

**Occupational Balance in Families:
The Lived Experience of Dual Earner Parents and School-Aged Children**

Marie-Christine Ranger

Thesis submitted to the University of Ottawa
in partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the
Doctorate in Rehabilitation Sciences

School of Rehabilitation Sciences
Faculty of Health Sciences
University of Ottawa

© Marie-Christine Ranger, Ottawa, Canada, 2022

Table of contents

List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vii
Legend	viii
Abstract	ix
Acknowledgements.....	xi
Copyrighted Contents	xii
Chapter 1 - Introduction and Literature Review	1
Introduction	1
Background	1
Purpose Statement and Unique Contributions	4
Research Methodology and Questions.....	5
Theoretical Frameworks	5
The Dimensions of Occupation	6
The Lived Existentials.....	7
Definitions of key terms.....	10
Literature review.....	13
Family.....	13
The Concept of Family: Definition and Theory.....	13
Dual Earner Families	15
The Roles of Worker and Nurturer	16
Occupations in Families	18
Occupational balance	19
Theoretical Perspectives on Occupational Balance.....	19
The Experience of Occupational Balance.....	25
Occupational Balance and Health	26
Occupational Balance in this Research	26
Personal and Socio-Environmental Factors Influencing Occupational Balance	27
Occupational Balance in Family Caregivers and Mothers of Children with Disabilities	29
Occupational Balance in Parents.....	30
Occupational Balance in Children.....	32
Chapter 2 - Methodology	35

Research Design and Rationale.....	35
Researcher Assumptions	38
Participants	39
Data collection methods and procedures	40
Daily Occupational Schedules	41
Occupational Map	42
Phenomenological Interviews.....	44
Photo-elicitation Interviews.....	45
Research Process.....	48
Initial Contact (T1)	51
Second Contact (T2)	51
Third Contact (T3).....	51
Fourth Contact (T4)	53
Fifth Contact (T5).....	53
Sixth Contact (T6)	53
Seventh Contact (T7)	54
Pilot Testing	56
Data Analysis.....	56
Thematic Analysis.....	56
Reflection	58
Dialogic Process.....	59
Reflexivity	60
Criteria to Ensure Quality of Phenomenological Research.....	60
Ethics	62
Chapter 3 - Findings: Families and Occupational Balance.....	64
Presentation of families.....	64
Family 1.....	64
Family 2.....	66
Family 3.....	68
Family 4.....	69
Togetherness and Family Occupational Balance	74
Eating dinner as a family.....	75
Family leisure	81

Chapter 4 - Findings: Individual Occupational Balance	88
Refocusing on self and individual occupational balance	88
Intentional activities	92
Creation.....	93
Centration	95
Contemplation.....	97
Contribution	98
Connection	99
Combination of more than one intentional activity	100
Younger children: playing, feeling good and having fun	102
The dynamic nature of individual occupational balance.....	106
The quest for individual occupational balance	107
Recalibration	113
Chapter 5 - Reflections on Findings	120
Intention as an essence of family occupational balance for parents	121
Intention and the dimensions of occupation: doing, belonging and becoming	122
Intention and the lived existentials: temporality	124
Restoration as an essence of individual occupational balance.....	125
Restoration and the dimensions of occupation: doing and being	126
Restoration and the lived existentials: temporality, corporeality, and spatiality	129
Equity as an essence of individual occupational balance for parents.....	131
Equity and the dimensions of occupation: doing, being and belonging.....	133
Equity and the lived existentials: temporality and corporeality	134
Reconsideration - the challenges to studying the experience of occupational balance	139
Occupational balance is a complex concept	139
Occupational balance: theory versus experience	140
Studying occupational balance from a strength-based perspective.....	141
Implications for occupational therapy and science	142
Research limitations	146
Future research	148
Closing the circle(s)	150
Appendix A.....	154
Appendix B.....	156

Appendix C.....	157
Appendix D	165
Appendix F.....	169
Appendix G	171
Appendix H	176
Appendix I.....	178
Appendix J.....	182
Appendix K.....	184
Appendix L	188
Appendix M	191
References	192

List of Tables

Table 1	<i>Procedures summary</i>	p. 67
Table 2	<i>Existentials and their meaning according to van Manen (2014)</i>	p. 70
Table 3	<i>Overview of families</i>	p. 85
Table 4	<i>Summary of occupations and their types according to the participants, themes and essences highlighted in this research</i>	p. 154

List of Figures

Figure 1	<i>Dimensions of occupation</i>	p. 20
Figure 2	<i>Lived existentials</i>	p. 22
Figure 3	<i>The combined theoretical frameworks</i>	p. 23
Figure 4	<i>Occupational map, example 1</i>	p. 55
Figure 5	<i>Occupational map, example 2</i>	p. 56
Figure 6	<i>Staged photograph</i>	p. 60
Figure 7	<i>Research process and activities</i>	p. 62
Figure 8	<i>Mary Pratt, Supper Table (1969)</i>	p. 87
Figure 9	<i>The family dinner in a participating family</i>	p. 92
Figure 10 and Figure 11	<i>Examples of family leisure in participating families</i>	p. 93
Figure 12	<i>Younger children often found individual occupational balance in the presence of their family</i>	p. 114
Figure 13	<i>Younger children reported sports and outdoor activities as contributing to the experience of occupational balance</i>	p. 115
Figure 14	<i>Playing, feeling good and having fun was the theme for the younger children's experience of individual occupational balance</i>	p. 117
Figure 15	<i>Perspectives to time characteristic of mothers and fathers</i>	p. 148

Legend

OT Occupational therapy

OS Occupational science

Abstract

Parents in dual earner families with school-aged children report significant time constraints. Occupational balance refers to the distribution of time in various occupations in accordance with one's values and it has been related to well-being. While occupational balance has been studied from an individual perspective, no study to date has taken a family perspective. This research explores the lived experience and meaning of occupational balance for dual earner parents and school-aged children. Multiple perspectives were obtained to capture family occupational balance as well as individual occupational balance. This research contributes to a greater appreciation of the complex phenomenon of occupational balance. Furthermore, it adds to the ongoing conversation in occupational science on the relational aspects of occupation. For this interpretive phenomenological research, semi-structured interviews were used with parents and photo-elicitation interviews with children. Four families were recruited, for a total of 18 participants. Additional methods of data collection included individual daily schedules and a family occupational map. Lived existentials and the dimensions of occupation were used as analytical frameworks to understand the phenomenon of occupational balance. Findings reveal that family occupational balance is experienced through the theme of *togetherness* and enacted in two occupations: the family dinner and family leisure. For adults and older siblings, individual occupational balance is experienced through *refocusing on self* as illustrated in intentional activities; while *playing, feeling good and having fun* was central to the experience of individual occupational balance in younger siblings. A reflection on these findings is provided through 3 essences of the experience of occupational balance in families: *intention, restoration, and equity*. Implications for occupational therapy and occupational science highlight the dynamic and relational aspects of occupational balance in families. Unique contributions include the 3

essences which are more evocative, discernable, and therefore more applicable to research and practice than the taken for granted phenomenon of occupational balance.

Acknowledgements

My first thank-you goes to Professor Rose Martini, who embarked on this journey with me and has been unfailingly enthusiastic from the start. This work was done in constant dialogue with her, and I am deeply grateful for the time she has invested in my research as well as for her availability, generosity, and invaluable insights. Thank you for accompanying me every step of the way, Rose. My thesis advisory committee has provided continuous guidance and methodological expertise. Thank you to Professor Denise Moreau, who (re)planted the idea of doing a doctoral degree. Thank you also for your thorough reading of my work and for asking the right questions, Denise. Thank you to Professor Roanne Thomas, who made me feel at home from the very first day of class in the doctoral program and who opened my eyes to the world of creative and visual methods. Thank you also for encouraging my reflections, Roanne.

Thank you to the professors at the Faculty of Health Sciences with whom I was able to discuss my research, with special thanks to Professors Paulette Guitard, Mary Egan, Viola Polomeno and Claire-Jehanne Dubouloz. I am also grateful for the financial support of the School of Rehabilitation Sciences at the University of Ottawa, the Canadian Occupational Therapy Foundation, and the Canadian Society of Occupational Scientists. I am thankful for the supportive network of fellow graduate students and the occupational therapists in the Martini lab for our stimulating exchanges and their help with recruitment.

Finally, I am grateful for the families who participated in this research for sharing their lived experiences. Thank you for trusting me with your words and making me appreciate even more the time I have with my own family. I thank my immediate family for their encouragement from start to finish. Thank you for the meals you invented and for proving that simple moments can be extraordinary. I would not want to share my daily life with anyone else. To my extended family and friends: thank you for checking in on me and for cheering me on.

Copyrighted Contents

Requestor	Marie-Christine Ranger PhD Candidate <u>Rehabilitation Sciences</u> University of Ottawa
Publication Exhibition Or Other	PhD dissertation on Family occupational balance in dual earner families with school-aged children
Image(s)	<i>Supper Table (1969)</i>
Copyright	©Estate of Mary Pratt
Edition (number of copies of publication)	n/a
Languages	English
Distribution	The PhD dissertation will be made available to the public through <u>uO</u> Research (uOttawa's institutional repository)
Credit lines	Mary Pratt, <i>Supper Table</i> (1969)

Page 1/3

Special permissions	
Royalty Fees	Royalty fees are calculated using the CARFAC formula. Applicable only if the publication is offered for sale. https://carfac-raav.ca/2020-en/section-2/#B.4.1 <u>Print reproductions related to exhibitions and screenings</u> ████████████████████

Address for payment	John Pratt [REDACTED]
Contact	Anne Pratt [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Page 2/3

Conditions of reproduction permission

- Permission is granted for one-time, non-exclusive usage in the publication identified on page 1 (one) above, for 1 (one) edition, in the agreed-upon languages and with the distribution described.
- Reproduction in editions in other languages; subsequent new editions; electronic (digital) editions or any other edition require a unique request.
- If requested, colour proofs or digital review proofs must be provided to the Family and Estate of Mary Pratt.
- The image must not be reproduced on colour or textured stock.
- Nothing may be superimposed on the image without prior permission.
- The image may not be cropped without prior permission.
- The image may not be altered with photo editing software or manipulated in any way.

Online use

- All appropriate Technical Protection Measures will be enabled to ensure images are protected from downloading.
- The publisher will disable right-clicking or downloading of images on their site. All high-resolution 300 DPI files will be recompressed to 72 DPI for display on the web.
- The credit line, as provided, must be shown in immediate proximity to the image, or in that section of the publication devoted to acknowledgements.

The Family and Estate of Mary Pratt reserve the right to refuse or revoke permission for use of reproduction(s) if these conditions are not met, or if the is reproduced inappropriately.



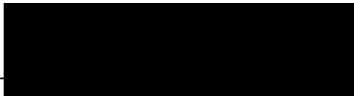
Signature

Anne Pratt (for John Pratt)

Print

Family and Estate of Mary Pratt

Date: July 3 2021



Signature

Marie-Christine Ranger

Print

Date: July 2nd 2021

Chapter 1 - Introduction and Literature Review

Introduction

Background

Significant sociological, demographical, and economic changes have influenced families in recent decades (Pronovost, 2015). More than ever, families exist in a diversity of structures and compositions. Families where both parents are working full-time are quickly becoming the norm in North America (Bernardo et al., 2015; Pronovost, 2015; Vanier Institute of the Family, 2016) with parents' paid work taking up most of their daily schedule (Pronovost, 2015). The daily lives of today's families are increasingly characterized by multiple concurrent demands on time. What needs to be done and what family members want to do are constantly in competition for the same limited resource: time. Today's families feel like they are living at a constant, accelerated pace. The Canadian Mental Health Association reports 58% of the population feels an overload with respect to the activities they have to perform in all areas of life (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2016).

These challenges are compounded in families of dual earner parents with school-aged children. In this stage of family life, parents are simultaneously negotiating a role in the workplace while still adapting to their role of partner and parent (Hutchison, 2012). Furthermore, these adaptations take place when young families are particularly active (Pronovost, 2015; Rönkä & Korvela, 2009). This seems to be the case in Western countries where there is a tendency towards the intensification of parenting (Craig et al., 2014; Hall, 2007) whereby, parents of school-aged children become more and more involved in the direct care of their children, oftentimes prioritizing their children's perceived needs over their own. Parents' time away from work is centered around their children, assisting them with homework, accompanying them to afterschool lessons, driving them to various sports or other activities, in

a concerted effort to encourage their children to explore different interests and provide opportunities for them to socialize with other children their age (Hofferth et al., 2009; Ziviani et al., 2010).

School-aged children's lives appear busier and more scheduled than in previous generations (Darlington & Rodger, 2006; Harden et al., 2013). To accommodate their parents' work schedule, most school-aged children spend time in some form of afterschool childcare (Darlington & Rodger, 2006; Hofferth & al., 2009). In addition, they participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities (e.g., sport, music) for which they are dependent on their parents for commuting to and from (Harden et al., 2013). When afterschool time is spent in structured activities, it leaves less time for free play whether indoors or outdoors (Darlington & Rodger, 2006). Because one family member's schedule influences the schedules of other members, the ensuing multiple schedules in families are oftentimes a challenge to coordinate (Brannen et al., 2013). Furthermore, time constraints and highly scheduled lives expose families to stress with the resulting individual and collective consequences. "Time pressure, similar to economic constraints, carries negative well-being and emotional implications. ... busier lives of "time-poor" respondents clearly carry an emotional price tag" (Zuzanek, 2017, p. 34). Occupational science (OS) and occupational therapy (OT) are uniquely positioned to foster understandings of time-use and occupations in families.

OT is a rehabilitation profession defined by Townsend and Polatajko (2007) as "[the] art and science of enabling engagement in everyday living, through occupation; of enabling people to perform the occupations that foster health and well-being; and of enabling a just and inclusive society so that all people may participate to their potential in the daily occupations of life" (p. 372). OS is the science which informs and supports the development of OT. It studies humans as occupational beings (Wilcock & Hocking, 2015) and seeks to understand the

relationship between occupation and health in individuals and communities (Law et al., 1998; Wilcock, 2007). OS research is interested in the organization of occupations within a day or throughout the life course and how people experience their occupations (World Federation of Occupational Therapists, 2005). Of central concern to the discipline of OS are the personal and socio-cultural meanings of daily activities (Larson & Zemke, 2003). Where OT has typically been client-centered and individualized, OS's scope is much broader. As a rehabilitation profession, OT has focused on interventions for individuals who have a disability, but it has the potential to expand beyond to positively influence the health of groups and communities (Hocking, 2013). An occupational perspective on health promotion takes a holistic view, which means that instead of focusing on discrete activities and habits, such as physical activity, nutrition, or smoking cessation, it recognizes that all the activities we carry out everyday have an impact on our health. It helps link activity patterns to health and well-being. One aspect of a healthy occupational life is occupational balance (Moll et al., 2015).

For the purpose of this research, occupational balance will be defined as the umbrella term used in OS and OT to designate all concepts related to the distribution of time in various occupations in accordance with one's values and within a health and well-being perspective (Matuska, 2012; Wagman et al., 2015; Westhorp, 2003). Occupational balance encompasses such constructs as occupational integrity, balance in everyday occupations, lifestyle balance and life balance (Clouston, 2015; Jonsson et al., 2014). To date, the relationship between occupational balance and health has been explored at the level of the individual. In individuals, a lack of occupational balance has been associated with sleep disturbances and fatigue (Erlandsson & Eklund, 2006; Håkansson & Ahlborg, 2017), anxiety and depression (Townsend & Polatajko, 2007) and obesity in adults (Matuska & Bass, 2016). Some occupational patterns have been shown to impact obesity and school performance in children (Orban et al., 2012; Raveica

et al., 2012). Since families are composed of individuals whose lives are interlinked, these effects have also been noted at the level of the family. For instance, studies have shown that external pressures and difficulties integrating work and family life lead to the deterioration of relationships (Matuska et al., 2013).

Research in OS and OT has not focused on occupational balance of all individuals in a family, as such no family perspective on occupational balance currently exists. When occupational balance is studied from a purely individual perspective it fails to recognize the fact lives are not lived in isolation. If a family member is or is not in occupational balance, what are the implications for other family members? Is one family member's occupational balance experienced at the expense of another member's occupational balance?

Purpose Statement and Unique Contributions

The purpose of this research is to explore in depth the phenomenon of occupational balance as it is lived in families composed of dual earner parents and school-aged children. By interviewing each family member in the participating families, I will describe the phenomenon of occupational balance as it is lived by these time-constrained families. As a result of this research, the relational aspects of occupations in families will be illuminated.

The unique contributions of this research are to provide a deeper understanding of occupation as a contributor to qualitatively defined well-being and health. In addressing the gaps in the literature as to multiple perspectives including those of children, the research will also contribute to a greater appreciation of the value of occupational balance in a family setting. Furthermore, it will add to the ongoing conversation in OS on the relational aspects of occupation or how occupations of one family member can influence the choice, nature, time, place, and way other family members carry out their own occupations. This research will

provide a deeper comprehension of occupations in families and how they are orchestrated to maintain family well-being.

Research Methodology and Questions

I chose to explore the meaning of the lived experience of occupational balance through Phenomenology of practice as per van Manen (2007). Phenomenology seeks to uncover the meanings of a phenomenon for a group of individuals (van Manen, 2014). Data collection procedures will include phenomenological interviews, photo-elicitation interviews, a simplified time-use methodology (daily occupational schedules) and occupational mapping. The analysis of the interviews will rest on continued reflection on the material from broad to specific to broad once again (van Manen, 2014). The final product of the research are themes and essences of experience which capture the lived experience of occupational balance for family members.

