# An exploration of a traceur's experience of lack of progression in parkour – a grounded theory study

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# Abstract

Parkour is an exciting, complex and at times risky art form in the sporting world. Officially incorporated as a sport in the UK in 2017 (Parkour UK, 2019) but born in France almost 30 years ago (Belle, 2009). Parkour consists of practitioners finding a route through predominantly urban terrain, mastering various physical and psychological skills to overcome obstacles in the most efficient, effective way possible (Belle, 2009). Although initially proposed as a non-competitive discipline, it is now headed for the Olympics in 2022 (Gillen, 2020). Possibly due to the relative novelty of parkour and the buzz surrounding it, little to no research to date has reviewed the deterrents, hurdles and various physical, mental, emotional and social stressors that practitioners may experience during parkour training, that is in direct relationship with the discipline's practice and delivery hurdles.

The main aim of this study was to explore accounts of parkour practitioners who no longer engage in the sport, to gain deeper insight into their experience of parkour training and the processes leading up to their stopping. The subsequent aim was to co-construct an explanatory grounded theory (GT) of the process. The study adopted a social constructivist GT methodology (Charmaz, 2010), initially using purposeful sampling, and recruiting four parkour practitioners. Refining the developing theory further, theoretical sampling was adopted, recruiting four further parkour practitioners and one gymnast for theoretical sampling. Overall, nine participants informed the co-constructed final GT model.

The psychosocioemotional process co-constructed from the data indicated that participants experienced several forms of losses that were paradoxical. The losses could be attributed to an experience opposite to that anticipated, which in turn, over time, cost them a lack of progression (LoP) as opposed to meeting their needs. This led to such a significant struggle, it forced them to cope in various ways, eventually resulting in a behavioural outcome of stopping training or contemplative re-entry. Participants, therefore, appeared to suffer a complex process of 'paradoxically losing while journeying through parkour', influenced by the factors that had initially influenced them to enter parkour. The intrapsychic conflict of 'anticipated gaining' through parkour practice versus 'risk of losing' appeared to lead to a rupture in their sense of self.

The findings from this study provide very important insights into parkour practitioners experiences of LoP, the re-traumatisation that seems to occur, the rupture participants often

experienced in their sense of self, and the important recommendations that participants and researcher believed could help reduce such outcomes in the future. A longitudinal, trauma-based, person-centred model of LoP such as the one proposed in this thesis could help inform practitioners, coaches and counselling or other psychological professionals who are involved primarily in parkour, and beyond. This study's conceptualisation of a parkour specific model, informed by pluralistic counselling psychology is particularly important as the sport moves towards elite competition. Additionally, it adds to existing sports stress and burnout management literature. The translational implication of this LoP model could lead to more systemic changes in sports culture as well as increased congruence within parkour multidisciplinary team structures. The LoP model potentially enhances intervention delivery within and outside of competition resulting in more holistic coaching practices, increasing practitioner training satisfaction and overall partitioner well-being.

Full implications for practice, training and the counselling/psychological profession will be discussed further, in addition to the study's limitations and recommendations for further research.

# Opening reflexivity: The start of the journey

I was a first-year trainee with no idea of what to research for my doctoral research. I was in awe of other students' research but not intrigued enough by any of the taught topics to imagine myself delving into researching one for the next three to six years. I was questioning myself immensely and anxious that I was perhaps in over my head and not meant for the path I was on. Things in my personal life were turbulent, I was overworked juggling university, placements and work and I was in real need of a distraction from it all.

A fellow trainee suggested I try a university club that he said seemed to match my thirst for newness and stimulation and so I attended, alone and oblivious to what I was about to try. I was asked by the coach if I was here for "parkour" and I said I was not sure but if that is the fun exercise looking thing outdoors then yes! I could not have predicted what followed. For the next two hours, I was guided by the coach and the more experienced students to attempt and try things with my body that would never have crossed my mind. The session fully absorbed me and I was immersed in deep challenge through novelty like never before.

My mind was put to the test, perceptions of my own reality put to question and more beautifully, the coach, the tasks and the space exposed me to vulnerabilities in myself I had never embodied in such a visceral way till now. I later realised this echoed O'Grady's (2012) participants who experienced parkour practice as having aided them to grow in self-awareness.

Within this very first session, tasks set triggered in me an equal sense of dread and exhilaration that all seemingly tapped into my perception and management of fear, a very existential need in me to seek a sense of freedom and liberation while being mortified of it became apparent. This freedom later corroborated by Belle's (2006), the founder, definition of what the spirit of parkour entailed for him. At the end of my first session, I turned to the coach and said "I want to do this forever!". More interestingly, in the months to come, the potential parallel processes of counselling psychology and parkour became increasingly obvious to me, a revelation that ignited my passion for researching parkour through a counselling psychology lens.

When I was confronted by an obstacle, I felt confronted with a hurdle, much like the hurdles my clients and I often face in therapy. Questions began to enter my mind. For example, what impact is this hurdle having on me? What, if anything, is it that this object represents to me? What is it about this situation that is triggering me to feel/think/behave like this? Have I felt

like this before? How much of my feeling/reaction/anticipation is based on the present reality and how much is perceived? What experiences in my past may have happened to cause me to currently be experiencing this obstacle this way? These questions that I experienced asking myself when training felt very similar to the guided discovery process through Socratic questioning often used in cognitive behavioural therapy, thought to allow a person to rediscover things about themselves through self-reflection (Turkcapar, Kahraman & Sargin, 2015).

Many a time, I realised that the answers to my questions had very little to do with the physical constructs at play such as strength, endurance, flexibility, distance and time but often that was where my reasoning settled. That is until I faced a real blockage and was unable to overcome what I had to. I realised that more often than not, my mind was the barrier and my perception of my own abilities my hurdle. Physicality was often an easy excuse and one that attracted a lot of validation and positive reassurance from others. In hindsight, I wondered whether I felt that the fact that I was supposed to be doing parkour as a hobby rendered that the process to training should have been one that was more freeing than constraining played a part in the excuses I made. Had I dug deeper during training, perhaps unconsciously the 'fun-ness' of the training would have been lost and it would have felt too much like 'work'. This is supported by Iso-ahola's (2015) research, on how freedom in leisure activities undermines one's initiative for self-development. According to Iso-ahola's (2015), our unconscious mind more commonly tends to choose the less cognitively demanding route to safeguard our experience of freedom while engaging in such activities.

At first, training was interesting and seemingly entirely positively consuming as the learning curve was steep. Then the problems to solve through the movements became tougher, requiring more conviction in motion, more commitment to attempt things and little by little I began to experience a nagging frustration in, what I have now come to understand, was my inability to perform the movements and training drills. In essence, what my perceived failure was saying about myself. I began to question the joy or best fit for me that the art form had, leading me to use counselling psychology tools to re-direct my queries on to myself when I felt myself lose interest in training or avoid it and then feel huge guilt in doing so. What was it about me that was making training more stressful now? What were my expectations and why? What part of my personality was causing me to deal with not meeting my expectations in this way? Why were these my expectations in the first place?

I was relatively alone in this search. The coach in particular understood the gist of my questions but the ability to guide me through my questioning was understandably beyond his scope. This was understandable, sports coaching being mostly a bodily affair as Evans and Reynolds (2016) describe it; identifying that talking through things often is an overlooked area. Neither he nor my therapist at the time could see just how my psychological formulation and processes within it were so closely enacted through my practice of the art form and I myself did not manage to make the necessary links between these in time for what was to follow. Not long into my training, while I was physically improving very rapidly, I attempted a move at an event before I was ready and I fell very badly and broke my wrist. Given the parameters surrounding the jump I attempted, I was lucky to be alive, caught by one of the coaches after impact, preventing me from falling further off a roof.

In the following months, I was enraged, humiliated, disappointed, but all the while seemingly rationalising, in hindsight justifying my decision making. I realised that I was so terrified to repeat this move that I loved so dearly that I had to confront the experience more honestly to be able to work through it. I now realise I had to process anger and an almost betrayal-like feeling I harboured towards myself for "not knowing better". At the time, however, I found myself projecting these feelings onto my therapist for "not knowing better" and my coach for "not stopping me/saving me". My ego perhaps bruised by not having known better seems to have led me to see this failing in my support figures, to safeguard myself from owning my shortcomings at the time. This is in line with Freud's (1918) description of projection in his book Totem and Taboo.

I found myself working through what I now know was a denial of my actual competencies versus the competencies I wanted to appear to myself and others to have. I had to admit to pride, being someone plagued by perceived peer pressure, having what I thought was a deeply masked sense of low self-worth that demanded that I prove myself to myself and others at all cost. Competitive with myself and others, I had ultimately sought external validation and acclaim to compensate for the dissatisfaction I felt in myself, much like I do elsewhere. I have been told so by teachers, friends and colleagues, a possible unconscious reaction stemming from hard conditions of worth being placed on me throughout my upbringing. This competitiveness laced with perfectionist ideals, and the inherent cost they had to my training echoes research on traits that exacerbate the risks of unhelpful training styles often seen in athletes who had an experience of demanding childhoods (Boysan & Kiral (2017). My person

within parkour was not unique to parkour, it was me in a different context with seemingly different parameters, my conflicts remaining the same.

I realised only later in the year that nothing in my life thus far had required me to confront my demons in such a physical form to ensure continued progression. Nothing had required me to wear my vulnerabilities on my sleeve as much as parkour to truly and safely progress in the discipline. The medium of parkour and the opportunity that overcoming its obstacles presents required me to question deep-rooted struggles with my personality and coping styles. Furthermore, it invited me to question my childhood experiences, my current re-enacted validatory pathways and enabled me to question what it was I was truly looking for in terms of my self-development as a person, family member, future therapist and as a parkour practitioner.

Having been given what felt like a second chance after my injury to re-learn how to train in a way that championed facing my vulnerabilities and not avoiding them, I was faced with two options. The first one was quitting to avoid further injury thereby possibly continuing to avoid the root causes of my very traumatic experience or find a way to use this experience to motivate me to stay training in the discipline. I became invested in discovering how to use the parkour training including the physical and psychological obstacles within it to try to better understand myself and others processes. These were not in fact parkour specific in my view, but hugely mirroring of one's own unique processing styles in life. I attempted to go backwards in my own journey to enable me to safely navigate a seemingly more real or concrete progression in parkour and myself as a person.

Be it a sport-related obstacle like mine, or trauma from a car accident, this process reminded me of the process of exposure work in therapy addressing post-traumatic stress disorder. More specifically, I felt that the following steps outlined by Ehlers, Clark, Hackmann, McManus & Fennell (2005) in their work of trauma management resonated significantly. Firstly the process of reconstructing the traumatic event, secondly updating the trauma memory to process the most triggering moments. Then, moving to differentiate between the trauma memory and present situations that feel re-triggering, to helping clients to desist from behaviours that maintain the difficult effects of the trauma and help them to progress through it.

After my injury, I needed space away from my Doctorate to process this, leaving to study parkour in Denmark for six months. I toured Europe that year and realised that parkour practice styles differed all over the world, further investing me in this research and the individual

process and nuance of training progression or lack thereof. It struck me that there were so many constructs to training, including societal, political, individual and familial processes. This led me to gain greater respect for who parkour training appeared to have the potential to impact change in micro, meso, exo and macro systems, seemingly in line with ecological systems theories like that of Bronfenbrenner (1979). I grew convinced that one's understanding of one's struggles within parkour training may be influential on and transferable to other areas of one's life, believing one's systems to be inevitably entwined. In line with this, counselling psychology, which takes into account all these systems when formulating with clients and their concerns (Chiboola & Munsaka, 2018), compounded my confidence in its arguable relevance to this area of inquiry.

The distance I took from the UK parkour community also highlighted a difference in the level of competition I felt was unconsciously yet inherently present in the UK's training styles compared to different countries in Europe. My own response to this was put into perspective and further enlightened me on my own and possibly others triggers to the unspoken vibes and nuances of training communities that could potentially be impacting one's training trajectories and own self-concept within this. The person's psychosocioemotional map within parkour seemed so vital to one's progress in it, that to render progression to be only sport-specific and not holistically linked to other areas of the person's past, present and future seemed irresponsible and short-sighted. A psychodynamic approach within counselling psychology practice stresses the importance of our past, including the unconscious parts of it, which dictate how we behave and cope with people and situations in our present (Summers and Barber, 2010). Therefore, holding a holistic vantage point in relation to sports training can in my view only strengthen good practice.

The parallel between my understanding of a counselling psychologist's agenda and parkour's requirements of a practitioner seemed to greatly overlap. My passion for further marrying counselling psychology's therapeutic principles and practices with parkour in some way grew. Counselling psychology's relevance to sport more generally became more apparent to me as this research, clinical and my own parkour practice developed.

I returned to the UK renewed in energy. The questions were there inside of me in a very embodied way, resembling Etherington's (2004) participant's experience. My topic already there somehow, experienced in part by my body while my mind felt like it was playing catch

up as my research continued. I settled into the notion that just maybe there was a place for this research. I was hopeful that I could share this passion with other counselling psychologists in the hope that they too may join me in bridging our person-centred holistic approach to the conceptualisation of clients in sport or otherwise.

This research was therefore carried out with the intention of allowing for the participants' experiences of their own LoP to be heard and a new population to be made accessible to counselling psychologists. Furthermore, to help sports psychologists see beyond their current models as explained later in my literature review and for my own use and practice. I would have found it helpful if this research and approach existed at the time where I felt forced to choose to stay or leave the sport. I felt hugely passionate about bringing both the parkour and counselling psychology community a model that further helps my vision of the marriage of two disciplines I so deeply love. The costs and the benefits of this yearning is further expanded on in later reflexive statements herein.

# Chapter 1: Literature review

## 1.1. Introduction

This literature review aims to discuss existing parkour research identifying a gap in the literature with regards to stressors and their impact that practitioners may experience in training. It further moves to critically evaluate existing general stress-related research, burnout more specifically ending with burnout in athletes within a sports context. The review attempts to highlight the gap in interdisciplinary working within each domain, offering suggestions for how counselling psychology, in particular, could be useful in further research and practice. The literature review highlights methodological, conceptual and epistemological gaps in the current research amalgamating in the proposed study's reasoning and the justification behind it.

## 1.2. Parkour

### 1.2.1. Art du déplacement, parkour and freerunning – a brief history

Parkour, founded by David Belle in the late 1980s in Paris (Belle, 2009), is a movement discipline that Atkinson (2009) defined as a physical and mental method of training to overcome obstacles while moving through one's environment with control, efficiency and fluidity.

Belle had previously been part of the group Yamakasi for several years, a group of nine men, namely Chau Belle, David Belle, Williams Belle, Yann Hnautra, Laurent Piemontesi, Guylain Boyeke, Charles Perrière, Sébastien Foucan and Malik Diouf (ADD Academy, 2015). This group co-created the professionalised discipline called Art du Déplacement (ADD) in 1997 (Piemontesi, 2017). The name Yamakasi derived from the Central African dialect, Lingala, 'Ya makàsi' signifying "strong spirit, strong body, strong person" (Sensagent dictionary, 2012). Although ADD was visually similar in its practice of using the body to overcoming obstacles, the two related threads of the discipline that emerged embodied varying interest, historic experiences and later training ideologies. David Belle created parkour and Sebastien Foucan created freerunning (ADD Academy, 2015).

### 1.2.2. Introduction

This chapter aims to reflect on parkour literature to date, informing the critical review of this with research into other sports literature given the significantly limited parkour specific literature that exists. A brief history of parkour, what parkour is thought to be and how it is trained is briefly outlined. Different perspectives on why people may train parkour and what its allure is thought to be is explored, touching on parkour's inclusive and diverse growing application. Possible training risks are briefly discussed, informing some suggestions as to the future research that parkour may benefit from.

### 1.2.3. What is parkour and how is it trained?

Belle (2009) largely credited his father Raymond Belle's use of Hébert's *Méthode naturelle (natural method)* that used the military-inspired obstacle course training method called *le parcours du combattant*, as being influential in his formation of parkour. Belle (2009) saw parkour as a means of overcoming obstacles, becoming stronger in mind and body, with challenges set in training gradually increasing over time. He recounts repeating movements hundreds of times in a highly disciplined manner with the aim of building endurance, control and determination (Belle, 2009).

This manner of training through intense preparation in order to minimise risk and gaining control of one's self was echoed in Brymer's (2010) participants' experiences. Bavinton (2007) asserted however that the physical training in parkour and the resulting feats were of great importance to the art form. For example, the physical elements are an outward expression of the underlying philosophy that is a medium to engage self-introspection and grow self-awareness (Bavinton, 2007). Edwards (2009) later described parkour to be based on an underlying philosophical underpinning driven by a sense of responsibility, autonomy, agency through autonomous action, and self-improvement.

### 1.2.4. Why do people train parkour: a psychological perspective

Parkour is often known to entail progressing to accomplish great fear-confronting feats such as roof gap jumps (Angel, 2011). However, this more often than not leads the observer to align parkour more readily with practices deemed dangerous and risky rather than introspective (Smith, 2017). Positivistic psychological theorists like Self, Henry, Findley & Reilly (2007) espousing that participants that engage in extreme sports may be using participation as a means

of living out deviant personality traits through risk-taking behaviour. This supports the notion that one's deviance is something one is born with (Zuckerman, 2000), lending itself to see risk-taking as something unchanging and needing to be cured.

Historically, therefore, psychological perspectives to risky sports engagement do not lend themselves to perceive risk-taking as a means of intense introspection like Bavington (2007) and Edwards (2009) suggest is the case in parkour training. Martin and Wagstaff (2012) stipulate in their chapter about the presumption of risk, that participants in extreme sports are often described as pathological, socially unacceptable, negative or deviant, seemingly driven by risk-taking rather than control. Contrary to this notion, however, and supporting Bavington's (2007) thoughts, O'Grady (2012) found that his parkour participants reported improved mental efficiency and strength. They described the acquisition of transferable skills they associated with overcoming personal obstacles, through the physical ones, growing self-awareness and confidence-building (O'Grady, 2012).

### 1.2.5. Why do people train parkour: a sociological perspective

Perhaps bridging both perspectives, is the sociological theory termed 'edgework' (Laurendeau, 2008). Although seen to hold risk-taking as scary sports practitioners principle goal (Lyng, 1990), the 'edge' in edgework describes the point at which participants are in danger of losing control, walking a fine line between control and chaos (Laurendeau, 2008). Seemingly in line with Belle's (2009) objective with parkour training, Laurendeau (2008) suggest that participants of risky sports may in fact be particularly interested in courting danger while driven by a desire to maintain control over themselves.

Interestingly, further challenging the notion of parkour training being inherently risk centred, Rosendhal (2018) later investigated parkour as a humanitarian tool. He highlighted the use of parkour in augmenting certain life skills like resilience, courage and problem solving instead; stressing the positive relationship that these skills could have to conflict-afflicted areas and beyond (Rosendhal, 2018). The courage acquisition through parkour training outlined by Rosendhal (2018), echoed humanistic psychologists Brymer and Oades' (2009) participants' experience within other sports associated with risk-taking. Participants in their study sought to further develop positive psychological constructs through training like courage, through facing fears (Brymer and Oades, 2009). In conjunction, this process also appeared to enhance abilities

in assessing their characteristics and acknowledging their limitations (Brymer and Oades, 2009).

### 1.2.6. Why do people train parkour: a psychodynamic perspective

As his training progressed, Belle created a core group who followed him in his training (Belle, 2009) seemingly moving his practice from one that was merely individualistic to a more shared endeavour. Training as a group created trust that would eventually see Belle's initial group's members forming strong social bonds (Angel, 2011). Belle's group members were said to seek a dynamic to training that provided psychosocial pleasures like friendship, teamwork, human touch as well as the more person-centric skills acquisition, fitness, adaptability and creativity (Angel, 2011). The provision of such dynamics thought to be present in parkour training according to Angel's (2011) findings, grew a sense of connectedness and belonging within the group, echoing Wallace's (2013) findings. Participants in his study felt a strong need for the connectedness that parkour training was thought by them to offer. He even identified the notion of 'parkour language' that developed within parkour training groups that comforted participants in a way that verbal language did not (Wallace, 2013).

This apparent need that participants shared, aligns with psychodynamic perspectives surrounding the very human search for 'alikeness' that Kohut (1984) describes. This search for 'alikeness' said to begin in childhood, often persists into adulthood if unfruitful in one's early developmental years, leading to a significantly harmful loss of validation and a diminished sense of self (Greenberg, Solomon & Pyszczynski, 1997). This strive for connectedness, driven by a continued search for 'twinship' (Kohut, 1984) throughout one's life, sees people seeking to grow their sense of self by attempting to satisfy their previously unmet attachment needs within their adult relationships. This could lead to re-growing their ability to trust in others as well as themselves (Kohut, 1984). In line with this, it could therefore be suggested that parkour, as it is described by Angel's (2011) and Wallace's (2013) participants, provides a useful platform to nurture trust within relationships. Angel (2011) also outlines, this is imperative when attempting to overcome certain obstacles that were frightening with more confidence.

Participation within risky sports however has also been seen as pathological and driven by a very self-serving and individualistic unhealthy narcissistic tendency (Hunt, 1996), within parkour, Raymen's (2017) findings echoing such narcissistic interpretations. Hunt's (1996)

participants displayed engagement of unhealthy narcissism, committing socially sanctioned mistakes to get validation, something Hunt (1996) felt was an attempt at replacing their need for validation that had historically not been met by their father. Participants appeared to regain a sense of power from the objects used within their training, narcissistically overestimating their abilities and consistently using self-serving explanations for their failures (Hunt, 1996).

Hunt's (1996) interpretation of her participants' use of objects to source power, seems to align with suggestions that from infancy, we have an unconscious symbolic need to 'merge' with powerful objects (in her case, the participants' father) that we idolise (Freud, 1954) in an attempt to satisfy libidinal energy that needs constant renewing. Risk centric sports that can be very exciting, can be argued to present a great opportunity for enacting this unconscious human need arguably unhelpfully. Echoing Hunt's (1996) interpretations of her participants' experience, this need if unmet in training may lead to feelings of defeat and failure (Fox & Rooney, 2015).

### 1.2.7. Why do people train parkour: a naturalistic perspective

Nonetheless, exploring the connectedness that parkour training may be thought to provide, Angel (2011) reports that members of Belle's group were looking to find ways to adapt to their environments more creatively. This seems to align well with more naturalistic perspectives surrounding people's motivations for engaging in risky sports, which places a motivation to feel a connection with one's natural world and feel part of it, as central to a practitioner's motivations (Brymer & Cuddihy, 2009).

Researchers like Brymer, Downey and Gray (2009) argue that more thrill-seeking and adrenaline-fuelled perspectives that seem to dominate risky sports literature as suggested by Martin and Wagstaff (2012), obscure the role that working 'with' nature is given by athletes of extreme sports, instead lending them to appear to 'overpower' it somehow. Interestingly, as can be seen throughout this literature review, participants often appear to use language like 'overcome' obstacles in parkour (Angel, 2011; Belle, 2009), seemingly however seeking to find a one-ness or flow state within it somehow (Saville, 2008).

Many of Belle's initial training group members were said to be looking to escape from a culture of criminality according to Angel (2011), Herrmann (2016) suggesting that their acquired skills in the management of risky situations affording them a sense of freedom they seemingly

craved. Interestingly, Wallace's (2013) participants saw parkour as "outside the mainstream and in one sense underground" (p. 25). In contrast to Belle's initial training group as Angel (2011) outlines above, these participants found the aspects of parkour that they perceived to be rebellious and unconventional, to be the appeal (Wallace, 2013).

The sense of freedom Herrmann (2016) outlines, however, was echoed in Ameel and Tani's (2012) findings, though in a differing context. Their participants found parkour to be innately childlike, the curiosity and the playfulness it afforded through one's exploration of their environment and body, appearing to be driven by their search for 'personal freedom'. Interestingly, the nature of parkour training may be considered to have changed over time as parkour practice spread globally Stevens (2007) and Geyh (2006) both suggesting that parkour was inherently playful, something that seems to conflict with Belle's (2009) descriptions of parkour training as extremely challenging. Nonetheless, the playful connection to one's environment described earlier, seem to rhyme with the naturalistic perspectives within extreme sports practice that see participants developing a relationship to their natural world. Engagement with extreme sports being paralleled to an "intimate dance between actively engaged partners" by Brymer, Downey and Gray's (2009) participants.

### 1.2.8. Why do people train parkour: a transformational and philosophical perspective

Challenging the more positivist 'unchanging' perspective, psychologists from a transformational perspective like Celsi, Rose & Leigh (1993), noticed that the initial motives of participants in risk-taking sports may be the thrills that may resonate with intrinsic needs; motivations however seemingly changing with continued participation.

However, in line with altering participant drivers within parkour more specifically, Raymen's (2017) participants were said to show the opposite. Such as subversive motivations when entering parkour, possibly then transcended by the pure movement risk-taking appeal of parkour, driven by a need to satisfy ego-ideals through training (Raymen, 2017). These findings seemed to align with Wallace's (2013) findings, participants seemingly having hedonistic motives for engaging in parkour training tied into intrinsic pleasure-seeking needs striving to be met.

According to Witfeld, Gerling & Pach (2011) however, parkour also heavily emphasises the 'usefulness' of the techniques, their origins being traced back to emergency situations. In line

with this, members of the initial group of parkour practitioners that came to be known as 'traceurs' seemed to strive for ways to make a positive social impact (Herrmann, 2016). This social responsibility that the members seemed to have experienced, appears in line with transformational and philosophical perspectives on risk-centric sports engagement. Brymer and Oades (2009) for example, posited that their findings implied a much less self-indulgent ideology underlying extreme sports participation contradicting previous self-serving traditional thrill-seeking perspectives. Their participants reported seeking a sense of humility through extreme sports training, with an agenda to more readily consider themselves as:

"part of a larger concern, rather than its centre"

(Brymer & Oades, 2009, p. 2).

A possible social impact of parkour as Archer (2010) saw it, was the nature of the practice as a useful form of societal resistance, capable of challenging hierarchical control through the appropriation of public space for alternative use to what it was intended for.

In line with Herrmann (2016) suggestions that the members of Belle's initial training group appeared to strive for ways to make a positive social impact; Atkinson (2009) had prior suggested that parkour is an expression of concern towards capitalist cities and their impact on society, culture, spirituality and environmental ethics. This argues that it is a physical cultural practice of criticism, which seeks to highlight the contradictions prevalent in modern society. This perspective challenged Lyng's (1990) suggestion that participants of extreme sports are in fact essentially seeking to challenge the nature of their own will, wants and desires through a series of great physical challenges; their true nature in fact actually corrupted by processes of consumerism. The influence of consumerism on the concept of parkour as potentially deviant and rebellious was further explored by Raymen (2017), who noted the possible influence this has on narcissistic individualism.

Resembling the paradox Raymen (2017) outlines that saw participants subversive motivations possibly transcended by the pure movement risk-taking appeal of parkour; Belle (2009) described usefulness (to others), altruism, modesty and honesty as inherent to the spirit of his parkour, though his subsequent application of his parkour training seemingly contradicting aspects of this ideology. Angel (2011) references such contradictions to the centrality placed on usefulness within parkour's ideology by Belle, though using parkour in more exhibitionist

mediums like in the show Speed Air Man which was a mere display of acrobatics. Herrmann (2016) identifies this as Belle seeking to enhance his media career, arguably moving away from the more altruistic centred ideologies of his parkour training.

This serving as a first reference to parkour for many (Herrmann, 2016), gave parkour a new potential to its practice, one that was far more performative than moralistic or metaphysical in nature. As training styles evolved with the global expansion of parkour, Baker (2016) notes that the degree to which the notions of values like 'usefulness' forming part of practitioners training varies increasingly.

**1.2.9. Contributions of freerunning to parkour**

This more acrobatic or aesthetic shift in training focus, brought even more focus to Foucan's development of freerunning (Foucan, 2008). Freerunning  combined parkour-like aspects of overcoming obstacles in a controlled and fluent manner with a range of highly creative movements derived from various other disciplines linked to artistic expression like gymnastics and capoeira (Witfeld et al., 2011). Foucan's (2008) aim with freerunning was to further promote the potential of creativity and freedom of expression within his practice of parkour. Unlike Belle's (2009) parkour ideology that prioritised a culture of effort and challenge, it has been said that a freerunner aims to be creative over efficient, championing individuality in physical movement to find enjoyment (Witfeld et al., 2011) all be it requiring extensive training to enhance one's practice. This appears more aligned with Ameel and Tani's (2012) participants' search within parkour for freedom through curiosity, and Bavinton's (2007) view of parkour as boundless, seeing the world as a potential urban playground.

**1.2.10. Parkour: an inclusive and diversely applied practice**

Despite parkour and freerunning being independent in conceptualisation, they appear to be increasingly more integrated in practice. Herrmann (2016) offers a Hybrid Discipline or Integrated Practice which is fast emerging, an entwining of parkour and freerunning.  Herrmann (2016) suggests that the openness to interpretation allows for more inclusivity; something ADD initially aimed at promoting when disseminating their practice to small, highly inclusive groups (Angel, 2011). The freedom of expression housed in freerunning, arguably also allowing one's practice to further be tailored to one's own unique drivers and desires, renders it highly adaptable and inviting to diversity.

However inclusive the founders of the disciplines may have intended training to be, the reality seems to have been historically different. For example, Atkinson (2009) found that parkour's standard demographic for practice was white male, lower-middle class to upper-middle class. Angel (2011) further describes parkour as highly popular among predominantly white males. Although historically male-dominated, a shift towards greater female inclusivity has been noted (Grospretre & Lepers, 2015). Companies like Parkour Generations, Street Movement and Esprit Concrete are increasingly housing female and non-binary populations within their personal development movement courses and international gatherings like Women's International Parkour Weekend (Parkour Generations, 2018), Copenhagen Girls Gathering (StreetMovement, 2018) and Les Dames du Movement - London (Esprit Concrete, 2019) (hosted by each organisation respectively). This is similarly visible at events abroad as well, for example, the gender-integrated event 'Emakumeakmugimenduan' hosted by Lotzen ADD (2018).

Having started in France, parkour now transcends its home nation touching people all over the world, from the eclectically diverse streets of London to war-torn areas of the world still using sport as it was intended as a means of stability and peace-seeking (Thorpe & Ahmad, 2013). Such powerful applications of parkour as these, that champion collaboration in opposition to more deficiency oriented systems and tools (Thorpe & Ahmad, 2013), could show cause for parkour to further collaborate with integrative disciplines, like counselling psychology. This could be seen to aid parkour to continue to be experienced sensitively and effectively by diverse populations around the world; helpfully aligning itself with allied professionals and practitioners that are dedicated to working with ethnic and cultural diversity as part of best practice (Ade-Serrano & Nkansa-Dwamena, 2020). Aligned with growing diversity in parkour's application and cross-discipline integration, universities like Roehampton University (2021) interestingly see parkour training methodologies discussed even within their zoology undergraduate module. For example, there are parallels drawn between movement techniques in training and animal movement (Roehampton University, 2021).

More inclusive parkour training initiatives, therefore, are ever-growing, with a keen focus being placed on parkour for wellbeing, mental health and community development (Herrmann, 2016). ADD, parkour and freerunning companies increasingly tailor their teaching styles within parkour coaching and engage with various populations. For example, elderly individuals (Parkour Dance Company, 2015), people experiencing homelessness and young people

deemed at greater risk of social exclusion (Esprit Concrete, 2019). Such initiatives appear to be yielding very positive changes to participation in physical activity by otherwise sedentary individuals or those in situations that are deemed too adverse to render movement important. For example, seeing participants report mood enhancement in homeless populations in London (Esprit Concrete, 2019). The Flourishing Lives initiative sees parkour applied in an initiative to reduce loneliness in seniors and aid surviving Alzheimer's in collaboration with the Department of Health (Oliver& Kelly, 2012). There is also decisive support to embed parkour more naturally within communal spaces, for example, the Commonwealth's Sport for Development and Peace (Dudfield & Dingwall-Smith, 2015) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Report (Tsalis, Malamateniou, Koulouriotis & Nikolaou, 2020). They ask that parkour's needs be integrated into high-density urban settlements due to having shown to have a potential for sport within a developmental context ((Tsalis, Malamateniou, Koulouriotis & Nikolaou, 2020)).

Blog writer McGurran (2016) perceived parkour training to be protective of mental health in its training even upon trying it at an event for only a weekend. McGurran (2016) highlights the nurturing contributions of the training community and the perspective-shifting effect that it can have on one's view of the world, paralleling this with necessary mood management tools. She continues describing training as mindfully flow inducing and overall confidence-boosting in its requirement of people to overcome obstacles (McGurran, 2016). Although these experiences echo O'grady's (2012), Bavington's (2007), and Clegg's (2011) participants, it could be questioned as to whether some of the more adversely challenging experiences could come about. For example, through longer exposure to training, lone or group training and unique to one's relationship to one's past experiences; Saville's (2008) study, which is expanded on later in this review, highlights some potential stress existing within training.

**1.2.11. Parkour and social media**

Increasingly, parkour and freerunning are becoming more broadly practised by much of the world today thanks to social media initiatives like documentaries like Jump London (Christie, 2003), films like District 13 (Morel, 2004) and Casino Royale (Campbell, 2006) historically. More recently, transferable skills are being seen on shows like Ninja Warrior (Higuchi, 2015) as well as more broadly visible through athlete social media engagement in the form of blogs and showreels. As well as the benefit of exposure bringing more people to the practices

undoubtedly making it more accessible, there continue to be some costs. The misinterpretation of much of parkour's training components dates as far back as the early 2000s, with media favouring the use of daredevil images to discuss ADD and parkour (Angel, 2011). However, the growing use of today's media platforms like Storror's Roof Culture YouTube channel with 7 million subscribers in 2021 (Storror, 2021), arguably fortifies the aspects to parkour and freerunning that can seem extreme and dangerous to the untrained eye. This is further fortified by such channels being more readily accessible than process-driven videos like those of less known individuals. This has seen to add to the allure of parkour for many who have sought the risk and thrill factors in training as Wallace (2014) and Raymen (2017) have suggested.

### 1.2.12. Parkour: possible training risks

This presence of risk, both inherent in training if not safely managed (Kidder, 2013) and in its perception by onlookers (Smith, 2017), suggests that the possible costs to training parkour should be further researched. As well as the hurdles that may be inherent in it and the experience of participants who may experience a lack of having their expectations met through practising it. Over a decade ago, Saville's (2008) ethnographic traceurs group work resulted in reports of parkour training being experienced as stressful and anxiety-provoking at times. To this, Saville (2008) inferred that parkour is therefore a process that involves overcoming emotions and continuous learning towards confronting fear as a lived experience. Although parkour does appear to expose people to the possibility of engaging in such processes, it is questionable whether or not the discipline itself is inherently apt at equipping people with the tools needed to address this anxiety and stress. This is further questioned in instances where, as Angel (2011) mentions, people are self-directed and non-organised when training parkour recreationally, arguably less safeguarded and assisted if needed.

Saville's (2008) participants further reported they felt parkour training could entail an intense pre-conscious mobilisation of past places and the emotional experiences connecting them to present situations or moments. For his participants, this resulted in a unique experience of 'flow', where they felt every part of the environment move in unison; an emotionally charged continuum of shapes, textures and sensations (Saville, 2008). In this instance, re-connection to past memory was received well, enjoying a resultant mindful state, a similar experience echoed by Clegg (2011) through his participants' accounts.

This flow experience appears to echo the traditional concept of 'flow' as popularised by Hungarian psychologist Csikszentmihalyi (1975). Also featured in counselling psychology theories by Maslow and Rogers, the concept of flow was later integrated into sports psychology by Jackson (1995). A flow experience as described by Csikszentmihalyi (1975) referred to the process of losing self-consciousness and becoming at one with movement physically and psychologically. In addition to Saville (2008), Clegg (2011) and McGurran (2016) reports, O'Grady's (2012) participants also reported a 'flow' state being a sought experience in parkour. The 'flow experience', said to enrich someone's life (O'Grady, 2012) however has one golden rule: that the challenge be well matched to someone's skill (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975).

It does, therefore, pose the question of whether parkour if practised outside these parameters could be potentially challenging. Further to this, if parkour is, as Saville's (2008) participants experienced it, re-triggering, it could arguably pose some risks to participants who perhaps have experienced trauma, for example, that is still unprocessed. Given the very visceral and embodied way in which Saville's (2008) participants re-experienced their experiences, it may be important to consider the effect that parkour training may adversely have on one's body.

This is in line with research on how the experiences of emotional safety are bodily based (Porges, 2011). Given that each practitioner is unique, it is arguable that parkour, as it is practised today, may not render enough links to practitioners need to stabilize themselves before engaging with the training. This is known to aid people to manage experiences like flashbacks and re-experiencing in trauma therapy (Punkanen & Buckley, 2020). The lack of doing so could possibly stir up trauma that has yet to be processed. This seems worth considering if traceurs' are as Atkinson's (2009) believes, in patterned contexts of physical, mental, emotional and social suffering. And parkour is as suggested by Rosendahl (2008), a patterned way of learning which provides a route to embodied self-knowledge.

### 1.2.13. Parkour research: future directions

As this chapter highlights, there are possible stressors within training parkour yet to be inquired about; from the movements themselves, to how they are trained, to the environment one trains in. Predisposed constructs like personality as well as person-centred motivations have been highlighted as influential to the training experience, contributing perhaps to the embodied reactions practitioners have to the stressors experienced within training.

Interestingly, perhaps due to parkour still being in its infancy, most of the research appears to focus on the benefits of training, next to none appearing to address the possible costs. Parkour has yet to have any parkour grounded theories within its academic literature, renders research being heavily centred on practitioner experience methodologies like Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (Wallace, 2013) and ethnographic research (Raymen, 2017), with little to no parkour specific process drives analyses to date.

There are, however, mentions within this chapter that suggest that several interesting processes may be present within parkour training that are perhaps unique and differing from other existing sports. This being said, parkour processes also seem to greatly align with broader pre-existing models and theories within various other fields including but not limited to sports literature.

Therefore although the current research around hurdles in parkour, risk factors associated with training and possible costs of training to practitioners appear to currently be limited to injury studies (Giner Gran, 2020), further research into the physical, psychological and emotional processes of practitioners in training could be invaluable.

## 1.3. Stress

According to Dudley and Kuyken (2014), experiencing stress is something all humans experience. As such, this chapter seeks to briefly outline stress and coping as a general human experience more closely than that of an athlete. The review, therefore, focuses primarily on more general models of stress rather than sport centric ones. Interestingly, however, this review highlighted that sports specific models like performative stress models like Graham-Jones and Hardy's (1990) or sport centric response to stress-chain models like Reilly & Williams (2003) for example, appear to still be highly derivative of more general stress models (Gill, 1994). This chapter seeks to critique Lazarus' (1966) transactional model of stress primarily. This is because it appears to remain the cornerstone psychological stress and coping models (Biggs, Brough & Drummond, 2017). This chapter also incorporates other models that are informed by it (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Almeida, 2005). Some other general and sport-specific stress models will be presented to describe the manner in which stress models are developing and the continuing limitations apparent; in summation briefly highlighting sports practitioner specific consequences of stress.

### 1.3.1. What is stress?

Stress is defined as "a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances" according to the Oxford Dictionary (2021). Almeida (2005) defines daily stressors as challenges within a daily routine that disrupt or challenge a person's physical, social or psychological resources. Stressors can range from relational in nature to more inanimate object-related, varying in frequency and severity, and varying in the degree that one involves themselves with these (Diehl, Hay & Chui, 2012). Bisconti, Bergeman & Boker (2004) recognised this earlier, attributing the challenge of researching stress and coping to heterogeneity in people's reactions to stressors. This heterogeneity is perhaps not specific to one's stress reaction; individuality, uniqueness and subjective realities being increasingly stressed at the epicentre of the human condition (McLeod & Sundet, 2020).

### 1.3.2. Models of stress

Stress, generally and within sport more specifically has historically been approached from a cognitive lens. For example, research informed by cognitive appraisal viewpoints as with Spielberger's (1989), Lazarus' (1966) and Martens' (1976) research. Another example being trait anxiety, as researched by Spielberger (1966). Cognitive appraisal is a process that sees a person experience a stressor, perceive and appraise the threat and response to it (Spielberger, 1989). Trait anxiety is where a specific characteristic of the person that influences perceived threat as opposed to state anxiety that is described as one's response to a specific threat (Spielberger, 1966).

Alongside Spielberger's advancements, Lazarus (1966) developed a model of stress (Figure 1) that emphasised cognitive appraisal. His model assumed that stress was complex and multidimensional, recognising the importance of the relationship between the person's characteristics and the stressor's. Due to this emphasis, his model was said to be transactional, stress not being in the person nor the trigger but dependant on how they both interrelate to one another (Gill, 1994). He also addresses the variables and processes within the model as interdependent rendering the model iterative (Lazarus, 1966). Stressors were acknowledged as not universal and the stress process induced by a stressor subject to change, rendering assessment and re-assessment over time important when applying the model in practice (Lazarus, 1966).
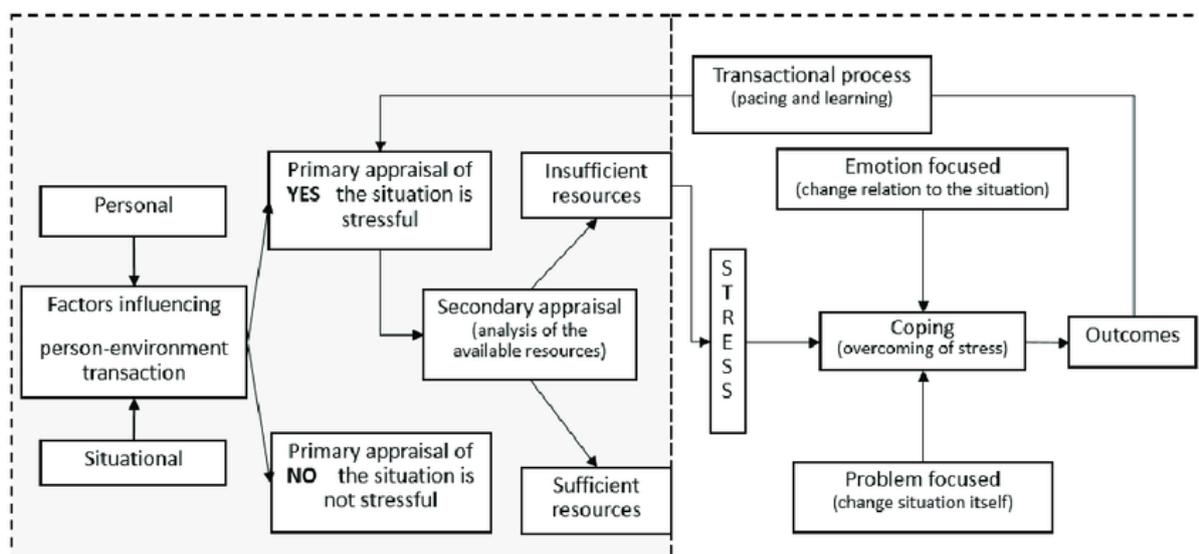
Figure 1: Transactional model of stress (Lazarus, 1966)

In further support of Lazarus' (1966) belief that one model could not house every possible way of coping, nor could it account for every stressor, Skinner, Edge, Altman and Sherwood (2003), defined coping as an *organisational construct* of the myriad of actions taken by a person experiencing stress to deal with it. To this effect, they suggested a hierarchical conceptualisation of coping that resulted in an indefinite number of adaptive processes, families of coping, ways of coping or coping instances.

Arguably less helpful an assumption by Lazarus (1966), as discussed by Gill (1994), was that emotion is more encompassing than informative in the coping of stress. Emotion was only included in his first model in referring to altering one's state to cope with stress, as opposed to changing the situation to do so (Lazarus, 1966). However, the mechanisms of change outlined in Dialectical Behavioural Therapy DBT (Linehan, Dimeff, Kanter & Comtois, 1999; Lynch, Chapman, Rosenthal, Kuo & Linehan, 2006) for example, further supports the need to address emotion in stress management. DBT, based on biosocial theory, takes the understanding of the transaction between invalidating environments (e.g. neglectful formative relationships) and one's biological reactions to these one step further (Lynch et al, 2006). DBT looks at how past triggers in line with such invalidation often leads to emotional vulnerability in adulthood, rendering clients unable to regulate emotions thereby demonstrating increased negative appraisal (Lynch et al, 2006). This emotional vulnerability lends clients to unhelpfully manage

reactions to stressful triggers, re-deploying past strategies that are anxiety-driven if not addressed (Lynch et al, 2006).

Seemingly, beginning to consider the importance of emotion on how people focus within stressful situations that affect stress coping (Smith & Lazarus, 1990), Lazarus & Folkman (1984) (Figure 2) suggested a model of stress that began to introduce the notion of 'coping resources'. Expanding on this, stress models further developed to more carefully consider one's subjective past experiences, their impact on one's coping resources, further conceptualising how stressors were responded to (Williams & Andersen, 1998; Almeida, 2005).
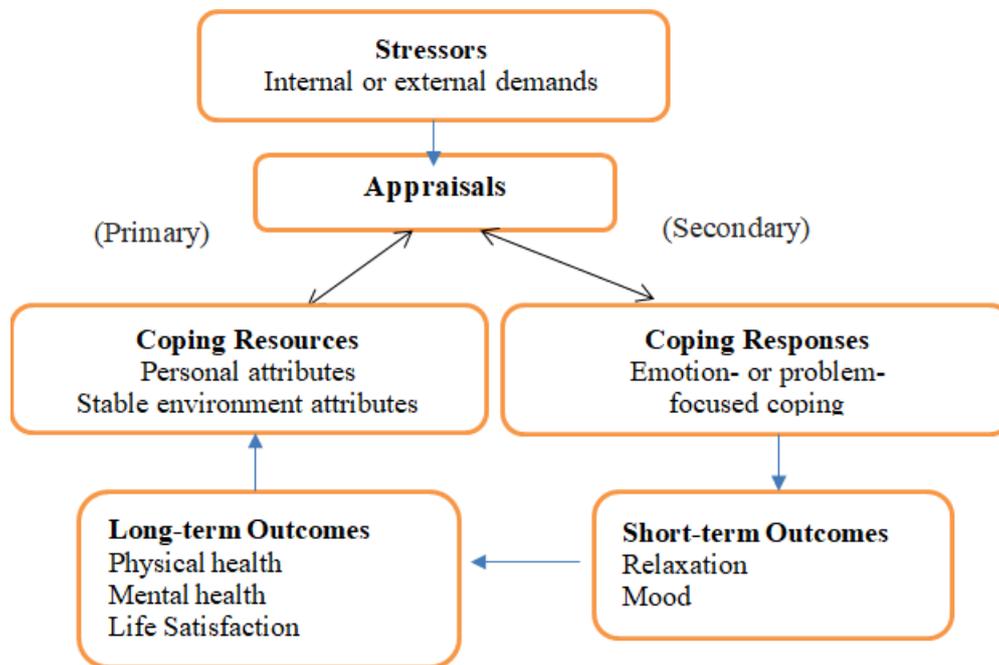


Figure 2: Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984)

Andersen & Williams's (1988) initial stress and injury model of stress for example (Figure 3), initially assumed that only history of stressors initially affected stress responses, later moving to include personality and coping resources (Williams & Andersen, 1998). This rendered the model more accommodating of the overlapping nature of different constructs, enabling athlete stress to be contextualised more readily in stressors inside and outside of sport (Traneus, Ivarsson & Johnson, 2018).
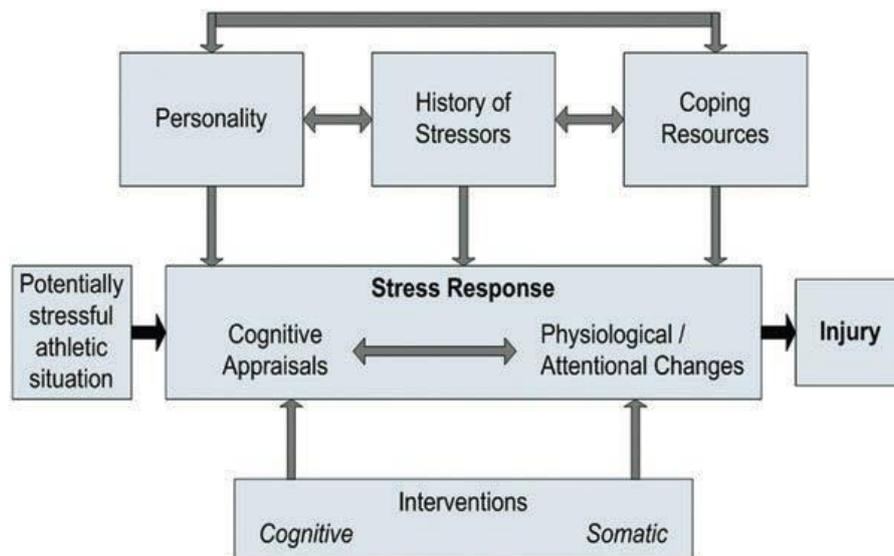
Figure 3: The model of stress and athletic injury (Williams & Andersen,1998)

More stress-vulnerability focused models in sport, general and health fields (Williams & Andersen, 1998; Almeida, 2005, Dieserud, Røysamb, Ekeberg, & Kraft, (2001)) for example were therefore developed. They accounted for people's personal coping resources (Williams & Andersen, 1998), more nuanced subjective appraisal (Almeida, 2005), and later on even more socially driven systemic impacting factors like social support (Berry, 2006). Alongside these developments, researchers were expanding on Lazarus' (1966) work by further exploring how psychophysiological factors relate to people's appraisals of stress Burton, 1988; Martens, Vealey & Burton 1990; Landers & Boutcher, 1998). This proved highly important for anxiety-performance related applications paramount to outcome-driven settings like competitive sport (Gill, 1994). The role of psychophysiological and emotional reactions to stress was further explored by researchers interested in injury prevention (Williams & Andersen, 1998; Arnason 2004; Nicholls and Polman 2007; Wiese-Bjornstal 2010). More interestingly, however, as focus interest in exercise for health began to grow, the psychophysiological-stress relationship opened up research into exercise and its physicality as a possible trigger exacerbating stress or ill-health more broadly (Berger, 1994; Dishman, 1994).

Even with these advancements, some models in sport continue to appear more linear than outcome-driven and much less holistic than may be helpful. For example, Reilly and Williams' (2003) stress response model depicted below as a visual aid to demonstrate the linearity (Figure 4).

Stage 1: **Environmental Demand**
(Physical & Psychological)

Stage 2: **Individual's perception of the environmental demand**
(Amount of threat perceived)

Stage 3: **Stress Response**
(Arousal, muscle tension, attentional changes, and state anxiety)

= Stage 5 (return to homeostatic position)

Stage 4: **Behavioral Consequences**
(Performance or outcome)
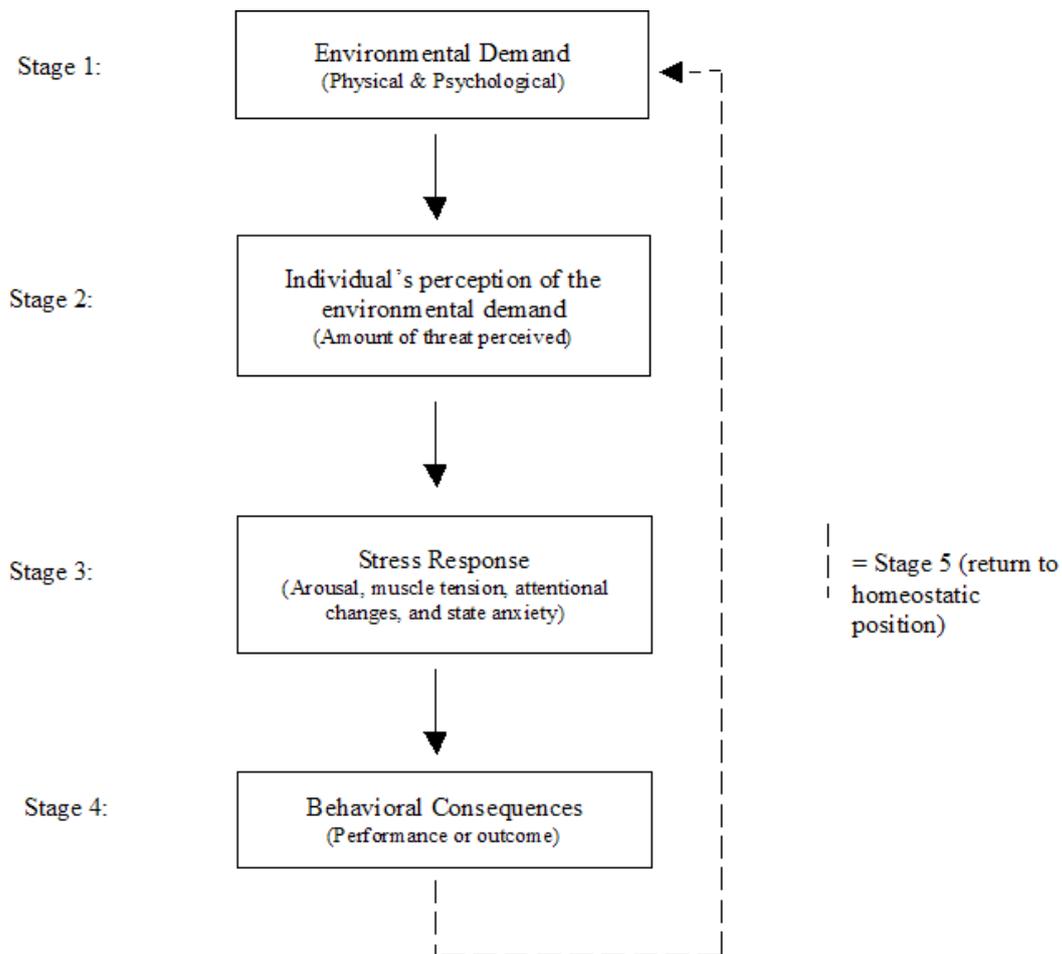
Figure 4: Stress response model (Reilly & Williams, 2003)

Models like this, informed by Graham-Jones and Hardy's (1990) physiological response to stress in sport, seem to perpetuate the trend of addressing stress and coping in isolated contexts. Although as Lazarus (1966) suggests, stressors are multiple rendering it impossible to account for each one uniquely, the person at the centre of the experiences could be argued to be constant and therefore required to be centralised within the model. Knowing that cognitive appraisal influences stress responses, it may be important to look at stress more developmentally. In line with Bowlby's (1973) contributions of internal working models to the field of psychodynamic theory, these models formed in our infancy, later go on to affect our assessments of the outside world. If indeed cognitive appraisals are central to stress and our response to it (Lazarus, 1966), perhaps greater insight into the somewhat change-resistant aspects of a person's inner workings

that are unconscious (Bowlby, 1973) may be helpful. For example, it may help us to better understand the re-occurring nature of stress described by Gill (1994) and provide some consistent grounding insight in an otherwise very complex multiple scenarios construct.

Models like the above seemingly support the notion that the models, especially within sports are still not integrative, iterative and individualized enough in their approach to stress and coping, a viewpoint volunteered almost two decades ago by Gill (1994). When talking specifically about sport Gill (1994) had advocated that when conceptualising stress in sport, the sport psychologist should move away from seeing stress as an event (responsibility placed on the stressor), physiological response (Graham-Jones & Hardy, 1990) or a response- chain (Reilly & Williams, 2003). She called for future researchers to try to consider greater individualisation, the recursive nature of the stress process and broaden the perspective taken on the research to make room for relation aspects. For example, but not limited to, the role of social support on an individual's psychosocial response to stress and stress-induced coping (Gill, 1994).

The further individualisation appears to heavily speak to the person-centred and relational approaches that form the bedrock of counselling psychology (Rogers, 1961). The necessary focus on broader contextual factors like an individual's psychosocial reality speaks to the highly dynamic, multi-level and integrative approach counselling psychologists use when conceptualising (Dallos & Steadmon, 2014). The recursive nature of the stress process resembles the re-triggering processes outlined in psychodynamic literature (Freud, 1914).

These three factors alone, tapping into different fields within psychology, appear to render it possible that stress and coping researchers could benefit from other more humanistic disciplines. McLeod and Sundet (2020) who describe counselling psychology as such a humanistic discipline, could influence models to be more person-centred, biopsychosocial and relational, as suggested is necessary by Gill (1994).

### 1.3.3. Consequences of stress in athletes

Stress researchers like Zautra (2003) theorize that how an individual copes with daily stress; daily may, in the long run, pre-dispose them to developing long-term difficulties, such as depression or anxiety-related concerns. This emphasises that no one is immune to coming face to face with stress, it is merely a question of to what degree they do (Dudley and Kuyken,

2014). This being said Fullerton (2009) however suggests that athletes tend to suffer from it more than non-athletes. Fullerton (2009) credits this to an athlete's need to balance several conflicting demands including their sports training sessions, matches, school/work and family pressures. Calmeiro, Tenenbaum and Eccles (2014) further suggest that elite athletes seem to negatively appraise stressful situations as a coping mechanism more than non-elite athletes.

Athletes that experience levels of stress that are beyond their coping capacities have historically shown to lead to decreased performance (Simms, Arnold, Turner & Hays, 2020; Bali, 2015). For example, Bali's (2015) study highlighting that continued stress creates anxiety which in turn leads to tension within the body, ultimately resulting in psychosomatic disorders that reduce performance. Stress can also lead to psychological and physical ill-health (Biggin, Burns & Uphill, 2017; Magherini et al., 2019; Traneus, Ivarsson & Johnson, 2018). Biggin et al.,'s (2017) participants voiced that the pressure felt by athletes is a significant factor in training rendering obsessional compulsive tendencies and anxiety prevalent. Magherini et al.,'s (2019) research looking into how stress in training can lead to an accumulation of fatigue negatively impacting one's central nervous system leading to inflammation and hormone irregularities. Should stress become completely unmanageable for an athlete, research shows that this can often lead to dropping out of sports (Smith, 1986, Goodger, Gorley, Lavallee & Harwood, 2007; Lonsdale, Hodge& Rose, 2009, Hall, Hill & Appleton, 2012). Hall, Hill and Appleton's (2012) study has shown certain dimensions of perfectionism to have negatively related to burnout for junior elite athletes, exacerbating the likelihood of it occurring. These three athlete experiences are thought to all be factors of a process of maladaptive coping within sports that has come to be known as burnout (Goodger et al., 2007).

## 1.4. Burnout

### 1.4.1. Introduction

Definitions and conceptualisations of athlete burnout are largely grounded in earlier stress-coping research (Smith, 1986) and burnout research within human service settings (Maslach, 1979).

There is however also some suggestion that burnout and its research shares several similarities with the phenomenon of stress as expanded on below. This chapter, therefore, aims to briefly outline the history of burnout, review the Maslach Burnout Inventory, discuss the debate of the multidimensional nature of the burnout construct and its scope. This chapter ends with future recommendations for research to address the confusion that exists between burnout being a construct or a phenomena. I then aim to move to investigate the links between stress models and burnout, research in athlete-specific burnout within the subsequent chapter.

### 1.4.2. A brief history of burnout

According to Schaufeli, Leiter and Maslach (2009), the term 'burnout' preceded science identifying it as a studied phenomenon. The term was seemingly socially constructed and colloquially used by drug-involved communities to refer to devastating effects of chronic drug abuse (Schaufeli et al., 2009). Psychiatrist Freudenberger (1974) subsequently adopted it to describe the gradual emotional depletion, reduced motivation and reduced commitment of volunteers in a free clinic that he observed. Alongside Freudenberger's (1974) work, social psychologist Maslach (1979) came across the term in a variety of human service workers, her interest specific to how workers coped with their emotional arousal using cognitive strategies (Schaufeli et al., 2009).

This early work surrounding burnout was either theoretical or based on observations that were not controlled or systematic (Maslach & Pines, 1977). Various stressors were identified, including but not limited to workload and work environment as well as more personality-centred characteristics like perfectionism (Gann, 1979). Basing their consequent work on the early research mentioned prior, Maslach subsequently drove the development of further research in the field and Freudenberger instead focussed on furthering the practitioner-based treatment of the syndrome (Schaufeli & Buunk, 2003).

### 1.4.3. A brief history of the burnout as a 'syndrome'

Maslach and Jackson (1981) devised the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). The MBI, housed three subscales, Emotional Exhaustion, Personal Accomplishment and Depersonalisation. In

line with this, burnout as defined by Maslach and Jackson (1984) was a syndrome of (a) emotional exhaustion that occurs frequently in individuals who do people-work; (b) the development of cynical attitudes and feelings towards clients that led to a form of depersonalization by the worker; and (c) negative evaluation of the self by the worker that rendered them dissatisfied with their work accomplishments.

Given how subjective the subscales within the MBI seems to be e.g. perceived dissatisfaction or the perceived degree of emotional exhaustion, it is interesting that the research that followed also appeared to stay within an objective framework (Kirstensen, Borritz, Villadsen, & Christensen, 2005; Halbesleben & Demerouti, 2005; Bekker, Croon, & Bressers 2005). People's appraisal of their own psychological, social and emotional states has been shown to depend on one's own world view (Bowlby, 1973). This arguably informing a diagnosis seems to render the measure limiting given, for example that there are many perceptions that are heavily influenced by one's defences and coping needs (Leiper, 2014). Psychodynamic formulations like Malan's (1979) Triangle of Person, demonstrates how the hidden feelings that are at play inevitably influence one's relational defensiveness, anxiety towards professionals/authoritative constructs and one's past. This may therefore support the notion that accuracy in self-measures perhaps cannot be presumed to the degree that Maslach and Jackson (1981) suggest.

Further to this, burnout, much like other mental ill-health experiences, is known to carry a stigma within different settings. For example, conversations on burnout in residency training programs for example now shift to wellness instead (Eckleberry-Hunt, Dyke, Lick & Tucciarone, 2009). This could see people biasing their answers to burnout questionnaires like MBI, consciously or unconsciously denying that they are experiencing the symptoms alluded to in the scales for fear of what others may think (Wahl, 1999). Therapeutically within disciplines like counselling psychology assessments are carried out collaboratively, co-constructing a clients formulation of the perceived problem, something that in cognitive behavioural therapy is often referred to as collaborative empiricism (Ashley, 2010). This allows the client's experience to be sensitively integrated with reasoning discrepancies or biases elicited through psychoeducation without rendering the person's account invalid (Safran & Segal, 1996). This can aid the client to better understand their experience of a process without being replaced as a reality judge of their lives by a professional (Ashley, 2010). Counselling psychologists disengage this expert stance which can often lead to invalidating a client's

experience or raising some of the defences mentioned prior (Ashley, 2010). Further to this, something like diagnostic frameworks that tend to suggest a right or wrong experience can arguably challenge the empowering humanistic stance that assessments can take (Ashley, 2010).

Maslach and Jackson's (1984) study appears to use a very top-down approach to diagnosis through the use of an objective 'problem identifying' tool, something thought by Harper and Moss (2003) to be commonplace in assessments that place the clinician as the expert. On the other hand, appearing to rely on the varying unique awareness of self that an individual may have, to diagnose the degree to which an experience is creating impact in the aim of curing it. In addition, Cox, Tisserand & Taris's (2005) mention that the burnout, as it is, may be overly similar to stress or emotional exhaustion, and this could render it confusing both for the clinician and client. It would therefore be helpful to differentiate between experiences of burnout or co-morbid presentations like depression.

A collaborative client-clinician assessment of a supposed problem therefore could be argued to be useful in offering a more realistic or wholesome understanding of a client's struggle, the resulting story of the problem being one of the multiple viewpoints (Harper & Moss, 2003). Carr (2012) suggested that the lack of collaborative formulation can lead to 'semi-objective' or 'objective' description of problems as opposed to collaborative sense-making which, reduces the sensitivity of the formulation, or in this case the diagnosis, to a person's particular context.

The tool also appears useful to people who find themselves experiencing 'normative' burnout experiences, given that psychometric tests are grounded in normativity and standardisation (Arcara & Bambini, 2016). This, however, may lead to certain people perhaps feeling underrepresented, experiencing a construct albeit not in the way the 'norm' does. Bekker et al (2005) for example highlighted differences in one's burnout experience based on several gender-related variables. Unlike rationalist cognitive approaches that Maslach & Jackson (1981) seemingly adopted, more person-centred practitioners like Kelly (1955) and Winter and Procter (2014) would argue that there is no one way of viewing the world. They interest themselves in further understanding how the client constructs things rather than how a construct impacts the client.

Nonetheless, Maslach and Jackson (1981) favoured positivist research methods in investigating

and measuring burnout. Designed to measure hypothesised aspects of burnout syndrome, the MBI was indeed found to be reliable, valid and easy to administer (Maslach and Jackson, 1981). Schaufeli et al (2009) later described the results as "gold standard" (p. 211). Disciplines like counselling psychology, however, are steadily growing their use of qualitative research methods, increasingly gaining credibility in their use (Haverkamp, Morrow & Ponterotto, 2005). The use of such methods would allow individual subjectivity to be added to the long-standing objective data available, enabling unique human processes to be accounted for within future measures and assessments (Gough & Lyons, 2016). This could perhaps also encourage further bridging of the research and the practitioner approaches within the field, something thought to be useful by Morrow (2007) in further allowing a more overarchingly psychotherapeutic relational frame to be engaged. This could see burnout assessment and intervention veering towards existing alternative therapeutic methodologies like narrative therapy for example, where formulation (e.g. in the form of letter writing) is seen as an intervention in and of itself (Harper & Spellman, 2014). This may render future inquiry more sensitive to understanding burnout as a context-free yet person-centred phenomenon.

Furthermore, Maslach and Leiter (2016) saw clinical psychology's input into burnout as contributing to the resultant diagnostic nature of burnout's definition, assessment and intervention. Clinical psychologists like Johnstone (2014) however, argues that psychiatric/medical concepts and psychological conceptualisations have different assumptions and implications. There could arguably be a further integration of the social-relational aspects that Maslach & Jackson (1981) brought to the research as a social psychologist and the additions of the clinical psychology field. This is especially so given that clinical psychologists can also conceptualise a problem non-medically (Johnstone, 2014); rather conceptualising a problem as it is perceived or held by the client and their systems (Johnstone, 2014). It could be argued therefore that further research into burnout, if it is non-diagnostic and more case formulaic, could make for a richer, more helpful, person-centred combination of skills and tools. This notion is in line with Eells' (2010) views that place a diagnosis as useful if indeed it is in line with the specifics of a client's life. In this way, it could be argued something may be 'gold standard' depending on where one focuses the question of 'for whom'.

As the MBI travelled the globe, arguably due to this diagnostic lens underpinning the tool, some came to understand the term 'burnout' as more of an end-stage diagnosis, rather than a process that denotes a process of work-related exhaustion (Schaufeli et al., 2009). Schaufeli et

al., (2009) describe the original use of burnout as an umbrella for a spectrum of symptoms, mild to severe, suggesting that this is at odds with the more formal diagnostic endpoint that it has been known to be increasingly used for. Maslach and Leiter's (2016) explanation of burnout as a concept drawn from clinical psychology and accounting for the medicalised framing of clients experiences. However, it appears to encourage a diagnostic application of the term as opposed to championing a process-driven experience as pointed out by Kristensen et al (2005).

Some criticise the multi-dimensionality of burnout as suggested by Maslach and Jackson (1981), believing instead that burnout is equivalent to exhaustion (Kristensen et al., 2005). Others question its scope, believing burnout to be a 'context-free' phenomenon (Pines, Aronson & Kafry, 1981) as opposed to a work-specific experience. Cox, Kuk and Leiter (1993) for example find that the exhaustion scale in the MBI only shared 16% of its variance with the 'worn out' scale in the General Wellbeing Questionnaire; suggesting that burnout may be an experience belonging to a more general context.

In an attempt to make burnout accessible to domains beyond human service settings and work-based settings reservedly, Kristensen et al., (2005) developed another burnout measure called the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI). This tool accounted for personal, work-related and client-centred burnout. One could argue that this still renders burnout overly specific. The scales themselves house different areas of a person's life separately thereby further distancing the investigation into burnout and the assessment of it as being a person-centric inquiry; similar to Gill's (1994) reflections of the stress research to date. If burnout is a context-free phenomenon, similar to Lazarus' (1966) and Gill's (1994) beliefs on stress and stressors, it houses immeasurable triggers and responses to it. In line with a counselling psychology perspective, it is the representation of the trigger and what that brings up for them that determine a person's reaction to the situation, or different relationships (Freud, 1914). Therefore, things about a person's relationships to any 'other', be it a task, another person or an environment is arguably informed by one's early relational attachment styles (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) and their internal working models (Bowlby, 1973) described in the previous chapter. These further support the notion that stressors in burnout, much like in stress, are inherently context-free and yet person-specific.

### 1.4.4. Burnout: a construct or a phenomenon

Further supporting the comparison to existing stress-based literature, Cox, Tisserand and Taris (2005) argue that not enough research exists to demonstrate that burnout differs conceptually from stress. In line with researchers like Kristensen et al.,'s (2005) critiques, however, the construct of burnout and its subscales were not derivative from the theoretical framework, instead emergent from an inductive process using factor analysis. As such it could be argued that there is still a lack of understanding of the structure of burnout and the processes underlying it as a phenomenon (Cox, Tisserand & Taris, 2005). Confusingly, however, as is apparent throughout this chapter, researchers have interchangeably called burnout a 'construct' and a 'phenomenon' (Freudenberger, 1974; Cox, Tisserand & Taris, 2005; Halbesleben & Demerouti, 2005; Marais, Moster & Rothmann, 2009). Maslach and Schaufeli (1993) uphold that burnout emerged from iterative extensive interviews rendering the three-dimensional construct conceptually statistically confirmed. Nevertheless, it could be helpful if, given the controversy surrounding the construct's multidimensionality, scope and absence of a theoretical conceptualisation, further research to address these took place.

If research into burnout continues to align itself with more objectivist approaches that Maslach and Jackson (1981) engaged, however, research methods like Glaser and Strauss' (1967) positivist theory generation methods would see the burnout phenomenon 'uncovered' to create a theoretical framework for it. This could arguably render the phenomenon's processes less dynamic and creative and more crystalline (Charmaz, 2010). Given, however, that burnout has a socially constructed history, it could be suggested to be more appropriate to look into burnout as a phenomenon through a social constructivist methodology like that of Charmaz (2010). This could allow researchers to best understand the participant's reality, interpretation and meaning-making of the processes when experiencing burnout (Charmaz, 2006). It could also aid more reflexivity to take place, considering the biases that the researcher brings into the conceptualisation process more closely, in line with relativists ontology that aligns well with counselling psychology values (Woolfe, Dryden & Strawbridge, 2003). It could be argued that given the positivist methods employed by previous researchers within the field do not factor in the role of the researcher in conceptualisation as much as social constructivist approaches do (Charmaz, 2006), perhaps it stands to reason that the burnout construct was rendered to focus

more on cognitive arousal. An example of this is highlighted by Schaufeli et al., (2009) in relation to Maslach's specific interest in the management of emotional arousal using cognitive strategies.

In summary, prior research on burnout appears to be predominantly positivist in nature. Still, the criticisms of the conceptualisation even from researchers who then continued to research within similar frameworks, seem grounded in the lack of generalisability to the human condition that the research affords to date. It could therefore be argued that future research must now pay even more attention to ensuring that knowledge gained from research is separate from researcher opinion (Wenning, 2009). Counselling psychology, with its inherent reflexive component to both research and practice as highlighted by Etherington (2010) could perhaps helpfully contribute if the medicalised clinical lens is to meet a more humanistic person-centred one.

## 1.5. Burnout in athletes

### 1.5.1. Introduction

This chapter seeks to provide a brief overview of the athlete burnout models that exist within the literature, seeking to critically evaluate their contribution. While exploring the various strengths and vulnerabilities of the models through a counselling psychology lens, recommendations for future research are volunteered, resulting in the suggestion for a more pluralistic, holistic and humanistic model to be sought after.

### 1.5.2. The definition

The definition of burnout, as mentioned early on in Chapter 3, is grounded in Maslach and Jackson's (1981) definition of burnout as a syndrome. Within popular athlete psychosocial conceptualisations, burnout is described as an experiential syndrome characterised by emotional and physical exhaustion, reduced accomplishment, and sport devaluation (Raedeke & Smith, 2001).

Sport psychology's current agenda, thought to be moving towards a more holistic practise that attempts to place the individual at the centre of its care model (Friesen & Orlick, 2010),  does not however come through with this definition of athlete burnout. Instead, the terminology within it remains heavily in line with the psychiatrically informed philosophy that Maslach and Leiter (2016) describe stemming from the clinical psychology school of thought. Interestingly, however, burnout does not appear in the DSM–V and there is still no diagnostic criteria for identifying it (Bakusic, Schaufeli, Claes & Godderis, 2017). Nonetheless, the definition of burnout in athletes still centres around how a construct (burnout in this case) impacts a client and not how the client makes sense of that construct (Winter & Procter, 2014).

The current definition, grounded in a medical causal model, still appears reductionist and quantifiable, something that Shaffer (1978) describes as contrary to humanistic psychology's underlying principles. Counselling psychologists, for example, suggest viewing a client's difficulty as more symbolic of a relational systemic breakdown as opposed to a client's failing or problem (McLeod & Sundet, 2020); a label McLeod and Sundet (2020) believe to be stigma inducing and counterproductive to intervention success. They posit questioning not what is wrong with the client, but rather what is not working within the intervention when clients feel stuck, do not engage or progress (McLeod & Sundet, 2020).

