was sometimes required. Sometimes individuals were motivated at once by a compelling pull, and a sense of committed push.

Compelling pull.
Participants reflected the strong and compelling pull that they experienced towards their occupations. When individuals felt compelled, they gave a sense of being unable to resist a temptation to do. Thus the pull resulted in a compelling desire. There may be barriers present, but the pull, and the response to the pull, are so strong that these may be ignored.

The surfer described the way in which doing can be addictive:

> it is an addiction but I think it’s um not like smoking or drinking, it’s very you know, if you had to put an end to it you could. But you might, some people would probably go through some withdrawals I’m sure. Um I know that generally you can probably ask [my wife], I probably get quite scratchy. I know that personally after a week of not having had a surf um we all laugh about it and ring each other up and we’re all going we’re getting a bit desperate for a surf. So there’s that desire to go out and catch a wave – it’s always there, it’s always there. So it’s probably, actually it’s probably more addictive than I’m even letting on now I think. I still live for it now. In fact I think I started living for it the day I went out.

There is a compelling pull for him to reach a point – that of catching a wave. He does not need to put effort into his doing - rather, there is an ever present force that seems to pull him along, and he recognises the addictive qualities of his doing to the point that he feels “desperate” when he cannot do. There was a clear link between addiction and emotion for this individual. In referring to the buzz lingering on, and
hanging out to do it again he went on to say: “and that’s where the addiction side of it is – you get into something where – it’s an addiction. He holds such a strong desire to do that after his doing has finished he looks ahead with yearning to the next time he can do: “I couldn’t wait for the next session”.

Similarly, the triathlete described what she does as an obsession. This is to the extent that she feels she is 'living' an occupation, and that other aspects of her life get the way of her doing:

it’s not just you know your wee hobby that you might do once a week or every other week you know when you feel like it, it’s actually structures my life I suppose. You know so if I wasn’t working I’d probably be doing more training you know. Like work is what gets in the way and I have to structure um my hobby or my obsession as much as possible around the free pockets of time that I might have around work. And you know um I don’t know why I call it an obsession. It’s probably because you’re eating and sleeping and – you know you’re living triathlon, it’s all consuming really and it doesn’t need to be.

Her involvement has gone beyond doing something that she simply enjoys and that fills her time, to being a central aspect of her life that she lives for. For both the surfer and the triathlete there was strong sense of chasing something which contributed to their compelling desire to do. However, while the surfer feels a compelling pull, the motivating force for the triathlon competitor is more accurately described as an obsessive push from within:

You are pushing. You’re seeing how far you can push yourself, and much of it isn’t about the physical side of things. Yeah the training you know will get you physically fit, but you’re actually training your mind as well, like you’re really training for that mental toughness to be able to sustain and persist in, even when things are really quite unbearable ... we are trying you know to push ourselves to be as good as we can be. Even if it does require pain.

She shows that even when an occupation is unpleasant or “unbearable” it can still be intensely compelling. Her doing is obsessive even though it involves, in her words, “suffering”.
The kapahaka performer experienced an intense pull toward keeping tradition alive in the doing of his occupation. The pull is toward doing something that feels right for him because it aligns with his values. The absence of kapa haka in his life that came after being immersed in the occupation as a child led to a passionate yearning to do: “even though I was with my school, my mind was still with the school, but my heart was with kapa haka. I think that drew me in – pretty much told me I wanted to do kapa haka”. The words reflect a passionate yearning to do what felt so right for him, which was intensified because he had been starved of this doing.

**Compelling pull can become a problem.**
While compelling pull could serve the positive function of pulling people into their doing and sustaining their engagement, it could also lead to one’s doing being all-consuming, which generated problems. The surfer provided a description that gave a sense of an occupation overtaking sensibility and logic because the pull for him is so strong:

*I couldn’t wait. And then in fact it would be quite ridiculous – we’d go all the way to [the place where I surf] and it would be horrendous conditions and there were times when we’d turn up and we wouldn’t even go in . . . and they’d say well I’m not going out in that – and I’d say nah I don’t think I will either – knowing that it was probably going to be a bit rough. But just wanting to be out there and maybe – maybe it’ll be alright when we get there – maybe the wind will have died off or – so the, I guess the hunger, the passion, the desire to go out and do it was just very strong.*

He also took risks and continued despite having times when he found himself in trouble:

*I came off the wave, got sucked down and it probably drags you along for as long as it takes before you get pushed back up. So I got down there and what happens is your board stays floating ... they call it tomb stoning and you’re sort of held on by your leg rope. And you just kind of um, you feel like you’re going through the washing machine, so you wait for that to finish, then you open your eyes so that you can actually see which way to go to get back to the surface. So yeah by then I’d run out of air and I’m thinking you know you’re not that deep and open your eyes and you can see the – you can see the light – and so I just calmly tried to paddle back up to the top... I*
thought man I couldn’t get much closer than that. And then it happened again, but at the same time you know you’re going through this learning curve….so if it happens, you’ve just got to grin and bear it.

Not only does he accept life-threatening situations, but he described the way in which his occupation presented a pull so strong that he became aware of the degree to which his attention was becoming focused on the occupation:

it just completely takes over and yeah we couldn’t walk down the beach without me looking at the waves rather than talking to [my wife]. I’m more interested in what that wave’s doing, or I’d rather be out there than walking on the beach.

Thus he recognises the strong pull to his occupation as a problem, and imposes limits on himself. He sometimes deliberately decides that surfing will be in the background for a period of time: “Otherwise I’ll just be phew, in and out every five or ten minutes. In fact it’s probably better if I didn’t take my board, but normally we take it, but I’m probably better now than I what I would have been a few years ago at that”.

He recognised the need to stop his occupation from becoming all-consuming:

of late I suppose um we sort of look for a balance that it’s good for me to get out and have a surf when [my wife] does her thing. And then there are times when we say forget the surfing we’re going [away] for the weekend but surfing’s not, it’s in the background.

Other participants did likewise. The gardener deliberately pulls herself back from the pull she experiences toward the occupation: I’m not allowed out – it’s a self-imposed rule – I’m not allowed out until I’ve done the housework, and I’m not allowed out until I’ve done at least an hour inside, and that’s very frustrating”. Describing a similar self-imposing of limits the artist said “sometimes you have to stop and pull yourself back and go okay…I need to do [something else] or why is dinner late – oh sorry I got a bit carried away”.

Committed push.
While some individuals experienced a compelling pull toward what they do, a sense of committed push from within was more evident for others. When doing occurred out of commitment, participants continued because something was important for
them. This was the occupation itself, or a goal, or both. A sense of commitment to what one does was likened by the martial artist to being in a relationship. He said:

_In a relationship you know, if you’re committed to a relationship you get grumpy with one another, you know, but you don’t go and leave. You don’t say oh I’m grumpy with you today I’m going to walk out. You think alright I’m grumpy with her, I’ll cope with this and by next week it’ll be forgotten, it’ll be stupid. That’s the same thing with martial arts._

His continuation in this aspect is driven not by a sense of compelling desire, but because he is committed to what he does.

Even when there was an intense pull, involvement that was underpinned by commitment could be effortful. While the kapa haka performer experienced a compelling pull into his occupation, he also depicted the effort that goes into his ongoing doing:

_we’ve already started training for [a competition], not as a group, but as individuals they are in the gym slaving it all out, lifting weights, hitting the roads, running, and that’s just to get us prepared for when the group meets, and then we’re fit, healthy, ready to go for the bracket that we have to perform. So although it’s only a 30 minute bracket it demands a high energy level, fitness, endurance, and that’s the body part of it. And then there’s the mental side where we have to learn words, keep things all in unison, actions, precision, um so there’s heaps of things you have to consider when performing in kapa haka so it’s a lot of hard work._

His move towards personally and culturally important goals was simultaneously expressed as a compelling desire, and as being effortful.

Effortful engagement was evident in other situations where commitment was significant in underlying drive. The violinist explained that she needs to push herself to continue to practice:

_it might be that the end of the day had come and I was thinking oh I haven’t done my practice yet – I’ll go and do it and realising that you probably hadn’t, you know it wasn’t good leaving it that long sort of thing, you weren’t really getting the most out of it. But it’s just perhaps other distractions maybe, things that I quite honestly would have preferred to be_
doing at that point. But once again it was always that if I do want to achieve something here that’s good for me I do need to put in the work.

There is a sense that rather than having to fight a pull toward, she had to fight to actually get to the point of doing. Her overall goal keeps her practicing and gives her the incentive to do even when in the moment she does not feel like it. The violinist’s words also show that she believes the return – of the achieving – will eventually outweigh the cost of the hard work. In a similar way, the horse rider mused about why she continues when she does not always feel like it: “it keeps you outside, I love being outside, it gives you a routine you know, it gives you some responsibility, it gives you exercise, you know there’s a lot of things that you get back from it”. The kapa haka performer anticipated the return that would eventually make the effort of his doing seem worthwhile. In talking about taking the occupation back home he said “all the hard work’s paying off”.

Relationship between compelling pull and committed push. Thus the source of compelling pull and committed push is different. Whereas compelling pull came from the occupation, which provided a strong enticement to do, committed push came from within the individual. Commitment and compelling pull were sometimes present at once. The triathlete at once feels compelled to better her time, and committed to her doing even when she doesn’t feel like it. Although she labelled her involvement as being “obsessive”, she also described the choice she has made to continue her doing:

You’ve taken away that choice because that’s what – you know you’ve almost prescribed to yourself this is what I’m going to do. It’s almost like being on a diet isn’t it? …. there’s not the choice or the oh I really fancy going for a run.

Comparably, the horse rider experiences compelling pull coupled with committed push. She referred to her occupation as being an addiction. This at once related to being pulled towards a point of achievement, and the nature of horses: “I always say it’s a virus people that get involved with horse riding get. You just can’t get rid of it”. She went on to explain: ”I think it’s something to do with the nature of horses, the riding, I always want with my riding I want to achieve something you know I want to have a goal you know, work towards something”. However, while she experiences
an addictive pull, she also gave a strong sense of the commitment and effort that is required for her to continue with her occupation. For example:

sometimes you sort of think oh I really don't want to go today you know, I want to have a break”.

“so you want to keep the training up but sometimes you're like oh I don't feel like doing a lot of hard out training today, I just want to do a relaxing training, but then you get there and . . . it's not going to be relaxing, I'll have to work him today”.