Recognizing that occupational balance is related to the well-being of individuals and in a broader sense to the well-being of families, this research focuses on the following research questions:

- What is the lived experience and meaning of family occupational balance for families formed by dual earner parents and school-aged children?
- What is the lived experience and meaning of occupational balance for parents?
- What is the lived experience and meaning of occupational balance for children?

Theoretical Frameworks

Two theoretical frameworks are used in this research. Together, they serve as a lens to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of occupational balance as it is experienced by the participating families. The first framework, the dimensions of occupation, belongs to the field of OS (Hitch et al., 2014a; Hitch et al., 2014b; Hitch et al., 2018; Hitch & Pépin, 2021;

Wilcock & Hocking, 2015). The second framework comes from the world of phenomenology (van Manen, 2014).

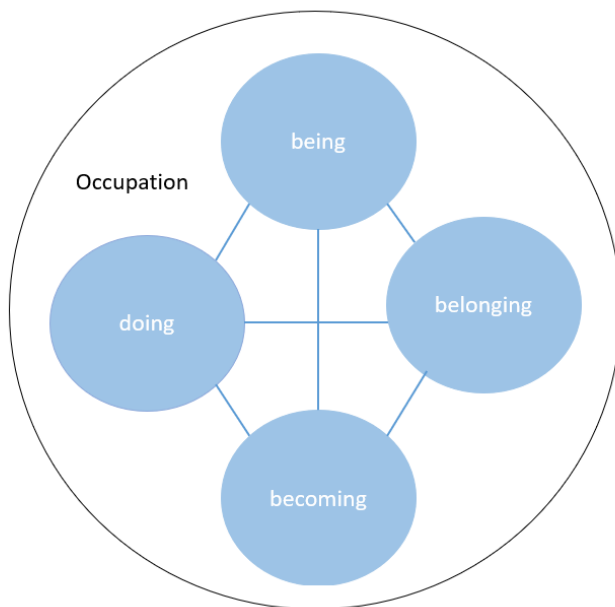
The Dimensions of Occupation

OS comprehends occupations as being composed of 4 interdependent dimensions: doing, being, becoming and belonging. Although the dimensions make the occupation appear fragmented all dimensions exist within the occupation. They are constantly in interaction (Hitch et al., 2014b; Hitch et al., 2020). The doing dimension is the most obvious, readily understood and often visible dimension of occupation (Hitch et al., 2014). It concerns the act of engaging in occupations. For example, as I am in the process of writing a dissertation, the doing dimension concerns my engagement in reading, writing, thinking, and reflecting, communicating with my thesis committee and so on. The being dimension of the occupation of writing a thesis involves the reasons that motivate my choice to engage in that occupation. It also includes the meaning I ascribe to the occupation, my feelings towards it and how the occupation speaks of my identity, in this case as a graduate student. The being dimension also encompasses my interests, abilities, and limitations (Wilcock & Hocking, 2015). The becoming dimension of occupation involves a time perspective and alludes to the constant development of an individual (Hitch, 2017). It usually pertains to the future, but it could potentially be a link to the past. With the example at hand, writing a thesis would mean attaining a higher degree and potentially becoming eligible to apply to positions in research or in another area that the student may not have been able to access before. It could also be related to a more immediate future as in apprehending the doctoral defense or to the past as writing a doctoral dissertation would be a natural progression from the past occupation of being a master's degree student or being a research coordinator in a project that inspired the present doctoral research. Finally, the belonging dimension of the occupation of writing a thesis is the relational aspect of it. In this case, it includes the supportive

relationships of supervisor and thesis advisory committee members, the cooperation with fellow students in a program or cohort. Belonging also refers to more intimate relationships that may not be instantly evoked by the occupation of writing a thesis such as family relationships and encouragements received by close friends and extended family. Figure 1 illustrates the dimensions of occupation.

Figure 1

Dimensions of occupation

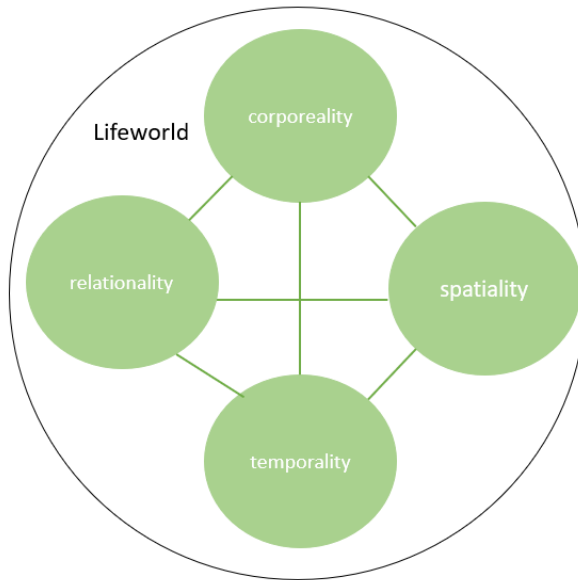


The Lived Existentials

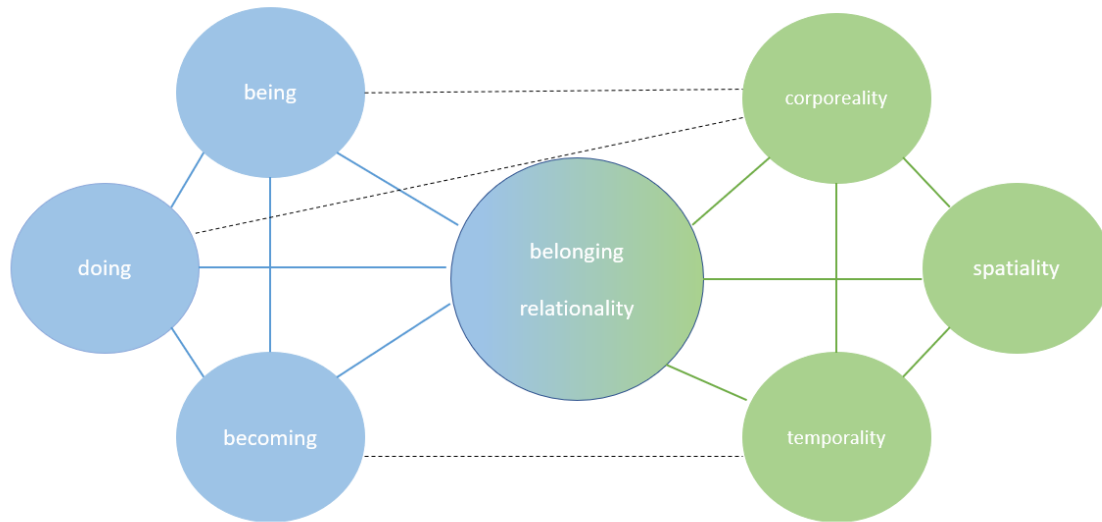
The second framework used for this research is the lived existentials. Lived existentials stem from phenomenology (Finlay, 2011; van Manen, 1997; van Manen, 2014). In phenomenology, body, self, and world are intertwined (Finlay, 2011). They do not exist separately. Only for the purpose of illuminating the complexities of a phenomenon can we divide the lifeworld into separate existentials: corporeality, relationality, temporality, and

spatiality. This is one of the similarities between the lived existentials and the dimensions of occupation. Both arise from what we could call an artificial dissection of either an occupation or the lifeworld. As the dimensions of occupation are embedded in occupations and do not exist independently; similarly, the lived existentials are one with the lifeworld.

If we continue with the initial example of writing a thesis. In this case, we would posit that writing a doctoral thesis is a phenomenon instead of an occupation. The lived existential of corporeality is also referred to as the lived-body, which speaks immediately to its reference to physicality, or in other words to how the body experiences the phenomenon. The body may be still and on alert. It may be tense, weary, fidgeting, craving food or movement. No dimension of occupation addresses the body specifically. Although they are not equivalent, corporeality can be related to the *doing* dimension of occupation because of its reference to physicality and to the *being* dimension because of the first person and intimacy with self. Relationality is the lived-other or the way others or relationships with others are experienced within the phenomenon. As such, it is equivalent to the *belonging* dimension of occupations. Temporality refers to how time is experienced with respect to the phenomenon. While writing a thesis, time may be unbearably slow, deadlines may be lurking, or the student may lose complete sense of time. These are illustrations of the lived-time which relate to the *becoming* dimension of occupation. Finally, lived-space or spatiality is how space is experienced. While writing a dissertation, space may feel confined, or cluttered. No specific equivalent exists for spatiality in the dimensions of occupation. Figure 2 illustrates the lived existentials of the lifeworld.

Figure 2*Lived existentials*

When both frameworks are integrated, the resultant is illustrated in Figure 3. The belonging dimension is indistinguishable to relationality, forming together a central unit within the framework. Both make reference to relationships and affiliations to others. The links between temporality and becoming are subtle and refer to the passing of time. Similarly, the links between the physicality and intimacy of doing and being and corporeality are subtle. This integrated framework of the lived existentials and the dimensions of occupations will be used as the structure to reflect and discuss the findings. The combined framework is a lens to analyze the phenomenon and as such, it is not capable of illustrating or explaining every possible nuance or relationship.

Figure 3*The combined theoretical frameworks*

The following section is a glossary of key terms. I provide definitions for concepts used frequently in this dissertation that may be complex or for which multiple meanings may exist.

Definitions of key terms

For the purpose of this research the following terms will be used as defined below.

Activity: In OS and OT literature, an activity is an observable unit of behaviour and recognizable sequence of actions taken together in a particular context; beyond tasks, yet without the complexity of occupations (adapted from Christiansen & Townsend, 2010). To represent the fact that this research encompasses literature from domains outside of OS and OT, activity and occupations will be used synonymously.

Family: Persons who are bound together over time by ties of mutual consent, birth and/or adoption or placement and who, together, assume various responsibilities (adapted from Vanier Institute of the Family, 2017).

Family occupations: Occupations families carry out together (Humphry & Corcoran, 2004; Segal, 1998; Werner DeGrace, 2003).

Flow: A positive psychological state in which the individual is engaged in a rewarding activity, to the point of losing sense of time (Emerson, 1998).

Intensification of parenting: High standards of parenting (Milkie et al., 2010) in Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom (Wall, 2010) introduced as the dominant view of motherhood by Hays in 1996. The assumptions of intensive parenting are as follows: 1) Mothers are the ideal caretakers of children; 2) Preferred child rearing practices should be based on expert advice, be emotionally absorbing, and labour-intensive; 3) Children are sacred and should be protected as not to suffer developmentally (Hays, 1996). Although this discourse on intensive childrearing practices was initially focused on mothers, it has since progressively extended to fathers as well (Daly, 2001).

Life balance: “[A] satisfying pattern of daily activity that is healthful, meaningful, and sustainable to an individual within the context of his or her current life circumstances” (Matuska & Christiansen, 2008, p. 11).

Lived experience: Lived experience is our experience of the world as we are immediately experiencing it without conceptualizing or reflecting on it (van Manen, 1997). Phenomenology is the study of lived experience.

Occupation: The everyday tasks and activities that people do as individuals, in families and with communities to occupy time and bring meaning and purpose to life (adapted from World Federation of Occupational Therapists, 2012). Occupations include things people need to, want to and are expected to do (Wilcock & Hocking, 2015).

Occupational balance: An umbrella term used in OS and OT to designate all concepts related to the distribution of time in various occupations in accordance with one’s values and within a

health and well-being perspective (Matuska, 2012; Wagman, Håkansson & Björklund, 2012; Westhorp, 2003). In this research, occupational balance encompasses such constructs as occupational integrity (Pentland and McColl, 2008), balance in everyday occupations (Wada et al, 2014), lifestyle balance (Matuska & Christiansen, 2008) and life balance (Jonsson, et al., 2014).

Occupational integrity: An alignment of values with the choice of occupations (Pentland & McColl, 2008). This is a multidimensional concept from the fields of OS and OT, it is based on positive psychology theories.

Occupational pattern: How occupations and their simpler units are organized in time, frequency, and number of repetitions in the social and physical environment. Occupational patterns are related to an overriding meaningful theme or goal in an individual's life. They can be unique to an individual or shared amongst a specific group (Bendixen et al., 2006).

Role balance: Multidimensional and multidisciplinary concept intimately linked to work-life balance (Rantanen et al., 2011). Role balance can limit individualism when identity does not correspond to normative roles. Although it recognizes responsibilities and occupations related to roles, role balance does not generally take into account occupations or activity patterns per se (Christiansen & Matuska, 2006). Matuska (2010) acknowledges "the occupations undertaken to fulfill role requirements will vary significantly among individuals" (p. 108). Although social roles are multiple, the role balance concept is better suited to parents, parental carers, and workers; the worker role being the most extensively documented role in the role balance literature (Evans, et al., 2016).

Routines: Routines are a regularly repeated pattern of activities which involve direct communication and a designation of roles (Fiese, 2007).

Task: Tasks are limited to a set of actions usually involving the use of tools (Christiansen & Townsend, 2010) and contributing to the accomplishment of an activity (Townsend & Polatajko, 2007).

Work-family and work -life balance: Dichotomous concept suited to employed adults. It has an affiliation to organizational and industrial psychology (Perry-Jenkins & MacDermid, 2013; Williams et al., 2016), highlighting the dominance of paid employment in our society (Clouston, 2015; Wilcock & Hocking, 2015) while recognizing the cultural pressures from high parenting standards (Milkie & al., 2010).

Literature review

Family

The Concept of Family: Definition and Theory

While everyone knows what a family is, it remains a difficult concept to define. Family represents different things to different people. For some, it may represent a couple without children, for others many members spanning generations. From single-parent families to same-sex parents and blended families, families exist in a variety of forms and living arrangements. Nevertheless, family science scholars agree on a few principles. Family is recognized as the most basic social unit (Daly, 2003). For children and adults alike, this social unit provides a strong identity group and the context to lifelong development (Fiese, 2007). The Vanier Institute of the Family offers a broad definition of family, based on commitment, relationship and what families do. They refer to family as:

Any combination of two or more persons who are bound together over time by ties of mutual consent, birth and/or adoption or placement and who, together, assume responsibilities for variant combinations of some of the following: physical maintenance and care of group members; addition of new members through procreation or

adoption; socialization of children; social control of members; production, consumption, distribution of goods and services; affective nurturance – love. (Vanier Institute of the Family, 2017)

Family theories further contribute to our understanding of families. The General Systems Theory studies phenomena as a complex assemblage of interconnected parts (White et al., 2015). This was a vision made popular in scientific fields in the 1960s (Rapoport, 1986). The Family Systems Theory is the application of the General Systems Theory to the family and is the basic theoretical model underlying most family therapy (Broderick, 1993). Family Systems Theory recognizes family as being more than a group of individuals; family is understood as a whole, which is greater than the sum of its parts (White et al., 2015). In other words, the family system, and its members (parts) can only be understood within the context of their family unit (Smith & Hamon, 2012). Within Family Systems Theory, the family is an “open, ongoing, goal-seeking, self-regulating, social system,” (Broderick, 1993, pp 36-37). The systems perspective highlights that the family is composed of individuals who are interrelated and interdependent whereby a change in one individual will inevitably affect all individuals.

As family theories have evolved, they continue to include and build on the concept of interrelatedness and interdependence. The concept of linked lives from the Life Course perspective is such an example.

The Life Course perspective is a theoretical framework increasingly used in the study of families (Gherghel, 2013; Perry-Jenkins & Macdermid Wadsworth, 2017a; Perry-Jenkins & Macdermid Wadsworth, 2017b; Sheldon et al., 2010). This perspective highlights time and change in families, considering their cultural, geographic, socioeconomic, and historical contexts (Smith & Hamon, 2012). Through the concept of linked lives, the interdependence of lives especially among family members is underscored (Gherghel, 2013). Individuals do not live in

isolation, their lives affect other family members' lives (Settersten, 2015). "One person's resources, resource deficits, successes, failures, chronic strains, and (expected or unexpected) transitions can become focal conditions, even turning points in the lives of others, especially other family members." (Moen & Hernandez, 2009, p. 259). The Life Course perspective recognizes the complex, interconnected nature of family experiences and points to the need for multiple viewpoints to properly understand a family experience.

The Life Course perspective acknowledges the effect of social-cultural and contextual influences of geography and time period (Elder & Giele, 2009). That is, depending on the place and period of time when a person is born, he or she will face a different world (Hutchison, 2005; Hutchison, 2011). This, along with the concept of linked lives, provides a framework with which to understand the various changes families have experienced over the last few decades.

Dual Earner Families

Through recent years, the traditional single earner family has evolved. The traditional nuclear family of the nineteen fifties was one based on clearly defined gender-dependent roles. The father was considered the head of the family and provider of income, shelter, food, and status (Smith & Hamon, 2012). Mothers, on the other hand, played a complementary role with their principal responsibility being to raise children and upkeep the household (Smith & Hamon, 2012). In the last 50 years, mothers have taken a more prominent role in the workforce (Duxbury & Higgins, 2017), while fathers have gradually taken on more responsibility for childcare and housework (Broege et al., 2007). In 2014, 69% of Canadian couples with children under the age of 16 were both involved in the workforce (Vanier Institute of the Family, 2016). This is a significant increase from 36% in 1976 (Vanier Institute of the Family, 2016). The rise of the dual earner family has been rather rapid, but workplace settings are still lagging in their adaptation to the needs of the dual earner family, with most organizations expecting employees

to perform as if they have no childcare responsibilities (Gerson & Torres, 2015; Moen, 2011; Williams et al., 2016). Families are left to “absorb the tensions of managing discrepant childrearing and employment time schedules into the fabric of day-to-day family and personal life” (Irwin & Winterton, 2014, p. 144).