Traditionally coaching and athlete management within sport has been viewed as a sequential activity aimed specifically at skill enhancement and competition priming (Jones, 2007). More recently however, it does appear to be moving towards a more process-driven endeavour that centres around the holistic development of an athlete (Jones, 2007). To this effect, it could be argued that the definition of athlete burnout has always included the word 'experiential' (Raedeke & Smith, 2001), perhaps in an attempt to address burnout as a process as opposed to an end diagnosis. More person-centred approaches are also being drawn on to inform the coaching frameworks (Hill, 2001), in theory requiring the way in which an athlete 'experiences' a syndrome like burnout to be considered more closely.

Although researchers like Nelson, Potrac & Marshall (2010) have historically described this seemingly humanistic practice to sporting coaching contexts as superficial and very limited, the argument for the necessity for athlete burnout to be conceptualised, assessed and intervened in a manner specific to the athletes experience in a sporting context appears to be a long-

standing one (Fender, 1989; Dale & Weinberg, 1990). More recently, the invested interest in moving towards a more nuanced conceptualisation of the athlete experience in an attempt to address more athlete-centric needs (Goodger et al., 2007), only growing.

Nonetheless, humanistic psychology principles thought to be transitional, moving beyond a set of context-specific needs or linked to a specific identity (Jenkins, 2009), arguably challenges the definition of athlete burnout to be even remotely encompassing of this. Kidman's (2005) thoughts, who in discussing athlete-centred coaching stated that an athlete's holistic development is central to the success of an athlete-centred approach, arguably further challenges the notion that athlete experiences like burnout should be conceptualised merely within the context of sport.

### 1.5.3. Athlete burnout models – a brief history

Subjective individual experience possibilities aside, athlete burnout being found to be a shared experience by many athletes (Cresswell & Eklund, 2007), believed to arise from chronic stress triggered by experiencing intense demands in and around training and competition (Gustafsson, Hassmén, Kenttä & Johansson, 2008). Although research into athlete burnout is said to be based on small, selective populations (Gustafsson, Kenttä & Hassmén, 2011) it appears to have been rising supposedly due to increased pressure in elite sport and the consequent increase in training load (Goud & Dieffenbach, 2002). This being said, the prevalence, often gained from large scale survey studies, is not said to be well understood (Eklund & Creswell, 2007).

Much of the quantitative research that exists surrounding burnout appears to be carried out with people who still actively participate in sport, named the "healthy worker effect" by Schaufeli & Enzmann (1998), rendering it hard to be sure that burnout is the experience being represented. Most of the burnout research that is carried out with people who have left sport therefore is qualitative (Tabei, Fletcher, Goodger, 2012). This appears to compound the assumption mentioned in the previous chapter that to some burnout is a final stage of a process (Schufeli, Leiter & Maslach, 2008). Smith (1986) however countering that in sport, burnout does not always lead to stopping sport participation.

As briefly mentioned in Chapter 2 of this review, burnout in sport has been shown to lead to emotional, cognitive, motivational and behavioural consequences (Goodger et al, 2007); the sources of stress that are said to drive an athlete to experience burnout are physiological, psychological and social (Kenttä & Hassmén, 1998). Although research initially focussed largely on research centred around physical stressors very specific to the training and performance context (Kuipers & Keizer, 1988), there is now growing research looking at the impact of non-training factors (Meehan, Bull, Wood & James, 2004). The focus on daily stressors, as researched within stress models (Almeida, 2005) and work-based burnout research (Cresswell & Eklund, 2005), now also shown appreciation in their impact on training adaptation, underperformance and overtraining (Gustafsson et al, 2008).

In line with this, the models of athlete burnout unsurprisingly mirrored the developments in the understanding of influencing factors of burnout. Initially proposing a stress-induced conceptualisation of burnout, Smith (1986) volunteered a 'cognitive-affective stress model' of burnout, that saw his stress-related work meet ideas of social exchange theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Silva (1990) later proposed a model of 'training stress syndrome' focussing heavily on athletes' psychophysiological responses to training-induced stress. Bringing a social lens to athlete burnout models, Coakley's (1992) 'unidimensionalidentity development and external control model' conceptualised the role that the social organisation of sport had on the athlete's burnout experience. Drawing upon earlier research that surrounded the idea that not every athlete burns out (Smith, 1986) saw 'commitment models' (Schmidt & Stein, 1991; Raedeke, 1997) explore the notion of commitment in the development of burnout. Most recently the Gustafsson et al., (2011) 'integrative model of athlete burnout' integrates knowledge from the models mentioned just prior with things that seemed to still be left unknown**.**

### 1.5.4. Cognitive-affective stress model (Smith, 1986)


Smith's (1986) stress model of burnout attempts to demonstrate the parallel between his stress-based concepts and aspects of burnout syndrome (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). It is based on the assumption that human behaviour is driven by a desire to maximise positive experiences and to minimize negative ones (Smith, 1986), in line with social exchange theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). As such Smith (1986) suggested that athletes drop out due to the costs of

continuation outweighing the rewards, at times replaced by other more seemingly favourable alternatives. This process mirrors Thibaut and Kelley's (1959) proposed comparison level and comparison level of alternatives, terms attributed to encapsulate the process of evaluating the outcomes of participation in a situation in relation to standards that have been set by the person. This assessment then sees them choosing whether it is worth staying engaged in the current task or attempting to satisfy their expectations of rewards elsewhere (Smith, 1986). Corresponding to Bandura's (1977) ideas, these standards are supposedly self-administered, catered around self-approval or self-derogation that are triggered by the degree to which a person meets their individual standards of performance in the activity at hand.

Smith (1986) nonetheless suggested that situational factors, cognitive appraisal of these and a person's personality and motivational factors all result in certain physiological and behavioural responses. He proposes four steps for this; firstly, athletes experience an excessive amount of demands placed on them outweighing their coping resources. Secondly, athletes assess the situation, perceive it and determine how to respond to it. Thirdly, athletes embody the level of stress that they experience based on the degree of threat they determine the situational factors to have on them. Lastly, responding with behavioural coping responses to these physiological reactions, for example, more severe reactions resulting in dropout of sport (Smith, 1986). Smith (1986) parallels this to the burnout syndrome, burnout within this framework representing the manifestation of situational, cognitive, physiological and behavioural components of stress as well.

Smith's (1986) assumptions underpinning the model, grounded in Bandura's (1977) notions of self-efficacy, seemingly fail to accommodate for a wider range of impacting factors, laying sole responsibility for burnout with the athlete. Behavioural analytic researchers like Hayes and Brownstein (1986) who take a 'world view' argue that the environment relationship to the person for example needs to be considered when investigating how a person responds to a situation. Or McLeod and Sundet (2020) for example take a more systemically reflective approach, emphasising the role of the therapists in a client's experience of stuckness.

This model therefore seems to specifically focus on some particular aspects of a process that centres heavily on a specific cognitive process, in line with Nilsen's (2020) view on what experimental models fundamentally do. The narrow extent to which Smith's (1986) model conceptualises influencing factors beyond motivations or personality could however be

perceived as limited and finite (Gill, 1994). Researchers like Jenkins (2010) for example suggest that a conceptualisation of a person should perhaps go beyond the motivational dimension that they are often contextualised in.

Further to the lack of centrality on a holistic human experience, Maslow (1968) for example, suggest that needs and drivers should be contextualised in a more transpersonal manner than a mere 'human' one. This thereby arguably rendering an athlete's physical, emotional and social needs and drivers limitless, complex, as worthy of inquiry beyond the model's capture of their personality and motivations alone. This arguably further limits the possible conceptualisation of a person's process to that which they know of themselves or what we perceive of them, as opposed to the limitless inquiry into a person's complex nuanced experience championed by McLeod and Sundet (2020). A provision of space for inquiry into what may not be known would arguably add layers of complexity to this model, as opposed to the seemingly hypothesised causal ideology that this model grounds its assumptions in, inspired by Thibaut and Kelley's (1959) social exchange theory.

The model does not seem to consider the deeper understanding of the more pluralistic factors, like more nuanced existential ones, that may need to be considered to accurately assess one's motivations, perceptions of demands and resultant behaviours. Alternative perspectives like transhuman perspectives however are thought to underpin a truer humanistic conceptualisation of an individual's needs (Maslow, 1963), in line with the current shift that sports psychology is attempting to navigate (Friesen & Orlick, 2010). This suggestion of a model allowing for exploring the 'unknown' closely mirrors a counselling psychologist's appreciation of the existential uncertainty that exists when working with humans which decrees the opportunity for plural possibilities (Cooper & McLeod, 2011).

The model instead appears to have two definitive stress-related strains, one physically and a social-psychologically driven strain; like overtraining induced burnout and relational or personality induced burnout respectively (Gustafsson et al., 2011). Lemyre, Roberts, & Stray-Gundersen's (2007) research show further support that maladaptive training often leads to burnout; with Gould, Tuffey, Udry and Loehr's (1997) research supporting maladaptive personality traits like perfectionism to be a psychological vulnerability in developing burnout.

The specificity of the two factors seemingly underpinning the process of burnout in this model, however, may render it arguably less heuristic than desired when conceptualising phenomena

(Nilsen , 2020). Nilsen (2020) however also volunteers that the simplicity of a model can be due to its need to have practical utility. Gill (1994) however argues that the specificity of the model to such narrow stress-related strains also perhaps renders the model reductionist; specific vulnerabilities like personality and motivation arguably rendering the conceptualisation of the process less 'human' centred (Dallos & Steadmon, 2014). In line with this, Gill (1994) stressed the importance of stress models being conceptualised more systemically, with Schaufeli, Maslach and Leiter (2008) also stressing the multidimensionality of the burnout syndrome. The dual strain model that this model is seemingly based on therefore does not seem to align with the modern definition of burnout that is considered multidimensional (Gustafsson, Kenttä & Hassmén, 2011). Nonetheless, this stress model of burnout has received a lot of support over the years (Cohn, 1990; Cresswell & Eklund, 2005; Lemyre et al., 2007).

### 1.5.5. Unidimensionalidentity development and external control model (Coakley, 1992)

Unlike Smith's (1986) assumptions, in line with more sociological schools of thought (Goodger, et al., 2007), Coakley's (1992) model suggested that responsibility lay with the social organisation of high-performance sport. Coakley (1992) centralised the model on research done with young high-level athletes, arguing that the organisation of sport leads to an experience of foreclosure for them leading to unidimensionalidentity formation and a loss of autonomy.

In line with Fullerton's (2009) suggestion when discussing increased stress experienced in athletes, this model emphasises the conflicting pressures that other aspects of an athlete's life have on training; arguing that the social world becomes the athlete's central world (Coakley, 1992). Coakley (1992) suggested that the sports world is one that inhibits an athlete's decision-making ability and therefore their control over their sporting life as well as their life more broadly. Coakley (1992) suggested, therefore, that there is a need to step away from the psychological focus that burnout research places on "personal troubles" (p. 271), burnout being more socially impacted on than the historic focus on the individuals, character, change and situational reactivity would suggest. In line with this, Nixon (1994) found there to be a steadfast relationship between athlete burnout and social constructs and their pressures.

Supporting Coakley's (1992) ideologies around social pressures and their impact on autonomy and identity, research into such organisational and cultural pressures have increased. Bullying, for example, has shown to significantly reduce athletes' self-confidence and their satisfaction within sporting environments (Grey-Thompson, 2017). Athletes are historically burdened with unresolved trauma due to abusive and neglectful governance within their sporting bodies, the US Gymnastics' Governing Body as an example (Woollard, 2018). Such organisational realities, arguably lend support to the necessity of empowerment centric models like Coakley's (1992) model. Empowerment on the individual, organisational and community levels requiring that one adopts advocator, trainer, alliance builder and participation enabler roles (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995) rather than autonomy inhibiting behaviours. The person-centred, pluralistic, creative and flexible nature of counselling psychology (Woolfe, Strawbridge, Douglas & Dryden, 2010) therefore could have much to offer this area of more athlete 'safeguard' centric and less athlete 'problem' centric models. Kagan, Duckett, Lawthom & Burton (2005) corroborate that such skills undoubtedly further enrich communities, rendering service provision more inclusive, possibly improving on sport mentoring, training and management systems with regards to accessibility, diversity and inclusivity.

Coakley (1992) also suggests that athletes eventually desire to reclaim the control over their life they may have lost, keen to develop other identities beyond sport, thus prompting them to leave sports. As leaving sports is posited to be a painful experience for athletes by Coakley (1992), he believed that leaving in and of itself contributes to burnout. Although stressors within sport can be identity stunting as Coakley (1992) outlines, some aspects to involvement in sport can also be nurturing, further adding to the pain experienced when leaving (Curtis & Ennis, 1988). 'Existential isolation' that refers to one's fears of being alone  (Yalom, 1980) could be seen to representationally echo the fears that athletes face,  group players for example, when faced with the loss of their teams upon retiring (Curtis & Ennis, 1988). Interestingly, Coakley's (1992) model, although alluding to the effect of transition on burnout, does not appear to be any more longitudinal or lifespan sensitive than models like Smith's (1986).

This perhaps invites a counselling psychology existential perspective coupled with its expertise on developmental life span and older-adult specific models  (Evans & Garner, 2004) to further support conceptualising burnout. Possibly further coupled with counselling psychology's breadth of experience working with the painful process of endings, be it therapy endings (McLeod, 2017) or existential end of life endings (Cooper, 2015). Given the current

progressive UK Sport's 'life after sport' guidance (UK Sport, 2016), Coakley's (1992) model appears to be renewed in its arguable relevance, perhaps forming a strong foundation for future more existentially and pluralistically informed models of burnout, counselling psychologists like Cooper (2015) advocate that this lens to be more broadly incorporated in client-centric work. This could perhaps more holistically attend to aspects central to transitioning professional athletes, and the change in identity that Coakley (1992) suggests is inevitable.

This however may require research inquiry that allows for a more in-depth analysis of the athlete's self-complexity. Linville (1985) defined self-complexity as a function of the numerous relative independent dimensions of self-knowledge salient to a person. An athlete's ability to delve into these dimensions is therefore arguably essential to, further question the processes underlying the possible unidimensionalidentity (Coakley, 1992), its impact on cognitive appraisal and the processes by which multiple identities are sought. These are all things Coakley (1992) created hypotheses for, based on informal talks that were sourced from a sample of convenience. Perhaps therefore more socially grounded, systematic, process-driven qualitative methodologies as described by Charmaz (2010) could be useful to explore the social dynamic that this model outlines. The strong reflexive function and narrative competencies that counselling psychology illicit in clients, researchers and practitioners (Steadmon & Dallos (2009) could aid to better explore some of the processes that Coakley alludes to, and the unknown on burnout that still requires more research (Goodger et al., 2007).

Although some claim that there is not much support for this model (Gustafsson et al., 2011), studies have shown that control and identity exclusivity contribute to athlete burnout (Black & Smith, 2007). Other models have also been inspired by Coakley's (1992) model, for example, Tenenbaum, Jones, Kitsantas, Sacks and Berwick (2003) who offer the failure-adaptation model. This model suggests that in addition to stress management imbalances, burnout out is largely affected by the interactions of situations, events and dispositions (Tenenbaum et al., 2003).

### 1.5.6. Commitment models of (Schmidt & Stein, 1991; Raedeke, 1997)

Raedeke (1997) helpfully points out when critiquing Smith's (1986) model, that not all athletes who experience burnout withdraw from sports. Smith (1986) himself believing that Coakley's

(1983) research for example looking into the process of how retirement may fit into the process of burnout, would shed light on non-drop out related burnout experiences.

Schmidt and Stein (1991) and Raedeke (1997) therefore suggested commitment as important to the development of burnout. Commitment in a work or relational context, as described by Kelley (1983), refers to psychological attachment and behavioural intent to stay involved in work or relationships. Schmidt and Stein (1991) and Raedeke (1997) posit that if an athlete's commitment to sports is based on entrapment, they participate because they feel they have to, not because they want to. They proposed three athletic profiles based on these two types of commitment labelled attraction-based, entrapment-based and low commitment (Schmidt & Stein, 1991; Raedeke, 1997). They argued that entrapment-based commitment was theoretically linked to burnout, both attraction-based and low commitment seemingly not experiencing high levels of burnout due to either high enjoyment in participation or low desire to continue, ergo not feeling entrapped (Schmidt & Stein, 1991; Raedeke, 1997).

Seemingly their vision on entrapment is still aligned closely with ideas of cost and rewards outlined in social exchange theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959), similarly to Smith (1986). The investment into the sport by the athlete being perceived as too high, renders alternatives unappealing, increasing social constraints due to the athlete continuing their involvement largely due to social pressures (Raedeke, Smith, Kenttä, Arce & de Francisco, 2014).

In this way, Raedeke, Smith, Kenttä, Arce and de Francisco (2014) suggest that commitment perspectives toward burnout align with Coakley's (1992) model, given that burnout is said to begin when the athlete questions their role as an athlete albeit seemingly unable to exit the sport. They further posit that the key to reducing the likelihood of burnout is to balance passion for involvement with perceptions of entrapment (Raedeke, et al., 2014). Unlike Coakley (1992) however, the commitment perspective appears to default to placing the problem very centrally to the athlete, albeit Raedeke, et al., (2014) acknowledging the socio-external factors that play a part in exacerbating burnout. There still seems to be a heavy dependence on awareness and cognitive processing involved in an athlete finding themselves entrapped. The model does not for example consider the unconscious defences that the athlete may be unable to process but may be driven by; studied by Apitzsch and Berggren (1993) within the context of performance enhancement or hindrance. Similarly, Young's (1999) schema-focused model, highlights that relational views of the world that are formed in one's childhood may influence repetitive

patterns on behaviour in adulthood, only perhaps insightful if models are eclectic enough to encompass early childhood formative experiences.

Given that the model focuses on commitment that has a strong relational link to it, it again repeats in not broadening its lens to house more socially related factors and processes, consistent with Gill's (1994) comments on stress models that came before it. Entrapment through a more relational lens like that of the psychodynamic perspective could be helpful. They propose, similarly to Coakley's (1992) unidimensionalidentity, that societal constructs like organisations have always placed limitations on one's freedom (Marcuse, 1964). This is said to paralyse one's unconscious mind to render someone unable to remember what could be, something Marcuse (1964) suggested led to the 'one-dimensional man'. This is arguably similar to Coakley's (1992) and Raedeke's (1997) view on an athlete's identity being reduced to one role, seemingly helplessly in this process. The difference is that perspectives like the psychodynamic one, grounds people's tendencies to lean into relational pressures like these more generally or to challenge them, as closely linked to attachment styles as adults informed by childhood attachment experiences (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Fears surrounding the loss of relationships they invest in based on losses experienced in their past may inform conscious and unconscious coping strategies that see people stay in relationships and situations unhelpfully (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).

Growing on the social aspects to Schmidt and Stein's (1991) and Raedeke's (1997) model that arguably is not much expanded on, Jung's (1957) theories for example add further insight into the function that one's desire to connect and belong play in engaging in social systems. Jung (1957) posited that there needs to be a balance struck between the individual's goals and rights and the group's. The individual's goals are governed by personal rewards and benefits (Jung, 1957) , in line with social learning theorists like Thibaut and Kelley (1959) perhaps, and the group's dynamics are on the other hand governed by what the collective feel they need (Jung, 1957). Jung (1957) suggested that both are crucial for one to discover their 'self',  perhaps attesting to the notion that if individual and group goals or needs conflict, identity formation may be negatively impacted as Coakley (1992) and Raedeke (1997) also suggests. Athletes struggling with commitment perhaps in an attempt to cope with this lack of alignment, mirroring what Schmidt and Stein's (1991) and Raedeke's (1997) model describe.

This being said, motivational psychology has been shown to tie into the degree to which

people's commitment to their involvement in change. Self-determination theorists like Deci and Ryan (2002) for example, align effective success to the degree to which a person feels competent, autonomous and a sense of relatedness to the goal, environment and/or relationships. These being aspects central to one feeling free in their decision making (Deci & Ryan, 1985), and have shown support for the more athlete-centric models like Schmidt and Stein's (1991) and Raedeke's (1997) leading to further application within integrative models in practice (Lonsdale, Hodge & Rose, 2009). A meta-analytic summary of extant work into this area of research by Li, Wang and Kee (2013) found that overall the fulfilment of the needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness increase intrinsic motivation, reducing burnout susceptibility in athletes.

Yet again, however, such school of thought that models like Schmidt and Stein's (1991) and Raedeke's (1997) align themselves with, see the extrinsic aspects to motivation and commitment to change as 'ostensibly' controlled by a sense of obligation and external rewards (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This seemingly implies that the contextual factors that impact the individual are not truly assigned any responsibility for the client's struggle in their own right. This returns to a narrative where the client is the one with the problem, 'amotivated' if unable to find meaningful connections between their behaviour and outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 2000), akin to the medical models described earlier; something being amiss with them.

This manner of perceiving a client's reality has nonetheless been shown to aid methods of cognitive behavioural normalisation known to work well when working with clients who experience psychoemotional breakdowns (Dudley, Bryant, Hammond, Siddle, Kingdon & Turkington, 2007). One could still argue however that this lens is less humanistic and pluralistic than what is advised is best practice within counselling psychology (Davey, 2011). It could be suggested, therefore, that instead of growing the systemically related suggestions that Coakley's (1992) model began to propose, the models by Schmidt and Stein's (1991) and Raedeke's (1997) overly specialised their model instead of pluralistically broadening it.

In line with prior discussions on the lack of longitudinal conceptualisations of the models discussed thus far, Gustafsson et al., (2011) critique that there are also no longitudinal studies on commitment so not much research exists on how entrapment develops over time. This is perhaps important to consider, given that the model's concept seems to align itself with transtheoretical perspectives; researchers like Prochaska and DiClemente (1983) suggesting

that the biopsychosocial factors inherent in models that look at a process of change within a person need to be represented in a temporal dimension.

### 1.5.7. Training stress syndrome (Silva, 1990)

Growing on the more physically driven strain that Smith's (1986) model touched on, Silva's (1990) model heavily focussed on physical and training factors, though recognising the importance of psychological aspects associated with burnout. Silva (1990) outlines a spectrum of negative adaptation to stress responses in his model, from staleness to overtraining to burnout.

Staleness is described as:

> "an initial failure of the body's adaptive mechanisms to cope with the psychophysiological stress created by a training stimulus"

> (Silva, 1990, p. 10)

Overtraining is seen to occur when there is:

> "repeated failure of the body's adaptive mechanisms to cope with chronic stress"
> (Silva, 1990, p. 10)

Burnout is defined as:

> "an exhaustive psychophysiological response exhibited as a result of frequent, sometimes extreme, but generally ineffective efforts to meet excessive training and competitive demands"

> (Silva, 1990, p. 11)

When an athlete is experiencing staleness, their mind and their body is said to be reacting and attempting to adapt to the demands imposed; when overtraining, the athlete's mind and body are said to be resisting the stress created by the excessive training stimulus; when burnout occurs, the athlete is said to withdraw, voluntarily or involuntarily from the imposed stressful training environment (Silva, 1990).

This model, therefore, helpfully appears to formulate the embodied nature of athlete burnout,

expanding on the effect that one's psychology can have on the body as Valle, King and Halling (1989) suggested is very important within a therapeutic context, corroborated also by Gill (1994). The three states that Silva (1990) proposes on this continuum, all centring on psychophysiology, arguably align well with the more general theories on neurobiological responses to stress. Porges' (2011) work for example exploring how stress affects the vagal pathways resulting in adverse physical reactions to stress when negatively emotionally aroused.

Counselling psychologists like Field (2021) describe a stage when working through stuckness in therapy that sees clients beginning to sense that a change is needed but not motivated or informed enough to yet change. This is called the stage of contemplation by Prochaska and DiClemente (1996), Field (2021) describing it as closely resembling a state of ambivalence. This perhaps representationally mirrors a diluted form of the instinctual fear response of 'freezing', brains and bodies immobilised when threats are perceived (Damasio, 2005).

Overtraining in Silva's (1990) model suggested to be a means of attempting to fight the negative stress response one is having by working harder, has historically been aligned with maximum performance gain (Morgan, Brown, Raglin, O'Conor & Ellickson, 1987). This process of the use of overtraining as a coping mechanism, however, further appears to resemble the 'fight mode' outlined by neurobiological evolutionary perspective holders (Goleman, 1996; Damasio, 2005; Porges, 2011; LeDoux, 2012), though in an arguably less instinctual manner. Field (2021) suggests that neurobiological safety strategies are the reason that one at times wants to change but cannot, even though one wills it. Van Der Kolk (2014) offers that the body keeps score of negative experiences throughout one's life; impacting the development of the mind and the body, informing how they cope with triggers in the future. This model therefore seemingly attempts to bridge the previously highly significant gap within stress and burnout models that was psychosomatic; a cause for concern within the existing literature discussed by Gill (1994).

James (1988) suggests that a human emotion is a non-entity if disembodied, arguably renders this psychophysiological model potentially very useful in the prevention of burnout; his conceptualisation being centred on early and easily observed changes in mental orientation and physical performance in athletes over time (Silva, 1990). The model also helpfully demonstrates how staleness and overtraining can both feed into a negative feedback loop that sees athletes being re-stressed repeatedly leading to athletes feeling chronically stressed if

remaining in training (Silva, 1990). Gill (1994) having argued that any form of re-experiencing of stress was still largely under-researched.

Nonetheless, this model, like others mentioned prior, appears to be symptom-based and diagnostic. Cohn's (1997) suggestion that being-in-the-world requires researchers to consider the spatial world and the relational one in tandem. There is next to no interplay accounted for by this model for the athletes knowledge of their special/physical world, nor of how they are processing or relating to this; something Cohn (1997) stresses is important. Van De Kolk (2014) suggests that past and developmental experiences impact how our bodies react to stress uniquely, which arguably renders this association equally important.

Instead, the model also aligns itself with conditioning models, like classical conditioning, assuming that an athlete that is never exposed to competitive stress is unlikely to adapt well to stressors when faced with competition (Sliva, 1990). Assumptions like this could potentially render the model less inclusive of athletes that do not meet this assumption, rendering it rather less inclusive and sensitive to athletes' individualistic needs which are increasingly desired in sports psychology practice (Friesen & Orlick, 2010). Personality, previous experience of historic stressors and resources one generally has, are already shown to greatly mitigate how well someone copes to stressors (Almeida, 2005). Adaptive processes largely unspecific to the stressor itself (Skinner, Edge, Altman & Sherwood, 2003), could therefore render the assumptions that Silva (1990) draws upon to underpin the model as somewhat limited.

Athletes known to be influenced greatly by 'external to training' stressors (Fullerton, 2009) renders this model overly context-specific and absent of the contextualisation of how external load may also impact an athlete. This alongside the highly medicalised nature of the 'syndrome' further renders this model much less person-centred and holistic than it could be. From a counselling psychology perspective, Duffy (1990) emphasises the importance of psychologists in helping clients and not problem fix clients when attempting to provide a strong foundation for positive change. The lack of relational considerations also aligns the model's conceptualisation as 'doing to' and not 'being with' clients, something Duffy (1990) views as essential within a therapeutic journey.

This model having been proposed based on questionnaire responses renders the data explanatory and descriptive (Silva, 1990) rather than process-driven data. It is therefore arguably unable to allow for the dynamic meaning-making of both the athlete's 'symptoms'

and the stressors that elicited them. Psychodynamic researchers like Chertoff (1998) for example, supposing this to be very useful for people presenting with acute presentations of trauma. Burnout arguably being presented as resulting in chronic and acute negative training stress experiences (Silva, 1990), could perhaps benefit from such schools of thought.

Researchers who align with biopsychological perspectives within athlete burnout have nonetheless favoured Silva's (1990) contributions greatly, the model heavily contributing to subsequent models like the total-quality-recovery model (Kenttä & Hassmén, 1998). These models have attempted to further distinguish the staleness and overtraining concepts from burnout; albeit sacrificing their uniqueness and newness to a degree by being tenets of Silva's (1990) model as critiqued by Gustafsson et al., (2011).

**1.5.8. An integrative model of athlete burnout (Gustafsson, Kenttä & Hassmén, 2011)**

Interestingly, Gustafsson et al., (2011) felt that it was important to centralise all that the models outlined herein had contributed to the understanding of athlete burnout, creating their integrative model. They felt it prudent to have major antecedents, early signs, entrapment (athletes staying in sport all be its negative consequences) personality, coping and environment, key dimensions (of burnout) and consequences, housed within one model (Gustafsson et al., 2011). See Figure 5 below included for a visual representation.

**Entrapment**

Unidimensional athlete identity  High investments  Social constraints
Performance based self-esteem  Low alternative attractivness

**Antecedents**

Excessive Training

School/ Work Demands

Stressful Social Relations

Negative Performance Demands

Lack of Recovery

Early Success

**Early signs**

Mood Disturbance

Elevated Cortisol

Diminishing Motivation

Frustration over lack of Results

Dysfunctinal Behaviors

Lack of Control

Performance Decrement

**Burnout**

Emotional/Physical Exhaustion

Reduced accomplishments

Devaluation

**Maladaptive consequences**

Withdrawal (*partial or complete*)
Impaired immune function
Chronic inflammation
Long term performance impairment

Perfectionism  Trait anxiety  Low Social support  Low Autonomy
Lack of Coping Skills  Goal orientation  Motivational Climate

**Personality, Coping and Environment**

Figure 5: Integrated model of athlete burnout (Gustafsson et al., 2011).

They felt this would make it easier to see what research already proposes and what is yet to be known (Gustafsson et al., 2011). Gustafsson, Defreese and Madigan (2017) thought that this model was holistic, integrated and pedagogical. Gustafsson et al., (2011) claim that the model not only includes the process of burnout, given evidence for the dynamisms of burnout like Cresswell and Eklund's (2006) research, but also the state of it as defined by Raedeke (1997).

They further add that although they list antecedents, they recognise that burnout is a personal experience as suggested by Gould et al., (2007) only to then state that the aetiology of burnout is not yet understood (Gustafsson et al., 2011). When reflecting on this, they recommend more research including more qualitative research to be carried out (Gustafsson et al., 2011). Researchers however still appear to be seemingly committed to seeing research result in more reliable diagnostic measures to grow the field's understanding of clinical cut-offs within an athlete's burnout experience (Gustafsson et al., 2017); arguably more generalisable data being sought than individualistic and person-centred.

This model, therefore, has arguably incorporated all the strengths and the vulnerabilities of the models before it, and thus seemingly helpfully integrating prior models rendering it easier to conceptualise what is known within burnout literature. It could however be argued that for

future models to be truly integrative the models need to move beyond stress-based schools of thought alone and venture into other schools of thought. The International Integrative Psychotherapy Association (2021) define integrative psychotherapy as a means of bringing affective, cognitive, behavioural and physiological systems of an individual together with an awareness of the social and transpersonal aspects of the environment that surrounds that individual. In this way, a model that is integrative would consider human development and be applicable to one's life phases, regarding one's systems more sensitively, opportunistically and uniquely observing each crisis that may arise within these (Erskine & Tautmann (1996). Norcross (2005), further recognises that routes to integration should include theoretical integration, assimilative integration, common factors and technical eclecticism.

This renders this model arguably similar to the 'bricolaging' that McLeod and Sundet (2020) describes, many models having been collaged together. It is arguably not however pluralistic, its factors being seemingly finite, lacking the flexibility needed to have the model cater to an individual's unique experience (McLeod & Sundet, 2020). Clients often presenting with co-morbid difficulties or with nuanced struggles that do not align with evidence-based treatments often render theory-driven approaches essential (Frank & Davidson, 2014), this model seemingly limiting formulation of this creative nature.

As Nixdorf, Beckmann & Nixdorf (2020) research with junior athletes highlights, there is still a push within the literature to identify predictors for diagnosis symptoms specifically, seeking to establish a 'best model fit' for athletes at risk of or experiencing burnout. As mentioned prior, such categorisation and labelling render assessment, intervention and evaluation normatively driven not individualistic, categorical rather than fluid and arguably less diversified in a way that is thought to befit the complex human condition (McLeod & Sundet, 2020).

Furthermore, within quantitative research methods into developmental stages like adolescence, complex theories have been shown to be more useful than linear models that models like Gustafsson et al.,'s (2011) are derivatives of. González, Coenders and Casas (2006) argue that even if a large number of dimensions are considered, the explanatory power of linear models is inherently low. They stress that more complex models allow for complex psychological and psychosocial phenomena to hold a higher explanatory power (González et al ., 2006). For example in conceptualising psychological wellbeing in adolescents over life as a whole as

opposed to mere psychological wellbeing at mere time stamps (González et al, 2006). Athlete burnout being a multidimensional, psychosocial phenomenon as described by Raedeke (1997), should perhaps be considered so more readily by future researchers when exploring approaches to modelling burnout in the future.

Athlete burnout is still heavily informed by sports, exercise and health science, visible by the names of researchers in the field surfacing in this literature review search (Goodger et al., 2007; Nixdorf et al., 2020), some referenced highly repetitively like the creators of this integrative model (Gustafsson et al., 2011). As such, positivist diagnostic tools in the assessment of athlete burnout prevail, questionnaires like the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (ABQ) (Raedeke & Smith, 2001) and the Recovery-Stress Questionnaire for Athletes (RESTQ) (Kellmann & Kallus, 2001) having been thought to have potential in burnout prevention (Gustafsson et al, 2011). Even though athlete burnout still lacks predefined criteria and therefore is confusing to diagnose (Gustafsson, Lundkvist, Podlog & Lundqvist, 2016), Gustafsson et al., (2011) and others still advocate for more research on refining measures like the ABQ (Gustafsson et al., 2017).

Although Gustafsson et al., (2011) argued for more questionnaires to be sought for when presenting their integrative model, they suggested that there were ethical issues inherent in researching burnout; overtraining and burnout needing to be provoked in a 'healthy' population of athletes to be researched. These concerns arguably arise due to the positivist alignment that the current models and assessment tools appear to be informed by, research seemingly needing to test a hypothesis, find causality and ultimately find a cure or a preventative strategy (Gustafsson et al., 2011). Thus seemingly seeing athletes as test subjects as opposed to humans under inquiry. They further seem to assume that athlete populations that have experienced burnout may have left sports thereby being hard to reach (Gustafsson et al., 2011).

Perhaps, such ethical questions and sample limitations could be negated should more interdisciplinary collaboration be more prevalent. For example, using counselling psychologists trained in more person-centred and client sensitive qualitative methods (Ponterotto, 2005). This may aid researchers to hold the possible distress that athletes who experience burnout may undergo so as to capture their experience, possibly avoiding the need to unethically illicit such experiences in athletes not experiencing burnout. Client inquiry as an assessment and intervention rather than a testing and treating methodology would perhaps also

render the research base more collaborative (Gladding, 2009), thereby perhaps being more appealing to athletes who may be hard to reach. Clients may then benefit more from the research or assessment processes itself rather than leaving with a checked list as a product. Patterson and Watkins (1982) suggest that an assessment's ultimate goal should be client self-actualisation. Counselling psychologists, psychotherapists and therapists further focus on the importance of relational components to assessment and intervention, therapeutic alliance being so vital in therapy (Kahn, 1996). This could perhaps provide current researchers further support in reaching, engaging and working with clients that may be less forthcoming within or less open to research. It may also be helpful to further collaborate in an interdisciplinary manner with disciplines like social psychology and philosophy for example, whose research means to augment engagement of hidden, hard-to-reach and vulnerable populations (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey & Choubak, 2015).

If athlete burnout is as subjective as Raedeke (1997) acknowledges, social constructionivist research and intervention methodologies may benefit the field far more than generalisable methods that have been used to date. Such methods still sharing the cognitive constructivist underpinnings of the initial stress and burnout theories; social constructionism within social constructionivist for example adding subjectivity and person-centred contextualisation to one's understanding of how a client constructs a phenomenon (Winter & Proctor, 2014).

Seemingly in line with subjectivism, more person-centred approaches are utilised to research some of the named personality and coping factors with the current integrative models' conceptualisation (Gustafsson, Hill, Stenling, Wagnsson, 2016). Gustafsson et al., (2017) positing that this person-centred more holistic approach may enrich the research available on things like an endorsement of high levels of burnout. Yet, instead of maximising on such methods to inform more individualistically sensitive models of burnout and consequent preventative interventions, Gustafsson et al., (2017) again revert the applicability of such methods to help in creating "burnout profiles", seemingly biased by the researchers positivist orientations. Nonetheless, researchers have been persistently trying to veer closer to athletes' experiences, Gustafsson et al., (2008) conducting interviews into elite athlete burnout experiences.

Given the degree of subjectivity of the burnout experience (Raedeke, 1997), Gustafsson et al., (2011), suggest this as a possible contributor to why the aetiology to athlete burnout is so hard

to establish. Therefore, instead of looking to the models for preventative aids to burnout, Gustafsson et al., (2017) suggest looking to interventions used in burnout like cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) to guide athlete burnout prevention work. A classic CBT model being grounded in the same school of thought as the current burnout models, cognitive appraisal consequences (Beck, 1963), aligns with the current burnout models.

This alignment although seemingly well-matched, may however be limited in its scope in addressing athlete burnout and its prevention. Take one of the antecedents for burnout in athletes for example that Jowett (2007) suggested was the most intense in a sporting context, the coach-athlete relationship. CBT although involving therapeutic alliance in its work does not centralise it to its mode of working, Greenberger and Padesky's (1995) Mind Over Mood tools for example making CBT available to the public, not limited to clients within a therapeutic alliance. CBT therefore, although effective within the field of burnout to a degree (Gustafsson et al., 2017) may be limited compared to the more integrative of the humanistic, person-centred and psychodynamic schools of thought that may see the relational dynamics within interventions at play more centralised, mirroring the dynamism of the athletes' relationships like those to their coaches.

Nonetheless, CBT has shown to reduce signs of burnout and impact positive return to work outcomes in work-focused treatment (Lagerveld, Blonk, Brenninkmeijer, Wijngaards-de Meij & Schaufeli, 2012), Gustafsson et al ., (2017) suggesting that its effectiveness may therefore be transferable. CBT being heavily centralised on the present and the future, however, arguably mirroring Gustafsson et al.,'s (2011) integrative burnout model, may not be sufficient to adequately address the chronicity of burnout that is alluded to in Silva's (1990) model and the re-experiencing nature of stress that has been previously discussed herein for example by Gill (1994). It could be argued that CBT lacks the focus on past experiences, attachment formation and unconscious aspects of a client's presentation, central to patterns of re-experiencing as discussed prior for example by Freud (1914).

It may be important, however, to stress that no single theory or model may be able to meet all clients' needs, possibly amplifying the importance of integrative practice in mixing and matching parts of approaches that best fit clients as proposed by Ghosal (2020). Take psychoanalytic approaches, for example, suggested to counter the person-centred approaches to client work as it places psychodynamic practitioners in a 'specialist' role (Leiper, 2014).

This is arguably similar to the 'diagnostic' function of burnout and athlete models to date in diagnosing a syndrome (Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Silva, 1990). Formulation being highly interpretative and yet central to psychodynamic practitioners (Leiper, 2014) is something shunned by client-centred therapists who are against placing any judgement on the client (Ghosal, 2020). Kahn (1997) however suggested that the two schools of thought share empathy as a common cornerstone highlight that even very different schools of thought may indeed converge helpfully albeit through different means of execution. In addition, Patterson and Watkins (1982) highlight, a co-constructed formulation can be very client-empowering when combined with a person-centred approach to assessment.

Therefore, although Gustafsson et al.,'s (2011) athlete burnout model is thought to be integrative and holistic, it could be argued that it is merely amalgamative; albeit helpfully pedological as they suggested in providing a summation of research to date (Gustafsson et al, 2011). It does not arguably include theoretical integration and technical eclecticism and the way that integration is thought to require (Norcross, 2005) nor does it house space for transpersonal perspectives that holism is now thought to encompass (Jenkins, 2009).

It is still seemingly linear and centralised on the present with its antecedents being contextualised predominantly in the athletes' current influencing factors. This renders the model arguably less longitudinal and life span transitional than what Coakley's (1992) model had desired to propagate in future research, and that is necessary for the model to be useful to the transitioning athlete experience (Curtis & Ennis, 1988).  There are overly specific athlete vulnerabilities accounted for by the model, seemingly limiting its inclusivity. Unlike Lombardo (1987) who advocates that it is essential to see humanistic principles meet the sporting experience, the model seems reductionist, lacking space for the unique person-centred experience of burnout and overly defining of the burnout construct. These factors appear to directly oppose the humanistic direction that sports psychology seems to want to take, humanistic approaches seeing human nature as never fully definable and truths being specific to an individual's unique perspective (Shaffer, 1978).

It may therefore be advisable that greater pluralism be sought through more integrative multi-disciplinary working to allow athlete burnout models to be more sensitive to the human experience and more individualistic. Inspiration for future athlete burnout model generation, research methods and intervention creation, may want to take inspiration from other mental

health models conceptualised more broadly like Randal, Stewart, Proverbs, Lampshire, Symes and Hamer's (2009) integrative stress-vulnerability-strengths approach to mental health for example. Approaches like these consider bio-socio-psycho-cultural and spiritual developmental realms to the human condition when conceptualising the resilience and vulnerabilities that shape a person (Randal et al., 2009). This is suggested to better challenge vicious cycles in a positive hope centric manner (Randal et al., 2009), as opposed to the more problem-centric methods visible herein.

# Chapter 2: Justification

Upon conducting this literature review, this research study was proposed and carried out to address some gaps that appeared to emerge. I had hoped this study would address the processes underlying the parkour practitioners experience of parkour training that ended in them stopping training. Through a counselling psychology perspective, this study aimed to contribute novel research to the existing literature on parkour, stress and burnout. The methodology of the study also designed to address a gap in the current literature; an outline of these gaps along with how these informed how this study aimed to address these is outlined below.

## 2.1 Parkour

Given my own experience in coaching that saw people dropping out of parkour, this study hoped to inquire into the processes that led to training rupture; research to date absent of any studies on engagement, retention or lack thereof. Furthermore, research within the existing parkour literature into the possible stressors within training and practitioners processing of these seemed to be lacking. This study, therefore, sought to explore what processes practitioners experienced when training and how they felt these impacted their training coming to an end.  The existing research being largely descriptive, limited to focusing on the practitioners' experience of parkour training (e.g. Wallace, 2010; Raymen, 2017), justifiably called for this more process-driven method and analysis to aid better safeguarding of practitioners in training in the future.

The negative impact of parkour training having also been limited to physical injury studies (e.g. Giner Gran, 2020) called for exploration into the possible adverse psychological, emotional and social effects of parkour training. Justification for this further housed in Saville's (2008) research that described participants experiencing parkour training as an emotionally dynamic experience, triggering re-connections with the memories of their pasts and pre-consciously mobilising of past places and emotional experiences. Resonating with my own lived experience, though, unlike Saville's (2008) participants, not always positive, I hoped that this study would add to research into the possible costs to practitioners of parkour training that

seems to be still negligibly researched.

As the literature review discussed, stress and burnout models have historically aimed to address how people experience stressors and the burnout experience. It has, however, historically been suggested that more sport-specific models be generated, Dishman (1983) arguing that the 'borrowing' of clinical psychological models instead of generating bespoke models happens too often within sports. The general sports models around athlete stress management and athlete burnout that do exist (Goodger et al., 2007) do not appear to be sport specific, fortifying justification for this study's aim to exploring parkour practitioners' specific experiences of struggles with training and their experiences of stopping. This thinking is also in line with Corbin & Strauss' (2008), who contended that theories and models should fit the area of study they are derived from and within which they will be used.

Further to Dishman's (1983) suggestion, the current burnout models in sport discussed in the literature review appeared to be heavily informed by stress models (Goodger et al., 2011). Researchers in stress like Gill (1994) having identified that the models within stress were very generalisable and less individualistic yet Raedeke (1997) identifying stressors in sport to be unique to an individual highlighted a gap; this study, therefore, aiming to be more person-centred in its aim and methodology. I hoped that this study would result in research that was contextualised in the participants' realities and the sports specific experience, mirroring a more humanistic and less diagnostic philosophical underpinning (Woolfe et al., 2010).

Though possibly transferable, the aim of the study's methodology was not to see this study's research outcomes be generalisable. The qualitative research methodology adopted instead moves away from more 'truth' seeking schools of thought (Strawbridge & Woolfe, 2003) that previously informed research in this area. Previous research within the stress and burnout field having been very positivist and investigative (Smith, 1986). My research procedure was therefore aimed at being more subjective and inquiry-led, placing the person at the centre of my inquiry (McLeod & Sundet, 2020).

Additionally, current models being heavily informed by prior models (e.g. Gustafsson et al., 2011), were criticised as not being entirely original (Goodger et al., 2007), researchers like Gustafsson et al., (2011) however encouraging new models to be researched**.** I attempted therefore to avoid hypothesis generation based on previous research, in the hope that this would encourage greater novelty of the research. In line with this, I chose to view my participants as

unique, not just as individuals but also as a population that was yet to be inquired after in this manner.

To this effect, given the significant controversy surrounding definitions of burnout seen in the literature review, its colloquial overuse as well as its more diagnostic application (Schaufeli et al., 2008), I chose not to assume that ending parkour training meant that participants had experienced 'burnout' either. I sought instead to leave space for the participants to use their own language to describe the processes that they felt led to their participation in parkour ending. Attempting to better align my research methods with the sociological perspectives within psychology that saw society constructing phenomena like burnout before science studied it (Schaufeli et al., 2008), I engaged Charmaz's (2006) social constructivist GT. In line with Charmaz's (2006) thoughts that a phenomenon should not be assumed to exist, and instead assuming the possibility that multiple realities exist, I looked to explore the participants' processes that arose from their own subjective meaning-making to co-construct a context-specific GT and resultant model. Given the lack of prior research into the area of research I was inquiring into and my belief that my involvement as a researcher and a parkour practitioner in this study would be an active one, the stance I chose lent itself to the social constructionist ideology as described by Charmaz (2006).

With previous research in this field having resulted in linear, causal seeking models as suggested in the literature review, I opted for an iterative, process-driven methodology of inquiry that aligned more appropriately with the non-linear human experience that counselling psychologists like Cooper (2009) and McLeod and Sundet (2020) describe. In this way, I attempted to encapsulate the humanness that has previously also been thought to be lacking in stress sport psychology research (Gill, 1994). I also attempted to better align this study's philosophical underpinnings with ADD's (parkour's ancestor discipline) belief that a unique understanding of the 'person' must be inherent in training to dismantle one's blockages (Piemontesi, 2021). This seemed further prudent to add to the existing research into what processes were more specific to parkour practitioners' experiences, and which are shared with other longstanding sports or indeed in human beings more generally.

Furthermore, a significant gap in longitudinal and developmental models existent in much of the literature was found when reviewed, antecedents and vulnerabilities in current models being overly specific and temporally current problem centred. More broadly, Danish and Hale's

(1981) suggest that research and applied practice that considers a developmental perspective is better suited to understand, assess and intervene in sports-related concerns. I, therefore, chose to engage a very broad scope of inquiry when interviewing participants' experience. Aiming to get more developmental and longitudinal data, I chose to allow the participant to introduce themselves as they desired, explored why they felt they had sought out parkour, how they had experienced the training, what they felt had contributed to their ending of training and asked them to reflect on things in hindsight now that they were beyond their ending.

By extending the capture of data to house more than an account of the processes within parkour, it was my hope that the data collected would be contextualised more. Relationally and more dynamically within the individual's life, further bridging the identity dichotomy that Coakley (1992) offered exists, aiming to render the resultant GT more person-specific and less 'sports person' specific. An overly narrow list of antecedents linked to sporting drop out was seen in the literature review, to still be something seen even in the latest and most integrative athlete burnout models (Gustafsson et al., 2011). This study instead attempted to acknowledge that a parkour practitioner training parkour has already been impacted and informed by innumerable life stressors prior to their experience of parkour. This broader focus on one's contextual factors is thought in counselling psychology to inform a more holistically understanding of an individual's psychosocial reality (Dallos & Steadmon, 2014).

## 2.2. Relevance of counselling psychology to the study

Counselling psychology's role specialising in helping clients make sense of things they are struggling with (McLeod, 2017; Field, 2021) appeared to justify its lens being applied to inquiring after parkour practitioners' struggles in training. I also felt that this specialism central to counselling psychology closely mirrored parkour's supposed function in equipping people with skills in overcoming obstacles (Belle, 2009). Given the importance that counselling psychology also gives to holistic, body inclusive work with clients (Owen, 2014), this lens appeared to bring additional sensitivity to the parkour population I was researching who were engaging in what Atkinson (2009) describes as a very embodied activity as a medium for change.

Furthermore, given that a more human-centred approach to sport has been identified to be in

line with sports psychologists' agenda (Friesen & Orlick, 2010), a counselling psychology approach to this study seemed justified given its person-centred underpinnings (Rogers, 1961). This study was looking to inquire into processes that could have been hard to make sense of for the participants, something I felt benefited counselling psychology's aptitude in dealing with uncertain, unexplored and painful experiences (Cooper & McLeod, 2011). Furthermore, empathy, respect and client validation being the cornerstone of counselling psychology's humanistic underpinnings (Rogers, 1961), seemed essential to the study's aim to explore parkour participants' unique experiences of parkour training and endings in a caring manner. I felt it prudent to engage these skills to leave the client feeling as heard and contained as possible, in line with Ponterotto's (2005) suggestion that research should be client centred and client sensitive.

I felt counselling psychology was a helpful lens to view the participants' experiences when inquiring about their processes given how central self-actualisation is to its practice (Patterson & Watkins, 1982). Also, given how collaborative a process I wanted this research process to be, sourcing on counselling psychology's emphasis on trust-building (Kahn, 1996) for a collaborative research outcome felt key. Legg (1998) describing counselling psychology as highly self-reflective by nature, seemed to align well with the intense introspection that parkour is said to centralise to its practice (Bavington, 2007; Edwards, 2009) and that I was hoping this study's interviews to result in.

Pluralism, central to counselling psychology (Woolfe et al., 2010), further aligned with this study's aim to analyse parkour practitioners' experiences of ending training in a multi-theoretical manner. This seemingly championed Silva's (2010) advocacy of sports psychology embracing and enhancing interdisciplinary working. Danish & Hale (1981) having expressed concern that medical models are overused in sports psychology research, I felt the counselling psychology perspective, with its non-labelling philosophical underpinnings (Mcleod & Sundet, 2020) would be ideally suited to diversify the current literature.

## 2.3. Relevance to counselling psychology of the study

Counselling psychology is used to address stuckness (Field, 2021) and endings (Cooper, 2015) more generally in therapy. Given that counselling psychologists like McLeod and Sundet

(2020) argue that this should ideally be done more pluralistically, I felt that this study was justified; it being research into a new population's experience of possible hurdles contributing to endings.

This area of research ordinarily perhaps presumed to be a sports psychology domain, I felt that the research would be an opportunity to diversify and expand on the population's counselling psychology current work in, in both research and practice. This study also seemed to align well with the discipline's aims to be open, creative and adaptive (Holm-Hadulla & Hofmann, 2012). As counselling psychologists seek to 'be with' their clients, a deeper understanding of parkour practitioners training seems vital to better connect, mentalise and ultimately help this potential future population.

Cohn's (1997) suggestion that being-in-the-world requires us to consider two things in tandem, our spatial world and our relational one, made me feel that although counselling psychology is very familiar with clients' relational worlds there is still scope for more learning to be had around clients' spatial worlds and their impacts on them. In this way, I felt that this study would go some way in bridging this gap, helping counselling psychology move closer to factoring in the natural world into its client formulations. Environmentally-aware practice existent within counselling psychology acknowledges that the natural world evokes emotions in us and is not merely a geographical setting (Milton, 2010).

With parkour being said to be so visceral, outdoor practice (Saville, 2008), it was my hope that this study would grow counselling psychology's understanding of psychology in practice outside but also its application outside. This is in line with Hamilton's (2004) suggestion that there is much to learn from this innovative and integrative way of working. It was my hope that this research would add to the ethics and defensibility of future therapeutic practice within the embodied practice of parkour, MIND (2007) showing increased support for therapy in nature as a means of working with mental ill-health.

## 2.4. Research aims

The primary aim was to explore participants' experiences of parkour training as they felt it related to their ending of training. As the analysis progressed a secondary aim emerged that led to an inquiry into their experiences of entering parkour training, the hurdles they experienced within the training and how they felt these contributed to the LoP they experienced that

appeared to lend them to leave training. The third aim was to co-construct a GT to explain these processes.

# Chapter 3: Methodology

## 3.1. Design

### 3.1.1. Introduction to a qualitative design: congruence with counselling psychology philosophy

Historically, psychological research has aligned itself with a positivist ideology that favours quantitative research, focused on uncovering a 'valid' finding by employing mathematical designs and employing standardised experimental testing methods to generate generalisable findings relatable to a 'norm' (Nevill, Holder & Cooper, 2007). Yet quantitative researchers themselves have more recently begun questioning how meaningful the numbers they report actually are; and whether they are an accurate representation of the attributes and processes they propose to reflect (Osborne, 2010).

Counselling psychology, which views individuals as unique (albeit sharing aspects of themselves), and varying significantly from one another given differences in both internal and external contextual factors, is steadily growing qualitative research contributing to its increasing credibility (Haverkamp, Morrow & Ponterotto, 2005). Qualitative research techniques enabling us to delve into the subjective world views of participants and their unique experience of and processing of this (Gough & Lyons, 2016) allows us to gain a rich understanding of a specific human experience, in a manner very congruent with the psychotherapeutic relational frame of meeting the client to better understand them; core to the work of counselling psychologists (Morrow, 2007).

### 3.1.2. Rationale for choosing qualitative research

Thought to be 'lightweight' and biased by the researchers' own experiences and opinions (Hammarberg, Kirkman & Lacey, 2016), qualitative methods have historically been deemed unreliable by the scientific community. Yet their strength is in their non-reductionist approach

(McLeod, 2003). Qualitative methods should more fairly be seen as enriching quantitative methods which often lend themselves to over-simplifying the unique human experience (Hammarberg, Kirkman & Lacey, 2016), especially given they are intended to represent an overview of a broader normative population. Qualitative methods, therefore, champion a much needed, still grossly absent investigation into a difference and diversity, arguably best served as an accompaniment, rather than a replacement to quantitative methods.

Qualitative methods are often viewed as appropriate when used in the pursuit of emergent designs; and imperative to those demanding self-reflection by the researcher (Marrow & Smith, 2000). Such methods are wholly in line with the needs of this research enquiry, given the secondary aim for new theory generation and the anticipated active role of the researcher inherent in constructivist grounded theory (GT) (explained further in section 3.2.2).

## 3.2. Epistemology

Epistemology can be defined as the theory of knowledge that enables knowledge gained from research to be justified and distinctly separated from researcher opinion (Wenning, 2009). Wenning (2009) stressed that it is important to be clear about the epistemology that a researcher upholds. This is said to ensure clarity in what research paradigm is being adopted and through which design of research, if researcher and reader are to remain mindful of how the data in this study was made sense of, manipulated and presented (Wenning, 2009).

### 3.2.1. Objectivist grounded theory

Initial GT theorists, objectivist in approach, viewed the researcher as a passive observer of the data, absent in the process, adopting the idea that data was pre-existing and therefore uncovered, not constructed by the researcher, and explicitly adopting a positivist (truth-seeking) epistemology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This arguably held that the researcher did not impact the GT with any pre-existing assumptions and biases, believing that enough restraint within the execution of the analysis could ensure research bias was minimised to a point of neutrality (Glaser, 2002). Charmaz (2006), however, argues that neutralisation being necessary to begin with assumes that the researcher does have a value in GT development, rendering them active instead of passive.

### 3.2.2. Social constructivism and social constructionist grounded theory

Charmaz (2006) asserted that to best understand a participant's reality, interpretation of meaning-making must be assumed, supporting the notion that the researcher will be allocating meaning to the client's internal and external world: leaving us thereby unable to assume a discovery void of researcher influence.

In line with this, symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969) is 'fully compatible' (Charmaz, 2010) with GT. It refers to a frame of reference that facilitates understanding of how participants interact with others, creating a 'symbolic world' to allow the researcher to shape an understanding of their individual behaviours (Tan & Hall, 2007). The researcher, therefore, makes meaning of the participant's narrative, organises this meaning and modifies it using an iterative interactive process, resulting in model co-creation that focuses on the active processes which people create and navigate; and the dynamic relationships between the researcher and participant, meaning-making and the actions taken (Jeon, 2004).

This allows for a design that is interpretive and constructivist rather than objectivist and positivist. The researcher, 'I', personally believing in multiple realities, interpretations of meanings and actions, consistent with the relativist ontology of both qualitative research and counselling psychology, has upheld a rejection of the existence of a single truth (Strawbridge & Woolfe, 2003).

### 3.2.3. Rationale for a grounded theory design: A social constructivist methodology

Moreover, due to minimal theory surrounding parkour and its practitioners' experiences of it, generalised sports models already being employed to manage this, a structure of concepts and/theories inter and intra-research fields needed to be pulled together to map out the area in which this research hoped to address: giving rise to a conceptual, rather than a theoretical framework in its design (Telles-Langdon, 2011). Social constructivist GT was therefore deemed an appropriate design on the basis that '*how*' processes were experienced by participants drove the study's line of inquiry and intrigue from the start; leading to a secondary materialisation of a possible '*why*' from the '*how*', co-constructed through the researcher's interpretation of participant data when model generating (Creswell, 2009). This design thereby refrained from adopting a positivistic driving stance; a single truth-finding or directly causal relationship being uncovered was never presumed (Patton, 2002).

In addition to the unique subjectivity of participants' lived experiences and the biases of the researcher being assumed within this study's design, the study adopts the stance that we are inevitably a sum of our interactions with the social world; and that the world as studied through the lens of GT is a product of this human participation and transaction: in essence, a dynamic domain as Charmaz (2010) describes it. This research, therefore, employed a qualitative social constructivist GT methodology (Charmaz, 2010), which was deemed the best fit for its proposed line of inquiry.

## 3.3. Participants

### 3.3.1. Sampling considerations

A 'snowball' sampling strategy was used as a data accessing method for participant interviews. I intended that this particular sampling method would safeguard the recruitment strategy from the possible hegemonic power I might have unconsciously had over the selection, as an impassioned parkour practitioner with a strong community presence. Atkinson & Flint (2001) also suggest that snowball methods facilitate gaining access to information from 'hidden populations', who may shy away from sharing their experiences given the possibly stigmatised processes (e.g. quitting) being explored by the study, within the context of a highly socially informed movement discipline.

In line with my constructivist approach, the snowball strategy allowed for the recruitment process to be grounded within parkour social systems, relying on the dynamics of the social networks of the parkour community to generate unique knowledge which is interactional in quality. This is something Hay (2005) describes as helpful to dynamic research recruitment methods. The snowballing methodology, assumed to conceptualise social knowledge as highly 'dynamic, processual and emergent' (Noy, 2008) seemed to accommodate this study's socio-constructionist GT generation aims very well.

A test interview was conducted prior to data collection, to test out the interview schedule and allow me to get familiar with the interview, transcription and coding process: ensuring rigour when attending to participant data.

The first four interviewees were then recruited through a targeted sampling selection process, and consisted of one male and three women. Theoretical sampling was then implemented,

ensuring that the remaining participants were selected depending on what was being sought in the data collection; and the elaboration and refinement of developing concepts and emergent theory from earlier interviews, using the constant comparison method (Charmaz, 2006).

### 3.3.2. Participant demographic data

Overall, nine participants were recruited, generating eight face-to-face ex-parkour practising and one ex-gymnastics practising interviewee as part of the theoretical sampling. Participant demographics reported below are kept vague due to the extremely niche nature of the parkour community:

| Participant | Gender | Age range | Ethnicity | Education | Work status | Training duration (approx.) | Current training status |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Female | 25-30 | Caucasian | Vocational | Student | 5 years | Stopped |
| 2 | Female | 35-40 | Jewish | Higher education | Part-time work | 3 years | Stopped |
| 3 | Male | 25-30 | White Irish | Vocational | Full-time work | 10 years | Sporadic training |
| 4 | Female | 35-40 | White British | Higher education | Student | 3 years | Stopped |
| 5 | Male | 35-40 | Caucasian | High school | Full-time work and vocational education | 6 years | Stopped |
| 6 | Male | 20-25 | Mixed-Native | Higher education | Part-time work and student | 6 years | Sporadic Training |
| 7 | Male | 25-30 | Asian | High school | Full-time | 8 years | Stopped |

| | | | | | work | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | Male | 20-25 | Caucasian | Higher education | Student | 6 years | Sporadic training |
| 9 (theoretical sample) | Female | 20-15 | Caucasian | Higher education | Student and Part-time work | 5 years | In training |

Table 1: Participant demographic information

### 3.3.3. Inclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria for all participants were that they were aged 18 or older, had trained in parkour for at least two years for an average of twice a week, and were no longer training in parkour now. Any forms of learning styles were included (including self-taught, classes, online tutorials, etc.).

### 3.3.4. Exclusion criteria

Exclusion criteria for all participants were: non-working knowledge of the English language, being under age 18 or holding any completed parkour qualifications.

### 3.3.5. Justification for inclusion/exclusion criteria

In line with the research aims, relatively experienced practitioners of parkour who have been training intensely in any medium were considered to have had enough opportunities to experience difficulties, as perceived by them, as too great to overcome. Expert advice was sought from Parkour UK and their training team, based on their teaching model and their observations of parkour students over the years: resulting in the minimum training timeframe used in participant selection. I also based this on my own experience of my clients within parkour and various informal dialogues with my colleagues.

The financial constraints in the use of interpreters being too exorbitant for the scope of this study rendered non-working knowledge of the English language by participants could not be accommodated. Participants were not to hold any completed parkour qualifications, as this was

thought to bias the processing of their experiences thanks to the differential nature of the training received as opposed to that of non-professional parkour training. However, those who had attempted to gain such qualifications and had failed were not excluded - as this was considered a form of LoP in their parkour journeys.

GT determines appropriate sample size by the concept of 'theoretical saturation', which occurs only when: '(a) no new or relevant data seem to emerge regarding a category; (b) the category is well developed in terms of its properties and dimensions demonstrating variation; (c) the relationships among categories are well established and validated' (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 212). This was unrealistic for the scope of doctoral research (Bernard, Wutich & Ryan, 2016). As such, nine participants appeared an appropriate sample size for the validity of the findings to be upheld. Guest, Bunce & Johnson (2006) denote eight as a realistic minimum in a doctoral study.

As the sample size for when theoretical saturation may occur is also dependent on the research question (Sobal, 2001), this study did not restrict its findings to a fixed number of interviews. Instead, as Strauss and Corbin (1998) suggest, it focused the research question more closely after the fourth interview: allowing for flexibility depending on what patterns and themes developed, further reducing the risk of loss of validity and reliability (Jones & Noble, 2007).

## 3.4. Data collection

This study aimed to explore how parkour practitioners experience LoP and the processes which they believed contributed to their stopping training. To do this, it was important that I use a data collection method that would enable participants to deep dive into their experiences, allowing them to be heard and also hear themselves: further enlightening us both on processes which they felt they had engaged in. The richness of the data elicited would allow for meaning and interpretation of their narrative, to help me as the researcher make sense of what processes were being engaged and how; and possibly elicit why they had seemingly undergone the particular process as a by-product. Unexpectedly, participants also appeared to have arrived at certain realisations themselves as a result of the chosen method, resulting in me being able to further adjust my line of questioning during subsequent interviews, and grow the constructed theory iteratively in line with where they, as experiencers of the phenomenon being researched, also felt my enquiry should look at. This made for a truly collaborative interview and process

of analysis which I felt was very concretely grounded in their processes.

### 3.4.1. The research interview

To achieve this depth from the interviews, a semi-structured methodology was used. To avoid overly directing the participant and to allow myself to truly stay open to exploring the participant's experience and processing so far as they felt comfortable to share it, a few 'Grand Tour questions' (Charmaz, 2010) were used to guide the interview process, leaving room for me to probe the interviewees on their narrative more flexibly. The initial interview schedule demonstrating this (Appendix 16), was then adapted: in line with the needs of the developing theory (also Appendix 16). The Grand Tour questions allowed for an increase in data reliability, due to the standardisation of some of the questions, helping in part to ensure a more valid conveyance of meaning-making: facilitating comparability (Denzin, 1989), but also allowing for the detailed exploration which GT demanded.

This form of interview allowed it to be more conversational, giving the participant space and ease in the process, helpful in eliciting deeper self-reflection and analysis of bias in both them and myself (Miles, Huberman, Huberman & Huberman, 1994). It did, however, require continuous, in-the-moment analysis, which although vital for researchers to follow leads more immediately (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001), was not without its challenges.

## 3.5. Procedure

### 3.5.1. Ethical considerations

This study fully adhered to ethical guidelines as outlined by the British Psychological Society for human research ethics (BPS, 2014). Ethical approval was applied for and gained from the London Metropolitan University School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Review Panel (Appendix 18).

Careful attention was paid throughout the data collection process to monitor the extent to which possible changes to the interview schedule and target participant sample were necessarily implemented, due to the selective and theoretical sampling embraced by the GT approach. Should such changes occur, a protocol was in place to ensure the research ethics boards were contacted directly to ensure optimal ethical and practical conditions for GT (Bruce, 2007). No

such changes were needed nor sought. The following ethical considerations were considered and addressed.

### 3.5.2 Recruitment

Esprit Concrete Ltd. advertised the research project through their mailing list, website and social media outlets. They provided researcher details to interested parties, safeguarding participants' privacy, and allowing them to share their details with the researcher should they be interested in participating. This consent was accepted via written approval in the form of messages or emails. The researcher then messaged participants in order of interest shown, to allow for equal opportunities and non-biased responses in the research process.

Upon receiving written confirmation that the participant was interested in taking part in the interview, I asked them to answer the inclusion and exclusion criteria through any means they found easiest e.g. phone call, email, social media messaging. My questions on inclusion and exclusion varied to match the criteria as they changed when the interview's scope was being narrowed or altered to fit the remaining needs of the emerging theory (see 3.6.3). Basic demographic questions were asked during this initial call if they could spare the time, or later during the initial introductory section of the in-person interviews. Either way, their answers were re-visited and verified during the in-person interviews.

Although I did not know participants directly, I was at times familiar with them and their training, having frequented some "jams" (parkour/art du déplacement/freerunning training gatherings) where they attended or merely seen them on Facebook threads linked to parkour. Using my social media presence largely for work, I was also known to most of the participants through a mutual acquaintance or by reputation. The parkour community, being as intimate as it is and myself having been all over the world for training and teaching alike, made it likely that some common knowledge of myself or participants was present. This may have influenced the data in certain ways like their manner of conversing, the anticipation of the question types I may pose or what my expectations of their answers may have been. A more in-depth reflection on this can be found in Chapter 7 on the limitations of the study.

### 3.5.3 Informed consent

An information sheet (Appendix 12) outlining the study was emailed to participants. The

researcher and supervisor's details were made explicit if participants had any questions in such regard. Upon agreeing to partake in the study, they were emailed two identical consent forms (Appendix 13), which they were asked to read prior to the interview. On the day of the interview, both the interviewee and the researcher signed both consent forms: one for the participant's records and one for the researcher. If this was done via email prior to the day, electronic signatures were accepted and verification calls carried out to verify the sender. Interviews were carried out once consent had been gained and information sheets read and processed by participants.

### 3.5.4. Right to withdraw

It was made explicit both in the information sheet as well as by me in person after the interview that participants had the right to opt-out of the research at any given time should they choose, without any explanation required - as long as this was done prior to me entering final analysis stages of which they had been apprised. They were informed that their details, transcripts and recordings would be destroyed directly upon their withdrawal.

### 3.5.5. Interview process

Interviews were 45-120 minutes long, depending on participant narrative size and the point of interviewing, e.g. initial broader interview or theoretical sample interview. These took place face-to-face and were recorded using a handheld device.

### 3.5.6. Transcription

According to Charmaz (2000), GT advocates for a denaturalised style of transcription, whereby the idiosyncratic elements of speech (non-verbal, involuntary vocalisation, etc.) are left out. Cameron (2001) suggests that instead of a participant's language depicting the 'real' world (critical realist in epistemology) as with naturalised transcription, it depicts meanings and perceptions that construct our reality (in line with social constructionist epistemology). Although this denaturalised style, enables a researcher to distance their assumptions from their analysis due to its reliance on staying close to the meaning-making of the interview, which is in line with GT methods, I found that during interviewing, the idiosyncratic elements of speech added a great deal of depth to the unconscious processes which the participants were undergoing or had undergone in processing their experiences.

Thus I was mindful to process some of this data when transcribing, to allow my analysis to go beyond the words of their conscious language and consider their unconscious language in aiding the co-construction of a model. I felt that encapsulating processes which participants may not have been aware of but had perhaps internalised and reacted to, both implicitly and at times explicitly, were important to explore and reflect on: especially as an active researcher in the interpretation process of their narratives and co-construction of the resultant model.

In this way, each interview was transcribed line by line in a denaturalised manner, while including idiosyncratic elements where it was informative, guided by their predominance during and after interview memoing. I also transcribed the interviews myself, which allowed me to become more reflexive and sensitive to the participants' meaning, frame the data more clearly, and facilitate a systematic, transparent and open coding process throughout (Finlay & Ballinger, 2006).

### 3.5.7. Confidentiality

Due to the extremely close nature of the parkour community both in the UK and globally, and my own social media presence within it, confidentiality and anonymity were extremely important.

Participants were informed that their interviews were anonymised (Appendix B); and any data collected stored on a password encrypted hard drive, accessible only to the researcher and the supervisors: ensuring confidentiality, subject to the Gov.uk (1998). The interviews were not stored on the recording device for more than the time necessary for the data to be transferred. Any personal, identifiable data collected on the participants was securely held on an encrypted spreadsheet and stored on the researcher's private password-protected laptop. All data will be kept for 5 years for the purpose of marking and possible publication. After 5 years, all data will be shredded and disposed of securely.

Participants were assigned pseudonyms and numbers for the purpose of the analysis and dissemination; and any identifiable information provided (places, companies, fellow parkour practitioners, etc.), removed and substituted with 'XX' during the transcription process. Full transcripts have not been attached as appendices, as a means of protecting clients' identities.

### 3.5.8. Participant welfare

It could not be assumed that no stress would be experienced by participants, as the topic being discussed could have been sensitive for some, and indeed transpired so. In the event that psychological risk in terms of stress was identified, a distress protocol was adhered to (Appendix 15), to manage this in line with the BPS (2010) guidelines for managing risk, in accordance with the London Metropolitan University Distress Protocol guidelines provided to me by my supervisor. In the event of physical and sociological risk, the participant was signposted to helpful references of contact, and the researcher's supervisor was prepared to be informed immediately, with further proceedings managed accordingly (Appendix 17).

### 3.5.9. Debriefing

I was aware that the interview process itself could trigger people to become aware of things they might not have been aware of previously, as well as possibly inducing unconscious knowledge being brought to the forefront of their conscious minds through the reflection and reflexivity in line with Augusto (2010), which the interviews required. Every interview was therefore followed by a short debrief, to allow interviewees to discuss anything which they felt had come up for them. It was reiterated post-interview that they could contact both my supervisor and myself should they have any questions. In such regard, participants were handed a debrief form (Appendix 14) after the interview: containing all necessary contact information in addition to the aim of the research they had taken part in.

### 3.5.10. Health and safety: The researcher researching

There was minimal risk posed by this participant population; thus interviews were arranged at locations that suited both the researcher and the participant, including their homes and places of work. However, for convenience and safeguarding in general, a public place was offered as a preferred location for the conduction of the interviews.

To mitigate any potential risks which could have arisen to me as a researcher, I made a responsible third party aware of appointments I made, including the date, time and location of the interview. This person was a vetted member of Esprit Concrete Ltd; this ensured added rigour in maintaining confidentiality unless there was a concern for my wellbeing. An estimated time slot with a comfortable margin on either side was shared, after which I arranged to text or call them to confirm I was safe. Should I not have responded, they knew to contact

emergency services.

As all meetings were in new locations, I assessed for risk, identified exits and any potential hazards upon arrival; and was mindful to remain vigilant of my surroundings, and the temperament of my participant throughout my time with them. If I sensed any aggression which I felt would have led to an escalation of any kind, I would have considered terminating the interview and leaving the location promptly.

## 3.6. Analytical procedure

### 3.6.1. Coding

Although in some approaches, such as Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), the use of occasional questions in less-structured interviewing may make it difficult to quantify and analyse the data reliably, GT allows for such occurrences more generously: due to its less homogenous nature, and theory generation aims and objectives being so iterative in comparison (Charmaz, 2010).

Unlike in IPA, data collection and data analysis overlapped in GT, due to the latter beginning during the interview process through memoing, followed by the transcription of interviews prior to further interviewing. Formulating questions based on the interpretations during interviews being made '*vivet*' led to each interview unfolding slightly differently each time; my analytical thoughts often influencing subsequent coding of the data as Coffey and Atkinson (1996) describe is common practice.

Transcribed interviews were analysed line by line (Appendix 11). Coding, described as the "core process in GT methodology" (Holton, 2007, p. 265), is the first level of abstraction, whereby data is sub-divided into small segments (in this study, line-by-line). Coding is the fundamental process of choosing, dividing and organising data to better understand it (Holton, 2007).

As Charmaz (2006) outlines, the initial coding process involved open coding, which required questions to be asked of the data, such as 'what is actually happening in the data?', or 'what is the participant concerned about? In doing so, I could ensure 'theoretical sensitivity', a term used by Glaser (1978) to describe a means of creating concepts from the data which are then related back to existing normal models of theory. I had to remain competent and analytical

through the use of these questions; and distant enough from the data to sit with the confusion and retrogression which I continually experienced, in order to slowly work towards conceptual co-construction as objectively as possible. Charmaz (2010) describes this as an interactive process that results in copious conceptualisations forming.