Sometimes there was consistency across time in the type of drive underlying doing, and in other situations there was shift or fluctuation through an individuals’ involvement. For the violinist, effortful commitment was present in taking up her occupation. She decided to learn the violin for an indefinite period of time, and made a strong commitment at the outset. The doing out of commitment remained throughout her involvement. For others, commitment to their occupations developed over time. While the martial artist now has a deep sense of commitment to what he does, this was not evident from the point of uptake. Initially, a variety of factors merged to lead to the uptake of his doing, and he got to the point of thinking “let's try martial arts”. His commitment evolved as he became more and more involved in the occupation, and his interest gradually grew. On the other hand, compelling pull was evident for some at the point of uptake. The surfer described how he borrowed his son's surfboard to have a go and “after that it was all go – I just fell in love with it”. He was grabbed by the possibility of catching a wave. This sense of compelling desire continued, as shown in these previously quoted words: “I still live for it now, in fact I think I started living for it the day I went out”. Similarly the artist portrayed that after she had the opportunity to try doing artwork she had a sudden drawing in to her occupation: “I've sort of been hooked ever since”. The kapa haka performer seemed to move from a deep yearning, a string desire which persisted, but was also coupled with his involvement at times feeling effortful.

The scope in the quality and intensity of drive toward doing is represented in the Motivation Intensity Quadrant (Figure 1), which is based on my results. It illustrates that compelling pull and committed push can range from weak to strong, and that they can be simultaneously present or that one may dominate. The horizontal line represents compelling pull, and that it can range from weak (left) to strong (right).
The vertical line represents committed push, which can also range from weak (bottom) to strong (top). Compelling pull and committed push are also shown to be dynamic forces; people can fluctuate between, or the tendency toward one or the other can shift during the course of continued doing. The variation between participants is shown by the plotting, which is indicative only and not an attempt to view data quantitively. For example, the quilter is both strongly committed, and strongly compelled towards, her occupation, hence her doing is represented in the top right quadrant. The doing of the kapa haka performer is represented with an oblong, showing that he consistently experiences a committed push, but that the strength of compelling pull experienced has varied across the course of his doing.
Figure 1: Motivation Intensity and Quality Quadrant
Fluctuation in Intensity of the Desire to Do

Desire to do an occupation varied in intensity across time. The horse rider’s enjoyment of her occupation came in waves that were interspersed with self-questioning of her involvement: “there are stages that like oh yeah I really, really enjoy it and I love just every second of it and then you know there’s other stages that’s like oh it’s taking so much time, it’s cost me so much money and you know, why am I doing it? The martial artist reflected a similar fluctuation in motivation: “There have been times when I’ve nearly given up, um, but I also know there’s an ebb and flow”. The actor identified times he has needed a break “just to have a life outside of theatre. Just to have time to think about other things just for a while. I’ve never wanted to give it up completely. I just want to have a rest so it’s fresh when you come back to it”. The kapa haka performer discussed times when motivation has waned: “there are times where . . . I just can’t be bothered doing kapa haka at all”. Going back home at those times and “seeing all the kids doing it” helps to give him a resurgence of motivation.

Reduction in motivation sometimes came as a result of intense involvement that led to exhaustion. The triathlon competitor said: “there’s been times when we’ve both agreed you know we’ve overdone this and we need a bit of down time, and we’ve been doing too many races, so we’re really burnt out physically as well as mentally”. Physical exhaustion leading to decreased motivation was evident also for the kapa haka performer who said “There are times where...with the body being tired I just can’t be bothered with kapa haka at all”.

Even though motivation fluctuated, individuals continued in their chosen occupations. Sometimes participants took breaks, but they always returned to their doing. There were important factors that contributed to the motivation to sustain. Progression, and challenge, were both crucial in providing impetus to continue.

Theme Three: Impetus to Continue

Whatever the underlying forces, doing expanded to prevent boredom, and this expansion provided the impetus to continue. Participants faced challenges and
difficulties, which were pushed through and even served the function of helping individuals to continue their doing.

**Expansion – not about repetition.**
Participants moved in their chosen occupations – there was never a sense that their involvement was repetitive. This ‘moving’ came in various forms - seeking diversity, doing something new within an occupation, learning, and achieving gradually more. These factors helped to prevent boredom and sustain participation. In no case was involvement in occupations just about repetition of doing – there was for every individual a sense of moving and progressing.

Interest in occupations was kept alive through experiencing diversity in what people did. When asked why they did not get bored, participants were quick to respond with comments about variety and diversity:

“You don’t get bored with it because no quilt’s the same” (quilter).

“There's too much to try to get bored” (artist).

The artist recognised the way that there is a large amount of scope in her use of mixed media, and different directions she can go in. There was enjoyment expressed at being able to experiment, and experience new aspects of her occupation: “trying out a new technique or a new medium you know – um for instance water colour crayons. Um I'd heard about them so I tried some out and it was like these are really cool you know”. Along with this there has been a progression in her artwork from acrylics, to canvas, to mixed media, and this has allowed her to explore and get more creative. Similarly, the gardener sought variety and changed the focus of her doing across time: Well it was always with pansies and the usual ah gardening that people had and then I went onto succulents and found them interesting, and then somebody introduced me to bromeliads . . . and ah lately I've been trying to do a wall with just air plants.

The actor explained that every show is a different show, and that the variety prevents boredom: “The aspects of theatre are so diverse that I’m constantly interested in doing something with it” He saw each show as being a “creative challenge”. For the
surfer there is ongoing challenge presented by the unpredictability and the variety in conditions:

\[\text{the wind’s different, the swell’s different, so even though it all looks like it’s a wave, when you’re on the wave it’s behaving in its own unique way. And so you’re always adapting to make the most of what happens next.}\]

Thus in experiencing and seeking diversity participants experienced challenge that kept them engaged.

Learning was another factor that sustained interest. This encompassed skill development, and gaining knowledge:

“\text{You keep learning and you keep trying to ... improve}” (surfer).

“\text{Your knowledge extends and it changes}” (gardener).

The horse rider portrayed the difficulty with learning the skill of riding initially, and the progression that can be made as more complex skills are learnt. The learning is sometimes intertwined with support from other people. For the kapa haka performer learning happened through people who were involved in the same occupation:

\[I’ve worked with a lot of people who are experts in their own specific field, so we have one who could be good at the guitar, one who’s a master at singing, one a master at weaponry, one a master at traditional Maori instruments. So it’s good to network with all of them and get a bit out of, pick their brain at everything and then just learn, take it all in”.\]

The quilter, who also learnt through tutors and others involved in her occupation, saw learning as an inherent part of the occupation: “\text{we're all the time learning, it's not like some hobbies...it's all the time you're learning . . . you're stretching yourself all the time.}” For her, this learning “\text{takes you out of your comfort zone}”. In the quilter's case learning often happened from other people – both members of her quilting group, and tutors. It also happened through trial and error: “\text{sometimes you don’t know how to go about things, by the time you’ve come to the end you have learnt the things that you should do and shouldn’t do}” (quilter). Connected with learning was the development of skills in an occupation, which sustained interest. The violinist, for
example, said “as long as there's some little thing to sort of keep working at and improving, the boredom certainly hasn't crept in.”

Seeing what others were doing provided the inspiration for individuals to expand their involvement. Seeing other people’s work motivated the quilter to continue. She explained:

we always have show and tell and so you're always keen to go along and see what other people have completed, because when you see other people's work you always – you're always seeing things that you admire and maybe something that you might like to try yourself . . . I'm always motivated by seeing someone else's work.

Thus diversity and variety, learning, and achieving gradually were important in sustaining engagement. They kept a current running through the doing, kept things fresh, sustained interest.

**Demanding challenge and perseverance.**

As has been demonstrated, participating in occupations was often difficult and involved considerable effort. It was described variously as physically challenging and mentally demanding to the extent of being terrible or punishing, and causing damage to ones body. It could be shattering, disastrous, wildly frustrating, emotionally painful, and intensely tiring. All participants described facing difficulties, sometimes extreme difficulties - yet they continued.

In addition to the difficult situations that have been referred to in other sections, participants gave other accounts of difficulties. For the martial artist and the horse rider, negative experiences came at the beginning of their occupational involvement. When the martial artist went on a course at the beginning of his training he found the experience extremely physically demanding: “at the end of the first day I was feeling completely shattered because this was an incredibly punishing day. I’d never had exercise like this”. The horse-rider described her first competition as “a disaster”, but that this did not put her off. Despite the early negative experiences, participants did not feel discouraged enough to give up their doing.
As individuals continued their engagement, in many instances substantial effort or hard work was required, or obstacles were faced. As previously cited, descriptions were given by the triathlon competitor and the kapa haka performer of the hard physical work and mental energy involved in their occupations. Yet the high level of challenge was not off-putting – they continued their doing despite the difficulties. Individuals accepted and pushed through feelings of frustration, or managed feelings by temporarily putting an activity aside. The gardener described the frustration that comes when flooding ruins her work “and yet you can’t do anything about it so you’ve got to accept it”. The artist did likewise. She said: “it’s just like with anything I guess. I mean I remember when I was learning piano as a kid and I’d get stuck on something, oh I can’t do this, but actually physically removing myself from something [helped]”.

Some participants, then, seemed able to manage frustration well. Others had a disciplined approach to their doing others helped them to persist through challenge. The kapa haka performer described his occupation as “a discipline. It teaches you control, self control, fitness, survival”. This was also clear for the triathlete who said “we’ve worked out a system and I think one of the things that we’ve learnt is that whole thing around being consistent, make sure you’re just persistent as well...and you’re not you know stopping and then starting again, and then stopping and starting”.

Working towards a point was highly significant in sustaining engagement through difficulties. Looking towards a goal helped participants to persevere: there’s an element of suffering, and that’s a word that’s been used quite a bit you know – some of the books that I’ve been reading is that whole notion of suffering ... you’re doing something that’s out of your comfort zone and then you’re looking at what you’re achieving afterwards”. The sense of achievement that would come made the difficulty of doing worthwhile.

Challenge was strongly associated with achievement. The data indicates that challenge actually needs to be present in some form to help an individual sustain their engagement, and that it can help to pull individuals back into what they do. The violinist showed this in explaining the effort involved for her in practicing: “it was
always that if I wanted to achieve something here that’s good for me I do need to put in the work”. Perseverance was in some cases in fact explicitly related to challenge. This was strongly evident for the triathlete, who described how the challenge of things not going well helps to keep her going:

and it must be a bit odd because it’s not like you’re getting this huge positive like you know – oh I mean sometimes you do because you think oh that was – that was brilliant, I did a personal best time. You know and you can see how that’s obviously going to fuel you to keep going. Whereas there’s quite a few races where shit happens you know? You get a flat tyre or you know- the swim isn’t the best or something happens in the run, and you know that was not a good performance, like your time isn’t that good, but it doesn’t actually put you off. It almost does make you say right the next one I’m going to so this, and you’re already thinking about how you’re going to change your training you know, so you manage to do it more successfully.