The Roles of Worker and Nurturer

For dual earner couples raising children, fulfilling their responsibilities as parents while meeting the demands in a competitive work setting is a challenge. Zuzanek’s (2017) time-use analysis of the last 30 years highlights how middle-aged adults and parents are faced with increasing hours of paid and unpaid work and are pressured for time. This accounts for the decline in satisfaction with their time-use by parents in more recent years. Combining both roles of worker and nurturer puts parents in a time bind which explains why parents in the workforce are twice as stressed as other employees (Zuzanek, 2017). Women still act as primary caretakers and are particularly affected by this situation (Davis & Greenstein, 2020; Gerson & Torres, 2015; Offer & Schneider, 2011; Pepin & Sayer, 2018; Pronovost, 2015; Zuzanek, 2017). Their nurturing role puts them at risk of being penalized at work by being afforded fewer chances for advancement (Williams et al., 2016). They are concurrently expected to work and invest time in the care of their children, but this caring role is neither rewarded nor valued by society (Gerson & Torres, 2015; Harden et al., 2014; Williams et al., 2016). In recent years, fathers are increasingly taking on a nurturing role with the same lack of recognition (Miller & Bowd, 2014). While families have changed, society’s work structure is still based on the one parent worker model. This presents challenges for families.

Work remains the dominant obligation in our culture (Pronovost, 2015) and in the last twenty years parents have increased the number of hours they work (Craig et al., 2014; Daly, 2001; Pronovost, 2015). While work has remained predominant, and the role of caring is

undervalued, the practice of parenting has also intensified (Craig et al., 2014; Pronovost, 2015). Parents spend significantly more time caring for children, even more than they did when mothers were at home (Bianchi et al., 2006). The intensification of parenting is a trend based on the belief that thorough and constant attention to children is essential to a child's development (Craig et al., 2014) and future success (Daly & Beaton, 2005). This trend originated in the nineteen nineties in Western industrialized countries. The focus of intensive parenting is "to optimize children development through ample and appropriate stimulation" (Wall, 2010, p. 253). Intensive parenting norms were first geared towards mothers but have since been expanded to include fathers (Daly, 2001). This need to develop their children's potential partially explains why children's schedules are so fully booked with extra-curricular activities of all types (Daly & Beaton, 2005; Lareau, 2011).

Of all parents, parents whose children are aged between five and 12, work the most, sleep the least, and are the most active in sports and community life (Pronovost, 2015). This is understandable because at this stage in their lives, besides work responsibilities, they need to make adjustments within their couple to collabourate in child-rearing, financial and housekeeping tasks (McGoldrick et al, 2015). Parents' work schedules often dominate family life (Pronovost, 2015) and school-aged children's activities are structured around it (Orban et al., 2012). During the school-age years, parents act as gatekeepers for their children's occupational choices (Lynch, 2009). Consequently, children have little control over their choice of occupations and the use of time in their family (Ziviani et al., 2010). Given the busyness of family life, the coordination of parents' and children's multiple schedules in a harmonious family calendar is a challenge for most families (Brannen et al., 2013). It requires intricate logistics, taking into account time-use, context, and social interactions (Larson, 2000; Larson & Zemke, 2003; Primeau 1998). For this reason, occupations in a family setting are referred to as "negotiated"

(Miao, 2017), meaning arrangements and compromises take place in the orchestration of family members' occupations whether these are individual or shared occupations.

Occupations in Families

In families with young children, occupations are often centered on them (Evans & Rodger, 2008). From the busy morning routines to afterschool activities, mealtimes to family outings and soothing bedtime routines, occupations structure everyday life in families. Studies have shown that how time is spent, can influence well-being in families (Evans & Rodger, 2008; Koome et al., 2012; Smith et al., 2017; Spagnola & Fiese, 2007).

Family occupations are culturally meaningful occupations (Segal, 1999). Bedtime and mealtime routines have been explored extensively in families where there is a child with a disability, as well as with typically developing children. Bedtime routines serve more than the purpose of simply putting a child to bed. They are routines imbued with intimacy, meaning and emotion (Evans & Rodger, 2008). On the other hand, mealtime routines can either be an important marker in a family's day or they can be limited to the instrumental task of getting the family fed. If all family members can be present and parents afford importance to the family meal, the family is more likely to eat together (Evans & Rodger, 2008; Smith et al., 2020). On the other hand, time constraints leading to little energy to cook and clean up or the absence of a family member are deterrents to the family meal (Evans & Rodger, 2008; Smith et al., 2020). Sharing a meal is highly valued by children and parents alike (Evans & Rodger, 2008; McCloy et al., 2016; Sevón et al., 2014). It helps families stay connected (Ochs & Shohet, 2006; Ochs et al., 2011; Ochs & Beck, 2013; Smith et al., 2020).

McCloy and colleagues (2016) studied the perspectives of school-aged children on family routines. They found a marked distinction between weekday and weekend routines. Weekdays were more focused on selfcare and productivity while leisure dominated weekends; a

finding consistent with other studies on family time (Daly, 2001; Kremer-Sadlik, 2013). Family leisure is characterized as a positive experience for all family members (Downs, 2008; Hilbrecht et al., 2008; Sevón et al., 2014) not without its workload for the parents (Kremer-Sadlik, 2013; Daly, 2001).

Play is children's central occupation. From children's perspective, play and pleasurable occupations contribute to their sense of well-being (Moore & Lynch, 2018). When children and adolescents are asked about occupations and well-being, they report on the importance of relationships and challenges (Widmark & Fristedt, 2019).

This section explored what family means, the challenges for dual earner families and occupations in families. The next section is on occupational balance.

Occupational balance

Theoretical Perspectives on Occupational Balance

For centuries, balance has been used as a metaphor to describe health (Birchenbach & Glass, 2009). Hippocrates conceived of health as a balance between the four humours (blood, yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm) (Horden & Hsu, 2013). In antiquity, health was balance and disease disharmony. The yin-yang theory is yet another example of balance as well-being. In traditional Chinese medicine, body structures and physiological functions belong to the yin or yang and must be balanced for the individual to be healthy (Shen, & Tse-lin, 1996).

For OS and OT, health in the form of balance is referred to as occupational balance. Occupational balance is a fundamental concept of OS and OT because it puts a person's occupations in direct relationship with his or her state of well-being. Eleanor Clarke Slagle, a founder of the American Occupational Therapy Association, emphasized the importance of a well-balanced day of rest, play, occupation and exercise for the rehabilitation of patients with mental health conditions (Ryan & Sladyk, 2005). Adolf Meyer, a Swiss born psychiatrist and

distinguished figure in the history of OT, gave priority to time, occupation, and the productive use of energy in his psychobiological approach to the treatment of individuals with mental health conditions. He stated:

The whole of human organization has its shape in a kind of rhythm. It is not enough that our hearts should beat in a useful rhythm, always kept up to a standard at which it can meet rest as well as wholesome strain without upset. There are many other rhythms which we must be attuned to: the larger rhythms of night and day, of sleep and waking hours, of hunger and its gratification, and finally the big four-work and play and rest and sleep, which our organism must be able to balance even under difficulty. The only way to attain balance in all this is actual doing, actual practice, a program of wholesome living as the basis of wholesome feeling and thinking and fancy and interests (Meyer, 1922, p. 83).

Balance in occupations was recognized as the mainstay of OT intervention. This conceptualization relied on an elementary representation of balance as equivalent time spent in the daily activities of work, play, rest, and sleep. At that time, in wider social groups such as the labour movement's campaigns for the normalization of the 8-hour workday, the same representation of balance as equal time spent in daily activities was circulating (Kantartzis & Molineux, 2011). Workers were demanding an 8-hour workday which would allow for 8 hours of leisure and 8 hours of sleep. This simplistic understanding of balance is reflected in some of the earlier models of OT practice (Kielhofner, 2008; Law et al, 1998; Reilly, 1962). In the last 30 years, the understanding of occupational balance as solely an equivalence in time spent between occupations has been scrutinized more closely (Spencer, 1989; Westhorp, 2003). Research reveals a concept that is far more complex than what was initially perceived. As the following section will illustrate, the concept has progressively integrated characteristics of

occupations, the level of challenge, the expectations of the environment, satisfaction, and alignment with personal values.

Regardless of its popularity and centrality in OS and OT, occupational balance is a complex concept that remains elusive (Dür et al, 2015; Wada et al., 2010). Rather than being an observable phenomenon, it is a perceived, fluctuating state (Backman, 2004; Wagman et al., 2015). It has been conceptualized and described in numerous manners. The most cited interpretations are detailed below.

Wagman, Håkansson & Björklund (2012) took occupational balance beyond the simple equivalence of time-use in activities of daily living, work and leisure. Following their conceptual analysis of occupational balance, they defined it as: “the individual’s perception of having the right amount of occupations and the right variation between occupations.” (Wagman, Håkansson & Björklund, 2012, p. 322). In other words, an individual’s occupations should be varied in terms of occupational areas (sleep, work, leisure, activities of daily living), characteristics of the occupations (stimulating cognitively, physically, compulsory, or discretionary...), and time-use. Wagman, Håkansson & Björklund (2012) also highlight the importance of satisfaction with respect to occupations themselves and to time-use. While the aspect of satisfaction within this definition hints at the subjective characteristic of occupational balance, it also infers that all occupations that provide satisfaction are healthy (Matuska, 2012; Wagman, Håkansson & Björklund, 2012). Such a purely satisfaction-based concept of occupational balance is problematic because it may not be health related. The case of addiction as a central occupation in a person’s life is an example of occupations that can provide satisfaction and yet be detrimental to one’s health (Bonsaksen, 2015; Kiepek & Magalhaes, 2011; Wasmuth et al., 2014).

Pentland and McColl (2008) also recognized a subjective element to occupational balance. These authors go beyond satisfaction and describe balance as the alignment of occupations and values. Their model of Occupational Integrity (Pentland & McColl, 2008) is centered on the idea that the relationship between occupational patterns and well-being should be referred to as “the extent to which a person lives in integrity with his or her personal values, strengths and attributions of meaning” (p. 136). Occupational integrity implies choosing occupations that are congruent with one’s personal values (Pentland & McColl, 2008). Contrary to previous definitions focused on the objective aspects of balance (time-use and occupations), this model highlights the importance of the subjective elements of choices, values and meaning.

Wada and colleagues (2010) further refined the concept of occupational balance and its subjectivity. In reviewing different definitions of occupational balance, they identified 4 theoretical perspectives on balance. The first is the *quantity* of involvement across occupations. This refers to time allocation in occupations of various characteristics or dimensions. An example of this is Wilcock and colleagues’s (1997) study which found equivalent engagement in physical, mental, social and rest occupations to be an ideal balance. The second perspective is *congruence* which points to the correspondence between an individual’s beliefs, values, interests, or goals (meaning) and his or her occupations. Eakman’s (2015) meaningful wants and needs assessment would be an illustration of congruence. The perspective of *fulfillment* indicates that the individual has the ability to meet the demands related to his or her roles (competency and resources). The last perspective is *compatibility*, and it corresponds to a state of harmony in occupational patterns (time, location, and the amount of energy) where participation in one valuable occupation does not preclude participation in other significant occupations.

Matuska has proposed the Life Balance Model in which occupational balance is defined as: “a satisfying pattern of daily activity that is healthful, meaningful and sustainable to an individual within the context of his or her current life circumstances.” (Matuska & Christiansen, 2008, p. 1). Matuska (2012) describes four areas of needs which activities should fulfill. These are basic instrumental needs necessary for biological health and physical safety, the need for rewarding and self-affirming relationships, the need to feel engaged, challenged, and competent and the need to create meaning and a positive personal identity (Matuska, 2012). The strength of this model lies in the fact it uses two measures of balance. To adjust for the purely satisfaction-based concept presented in Wagman, Håkansson & Björklund’s (2012) concept analysis, Matuska proposes *congruence* and *equivalence*. Congruence relates to the actual activity configuration matching the desired activity configuration (what people do is congruent with what they desire to do). On the other hand, equivalence relates to a relative equal distribution of time across the 4 need-based dimensions (health, relationship, challenge, and identity) (Matuska, 2012). The Life Balance Model has stimulated research in both the general population and in people with disabilities (Larivière et al., 2016; Larivière & Levasseur, 2016; Håkansson & Matuska, 2010; Matuska, & Bass, 2016; Myers et al., 2016; Stein et al., 2011).

Jonsson and Persson (2006) studied occupational balance from an experiential perspective. First, they asked participants to rate the challenge presented by an occupation and the skills required to perform the occupation. Afterwards they related these two factors to one another. The novelty of their approach is that they measure the occupations in the natural setting, as the participant is involved in the occupation. In their Experiential Model of Occupational Balance, they identify three types of experience that should exist in equivalent portions: exacting, when the challenge exceeds the skills; flowing when challenge and skills are matched; and calming, to identify experiences of low challenge.

Evans and colleagues (2014) explored yet another way to describe balance, through the experience of role balance in working women with family responsibilities. In their pilot study using multiple embedded case studies with 9 women, they used a questionnaire, time diary and an interview with the aim to support a model of occupational balance called the Model of Juggling Occupations. This model incorporates role balance with Kielhofner's Model of Human Occupation (2008). It focuses on balance in individuals. Balance is described as the interactions between each role and within each role. In this case the roles of the women interviewed were parent, carer, spouse, and worker. Roles either conflict with or enrich each other. The time diary proved to be particularly valuable in providing rich details on the occupational experiences of the participants. The findings reveal there was a wide variation among the roles played by the participants. Time diaries highlighted the busy lifestyle of the participants with women performing multiple occupations for most of their day. Results of the study confirm the many roles working women with family responsibilities engage in. For research conducted in a family setting no other perspectives than the women's was taken into account.

Occupational harmony is the latest proposed theoretical model of occupational balance (Liu et al., 2021). It is a model that reflects traditional Chinese culture. It is a complex model which incorporates multiple concepts such as activity patterns, time-use, occupational characteristics, need satisfaction and biological rhythms. Occupational harmony is achieved through the balance between three pairs of two-sided occupational characteristics (physical-mental, quiet-active, and individual-social) and five dimensions of occupational engagement (virtuous engagement, rational engagement, productive engagement, emotional engagement, and health maintenance engagement) (Liu et al., 2021). All this takes place through transactions within multiple systems layers similar to the ones in the Ecological Systems Theory.

In summary, from the various theoretical perspectives presented, it is apparent that the concept of occupational balance has evolved to comprise both objective and subjective dimensions. The objective dimensions of occupational balance (Eklund et al., 2010; Eklund et al., 2017) are the more observable and measurable components. They refer to time-use, activity patterns and the various characteristics of occupations. Understandably, they are the most often assessed components in studies on occupational balance (Backman, 2010; Dür et al., 2015; Eklund et al., 2017). They are commonly measured through specific instruments and time-use methodologies. The subjective dimensions of occupational balance are based on meaning, values and satisfaction and are therefore more appropriate to be studied through qualitative means, such as interviews, observations or focus groups. Both objective and subjective dimensions are essential to the understanding of occupational balance.

The Experience of Occupational Balance

What adds to the complexity of occupational balance is the fact it is experienced as a dynamic state constantly influenced by a myriad of factors (Backman, 2004; Backman, 2010; Evans et al., 2014). It is individually constructed, dependent on time allocation and meaning but also on the individual's agency. Using available resources, an individual creates his or her daily life by choosing occupations to respond to the various demands and challenges he or she is continuously presented within his or her environment (Westhorp, 2003). Occupational balance is therefore a fluctuating state, it is ever changing and must be understood within a continuum of occupational balance and occupational imbalance (Håkansson & Matuska, 2010). When there is occupational imbalance, the individual experiences strain, stress and conflict which jeopardize health and well-being. Conversely, when the individual feels in balance, he or she experiences harmony and can thrive. This experience is health enhancing (Backman, 2010).

Occupational Balance and Health

Occupational balance has been related to health and well-being by many authors (Anaby et al., 2010; Dür et al., 2016; Forhan & Backman, 2010; Håkansson & Ahlborg, 2010; Håkansson, Björkelund & Eklund, 2011; Håkansson et al, 2006; Håkansson C et al., 2009; Jonsson & Persson, 2006; Matuska, 2012; To-Miles et al., 2021; Wagman et al., 2011; Wagman et al., 2015; Wagman & Håkansson, 2014; Wilcock & Hocking, 2015; Westhorp, 2003; Yerxa, 1998). The following empirical studies have demonstrated that the opposite is also true; occupational imbalance is related to decreased health, burnout, or boredom (Wilcock & Hocking, 2015). Some authors have noted the relationship between occupational imbalance, stress, and negative consequences on health (Clouston 2014; Håkansson & Ahlborg, 2018; Henton et al., 2021; Hernandez et al., 2020; Lexén et al., 2020; Mohammadi et al., 2021; Wilson & Wilcock, 2005; Yu et al., 2018). Other authors have linked it with sleeping problems and fatigue (Ho et al., 2020; Magnusson et al., 2020; Wagman et al., 2015).

Occupational Balance in this Research

Occupational balance is a longstanding and predominant concept within OS and OT and it conveys a sense of identity to the profession. In OS and OT literature, there is a recognition that the use of the concepts of life balance, occupational balance and occupational integrity are different expressions which all refer to the concept of balance from an occupational perspective (Clouston, 2015; Dür et al., 2015; Jonsson et al., 2014). Occupational balance will be used as an umbrella term to designate all concepts related to the distribution of time in various occupations in accordance with one's values and within a health perspective.