I used the gerund method, reframing the nouns commencing the line-by-line code with their verb forms with '-ing' (Charmaz, 2010), to allow me to interact with the data through participants' actions, so aiding the discovery process (Glaser, 1978). Glaser (1978) and Charmaz (2012) advocate using the gerund to allow actions and states of being to surface through the data, enabling the researcher to begin to identify what processes the participants are engaging in.

The second coding process, focused coding (Appendix 3A), encourages the researcher to begin to substantiate groups of initial codes in a more conceptual manner: which attempts to explain what processes are going on for the participant - not just explicitly cited by them, but as interpreted by the researcher. It is the beginning of an iterative process that spans the entire analysis process, allowing the researcher to think more analytically about the data, using a constant comparison method between participant interviews.

This allows for the grouping of focused codes to begin to emerge, forming lower-order categories which each encompass themes shared by certain focus codes. These relationships are constantly scrutinised to identify which higher-order category they best fit into. These processes involve starting to code theoretically, converging codes relating to one another into these categories (Appendix 1 and 2), refining the categories further by cross-checking them with the low-level abstraction codes they were now to represent (Willig, 2013).

In this way, data was not so much sorted as really explored and asked questions of, to-ing and fro-ing between constructed categories to account for all possibilities of its meaning; until I believed that the complexity of the data had been explored fully and belonged to one category or another. There was a constant search for thoughts, feelings, behaviours, etc. in the participant data which would contradict the similarities and differences inferred, especially as tentative hypotheses begin to emerge, a process central to GT outlined by McLeod (2003).

### 3.6.2. Memo writing

Memo writing, part of the coding process, involves recording the theory development stages:

providing the researcher and others with evidence of their interaction with their data (Glaser, 1978). It is said to stimulate higher-level thinking about ideas, comparisons and connections which researchers experience when analysing the data, allowing them to establish which direction they want to take the theory generation in and have a process of evidencing why (Glaser, 1978).

My memoing started even before my first interview, noting down assumptions and beliefs I had in relation to the research topic, interview, participant and suchlike. As interviewing began, the memos served to explore what vocalisations, behaviours and implicit and explicit processes participants seemed to have experienced, enabling me to compare these with other participants in line with Charmaz (2006). This informed what categories were co-constructed before I used memoing to engage these more deeply in a systematic manner. This illuminated processes, assumptions and actions, allowing me to understand how they related, what was being hypothesised and what resultant categories were materialising.

It began to appear that participants had employed different coping styles in an attempt to manage and make sense of the core phenomena, their experience of the LoP, in line with McLeod's (2003) reports. They further appeared to experience processes that exacerbated the LoP phenomenon, which seemingly led to quitting styles being adopted and links back to a seeking behaviour when entering parkour. Memos detailing such emerging themes and concepts were dated and labelled to reflect which section of the data they were referring to (Appendix 10).

### 3.6.3. Theoretical sampling

As the categories and core category was being constructed, theoretical sampling was introduced. This is a procedure in which the researcher selects additional cases to further explore, develop or refine concepts already proposed (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Corbin and Strauss (2008) demonstrate theoretical sampling at three levels of coding: open (sampling with purpose), axial (sampling in a structured way to validate relationships thought to be forming), and selective (deliberately testing and integrating categories).

The first theoretical sample filtered for:

1.  Male participants who no longer trained in parkour, as the initial sample appeared to be predominantly made up of women.

The second theoretical sample filtered for comparison with the concepts which were beginning to be constructed from earlier interviews:

1. Participants desiring to re-enter parkour training: exploring the processes that appeared to show a willingness to re-enter parkour and what they processed as helpful to this, based on the initial interviewees' data.

2. Participants seemingly sure that they would never return to parkour training: probing their conscious processing of LoP and quitting styles further.

The third theoretical sample, selectively interviewing to test the co-constructed model and its integrated categories, assessed generalisability to a similar population, seemingly experiencing the same phenomenon of LoP:

1. An ex-gymnast who was no longer training and had done so, on average, twice a week for at least two years before quitting gymnastics. Interestingly, they had had exposure to parkour in the last year, having substituted gymnastics for it three years after quitting (this was an unforeseen circumstance, and neither inclusion nor exclusion criteria).

The third theoretical sample allowed for theory generation to continue in light of negative cases, which Kennedy and Lingard (2006) describe as integral to the constant comparative data analysis method that GT entails. This allowed for the establishment of points of comparison with 'normal' cases: a means of establishing a study control, useful in the development of theoretically generalisable models, which added further rigour to the research.

All the above stages of coding were accompanied by diagramming (Appendix 9), beneficial in GT in visually mapping out the researcher's ideas and linkages, aiding in the conceptualisation of categories as soon as focused coding begins (Charmaz, 2010). Using diagramming, layer upon layer of outlining theory was mapped out: until the co-constructed GT, based on my integrated concepts, had been developed (Charmaz, 2010).

There continues to be a conundrum on whether GT research should involve a literature review early in the research, or during its later stages (Hussein, Kennedy & Oliver, 2017). In line with McGhee, Marland and Atkinson's (2007)'s thoughts, some form of literature review is perhaps helpful in allowing a researcher to identify the gaps in existing theory, and decide what to research. Although performing such a review earlier on in this study could, in any case, be

justified by its constructivist epistemology, even if we acknowledge my role, biases and prior knowledge (Ramalho, Adams, Huggard & Hoare, 2015), the constraints of this study being part of a doctoral system which demands a certain checklist to be ticked off for it to progress mean that a delayed literature review was not a realistic expectation. Thus I came to a compromise, deploying a high level of reflexivity throughout the reviewing process advocated by McGhee et al., (2007). I conducted a literature review that remained broad in scope, only engaging with it more concretely once my theoretical sampling had begun, in line with Charmaz's (2010) suggestions.

The literature search was initially carried out to establish a gap and initial justification for this study. After the analysis, a further review was carried out to support the model discussion. Upon feedback post viva, the review was then further enhanced thus resulting in the exhaustive review in Chapter 1. Although a literature review of this nature is usually uncommon for the social constructivist methodology I used in this study, it did not interfere with my methodology given that it was written after model creation, in line with Charmaz's (2010) suggestions on good social constructivist grounded theory (GT) in practice guidelines.

### 3.6.4. Conceptual depth attainment

Although this study's sample number was too small to reach 'data saturation', described as the point at which no additional data are being found (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), I would argue that the final categories could be said to have been reached 'theoretical sufficiency' (Dey, 1999); there being no new properties or novel relationships in the categories emerging, all having been "defined, checked and explained" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 213).

More systematically matching up this study's final concepts and resultant model against the 'conceptual depth criteria', a criterion proposed by Nelson (2016), it would appear that data collection ended with conceptual depth being met:

- The concepts were illustrated using a range of quotes drawn from multiple participants per concept.

- These sat in a rich network of concepts and themes, grounded in the data and linked by complex connections.

- The unspoken, unconscious, more subtle aspects had been understood and used to put

forward depth in the concepts' meaning.

- The concepts resonated with existing literature.

- The concepts had been tested for external validity (third theoretical sampling).

### 3.6.5. Methods to ensure rigour

In line with Chiovitti and Piran's (2003) suggested criteria for trustworthiness in GT, the following processes were carried out to uphold reliability and validity throughout the course of this research:

- I remained transparent with my participants throughout the process, inviting them to request access to my analysis after preliminary theory construction commenced. I also stuck closely to using their own words: cross-checking all I constructed with their own words and allowing my model to stick closely with the processes they brought to the research, without overly straying from this traceable method of working.

- I kept a reflexive diary throughout analysis and theory construction. This is thought to facilitate externalisation and sense-making of one's subjective perspectives about the area of research, and reduce the danger of them overly biasing data interpretation (Birks, Chapman & Francis, 2008).

- I cross-checked my coding, analysis and conclusions drawn with other GT researchers and added an extra layer of scrutiny to my analysis throughout: ultimately increasing the reliability of the resultant categories and argued processes.

- Finally, I attempted to work within the scope of my research. True to the level of theory I was able to generate given my data, I made sense of the categories and the model itself through discussing how pre-existing theory and literature helped make sense of each category.

# Chapter 4: Reflexive Statement – Methodology and analysis

Reflexivity as discussed by Finlay and Gough (2003) involves developing an awareness of the presence of one's own mind or subjectivity within one's research, then engaging in deep reflection. McLeod (2001) highlights this as vital in addressing the assumptions and biases one may have which I certainly found essential to my own research's methodology and analysis journey, expanded on below. My research being of a qualitative design further emphasised my need to acknowledge the co-constructed nature of the model that ensued, given it centring so crucially around my interpretation of interviewees' world views, understanding of their processes and at times lack thereof. Although this is normalised as part of the process of GT by Charmaz (2010), it was as discussed below, quite a challenge and a steep learning curve for me.

Hall & Callery (2001) argue that to ensure rigour, relationality and reflexivity should be incorporated into the research methodology to address the power and trust dynamics within researcher-participant interactions. Throughout my time with the research data, I can attest to the complexity of this relationship as tremendously organic and overwhelming. For example, I found myself constantly fearful of interpreting data to too great an extent and not remaining close enough to the participants' text. I often feared being overly biased by the interpretative therapist skills I am partial to; which ironically, I also found myself actively needing to engage with when faced with making sense of the interviewees' inner conflicts and defences, which emerged increasingly over the course of my data analysis.

My adoption of a social constructivist epistemology thus required me to openly scrutinise my research journey, and keep me mindful of the degree to which I was influencing my inquiry. This is something Charmaz (2006) describes as a  means of reducing the likelihood of overly distorting the data through my perceptions of the field of study, personal assumptions, biases and my interpretations of the participants. This aided in the accountability which allowed the research to retain its credibility as discussed by McGhee et al. (2007).  I also used reflexive journaling and very detailed memoing to help paper trail my research journey transparently. Documenting all interpretations of data I made and consequent decision-making carried out was, as Charmaz (2010) describes good practice to allow my positioning, assumptions and interests to hold up to inquiry.

When I was using the memoing to begin to organise my thoughts and then the model categories

themselves, I sometimes found myself swaying between participant narratives and my own meaning-making. For example, I was perhaps conceptualising too soon and skipping steps in my analysis process when I was restless, overall perhaps over anticipating the trajectories in my emergent model to a degree. The fact that I was visually able to trace my way back through the coding stages and the thoughts associated with them via memoing, allowed me to reverse engineer pathways if necessary and catch myself overestimating whenever necessary. This was either through lone reflection or through external means e.g. giving my work to the peer supervision group to see how differently they would interpret and process the data. Peer supervision proved to be very useful in terms of providing me with the developmental feedback I needed for both my own growth and my model's through the process of GT. This was in line with Benshoff's (1994) thoughts on peer supervision being ideal for increased self-evaluation necessary for developmental growth.

In line with my experience, critics of social constructivist methodologies like Potter and Wetherell (1995) have argued that focusing so heavily on the dynamics of a research method as I found myself doing, could risk largely overriding interviewees' personal accounts. For example, through overly disguising decisions made on the data by the researchers' relevant meaning-making. However, my experience was that given how much data mapping interviewee processes were largely unspoken throughout my analysis, connecting my own meaning-making to the analysis was inevitable. Therefore the process of memoing and reflecting on these with my supervisor in particular, as recommended by Lee (2007), allowed me to marry the interpretive skills I was relying on with the rigorous objectivity the research methodology demanded.

Ultimately the objective input of peer and supervisor supervision around my coding of data and memoing through it led me to feel that I was not masking my personal and professional meaning-making of the data. Rather, I was entwining them fittingly to the best of my knowledge with the narrative of processes the participants had volunteered.

I also found myself needing to constantly check in with my drivers throughout working with my data, repeatedly re-visiting my methodology and my research question, challenging whether my agenda was in line with the data's emerging findings or if I was influencing them too heavily. This iterative process, though very mirroring of that which Charmaz (2010) outlines as necessary when models are collaboratively co-constructed, was still very unnerving

for me. This was undoubtedly driven by a fear of my own needs and desires for my research not being met. I realised that I had great reservations about my ability to get the primary three disciplines I knew this model could matter to, namely counselling psychology, parkour and sports psychology, to understand the links that I was seeing forming through the data. I realised I was plagued by doubts of how the mainstream might see me and my motivations within this research, fearing their judgment in a very visceral and embodied way. This echoed one of Etherington's (2004) participants sentiments when outlining the angst that she experienced when going her own way with her research realising that the validation she sought from "outside" needed to come from within (Etherington, 2004, p. 221).

I was further plagued with questions I had been posed by others throughout my research like "why not do this as part of the sport psychology department?" or "what does parkour have to do with counselling psychology". From this, I was very self-conscious that my hope that the emerging data would highlight the answers to these questions was ever-present and highly influential to my data interpretation direction if unchecked. This made me extremely worried and very hypervigilant about my own validation seeking tendencies influencing the research. This prompted me to keep a personal diary, which Etherington's participants found helpful in providing structure and discipline, as well as a means of connecting with themselves (Etherington, 2004). I felt both things would be helpful in managing being influenced overly by my anxieties. In addition to keeping a diary, I used my memo collection as a way to self-manage my anxieties so as to not overly influence the data based on my agenda and the defensiveness that sometimes emerged as a result of the fears I was experiencing.

Further to this, being myself a practitioner who was actively experiencing the phenomenon of LoP that was being co-constructed during the research process, it was often easy to align myself with my participants' narratives. At times this also blinded me from possible alternative accounts of processes that were coming through from the data. Actively journaling the answers to "who's agenda am I focussing on here?" and "which lens is this interpretation being viewed through?" allowed me to step outside of myself enough to reflect, challenge and at times re-align myself with my research question and emerging models requirements. Thus re-directing the focus from my own drivers and needs to my participant's processes.

My position at the time of research, therefore, was very much that of an 'insider', defined by McGhee et al., (2007) as someone working within the area of their research. Not only was I a

practitioner myself, but I was also one of the few if not only, current parkour therapist coaches in the community. This further exacerbated my motivation to better understand the process behind the LoP which I saw my existing clients experience and the participants' intrigue in both the research and myself. Although this was a great source of intrinsic motivation to me, it had certain drawbacks.

As I further discuss in the limitations chapter of this thesis (Chapter 7), I had to pay special attention to the effect that my known role as a parkour therapist had on my participants during the interview as well as my processing of this effect during, post-interviewing and throughout my analysis. Participants' language seemed more therapeutically orientated during interviews and their focus was very heavily 'psychologised' at times in my view. This possibly aligned with their pre-existing ideologies of me as a therapist and the expectations of them they may have thought I had. This required me to actively yet subtly challenge or probe their meaning-making. Doing so allowed me to differentiate between what they were sharing because they felt I was looking for it or possibly seeking to better align with me, versus their meaning-making less influenced by this. This allowed the data collected to be more representative of their truer personal thoughts, feelings and behaviours. I did this by exploring their lexis and definitions with them. I expanded on psychological terms they used and processes they described to encourage personalised example led narratives that sought to contextualise their storytelling in their own realities. I was also extremely mindful to validate their sensitive positioning at the time of interviewing in relation to the 'client-therapist' dynamic that may very well have been enacted during the interview, all the while steering them back to their own realities and perceptions of these as much as possible.

I in turn had to very consciously mitigate my tendency to deviate away from my research line of inquiry, reminding myself that I was there to observe their process and not intervene in it as much as possible. This left me at times feeling very energised at the emerging potential I could see my model having in the future as I further immersed myself in the participants' process. At times, however, it also left me feeling unfulfilled at not having been able to fully embrace my other self, the therapist self. I actively reminded myself that this research was the first step to a life long journey within this topic of investigation and that my ability to compartmentalise both my therapist and researcher roles was inevitably increasing the quality of my current agenda. Furthermore, my research, and that the diaries and memoing could always serve to be revisited in the future to grow the more therapeutically-centred thoughts and ideas that may have been

triggered throughout the research process. Similarly to Etherington's (2004) participants, these tools were a way of holding emerging dreams that were forming. Further akin to Etherington's (2004) participants I came to allow myself to use these as a process that held space to discover things at large, not merely things directly relevant to this study.

Towards the end of my research, I was appointed Mental Health Lead for the national governing body Parkour UK, and my relationship to the GT process became even more nerve-wracking. Glaser & Strauss (1967) recognised and accepted that no two researchers could produce the same data exactly – describing the GT domain as a dynamic one that only results from a 'studied' world and a product of 'human' participation and interaction. Nonetheless, this did little to comfort me during the process itself. I felt an overinflated burden from the weight that the resulting model could carry not only for the counselling psychology field but also my fellow community members within parkour, and my own professional identity in relation to the parkour community moving forward seemingly contingent on the 'success' of this emergent model.

I realised at this point that my science-practitioner character style and professional practice stance were at odds with the social constructivist methodologies I was engaging with. The fact that there was a reliance on 'giving in to the data' within this mode of working, requiring a release of a pre-defined notion of 'correctness' was grinding against my constant niggling sub-conscious search for a 'truth'. I felt a character clash taking place with my chosen methodology through my analysis that I needed to re-engage with several times during the GT process. I found myself looking for order in a type of chaos that I should have been welcoming, and structuring my emerging models far too linearly, far too soon. My supervisor picked up very early on that my analysis was resembling Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis and categorisation methods rather than process-driven methods. From this, I was able to address the fact that my need to be so organised was indeed my dislike of the messiness that my chosen form of social constructivist GT methodology required.

My analysis also saw me engage psychodynamic theory to guide some of the interpretations that I made on the data. In line with Ghosal's (2020) own reflections, the interpretative nature of psychodynamic practice aligns with an expert stance, at odds with the participant centric analysis that a subjective epistemology demands. I began to familiarise myself more with the process of acknowledging my need to control and starting to let go of it, trusting the process

more and more as time went on. I also felt able to be kinder with myself at having been influenced so strongly by the positivist influences mentioned above. I sought to engage my GT group's help in remaining as close to the client experiences as possible, sharing my interpretations openly to try to deepen the analysis while minimising the risk of overly leading it towards a non-person-centred direction. I reminded myself, however, as Etherington's (2004) participants did, that it was perhaps natural to truth-seek to gain some footing with the seemingly never-ending uncertainty. Thus bringing me some humorous respite when reminded that I was trying not to influence research that was in fact co-constructive by nature.

Ongoing reflection also included personal therapy that heavily centred on normalising my struggles and framing things compassionately. This alongside my GT support group helped me gain moments of insight into myself and others in ways that I now can even channel through to other relational areas of my personal and professional life. For example, I was able to dissociate my own over-inflated need for control maintenance through the uncertainty of GT, healthily. This helped reduce my sense of responsibility to myself and others more generally, undoubtedly influenced by my long-standing inner narcissism.

These moments of insight felt like the 'empathic insights' Boden, Gibson, Owen and Benson (2016) speak of, that help to allow researchers like me to appreciate the beauty in complexity that the rich interviewee data can provide. All the while re-appraising my analysis to reassure and reframe my approach to the process, allowing for a seemingly rich, credible piece of research to be produced. In these instances, reducing my inflated use of self through my reflexive practice when seeing that it was triggered by self-indulgence, allowed for necessary objectivity to be gained, in line with Mykhalovskiy's (1997) thoughts that reflexivity can at times contaminate good research.

Throughout my time with my data, I ping-ponged, very much like my participants, from a hugely empowering state of 'knowing-ness' to a very unnerving position of 'know less-ness'. In line with Marks and Mönnich-Marks' (2003) study that stressed the importance of addressing interview counter-transference, I began to reflect on the possible counter-transference that could have been at play for me during my research journey, at the interview stage and as my inquiry into my interview transcripts deepened.

I appeared to be heavily doubting my tacit knowledge, making even the use of my GT tools challenging, in line with Lempert's (2007) thoughts on GT novice's experience of the process.

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This mirrored the doubt that my participants had shown during their own training, their lack of confidence in themselves within their training context mirroring my own lack of confidence in my research process. The sheer breadth of the emerging model and the richness of data it was informed by was so overwhelming that I felt I was embodying my process very viscerally, again paralleling some of my interviewees' experiences. It honestly felt like I was constantly in an emotional perceived state of LoP most of the time, while rationally being justifiably where I needed to be at that time. This extreme dichotomy I experienced needing to remain grounded in a process that although necessarily organised, was far from neatly linear, required me to move towards acknowledging, accepting and normalising my feelings of LoP. This reduced the judgement I was placing on myself, ultimately serving to reconnect me with my participants' realities, releasing me up more emotionally and physically to allow the co-created model to emerge more freely.

I could not have anticipated the journey this research took me on. I reflect back on it fondly and with some pride. I feel privileged that the participants all reported feeling heard and that the analysis was conducted by centring them in it, validating their experiences. This aided the model creation process, increasing its potential to help inform these participants and others experience of parkour training in the future. It was transformative to be with my participants' data in the intimate way required by GT and although the path was fraught with self-doubt and at times loathing for the process, I emerged from it reassured by my instincts that not only had my research question appropriately match GT methodology but so had I. I gained a new perspective on research more synonymous with McLeod's (1997) contributions that research should be approached more like a re-search of participants and less about truth-seeking. This mindset greatly aided me to embody the social constructionism epistemology I strove to uphold.

# Chapter 5: Analysis

## 5.1. Model summary

'*Internal*' and '*external*', '*physical*' and '*psychosocioemotional'* influencing factors appear to influence people's motivation to enter parkour, thus informing what they are '*seeking through parkour training'*.

Upon initiating parkour, participants appeared to have suffered a complex process of '*paradoxically losing while journeying through parkour*', influenced by the seeking factors they sought through parkour training. The participants' experiences exposed a painful conflict between the driver of 'anticipated gaining' through parkour practice versus the disaster of 'risk of losing' that they experienced, which appeared to rupture their sense of self.

This paradoxical losing process was experienced through '*struggling with somatic challenges'*, the '*unmasking of the traceur's "divided self"* ', a process that resembled '*re-enacting the past through parkour'*, '*"religion-ing" of practice and practitioner through parkour*' and '*experiencing "fitness fascism*"-ing throughout the course of their training.

The paradoxical losing process seemed to then fuel the augmentation of pre-existing hurdles which participants had previously experienced prior to parkour or were now experiencing through training, triggering and then seemingly exacerbating a phenomenon of '*experiencing lack of progression (LoP)'* in parkour.

The participants '*experiencing LoP'* appeared to adopt three different types of coping styles to manage their experience: '*detached defending'*, '*defended destroying*', and '*reflective warrioring*'. In addition, '*contained practitioning*' emerged as a seemingly utopian suggestive coping style for managing someone's experience of LoP. It embodied recommendations made by participants for internal and external containment provisions to teaching and practice for themselves as lone practitioners in and around the community, as well as students and coaches within institutionalised parkour structures (e.g. classes). These appeared to be derived from the absolute opposite experience of the participants' lived-in '*experience of LoP'*; or indeed stopping parkour, as often emerged from a 20/20 hindsight perspective, as well as researcher interpretation.

The outcome of LoP appeared to be displayed in the development of *'quitting styles'* that

subdivided into *'re-entering parkour - experiencing a revolving door'* or *'stopping parkour permanently'*.

The consequence of participants' coping through '*detached defending*' to cope with their '*experience of LoP*' was *'stopping parkour permanently'* and a *'conflicted stopping'* style. They were either content with their decision, taken through a somewhat unconsciously conflicted process; or avoidant coping styles justified their stopping training permanently.

The consequence of participants' coping through '*defended destroying*' involved considering resuming training or still training sporadically: *'re-entering parkour - experiencing a revolving door'*. They appeared to be stuck in a conflictual loop between re-experiencing the '*paradoxically losing*' process of training due to not having processed their trauma, seemingly fighting their urges to stop training, contemplating or indeed *'re-entering conflicted'*.

Those who coped through '*reflective warrioring*' appeared to show a reflective and reflexive readiness to *'re-entering parkour - experiencing a revolving door'*, with a renewed desire to keep seeking what they initially had desired through parkour training. This involved constructively processing and adapting their own '*internal*' and '*external*' influencing factors, allowing for a supposedly more positive and safe *'re-entering resolved'* style of continued training. Those who ended up *'stopping parkour permanently'* seemed reflectively resigned and content with their decision, varying from those *'re-entering conflicted'*.

It is suggested that '*experiencing LoP*' was an inevitable phenomenon that all participants experienced at some point in their parkour trajectories. How it was managed, however, appeared critical in predicting someone's commitment to continuing rather than stopping; and whether they felt conflicted or resolved. Coping with LoP through '*contained practitioning*' therefore emerged explicitly and implicitly as a recommended style of coping, thought to reduce the likelihood of quitting. Participants felt that if they were able to '*experience LoP*' in a 'held' manner by themselves and others, continually normalising and in turn positively processing their LoP. Exposure to LoP distress would be arguably more harmoniously embedded into the process of their daily training, reducing the risk of LoP leading to a total rupture of their practice, relationship to the discipline and sense of self.

In accepting that participants seek out sports for a myriad of reasons, in this case parkour, when they experience trials and tribulations through exposure to its training, certain losses occur to a participants' 'self'. This triggers coping styles that mirror an individual's defences and

acceptances in life more generally. This study proposes that pre-sport experiences influence somebody's symbolic representations of the sport itself and experiences within it, thereby influencing how they internalise or externalise these. Some processes result in constructive outcomes, such as retention in parkour or resolved re-entry; others in destructive ones, such as exiting the sport or re-entering unaltered in their coping style.
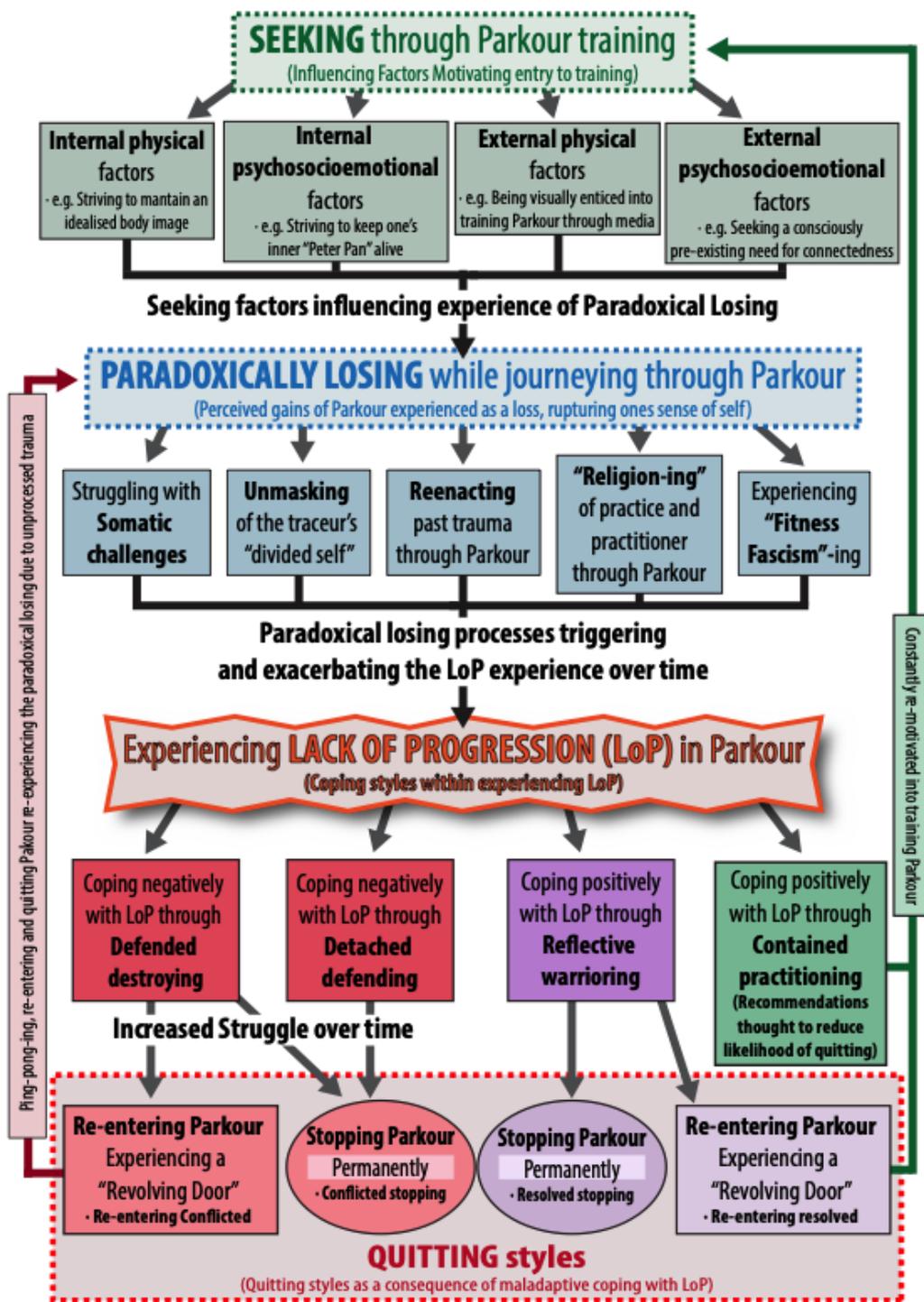
Figure 6: The grounded theory model of longitudinal LoP in parkour

| Category | Higher order category | Lower order category | Participants |
|---|---|---|---|
| Seeking through parkour training | Internal physical influencing factors | Striving to maintain an idealised body image | 2,5,6,8,1 |
| | | Seeking to embody subverting through an accepted medium | 3,8,5,1,2,4 |
| | Internal psychosocioemotional influencing factors | Striving to keep their inner 'Peter Pan' alive | 9,1,4,6,8,2,3 |
| | | Seeking to satisfy their inner narcissist | 1,8,3,7,5,9 |
| | External physical influencing factors | Being visually enticed into training in parkour through media | 2,3,4,5,7,1 |
| | | Seeking to challenge lived experiences of others' negative perceptions of their potential | 1,4,3,2,6,8 |
| | External psychosocioemotional influencing factors | Seeking a consciously pre-existing need for connectedness | 4,7,3,5,2,1,6 |
| | | Seeking a medium to practise overcoming obstacles in life | 3,4,1,6,9,7,5 |
| Paradoxically losing while journeying through parkour | Struggling with somatic challenges | Experiencing cost of psychosomatic barriers to the self | 3,5,2,6,1 |
| | | Experiencing cost of somatopsychic barriers to the self | 2,8,4,7,6 |
| | | Experiencing a rupture in sense of self through injury | 3,4,6,7,1,9,8 |
| | Unmasking the traceur's 'divided self' | Experiencing a wavering in their own values– 'showmanship' vs 'withinship' | 3,8,4,7,1,2,6 |
| | | Struggling with being confronted with the 'failing' self | 5,2,4,3,1,5,6,8 |
| | | Mismatching their reality with fantasy | 3,4,7,2,1,5,6 |
| | Re-enacting past trauma through parkour | Unconsciously re-traumatising the self through re-exposure to insurmountable challenge | 4,9,2,6,5,7,8,3 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Unconsciously re-traumatising the self through employing past maladaptive coping styles | 6,9,2,7,8,4 |
| | 'Religion-ing' of practice and practitioner through parkour | Experiencing the need to compartmentalise the self to avoid being engulfed into 'cultish' parkour life track | 4,2,7,5,9,3 |
| | | Adopting parkour as a medium to achieve omnipotence: 'The God like Man' | 2,4,1,7,3 |
| | | Transferring custody of their omnipotence onto another | 25,1,2,8,9,3,7 |
| | Experiencing "fitness fascism" - ing | Struggling with a 'Doppler effect' style shift in parkour culture over time | 3,5,7,9,1 |
| | | Struggling in the face of theirpreconceptionsof parkour as a non-competitive sport being challenged | 2,4,9,3,7,5,1 |
| Experiencing 'LoP' (LoP) in parkour | Coping negatively with LoP through defended destroying | Externalising blame on to the 'other' destructively | 4,2,9,1,3 |
| | | 'Ping-Pong-ing' paradoxically losing due to sitting with unprocessed trauma | 7,2,6,8,5 |
| | Coping negatively with LoP through detached defending | Externalising blame on to the 'other' numbingly | 4,5,2,1,8,3 |
| | | Substituting parkour with other mediums to meet persistent needs of the self | 7,2,6,8,5,9,4 |
| | Coping positively with LoP through reflective warrioring | Objectively allocating responsibility for LoP | 3,1,9,7,6 |
| | | Reflexively processing LoP | 2,4,3,7,1,5 |
| | Coping positively with LoP through contained practitioning (Recommendations | Reflecting on a need for external containment provisions | 4,3,2,7,9,1 |

| | | thought to reduce the likelihood of quitting) | Reflecting on a need for internal containment provisions | 4,8,6,1,2,7 |
| | | | Reflecting on a necessary balance needed between the collective and autonomous parkour training experience | 6,9,4,5,2,7,3 |
| Quitting styles | Re-entering parkour: experiencing the revolving door | Re-entering conflicted | 5,6,3,7,8 |
| | | Re-entering resolved | 3,5,1,2,4 |
| | Stopping parkour permanently | Resolved stopping | 2,5,4,3,1 |
| | | Conflicted stopping | 4,3,2,8,9,7 |

Table 2: Summary table of LoP model categories

# 5.2. Seeking through parkour training

This category comprises of things that participants experienced before encountering parkour that they consciously felt enticed them into the discipline, and that I felt unconsciously led them to seek out and try an art form like parkour.

This category introduces various 'internal' and 'external' factors that appear to motivate participants' entry into parkour,

The term 'Internal' was used to encapsulate the constructs being relied on within a participant e.g. 'my motivations' or 'my body' that participants appeared to be tapping into. To then processing states like the desire to try parkour and personal orientations e.g. 'wanting to be less shy/ feel thrill' or 'stay fit'. In this way, I saw them to be internally driven according to participants.

'The term 'External' was used to encapsulate the constructs being relied on that appeared external to the participant e.g. 'using parkour to…' or 'using people to…' and factors e.g. 'media or friends' to directly impact participants ideology formation according to participants and my own interpretation of the data.

The complexity in the possible comprehension of these term assignments and at times the seeming overlap possibly perceived, stems from the devil's advocate interpretation that could be placed on the clients interpretation of their views being internal or external, as it was by

myself and my viva examiners. This is inherently due to internal and external processes being so inherently entwined when influencing the beliefs, conceptions and working models of the participants consciously and unconsciously (further discussed in Chapter 6). Therefore, I led with where the participant placed responsibility for the construct/phenomenon in question for the name-assignment to the category, still addressing the complexity intertwined in my interpretations and reflections of their statements.

These 'Internal' and 'External' factors were seen to span 'physical' as well as 'psychosocioemotional' factors. The 'physical' factors were named so to address the participants' reference to factors that were to do with obvious physical constructs like objects, actions and the body. I extended this title to include states that participants were striving to demonstrate through the use of their body, such as 'embodiment' and less tangible but in my view, physical influencers such as the media, others' actions and things that participants were using their bodies to try to convey, e.g. defying others' expectations of them through physically training parkour. 'Psychosocioemotional' was a term created by me to encapsulate the psychological, social and/or emotional factors that appeared entwined within participants' processing of what they sought through parkour, and how. These factors seemed to me to be affectual and abstract such as being motivated by seeking a feeling e.g. peter pan like, or feeding into a personality trait e.g. narcissism or seeking a 'space' to train e.g. to overcoming life hurdles.

## 5.2.1. Internal physical influencing factors

This higher order category was organised to present the influencing factors that appeared to stem from pre-existing beliefs of participants e.g. feeling less free/ unhealthy (internal constructs) and things they felt parkour would help them to address e.g. doing more exercise, increasing positive neurotransmitters (physical constructs). Further to this, participants appeared to see a way of using parkour training to make embodied physical statements to challenge things that they had seemingly internalised about the world e.g. society is closed, girls don't do parkour. In this way, the category of embodied subversion through an acceptable medium of parkour transpired. This resulted in me categorising the above aims that participants seemed to have for entering parkour training as internal physical influencing factors.

| Higher order category | Lower order category | Participants |
| --- | --- | --- |

| 5.2.1. Internal physical influencing factors | 5.2.1.1. Striving to maintain an idealised body image | 2,1,5,6,8 |
| | 5.2.1.2. Seeking to embody subverting through an accepted medium | 3,8,5,1,2,4 |

Table 3: Visual representation of higher and lower order categories and their participants (HLOCP) for 5.2.1

### *5.2.1.1. Striving to maintain an idealised body image*

This lower order category came together to organise the factors associated with participants' body image, composition and desired states they wanted it to embody. For example, being able to do what they want with a body if fit, which seemed to influence them to seek out and joining parkour.

Participants appeared driven by a desire to get healthy through parkour training as a motivation for entry:

> *'So, my motivations (for doing parkour) were, in not any particular order, but I would definitely say exercise being one' (Fay, p. 6, line 270-271).*

There was a sense that being healthy led to being more physically liberated:

> *'I just want to (...) be fit to be able to do what I want' (Jack, p. 11, line 280-282).*

Some participants shared their belief in training being extremely beneficial to their mental health:

> *'Treat mental illness by increasing level (of exercise) and like all these positive neurotransmitters, biologically helping me' (John, p. 11, line 284-288).*

A desire to get back to their former self-image also appears to be a significant motivator:

> *'A mum... after two pregnancies, my body is wrecked (...) I decided actually to train' (May, p. 9, line 355).*

### *5.2.1.2. Seeking to embody subverting through an accepted medium*

A sense of seeking a means of 'breaking out' (as Jeremy describes it) and away from oppressive norms and a means of seeking preparedness for this through parkour came through strongly in some participants' narratives. As a result, I organised their (internal) needs to challenge their

world views or the perceived views others had on them through training in the safe space that they assigned parkour practice to have (physical). I then categorised this into seeking to physically subserve through a medium they themselves seemed to find containing.

Some participants observed parkour as able to challenge previously embodied labels, and a medium for positive change in affect processing:

> *'Basically, I think society is closed. Everything is on point, using tools and stuff, but parkour breaks them…. That kind of concept I like, maybe that's why I'm saying freedom, you're never stuck in a box. Even if you are you can get out' (Ryan, p. 5, 113-118).*

> *'They thought I was just being naughty rather than unable to do work so I started acting out and being rebellious. I vandalised schools. I put several kids in hospital (…) when I found parkour, I just thought all the sort of anger just went' (Jeremy, p. 2, line 46-51).*

Challenging the perceived status quo, gender stigma echoed rebelliously through the voice of some participants: May expressing a desire to try it to prove these opinions wrong:

> *'"Girls don't do parkour", and I was like, "What!" So I had to fight back' (May, p. 3, line 89-90).*

Several participants did, however, also experience stress, judgement and hindrances to their desire to train, which led to them embodying a certain fight to meet systemic expectations held by parents, teachers, partners and alike:

> *'He (Dad) just shook his head like ... you know, like, "Ugh, kids" (…) "Just get a job" kind of thing. That's not what he said, but that was the kind of mentality' (Tina, p. 14, line 593-596).*

Some participants appeared to internalise expectations which they perceived others had of them, generating a state of great anxiety when training in front of others:

> *'That feeling of being so nervous every time I HAD to play in front of people and nerves with any performance, the physiological thing and I'm sure it's with (…) if you're doing parkour or you're doing music, you take shallow breaths and you can't take deep breaths' (May, p. 2, line 88-92).*

### 5.2.2. Internal psychosocioemotional influencing factors

This higher order category was organised to house the influencing factors which appeared to

stem from participants' accounts of their internal needs/drivers (e.g. wanting to feel alive). Secondly, their pre-disposed beliefs that participating in parkour would meet these needs (e.g. thinking parkour would set them free). Participants made references to how they felt parkour would influence their lives and selves psychologically (e.g. their personality), sociologically (e.g. people in society judging them) and their emotional regulation (e.g. controlling their desired externalised self). As these did not always appear conscious, I co-constructed what participants voiced as known with what I inferred through the analysis of what I also felt lay beneath their descriptions. For example, fleshing out their conscious and unconscious processes to organise this internal psychosocioemotional influencing factors category .

| Higher order category | Lower order category | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| 5.2.2. Internal psychosocioemotional influencing factors | 5.2.2.1. Striving to keep their inner 'Peter Pan' alive | 9,1,4,6,8 |
| | 5.2.2.2. Seeking to satisfy their inner narcissist | 1,8,3,7,5,9 |

Table 4: HLOCP for 5.2.2

### 5.2.2.1. Striving to keep their inner 'Peter Pan' alive

This lower order category was named so because of the references that many participants made to parkour being tied to a re-claiming of one's youth and the freedom they perceived it to embody through its practice which made me envision the fictional timeless character of Peter Pan. It then transpired that one of the participants themselves also used the exact term to describe what they felt like when practising parkour early on in their training. This category was therefore organised to house the participants' internal (e.g. ideologies of parkour training) and psychosocioemotional (e.g. freedom-seeking needs) influencing drivers that led them to seek out parkour training.

There was a strong sense of freedom being sought through parkour training; to use it as a way for participants to feel alive. Participants displayed a strong sense of hope in the positive role parkour would play in their personal development:

> *'I thought it would just make me alive. I thought it would set me free and make me alive and I'd feel alive in some ways and I guess for all of us, that bits of us aren't fully awake or developed and I sensed that I thought that this was gonna be key' (Tina, p. 5, line 185-196).*

> *'I mean it's about freedom of movement, overcoming obstacles' (May, p. 4,*

*line 140).*

Although Lucy later experienced gymnastics as very restrictive, she initially had a similar freeing relationship to her sport:

> *'Liked it as a kid because there it was just a freedom of sorts…' (p. 1, line 14).*

Accompanying this notion of freedom, participants shared a desire to relive childlike play through parkour; some linking it to a recapturing of intuitive playfulness, and some describing a lifelong permanent liking of child's play:

> *'It's just like children engage with the world in a way like, intuitive kind of fun playful way and I feel parkour helps you get back into that and recapture that as an adult' (John, p. 5, line 109-112).*

> *'I've always done jumping and climbing since I was a little kid and it was fun for me then and it's fun for me now' (Ryan, p. 4, line 88-90).*

### 5.2.2.2. Seeking to satisfy their inner narcissist

This lower order category was named as such because I felt that the term 'inner narcissist' housed the participants' internal drivers that were linked to very complex and vulnerable narcissistic aspects of their personality such as 'thrill seeking', 'hedonism' and 'self-consciousness' to name a few. Furthermore, their seeming belief that parkour satisfied one's ego validating needs through it being perceived as 'risky' and potential 'hero embodiment' was further reinforced by their descriptions of themselves prior to starting parkour. This often centred around a seemingly fragile self-concept (e.g. shyness in being judged by others) or an over-inflated one (e.g. parkour indulging one's hedonism).  As such, I felt that the participants' 'inner narcissist' was being sought to be satisfied by them driving to seek out parkour as the discipline of their choice.

Participants  appeared to seek social standing, possibly desiring acceptance as 'cool' and relevant within a group setting:

> *'I wanted to be involved with it. It was cool!' (May, p. 1, line 2-3)*

Yet parkour also seemed to attract people with a dislike for societal eyes on them, who instead hoped parkour could help them work on this aspect of themselves:

*'Before, I was just on my own, I was scared to do things around other people (…) shy that people would judge me and stuff…' (Ryan, p. 5, line 121-123).*

Participants expressed a desire for the thrill of parkour, seeking out exposure to its risks and the feeling this rendered in them:

*'Fear, what I like is it's mental. You have to work on your inner self and do a jump and think about actually, everything can go wrong (…), if I slip here, I can drop and break my skull' (Jack, p. 4, line 143-147).*

*'Jumping from higher and dropping down, or when you're falling, you get that slight feeling. Sometimes when you are in a car and it goes up and down, that little feeling…' (Jim, p. 8, line 336-338).*

Other participants echoed this thrill-seeking desire, though retrospectively crediting parkour as an effective medium through which to positively challenge internal predispositions they felt they had, seeking to alter how they were perceived by others:

*'I used to be very egotistic (…) like challenge respected people in the community (…) to say, "you're not better than me' sort of thing (…)"' (Jeremy, p. 9, line 387-390).*

Interestingly, some participants appeared to readily use sporting performance-related aspects to control their desired externalised self (how they wanted others to perceive them), identifying a great need for this incentive and the support that came with it:

*'Because on the side of it [gymnastics], there were competitions and some achievements and some incentives to do it and we all like the support, we loved the support!' (Lucy, p. 8, line 203-208).*

Indeed, there was a general sense of participants' quest to indulge their 'hedonism', as Jeremy put it when describing his indulgence of self and his need to prioritise himself: some describing their own desires in oxymoronically striving to mirror fantasy heroes, normally considered altruistic, to gratify their own needs to be 'all-able' through training in parkour:

*'Well, from cartoons, anime, things like that, movies, action films. I just want to be able to do those things' (Ryan, p. 11, line 283-285).*

### 5.2.3. External physical influencing factors

This higher order category was organised to encompass how participants were enticed into

parkour through external sources like but not limited to media as explained below. Furthermore, participants seemed enticed due to them seeking a medium of externalising actions they had otherwise been yet unable to act out historically (e.g. prove people's perceptions about them wrong). In this way, I perceived participants to be seeking to implement parkour as a physical external tool through training and external influencers to be hugely enticing to them in seeking out parkour in the first place.

| Higher order category | Lower order category | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| 5.2.3. External physical influencing factors | 5.2.3.1. Being visually enticed into training in parkour through media | 2,3,4,5,7,1 |
| | 5.2.3.2. Seeking to challenge lived experiences of others' negative perceptions of their potential | 1,4 |

Table 5: HLOCP for 5.2.3

### *5.2.3.1. Being visually enticed into training in parkour through media*

In this lower order category, I chose to use the term 'media' untraditionally, not limiting media to mean mass mediums of communication e.g. TV, but also friends and other external influencing factors e.g. peers and the world external to them. My rationale here was to allow this umbrella term to provide the category with space to encompass any all-consuming, popular, in-trend and advertised sources of external influence. From traditional media sources to popularly adopted city cultural influences,  participants shared promotional external factors like these had had a strong influence on them trying parkour out in the first place. The 'media' here, therefore, was used by participants and understood by me as a concrete, influential entity, thereby rendering it physical in my conceptualisation. Participants' motivation to join parkour in this category, therefore, seemed externally driven through the use of physical entities external to their own intrinsic needs and pursuits.

Traditional media sources  appear to play a major role in enticing people into desiring to learn what they had already seen of parkour:

> *'I heard of parkour years ago back in France in the 1990s within magazines, on TV (Jack, p. 1, line 19-20).*

> *'I don't know what the documentary is, but that was my first touch with parkour' (Jim, p. 1, line 9-10).*

Many participants also appeared to have tried parkour through a friend's recommendation:

> *'There was an indoor or outdoor parkour class with XX…. she said let's go… she said, let's do this thing… so we went with a few friends' (Fay, p. 3, line 134-141)*

Predominantly, there was a sense that participants were also seeking to challenge their world view through parkour, frame the world in a more solution-focused way, and challenging their notion of inability, historically imposed on them by others:

> *'When you walk everywhere, you think (..) when you train parkour (…) When you see a problem, you can approach it differently (…) so it brings something else into your life as well' (Jack, p. 3, line 117-122).*

> *'It really opened me to a new world, because I try and imagine, if I do something. I thought I couldn't do (…) but just doing that (…) There's so many things I can do and I didn't know I could do, just because someone told me I couldn't do it (May, p. 4, line 144-149).*

### *5.2.3.2. Seeking to challenge lived experiences of others' negative perceptions of their potential*

This lower order category emerged as participants seemingly sought to also use parkour to challenge others' negative perceptions of them (external stimulus) that they felt were impacting them through words and actions (physical). I, therefore, perceived participants to be aiming to implement parkour as an external tool, apparently seeking a medium of externalising actions they had otherwise been yet unable to physically act out historically.

Participants voiced further historical external influences – whether parental, cultural or religious – which they had internalised as negative, desiring to confront these past experiences of others' lack of belief in them through parkour, and an attachment to something greater than themselves:

> *'My mum was very always negative voice about that* [believing she was doing training for boys] *( …) But I was doing this and blah blah blah…' (May, p.3, line 84-85).*

## 5.2.4. External psychosocioemotional influencing factors

This higher order category was organised to house the psychological, social and emotional needs that participants had coming into parkour and their seeming pre-existing ideologies of parkour. This was seen as a means of enabling them to better process some of these needs

consciously or unconsciously as co-constructed by their reflections and my further analysis. This appeared to contribute to what they were seeking through parkour practice. To which I saw parkour as being an external entity that was functioning as a 'holding space' for many (external to themselves). As well as a physical medium to train to overcome previously experienced hurdles that they faced (triggered externally) and a means to embody certain (psychosocioemotional) needs (e.g. connectedness) through doing parkour.

| Higher order category | Lower order category | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| 5.2.4. External psychosocioemotional influencing factors | 5.2.4.1. Seeking a consciously pre-existing need for connectedness | 4,7,3,5 |
| | 5.2.4.2. Seeking a medium to practise overcoming obstacles in life | 3,4,1,6,9,4,7,5 |

Table 6: HLOCP for 5.2.4

### 5.2.4.1. Seeking a consciously pre-existing need for connectedness

This lower order category was named to categorise the sense of belonging and feelings of usefulness that participants seemingly sought to satisfy through parkour as a practice. A search that seemed to pre-date their parkour journey but seems to be thought to be achievable through the medium of parkour when entering parkour.

Participants appeared to voice underlying vulnerabilities in connecting to others on both physical and emotional levels:

> 'I realised that it wasn't normal to not want to have contact with other people (...) I could feel that my instinct was to move away' (Tina, p. 2, line 46-50).

Yet it was the sense of group belonging that many, including Tina, were seeking from parkour in addition to seeking to replace previously unhealthy support systems (e.g. gang membership, co-dependencies, oppressive relationships) with more positive ones through training:

> 'I felt special like I was a part of something, like a certain group or cult, or some societies' (Jim, p. 10, line 385-386).

> 'I was chastised throughout my childhood by my teachers and then my parents (...) to be part of a community and also be relatively skilled (...) to suddenly have a social group and to have a skill set was really, really nice' (Jeremy, p. 4, line 132-144).

It is unsurprising therefore that participants also demonstrated a certain indulgence of their altruistic tendencies being sought, opting in to societally sacrificing themselves to feel a part

of something greater than themselves:

> *'Through parkour, it also means you genuinely could (….) like if somebody was in a burning building for example, you could potentially help that person'* (Jeremy, p. 2, line 36-38).

### 5.2.4.2. Seeking a medium to practise overcoming obstacles in life

This lower order category was named to categorise the various psychosocioemotional hurdles and vulnerabilities participants consciously and unconsciously appeared to have struggled with in the past, seemingly seeking to grow resilience in better managing these through their pre-existing ideologies of parkour training.

Most participants reported experiencing previous mental health obstacles, spanning their childhood into adulthood:

> *'I used to struggle with depression when I was in high school'* (John, p. 7, line 177-178).

> *'Like back when I was just my… like I was borderline suicidal all the time'* (Lucy, p. 5, line 134-135).

> *'Basically my primary school years, I've got a learning disability, dyslexia or question mark, autism spectrum sort of stuff…'* (Jeremy, p. 2, line 43-45).

Although, as the quotes above show, some difficulties may have stemmed biologically, many were said to have been a consequence of experiencing adverse childhood experiences (having to cope with parental mental illness, abuse, homelessness, divorce, bullying):

> *'Back in school, I became homeless a few times and obviously I was too embarrassed to talk about that sort of stuff. My mother had mental health issues as well and I felt I had to keep a lot of stuff to myself (…) I also had no money, so I quit school… again one of the 'XX' gangs, 'XX', ended up joining one of them as well'* (Jim, p. 7, line 252-259).

These participants, then, sought to challenge these previous adverse experiences through their parkour training, seeing it as a potential means of changing their perceived path in life and equipping them with tools to overcome their emotional hurdles safely:

> *'I was realising, "oh, I have a pattern", and through that pattern and then opportunities [parkour] to change the path…. To fail, try again and not necessarily be judged or graded on those activities….' (Tina, p. 2, line 52-*

*56).*

That said, I perceived participants to still be seeking to match their coping styles to the movement training style of parkour, even when intending to work on overcoming their past barrier: thereby entering parkour happy that it demanded a coping style similar to their own (in their opinion):

> *'Opposition against things to create force and energy and I actually was much better at that, because I had so much internal tension and energy that needed to be dissipated. But I struggled with release because their ideology is all softer, (...), clean air and I was like, oh my goodness I could never do that. There is too much physical information to be that soft and simple. I think that's why I ended up going towards parkour, cos it was hard' (Tina, p. 3, line 116-123).*

## 5.3. Paradoxically losing while journeying through parkour

This category comprises complex experiences of conscious and unconscious loss, co-constructed from participants' reflections of their experiences of training in parkour. Participants' apparent struggles seemed to stem from appearing to feel let-down when their pre-disposed ideologies of parkour were challenged, which I coined loss, due to the various costs this mismatch of expectations appeared to have, consciously and unconsciously.

This loss appeared to conflict significantly with beliefs around what parkour could gain them, the notion for parkour practice coming with a cost, seemingly unimagined by them prior to processing certain questions in this study's interview. I, therefore, chose to use the term paradox when describing the losing experienced by participants due to the term often implying that something being suggested/possible is absurd though often proven possible when further investigated.

Given the newness of parkour as a sport and art form, most research in parkour is advocating for the benefits that it brings people. Historically, no research, other than medically-centred injury research, existed to investigate the notion that training parkour could be counterproductive to this pre-conceived ideology. When the participants' narratives indicated that they had been suffering a loss, conscious or unconscious from training parkour, I felt it as indicative that this loss be seemingly paradoxical to the community at large's understanding of parkour's impact but fully in line with suspicions I had entering this research.

There was a certain irony in something that the participants perceived as 'fun, cool, empowering' being potentially less evidently destructive, as my viva examiners also pointed out. Nevertheless, the term paradox resonated with me more due to the fact that this piece of work was the first to my knowledge to bring to light that the notion of the costs of parkour being a reality was perhaps not so absurd and more importantly not a threat to its growth and 'buy in' but rather a fabulous way to inform a better quality practice of it if only addressed.

This category of paradoxically losing while journeying through parkour appeared to be comprised of physical and psychoemotional losses to the participants, through either physical or psychoemotional means as they struggled with various somatic challenges.

It further housed the processes that participants were confronted with when experiencing themselves within their training of parkour or their LoP within it. Thus unmasking a 'divided sense of self' that seemed to lead them to struggle to stay true to their value systems, confront their perceived failures and seemingly experience a mismatch between their real experiences and those they fantasised about having.

Through a process that sees them re-enacting past traumas through their parkour training, they appeared to be unconsciously re-traumatised by their exposure to perceived insurmountable challenges, further re-experiencing past failure due to a re-deployment of past maladaptive coping strategies. Although they had appeared to seek out learning new strategies through parkour training, their experiences appeared directly opposing to this aim in practice.

Having sought out parkour to gain connectedness and belonging of sorts as seen in the previous category (5.2), participants further found a mismatch in their perceived ideologies of parkour and their reality in training it. They experienced parkour as an almost religious practice at times, experiencing the need to find ways of coping with this to avoid being 'engulfed'. Although they had mentioned the altruistic nature of parkour in their pre-existing ideologies, many experienced it as a means of achieving omnipotence of sorts that some found eventually to be false and artificially 'grandiose'. This omnipotence also appeared to need to be shared with objects and people which further conflicted with the empowerment state they had perceived parkour to provide. Thus often being confronted with a perceived loss when giving their trust to a process, person or object and having it broken.

The timeless expectation that participants had of parkour practice being 'Peter Pan'-like was also seemingly challenged in practice, with participants experiencing a 'fascism' relating to

fitness in training, directly opposing the freeness they had entered parkour seeking. They appeared to struggle with the commercial and structural shifts parkour was experiencing, faced with further challenges to their pre-existing ideologies of parkour as non-competitive, experiencing a severe loss of sense of self during the practice of the discipline itself.

## 5.3.1. Struggling with somatic challenges

This higher order category was organised to explore the participants' paradoxical losing process that encompassed them either being physically affected by their psychoemotional states and coping styles e.g. getting physically hurt, or being hindered by physical aspects of training. For example, training pain or training terrain type, impacting on their commitment to progress in parkour. I, therefore, named the barrier in the first lower order category (5.3.1.1.) 'psychosomatic'. The physical costs that are induced by affectual factors which were organised into the second lower order category (5.3.1.2) 'somatopsychic' was named to define the affect costs induced by physical factors e.g. injuries affecting their confidence in committing to progressing movement. The third higher order category organised various somatic costs of training that seemingly led to a rupture in their sense of self, their ego being injured somehow. An example of this was feeling embarrassed, as was that lack of training in and of itself had a similar diminishing sense of self effect on participants.

| Higher order category | Lower order category | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| 5.3.1 Struggling with somatic challenges | 5.3.1.1. Experiencing cost of psychosomatic barriers to the self | 3,5,2,6,1 |
| | 5.3.1.2. Experiencing cost of somatopsychic barriers to the self | 2,8,4,7,6, |
| | 5.3.1.3. Experiencing a rupture in sense of self through injury | 3,4,6,7,1,9,8 |

Table 7: HLOCP for 5.3.1

### 5.3.1.1. Experiencing cost of psychosomatic barriers to the self

As mentioned above, this lower order category was named to represent physical costs to the participant that were induced by their affectual factors e.g. being incapacitated by anxiety prior to approaching the box thereby being unable to overcome a vault movement. In this way participants appeared to embody these affectual factors, expressing their psychological states and emotions in a tangible and quantifiable form. Examples of these factors were emotional

burdens like anxiety within the parkour training environment, as well as emotional burdens external to training but inevitably compounding of their training mindset e.g. work/family-related concerns. They did not appear to take head of their emotional intuition about readiness to train/try new things, and instead engaging in compounding their psychosomatic barriers further by enlisting unhelpful pre-existing ideologies around coping with these. For example, sticking with it without challenging things physically nor emotionally. All the above appeared to exacerbate LoP in parkour by hindering them from attempting things they need to progress.

Many described this internal struggle with feelings such as anxiety which they experience towards objects and movement within the training:

> *'I never did a real kong (…) It was basically knowing that my brain was thinking the wrong things. So I wasn't feeling necessarily nervous (…) you know the theory behind it, and then that thing of like starting to run towards it and even as I run towards it, being like, nah, you've lost it' (Fay, p.4, line 175-183).*

Several participants also experienced having to manage worry related to their 'out of parkour' roles and responsibilities (parenthood, marital obligations, work commitments), which they feared would be negatively impacted were they to suffer physically through parkour training, e.g. injuring themselves:

> *'I'm conscious of getting injured and not being able to work (…) I'm just so fearful of messing up and then not having my children (…) I would feel incredibly selfish and guilty for putting my needs above the needs of my family' (Jeremy, p. 6, line 216-224).*

Interestingly, participants like Ryan, Jack and John, who had fewer commitments outside of themselves and parkour, described a process of ignoring psycho-emotional intuitions they had of a successful self, which they were aware had led to an increased risk of LoP; and at times, of extremely severe injury:

> *'I got a gut feeling that I shouldn't sign up for training but I ignored it because I wanted to be a parkour instructor' (p.1, line 20-22) (…) 'So I jumped and hit my head right here and I knocked myself out' (John, p.2, line 30-32).*

There seemed an unconscious maladaptive coping tendency among participants inherent in their parkour training, being rooted in unhelpful pre-existing ideologies they had. This led them to hold unrealistic expectations of themselves in training, often risking LoP even further. Many

reported only recognising a need to question their coping styles in training once they experienced severe injury (e.g. John):

> '*I'm not a quitter. I stick things through*' (p. 14, line 647).

> '*I wasn't going there* [parkour class] *to feel that way. So I sometimes would go to the bathroom at the really hard bit where my group had to go like the really difficult section where I was like, I do not wanna do that. I'm gonna use this time to go have a wee and have we finished that?*' (Fay, p. 14, line 662-667)

> '*So it's just my, I feel like I have no other option and the best thing I can do is just push through them [problems, health and training] as much as I can (...) but clearly I have to balance that with not pushing myself too far*' [after getting injured] (John, p. 4, line, 91-97).

### 5.3.1.2. Experiencing cost of somatopsychic barriers to the self

As mentioned above, this lower order category categorised participants affect costs induced by physical factors e.g. injury (somatic) instilling a feeling of fear (psychic) in training that hindered progression. Somatic factors external to the participants also appeared to compound their psychological states in training hindering progression e.g. focussing on physical properties (e.g. their body type/ unfavourable object properties) that could exacerbate fear (psychological barrier) and hinder commitment to progression further compounding LoP. Interestingly, however, these struggles were something participants also appeared to feel depending on what they sought from parkour (e.g. 'pain is gain') and their preferred style of coping with their affect (e.g. limiting their display of life's frustrations within a parkour/movement training context).

Both the physical and emotional cost previously experienced from injury or witness to another appeared to increase the likelihood of hesitation in training: with participants often catastrophising training outcomes to end in re-injury:

> '*It hurts a lot and when it hurts, it's not about the pain, it's being afraid that something might rip again. I think that is the only stopping it does to me, just being afraid something might happen*' (Ryan, p. 12, line 307-311).

> '*If there were things I thought I should do I sometimes I would be like, I'm*

*not going to do that. I'm really worried I'm going to hurt myself. I witnessed many people break things in that class over five years. There was one man whose kneecap went like round his knee (…) I had no illusions that it was a safe sport' (Fay, p. 12, 571-577).*

Participants appeared to further compound LoP by overly differentiating in context (areas, group size, weather, texture, movement, etc.) in training, impacting their relationship to risk-taking. There was a false illusion of safety being context-dependent, costing participants consistency in their training selves' ability, leading them to have to contain a great deal of internalised fear associated with overly anticipating injury:

> *'The class felt more like I was definitely going to have to achieve something that day. (…) Someone's gonna in a queue behind me and I was gonna have to deal with an issue that I had (…) it was purposeful. The jam was a chance for me to go and maybe try something, but copout if I wasn't up to it (…) I tried to use them to fulfil different things. But ended up not training at all (…) that point the fear had me so much, that it wasn't gonna be solved that way' (Tina, p. 14, line 566-575).*

Some participants also strongly attributed predicting failure to pre-existing physical vulnerabilities (height, weight, perceived strength, etc.): often impacting negatively on their motivation in training; their belief in their ability to overcome certain obstacles; and at times in the usefulness of training in things they felt they were not good at due to these vulnerabilities:

> *'I had no upper body strength. So, to make up for that I had to use speed (…) to get ahead I had to train in speed. I could never do a muscle up' (Jim, p. 7, line 173-275).*

Yet even when holding a very real belief in their pre-disposed vulnerabilities, many of these same participants seemed to perceive a dependency on their physical training for their emotional regulation:

> *'I couldn't walk the next day, but every time I was doing it, it was worth it. The next day I'd feel amazing. While I was doing it, it felt amazing' (Jim, p. 8, line 205-208).*

> *'It* [dance and parkour] *was a really nice outlet and it was a place where all that frustration and … I think it's where emotions could have some kind of containment'  (Tina, p. 1, line 23-25).*

### 5.3.1.3. Experiencing a rupture in sense of self through injury

The more they appeared to experience physical costs to training, the more they appeared to experience fissures to their ego in training. For example, through rupturing their sense of self quite harmfully. For example, increased self-consciousness, internalising a sense of rejection during training. If the physical costs to their training lead to time away from training, this appeared to further compound a sense of loss. This loss appeared closely linked to a loss in participants' sense of self thereby giving rise to the name of this lower order category.

Participants' narratives indicated that training incurred physical costs (e.g. visible cuts, alterations to appearance etc.) which triggered self-consciousness before and afterwards, resulting in them experiencing a fragile sense of self:

> 'I don't wanna fall on my face in front of people watching me. (…) If there's like a group of people near the bench, I'm not gonna do that (vault a bench), because I don't wanna look stupid, especially if I fail' (Tina, p. 9, line 427-431).

> 'I used to always get cuts on my arms from scraping on the wall (…) At work obviously it's on show and it looks bad. One of the bosses was like, it's okay to continue. I was like no, be careful. I stopped doing climb-ups so much' (Jim, p.7, line 276-280).

Some participants were very conscious of their sense of self rupturing when injured, reflecting on how their ego had suffered:

> 'I was stretching out my medial collateral ligaments in my knee. And so it eventually got to the point (…) I had no ligament strength. So I had to completely change my style of training. I couldn't do certain moves. I couldn't do the big jumps anymore, but that wasn't so much of an issue. (…) I suppose the biggest issue would be my ego' (Jeremy, p.11, line 433-440).

Exacerbating participants' already fragile sense of self, they appeared to internalise the lack of validation experienced by others (e.g. coaches) as a form of rejection, greatly challenging their sense of self-worth. Failing to meet their perceived expectations of themselves or the perceived expectations of the other, participants often felt alone in their humiliation, sabotaged by the 'other':

> 'I just saw this big wall and I was like, oh, I can't go up I've tried five times and then she said, "just go on the side and let other people go around"… I

*felt humiliated. I stopped doing that and waited for the next exercise. I felt very conscious that I was slower' (May, p.5, line 204-208).*

*'I was put in a position of alternative of even having like pushing through it and having a surgery (…) they [the gymnastics team] wanted me to fail in the sport equivalent of my degree and that literally crossed out (…) they hate me down at the gym' (Lucy, p. 5, line 113-120).*

For some participants, however, lack of training appeared also to lead to a loss of sense of self; and a sense that they were not fulfilling parts of their identity and excessively judging themselves as inadequate:

*'When it happened, it was like, I felt horrible. (…) It was horrible. (…) training was a big part of my life, I couldn't train. I just wanted to be able to do things (…) I want' (Ryan, pp. 10, 11, line 271-282).*

*'It's not nice actually, because it messed with your head a lot. Like when you go out (…) with the lads that train round here (…) I'm not able to do jumps that I know I used to be able to (…) it just makes you feel weak. It makes you feel lazy and it makes you feel like you've let yourself down' (Jeremy, p. 5, line 187-192).*

## 5.3.2. Unmasking of the traceur's "divided self"

This higher order category was categorised to reflect the variety of processes that led participants to struggle with their sense of self through training. It reflects on what parkour and others in training helped them discover about themselves, including personality traits as pointed out by others. In addition, their struggle to uphold pre-existing values and ideologies they had of themselves and parkour in the face of conflicting external pressures that seemingly challenged these. An example of the latter being having initially sought parkour to embolden themselves freeing-ly in a non-competitive medium; they found it pressuring to meet what they perceived were others' expectations of them. They also appeared to struggle with how they process their perceived failures in training, confronted by what they couldn't surmount all the while perceiving a strong desire to be without vulnerabilities. They struggle to regulate their affect towards this as it unfolded, at times trying to use training to confront this, ultimately resulting in further avoidance of training. Some began to experience a self they only connected with when training ('training self') that directly opposed the vulnerability they felt more generally in life which was housed in the term I coined, their 'real self'. They seemed to be

risking their 'real' or 'actual' self's ego by seemingly hiding behind this emerging persona, the desired 'training self' increasing the risk of feeling negatively impacted in both physically (e.g. attempting a vault when not ready and injuring one's self) and emotionally (e.g. crying alone in hiding during training). As such, I named this category to symbolise the process of participants experiencing their true selves being unveiled through training, all the while masked by a training self that was not true to their real self. This resulted in them realising their self was somewhat split, for example: divided into two.

| Higher order category | Lower order category | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| 5.3.2. Unmasking the traceur's 'divided self' | 5.3.2.1. Experiencing a wavering in their own values–'showmanship' vs 'withinship' | 3,8,4,7,1 |
| | 5.3.2.2. Struggling with being confronted with the 'failing' self | 5,2,3,4 |
| | 5.3.2.3. Mismatching their reality with fantasy | 3,4,7,2 |

Table 8: HLOCP for 5.3.2

### 5.3.2.1. Experiencing a wavering in their own values– 'showmanship' vs 'withinship'

This lower order category was organised to encompass what participants processed about themselves through training. For example, their internal values and ideologies being challenged and the process by which this was at times influential in them risking their own values to cater to what they felt was valued by others. The purpose of which was an attempt to validate the in-group needs that influenced them to seek out a community-driven sport like parkour in the first place. The term 'showmanship' to me represented the performance-like nature of participants conforming behaviours e.g. risking a jump to uphold a nickname given to them by peers in parkour. I created the term 'withinship' to represent the internal behaviours that participants seemed to struggle to hold on to in the face of perceived opposition to these. They appeared to struggle with these two states and therefore a wavering was perceived by me as important to name. This dynamic state was symbolic to me that nothing was concrete but more of a fluid everchanging variability in states leaving room for growth or LoP.

Participants' processes were influenced by others while training, identifying that others impacted on their training positively (gaining self-awareness of themselves) and negatively (placing pressure on them to perform):

> 'Eventually I realised that I was being arrogant and egotistical. It took quite
> a long time, but years of people telling me, so I started to think, maybe these

*people aren't just being horrible and they're being honest. So I think that's how parkour changed me. It made me realise that I was actually a big huge dick, (…) and it made me want to take steps to fix that' (Jeremy, p. 11, line 455-461).*

*'The shyness became more of the general public, because always, when someone is just standing on a wall, thinking about doing something and someone walks past, crowds just start forming and looking. Sometimes you don't want to do anything (…). And then you feel like you have to do something and you can't fail' (Jim, p. 3, line 111-116).*

This paradoxical loss and gain from the 'other' often created a conflict within participants: a struggle to maintain their internal values while training, when being enticed into risking their sense of self to gain validation from peers:

*'I get injured a lot. (…) I guess there is a slight peer pressure' (p. 2, line 54). 'I have a nickname. One of them was "XX" because I just go for it. Before I even knew how to flip…there's actually a famous photo of me down by the sands, diving out in the air. I didn't know how to rotate, I was scared (…) landing on my neck, but I just kept going for it' (Jim, p. 3, line 92-97).*

*'I was doing it (training) for social acceptance. I wanted to be in the group. I wanted to be accepted it wasn't happening and I was getting upset' (May, pp. 10, 11, line 414-416).*

### 5.3.2.2. Struggling with being confronted with the 'failing' self

This lower order category categorised participants' processing of being unable to progress in parkour and the negative self-perceptions this brought with it. This appeared confronting to many, for some novel even, and they appeared to struggle to contain the emotional repercussions that came with such confrontations to realities of perceived failure (e.g. being unable/not progressing). As such, I named this category to include the key processes I felt were dominating the focussed codes within this lower order category, such as struggle, confrontation and a failing self.

Exposure to 'failing' in training appeared to be inevitable in participants' narratives. They really struggled to accept being faced with insurmountable challenges. They felt a strong desire to be almost unbreakable, yet were confronted with the realities of their vulnerabilities:

*'After three hours, you're physically exhausted and just doing a small jump. But it pushes you and then almost crying and the end. I am physically*

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*exhausted and you didn't do it, or you couldn't do it. It was not a big jump, but just fall down and you cry (...) it's weird because at the end I cried automatically. It's not something I cry because I was sad, I was crying because I was tired mentally and just ... you have to give up' (Jack, p. 5, lines 187-193).*

This led to a struggle with emotional regulation when faced with their perceived failure. Participants sometimes described this struggle as very unfamiliar to them, or something that they believed could be negated by training - but then was oxymoronically keeping them away from it:

*'The fact that I was failing was suddenly like very frightening, cos I'd always... not always succeed. I'd always worked, struggled, succeeded, worked, struggled, succeeded, and here I felt like I was work, struggling, going backwards. So I started to panic' (Tina, p. 6., line 222-226).*

*'I start running through like every potential failure mode in my head (...) thinking about catching my knees, catching my feet on the way through (...) I start to think about all the worst sorts of situations that can happen. (...) the reason I am not training is cos I am scared of training, but if I was training, I wouldn't be scared of it' (Jeremy, p.5, line 204-215).*

### 5.3.2.3. Mismatching their reality with fantasy

This lower order category was organised to hold perceptions that participants seemed to have that was misaligned when it came to who they were in training versus who they really were more generally and consistently. I coined the first 'training self' and the latter 'real self'. Due to the discrepancy they experienced I called this process a 'mismatching' one, the reality with fantasy part of the category name encompassing the real self they described. The fantastical one (coined 'desired' in the form of a 'training self') because they seemed to strive for or need to embody so badly that they sometimes went so far as to even injure themselves trying to do so. Somehow, the more they tried to embody their 'training self' the further away they got from actually training; thereby making the 'training self' seem all the more surreal and filled with conjecture, a fantasy.

Some participants seemed to experience a discrepancy between the 'training self' and their 'real self', which some attributed to an avoidant 'masking' of sorts. Although this allowed them to feel safer while training, upon reflection, this led to them experiencing a split with themselves which they largely felt uncomfortable with:

*'Like what I said, started to develop a sense of self-worth through parkour and obviously in the back of my mind there was still something eating at me and so I was probably trying to use it as like a visage to hide behind, I think'* (Jeremy, p. 10, line 402-405).

*'It felt one-dimensional and I wanted it to be okay. If I look at circus (…) they find much more richness by not having values that are about being strong, fast and impressive. I just felt like there was no space for vulnerability. (…) If I can't be vulnerable then I can't be me, which means I can't be real, which means I can't bring my whole self with me (…) which means I'm in denial, which means it's just not right basically'* (Tina, p. 10, lines 423-431).

Unable to stay with the process of training, participants tended to find themselves enacting their 'training self' (desired) in ways that often led to them risking their 'real self': resulting in physical injury or a loss of hope in an integration of their 'desired self' and their 'actual self':

*'You've got to choose and I chose dance and now I've given that up too. So yeah, I just couldn't do it sustainably. (…) I had a dream that I did a precision vault between two rails and I had… was like a bird and my feet became claws (…) my toenails kinda went round the pole and I was like, oh that's what real confidence and real reassurance feels like. It became a quest to be able to have that feeling in reality (…) I was not coming anywhere near it. I would have been training for like 20,000 years before I had that feeling'* (Tina, p. 18, line 734-744).