The high level of challenge is significant in her being pulled back to her occupation. The surfer also described the thrill of facing a challenge that pulled him to want to continue because of the anticipation of what would come:

The fact that sometimes you felt like you were going to drown – all those things that should put you off or could put you off only made it more exciting because you knew that once you got over that . . . you’ve got to get over that and then start to enjoy the highlights of what it can offer you . . . knowing that the learning curve was very hard and long, the day that you are going to get your first what you call a green wave or an unbroken wave, you know the smile just um and people I remember the day it actually happened and it was 3 or 4 guys that saw me get up and they just all just kind of smiled at me cause I was just beaming – I’ve done it.

Table 3 illustrates that challenge can be divided into two broad areas- that of interesting challenge, and that of demanding challenge that involves a degree of unpleasantness or requires perseverance.
Table 3: Examples of interesting and demanding challenge in data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Interesting challenge</th>
<th>Demanding challenge</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Creative challenge of new shows &lt;br&gt;Creating something from many parts</td>
<td>Struggle to find helpers in the society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Exploring new techniques &lt;br&gt;Progression through use of different types of media</td>
<td>Artwork not turning out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardener</td>
<td>Interest in different plants over time – pansies to succulents to bromeliads to airplants &lt;br&gt;Knowledge keeps extending and changing</td>
<td>Flooding ruining work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse rider</td>
<td></td>
<td>The need to attend to horse when she does not feel like it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapa Haka performer</td>
<td>Learning from others about techniques</td>
<td>Hard physical and mental work involved in training &lt;br&gt;Working butt off practicing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martial Artist</td>
<td></td>
<td>Punishing exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quilter</td>
<td>Stretching self through learning from others in quilting group and through producing quilts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfer</td>
<td>Learning to catch a wave &lt;br&gt;Adapting to each wave behaving in its own unique way</td>
<td>Feeling like he was going to drown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triathlete</td>
<td></td>
<td>Terrible experience in early competition &lt;br&gt;Suffering, pain, and unbearable situations in training and competitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violinist</td>
<td></td>
<td>Practicing and working towards a goal with limited sense of progress</td>
</tr>
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**Theme Four: Positive Experience in Doing is Unnecessary for Sustained Engagement**

This theme is focused on the finding that continuous positive experiences in doing are not a pre-requisite for sustained doing over time. It highlights the point that negative feelings are an integral part of ongoing participation. The fourth theme also has a
strong degree of overlap with the three themes already presented. It thus draws attention to concepts already focussed on or referred to in other sections – negative feelings, lack of immediate reward in doing, the significance of the pull to a point, demanding challenge, and effortful engagement – drawing these together and viewing them from another angle.

**Enjoyment of all doing is not necessary.**

Negative feelings were reported as an integral part of the overall process of doing, being associated with challenge and hard work, and there was often little short term reward in doing. The kapa haka performer demonstrated in describing the intense effort involved in his occupation, directed to the point of performing, with up to six months of “getting nothing out of it”. Feelings of frustration were often described. For example, the actor referred to the struggles the society faces as “the pain side of it”. He expressed negative feelings at the difficulty with finding people to be involved in plays, and with low audience turnout: “We don’t always have enough people for the jobs that need to be done, and we’re always scrounging for helpers and pleading with people…it’s always a struggle and that’s the frustration”. When asked what feelings are experienced during their doing, the first emotion identified by the artist and the violinist was frustration. The violinist said: “If it’s practice time, me at home, I’m usually working hard at learning something new or becoming very frustrated because I’m not achieving what I want to achieve” Referring to practice sessions she stated

\[I \text{ certainly get to the end of it and wildly moving the bow and I guess that sense of well enough is enough and that sort of thing and put it down and walk away. But I never get that sense that I wouldn’t go back to it or anything like that.}\]

Negative feelings, in the violinist’s words, can be seen to emerge in relation to a block in progressing towards a point. They are directly related to not being able to achieve what she wants to. Similarly, the martial artist expressed frustration around lack of progress: “In some ways it gets very frustrating. You want to get to that next level and that next level, and as you get better and better at anything, you know, the next level of skill is actually really hard to get to”.  

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Negative feelings also came as a result of the intensity of engagement and resulting impact on the body: “There’s your two hours of training, it’s morning and afternoon and it’s full on on the body. You get tired, everyone gets all cranky, and then you start nagging at each other” (kapa haka performer). The triathlete referred to feeling burnt out, and questioned the enjoyment for her doing: “that’s when you ask yourself are we having fun any more? Are you still enjoying it um and feeling almost like you were burnt out.”

While having an experience or achieving something was generally connected with emotion, it was not so for every participant. For the martial artist the experience is not about feelings – it is devoid of emotion. When asked to identify any emotions that he experiences in doing he replied “absence of emotion, when you’re in the zone there is no emotion”. He talked about the way his occupation does not bring him pleasure: “there's no pleasure involved ... Honestly I suspect most of the things that make people happy are not pleasurable ... a lot of pleasurable things will not produce happiness”. His words show that doing does not need to bring pleasure for engagement to be sustained.

**Immediate reward in doing is not necessary for continued doing.**

Although participants communicated many positive experiences associated with their ongoing doing, negative experiences and difficulties were clearly seen. Referring back to the previously cited words of the triathlete, persisting “even when things are really quite unbearable” captures the extreme negative experiences that can occur in doing, that people sustain their engagement in spite of. She persevered through such situations for “the feeling of achievement after the race”. Demanding challenges that were faced, and effortful engagement evident in participants’ involvement, provide evidence that reward does not need to be immediate. The negative experiences that came were persisted through because the pull to a point that would offer reward was strong enough. This made the violinist’s effort in learning to play, the relentless effort involved in training for kapa haka competitions, and the risks associated with surfing, worthwhile. The surfer said “Sometimes you felt like you were going to drown”. But he pushed through this because he looked toward the point he would one day reach “the day that you are going to get your first wave”.
Pushing through negative experiences helped individuals to move ahead in their occupations. The martial artist recognised that the hard work at the beginning of his training paid off: “After a few months if you’ve trained that relentlessly, after a few months you will get fit and then I was kind of away”. The violinist said “you’d look at it and think oh I’ll never get my head around this. But you realise that slowly but surely working your way at this and sticking at things that you do achieve a goal”.

The following words, where the kapa haka performer refers to the on-stage experience, powerfully illustrate that short term satisfaction, or enjoyment of immediate doing, is not always important because striving toward a sense of achievement pull an individual:

you only get 30 minutes on stage but it’s those three to six months that you’re working your butt off practicing, and it’s all on your own like you’re getting nothing out of it really, just for that 30 minutes pure adrenalin on stage. Then once you’ve finished it’s just a big celebration as a tribe, as a group, and it’s just uplifting for yourself.

Summary

This chapter has explored the reasons for ongoing engagement in non-essential occupations. The findings have been presented within four themes, and participants’ words have been drawn on to illustrate and support the themes presented. I have shown that various dimensions operated together to attract, pull, push, and propel participants along in their doing. Compelling pull and committed push lay beneath doing in various degrees. Doing expanded and developed so that interest was sustained. Feelings were an integral part of the doing, and positive feelings enticed individuals into further engagement. Yet doing did not have to be enjoyed for engagement to be sustained. Engagement was sometimes unstoppable, sometimes effortful, but it was always directional. Ultimately it moved towards a point – an experience, or a place of achievement – that led to further doing.
Chapter Five: Discussion

This research aimed to explore what influences are present, and what processes are operating, in motivating individuals to begin and sustain their engagement in occupations that they do not have to do. In this chapter the reported findings are discussed with a focus on areas that illuminate or add to what is already known from occupational therapy and occupational science, and where relevant will draw on research and theory from other disciplines. I move beyond the occupational therapy and occupational science explanations because they are currently unsatisfactory in their scope and do not fully explain my findings. The strengths and limitations of the research will then be addressed, and the chapter will explore how knowledge gained from this study can be applied to practice, and present recommendations for future research. I will conclude by returning to the research questions, and summarising the findings.

There are three areas related to the study findings that will be discussed as follows: the range in the intensity and quality of force that can underpin passionate doing, degrees of challenge and the significance of perseverance through high levels of challenge, and that enjoyment of doing is not always necessary due to the pull to a point of achievement. Within each of these areas I consider current theory, often pointing to areas which need development.

Compelling Pull and Commitment Underpin Passionate Sustained Engagement in Varying Degrees

There is wide variation in the intensity and quality of the forces underpinning passionate doing, both across time and from person to person. In my study participants’ involvement ranged from effortful commitment, and sometimes a struggle to keep involved, to compelling, almost unstoppable pull. Despite what is proposed in psychology theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; Vallerand et al. 2003), participants were not always intrinsically motivated to continue in their occupations of passion.
My study demonstrates that feeling a compelling pull to act can be both useful and problematic. On the one hand it can serve the positive function of pulling people into their doing and keeping them coming back. When this finding is viewed in relation to other occupation studies, it can be seen that a compelling need to do is a commonly occurring aspect of sustained engagement, with this phenomenon being reported across a range of studies. Wright St-Clair (2012), in studying the experience of being aged in everyday life, found that all participants spontaneously talked of one occupation that they were passionate about – “one enduring, compelling occupation” (p. 50). This occupation made the everyday worthwhile: “Having at least one thing that gives great joy is a reason for being in the everyday” (p.50, italics original authors). In a comparable way Reed, Hocking and Smythe (2010), in their study of meaning in occupation, found that there was an ever present “call” to do, which could become the focus of attention and show itself as a passion. Studies focused on specific occupations show a similar compelling pull to that which is evident in my results. For example immigrant women experienced a compelling attraction to sewing (Boerma, Russell and Aguilar, 2010), Haines, Smith and Baxter (2010) found that participants were “compelled” towards skateboarding, and as referred to in the literature review Riley (2008) found that making textiles was something that individuals “must do”, with participants continuing regardless of circumstance.

However, a compelling pull to an occupation can sometimes lead to ‘unhealthy’ doing, such as risk taking, or doing that becomes out of balance with other aspects of a person’s life, as also evidenced in my study results. The negative consequences of passionate doing are seen in a similar way by Vallerand et al. (2003), who state that passion can “arouse negative emotions, lead to inflexible persistence, and interfere with achieving a balanced, successful life” (p. 756). A strong compelling desire can be aligned with addiction and obsession, which were words that my participants used to describe their behaviour. Those who were compelled often recognised the need to pull back from their doing. A similar sense of compelling pull, where there was such a strong desire to do that it became uncontrollable, was evident in two studies of student musicians (Guptill, 2012; Park, Guptill & Sumsion, 2007). Participants pushed themselves through pain in order to fulfil their passion for music. One participant in Guptill’s (2012) study talked of her doing as an addiction, identifying that she had an ‘abusive’ relationship with her instrument. Russell (2008) similarly
referred to the compulsion of humans to engage in occupations that are not conducive to health and wellbeing. Thus compelling pull does not always serve a positive function. In my study some participants showed the ability to manage the compelling pull that they experienced, placing boundaries on their doing. The question is raised, however, as to what happens when individuals cannot resist the urge to do. There is not currently a strong focus in the occupation research of the effect of the negative consequences of compelling doing.