Personal and Socio-Environmental Factors Influencing Occupational Balance

Occupational balance is influenced by a variety of personal and social-environmental factors, particularly in regard to how these shape the occupations an individual is involved in, as well as the ensuing time demands and satisfaction.

Backman (2010) identified that *family composition* and *life stage* influence occupational balance. In her study on stress in adults, Matuska (2012) and colleagues (2013) found that the number of children living in the home interfered with the satisfaction parents experience in their occupations. More specifically, parents experienced lower occupational balance and considerably more challenges when they had more than one child in the home. Similarly, Wagman and colleagues (2020) reported that adults with rheumatoid arthritis experienced higher occupational when they had no children living at home. With respect to life stage, in their study of adults in Sweden, Wagman & Håkansson (2014) observed that middle adulthood reflects a time of heightened demands from the home and the workplace and was consequently related to more stress. *Gender* also influences occupational balance (Dür et al., 2016; Matuska et al., 2013). Women have been found to be less satisfied with occupations which reinforce their identity (Matuska et al., 2013). Håkansson and colleagues (2006) found that women with stress related disorders tended to place other's needs above their own which led to occupational imbalance. The *role of parent*, especially the role of mother, has consistently been associated with increased stress and lower occupational balance (Matuska, 2012, Matuska et al., 2013; Wagman & Håkansson, 2014; Wagman, Nordin et al., 2017). Erlandsson & Håkansson (2009) found that employed mothers living with a partner and dependent children were at risk of imbalance because of the challenges associated to interruptions and unpredictable changes in their daily occupations.

Social environmental factors include *social support* which has an influence on occupational balance (Backman, 2010; Matuska, 2012; Matuska et al., 2013; Myers et al., 2016; Wagman et al., 2011; Wagman, Håkansson, Jacobsson, Falkmer & Bjorklund, 2012). Relationships and doing activities with significant others act as buffers for occupational balance. The *division of housework* also has an influence on occupational balance (Larson, 2000; Primeau, 2000; Wada et al., 2010; Wagman, Nordin et al., 2017). Wagman, Nordin and colleagues (2017) found women still did most of the domestic work and were less satisfied with the division of labour. In general, men have been found to have a better balance between employment, household responsibilities and leisure than women (Håkansson & Ahlborg, 2010).

Factors such as *work status* and *workplace conditions* play a role in the perceived occupational balance of individuals (Backman, 2010; Borgh et al., 2018; Erlandsson & Eklund, 2006; Stein et al., 2011; Wagman et al., 2011; Wagman, Lindmark et al., 2017). For men, low level of stress at work was the most important predictor of work attendance and self-rated health (Håkansson & Ahlborg, 2010). Matuska (2012) found that being employed fulltime or being in school reduced one's ability to participate in valued occupations. Conversely being self-employed or retired was associated with higher levels of life balance (Matuska, 2012). Understandably, having control over one's time or more free time leads to a greater sense of occupational balance. Other factors such as the *need to commute* or the *availability of childcare services* can influence occupational balance (Backman, 2010), while these have been studied from the perspective of work-life balance (Bernardo et al., 2015; Mattisson et al., 2015; Repetti & Wang, 2014; Tranter, 2014), no study on occupational balance has reported on these factors.

Studies that investigated occupational balance in a family setting were consulted. The following is an overview of these studies. Because the scope of OT has predominantly been rehabilitation, the first studies explore occupational balance from the perspectives of family

members caring for another member with a disability. Subsequently, studies in the well population, focused on parents and finally children are presented.

Occupational Balance in Family Caregivers and Mothers of Children with Disabilities

When occupational balance is studied in caregivers, it was found that family members who care for a loved one who is either in palliative care or in a prolonged vegetative state, tend to neglect or abandon their valued occupations, including, sleep, work or school, socialization, and recreational activities, for lack of time (Elliott & McVicar, 2018; Nissmark & Fänge, 2018). This can leave them feeling isolated and overburdened by the care of the family member. Caregivers also expressed feelings of guilt for not dedicating more time to their family member (Elliott & McVicar, 2018; Nissmark & Fänge, 2018). At twelve months post-injury, caregivers of family members in a vegetative state were slowly beginning to transition towards a more balanced repertoire of occupations (Elliott & McVicar, 2018). Another group with caring responsibilities is mothers of children with disabilities.

Mothers of children with disabilities have considerable caregiving responsibilities. Studies on occupational balance in mothers of children with disabilities reveal they often forego participating in their own valuable occupations to attend to the needs of their children with disabilities, provoking a sense of occupational imbalance (Günel et al., 2021; Hodgetts et al., 2014). These mothers have little time for sleep or to partake in leisure activities and relationships (Günel et al., 2021; McGuire et al., 2004). Mothers felt their well-being was improved when they participated in activities aimed at taking care of themselves (McGuire et al., 2004). Physical and emotional support of friends and families were the most often cited strategies used by the mothers (McGuire et al., 2004).

When comparing the occupational balance of mothers of children with cerebral palsy with mothers of typically developing children, Günel and colleagues (2021) report that a

prominent difference is the ratio of obligatory versus voluntary occupations. Gevir and colleagues (2006) found mothers who receive support, whether they have typically developing children or children with disabilities, are better able to balance their time and perceive their daily occupations in a more positive light.

These studies highlight how the caregiving role is associated with less time for self and the relinquishing of valued occupations. Although this offers insight into the occupational balance of caregivers and mothers, an individual perspective is still inadequate to fully understand occupational balance in families. The following section will look at parents' and children's occupational balance in families without disabilities.

Occupational Balance in Parents

Wada and colleagues (2014) chose a phenomenographic and critical discourse approach to elicit the individual conception of balance in everyday life in 15 heterosexual dual-income couples with at least one preschool-aged child. They carried out separate individual interviews with the mother and father. Findings show that for parents of preschool children, the conception of balance is associated with managing life and participating in a mix of activities (Wada et al., 2014). Parents need to negotiate between collective and individual needs. The findings also point to the importance for parents of combining employment and family activities to experience occupational balance. The study does not distinguish the fathering from the mothering experience, in which case the reader assumes they are the same. Furthermore, because of their young age, the children's perspectives on occupational balance were not considered in this study.

In further analyzing the data from the initial study, Wada and colleagues (2015) focused on the data obtained from the fathers with the aim to delve deeper into the men's construction of balance in everyday life. The discourse analysis revealed that the theme of the ideal father

was associated with the finding of managing life (Wada et al., 2015). The ideal father is responsible for fulfilling the financial obligations of the family, he shares the responsibilities of childcare and household tasks and chooses to fulfill family needs ahead of his own (Wada et al., 2015). On the other hand, the finding of participating in a mix of activities is coherent with the theme of the contented man. The contented man underscores the concept of occupational justice, where each person is entitled to engage in activities that allow him or her to meet their individual needs (Wada et al., 2015). A subjective sense of balance was attained by the fathers by having diverse stimulating, gratifying experiences, by having the freedom to enjoy personal time and finally by meeting their health needs (Wada et al., 2015). Although this study offers the perspective of fathers, the findings are not contrasted with those of the mothers.

Two Swedish studies have focused on occupational balance in cohabiting and working parents. The first of these quantitative studies was carried out over five years and with 139 cohabiting couples with children. It underscores the presence of traditional gender roles, with women managing everyday life, caring for home and the children while men were mainly concerned with paid work (Håkansson et al., 2019). It found that for the majority of couples (42%) one partner rated with a high occupational balance while the other a low occupational balance. In this case, the mother was more frequently the parent reporting a low occupational balance. Håkansson and colleagues (2019) further highlight the satisfaction with the division of domestic work as a predictor of a high level of occupational balance in both parents (Håkansson et al., 2019). Shifting the focus away from the home and to the workplace, the second Swedish study examined through a survey, which workplace and organisational factors promoted occupational balance in parents (Borgh et al., 2018). Seven-hundred and eighteen parents participated in this study. Positive workplace attitudes towards parenthood and parental leave were associated with higher occupational balance in parents. Parents who had a defined

structure to handover work when they were absent were more likely to experience high occupational balance (Borgh et al., 2018).

Finally, Parnell looked specifically at African American working mothers in her study on occupational imbalance (2020). Semi-structured interviews were conducted for this study. Parnell (2020) qualifies the mothers' pace as being hurried and acknowledges this poses a risk to their well-being. Mothers described a physical and a mental load associated with their responsibilities coupled with relatively few opportunities to rest and restore. After-school routines were particularly busy, with mothers often multitasking homework and meal preparation. The mothers' sleep quality was poor, and they appeared to have difficulty unwinding and participating in leisure activities. The mothering role predominated the African American women's multiple roles while the role of wife was most affected by this, occasionally leading to conflict. Despite the intensity of their occupations, mothers felt guilt at not being able to do more with respect to the role of mothering but also to volunteering or being a friend or caregiver to other family members.

Studies on parents' occupational balance underscore the pull between the needs of self and those of other family members or of the family as a unit. The inequity in the division of housework is also laid bare, revealing most of it falls on mothers.

Occupational Balance in Children

Occupational balance is rarely studied in children, but few exceptions exist. The following are three studies, each with a different take on occupational balance and children. Raveica and colleagues (2012) explored the occupational balance and academic success of children 8 to 10 years old in urban and rural settings of Romania. Their quantitative research used an occupational profile questionnaire as well as the Canadian Model of Occupational Performance to collect data from the children, on occupation and on the satisfaction with daily

activities in their environment. Teachers and parents were also surveyed for their perceptions of the children's occupational balance. In their findings, the researchers note a clear distinction between the occupations of rural and urban children with 70% of rural children participating in household activities (including caring for siblings, yard work and animal care). Conversely urban children spent a considerable amount of time on the computer. As for academic success, children from the urban setting fared much better than the children living in rural areas (Raveica et al., 2012). In this study, the children's perspective could potentially have been obscured by the perceptions of their teachers and parents. This study sets out to examine occupational balance of children but reports exclusively on time-use, satisfaction, and academic success which are insufficient proxies for occupational balance.

Although Bazyk and Bazyk (2009) did not set out to explore occupational balance in children, their study on the meaning of afterschool occupation-based groups for low-income urban youths exposed how providing a creative, fun, and safe outlet had the possibility of enhancing the children's occupational balance.

Finally, Garfinkel & Minard (2021) raise the importance of occupational balance for children in the face of widespread use of technologies, including for the purpose of distance learning. Several recommendations are proposed for occupational therapists to work with parents. Establishing healthy limits and habits around screen time, soothing routines for bedtime and efficient and fun morning routines can optimize the benefits of technology use in children while counteracting its disadvantages.

Although research on occupational balance is prolific, it has neglected the interpersonal perspective that exists in families. Research has often focused on women (Wagman et al., 2015), including mothers of children with disability (Dür et al., 2015) and other caregivers. Very few studies on occupational balance and children exist. Among the few exceptions, it was noted that

the perspective of the child was either rarely sought or potentially overshadowed by parents and other meaningful adults. It has been recognized that the perspective of children has been neglected in OT research in general (Boyd et al., 2014; Milton & Roe, 2017; Moore & Lynch, 2018; Segal, 2004).

Because of changes in society, families are now busier than ever. Family members' lives are linked and interrelated. A family perspective of occupational balance cannot be deciphered from the perspective of a sole member of the family. A true family perspective is multifaceted and relies on the participation of each family member to capture the complexity of the family perspective. As Handel (1997) explains: "No member of any family is a sufficient source of information for that family. A family constructs its life from the multiple perspectives of its members, and an adequate understanding requires that those perspectives be obtained from their multiple sources." (p.346).

Because family members' personal and collective occupations influence each other, a purely individual perspective on occupational balance fails to recognize the highly social aspect of human occupations, particularly in families. The purpose of this research is to describe occupational balance as it is lived in families with dual earner parents and school-aged children and to elucidate the meaning it has for family members. This research will analyze data from individual family members on their personal occupational balance as well as on their family's occupational balance.

Chapter 2 - Methodology

The purpose of this research is to explore the phenomenon of occupational balance in dual earner families with school-aged children. In this chapter, I present the research methodology and rationale as well as my assumptions. I discuss the recruitment of participants and the methods chosen to collect data. Each step of the research process is detailed. The data analysis is explicated before I close the chapter with criteria to ensure the quality of phenomenological research and ethics.

Research Design and Rationale

Phenomenology is the choice research methodology for exploring in-depth a phenomenon of everyday life which typically goes unnoticed (Finlay, 2011). It provides rich first-person descriptions of the lived experience of participants (Deschamps, 1993). The goal is to go beyond the description of their perspective to reveal the singularity of the experience of a phenomenon. In this way, “[p]henomenology is the study of essences” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/1995, p. vii). It seeks what makes a phenomenon unique. Because phenomenology is concerned with the meaning derived from the complexities and singularities of everyday life it shares common grounds with the study of occupation (Barber, 2004; Hasselkus, 2006; Park Lala & Kinsella, 2011). Phenomenology of practice, as per van Manen is the research methodology chosen to capture the lived experience and meaning of occupational balance in dual earner families with school-aged children.

Different schools of phenomenology exist. Among these, the Utrecht School of phenomenology was formed by a group of educators, sociologists, psychologists, physicians, and jurists who were interested in integrating the methods of phenomenology as a philosophy, into their disciplines (van Manen, 2007). They used phenomenology to understand everyday practices. Van Manen is a Canadian educator and phenomenologist who belongs to this Dutch

tradition (Dowling, 2007). He proposes Phenomenology of practice as a contemporary form of phenomenology, specifically developed for educators and health care professionals (van Manen, 2014). Van Manen's contemporary phenomenology is commonly categorized as a hermeneutic, interpretive approach. It is somewhat eclectic as it draws its strengths from the descriptive, interpretive and lifeworld approaches (Dowling, 2007; Dowling & Cooney, 2012; Finlay 2009; Finlay, 2011; van Manen, 1997). It is descriptive and interpretive in how it presents the phenomenon as it appears and through essences, while acknowledging that the findings are entangled with the researcher's own interpretations of the context (Finlay, 2011). Furthermore, Phenomenology of practice offers four fundamental existentials as universal themes that serve to give shape to the reflective process in the exploration of meaning (Dowling, 2007; van Manen, 1997). Relationality, corporeality, spatiality, and temporality are interconnected in all human lifeworlds (Seamon, 2012; van Manen, 2014).

Some terminology associated with van Manen's interpretive phenomenological research needs clarification in order to grasp the philosophy grounding the interpretation of the findings. Firstly, *Dasein* is a German word Heidegger uses to illustrate his philosophical and ontological project. *Dasein* refers to the human experience of being ever present in the world with others and in the circumstances of our existence (Heidegger, 1953/2010). Human existence is not self-contained (Finlay, 2011), as such, the term is translated to the English expression 'being-in-the-world'. This idea is further developed in the notion of intentionality. Intentionality means "that experience and world co-constitute one another" and that humans are "fundamentally related to the contexts in which they live" (Pollio et al., 1997, p. 7). Van Manen understands the world as being composed of lived existentials that do not actually exist separately but are intertwined as one lifeworld. Lived existentials serve to understand human experience. The human experience is understood through the process of a series of reflections and revisions called a

hermeneutic circle. Furthermore, understanding happens from a constant movement between understanding parts of the experience to understanding the whole of the experience (van Manen, 2014).

Phenomenology of practice belongs to the constructivist paradigm (Annells, 1999). Within this paradigm, individuals are seen as constructing their own realities and therefore multiple realities coexist (Deschamps, 1993). Correspondingly, this research uses the subjectivist epistemology, where the researcher recognizes it is impossible for her to separate from what she knows. The researcher and the object of her research are connected. The ontology in this research is relativist ontology; reality is constructed socially through meanings. In this case, as the researcher, I am a co-creator of the research: my interpretation of the meaning of the phenomenon cannot be dissociated from the meaning of the participants (Annells, 1999).

Van Manen employs philosophical and empirical methods in his approach. The foremost techniques to carry out phenomenological research are characteristic of an attitude to be adopted by the researcher: the phenomenological attitude (as opposed to our everyday natural attitude) (van Manen, 2001; van Manen 2014). This attitude illustrates the philosophical tradition of phenomenology and how van Manen's approach takes from both Husserl and Heidegger. It can be summed up in two dispositions towards the phenomenon: the *epoché* and the reduction-proper. The *epoché* is the act of setting aside the researcher's thoughts, ideas, assumptions, and opinions regarding the phenomenon (van Manen, 2014). It can be understood as suspending the "taken-for-grantedness" of the situation (van Manen, 2001). Where the *epoché* is the curbing of assumptions at a distance, the reduction-proper is the opposite movement of making the phenomenon known, of exposing it and fully attending to it, with wonder (Heinonen, 2015; van Manen, 2014; van Manen & van Manen, 2021). Other methods are characterized as empirical and are derived from the social sciences. These include most

commonly: phenomenological interviews, phenomenological observations, and excerpts from literature.

Researcher Assumptions

My interest to explore occupational balance in families with school-aged children stems from professional and personal experiences. A recent research project I was involved in had a focus on young families. It was an interdisciplinary longitudinal study on the transition to parenthood. Researchers involved in this project were from the fields of nursing, psychology, social work, and anthropology. One hundred and three families were followed. Once parental leave was over, a frequent concern expressed by mothers and fathers was the difficulty to maintain the occupations that they valued. For me, this appeared to be related to occupational balance.

I am the mother of two daughters and have been married for 23 years. In the beginning of our family life, we moved many times, which meant that I had to adapt to very different environments and employment statuses. The frequent moves gave me the opportunity to interact with people from various backgrounds. I believe being a parent is an experience that bridges differences and brings people together. It is a role I value.