*'There were some benches. I thought do you know what, let me try dive konging it. I can do a kong. My friend said a double kong is easier, because I never do the kick. (…) I kept diving but I kept putting my foot down at the last second in the middle. So I told myself, just commit, don't put your foot down. So, I went for it. I forced myself to not put my foot down, and I ended up crashing into the bench. It hurt so much'* (Jim, p. 8, line 294-302).

Participants seemed to maladaptively cope with their reality in an effort to embody their 'desired self': often hiding their fear from themselves and others, further rupturing their sense of self and distancing them further from their 'desired self':

*'I felt that there was a split between the person who would go to a jam and go, "Oh no, I'm just a bit scared. Oh, I'm okay today", and then go in a corner and cry and maybe no-one will see and you'd come back smiling. (…) and the person I really (…) struggling so much'* (Tina, p. 7, line 290-293).

### 5.3.3. Re-enacting past trauma through parkour

This higher order category was organised to house the paradoxical losing that participants seemed to engage in through a process that to me mirrored Freud's (1914) coined term re-enactment; meaning re-exposure to negative experiences similar to those in participants' pasts instead of them processing the experiences differently. As well as re-traumatisation (Freud, 1920), coined by Freud as a process of trauma repeating itself in repressed abuse. Although the terms were sourced from arguably unrelated pre-existing psychodynamic trauma theory, I felt that the processes underlying much of the conscious and unconscious narratives of the participants portrayed that they were re-living things that they were affected by in the past when training parkour. However, without seeing them altering their coping behaviours within these experiences to change the outcome, they appeared to have re-experienced trauma (e.g. feelings of rejection by coaches) in ways similarly observed by me in my work with traumatised clients.

Trauma is largely understood by laymen and practitioners alike as making reference to a deeply disturbing experience. It ordinarily leads to a wound that oftentimes is thought to leave a mark, physically or emotionally that rarely heals without conscious intervention. This notion of trauma and traumatic experiences, in my view, undoubtedly validates people's experiences, helping to normalise its consequential dysfunctional impact on a person. It can however also largely alienate people from owning smaller wounds and injuries that if overlooked/unacknowledged but accumulated over time, later proving remarkably destructive to one's self-development and self-concept.

I have observed this in my general therapeutic practice but more obviously within the parkour community including participants in this study, where many voice that they train parkour to confront and overcome fear. Yet many struggle to own their experiences of fear in training, often minimising injuries sustained both physically and psychosocioemotionally. I, therefore, used the word trauma as an umbrella term in this thesis, attempting to encapsulate all experiences that caused some level of seemingly negative impact on the participants, consciously or unconsciously, to further normalise the use of the term and mirror the preventative conceptualisation of the model that emerged. By this, I attempt to broaden the definition of trauma to target undesirable impact that participants seemingly overlooked, but upon reflection and analysis from me, seemed to amount to significant negative changes to

themselves, relationship to parkour or to their pre-disposed ideologies of it.

Participants appeared to be re-experiencing unexpected paradoxical losses within themselves in relation to others and to objects. They did this through confrontations with these re-occurring insurmountable challenges that were completely unexpected when seeking out parkour. Additionally, they redeployed maladaptive coping strategies in training to cope with the trauma they were experiencing that were seemingly unconscious to participants. These seemingly exacerbated feelings of 'stuckness', participants often solely blaming themselves for their experiences, much like the internalised guilt we see in traumatised individuals more generally.

| Higher order category | Lower order category | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| 5.3.3. Re-enacting past trauma through parkour | 5.3.3.1. Unconsciously re-traumatising the self through re-exposure to insurmountable challenge | 4,9,6,2 |
| | 5.3.3.2. Unconsciously re-traumatising the self due to employing past maladaptive coping styles | 6,9,2,7,8,4 |

Table 9: HLOCP for 5.3.3

### 5.3.3.1. Unconsciously re-traumatising the self through re-exposure to insurmountable challenge

This lower order category was organised to amalgamate various types of 'un-conscious re-traumatisation' that participants experienced. The re-traumatisation being constructed by my interpretation of it underlying the participants' description of re-exposure to discomfort and or pain (emotionally, psychologically and physically). The 're-exposure' incorporated a time fluid construct that ranged from re-experiencing something regularly in parkour training sessions to re-experiencing an experience that participants had experienced far more historically in childhood for example. 'Insurmountable challenge' was used to make reference to the difficulty the participants experienced in specific situations that they could not seemingly overcome (challenge). Secondly, 'Insurmountable challenge' also makes reference to the helpless undertones of how they discussed processing experiences that seemed to overpower them (e.g. negative feedback from people in positions of authority, injuries that hurt them insurmountably.

In line with the idea of negative internalisation of rejection, some participants seem to have been repeatedly re-experiencing negative reinforcement from people in positions of power through taught training. For example, Lucy below expresses having been repetitively put down, unable to get rid of the negative coach feedback even when excelling in her training rendering the trauma of "torment" experienced insurmountable:

> *'I had a coach (…) she was like literally putting me down like all around together and in front of peers which is the worst and then the more chosen you were to excel the more they were like tormenting you mentally'* (Lucy, p. 4, line 83-89).

Some participants had an early historic experience of negative reinforcement triggered by others e.g. coaches in sessions, leading them to re-experience negative affect again in a parkour teaching context. Fay below shared her experience of how difficult it was for her that parkour instructors had been repeatedly unable to understand her. She relates this to her younger self's experience of being misunderstood by her singing teachers. Her inability to get them to understand her, albeit trying to convey this to them appeared insurmountable and distressing:

Parkour experience*:*

> *'An instructor doesn't always know what someone is going through. There were times, let's say in singing where they're hearing the way someone is singing and I just, "oh but just… just put it in your head voice, like this. It's just like this", and they're like "I don't understand", (…) and that's how I sometimes felt with some of my instructors (…) definitely that feeling that they didn't understand that you couldn't do it."* (Fay, p. 5, lines 234-242).

Re-trigger from historical experience:

> *'I wanted to be a singer. They didn't see that, or they didn't hear it (…) I didn't sing with a big bravado (…) I was afraid of sounding like an older woman. And they heard that as not having a loud voice…'* (Fay, p. 1, lines 22-28).

Similar to the above process, participants experienced re-enacting failure through re-exposure to insurmountable challenges, which both re-triggered historical parkour training experiences at parkour classes they attended. Tina below describes repetitively turning up to training, being unable to do anything each time, seemingly unable to do anything to stop this repetitive experience of failing which she seemed to harshly blame herself for:

> *'I felt like I was constantly appearing there as the girl who came a lot, couldn't do anything and there was no avenue to kind of have a slightly different way of interacting with people (…) I just thought it was a reflection of me (…): "It must be you. Work harder, be better. Prove to them that you can jump over this and that you can"'* (Tina, p. 8, lines 313-321).

Participants also experienced re-injuring themselves physically, feelings of inadequacy,

contributing to feelings of 'being stuck' and low mood:

> *'I'd hurt myself in the last year, I fell, like I'd go for a jump and my legs would kind of give out (…) and I'd hit my torso on something (…) and that happened like once or twice a week, like about once a month (…) I'm like feeling down'* (John, p. 13, lines 333-342).

### 5.3.3.2. Unconsciously re-traumatising the self due to employing past maladaptive coping styles

This lower order category was created to categorise how various coping styles that participants volunteered using, were interpreted by me as being unconsciously unhelpful (e.g. avoidance, replacement, displacement and minimisation). Participants seemed to be re-experiencing failure in the form of re-injury for example, due to them re-using the same coping strategies they had always used in parkour and alike. Rather than looking back and re-addressing the possible source of their failure (e.g. stuckness/injury/LoP) historically, they continued on indifferently, opening themselves up to further LoP (e.g. not being able to compete/do the vault/distance themselves from feeling like failing was their fault).

Participants largely seemed to unconsciously displace emotional vulnerabilities in favour of physical ones when attributing causality to perceived failure, even after having experienced non-physical re-experiences which markedly impacted their sense of self. This could have been a means for them to safeguard themselves from being overwhelmed when faced with the abuse their vulnerabilities had endured:

> *'I was forced to quit, I kind of… I would rather stay to compete in "XX" but I was forced with my health'* (Lucy, p. 8, line 216-217)

versus*:*

> *'I really wanted to be out because of them literally shouting and putting you down for so many hours per day. (…) there was no night that I would fall asleep without crying'* (Lucy, p. 3, line 75-78).

Participants further perpetuated their re-experiencing negative reinforcement of self through replacing failed tasks with more readily accomplishable tasks in training: in other words, re-avoiding tasks and re-assigning goals of progress, rather than seeking new ways of problem-solving difficult challenges:

*'Knowing that like I hadn't visualised it well enough. Because by the time I reached it I was like no way. I'm doing a slide monkey. And the slide monkey I find so much easier (…)' (Fay, p. 4, line 183-185).*

Even when physically re-experiencing maladaptive coping through injuries, participants seem to minimise injuries experienced historically in favour of avoidant over-training tendencies:

*'But I didn't feel it on my rib area, I only felt it on my hip area. After a while I carried on training that day (…) I could feel that on the hip but thought, no, I can take it, it's fine' (Jim, p. 8, lines 304-509).*

Unconsciously, participants distributed responsibility of safeguarding themselves unevenly when perceiving failure: often internalising it as a shortcoming on their part, which re-enacted something they were often held to in their past:

*'"You've got to endure and work harder". It was quite a military mentality, and as I said both my family are military, so they tend to, if you plan enough and work hard enough then there's nothing you can't do. So, I just felt like I'm just not working enough' (Tina, p. 7, line 264-268).*

### 5.3.4. 'Religion-ing' of practice and practitioner through parkour

The 'religion-ing' in his higher order category's name was coined after a participant (Jeremy) described parkour as 'a religion absent of a God that needs ego gratifying'. As participation in training increased, it appeared that some people began to 'follow' trends within parkour and those that did not, did acknowledge this apparent movement albeit not feeling that they were 'buying into it' (Fay), through a shared way of life, belief system, food intake trend, clothing worn, etc. Even these participants, however, seemed somehow 'loyal' to parkour training and the people within it, thereby seemingly bound to it without perhaps being conscious of it.

Within this category, therefore, participants' appeared to be processing the intricacies of group dynamics and the effect this had on them and their own practice. They also appeared to fluctuate in their perceived omnipotence unconsciously oftentimes transferring it to others, objects and beyond. For example onto deities/idols, which to me mirrored processes that take place in worship within religion. This behaviour also challenged participants in line with their hitherto idyllic ideology of parkour as being something that primarily made them find a certain heroism internally. This centred on the perception they had of parkour being uncompetitive and non-hierarchical. In practice, however, they appeared to centre their experiences around a

seeming need for self-validation through movement acquisition and comparison of themselves to others. Experiencing parkour's potential engulfing power of their sense of selves, they outlined a myriad of internal conflicts when becoming immersed in parkour and its apparent culture that they did not seemingly anticipate when seeking out parkour.

I chose to house this higher order category in 'paradoxically losing while journeying through parkour' because I felt that these processes mentioned above had occurred to me as possible from the start of my research and own training practice. However, no one appeared to deem it possible given their arguably overly positive ideologies of parkour going into the practice and their possible lack of insight into their true needs being sought through parkour training.

| Higher order category | Lower order category | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| 5.3.4. 'Religion-ing' of practice and practitioner through parkour | 5.3.4.1. Experiencing the need to compartmentalise the self to avoid being engulfed into 'cultish' parkour life track | 4,2,7 |
| | 5.3.4.2. Adopting parkour as a medium to achieve omnipotence: 'The God like Man' | 2,4,1,7,3 |
| | 5.3.4.3. Transferring custody of their omnipotence onto another | 5,1,2,8,9 |

Table 10: HLOCP for 5.3.4

### *5.3.4.1. Experiencing the need to compartmentalise the self to avoid being engulfed into 'cultish' parkour life track*

This lower order category was organised to house the 'cult-like' pressures (called so by Tina) I perceived and participants expressed were present within parkour training. This experience of pressure was called to outline their attempts to find a means of staying true to their own internal ideologies amidst what seemed at times to be overwhelming immersive external influencing factors in training. This was much like the friction one can feel when belonging to a group like a cult. Initially only seeing shared values, they later on sometimes questioned these. They began to struggle with conserving these and not getting overly influenced by other ideologies they felt came with the parkour training experience. Some identified as being individuals with different needs and values within a group that they perceived as expectant of a certain sameness from them in order to belong. This sameness was albeit something they did enter parkour initially looking for.

Following on from the notion that participants struggled to stay true to their own training values, they further appeared to consciously avoid subscribing to certain values they felt were

imposed on them by cult-like dynamics experienced within parkour:

> *'The more ideal... I don't know if ideological is the right word, but philosophical, religious. The thing where parkour practitioners feel like it's a way of life is just not something I necessarily subscribe to in that sense' (p. 8, lines 386-389). 'I was on my way to do the rest of my life and you know. So, I would never say I practised parkour. I was not a parkour practitioner (Fay, p. 8, lines 396-398).*

Participants struggled to stay true to their own value systems within parkour: often questioning who they were becoming within it, and whether they felt comfortable with this:

> *'I felt there was a danger that I was beginning to put my identity about being better than other people and that's what was giving me confidence, rather than just, I could do something' (Tina, p. 12, line 509-512).*

Nonetheless, participants largely appeared to experience 'religiously' attending their parkour training, often comparing their loyalty to parkour to others, perhaps in an attempt to validate the acceptance and sense of belonging they had sought out initially when entering parkour:

> *'He wasn't loyal to the (X) class. (…) Whereas I think I really felt strongly that when I could I had to turn up. Even if I wasn't feeling up to it. I would turn up to that class, because I was like, I'm coming to the (X) class' (Fay, p. 17, line 798-803).*

### 5.3.4.2. Adopting parkour as a medium to achieve omnipotence: "the God like man"

Coined after Jeremy's phrasing, this lower order category was categorised to contain processes that felt associated with using parkour as a means of attaining the unattainable and feeling omnipotent in the process. Although this was largely enjoyed by participants through their own skill acquisition, they also expressed a paradoxically seeming experience of this process negatively affecting themselves or others. For example, some acknowledged a sense of loss of truth in their 'God like' perceptions of themselves or others that at times further lead to a redirection of the intention behind one's training or judgements forming on others' training internalisations.

Many participants appeared to use parkour as a medium to feel a sense of super-human invincibility, something wonder-inducing (Fay) or miraculous (Tina):

> *'Seeing it (parkour after childbirth) was done before. Cos my next goal would be to be able to do things that no-one has ever done before' (May, p. 9, line*

*363-364).*

Although themselves striving for this apparent heroism in their training goals, they also perceived there to be a 'hero complex' mentality to parkour practitioners which some did not always perceive as positive:

> *'Freerunners, they were quite skilled. So they become quite cocky about it and eventually they thought they were kings in a sense. Almost Gods' (Jim, p. 11, lines 448-450).*

Some participants aligned themselves with this tendency when reflecting back on their training, describing a struggle with a false sense of grandeur experienced through training:

> *'I think I was a little bit in denial. I was using it* [perceived respect from other practitioners] *as a façade. It was kind of irrelevant to me that the other people* [in the world]) *didn't really care, because in my head I was like, I'm an athlete. I'm good at what I do and nobody can take that away from me' (Jeremy, p. 10, lines 420-422).*

In doing so, participants outlined their strive to impact positive change through parkour as a medium, attempting to use the sport to help them reclaim their perceived healthy functionality:

> *'*[parkour] *was getting away from my dance. It was getting away from something dysfunctional, that's not sustainable. Something that isn't fully… What's the word, not positive, and finding a way. To make sense of that. So it's problem solving' (Tina, p. 6, line 227-232).*

### 5.3.4.3. Transferring custody of their omnipotence onto another

This lower order category was categorised to house somewhat contradictory processes to that of the previous category (5.3.4.2). Participants seemed to need to go through a process of addressing vulnerability and letting go of their omnipotence temporarily in order to be able to eventually overcome obstacles. I felt that although the notion of embracing vulnerability in order to move to reinforce strengths had always appeared almost essential to me. The participants' initial focus was so completely placed on how empowering parkour training was ideologically when seeking it out, that a paradox was highlighted when they described the more vulnerable process of handing over the trust they had in themselves to others in order to proceed with training as such a necessity. This is a category that I felt nicely introduced the challenging notion that parkour in and of itself may not always be as naturally nurturing as perceived if

unsupported by other factors. Factors such as belief in deities, experienced practitioner influence, peer support and positive relationships to objects themselves. This transference of omnipotence being a seemingly fragile and risky process to one's sense of self, at times left participants feeling a sense of loss rather than gain when mismanaged or misaligned with their need for containment and motivation to progress.

Negating the 'hero complex' (Jeremy) stood apart from a clearly identified need for role models in parkour training outlined by participants to aid progression through stimulation or guidance:

> *'People are afraid of joining parkour because they think they're going to be in danger all the time. But the fraternity just tells you that oh, I've been there but if you do it like this, you can actually avoid this problem (…) you see someone doing something that you probably can do, you can push yourself and then try it' (Jack, p. 2, lines 55-60).*

Participants appeared to greatly benefit from temporarily transferring their trust in themselves to another (coaches, friends, deities, objects, etc.) to overcome obstacles. Coupled with trusting the process, this allowed them to process difficult tasks more successfully, preventing LoP:

> *'I did feel safe having someone next to me. So there were two phases I would say. (…) Like to show me I could do it (…) then stay next to me the first time, that would help me to explore it, then most of the time I overcame my fears when I was by myself cause I don't like being watched too much' (May, p. 1, lines 23-31)*

> *'I would get nervous and I would get butterflies in my stomach (…) like, oh my God, oh my God please don't let anything to happen bad' (Fay, p.2, lines 104-106).*

Along with this transaction, participants unconsciously appeared to suffer a cost to their sense of self when perceiving the other to be breaking their trust. For some, like Fay, coaches failing to contain their needs was a re-lived experience, noticed again through their exposure to it in parkour classes:

> *'14 years old you've got something to say, but they literally do not let you talk to them, they just carry on shouting. You're not allowed to speak up because you knew that you're going to be told off anyways (…) it's horrible…' (Lucy, p. 7, lines 200-202).*

*'I suppose also there is an element of wanting to be understood. Wanting that your fear of something not be laughed off by your instructor'* (Fay, p. 5, line 230-231).

Having temporarily sought to transfer their omnipotence to external entities and not been validated as desired, this gain of this temporary omnipotence custody that can cause participants to flourish ended up costing them a seemingly painful diminishment of self.

## 5.3.5. Experiencing "fitness fascism"-ing

This higher order category, coined using a participant's (Tina's) description of the trajectory which she felt parkour was moving towards. The 'fitness' part of the category was called to house a common thread in participants' experience that saw parkour to be moving towards a focus more directed at gym-like fitness and sporting culture than the freeing, playful, holistic, self-development, outdoor ideologies that participants had entered parkour believing it to represent. The 'fascism' part of the category, was categorised to hold processes in which participants appeared to be grappling with surrounding parkour and its relationship to a practitioner's loss of perceived autonomy and control in parkour's growth trajectory. For example, through increasing institutionalisation and shifts towards competitive practice over time.

Participants appeared to experience a paradoxical cost to them finding themselves struggling to practice within a discipline that they described as going through a transition. A transition from a non-conformist art form to a more traditionally organised normative sport filled with varying, and non-ideologically conforming agendas to their own. This seemed to leave participants feeling overwhelmed, often processing a loss of sense of belonging and/or containment experienced by the 'other'. For example, the discipline, the coaches and alike, something they came into training parkour only anticipating to gain from.

| Higher order category | Lower order category | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| 5.3.5. Experiencing –"fitness fascism"-ing | 5.3.5.1. Struggling with a 'Doppler effect' style shift in parkour culture over time | 5,3,1,7 |
| | 5.3.5.2. Struggling in the face of theirpreconceptionsof parkour as a non-competitive sport being challenged | 2,4,9 |

Table 11: HLOCP for 5.3.5

### 5.3.5.1. Struggling with a 'Doppler effect' style shift in parkour culture over time

This lower order category was named 'Doppler' style shift by me to represent this ever-expanding exponential cultural growth/change within parkour that somehow reminded me of a physics 'red shift' visualisation of an ever-enlarging universe beyond the possible realm of control. This expansion appeared from participants' narratives to be happening very fast, and I perceived a loss of sense of control from them. This loss of control that mirrored my above analogy, participants' voicing feeling that the lack of containment of this process of cultural change, was altering and somewhat diluting the discipline and their positive feelings towards training within it. In my visualisation of their experienced processes this was leading to a big bang like demise, an accruing loss over time in what they felt made their experiences of parkour so niche, unique and different to other movement forms.

I felt this category to be paradoxical to the participants' initial pre-existing ideologies of parkour as almost absolute in its safeguarding and seemingly timeless ('Peter Pan'-like) nature. Additionally, the notion of parkour being unsafe yet again not conceivable while seeking it out until experienced when immersed in training it.

Over time, several participants struggled to perceive parkour as representative of their pre-existing values as the popularity of the sport increased. There was a sense of newer generations not knowing what participants believed parkour to be. On the other hand, older generations forgetting what participants believed were core values central to the discipline's practice, favouritism towards doing the sport to be cool more than anything else fast emerging:

> *'In a way, I hate the turn it took when it became more something cool to do. Then you start to see large number of people, which parkour is meant to be for everyone but not everyone is meant to do parkour. It's… some people do that because of fashion. I'm going to parkour training, but they never actually do it outside, or they never experience it the right way. (Jack, p. 11, lines 474-79) 'Which goes against to me the parkour value in the beginning' (Jack, p. 11, lines 85-86).*

Some even described experiencing victimisation as training group demographics shifted with the onset of popularisation: from the isolation they may have experienced if not feeling good enough to train with some groups, to believing in a shift in the training culture which they believed had existed:

> *'Sometimes people will say get off my wall (…) people are putting anti-climb*

*paint everywhere or putting spikes up or just knocking things down (...) it makes me think of other people doing the sport. If they were all like I was back in the day, where everyone was nice, everyone was considerate, would we get the same complaints?' (Jim, p. 11, line 425-434)*

Unsurprisingly, many participants described being conflicted with the growing institutionalisation of parkour and perceived a loss of autonomy in their practice. There was a strong negative monetary influence described by participants; as well as a self-questioning process of doubting their own practice due to the changes to training which they perceived were happening (e.g. more gym training, establishing allocated parks, etc.):

*'I don't like the path it's going at the moment (...). I think in the long run it's going to take control away from the people that should be in control of the ... how parkour develops and grows and it'll be down to the governing bodies. Not down to the traceurs and freerunners, which scares me quite a lot' (Jeremy, p. 11, line 466-470).*

*Sometimes you question yourself, are we doing things that are wrong?(...) It makes me question myself and it makes me question the support (...) knowing that there was a special park made, I think maybe what we are doing is right, just not in the right place (Jim, p. 11, line 425-438).*

### 5.3.5.2. Struggling in the face of theirpreconceptionsof parkour as a non-competitive sport being challenged

This lower order category was organised to house the myriad of ways in which participants' pre-disposed non-competitive ideologies of parkour was challenged in their practice experience over time. Participants seemed to face nuances of competition with themselves and others as well as others' competitiveness towards them. This often led to a loss in their sense of self, and views of parkour as a safe space. It seemed that they did not consider that could/would happen when entering parkour. This could be due to their perception of parkour being solely uncompetitive in epistemology, and them not factoring in their own and others' 'human' personal biases within training.

This category therefore housed experiences of various types of competition experienced in practice, participants' negative perceptions of these and the notion that this was a change they were perceiving over time, not innate to their predisposed understanding of what parkour was intended to be.

Although believing parkour to be innately non-competitive, participants often described a process of consciously comparing themselves to others and then judging themselves for it, leading to a rupture in their sense of self:

> *'I feel ashamed. I can't keep up. They put me in a slow group. That person's not done any exercise. They've got loads of energy and they look strong and I was almost ... I was competing' (Tina, p. 8, lines 336-338).*

Following on from some participants experiencing other traceurs as having a 'hero complex', they also perceived coaches as often being 'greater than tough', leading to a further rupture in their sense of self. Their expectations from coaches were often not met; condescension and belittlement featured strongly in their experiences of coaching styles:

> *'As a teacher, you're a coach you really invest in helping people along, but I didn't feel like that's what they did. I thought they weren't really coaches, they were just like... they like the sound of their own voice and they just like cracking the whip a bit'(Fay, p. 14, 586-589).*

Further to this, participants voiced the belief in structured competition being destructive to parkour, sometimes describing having come to this conclusion through negative experiences of competition-embedded class content, and the costs they perceived from it:

> *'Competitions people pushing too much (...) they're* [gymnastics federations] *just so fresh, they just know to push it towards competitiveness, which I think is very toxic actually because if you want to something for fun just do it, play with it like, if you are pursuing some regulated stuff like I did in gymnastics, I'm very against what's happening right now* [to parkour]*' (Lucy, p. 11, line 274-283).*

> *'I thought it* [competition] *would be mutually uplifting for everybody, but it didn't (...) really ever manifest in that way. It just felt like somebody could be a winner, someone's gonna be a loser. That's how it felt. And also, parkour is so measurable and this is something that annoyed me as well (...) it just felt like I was set up to fail' (Tina, p. 9, line 348-385).*

## 5.4. Experiencing lack of progression (LoP) in parkour

This category was categorised to encapsulate what struggles participants experienced, identifying the losses that they had not anticipated experiencing throughout and encompass how their processing of these ultimately affected their experience of LoP in their parkour training.

During my research, I could not find any studies that specifically looked at peoples experience of lack of progression (LoP) more generally within a movement context, and therefore no formal definition either. As explained in this study's literature review, even the more integrative model of athlete burnout (Gustafsson et al., 2011) did not seem to encapsulate a participant's unique experience of the build-up to their burnout experience, the antecedents mentioned being very specific and not very person-centred. I found models for physical progression and regression in rehabilitation like those outlined by Blanchard and Glasgow (2014) but nothing fitting the phenomenon that was being co-created in this study, that encapsulated the embodied aspects of physical LoP as well as the more psychosocio-situational types.

Stuckness, however, seemed to exist in therapeutic research. Although not used much clinically, it has been thought to be closely associated with models of change like that of Prochaska, Norcross and DiClemente (1994) and is said to be psychological and situational by counselling psychologists like Field (2021). The embodied psychotherapeautic practice appeared to explain stuckness in a person by looking at the neurology of a person and the links that this had to their inability to move through one main emotion, fear (Damasio, 2005).

LoP phenomenon co-constructed in this study, however, needed to house what could have been a very physical and relatively obvious hurdle they couldn't overcome e.g. not being able to do a jump. Another example could be psychosocioemotional such as being unable to understand why they could do something one day and not repeat it the next; as well as encapsulate the relational nature of one's LoP in and outside of the participants' situational context, their parkour training. It became apparent that not all experiences of stuckness in these participants necessarily led back to a process they or I felt was solely linked to fear management. Using a new term of LoP, therefore, as opposed to the pre-existing notion of stuckness, appeared to me to allow the participants LoP to be personalised to them. This is in line with the notions of pluralism that McLeod (2020) advocates when discussing ways for therapists to move through stuckness with their clients. The term was ultimately left open to each participant's understanding of the concept and its underlying process relative to their own experiences and their own beliefs. It comprised of anything that encompassed an individual's conscious or unconscious feeling of 'stuckness'; embodied, psychological, situational or otherwise.

Noticing that due to the different ways that people perceived LoP and the presence of individual

difference more broadly, this newly named phenomenon seemed to provide space to encapsulate more person-centred nuanced coping styles. For example, expanding on the more survival and instinctual traditionally explored responses to threat like, fight, flight and freeze (Goleman,1996) that Field (2021) proposes underpins stuckness experienced by clients.

This category was consequently subdivided into higher order categories aimed at housing coping processes such as aggressively ('defended destroying'), avoidantly ('detached defending') combative in nature, retrospectively exploratively ('reflective warrioring') or iteratively regulatorily ('contained practitioning') coping processes. These ways of coping were further grouped based on whether the participants' narratives and my interpretations of this appeared helpful or unhelpful ('negative'/'positive') and purposefully housed participants' conscious and unconscious processes.

## 5.4.1. Coping negatively with LoP through defended destroying

This higher order category was categorised to encapsulate a defensive coping style ("defending") that was co-constructed based on their direct narratives when reflecting on their experience of LoP, as well as participants' more idiosyncratic speech elements (e.g. sarcastic, mocking, minimising tones). Their defensive coping with their LoP seemed to be displayed in an aggressively combatively manner, lending me to call this 'destroying'. Further to this, this coping style seemed to result in part from participants not reflecting on past coping styles to inform a change or adaptation to coping with LoP within their parkour training. This seemed to render their 'defended destroying' style one that re-deployed and therefore re-traumatising. The coping style appeared unhelpful in allowing participants to usefully process their LoP or indeed seemingly safeguard themselves adequately, thereby being coined 'coping negatively'.

| Higher order category | Lower order category | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| 5.4.1. Coping negatively with LoP through defended destroying | 5.4.1.1. Externalising blame on to the 'other' destructively | 4,2 |
| | 5.4.1.2. 'Ping-Pong'-ing paradoxically losing due to sitting with unprocessed trauma | 7,8,5 |

Table 12: HLOCP for 5.4.1

### *5.4.1.1. Externalising blame on to the 'other' destructively*

This lower order category was co-created to house an unhelpful coping style that saw

participants feigning a process that appeared to blame others (people or objects) while never openly voicing this process to said objects. The blaming of their LoP or their seeming inability to process it productively, saw them place blame externally on to themselves, in a harsh manner, thereby coined destructive. Further to this, as the strategy left the LoP unresolved, the externalisation was deemed unhelpful further supporting that the blaming was in fact unhelpful.

Some participants appeared to engage in the externalisation of blame onto the 'other' (e.g. peers for their insights into training, coaches for their problematic style of coaching etc.), at times projecting internalised feelings onto others aggressively when processing LoP. Although conscious of their thoughts, some did not seem to openly voice their blame to those they felt culpable - merely adopting a somewhat unconsciously defended stance instead:

> *'I just couldn't do what I wanted to do (...) I did a jump that scared me for a couple of months and then (...) I was super confident at it, the next week, I'd go back and it was like I'd never done it. And people would come round me, (...), "oh you can do it, you can do it". I'd be like "I already have done it. So all your, this is how you break a     jump isn't true, cause I've done this one. (...) I would just feel like shut up. Just leave me the hell alone…"' (Tina, p. 6, lines 210-218).*

Alternatively, there was a tendency for some to project internalised anxieties towards their training onto imagined objects when processing their LoP: appearing unconsciously unable to own their own decision-making process of not pursuing aspects of training:

> *'Fear was visceral. It was, like literally it felt like somebody was pulling you backwards. Like you were like, I'm gonna jump. (...) and every time it felt like someone's hand was going, no you're not. Don't do it. Okay, no you're not ready. (...) it almost felt like an invisible wall was stopping me from jumping' (Fay, p. 12, line 556-561).*

### 5.4.1.2. 'Ping-Pong'-ing paradoxically losing due to sitting with unprocessed trauma

This lower order category used the term 'Ping-Pong'-ing, derived from the medical term 'ping-pong' (Segen's Medical Dictionary, 2012). This term used to for emaple, describe the repeated passing on of a patient back and forth between two physicians to overcharge the payee. This resonated with the process I came to see participants' experience of constantly returning to training unresolved in their unhelpful coping style in processing their LoP, often leading to a progressively exorbitant cost to their sense of self. Participants appeared to be 'ping-pong'-ing

from getting injured (physically, emotionally etc.) and re-attempting training. Thus compounding their unprocessed past trauma, without changing any of the key players in this process (not their coping style, not their training environment, not their resources etc.). This led to participants constantly losing, re-regressing instead of progressing as they had been convinced they would do when starting parkour training as discussed in previous categories. This collectively resulted in me naming this category 'Ping-Pong'-ing paradoxically losing due to sitting with unprocessed trauma'.

Following on from re-traumatisation through minimisation discussed in the previous category (5.4.1.1), some participants seemed to re-attempt training constantly without altering their training style. Some would experience this unaltered re-attempt repeatedly within parkour; and as with historical re-traumatisation, some would repeat harmful training styles deployed previously in other areas of sport or their lives more broadly unknowingly. Fay quoted below had previously shared that she felt her needs were not understood by coaches in parkour training or historically in singing. She however appeared to repeatedly avoid addressing the difficulty in training re-exposing herself to things she could not do, repeatedly re-affirming her incompetency in sessions but assuming this was a safe coping strategy. This behaviour however appeared to come at an emotional cost of her feeling not seen and physical cost of reduced physical improvement as discussed in section 5.3.3.1 of the analysis.

Re-enactment in session:

> *'I'm gonna keep going back to this. (...) there became a moment where I think I would say that whenever presented with something that I knew I was afraid of doing, I'd just kind of go, I'm just gonna try my best and I know I don't feel safe jumping (...) so I am going to do* [a move] *cos I know I can do that and I know I'm safe doing that' (Fay, p. 7, lines 320-327).*

John below appeared to believe he had deployed different coping styles within parkour training, having however attributed stopping parkour to a severe parkour injury. Below he discusses past patterns of coping that saw him keep pushing in sports even when he felt he should have stopped in hindsight. Given that we see him push too far in parkour as well which leads to injury, it appears that he re-traumatises himself physically perhaps due to not fully having processed his historical coping style's effect on his previous injury trauma.

Re-enacting the past in parkour:

*'I used to run long distances a lot and still do some and I got a stress fracture from overuse injury (...) I should have changed my shoes earlier but I supposed like, yeah I just learned like to be patient and maybe kind of wait process (...) and not to push myself too far. So now I don't make those mistakes anymore' (John, p. 6, lines 126-134).*

For some, this ping-ponging style of training led them to further doubt themselves: fearing a cost to self when re-attempting training, without processing prior trauma they had experienced and adopting new means of processing this:

*'After I sprained the last time, I was scared to pursue parkour again, because every time I start something new* [in parkour training], *it* [re-injury] *just happens' (Ryan, p. 4, line 101-103).*

## 5.4.2. Coping negatively with LoP through detached defending

This higher order category, similar to the previous, was categorised to encapsulate a defensive coping style ("defending") that was co-constructed based on participants' direct narratives as well as what was implied in their omissions when reflecting on their experience of LoP. They readily volunteered their own needs underlying their chosen manner of coping with their LoP, seemingly showing a form of detachment from owning their own role and responsibility within their LoP. Instead, they appeared to defend against needing to process the LoP by externalising blame for it on to others indirectly, often unconsciously. Physically they also were seen to displace their unmet needs in parkour training with other things, detaching themselves very literally from needing to address their LoP. This process being seemingly unhelpful and veering participants closer to leaving training unresolved, resulted in the assignment of the name 'copping negatively, LoP thought to be coped with in a detached defended manner.

| Higher order category | Lower order category | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| 5.4.2. Coping negatively with LoP through detached defending | 5.4.2.1. Externalising blame on to the 'other' numbingly | 4,5,2,1,8,3 |
| | 5.4.2.2. Substituting parkour with other mediums to meet persistent needs of the self | 7,2,6,8,5,9,4 |

Table 13: HLOCP for 5.4.2

### *5.4.2.1. Externalising blame on to the 'other' numbingly*

Within this lower order category, the coping with LoP seemed to involve participants framing their decision-making involving their LoP as a resultant of other's needs. This process of

making their LoP about others when faced with their LoP was housed in the term 'externalising blame'. Participants' seeming lack of awareness at the displacement of responsibility at play and the nonchalant, emotionally unaffected manner in which this was expressed by them, resulted in the coining of the coping style being 'numbing'. This style of coping seemed to provide participants with some respite from any disappointment that may have arisen when experiencing LoP (e.g. getting injured), given that the processing of the LoP in this manner appeared productively justified (e.g. leaving to take care of another).

Some participants attributed their experience of LoP to external entities (e.g. professionals, relationships, coaches, work etc.) non-committedly, apparently to safeguard their sense of self and unconsciously defend against coping with their LoP without taking ownership of it. Reflecting on whether he would have done things differently in order to progress past his injury, Jack commented:

> *'Probably not. I mean, I'm not going to say I would have dumped my girlfriend, because it's not something you choose. At the time, I'm happy* [now]*, but probably if I didn't have a girlfriend, I probably would have got back to it* [training after injury]*' (p. 10, lines 424-427).*

There was also a tendency from some participants to attribute their LoP to a perceived need to re-distribute their time to other areas of their life (e.g. work, children, friends etc.), almost as if to justify their LoP to themselves and perhaps others, transforming it into a positive outcome:

> *'I was stopping myself (training), because as I said I had a bit of relationship drama in parkour. I felt going back to training with the same people I dated wasn't nice towards [my partner]… I felt it might bother him' (May, p. 11, lines 441-445).*

> *'I had to spend two hours travelling to get there (…) it's a lot of money also, not just distance. You have to pay for the parkour session, travel and yes. I didn't have that money' (Ryan, p. 7, lines 179-184).*

### 5.4.2.2. Substituting parkour with other mediums to meet persistent needs of the self

This lower order category was co-created to house participants' strategy of coping with LoP in training by sourcing a replacement of their needs ('substitution') seemingly diminishing the loss they felt towards their experience of LoP. Initially having sought these needs from parkour training, they now reported finding them elsewhere in areas outside of parkour ('other mediums') once LoP was experienced within training. The needs they had when entering

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parkour training that they had hoped would be met through training, appeared to remain consistent even if not progressed through parkour ('persistent'). For many, not having parkour training meet the needs they previously hoped it would, was the type of LoP they experienced in and of itself. This category saw participants avoidantly seeking these needs elsewhere as opposed to investigating how and why they had lacked this experience within parkour training.

Some participants coped with their LoP by seeking to meet socialisation needs previously satisfied through parkour training through an alternative means (e.g. watching films with friends, eating together etc.), sometimes still centred on parkour, at others wholly separate from it:

> *'Every now and then, like recently, we have a little gather up with some of them. Not everyone. But there's still some of them…. We're still in touch in small clusters' (Jim, p. 6, 7, lines 249-251).*

> *'I had a few crushes as well, I'm not gonna lie. And that was really enjoyable for me to be like, these were just crushes. (…) I don't think it's a complete coincidence that when I met my husband, was about six months later was when I went, "I'm gonna quit"' (Fay, p. 6, line 285-291).*

Others sought to replace their psychosocioemotional needs met through parkour through other mediums, often not physical ones (e.g. diary, dance, music etc.):

> *'Just learnt to kind of channel that energy into something else, whether it's music or reading that way I don't you know like, you know I'm really sad or depressed about not being able to do sport' (John, p. 14, lines 377-381).*

Some participants, often those who had entered parkour for the sense of freedom/breaking out it brought to them, seemed to replace this through alternative movement forms:

> *'I feel like only one thing and then not doing it then it's one part of you missing, but I fill that part with different things (…) so whenever I do martial arts, I don't even think about parkour' (Ryan, p. 8, line 185-190).*

### 5.4.3. Coping positively with LoP through reflective warrioring

This higher order category involves participants reflectively processing their LoP experiences, normalising them to help rationalise them, and ultimately owning the changes they felt they needed to attend to within this process. I named the category, 'reflective warrioring', as in this coping style, participants were empathetically processing their experience of LoP while still

battling through it assertively, which to my supervisor and I felt warrior-like. Some participants' experiences were lived; others appeared to emerge after being asked to reflect on their actual coping with LoP versus their retrospectively analysed thoughts on what they may have felt would have helped them process the LoP more effectively. Whether the reflection was during training or after, this coping process was categorised as 'positive' due to participants gaining something helpfully transformative from their acknowledging, confronting and processing of their LoP.

| Higher order category | Lower order category | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| 5.4.3. Coping positively with LoP through reflective warrioring | 5.4.3.1. Objectively allocating responsibility for LoP | 3,1,9 |
| | 5.4.3.2. Reflexively processing LoP | 2,3,4 |

Table 14: HLOCP for 5.4.3

### 5.4.3.1. Objectively allocating responsibility for LoP

This lower order category was co-created to house participants' coping strategies, during the training of parkour, which were in aid of them gaining objectivity surrounding who or what was responsible for their experience of LoP in training. Objectivity by definition implies an absence of personal influence on a thought or action (Cambridge University Press, 2021). Its use here however was to represent a distancing from participants' previously largely biased self-appraisals in the allocation of responsibility for their LoP to themselves, others and objects, towards a more balanced one. These participants were able to assume their role in experiencing LoP with training as well as relinquish that which was not theirs to assume. This appeared to be a positive coping strategy due to it making their LoP seemingly more digestible, it being accurately shared by the multiple influencing factors it took to experience LoP in the first instance. This allowed them to avoid overly internalising blaming and harbouring unhelpful emotions. Participants appeared to find this both empowering and enlightening, using distancing from training in order to allow them to more readily and honestly re-search their processing of LoP.

Some participants coped with their LoP through healthily assuming responsibility for decisions perceived to exacerbate factors influencing it (e.g. drug-taking, replacing training, not attending to their LoP etc.):

> 'It's a work in progress, cos there are things for which I know that it was all

*my fault. (…) So it's something I am trying to do, taking 100% responsibility on everything that happens to me, because it gives me more control'* (May, p. 11, lines 433-438).

This style of coping also allowed some participants to healthily relinquish responsibility for decisions made which were thought to have influenced factors influencing their LoP (e.g. not assuming the blame for not being able to speak out to those in power, reflecting on overinflated blaming of the self etc.)

> *'Looking back at it, well what can I expect of a like 14 years old (…) them [coaches] to see that not everyone is capable of being pushed to their limits in this way and sometimes it destroys personalities instead of building them as they thought it should work'* (Lucy, p. 9, lines 227-239).

### 5.4.3.2. Reflexively processing LoP

This lower order category was co-created to house participants reflective coping strategies after stopping parkour training. Self-reflection after ending training seemingly allowed participants to contextualise their LoP more readily to their own personal influencing factors, avoid blanket comparisons with others that were often self-diminishing and accept LoP as dependent on their decision-making. This processing style appeared to resolve difficult emotions that participants had when experiencing their LoP during their parkour training. This reflective process seemingly provided them with a more compassionate yet authentic reflective and reflexive viewpoint when processing their future choices linked to parkour training. They seemingly reflected by regarding what was happening and considering it, reflexively questioning how they had influenced or been influenced by experiences of LoP within training.

These participants appeared to retrospectively accept intersubjective differences within their training settings, allowing them to cope with their LoP by contextualising it within their own contexts and priorities in life – as opposed to the previous negative comparisons to others experienced during training as destructive to their sense of self:

> *'At a certain point when I realised like, I'm not really getting better at this, I realised it was my own mental blocks that's stopping me, but my priority is not to be good at parkour. I don't wanna become a parkour practitioner that gets paid to be in a commercial to jump over things. That's not what I'm here for. What I'm here for is the social, the exercise stuff. So it's okay if actually I go back to group one (…) and there maybe someone better than me. I'm okay with that'* (Fay, p. 10, lines 452-459).

There was a degree of normalisation of LoP demonstrated by participants: some normalising it to their usual coping styles more generally; or through direct, self-soothing normalisation of their negative feelings towards their LoP, perhaps providing them with necessary containment of the self:

> *'I stopped wanting to travel miles by myself to go training with people I suppose. So it's my fault that I stopped training. I could have kept myself going, but for some reason I've always lacked the will-power to go out training by myself. (…) I suppose I feel very self-conscious running by myself'* (Jeremy, p. 4, lines 155-159).

Participants who coped in this way appeared more likely to be thinking about re-entering parkour after adjusting training styles, expectations and goals, or resolving to not re-enter training at all.

## 5.4.4. Coping positively with LoP through contained practitioning

This higher order category was co-constructed through my analysis of what participants suggested throughout the above categories, and directly from their responses to 20/20 hindsight questions on their training and coping processes. It resulted in an iterative process, unlike the participants' lived reactive deductive processes, suggesting this to be better suited to positively experiencing and coping with LoP. The functions of the participants, others and the training format were reflected on, resulting in lower order categories which contain recommendations for training practices that safeguard participants' sense of self, advise a healthy means of processing LoP, keep practitioners in training and reduces the risk of exiting parkour training.

| Higher order category | Lower order category | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| 5.4.4. Coping positively with LoP through contained practitioning (Recommendations thought to reduce likelihood of quitting) | 5.4.4.1. Reflecting on a need for external containment provisions | 4,3,2,7 |
| | 5.4.4.2. Reflecting on a need for internal containment provisions | 4,8,6,1 |
| | 5.4.4.3. Reflecting on a necessary balance needed between the collective and autonomous parkour training experience | 6,9,4,5,2,7,3 |

Table 15: HLOCP for 5.4.4

### *5.4.4.1. Reflecting on a need for external containment provisions*

This lower order category was co-constructed to address the needs that participants voiced, as well as those I inferred through the analysis process, for provisions outside of themselves that

could aid them to process and contain their unhelpful thoughts, feelings and behaviours. This containment ranged from movement-oriented progression guidance to more emotional support, from people within parkour training to beyond. Overall, this category housed a strong notion that although external containment provision was key to aid LoP processing and reduced LoP, it was paramount that such provisions provided by a practitioner's systems were conducive to their own unique needs.

Participants seemed to not feel 'known' by the 'other' (e.g. Fay, *p. 10, line 461-469*). Many identified a need for more person-centred, progression-based practice within parkour to help them better cope and more effectively process their LoP. This seemed to include physically breaking down progressions to challenges in parkour dependent on the needs of the person; personalising the psychosocioemotional mapping of learning and person-centred goal setting to sit more congruently with themselves and others, healthily managing their own expectations of the self:

> *'As soon as it's goal driven, then you're setting yourself up for having information that is uncomfortable and you can't do anything. Sometimes you need to prioritise the inner (…) just teach people to (…) operate outside in or inside out. There's a different modality, so I think you need a complementary modality, so that people can learn to feel their feelings, feel their sensations. Accept them and integrate them, rather than creating a kind of strange, dysfunctional paradigm' (Tina, p. 16, 652-662)*

Participants also reflected on the need and importance of systemic support (e.g. peers, family, coaching etc.) when struggling in parkour, believing this to be essential to a traceur's healthy development of self, containment provision by coaches and reassurance necessary in aiding their processing of LoP:

> *'One of the founders… I think if they were around more, they could have, as adults, stopped it* [bullying and vandalism] *and also because they're much more respected, I think others are more inclined to follow (…) the ones* [freerunners] *who were bad are probably a similar age group to me. Then they had quite a lot of young ones follow in their footsteps. (…) So, I think if there were role models around, it would have prevented it' (Jim, p.12, lines 457-466).*

### 5.4.4.2. Reflecting on a need for internal containment provisions

Having outlined the need for external containment provisions as key, this lower order category

was co-created to house important coping strategies that were recommended to be implemented by parkour practitioners. There was advocacy for practitioners to know and manage their boundaries within training to not risk overly exacerbating one's negative processing of LoP. A further recommendation saw a suggestion for self-management aids outside of parkour to be utilised within a parkour setting to process one's LoP experience being put forward by a participant.

Complementing the above, participants reflected on the importance of checking in with their 'red flags' (a term coined by Tina) to safeguard themselves when coping with LoP. Some participants, like Ryan (*pp. 11, 12; line 297-301*) struggled to regulate their internal processes: often leading to avoidant and destructive coping styles to LoP:

> *'If you stop enjoying it* [parkour training], *it starts to feel like something that's a punishment. I feel like I felt a sense of self-harm almost, like the exercise obsession. Again, that's a warning. I'd probably describe some red flags (...) "Are you over-training, have you stopped sweating?" (...) I would kind of map out what some red flags are and would say, 'Are you in this territory? Maybe this isn't parkour territory, maybe this is bad"' (Tina, p. 15, lines 623-630).*

Some participants advocated the benefits of working on themselves outside of parkour (e.g. acting, journaling, blogging, therapies etc.), to aid in making sense of their experiences of LoP; and hence, make the above process of monitoring coping more readily accessible to practitioners, ultimately helping their progression:

> *'I did have one thing that actually parkour (...) brought up was my commitment issues' (p. 13, line 513-515). 'When I started acting again and training as an actor,        I started doing method and there was a lot of inner search and so on (...) I realised I had commitment issues (...)' (p. 13, line 522-526). 'I also learnt about my narcissism. (...) that's what triggered my actually ...fulfil my potential' (p. 14, line 529-534).*

### 5.4.4.3. Reflecting on a necessary balance needed between the collective and autonomous parkour training experience

This lower order category was co-constructed to house the participants' recommendations that parkour training should be distributed between autonomous and collective training. This category saw participants stressing the importance of both these training paradigms, ultimately outlining the benefits they each had to a practitioner's understanding of their relationship to

training and to their LoP.

Participants seemed to champion independent creative play as nurturing their sense of self, often implying that it cultivated self-discovery uniquely for each individual; in turn fostering a vital sense of autonomy in their training, essential to coping more contentedly with LoP:

> *'Just like give me more space to like figure things out by myself (…) like leave the time to rest or to reflect or to put more creativity in it instead of like drills and repetitions' (Lucy, p. 9, lines 238-242).*

> *'You know, it's good to have advice but sort of train a bit more how you want. How makes you happy' (Tina, p. 15, line 621-622).*

Participants also identified the benefits of group training in coping with LoP pro-socially (motivationally, in fear management, injury recovery etc.):

> *"I think it* [the feeling of them going for a jump] *comes from bond. With strangers … (p. 3, line 98) …you always arrange to meet outside (…) in your own little clan, to train someone else. We all had confidence, because I thought, if I mess up it doesn't matter, because they will mess up as well, and they'll tell me to try again or they might help me adjust and tell me what to do' (Jim, p. 3, lines 105-110).*

Nonetheless, participants also reflected on the benefits of solo training, describing a confidence that can be gained from this: growing their ability to better hold their own in group settings later (Jack, p. 3, line 124-128), understand their own progression or lack thereof more intuitively (Fay, p. 10, line 479-481) to better cope with the struggles of group/community-driven agendas, and ultimately:

> *'If somebody's feeling like disillusioned with the community then they should take that on the chin if you can and carry on your training in your way. Don't let what's going on with the community as a whole to dictate to you what parkour is to you, cause otherwise you end up upset and bitter like me' (Jeremy, p. 13, lines 534-539).*

## 5.5. Quitting Styles

This category was called 'quitting styles' to house the various co-constructed processes that participants seemed to engage with when ending their training. The term 'quitting' was used due to ending training in sport having been called quitting by several participants in this study e.g. (Jeremy, pg. 7, line 277). The 'style' of quitting came to be called so, to refer to 'how' the

participants experienced the quitting or lack thereof. The word 'style' was used in line with the dictionary definition that defines the word style as "the manner in which something is expressed" (American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 2011). Depending on how participants coped with their LoP, quitting was expressed differently, these styles co-constructed to involve processes that were co-constructed as conflicted or resolved. These two processes were seen both in participants either flirting with notions of re-entering parkour training and also with those stopping more permanently.

## 5.5.1. Re-entering parkour: experiencing the revolving door

This higher order category was called 're-entering parkour' to describe the possibility that some participants eluded going back to parkour training in the future, in either a conflicted or a resolved manner. The term 'the revolving door' was used to represent the lack of certainty that participants seemed to have in returning or indeed staying in training once returned, their return being contingent on things that could revert back to being unfulfilled in the future. For example, the presence of external support, where Jack stated that he thought he would need to find the right group to re-enter training (p. 10, line 452-453). This dependency that participants' re-entry had on factors that could fluctuate in availability, lead to the possibility of entry and quitting again being embodied in the term revolving door. This process further reminds me of the term that reporter Hill (2014) had used when covering a project I used to work on, to describe clients' repetitive re-entry into a service. Clients' issues remained unresolved or problematic yet again, even after going through a process that is believed to be helpful.

| Higher order category | Lower order category | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| 5.5.1. Re-entering parkour: experiencing the revolving door | 5.5.1.1. Re-entering conflicted | 5,6,3 |
| | 5.5.1.2. Re-entering resolved | 3,5,1 |

Table 16: HLOCP for 5.5.1

### 5.5.1.1. Re-entering conflicted

In this lower order category, some participants sought re-entry into parkour training in a manner that was co-constructed as conflicted. The term conflicted was used to describe the duality of participants' desire to return and their trepidation at doing so. Participants' conflicts ranged from needs that were very situational and external to them e.g. where or who training was with,

to more personal ones e.g. resolving internal aspects of themselves they felt had contributed to quitting in the first instance.

Some participants, who had arguably not processed their LoP effectively, seemed to require external support to re-enter training, seeking external entities to increase motivation and drive:

> *'One of my roommates actually teaches at the parkour gym, so I'd be excited to start doing parkour with him and getting back into the community. (...) It definitely helps, makes it easier to get back in' (John, p. 15, lines 393-398).*

These participants and others also needed to control factors perceived to have contributed to their LoP prior to re-entry. Some striving to work on their 'real' vulnerabilities (e.g. self-identified sacrificial tendencies), while others held on to fixing their 'replacement' vulnerabilities (e.g. fixing their perceived pre-disposing physical attributes):

> *'(If I did parkour again) I think I would first need to be lighter and more forgiving, slower, those kinds of things. Allow there to be different politics. Allow there to be different frustrations, but keep going' (Jeremy, p. 13, lines 558-560).*

> '[If Jack goes back] *there's still going to be my leg* [rehab on broken leg] *which I don't know how it reacts' (Jack, p. 10, line 450-451).*

### 5.5.1.2. Re-entering resolved

Conversely to the above category, this lower order category was co-constructed to house participants who appeared to have already addressed their pre-requisite needs and encouraged by this when contemplating their re-entry into parkour training. Participants however also volunteered that should they not heed the necessary changes to training or themselves once back in parkour training, the risk of re-exiting training was a definite possibility. For example, Jack stated he knew he would go back if he could be "more cautious and more sensible" (p. 12, line 482), also saying that he however always seems to just go for it, and this approach not always working out (p. 12, line 183-484). This dualism leads this lower order category to sit well within the higher order category's revolving door reference.

Several participants, especially those who had worked on their LoP outside of parkour, desired re-entry after gaining a better understanding of themselves:

> *'I wanna sort of start over and I can be a beginner without the psychological pressure. I know no-one is putting the pressure on me, but I am putting it on*

*myself so the only thing I can do is recognise that and try to work with it, instead of avoiding it, if that makes sense' (May, p. 12, line 483-487).*

*'It's made me like when all of this is all sorted just maybe want to actually get down and start training' (Jeremy, p. 24, line 565-567).*

## 5.5.2. Stopping parkour permanently

This higher order category was co-constructed to house all the various styles of processing of permanent endings, thereby coined 'stopping'. The permanence in the category name 'permanently' represents the decisiveness that participants showed in their lack of desire to return to training in any capacity. This decision to stop training with such permanence was either peacefully reconciled ('resolved stopping'), or demonstrative of an arduous emotional process of quitting, that appeared to render participants' decisions to stop training somewhat unconsciously incongruent with their possible truer desires ('conflicted stopping').

| Higher order category | Lower order category | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| 5.5.2. Stopping parkour permanently | 5.5.2.1. Resolved stopping | 2 |
| | 5.5.2.2. Conflicted stopping | 4,5,3,2 |

Table 17: HLOCP for 5.5.2

### *5.5.2.1. Resolved stopping*

This lower order category was co-constructed to house processes of stopping training that was reconciled. This outcome of training may be seen as negative to some due to the end result of their training trajectory being to leave the sport thereby decreasing sports retention. Importantly, however, this decision and the process leading up to it appeared to be one that was healthily in line with the participants' needs. Participants did not seemingly harbour any unprocessed conflict linked to their decision of ending training thereby very decidedly not wishing to return.

Some participants, especially those who had made peace with retrospectively accepting individual differences in their training, seemed to remember their affinity to parkour fondly, while not desiring to re-enter:

> *'I was like sad not to be exercising, but I'm also really okay with it. Like I don't feel sorry [I left]' (Fay, p. 20, line 906-908).*

*5.5.2.2. Conflicted stopping*

This lower order category was called so, to house the event of stopping training altogether while embodying the process of unresolved processes still alive in participants who had stopped training. Participants discussing a return seeming non-committal while their departures appearing difficult, led to this category including the notion of conflict within it.

Some participants, especially those who coped with their experience of LoP by numbingly externalising blame onto external entities non-committedly, displayed an ambivalent longing to return to parkour without demonstrating decisive actions to re-enter:

> *'Now, it's more, three years without it, it's hard to get back in (…) I still see a lot of friends asking me, you should come back and okay, but to start from scratch maybe? and do it again' (Jack, p. 10, lines 438-443).*

Some who had shown tendencies to externalise blame destructively when coping with their LoP, while being quite defensive in doing so, appeared resigned to stopping - while remaining interested in trying other approaches to training:

> *'I am not sure I'm ready to go back to 'XX'. Parkour is a work in progress. To be honest, I quite like the concept of 'XX', because they associate self-development. (…) Like people saying it out loud, yeah, people did self-development in their life and I think that's really nice and mature and it takes in consideration the humanity. The human bits. That's part of it. I do like that. I would like to experience that' (May, p. 12, 458-465).*

A sign of conflicted stopping came through strongly in some participants, regardless of whether they sought to re-enter. This may have been linked to their seeking acceptance when joining parkour, and prior experiences of rejection from people in positions of power. Much of this conflict came to light when participants reflected on the function of their delayed decision-making processes in stopping training:

> *'I announced my departure like weeks and weeks before I finally left' (p. 15, line 718-719). 'Maybe it was to make sure that I (…) stop, cause I could easily just kept on going, but I felt if I announced it then I had announced my intentions and then I would fulfil my intentions and also, I think it was that I felt so attached to that group of people and those instructors and I just felt like (…) I owed it to them to give them a lot of warning that I was no longer attending their class and that it wasn't a personal thing against any of them' (Fay, p. 16, lines 738-744).*

# Chapter 6: Discussion

## 6.1. Summary of discussion

The GT presented above outlines the longitudinal physical psychosocioemotional processes involved in paradoxical losing through training and participants' relationship to a seemingly inevitable LoP. The theory was influenced by my social constructionist position as a researcher, using an integrative psychoanalytically informed interpretation of the participants' affectual and behavioural processes, and by my insider position as a parkour practitioner myself (McGee et al., 2007). Co-constructed with the participants' narrative, this study aimed to address the gap of research that existed in parkour literature around participants' experiences of stopping training. The GT was co-constructed with the core category of LoP, the model summary below further discussed within this chapter.

'*Internal*' and '*external*' influencing factors appear to influence people's motivation to enter parkour, informing what they are '*seeking through parkour training*'. Upon initiating parkour, participants appeared to have suffered a complex process of '*paradoxically losing while journeying through parkour*', experienced through '*struggling with somatic challenges*', the '*unmasking of the traceur's "divided self"*', a process that resembled '*re-enacting the past through parkour*', '*"religion-ing" of practice and practitioner through parkour*' and '*experiencing "fitness fascism"-ing*' throughout the course of their training. This process then fuelled the augmentation of pre-existing hurdles in front of the participants, seemingly exacerbating a phenomenon of '*experiencing LoP*' in parkour. The participants '*experiencing LoP*' adopted three different types of coping styles to manage their experience: '*detached defending*', '*defended destroying*', and '*reflective warrioring*'.

In addition, '*reflective warrioring*' resulted in '*quitting styles*' that subdivided into '*re-entering parkour - experiencing a revolving door*', or '*stopping parkour permanently*'. It is, therefore, suggested that '*experiencing LoP*' was inevitable – but that how it was managed is critical in predicting someone's commitment to continuing parkour training rather than stopping, feeling conflicted or resolved. Based on this, a recommended coping style housed in '*contained practitioning*' saw people believing that one could stay within training and re-gain what they had once sought in parkour if they coped more helpfully.

Within this discussion, these processes and their respective categories are largely discussed co-

dependently, to appropriately mirror the symbiotic nature of the various categories of the model; and the iterative feedback looping nature of processes which practitioners appear to 'ping-pong' through, both consciously and unconsciously, when reflecting on the phenomenon of LoP through paradoxical losing and what was experienced.

The model did not require that the person follow a direct causal path from what they seek - to what they lose - to how they cope - resulting in whether they quit or remain; rather, it attempts to explain how participants felt they and other practitioners may experience losses, how they may process these and the risks or rewards in terms of their parkour progression. This model, therefore, proposes that this may be more in line with who they have come to be as a person; and how closely their processing of LoP may mirror their processing of stressors within relationships to objects, people and situations in life more broadly. This is due to having inevitably experienced and coped with various forms of trauma in their past, whether it was owned or not. Although at a brief glance, the model may appear categorical and causal in nature, it is linear only in highlighting a longitudinal trajectory and patterns uncovered in analysis: the processes through which remain highly dynamic, organic and iterative throughout. This model is more broadly conceptualised with the participants viewed primarily as humans and not just as sportspersons. Though not generalisable given the socio-constructivist and non-positivist methodology that was engaged throughout the analysis, this renders the model's processes possibly transferable to other practitioners and even other movement forms.

## 6.2. Seeking through parkour training?

### 6.2.1. Internal physical influencing factors

#### *6.2.1.1. Striving to maintain an idealised body image*

Participants sought to get healthy through training: seeking out how parkour would make them feel physically, in line with what Clegg and Butryn (2012) describe as the 'bodily experience' of parkour being alluring. Interestingly, previous research into high-intensity exercise seems to suggest that the 'feel-good' effect of a work out is usually unlikely during high-intensity training (Biddle & Batterham, 2015). However, participants in this study seemed to actively seek out 'the burn' in parkour training. They loved the post-workout feeling where they believed that the pain was worth the burn and striving to get fitter through parkour. In line with

research on how exercise can aid mood management, making a person feel like they are gaining forward momentum through training (Pickett, Kendrick & Yardley, 2017), participants believe that other than just symbolically, they were also allowing themselves to release endorphin-like chemicals through training which benefited them on both a physical and psychological level. Szabo, Griffiths and Demetrovics (2019) echo this biological gain. These participants did however question the effectiveness of training on the said gain if exercise is abused, in line with Magherini et al.,'s (2019) research on how stress in training can lead to negative biological consequences.

In addition to general fitness and emotional wellbeing being sought through the physical engagement of parkour, some women wanted to use parkour as a means of reclaiming their former self-image. This is in line with growing data that suggests that women (postnatally, for example), tend to be increasingly dissatisfied with their body image and attempt to make peace with this through physical activity (Sun, Chen, Wang, Liu & Zhang, 2018). Yet not all physical interventions are motivational enough for this population (Lee, McInnes, Hughes, Guthrie & Jepson, 2016) which suggests perhaps that participants were looking to the inclusive uniqueness that parkour was thought to inhabit to engage them more durably.

### 6.2.1.2. Seeking to embody subverting through an accepted medium

In line with Wallace (2013), participants also viewed parkour as 'outside the mainstream and in one sense underground' (p. 25). This appealed to them, possibly for the 'specialness' it brought to their identity in practising it; but also for the rebellious and unconventional aspect it was seen to uphold. Many participants were seeking to break away from the norm and fight the systemic expectations which they felt they had to meet.

In line with Wheaton's (2004) description of people who do extreme sports, participants sought out parkour because they perceived it to be counter to cultural norms, rejected the status quo and dogmatic perceptions of societal authority. They aligned themselves with the ideology that parkour was a form of resistance in its very practice which matches Bavinton's (2007) view of parkour as a practice that sees the world as an urban playground, without limits or confines. Archer (2010) described parkour as a form of resistance that challenges hierarchical control through the alternative use of public space, something echoed in our participants' narrative.

Meanwhile, several female participants voiced a desire to challenge the ideology they had been

subject to growing up, namely, that women were not to do sports such as parkour and that this sport was for men. Parkour's standard demographic, as Atkinson (2009) found, is white, male, lower-middle to upper-working class.

## 6.2.2. Internal psychosocioemotional influencing factors

### 6.2.2.1. Striving to keep their inner 'Peter Pan' alive

Participants sought a sense of freedom, echoing Ameel and Tani's (2012) findings that highlighted their participants' motives as partially based on 'personal freedom'. They also found that curiosity and a playful approach was sought by practitioners of parkour, mirrored by participants in this study in their seeking to revive childlike play. Stevens (2007) and Geyh (2006) suggested that parkour was inherently playful and lucid in nature; participants in this study had the same pre-existing conceptions, which were attractive to them in pursuing entry to the sport. There also seemed to be a 'Peter Pan'-esque timelessness to parkour's allure.

In line with Pringle, Rinehart and Caudwell's (2015) ideas, there was a temporal time lapse tie which participants seemed to perceive in parkour where they regard it as a means of transparent emotional happiness and being in the moment, which they found pleasurable. Vonow (2016) used the term 'Peter Pan effect' when looking into adult attempts to re-elicit positive childhood memories through retuning to childhood holiday destinations. Participants seemed to be searching for this same re-enactment while coupling this with a search for mindfulness at playtime, to let go of adult life stresses and re-experience the perceived carefreeness which they believed that children experience.

Interestingly, this same motivator was later seen to have aided some participants in letting parkour go. Coping with their experience of LoP, they suggested that maybe they had done enough playing around: believing it was time to grow up, something often reinforced by people in their support networks.

### 6.2.2.2. Seeking to satisfy their inner narcissist

Participants appeared to be chasing a thrill by engaging in parkour, echoed in Wallace's (2013) and Le Breton's (2000) research, participants in their studies suggesting that thrill-seeking was closely linked to the desired experience of a participant completing a jump and a certain level

of adrenaline that came with this. This is also seemingly aligned with Zuckerman's (2007) sensation-seeking perspective that supports thrill-seeking as central to participation in seemingly risky sports.

Moreover, participants seemed to have hedonistic motives for doing parkour associated with their thrill-seeking, again in line with Wallace (2013). Pringle, Rinehart and Caudwell (2015), who describe pleasure-seeking as inherent in humans, believe that happiness and the search for it is humans' primary goal and the purpose of life, validate this study's participants' search. Celsi et al., (1993) explained that although thrill-seeking properties like the excitement and adrenaline sought for in activities like parkour are ever-present, they do not reach dangerous levels; a practitioner's fear normalising over time as skills are honed, eventually reducing as participants strive for transcendent flow states.

Yet this did not seem to be the case for participants in this study. In fact, many re-injured themselves during training; and throughout, chased this thrilling feeling without processing the potentially self-harming nature of their actions. Raymen (2017) suggests that a participant's risk-taking may transcend the thrill-seeking and subversive motivations they have when entering parkour. Together, with the risk-taking appeal of the sport entwining with their trials to attain ego-ideals, and an individualistic lifestyle which engages the narcissism inherent in many participants.

The participants did seem to be driven by an unhealthy narcissistic tendency at times which links in with Brymer's (2010) review of current risk-orientated perspectives on extreme sports. For example, seeking social standing through pre-conceived ideologies that parkour embodies, with a sense of extreme strength providing a means to deny their limitations and vulnerabilities, and leave them feeling invincible. This invincibility aligns with Hunt's (1996) paper, where attention is paid to the role of the diver's father in the evolution of the participants' pre-oedipal and oedipal fantasies and conflicts which appear to be linked to the inflated sense of accomplishment.

## 6.2.3. External physical influencing factors

### 6.2.3.1. Being visually enticed into parkour through media

Participants appeared, in line with Wallace (2013), to be influenced by media and friends to

enter parkour. At a time where social media is the source of risk-taking for many, and a means of attaining status and social standing (Dokur, Petekkaya & Karadag, 2018), it was interesting that some participants were initially drawn to the highly visual, apparently unattainable feats which parkour could apparently help them embody. Fox and Rooney (2015) suggest this feeds into someone's unconscious dark triad of personality (Machiavellianism, narcissism, psychopathy). Some, however, took inspiration from educational sources of media using them as Doetsch-Kidder (2012) suggested, to imagine themselves doing the sport in a way that healthily drummed up the motivation to try out certain aspects of it.

Nonetheless, participants often demonstrated a need to attain a standing similar to that of their idols. This seemed unconscious but was superficially made reference to when they identified the role that idolisation of role models has on their motivations to train in parkour. This resembled a symbolic need to 'merge' with a powerful object (parkour) which can be thought to demonstrate an innate hunger for humans to feel satisfied and renewed in libidinal energy as described by Anna Freud (1954). This is much like the need a baby has to satisfy its hunger through the engulfment of the breast.

The apparent misrepresentation of parkour in the media, argued by Gilchrist and Wheaton (2017) to possibly be due to its subcultural nature, could have initially inspired participants and then overly raised expectations of themselves in the sport. This led to feelings of inferiority later on in training, when they realised their dreams of matching these idols was unattainable to them.

### 6.2.3.2. Seeking to challenge lived experiences of others' negative perceptions of their potential

Inasmuch as media and people around them enticed participants to join parkour, these same entities drove them to see parkour as a counter-culture much like Wheaton's (2004) participants. Therefore it was seen as a means to embody aspects of themselves which those surrounding them had wrongly made inferences about, which ultimately aroused them to challenge these. The social perception, a term described by Aronson, Akert and Wilson (2010) to mean the way people thought about others, which they perceived existed about themselves, was sought out to be confronted through parkour. Participants thereby not only viewed parkour as an acceptable means of subverting the societal norms, but also of subverting the elements of their own mapped out personal norms which they felt had been inaccurately prescribed to them

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by people in their lives.

The attributes that participants felt others around them had assigned to them were inaccurate and in line with models of attribution theory by Heider (1958) that centre on the notion that people can make errors or have biases that result in an attribution error. Participants however also disagreed with the internal attributions they felt they embodied as a result of external entities assigning negative values to them and their behaviour. For example, their inability, lack of disposition and being unequipped to manage tasks surrounding them. As such, participants sought a means of challenging these preconceptions and proving them wrong, both outwardly to others and inwardly for the inner satisfaction they thought this would bring.

## 6.2.4. External psychosocioemotional influencing factors

### 6.2.4.1. Seeking a consciously pre-existing need for connectedness

Participants sought a sense of belonging and acceptance through parkour. Both are strongly associated with identity formation (Wheaton, 2000). They were driven by a need to find themselves, while still seeking to belong to a group and be acknowledged within it. This is in line with Wheaton and Beal's (2003) idea that in-group status gives people a sense of authenticity. Participants' narratives directly implying their need for previously absent feelings of connectedness which comes up in Wallace's (2013) study. This study proposes that participants were looking for a certain twinship coined by Kohut (1984) where people search for a sense of alikeness in others or a sense that the other possesses qualities they like to think they also have. Seeing one's self in another is thought to be highly validating, leading to a healthier sense of self (Greenberg, Solomon & Pyszczynski, 1997). The development of a common language, transcending verbal language, appeared to comfort participants linking back to what Wallace (2013) proposed regarding a 'parkour language' derived from his participants' experiences. It was suggested by Fishman (1960) that a common language can heighten practitioners' intimacy with their experiences.

Interestingly, participants also sought self-acceptance through measures of progression which are defined here as completion of tasks in parkour. This spoke to a process resembling the mirroring of others, defined by Kohut (1984) as a caregiver's ability to mirror the child's innate sense of greatness meeting the child's grandiose need; participants seeing progression as the object that mirrored their self-worth. Twinship proposed by Kohut (1971) as a process

involving narcissistic transference within relationships, seemed to resonate with the participants' seeming need to meet their own narcissistic needs through a form of transference within their training of parkour, as if unconsciously believing it to house the narcissistic characteristics they were so eager to own. This led to a form of 'risk acceptance', used by Wallach, Kogan and Bem (1962) to explain increased risk-taking when one is in a group, with participants in this study striving to perform moves that they didn't want to due to being encouraged by the group they yearned to belong to. This cost of a desire to be accepted is further explored when discussing participants being confronted with their 'failing' selves.

In line with the unstable childhoods that many participants described, their desire for twinship in adulthood to such an extent was validated by the sense that mirroring did not happen as it should have in their earlier years. This left participants unable to accept differences in others and although at times feeling suffocated by their groups, being driven overwhelmingly by a need to be accepted and accept others based on their similarities.

In line with this validation, acceptance and belonging being sought, participants also demonstrated an allure to the altruistic connotations they believed parkour to have e.g. being strong to be useful. Sachdeva, lliev, Ekhtiari and Dehghani (2015) suggest there is something unique in humans; a tendency to be drawn to sacrificing the self for others, a cornerstone of our moral concepts. Yet what appeared to be a very selfless attraction to parkour experienced by the practitioners later seemed more closely linked to the ego gains someone can experience through this seemingly altruistic approach. Some of the altruism sought in parkour may have represented a coping style to better manage losses which participants experienced; an over-compensation in seeking usefulness, after injuries to their ego sustained both earlier on in life, as well as during training.

### 6.2.4.2. Seeking a medium to practise overcoming obstacles in life

Participants shared having experienced a variety of mental health struggles themselves, as well as vicariously through adverse childhood experiences of emotional neglect through parental mental illness, homelessness and other challenges. Many had sought parkour out, believing it could aid them in challenging themselves and teach them to overcome obstacles. Echoing Wallace's (2013) participants' narrative, this also allowed them to find healthier replacement support systems to encourage them to overcome these obstacles. Participants entered parkour seeking to problem-solve rather than avoiding confronting their perceived issues, corroborating

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Smith's (2005) suggestions that in situations where participants were deeply afraid, control through the emotion was sought, enabling the sense of elation sought by them to flourish.

Seemingly complimentary of the 'parkour language' concept (Wallace, 2013), Ameel and Tani (2012) proposed a process they termed 'parkour vision'. This is based on the process participants outlined which involved them looking over an area and mentally processing the moves they wanted to achieve, in a very stepped problem-solving manner.