Viewing my study results in the light of the aforementioned findings from other research, then, indicates that ‘compelling doing’, which can be defined as doing that is a response to a strong pull from an occupation, is a concept relevant to understanding motivation toward occupation. It can serve positive and negative functions, because it both assists individuals to sustain healthy doing, and pulls people into irrational and illogical doing with harmful consequences.

However, passionate doers are not always compelled - often individuals are committed to their occupations of passion. In this research many participants were committed - putting in intense effort, pushing themselves, and persevering - even when they did not always feel like doing. The idea of commitment to doing aligns with two theories - engaging occupation (Jonsson, 2010; Jonsson, Borell & Sadlo, 2000) and serious leisure (Stebbins, 2007). Engaging occupation is a special type of occupation done with commitment, enthusiasm, perseverance and passion that is “infused with positive meaning” (Jonsson 2010, p. 221). It goes beyond personal pleasure, becoming a commitment or responsibility. Retired participants in Jonsson’s (2010) study were in some cases committed to their occupations as personal duties, which included “taking the bad with the good” (p. 222). Within my results, while compelling pull sometimes led to problems, commitment to doing often had a sense of being healthy and positive in a similar way to that proposed by Jonsson. The kapa haka performer, for example, was highly committed to others in his doing, desiring to keep his culture alive, and wanting to exert a positive influence on the younger generation. Many participants, too, went beyond personal pleasure, with a sense of responsibility underlying their doing. The clear will of participants to continue despite the effort required also aligns with Stebbin’s (2000) theory. He argues that serious leisure is characterised by agreeable obligation - that activities can evolve into
becoming obligatory. Agreeable obligation was apparent for many in my study, including the actor who happily continued his doing, in part because he had committed himself to a particular role. Both Stebbins (2000) and Jonsson’s (2008) viewpoints emphasise a will, or a decision to continue, rather than a persistent urge, which assists with explaining why my participants continued to do even when they struggled or needed to put significant effort into doing so.

Other occupation literature considers commitment to doing to an extent. Kielhofner (2008) for example recognises that occupational choices involve commitment in order to sustain performance over time. He defines occupational choices as “deliberate commitments to enter an occupational role, acquire a new habit, or undertake a personal project” (p.15). The theory, however, does not consider the fluctuation that can occur in commitment, or that commitment can evolve during the course of doing rather than necessarily being present at the outset.

Returning to Carlson’s (1996) theory of occupational self-perpetuation, which was referred to in the introduction and literature review chapters, the theory aligns comfortably with doing associated with a compelling pull, but not when it is fundamentally underpinned by commitment. The compelling attraction into doing experienced by the surfer, for example, can be likened to occupational self perpetuation, because he experienced the thrill of being out in nature and catching waves and then could not wait for more, which led him to do again and again. However, the mechanism underlying doing that Carlson discusses was not apparent for all participants. For example, there is no sense of momentum provided by the violinist’s doing, but a fight to do. Carlson emphasises that many other considerations, such as needs satisfaction, may lead to ongoing participation. Where commitment, rather than compelling attraction, helped to sustain doing, some of these other factors more satisfactorily explain why people sustain their doing. Occupational self-perpetuation is a useful way of viewing some approaches to doing, but other theories and concepts are required to fully understand why people keep coming back.

Occupational scientists need an awareness of the types of pull and push that people can experience towards their doing, and to recognise the benefits of, and the dangers of, types of momentum underlying doing. There is a tendency within the discipline to
present romantic notions – to talk about occupation as if it is always healthy. Hammell (2009) similarly points to this problem. However, even in a sample of people who were attracted to seemingly positive and healthy occupations, a tendency toward unhealthy doing – evidenced by the risks taken, feelings of burnout, and the recognised need to pull back - was revealed. Some theorists have pointed to the ‘other side’ of occupation. For example, Lobo (1999) saw that leisure occupation “has the propensity to benefit society, but can also be used for anti-social purposes” (p. 31-32). Russell (2008), in reference to the occupation of tagging, stated that “humans are increasingly compelled towards engaging in occupations with form, functions and/ or meanings that are not conducive to health and well-being” (p. 95). However, given that occupation can have pervasive negative consequences there is a lack of research with such a focus. A deeper understanding of compelling pull is required, because compelling doing can lead to problems. It also needs to be considered that it is not only the types of occupations in which a person engages, but the way in which occupations are approached that can be healthy or unhealthy.

The existence of both compelling and committed approaches to doing in my results is revealing. To my knowledge research within occupation domains has not focused on compelling doing, and committed doing, within one study. The fact that such a range of approaches is evident across a sample of passionate individuals raises questions about what passion is, the nature of motivation toward non-essential occupations, and whether chosen – or leisure - occupations fundamentally need to be enjoyed. The motivation intensity quadrant demonstrates that participants’ motivation to do varied considerably in nature. Whilst one might expect that passionate doers are consistently compelled toward that which they do, the quadrant shows that this is by no means the case.

The conceptualisation of compelling and committed approaches to doing existing on a spectrum can be compared and contrasted with Vallerand’s (2008) conceptualisation of passion. He proposes that there are two types of passion. Harmonious passion is associated with people freely choosing to engage in the activity that they love. The activity is significant but not overpowering, and is in balance with the rest of the person’s life. Obsessive passion, on the other hand, is linked with experiencing an uncontrollable urge to participate in an activity. According to the theory, when
individuals are pulled by obsessive passion the activity controls them, and when they are pulled by harmonious passion they control the activity (Vallerand et al., 2003). Broadly speaking, compelling doing may be equated with obsessive passion, although often participants in my study were compelled without being controlled by their occupation.

What is encompassed in the quadrant can also be contrasted with Vallerand’s (2008) theory of passion. There are three key differences between the conceptualisations. First, while Vallerand discusses harmonious and obsessive passion as if they are dichotomous, commitment and compulsion, in light of my results, exist on a continuum. Second, my model emphasises that the quality underlying drive can change over time, whereas Vallerand implies that this is stable. Third, while Vallerand’s theory focuses on intrinsic motivation, not extrinsic, the use of the term “commitment” within my conceptualisation carries with it notions of extrinsic motivation.

This leads on to consideration of the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and passionate doing. Intrinsic motivation, according to self-determination theory, aligns with doing out of interest, pleasure and enjoyment (Ryan and Deci, 2000b). Similarly, according to Vallerand (2008) extrinsic motivation “does not entail performing the activity out of enjoyment, but for something outside of the activity” (p. 3). However, my findings show that extrinsic motivation also has an important place in ongoing, passionate doing. Often participants who claimed themselves as passionate did for extrinsically motivated reasons. The kapa haka performer doing out of a desire to keep tradition alive, and the martial artist doing out of a strong sense of commitment are both examples of extrinsic motivation. Thus from this perspective extrinsic, not just intrinsic, motivation, has an important place in ongoing, passionate doing.

Different levels of extrinsic motivation reflecting varying degrees of autonomy have been proposed by Ryan and Deci (2000a). The two levels of relevance to this discussion are that of identified regulation, which exists when individuals act out of choice and the conscious valuing of a goal, and integrated regulation which occurs when decisions are made because they align with a part of the individual's values and
self. Both of the kapa haka performer and the martial artist demonstrated aspects of integrated regulation, because their doing was driven by the values they held and the sense of who they are (Reeve, 2009).

Nevertheless, my study indicates that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are often very difficult to separate, and even when considered on a spectrum of differing levels, it is often difficult to pinpoint the orientation of one’s motivation. For example, was the violinist extrinsically or intrinsically motivated? Her doing was not obviously for external reward. She wanted to do something that would be satisfying for her, yet she did not always love, or even like, the actual doing. These concepts are compartmentalised, and do not sufficiently encompass or acknowledge the complex array of reasons for doing. Notions of commitment and compulsion, which merge and overlap, are a more comfortable way of conceptualising the results of this study, and may be a more useful conceptualisation for occupational science and occupational therapy.

This study has presented compelling pull and committed push. These differ from extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, in that they can exist comfortably together, vary in their intensity across time, and are not focused exclusively on the internal or external orientation of motivation. The notion of quality of motivation existing on a continuum may be more valuable for occupational science than psychology based theories and conceptualisations of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The presented conceptualisation has worth for occupational science, and needs exploration in future research.

**Challenge, Including Hard Challenge, Sustains Doing**

Another key finding from this study is that people face challenges in doing yet keep going. Sustained, non-essential doing does not become simply repetitious - people face, and seek out, challenge, which has the function of maintaining interest and preventing boredom. However, challenge can go beyond the realms of being interesting and engaging – it can be demanding, causing difficulties, pain and suffering. Current occupational therapy theory is not completely satisfactory in this regard; it encompasses notions of ‘interesting’ challenge, but does not recognise
‘demanding’ challenge, or address why people persevere through more difficult situations.

Participants in this study sustained their interest through expansion of their occupational involvement. All showed a desire to learn and/or explore through their doing, which was required to prevent boredom. This idea of expansion of doing is reflected in two relevant theories from other disciplines - Silvia’s (2008) theory of interest, and Csikszentmihalyi’s (1990) theory of flow. According to Kashdan and Silvia (2009) curiosity and interest are central to intrinsically motivated doing, and cause people to seek out challenging activities. Silvia (2001) also points out that many areas of interest have infinite possible mastery, and that interests are sustained in part because of the novelty and complexity that present themselves along the way. Flow theory is similar in the regard that it asserts that individuals seek challenge in line with their capability (Csikszentmihalyi 2000). In my study, the exploration of the limits of abilities is seen in the challenges that participants undertook - for example, the artist tried out new techniques, and the violinist learnt new skills on her instrument. In the aspect of its focus on the “dynamic interaction between the person’s skills and the challenge of an occupation” (Jonsson & Persson 2006, p. 62), the theory of flow offers a very useful understanding for our profession. Yet both of these theories are insufficient to explain why my participants pushed through very difficult situations, because they only show why people seek and engage with a certain degree of challenge.

The two categories of challenge in my results demonstrate that challenge can be interesting and enjoyable, as well as demanding. The need for significant personal effort in doing is seen clearly. Many found their ongoing doing effortful – it included hard physical work and mental energy - to the extent of involving suffering - and the learning of difficult skills. The idea of demanding challenge differs from the concept of challenge within flow, because flow does not happen when people face something that puts too much stretch on the skill level (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Flow theory is therefore insufficient to explain why people continue doing in difficult conditions and where there is lack of immediate reward. Jonsson and Persson (2006) point out that “the concepts used in the theory imply that flow is the only valuable experience in human occupation” (p. 63), and my results support this critique. That participants
were in other states in their doing, yet remained motivated, shows that other conditions may be valid within ongoing doing.