I fully embrace the philosophy of my profession. I enjoy the small pleasures of everyday life and recognize that our lives derive meaning from our many occupations. I believe what we do and how we spend our time influences our health and well-being. This is a value I strive to instill in my daughters. Throughout my doctoral studies, both my daughters have finished high school and the eldest has started graduate studies. As both have spent more time away from home in the last few months, family time has become scarce.

I recognize that my interest in occupational balance in dual earner families carries the assumption that the current rhythm of our lives is unhealthy from an occupational perspective

and that this is partly due to the importance we give as a society to paid work. I believe new models of productivity could be imagined, offering families who are raising children more options to care for themselves and their families, while being productive at work. In the beginning of this research, I assumed occupational balance would be a preoccupation for all parents. Another initial assumption that has been made clear to me through this research is that I naively presumed that couples who chose to pursue both of their careers had naturally adopted non-traditional gender roles.

Participants

For this research, 4 families (a total of 18 participants) were recruited. All family members were requested to participate in the research. The sample was a purposive sample.

The inclusion criteria were as follows:

- Families who live in the same household;
- Families who have been living in the Ottawa-Gatineau area for at least 2 years;
- Families who speak English or French;
- Families whose children are elementary school-aged (7 to 12 years); and
- Families where both parents work full time outside the home (each at least 30 hours a week).

Inclusion criteria were flexible to accommodate possible challenges in recruiting multiple family members willing to participate in the research and to take into consideration the burden of data collection. To that effect, 2 families in which a child was six and/or 13 were allowed to participate in the research.

Were excluded from the sample, families whose challenges could have had a substantial impact on the experience of occupational balance, for example families in which a child or a parent lived with a disability. Families originating from recent immigration (less than five years) were also excluded as they are likely undergoing adjustments to a new setting and culture. This

can include challenges related to language proficiency and for some, to socioeconomic issues (Fuligni & Yoshikawa, 2003). Single parent families also have characteristics that distinguish them from two-parent families. Socioeconomic status, a social network which extends beyond the household and more prominent time-scarcity issues (Kalenkoski et al., 2005) are some of potential differences.

Recruitment was achieved exclusively through word of mouth and through a local cross-country ski club (Skinouk). The recruitment strategy included informing the club administrator about the research and having her email information to the members detailing the research (including phone number and email address of the researcher). (See Appendix A for the recruitment posters. See Appendix B for the letter of approval by Skinouk cross-country ski club).

School-aged children were chosen because between the ages of seven and 12 years old, children go through a developmental shift that allows them to participate increasingly and more independently in the public sphere (Bonsall, 2014). Dual earner couples deal with the concurrent demands of managing two jobs, their relationship, and children (Wada et al., 2014). To embrace an expansive view of family, parents were not expected to be married or be the natural parents of the children in the research. Same-sex parents and blended families were welcomed in the sample as long as they lived in the same household. Although one same-sex couple was initially interested in participating in the research, they were ultimately excluded because the children lived between two households.

Data collection methods and procedures

The data gathering process sought pre-reflective accounts of the phenomenon. A pre-reflective account is the description of an experience as it is lived (van Manen et al., 2016). What is pursued from research participants is their authentic experience before they have made sense

of it and categorized it. In this research, traditional and innovative data gathering methods were selected to draw on the experiences of participants. These four qualitative methods are: daily occupational schedules, occupational map; phenomenological interviews and photo-elicitation interviews. Additionally, a short online survey was used to obtain basic sociodemographic information from the families. The researcher provided her family's own individual weekly schedules and occupational map as examples for the participants. Of these methods, the first two served as icebreakers and as an introduction to the use of time and occupations. Conversely, the phenomenological and photo-elicitation interviews, which build on the initial methods, were the primary sources of lived experience that informed the findings in this thesis.

Daily Occupational Schedules

Occupational schedules are time-use methods that are not as time consuming as time diaries. They provide an overview on lifestyle (Matuska & Bass, 2016; Pentland & Harvey, 1999) and bypass the tedious task for participants to report everyday. Information was gathered for three days of the current seven-day week. Activities vary greatly across the days of the week (Hunt & McKay, 2015), with the greatest variation existing between weekdays and weekend days with Friday differing considerably from all other days (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, 2013). Time-use that captures two or three days in the lives of the participants have been shown to be more representative of the range of activities they engage in (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, 2013; Ziviani et al., 2008). For this reason, of the days reported on, one day was a weekday (Monday to Thursday), one day was the Friday and the third day was a weekend day. Besides the Friday, participants decided on the days to report, all days were from the same week. The material needed were copies of the schedule template (See Appendix C for the daily occupational schedule and instructions.) and pencils or pens. Daily occupational schedules provided an idea of the occupational repertoire of each

family member. The schedules were completed by all participants. Younger children at times required help from a parent to fill out their schedule.

Occupational Map

An occupational map is a visual representation of the sites of importance to participants and the corresponding occupations that take place in those sites (Huot & Rudman Laliberté, 2015; Warren et al., 2016). It highlights places of occupation of individual members and of the family. For example, residence, parents' workplaces, schools attended by the children, afterschool activities, leisure and, frequently visited places of business were included. The map was hand drawn by all family members. It was not expected to be to scale. Its purpose was to generate a physical representation of the abstract notion of occupation as well as to provide information on the expanse of the family's physical community.

The occupational map is a developing method of data collection in the field of OS. It is related to other arts-based methods used in qualitative studies such as body mapping (Hartman, et al., 2011) and go-along interviews (Carpiano, 2009). It is not a traditional method within contemporary phenomenological research, but van Manen (2014) recognizes the use of poetry, literature, and values arts-based expressions to inform practice. Increasingly, visual methods are being incorporated in studies as a recognition of the added value images bring to the textual or spoken word (Ball & Gilligan, 2010). All material required was provided by the researcher. It included large poster boards (one or two per family) and an assortment of coloured pencils and markers.

All families participated in the drawing of their occupational map. Some were more invested in the activity than others. For example, one family participated in the activity for more than 90 minutes and produced a detailed and extensive map which included past vacation destinations and the virtual space. (See Figure 4 Occupational map, example 1.) For another

family, the drawing of the occupational map provided insights on the mother's limited leisure occupations. While the father drew multiple sporting activities and places where he met friends, the mother's occupations were mainly centered on home and family responsibilities (medical appointments, library, and grocery shopping). (See Figure 5 Occupational map, example 2.)

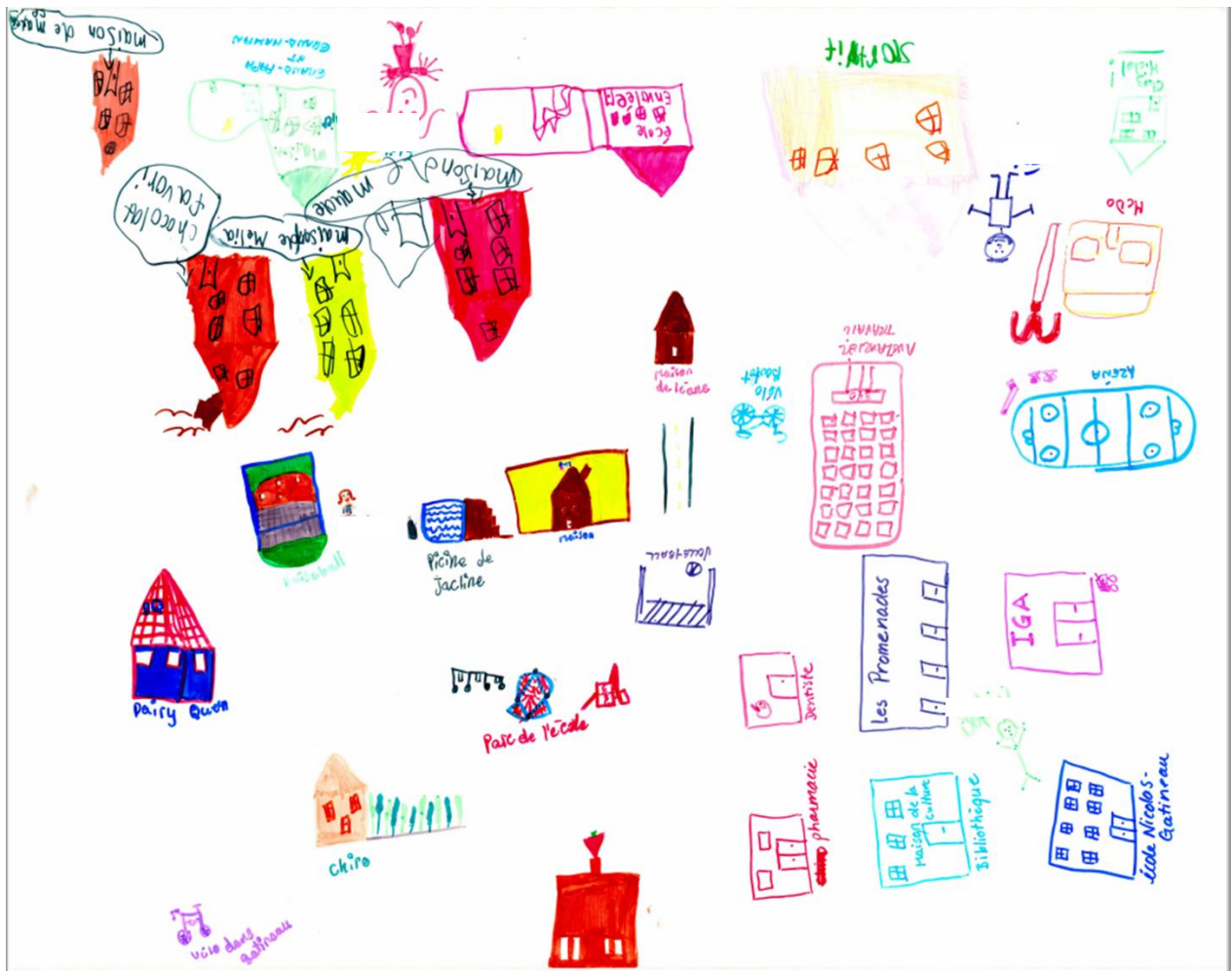
Figure 4

Occupational map, example 1



Figure 5

Occupational map, example 2



Phenomenological Interviews

The phenomenological interview is an in-depth semi-structured interview with the objective of gathering rich lived experience descriptions (van Manen, 2007). Phenomenological interviews are more suitable for adults as they are heavily dependent on language skills. As a traditional phenomenological method, the interview is ontologically and epistemologically congruent with the methodology in as much as it acknowledges multiple realities coexist and are created through our lived experience in relationship to others (Bevan, 2014; Wilson, 2015).

The phenomenological attitude of the epoché and the reduction-proper was maintained throughout the interviews (Bevan, 2014; van Manen, 2014). The researcher listened actively (Finlay, 2011; van Manen, 2007; Wilson, 2015) and encouraged the participant to describe spontaneously, without interpretation, his or her experience (Finlay, 2011; van Manen, 2014). With the help of probes, the experience was explored in as many details as possible. Parallels exist between the phenomenological interview and a client interview in OT. Occupational therapists are trained to listen, to be responsive during interviews, to help clients express themselves and to facilitate awareness. Furthermore, skilled therapists can explore “shifts in meaning that can emerge from increased awareness” (Finlay, 2011, p. 201).

In-person interviews have the advantage of establishing a stronger rapport between interviewer and interviewee and increasing the likelihood of obtaining highly detailed and relevant data (Wilson, 2015). Valuable observations can also be gleaned from this direct contact, even more so if the interview takes place at the home of the participant. Interviews were recorded to facilitate analysis and free the interviewer from taking detailed notes. (See Appendix D for the phenomenological interview guide.)

Each parent participated in an individual phenomenological interview at the time and place of their choice. Parents chose to be interviewed at home, at their place of work or at a coffee shop or restaurant close to their workplace. Interviews lasted between 38 minutes to 99 minutes.

Photo-elicitation Interviews

Photo-elicitation interviews are research methods in which participants’ active involvement is solicited. They take place in two distinct steps. In the first step, research participants are invited to take photographs related to a specific topic. In the second step, the photographs are used as visual prompts to reflect and explore deeper meanings during a follow-

up interview with the researcher (Fargas-Malet et al., 2010; Whiting, 2015). Because it requires no reading or writing skills, this method is developmentally appropriate to use with school-aged children (Byrne & al., 2016; McCloy et al., 2016; Whiting, 2015). Its participatory aspect gives the status of co-researcher to participants which reduces the concern of power relations between child participant and adult researcher (Bukhave & Huniche, 2016; Byrne et al., 2016; Lal et al., 2012; Mandleco, 2013; McCloy et al., 2016; White et al., 2010). Children enjoy the creativity, control, and freedom they are afforded through photo-elicitation interviews (McCloy & al., 2016; Mykkänen & Böök, 2013; Whiting, 2015). Taking photographs is stimulating and rewarding for them (White et al., 2010; Whiting, 2015) which facilitates their engagement and the attainment of the investigation's aims (McCloy et al., 2016; Whiting, 2015). Practically speaking, the photographs serve as recalls (Bukhave & Huniche, 2016; McCloy et al., 2016) and to focus the interview for children whose attention span is shorter (Whiting, 2015).

Although photo-elicitation interviews are not a traditional form of phenomenological enquiry, children are naturally attracted to pictorial representations (Coad, 2012) and it can be argued that the process of taking photographs is an active and creative process akin to more traditional forms of enquiry. Moreover, as stated by McCloy & al. (2016), photography has the advantage of compensating for varied artistic abilities in children. The approach based on two modes of data collection (visual and conversational) facilitates the understanding of the phenomenon (Svendler Nielsen, 2009).

Turning children into photographers offers them a different perspective on their life. The photographs they produce are visual representations of their lifeworld (Kirova & Emme, 2006). It is through the interview that the researcher can gain insight into what meaning the photographs hold for the child (Barker & Smith, 2012; Bukhave & Huniche, 2016). As such, they have the power to “generate knowledge of embodied everyday life experiences” (Bukhave &

Huniche, 2016). For this method to be used in the context of phenomenology, it requires the interview to be conducted as a phenomenological interview. To adapt the interview, I asked the children to describe a typical day or a specific situation in which they have experienced balance in everyday activities (Finlay, 2011; Shi, 2011). Children speak freely when asked about photographs (McCloy et al., 2016; Zartler & Richter, 2014). Their senses are stimulated through photographs (Pink et al., 2011) and the photographs stir emotions and meanings related to aspects of daily life that may not otherwise be perceived in traditional interviews. (See Appendix E for the instructions on taking photos and Appendix F for the Photo-elicitation interview guide.)

Digital photography has proven to be more practical and superior in many ways to disposable cameras (Bukhave & Huniche, 2016; Dennis et al., 2009; Whiting, 2015). Digital cameras, iPads, iPods and cellular phones are easy for children to operate and provide immediate images of higher quality which can be deleted and retaken when necessary (Barker & Smith, 2012; Bukhave & Huniche, 2016; McCloy et al., 2016; Whiting, 2015). Digital photographs also have the advantage of being easy to display during follow-up interviews.

All participating children had access to iPads or cellphones and provided at least 5 photographs in preparation for their photo-elicitation interview. Photo-elicitation interviews lasted approximately 20 minutes. In most cases the photo taking process was adapted by the families. For example, for lack of time, one participating family took staged photos of the occupations instead of occupations captured in the moment. During the interview, the children described the lived experience of staging the photographs which they thought was very amusing, but the staged photographs were lacking the lived experience of the occupation they attempted to represent. (See Figure 6 as an example of a staged photograph.) After this incident, more detailed instructions cautioned families to avoid staging photographs. The photo-elicitation process was meant to be undertaken by the children and in that sense, I did not

expect to see photos of the children themselves but photos of their lifeworld. To my surprise children were in all the photos. In a few instances children had taken selfies. Generally, parents had either taken photos of the children or had selected with their children, photos from past experiences. This involvement by the parents was unexpected but reflects an adaptation they saw as important. It may have been done to save time or to limit the use of electronic devices by young children.

Figure 6

Staged photograph



Research Process

All research activities pertaining to a family (daily occupational schedules, occupational maps, phenomenological interviews, and photo-elicitation interviews) were collected over five to nine weeks to maintain the family's interest in the research, as a short time span can reduce the chances of attrition. All efforts were made to respect the family's busy schedules.

Furthermore, each research activity was built on the previous one with the first activities being exploratory and non-threatening and more revealing activities, such as interviews, taking place

at the end of the data collection. This approach made the research process iterative and allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Figure 7 illustrates the research process and research activities. Table 1 summarizes the research procedures.

Dates for each of the research activities were taken into account as seasons can affect individual and family occupations and the use of time. Similarly, because of the contrasting rhythms in the summer months, all activities were conducted during the school year. Two families went through the complete cycle of procedures before data collection started with another family. To accommodate the families and because of the difficulty in recruiting, two families participated in the research activities simultaneously.

Figure 7

Research process and activities



Initial Contact (T1)

Once interested families were identified, I emailed the family contact to schedule an initial meeting at a place of the family's convenience. All families preferred to meet in their home. I met with all family members and explained in detail the research, including objectives, timeline, participation requirements and confidentiality/ethics issues. Family members were given a chance to ask questions. I read the consent forms and obtained signatures from each family member. (See Appendix G for the informed consent, Appendix H for the child's assent, Appendix I for the parental consent, and Appendix J for the release form.) Instructions and forms for the daily occupational schedules were handed-in to the contact person (three forms per family member: one for each day). The approximate time needed for the initial contact with the family was 45 minutes.