Participants perceived parkour's potential in this as unique, believing in its ability to grow their resilience, courage, problem-solving abilities and much more. Rosendahl (2018) investigated parkour as a tool in a humanitarian life skills intervention, highlighting how it aligns itself with the life skills education that the World Health Organisation (1999) assembled within their wider mental health programming agenda. Risk assessment and management (Puddle, 2015), decision-making (Cabrera Gadea & Jacobs, 2016) and sitting with uncertainty (Fernandez-Rio & Suarez, 2016) have all been argued to be further developed by the practice of parkour. Although these authors, many of whom are practitioners themselves, echo beliefs similar to the participants in this study, the positive impact that a nature-based activity like parkour has on psycho-emotional wellbeing, suggested by Yeh (2017), was questionable upon practice commencing for this study's participants. Merritt and Tharp (2013) suggest that over time, and with experience, risk assessment and problem-solving develops further and positively; yet in this study, this did not seem to be participants' experience.

Perhaps this is partly due to the expectation that participants also appeared to hold of parkour, being well-aligned with their own values, interests and goals. Participants appeared to believe that parkour's needs would marry with their needs in a top-down fashion, a term used by Boekaerts (2006) to signify that one's pursuit of a goal is values-driven in strategy that if in line with one's own needs could lead to mastery. They perhaps did not anticipate the aspects within parkour or their training of it which would go against their values adding to their growth of the self in a very bottom-up fashion, Boekaerts (2006) describing bottom-up as a self-regulatory strategy that if interrupted could affect a person's well-being; later leading to paradoxical loss compounding their experience of LoP through training. Participants expressed a feeling of safety with the sport, despite being thrilled by the risk they thought it to contain. This meant they perceived it to involve a training style they were compatible with, based on previous coping styles they had engaged which were 'hard and oppositional' in nature.

# 6.3. Paradoxically losing while journeying through parkour

## 6.3.1. Struggling with somatic challenges

### *6.3.1.1. Experiencing cost of psychosomatic barriers to the self*

Human attachment relationships, primarily to people, though also in objects, depending on where custody of omnipotence is placed, is thought to be dependent on motivational systems which develop in childhood and are then shared among us throughout our lives (Bowlby, 1979). In object relations psychology, Klein (1946) outlines that attitudes towards others and the self (objects) are internalised, as they affect a person's approach to new situations. When adverse experiences occur in childhood, the images of people and events are turned into 'objects', which in adulthood are unconsciously drawn upon, to predict behaviour and in turn inform how we approach these people and situations (Iso-Ahola & St. Clair, 2000).

In a classic example, parts of a person are also thought to be internalised. For example, a mother's breast, if sufficiently responsive, is internalised as a good breast; if not, as a bad breast (Klein, 1946). This can then lead to a generalised idolisation or rejection of the object, and to a great distrust of objects in adulthood. On the other hand, integration of the good and the bad occurs in healthy childhood development, leading to the 'whole' object being reconciled and still safely attached to (Klein, 1946).

Similarly, later experiences can help reshape these early patterns; yet if further negative experiences are lived through, the split is reinforced and integration remains conflicted (Greenberg, 1983). In this study, scary objects/moves which participants were faced with in training were seemingly processed using these same patterns, given their past negative experiences. This led to a psychosomatic barrier being experienced which meant they experienced physical challenges which were unconsciously emotionally driven.

There seems to have been an inability among participants to integrate the good and bad aspects of the objects/moves, in line with Klein's (2013) concepts explored above. Instead, working off past bad experiences, e.g. injury, they interpreted and predicted the object/move would cause them pain, suggestive of their having developed conflicted internal models of working with objects, due to settings like this having previously made them feel insecure and unsafe. This is further in line with Bretherton and  Munholland's (2012) suggestions that perception of

safety impacts the types of internal models of working one forms. This led them to demonise and reject the object/move; thereby not allowing them to progress, mirroring Klein's (2002) suggestion of a person's rejection of objects in adulthood due to insufficient responsiveness experienced as a child.

Internalising the resulting failure with dissatisfaction led them to resort to unconscious maladaptive coping styles which were already well-learned in order to cope with impeding lack of commitment, and a consequence of lack of ability to normalise their anxiety towards a more manageable depressive state; Klein (2013) describing this state as more containing and reconciling than the anxious state that precedes it. In overcoming the object/move, they needed to maintain a secure sense of self. Their inability to sit with the uncertainty, often seen to exacerbate depression states according to Boswell, Thompson-Hollands, Farchione & Barlow (2013), led to participants fighting back against the object. For example, by projectively rejecting it, unable to reconcile the aspects of an object we consider unsafe or bad (Klein, 1946) or avoiding it (diminishing the object's importance to them) to seemingly safeguard sense of self. This appeared dependent on what pre-disposed ideologies participants held of their 'good' selves or 'bad' selves.

Uncertainty about others, training aspects and the shared interpersonal conflict they experienced in life, meant they further struggled to consider and reflect the impact they had on others, a difficulty which Bateman and Fonagy (2013) try and target in their treatments through addressing people's struggles in understanding other's mental states. This transferred to a lack of trust they perceived in their own abilities in overcoming physical barriers, or in the object's symbolic permanence.

In not attending to these emotional burdens, some participants attempted to dissociate from them or externalise affect regarding their struggle which subsequently facilitated a re-enactment process leading to re-traumatisation.

### 6.3.1.2. Experiencing cost of somatopsychic barriers to the self

Participants negatively held on to previous somatic experiences such as overly differentiating contexts in training or attributing failure to pre-existing physical limitations they perceived in themselves. Yet ultimately, they depended heavily on the training to validate their sense of self and cement parts of their identity.

This 'victimised self' led to participants perceiving physical weaknesses like being short, faint, or lacking in strength to pre-dispose them to failure, often resulting in avoidance or a 'chucking' style of approach to training, which both invalidated their trust in their own safety and that of the sport. Although research into other sports suggests that biomechanical factors can increase the likelihood of struggling with some movement and exacerbate over-use injuries, it is also thought that the individual often has a degree of control over how much this impacts their performance through how they maintain themselves (Behm, Blazevich, Kay & McHugh, 2015). This study assumes this is transferable to parkour training, especially giving the participants' pre-disposed ideologies of the sport being about adaptability to overcome obstacles. Although a lack of generalisation to participants' selves adds to the argument that perhaps some physical barriers were perceived as too difficult to own.

Injuries are well known to be a side-effect of parkour training (Miller and Demoiny, 2008); some participants appearing to process these in this study as well. Yet an unconscious rejection of this was seen through participants avoiding training, overly committing to movement or both at various points. As such, participants seemed to normalise their physical barriers such as injury risk, but not as a means of maintaining self-efficacy and authenticity as suggested by **Willig (2008)**. Instead, they use these physical barriers as a means of denying their struggle to confront their training or hoping for the prior negative somatic experiences to not influence progression negatively. These processes also seemed to resonate with **Silva's (1990)** model of athlete burnout contribution, his staleness and overtraining negative adaptations to physical training stress experiences in sport seemingly mirroring the avoidance of training and/or overtraining seen with these study's participants in response to training load and resultant injuries.

Instead of processing the somatopsychic barriers outlined above, participants appeared to further externalise their fear by using their environment to give them reasons to not train. Unlike in Lam's (2005) findings, where participants saw rails, benches and other such materials as opportunities, some in this study held a romanticised opportunistic outlook of such materials only in theory. In practice, they instead perceived all the risks such objects brought to them, and none of the gains, further compounding their LoP.

### 6.3.1.3. Experiencing a rupture in sense of self through injury

Some participants processed injury, consciously and unconsciously, experiencing it as

humiliating. In line with the 'facades' that some participants perceived themselves to be personifying to maintain their idealised 'training self', they suffered ego-bruising, the risk of which was sufficient enough to further their LoP through avoidance.

As internal a struggle as this may have been, participants anticipated external rejection from others, often using this as a reason why not to attempt certain moves/try new things. This experience is synonymous with Blodgett, Ge, Schinke & McGannon's (2017) findings, which saw participants weighing out the perceived risks for their journey ahead, encapsulating newcomer athletes' uncertainty and fear in sport. This gave rise to anger, humiliation and hardening, encapsulated by the theme of 'public stoning' **(Blodgett et al., 2017)**. In this study, if participants were seen to be getting injured, the reactions of peers/coaches/society were at times anticipated and participants appeared to experience internalised anger and shame at the perceived onlooker's reaction. The theme of 'hope' in Blodgett et al.'s (2017) study was, however, mirrored by our participants striving to keep trying while still engaged. They were hopeful for the acculturation these authors described, in line with their desires to fit in, find acceptance and belonging.

That participants' 'training self' was so central to many, arguably fuelling their sense of loss in their identity, as well as the fragility in their sense of self when unable to train due to injury. In line with their desire to challenge their own and societal impressions of identity, something sport has been known to facilitate (Piatt, Kang, Wells, Nagata, Hoffman & Taylor, 2018), it is understandable that participants experienced disappointment when failing to achieve this. Additionally, in line with theories on the social identity formation of athletes in sports psychology which propose that people self-categorise when partaking in sport (Rees, Haslam, Coffee & Lavallee, 2015), the outgroup feeling and isolation experienced by these participants were clearly significant enough to cause a very real rupture in their sense of self.

For participants who trained to compensate for a failing in themselves or an unconscious means of attaining an unachievable version of themselves while avoiding dealing with their real needs, something also described by Tangney and Dearing (2002), being unable to train appeared to cost them their coping style and act as an outlet for all manner of emotional processing. Duffy, Rogers and Joiner (2018) argue that exercise dependency is often an outlet for over-compensating for lack of trust in the body, which can even lead to suicide if not addressed. In our study, participants trained until physically rupturing their body, then missed that same

excessive training which had put their lives at risk.

## 6.3.2. Unmasking of the traceur's "divided self"

### 6.3.2.1. Experiencing a wavering in their own values – 'showmanship' vs 'withinship'

Some participants consciously and unconsciously risked their wellbeing for external validation, wavering from their own value systems. They appeared almost engulfed in a role, often deviant and risk-taking in a way that resembled how Henry (2018) had described his participants, which they felt held more status and were required to adopt as their identity during training. This seemingly restricted their real self-image from being shared, a function **Sandell (2002)** suggests could be a means of attempting to meet the status quo to avoid resistance on one's path to their desired future state; which although by their own admission, appeared to keep them safe from humiliation at the time, cost them their authenticity in their sense of self over time, having greatly deviated from their own training values to adopt 'showy' ones instead. Kohut (1984), however, would suggest that this alignment to values which elicit 'showy' behaviours may also be an embodiment of certain 'poles' of the body; the side of a person who needs, unconsciously, to satisfy their 'grandiose-exhibitionistic' needs.

Even when participants were fighting the urge to waver from their values in an embodied way, they described inevitably finding themselves comparing themselves to others in a very 'downward' manner, often getting distressed at perceiving others to be better than them. According to Festinger's (1954) theory of social comparison processes, we have an innate drive as humans to evaluate our abilities. If there is no objective way to perform this evaluation, we naturally resort to comparing ourselves to others around us. In line with parkour often being thought of as a non-competitive sport, initially described as such by the participants in this study, it is therefore unsurprising that participants found themselves still struggling with the presence of a competition construct existing. The presence of this construct put pressure on them regardless of their training style or preconceived ideologies.

In addition to the hugely inclusive nature of parkour, another pre-disposed ideology participants initially held, there was invariable exposure to difference and diversity in skill level which they struggled with. This factor seemed to reinforce their competitiveness in training, upholding the theory's third hypothesis, that the tendency for someone to compare themselves decreases with time should their skill levels lower in difference as suggested by Festinger

(1954). Yet many participants in this study felt this never happened, such was their experience of their LoP.

### 6.3.2.2. Struggling with being confronted with the 'failing' self

Participants also struggled with the concept of a 'failing self'. Battling to own their vulnerabilities, they often experienced negative emotional reactions like panic when face-to-face with failing. On the other hand, they avoided owning such emotions at all, as if striving to embody an unbreakable persona instead of working through the needs that their training was manifesting.

In line with theory surrounding fear of failure, the latter appeared to internalise their 'failing self', projecting power and appearances of success, possibly to avoid owning a sense of shame known to lead people to dissociate from their core vulnerability in order to cope Tangney & Dearing (2002). Tangney & Dearing (2002) suggest that shame-fuelled fear of failure often leads people to feel judged and unworthy of others when their real image is exposed, leading to them avoiding such interactions. This denial of vulnerabilities also seen in Hunt's (1996) participants, mirrored the divers' denial of their vulnerabilities and limitations.

This aligns with Atkinson's (1957) thoughts that motives are affect dependent. Participants who seek emotional alliances with others, prefer to train in groups (possibly to combat their feeling alone in their struggle). Furthermore, they may strive to change their fear of failure into a motive for success and tend to fare better than those who favour training alone, and often avoid confronting their fear (Sagar & Stroeber, 2009).

In light of there seemingly being a higher order processing of compassion of the self missing in such participants, they often found themselves destructively comparing themselves to others. The theory suggests here that someone can only positively manipulate how others affect us if they first transcend their own experience of vulnerability, identifying what is aroused in them (Beall & Tracy, 2017). From a more motivational theorist lens, both means of struggling with confronting their 'failing self', could be argued to have been processes that maintained their LoP through their further negative coping strategies expressed by avoiding training. These are reminiscent of patterns that McGregor and Elliot (2005) link to fear of failure and whether someone is likely to share or avoid their failure.

### 6.3.2.3. Mismatching reality with fantasy

Some participants engaged in such avoidant masking that they consciously and unconsciously appeared to develop a split in their identity; their 'real self' versus their 'training self'. Unable to stay with a process that would more likely ensure success, they appeared to adopt maladaptive coping styles. For example, throwing their body towards an object instead of progressing movements in an effort to embody their 'desired' self, rather than sit with their 'actual self'.

When our ability to mentalize, described by Fonagy (2018) as our ability to envisage our own and others' mental states, is compromised, we all fall back on the alien self, which results from aspects of the self that are false. We strive to recreate a sense of cohesion of the self to restore it in our mind and sometimes if parental failures in contingent marked mirroring (a caregiver's feedbacking of the child's affective state (Fonagy, 2018)) are traumatic, unconscious safety behaviour, often seen in people with personality disorders, occurs (Winnicott, 1971). We experience the alien self as punishing and engage defences (Gabbard, 2005), projective identification defined by Klein (1979) to mean unconsciously putting unwanted parts of ourselves onto others, and dissociation, a minimising defence mechanism that aids to tolerate stress (Auerbach, 2005) as examples. Fonagy & Target (2018) describe how this process can lead to a child being unable to develop a strong sense of themselves or their experience, resulting in a replacement coping strategy being observed in adulthood, such as dramatic action (Winnicott, 1971).

Dramatic action can look like being excessively assertive, or creating an image of themselves that is self-serving, in a space that Winnicott (1971) suggested existed between who we are and who we are not. This allows for people to engage their fantasised omnipotent control (Schapiro, 1999), similar to the behaviours displayed by participants in this study. For example, needing to hold a position of righteousness as opposed to failure, seeking self-affirming reactions from themselves and others. This is echoed in Hunt (1996); her participants are seen to use self-serving rationales for failures.

Although not directly transferable to adulthood, Bateman & Fonagy's (2004) explanation of children's inability to decouple reality from fantasy in playing resulting in psychic equivalence, suggests that some participants may have had trouble reconciling the separateness of their bodies and minds in their earlier years. This is believed to lead to an inability in integrating

fantasy with reality as an adult (Auerbach & Blatt, 2002) which is synonymous with some of these participants' experiences.

In line with research on projection (Klein, 1979), transference (Freud, 1912) and the formation of a teleological mode (Gergely, 2003) which wants to reject the unresolved self, in order to externalise that painful self which they attempted to deny, participants who mismatched their reality with fantasy appeared to have unconscious methods of coping like these. These unconscious methods are supposed to appease the anxiety they felt from an incomplete sense of self exposed through their parkour training.

Although some may argue that this suggestion seems inflated due to the self-harming nature of the teleological stances usually adopted in the literature, I propose that participants who took risks to embody their 'desired self' may have done so as a means of externalising their alien self, so that it was easier to see and manage it. Based on participants fondly recounting support and concern from peers, while still engaging in such recklessness, I would argue that the externalisation may have been their means of seeking help and at times paralleled a form of self-harming behaviour. Paradoxically, it also unconsciously led to a reinforcement of their rejection of self, due to the humiliation they described each time they were re-injured in public.

### 6.3.3. Re-enacting past trauma through parkour

#### 6.3.3.1. Unconsciously re-traumatising the self through re-exposure to insurmountable challenge

Participants enter parkour believing it will make them feel more purposeful and useful, describing feeling invalidated by people in positions of power. They voiced feeling unassisted by coaches they perceived as repeatedly aggressive, which reactivated internal shame through re-experiencing past anxieties and thoughts of failure about their performance or self. Supporting this is Greenberg & Vrana's (2018) work on emotions and their function. They explain how people tend to form associations between their lived experiences and the emotions triggered by these, allowing us to hold emotional memories (Greenberg & Vrana, 2018). As Greenberg (2012) suggested, certain emotional schemes are created. Someone's reaction to threat perception is not based solely on physical cues of danger, but emotional ones. Supposing that participants experienced things during training that re-activated painful historic emotional schemes, this reinforced their feelings of rejection and is likely to have unconsciously re-

traumatised them when training. With it being known that people are heavily reliant on emotion as a foundation for decision-making (Damasio, 1994), it is unsurprising that given this externally induced re-experiencing of negative affect, participants ended up quitting after internalising and externalising such situations in various ways.

Expanding on the above, a further rupture of their sense of self seems to have occurred as a result of participants not perceiving expectations thought to be placed on them by others to be embodiable by them. Gucciardi, Stamatis & Ntoumanis's (2017) study, which explored controlling coaching and its effect on athletes' experience, suggested that this style of coaching often negatively impacted vitality and learning in sessions. Although those with a higher level of mental toughness may have got through this thanks to the buffers they possessed, the vitality experiences of those participants with a lower threshold were severely impacted (Gucciardi et al., 2017).

Given that participants in this study had largely shared their vulnerabilities in their self-concept from early on in life, they were perhaps not equipped with the buffers necessary to manage such oppressive behaviours from people they placed their trust in. Inevitably, this gave rise to their demoralisation, which in turn reinforced feelings of failure and diminished omnipotence.

The paradoxical loss here is proposed to have involved re-exposure to these seemingly insurmountable tasks, void of progression or alternative styles of suggested/contemplated processing. This mirrors the concept of re-enactment coined by Freud (1914) but in this study, re-enactment through re-injury. Participants re-experienced feelings of worthlessness, abandonment, and doubt of self they had experienced in the past, leaving them feeling judged and misunderstood by others. They often internalised others' rejection as 'emotional unavailability'; humiliating, given their dependence on acceptance to feel capable of success. Participants in this study appeared to re-enact things they have been conflicted with in the past maintaining the same hopefulness for a positive outcome, without challenging their approach. This process resembled that process coined the repetition compulsion by Freud (1914) whereby people act out conflict situations from their past in their present expecting a different outcome without changing their response to the triggers. Freud (1905) believed that people strive to 'master' these conflict situations without altering their approach which often leads to re-injury, mirroring the participants' experience in this study.

Self-proclaimed pre-existing personality traits such as 'perfectionism' and 'stubbornness' may

also have reinforced their tendency to re-expose themselves to re-traumatisation. These two personal traits have been suggested by Gould and Whitley (2009) to increase the risks of burnout due to their unhelpful function of exacerbating an athlete's tendency to stay excessively engaged in unhealthy training environments. Additionally, Boysan and Kiral (2017) allude to such performance tendencies being linked to historical experiences like excessive parental criticism or lack thereof. This was echoed in the experiences of participants in this study who described re-experiencing things in parkour training that reminded them of things they experienced in childhood e.g. coaching styles reminding them of parenting styles. This resulted in them experiencing aspects of their personality being triggered, responding to training driven by these aspects and dissatisfied again with the outcome. It, therefore, appeared that participants identified that personality factors and historic stressors were influential to their relationship to stressors within training, in line with previous models of stress and injury in sport suggestions (Williams & Andersen, 1998).

Those participants who had attempted to establish influential social standing through parkour training, but had not been successful, appear to have experienced this negatively. Participants were confronted with their feelings of inadequacy which included devaluing their sense of self and re-affirming their lack of possession of qualities that they desired and perceived in people they looked up to within the sport. As failure in this context is being perceived as traumatic, this appeared to strengthen their 'assimilation of fixed ideas' (Freud, 1921). Freud (1921) describes the assimilation of fixed ideas as the process that sees people who adapt to experiences negatively, further binding them to unhealthy aspects of their personality, further stunting their already fractured egos. This also reinforced chronic/repetitive states of helplessness in the participants being induced by rendering these traumatic rejections as foci in the development of their alternate, more self-gratifying states of consciousness. This is a process resembling that which Van der Kolk (2005) outlines takes place with highly developmentally traumatised individuals.

Janet (1889) suggests that too many such assimilations render a personality almost crystalline where its development is stopped and it is unable to expand further by the assimilation of any new elements. This is based on Freud's (1921) early theories on re-traumatisation and would support the unconscious re-enactment of trauma exposure seen in these participants supposing that they may have been unable to take on new interpretations of their environment or coping strategies resulting in the repetition compulsion described.

### 6.3.3.2. Unconsciously re-traumatising the self through employing past maladaptive coping styles

As discussed earlier, participants appeared to seek a need to connect and satisfy their altruistic tendencies when entering parkour, which could explain the apparent self-sacrificial protective nature some showed towards assuming responsibility when perceiving failure in training. Their mental health obstacles and adverse childhoods are also believed to have played a part in this persistent re-deployment of negative coping styles, which appeared to re-traumatise them during training. Some participants absolved the 'other' from responsibility assumption as if protecting them from positioning themselves in a historically familiar position of doubt. Being in this position seemingly led to the formation of a mask to the 'hidden self', a term derived from the Johari Window model for interpersonal relations (Luft & Ingham, 1955). The hidden self, which refers to what a person sees in themselves but what others do not see in them (Luft & Ingham, 1955), aligned with participants in this study who appeared to embody a highly 'victimised self'. These participants displayed hermeneutic lacuna, seemingly having an obscured understanding of their training and LoP; arguably making it hard for them to advocate agency in blame assumption and dismissal of it when necessary.

It is often easier for blame to be internalised by those who were made to feel like the 'problem child', a term used by Margraf and Pinquart (2018) to describe a child who feels blame when internalising a parental figures' excessively punitive parenting styles. As these participants had experienced low self-worth development from a young age, they continued to take maladaptive coping styles. For example, re-traumatising themselves as adults, minimising external factors that impact the self, replacing tasks they find challenging rather than asking for help to process them, and often burdening themselves with the blame of the loss they experienced in training.

Seltzer (2008) suggests that this uneven distribution of blame and maladaptive coping may be linked to a childhood demanding compliance with the wishes and the demands of others. It would appear that the weakened self, which is seeing a problem with themselves, is not in fact 'real' but rather, re-enacted. For these participants, it is almost as if a version of themselves was repeating the past material as a contemporary experience instead of remembering it as something belonging to the past. Although Freud (1920) intended this theory to further aid the comprehension of how trauma repeats itself (re-traumatisation) on behavioural, emotional and physiological levels in repressed abuse, the repetition phenomenon he outlined resonates with

participants' experience here, in a way that also appears to be unconscious, but is well marked in their narratives.

Indeed, given their childhood experiences were marked by lack of autonomy formation due to excessively harsh parental and systemic control models of aggression being asserted, a certain misalignment of processing fault and blame in adulthood rendered participants in a position of constant re-occurred losing.

## 6.3.4. "Religion-ing" of practice and practitioner through parkour

### 6.3.4.1. Experiencing the need to compartmentalise the self to avoid being engulfed into the 'cultish' parkour life track

Although participants initially sought connectedness and in-group acceptance through parkour, once training, they appeared to encounter a struggle which is their desire to belong challenging their need for individualism. This led to an internal duel for their individuality to survive the surrounding collectivism they were now experiencing. Their need to belong aligned them with the group, but created an internal struggle not to lose their own uniqueness. This resonates with Jung's (1957) theories on our need to hold onto our free-thinking individualism in the face of threats of totalitarianism, political and social propaganda.

A lack of perceived space for this, through un-boundaried coaching, strong personalities and the 'cultish' culture which participants experienced, led to them feeling imposed on and engulfed by an overwhelming need to conform. Lacocque (1984) describes a similar process in his work on fear of engulfment and the problem with identity, where he suggests that people desire to explore themselves but are conflicted when this gets in the way of maintaining close relationships with others, risking alienation. Risking their selves by revealing their own values is to risk rejection from those they may care about lead some, who wants to avoid conforming, to do so quietly to avoid rejection. This is thought to often leading to a build-up in feelings of suffocation (Lacocque, 1984), something that resonated with these participants narratives. These participants' experiences further seemed to echo Coakley's (1992) suggestion that social pressures within sport impact a sports person's autonomy and identity leading them to push back against the unidimensionalidentity they form in an attempt to regain control of their life.

Participants attended sessions 'loyally' and 'religiously', and although not always processing

this suffocation, they did voice relief when having stopped attending the training they had been so committed to for so long: a strong sign of a sense of freedom regained. This resembles Raedeke's (1997) contributions on entrapment-based commitment to training that see people questioning their desire to stay in training, nonetheless remaining within it perceiving the costs of leaving to be too high. Some participants had felt forced into things as if experiencing a libidinal investment in others; a process similar to psychoanalytic cathexis, described by Hall (1954) as the investment of mental and emotional energy in the 'other'. Moving away from their own 'true need', which Strohminger, Knobe and Newman (2017) describe as a need someone accepts as representative of the true self they are happy to own, participants had often satisfied the needs of others instead. This further aligns with Raedeke's (1997) view that a sports participant's experience of entrapment-based commitment is often largely due to social pressure.

Referring back to their apparent search for twinship provisions through parkour, it also transpired that some participants 'mimicked' others, for example, wearing the same clothes, eating the same foods etc., which is often unconscious. They went on to criticise their decision-making process, in hindsight, often when such actions had resulted in a perceived rupture in their sense of self. Leander, Chartrand and Wood's (2011) work on mimicry resonates with this, for example, lack of mimicry can at times be perceived as threatening, or as a feeling of coldness between participants. Our study's participants found that this coldness correlated with feeling socially excluded, which then led to increased mimicry to avoid this. This seems in line with Marcuse's (1964) ideas on how societal constructs, in this study namely parkour, place limitations on one's freedom, lending us to be one-dimensional, entrapped by our unconscious minds being somewhat paralysed by the societal constructs agenda.

### 6.3.4.2. Adopting parkour as a medium to achieving omnipotence: 'The God like Man'

Central to this concept is narcissism, which is our innate need to protect our ego from bruising and maintain our omnipotence and our grandiose sense of self, which safeguards us from the pain and humiliation of rejection (Ronningham, 2005). In line with Schopenhauer's (1903) prediction that a desire for social power would produce human suffering, participants appeared to struggle grossly when reconciling their inability to be 'God like' as they termed it.

There was a need for ego masking of sorts, protecting participants' sense of grandeur; as well as considerable other and self-judgement of this need, displayed by their engagement in

training that challenged and at times humiliated them. The narrative appeared scattered with allusions to a secure and whole sense of self which was very 'hidden'. This is much like Jung's (1957) undiscovered self that only manifests in dreamlike realms; participants succeeded at parkour while 'playing it out in a dream' but failed in reality. Nonetheless, they still appeared to use parkour to feel super-human, striving for invincibility, attempting to personify their superhero role models. For many, a healthy sense of grandiosity appeared to have been fragmented from an early age, leaving them with either a very strongly dismissively avoidant coping style, or an attackingly defended one. This mirrored the narcissistic admiration versus rivalry concept models proposed by Southard, Zeigler-Hill, Vrabel and McCabe (2018).

Participants experienced a need to push boundaries, perhaps when seeking to embody the grandiosity which they desired; while conversely feeling victimised and rejecting it when identifying it in others. They described feelings of insecurity and vulnerability when surrounded by people they perceived as having a hero-like complex in training mentality. Their definition of this perceived heroism appears in line with Jung's (1981) description of a hero, an archetype in fantasy, who shows physical courage, risks their life and is validated for this externally.

Both Jung (1981) and our participants described this archetype as fearing vulnerability, being arrogant and confrontational, yet receiving high praise as the constant winner through their expert mastery of skills. Using Jung's (1981) concepts of the self, shadow self and ego, this study suggests, therefore, that this mentality towards perceptions of heroism inevitably led to participants struggling to integrate their own 'self' (the archetype of wholeness: the regulating centre of the psyche that transcends the ego) with their 'shadow self' (the moral self that challenges the ego) and their 'ego' (central to consciousness). This thereby created the necessity for a persona, defined by Jung (1953) as who we and others think we are, to sometimes be formed by participants in a defensive response to perceived failure or rejection. The purpose of this being to save face and maintain the connectedness they initially sought through parkour.

In processing a loss to their sense of self within parkour training, growing from the process of ejaculating the alien self when struggling with a mismatch between fantasy and reality, participants appeared to share a belief that they were adopting a façade through training to cope with a false sense of grandiosity which would further develop through parkour training.

Facades are thought to be influenced by environments and created out of incongruence with someone's sense of self (Hewlin, 2003). Hewlin, Dumas and Burnett (2017) add that façades also develop as a result of diminished self-esteem which participants had encountered at various points in their life, but re-experienced in parkour training.

In line with our need to maintain our narcissistic grandiose sense of self is the complex connection that this can have with our self-esteem, Southard et al., (2018) categorise both as positive forms of self-regard. They argue that the grandiose façade, often involving an exaggerated persona, is in fact difficult for a person to reconcile, creating a conflict in someone. Nonetheless, participants in this study still seemed to unconsciously and consciously engage this 'pseudo-self'. This was seemingly their attempt at processing their inability to hold their 'self' together, a process which Wooldridge (2018) suggests occurs in people with anorexia nervosa in an attempt to regain some control over their lost sense of self. Furthermore, this process of holding their 'self' together results in the externalisation of a grandiose self, what was seen in this study resembling Bick's (1968) 'second skin'.

As if atoning for this, some of these participants turned to a need to help others by assuming a more authoritative position in the parkour community. Having suffered huge rejection historically, they attempted to gain a foothold as a coach, leader, or influencer of some sort. Levi, Albright, Cawley and Williams (1995) suggest that people are often motivated by their low self-esteem, striving to achieve more through acquiring positions in society they perceive as viewed as worthy of respect; gaining such positions also appeared important to these participants. This would have fed back into them maintaining a semblance of omnipotence, which they felt parkour training was stripping them of.

### 6.3.4.3. Transferring custody of their omnipotence onto another

Participants who did not have suitable role models growing up and reported not feeling contained, expressed a desire to be guided through their parkour journey. This was both for reasons of motivation and more importantly, to ensure that their pre-conceived values of parkour were upheld. They did not appear to believe they had any entitlement to affirm authority on others to ensure this, instead voicing a need for 'the older generation' or 'role models'.

This belief, compounded by disillusionment in themselves from early experiences through to

adulthood, links into an underdeveloped, transitional need to idolise objects (e.g. a father figure, or God-like deity) to feel safe, dismissing their otherwise debilitating belief in their non-impotent immerging self. This echoes the notion that the development of a healthy ego is dependent on successful primary identification with the idolised father in infancy followed by a resolution of this, the absence of which leads to unhealthy identification as an adult (Meissner, 1970). Their childhood disillusionment would suggest that participants often began to experience forms of complex loss at a very young age; and maintained their idolisation tendencies in adulthood to safeguard this looming fear of loss. Idolisation as defined by Kamler (1994), is the feeling of someone seeing traits in others that they do not believe they possess; thus they admire and revere them, while never believing these traits can be acquired by themselves. Idolisation, occurring prominently around the latency age of six, when a child begins to identify with the parent of the same sex, is thought to reduce over time if healthy 'identification' happens (Baldwin, 1967).

Kamler (1994) describes the process by which a desired trait is personified through a transitional object in the early years of latency, but over time is allowed by the individual to reclaim agency of this trait through *'being'* it. After which, the 'self' would fully develop, enveloping this trait into its identity thereby allowing that person to become a 'full identifier' (Kamler, 1994). When narcissistic injuries occur, however, as participants in this study describe, an introjection of idols may still be needed; full agency of the individual has not been achieved, and idolisation continues into adulthood through fantasy (Baldwin, 1967).

In line with this, custody of participants' autonomy was trustingly handed over to coaches/deities/objects, often leading to participants following through on instructions or tasks, without questioning them until coming face-to-face with a rupture e.g. injury, frequently of the self. Seemingly similar to other sporting settings, the coach-practitioner relationship appeared to house great importance, the intensity of a coach-athlete relationship having been shown to be an important antecedent for burnout if mismanaged (Jowett, 2007). Although the parameters here are somewhat different to Milgram's experiment (1965), the concept appears to support his findings. His experiment explored the willingness of participants to obey an authority figure, who would instruct them to do something that conflicted with their own values. Finding that participants obeyed, even if unwilling, suggests that such obedience consists of people viewing themselves as suitable to carry out another's will/instruction due to not seeing themselves as responsible for their own actions. This can be linked to a critical shift occurring

within them at some point earlier on in life which McLeod (2007) suggests may diminish one's development of the self-actualiser characteristic that is associated with self-acceptance and responsibility assumption.

In injuring themselves and often perceiving themselves to have failed in some way, participants seemed unable to ever reclaim their autonomy within training through successful outcomes that validated their ability to do things absent of their autonomy custodians; resulting in reported feelings of hopelessness. This supports Ratcliffe, Ruddle and Smith's (2014) beliefs on how lack of trust can change how we think and feel about the future; rendering people uncertain and doubtful, fearing danger based on a historically informed negative anticipation derived from experiences of breaches in trust.

## 6.3.5. Experiencing "fitness fascism"-ing

### 6.3.5.1. Struggling with a 'Doppler effect' style shift in parkour culture over time

Initially echoing Wallace's (2013) participants' experiences of searching for acceptance within a perceived like-minded group and distancing themselves from stigma and segregation, many narratives then moved to describe needing to 'get out'. There was a push back against the shift participants now believed parkour to be engaged in, its popularisation seemingly threatening them.

Parkour even became unsafe for some male participants, who described observing the formation of gang culture within parkour. Roberts, Bush, Morgan and Parker (2018) argue that certain sports often aimed at targeting social inclusion and prosocial change do at times end up reinforcing the issues faced by young men in particular, who seek to maintain dominance in their communities.

Emotionally, some participants processed the phenomenon of globalisation of parkour as symbolic of the containment it had held for them. They felt under siege by globalisation, their vehicle for meaning-making through public spaces rapidly jeopardised, themes/concepts which Kidder (2017) examines in his book about sport and creative appropriation of urban spaces and youth culture.

Participants talked of the expanding discipline being experienced as threatening to them. They shared growing feelings of entrapment and caging through the establishment of parkour

practice restrictions e.g. park allocated training paces. Instead of training in communal public spaces, experiencing feelings of freedom and urban space appropriation, in line with their entry to parkour ideologies, they paradoxically felt increasingly under the control of capitalism and institutionalisation. Geyh's (2006) idea, that parkour allows someone to recreate public space into free play in and amongst not only the architecture but also the inhabitants, was thus challenged in practice for some participants of this study.

The very notion of parkour being 'allowed' in certain areas compounded pre-existing doubts which some participants had shared about whether they were doing something wrong to begin with when using public spaces in the way they had done. This directly challenged the reality of parkour practice as facilitating a sense of belonging, with participants at times feeling rejected by society for using space in the way they did. Raymen (2017) validates this conundrum, suggesting that the cultural lifestyle sport of parkour seems to hold an ambiguous position between the crossroads of deviance and leisure. He references the conformity which parkour shows to the consumer capitalist norms of "cool individualism, risk-taking, and the creation of deviant identities" (Raymen, 2017, p. iii). Whilst also suggesting that it continues to give meaning to un-formed spaces excluded by the 'spatial guardians of the hyper-regulated city' (Raymen, 2017, p. iii).

Some participants seem to have internalised these regulations and confinements as a rejection of the self, leading to an exacerbation of the self-doubt they already felt in their practice, and in themselves. This caused them to feel segregated, viewing the state's decision-making as negatively reinforcing the rejection many had already experienced within parkour training and earlier on in life. Subsequently, this repositioned them in the victimised state previously outlined, for example, being re-traumatized by internalising their position as one of powerlessness.

This process mimics O'Grady's (2012) fears that standardisation may harm the sub-cultural nature of parkour at the heart of its practice. The ramifications of such shifts could re-enact participants' mechanical pattern of further injuring a previously narcissistically injured self. This could occur through a lack of acceptance and empathetic mirroring of their needs, concepts coined by Kernberg (1983), thereby reinforcing feelings of failure in them and others. They felt punished by society for something they needed which now appears to be labelled as wrong, namely, the freedom to move and use public spaces.

### 6.3.5.2. Struggling in the face of their preconceptions of parkour as a non-competitive sport being challenged

Participants also expressed fear towards parkour moving towards competition. For example, believing it unhealthy towards their personal development, and aligning themselves with the pre-disposed notions of parkour as inclusive, play-based, creative, non-competitive and non-hierarchical, in line with O'Grady's (2012) participants beliefs. Excessive pressure such as competition is known to exacerbate stress (Gould & Whitley, 2009); with this study's participants having already consciously and unconsciously experienced its inevitability in training and the toll this took on their progression, it is unsurprising that they did not favour it on the whole.

Interestingly, participants did not align themselves with Atkinson's (2009) thoughts on parkour training's focus being emotional and physical, rather than on power and performance. Many participants in this study had similar ideologies entering training, but they did not implement these, and instead were impacted greatly by 'risk influence', something which Wallace's (2013) participants also spoke about. Participants prioritised performance in their own eyes and others; quantifying their progress in distance, power and jump size rather than whether things in training 'felt' positive to them. In this way, it seemed that participants' experiences of parkour training in practice aligned more readily with more traditional sporting agendas, a sequential activity aimed at skill enhancement and competition priming as outlined by Drewe (2000).

Some participants did echo Gilchrist and Wheaton's (2011) beliefs that parkour's globalisation could have positive benefits to a social inclusion agenda, e.g. inclusion of parkour in schools. Interestingly, however, there was a strong sense that inclusivity was not as generalisable to adults as they had perceived it to be prior to starting training. Participants often felt ostracised by the 'Doppler shift' (increased globalisation of parkour),  not feeling like they fit into parkour's future, with a sense of shame in playing as an adult also being triggered. In line with Perkins and Berkowitz (1986) social norms theory, it could be suggested that social means of play often contradicts the norms associated with adults, responsibility and productive conduct.

## 6.4. Experiencing LoP in parkour

### 6.4.1. Coping negatively with LoP through defended destroying

#### *6.4.1.1. Externalising blame on to the other destructively when processing LoP*

In attempting to cope with their LoP, some participants projected their internalised affect onto others, such as people, e.g. coaches and imagined objects, e.g. a hand outside of themselves. They voiced feelings of anger and disappointment at objects, projecting their feelings passive-aggressively, never truly confronting the objects they perceived were responsible for their LoP and injuries to the self. The development of negative cynical attitudes and feelings towards client-centric work that Maslach & Jackson's (1981) participants showed when they experienced a depletion of their emotional resources due to burnout, arguably resembles these participants' response to their LoP. Importantly, however, in this study, this process was not merely seen when participants felt they were emotionally exhausted as suggested by Maslach & Jackson (1981).

Participants seemingly projecting their feelings to cope with their LoP, however, mirrors the behaviour of externalising feelings of internalised failure onto objects when experiencing a psychosomatic barrier to the self. They appear to outwardly reject the 'other' in an attempt to safeguard their sense of self (Klein, 1946). Interestingly, the passive manner by which they appear to process this externalisation of blame is synonymous with attachment theory which suggests that babies are born with innate behaviours called social releasers that help them remain proximal to people they are attached to (Bowlby, 1969). As McLeod (2017) highlights, these behaviours are targeted at eliciting responsiveness from caregivers, the infant fearing that they will be rejected. The process of externalisation of blame that these participants engage in being passive may mirror this fear.

Bowlby's (1988) attachment theories suggested that attachment behaviours are therefore instinctive, often activated when a threat that risks their relationship to their attachment figures, such as insecurity and fear, is perceived. This study proposes that participants exhibited safeguarding processes similar to this when attempting to deal with the rejection of self they perceived their LoP to symbolise. They projected these fears onto people and objects in a position of trust, though not active enough to lead them to be further rejected by these objects

they were 'loyal' to and, to a degree, dependent on. In this way, these participants appeared to be coping negatively; defending themselves against ownership of LoP, although destructive in means, remained unshared with and only passively externalised to the objects they held responsible for their perceived failure.

### 6.4.1.2. 'Ping-Pong'-ing paradoxically losing due to sitting with unprocessed trauma

In line with the re-enactment and re-traumatisation processes described earlier as part of paradoxical losing, some participants appeared to cope with their LoP through re-attempting training without altering their coping styles. This form of coping represents a defence which the participant unconsciously believes will safeguard them, though inevitably destroying them through re-injury, both physical and emotional, as they re-try for a better ending next time to their cautionary tale of perceived failure. This tale, thought to be developed during the early years, is an unconscious story of hurt which participants carry with them in relationships (Ogden, 1992); their relationship to parkour training being no exception. They continue to push through and re-attempt training without addressing the issues within this, unconsciously re-traumatising themselves, 'ping-pong'-ing losing through parkour without seeking to understand why they keep failing or not progressing. An aggressive avoidance of their LoP, therefore, seems to occur, repeatedly costing them their sense of self, with them no more prepared for the hurdles ahead than last time.

Participants appear to believe they have changed, even when sharing similar past experiences of injury trauma habits, unconscious that they have re-enacted this exact same coping style in their parkour training. Their doubt understandably increases with each re-entry back into training, due to the outcome invariably being re-injury. This study proposes that these participants seem to develop an ego state which appears specific to their relationship to their training, seemingly walled off from the rest of their personality in their conscious minds. Frederick (2013) described such states as a response to psychological trauma; argued here to result from both physical and emotional injuries sustained throughout parkour training. This state struggles to integrate with other states, disallowing true integration to occur, a process outlined by Shapiro (2016), rendering certain facets of participants' personality to become more pertinent, impacting their negative decision-making more dominantly in line with Federick's (2013) findings. A common trait among such participants, such as perfectionism, appears activated more partially in re-attempted training, given that their stress increases when

re-met with seemingly insurmountable, re-failed tasks.

In a risk setting like parkour, where safe drivers and healthy self-preservation intentionality are imperative for safety and at times survival, these unresolved psychodynamic problems alluded to throughout this study, is hypothesised here to be perilous. Participants who ping-pong loss states in training repetitively and unchangingly do not appear to be attempting to resolve their internal conflicts to achieve harmony when re-entering. They are undoubtedly negatively coping with their LoP, maintaining this approach instead of acknowledging, normalising and productively processing it to seek alternative more helpful coping strategies.

## 6.4.2. Coping negatively with LoP through detached defending

### 6.4.2.1. Externalising blame numbingly onto the 'other'

Those who appeared more uncommittedly defensive when processing their LoP (e.g. injury) unconsciously distanced themselves from owning responsibility, often placing it on another in a subtle manner. This is very similar to 'scapegoating' which in psychodynamic theory, refers to a process involving projective identification, where one forces parts of themselves they do not like on to others (Gabbard, 2005). Participants seemed to reflect Moreno's (2007) findings in group work; for example, in externalising responsibility for their LoP, proving unable to take responsibility of it themselves, thereby unconsciously projecting it onto another. Some participants made their LoP a result of a partner/child needing their attention instead of them owning their need of their partner/child in enabling them to have an excuse outside of their own perceived failure in training, to deprioritise training,.

In addition to being a defence against owning the parts of one's self that one does not want to admit having, the process of projective identification as Moreno (2007) explains it, also makes it more accessible for the projector to change or control the projection at will. In line with this, this study saw participants framing their LoP as being resultant of someone else's need e.g. partner, as altruistic of them temporarily, before later on reflecting on the notion that this need they perceived in the partner at the time of quitting training may have also come at an opportune time for them and their training struggles. This transitional step of making their LoP symbolic of meeting another's need, allowed them enough distance from needing to own their own perceived vulnerabilities. This was later accepted and normalised by some, allowing them to make peace with their LoP during training and their decision to leave training and move on to

other things.

In this way, participants, much like Moreno's (2007) group clients, may have felt safer, managing their unwanted and unowned feelings without needing to claim them as their own. That said, this process is often thought, in sports, to create feelings of guilt in the projector (Free, 2008). This study considers that this could account for their conscious denial and lack of ownership of the initial impulse when blaming the other numbingly for their LoP.

Interestingly, those participants who unconsciously re-traumatised themselves during training by repeatedly internalising blame, overly assumed responsibility for their LoP and did not address it, instead tending to numbingly externalise blame here. In line with Braiker's (2004) suggestions, the cost to the self of maintaining this blame assumption, the 'price of nice', takes a psychological toll assumed by the previously described 'victim self'. This is then unconsciously dissipated through this detached defending style of coping. This style enabled participants to share the burden of perceived blame for their LoP without directly challenging their 'victim self' or fighting against their self-criticising tendencies, while keeping their coping style for perceived failure safely intact.

### 6.4.2.2. Substituting parkour with other mediums to meet persistent needs of the self

In line with Atkinson's (2009) findings, participants appeared to substitute parkour with other mediums, e.g. martial arts/cycling, in an attempt to meet the needs that parkour had initially been seen to satisfy when they no longer felt it was. Atkinson (2009) further voiced a belief that those who do not train in parkour for competition are more likely to move from one alternative sport to another. In our study, however, competition seemed to compound participants' desire to quit parkour; they were unable to healthily process this contributing stressor enough to progress through it. In line with Smith's (1986) thoughts on athlete drop out in sports, participants were seen to find replacement sports. Smith (1986) suggests that changes to sports participation like this may be due to other sports appearing more rewarding to athletes and more in line with their needs. This viewpoint is further supported by Raedeke (1997) whose ideas on low commitment profiles of athletes see athletes experiencing a decreased desire to continue, resulting in them leaving a sport for another. Both of these suggestions however do not seem to consider replacement as a dissatisfying avoidant coping mechanism in the way it appeared at times to be used by participants in this study; even Gustafsson et al.,'s (2011) recent integrative burnout model categorising withdrawal as a maladaptive consequence to burnout

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void of any mention of replacement.

Unable to cope proactively with their LoP, some participants coped avoidantly, replacing their now unmet needs with other mediums. Some turned to religion, validating their decision to avoid processing their LoP by ultimately quitting and pursuing a seemingly more righteous pursuit. Bird (2018) identifies a turn towards more righteous pursuits like religion as a factor that prevented student-athletes in his study from seeking help from the sport-related professionals available.

Others threw themselves into other sports to satisfy their physical needs after parkour had undermined their perceived safety, both emotionally and physically. In line with Walker, Risen, Gilovich & Thaler's (2018) 'sudden-death aversion' analogy, participants appeared to process what they needed to do to progress in parkour in the form of, 'go for it and possibly feel amazing', versus 'attempt it to feel amazing but know you could injure yourself'. Training now appeared to render the thrill of a gain in parkour redundant. Instead, they turned to slower, arguably less gratifying means, seen often in disciplines where injury may still be likely but perhaps induced more gradually over time, i.e. less critically traumatic (Walker et al, 2018).

However, participants still experienced a void, suggesting they may have made substitution decisions while focusing on their perceived 'sudden-death' outcome, without perhaps questioning what this decision would cost them later on in their training lifespan.

## 6.4.3. Coping positively with LoP through reflective warrioring

### 6.4.3.1. Objectively allocating responsibility for LoP

Some participants appeared to healthily assume responsibility for decisions they felt had influenced their LoP, albeit sharing that this only happened upon experiencing distance from parkour, not simultaneously while practising it.

Atkinson (2009) describes a process that his participants underwent called letting go. His participants were seen to repeatedly complete dangerous moves rendering a physical and psychological tension release over time; rendering his participants increasingly more uninhibited and instinctual in mind and body during motion (Atkinson, 2009). Although not the form of 'letting go' that Atkinson's participants described, participants of this study also appeared to process their LoP positively, through unconscious techniques of letting go of

inappropriately bridled responsibility, to ultimately consciously reflect on relinquishing responsibility. Participants went through a process of identifying boundaries that had been overstepped and labelling injustices they had suffered, moving towards accepting their own vulnerabilities.

The notion that parkour training can trigger insight into personal boundaries aligns with O'Grady's (2012) participants' experience, differing though in that participants of this study did not experience this process as being gained during training, rather after leaving training. Additionally, this study's participants' process of accepting vulnerabilities, allowed other healthier processes to unfold. Participants were more readily able to , for example, transfer their inflated sense of responsibility at their LoP back to the person in a position of power historically, as opposed to shouldering all the responsibility unjustly themselves. Trusting in their individual autonomy led to ultimately owning their newly accurate role in their lack of progress, rather than the previous engulfment of blame and shame they reported having felt when they had internalised sole responsibility.

Interestingly, in Kohlenberg and Vandenberghe's (2007) paper, describing an unconventional treatment for treatment-resistant obsessive-compulsive disorder, he outlines the active role that a therapist can play in assuming responsibility as a means of teaching clients to accept reasonable levels of responsibility and learn to trust others. Although participants in this study did not have, for example, their coaches volunteering to take on this responsibility assumption as a possible means of deflating their responsibility, it does appear that distancing themselves from parkour training somehow allowed for some perspective to be gained of their experience. This seems to have mirrored the role a therapist's containment can have in temporarily shouldering the responsibility, mentioned by Kohlenberg and Vandenbergh (2007) to grow a client's ability to accept reasonable levels of responsibility. The space the participant created allowed them to feel safe enough to admit their own vulnerability and strong enough to be autonomous in that. Consequently, a considerable degree of freedom from elements exacerbating their LoP and their unhelpful avoidance appeared to be attained.

Similarly to Maslach & Jackson's (1981) findings, participants initially expressed being dissatisfied with not only their accomplishments, in this case within their parkour skill acquisition, but also unhappy about themselves. However, this study suggests that in line with the Rogers (1961) way of thinking, self-fulfilment and self-actualisation was achieved through

participants reflecting on their self-worth and the dignity they were entitled to as human beings, supporting the suggestion that someone's rationality allows them a capacity to find their own truth through ongoing self-reflection (Rogers, 1961).

### 6.4.3.2. Reflexively processing LoP

Some participants appeared to cope with their LoP through normalising their difficulties, not only to themselves but also intersubjectively. The power of normalisation is well-researched and at the heart of many of the appraisal models used when working with anxiety and its management (Salkovskis, 1996). Both anxiety and a need to manage it were things participants of this study reported experiencing in their parkour training.

These participants engaged in the process of acknowledging an issue they believed they embodied. For example, recognising the 'perceived-ness' of something's impact on their LoP, while attempting to change this often catastrophised, unhelpful appraisal of this shortcoming's impact, to attempt to generate a 'more real' view of it. Participants seemed to use this process successfully in reducing the stress relating to the insurmountable challenge in question. This allowed them the affectual space they needed to gain enough cognitive objectivity before deciding what steps to take to progress the issue in a highly problem-solving manner similar to that outlined by Svinhufvud, Voutilainen and Weiste (2017).

This process positively reinforced the participants, giving them a certain level of control over the factors exacerbating their LoP. When normalising their perceived shortcomings in this way, they were able to contextualise these in a more self-affirming manner. This was quite unlike the negative, self-denigrating manner they had engaged in when comparing themselves to others competitively, for example, often resulting in them feeling inadequate.

This normalisation allowed for self-compassion to take effect, which Neff (2003) explored as an emotionally positive self-attitude that should protect against the negative consequences of self-judgment, isolation, and rumination. Neff and Knoz (2017) hold that self-compassion is in direct opposition to the self-critical approach adopted by other participants, who appeared to cope destructively. This self-compassionate frame of mind that Neff and Knoz (2017) define, appeared to have a similar effect in this study, growing participants' understanding of the problem, allowing them to break it down more constructively, rendering them less self-critical and more self-affirming. Those who initially held ideologies about needing to overly push

themselves to succeed reflexively processed this and discovered that self-care and patience with themselves yielded better goal attainment, echoing Neff and Seppala's (2016) findings.

This study would go further by aligning its findings with the suggestion that dissipating stress using these processes could have also had a physiological effect of reducing the psychosomatic barriers participants were experiencing. This is in line with Arch, Brown, Dean, Landy, Brown and Laudenslager's (2014) findings that people who display high levels of compassion demonstrate improved sympathetic and parasympathetic response to stressors.

Although these participants still inevitably faced LoP, their perception and sense-making of it enabled them to initially sit with it for longer and in a more contained manner than other participants. Atkinson (2009) suggests that denying one's urges, for example in this study, the urge to avoid or externalise anger can provide people with the space to see where they are suffering and move to be liberated from it. Yet paradoxically, participants in Atkinson's (2009) study combatted this urge by filling their minds with parkour, which helped them master the art of letting go of their 'material' desires, e.g. externally influenced goals.

This study would argue that this process, unguided, may have been far too complex for even those participants who coped highly reflexively. Depending on their normative coping styles and pre-disposed tendencies linked to their past unprocessed trauma, some participants still found it a struggle to 'let go'. Impacting upon their 'drive', a term coined by Schopenhauer (1903) to describe a person's existential will, this left them unable to process the possible productive interconnectivity of their desires and their fears in the long term, resulting in them quitting.

## 6.4.4. Coping positively with LoP through contained practitioning

### 6.4.4.1. Reflecting on a need for external containment provisions

In line with the centrality to past trauma re-enactment through training, narcissism, sense of self and various 'real' versus 'adopted' ego states, it is unsurprising that participants identified both a need for training to be more person-centred and the importance of systemic support in helping them cope with LoP. Although the context researched was sports, the needs which participants seemed to desire from their peers and family members seemed to align with clients' expectations in therapy. Participants sought a style of containment much like that facilitated

through the therapeutic relationship (Rogers, 1959). This was rather unsurprising, given how highly exposing of someone's 'true vulnerabilities' parkour was for these participants, both consciously and unconsciously.

Saville (2008) offered that parkour is inherently a process of overcoming emotions and continuously learning through confronting fear as a lived experience. Participants of this study initially echoed these initial thoughts as aligning with the impression they had of parkour upon entering training. Their experience of training parkour, however, was that parkour alone did not accomplish the overcoming that Saville (2008) outlines. Based on the recommendations of participants, alongside the co-constructed themes which resulted in analysing their unconscious experiences, parkour in this study was deemed to have the potential to teach people how to navigate fear and enhance emotional coping. In reality, however, the process of genuinely overcoming emotions and confronting fear through parkour training appeared impossible to overcome for many. The degree by which this notion was aligned with by participants, seemed to depend on the degree of prior trauma experienced and the coping styles they had come to adopt. More often than not, their past and their management of this in training, resulted in them quitting parkour without even considering re-entry, after enduring great pain and loss of sense of self.

In addition to seeking external help, physical person-centred progression was important in effectively coping with one's LoP. Aggerholm and Larson (2016) have established helpful repetition with feedback-based training paradigms to aid in progressing quality of movement, in turn growing inner satisfaction and confidence. 'Challenge-break-clean' as Aggerholm and Larson (2016) call it, sees a practitioner approach a challenge, complete it and then refine it, crediting this process as central to growth in confidence and physical competence.

Although this may be a straightforward process for some, the reality in this study suggests that to get to a 'challenge-break-clean', much of the LoP happens even before the participant meets their challenge. This study suggests that this may reduce the likelihood of them attaining the physical and emotional confidence Aggerholm and Larson (2016) describe. This is due in part to the participants' experience in this study highlighting the possibly traumatic parallel process that exists between a participant's struggles and maladaptive coping of these within the context of a parkour task, and struggles experienced and maladaptive coping styles adopted in their pasts. This parallel saw participants approaching parkour tasks with a mindset that was

informed by their reactions to adversity in the past, as well as internal working models that were often unhelpful when faced with adversity. This would have physically, emotionally and psychologically loaded their experience of the 'challenge-break-clean', often unconsciously, rendering a parkour challenge not new but more of a re-trigger of something previously experienced negatively in their pasts.

The lack of a 'clean slate'-like experience of challenges in parkour, therefore, suggests that reflection on one's relationship to challenge at large perhaps even prior to reflecting on a specific parkour challenge, may be paramount to influence a positive challenge attempt experience overall.

This study, therefore, suggests that to accomplish the challenge-break-clean process as Aggerholm and Larson (2016) intend, it may be more easily accomplished by reflective practitioners with a healthy process in place to manage past and present blockages, and those who make helpful use of the systemic tools in place. Conversely, a highly preventative, reflection inducing style of training/teaching, tailored specifically to participants' own unique physical and emotional needs, is necessary to assist those who may be unable to complete tasks set independently. These participants highlighted the importance of paying attention to training style, structure and load, all things that researchers like Silva (1990) Kenttä and Hassmé (1998) and Tenenbaum et al., (2003) described as crucial to preventing burnout in sports.

Through their 20/20-hindsight suggestions that LoP is inevitable and how it is attended to is extremely important, participants clearly needed to have their emotional struggles noticed. In this, they acknowledged something which Hancox, Quested, Ntoumanis & Thøgersen-Ntoumani (2018) suggest is essential to aid their own self-determination in sports. Tied into the normalisation of anxieties in all contexts for optimum psycho-emotional functioning of individuals (Salkovskis, 1996), this study proposes that it is first necessary to validate a practitioner similarly to how a caregiver would; Linehan (2015) describing this as an essential part of any caregiver's communication of their acceptance of a person. Lack of this, as noticed by participants in this study, could lead to someone feeling ashamed due to internalising this dismissal as symbolic of them not being important enough or good enough to be listened to. This hinders therapeutic and other intimate relationships according to Moorey and Lavander (2018), compromising progress in psychosomatic therapies, as described by Williamson (2008) when discussing what constitutes successful brief psychological interventions; in this

study, exacerbating the types of paradoxical loss experienced by participants, seemingly also contributing to LoP in parkour.

### 6.4.4.2. Reflecting on a need for internal containment provisions

Participants reflected on the importance of safeguarding themselves. For example, advocating for regularly checking in with their relationship to their training, and the 'red flags' which are signs they were pushing themselves over their limits, physically and emotionally. As Szabo, Griffiths and Demetrovics (2019) highlight, exercise in moderation is beneficial; yet there is an inherent risk for those who experience conscious or unconscious self-harming tendencies for it to become addictive and ultimately dangerous.

Then, there was participants' need to belong and connect with others, conflictingly experienced through their simultaneous need for agency and control over their lives as Maslow (1963) highlights on how people can reach such a point in their lives. In line with this, both hypothetically and from experience, participants championed the process of reflective practice as a form of internal containment provision, arguing that this should be guided by sources external to themselves and parkour. They suggested that this process allowed them to gain more insight into themselves which they could not attain alone, enabling them to decide what they really wanted from their training. Deci and Ryan's (2002) work on how crucial self-realisation and self-governance is, for example, in a person deciding what was best for themselves, confirms this. However, the process can be turbulent, lacking transparency and hard to accept at times as Hayes, Strosahl and Wilson's (1999) concluded in their work around acceptance and commitment to change.

Through their ecocultural model of development, Keller and Kartner (2013) confirm that once this knowledge of someone's desires and intentions is established, 'relatedness' as Kagitcibasi (2007) calls it, can be appropriately engaged with less threat to that person's autonomy. This is because they would be able to remain self-contained, relate to self-selected others based on the views and values they feel to best fit their own, and reject those they do not align with, thereby embodying the very meaning of relatedness. Coakley (1992) however suggests that sporting environments are immersive and often alienate the rest of a person's world, highly influencing one's autonomy development or maintenance. This could therefore render self-containment less linear or crystalline a process than Kelle and Kartner (2013) suggest, something participants in this study seemed to struggle with. This being said participants did

seemingly show varying and wavering desires for relatedness as influenced by their perceptions and their lived experiences of parkour training, suggesting that this could have enabled them to preventatively perceive the threat to their self-containment earlier had they been actively reflecting.

Given that the 'red flags' resulted in participants pushing past their limits, initially mostly unconsciously and driven by intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, it stands to reason that externalisation of their thoughts, feelings and behaviours worked to provide them with some distancing, perspective taking and eventual sensitisation to their internal working models. This allowed them the insight they needed into their maladaptive training coping styles, needs and drivers, which had ultimately influenced them to self-harm, externalise blame and avoid making changes they now retrospectively understood may have helped process their LoP.

### 6.4.4.3. Reflecting on a necessary balance needed between the collective and autonomous parkour training experience

Participants reflected on the benefits of solo training in parkour, highlighting its necessity in cultivating self-discovery unique to the individual which according to Jung (1957) is vital for the healthy nurturing of both collectivist and individual needs. Through analysis of the positive and negative functions of group training on participants, they advocated a balanced training style marrying solo and group training. This was thought to best safeguard their identity and avoid over-engulfing by the group, which some had struggled with at some point in their training lifespan. This mirrors the needs outlined by Erikson's (1968) work on adolescents, who he argued were at a crisis point in their lives, asking themselves the existential question of 'Who am I and what can I be?', a question participants in this study were also posing when seeking out parkour.

Yet they did experience physical and emotional gains to their training when in groups, supporting findings on group-based sports by Davis, Taylor & Cohen (2015) that champion group-based exercise as a means of augmenting social bonds and nurturing reciprocal relationships. This study argues that although parkour is largely a solo sport, e.g. one person, not several, performs the jump;  the role of the other as temporary custodian of a traceur's omnipotence, its relationship to trust-building for effective progression, and the increased probability of better coping with LoP, all stand to reason when participants discuss great benefits from group training settings.

More individually focused participants however also championed creative play, believing it to be highly nurturing to their sense of self. Resnick and Robinson (2017), who advocate lifelong play, concurs that play is essential for passion, peers and projects to come together in a way that best facilitates learning. They do, however, draw on the notion of there being different types of play. Parkour, based on some of the 'Doppler shift' views apparent in this study, seems to need spaces and room for improvisation, reactivity, flexibility and adaptability to be exercised. This is similar to Resnick and Robinson's (2017) definition of a 'playground', as opposed to the restrictive conditions of a 'playpen'.

Indeed, the shift occurring at present may be reducing the freedom, autonomy, creativity and even risk from the equation of learning in certain forms: with familiarity being more readily accomplishable in parks than in public spaces with limitless possibilities and unknowns (Resnick & Robinson, 2017). The unstructured, open exploration that Resnick and Robinson (2017) advocate are necessary for a more self-nurturing experience to training, was echoed to be important to pleasurable parkour training for many of this study's participants.

## 6.5. Quitting styles

### 6.5.1. Re-entering parkour: experiencing the revolving door

#### 6.5.1.1. Re-entering conflicted

Participants contemplating re-entry, having not processed their LoP consciously, appeared to require external support. Rooted in psychosomatic challenges, suggested herein to be linked to object relations theory (Klein, 1946), these participants were demonstrating an anxious-preoccupied attachment style when attempting to re-enter parkour, an attachment style that Bowlby (1979) suggests compensates for one's adult unstable mental working models. As such, participants appeared to treat friendships as animate transitional objects, used to help transition them back into training securely. This is a process akin to the process Hooley and Wilson-Murphy (2012) outline as characteristic of people with borderline personality disorder. Additionally, Mikulincer, Shaver and Pereg's (2003) model describes a 'security-based' strategy adopted by adults to reduce anxiety, through seeking physical and psychological closeness from a person in a position of trust, resonating with the behaviours displayed by participants in this study.

Moreover, some participants struggled to reconcile control of their 'replacement vulnerabilities', e.g. injury prior to re-entry; still not having attended to their 'core vulnerabilities' which impacted on their quitting in the first place. This perceived lack of control echoes Murphy's (1995) belief that athletes tend to need guidance (i.e. counselling) to attend to changes in their self-identity, support systems and coping skills to develop a greater sense of control when transitioning in sports. Additionally, with re-entry indeed a possible transitory phase. The lack of such support even being considered by these participants would suggest the probability of them staying focused on their perceived traumatic quitting causes and their perceived loss. This loss kept them fearful of moving forward instead of attending to the skills-based reflective approach so often thought to aid athletes' transition in sports (Lavallee & Andersen, 2000). Hsu, Meierbachtol, George and Chmielewski (2016) suggest that this lack of confidence, if not addressed, will continue to exacerbate the fear of re-injury and other athlete limitations.

As a result, similar to Gill's (1994) observations within the stress experience in general populations, stressors were seen to be re-experienced by these participants, their reactions to these unchanging. When re-entering training unresolved, participants appeared to experience a process that resembled the chronic stress experience of other athletes in other sports when they are faced with repeatedly intense demands as outlined by Gustafsson et al., (2008).

### 6.5.1.2. Re-entering resolved

Participants who wanted to re-enter training having resolved matters seemed to have gained insight into their 'core vulnerabilities'. Having internally and externally processed their LoP and coping with this left them confident of being in a better position to manage their LoP in the future. Many such participants had employed internal means (e.g. journaling through their emotions) and external ones (e.g. hypnosis to manage anger); with self-deterministic frameworks similar to those outlined by Deci and Ryan (2002). This helped them grow the necessary autonomy and intrinsic motivation needed to participate healthily in sports.

Some participants aligned themselves with athlete populations who generally perceive seeking help as a weakness, a narrative found in Putukian's (2016) study that looked at the psychological response student-athletes had to injury. Further to this, some participants were striving to uphold the mental toughness thought to exist in competitive sports (Bauman, 2016). Furthermore, those who were resolved and ready to return to training appeared to view it

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similarly to non-elite groups, such as university populations in Shannon, Breslin, Haughey, Sarju, Neill, Lawlor and Leavey's (2019) study, similarly considering help-seeking as a positive means of increasing their resilience and well-being.

These participants confronted the factors which they perceived had contributed to their LoP, accepting these and committing to work on a change before re-entering. This is in line with Hayes et al.,'s (1999) thoughts that addressing internal processes can aid arousal regulation by creating the transcendent sense of self needing to meet highly complex, challenging situations, that this study is seeing sports like parkour as inherently so.

## 6.5.2. Stopping parkour permanently

### 6.5.2.1. Resolved stopping

Some participants appeared to have accepted their decision to quit, describing it as doing what they believed was right for them. They fondly reminisced on their experiences but were self-compassionate in their decision to leave resembling Neff's (2003) description of self-compassion. This self-compassion allowed them to grow from their experience of losing parkour, accepting that the things they learnt in their training were now better suited to other areas of their life. They were, therefore, able to reappraise their quitting, the historical stressor, seeing it as a healthier attribution of their experience. Stanton, Kirk, Cameron and Danoff-Burg (2000) suggest that this allows individuals to accept responsibility for the role they played in their negative experience while maintaining a nurturing kindness towards themselves.

Arguably, this went some way towards repairing their loss of sense of self through quitting. Leary, Tate, Adams, Batts Allen and Hancock (2007) argue that such self-compassion facilitates an individual's ability to gain an appreciation that failing is merely part of humanity. The self-compassion that participants in this study showed appeared to normalise their failures, allowing them to reconcile their perceived inadequacies in a way that enabled them to grow their interconnectedness to parkour, rather than alienating them from it, its practitioners and their affinity to it. This closely resembles what Huysmand and Clement (2017) found in regards to the potential benefits of self-compassion on coping and appraisal of stress in sports.

### 6.5.2.2. Conflicted stopping

Conversely, participants who stopped conflicted showed a longing to return to sport uncommittedly, but were not decisive in returning to parkour training. In line with research, albeit predominantly extant in terms of elite athlete populations, transitioning from a sport requires acclimatisation and is a challenge, requiring a person to redefine a big part of themselves (Murray, 2017). Participants in this study had invested significantly in parkour, not only as a means of having fun and staying fit, but for the connectedness and belonging it brought them through assimilating its practice and culture into their identity. The loss of this social inclusiveness and standing has been known to leave athletes feeling very isolated and lacking in themselves, possibly overinflating their emotional longing to return; an experience closely resembling that of 'homesickness' described by Anspach (1934).

Unlike in resolved stopping, and mirroring athletes who feel their retirement from sport is forced (Blinde & Stratta, 1992), these participants seemed to process quitting as 'happening to them'. For example, numbingly externalising blame to others and 'replacement vulnerabilities' for their experience of it, struggling to own their decision-making. This led them, probably unconsciously, to further compound the feeling of longing for a return. This is in line with their lack of ownership of responsibility, which led to them not engaging the necessary steps to re-enter the sport either. This disassociation from their own control in quitting left participants with an attitude that seemed defeatist and uncommitted, increased control over one's exit from a sport being something that Webb, Nasco, Riley and Headrick's (1998) study highlights as important in reducing difficulties in post-sport adjustment.

In line with ideas surrounding nostalgia fortifying resistance to change after losing social bonds and continuity of self (Batcho, 2018), these participants expressed a desire to explore other approaches to parkour. They endeavoured to remain close to the sport, perhaps contemplating the idea of a potentially healthier growth of self in another setting resembling one of the past. This resonates with Batcho's (2018) suggestions that nostalgia can fortify resistance to change, participants in this study seemingly yearning to go back to where they used to train to mirror the Batcho's 'attachment to home' theme.

These conflicted, seemingly hard to cut, invisible ties were embodied in their manner of quitting, for example, some having experienced almost a year of preparing and priming themselves for this, and suggesting that they did so for others. However, this study views this

as a coping style designed to lessen the loss when they eventually had to confront deciding to leave. Psychodynamically, termination is a process thought to be ever-present due to the implicit knowledge of death being inherent in self-consciousness (Knafo, 2018). Endings, arguably symbolic of a death, require planning, mutual agreement and a set time, to render the process less destructive and painful, more transformational and insightful.

Even though participants often lacked the provisions to adequately process the impeding loss they were to experience when quitting parkour; the temporal elements of this, accustomisation to it, and priming of those around them to provide them with some containment, represented a broadly safe means for them to end their relationship with parkour. Their reasons for quitting and sense of responsibility remained unresolved, though, leaving them conflicted and unable to leave parkour undefended.

# Chapter 7: Limitations of the research

Although this research has provided rich insight into traceurs' experiences of LoP and the conscious and unconscious traumatisation associated with it, a number of limitations require consideration.

Although all participants were well above 18 years old at interview, the 'control' participant had stopped their sport prior to 18. It cannot be guaranteed that this impacted negatively on the analysis; but their experience of LoP and indeed, of engagement with their sport would be viewed from a lens that may have varied significantly from when they were training, degrees of one's reflective abilities and general psychosocial processing known to vary greatly depending on what stage of development a person finds themselves in (Erikson & Erikson, 1998). Age is further known to impact one's ability to mentalize, described as one's ability to recognise one's own and others mental states (Fonagy, 2018). Consequently, the degree to which their self-concept had developed at the time of experiencing and at the time of inquiry, as described by Marshall (1989), could have also differed greatly. Although these processes vary innately from person to person, explicit 'norm based' differences suggest that children have relatively under-developed pathways compared to adults (Tackett & Sharp, 2014). This further suggests that the experience at the time of training may have been interpreted differently at the time of this study.

Although precautions were taken to lower self-selection bias through snowball sampling, this may still have produced an inclusion bias, resulting in the sample being overly representative of the study population, and biased in the similarity between participants. This may be in line with Noble and Smith's (2015) work that suggest the possible negative cost of such biases to the reliability and validity of qualitative studies. The use of open questions during the interviews within this research increased variance in capturable data in line with O'Cathain and Thomas's (2004) reflections on the value of open-ended questions on an increase in response rate and encourage elaboration by participants. However, it is important to recognise that participants' voluntary response bias may still have played a part in selection stages. It is possible that those with more willingness to share their opinions engaged more readily in the selection process. Recruiting a relatively homogenous group through voluntary recruitment meant this was always going to raise a cause for concern given that echoing Collier and

Mahoney's (1996) findings, I had very little control in negating such bias as a researcher.

Reflecting back on the study, my purposeful sample catchment of people who had stopped training may have contradicted a full analysis of the LoP phenomenon. This bias in my own actions may have been a result of the broad, brief literature review I carried out in the early stages of the research when attempting to identify gaps. As all literature largely referred to 'burnout' as an ultimate cause of 'quitting' the sample may have been overly biased by the presumption of an outcome of LoP being quitting. This informed the catchment sample chosen possibly biasing it at recruitment, as opposed to inviting participants who believed themselves to have experienced LoP in their parkour training regardless of current training status. Dey (1999), however, accounts for this in GT, labelling it as 'accumulated knowledge' covered for in constructivist methodologies. I would further argue that as LoP was the process that was co-created by the participants' narratives and my own interpretations of this, I was not in a position to start with recruitment encapsulating the LoP phenomenon as I was overarchingly unaware of its presence.

Participants were often already aware of my work and background as a counselling psychologist trainee who practises parkour, increasing the likelihood of my position having influenced their narrative in some way. Participants may have been influenced by my position within both disciplines, as well as attempted to please me in an attempt to gain validation during the course of the interview, if the power dynamics are reflected on honestly. This potentially allowed for 'halo error' to result, whereby characteristics of the researcher may have influenced how participants evaluated the processes raised by the interview questions, in line with Murphy, Jako and Anhalt (1993). This possibly impacted the quality of the data gathered and the subsequent analysis of it. Being regarded within the parkour community as someone specialising as a parkour therapist, potentially further biased their conceptualisation of the questions I asked. Their prior knowledge of my work could have placed them in a frame of reference which was psychologically adapted, impacting on the critical voices being heard.

Expanding on this, I experienced participants talking in psychological ways at times throughout the interviews, predominantly but not limited to the start of interviews. They seemed to at times volunteer their psychological and or therapeutic knowledge and mental health experience, past present and in relation to the LoP and burnout topics without prompting from me. Although seemingly positive on one hand as they were open and very reflective allowing for the

processes they went through to be explored richly, the possible limitations of this may have been an introduction to the unintended biases described above. Introduced by my involvement or their preconceived ideologies of my expectations and agendas, bias in their recollection of experiences or re-telling of states embodied during various phenomena may have been introduced.