In the current study states of high anxiety and arousal in people’s occupations of passion were described, beyond that of an optimum level of challenge, and into the realms of intense difficulty. This was evident, for example, for the martial artist and triathlete. For both of these individuals, their doing at times occurred in a state of what Csikszentmihalyi (2000) refers to as anxiety, which occurs when one’s action opportunities are too demanding for one’s capabilities. Demand beyond capability occurred for both of these individuals in the early stages of their doing, with both describing incidents of intense difficulty that was “punishing” or “terrible”. For the triathlete such circumstances continued, and she sought this state in her doing so that she could feel good about the achievement that would come from it. In the regard that people can be seen to continue through ‘hard challenge’, The Model of Human Occupation (MOHO) may also be insufficient. According to Kielhofner (2008) “People are disposed to undertake that for which they feel capable and to avoid that which threatens them with failure” (p. 37). Kielhofner’s theory may not sufficiently recognise that individuals can push themselves to do things that they do not feel capable of.

Although occupational science research has had a tendency to focus on concepts that align with the notion of ‘interesting’ challenge, some exceptions will be pointed out here. Fox and Dickie (2010) found that individuals involved in theatre worked through significant environmental barriers to be able to continue in their occupations. They stated that theatre is a “closed, impenetrable vessel that you can only get into through extraordinary forces” (p. 160). However, the research did not seek to understand why individuals kept going through significant struggles. Riley (2008) showed that challenge and the learning of new skills are not always easy to manage or achieve. She observed that mastery is only reachable in textile-based occupations through considerable practice, which in turn requires strong intrinsic motivation. Tonneijck, Kirkham and Josephsson, (2008) also referred to the demanding challenge that was faced by choir singers, even though the researchers perhaps wrongly associated this with flow. However, it has been much more common for the occupation literature to focus on more enjoyable challenge in doing (Haines, Smith &
Occupational scientists need to know more about why people persevere, because pushing through challenge can have powerful consequences. It can lead to ongoing doing that has positive implications for oneself and others, as well as to negative consequences, as has already been discussed in relation to compelling doing. Although this has not been considered in depth in the occupational science literature, Jonsson and Persson (2006) suggested that people need to experience occupations in which challenges are too high for their skills, which they argue can help contribute to wellbeing.

Participants continuing through difficulties rings true with Stebbins’ (2001) viewpoint. He states that “serious leisure is never an unalloyed joy, for where there is challenge in applying skill and knowledge, there are sure to be costs as well, even if they only rarely dilute the overall effect of the rewards” (p. 55). Stebbins recognises the importance of facing difficulties in doing, arguing that serious leisure includes significant personal effort and the occasional need for perseverance, and that although individuals may find a degree of pleasure in serious leisure occupations, adversity is a fundamental part of the experience because overcoming it leads to a sense of reward. The outcome is therefore of high importance in doing: “the drive to find fulfilment in serious leisure is the drive to experience the rewards of a given leisure activity, such that its costs are seen by the participant as more or less insignificant by comparison” (Stebbins, 2007, p. 13). Stebbins view aligns with Jonsson and Persson’s, (2006) in that in cases where experiences in doing exceed skill, they may arouse negative feelings, but “this might be the price one has to pay to secure further development and creativity” (p. 69). Both emphasise reward, rather than immediate pleasure in doing, which is consistent with my results.

This study demonstrates that people can decide to continue doing through very challenging conditions. Some theory sufficiently considers and explains why people continue through and even seek very high levels of challenge, and some is inadequate. Where occupation research has included a focus on challenge, it has tended not to consider demanding levels of challenge. Occupational scientists need to understand
more about why people persevere through challenge, and theory needs to recognise that some people persist through challenge even when it stretches their capabilities.

**Doing Does Not Need to Be Enjoyed for Sustained Engagement to Occur**

Working towards a point sustains individuals’ engagement in spite of lack of enjoyment of doing. In my study, the possibility of reaching something helped participants to continue doing even when they did not enjoy themselves, enabling sustained doing that was not enjoyable and lacked short term reward. While engagement in occupations of choice for participants was often about in the moment experience and enjoyment of doing, *their sustained doing was never about in the moment experience alone.*

The finding that doing continues despite lack of enjoyment is comparable with what was found in a psychology focused, ethnographic study of skateboarders (Sieffert and Hedderson, 2010). It was found that as skateboarders sought to master tricks, they continued through failure. The researchers witnessed untiring persistence, finding that success through hard work was a prominent motivator. Of significance when viewed against my study findings, the researchers raise the question of what it means to be intrinsically motivated and suggest it may be defined by goal pursuit rather than enjoyment: “It appears that to be intrinsically motivated is more than freely choosing to engage in an activity, or to engage in the activity for enjoyment. Rather, to be intrinsically motivated appears to involve mastery of a challenge culminating in an intense subjective experience” (p. 288). These words resound with my findings. Participants in my study were more concerned with achieving than with enjoying themselves. The significance of reaching a point in one’s doing cannot be over estimated.

The importance of achievement has been a finding of some other occupationally focused studies, (Bedding and Sadlo, 2008; Haines, Smith & Baxter, 2010; Mullen, Davis & Polatajko, 2012), although has tended to not be highlighted, and more attention to such results is warranted. This finding was particularly evident in Mullen et al.’s study of passion in the performing arts, where participants described a process for engaging in their occupation. Achieving success was meaningful with lasting effects, but once the effect faded, the need arose to reach for success again. This is
similar to the process in my study where reaching a point motivated participants to want to do more. In particular it has commonalities with the doing of the surfer, where catching his first wave was a point of significant success which fuelled him to want to catch more waves. Other studies have revealed similar findings. For example McReady and Reid (2007) point out that musicians identify feelings of achievement as the primary motivating factor for playing musical instruments. Given the range of occupations both within my study, and in the studies referred to here, it seems that achievement may be important regardless of the type of occupation and its characteristics. While there is cumulating evidence as to the importance of achieving success in doing, no-one has flagged the serious implications of these findings. This important observation needs to be made explicit, and examined further.

In light of the importance of reaching points in one’s doing, and the significance of achieving to sustaining doing, theory that emphasises enjoyment of doing is therefore insufficient to explain in its entirety what motivates people. MOHO requires consideration here, as does flow theory, and the dualistic model of passion. The intense enjoyment of an experience is emphasised within flow theory, therefore in this aspect it does not sit comfortable with my results. According to Csikszentmihalyi (2000), the main reasons for doing activities that do not offer extrinsic rewards are that “the experiences are rewarding in themselves, and that the activities provide little worlds of their own which are enjoyable” (p. 14). Flow emphasises the experience itself being the reason for doing: “experiencing flow encourages a person to persist at and return to an activity because of the experiential rewards it promises, and thereby fosters the growth of skills over time” (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 95-96). While some participants in my study did have flow-like experiences - for example, the gardener and the artist experienced a loss of awareness of time in their doing and a sense of deep absorption, and the quilter described engaging with the rhythm and repetition of quilting - many did not feel immediate experiential rewards. The kapahaka performer, for example, clearly indicated that his doing was for future benefit rather than the immediate experience. If flow includes the experience of the activity as intrinsically rewarding, such that the end goal may just be an excuse for the process (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002), then it does not explain why my participants carried on doing when the actual experience was not intrinsically rewarding.
It is of note that my study set out to answer a different set of questions than studies on flow have. Csikszentmihalyi (2000) was seeking to understand why doing is so enjoyable. I asked broader research questions related to what keeps drawing individuals back, whereas Csikszentmihalyi (2000) was specifically concerned with what the intrinsic rewards of activities are, and what conditions create enjoyment, and focused on activities that are enjoyable in and of themselves. Thus my study was set up to enable a focus on other aspects of doing rather than just the experience people have while they are doing. However, Csikszentmihalyi (1999) goes so far as to say that being able to achieve a state of flow is necessary for happiness. He claims that his studies suggest that “happiness depends on whether a person is able to derive flow from what he or she does” (p. 824). Although my study was not focused on happiness, participants experienced positive emotions because they were doing something that they saw to be meaningful and important. What individuals saw as important was often bound up with being able to achieve something.

Flow, then, although not directly studied in this research, appears to be of limited importance when considered against other reasons for continued doing. Flow has become a widely studied and accepted theory, yet it only goes some way toward explaining the pull to sustained occupational involvement. Whilst it may be an aspect that draws people back to their doing, my results indicate other important factors contribute to ongoing doing. A focus on flow in research and theory, and the experience in doing, may have come at the expense of understanding the way that the results of doing may propel involvement. Flow is just one piece of the puzzle.

Considering now Kielhofner’s (2008) work, my findings indicate that values (feelings about what one holds as important) are more important than interests (what one finds enjoyable) in sustaining doing. Whilst the volition subsystem of MOHO emphasises the importance of occupational experience, when participants in my study did not find their immediate occupational experiences pleasurable they kept doing because they wanted to achieve something that held meaning for them. The volition subsystem does not overtly include the elements of commitment to a goal or an anticipated sense of achievement, yet in my study these were the strongest influences underlying people’s continued involvement.
The study findings also do not align comfortably with the psychology theory of the Dualistic Model of Passion (Vallerand et al. 2003). The theory proposes that one will like or love the doing of an activity, again emphasising the *enjoyment* of doing. In both obsessive and harmonious types of passion, enjoyment of doing is emphasised, whereas my results show this is not necessary for an occupation to be a passion. Vallerand’s theory has not commonly been considered in occupation literature, although was recently used as a framework in Mullen, Davis and Polatajko’s (2012) study. This research concluded that there was consistency between most elements of the model and participants’ experiences in carrying out performing arts occupations. This differs from the results of my study. The inclination towards activity that one values and finds important, however, is indicated in my results, which does reflect Mullen et al.’s findings.

This research has shown that the enjoyment of all doing is not necessary for sustained engagement. Occupational scientists need to look beyond enjoyment of doing and more fully consider the significance of striving towards a point of achievement for sustained doing. This finding is contrary to some existing theory.

**Strengths and Limitations**

The strengths and limitations of this study will now be considered. First, strengths and limitations were presented by the occupations included within the study. The focus on ten different occupations within the sample has led to a broad perspective in the results. The diversity of occupations was explored because I was interested less in *what* people were motivated to do than *why* they were motivated to do. This has enabled a focus on processes, rather than the properties of an occupation, as well as consideration of the differences across occupations.