Second Contact (T2)

During the week following the initial contact, or when agreed upon with the contact person, I communicated at least once via the preferred mode (email or text message) to remind family members to fill out their daily occupational schedules.

Third Contact (T3)

Once the daily occupational schedules had been completed, the third contact took place in person at a place of convenience. All participating families chose to meet in their home. Schedules were briefly reviewed with family members to see what free time is available to the family outside of school hours and work hours and what activities family members participate in individually and together. Family members' insights into the activity of completing schedules were also sought through questions such as: What are your initial thoughts when you see your schedules? Did you expect the schedules to be as they are? What is different than expected? What is as expected?

Some participants' observations pertained to 'doing many things for others' or to 'spending a lot of time doing nothing before school' or again to 'having a very different rhythm now that hockey has come to an end'. With the process of the daily occupational schedules fresh in their mind and being more familiar with the concept of occupation, as a group, family members were invited to complete a family occupational map. Minimal instructions were given. Family members were encouraged to use various pens and pencils to draw their occupations and the places where they occur. The process of drawing the map as a family was an opportunity for participants to explore their everyday occupations in a new light. Questions were asked during the drawing of the map to help further stimulate the participants' reflection on occupations. What do you like to do? What are the places you go to in a typical week? What about last week? Who are the important people in your life and where and when do you see them? What are the places that you go to/visit as a family? The occupational mapping afforded the researcher a significant opportunity to observe the participants in a joint activity. Observations yielded further insights into the lifeworld of the family. All observation notes were journaled.

With the objective of having each research activity building on the preceding one, carrying out the occupational map prior to the interviews served to strengthen the rapport between the researcher and the family members and to bring to the surface experiences of occupation and occupational balance. The interviews extended on this research activity.

At the end of the third contact, family members were briefed on the next research activities. Specific instructions were given with respect to the photo-elicitation interviews. Appointments were made with each family member for the individual interviews. The approximate time needed for the third contact with the family was 90 minutes.

Fourth Contact (T4)

On the week following the third contact with the family, I emailed or texted the family contact to remind them of the photos the children should take in preparation for their interviews. The dates and times for each individual family member interview were also confirmed.

Fifth Contact (T5)

When needed a second reminder was sent to the family contact. In a few exceptional cases, interviews had to be rescheduled.

Sixth Contact (T6)

Between the fourth and ninth week following the initial visit, the researcher met individually with family members to conduct a phenomenological interview with each parent and a photo-elicitation interview with each child. Care was taken to ensure the interviews were private. I prepared myself for the interviews by reviewing my notes, the occupational schedules, the maps and photos (in the case of photo-elicitation interviews). When clarifications or questions imposed themselves, these were noted on the interview guide to be brought up during the interview. Parents were interviewed after their children and any concern or question about the information shared by a child with the researcher was checked with a parent. Children from the same family were interviewed during the same visit. One adult interview was conducted per visit.

The interview guide was developed to serve as a quick reference and help the interviewer focus on the actual experience rather than the perceptions, beliefs, or interpretation of the experience. Open-ended questions were used. Follow-up and probing questions aimed to gather further description and details of the experience.

The five photos (or more) taken by the child to represent individual and/or family occupational balance directed the photo-elicitation interview. When useful, the map served as a prompt (Fargas-Malet et al., 2010) during the interviews with children.

Seventh Contact (T7)

Once all interviews for the family had been carried out, I emailed the parent that had not acted as a family contact with a link to an online sociodemographic survey. (See Appendix K for sociodemographic survey.) Filling out the short survey took less than 10 minutes. A personalized thank you note was then mailed to the family. Families were informed they could contact me should they be interested in the findings of the research. Three of the families contacted the researcher after receiving the thank you note, but to date no family requested the research findings.

Table 1
Procedures summary

Time	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7
Mean	In person	Text or email	In person	Text or email	Text or email	In person	Email
Place	Participants' residence	-	Participants' residence	-	-	Participants' residence or place of choice	-
Activities	-Describe the research to participants -Sign consent and release forms -Answer participants' questions -Review the daily occupational schedule form	-Send reminders to fill out the daily occupational schedule forms	-Draw the occupational map -Give instructions regarding photo-elicitation interviews -Schedule parents' interviews and children's photo-elicitation interviews	-Confirm interview dates -Send reminders to take pictures in preparation for the photo-elicitation interviews	-Send second reminder regarding interview dates -Send second reminder to take pictures in preparation for the photo-elicitation interviews	- Photo-elicitation interviews with children and phenomenological interviews with parents	-Send sociodemographic survey
Participants	All family members	Contact person	All family members	Contact person	Contact person	Family members, individually	Other parent (not contact person)
Duration	45 minutes	A few minutes 3 days of the week	60 - 110 minutes	-	-	40 -100 minutes (parents) 20 minutes (children)	Less than, 10 minutes

Note. T1 - T7 = refer to first to seventh contact with participants

Pilot Testing

Data collection methods were pilot tested with one family who met the inclusion criteria. This family included two children to obtain multiple (more than three) perspectives. A meeting with the thesis advisory committee followed the pilot testing to evaluate and discuss any amendment needed to the procedures. Pilot testing served to verify instructions to families were clear and to measure the time commitment imposed on families. Through the pilot testing, it was possible to appreciate how it was difficult for younger children to grasp the concept of occupational balance and adjustments were made to the introduction of the photo-elicitation interview guide. Interviews were transcribed and all data from pilot were included in the analysis.

Data Analysis

Phenomenological research is a non-linear, iterative research process (van Manen, 2012). The lived experience of a phenomenon is illuminated through themes and essences. The analysis for this research included a thematic analysis, an on-going reflection, and a dialogic process. As a researcher, I remained open to the phenomenon from the development of the research to the writing of this thesis. Prolonged immersion in the data collected was necessary to the analysis. The first step in this immersion was the transcription of participants' interviews. All data collected from the interviews and photo-elicitation interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed using verbatim transcription. Visual methodologies, photos, and maps, were saved to the participants' files and used complementarily during the analysis. The researcher's journal which included notes on reflexivity, observations on participants, memos regarding the research process and reflections on the phenomenon was also paramount for the writing of this thesis.

Thematic Analysis

Each transcript was read several times to explore for meanings holistically, then selectively and finally at the level of the sentence (van Manen, 2014). This process allowed for an initial development of

themes. To reflect both the occupational and phenomenological perspectives, occupations, lived existentials and words or phrases that carried meaning and were repeated were used as themes. In phenomenology, themes refer to elements of text that contain meaning and have the power to explicate the phenomenon under study. The themes are often referred to as “structures of experience” (van Manen, 1997, p. 79) and they act as foci around which the experience of the phenomenon can be articulated (van Manen, 1997).

Although van Manen (2014) discourages the use of qualitative data analysis software claiming they cannot provide phenomenological insights, careful use of software, such as NVivo, has been successfully used in phenomenological studies (Sohn, 2017). The transcripts were coded with the themes using NVivo – QSR International (release 1.4). Nvivo was used to organize the information, facilitating the creative and intuitive process of data analysis rather than substituting it. When transcripts revealed new themes, previous transcripts were revisited and recoded as needed, accentuating the immersion in the interview and the iterative process of analysis. This process countered the fragmenting of transcripts that is a common critique of the use of software in phenomenology. Appendix L presents the themes shared by the participants and used in the analysis of the transcripts. To illustrate the emergent nature of the data analysis, themes present in the first family’s transcripts are marked with an asterisk. Additionally, some themes were present in the first family’s transcripts, yet do not appear in the final list of themes. This was either because the theme was incidental or specific to that family and played a secondary role in the meaning of occupational balance, as was the case for the initial themes of ‘active travel’, ‘time as money’, ‘absence of a parent’ or ‘availability for children’. Another reason why initial themes from the first family may be absent from the list of themes is because these were collapsed or absorbed into other themes. For example, the initial broad theme of ‘leisure’ was later revisited and coded more specifically under ‘family leisure’ and/or under ‘occupations contributing to occupational balance’. Yet another example would be the

initial theme ‘experience of occupational balance’ which was again too broad and was reorganized into more specific themes under the lived existentials. In this thesis, I use the term essence as a form of higher-ranking theme. Three essences are presented in Chapter five as lines of reflection for the interpretation of the findings. Essences were shared by all participants and were related to specific occupations.

Reflection

As much as immersion in the transcripts was necessary for the analysis, reflection presupposes a distance with the data to uncover new understandings. Reflection was an integral part of the data analysis and indeed the entire process of this phenomenological research. Initial reflections on the participants’ transcripts were made by means of the lived existentials. Because these are universal themes, they can assist in the exploration of meaning (van Manen 1997). (See Table 2 Existentials and their meaning according to van Manen (2014).)

Table 2

Existentials and their meaning according to van Manen (2014)

Existentials	Meaning
Relationality : lived-other	What is the experience of self and others in occupational balance?
Corporeality: Lived-body	What is the experience of the senses and the body in occupational balance?
Spatiality: Lived-space	What is the experience of space in occupational balance?
Temporality: Lived-time	What is the experience of time in occupational balance?

Note. Adapted from van Manen (2014)

Further materials for reflection came in the form of notes on observations of the participants, memos regarding the data analysis, personal experiences by the researcher, readings and works of art or other representations that were associated to the phenomenon of occupational balance or to daily

family life. Notes were taken after each data collection activity. All reflections were consigned to the researcher journal. They included ideas and insights related to the emergence of potential themes to consider for the analysis (e.g., sports, children's sports, and fathers), reflections on certain words or expressions which were used by participants (e.g., 'until the next tantrum') and how these could be interpreted.

Dialogic Process

The dialogic process refers to conversations and discussions that can generate deeper understandings of the phenomenon. To assist in the data analysis, regular meetings with the members of the thesis advisory committee took place. I was able to discuss the themes and meanings which emerged from the data. My supervisor read all the interview transcripts. Other members became familiar with various portions of the transcripts. To favor the inclusion of multiple perspectives in the research process, I regularly sought the assistance of my supervisor and thesis committee advisors to foster dialogue and confront my perspective. My supervisor and thesis committee advisors were encouraged to present their complementary as well as divergent views. Reflections were noted before and after each committee meeting. A summary of the decisions taken during the meeting was sent to each committee member, at the latest two weeks following the meeting.

Other sources of insight into the findings came from a graduate students' labouratory group, presentations at conferences and discussions with faculty members and colleagues. From April 2018 to July 2020, four students with a background in OT met once or twice monthly, under the supervision of Professor Rose Martini. The goal of the labouratory was to encourage reflection and discussion. Preliminary findings, abstract submissions and conferences were presented to the group for feedback. I also presented preliminary findings of this research at three conferences in which I received feedback from attendees. Formal and informal discussions with faculty members of the Faculty of Health Sciences

at the University of Ottawa, as well as colleagues also led to reflections, ideas, questions, and new understandings which were recorded in the research journal.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity relates to an openness and a self-awareness from the part of the researcher. In hermeneutic phenomenology, the researcher is viewed as an “instrument” in the research process. Regardless of the attempt to suspend the researcher’s view on the phenomenon, meanings derived from the interpretive research are a blend of the meanings of both the participants and the researcher. In this sense, the perspective of the researcher influences all aspects of the research and is indivisible from the process (Finlay, 2011; Primeau, 2003). Rather than jeopardize the reliability of the research, this provides it with a richer understanding of the phenomenon and more intense insights (Finlay, 2002).

In this research, three means address reflexivity: the research journal, the inclusion of multiple perspectives into the findings and an initial interview of the researcher. The first two means have been described above in the data analysis process. The initial interview served to reveal main assumptions, values, and beliefs regarding the phenomenon and to develop an awareness to these. I was interviewed by my supervisor in May 2018, before data collection began.

Criteria to Ensure Quality of Phenomenological Research

Criteria for the evaluation of phenomenological research differ from those used in other qualitative research designs (van Manen, 2014). According to van Manen (2014), strong phenomenological research “may be assessed on the criteria of its suspension of personal bias (...), its originality of insight, and its scholarly treatment of sources (p.347).” For example, in lieu of using criteria such as credibility through member checking or transferability, van Manen (2014) recommends the researcher, and the readers evaluate phenomenological research by asking themselves if the research contains rich appreciable experiential material or if the research proposes reflective insights beyond the taken for granted appreciation of daily life or still if the research addresses our sense of embodiment.

The strength of this research centers on the rapport built with the family members, on the layered analysis of the findings and on their usefulness. I have chosen Annells' (1999) four criteria to ensure the quality of this phenomenological research.

Was the selection of a phenomenological research a suitable methodology for the research?

As explained throughout this chapter, the research question, data collection activities and data analysis process are congruent with the philosophical underpinnings of interpretive phenomenology. The multiple research methods (triangulation of sources) used in the data collection offered flexible and multifaceted means to investigate the experience of the family members. The iterative process of this research served to gain trust with the participants but also to build on methods already explored with the participants. Rapport with family member was built during the two to three visits before the phenomenological interviews or photo-elicitation interviews. This allowed the researcher and participants to become familiar with each other. It also granted the researcher a view into the lived experience of family members. Finally, this time enabled participants to reflect on the concept of occupation and the phenomenon of occupational balance.

Is the product understandable and appreciable? Intense collaboration with the participants over a five-to-nine-week period inform the findings of this research. Care was given to the writing of the findings to ensure they provide powerful, vivid accounts of the experience of occupational balance in families. The research findings detailed in chapters three and four are presented in a manner that is easily understood by a reader with or without a phenomenological background.

Is the process of inquiry understandable? Analysis of this phenomenological research was carefully crafted through the numerous readings of the interviews and extended reflection on the findings. Although experiences were diverse, the analysis yielded commonalities in the occupations, themes and essences related in the description of the complex phenomenon of occupational balance. These are illustrated in the thesis by various quotes.

Is the product useful? Occupational balance is a concept at the core of OT (Westhorp, 2003). It is a timely concept to study because of the increased interest in the relational aspects of occupation (Ramugondo & Kronenberg, 2015) and because OS is making constant advances in health promotion (Moll et al., 2013; Ziviani et al., 2010;). This research generated new ideas on occupational balance and the usefulness of the concept. It suggests alternatives to occupational balance that may be more adapted to the practice of OT and the study of occupations. Implications for the field of OS and OT are provided in Chapter five.

Ethics

Before data collection took place, ethics approval from the University of Ottawa's review boards was obtained. (See Appendix M for the certificate of ethics approval.) During the recruitment phase, participants were invited to initiate contact with the researcher if they were interested in participating in the research. Informed consent was obtained from each family member. The informed consent included the research objectives and the timeline for the research activities. Participants signed two copies of the informed consent: one for the researcher's files and the other copy for the participant's own records. A specific section of the form was on the use of photographs and required additional signatures. As well, parents provided permission for the participation of their children in the research. Children signed assents.

Any necessary electronical sharing of research material with other research team members was done through encrypted computer files. Because speaking of their experience on balance in everyday life could bring up sensitive issues for some participants, a telephone hotline and contact details for community resources, specifically addressing parents' needs was added to the information and consent form. Names of participants are not revealed in the findings.

All electronic versions of the data collected through interview recordings, transcripts, maps, schedules, photographs, and sociodemographic survey are kept on an encrypted USB key as well as on a

computer protected with a password. Hard copies of the data collected has been stored on the Health Sciences campus of the University of Ottawa in a locked filing cabinet of the supervisor's lab. Only the researcher and supervisor have access to it. The data will be conserved for 5 years, after which time it will be erased or destroyed.

Chapter 3 - Findings: Families and Occupational Balance

The research findings are organized over two chapters. This chapter contains a presentation of the participating families. It is followed by a section on family occupational balance. The findings on individual occupational balance and the dynamic nature of occupational balance appear in the next chapter.

Presentation of families

The aim of this section is to introduce each of the four families who participated in the research. Families will be described in terms of individual members, the language spoken at home, the place where they live, as well as the time and location of the visits and interviews for the research. A general overview of the family's occupations is also provided. When appropriate, distinct features of the family or events in the life of the family members are illustrated. Table 3 is a summary of the four participating families. The results reported in this section are based on the sociodemographic questionnaire, my reflective journal, and my observations from contacts with the families, including the preliminary activities of filling out daily schedules and drawing an occupational map. This section offers the reader the context to understand the findings and interpretations presented subsequently.

Family 1

Family 1 is made up of a married couple and two girls aged seven and nine years. Their home is in Gatineau (a city in western Québec located immediately across the river from Ottawa, Ontario), on a quiet dead-end street. The family is French speaking. Our exchanges and my visits span from the end of May 2018 to the beginning of July 2018. As soon as I enter the home, the children are curious about my presence and ask many questions. The family home's living space is dominated by the girls' elaborate and inventive construction of homes with items from the living room (cushions, books, chairs...) for their play figures. In the dining room, the table is flanked by a bookcase overflowing with board games and

colorful material for crafts. Each of my visit takes place in the dining room, where we sit at the table, except for the father's interview which is carried out at a restaurant close to his workplace.

The girls attend a French elementary school which is close by. In the mornings, they walk to school with their father and walk home with their mother at the end of the school day. The couple chose their home because of its proximity to this school as well as the high school where the mother teaches. The father's parents, who are an excellent source of support for the family, also live close by. The mother drives to work in Gatineau, while the father cycles to work in Ottawa. In the winter, the father commutes by bus. He works as an accountant for the government.