Although a social constructivist epistemological standpoint allows for the researcher to be active in GT research as suggested by Charmaz (2006), our dual assumptions could still have impacted theory generation construction. I, therefore, attempted to mitigate this through exploring their own meaning-making behind the psychological terminology they used that appeared to resemble therapeutic jargon, for example, terms like "self-sabotage", "oppositional learning styles" and "narcissism". This appeared to diminish the use of such jargon as the interviews progressed, as well as providing invaluable insight into the participants' world and self-views. It appeared to enable them to experience reflections and a level of reflexivity within their LoP experience for example, that they reported never really having done before, nor really having had the space to before their interview for this study. In this way, I felt that I was able to mitigate some of the possible biasing effects that their previous knowledge of me had on their seemingly externalised psychological knowledge, instead re-directing them to their own internal meaning-making accounts and away from their perceptions of perhaps what I wanted to hear from them.

In hindsight, however, I contemplate if it would have been more advisable to advertise the study with a lessened explicit connection to myself. In this way, I would have further distanced myself from being central to the research. Perhaps using a more neutral party like the university as a buffer when signposting and recruiting would have further minimised the bias. In this way, transparency in my carrying out this project as part of my doctorate would have been maintained but perhaps some social distancing could have been implemented through social media advertising to avoid people researching me excessively when preparing to interview. An example of how this could be done could perhaps be by creating a research page on Facebook for this research rather than using my own public page which then could have been circulated by Esprit Concrete Ltd and others.

Reflecting back, I wondered whether I had been unable to contemplate this line of advertising due to my fears of no one replying to my advert and therefore using my influence unconsciously

to entice people into volunteering. I also wonder if a part of me wanted the accolade of this being my research project and showing the community that I and my company was active in research within this field, so much depending on this for my desired future career path. I also lament as to whether it was also perhaps a naivety of the impact I could have on this research process from the start that often stems from the lack of self-worth I seem to have surrounding research, lending me to undervalue the impact I have on many things, in this case, the research, as a live stimulus for my participants and the assumptions they could have made.

The process of GT itself has been criticised as subject to over-simplification of complex meaning-making, relational patterns in the data and restrictive in nature, such are the interpretive procedures it demands (Thomas & James, 2006). Induction of data may be rendered inaccurate through inappropriate models being conceptualised to make sense of it (Thomas & James, 2006): which I was very aware of throughout my analysis. Although not easy, I chose to remain highly reflexive, to avoid imposing my own assumptions too heavily on the data. I attempted to avoid approaching analysis too rigidly, allowing for unexpected invisible threads between codes to be illuminated and for the model-making to remain as creative and data-grounded as possible (Charmaz, 2006). This however was not without its considerable challenges, my anxiety surrounding getting this GT 'right' heavily pressuring me in the back of my mind.

This further added to the complexity of keeping the write-up succinct. I found myself wanting to include everything. I was filled with debilitating fear at times of missing out on crucial underlying processes, frustratingly revisiting every single part of the analysis countless times to try to gain some control and perspective on this. This experience echoed Fassinger's (2005) description of the GT process being extremely arduous, albeit rewarding. Although GT is often criticised for being non-generalisable, and an over-simplification (Allen, 2003), in line with Nelson (2016), the remit of this study was to keep analysing until 'conceptual depth' was possible; not to reach 'data saturation' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), thereby allowing the methodology to uphold Charmaz's (2006) stance that it could indeed generate a model and not merely enable interpretation and insight, accounted for by other, more descriptive methodologies like descriptive phenomenological methods (Morrow, Rodriguez & King, 2015).

After I had my viva, an experience that was gruelling, triggering of many defences,

vulnerabilities-exposing and therefore ego-bruising, I was able to further reflect on my own agenda for the research and its potential influence in biasing my research. I was reminded to make space for my researcher anxiety by my support systems, eventually learning to sit with it. This allowed me to return to the analysis when my emotional mind was calmer allowing me to be more objective with the data at hand. In hindsight, this process was crucial in mitigating the seeping into the analysis of some of my own agenda-driven biases. The importance of this reflective psychoemotional step I took to my analysis' validity and reliability to be safeguarded cannot be stressed enough. In the end, I realise that I adopted a coping style within my research process that strongly resembled the contained practitioner style of coping that this study's model puts forward. I believe that the adoption of this process ultimately helped me emotionally survive my insider researcher experience in a more boundaried and more objective manner, undoubtedly aiding results to be more robust.

## 7.1. Research rigour and trustworthiness

Qualitative research like GT, intended to generate knowledge grounded in participants' worldly experiences (Sandelowski, 2004), needs to be conducted in a methodological manner to yield useful, meaningful results (Attride-Stirling, 2001). As such, methodological rigour, a means to assure reliability and quality, must be upheld to the standards of the research field, the chosen methodology and epistemological stance undertaken by the researcher (Haverkamp et al., 2005). Lincoln and Guba (1985) outline a process of checking trustworthiness ensuring that credibility, transferability, dependability, conformity, auditability and reflexivity. These were applied to this study in an attempt to uphold the study's methodological rigour.

With regards to credibility, Guba and Lincoln (1989) claim that trustworthiness or credibility can be determined by how best participants' data 'fit' the views of the researcher's representation of them, further supported by Tobin and Begley (2004). In this study, this was ensured through prolonged engagement with the participants' data, closely sticking to their words and meaning-making throughout the analysis. In addition, peer debriefing was used throughout the GT group I attended, as a means of further checking my sense-making of the data, as well as constantly going back to the raw data to check preliminary findings.

Transferability refers to the generalisability of a study as outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985). I remained transparent in my work, providing thick descriptions and clearly stepped processes

to share how the theory was constructed should anyone else seek to transfer findings, in an attempt to ensure transferability. Examples of participant transcripts are provided in the Appendix, to ensure that transparency does not compromise participants' anonymity.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) define dependability as the degree to which one's research process is well documented, easily understood, and accounts for how it resulted in the construction of GT, logically and traceably. Upholding this, I documented all stages of interview script coding, memoing and diagramming, providing samples to allow the process to be accessible to readers in the appendix of this thesis.

In line with Koch, Niesz and McCarthy's (2014) recommendations conformity in this study was accounted for by explaining my reasons for the theoretical, methodological and analytical choices I made throughout the research process and meeting the criteria for credibility, transferability and conformity. It is my hope that through evidencing these aspects of my process, others may understand how and why my decisions were made.

Auditability, said to be the trail that provides readers with support of a researcher's choice (Halpern, 1983), was accounted for through memoing and reflexive journaling. This should enable me and others to cross-reference my process in a clear, auditable manner.

Reflexivity involving iterative and constant reflection and self-critiquing, as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985), allows the researcher to bring to light their conscious and unconscious assumptions on the data, reducing bias by rendering GT process researcher outcomes-driven, not participant data-driven. I engaged with research supervision, clinical supervision and therapy throughout the course of the research, ensuring rigour through open, honest reflection on my inner and outer influences on the data.

Although some argue strongly that strict adherence to GT process steps ensures rigour (Seale & Silverman, 1997), in my experience, the process, however well-read and ready I thought I was, was so far from linear and so exhaustive that the tools mentioned above added greatly to the rigour of this study as I mention in the limitations section above. The GT process is immensely immersive; so having tools in place to distance me from the data and better see what it was saying was vital in ensuring that my research is credible and defensible.

# Chapter 8: Considerations and implications for future practice

## 8.1. The LoP model's contribution to existing models

This study was an inquiry into the processes that led to participants stopping parkour, resulting in a model of how the phenomenon of 'LoP' (LoP) was experienced by participants being co-generated as analysis progressed. This subjective and researcher-participant co-construction varies from more general models in sports within the field of stress and burnout historically (e.g Smith, 1996; Raedeke, 1997; Gustafsson et al., 2011). The resultant model is arguably more person-centred and humanistic, the interviews conducted, void of hypotheses as much as possible. Questions that led to the data used to co-construct this LoP model were open-ended and only further specific when co-construction began in line with Charmaz's (2010) recommendations for social constructivist GT methodology.

Everything within the model is assumed to be tentative. It is inherently informed by a non-truth seeking methodology keeping assumptions as low as possible for myself as a human doing research, clear of numerically quantifiable resultant data. As my reflective statements show, the allure of such positivist tendencies was strong at times to add certainty to my journey and validation to what I perceived my results to say about me. Nonetheless, due to the active measures taken, the resultant model is driven by participant experience in a non-linear, iterative manner, where all possible experiences were deemed possible. This is in line with Charmaz's (2006) suggestions that multiple realities exist, differing from the categorical nature of the general burnout and sport-specific models existing to date (e.g. Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Smith, 1986; Gustafsson et al., 2011).

The model is non-generalisable, focussing instead on individual and unique experiences, addressing the gap identified by Gill (1994) that stress-response theories to date lack. This LoP model does captures some of the processes behind seeking out parkour, what is paradoxically lost through training and how LoP is experienced and coped with and what resultant behaviour was experienced by participants. This study's methodology however, assumes that this model should merely be the first of many, mirroring the belief that there are indefinite multiple outcomes of causers, triggers and responses to stress more broadly as suggested by Lazarus (1966). In this way, the aim of the model somewhat challenges the notion that we possibly need to have one all-encompassing model to date for ease of reference as suggested by Gustafsson

et al., (2011). It instead proposes that the complexity of the human condition negates that there is probably not space enough for all eventualities of the LoP experience to be housed in a model. Instead, this model suggests it could perhaps be a guide to how the LoP phenomenon can interrupt training to best inform adapting to it more helpfully, though not attempting to hold an available summary of every person's possible experience of LoP. In this way, I would suggest that it reduces the risk of labelling and diagnosing parkour practitioners with 'LoP' as a condition. Rather it suggests that such processes within this phenomenon appear to exist as part of the human condition. It aims to sensitise people to this notion within parkour and sports more generally which may be helpful to get practitioners, coaches, clinicians and alike to stop, reflect on and inquire after one's process of such a phenomenon. It is my hope that this will improve wellbeing and performance in sports preventatively, consequently to the experience of LoP or aid returning people to parkour and sports more broadly.

This model attempts to see parkour practitioners primarily as people. As such the model encapsulates early experiences in not only how participants seemingly managed stressors in parkour but also what motivated them to enter the sport and stay within it. It assumes that although the participant in this study is reflecting on their experience as a parkour practitioner, they are indeed human, their lives more generally informing their parkour experiences and identities from even prior to their entry into sports. In this way, this LoP model in and of itself aims to reduce the reinforcement of the previously identified identity split that Coakley (1992) describes often results in sport, by means of how it is conceptualised and the 'human as a whole' lens it observes throughout the analysis of the data it is resultant from.

It is therefore longitudinal, the participants experience within parkour contextualised within their life span. It is inclusive of historic experiences as well as current states and future desires, possibly furthering research on how LoP stress management and endings can impact transitioning practitioners, aligning with what Raedeke and Smith (2001) proposed as important. Coakley (1992) thought to have started to address this in his general sports burnout model, though arguably not longitudinally enough. This model's inclusion of developmental experiences of participants aligns with Danish and Hale's (1981) call for research to be more developmentally perceived to better understand, assess and intervene in sport-related concerns.

This model, therefore, aligns itself with the assumption that we are a sum of our experiences as suggested by Dallos and Steadmon (2014), non-reductive of the influencing vulnerabilities

that may influence LoP specifically e.g. perfectionistic traits as suggested by Gustafsson et al., (2011) in their sports burnout model. In this way, the model stresses that personalised interpretations of past influencing traumas, personality factors, attachments and other aspects to participants more broadly, as defined by the participants themselves influence LoP in parkour. This model does not aim to categorise these influencing factors as exhaustive nor pre-disposing for other practitioners. It merely aims to explore some of the internal and external factors these participants and I identified through the model's co-construction. Furthermore, given the 'human in sport' assumption above, arguably lacking in prior general stress models (Coakley, 1990; Raedek, 1997; Gustafsson et al., 2011), the participants' stress management is not merely contextualised specifically to sports. Rather this model allows for this management to transition beyond sports and show prevalence in their relationships outside of sports, more broadly if deemed by them to be applicable.

Some of this model's novelty is in its encapsulation of the process of re-experiencing some processes within participants' experience of LoP through a psychodynamic lens. This model sheds light on the process of re-experiencing LoP within other contexts outside of parkour training e.g. earlier on in life, as well as re-experiencing even within parkour training e.g. re-experiencing injuries of the self emotionally and physically. This contextualisation of participants re-experiencing of LoP not only in parkour but more broadly, proposes LoP as something that a person has a relationship with, can arguably further understanding on the re-occurring nature of a person's experience to stressors, an area that Gill (1994) identified is still highly under-researched.

This model helps shed some light on stressors and responses to these as they are re-experienced as well as proposing some suggestions as to why parkour participation may be revolving door-like for some. Retention within and re-entry into parkour training for these participants seemingly identify that enhancing their management of stress and resulting LoP is essential to continued training. Although previous more general sports models like Silva's (1990) model, looked at cyclical burnout in sports through a physical lens e.g. overtraining cycles, this study expands on this conceptualisation for its participants, processes of cyclical LoP appearing to be experienced somatically as well and psychosocioemotionally.

Further to this single example above, this LoP model is integrative, eclectic and pluralistic in its conceptualisation as a whole, inclusive of schools of thought from but not limited to

biological, psychological, social psychology. This adds diversity to the predominantly cognitive and social psychology informed models that general burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1981), general stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) and sport-specific burnout models (Gustafsson et al., 2011) appear to have adopted.

Furthermore, the psychodynamic lens utilised to deepen the data analysis in this study, renders this model sensitive to not only what participants appeared conscious of, but also the processes that may have been experienced unconsciously. This model in its co-conceptualised nature allows for the participants' expertise to be fused with my professional expertise, marrying both hubs of knowledge in a manner that is seemingly less common within the stress and burnout area of research. This model is therefore less traditionally positivist than existing models and arguably less top-down, while still housing value for the informed interpretations of myself as a researcher, in line with the active researcher stance that social-constructivist GT allows for (Charmaz, 2006). In this way, the model further addresses the gap in research that moves away from focussing solely on the awareness and cognitive processing of people in sports, allowing novel insight into the participants' defences; unconscious defences known in sports more broadly to impact performance (Apitzsch & Berggren, 1993).

This pluralistic model, although supposedly transferrable to sports more generally, is by conception sport-specific, in line with Dishman's (1983) suggestion that more sport-specific models should be researched. This model, therefore, helps capture the uniqueness of parkour as it is uniquely experienced by some of its practitioners. Arguably, this study still sharing some resultant concepts with more general stress and athlete burnout models renders it possibly transferable in parts to areas outside of parkour. This dual-use is further discussed below. This model being non-diagnostic resulted in a suggestion that LoP should in fact be normalised as part and parcel of the human condition, in this study specifically within a parkour training context. Championing Almeida's (2005) view that stress is something we all experience as humans on a daily basis, this model shares this view of its resultant LoP phenomenon in parkour training.

It sees LoP as something experienced on a spectrum, differently depending on who we are as people. This suggestion renders that models like this may be best suited to alert us on the importance of exploring how we may likely cope with our unique experiences of LoP in any domain early on, not believing that experiencing it can be prevented, rather in the hope that it

can help best manage it when it occurs. As such, unlike existing linear models like Gustafsson et al.,'s (2011) integrative model of burnout in sports that are based on more medical models, like Maslach & Jackson's (1981) model, this model does not see any outcome to participants' experiences of LoP as curable. Similarly to Raedeke's (1997) model, this model also highlights that exiting sports is not necessarily a negative outcome for sports participants. This model proposes that the outcome of the LoP experience is determined by the way in which participants experience their LoP. This renders a conflicted stopping of parkour training experience perceptually positive to some. For example, should they be unaware of the cost that stopping training could have on them, given that their processing of LoP is avoidant in nature. In this way, this model goes some way in challenging what is perceived as a 'bad outcome', suggesting a question be posed of bad for who. This model suggests that LoP is therefore extremely complex and nuanced in nature, grounded in the subjective realities of an individual, in line with the counselling psychology perspective that rejects the notion of singular truths (Strawbridge & Woolfe, 2003).

This model's presentation of varying outcomes to training, including re-entry albeit one's parkour training and LoP experience being conflicted, further align with existing theories of sporting entrapment (Schmidt & Stein, 1991; Raedeke, 1997). This model however helpfully included reflective hindsight informed participant data, known to be central to counselling psychologists reflective and reflexive practice (Legg, 1998). This allowed for recommendations to be proposed based on these participants' opinions of what they felt would have helped them, and could help again, in processing their LoP more effectively. Therefore instead of recommendations being merely extractive, resultant of conclusions drawn from me as an observer, this model helpfully made room for contextualised recommendations driven by participants' experiences. This gave voice to parkour practitioners themselves on what would be best for future parkour practitioners in assessing and coping with their LoP. This could further strengthen the socially constructed nature of the phenomena of burnout; burnout known to have been originally societally constructed (Schaufeli et al, 2009).

Therefore, although this LoP model shows some support of previous research as mentioned above, it adds novelty to existing research through its subjective research methodology, person-centred style of conceptualisation, parkour specificity and introduction to our understanding of the resultant LoP phenomenon. The model allows for transferable suggestions making it potentially flexibly adaptable to practitioners, clinicians and others as they see fit. Not resulting

in diagnostic criteria and not normative, this model looks to inform understanding of how some practitioners may experience LoP, aiding others to question their own why. Rather than labelling what is happening, and assigning a why prescriptively, this model is suggested to be a mere pioneering tool, its proposed concepts available to one's integrative practice as perceived applicable by them, and useful in informing future models within parkour, sports and beyond.

## 8.2. The LoP model's contribution to parkour

This model is the first of its kind in parkour research. As such it is my sincere hope that it is the first step in the direction of more alike research being conducted in the area of the study's now proposed phenomena of LoP in parkour training. Counselling psychology often works to explore people's stuckness and lack of progress as McLeod and Sundet (2020) discuss with regards to the therapeutic relationship and its role in clients moving through hurdles in therapy. This model is grounded in a counselling psychology perspective, therefore, could further strengthen a medium that according to Belle (2009) already looks at overcoming obstacles. I suggest that it could perhaps deepen parkour's potential to helpfully teach people to process more concrete obstacles while better linking this with more psychoemotional obstacle processing.

This model helps provide a deeper contextualised and person-centred understanding of risk-taking factors for entering parkour for some practitioners. This study grows on previously proposed reasons for participation in seemingly risky sports ideologies. Namely that participation is influenced by factors like personality traits (Zuckerman, 2000), deviance presumed historically to be something one is born with by some (Zuckerman, 2000) and risk-taking within parkour more specifically to be driven by a need to satisfy ego-ideals (Raymen, 2017). Moving beyond describing participants' possible hedonistic, subservient and narcissistic motives for entering parkour training as Wallace's (2013) study did to a degree, this model looked at participants' early experiences to help contextualise 'how' such drivers developed in participants more generally to begin with. This then allowed for a deeper understanding of how factors like these then influenced parkour seeking and engagement. This model helps to add layers to prior understanding of predisposing factors that influence parkour

entry, introducing a more developmental understanding of how these factors influence what is sought in parkour and the subsequent impact on one's LoP experience in parkour if such needs are unmet.

Due to the subjective nature of the model, however, it is arguably less reductionist and categorical than previous sports burnout models that list certain predisposing traits to be more influential than others in a sporting experience (Smith, 1986). Instead, it simply allows room for one's personality to inform one's resultant relationship to sport, parkour in this study. It is more explanatory through it being inquiry led in its conceptualisation, suggesting that all personality factors may have a contributing function to one's LoP and all can be exacerbating. The degree to which the personality factor is helpful or not is subjective to how one accepts, makes sense of and in turn utilises it in their experience of LoP and their broader understanding of their coping styles.

Stressors in parkour having not been researched much if at all till now, appear from this study to seem both specific to parkour but also more broadly grounded. In line with previous general stress and burnout athlete models discussed in the literature review, there was a parallel in this study. Participants inaccurately cognitively appraised their triggers or stressor resulting in exacerbating LoP unhelpfully. This process seemingly mirrored the stress exacerbating cognitive appraisal patterns outlined by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) and Smith (1990) that lead to unhelpful stress coping mechanisms in their stress models. A more in-depth assessment of how people make sense of their world around them and what this draws on from past experiences to inform how they react to stressors, may be one of the helpful things that this model sheds light on within a parkour setting.

I propose based on the resultant model herein that this kind of understanding could prove invaluable to a parkour practitioner's training trajectory and overall relationship to themselves, others and objects within parkour. This study has shown that interactions with objects, coaches and peers had affected participants' cognitive appraisals of situations and of their self-worth, thereby reaffirming things that they remembered having negatively experienced in earlier years. Similarly to DBT concepts discussed in the literature review (e.g. Linehan et al., 1999), the re-triggering of one's past and its impact on current behaviours, appeared in this study to further break down the trust they had in themselves, their environment and others exacerbating their LoP unhelpfully. In a DBT context within counselling psychology practice, for example,

a strong understanding of how individual stressors affecting a person's transaction with their environment uniquely, is sought after (Lynch et al, 2006).

This model supports this interest, highlighting the importance that assessing one's perceptions of the world can have on how parkour practitioners may relate to tasks, coaches and objects which could prove helpful in further enhancing coaching practice, self-development goals setting and general training environments. I, therefore, suggest that this model and the participants' experiences that helped inform it could very usefully inform parkour practitioners' personal risk assessments in practice in the future. This would be through raising awareness of people's relational threat perception in both participant and coach further growing inter-relational trust, known to be essential in sport satisfaction more broadly (Jowett, 2007). Much like in DBT validation is the oil for change (Linehan, Dimeff, Kanter & Comtois, 1999) and if this results in higher care provision in a therapeutic setting then I propose that this model, with focus on the relational factors influencing LoP, would be helpful, not only in yielding higher practitioner commitment for change in the future but better relational settings to help induce such change. Given the contributions of the participants' needs for further self-reflection to be practised by, this model could help inform coaches on some of the key factors that they may benefit from paying closer attention to when teaching. This could enable coaches to provide more containment and boundary adherence when coaching, familiarising themselves with their own psychoemotional processes. The lack of which appeared in this study to strongly impact their relationships to students and some students' overall progression.

Most of the preparation however taking place in vivo during training, when already faced with movements or challenges (Belle, 2009), I suggest leaves room for this model to help take a practitioner's psychosocioemotional and physical preparedness even further. Saville's (2008) participants have highlighted the potential for space to bring up emotional past memories, which aligns well with this study's participant experiences of having re-experienced things in their past when triggered by parkour in practice. Although in this study this was not just affected by the objects and one's training environment but also other human to human interactions, it highlighted the importance of better reflecting on how one processes such experiences. For this study, the re-experiencing and remembering were not always pleasant, especially when associated with LoP. This model therefore could prove valuable in aiding raising awareness of such potential for re-triggering experiences that parkour training can illicit, and insight into how these can be prepared for and/or mitigated to some degree.

This model, therefore, aligns with Brymer's (2010) findings that parkour already involves intense preparation to minimise risk and gain more control over one's self in its training style. As mentioned prior, this LoP model could help inform parkour practitioners in the future to consider how they might, already do or could experience LoP within their training. I believe that this model can sensitise future practitioners to their processing styles of LoP, growing their awareness of it to increase preparedness for it. In line with counselling psychologists current work on stuckness (e.g. Field, 2021), I suggest that this model may aid parkour practitioners to explore their vulnerabilities more openly, preparing them to address the inevitable challenges that parkour training will bring with it. I believe that conceptualising their relationship to challenge as part of their readiness to training experience, before, during and after, could help better situate themselves within their movement challenges when faced with them in training. This could better support practitioners, athletes and amateur alike, to normalise their LoP to a greater extent, explore how to process it and reduce it costing them their parkour participation.

I believe that this model can offer a means of conceptualising one's LoP at various initial, during and post-assessment stages in training iteratively, thereby increasing the inclusivity that parkour is already thought to accommodate (Grospretre & Lepers, 2015). Greater insight into a practitioner's possible relationship to progression and the lack thereof could help nuance both a coach's and practitioner's training style from entry into sports right through to the end of their training careers. This could in principle allow those who fear failing, believe they are not suited to parkour or have considerations that they fear will impede their parkour journey to establish what factors they may be affected by physically, emotionally, socially and alike prior to commencing to reassuringly normalise these fears and plan how best to address them should they be realised. I believe that this could aid in minimising overly painful physical and emotional experiences of LoP in training, better safeguarding parkour practitioners, coaches and individuals themselves, making attempting parkour less scary a prospect for some. The deepening of their conceptualisation of needs and desires that this model can inspire, could allow for more authentic practitioner development and potential attainment.

Current coaching qualifications like Parkour UK's 1st4Sport Level 1 and 2 (Parkour UK, 2021), include a history of parkour in their learner's packs, including risk assessment and management teaching points. Practitioner history and the possible contribution that this could have to their risk management plans still do not feature. This model could help shed light on this gap, aiding coaches to become more holistic in their risk assessments, moving to assess

the person's impact on a space and their unique possible experience within it as opposed to merely a space and its possible impact on its practitioner. The model could help sensitise practitioners, coaches, teams and national governing bodies to the possible trauma that training unhelpfully can have to a practitioner, in turn allowing them to acknowledge and consider this more greatly in training plans. In line with parkour's person-centric nature to one's journey through it (Belle, 2009) and the push for athletes more generally being invited to openly share their needs (UK Sport, 2021), this model and its reflective nature could aid participants. It could help guide them through further questioning their needs more accurately to better inform their goals and ask for their needs to be met. Coaches being encouraged to ask more meaningful questions when working with athletes (Kidman, 2005), and this study's participants finding coaches lacking in sensitivity and alignment with their needs at times, this model seems to have potential in bringing coaches closer to better understanding their practitioners.

Parkour being applied as a helpful, playful and inclusive medium for life span training (e.g. Parkour Dance Company, 2015), could be better informed by concepts proposed in this longitudinally and developmentally sensitive model. This model helps inform an arguably truer understanding of one's fears, specifically those impacting one's LoP within parkour which could be very liberating. This model suggests that closer attention be paid to one's developmental history to allow a practitioner to connect with their process more authentically, perhaps going some way to helping practitioners attain more moments of flow states, something parkour practitioners have been known to seek (Saville, 2008). It could arguably also help future practitioners unlock more creative capacity through earlier sensitisation of their internal and external influencing restricting factors, increasing positive risk-taking thereby increasing performance. Ameel and Tani's (2012) upholding that practitioners' search for 'personal freedom' when training could render this model useful in better guiding practitioners to more honestly explore what this means for them and how best to attain it.

Participants in this study contributing how more parkour specific and general life changes impacted their relationship to parkour training, allowed this longitudinal model to house space to highlight how transitions in training can also lead to LoP experiences. This could help better inform how practitioners could approach training preventatively if potential impacts of life stages and temporally specific experiences they may be facing were more integrated into training. The 'Doppler shift' concept proposed by this model, further informs the importance that temporal considerations have in sports, given how changes to parkour over time seem to

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affect some participants. This model's suggestions could help ensure that the sport is regularly reviewed, assessments of its influence on practitioners assessed more closely, ensuring that changes to its governance, teaching and display stay as true to practitioners' experiences as possible.

As parkour moves more and more into competitive realms (Gillen, 2020) I see this model as possibly helpful in ensuring that a future athlete's LoP is centred closely on their processing of it as individuals. This model being co-created by a parkour practising counselling psychology informed researcher provides valuable integration of both disciplines that is still uncommon and seems to bridge a research and practice gap in a very embodied manner. This could help encourage future models and methods to be conceptualised with both a strong understanding of the cultural nuances of parkour and bespoke to parkour athletes' unique experiences as humans. This model attempts to inform future athlete safeguarding and developmental practices that align with their sports-specific culture as well as their own. This hopefully helps athletes identify their own agendas for practice and stay connected to them even when needing to align themselves with the wider sporting cultures. This model's focus on the importance of autonomous practice physically, emotionally, psychologically and socially to strengthen unique identity formation or retention could help future athletes adopt training practices that allow them to better safeguard their sense of self, even when training within systems that may challenge their own needs and desires. This is, as previously mentioned, well-aligned with entrapment into sports research that has existed to date (Raedeke, 1997).

It is my hope therefore that more models like this will normalise the conceptualisation of people's unique psychoemotional realities often fraught with historic traumas temporally within management plans, further aligning NGB level and clubs alike with the more holistic direction that sport is moving towards (Friesen & Orlick, 2010). Using this humanistic, person-centred model to help inform how observing lack progression in parkour could also helpfully grow its original practice. For example, ADD's aim of training being transformational to one's self (ADD Academy, 2015) and its founders believing that for physical blockages to be worked through, the understanding of the 'person' is inherent (Piemontesi, 2017). This LoP model having been conceptualised with a reflective and reflexive counselling psychology lens (Legg, 1998) could help training to be more helpful in guiding, aiding self-actualisation and goal attainment in a more progression focussed manner.

## 8.3. Counselling psychology relevance to the LoP model

This study champions that counselling psychologists have the privilege of a skillset that can seek to alter the somatic and psychological challenges experienced by clients. For such processes to be challenged successfully and perhaps replaced by healthier pathways that better balance out a practitioner's parallel processing of the possible paradoxical somatopsychic and psychosomatic experience, careful assessment, intervention and evaluation will be important. These are all competencies that a counselling psychologist specialises in doing interchangeably as required (Bor & Watts, 2016).

Owen (2010) suggests that counselling psychologists have an invested interest in navigating the physical and the psychological presentations of clients using a therapeutic parallel process which better informs nurturing training experiences in sports and a more holistic trajectory of progression. In this study, these somatic and psychic challenges involved different lived-in experiences of the same conflict for participants: who attempted to problem-solve both interdependently as they emerged throughout their training lifespan.

I would further suggest that counselling psychologists are extremely well placed to safeguard parkour practitioners who experience things similar to these study's participants. Working with clients to grow the tools needed to identify barriers to progression, counselling psychologists find ways to navigate these in a productive and protective way (McLeod & Sundet, 2020). McLeod and Sundet's (2020) contribute that counselling psychologists work through points of stuckness, tension and LoP in therapy see themselves as possible players in the client's hurdle processing, using their ability to think about what the therapeutic relationship plays out in one's life and what triggers the relationship itself may enact. This reflection with the client and reflexivity by the psychologist, helpfully role models the suggested processes within this model that participants felt would help them in better processing, accepting and moving through their LoP.

This model proposes that these parkour practitioners experienced cyclical re-experiences of LoP that led to demoralisation, escapism or confrontation. Resonating with some of Maslach and Jackson's (1981) participants' experiences, the most popular current therapeutic care plans see sports psychologists working with such client experiences using predominantly cognitive behavioural approaches (Gustafsson et al ., 2017). This model however suggested that this study's participants' experiences were perhaps informed by more than cognitive-appraisal

centric processes. Suggesting instead that the underlying processes are specific to the client's realities that are not always generalisable or known to us, this model's application could benefit from the pluralistic nature of counselling psychology and the familiarity with uncertainty and plural possibilities that counselling psychologists are thought have (Cooper & McLeod, 2011).

Counselling psychology, leading with person-centred schools of thought in practice, places the client at the centre of their work with them (Duffy, 1990). Similar to the iterative and often re-occurring reactions that people have to stress (Gill, 1994) or the redeployment of overtraining styles that Silva's (1990) athlete model suggests, this model's participants also experienced re-experiences of LoP in parkour. This model suggests therefore that perhaps the common denominator in how parkour practitioners respond to stressors more generally and LoP more specifically may in fact be the human at the centre of all relationships. Given the client-centric nature of counselling psychology and its humanistic underpinnings (Rogers, 1961), I propose that future applications of the model to aid in addressing reactions to stressors within parkour and one's experience of LoP more specifically would benefit from a counselling psychologist's skill set.

The experiencing process housed in this model also appeared synonymous with thoughts from Freud (1914) on re-enactment as well as the adulthood persistent conflicts that Erikson (1950) speaks to when child and adolescent traumas remain unresolved. As such the arguable expertise required when working to address difficult relational hurdles touching on areas like these calls for the trusted relational framework at the core of counselling psychology practice (Hubble, Duncan & Miller, 1999).

It is my hope that all the above mentioned, add to the value that counselling psychology can bring to this study's LoP model, and that parkour and other disciplines not limited to sport and movement will invite more counselling psychology insight into their plans. I hope that counselling psychologists will be curious and adventurous enough to venture away from solely traditional ways of working (e.g. 1:1 seated therapy). For example, integrating their expertise more dynamically, be it within movement sessions, management as usual 1:1 sessions, more managerial plans or beyond, creativity being positioned as central to successful counselling and psychotherapy as suggested by Holm-Hadulla & Hofmann (2012).

## 8.4. The LoP model's contribution to counselling psychology in practice

I believe that this study's model helpfully contributes to such creativity. It excitingly has the capacity to entwine a parkour, or indeed any movement or alternative, coach's understanding of a practitioner's use of their body and movement, with a counselling psychologist's or therapist's rich psychosocioemotional processes knowledge, should they want to creatively marry this model with their pre-existing practices. The model attempts to integrate the two specialities more intentionally to further reduce the dichotomy that is the mind and the body, a lacking dualism that I believe still exists within sports and, depending on how a practitioner practices, with counselling psychology too to a degree. Instead of seeing psychological theory and its application as something done to the body as an object of inquiry studied in isolation, as suggested by Valle, King and Halling (1989), this GT would see us adopting a more existential approach to research and practice. This supports Cohn's (1997) suggestion that being-in-the-world requires us to consider two things in tandem, our spatial world and our relational one. I propose that this may further guide counselling psychologists to further integrate the somatic embodied realities of practitioners, perhaps compounding assimilated changes in thoughts, feelings and behaviours that a client may be likely to undergo through therapy psychologically. Through the embodied practice of parkour and its use in overcoming obstacles, it is my hope that transferring aspects of this model will help ground these more cognitive behavioural changes within practitioners' bodies; making the change more lived in, visceral and durable.

Ideally, a strong understanding of both parkour and counselling psychology would well place a professional to integrate aspects of this model into a counselling psychologist's practice, it being co-conceptualised by parkour practitioners and a parkour informed counselling psychologist trainee. This being said, it is by no means a pre-requisite due to the suggested broader implications of the model and possible use within a range of populations and diverse contexts. If therefore one does not have the dual skillset, this thesis suggests that this model's conceptualisation champions sports or movement coaches, primarily parkour coaches, to work in tandem with counselling psychologists to complement each other's expertise.

As such this model in its novelty, could also provide an important opportunity for counselling psychologists to develop new skills within the realm of movement and sports that they may not yet be well versed in. Parkour, sports and movement coaches alike would initially be trained

by an LoP Model training provider to look for the movement cues that inform the integrative formulation of the client. This is then used to train counselling psychologists to recognise, feedback on and manipulate the movement cues in question to collaboratively assimilate any aspects of the LoP model that may be synonymous to the person's needs into their training in a sport-specific and holistic embodied manner. The idea is to expand a clinician's insight into the client's possible points of stuckness, LoP or burnout not merely through verbal intervention in 1:1s but also through body language observation in vivo in training sessions.

This could arguably allow for a unique mixture of 1:1 sessions in therapy as well as movement, both underpinned by integrative co-formulation using transferred aspects of the model, as well as therapy and movement conjoined assessments, evaluations and progression sessions. This is where the counselling psychologist could guide the client through integrated interventions based on the coach's guidance on what they hypothesise is happening for the client through the movement.

Crucially, the psychologist and the coach will, in tandem to hold in head the practitioner's views of themselves, be responsible for feeding back to the client what they feel is visible to them or what they may interpret to be happening unconsciously to the client. Bringing this to the awareness will enable the client to integrate the co-formulation created by the three parties into their movement. It is my hope that the inclusion of the LoP model's contributions into wider formulations and interventions may form the basis of both physical and psychological change in one's movement repertoire, psychosocioemotional processing and in the end one's training trajectory, all the while affecting change in their other relationships as well. Similarly, they may also be asked to work on aspects of themselves and their relationships outside of the movement context, based on this LoP model's contributions, to further enhance progression in their movement/performance context.

More broadly, I believe this LoP model helps bring counselling psychology closer to the domains of stress, burnout and now LoP psychology, allowing our discipline to further inform models and interventions in the future.

## 8.5. An exploratory case study example informed by the LoP model

To further explain how this model can be possibly transferred to practice in a real-world context, I sought consent from a parkour partitioner to tentatively have us integrate aspects of

the LoP model into their co-constructed therapeutic formulation that looked to address some movement hurdles they had brought to my attention. I hoped that the case study below would further allow practitioners to get more of an applied sense of the model's possible contributions to client sense-making within a therapeutic and movement setting.

### 8.5.1. Ed's (pseudonym) integrative formulation

Ed had been training parkour for thirteen years and came to the clinic looking to gain the capacity to interact better with people in his life, his parkour students and figure out why he was plateauing and still getting injured regularly in training. Ed was a twenty-five year old, Hispanic, an only child, only realising he had paternal step-siblings at around age ten. He had lived with his mother all his life and continued to do so, having had contact with his father sporadically till the age of eleven when his mother ended this contact. Ed initially had no recollection of the reasons behind this decision, instead believing that his mother had centred her decision making on her own preferences without discussing this with him. He did however recall his father often being "unreliable" with their appointments but expressed "numbness" at this. He recalled his mother working a lot "leaving 'him' alone", "left to his own devices", "left with friends". He had very few friends and his intimate relationships never lasted longer than three months. When asked, however, Ed volunteered that he was "fine", his family history had "no effect on him" and he "needed no one".

Oxymoronically, Ed had recounted loving school as he had seen it as a "way to socialise and connect", this prioritisation often costing him some academic performance, "no-one actively helping" him when struggling. College proved critical for Ed having had to leave his friends behind and enter a new space with everything "feeling unknown". He found himself retreating to being alone, unwilling to make new friends and that is when he found parkour.

Ed had entered parkour seeking certain internal psychosocioemotional factors. He seemed to seek to control his externalised self (self-image to others) in a manner that he felt relayed stoicism through the attainment of incredible physical parkour feats. He unconsciously sought to gratify his severely injured ego through parkour practise, to account for having several adverse childhood experiences e.g. loss of connection to father, that exacerbated feelings of abandonment. He sought further external psychosocioemotional factors from parkour such as a sense of belonging to further counter his lack of containment from parents and other support systems like friends. He seemingly sought an embodied means to challenge historical adverse

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life experiences such as loss (e.g. loss of paternal attachment figure) and struggles with change (e.g. college transitions). Parkour training "felt stable and reliable" and in hindsight, Ed now felt that it had replaced his need for friends, a companion that "needed nothing" but himself. Finding that he was not enjoying college but that he needed to do something to start working towards some independence from his home situation, he began to work towards his parkour qualifications.

Having thought that parkour would positively address the above desires/needs, he was disappointed to find that training afforded him certain losses. He experienced somatic challenges like developing a dependency on training for emotional regulation e.g. regulating his loneliness or feelings of abandonment, often experiencing physical rejection by the objects in use or the discipline itself when his body failed to do what he wanted it to. His tendency to embody his emotions e.g. fear-induced rigidity through motion, further challenged him somatically. He was often reckless with objects and himself (something he framed as "brave" prior to our work together) seemingly uncaring for his own safety or the permanence of the objects in his surrounding space, resulting in a high injury rate.

Upon closer examination of his technique to training, he appeared to be extremely tense in his movement, particularly his absorption of impact, not greeting the objects openly, instead trying to dominate them using excessive force. As such he was seen to over jump, over commit, use speed when he should slow down and ultimately appear to be afraid of under committing to jumps which would have allowed him the time in the air to let the object greet him when he lands – almost the preferred  'meeting halfway' approach.

This excessive force highlighted a lack of confidence in his ability to truly control his motion, it mirrored his lack of confidence in the object being permanent and present to receive him as with his relationships. It appeared that Ed was mismatching the risk inherent in movement scenarios like this, misassigning his resources to it, mismeasured in his appraisal of the impact the task stressors of the situations were having on him, thereby behaving unhelpfully to the stressor. These processes, seemingly synonymous with unhelpful stress management processes outlined by Smith (1986), saw him depersonalising tasks, alienating himself from re-experiencing similar trials and plateauing in training.  This mismatch of appraisals of the situation and its needs, seemingly allowed him to stay clear of owning his effects on the situation's outcomes, externally blaming everything on the objects, relationships and his past.

This seemed to keep him away from claiming responsibility and ultimately kept him alone and untrusting of others, objects and alike. This was the opposite of the interconnected, forward progressing goals he truly desired, avoidantly self-sabotaging attainment.

His training unmasked that his seemingly desired stoic self, his 'training self', was masking his highly vulnerable 'real self', identities that thought adopted from the LoP model, resonated with Ed. Ed's 'training self' appeared similar to Fonagy's (2018) 'alien self', a self that is thought to be engaged when one is unable to sit with their 'actual self' thereby falling back on the aspects of themselves that are false. One such aspect that Ed struggled with was the notion that he was unable to appropriately regulate his training, consequently seemingly engaging "fantasied omnipotent control" as Schapiro (1999) described it, in the form of a constant self-affirming righteous stance about his choice making when attempting moves outside his immediate grasp, arguably to maintain the false sense of grandiosity that his 'training self' demanded.

In not owning his vulnerabilities he demonstrated a strong dislike at his 'real self' being exposed to himself and others. Ed often felt anger, which we came to understand was masking feelings of embarrassment, recognisant of Tangney and Dearing's (2002) suggestion that people with a deep fear of failure often try to avoid exposing their real image for fear of being judged or seen to be unworthy. Failing to mask his 'real self' and its vulnerabilities, his training style largely left him feeling far from omnipotent each time he injured himself physically or emotionally, exacerbating the lack of trust he unconsciously had in himself over time.

He further realised that during coaching, he was finding it difficult to relate to his students 'real selves', lacking empathy for their vulnerabilities at times and generally focussing more on assuming a position of certainty and knowingness (in line with his 'training self'). Ed's account of his early attachment relationships did not appear to have established an intimate exchange of insight into his own experiences as understood by his role models e.g. mother or father. This seemingly made it difficult for Ed to model an ability to reflect on others mental states thereby making it difficult for Ed to understand other people's thoughts, feelings and motivations. His difficulties with this process that Bateman et al., (2004) outline as crucial for mentalization, one's ability to 'think about thinking' (Fonagy, 2018), was something Ed recognised as limiting for both his and his students' physical progression and their interrelationships.

He expressed seeing the same patterns in his romantic relationships, being unable to sustain

one for longer than two or three months, getting bored within them and the lack of communication within the relationship, often getting irritated by the "neediness" of the other. Boredom, we later recognised as being a defence mechanism for committing to opening up more 'real-ly' to the other after the honeymoon phase, a position of unconscious vulnerability. The neediness appeared to trigger an irritation at his own ego not being cared for as a priority in his mind, still seemingly wounded from the trauma of not feeling attended to when younger. In line with Young's Schema Therapy Theory (Young, Klosko & Weishaar, 2003), Ed seemed to have developed a strong detached protector mode (e.g. retreating away from others, physically and emotionally) that appeared to act as a means of protecting himself from re-experiencing earlier negative experiences i.e. having to contain his mother's affect. This seemed compounded by his tendency to self-aggrandizer in line with the maladaptive early schema Young et al., (2003) associated with perceived entitlement and grandiosity, that seemed to be displayed through an omnipotent 'training self' ideology which led him to avoid situations that highlighted his lack of superiority of others. This limited his capacity to show empathy he felt he deserved above others, seemingly embodying a stoic 'training self' that was critically demanding of others, setting unrealistic expectations of students and others in his life, very reminiscent of the Dysfunctional Demanding Parent mode (Young et al., 2003).

Having felt that he had to contain a lot of his mother's emotions while growing up we recognised that he had not learned that it was okay to ask for help, to be vulnerable. He had relied on himself and therefore did not understand the notion of needing another, depending on another and the inconsistencies in the paternal presence also impacted his levels of trust. It seemed that in training this was displayed through a refusal for being assisted by the coach, an argumentative stance when being offered alternative advice and an overall oppositional rigidity in his body that lent to him avoiding training softer skills like flexibility for fear that this would compromise his "stoic self". Erikson's (1950) psychosocial model of development, shows that for a person to not be grossly mistrustful in adulthood, their experiences of trust and mistrust should maintain a balanced ratio throughout childhood and adolescence. Ed, not having seemingly experienced such balance through not having been provided containment and reassurance from his attachment figures when younger said to groom trust in one's self, others and the world (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), arguably contributed to his inability to risk depending on others for support.

We later found out through talks with his mother that he had asked not to see his father anymore

to avoid recurring disappointment, something we came to realise Ed had blocked out. In line with Freud's (1896) work on repressed memories, Ed appeared to have stored this memory within the unconscious parts of his mind without knowing, still however seemingly affected by it behaviourally and unconsciously as an adult. Although Ed's ability to ask for help with managing this affect by asking his mother to end contact with his dad shows his capacity to access such emotions and act on them to safeguard himself, the repression indicated the stress of the task being too emotionally great for Ed to consciously cope with, arguably leading him to deploy avoidant coping styles further as he grew up. We further came to associate this repression and his Detached Protector mode to an emotionally ambivalent attachment style (Bowlby, 1969). Ed's attachment instinct that Bowlby (1969) suggested aids adults establish stable relationships with their attachment figure appeared compromised by the inconsistent physical exposure he had to his father and the emotional distance he described having felt from his mother. We noticed that the distrust in relationships arguably stemming from his ruptured attachment history saw him engaging very outwardly blamingly within his parkour training and his teaching of it, as well as within other significant relationships.

Parkour having seemingly been given the role of 'saviour' almost in his use of it to compensate for all other mediums of connection formation and self-actualisation, Ed suffered a significant cost to his sense of self when perceiving objects, coaches and the discipline itself to break his trust when they challenged him or he perceived them to compromise him through not doing what he wanted them to or felt they should. We later realised that his anger with the movement came from feelings of further abandonment, disillusionment and overall disappointment at his chosen past time not gratifying his need to feel powerful, in control and contained/safe/belonging to, an experience he likened to the rejection he had experienced in several of his previous relationships.

Having initially sought connectedness and belonging within parkour training and its community, he now consciously avoided subscribing to the community and its collectiveness due to his admitted inability to connect with others. Unconsciously not wanting to invest in the relationships within the community, he further solo trained, further increasing his feelings of loneliness and outsider-ism, reminiscent of his decision to self-isolate at college when change proved a challenge. This was seemingly in line with stress management styles that existing burnout models describe as withdrawal (Gustafsson et al., 2011), replacing group training with solo training, on the surface believing that this housed space for his needs now unmet in group

training. This was seemingly further synonymous with replacement behaviours that Raedeke (1997) speaks to that sees athletes switch sporting investments when commitment within a sport waver.

As our work together progressed, he acknowledged that the community of parkour had appealed as it was a concept of belonging that he could see and feel at a distance, him still practising the sport in his "own bubble", together with but without any "emotional buy-in". Physically examining his injury history, it became apparent that he was repeatedly retrying things he had decided would work for him without using the 'in-group' capacity of parkour to seek alternative suggestions and perspectives from the community and coaches alike, inevitably further alienating him, re-triggering is angry defences, compounding his feelings of 'other' rejection and 'self' failure.

Over time, as he was largely avoidant in his coping of his LoP, Ed would repetitively return to training tasks without any reflective resolution, and his avoidance of looking deeper into why he was getting injured so often led to him re-injuring himself when he did decide to train again. He continued to use the maladaptive coping styles to try to resolve his dissatisfaction in training, pushing harder and more oppositionally instead of looking at possibly addressing and embracing his vulnerabilities, the aspect of his training that his parkour coach and counselling psychologist worked on with him when he eventually began sessions with them.

### 8.5.2. Examples of applied integrative interventions with Ed

The coach re-acquainted Ed with more basic progressions of bigger moves he was doing to shift his movement foundations to incorporate more flexibility and fluidity. This was actioned physically by working on proprioceptive tasks (proprioceptive here meaning the body knowing where the body is in space) repetitively and doing basic parkour movements like basic low difficulty level vaults frequently to allow him to connect more to his own body and its position in relation to other objects. I explored the amount of emotional and physical control he could still have if he slowed down his movement to soothe his emotional mind. This was aimed at facilitating a growth of trust in himself to allow himself to further relax into his environment, by lowering his current defensive fight, flight or freeze response to it (e.g. overpowering a jump (fight) due to lack of trust).

This intervention was in part grounded in Porges' (2001) ideas on how the mammalian vagal pathways are positively affected by a person's surroundings if they perceive the social and object stimuli engagement as trustworthy and safe. Removing speed from their motion and reintroducing it incrementally in this example was hypothesised to avoid overloading their sympathetic nervous system that is responsible for the fight, flight and freezing responses. Porges (2001) explains that this is our natural evolutionary means of safeguarding the self, arguably thought to be vital for progression or lack thereof herein.

Further to this, the notion of further growing Ed's perception of his control over his motion and his environment allowed him to re-learn that he could trust himself and the objects more than he had historically. He was beginning to re-learn how to trust objects to safely contain him and for Ed to be boundaried enough to engage them less defensively but more assertively. In essence, he is grooming an 'adult' Ed that was informed by constructive feedback loops and not the 'punitive parent' voice, or 'demanding child' voice he had so heavily been governed by previously in line with Young et al.,'s (2003) schema theories mentioned in his formulation above.

Throughout these training sessions, Ed was encouraged to open up and make room for his feelings by connecting with the present moment instead of numbly going through the training unreflectively and unfeelingly, as Harris (2013) suggests is helpful. In line with Hayes et al., (1999) acceptance and commitment therapeutic principles, Ed was encouraged to connect more openly with his process leading to a greater acceptance that it was okay to have thoughts and feelings about his training by being guided to acknowledge and then step back from these in training. He was prompted to question and explore his 'critical parent' voice without getting unhelpfully caught up in its thoughts, a process Hayes et al., (1999) called defusion. This allowed for helpful responsibility assumption and less externalised defensive blaming when faced with his LoP, which appeared largely responsible for Ed's movement plateauing or regression.

### 8.5.3. Examples of progression observed

Using techniques like these seems to be growing Ed's acceptance of his 'real self' and its vulnerabilities increased, altering his 'training self' to be less stoic and more 'real'. This is allowing for further progression in movement through greater initial acceptance of struggle, increased help-seeking behaviours making Ed feel more in control of his progression and less

a victim of his situation. His movement is progressing, his relationship with his coach is more collaborative and his dialogue with his mother appears to be less laboured and more inquisitive, showing an overall increase in motivation to change and grow than at first acquaintance. He is developing a more reflective practice style in training that is allowing him to "feel less anxious training" due to him feeling more "capable of working through stuff", overall moving to a means of coping that resembled this study's participants' contributions to the more 'contained practitioning' coping style when dealing with his LoP.

Ed volunteered that he had initially been against the notion of ever going to therapy as he felt it meant there was something wrong with him. He proceeded to share that experiencing the integration of the LoP centric aspects in his psychological formulation into his training felt like it made sense. He said that it helped him tackle harder relational difficulties in a way that didn't feel so directly linked to these difficulties, using a medium he actually now remembered he loved. He reported working on his coping styles through his movement were in line with his immediate goal which had always been to get better at moving, only to then realise that he was in fact motivated to work on his whole self not just his 'training self'.

As his therapist, I felt that I could better align with his worldview if I was there with him during his training, co-manipulating the medium he felt relatively safe in, as opposed to trying to engage a model that is based on sitting down in a room on him which he felt was foreign to him. I felt working this way helped us find out what best met Ed's needs which were in line with his unique philosophical position which strengthens our therapeutic relationship. This felt central to our trust formation, supporting Duffy's (1990) view that any successful therapeutic journey is closely linked to the degree with which we are 'with' and not 'doing to' our clients.

Taking this further, I felt that the contributions of the LoP model to my work with Ed allowed me to make sense of his needs through a manner of communication that he felt more comfortable with initially which is parkour, as opposed to words. Being creative and flexible with this, seemingly helped Ed distance himself from the problem-centric notion that therapy is only for people who as he said "can talk about their feelings" which had kept him away from help-seeking in the past. This allowed him to begin to see that therapy can be more person-centred and contextualised, in line with Lipchik (2002) who suggests that even more directive therapies like solution-focused therapies should be tailor-made to a degree to ensure effective results.

This alignment of the LoP model informed integrative formulation and practice to Ed's needs, seemingly reducing his shame fuelled feelings of inadequacy in being "bad at talking and reflecting". Instead, showing him that he had great potential to develop these skills if we began where he was at using what he knew best. Duffy (1990) emphasised the importance of a helper's and not a problem fixing mindset in providing a strong foundation for positive change.

The contextual nature of the model's contributions further placed Ed at the helm of our sessions, allowing him, in his chosen space, through his chosen medium, to lead us through our exploration of his process, upholding my counselling psychologist values that we are not in an 'expert' position but rather an experienced guide taking our lead from our clients (Rogers, 1961).

The relationship, therefore, felt like a sharing of knowledge rather than anything singly directive on either side, me learning Ed's parkour reality and him learning my proposed therapeutic suggestions. This open and transparent sharing allowed me congruence when I was learning from Ed and empathy when he struggled to grasp concepts I was volunteering. This created a 'genuineness' that Rogers (1961) outlines as being so crucial to a successful therapeutic alliance. Specific to the LoP model's co-creation ideology, this allowed me to mirror the vulnerability that I was encouraging Ed to own, having to own my own ignorance at things at times, showing the willingness to learn from them instead of avoiding or rejecting them outwardly, role modelling the contained practitioner coping style Ed was hoping to acquire as opposed to his defended destroying style he was used to.

Ed and I both found that allowing his body to experience habit change that was often induced by psycho-social interventions, allowed him to absorb the changes and transfer the learning more readily. He shared that he would remember the feelings of things in his body in other life situations which would trigger him to remember the lessons he felt he had learnt in training to then transfer the learning to the current situation he was facing less defensively.

Overall, the medium that the LoP model contributions were applied to here, which is parkour could, I believe, be applied to any sport. I suggest that it would greatly enhance the person-centred nature of current conceptualisations based on current more generalisable and categorical models. Its uniqueness being that it accounts for people's movement experiences paralleled with their life experiences relationally and longitudinally. This subjective and richly contextual therapeutic journey, empirically underpinned by this thesis to some degree, could

act as a stepping stone for more sports researchers and sports practitioners to explore this initial contribution further. Moving towards models and interventions that are more individualistic sports psychology for athletes to further develop.

## 8.6. Possible challenges of working with the LoP model in practice

Given that this model is new and I believe, relatively complex, one would naturally require training, not only to digest the model but also to learn to adopt the above integration of the body and the mind into both a psychological and a physical movement setting. It is my aim to create various training packages tailored to various groups of professionals e.g. counselling psychologists and sports coaches, to allow the model's contribution and possible transferability to be explained in a manner fitting its audience and their requirements from it. Ideally, a counselling psychologist would learn how to navigate the model in practice to learn how it can best be transferred for use with one's clients, more specifically tailored to their clients' and colleagues' needs. They could then supervise professionals in their organisations to integrate it into the clients', participants' and/or athletes' training plans, always co-formulating as they do so. This could potentially allow for more opportunities for counselling psychologists to integrate their therapeutic, management, supervisory and training competencies within the field of sport aiding clubs with the delivery, evaluation, and maintenance of the athletes, coaches, managers and stakeholders alike.

Understandably there are however some practical difficulties that may arise. Inevitably with creative ways of working, as the method of working presented herein, is novel, highly integrative and as such, unknown and potentially unnerving. This study sees a vast, multifaceted understanding and working grasp of psychodynamic theory, in conjunction with other modalities being explored within the discussion for example that some practitioners may be less familiar with. Although integrations are often accompanied by doubt and uncertainty at times, mirroring the experience outlined by Moller and Rance's (2013) of self-questioning trainees, it is my hope that perhaps integrating the LoP model into career personal development programmes will grow professionals' confidence in applying it.

This being said, practitioners who do experience doubts even when familiar with the model's possible transferability, would need to carefully consider whether they can deal with this

uncertainty to meet the already considerable doubt and resistance I find clients already come into sessions with. Ensuring that supervision can aid them to work through this therefore will be key in the processing of conscious and unconscious processes. It could also help to avoid burnout both in the client, as a result of LoP; and the therapist, in applying the model and managing the hurdles that may arise from it. Monitoring, processing, counter-transference and confrontation will undoubtedly form part of the working model, and the clinicians role within the client's relational model of change will be critical.

# Chapter 9: Wider implications of counselling psychology: parkour, sport and beyond

## 9.1. Introduction

The notion being put forward through this thesis however goes beyond the symbiosis that I believe exists between counselling psychology formulation and this study's LoP model as demonstrated in the case study. At its very core, this study's philosophical underpinnings, epistemology, design and implications champion much broader collaboration and interdisciplinary working. It attempts to embody and promote the great value that I believe is inherent in interdisciplinary collaboration, specifically within the realm of theory, model and intervention creation. This model may be able to further demonstrate how counselling psychologists, other psychologists and therapists alike, to work more holistically with clients and movers. I feel that it could also bring sports coaches and movement practitioners themselves closer to understanding a person as conceptualised by a counselling psychologist. Specifically, how conceptualisations within counselling psychology like this can impact a wider context, enhancing not only one's own personal training relationship but even service, management and organisational structures more systemically. I suggest that delivery and client care that is conceptualised through a person-centred, trauma-sensitive, relational counselling psychology lens like this model, could eventually increase the chance of more positive and rewarding outcomes for sporting success overarchingly for all those involved. I propose that

this GT is more than an academic conceptualisation. It perhaps sets a foundation for further training for academic, psychological, managerial and movement practitioners alike to adapt their current working models by expanding their understanding of the precious function of longitudinal formulation within the context of sports management.

This chapter reflectively looks to suggest some of the aspects of counselling psychology that either has shown to be or could potentially be helpful to sports, touching on the reverse towards the chapter's end. The wider mental health agenda in sport and the relevance of counselling psychology's therapeutic relationship, pluralism, inclusivity, existentialism, governance and systemic practices are all discussed briefly herein. Examples used to discuss these areas comprise of previous research, my own clinical experience throughout my counselling psychology doctorate and this study's contributions, the study topic having been largely driven by my wider experiences on my course.

## 9.2. Mental health agenda within sport today

From the Department for the Mental Health Elite Sport Action Plan (Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, 2018) to the Mental Health Charter for Sport and Recreation (Sport and Recreation Alliance, 2015), action is increasingly being taken to reduce stigma around mental health. Furthermore, they also champion a psychologically underpinned performance environment and improve support for mental health for grassroots through to elite participants (Sport and Recreation Alliance, 2015).

Historically, sports psychology and exercise psychology have been largely separate disciplines. Sports psychology predominantly centred its practice around helping athletes prepare for, cope with and recover from the psychological demands of competition and training in and around recreational, amateur and elite contexts (BPS, 2021). On the other hand, exercise psychologists concern themselves with the application of psychology to increase exercise participation and motivation to exercise in a general population (BPS, 2021).

Over time, however, the tactical and psychological aspects attracted greater focus in both disciplines (Dosil, 2006). For example, mental well-being and ownership of it being vigilantly considered within pre-existing priorities, championed by many organisations like Time for Change (2021) as being not athlete or grassroots specific, rather a concern to us all as human beings. Support is progressively being shown by sporting national governing bodies like

Parkour UK's involvement in campaigns that raise awareness for the importance of safeguarding mental health such as Time to Talk  (Parkour UK, 2021). Additionally, over 350 sporting organisations pledging to adhere to good mental health practice by signing the Mental Health Charter (Sport and Recreation Alliance, 2015).

Active signposting of and increased normalisation of referrals for participants' mental health management can become more ingrained in the sports world through initiatives like the Action Plan (Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, 2018) and the Charter (Sport and Recreation Alliance, 2015). It is my hope that help-seeking is seen by professionals and participants as acceptable and encouraged. The more mental hygiene is seen as a human necessity and less like a human imperfection, the easier I believe it will become to further integrate therapeutic practices like counselling psychology into the high-performance environments and athletes and grassroots practitioners' management plans alike. Furthermore, I hope that this integration also occurs without separating the participants' therapeutic journey from their sporting one, seeing the practitioner as a human being first and foremost.

## 9.3. The therapeutic relationship

The Mental Health Elite Sport Action Plan (Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, 2018) aims to work closely with more psychologists to enhance the mental wellbeing of sports practitioners.  Counselling psychologists could be well placed to contribute more of their pluralistic, person-centred, creative expertise, skills which are inherent in their training (BPS, 2009), to the sporting discipline that is still very young on its journey to holistic integrative practice (Friesen & Orlick, 2010).

For example, an Olympic runner having always been as human as a participant running for leisure could be in therapy prior to joining a sports team and wants to now move on to working on sports-related hurdles. Or, this Olympic runner could be seeking to address an emerging sporting performance concern but finds himself wanting to prioritise working on things in his concerns outside of sport, as he feels they compound the struggles he faces at work. Counselling psychology's recognition of the importance of the client's wider context would, therefore, as Owen (2010) suggested almost a decade ago, helpfully places a client's sports and exercise behaviour within the context of the rest of the client's lives.

Further to this, given that research has historically suggested that the success of a sport

psychologist's intervention largely depends on their capacity to establish rapport, trustworthiness and meet the specific needs of the individual (Gould, Tammen, Murphy & May, 1991), parallels have been drawn between the therapist-client relationship and the psychologist-athlete relationship (Petipas Giges & Danish (1999). As Owen (2010) suggests, collaboration with counselling psychologists who could grow the interpersonal skills and sensitivity to needs aspects of sports psychology could therefore result in stronger working alliances with clients that could augment progress. Owen (2010) further suggests that a counselling psychologist's insight into the transference and countertransference which usually is paid less attention to in sports psychology could not only add to strengthen the psychologist-athlete alliance but also shed light on patterns of behaviour that span both in and out of sports.

## 9.4. Pluralism

Counselling psychologists' experience increasingly spans very eclectic fields due to the diverse placements that trainees are required to undertake according to the BPS's standards for accreditation (BPS, 2009). If the current agenda of the sporting world is to heed that one's lived experience can affect one's experience of sports and vice versa and that this requires sporting professionals to work more inclusively of this (Friesen & Orlick, 2010) then I suggest that counselling psychology could have important applications here. I believe that one's struggles in other areas of life, that a counselling psychologist may work through with a client, could ripple over to the client's experience within sport. Furthermore, if parallels are not acknowledged and integrated with their formulation and its application, we may end up causing the therapeutic work to be overly context-specific, instead of the creatively holistic and integrative transferable therapy journey it is recommended to be (BPS, 2009).

As an example, during my doctoral training, I spent two years working in psychodermatology, predominantly working with people who were experiencing psychosocial difficulties that they attributed to their inflammatory skin conditions like eczema, psoriasis and acne. Many clients expressed similar experiences to those recounted by Van Moffaert (1992) of shame, anxiety and fear when in situations that involved visual or tactile communication. Clients perceived their skin, our 'organ of expression' as Sack (1928) described it, as communicating things about them that they felt they could not control, often resulting in reduced participation in things like group sports, social gatherings and more intimate relationships. Believing that movement is crucial to improved well-being, I often encouraged the introduction of physical

activity into clients' weekly schedules, something that was often met with resistance and scepticism; more so in summer for example when they felt the need to wear more revealing clothing which greatly challenged their self-esteem and in turn their motivation to attempt our schedule.

Many clients with long-standing skin conditions recalled having experienced the onset of their shame at their skin's appearance during adolescence in line with Ouellet-Morin et al.,'s (2011) (2000) findings. For example, they would avoid physical education at school due to the desire to hide their skin's appearance from other schools for fear of being bullied, something Richardson (1997) described as extremely traumatic for psychodermatology populations. Clients that were avid sports participants, some professional athletes, shared that they often felt that their skin conditions flared when they were approaching a tournament, experiencing LoP or more paradoxically, when they were seemingly performing very well. Collaboratively,  my clients and I came to feel that the stress of such situations often triggered their immune systems and that their skin often told the tale of unacknowledged fears and unhelpfully managed anxieties. This often then led to training avoidance, exacerbated shame and increased inflammation of the skin, the complex relationship between inflammatory conditions and antecedent stress having a long research history in psychodermatology (Greismar, 1978; Papadopoulos, Bor, Legg & Hawk, 1998).

## 9.5. Inclusivity

Having outlined examples where sport can exacerbate certain psychological vulnerabilities linked to physical aspects of a client's body from a young age, sport is increasingly also thought to aid psychological and social outcomes for children and adolescents (Eime, Young, Harvey, Charity & Payne, 2013). Eime et al., (2013) recommend community sport participation be advocated for young people, not only for the physical benefits it brings in relation to obesity reduction for example, but also to enhance social and psychological well-being. Given that people's perceptions of themselves in relation to others can be so tumultuous as suggested prior, and that people's self-image and by extension their self-concept is developed so early in a person's life (Rogers, 1959), I would suggest that the integration of a counselling psychologist's expertise into the field of sport and its effective application would enable personal vulnerabilities of an individual to be held and processed with them as early on as possible. This would enable them to welcome the suggested benefits of sport from a young age,

something that is already encouraged in tennis for instance (Novak Djokovic Foundation, 2015).

In this way, I propose that counselling psychology practice could be helpful in linking less obvious struggles that an individual may be battling and their possible relationship to sport involvement. Through the application of models such as the LoP model proposed here, professionals within sports management could helpfully tackle the adult-centric needs. This is an agenda well aligned with private company initiatives and government strategies like 'our parks' (Our Parks, 2014) and 'tackling obesity' (Department of Health and Social Care, 2020) respectively. They can also be able to work more preventatively on LoP with younger age groups to effectively reduce further therapeutic dichotomy, resulting in increased sports inclusivity. The use of a more holistic, person-centred counselling psychology longitudinal lens could normalise a human's needs within sport early on in their entry into sports. This could reduce the more reactive use of current labels such as 'marginalised' or 'hard to reach' later on in one's sporting trajectory, when so many of the skills necessary for engagement in sport have not yet been integrated by a person.

Terminology like the above in my opinion continues to corroborate a victimising 'deviance from the norm' model of working within sports that places sole responsibility of LoP on the participant rather than rendering responsibility for LoP a shared construct involving both participants and the sporting system they find themselves in. The more empowering 'sport for all' model that the Sports Council have strived for since the 80s (UK Sport Association, 2021) continues to be promoted. UK Sport (2018/19) also advocates that sport be tailored to all while also best addressing the needs of the unique individuals within it. In line with this, counselling psychology and its more systemic outlook discussed prior could not only prove highly effective but also increase the likelihood that people with more debilitating psychosocial vulnerabilities feel contained enough to attempt to engage in sport.

Continuing with the more recent further attention being paid to inclusivity in sport, such as plans to increase female representation in Olympic and Paralympic sport (UK Sport, 2018/19) and the diversification of Sport England's board to include a higher percentage of Black, Asian and minority ethnic, disabled and LGBT+ representatives (UK Sport, 2018/19), mental health, counselling and psychiatry's growing specialist competencies within areas of psychology such as gender (Martin, 2006), sexuality (Pachankis & Goldfried, 2004) and race (Bhui & Bhugra,

2007) could further act as a very rich resource for guiding both current and future practice and guidelines.

As the positive strive for inclusivity increases, so may therapeutic stuckness if positive affirmation and appropriate alignment are not considered more specifically when considering the pairing of sports participants and a therapist's model of choice (Sue & Sue, 1999). I believe that the holistic, pluralistic and integrative nature of counselling psychology (Woolfe et al., 2010) uniquely suits its practitioners to work with the clients more deeply and authentically. For example, counselling psychologists may be well equipped to tap into complex processes such as 'pre-transference' that Curry (1964) discusses. This is a psychodynamic process whereby previous encounters with factors like cross-cultural exposure biases impact the client-therapist relationship, increasing resistance and reducing client progress (Eleftheriadou, 2010).

Further to this counselling psychology's humanistic underpinnings centring heavily on the subjective meaning-making of the client (Woolfe et al, 2010) would match up perfectly to a system that intends to positively affirm one's right to own their sexual identity without prejudice and discrimination, yet still require their therapists to sensitively probe an athlete about the possible complexity of the construct and its role in performance, something known to correlate with competitive sport (Capranica, Piacentini, Halson & Myburgh, 2013).

The sensitive nature of the above constructs and their possible impact on athletes would suggest that they require a greater focus on the client and therapist relationship. This could therefore render less integrated methods as problematic/worrying, such as purely cognitive behavioural methods. This is because they are argued to focus less on the therapeutic relationship (Greenberg & Padesky 1995) and potentially could lead to increased client resistance, compliance and a higher drop-out rate (Raue & Goldfried, 1994), which is undoubtedly not in the best interest of the client nor the sporting body.

## 9.6. Existentialism

Furthermore, as research into sport has highlighted a steadfast relationship between athlete burnout and social constructs and their pressures (Nixon, 1994), I'd suggest the greater our need grows to contextualise an athlete's strife within their relationship to their society and not just themselves increases. Roessler (2002) states, an athlete's pain is an expression of

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communication and sports psychologists working with this pain need to contextualise it in the athlete's cultural dimensions to better understand it to treat it. Given that a counselling psychologist has a strong 'reflexive function and narrative competence' (McLeod, 2004) I would propose that they could usefully complement sports psychologists in guiding athletes to consider such relationships that, in my experience can often be difficult to name let alone engage in meaningful work on.

Counselling psychologists have a great breadth of experience working with one's processing of pain, one such being the very tumultuous process of endings, from the complexities of therapy endings (Wachtel, 2002) to more existential end of life endings as they attempt to work more pluralistically (Cooper, 2015). As counselling psychologists grow their incorporation of such models into their formulations and interventions furthering their own holistic lifespan lens, their relevance in the progressive UK Sport's 'life after sport' guidance (UK Sport, 2016) seem to become more apparent. As the end of an athlete's career is often described as a painful, hard to reconcile, sudden and identity altering experience filled with a deep sense of loss, especially when met with career-ending injury (Loberg, 2009), the ever-growing opinion that more existential aspects to an athlete's experience of things like injury and pain should be incorporated more readily into management plans (Stelter, 2005) seems sound.

In sport, much like in the rest of one's life, Yalom's (1980) suggested existential domains seem to parallel. The inherent '*freedom*' of choice making as a human that can elicit guilt and require reconciliation he describes (Yalom, 1980), reminds me of the complex sequence of decisions athletes face. An example is for some ending with feelings of disappointment and perceived failure that my participants for one felt unable to reconcile, and for other athletes, feeling the loss of an absence of control when injured (Loberg, 2009). The '*meaning*' assignment by people Yalom (1980) suggests as being so crucial in providing humans with a sense of drive and hopefulness, can waver as seen in my participants, making motivation fluctuate and performance flay. The '*existential isolation*' that refers to one's fears of being alone (Yalom, 1980) echoes the fears of many group players who face the loss of their teams upon retiring (Curtis & Ennis, 1988). Lastly, '*death*' which he states is a universal anxiety that can intensify or diminish one's experience of living (Yalom, 1980) echoes Loberg's (2009) participant perspective that their final injury caused pervasive pain that extended far beyond the mere experience of their injury.

A counselling psychologist's knowledge of existential psychology coupled with their growing life span and older adult-specific model application to therapy (Evans & Garner, 2004) therefore could make their expertise invaluable in supporting sporting populations, especially transitioning professional athletes. This integration of knowledge discussed above into sporting practice, however, may also suggest that the longitudinal pluralistic approach of a counselling psychologist could further broaden the current sports practitioners formulation informing preventative grief management strategies to not only aid a person to cope with their experiences associated with sport desistance and exit, but also to aid them to cope with losses and gains within their sporting trajectories, their inevitable LoP.

## 9.7. Organisational applications

A counselling psychologist's ability to co-construct stories with clients (Corrie & Lane, 2010) does not, however, stop at the individual level. It takes into consideration the impact these stories have on one's surrounding environments and how the environment impacts the story. This contextualisation with a broad systemic lens, allows a counselling psychologist to not only contribute to the individual's development for reasons alluded to above but also to group dynamics and systems management at large as discussed below. It has been over a decade since it was suggested by Poczwardowski, Sherman and Henschen (1998) that counselling psychology has much to offer in regards to more managerial perspectives of organisations within sports. This is because sporting bodies continue to prioritise improving service delivery within these areas, the relevance of counselling psychology within sports in my view only grows. As a parallel, a counselling psychologist's role is increasingly more managerial, needing to umbrella work outside of therapy to include clinical governance, audits to improve service delivery, budget management and management of staff outside of the supervisory practice of other counselling psychologists (NHS, 2021). As a result, training programmes like the professional doctorate I underwent are increasingly including specific training within these areas mentioned, rendering counselling psychology trainees increasingly more competent within such domains.

Knowles, Tyler, Gilbourne and Eubank (2006) suggested that reflection in sport and sports coaching, something that has always formed part of counselling psychology's training bedrock (Legg, 1998), is paramount as an improvement tool to produce a positive change in practice. They stress its usefulness for individuals' further development as well as more systemic growth

at large (Knowles et al., 2006). Layered reflection as suggested by Knowles, Katz & Gilbourne (2012) provokes further affections by inviting differing points of view into an individual and group's reflective practice through sharing of reflections and listening to others views on these. The potential function of this in normalising talking about one's concerns and being met with respect, even when this could be hard to hear, could further enhance intra-team communication. Additionally, it could positively affect sports systems management and service delivery. Supervision, as practised by counselling psychologists, can therefore provide a crucial component in considering context, attitudes and power dynamics that parallel processes that may be at play. The parallel processes considered are not only within the supervisor-supervisee relationship as Kaberry (2000) suggests, but I would argue within peers and more hierarchical relationships at large. Further to this, the boundary setting encouraged within a supervisory setting within counselling psychology aimed at addressing some of the factors mentioned above (Kaberry, 2000), could potentially reduce harmful dynamics like victimisation. Peyton (2004) suggests victimisation can often be experienced as subtle and nuanced, but in my experience are just as important to address as abuse that may be more outwardly visible to others, especially when modelling practice from a preventative standpoint.