There are some gaps in the types of occupations within the study. In retrospect, the inclusion of an “intelliectually” based occupation, such as genealogy, could have added another dimension to the results. Some overlap in types of occupations also could have been more illuminating. For example, the addition of an occupation where individuals very often experience reaching a point in their doing, such as skateboarding, or completing puzzles like crosswords, could have provided a useful
comparison with surfing. However, such gaps are inevitable because I was working on a small project with a limited sample size.

Two occupations focused on had non-Western origins. This has been at once useful and problematic. Iwama (2010) points out that the study of occupation has largely been approached from the point of view of Western ways of knowing, but that differences in worldview can go a long way to explaining variations in perspectives on and understandings about human occupation. Other perspectives need to be considered and included in research to enhance the discipline’s understanding. The data emerging in the study in relation to the occupation of martial arts was different to that coming from other participants, which appeared to relate to beliefs linked with this occupation, and with the occupation’s non-Western origins. Dealing with these differences presented a challenge within data analysis. However, the inclusion of this occupation and of kapa haka has added a valuable dimension to the study.

This leads onto the problem that my research has an ‘individualistic’ focus reflecting Western values, for which occupational science research is beginning to be heavily criticised. Fox and Dickie (2010) point out the problem that group occupations are often unaddressed, resulting in little research investigating what factors may contribute to participation in such occupations. Cutchin and Dickie (2012) similarly argue that occupational science has tended to focus on, even when examining group occupations, individual experiences within those groups. Hocking (2012) calls occupational scientists to “move beyond (often romanticised) accounts of individual experiences” (p. 62). While an individualistic focus in this study has still generated useful results, a stronger focus on group occupations may have led to even richer understandings.

A point of difference and strength of this study is the focus on sustaining doing over the long term, and why people keep coming back to their occupations. While some of the factors that motivate people are already known, no studies to my knowledge have explicitly focused on the ‘coming back’ aspect. Further understandings about why people keep doing are required, both to know more fully what sustains ongoing, healthy doing, as well as to understand addictive doing that has negative effects.
Turning now to data collection, a problem faced in this research, which is directly related to the nature of the topic, is that even though participants were articulate, they had difficulty describing their experiences. Some explicitly referred to the difficulty articulating reasons for doing – this was one of the key points made by the martial artist. Striking a balance between non-leading questions, and questions that were specific enough to elicit depth, was also challenging. During data analysis there were times when a piece of text lacked clarity in its meaning, or where further information would have been helpful in extracting more depth. For example, one participant referred to her occupation lifting her out of depression, but it was unclear the exact ways in which her doing did this. While the use of follow-up interviews could have helped to gain more depth and clarity on points made by participants, this was not part of the design, and could not occur within the timeframes of this masters’ level project.

It needs to be considered that all qualitative research is limited and influenced by what is collected, the amount of time available, and the skills of the researcher.

I became increasingly aware throughout this study of the casual conversations I had with people where useful reflections – and often profound statements - were made about individuals’ reasons for doing occupations. It seemed that when people were not stifled by the formalities of the interview process that they would freely and spontaneously talk about their passions. This has led me to reflect on the limitations of contained interviews as a methodology. Caution against over-reliance on interviews has been pointed out by Thorne (2008), and I have come to see during this study the limitations that interviewing has as a data collection method. Furthermore, relying on only one data collection method may have decreased the representative credibility of the project, because to achieve this, methodological triangulation is encouraged (Thorne, 2008).

Because this was a sample of individuals who declared themselves as passionate about what they do, this limits the conclusions that can be drawn from the study. We cannot assume, for example, that individuals who are not so passionate about their doing would have the ability to persevere through challenge, nor that compulsion and commitment would feature in one’s doing in the same way. We can only draw conclusions about features of ongoing doing in highly motivated individuals. Despite
these and other limitations, however, there are considerations raised by this research that have implications for occupational therapy and occupational science.

**Implications for Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science**

There is a range of implications from the study for occupational therapy and occupational science that require attention here. From this research it can be seen that conceptualising motivation in relation to committed doing and compelling doing may be helpful at a theoretical and clinical level. I found intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to be problematic concepts when considered in relation to ongoing, passionate doing, and suggest that compelling doing and committed doing can provide a lens through which to view and explain sustained doing. Recognising that a compelling pull to do may draw individuals to continue in an occupation that results in harm is important clinically. The results may be helpful, for example, in working with individuals who have chronic pain, which was considered at the outset of the study. Given that people with chronic pain can experience periods of overactivity and underactivity (Fisher et al., 2007), viewing this in terms of compelling pull and desire may provide another angle with which to view the complexities of the pain experience. The development of a scale, where individuals plot their own perceived levels of compelling desire and commitment to their doing, could be a useful tool. Furthermore, techniques that help clients to manage compelling pull (as my study participants demonstrated in their approach to doing), may help to reduce the intensity of the overactivity/underactivity cycle.

Figure 2 – The Motivation Intensity and Quality Quadrant: Potential Problem Areas - illustrates that, when individual’s motivation is very high or very low, problems can occur. The shaded areas of the quadrant represent potential problem areas that may require intervention. The right hand shaded area, where a very strong compelling pull is experienced, can be a problematic zone, as evidenced by my study participants. Although this study focused on high levels of motivation, it would follow that the bottom left quadrant of the diagram, where motivation levels are low, is also a problem area. Low motivation levels, however, were not the focus of this study and need investigation in future research.
Figure 2: Motivation Intensity and Quality Potential Problem Areas
Occupational science also needs to understand that the notion of challenge in doing is very much broader than positive and enjoyable challenge. That people can face demanding challenge in their doing and continue is significant and needs to be understood to obtain a full picture of the complexities of doing. In relation to challenge, the discipline also needs to recognise that the pull to a point is highly important, and that in many instances it may be more important than the enjoyment of doing. Occupational science needs to extend beyond a focus on enjoyment and pleasure in doing, and to consider more fully achievement within results and theory.

Given both that reaching a point seems highly important, and that enjoyment of doing is not always necessary for sustained doing, categorisations of occupation, and definitions of leisure have limitations and may need to be revised. They tend to be infiltrated with the notion that enjoyment of doing is a fundamental aspect of leisure. For example, Jacob, Guptill and Sumison (2009) state that “The primary motive of leisure is personal enjoyment” (p. 18). In a similar vein Lloyd, King, McCarthy and Scanlan (2007) claim leisure occupations are freely chosen, enjoyable, and provide a sense of achievement and meaning. Whilst the elements of achievement and meaning seem to be of high importance when viewed in relation to my study results, personal enjoyment is not a pre-requisite for leisure activity. Serious leisure (Stebbins, 2007) offers a more accurate viewpoint on what leisure is, because it recognises the effort and challenge required in doing. It hence needs to be understood within the occupational science discipline. Returning to the categories of occupation referred to in the literature review – maintenance, work, play and relaxing (Persson, Erlandsson, Eklund & Iwarsson, 2001) – this conceptualisation also has problems. If play occupations are experienced as joyful and satisfying in and of themselves, and relaxing occupations are done because they are liked, there is not room within the conceptualisation for occupations done out of choice due to their meaning and value, and which provide opportunities for achievement but which are not necessarily joyful or always liked.

**Future Research**

The study also highlights areas that need to be addressed in future research.
I suggest that notions of compelling and committed doing are explored more fully in future research. The idea of a spectrum of motivation towards doing, proposed in this research, should form the focus of further research, because understanding this more fully has the potential to inform occupational therapists to and guide assessment and intervention. It also has the potential to inform theory more fully. Research within occupation domains has indirectly addressed “compelling” doing, but less so “committed” doing. No studies to my knowledge have set out to explore these concepts (even though findings have emerged from studies that relate to them), and no research has considered them alongside each other. Future research may ask “What is the relationship between compelling and committed approaches to ongoing, passionate doing?” Research also needs to explore these concepts in individuals who are less passionate about their doing.

Research that studies motivation of less passionate individuals may illuminate further important aspects of motivation that would have more direct clinical application. This study was deliberately focused on highly motivated doing, and what has been found in this study can now be used to help focus research with people who experience low levels of motivation. For example, the notions of compelling pull and committed push may be explored in a population known to have low motivation levels.

This study has shown that people sustain doing in difficult circumstances, but this idea is not sufficiently considered within other research to date. Further research is required to understand why people persevere through demanding challenge. This may deliberately seek participants who do occupations that are very challenging in nature. The attraction to reaching a point of achievement as a means of pushing through challenge requires further examination, because this seems to be such an important part of ongoing doing that we need to more fully understand what processes operate.

Occupational scientists also need to generate more research that examines ‘the other side’ of occupation. This research has shown that doing is not always positive and healthy (even though ‘healthy’ occupations were chosen). We need to extend our focus from the romanticised views of occupation, and outward toward the realities of doing that may not be nice, may not be positive, and may not be healthy. In line with this, Hocking (2012) puts forward a call to “embrace occupation in all its rich, situated
messy complexity” (p. 62). Those studies that have focused on the negative effects of an unstoppable urge to do have not directly asked what motivates individuals. For example, Park and Guptill and Sumison (2007) explored the value and meaning of occupation in relation to the transcendence of pain, but focused on the lived experience rather than on motivation for doing. Research should include a focus on understanding doing that is known to have harmful consequences, an example being gambling. A question that could be asked is “What motivates individuals to continue doing occupations that have harmful consequences?”.

Motivation for doing needs to be more directly considered by occupational scientists. Motivation is a grounded, useful, applicable concept to understanding occupation. If we are to truly appreciate and understand the process and subjective experiences involved in doing (Hocking, 2000), and understand doing in a way that considers the range of complex interactions that occur between factors (Harvey & Pentland, 2010), then we surely need to understand what motivates doing. While meaning is closely connected with motivation, a shift away from meaning and toward motivation in further research may help the profession to understand more fully what happens beneath the surface of doing. The discipline has looked at motivation side on, but tackling it head on will lead to a richer understanding of the complexities of doing.

Further research is required that considers multiple occupations at once. While in recent years two studies have emerged from New Zealand contexts that have included a broad range of occupations (Reed, Hocking and Smythe, 2010, Wright-St Clair, 2012), there has been a strong tendency for researchers to study one specific occupation. More studies that look at multiple occupations are required to generate understandings that come via comparison of different types of occupations. Within this study, I would have been unlikely to find the range of types of approaches to doing, and forces involved in doing, had I restricted the study to one occupation. The diversity has generated valuable observations, and future research can also be approached in this way.