Both daughters are involved in extra-curricular sports. When we meet, the youngest had just finished her trampoline classes for the season. Being spring, the eldest daughter was playing baseball on weekday evenings. Both girls swim and take gym lessons during the winter. The father plays volleyball and hockey on a weekly basis. The mother's leisure activities tend to be sedentary and take place in the home. She mentions enjoying learning German, cooking, and gardening and doing some occasional editorial work. While she identified these activities as making up her leisure time, she admitted that some of these occupations at times feel more like work or chores rather than true leisure occupations. The mother stated that it is important for her that the family participates in activities together. For instance, they do all their shopping, including grocery shopping, as a group. The family has planned to go on a cruise together the following year. Until recently, they have had few opportunities for taking a vacation together because of the father's work conditions. It is impossible for him to take time off at Christmas and in the summer, as those are his busiest periods at work. At the time of my visits, the father is in the process of changing employment. One of the motivations to change position is to be able to take time off when the rest of the family is out of school and work. The mother reports that since her work schedule as a teacher is identical to the girls', she has inevitably been more available for them. As

revealed by the couple, for this family, it has meant that the father has over relied on the mother to care for their daughters.

Approximately a year before we met, the mother became ill and had to take a prolonged sick leave. This experience was an opportunity for her to reflect on her daily life and for the couple to re-examine their routines. At that time, the division of household labour among the spouses was characteristic of traditional families, with the mother being the principal caregiver for the children and entirely responsible for the household tasks. Additionally, the father's work schedule was strained, he was heavily involved in sports, especially as a provincial and national referee in baseball. Since the mother's health crisis, however, the father has begun to take a more active role in the family. For instance, he now takes care of the girls' morning routine and accompanies them to school. This adjustment has allowed the mother to integrate more personal activities in her morning routine, such as taking her language lessons and getting herself ready for work without interruptions. The father has also found new ways to incorporate sports amongst family activities and daily life. For example, he has maintained his participation in hockey and volleyball teams and occasionally assists with the coaching of his eldest daughter's baseball team.

Family 2

A husband and wife with two girls, aged nine and 11 years compose Family 2. The family also has a dog and a cat. They live in a new suburban neighborhood in Orleans (eastern suburb of Ottawa). The open concept home has stylish furniture, brightly painted walls with accents, like an oversized bouquet of dried flowers at the entrance and an ornate mirror that reflect an attention to detail. The mother is a social worker, and the father is a community outreach worker. Both work in mental health. Although English is spoken at home, the girls attend a French elementary school. The eldest daughter takes the bus to school, while her younger sister is driven to the school daycare in the morning by her

father, on his way to work. Both parents drive to their workplaces. On my first visit, the girls are shy and the eldest repeatedly asks if she can go back to her room.

I meet with the family from April 2019 to the beginning of June 2019. On each of my visits to the home, the mother offers me a cup of coffee. We sit in the family room for the first visit, and I introduce the research. We meet a second time for the drawing of the occupational map. We sit in the dining room, which also serves as the craft room and the workspace where both girls do their homework. My interviews with the girls took place in the basement, which offered a little more privacy while each parent was interviewed at his and her workplace.

This family is very active in sports. The father plays hockey once a week in the summer and twice a week in the winter. The girls are very involved in hockey during the winter season (three times a week) and either baseball or lacrosse twice weekly in the spring and summer. The mother does not participate in sports except for the occasional race event. She likes to be involved in renovating and decorating projects around the house. Four times a year, she gets together with three girlfriends for a sleepover. She also enjoys baking birthday cakes. On special occasions, birthdays and race events, the family home becomes the hub for many friends and extended family members. Along with their extended family, the family enjoys participating in various running events (e.g. The Ottawa Race weekend). They go camping in the summer and skiing in the winter. They visit their extended family in North Bay four times a year. All family members work together on projects around the house. For instance, at the time of my visits, the family was finishing their basement and the girls assisted with the building of the stairs and the finishing of the floor.

This family's daily life is very organized and scheduled. They wake up, eat supper, and go to bed at fixed times, and family activities are planned well in advance. For example, the girls' summer camps, camping and weekends away have all been booked before the beginning of the summer. This family did not report getting any help from extended family or friends.

The parents encourage their daughters to explore their preferences in sports and other activities. They also acknowledge the need to support them in straying from their comfort zone. They prefer that their daughters not participate in competitive sports and enriched school programs, as they do not believe these to be conducive to balance in families.

The mother has recently changed her work schedule from a five-day workweek to a compressed four-day week. Although this did not reduce the total number of hours per week spent at work, having one day where she can stay at home has made a significant difference on the family's rhythm. The mother finds she accomplishes more in that one day at home where she usually cleans the house, than when that time was divided over five days. Since this change, the father oversees both girls' morning routines. He therefore leaves for work a little later than his wife, and she arrives home earlier than he does.

Family 3

The parents in Family 3 have three children, two daughters aged 13 and 11 and a son who is eight years old. The family also has a dog. They live in a new suburb of Orleans, in a bright and spacious home. Their backyard is private. It is landscaped with a pool, and it overlooks a wooded area. I meet with the family from April 2019 to July 2019. When I first arrive at their home, all three children are quietly drawing in a sun-filled family room. All following visits take place at the kitchen table or in the living room, except for the mother's interview which took place at her work.

The father is a high school teacher. He is home during the summer months when the children are out of school. The mother is a family physician who works full time throughout the year. The father is French Canadian, and the mother is English Canadian. All three children go to French school, with the youngest children in elementary school and the eldest in her first year of high school. Both parents drive to work.

On weekday mornings, the mother starts work at a 9:30 which allows her to walk the dog to the bus stop with the youngest children before getting ready for work. In the winter, the father and son both play hockey several times a week, including weekends, while the girls have Girl Guides once a week. In the springtime, the three children and the father practice martial arts twice a week. In the summer, the three children play soccer twice a week, which means the family is at a soccer practice or a game every evening. Throughout the year, the mother tries to go to the gym twice a week. The father goes to the gym daily, immediately after work, at the school where he teaches.

A highly coordinated and efficient routine has been elaborated around the father and the three children's Mui-Thai practice on weekday evenings. The mother drops off all three children at the dojo, while the father takes care of cleaning up after supper. The youngest children are the first to have their Mui-Thai class, where the eldest child is also involved as an assistant. After the drop-off, the mother grocery shops and then picks up the youngest children to bring them home to prepare for bed. In the meantime, the father heads to his Mui-Thai class which he takes with his eldest daughter.

This family enjoys going out to restaurants and trying new foods. They also take family vacations together. The maternal grandmother, lives close by, so does a paternal aunt. They come to the house, occasionally together, to help. Every year, the parents take a train trip in the spring to celebrate their wedding anniversary. This is the only family who spoke of the importance of taking time together, as a couple.

Family 4

Family 4 is composed of two parents and three children aged 13, 11, and six years old. They live across the street from Gatineau Park (a national park with several kilometers of hiking, biking, and skiing trails) in a bright renovated house. Skateboards adorn the living room walls. This is the only family for which the father is my contact. Although the father had initially replied very quickly to the emailed invitation in the spring of 2019, he cancelled our first meeting because he realized it was not a good

time for the family to participate in the research. I contacted him again in the fall of 2019 at which time the family was more available. My visits span from November 2019 to December 2019. Each time, the house was bustling with sounds and action as the children are each involved in their own activities, sometimes with friends. The children were interviewed at home and the parents at their workplaces. The family has a very big dog.

The mother works for the government and the father recently changed his work status to that of consultant. The three children attend different schools. The thirteen-year-old daughter attends an all-girls private high school in French. The eldest eleven-year-old son and the youngest six years old son both go to public elementary schools in French. French is also spoken at home. At the time of my visits, the eldest son was interviewing for the following year's admission to private high schools. All children take the school bus.

The mother is involved in voluntary community activities, such as being a founding member of the Gatineau Skateboard Association. On top of her full-time job in international affairs, eight months before my first visit, she opened a café. During her lunch break from her full-time job, she often drives home to walk the family dog. The father states that he is passionate about his work. His new consultant status means he now has a more flexible schedule, works fewer hours, and no longer needs to travel internationally for work. This allows him to be more involved in daily family activities like preparing meals and driving children to and from activities. He is also the president of the cross-country ski club of which his children are members.

All children cross-country ski competitively three times a week in the fall and winter, with the eldest two children already having classified for the Jeux du Québec (provincial games). In the spring and summer, all children mountain bike with the same frequency. The eldest son also plays hockey competitively (two or three times per week) in the winter. The father plays hockey once a week, year-round. The mother enjoys snowboarding, but states it is difficult for her to find the time to go to the

slopes. She has signed up for weekly cross-country ski lessons this year with the hopes that having scheduled days will be an incentive to go.

Both parents speak about having travelled extensively for work and leisure, as well as having lived abroad. Travel continues to be an interest and, while the family travels together, both parents mention the love of travelling alone. Throughout the time of my visits, the mother travelled internationally for work and the father took a week of vacation in the Caribbean by himself.

Although it appears this family is more individualistically focused on their activities and occupations, their occupations intersect. For example, the mother founded a skateboard association because her eldest son loves skateboarding. The family also takes advantage of the children's ski or hockey competitions to travel together. Another example is that of the coffee shop. The family home is less than a kilometer away from the building which houses the ski and cycling club and the café. The coffee shop has become a hub for family members because the children cross-country ski and mountain bike from there, the mother has her coffee shop there, and the father's board meetings for the ski association also take place in the same building. At times, the eldest daughter helps at the café and the eldest son will often walk over to the café after school, to wait for his parents.

The family has hired help to take care of the housework as well as the yard work. They also mention having the support from both grandmothers and a maternal aunt occasionally. Both extended families live in the Montréal area (large urban center 200km away).

As a group, the sample was fairly homogeneous. All families have a gross household income of \$100 000 or more per year. All parents have a university degree: three out of four fathers have completed a bachelor's degree and one father has a graduate diploma. All mothers, except for one, have obtained a graduate degree. While all parents are employed full-time and work between 30 to 42 hours a week, most mothers, except for one work roughly 10 hours less than their husband or partner. All parents were born in the seventies and all couples are mixed gender. Only one parent was non-

Caucasian. All children participated in extra-curricular activities. Families spoke English, French or both languages at home. No other language was spoken in the families. Three families were recruited through word of mouth while Family 4 was recruited through a community sports club. All children were interviewed at their home and most parents were interviewed at or near their place of work.

The description of the families provides a setting and some insights into the daily lives of the participating families which are helpful to contextualize the findings pertaining to occupational balance presented in the following sections of this chapter and the following chapter.

Table 3*Overview of families*

(Year of interview)	Family 1 (2018)	Family 2 (2019)	Family 3 (2019)	Family 4 (2019)
Father's year of birth (age at time of interview)	1977 (41)	1970 (49)	1978 (41)	1977 (42)
Mother's year of birth (age at time of interview)	1977 (41)	1978 (41)	1976 (43)	1974 (45)
Marital status	Common-law couple	Married	Married	Married
Language spoken at home	French	English	English	French
Number of children	2	2	3	3
Children and their year of birth (age at time of interview)	Girl 2009 (9) Girl 2010 (7)	Girl 2008 (11) Girl 2010 (9)	Girl 2006 (13) Girl 2008 (11) Boy 2011 (8)	Girl 2006 (13) Boy 2008 (11) Boy 2013 (6)
City or neighbourhood	Gatineau	Orléans	Orléans	Gatineau
Father's highest education attained	Bachelor's degree	Bachelor's degree	Bachelor's degree	Graduate studies
Mother's highest education attained	Bachelor's degree	Graduate studies	Graduate studies	Graduate studies
Father's career or occupation	Accountant	Community mental health worker	High school teacher	Consultant
Mother's career or occupation	High school teacher	Social worker	Family doctor	Public servant
Father's work hours/week	42	37.5	40	30
Mother's work hours/week	35	30	32	40

Togetherness and Family Occupational Balance

In this second section of chapter three, I examine family occupational balance as it is conveyed by the participants in the research. When speaking about family occupational balance, all families discussed two main occupations: the family dinner and family leisure. When appropriate, photos from the children's photo-elicitation interviews are used to illustrate quotes and themes.

This portion of the chapter uncovers the structure of experience for participants in terms of family occupational balance. I was initially disconcerted to find that when asked about occupational balance, participants did not recount experiences of balancing occupations, rather they described specific occupations that made them feel in balance. However, upon reflection, this can be explained by the distinct aim of the phenomenological interview, which is to bring forth experiential moments, before they are given theoretical thought. In other words, the lived experience relates to the doing in the present moment, which is what participants recounted, rather than communicating an understanding of the concept of occupational balance. As such, when asked what occupational balance meant for them, participants remembered and conveyed specific moments of occupational balance experience, where they were engaged in an occupation, rather than analyzing a situation or circumstance. As the findings are based on the experiential descriptions of occupational balance, the focus of this research is truly phenomenological.

The following section of chapter three provides insights related to the first research question: What is the lived experience and meaning of family occupational balance for families formed by dual earner parents and school-aged children?

Togetherness was found to be the overarching meaning for family occupational balance. This theme is repeatedly depicted as it was enacted in two shared family occupations: the family dinner and family leisure. Shared family occupations are those in which family members engage in collectively. In

the families interviewed, the first shared occupation of the family dinner is imbued with routine and ordinariness, while the second shared occupation of family leisure is reported as a rarer occurrence. According to the participants in this research, *togetherness* happens exclusively in instances when all family members are present and spend time with each other in shared occupations. Only exceptionally, did it also involve members of the extended family or friends. All research participants reported *togetherness* as a condition to family occupational balance.

Eating dinner as a family

Mary Pratt is a Canadian artist. She is an extraordinary avant-garde painter, who also worked as an occupational therapist (Cronin, 2018). I discern the influence of OT not only in the themes and subjects from everyday life she chooses to portray, but also in the manner she composes her artwork. For example, in her painting *Supper Table* (1969) (Figure 8), she depicts the remains of a dinner. Rather than choosing to paint a traditional still-life, by painting what is left of the dinner the artist highlights the occupation that took place, but also hints at the space and time in which the dinner occurred. Although no one is present at the table, the painting invites us to imagine Mary, her husband and 4 children were sitting at the table and enjoyed a meal together. We can almost hear the chatter and laughs. The family dinner was a moment that they shared, a time when their individual schedules coincided into the shared occupation of the evening meal. Now, they have moved on, possibly each to their own occupation.

Figure 8

Mary Pratt, Supper Table (1969) (Copyrighted content used with permission.)



In the repetition of the multiple daily occupations that make up family life, the occupation of eating dinner is described as key to family occupational balance for the participants in this research. Every day, on busy weekday evenings as well as the more leisurely weekend evenings, families sit down to eat dinner together. Some days, this is a quick meal before scurrying along to extra-curricular activities. All participants, whether adults or children refer to dinnertime as a privileged time to spend as a family and they relate this occupation to family occupational balance.

As parents and children explain in the following quotes, compared to the families' other daily occupations that appear chaotic, such as those involved in the morning routine or the early evening scramble to get everyone to their extra-curricular activities, dinnertime is the sole opportunity in the day for the family to gather and bond together over a meal and conversation. Family dinner stands out as a time when family members transition from their individual occupations, be they related to school, work, extra-curricular activities, or housework, to a shared family occupation. Eating dinner as a family is the intersection of multiple individuals' times, into a common time, place, and occupation. Figure 9 illustrates the family dinner, from the photo-elicitation interviews in one family.

One father fondly described that in his childhood, eating supper every evening as a family was a valued shared family occupation. However, he admits having difficulty regularly upholding this ideal

himself with his own family, even though he recognizes eating dinner as a family as ‘the best moment of the day’.

Être à la maison à l’heure du souper, quand j’étais plus jeune, c’est un moment où on se retrouvait le plus régulièrement ensemble en famille... Maintenant quand on s’assoit tous ensemble... on soupe, après ça, c’est douche-dodo. C’est à ce moment-là que c’est le meilleur moment de la journée, quand tout le monde est ensemble pour souper. Father, Family 1

Being at home at dinnertime, when I was younger, it was a time when we would almost always be together as a family... Now when we all sit down together ... we have dinner, after that it's shower time and bedtime. That's the best time of the day when everyone is together for supper. Father, Family 1¹

The child participant in the following quote also recognizes dinnertime as the only occasion in the day where family members systematically are together.

Dans la journée, quand on est tous vraiment là, c’est durant le souper à cause que [le matin] moi et mon père on doit partir en avance et puis [sister], [brother] et ma mère, y sont ici jusqu’à temps qu’ils s’en vont au bus et puis ma mère part pour le travail. Donc c’est le souper le seul moment. Eldest child, daughter, Family 3

During the day, it's really at dinnertime that we are all together because [in the morning] me and my dad have to leave early and then [sister], [brother] and my mom, they're here until they go to the bus and then my mom leaves for work. So, dinner is the only time. Eldest child, daughter, Family 3

There is a commitment entailed in making the family dinner happen. Lots of behind-the-scenes effort and organization go into this occupation. Numerous tasks are foreseeable, such as planning, grocery shopping, cooking, setting the table and cleaning up. In her painting showcasing leftovers from the family meal, Mary Pratt evokes some of the behind-the-scenes effort, such as cleaning up, and she contrasts this with what appears to be the short-lived nature of the family dinner. Less visible is the careful coordination of individual family members’ schedules. As two mothers from the research explain, for it to happen on a regular basis, having a set time for the family dinner simplifies the task.

¹ Throughout the next chapters, unofficial translations of the citations in French are provided (in italics). These are for information purposes only.