## 9.8. Governance

The role of misconduct more broadly and bullying more specifically in reducing athletes' satisfaction within sporting environments has recently gained a lot of public scrutiny in the UK through the efforts of people like Baroness Grey-Thompson's Duty of Care in Sport Review (Grey-Thompson, 2017). This review moves to recommend further education, training and monitoring of staff working with athletes to sensitise them to the performance pressures athletes face through their conduct. Furthermore, the aim is to increase the safeguarding standards in place within sports and ultimately move to reduce instances of bullying and abuse to better safeguard athletes and their mental health (Grey-Thompson, 2017).

In the wider world of sports, however, the last few years has seen athletes facing a lot of unresolved trauma due to abusive and neglectful governance within their sporting bodies, the US Gymnastics' Governing Body as an example (Woollard, 2018). The US Gymnastics' failure to change its culture and rebuild its leadership to appropriately address its members' duty of care needs has led to the United States Olympic Committee beginning to move to disband the governing body (Woollard, 2018). Although parkour is still in its infancy compared

to well-established disciplines like Gymnastics, it is perfectly positioned to try to learn from such experiences. For example, reflecting on other's erroneous cultures and observing its impact on the duty of care of athletes to safeguard our practitioners more thoroughly in the future.

The findings of this thesis specific to parkour practitioners, further support the necessity of parkour in taking the duty of care more seriously by everybody from practitioner to coach to governing body. For example, participants described feeling pressured to be a certain way by coaches and peers at times, which led to feelings of humiliation that contributed to reduced involvement in parkour classes (May, p. 5, line 204-208). This suggests that more reflection, feedback, applied change and re-assessment are paramount, all things counselling psychology provides a strong foundation for.

Additionally, the nature of bullying and maltreatment of individuals being so closely linked to work around empowerment on individual, organisational and community levels requires that a practitioner sometimes adopt advocator, trainer, alliance builder and participation enabler roles (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). The person-centred, pluralistic, creative and flexible nature of counselling psychology (Woolfe et al. 2010) therefore could have much to offer this area of duty of care development. Duckett, Lawthom, Kagan and Burton (2005) corroborating that such skills undoubtedly further enriches community psychology, could enrich sports mentoring, training and management systems.

A counselling psychologist's skill set in exploring complex relational boundaries, like those inherent in conflict (Towler, 2008), complemented by their humanistic underpinnings (Woolfe et al., 2010), could positively influence the necessary supervisory culture shift that Baroness Grey-Thompson's (2017) review alludes is crucial. In line with Gonzalez-Doupe's (2008), this is a culture that sees people in a supervisory position take their time with their staff, problem-solving with them and encourage sharing and reflection over outcome-driven stressors. Stressors that are inherent in high-pressure disciplines like sport, for example, over self-reliance and reactive responding. The absences of such cultures often increase the likelihood of extreme 'tension-points' as Towler (2008) calls them within systems being created. Such dynamics inevitably can only act to make positive safeguarding even more challenging, hindering individual, group and organisational progression.

## 9.9. Systemic practice

Sport both at grassroots level and elite, especially within team-oriented sports, often involve human interaction that goes beyond one's relationship to themselves and the chosen sport, to the participant, their sporting community, support systems and beyond. I would argue therefore that Natiello's (2001) suggestion that groups are complex living systems that can be enhanced by better understanding theories familiar to counselling psychologists who specialise in working with systems such as family (Athanasiades, 2008), group (Yost, Beutler, Corbishley & Allendar, 1986) and organisational therapies (Berman, Heru, Grunebaum, Rolland, Wood & Bruty, 2006). Furthermore, systems theory (Bertalanffy,, 1968), which is the interdisciplinary study of systems including organisms (e.g. humans) and social systems to name a couple is highlighted by du Plock (2010) as central to responding to breakdowns in social relationships, at a group level to society-wide. Its relevance to person-centred group work within counselling psychology leads me to believe this could also be helpful if applied more readily to team-centric sports and the systems they find themselves in.

Within such work, I would suggest that counselling psychology's reflective practice methodology for example could arguably aid in augmenting effective intra-team communication. Effective communication being something Sullivan and Short (2011) suggest contributes helpfully to intra-team acceptance, distinctiveness and positive conflict within team sports. Tackling negative feedback loops within systems using a counselling psychologist's unique understanding of systems dynamics, individual psychology and the process of reflection previously discussed, could therefore encourage a more desired homeostatic state within sporting systems. This would favour individual and collective success as opposed to more destructive dynamics like unhelpful intra-team competitiveness that can often lead to intra-team conflict and dissatisfaction, described by Mawritz Jr. (2020) as the dark side of rivalry in the Catch-22 of Intra-Team Rivalry.

Further to this, many counselling psychologists find themselves working within group therapy e.g. cognitive behavioural groups (Yost et al., 1986), or team formulations where processes like preparedness, collaboration, problem identification, change and consolidation are inherent (Johnstone, 2014). The inherent listening, reflecting, mediating and terminating skills that are inevitably role modelled through such work in my experience, could prove very useful to enhancing the individual comportment within teams as well as the coaching and mentoring

aspects inherent in sports. The human experience being described as universal with a great appreciation of the world as inherently social within existential psychology (du Plock, 2010), could further enhance the depth of coaching and mentoring within fields like sport who in my view share this complex duality between individual and social.

Here within lies further potential for a counselling psychologist to take a role in. Their psychosocial lens in particular, specialised in working through difficulties surrounding existential aspects of the self like self-concept, social attitudes and social prejudice as experienced by clients (Chiboola, Chiboola, Mazila & Kunda, 2018) could be useful in exploring team dynamics in all its complexity. This can be achieved through one's relationship to the inter-relational issues as they present.

As previously mentioned, a counselling psychologist has the ability to take into consideration the participant's positioning within these complex relational systems and inform how they work with the client based on how that person is contextualised within a culture, situation and environment. For example, a bullying or ineffective supervisory environment, could further an individual's own unique experience of the difficulties at hand as well as perhaps enhance best practice overarchingly within the person's sporting team, augmenting team morale and performance success. Chiboola and Munsaka (2018) uphold that this consideration enhances good practice overarchingly within a client-centred therapeutic practice. This then lends itself to the argument that integrating this within current sport management plans could potentially enhance it.

## 9.10. Interdisciplinary collaborative working – 'sharing is caring'

Therefore, as sports psychology veers towards holistic and person-centered practice, I believe that interdisciplinary working with counselling psychology would not only strengthen their agenda and its application in practice but it would also reduce the time spent on training workforces to work more reflectively by tapping into a  rich pre-existing resource in counselling psychology. Counselling psychologists, being already well versed in the manner of working that sport psychology is looking to move towards, could have diverse and ever-growing positive implications spanning from grassroots to elite sport, from training to managerial and supervisory intervention. Additionally, as there is growing support for sport to not be seen as "… special or different and able to behave outside what are considered

acceptable behaviour patterns" (Grey-Thompson, 2017, p. 4). The integration of methods and models from a discipline that specialises in general public populations and therefore behaviour patterns, in general, is perhaps advisable.

Equally, however, there is a lot that counselling psychology too can gain on this path to interdisciplinary collaborative working such as continuing to grow in its psychological intervention diversity and adaptability. This could be achieved by perhaps taking more inspiration from sports psychology e.g. life skills used in sports previously applied to stress management programmes (Le Scanff & Taugis, 2002). Hays (2002) paralleled the usefulness of skills acquired within sports in performance enhancement, injury and retirement management and management of arising developmental issues within other more artistic contexts. Taking the discipline of parkour as an example, its hybrid nature being dually a sport and an art form in many practitioners' eyes, would benefit from interventions that bridge both disciplines in a way similar to that outlined by Hays (2002).

Additionally, Jones (2002) suggested that the principles of elite performance readily translate to organisational issues, teamwork, leadership, one to one coaching and sports involvement stress. All the above areas could helpfully benefit from knowledge sharing with sport psychology areas that counselling psychologists can and do work with. This reinforces the suggestion that counselling psychology could greatly benefit from interdisciplinary collaboration, sharing in a valuable exchange for all disciplines involved.

Although the transference of the LoP model to practice section earlier in this thesis further champions interdisciplinary collaboration between sport psychology, counselling psychology and their clients, this thesis, on the whole, suggests that the collaboration move beyond intervention sharing to integrative theory and model development. It may allow for a richer, more context-specific and yet increasingly transferable hub of theories, models and interventions to be created.

# Chapter 10: Directions for further research

I would advocate that the further use of more subjective research methodologies like social constructivist approaches used herein could go a long way in helping reduce the current gap in individualistic research within sports. Further progress can then be made in how such research can helpfully inform more generalisable methods, theories, models and interventions to render even generalisable tools more person-centred. This model not directly generalisable due to the subjectivity of its methodology for conception, could however perhaps lay the way for more generalisable models in stress, burnout and LoP within parkour and sport more generally, to consider the much needed humanistic, holistic and longitudinal angle to models and methods that this thesis argues is so essential to any study of or intervention on areas of human conditions.

The research study specifically highlights the struggles of its parkour practitioners through training, involving myriad complex, paradoxical processes. The gains anticipated by the participants appeared at times to be lost during training, LoP appeared difficult to make sense of; and ultimately, very little insight into how they coped with it seemed conscious. This mirrored the gap in research, suggesting that the underlying processes of LoP are rarely explored in a way that does more than merely describe what participants live through and categorise the gains and losses they perceive in training. Further qualitative research is needed to explore the processes behind LoP from a variety of epistemological lenses and enrich the existing theory surrounding what this study found to be a very traumatic, sometimes enraging or dissociating experience. This should be explored with more time and depth than this study could allow for.

Parkour – an ever-growing, morphing, creative discipline – should be studied regularly, to allow the research to remain grounded in current contextual aspects of clients' experiences. Some of the processes which I co-constructed with the participants both unconsciously and consciously appeared to be temporally influenced: such as the 'Doppler shift'. The changing age range of parkour practitioners therefore should also be explored: perhaps through a study of under 18 practitioners who felt they stopped progressing or quit. In addition, in line with working towards more prevention-based models, a similar GT exploration into young people may help us gain a better understanding of training during early years, while they may be living some of the past experiences described in this study. This can provide vital insight into their

relationship to parkour, the function it plays in their lives and the processes at play for them when engaging with it.

Having begun to test this model's transferability and applicability in therapeutic parkour work myself so far as presented in the case study within this thesis, very promising results have been seen from both a psychologists' lens and a client perspective (see Appendix 19 for an example of a client's view). Further evaluation is paramount to identify the psychological and parkour community's reception of it: investigating its yield in practice from both a client and practitioner perspective through further qualitative research methods.

Although time-consuming and hugely demanding, further GT research is therefore advocated, in a field that remains highly under-researched, yet is changing so rapidly. Parkour-specific nuances and processes within it need time allocated to them to truly establish person-centred experiences for practitioners of this sport, how they feel, what they feel and perhaps why they think they feel what they do. This being said, as this study proposes that the LoP model could be transferred to a myriad of disciplines, further research out of a parkour and indeed sporting context would be advisable to get a better sense of this in practice.

# Chapter 11: Conclusions

This study outlines the longitudinal, developmental psychosocioemotional trauma centric processes that are involved in how participants experienced and coped with LoP in parkour training. Their processing of their LoP was made sense of by considering what current and historically informed psychosociemotional and physical factors appeared to influence their initial entry into parkour training. In turn, how these informed expectations of training and how participants experienced these to be later challenged or unmet in training, consciously or unconsciously, was co-constructed. This seemingly paradoxical misalignment between what was sought by participants with what was actually experienced appeared to unhelpfully augment their experience of LoP. Participants were seen to meet their LoP with defensiveness and rupture or acceptance and containment. Coping styles resultant from participants' relationship to LoP within training, and their coping styles in life more broadly, appeared to lead to conflicted or resolved participation in participants stopping or re-entering parkour training. Reflective suggestions of how one could better relate to the LoP phenomenon were housed in a 'contained practitioner' category, informing what the participants felt could have aided their experience of training and LoP and their overall relationship to parkour, in hindsight.

This GT suggests that not only conceptualising one's relationship to LoP in parkour training but also one's more general relationship to it in life (e.g. how one processes loss, failure and other undesirable outcomes) prior to, during and after training, may help practitioners better safeguard their sense of self in training. More readily aiming to integrate self-reflection within parkour training to provide a more holistic enhancement of one's relationship to progression more broadly in a practitioner's life, this GT encourages practitioners to connect further to their embodied psychosocial-emotional training experiences.

This study, therefore, highlighted that people can unhelpfully relate to LoP in complex, visceral and very hidden ways, motivations to continue or to stop training seemingly triggered by stressors that were both conscious and unconscious. Participants relayed that enough attention to the process of how these stressors had affected them over time had not been adequately considered. Furthermore, aligning with a wider developmental origin of their stress reactions. This GT offers insight into the repetitive re-experiencing of LoP in and out of parkour, and its

costs to practitioners in training and beyond. This offers some insight into how stressors come to be re-experienced and re-responded to unchangingly in parkour, proposing integrative relational processes that go some way in making sense of this. The impact of this is proposed to be a helpful addition to the existing literature on stress and burnout management in sport more broadly.

This study is hoped to lay a foundation for more person-centred, longitudinal and developmental process-driven research in sport. This is aimed at future research being more sensitive to individual difference, contextual factors and inter-relational in nature. This study's counselling psychology underpinnings are hoped to encourage future research to pay closer attention to bridging the existent gap between a sports practitioner and the person themselves when researching phenomena, informing how professionals practice with a subjective lens that complements the more generalisable one that has historically existed. This study hopes to highlight the importance of moving away from a merely diagnostic agenda in research and practice within parkour, sport and beyond, championing inquiry led research over investigation.

The potential implications of this model's conceptualisation are proposed to be an increase in collaborative interdisciplinary working, revolving around parkour practitioners' unique experience. It is hoped that this would align parkour and sports training, coaching and governance practices with a more humanistic, holistic and creative manner of working. This piece of research is hoped to be only a first step in aiding parkour training to be pluralistically prevention rather than cure focussed; the GT providing useful guidance with regards to what may be helpful to consider for future athlete and layperson training entry, progression and retention or transition.

# Chapter 12: Reflexivity – Discussion and Ending

Having completed this research (for now!) I am beginning to gain more confidence in my initial belief that there is not only a much bigger role that Counselling Psychology can play in sports more generally but more specifically with parkour. I now understand that my interpretations of people's/peer's reactions to my research were not something that needed to be feared or shied away from. I've come to see it as normal, merely an extension of humanity's more general reaction to the notion of anything uncertain or novel embodied. This is similar to parkour practitioners' re-playing of fearful reactions to new jumps they face no matter how experienced they may be as this study came to suggest. Given that our amygdala's role is to detect threat based on past experience of threat, it can arouse a feeling of fear as a response and devise a plan of action (Whalen, 2007), it stands to reason that unknown stimulus, e.g. a new jump or a research idea, would trigger a fear response to a degree no matter how experienced one is to sitting within the fear emotion overall.

Only once the jump is had, reflected on and digested do we truly question our initial doubts in ourselves, the movement, the space and the other influences, eventually often minimising the experience to "I don't know why I was so scared, that was easy". In this, the validatory pathways of all the processes that were very real that informed our doubts and that held us stuck for so long are swept under the rug and we live to jump another identically processed jump another day. I now realise through this research, that this need only be the case until we don't! This is a truly liberating feeling for me as a practitioner and a future psychologist within parkour and as a person.

Due to the gruelling nature of GT, my continued exploration of parkour training and my emerging alternative therapy methodology, the Esprit Concrete Method that sees parkour as an applied therapy on the back of this study's findings, has led me to explore my own fear of the unknown. I have found that this process has allowed me to better empathise and align myself with people's doubt, intrigue and questioning. I find myself now to be so grateful for the relentless questions that were posed to me, for I now see that without these, my research may not have delved to the depths that it did.

My fear of inadequacy forced me to be as meticulous and thorough as I could, while gently

allowing the data to re-forge my self-assurance, trust in the theory's emerging rigour, sense of determination in justifying my findings and participants' shared processes and courage. This all began to speak to me through the back and forth nature of the analysis process that I am so grateful to have experienced, the relentlessly iterative GT process outlined by Charmaz (2010). It allowed me to question my natural critical positivist nature that was far more in line with Glaser and Strauss' (1967) more emergent methodology. This broadened my aptitude within the invaluable creative and co-constructive process of Charmaz's (2010) social constructivism approach to GT.

Although my insider researcher positioning, as discussed in my method and analysis reflexivity caused me no small amount of mitigating and constant vigilance to not overstate the inevitable bias this brought to this research, I also now see that the complex enmeshed positioning I had was also so vital for the conceptualisation of this model. Parkour being so new and Counselling Psychology similarly being youthful as an independent discipline within Psychology means that the likelihood of finding practitioners who are so familiar with both disciplines was highly unrealistic. I do question whether this is my own self-deprecating way to normalise or somewhat dim the magnitude of what I do at heart believe this GT to have contributed to both fields by my hand. Though I also do find huge comfort in hoping that I was merely the first of many now, that will trail blaze this line of inquiry growing my model and methods to further interdisciplinary working.

I now also wonder if the notion of being "alone" in this line of questioning was a means of gratifying my ego and its pride in this fact, revelling in the nervous excitement and thrill-seeking parts of my personality that thoroughly indulges the notion of being a "first" at things. Alternatively, I then question if in fact it was a very true sense of loneliness and lack of belonging that was manifesting in the anxiety I experienced, much like my participants' own identified traits that enticed them into parkour in the first place. In line with Douglass and Moustakas' (1985) views on heuristic inquiry, researchers, especially those who look to use the self as a tool within their research methodology are known to research things they are close to or that they seek to personally understand. This perhaps accounts not only for my motivation to research this topic but also for the uncovering of shared experience with my participants at times. Post viva I even found myself questioning the use of the term 'traceur' in this study's title given that although participants mention the term, the name was assigned to them prior to me having met them. I question if this was perhaps my subconscious grouping my participants

in with the literature's parkour culture mirroring my own desire to share an identity with a group and belong.

No matter what the motivations, however, the alone-ness that I experienced and yearning for connectedness is also said to be shared by other researchers. For example, Etherington (2004) described her own journey as "powerful, sometimes lonely, and transforming" (Etherington, 2004, p. 18); the research path often being incredibly immersive and personal. Maybe the fact that I have never quite had time to 'fit in' or bond with peers growing up, having moved from country to country every year and a half further exacerbated my experience of loneliness on this doctoral research journey. Consequently, perhaps my feelings of 'being an outsider' that I have experienced so often historically were retriggered. My need for external validation perhaps enlarged as I attempted to complete what I often felt and at times still do feel is the most difficult, self-defining piece of work I have ever done/continue to do.

Be it ego-driven or methodological loneliness, or both, I ended this chapter of my journey with a far greater understanding of how truly reflexive the research process actually is. I came to understand the very visceral role that I as a researcher play in my research and how transformative research can be on the researcher themselves. I came to align myself with Grafanaki's (1996) suggestion that researchers and their participants can experience healing themselves through reflexivity; by having allowed myself to care and be influenced by my participants' experience. Both the viability and applicability of the research I came to feel was a direct mirror to how vulnerable I allowed myself to be throughout my analysis stages in particular, and throughout the last five years overall. Using reflexivity, I allowed myself some compassionate respite as I waded through what often felt like fear engulfed strife.

Adopting the advised method of maintaining transparency and openness in my process through diary-keeping, memoing, peer reflection, supervision and therapy (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003), allowed me to distance myself from the data. Through the self-reflective processes outlined above I was able to align myself with my research while overarchingly aligning my analysis with the realities of my participants' processes. Although I was able to recognise my own similarities and differences in experience of LoP in training with those of participants, the transparency and openness in my process allowed me to keep separate my role as a practitioner of parkour and a psychologist in the making. This being said, some of the processes within my model were rendered transferable by testing for external validity through theoretical sampling;

theoretical sampling known to increase external validity and robustness within qualitative research (Nelson, 2016).

I have made reference to certain changes I would have made to the research recruitment methodology of this study to minimise the effects my participants' prior knowledge of me and my work had on their responses in my limitations section. However, I now feel that this added a very interesting and vital ethnographical element to the social constructivist driven analysis, in line with Moustakas and Douglass' (1985) views mentioned prior. I believe that it allowed my participants to feel safer with me, more understood, my agenda with their life stories trustable and overall allowed me to peer more intimately into the cultures, customs, habits and mutual differences of a sample of the parkour community.

The holistic and multi-theoretical aspects of Counselling Psychology practice as I have come to know it, inspired by practitioners like Brooks-Harris (2008), warrants this depth and breadth of interdisciplinary investigation. Such interdisciplinary investigation takes into account a person so complex being held as a sum of so many fields of views and interpretations. It demands that rapport be considered in practice and as I approached this project as applied research albeit GT, I saw no reason for this not to ripple into the production of theory as well.

Counselling Psychology also demands rigour and robustness for credibility in research (BPS, 2009). Through the various examples in my trustworthiness section, this was able to be upheld all the while feeling like a piece of research that stayed true in epistemology. From the very complex, nuanced and dynamic counselling psychology lens, I used to observe, interact with and interpret the relationships, processes and underlying constructs, be it conscious or unconscious. Although this study seemingly produced a concrete result in the form of a model, in line with Etherington's (2004) thoughts on the research experience, I have come to see this research process and its products as merely a foundation for furthering a process that "implies movement, agency and continuity" (Etherington, 2004, p. 15), rather than a something that has concretely 'become'. It is merely a part of a never-ending journey of inquiry into my own and others' LoP.

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# Appendices

## A: Glossary for parkour related language featured

| | |
|---|---|
| Climb-up | A move that allows a person to climb on to walls and other objects more commonly only using their hands and feet |
| Double kong | Doing the movement of a kong yet first tapping an initial object with one's hands before finishing off the kong movement on the second obstacle in one continuous movement |
| Dive kong | Diving over a first obstacle to then kong a second obstacle in one continuous movement |
| Freerunner | Term for a person who does freerunning |
| Jam | A parkour gathering that is usually a mix of people who do parkour, a free, community interest initiative, locally and internationally driven |
| Kong | Leap over an object allowing only one hand to touch the object in front of them, then using hands to pull the rest of one's body through their arms without any other body parts touching the object |
| Layed | The act of having been at the receiving end of something being thrown at them |
| Slide monkey | A movement that initially starts out as a kong and requires the person to swivel their hips around the object lifting one hand of the object they are vaulting prior to the placing both hands back on the object now behind them to help propel them forward till both feet touch the floor and object is pushed away behind them |
| Tiefed | When someone steals something that does not belong to them |
| Traceur | Term for a person (masculine) who practices parkour |
| Vault | Leap over an object using hands and/or feet |

**B : Anonymity**

Table of participant pseudonym list and numbering for referencing in text

| Participant no. randomly allocated | Pseudonym allocated |
|---|---|
| 1 | May |
| 2 | Fay |
| 3 | Jeremy |
| 4 | Tina |
| 5 | Jack |
| 6 | John |
| 7 | Jim |
| 8 | Ryan |
| 9 | Lucy |

***Dates and  names of organisations/people/places that are too specific are all assigned ' XX ' as their pseudonym as relevance of these is proposed to be unimportant to this research.

**Appendix 1:** Full table of categories and interviewees

| Categories | Higher order categories | Lower order categories | Interviewee No Ex () = nos. not example quoted) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.  Seeking through parkour training | 1.1 Internal physical influencing factors | 1.1.1  Striving to maintain an idealised body image | 2, 5, 6, 8, 1 |
| | | 1.1.2  Seeking to embody subverting through an accepted medium | 3, 8, 5, 1, 2, 4 |

| | 1.2 Internal Psychosocioemotional influencing factors | 1.2.1 | Striving to keep their inner "Peter Pan" alive | 9, 1, 4, 6, 8, (2, 3) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1.2.2 | Seeking to satisfy their inner narcissist | 1, 8, 3, 7, 5, 9 |
| | 1.3 External Physical influencing factors | 1.3.1 | Being visually enticed into training parkour through media | 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 1 |
| | | 1.3.2 | Seeking to challenge lived experiences of other's negative perceptions of their potential | 1, 4 (3, 2, 6, 8) |
| | 1.4 External psychosocioemotional influencing factors | 1.4.1 | Seeking a consciously pre-existing need for connectedness. | 4, 7, 3, 5 (2, 1, 6) |
| | | 1.4.2 | Seeking a medium to practice overcoming obstacles in life | 3, 4, 1, 6, 9, 7, 5 |
| 2. Paradoxically losing while journeying through parkour | 2.1 Struggling with somatic challenges | 2.1.1 | Experiencing cost of Psychosomatic barriers to the self | 3, 5, 2, 6, 1 |
| | | 2.1.2 | Experiencing cost of somatopsychic barriers to the self | 2, 8, 4, 7, 6, |
| | | 2.1.3 | Experiencing a rupture in sense of self through injury | 3, 4, 6, 7, 1, 9, 8 |
| | 2.2 Unmasking of the traceur's "divided self" | 2.2.1 | Experiencing a wavering in their own values– "showmanship" vs "withinship" | 3, 8, 4, 7, 1 (2, 6) |
| | | 2.2.2 | Struggling with being confronted with the "failing" self | 5, 2, 4, 3 (1, 5, 6, 8) |
| | | 2.2.3 | Mismatching their reality with fantasy | 3, 4, 7, 2 (1, 5, 6) |
| | 2.3 Reenacting past trauma through parkour | 2.3.1 | Unconsciously re-traumatising the self through re-exposure to insurmountable challenge | 4, 9, 2, 6 (5, 7, 8, 3) |
| | | 2.3.2 | Unconsciously re-traumatising the self through employing past maladaptive coping styles | 6, 9, 2, 7, 8, 4 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2.4 "Religion-ing" of practice and practitioner through parkour | 2.4.1 | Experiencing the need to compartmentalise the self to avoid being engulfed into parkour as a "cult-ish" life track | 4, 2, 7 (5, 9, 3) |
| | | 2.4.2 | Adopting parkour as a medium to achieving omnipotence: "the God like Man" | 2, 4, 1, 7, 3 |
| | | 2.4.3 | Transferring custody of their omnipotence onto another | 5, 1, 2, 8, 9 (3, 7) |
| | 2.5 Experiencing "fitness fascism"ing | 2.5.1 | Struggling with a "Doppler effect" style shift in parkour culture over time | 3, 5, 7 (9, 1) |
| | | 2.5.2 | Struggling in the face of their preconceptions of parkour as a non-competitive sport being challenged | 2, 4, 9, 3 (7, 5, 1) |
| 3. Experiencing Lack of Progression (LoP) in parkour | 3.1 Coping negatively with LoP through defended destroying | 3.1.1 | Externalising blame on to the other destructively | 4, 2, (9, 1, 3) |
| | | 3.1.2 | Ping-Pong - ing paradoxically losing due to sitting with unprocessed trauma | 7, 2, 6, 8, 5 |
| | 3.2 Coping negatively with LoP through detached defending | 3.2.1 | Externalising blame on to the 'other' numbingly | 4, 5, 2, 1, 8, 3 |
| | | 3.2.2 | Substituting parkour with other mediums to meet persistent needs of the self | 7, 2, 6, 8, 5, 9, 4 |
| | 3.3 Coping positively with LoP through reflective warrioring | 3.3.1 | Objectively allocating responsibility for LoP | 3, 1, 9, (7, 6) |
| | | 3.3.2 | Reflexively processing LoP | 2, 4, 3, (7, 1, 5) |

| | 3.4 Coping positively with LoP through contained practitioning (Recommendations thought to reduce likelihood of quitting) | 3.4.1 | Reflecting on a need for external containment provisions | 4, 3, 2, 7 (9, 1) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 3.4.2 | Reflecting on a need for internal containment provisions | 4, 8, 6, 1 (2, 7) |
| | | 3.4.3 | Reflecting on a necessary balance needed between the collective and autonomous parkour training experience | 6, 9, 4, 5, 2, 7, 3 |
| 4. Quitting Styles | 4.1 Re- entering parkour: experiencing the revolving Door | 4.1.1 | Re-entering conflicted | 5, 6, 3 (7, 8) |
| | | 4.1.2 | Re-entering resolved | 3, 5, 1 (2, 4) |
| | 4.2 Stopping parkour permanently | 4.2.1 | Resolved stopping | 2, 4, 5, (3, 1) |
| | | 4.2.2 | Conflicted stopping | 4, 3, 2 (9, 8, 7) |

**Appendix 2:** Full table of Lower order categories, example focused codes and example interviewees

| Lower order categories | Example focused codes | Ex part no. of ex. quotes used |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1.1 Striving to maintain an idealised body image | 1.1.1.1 Desiring to get healthy <br> 1.1.1.2 Desiring to get back to a former self image | 2, 5, 6, 8 |
| | | 1 |
| 1.1.2. Seeking to embody subverting through an accepted medium | 1.1.2.1 "Breaking out" away from oppressional norms | 3, 8, 5 |
| | 1.1.2.2 Challenging the perceived status quo gender stigma | 1 |
| | 1.1.2.3 Fighting to meet systemic expectations | 2, 4,1 |
| 1.2.1 Striving to keep their inner "Peter Pan" alive | 1.2.1.1 Seeking a sense of freedom | 9, 1, 4 |
| | 1.2.1.2 Seeking to relive childlike play | 6, 8, |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1.2.2  Seeking to satisfy their inner narcissist | 1.2.2.1         Seeking social standing | 1, 8 |
| | 1.2.2.2.        Seeking the "thrill of it" | 3, 7, 5, |
| | 1.2.2.3        Seeking control of ones externalised self | 3,9 |
| | 1.2.2.4.        Seeking to indulge ones "hedonism" | 3,8 |
| 1.3.1   Being visually enticed into training parkour through media | 1.3.1.1        Desiring to learn what one saw of parkour via media | 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 |
| | 1.3.1.2.        Desiring to try parkour through friend recommendations | 2, 5, 7 |
| | 1.3.1.3.        Seeking to challenge one's world view | 5, 4, 1 |
| 1.3.2  Seeking to challenge lived experiences of other's negative perceptions of their potential | 1.3.2.1        Desiring to confront past experiences of others lack of belief in one's self | 1, 4 |
| 1.4.1  Seeking a consciously pre-existing need for connectedness | 1.4.1.1        Seeking a sense of in group belonging | 4, 7, 3 |
| | 1.4.1.2        Seeking healthy replacement support systems | 3, 7 |
| | 1.4.1.3        Seeking to indulge ones altruistic tendencies | 3, 4, 5 |
| 1.4.2 Seeking a medium to practice overcoming obstacles in life | 1.4.2.1        Experiencing previous mental health obstacles | 3, 4, 1, 6, 9 |
| | 1.4.2.2        Experiencing adverse childhood experiences | 1, 4, 7, 9 |
| | 1.4.2.3        Seeking to challenge previous adverse experiences through parkour | 4, 9, |
| | 1.4.2.4        Seeking to match ones coping styles to movement parkour training style | 4, 5 |
| 2.1.1 Experiencing cost of Psychosomatic barriers to the self | 2.1.1.1        Embodying emotional burdens increasing risk of injury | 3, 5, 2 |
| | 2.1.1.2        Ignoring psycho-emotional intuition of a successful self, risking LoP | 3, 6 |
| | 2.1.1.3        Maladaptively coping through parkour training due to | 6, 1, 2 |

| | unhelpful pre-existing ideologies risking LoP | |
|---|---|---|
| 2.1.2. Experiencing cost of somatopsychic barriers to the self | 2.1.2.1    Somatic experiences burdening one psycho-emotionally increasing risk of LoP | 2, 8 |
| | 2.1.2.2    Overly differentiating context in training impacting ones relationship to risk taking | 2, 4, 7 |
| | 2.1.2.3    Attributing predicting failure to pre-existing physical vulnerabilities | 6, 2, 7 |
| | 2.1.2.4    Perceiving a dependency on physical training for emotional regulation | 6, 7, 4 |
| 2.1.3  Experiencing a rupture in sense of self through injury | 2.1.3.1.    Experiencing a fragile sense of self when getting injured | 3, 4, 6, 7 |
| | 2.1.3.2.    Experiencing rejection when struggling | 1, 9 |
| | 2.1.3.3.    Experiencing a loss of sense of self if unable to train | 8, 3 |
| 2.2.1  Experiencing a wavering in their own values – "showmanship" vs "withinship" | 2.2.1.1    Being influenced by others while training | 3, 8, 4, 7 |
| | 2.2.1.2    Risking their self to gain validation from peers | 7, 1 |
| 2.2.2  Struggling with being confronted with the "failing" self | 2.2.2.1    Struggling to accept being faced with insurmountable challenge | 5, 2 |
| | 2.2.2.2    Struggling with emotional regulation when faced with perceived failure | 4, 3 |
| 2.2.3  Mismatching their reality with fantasy | 2.2.3.1    Experiencing a discrepancy between the 'training self' vs the 'real self' | 3, 4 |
| | 2.2.3.2    Being unable to stay with the process yet desiring idealised outcomes | 4, 7 |
| | 2.2.3.3    Maladaptively coping with ones reality in an attempt to embody ones 'desired self' | 4, 2 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2.3.1 Unconsciously re-traumatising the self through re-exposure to insurmountable challenge | 2.3.1.1 Re-experiencing negative reinforcement from people in positions of power through taught training | 4, 9, 2 |
| | 2.3.1.2 Re-enacting failure through re-exposure to insurmountable challenge | 9, 2, 4 |
| | 2.3.1.3 Re-injuring one's self physically re-experiencing feelings of inadequacy | 6, 4 |
| 2.3.2. Unconsciously re-traumatising the self through employing past maladaptive coping styles | 2.3.2.1 Unconsciously displacing emotional vulnerabilities in favour of physical vulnerabilities when attributing causality to perceived failure | 6, 9 |
| | 2.3.2.2 Replacing failing tasks with more readily accomplishable tasks | 6, 2 |
| | 2.3.2.3 Minimising injuries experienced historically in training | 7, 8 |
| | 2.3.2.4 Distributing responsibility of safeguarding one's self unevenly when perceiving failure | 4, 2, 9 |
| 2.4.1 Experiencing the need to compartmentalise the self to avoid being engulfed into the parkour "cult-ish" life track | 2.4.1.1 Consciously avoiding subscribing to value systems experienced as imposed on one's self by others | 4, 2 |
| | 2.4.1.2 Struggling to stay true to one's own value systems within parkour training | 4, 7 |
| | 2.4.1.3 Experiencing "religiously" attending parkour training | 4, 2 |
| 2.4.2 Adopting parkour as a medium to achieving omnipotence – "the God like Man" | 2.4.2.1 Using parkour as a medium to feel a sense of super-human invincibility | 2, 4, 1 |
| | 2.4.2.2 Perceiving there to be a 'hero complex' mentality to parkour practitioners | 7, 3 |
| | 2.4.2.3 Struggling with a false sense of grandiosity through training | 3, 4 |
| | 2.4.2.4 Striving to impact positive change through parkour as a medium | 4, 3 |
| 2.4.3 Transferring custody of their omnipotence onto another | 2.4.3.1 Identifying a need for role models within parkour training | 5, 1 |
| | 2.4.3.2 Temporarily transferring ones trust in the self to trust in the | 1, 2, 8 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | other to overcome obstacles | |
| | 2.4.3.3 Suffering a cost to sense of self when perceiving the other to be breaking one's trust | 9, 2 |
| 2.5.1 Struggling with a "Doppler effect" style shift in parkour culture over time | 2.5.1.1 Struggling to perceive parkour as representative of pre-existing values as popularity of the sport increases | 3, 5 |
| | 2.5.1.2 Experiencing victimisation as training group demographics shift with popularization of parkour | 7, 1 |
| | 2.5.1.3 Being conflicted with the growing institutionalisation in parkour | 3, 7 |
| 2.5.2 Struggling in the face of their preconceptions of parkour as a non-competitive sport being challenged | 2.5.2.1 Consciously comparing one's self to others leading to a rupture in sense of self | 2, 4 |
| | 2.5.2.2 Perceiving coaches to be "greater than though" rupturing one's sense of self | 9, 4, 2 |
| | 2.5.2.3 Believing structured competition to be destructive to parkour | 9, 4, 3 |
| 3.1.1 Externalising blame on to the other destructively | 3.1.1.1 Projecting internalised affect onto others destructively when processing LoP | 4, 2 |
| | 3.2.2.2 Projecting internalised anxieties onto imagined objects when processing LoP | 2 |
| 3.1.2 Ping-Pong - ing paradoxically losing due to sitting with unprocessed trauma | 3.1.2.1 Re-attempting training constantly without altering training style | 7 |
| | 3.1.2.2 Fearing a cost to sense of self when re-attempting training without processing prior trauma | 8, 5 |
| 3.2.1 Externalising blame on to the 'other' numbingly | 3.2.1.1 Attributing experience of LoP to external entities non-committedly to safeguard ones sense of self | 4, 5 |
| | 3.2.1.2 Attributing LoP to perceived need to re-distribute ones time to other areas of life | 2, 1, 8, 3 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3.2.2 Substituting parkour with other mediums to meet persistent needs of the self | 3.2.2.1 Seeking to meet socialization needs previously satisfied through parkour training through alternative means | 7, 2 |
| | 3.2.2.2 Seeking to meet psychosocioemotional needs previously sought through parkour training through alternative means | 6 |
| | 3.2.2.3 Seeking to meet physical needs previously satisfied through parkour training through alternative movement forms | 8, 5, 9, 4 |
| 3.3.1 Objectively allocating responsibility for LoP | 3.3.1.1 Assuming responsibility for decisions made that were thought to exacerbate factors influencing LoP | 3, 1 |
| | 3.3.1.1 Relinquishing responsibility for decisions made thought to exacerbate factors influencing LoP | 1, 9 |
| 3.3.2 Reflexively processing LoP | 3.3.2.1 Retrospectively accepting intersubjective differences | 2, 4 |
| | 3.3.2.2 Normalising ones LoP | 3, 2 |
| 3.4.1 Reflecting on a need for external containment provisions | 3.4.1.1 Identifying a need for more person-centered progression based practice | 4, 3 |
| | 3.4.1.2 Reflecting on the need for systemic support when struggling in parkour | 2, 7 |
| 3.4.2 Reflecting on a need for internal containment provisions | 3.4.2.1 Reflecting on the importance of checking in with one's "red flags" to safeguard one's self | 4, 8 |
| | 3.4.2.2 Identifying the benefits of working on one's self outside of parkour to aid making sense of one's experience of LoP | 4, 6, 1 |
| 3.4.3 Reflecting on a necessary balance needed between the collective and autonomous parkour training experience | 3.4.3.1 Championing independent creative play as nurturing for the self | 6, 9, 4 |
| | 3.4.3.2 Identifying the benefits of group training in progression pro-socially | 5, 2, 7 |

| | 3.4.3.3    Reflecting on benefits of solo training | 5, 3, 2 |
|---|---|---|
| 4.1.1 Re-entering conflicted | 4.1.1.1    Requiring external support to re-enter training | 5, 6 |
| | 4.1.1.2    Needing to control factors perceived to have contributed to LoP prior to re-entry | 5, 3, 6 |
| 4.1.2 Re-entering resolved | 4.1.2.2    Desiring re-entry into training after gaining a better understanding of one's self | 3, 5, 1 |
| 4.2.1 Resolved stopping | 4.2.1.1    Remembering one's affinity to parkour fondly while decidedly not desiring to re-enter | 2 |
| 4.2.2 Conflicted stopping | 4.2.2.1    Demonstrating an ambivalent longing to return to parkour without demonstrating decisive actions to re-enter | 4, 5 |
| | 4.2.2.2    Being resigned to stopping parkour while remaining interested in trying other approaches to training | 4, 3 |
| | 4.2.2.3    Reflecting on function of delayed decision to quit | 3, 2 |

**Appendix 3:** Table of example focused codes and example interviewee quotes:

| **Example focused codes** | **Example interviewee quotes, line number & participant number** |
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| 1.1.1.3  Desiring to get healthy | *No 2:* "So, my motivations (for doing parkour) were, in not any particular order, but I would definitely say exercise being one. " (pg 6, line 270-271)<br><br>*No 5:* "I just wanted to be a bit more healthy, a bit more fit, maybe try to get some habits of eating differently, to build muscle…(pg. 3, line 113-115)<br><br>*No 6:* "treat mental illness by increasing level (of exercise) and like all these positive neurotransmitters, biologically helping me" (pg. |

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| | *11, line 284-288)* |
| | **No 8:** *"I just want to (…) be fit to be able to do what I want." (pg. 11, line 280-282)* |
| 1.1.1.4  Desiring to get back to a former self image | **No 1:** *"A mum, after two pregnancies my body is wrecked (…)I decided actually to train" (pg. 9, line 355)* |
| 1.1.2.1    "Breaking out" away from oppressional norms | **No 3:** *"They thought I was just being naughty rather than unable to do work so  I started acting out and being rebellious. I vandalised schools. I put several kids in hospital (…) when I found parkour I just thought all of the sort of anger just went" (pg. 2, line 46-51)*<br><br>**No 8:** *"Basically I think society is closed. Everything is on point, using tools and stuff, but parkour breaks them…..That kind of concept I like, maybe that's why I'm saying freedom, you're never stuck in a box. Even if you are you can get out." (pg. 5, 113-118)*<br><br>**No 5:** *"There isn't a uniform to wear so you create your own…you can be yourself when you do parkour" (pg. 2, line71-72 )* |
| 1.1.2.2    Challenging the perceived status quo gender stigma | **No.1:** *"'Girl's don't do parkour', and I was like, 'What!' So I had to fight back" (pg. 3, line 89-90)* |
| 1.1.2.3    Fighting to meet systemic expectations | **No 2:** *"that feeling of being so nervous every time I HAD to play in front of people and nerves with any performance, the physiological thing and I and sure it's with (…) if you're doing parkour or you're doing music, you take shallow breaths and you can't take deep breaths" (pg. 2, line 88-92)*<br><br>**No 4:** *"He (dad) just shook his head like … you know, like, 'Ugh, kids.' (…) Just get a job kind of thing. That's not what he said, but that was the kind of mentality ". (pg. 14, line 593-596)*<br><br>**No 1:** *"Another thing that stopped me that was my husband, He didn't… he never stopped me. I was stopping myself. "(pg. 11, line 440-441)* |
| 1.2.1.3    Seeking a sense of freedom | **No 9:** *"liked it  (gymnastics)as a kid because there it was just a freedom of sorts…" (pg. 1, line 14)*<br><br>**No. 1:** *"I mean it's about freedom of movement, overcoming obstacles" (pg. 4, line 140)*<br><br>**No 4:** *"I thought it would just make me alive. I thought it would set me free and make me alive and I'd feel alive in some ways and I guess for all of us, that bits of us aren't fully awake or developed and I sensed that I thought that this was gonna be key." (pg. 5, line 185-196)* |

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| 1.2.1.4 | Seeking to relive childlike play | **No 6:** "it *(parkour)* is like going back to when you're a kid and playing in the playground" *(pg. 5, line 103-105)*<br><br>**No 6:** "it's just like children engage with the world in a way like, intuitive kind of fun playful way and I feel parkour helps you get back into that and recapture that as an adult" *(pg. 5, line109-112)*<br><br>**No 8:** "I've always done jumping and climbing since I was a little kid and it was fun for me then and it's fun for me now" *(pg. 4, line 88-90)* |
| 1.2.2.1 | Seeking social standing | **No 1:** "I wanted to be involved with it *(parkour)*. It was cool! " *(pg 1, line 2-3)*<br><br>**No 8:** "Before I was just on my own, I was scared to do things around other people (…) shy that people would judge me and stuff… *(pg.5, line 121-123)* |
| 1.2.2.2. | Seeking the 'thrill of it' | **No 3:** "When I found out it (parkour) was real it was like wow that's really amazing that someone can train themselves to, not only jump that far, but to jump that far over something incredibly dangerous and that's what inspired me…" *(pg 1, line 8-11)*<br><br>**No 7:** "jumping from higher and dropping down, or when you're falling, you get that slight feeling. Sometimes when you are in a car and it goes up and down, that little feeling…" *(pg. 8, line 336-338)*<br><br>**No 5:** "fear, what I like is it's *(parkour)* mental. You have to work on your inner-self and do a jump and think about actually, everything can go wrong (…), if I slip here, I can drop and break my skull."*(pg. 4, line 143-147)* |
| 1.2.2.3 | Seeking control of ones externalised self | **No 3:** I used to be very egotistic (…) like challenge respected people in the community (…) to say, 'you're not better than me' sort of thing (…)" *(pg. 9, line 387 – 390)*<br><br>**No 9:** "Because on the side of it (gymnastics) there were competitions and some achievements and some incentives to do it and we all like the support, we loved the support! *(pg. 8, line 203-208)*<br><br>**No 3:** "I was trying to fill a void in my own sort of psyche I suppose (…) develop a self-worth through parkour". *(pg.10, line 401-403)* |

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| 1.2.2.4.    Seeking to indulge ones "hedonism" | **No 3:** *"know and realise that anybody can be capable of being beautiful or like a hero or strong or whatever you want to describe it as" (pg 2, line 39-41)*<br><br>**No 8:** *"Well, from cartoons, anime, things like that, movies, action films. I just want to be able to do those things" (pg. 11, line 283-285)* |
| 1.3.1.1    Desiring to learn what one saw of parkour via media | **No 2:** *"(friend) read in a Time Out thing, 'A 101 things to do in London…' " (pg 3, line 133-134)*<br><br>**No 3:** *"I found parkour in ('XX'), it was the David Bell BBC. " (pg 1, line 6)*<br><br>**No 4:** *"Oh, I saw Jump London. Like everybody, saw Jump London…" (pg 4, line 149-150)*<br><br>**No 5:** *"I heard of parkour years ago back in France in the 1990's within magazines, on TV. (pg. 1, line 19-20)*<br><br>**No 7:** *"I don't know what the documentary is, but that was my first touch with parkour" (pg. 1, line 9-10))* |
| 1.3.1.2    Desiring to try parkour through friend recommendations | **No 2:** *"there was an indoor or outdoor parkour class with XX….she (friend) said let's go. ….. she said, let's do this thing… so we went with a few friends " (pg. 3, line 134-141)*<br><br>**No 5:** *"I made some friends and joined (parkour) in ('XX')" (pg. 1, line 26-27)*<br><br>**No 7:** *I also started using Facebook and I went looking for old friends including friends from primary school, and it turned out, they did parkour (…)We'd go out and try some parkour (pg. 1, line 13-17)* |
| 1.3.1.3    Seeking to challenge one's world view | **No 5:**" *when you walk everywhere, you think (..) when you train parkour (…) When you see a problem, you can approach it differently (…) so it brings something else into your life as well."* *(pg. 3, line 117-122 )*<br><br>**No 4:** *" I think everything is a surface that, could I get over it? (…) everything was a puzzle. It was a gift the environment was giving you (…) it was an invitation to come and play." (pg. 11, line 451-458)*<br><br>**No 1:** *"it really open me to a new world, because I try and imagine, if I do something I thought I couldn't do (…) but just doing that  (…) There's so many things I can do and I didn't know I could do, just because someone told me I couldn't do it" (pg. 4, line 144-149)* |

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| 1.3.2.1 Desiring to confront past experiences of others lack of belief in one's self | *No.1:* *"My mum was very always negative voice about that (believing she was training for boys) ( …) But I was doing this and blah blah blah…"* *(pg.3, line 84-85)* |
| | *No. 4* *"It's about trying to connect to something bigger than me. So I am not as sad as I think I am"* *(pg. 18, line 756-557)* |
| 1.4.1.1 Seeking a sense of in group belonging | *No 4:* *"I realised that it wasn't normal to not want to have contact with other people (…) I could feel that my instinct was to move away"* *(pg. 2, line 46-50)* |
| | *No7:* *"I felt special like I was a part of something, like a certain group or cult, or some societies."* *(pg. 10, line 385-386)* |
| | *No 3:* *"I suppose it's human nature to try and be accepted by other humans to a degree. So I guess I seek acceptance in a way"* *(pg. 10, line 425-426)* |
| 1.4.1.2 Seeking healthy replacement support systems | *No 3:* *"we're all emotionally retarded. We're severely, developmentally stunted when it comes to our emotional reasoning an so like it's awful group if you're going through something difficult, because they will laugh it off, (…) don't know how to be empathetic."* *(pg. 7, line 281-286)* |
| | *No 3:* *"I was chastised throughout my childhood By my teachers and then my parents (…) to be part of a community and also be relatively skilled (…) to suddenly have a social group and to have a skill set was really, really nice."* *(pg. 4, line 132-144)* |
| | *No 7:* *"When I first joined, it was a lovely thing because, I've never been with a group so big, where everyone is just a family (…) there's never been that much family together."* *(pg. 10, line 379-382)* |
| 1.4.1.3 Seeking to indulge ones altruistic tendencies | *No 3:* *"through parkour, it also means you genuinely could (….) like if somebody was in a burning building for example, you could potentially help that person. "* *(pg. 2, line 36-38)* |
| | *No 5:* *"the motto I think is a great motto. Be strong to be useful and help someone (…)(pg. 3, line 115-116)* |
| | *No. 4:* *"it's (parkour is) how we learn and how we become really strong and really useful".* *(pg. 13, line 520)* |
| 1.4.2.1 Experiencing previous mental health obstacles | *No 3:* *"basically my primary school years, I've got a learning disability, dyslexia or question mark, autism spectrum sort of stuff…(pg. 2, line 43-45)* |
| | *No 4:* *"you know, I had mental health issues then"* *(pg. 3, line 126-127)* |
| | *No 1:* *"And then there was this relationship drama and with this relationship drama I realised I had commitment issues (…).(pg.* |

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| | *13, line 524-526)* |
| | **No.6:** *"I used to struggle with depression when I was in high school" (pg. 7, line 177-178)* |
| | **No 9:** *"like back when I was just my….like I was borderline suicidal all the time." (pg. 5, line 134-135)* |
| 1.4.2.2       Experiencing adverse childhood experiences | **No 1:** *"I felt like judged a lot. It must be because of my upbringing, cause I had my mum always very…My mum was quite abusive in terms of… very controlling. So she would observe every move and make a comment. " (pg. 2, line 44-48)* |
| | **No 4:** *"My mum was probably the most visible issue. She was suicidal depressive and she tried to kill herself just before my 'A' levels and she was sectioned……before my first year of secondary school (…)" (pg. 1, line 17- 21)* |
| | **No 7:** *"Back in school, I became homeless a few times and obviously I was too embarrassed to talk about that sort of stuff. My mother ha mental health issues as well and I felt I had to keep a lot of stuff to myself (...) I also had no money, so I quit school…Again one of the XX gangs, triads, ended up joining one of them as well." (pg. 7, Line 252-259)* |
| | **No 9:** *"No, not all my family were about to…so my parents were about to divorce so they like were… weren't available emotionally to listen to me and then I had a coach not knowing about it." (pg. 4, line 81-84)* |
| 1.4.2.3       Seeking to challenge previous adverse experiences through parkour | **No 4:** *"I was realising, oh , I have a pattern and through that pattern and then opportunities (parkour)to change the path…. To fail, try again and not necessarily be judged or graded on those activities…." (pg. 2, line 52-56)* |
| | **No 9:** *"It (parkour) was about overcoming their mental barriers, more than physical barriers and it was weirdly addictive because of it" (pg. 10, line 264-266)* |
| 1.4.2.4       Seeking to match ones coping styles to movement parkour training style | **No 4:** *" opposition against things to create force and energy and I actually was much better at that, because I had so much internal tension And energy that needed to be dissipated. But I struggled with release because their ideology  is all softer, (…), clean air and I was like, oh my goodness I could never do that. There is too much physical information to be that soft and simple. I think that's why I ended up going towards parkour, cos it was hard." (pg. 3, line 116-123).* |
| | **No 4:** *"I mean parkour was a bit more military and my family were military so I quite like things being more. Well I suppose a bit more organised." (pg. 4, line 158-160)* |
| | **No 5:** *"I think in life as well (as parkour) I am the kind of person who would try not to take risks but I will judge everything (…) I find a game in everything. I challenge myself in everything I do." (pg. 4, line 149-153)* |

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| 2.1.1.1        Embodying emotional burdens risking LoP | ***No 3:*** *"I'm conscious of getting injured and not being able to work (…) I'm just so fearful of messing up and then not having my children (…) I would feel incredibly selfish and guilty for putting my needs above the needs of my family." (pg. 6, line 216-224)* <br><br> ***No 5:*** *"It (just before getting injured) )was the first time I was really scared that something really bad would happen to me and your parents or family would worry (…) then in the back of your mind, you can hear all these voices…"(pg. 7, line 281-285)* <br><br> ***No 2:*** *"I never did a real kong. (…)it was basically knowing that my brain was thinking the wrong things. So I wasn't feeling necessarily nervous, (…) you know the theory behind it, and then that thing of like starting to run towards it and even as I run towards it, being like, nah, you've lost it." (pg.4, line 175-183)* |
| 2.1.1.2        Ignoring psycho-emotional intuition of a successful self, risking LoP | ***No 5:*** *"I took this jump too lightly, but usually this kind of jump I would say okay, it's not for me today, and I wouldn't do it. But for some reason, I went and as I jumped I knew I missed it (…)" (pg. 7, line 263-266)* <br><br> ***No 6:*** *"I got a gut feeling that I shouldn't sign up for training but I ignored it because I wanted to be a parkour instructor"(pg.1, line 20-22) (…) "So I jumped and hit my head right here and I knocked myself out" (pg.2, line 30-32)* <br><br> ***No 6:*** *"I'm feeling kind of sick but I was pushing myself to continue training even though I wasn't feeling good at the time." (pg. 13, line 344-346)* |
| 2.1.1.3        Maladaptively coping through parkour training due to unhelpful pre-existing ideologies risking LoP | ***No 6:*** *"so it's just my, I feel like I have no other option and the best thing I can do is just push through them (problems, health and training) as much as I can (…) but clearly I have to balance that with not pushing myself too far."(after getting injured) (pg.4 line, 91-97)* <br><br> ***No 1:*** *"That day I wanted to prove I could do it (the jump) and it was different. I stopped having fun and quit (…) if I had decided to do it for fun, then probably I would have kept going throughout the day" (pg. 10 & 11, line 412-414)* <br><br> ***No 2:*** *"I'm not a quitter. I stick things through."(pg. 14, line647). "I wasn't going there (parkour class) to feel that way. So I sometimes would go to the bathroom at the really hard bit where my group had to go like the really difficult section where I was like, I do not wanna do that. I'm gonna use this time to go have a wee and have we finished that?"(pg. 14, line 662-667)* |
| 2.1.2.1        Somatic experiences burdening one psycho-emotionally increasing risk of LoP | ***No 2:*** *"Oh my God that was just a sprained ankle. What would happen if it was worse than that" (pg. 13, line 596-597))* <br><br> ***No 8:*** *"It (previous injury) hurts a lot and when it hurts, it's not about the pain, it's being afraid that something might rip again. I think* |

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| | *that is the only stopping it (injury) does to me, just being afraid something might happen." (pg. 12, line 307-311)* |
| | **No 2:** *"If there were thing I thought I should do I sometimes would be like, I'm not going to do that. I'm really worried I'm going to hurt myself. I witnessed many people break things in that class over five years. There was one man whose kneecap went like round his knee. (…) I had no illusions that it was a safe sport." (pg.12, 571-577)* |
| 2.1.2.2 Overly differentiating context in training impacting ones relationship to risk taking | **No 2:** *"finding it difficult to take what I learned inside and bring it outside. Sliding over gymnastics equipment is not the same as doing it on like a bar. It's just… it did feel a lot safe for me to be inside that outside." (pg. 9, line 413-416)* |
| | **No 2:** *"I've pretty much never done parkour outside. (…) Is me walking along a narrow strip like that, is that parkour? Because yeah, I've done that, but jumping on a railing outside? Hell no, cause I look at that railing and the concrete behind it and I was like my face is more important to me than being able to jump over that thing." (pg. 6, line 260-266)* |
| | **No 4:** *"the class felt more like I was definitely going to have to achieve something that day. (…) Someone's gonna in a queue behind me and I was gonna have to deal with an issue that I had (…) it was purposeful. The jam was a chance for me to go and maybe try something, but copout if I wasn't up to it (…) I tried to use them to fulfil different things. But ended up not training at all (…) that point the fear had me so much, that it wasn't gonna be solved that way" (pg. 14, line 566-575)* |
| | **No 7:** *"I've never landed a twist properly outside (…) two years ago I went to a trampoline place, I've never trampolined before (…) I tried twisting and it just feels so nice." (pg. 9, line 362-365)* |
| 2.1.2.3 Attributing predicting failure to pre-existing physical vulnerabilities | **No 6:** *"I've been dealing with a bunch of kind of health issues for like the last ten years and that's mainly digestive problems so (…) it's hard for me to perform as well as I'd like to…"(pg. 1, line 13-16)* |
| | **No 2:** *"I'm short (…) so for you this is hitting you at like below your hips, whereas like for me this is almost at my chest" (pg. 4 & 5, line 202-207)* |
| | **No 7:** *" I had no upper body strength. So, to make up for that I had to use speed. (…) To get ahead I had to train in speed. I could never do a muscle up" (pg. 7, line 173-275)* |
| | **No 2:** *"I think that I am actually a very slow person. I have a slow metabolism, I think. (…)I'd like to be fast (…) but I walk slowly." (pg. 15, line 710-714)* |
| 2.1.2.4 Perceiving a dependency on physical training for emotional regulation | **No 6:** *"exercise can basically help to treat any mental illness by like increasing level and like all these positive neurotransmitters but I think, basically biologically that helped me to just process more positive comments and so it was kind of like a double* |

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| | *whammy but helps me to start coming out of my depression and feel happier and I come down to up here." (pg. 11, line 285-291)* |
| | *No 7: "I couldn't walk the next day, but every time I was doing it, it was worth it. The next day I'd feel amazing. While I was doing it, it felt amazing." (pg. 8, line 205-208)* |
| | *No 4: "it (dance and parkour) was a really nice outlet and it was a place where all that frustration and … I think it's where emotions could have some kind of containment." (pg. 1, line 23-25)* |
| 2.1.3.1.  Experiencing a fragile sense of self when getting injured | *No 3: "I was stretching out my medial collateral ligaments in my knee. And so it eventually got to the point (…) I had no ligament strength. So I had to completely change my style of training. I couldn't do certain moves. I couldn't do the big jumps anymore, but that wasn't so much of an issue. (…) I suppose the biggest issue would be my ego" (pg.11, line 433-440)* |
| | *No 4: "I don't wanna fall on my face in front of people watching me. (…) If there's like a group of people near the bench, I'm not gonna do that (vault a bench), because I don't wanna look stupid, especially if I fail."(pg. 9, line 427-431)* |
| | *No 6: "It (getting injured) shakes my confidence and It's difficult to not be able to do what I enjoy doing the most" (pg.14, line 373-374)* |
| | *No. 7: "I used to always get cuts on my arms from scraping on the wall (…) At work obviously it's on show and it looks bad. One of the bosses was like, it's okay to continue. I was like no, be careful. I stopped doing climb-ups so much" (pg.7, line 276-280)* |
| 2.1.3.2.  Experiencing rejection when struggling | *No 1: "I just saw this big wall and I was like, oh, I can't go up I've tried five times and then she said, 'just go on the side and let other people go around…' I felt humiliated. I stopped doing that and waited for the next exercise. I felt very conscious that I was slower." (pg.5 line 204-208)* |
| | *No 9: "I was put in a position of alternative of even having like pushing through it and having a surgery (…) they (gymnastics team) wanted me to fail in sport equivalent of my degree and that literally cross out (…) they hate me down at the gym" (pg. 5, line 113-120)* |
| 2.1.3.3.  Experiencing a loss of sense of self if unable to train | *No 8: "When it happened, it was like, I felt horrible. (…) It was horrible. (…) training was a big part of my life, I couldn't train. I just wanted to be able to do things (…) I want." (pg. 10 & 11, line 271-282)* |
| | *No 3: "It's not nice actually, cause it messed with your head a lot. Ike when you go out (…) with the lads that train round here (…) I'm not able to do jumps that I know I used to be able to (…) it just makes you feel weak. It makes you feel lazy and it makes you feel like you've let yourself down" (pg. 5, line 187-192)* |

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| 2.2.1.1　Being influenced by others while training | **No 3:** *"Eventually I realised that I was being arrogant and egotistical. It took quite a long time, but years of people telling me, so I started to think, maybe these people aren't just being horrible and they're being honest. So I think that's how parkour changed me. It made me realise that I was actually a big huge dick, (…) and it made me want to take steps to fix that" (pg. 11, line 455-461)* |
| | **No 8:** *"I was doing it just on my own, I was scared to do it (parkour) around other people…shy that people would judge me and stuff" (pg.6, line 135-137)* |
| | **No 4:** *"They (classes) were high, it was loud, there was a lot of people, was a lot of ego in some ways. There was quite a lot of energy, so they kind of whipped up this feeling. Quite a group mentality and I some ways that as good, to be more outward looking and less inward looking" (pg.5, line 197-201) "when I thought that this was what was gonna make me succeed, I was happily part of it. It was only later when I was struggling that that environment starts to really become a clash." (pg. 5, line 206-208)* |
| | **No 7:** *"the shyness became more of the general public, because always, when someone is just standing on a wall, thinking about doing something and someone walks past, crowds just start forming and looking. Sometimes you don't want to do anything (…). And then you feel like you have to do something and you can't fail." (pg. 3, line 111-116)* |
| 2.2.1.2　Risking their self to gain validation from peers | **No 7:** *"I get injured a lot. (…) I guess there is a slight peer pressure." (pg. 2, line 54-54)"I have a nick name. One of them was 'XX' because I just go for it. Before I even knew how to flip…there's actually a famous photo of me down by the sands, diving out in the air. I didn't know how to rotate, I was scared (…) landing on my neck, but I just kept going for it." (pg. 3, line 92-97)* |
| | **No 1:** *""I was doing it (training) for social acceptance. I wanted to be in the group. I wanted to be accepted it wasn't happening and I was getting upset "(pg. 10 & 11, line 414-416)* |
| 2.2.2.1　Struggling to accept being faced with insurmountable challenge | **No 5:** *"after three hours, you're physically exhausted and just doing a small jump. But it pushes you and then almost crying and the end. I am physically exhausted and you didn't do it, or you couldn't do it. It was not a big jump, but just fall down and you cry.(…) it's weird because at the end I cried automatically. It's not something I cry because I was sad, I was crying because I was tired mentally and just … you have to give up." (pg. 5, line 187-193)* |
| | **No 2:** *"I've been here for four years and I am going to group 1. This is embarrassing (…) You feel embarrassed that you are not better at something you should be getting better at" (pg. 17, line 817-821)* |

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| 2.2.2.2 Struggling with emotional regulation when faced with perceived failure | *No 4:* "the fact that I was failing was suddenly like very frightening, cos I'd always… not always succeed. I'd always worked, struggled, succeeded, worked, struggled, succeeded, and here I felt like I was work, struggling, going backwards. So I started to panic" (pg. 6., line 222-226)<br><br>*No 3:* "I start running through like every potential failure mode in my head (…) thinking about catching my knees, catching my feet on the way through (…)I start to think about all the worst sorts of situations that can happen. (…)the reason I am not training is cause I am scared of training, but if I was training I wouldn't be scared of it" (pg.5, line 204-215) |
| 2.2.3.1 Experiencing a discrepancy between the 'training self' vs the 'real self' | *No 3:* "Like what I said, started to develop a sense of self-worth through parkour and obviously in the back of my mind there was still something eating at me and so I was probably trying to use it as like a visage to hide behind, I think" (pg. 10, line 402-405)<br><br>*No 4:* "It (training) felt one dimensional and I wanted it to be okay. If I look at circus (…) they find much more richness by not having values that are about being strong, fast and impressive. I just felt like there was no space for vulnerability. (…) If I can't be vulnerable then I can't be me, which means I can't be real, which means I can't bring my whole self with me (…) which means I'm in denial, which means it's just not right basically" (pg. 10, line 423-431) |
| 2.2.3.2 Being unable to stay with the process yet desiring idealised outcomes | *No 4:* "you've got to choose and I chose dance and now I've given that up too. So yeah, I just couldn't do it sustainably. (…) I had a dream that I did a precision vault between two rails and I had.. was like a bird and my feet became claws (…) my toenails kinda went round the pole and I was like, oh that's what real confidence and real reassurance feels like. It became a quest to be able to have that feeling in reality (…) I was not coming anywhere near it. I would have been training for like 20,000 years before I had that feeling." (pg. 18, line 734-744)<br><br>*No 7:* "…there were some benches. I thought do you know what, let me try dive kong-ing it. I can do a kong. My friend said a double kong is easier, because I never do the kick. (…) I kept diving but I kept putting my foot down at the last second in the middle. So I told myself, just commit, don't put. Your foot down. So, I went for it. I forced myself to not put my foot down, and I ended up crashing into the bench. It hurt so much." (pg. 8, line 294-302) |
| 2.2.3.3 Maladaptively coping with ones reality in an attempt to embody ones 'desired self' | *No 4:* "I felt that there was a split between the person who would go to a jam and go, 'Oh no, I'm just a bit scared. Oh, I'm okay today', and then go in a corner and cry and maybe no one will see and you'd come back smiling. (…)and the person I really (…) struggling so much" (pg. 7, line 290-293) |

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| | *No 2:* *"the whole final year of parkour, before lesson I would take loud hip hop or that kind of thing style of music, that was a bit aggressive, which is not necessarily the kind of music I would normally listen to. On the way there (…) I would say to myself, 'It's okay. Nothing bad is going to happen. If they ask you to do something you're afraid of doing, you can say no. It's okay'."* (pg.14, line 648-654) |
| 2.3.1.1   Re-experiencing negative reinforcement from people in positions of power through taught training | *No 4:* *" …he (coach )was like, 'You're just really slow, like you really need to pick up the speed at which you learn how to push past your zone.' And I was like, 'I am trying so hard and you've just completely squished me.' (…) I am crap at this and I really don't know why I 'm doing it"*(pg. 6, line 227-233 & pg. 6, line 240-254)<br><br>*No 9:* *"I had a coach (…) she was like literally putting me down like all around together and in front of peers which is the worst and then the more chosen you were. To excel the more they were like tormenting you mentally"* (pg. 4, line 83-89)<br><br>*No 2:* *"An instructor doesn't always know what someone is going through. There were times, let's say in singing where they're hearing the way someone is singing and I just, 'oh but just… just put it in your head voice, like this. It's just like this' and they're like 'I don't understand.' (…) and that's how I sometimes felt with some of my instructors there (…) definitely that feeling that they didn't understand that you couldn't do it."* (pg. 5, line 234-242)<br><br>****Verses****<br><br>*No 2:* *"I wanted to be a singer. They didn't see that, or they didn't hear it (…) I didn't sing with a big bravado (…) I was afraid of sounding like an older woman. And they heard that as not having a loud voice…"* (pg. 1, line 22-28) |
| 2.3.1.2   Re-enacting failure through re-exposure to insurmountable challenge | *No 9:* *"you didn't want to do it. You hated doing that like in terms of movement and everything just turned in to the deepest misery, but there was nothing else out there, there was literally nothing else."* (pg. 5, line 137-140)<br><br>*No 2:* *"I am a worrier. (but I worry about stuff and I prepare. (…) this anxiety was….God, when was the last time I felt that level of anxiety was like, maybe I was performing something that I wasn't ready to perform. (…) I knew I had to get through it but it felt like pain. (…)That was the first and only time that's happened to me in like 15 years, beside the feeling I would get before going to parkour."*<br><br>****Versus****<br><br>*No 2:* *"The emotion was abject fear. (…) every night when I had to perform in front of people, every night for about a month before performances."* (pg. 2, line 71-74)<br><br>*No 4:* *"I felt like I was constantly appearing there as the girl who came a lot, couldn't do anything and there was no avenue to kind of have a slightly different way of interacting with people (…) I just thought it was a reflection of me (…)it must be you.* |

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| | *Work harder, be better. Prove to them that you can jump over this and that you can (pg. 8, line 313-321)* |
| 2.3.1.3   Re-injuring one's self physically re-experiencing feelings of inadequacy | **No 6:** *"I'd hurt myself in the last year, I fell, Like I'd go for a jump and my legs would kind of give out (…) and I'd hit my torso on something (…)and that happened like once or twice a week, like about once a month (…) I'm like feeling down." (pg. 13, 333-342)* |
| | **No 4:** *"I saw a lot of people come in as frightened as me and then break that (fear) within a couple of months. I felt like … It didn't help that I fell and I hurt my back, then my arm. (…) So I had a lot of pain and I had a lot of injury and I was trying to negate that and it didn't help some psychological real obstacle that I was recovering from." (pg. 6, line 256-262)* |
| 2.3.2.1   Unconsciously displacing emotional vulnerabilities in favour of physical vulnerabilities when attributing causality to perceived failure | **No 6:** *"yeah, I was nervous because I felt in order to be in instructor you have to be able to perform at a really high level and I wasn't sure if I was at that level or not" (pg. 2, line 34-44)*<br><br>****versus****<br><br>**No 6:** *"I wasn't too anxious, I was a little nervous but I think, what kind of unnerves me about like my digestive issues is I'm afraid I'm going to feel that and hurt myself like I did that day (getting concussed in exam)" (pg. 3, line 57-60)*<br><br>**No 9:** *"I was forced to quit, I kind of….I would rather stay to compete in 'XX' but I was forced with my health" (pg. 8, line 216-217)*<br><br>****verses****<br><br>**No 9:** *" I really wanted to be out because of them literally shouting and putting you down for so many hours per day. (…) there was no night that I would fall asleep without crying" (pg. 3, line 75-78)* |
| 2.3.2.2   Replacing failing tasks with more readily accomplishable tasks | **No 6:** *"Yeah sometimes, I just keep working at it and if I can't get it I just move onto something I can do"*<br><br>**No 2:** *"Knowing that like I hadn't visualised it well enough. Because by the time I reached it I was like no way. I'm doing a slide monkey. And he slide monkey I find so much easier (…)" (pg. 4, line 183-185)* |
| 2.3.2.3   Minimising injuries experienced historically in training | **No 7:** *"But I didn't feel it on my rib area, I only felt it on my hip area. After a while I carried on training that day (…)I could feel that on the hip but thought , no, I can take it, it's fine " (pg. 8, line 304-509)*<br><br>**No 8:** *"It was five hours of training the next day, the whole body was aching and some places on the bottom of the abdomen. It was hurting as well, and I thought it was muscle so I thought, wow, I even worked those muscles. This is weird and good." (pg.* |

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| | *9, line 231-236)* |
| 2.3.2.4 Distributing responsibility of safeguarding one's self unevenly when perceiving failure | ***No 4:*** *" 'you've got to endure and work harder'. It was quite a military mentality, and as I said both my family are military, so they tend to, if you plan enough and work hard enough then there's nothing you can't do. So I just felt like I'm just not working enough" (pg. 7, line 264-268 )*<br><br>***No 2:*** *"it was a strange reaction to feel angry at the scenario, rather than to understand, oh gosh, I'm not in good enough shape" (pg.16, line 771-773)*<br><br>***No 9:*** *"I literally should look on the bright side of gymnastics and just have my own dignity and just push through." (pg. 6, line 146-148)* |
| 2.4.1.1 Consciously avoiding subscribing to value systems experienced as imposed on one's self by others | ***No 4:*** *"I felt it was a natural step in the value system of fit being good and being morally good (…) I felt like this community (parkour) is about an in group and an out group and I don't so much want to be like that." (pg.12, line 505-509)*<br><br>***No 2:*** *"The more ideal... I don't know if the ideological is the right word, but philosophical, religious. The thing where parkour practitioners feel like it's a way of life is just not something I necessarily subscribe to in that sense." (pg. 8 , line 386-389 . )"I was on my way to do the rest of my life and you know. So, I would never say I practiced parkour. I was not a parkour practitioner. (pg. 8, line 396-398)* |
| 2.4.1.2 Struggling to stay true to one's own value systems within parkour training | ***No 4:*** *"I felt there was a danger that I was beginning to put my identity about being better than other people and that's what was giving me confidence, rather than just, I could do something." (pg. 12, line 509-512)*<br><br>***No 4:*** *" I felt it wasn't just an activity they wanted to share. They wanted to share the values, the clothes, the lifestyle, the… They wanted to define a life track and I think it was too dogmatic (…)if you are in a class and you're sharing an activity, you also need to accept that people engage differently…" (pg. 13, line 546-552)*<br><br>***No 7:*** *" they used to steal a lot, I learnt the word tiefing from them. (…) Then some of them afterwards would argue about corporate government, money people, capitalism. I never tiefed. I layed once, but I felt so bad, I thought no, never again. Then afterwards you see them start picking on people including me at one point."(pg. 4, line 136-143)* |
| 2.4.1.3 Experiencing 'religiously' attending parkour training | ***No 4:*** *"I actually feel like it (parkour journey) was a journey about God. That's how I felt that it was" (pg. 18, line 755-156)*<br><br>***No 2:*** *"he wasn't loyal to the (X) class. (…)Whereas I think I really felt strongly that when I could I had to turn up. Even if I wasn't feeling up to it. I would turn up to that class, because I was like, I'm coming to the (X) class." (pg. 17, line 798-803)* |