Future research also needs to embrace and build on knowledge emerging from other disciplines. There are several disciplines where research and theory have been generated on motivation for doing, including psychology, leisure studies, and
sociology. With various ideas emerging from various fields, there is inconsistency and conflict between views, propositions and theories. There has been no attempt at drawing these ideas together. Comparing, debating, and synthesising these various ideas will be of worth in advancing the understanding of motivation to do, and related concepts. Given that occupation is the central focus of the discipline of occupational science, it is the ideal arena for doing this. Occupational scientists need to find out what is already known, embrace the relevant ideas where there is already strong evidence, build on those ideas, debate areas of conflict and uncertainty, and generate new research that can add to what has already emerged. This will enhance our knowledge base, and help strengthen the discipline. Wilcock (2007b) wrote about the potential for occupational science, but how it is “misunderstood because it has been fragmented into many parts, for study by many disciplines” (p. 3). It makes sense, then, for occupational science to work on bringing elements of this fragmented knowledge together. A step in this direction, resulting from this study, may be the completion of a literature review that examines literature from other disciplines and considers its relevance for occupational science.

What, then, specifically can be studied in relation to concepts from other disciplines to advance our own understandings? An emerging area from psychology relates to curiosity and interest. According to Kashdan and Silvia (2009), much still needs to be examined. Occupational science and occupational therapy research can make a valuable contribution to this area. The authors state “In the ideal, research on curiosity will no longer be the province of psychologists, but will include allied health professionals invested in applying knowledge to prevention and treatment” (p. 372). Let us respond to that call! How interest is experienced and the extent to which it features in less motivated individuals, including those with mental health issues, could form the focus of an occupational therapy study. In addition, using the theory of passion to inform research, as was done by Mullen, Davis, and Polatajko (2012), may help to advance our understandings of motivation.

Use of ethnography could be a useful methodology for further research related to the discussed areas. It is relevant here to note that Dickie (2003) found that the role of learning within quilt making was much more evident through observing activities, than through interviews. She says “studies that rely exclusively on interviews, and in
particular individual interviews, may well miss essential elements of occupation” (p. 128). She argues that the ordinary ways of doing are more likely to be evident through observing people engaged in occupations. Another method considered by Thorne (2008) to hold potential is the use of inductive analytic techniques on data generated through such means as public media, which have the advantage that researchers have not been influential in shaping their construction. I see, for example, potential in collecting data from television archives such as documentaries that have an occupational focus in more fully understanding motivation for sustained doing.

Future occupation research, then, needs a stronger focus on motivation for doing, which is necessary not only to inform clinical practice, but to address shortfalls in existing theory. Research needs to recognise and build on knowledge that has already been generated by other disciplines. There is a range of ways in which research may be approached, but it should not be limited to interviewing as a data collection method. A focus on multiple occupations, however, is encouraged.

Summary of Findings
Prior to concluding I will return to my research questions. My questions were:

What influences individuals to begin and continue to engage in occupations that they do not have to do, over time?

and

What processes are operating in the sustained doing of non-essential occupations?

Highly motivated individuals are influenced to sustain their doing in non-essential occupations because they are pulled and pushed towards engagement by factors that will ultimately result in positive feelings, including a sense of satisfaction or achievement from reaching a point that holds personal meaning. The anticipation of reaching a point sustains engagement. Doing because it is what one does, which is bound up with self-identity and routine, can also underpin sustained doing and contribute to inner strength. Doing does not always have to be enjoyed or provide
immediate reward for it to be continued over time, because the potential of reaching a point sustains interest.

Individuals are also *influenced* by the compelling pull and committed push that underpin motivation in varying degrees. A compelling pull can be so intense that individuals have difficulty in holding themselves back from their doing. Effort can also feature in continued doing, and when this is evident the desire to reach a valued point again features as a strong influence.

The *processes* that operate in sustaining the doing of non-essential occupations relate to the idea of expansion of doing. Interesting challenge, and demanding challenge, provide the impetus to continue and help to propel involvement. Doing is not repetitious but develops and expands over time, through learning and developing skill, and exploring the options within an occupation. This helps to sustain interest and prevent boredom, thereby providing further momentum for doing. Highly motivated individuals persevere through the difficulties they face in their occupations. Challenge is a necessary aspect of sustained doing, and contributes to continued engagement by providing opportunities for achievement.

**Conclusion**

This study has shown that motivation to do non-essential occupations is largely about what one values and finds important, and the potential of reaching a point of achievement. The research contributes to an already large body of knowledge about motivation, but comes from an occupational viewpoint, which is present to only a limited extent within the existing research. The study has also shown that there is more to understand, and that occupational scientists need to grasp what is already known and build on it. In particular our profession needs to understand more about the relationship between compulsion and commitment, because it may be a key to understanding occupation and ways of facilitating ongoing engagement.

Returning to the words of the participant quoted in the introduction:

*None of these things are sensible. It doesn't make any sense at all to do martial arts, to do motor racing, to climb mountains, to do flower arranging.*
There's no sense in sewing because you can buy it from China, you know. None of this stuff has got any sense to it.

We can say that these things do make at least some sense, even when these things are not enjoyed. These things make sense because people enjoy facing challenges and don’t like getting bored. These things make sense because even when people do not enjoy their doing they enable people to reach points of achievement and feel satisfied. There is, however, more sense that needs to be made through future research.
Chapter Six: Concluding Thoughts

The title of this thesis contains a double meaning. It reflects the centrality of getting to a point to the study results. The title is also about searching for what the point of doing is – why it is that people do non-essential things. What this project revealed about why people sustain their doing truly surprised me. I came to the research with the belief that people continue their involvement because of prior positive experiences in doing, and feelings of competence in doing. The influences on sustained engagement are more complex and intricate than I expected, and the finding that people are passionate even when they do not enjoy what they do was, for me, surprising. I also anticipated that the study findings would have potential application to understanding how people with low levels of motivation can be assisted. I did not, however, project that the study would reveal something about the problems that can come when very high levels of motivation are experienced. This has opened my eyes to another side of motivation, and I believe the occupational science discipline needs to understand more about this. I hope more can be found out about the conceptualisation that has been suggested from the results of this study, that relating to compelling and committed doing.

When setting out on this study I felt there was a risk in choosing to consider multiple occupations, as I wondered if the findings would be too divergent. However, I have discovered much through viewing occupations side by side. I do not believe the results would have been as illuminating had I not approached the study in this way, and I would encourage other researchers to consider using a similar approach.

I put considerable effort into searching for the ‘right’ methodology for this project, and was not content to settle with an approach where a forced fit would be necessary. The methodology has had useful flexibility, and has offered a fitting balance between description and interpretation in seeking to find answers to my questions. I encourage other researchers to consider its application. It surprises me that interpretive description has been so little used in occupational therapy research, when it is very suitable to applied disciplines.
Carrying out this study has led to me discovering the array of what is already known about why people do what they do, from within other disciplines. I am excited by the possibility that is there for occupational science to take existing concepts related to occupation from other disciplines, and investigate them from a solid occupational viewpoint. Understanding what is already known will help to strengthen the discipline further.

As this study progressed I saw what my participants reported mirrored in my own doing. Completing this thesis was ultimately about reaching a point. The compelling attraction toward, and commitment to, getting to that point have sustained my doing. Sometimes I felt intensely compelled, and at other times I would have preferred to be doing something else but my commitment kept me going. There were times when I enjoyed myself along the way, and instances when frustrations and difficulties arose that I persevered through because of the desire I had to complete the project. Now that I have reached the point of completion, I am very satisfied and feel a huge sense of achievement. But I also feel a pull into further doing – a sense of anticipation about the prospect of doing more in research in the future.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Glossary of Terms</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effortful engagement:</strong></td>
<td>Doing requiring effort which may include hard work, determination, difficulties, negative emotions, limited short term satisfaction, and lack of progress.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Compelling doing:</strong></td>
<td>Doing that is a response to a strong pull into an occupation that is difficult to resist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compelling Desire:</strong></td>
<td>An internal urge to do something that is the response to the pull presented by an occupation.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Compelling pull:</strong></td>
<td>A pull presented by the prospect of engaging in an occupation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Committed doing:</strong></td>
<td>Doing that continues despite difficulties and lack of immediate reward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demanding challenge:</strong></td>
<td>Difficulties presented by an occupation that require a degree of unpleasantness to progress through.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interesting challenge:</strong></td>
<td>Positive, stimulating challenge that prevents boredom in doing. It may include the experience of diversity in an occupation, and the opportunity to learn and to develop skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The point:</strong></td>
<td>Peaks in performance that are worked towards, including points of achievement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pull:</strong></td>
<td>Enticement into doing by what an occupation offers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Push:</strong></td>
<td>Impetus from within that happens toward a point of achievement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


Hocking (Eds.), *Occupational Science: Society, Inclusion, Participation*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.


Appendix A: Ethics Approval
30 September 2010

Karen Wilson
18A Addison Street
Leamington
Cambridge 3452

Dear Karen,

ETHICS 477 – “Processes underlying motivation to engage in non-survival activities over time”

Thank you for your amendments. They have been reviewed and the Committee has now granted final approval.

We wish you well with your study and remind you that at the conclusion of your research you should send a brief report with findings/conclusions to the Research Ethics Committee.

We wish you every success with your research project.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Linda Wilson
Chair – Otago Polytechnic Research Ethics Committee
Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet
Participant Information Form

Project Title
Processes underlying motivation to engage in occupations over time.

Introduction
This project is being carried out as part of a Masters of Occupational Therapy, through Otago Polytechnic. The researcher is seeking to understand why people choose to sustain their engagement in activities that they do not have to do. Humans show a tendency to repeat their engagement in ‘beyond-survival’ activities, over time, but relatively little is known about why. Knowing more about the factors that underlie the tendency of people to sustain their engagement in activities they do not have to do will help occupational therapists to understand how motivation is sustained, and could help to provide useful information that assists when people have a problem with their level of motivation.

What is the aim of the Project?
The aim is to explore the influences on individuals’ engagement in occupations over time. This will include how people choose their occupations, how they become established and develop, and how and why they are continued by individuals.

What types of participants are being sought?
Individuals who are passionate about one or more of the activities they engage in, out of choice and not primarily for income, are being sought. People who participate will be able and willing to reflect in depth on their involvement and articulate their reasons for engaging. Individuals will not be asked to participate if:
- They have significant health problems that prevent engagement in their occupations.
- Their primary identified activity or activities are considered by the researcher to be detrimental to health and well-being (such as gambling or criminal activity).
- They cannot converse fluently in English.

What will my participation involve?
Should you agree to take part in this project you will be asked to participate in an audio-recorded, semi-structured interview of between 30 and 60 minutes in length. This will take place face-to-face in a location convenient to you, or if you live over one hour drive from the researcher, the interview may take place over the telephone. The interview will explore involvement in the occupations you do that you do not ‘have’ to do, and why and how your interest has been maintained. After the interview is transcribed I will give you a copy of the interview for you to look at and see whether or not you wish to make any amendments or clarifications.

How will my confidentiality be protected?
The information you share will be known to the researcher, and to her primary supervisor Linda Wilson, and not shared directly with any other person. When the research is written, information that may identify you as an individual will be excluded.
You may request a copy of the results of the project by emailing karen.wilson@op.ac.nz with an email address or physical address that you would like the results to be sent to. It is anticipated results will be available by November 2012.
Data Storage
The data collected will be securely stored in a locked filing cabinet that only the researcher will have access to. At the end of the project any personal information will be destroyed except for any raw data on which the results are based. This will be retained in secure storage for a period of five years, after which it will be destroyed.

Can participants change their minds and withdraw from the project?
You can decline to participate without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind. If you choose to participate, you can stop participating in the project at any time, without having to give any reasons. You can also withdraw any information that has already been supplied until the stage agreed on the consent form.

You can refuse to answer any particular question, and ask for the audio recorder to be turned off at any stage. There are no negative consequences for you choosing to withdraw or not answer any questions.

What if participants have any questions?
If you have any questions about the project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact:

Karen Wilson (researcher) email: karen.wilson@op.ac.nz phone: (07) 834 8800 ex. 8363

Linda Wilson (primary supervisor): linda.wilson@op.ac.nz phone: 0800 762 786

This research has been approved by the Otago Polytechnic Research Ethics Committee.
Appendix C: Participant Consent Form
Consent Form

Project Title: Processes underlying motivation to engage in occupations over time.

- I have read the information sheet regarding this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:

- My participation in this project is entirely voluntary.
- I do not have to answer any particular question.
- I can bring a support person to the interview if I would like to.
- I am free to stop participating at any time.
- I can choose to withdraw information provided without giving reasons and without any disadvantage to me. I can withdraw any information I have supplied until 10 days after my interview transcript has been returned for review. After this point withdrawing information will not be possible because it would be difficult to separate specific information from the body of data.
- My data will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which it will be destroyed. If it needs to be kept longer than five years my permission will be sought.
- It is intended that the results of the research will be published, and may be used in a presentation at an academic conference, but in this my anonymity and confidentiality will be preserved.
- I will receive a copy of the research findings if I give the researcher an email address or physical address that I would like a copy sent to.

I agree to take part in this study under the conditions set out in the information sheet.

___________________________________________ (signature of participant)  
___________________________________________ (date)  
___________________________________________ (signature of researcher)  
___________________________________________ (date)
email: ________________________
Appendix D: Transcriber Confidentiality Form
Transcriber Confidentiality Form

I agree that in transcribing the data for this project, I will keep data securely stored, in a place only accessible to me. I will not discuss the information I am exposed to with any individuals.

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 11.9.2012
Can you describe what surfing involves for you.

Tell me about how you first got involved in surfing.

Tell me about how your interest in surfing has changed, or developed, or been maintained over time.

What has kept you going in surfing?

What motivates you to continue your involvement?

What do you find satisfying about surfing?

Why don’t you get bored with it?

Does your satisfaction with doing the activity motivate you to continue your involvement? If so, in what ways?

Can you tell me about an especially memorable or positive surfing experience. Can you describe to me how you felt at the time.

What (if anything) do you find frustrating about the surfing?

What do you get out of this activity?

Do you feel obliged in any way to do this activity? How?

How do others view your involvement in surfing?

Is there a time you have stopped your involvement? Why?

Why do you believe this activity has become so important to you?
Appendix F: Post Interview Broad Impressions of Key Points Example
Notes following interview with Kapa Haka performer

Very clear that it is about family/ his people/ keeping Maoridom alive

The competitive element is significant too

As a process I let go of pre-prepared questions even more and went with the flow of the interview, picking up on points and probing, which I think helped in exploring key reasons.

Further reflections following second reading of script:

Strongly driven by a goal.

Lots of hard work – not really enjoyable.

Further reflections on why the final interviews were 'good':

Perhaps because I recognised from the earlier scripts that there was lots in there that I didn't see as significant at the time, but that I am now seeing as very significant, and that some significant things were coming up in the last interviews. Or that I was more open to possibilities of what could come up rather than 'expecting' or 'wanting to' find certain things.

Also the degree of depth in what was articulated felt satisfying.
Appendix G: Coding of Script Example
K: You know to me [mhmm] but um — and so there is an element of suffering, and that’s a word that’s just used in quite a bit of you know some of the books that I’ve been reading is that whole notion of suffering.
I: Mhmm.
K: And I was like oh I don’t know if that’s me — I don’t do this because I suffer but it’s that — I suppose it wakes you up doesn’t it?
I: Yeah.
K: You’re doing something that’s out of your comfort zone and then you’re looking at what you’re achieving afterwards.
I: Yeah that’s a really interesting point. And just that idea of suffering or perhaps putting your body through something extremely demanding [yeah], and yet you choose to do that. There’s something I guess about perhaps the reward that comes afterwards from what you’re saying.
K: And it’s more of a psychological thing because you are pushing you’re seeing how far you can push yourself [mhmm], and much of it isn’t about the physical side of things. Yeah the training you know will get you physically fit, but you’re actually training your mind as well [mhmm] like you’re really training for that mental toughness to be able to sustain and persist in, even when things are really quite unbearable.
I: Yeah.
K: You know that you’re pushing yourself to keep it going, so um you know the tenacity that a lot of these really high end athletes have must be absolutely incredible [mhmm] you know — um and I suppose in a — in a lesser way that’s what I was trying to say you know to push ourselves to be as good as we can be.
I: Mhmm.
K: Even if it does require pain.
I: Yeah.
K: That whole no pain no gain you know?
I: Yeah, yeah, yeah, absolutely. Can you see a point at all where you might think oh I’ve had enough of triathlons I want to do something else, or at the moment can you — can you not see that point and you just would want to just continue in this?
K: Well it’s interesting isn’t it because I think every time we have the opportunity to go and compete at the world age group um competition, we’re seeing over the years the top age group as in the older age groups is increasing [oh], so when I first did my first world champs in 2005, to be honest I can’t remember what the top age group is, but it would have been probably in the 60’s.
Appendix H: Initial Categories
Initial categories 16 May 2012

1 Connecting
2 Encouragement/ feedback/ influence of others
3 Comparing with others
4 Inspired
5 Influence of place
6 Competition
7 Not wanting to fail
8 Aspects of the process
9 Appreciating beauty
10 Nature
11 Feelings
12 Pleasure/ satisfaction/ enjoyment
13 Flow
14 Freedom
15 Seeking an experience
16 Stress relief/ relaxation
17 Degrees of drive/ effort
18 Commitment
19 Obligation/ responsibility
20 Addiction/ strong pull
21 Passion
Disciplining self

Needing a break

Wanting to improve

Working towards a goal

End product

Achieving something/ seeing progress

Progression/ development

Avoiding feelings of guilt

Not wanting to loose gains made

Learning/ exploring

Creating

Continuation despite negative aspects

Hard work

Risk

Diversity/ variety

Challenge/ seeking appropriate challenge

Alignment with and recognition of skill level

Initial attraction to

Influence of childhood/ continuation from past

Chance/ opening of opportunity

Wanting to do for a long time

Something being switched on

Let's try
45 Growth/ development of involvement

46 Reasons for doing have changed

47 Contributing/ giving something

48 Keeping culture alive

49 Being a positive influence

50 Routine

51 Self-identity

52 Part of self

53 Benefits

54 Pragmatic reasons

55 Other
Appendix I: Example Section of Data Analysis Table
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning/ exploring</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3: 36 For me the learning curve was probably at that time was probably – well it was as much fun as it was actually trying to do it. So the fact that sometimes you nearly felt like you were going to drown – all those things that should put you off or could put you off only made it more exciting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: 17 5 it’s such a broad scope – it’s – so far there’s been no room to be bored because I’ve learnt so much by exploring</td>
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<tr>
<td>4: Recognises own learning that has come through theatre involvement.</td>
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<td>4: Has learnt about different areas/ types of plants as she has gone.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6: 46 So your knowledge extends and it changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: Has been fortunate to learn from experts in the field. 4: Gets to pick their brain and learn – take it all in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: Learns from members of the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6: in various clubs you get tutors that come along. You have the opportunity of choosing as a group you choose different tutors, and by having them it takes you out of your comfort zone and they take you in and teach you some different skills . . . we in our club get a lot of different types of tutors that come to teach us lots of different things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13: 31 So we’re all the time learning, it’s not like some hobbies that you sort of um can know a lot of and you’re just doing</td>
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and it can make the design look quite different. But it's so much nicer if you worked it out and designed it yourself. It's not that everybody likes to do that. A lot of people just like to get a pattern and they know what their end result is going to be. I mean when you're creating things it doesn't always work out and you have your failures or you have to change it and so the best you can.

9: Finds it a lot less satisfying to just work from a pattern.
Appendix J: Example of Initial Category Groupings
Possible category groupings 22 May 2012

**Connecting with others**
1 Connecting

**Support/ encouragement**
2 Encouragement/ feedback/ influence of others
4 Inspired

**Feedback**
3 Comparing with others
6 Competition
27 Achieving something/ seeing progress
2 Encouragement/ feedback/ influence of others

**Challenge perpetuates involvement**
37 Challenge/ seeking appropriate challenge
34 Hard work
33 Continuation despite negative aspects
35 Risk
23 Needing a break
36 Diversity/ variety
28 Progression/ development
31 Learning/ exploring
32 Creating

**Aspects of the process**
8 Aspects of the process
15 Seeking an experience
   (9 Appreciating beauty)
   (10 Nature)
11 Feelings
   16 Stress relief/ relaxation
13 Flow
   12 Pleasure/ satisfaction/ enjoyment (in the moment vs. in the bigger picture)
14 Freedom

17 Degrees of drive/ effort
20 Addiction/ strong pull to 18 Commitment (continuum)
21 Passion
22 Disciplining self

I do it because I do it
19 Obligation/ responsibility
51 Self-identity
50 Routine
52 Part of self

Goals
24 Wanting to improve
25 Working towards a goal
   48 Keeping culture alive
   49 Being a positive influence
   47 Contributing/ giving something
26 End product

Taking up and development of involvement
39 Initial attraction to
40 Influence of childhood/ continuation from past
41 Chance/ opening of opportunity
42 Wanting to do for a long time to 44 Let's try (spectrum of reasons for first engagement)
43 Something being switched on
45 Growth/ development of involvement
46 Reasons for doing have changed
Minor/ potentially insignificant
7 Not wanting to fail
53 Benefits
54 Pragmatic reasons
30 Not wanting to loose gains made
29 Avoiding feelings of guilt
5 Influence of place
38 Alignment with and recognition of skill level
55 Other
Appendix K: Data Analysis Diagram Examples