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| 2.4.2.1 Using parkour as a medium to feel a sense of super-human invincibility | *No 2:* *"I figured out how to do I slide monkey and I was like, I am Wonder Woman. I friggin' love doing the side monkey." (pg. 4, line 168-170)*<br><br>*No 4:* *"I'd finally vaulted over this beam that I hated (…)I was overcome (…) it was just wonderful. It was the best thing. (…) it was just the end of what that symbolised. (…)It's a miracle like a miracle has happened." (pg. 17, line 700-708)*<br><br>*No 1:* *"seeing it (parkour after childbirth) was done before . Cause my next goal would be to be able to do things that no one has ever done before" (pg. 9, line 363-364)* |
| 2.4.2.2 Perceiving there to be a 'hero complex' mentality to parkour practitioners | *No 7:* *"freerunners, they were quite skilled. So they become quite cocky about it and eventually they thought they were kings in a sense. Almost Gods." (pg. 11, line 448-450)*<br><br>*No 3:* *"if everyone in the world was a traceur all with this methodology that kind of encourages altruism then you'd see a very different world I think, if everyone was willing to stick their neck out for another person (…) looks like people jumping and flipping (…) encourages altruistic behaviours without it being a religious thing, I thought that was quite powerful" (pg. line, 363-369)* |
| 2.4.2.3 Struggling with a false sense of grandiosity through training | *No 3:* *"I think I was a little bit in denial. I was using it (perceived respect from other practitioners) as a façade. It was kind of irrelevant to me that the other people (in the world) didn't really care, because I in my head I was like, I'm an athlete. I'm good at what I do and nobody can take that away from me." (pg. 10, line 420-422)*<br><br>*No 4:* *" I remember there was this bit of arrogance about it ( being a parkour practitioner) as well and I felt I picked up that, "I'm more ready than…All these normal people just wander around. (…)If it was the zombie apocalypse, I'd survive. (…) It's the sense you are a little bit better than other people, like a fitness fascism. If your body is ready you're a righteous body and that kind of worried me (…) people who weren't fit, that somehow they'd lost their spirit (pg. 12, line 486-495)* |
| 2.4.2.4 Striving to impact positive change through parkour as a medium | *No 4:* *"It (parkour) was getting away from my dance. It was getting away from something dysfunctional, that's not sustainable. Something that isn't fully… What's the word, not positive, and finding a way. To make sense of that. So, it's problem solving" (pg. 6, line 227-232)*<br><br>*No 3:* *"I think if I personally had put more effort into building the community and building facilities in the town, then that would have done me some good (…) and maybe lead people more towards what I believe parkour to be" (pg.8 343-348)* |

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| 2.4.3.1 Identifying a need for role models within parkour training | **No 5:** *"people are afraid of joining parkour because they think they're going to danger all the time. But the fraternity just tells you that oh, I've been there but if you do it like this, you can actually avoid this problem (…) you see someone doing something that you probably can do, you can push yourself and then try it"* (pg. 2, line 55-60)<br><br>**No 1:** *" When I'm going to a class and I know that's what I wanna achieve. There's so much to go. There's such a long way to go that it makes it very very hard. (…) so I do like the success stories. The success stories actually do a lot for me. For example… mums that made it in parkour and they never done the course before. (pg. 9, line 343-349)* |
| 2.4.3.2 Temporarily transferring ones trust in the self to trust in the other to overcome obstacles | **No 1:** *" I did feel safe having someone next to me. So there were two phases I would say. (…) Like to show me I could do it (…) then stay next to me the first time, that would help me to explore it, then most of the time I overcame my fears when I was by myself cause I don't like being watched too much."* (pg. 1, line 23-31)<br><br>**No 2:** *"I would get nervous and I would get butterflies in my stomach (…) like, oh my God, oh my God please don't let anything to happen bad"* (pg.2, line 104-106)<br><br>**No 8:** *"especially if you have someone to train with you. You can see what the others are doing, you know it's possible, so you can do it basically, but on your own, it's a lot harder to risk going forward."* (pg. 4, line 93-97) |
| 2.4.3.3 Suffering a cost to sense of self when perceiving the other to be breaking one's trust | **No 9:** *"14 years old you've got something to say, but they literally do not let you talk to them they just carry on shouting. You're not allowed to speak up because you knew that you're going to be told off anyways (…) it's horrible…"* (pg. 7, line 200 – 202)<br><br>**No 2:** *"I suppose also there is an element of wanting to be understood. Wanting that your fear of something not be laughed off by your instructor"* (pg. 5, line 230-231) |
| 2.5.1.1 Struggling to perceive parkour as representative of pre-existing values as popularity of the sport increases | **No 3:** *"they've kind of forgotten what it means to be a traceur and doing something quickly isn't always the best way and doing something the easiest way certainly isn't the best way. So it's quite frustrating. (…)(pg. 12, line 505-508) It feels like a betrayal in a way"* (pg. 12, line 505-515)<br><br>**No 5:** *"In a way, I hate the turn it took when it became more something cool to do. Then you start to see large number of people, which parkour is meant to be for everyone but not everyone is meant to do parkour. It's… some people do that because of fashion. I'm going to parkour training, but they never actually do it outside, or they never experience it the right way. (pg. 11, line 474-79) (…) which goes against to me the parkour* |

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| | *value in the beginning" (pg. 11, line 85-86)* |
| 2.5.1.2    Experiencing victimisation as training group demographics shift with popularization of parkour | ***No 7:*** *Sometimes people will say get off my wall (…) people are putting anti-climb paint everywhere or putting spikes up or just knocking things down (…) it makes me think of other people doing the sport. If they were all like I was back in the day, where everyone was nice, everyone was considerate, would we get the same complaints?" (pg. 11, line 425-434)* |
| | ***No 1:*** *" that really upset me and I was like, this (the parkour community) is not really what I thought, you know, the principles of parkour. So people individually, everyone was amazing. Altogether they were not." (pg. 4, line 137-139)* |
| | ***No 1:*** *"When I first approaches parkour, I thought that they were (…) very open to newcomers (…). Then I realised that those that actually know how to do parkour and are good at training, they're actually a little bit of a crew, themselves. So I always felt a bit left out if that makes sense." (pg. 3, 94-99)* |
| 2.5.1.3    Being conflicted with the growing institutionalisation in parkour | ***No 3:*** *"They've literally had to change the definition of sport to allow parkour to be defined as a sport, and for what end? To be able to get a specific type of funding more easily.  It just… to me seems like people running businesses within parkour" (pg. 12, line 501-505)* |
| | ***No 7:*** *Sometimes you question yourself, are we doing things that are wrong?(…) It makes me question myself and it makes me question  the support (…) knowing that there was a special park made, I think maybe what we are doing is right, just not in the right place. (pg. 11, line 425-438)* |
| | ***No 3:*** *"I don't like the path it's going at the moment (…). I think in the long run it's going to take control away from the people that should be in control of the … how parkour develops and grows and it'll be down to the governing bodies. Not down to the traceurs and freerunners, which scares me quite a lot." (pg. 11, line 466-470)* |
| 2.5.2.1    Consciously comparing one's self to others leading to a rupture in sense of self | ***No 2:*** *"Come on. I'm better than those girls, come on. (…) Then instead of getting less nervous about jumping over stuff, I got more nervous about jumping over stuff.." (pg. 7, line 308-311)* |
| | ***No 4:*** *"I feel ashamed. I can't keep up. They put me in a slow group. That person's not done any exercise. They've got loads of energy and they look strong and I was almost … I was competing" (pg. 8, line 336-338)* |
| 2.5.2.2    Perceiving coaches to be "greater than though" rupturing one's sense of self | ***No 9:*** *"I think they were more showing off with how much can they shout on us to like prove how much position they have" (pg. 4, line 89-91)* |
| | ***No 4:*** *"what didn't sit well was just the one dimensional, partly masculine, dogma. (…) they'd gone beyond their remit. They* |

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| | *were trying kind of create this , almost like a religion." (pg. 13, line 533-537)* |
| | *No 2: "as a teacher you're a coach you really invest in helping people along, but I didn't feel like that's what they did. I thought they weren't really coaches they were just like…they like the sound of their own voice and they just like cracking the whip a bit." (pg. 14, 586-589)* |
| | *No 2: "there's where encouragement becomes bullying is not gonna serve anybody. And the younger, more inexperienced tutors would unfortunately pass that line." (pg. 11, line 518-520)* |
| 2.5.2.3    Believing structured competition to be destructive to parkour | *No 9: "competitions people pushing too much (…) they're (gymnastics federations) just so fresh, they just know to push it towards competitiveness, which I think is very toxic actually because if you want to something for fun just do it, play with it like, if you are pursuing some regulated stuff like I did in gymnastics, I'm very against what's happening right now." (pg. 11, line 274-283)* |
| | *No 4: "I thought it (competition) would be mutually uplifting for everybody, but it didn't (…) really ever manifest in that way. It just felt like somebody could be a winner, someone's gonna be a looser. That's how it felt. And also, parkour is so measurable and this is something that annoyed me as well (…) it just felt like I was set up to fail" (pg. 9, line 348-385)* |
| | *No 3: "Obviously there's people that have a different definition than I do for what parkour is and those people have the competitions like, you know, a serious thing. Whereas I find the majority of people that do parkour or freerunning", it's not so much a competition , it's doing a thing and then suggestion to a peer of yours that they can do it too  and so it's more like a tool of encouragement (pg. 6, line 234-239) for the most part competition in parkour is a good thing and it's not competitive in reality it's just a bit of fun (pg. 6, line 253-254)* |
| 3.1.1.1    Projecting internalised affect onto others destructively when processing Lo | *No 4: "I just couldn't do what I wanted to do (…) I did a jump that scared me for a couple of months and then () I was super confident at it, the next week, I'd go back and it was like I'd never done it. And people would come round me, (…), 'oh you can do it, you can do it.' I'd be like ' I already have done it. So all your, this is how you break a jump isn't true, cause I've done this one. (…)I would just feel like shut up. Just leave me the hell alone…" (pg. 6, line 210-218)* |
| | *No 2: "If you yell at me, cause I'm not doing exactly what you want, fuck off. I'm an adult ('XX')and if I wanna do a cat jump and not a kong, that's what I am going to do. So there was a thing a little bit of like, I'm just gonna do whatever I can do and try not to feel stressed about it (not being able)" (pg. 6, line 327-331)* |

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| 3.1.1.2   Projecting internalised anxieties onto imagined objects when processing LoP | **No 2:** *"fear was visceral. It was, like literally it felt like somebody was pulling you backwards. Like you were like, I'm gonna jump. (…) and every time it felt like someone's hand was going, no you're not. Don't do it. Okay, no you're not ready. (…) it almost felt like an invisible wall was stopping my from jumping."* (pg. 12, line 556-561) |
| 3.1.2.1   Re-attempting training constantly without altering training style | **No 7:** *"Sometimes I feel like being different (when attempting parkour again). But I was like, do you know what, forget it. (…) just do it this way (old way)If you're going to fail, you are going to fail. (…) rather than it's better to be safe than sorry, it was more, it was better to have done it rather than regretting and never knowing what would have happened"* (pg. 12-13, line 490-495)<br><br>**No 2:** *"I'm gonna keep going back to this. (…)there became a moment where I think I would say that whenever presented with something that I knew I was afraid of doing, I'd just kind of go, I'm just gonna try my best and I know I don't feel safe jumping (…) so I am going to do (a move) cause I know I can do that and I know I'm safe doing that."*(pg. 7, line 320-327)<br><br>**No 6:** *"I used to run long distances a lot and still do some and I got a stress fracture from overuse injury (…) I should have changed my shoes earlier but I supposed like, yeah I just learned like to be patient and maybe kind of wait process (…) and not to push myself too far. So now I don't make those mistakes anymore."* (pg. 6, line 126-134) |
| 3.1.2.2   Fearing a cost to self when re-attempting training without processing prior trauma | **No 8:** *"after I sprained the last time, I was scared to pursue parkour again, because every time I start something new (within parkour training), it (re-injury) just happens."* (pg. 4, line 101-103)<br><br>**No 5:** *"I did it (parkour) for four years so it would come back easily, (…). It's just the fear effect. (…) it would take me a month to do this jump, maybe after a few days, I would be back up to normal training. But there's still going to be this thing in my leg which I don't know how it reacts."* (pg. 10, line 445-451) |
| 3.2.1.1   Attributing experience of LoP to external entities non-committedly to safeguard ones sense of self | **No 4:** *"I came up against so many physical (obstacles) and concrete. That's the huge issue, my physio was like, please will you stop jumping on concrete. You can't train your body on sprung floor two days a week and then spend three evenings a week on concrete. Your muscles don't understand what kind of tone they're supposed to have and you're getting injured."* (pg. 18, line 727-733)<br><br>**No 5:** *"(reflecting on doing things differently to progress past injury) Probably not. I mean, I'm not going to say I would have dumped my girlfriend, because it's not something you choose. At the time, I'm happy (now), but probably if I didn't have a girlfriend, I probably would have got back to it (training after injury)"* (pg. 10, line 424-427) |

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| 3.2.1.2 Attributing LoP to a perceived need to re-distribute ones time to other areas of life | **No 2:** *"It (not training) just meant that we had another evening where we could see each other (partner and them), which was sometimes difficult, because our schedules didn't always match up (…) I felt very complete about this. I felt like, I've done this for five years. I feel like I've given this a really good shot."* (pg. 16, line 731-737)<br><br>**No 1:** *"I was stopping myself (training), because as I said I had a bit of relationship drama in parkour. I felt going back to training with the same people I dated wasn't nice towards him (partner) (…) I felt it might bother him."* (pg. 11, line 441-445)<br><br>**No 8:** *"I had to spend two hours travelling to get there (…) it's a lot of money also, not just distance. You have to pay for the parkour session, travel and yes. I didn't have that money."* (pg. 7, line 179-184)<br><br>**No 3:** *"I can't really justify something that I only do for my pleasure when the repercussions of doing it could be no job and therefore no money and potentially not being able to see my children (…)I think it all kind of set me up to fail in my head"* (pg. 5, line 181-186) |
| 3.2.2.1 Seeking to meet socialization needs previously satisfied through parkour training through alternative means | **No 7:** *"every now at then, like recently, we have a little gather up with some of them (friends). Not everyone. But there's still some of them…. We're still in touch in small clusters."* (pg. 6 & 7, line 249-251)<br><br>**No 2:** *"I had a few crushes as well, I'm not gonna lie. And that was really enjoyable for me to be like, these were just crushes. (…) I don't think it's a complete coincidence that when I met my husband, was about six months later was I went, 'I'm gonna quit."* (pg. 6, line 285-291) |
| 3.2.2.2 Seeking to meet psycho socioemotional needs previously sought through parkour training through alternative means | **No 6:** *"(…)just learn to kind of channel that energy (from training parkour) into something else whether it's music or reading that way I don't you know like, you know I'm really sad or depressed about not being able to do sport"*(pg. 14, line 377-381) |
| 3.2.2.3 Seeking to meet physical needs previously satisfied through parkour training through alternative movement forms | **No 8:** *"I feel like only one thing and then not doing it then it's one part of you missing, but I fill that part with different things (…)so whenever I do Martial arts, I don't even think about parkour."* (pg. 8, line 185-190)<br><br>**No 5:** *"I wanted to get back into some kind of exercise. (…) I started cycling (…) I kind of lost motivation of… I was tired at first and I was more on the bicycle side, and that took over parkour"* (pg. 7, line 272-280)<br><br>**No 9:** *"It (parkour) was basically something like what is the closest thing in the world I want to do(having quit gymnastics"* (pg. 10, line 260-261)<br><br>**No 4:** *"I reverted back to following the landscape the way that the urban planner told me to (…) I think I often dance as I move, just do little hops and turns and things like that just to get it out of* |

| | system. And then I go back to being normal. I(…) I did a dance piece (…) and there's a lot of parkour crossing in it" (pg.11, line 439-448) |
|---|---|
| 3.3.1.1    Assuming responsibility for decisions made that were thought to exacerbate factors influencing LoP | **No 3:** *"I recognise that it (stopping training) was my decisions that led me down the path which I did take (drugs). Not anybody else. But I heavily regret the choices I did make."  (pg. 8, line 330-332)*<br><br>**No 1:** *"It's a work in progress (understanding their LoP), cause there are things for which I know that it was all my fault. (…) So it's something I am trying to do, taking 100 percent responsibility on everything that happens to me, because it gives me more control." (pg. 11, 433-438)* |
| 3.3.1.2    Relinquishing responsibility for decisions made thought to exacerbate factors influencing LoP | **No 1:** *"I say it's a lot to do with my own inner psychology than what actually…the external factors. At the same time, I don't know if thinking that puts all the pressure on me and if that's a mistake." (pg. 11, line 430-433)*<br><br>**No 9:** *"looking back at it, well what can I expect of a like 14 years old (…) them (coachers) to see that not everyone is capable of being pushed to their limits in this way and sometimes it destroys personalities instead of building them as they thought it should work" (pg. 9, 227-239)* |
| 3.3.2.1    Retrospectively accepting intersubjective differences | **No 2:** *"at a certain point when I realised like, I'm not really getting better at this, I realised it was my own mental blocks that's stopping me, but my priority is not to be good at parkour. I don't wanna become a parkour practitioner that gets paid to be in a commercial to jump over things. That's not what I'm here for. What I'm here for is the social, the exercise stuff. So it's okay if actually I go back to group one (…) and there maybe someone better than me. I'm okay with that." (pg. 10, 452-459)*<br><br>**No 4:** *"you're really strong and you can jump into a river and you save someone's life, because you're used to training your critical skills. I think that's also true, but there's honour in doing a boring job, doing it well every day. It's less glamorous, less cool (…) I felt that was my values. I want to serve people and I don't need wicked abs to do that. (…) I feel like I just needed to grow up a little bit" (pg. 15, line 604-613)* |
| 3.3.2.2    Normalising ones LoP | **No 3:** *"I stopped wanting to travel miles by myself to go training with people I suppose. So it's my fault that I stopped training. I could have kept myself going, but for some reason I've always lacked the will power to go out training by myself. (…) I suppose I feel very self-conscious running by myself." (pg. 4, line 155-159)*<br><br>**No 2:** *"You feel embarrassed, but I just have to say to myself, it's okay. How I am feeling is okay and even feeling like this is natural. It's okay to feel embarrassed by this (lack of progress), it's not going to affect the rest of my life. Like I'm learning* |

| | *something. I'm exercising." (pg. 17 & 18, line 821-825)* |
|---|---|
| 3.4.1.1  Identifying a need for more person-centered progression based practice | **No 2:** *"I didn't like that (sensing dismissal from coaches in relation to her personal struggles). The people would say something (…) in that way or patronising or whatever it was, they didn't know me. They didn't know my reasons for being there. They didn't know how I felt about being there. They didn't know my fears. They didn't know my wishes.(…) So they were doing that from their own perspective and I was always cognisant of that " (pg. 10, line 461-469)*<br><br>**No 2:** *"I think if there'd been like a sort of variation of heights where there was a height where I knew I could definitely get over (…) and I could practice with that until I definitely got over (…)I might have been able to overcome that particular exercise (…) there wasn't the equipment for that." (pg. 5, line 222-229)*<br><br>**No 4:** *" As soon as its goal driven then you're setting yourself up for having information that is uncomfortable and you can't do anything. Sometimes you need to prioritise the inner (…) just teach people to (…) operate outside in or inside out. There's a different modality, so I think you need a complimentary modality (to the person), so that people can learn to feel their feelings, feel their sensations. Accept them and integrate them, rather than creating a kind of strange, dysfunctional paradigm." (pg. 16, 652-662)* |
| 3.4.1.2  Reflecting on the need for systemic support when struggling in parkour | **No 2:** *"So, really making a person feel looked after and safe and kind of cared for. And I think it's really important for someone's wellbeing when they're in duress and even if it's not a big deal ultimately (pg. 13, line 627-630) (…) what I needed was someone to just be there with me to say, Don't worry, don't worry. Everything will be okay." (pg. 13, line 634-636)*<br><br>**No 7:** *" one of the founders. I think if they were around more, they could have, as adults, stopped it (bullying and vandalism) and also because they're much more respected, I think others are more inclined to follow(…)the ones (freerunners) who were bad are probably a similar age group to me. Then they had quite a lot of young ones follow in their footsteps. (…) So, I think if there were role models around, it would have prevented it (change in attitude of freerunners)." (pg.12, line 457-466)* |
| 3.4.2.1  Reflecting on the importance of checking in with one's "red flags" to safeguard one's self | **No 4:** *"If you stop enjoying it (parkour training), it starts to feel like something that's a punishment. I feel like I felt a sense of self-harm almost, like the exercise obsession. Again, that's a warning. I'd probably describe some red flags (…) ' Are you over training, have you stopped sweating (…) I would kind of map out what some red flags are and would say, 'Are you in this territory. Maybe this isn't parkour territory, maybe this is bad." (pg. 15, line 623-630)*<br><br>**No 8:** *"even when I started training, I don't have sense or feeling when to stop and something else occurs, because I can just go on and on and then the next day something happens,* |

| | |
|---|---|
| | *something hurts." (pg. 11 & 12, line 297-301)* |
| 3.4.2.2      Identifying the benefits of working on one's self outside of parkour to aid making sense of ones experience of LoP | **No 4:** *"I can't commit to a jump and kind of picking that as a theme like about commitment. So it ended up being…I gave myself my own task (a blog) to sort of study myself within it (the blog) and that was definitely a bit more helpful, cos I could be more reflective and I could have my own values alongside 'XX' (training company)" (pg. 7, line 273-277)* |
| | **No 6:** *"I like to journal and just think about things, I thought about that a lot and I decided to leave and I felt like it was the right decision" (pg. 10, line 260-263)* |
| | **No 1:** *"Some days I think, who cares, you know, fuck it. You know, why do I care so much and it's part of my self-development and that's one of the reasons why was going to do hypnotherapy, because had this… It's sort of, I think related to anger management as well and I was angry" (pg. 11, line 424-428)* |
| | **No 1:** *"I did have one thing that actually parkour (…) brought up was my commitment issues." (pg. 13, line 513-515) "when I started acting again and training as an actor, I started doing method and there was a lot of inner search and so on (…) I realised I had commitment issues (…)(pg. 13, line 522-526) I also learnt about my narcissism. (…) that's what triggered my actually …fulfil my potential." (pg. 14, line 529-534)* |
| 3.4.3.1      Championing independent creative play as nurturing for the self | **No 6:** *" elevates mood, yeah and parkour specifically it's really playful and very spontaneous (…) it's pretty unstructured so I'd say those parts of it are a lot more fun and parkour specifically makes me feel like more confident just facing my fears…" (pg. 8, line 183-189)* |
| | **No 9:** *"Just like give me more space to like figure things out by myself (…) like leave the time to rest or to reflect or to pit more creativity in it instead of like drills and repetitions." (pg. 9, line 238-242)* |
| | **No 4:** *"You know, it's good to have advice but sort of train a bit more how you want. How makes you happy." (pg. 15, line 621-622)* |
| 3.4.3.2      Identifying the benefits of group training in progression pro-socially | **No 5:** *"I like the idea of challenging each other in small gangs, and then the gangs become bigger, the jumps become bigger. But also, in respect of people, the environment, which I liked about parkour (…) most of them are respectful (…) we can talk (…) I like the freedom in respect" (pg. 3, line 94- 101)* |
| | **No 2:** *"if I was in a classroom scenario with someone watching, I would make an effort to okay, they're watching so I'm gonna try again. One more time. One more time. And I think that's the thing always about being alone is you have to find self-motivation." (pg. 11, line 524-528)* |
| | **No 7:** *"I think it (the feeling of them going for a jump)* comes from bond.* |

| | |
|---|---|
| | *With strangers … (pg. 3, line 98)…you always arrange to meet outside (…) in your own little clan, to train someone else. We all had confidence, because I thought, if I mess up it doesn't matter, because they will mess up as well, and they'll tell me to try again or they might help me adjust and tell me what to do. (pg. 3, line 105-110)"*<br><br>***No 8:*** *"I miss all the company" (pg. 4, line 91)* |
| 3.4.3.3    Reflecting on benefits of solo training | ***No 5 :*** *"when I train alone, just to see my progress (…) I think you find something when you train yourself. You don't do it to impress someone. You do it for your own abilities and trying to be healthy." (pg. 3, line 124-128)*<br><br>***No 3:*** *"if somebody's feeling like disillusioned with the community then they should take that on the chin if you can and carry on your training in your way. Don't let what's going on with the community as a whole to dictate to you what parkour is to you, cause otherwise you end up upset and bitter like me." (pg. 13, line 534-539)*<br><br>***No 2:*** *"I would say part of parkour, is self-teaching. You are teaching yourself what you are able to do." (pg. 10, line 479-481)* |
| 4.1.1.1    Requiring external support to re-enter training | ***No 5:*** *"I think I need to find the right group, the right person" (pg. 10, line 452-453)*<br><br>***No 6:*** *"one of my roommates actually teaches at the parkour gym and so I'd be excited to start doing parkour with him and getting back into the community. (…) It definitely helps, makes it easier to get back in" (pg. 15, line 393-398)* |
| 4.1.1.2    Needing to control factors perceived to have contributed to LoP prior to re-entry | ***No 5:*** *"(if he goes back) there's still going to be my leg (rehab on broken leg) which I don't know how it reacts" (pg. 10, line 450-451)*<br><br>***No 3:*** *"(if I did parkour again) I think I would first need to be lighter and more forgiving, slower, those kinds of things. Allow there to be different politics. Allow there to be different frustrations, but keep going." (pg. 13, line 558-560)*<br><br>***No 6:*** *"I haven't been training because I physically don't feel quite ready yet and I feel like what that injury kind of made me realise that I need to be, resolve my health issues before I continue parkour." (pg. 8, line 201-205)* |
| 4.1.2.2    Desiring re-entry into training after gaining a better understanding of one's self | ***No 3:*** *"Today has made me realise how much I miss training I suppose. I don't really have anybody to talk to about it. It's made me like when all of this is sorted just maybe want to actually get down and start training by myself. Just me." (pg. 13 – 14, line 563-567)*<br><br>***No 5:*** *"Definitely. I know I would (train again). I just need to be more cautious and more sensible. With me, it was always a fuck it mentality, you always just go for it, and sometimes it will work,* |

| | |
|---|---|
| | *sometimes. It wouldn't work." (pg. 12, line 481-484)*<br><br>**No 1:** *"I wanna sort of start over and I can be a beginner without the psychological pressure. I know no one is putting the pressure on me, but I am putting it on myself So the only thing I can do is recognise that and try to work with it, instead of avoiding it, if that makes sense." (pg. 12, line 483-487)* |
| 4.2.1.1  Remembering one's affinity to parkour fondly while decidedly not desiring to re-enter | **No 2:** *"I was like sad not to be exercising, but I'm also really okay with it. Like I don't feel sorry (they left)" (pg. 20, line 906-908)* |
| 4.2.2.1  Demonstrating an ambivalent longing to return to parkour without demonstrating decisive actions to re-enter | **No 4:** *"This is the exact challenge between who you were and where you want to go and it's an invitation to come and play. (…) If I was on a bus I would spot different things and go 'oh that's great, cause that's brick and that's round and that's helpful." (…) some kids would like to do parkour there, but I don't think I would. Someone else might enjoy that. (pg. 11, line 457-463)*<br><br>**No 5:** *"Now, it's more, three years without it, it's hard to get back in (…) I still see a lot of friends asking me, you should come back and okay, but to start from scratch maybe? and do it again." (pg. 10, line 438-443)* |
| 4.2.2.2  Being resigned to stopping parkour while remaining interested in trying other approaches to training | **No 4:** *"If I wasn't injured and my body wasn't in the state that it's in, I would go back. Not to them ('XX' company they learnt with), but I would consider being involved. (…) create my own challenges and just treat it as another activity that I do. (pg. 13, line 554-557).*<br><br>**No 1:** *"I am not sure I'm ready to go back to 'XX' (company they learnt with). parkour is a work in progress. To be honest, I quite like the concept of 'XX', because they associate self-development. (…) Like people saying it out loud, yeah, people did self-development in their life and I think that's really nice and mature and it takes in consideration the humanity. The human bits. That's part of it. I do like that. I would like to experience that (kind of parkour training)" (pg. 12, 458-465)* |
| 4.2.2.3  Reflecting on  function of delayed decision to quit | **No 3:** *"throughout a year of the blog I quit. I'd gone round and round the issues enough respecting my own point of view to go, actually all of this is making you miserable. This hurts. The clichés that they tell you, don't apply to you for whatever reason. (…) I was trying to figure out what was going on." (pg. 7, 277-282)*<br><br>**No 2:** *"I announced my departure like weeks and weeks before I finally left." (pg. 15, line 718-719) "Maybe it was to make sure that I (…) stop, cause I could easily just kept on going, but I felt if I announced it then I had announced my intentions and then I would fulfil my intentions and also, I think it was that I felt so attached to that group of people and those instructors and I just felt like (…) I owed it to them to give them a lot of warning that I was no longer attending their class and that it wasn't a personal* |

| | |
|---|---|
| | *thing against any of them." (pg. 16, 738-744)* |

**3A:** Examples of focused coding of line by line coding

| Example interview no + line by line code | Example focused code |
|---|---|
| (4:125) Defining 'hard technique' as being to do with a strong centre and not release<br><br>(4:126) Expanding on parkour as opposition, pushing against things to create force<br><br>(4:127) Believing she was better at 'hard techniques'<br><br>(4:128) Being better at 'hard techniques' because of having so much internal tension and energy needing to be dispersed | 1.4.2.4 Seeking to match ones coping styles to movement parkour training style |
| (3:271) Agreeing that parkour helps with coping by developing a degree of mental toughness<br><br>(3:273) Believing that he had coped better with overcoming difficulties having done parkour than not | 1.4.2.3 Seeking to challenge previous adverse experiences through parkour |
| (8:93) Believing society to be closed<br><br>(8:94) Believing society to be everything on point<br><br>(8:95) Believing society to be requiring tools<br><br>(8:96) Believing that parkour breaks the ideologies of closedness<br><br>(8:99) Being able to get out even if stuck | 1.1.2.1 Breaking out away from oppressional norms |
| (6:268) Channelling energy elsewhere to not feel sad or depressed about being unable to do parkour<br><br>(6:285) Learning to channel energy elsewhere than parkour post injury | 3.2.2.2 Seeking to meet psychosocioemotional needs previously sought through parkour training through alternative means |
| (5:286) Loosing motivation with the groups he | 2.5.1.3 Being conflicted with the growing |

| | |
|---|---|
| was now in | institutionalization of parkour |
| (5:287) Experiencing the Sunday training groups as changing from small to big | |
| (5:288) Feeling that people didn't do too much in the parkour groups any more | |
| (5:438) Hating the turn he perceived parkour to be taking when it became 'something' (popular) | |
| (5:441) Not liking how parkour is turning out | |

**Appendix 4 :** Final GT longitudinal model of LoP in parkour
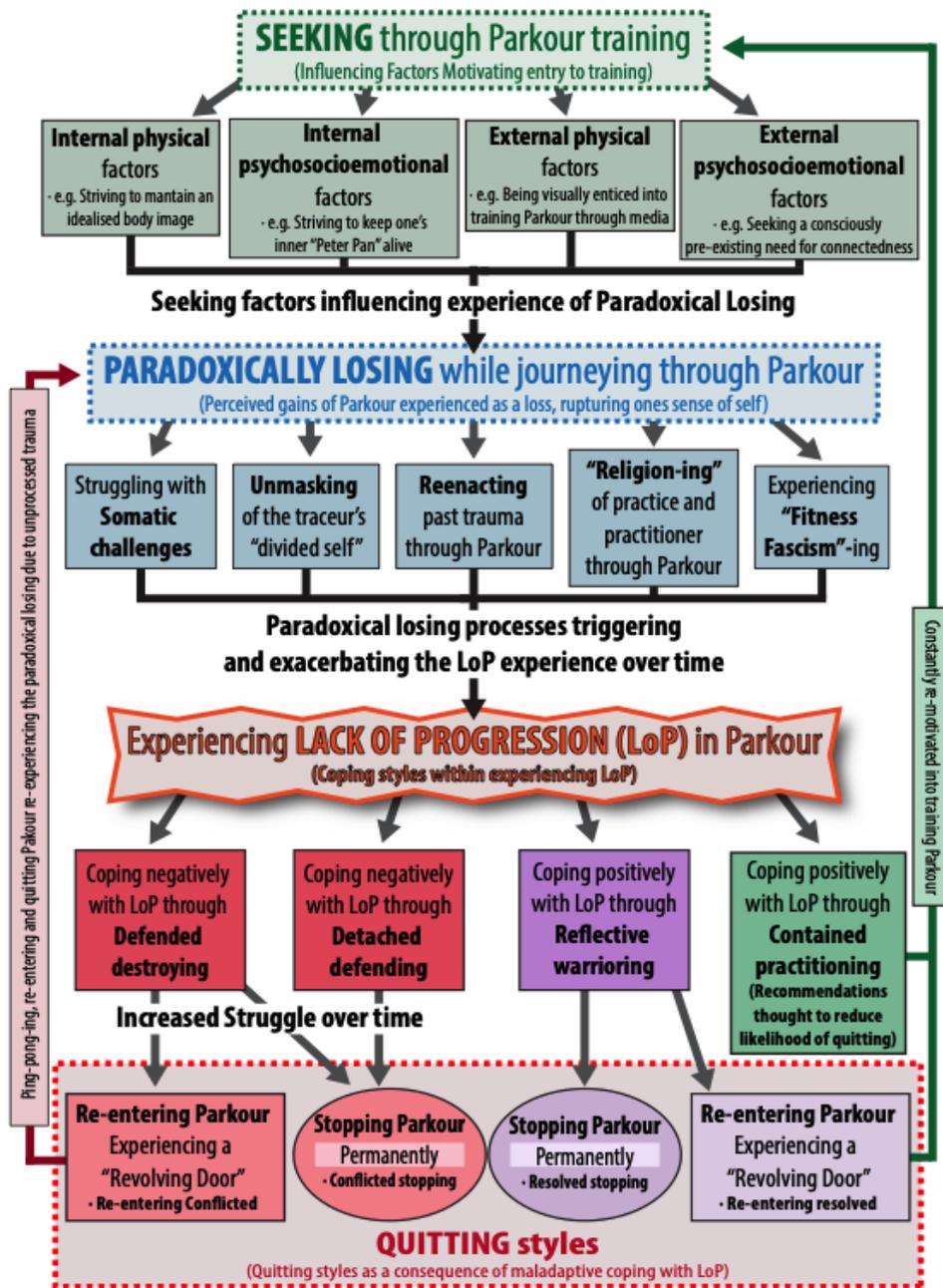


# LONGITUDINAL MODEL OF LACK OF PROGRESSION IN PARKOUR

**Appendix 5:** Draft 5 of GT model of LoP in parkour



Longitudinal model of lack of progression in Parkour
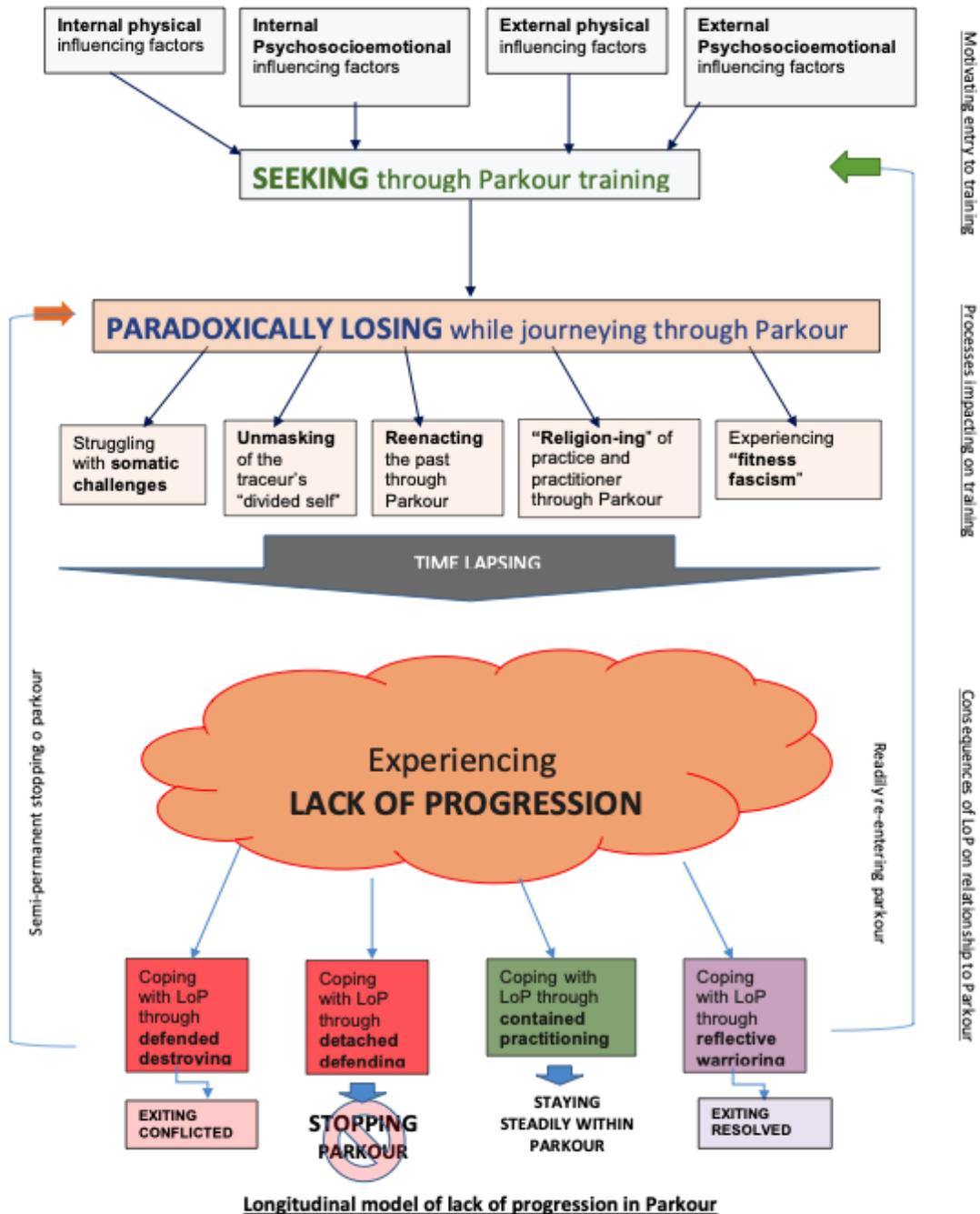
**Appendix 6:** Draft 3 of GT model of LoP in parkour
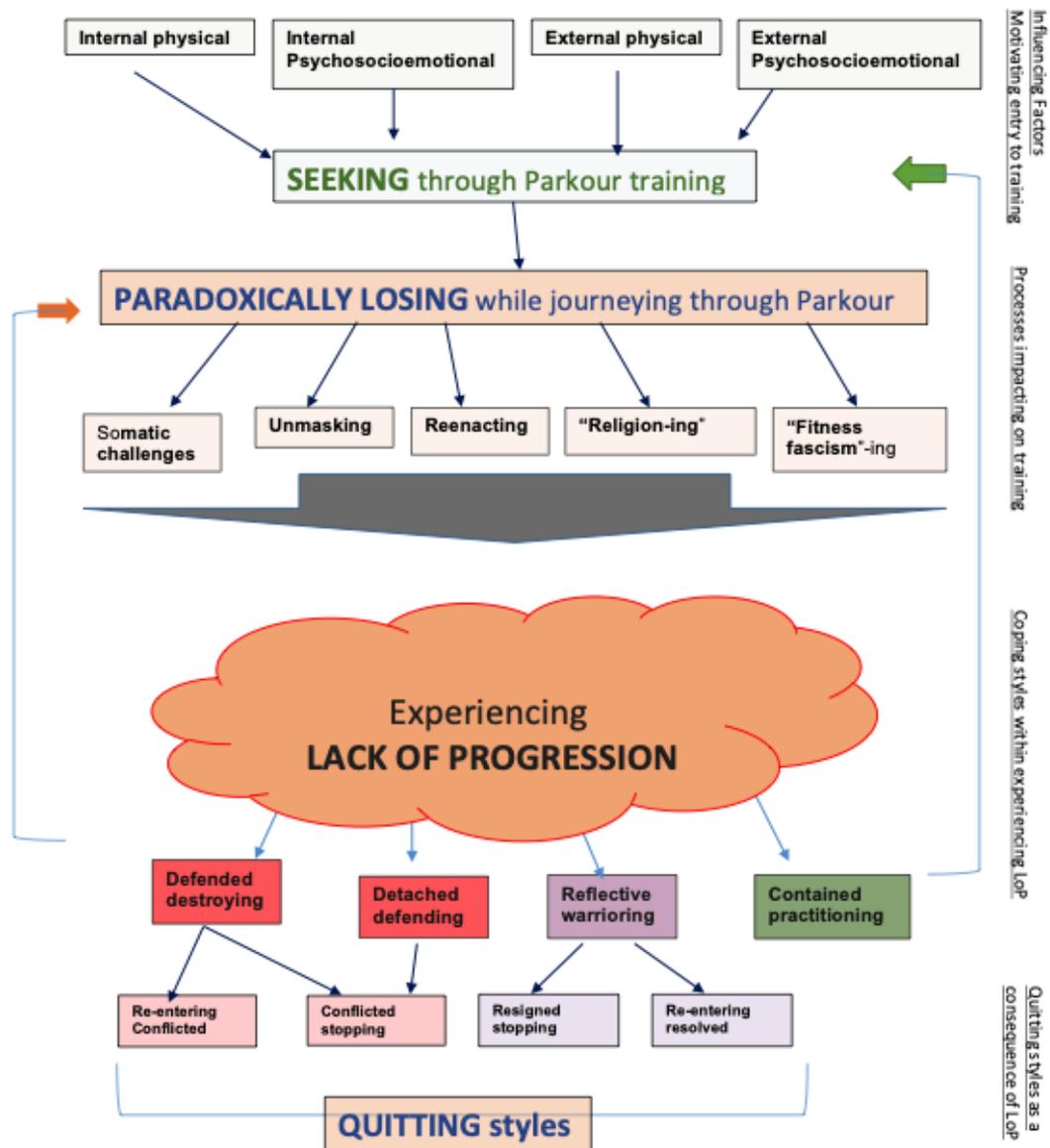


Longitudinal model of lack of progression in Parkour

**Appendix 8:** *Brainstorm of emerging GT diagramming* : showing the categories emerging, still brainstorming early ideas, attempting to identify if there was any emerging linearity.



**Appendix 9:** Mini model examples

1. ***Influencing factors mini model*** : showing the internal physical and psychosocioemotional lower concepts emerging, looking at grouping predisposing factors participants narrative showed.
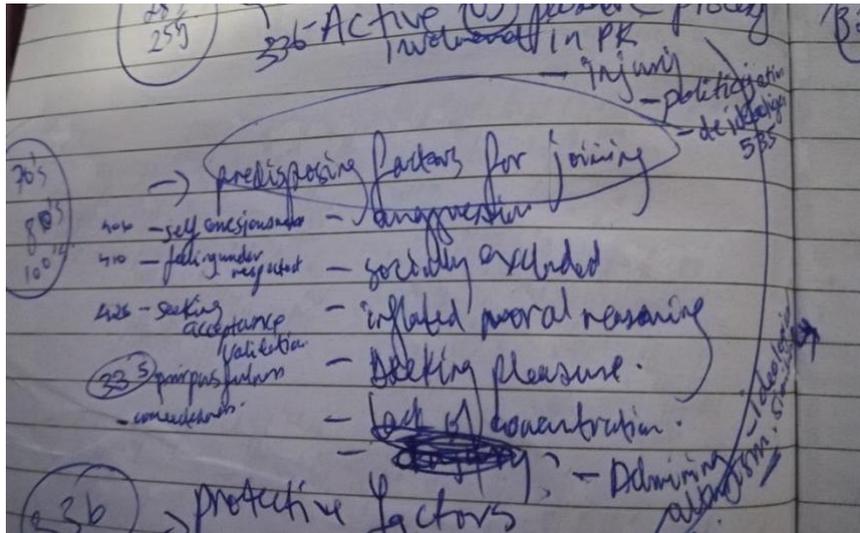
2. ***Failure mini model*** : showing the struggling with somatic challenges category thoughts beginning with concepts linking to psychosomatic barriers to self being co-constructed from participant data
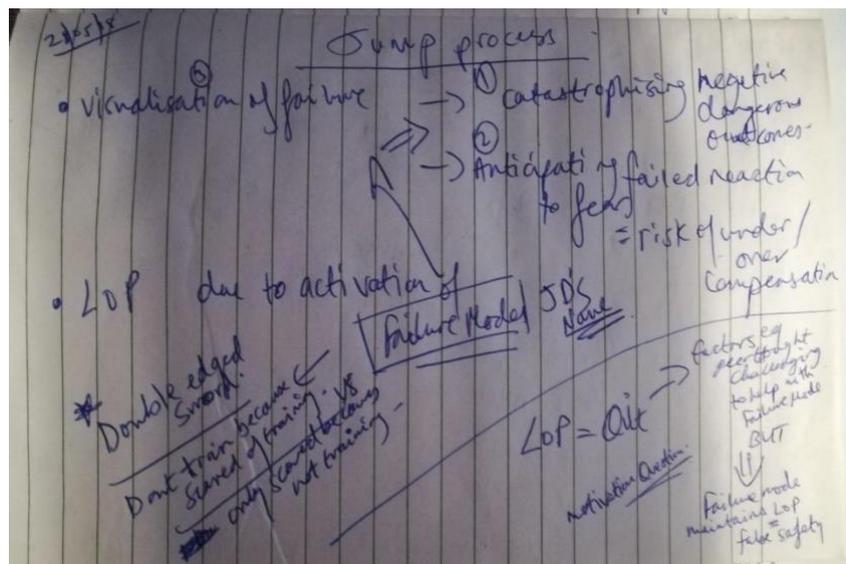


3. ***Defensiveness coping style mini model*** : showing the emergence of links between defensive coping through assertive aggression and avoidance – feeding into externalising blame destroying ad numbingly
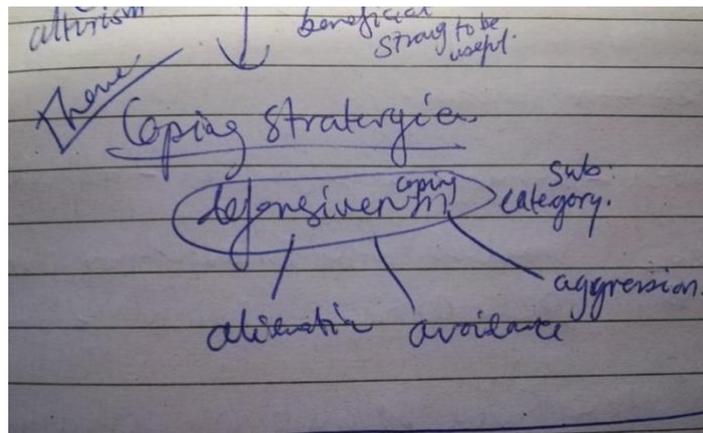
4. ***Pre-disposing factors for quitting mini model*** : feeding into types of paradoxical losing through emerging as different influencers to LoP are brought together.
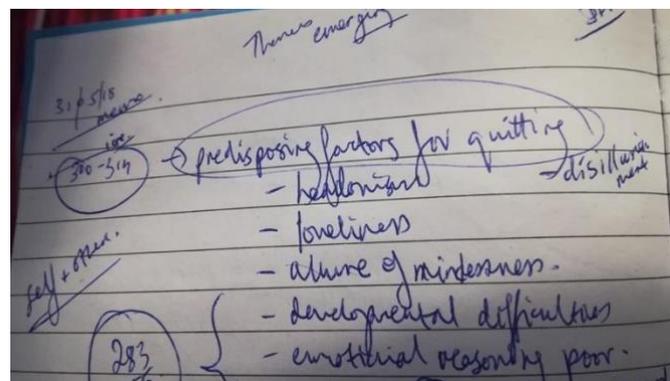


5. ***Re-traumatisation conceptualisation model*** : showing the re-enactment thoughts emerging, challenges to the sense of self, and the early experiences influencing coping till acting out – quitting.

6. ***Protective factors mini model*** : feeding into types of external and internal provisions needed for the emerging concept of safeguarding the self to reduce likelihood of LoP through contained practitioning.
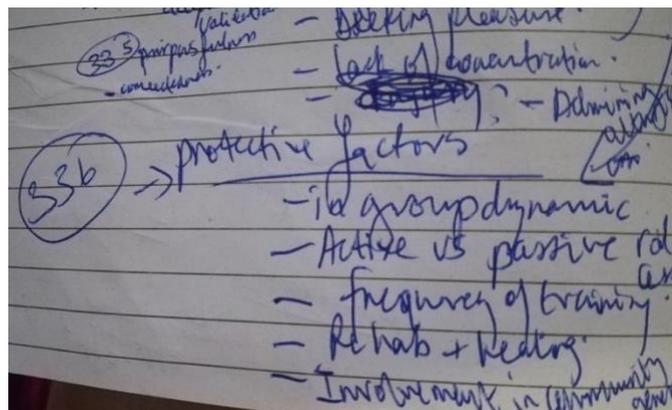


7. ***Factors reducing risk of quitting mini model*** : feeding into types of reflective practices

and cognitive challenging processes participants seemed to process in 20/20 hindsight question.
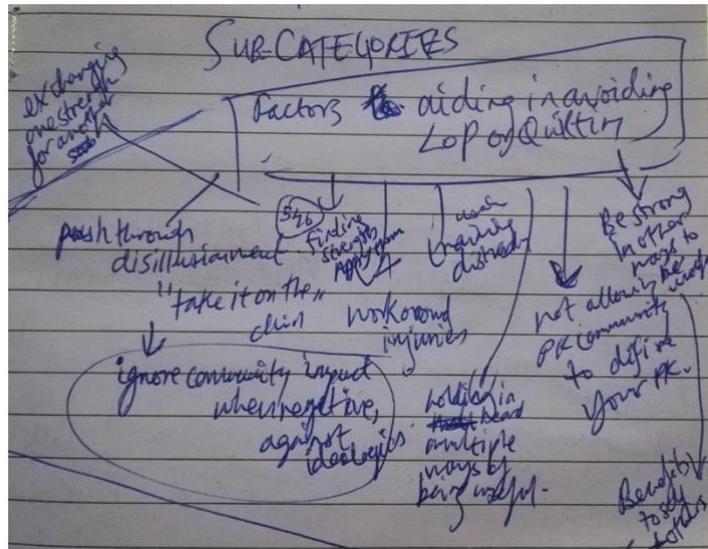


**Appendix 10:** Memoing examples

*Example 1: Conceptualised memoing* : showing how ideas on purposefulness were emerging in the thoughts of the participants, ideas of responsibility and ownership being triggered in the analysis process.

*Example 2: Conceptualised memoing* : showing the questioning of fear challenging in participants, the various contradictions in coping and how this tied in to participant personality

Example: 1



Scanned by CamScanner
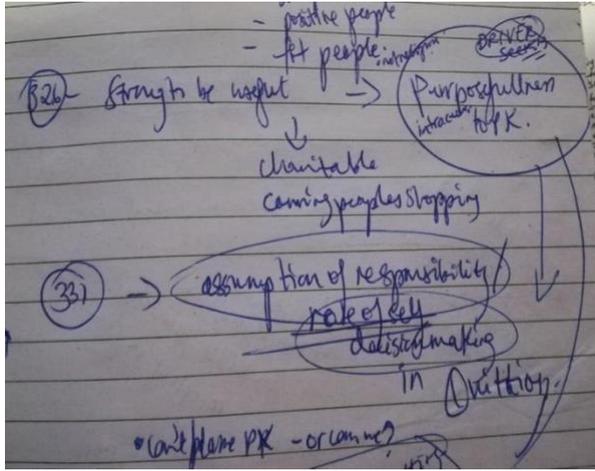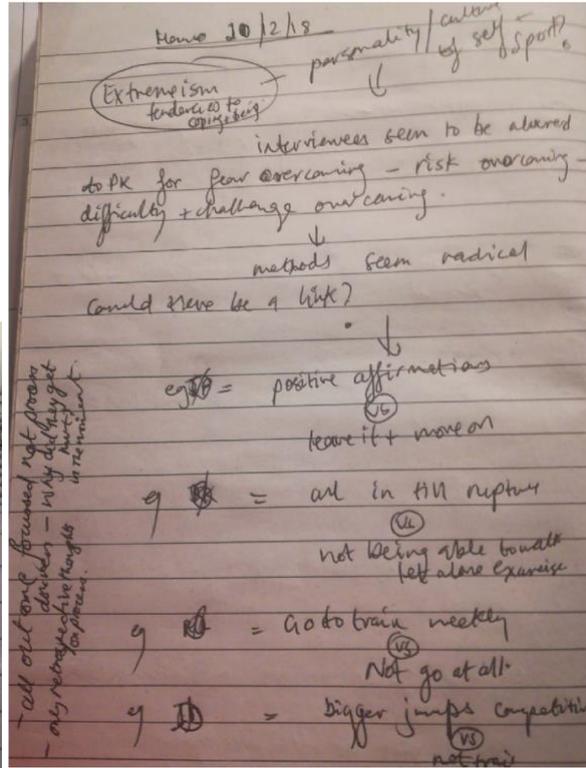
Example: 2

***Example 3: Conceptualised memoing*** : showing how ideas on what was sought in parkour physically and emotionally, coping style developing, paradoxical loss of autonomy , being triggered in the analysis process.

29/06/2018

- Previous MH
- Alienation from friends - attesting this to physical illness, not externalising blame "not friends fault" internalising blame "as I missed a lot of school " internalised further to existential questions for self-existence "what is the point "feeling hopelessness"
- PK as an outlet for "**growing confidence in self**" **-** Interestingly, however - 'XX' also seemingly struggling with truly "**being with true self**" as they were attributing confidence gaining not to an internal, intrapsychic process but to "being healthy". Not acknowledging his **Role of the "I" in managing his symptomology** even though he may have grasped the link between being nervous and exacerbated somatic symptoms **(CAPTIVITY EMBODIED vs FREEDOM EMBODIED) striving to achieve that "Other Self")**
- Seeking answers to connecting with desired self through movement - **Previously MOTIVATING COPING STYLE** (e.g. long distance running, suffering from long-standing overuse injuries - running away from the self they don't like theme).
- Getting their "**fix**" from anything with momentum e.g. music, running, climbing (strong "something very wrong with me" concept engagement). The sense of **Giving one's self** over to something else to feel better. Getting lost in **"the other"** BUT in **"the object of desire"** (PK embodying and housing the self they want to be?
- The **PK MIRRORING OXYMORONIC DUALISM OF ONE's SENSE OF SELF** - It is credited as the "Bringer of great Freedom" and "the Bringer of great Harm" - Intrapsycicly interesting that the people drawn to this dualism seem to struggle with a shattered sense of self and low self-worth, which we know from Psychodynamic theory often lends them to be drawn to people and things that directly or indirectly confirm their low self worth and undermine them but outwardly appear to be people and things that are much more self assured and strong - at time overpowering - PK appears to **ENGULF** and **CONTAIN** but also **EXPOSES, HUMILIATES** and more directly **INJURES** the self, **PHYSICALLY and INTRA PSYCHICALLY.**
- **A "BALANCE IS NEEDED"** (all interviewees said this) - **SAFEGUARDING OF THE SELF (directly and indirectly) by SELF, OTHERS and the WORLD to COMBAT the PARADOX**
- Very all or nothing for training black white - **splitting unable to hold all contradictions** - 'XX' humility and ego - in PK you are supposed to be humble but you succeed through bigger jumps.

365

Example 3: Evernote typed memo

## Appendix 11: Line by line coding examples



Transcript excerpt (left column, typed):

What did you find your understanding of what parkour was for you was?

393  What is it for me or what do I understand that it is?

Both.

384  What do I understand that it is? I understand that it is a form of getting
385  from A to B using the obstacles in your path to help you do that in the
386  most fluid way and possibly beautiful way as possible. The more ideal...
387  I don't know if the ideological is the right word, but philosophical,
388  religious. The thing where parkour practitioners feel like it's a way of
389  life is just not something that I necessarily subscribe to in that sense.
390  While I was doing the class, it's true that when I would go outside I
391  would look at the world slightly differently and think, oh look. I can
392  jump on that. Oh I could jump from there to there if I wanted to or I
393  should try but the simple fact is I was never dressed to do those sorts of
394  things and so I'd walk through the world being like, oh I could jump
395  there. Oh, you could jump on that or you could try going... I would
396  never do those things, because I wasn't wearing the right clothing and I
397  was on my way to do the rest of my life and you know. So, I would
398  never say that I practiced parkour. I was not a parkour practitioner. I

Example 1: line by line coding



Transcript excerpt (left column, typed):

Okay, so I know that you were saying that memory is a bit tricky.

1    It is on lots of things, so apologies.

That's okay. So, let's try just to remember as much as possible, because we're going to be mainly focusing on the Parkour. What got you in to it, firstly?

2    It was all the cool videos on YouTube. I used to always look at
3    videos on YouTube. I don't know how I came across it first.
4    Actually, no. When I was in primary school, I was watching TV and
5    there was a documentary and it was about some free runners in
6    France and they were just on the rooftops. I remember there was a
7    scene where one of them was talking about injuring himself, and he
8    was just walking along pointed rails, trying to impress some girls and
9    he fell over. I don't know what the documentary is, but that was my
10   first touch with Parkour. Then I completely forgot about it. Then for
11   some reason, years later, when I was in secondary school, I just
12   came across the videos and started watching it more and more.
13   Then I also started using Facebook and I went looking for old friends,
14   including friends from primary school, and it turned out, they did
15   Parkour. So, I ended up arranging to meet up, say hello, catch up
16   after five years or six years of not seeing each other since primary
17   school. We'd go out and try some Parkour.

So, it was always social?

18   It was social at the beginning, just meeting people and at first it was

366

Example 2:  line by line coding
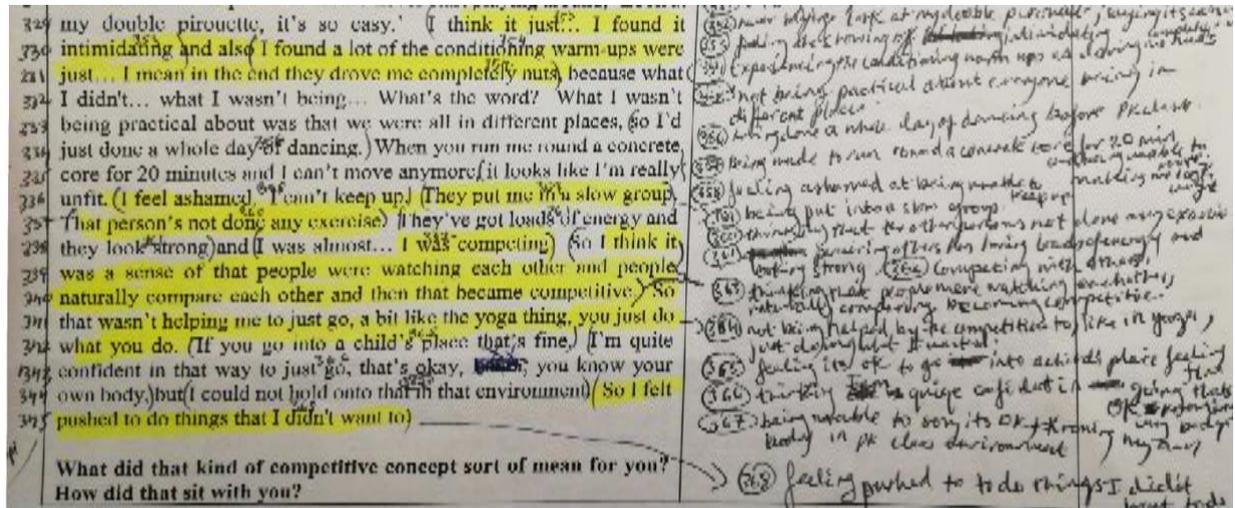


Example 3:  line by line coding

**Appendix 12:** Information sheet for interviewees:

Dear Participant,

You are being invited to participate in a study exploring the experiences of LoP and burn out in parkour.

I am particularly interested in your experiences of doing parkour, any factors that you have found influential for your personal development through it, your struggles with it and your experience of stopping your participation with it.

I am a student at London Metropolitan University, currently studying towards a Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology. I am hoping to do this piece of research as my doctoral thesis.

For this study I am looking for participants who:

   ·Are no longer training parkour
   · Have not previously completed any teaching courses in the discipline of

```
parkour
· Are aged between 18-64 years old.
```

To participate you would be required to attend an in-depth interview about different aspects of your experience of training and quitting parkour. The interview will last for approximately one hour.

If you do decide to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form. You are free to withdraw this consent at any time and without giving a reason. If you do decide to withdraw from the study all your existing data will be removed from the study and destroyed. You may find that talking in depth about your experience may be a very personal, and potentially emotional experience, therefore if you find any of the interview questions difficult or intrusive you are not obliged to answer.

Your interview will be digitally recorded to allow your responses to be reviewed in detail after the interview. This recording will be securely stored within the researcher's or supervisor's premises and all identifiable information that is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Your information will be removed from the data and anonymized. The consent forms will be kept separately from the data, and will only serve to verify that proper consent has been obtained. (Please note that confidentiality might not apply in certain circumstances, e.g., if information disclosed indicates immediate risk to someone's safety).

Whether you chose to take part in the study or not is entirely at your discretion.

All data will be destroyed after completion of the publishers' requirements to archive the data for further investigation by other researchers, e.g. for purposes of meta-analysis.

Please note that my director of studies or the external examiner may request access to the data to assess its accuracy and compliance with certain guidelines and protocols. I also intending on submitting the completed study for publication with a renowned journal. Successful publication would require me to retain all data for a certain length of time which could be about five years, depending on the journal.

Should interviewees wish to request a copy of the final study upon its completion, it will be available from January 2019.

This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Review Panel at London Metropolitan University  and will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines provided by the British Psychological Society.
 If you have any questions, comments or complaints about this study please do not hesitate to get in touch with me in person, via phone or email. Alternatively, you can also contact my supervisor directly, Dr Catherine Athanasiadou- Lewis at c.athanasiadoulewis@londonmet.ac.uk or on  0207 133 2669

Thank you very much in advance for your time, it is much appreciated.


Kind regards,

Kasturi Torchia

Email: kat0266@my.londonmet.ac.uk




**Appendix 13:** Consent form for interviewees:




Research Project: An exploration of a traceur's experience of  LoP in parkour: A GT study.

1. I confirm that I have read and fully understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

   Please tick box.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

   Please tick box.

3. I understand the interviews will be audio recorder and the use of verbatim quotes will be used in the reporting of the study. Information that has the potential to reveal the participants identity will be omitted.

   Please tick box.

4. I agree to take part in the above study.

   Please tick box.

5. I understand I am free to withdraw from the study at any point and all my existing data will be removed and destroyed.

   Please tick box.

..............................          ..............................          ................
Name of Participant                    Signature                              Date


..............................          ..............................          ................
Name of Researcher                     Signature                              Date


## **Appendix 14:** Debrief sheet for interviewees:

Dear Participant,

Thank you very much for taking part in this study and giving us you time, it is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions or concerns following the completion of the interview, now or at any point in the future, please contact:

Kasturi Torchia

Email: kat0266@my.londonmet.ac.uk/espritconcrete@gmail.com
Phone: 07908687599

Or my supervisor:
Dr Catherine Athanasiadou- Lewis
E mail: c.athanasiadoulewis@londonmet.ac.uk
Phone: 0207 133 2669

If taking part in this study has caused you any distress and you feel the need to speak to someone we encourage you to visit your GP who will be able to provide you with advice and guidance.

As mentioned before, you can request a copy of the completed study. This will be available in October 2017. Please contact me at any time with your interest via the contact details provided above.

Thanks you again for your time and cooperation,

Kasturi Torchia

## Appendix 15: Distress protocol for interviewees:

This protocol has been has been devised to deal with the possibility that some participants may become distressed and/or agitated during their involvement in the present research study on experiences of LoP in parkour. This topic area, being very subjective for participants, may bring up some current of historical psychological trauma experienced as well as difficult or trying recollections of their stories.

Kasturi Torchia is a trainee counselling psychologist at London Metropolitan University with experience in managing situations where distress can and often inevitably does occur. A three step protocol detailing signs of distress that the researcher will look out for, as well as action to take at each stage is outlined below.

Although it is not expected that extreme distress will occur, neither that the relevant actions within the protocol will become necessary, steps to manage this in the event of its occurrence is paramount. This is especially prudent in this study, as it is expected that most of the participants will not have access to professional services within which there would usually be an existing structure set up to deal with extreme distress, implemented by respective professionals.

**1. Mild distress:**

Signs of distress:

1. Tearing up
2. Voice breaking down, choking with emotion, difficulty speaking
3. Participant becomes distracted and/or restless, overly avoidant

Management of distress:

1. Ask participant if they are happy to continue
2. Offer them time to pause and re-compose themselves
3. Remind them of their right to stop at any time without justification if they become too distressed

**2. Severe distress:**

Signs of distress:

1. Uncontrolled crying or wailing, inability to for sentences coherently

2. Panic attack/ panic like symptoms e.g. hyperventilation, shaking, fear of impending heart attack, sweating excessively
3. Intrusive thoughts of the traumatic event e.g. flashbacks of a fall

Management of distress:

1. The researcher will terminate the interview/experiment prematurely.
2. The debrief will begin immediately
3. Relaxation techniques will be suggested to regulate breathing/ reduce agitation
4. The researcher will acknowledge and empathise with participants' distress, and reassuring them and normalising their experiences as common reactions to distressing events.
5. If any unresolved issues arise during the interview, researcher will acknowledge and validate their distress, reminding participants that although the interview is not designed as a therapeutic interaction, they would benefit from discussing this further with a GP or mental health professional.
6. Details of suitable counselling/therapeutic services will be offered to participants

**3. Extreme distress:**

Signs of distress:

1. Severe agitation and possible verbal or physical aggression
2. In very extreme cases, possible psychotic breakdown or participants reliving a traumatic incident such as an injury or fall, possibly begins to lose touch with reality

Management of distress:

1. Maintain safety of participant and researcher
2. If the researcher has concerns for the participant's safety or anyone else's, she will inform them that she has a duty to inform her supervisor and act upon their recommendation, albeit keeping the participant informed about actions throughout.
3. If the researcher believes that either the participant or someone else is in immediate danger, then she will suggest that they present themselves to the local A&E Department and ask for the on-call psychiatric liaison team.
4. If the participant is unwilling to seek immediate help and becomes violent, then the Police will be called and asked to use their powers under the Mental Health Act to detain someone and take them to a place of safety pending psychiatric assessment. (This last option is a last resort and would only be used in an extreme emergency)

**Appendix 16:** Initial approved interview schedule used for interviewees:

The researcher will use Glaser's concepts of "atmosphering" and "toning" (Scott, 2011) to create an environment in which the participant feels comfortable enough to risk sharing their experiences of parkour and their LoP. In addition, the researcher will use a conversational tone such that the participant feels contained, safe from harm, respected and not judged.

When using electronic communications extra care will be taken to choose a technology that the participant understands and is comfortable with the researcher using. The interviews will be conducted face to face and should take approximately an hour. Face to face interviews will be conducted in a comfortable location preferably a neutral location, void of any personal related influence on either the researcher or participant part.

The interview will include a semblance of the following script:

Introduction: My name is Kasturi and I am looking to explore .......... experiences using GT. GT is a research method specifically designed to abstract data away from any particular person place or time in order to develop a theory about what is going on in the research area [pause] in this parkour. I will not be using your name nor collecting any data that might reveal personally sensitive information. All interview data will be coded in a way that cannot be traced back to you.

In fact, if you feel overly uncomfortable in any way during our conversation you are free to end participation our session and opt out of the research without explanation,  and all notes will be destroyed.

The interview is really a conversation that will allow you to share your experience with me.  Before we begin, do you have any questions for me about the project, this session or anything else?

As I mentioned before I am particularly interested in your experiences in and around parkour. So…..

**[Example Grand Tour Question 1:]** "Can you please share with me a bit about you?"

**[Example Grand Tour Question 2:]** "Tell me a little bit about what got you into parkour".

**[Example Grand Tour Question 3:]** "Can you remember any experiences that you felt were positive during your time with parkour?"

**[Example Grand Tour Question 4:]** "Could you tell me a little bit about what it was like for you to experience this?"

Prompts: Feelings/thoughts/behaviours

**[Example Grand Tour Question 5:]** "Can you remember any experiences that you felt were more negative during your time with parkour?"

**[Example Grand Tour Question 6:]** "Could you tell me a little bit about what it was like for you to experience this?"

Prompts: Feelings/thoughts/behaviours

**[Example Grand Tour Question 7:]** "How did you find yourself coping with these experiences?"

Prompts: Internal/external/self/others

**[Example Grand Tour Question 8:]** "People say hind sight is 20/20, looking back on it, is there anything you would have done differently?"

Probes: If the participant should pause…I may say… "please go on"…or repeat the last word spoken or simply say… "tell me more about…"

Upon concluding the interview, the researcher will enquire as to how the participant is feeling about having just done it. If any distress is shared, the researcher will try to appease the participant and if this is ineffective, they will make contact with their supervisor and follow the protocol previously approved by the ethics board in the proposal. They will be debriefed and informed that should they have any further questions about the session or the next steps, the researcher and their supervisor will be contactable via the respective contact information provided in the information sheet.

**Example of Grand Tour Questions added for theoretical sampling:**

"What were/are your motivations for re-entering parkour if any?"

"What are the persisting factors that maintain your decision to dissit/stop/quit parkour?"

"How did you process these hurdles?"

"How did you find yourself coping with you LoP?"

"What processes do you feel contributed to your LoP?"

"How did you feel being unable to continue parkour?"

"How did you make sense of your decision to leave/re-enter parkour?"

"What do you miss about training parkour?"

"What would you need to have in place for you to re-enter parkour training?"

"What do you imagine it will be like for you to return to training?"

"What needs to happen for you to re-enter parkour training"

"Where do you find what you got from parkour now that you do no train parkour anymore?

**Appendix 17:** Signposting contact information given to interviewees upon request:

1. Samaritans

Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

Phone: 116 123 (free 24-hour helpline)

Website: www.samaritans.org.uk

2.  No Panic

Voluntary charity offering support for sufferers of panic attacks and OCD. Offers a course to help overcome your phobia/OCD. Includes a helpline.

Phone: 0844 967 4848 (daily, 10am-10pm

Website: www.nopanic.org.uk

3.  Mind

Promotes the views and needs of people with mental health problems.

Phone: 0300 123 3393 (Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm)

Website: www.mind.org.uk

**Appendix 18:** Ethics review panel proof of approval:

London Metropolitan University,
School of Psychology,
Research Ethics Review Panel

I can confirm that the following project has received ethical approval by one anonymous reviewer and the School of Social Sciences (Klaus Fischer) to proceed with the following research project:

*Title:* An exploration of a traceur's experience of lack of progression in Parkour: A Grounded Theory study

*Student:* Kasturi Torchia

*Supervisor:* Dr. Catherine Athanasiadou-Lewis

Ethical clearance to proceed has been granted providing that the study follows the ethical guidelines used by the School of Psychology and British Psychological Society, and incorporates any relevant changes required by the Research Ethics Review Panel. All participating organisations should provide formal consent allowing the student to collect data from their staff.

The researcher is also responsible for conducting the research in an ethically acceptable way, and should inform the ethics panel if there are any substantive changes to the project that could affect its ethical dimensions, and re-submit the proposal if it is deemed necessary.

Signed: *Lange-Küttner*                                    Date: 23 January 2017

Prof Dr Chris Lange-Küttner
(Chair - Psychology Research Ethics Review Panel)

Email c.langekuettner@londonmet.ac.uk

**Appendix 19:** Reflections form an anonymous client: formulating using the LoP Model

I've been struggling with having a healthy relationship with social media, and... parko…

     **Athlete & Coach**
15 February at 01:39 ·

I've been struggling with having a healthy relationship with social media, and... parkour. I've always liked sharing what I'm up to, but lately when I scroll through Instagram I'm just boiling with jealousy- after 10yrs of parkour, I thought I would be further along by now as a parkour athlete. I thought I'd be thinner by now for how strong I am. I thought I'd be... happier.

I started working with      · and been exploring why I get stopped in the goals I want (the total resistance I have to learning backflips!) I was shocked at the realization that my mentality around parkour is not that much different than when I used to have an eating disorder 10 years ago. My training has become the new obsession to try to control myself- to try to have the perfect body.

I'm newly being honest with myself- I've discovered the very thing I struggle with, control, is what makes parkour such a struggle for me- where can't I be in total control? When I'm in the air. So backflips occur as impossible, kong pre's or running jumps are unobtainable when I'm in this skewed perception of needing to feel control.

And because of being a perfectionist, I bring an "all or nothing" mentality to my training - if I don't see progress, I shut down. I give up on that goal. In reality for the 10-20hrs a week I budget for myself to train, I've probably been training a quarter of that. And I've totally avoided being honest with myself about how much I give up.

Tbh I've been in such a fantasy about who I'll be in the future for these last many years I feel burnt out. I'm at the point that if I make another goal and fail at it, I'd be ready to quit. I want to learn how to play again, I love what      said to me, I get to relearn how to learn. Learning doesn't have to be a forceful experience- it can be one that's responsible for how to build confidence while allowing myself to be out of control. That's what's next for this journey in movement.

Shoutout to    how much respect I have for her, for providing a space for me to unravel built up trauma.

My social media has always been about sharing and honesty. So I hope you get something out of reading this.

Love                Comment                Share