Almost 100 percent of the time, we sit down as a family at five. It takes us about five minutes to eat what took an hour to prepare. We have that protected time. So, there's no devices at the table, there's no TV on and we just sit down, and we have those few minutes of family time, where we eat and then the chaos of the evening begins. Mother, Family 2

Similarly, the mother in Family 1 expresses:

Souvent, j'attends aussi que [common-law partner] arrive. J'aime ça qu'on soupe en famille. C'est notre moment important. J'y tiens qu'on soupe en famille. Alors souvent, on s'ajuste avec ses horaires à lui. Il arrive vers 6:30, 7h, donc souvent on soupe tard. Étant donné le brouhaha quotidien, c'est difficile de trouver un petit moment pour être ensemble... Le matin, c'est go, go, go! Le moment privilégié qu'on a choisi nous, comme famille, c'est le souper. On soupe ensemble, c'est là qu'on se raconte un peu nos journées puis, parce que les filles me le racontent quand je vais les chercher à l'école, mais je trouve que c'est important qu'elles le partagent avec [common-law partner] aussi. Et puis c'est là qu'on voit aussi notre interaction familiale. Si les filles se chamaillent, on voit qu'est-ce qui se passe. Si dans la nourriture, elles aiment, elles n'aiment pas ou quelque chose comme ça. Ça nous permet de nous découvrir aussi, en tant que personne tout le monde. Et puis, c'est un moment aussi, si on a besoin de remettre les points sur les i à quelque part. Mother, Family 1

I often wait for [common-law partner] to arrive. I like it when we have dinner as a family. It is an important moment in our day. I want us to have dinner as a family. Often, we adjust to his schedule. He arrives around 6:30 or 7:00, so we often eat late. Given the daily hubbub, it's hard to find time to be together... In the morning, it's go, go, go! The special time that we have as a family is dinnertime. We have dinner together; that's when we tell each other about our days, because while the girls tell me about it when I go to pick them up from school, I think it's important that they share it with [common-law partner] as well. And that's when we see our family interact. If the girls are fighting, we can see what's happening. If they like or dislike the food, or something like that. It allows us to discover ourselves as individuals. And then, it's also a moment when, if we need to, we can dot the i's. Mother, Family 1

The mothers reiterate the importance of eating the evening meal together. They use terms like 'protected time' or 'privileged moment' to illustrate this. This description is contrasted with their description of other daily occupations that are filled with busyness and chaos, such as the ones that make up the morning routine or the ones immediately following the family dinner, when children need to be driven to their extra-curricular activities.

This last quote highlights dinnertime not only as an opportunity to share a meal and conversation, but also a time for each family member to talk about their day. During the family dinner, the focus of family members is on each other. The sharing of food facilitates the sharing of conversation.

Being a regularly occurring occupation, parents also see it as a time to touch base with the children and to plan upcoming activities. Certain rules often apply to the family dinner to foster and encourage family members to focus on each other. For instance, parents made references to cellphones and television not being permitted at dinnertime.

Children also report eating supper as a family as an occupation related to family occupational balance. They see the family dinner as an important occupation for sharing food and conversation. The youngest daughter in Family 2 says:

I think that is yesterday's supper. Yeah. So, we had salad, chicken legs and I'm eating a big cucumber! ... We get to talk about our day at school and we share lots of things at supper. And we eat! My specialty! Youngest child, daughter, Family 2

Similarly, her older sister also states:

Eating supper as a family, that's really important to us. Yeah. My Mom and Dad work in mental health, so they think it's really important to eat as a family... So, we eat! And we have conversations of the family. Sometimes we talk about upcoming events or sports. Eldest child, daughter, Family 2

Children also recognize the expectations and rules related to the family dinner, as illustrated by the following quote from the eldest child in Family 4.

Pour le souper, c'est pas comme si tout le monde s'en allait devant la télé ou dans leur chambre. On est obligé de rester à la table pis de parler. J'trouve ça le fun! Eldest child, daughter, Family 4

For dinner, it's not like everyone goes off to watch TV or to their room. You have to stay at the table and talk. I think it's fun! Eldest child, daughter, Family 4

As stated earlier, participants experience *togetherness* when all family members take part in the occupation. While efforts are made to accommodate everyone's schedule, there are times when this is not possible. At these times, the repeated absence of a family member does not go unnoticed. For Family 1, this is part of a greater issue related to occupational balance which will be addressed later in the chapter. As the eldest daughter in Family 1 says:

On soupe tous ensemble ... sauf que ça dépend. Des fois, ce monsieur-là, [she points to her father in the photo] il est pas là! Eldest child, daughter, Family 1

We all eat together ... except that it depends. Sometimes, this gentleman [she points to her father in the photo] is not there! Eldest child, daughter, Family 1

Figure 9

The family dinner in a participating family



Because it occurs daily and at a set time, the family dinner is described as a moment which structures the day for family members in this research. After each member has spent time in their individual occupations, whether it is school or work, the evening meal brings children and parents together for a short span of time in a shared occupation, before they separate again, to each take part in their own individual occupations. The most important condition for the family dinner is that all family members should be present. For parents, the daily family dinner allows them to touch base with their children and to set agendas for coming weeks. For children, the family dinner is an occasion to share the day's developments.

Family leisure

Togetherness was also expressed by all participants as the meaning of family occupational balance through the occupation of family leisure. Contrary to the family dinner for which time is set aside and respected daily, time for family leisure was noted to be rather scarce in the participating families. Nevertheless, it is another occupation through which families report finding occupational balance. Family leisure is most often described as outings and trips families take together. Movie nights, board games, outdoor sports and other organized events were also popular family leisure occupations.

Figures 10 and 11

Examples of family leisure in participating families



As was the case with eating dinner, participants described how distinctive family leisure was from their other routine occupations. They spoke of how the *togetherness* experienced during leisure reinforced bonds and how it was important that all family members participated in the leisure occupation for it to be considered as contributing to family occupational balance. Figures 10 and 11 are examples of family leisure as proposed by the participating children.

Whereas the family dinner happened every evening in the households visited, usually at a specific time, no set time was reserved or protected for shared family leisure. This practice of not attributing time to family leisure may explain the paucity of it. While parents stated that they believe family leisure is valuable and that they strive to include it in their family's schedule, they admit that this is achieved with limited success.

In the following quote, a father explains the planning and work that goes into family leisure activities and the multiple other activities that compete with it. He describes the attempts that have been made in the past and his wish to pursue family leisure, which he feels is currently lacking in his family's life.

Le temps en famille, c'est un peu plus compliqué parce qu'il y a tellement d'activités qui arrivent la semaine pendant l'école qu'il faut vraiment le planifier. Je pense qu'on en manque un peu de temps en famille. C'est tout le temps go, go, go! C'est le temps de manger, ok, c'est le temps de se préparer, c'est le temps de faire les devoirs... C'est pour ça qu'on avait commencé à faire du ski de fond l'hiver passé, et puis j'aimerais ça continuer cette année. C'est pour ça aussi qu'on veut se trouver une femme de ménage, parce que tous les samedis, on les perdait à nettoyer la maison. Et puis disons que la fin de semaine on a besoin de se retrouver, surtout quand [son] joue au hockey. Ça coupe pas mal de temps. C'est quelque chose qu'il va falloir travailler. Il va falloir commencer à mieux planifier le temps en famille parce que je trouve qu'on manque de temps où on s'amuse, du temps où est-ce qu'on est relaxe. Faut qu'on travaille ça. Father, Family 3.

Family time is a little bit more complicated because there are so many activities that happen during the week during the school year, that you really have to plan it. I think there's a bit of a lack of family time. It's always go, go, go! It's time to eat, okay, it's time to prepare, it's time to do homework... That's why we started cross-country skiing last winter, and I'd like to continue this year. That's also why we want to find a cleaning lady, because every Saturday, was lost to cleaning the house. And let's just say that on weekends we need to get together, especially when [son] is playing hockey. That takes a big chunk of our weekend. It's something we're going to have to work on. We're going to have to start planning our family time better because I find that we lack time to have fun, time to relax. We have to work on that. Father, Family 3

The expressions this father chooses: 'it's a little more complicated', 'it needs to be planned' or 'we will need to work on that' address the effort and the work that must go into making family leisure happen, emphasizing the fact that family leisure is often neglected. This father describes family leisure

as a time 'to have fun' and 'to relax'. Parents also allude to the fact that the busy weekday schedules do not allow for family leisure, consequently it is more likely to take place on weekends. This father's wife's words echo his own on the topic of family leisure necessitating 'work' and the coordination of individual schedules. Her multiple uses of the verb 'try' allude to the tentativeness of family leisure in these busy families.

[Son's] hockey was taking over our lives and it shouldn't. So, we tried to pare it down as best we could. And we set dates in order to fit in the Winterlude [winter festival] before it was done. We tried to take specific actions and then we set dates for our March break away and we did all the work on finding old skis and bought skis for the kids to be ready so that we would be able to have these family times together. Mother, Family 3.

The next quote illustrates how one child's activity, in this case a hockey competition, can be a pretense for family leisure (a weekend of skiing) facilitating the setting aside of time for family leisure.

The importance of every family member participating in the leisure occupation and how leisure strengthens family bonds is also exemplified in the quote. The father in Family 4 states:

Comme là, on va aller à Lake Placid pour faire du ski, c'est autour d'une compétition et puis on va aller toute la famille. Ça, tout le monde look forward to it parce que c'est une activité. On loue un Airbnb. Pis, il y a quand même une certaine routine qui est en train de s'installer... ça renforce le noyau. Father, Family 4

Like right now, we're going to go to Lake Placid to ski, it's around a competition and we're going to go with the whole family. So, everyone looks forward to it because it's an activity. We rent an Airbnb. And there's a certain routine that's settling in ... it strengthens our core. Father, Family 4

Another difference between family dinner and family leisure is that the former is embedded with rules and expectations, while the latter is rather unstructured and is aimed at being enjoyable, especially for children. Indeed, for children, shared leisure time is extolled as an escape from the daily routine and for parents, as an opportunity to create lifelong memories. For parents, family leisure can also have an alternative motive. One mother gives such an account of family leisure in a social context. In her example, she relates the pride she felt because hers was the only family enrolled in a five km walk organized by the local school board. She considered this an opportunity for her children to learn about

the role of physical activity for a healthy lifestyle. In this activity, the family was viewed and recognized, by the public, in this case by an organizer and other participants in the walk, as a single unit. Being seen and recognized by others as a unit reaffirms the *togetherness*. The mother in Family 1 says:

Dernièrement, avec la commission scolaire, il y avait le défi des entreprises. C'est pour valoriser l'activité physique. Ils nous demandent de s'entraîner un peu et puis après ça, il y a une journée spécialement pour ça. On choisit l'épreuve qu'on veut faire, c'est soit cinq km de marche ou de course ou 10km. Et puis dans toute la commission scolaire, j'étais la seule qui avait inscrit ma famille au complet. Les filles sont venues marcher avec nous, [common-law partner] aussi. La responsable, elle nous appelait : La Famille de la Commission scolaire! Je pensais que tout le monde allait s'inscrire en famille, mais finalement non, tout le monde c'est inscrit tout seul... Je trouvais que c'était une belle occasion de promouvoir l'activité physique et montrer aux filles que c'est important de se tenir en forme et que c'est une belle valeur. Elles ont marché les cinq km avec nous. On s'est retrouvé avec l'enseignante de [youngest daughter]. Le mardi suivant, tout le monde mettait leur chandail. Les filles ont mis le même chandail que ces gens-là à l'école. Ça représentait ceux qui ont participé au défi et puis elles étaient fières de ça. C'était un super beau moment en famille. Mother, Family 1

Recently, with the school board, there was a corporate challenge. It was to promote physical activity. They asked us to train a little, and then, there was a day dedicated to the challenge. We chose the event we wanted to participate in, either a five km walk or a run or 10 km. From the school board, I was the only one who had registered my whole family. The girls came to walk with us, [common-law partner] too. The woman in charge kept referring to us as 'The School Board Family'! I thought that everyone was going to register as a family, but in the end, everyone registered on their own ... I thought it was a great opportunity to promote physical activity and show the girls that it's important to stay in shape and that it's a great value. They walked the five km with us. We walked with [youngest daughter's] teacher. The next Tuesday, everyone put on the t-shirts from the challenge. The girls wore the same shirts as the teachers at school. It represented those who participated in the challenge and the girls were proud of it. It was a great family time. Mother, Family 1

For larger families or families in which the age range of children is wider, it can be difficult to find activities that suit all children. As the following mother details, now that the youngest of the siblings can keep up with the rest of the family, mountain biking is an activity they can enjoy as a family without having someone stay behind with the youngest. The mother in Family 4 states:

[Youngest child] va dans les sentiers avec les petits ponts. On a fait du vélo de montagne cet été en vacances. Maintenant que [youngest child] commence à suivre, on a un meilleur équilibre parce qu'avant, on se séparait pour l'accompagner. Mother, Family 4

[Youngest child] goes on the trails with bridges. We went mountain biking this summer while on vacation. Now that [youngest child] can follow, we have a better balance because before, we would separate so someone could accompany him. Mother, Family 4

In the next quote, another mother emphasizes *togetherness* as she sums up the key aspects of family leisure. She explains that in family leisure, it is not so much the ‘what’ is done, but the ‘who’, the ‘how’ and the ‘why’ that is important. As was the case with other participants, this mother stresses all family members should be present, should be experiencing the activity together and it should be enjoyable. Ultimately, the reason for participating in family leisure is to create memories. The mother in Family 3 says:

If we are doing anything where we are going together and we have an experience together, like going to Winterlude this winter or going cross-country skiing. Those are 2 good examples of times when we felt like we were making memories that we are always going to remember. It was just fun, and we were all together. Mother, Family 3

The children describe the same valuable features of family leisure as their parents did. In the quotes below, children state the ‘doing together’ and ‘being together’ as the valuable elements of family leisure rather than the occupation itself. They describe family leisure as being pleasurable and distinct from occupations related to responsibilities or occupations in which they participate by themselves. Furthermore, the children add a notion of exclusivity, closeness, warmth, and intimacy between family members that parents did not mention. The following quote is from the youngest of two daughters, she contrasts the times spent together as a family, with other times when she is by herself because other family members are involved in their own occupations.

Because we are all doing the same thing together! We help each other. We do stuff together and it feels like we are all together ... And like, we usually don’t stay together. Cause [older sister] is off to her friends and Mom is working on the floor. Youngest child, daughter, Family 2

A young participant describes family leisure by contrasting it with what she deems its opposite. In her example of a cross-country ski outing, she distinguishes this from times when family members are upset with each other, or when responsibilities need to be attended to.

Parfois on va faire des randonnées de ski en famille ou on regarde la télé. C'est spécial parce que c'est juste un moment où on se chicane pas et puis il n'y a personne qui demande à personne d'autre de faire la vaisselle ou de marcher le chien ou de faire autre chose. C'est juste un moment où tout le monde relaxe pis on se focusse sur une chose au lieu de penser: Ah! Je dois faire mes devoirs, je dois me préparer pour le ski, je dois faire la vaisselle, je dois nourrir le chien. Ou genre mes parents : Je dois amener telle personne à tel endroit. Je dois faire le ménage. Pis c'est juste un moment de relaxation, parce que personne n'est stressé vraiment. C'est un moment de liberté un peu. Eldest child, daughter, Family 4

Sometimes we go on ski outings as a family or we watch TV. It's special because it's a time when we don't argue and there's nobody asking anybody else to do the dishes or walk the dog or do this, or that. It's just a time where everyone relaxes and focuses on one thing instead of thinking: Ah, I have to do my homework, I have to get ready for skiing, I have to do the dishes, I have to feed the dog. Or for my parents: I have to drive someone somewhere. I have to clean the house. And it's just a moment of relaxation because nobody is really stressed. It's a moment of freedom a little bit. Eldest child, daughter, Family 4

The following two quotes refer to the intimacy felt and expressed by the children. In the first quote, a daughter describes a photo of her, her younger sister and her mother taking a walk together. She cites the holding of hands as a symbol demonstrating their close connection. As the eldest daughter in Family 1 states : "On marche dans la rue, sur le trottoir. On profite de l'air un peu et puis on parle ensemble. On prend notre temps. C'est comme si on était connecté quand on se donne les mains et puis on marche ensemble." *"We walk in the street, on the sidewalk. We take in the fresh air and then we chat. We take our time. It's like we're connected when we hold hands and walk together".*

Another young participant, the eldest daughter in Family 3, highlights the physicality and closeness of watching a movie with her family even though there is no verbal interaction. She describes movie nights as special occasions in which only immediate family members participate. For her, family leisure is an exclusive occupation : "Regarder un film, c'est juste nous et on est ensemble. On ne se parle pas, mais on peut sentir qu'on est ensemble." *"Watching a movie, it's just us and we're together. We don't talk to each other, but we can feel that we are together."* Eldest child, daughter, Family 3

To summarize, family leisure is active *togetherness*. Family members are engaged in a shared occupation. It is a positive experience mainly focused on children's pleasure. Especially for children,

family leisure is an escape from the everyday demands. From the parents' perspective, family leisure requires work and organization to make it happen and it easily gets crowded out of busy schedules. In the participating families, the occupations themselves were much less important than the *togetherness* in family leisure. In this way, the occupation was a pretext to be together.

Parental work patterns, children's school schedules and their extra-curricular activities shape the daily lives of the participating families. The quotes presented here suggest that families come together for shared meals and family leisure. It is through these shared occupations that families are built. The *togetherness* experienced during family dinner and family leisure define, constitute, and sustain the family as a social unit. Now that I have explored the experience of family occupational balance, the following chapter will focus on individual occupational balance.

Chapter 4 - Findings: Individual Occupational Balance

Refocusing on self and individual occupational balance

In this chapter, I examine what individual occupational balance means to family members. The occupations in which participants experienced family occupational balance were consistent among family members and across families. *Togetherness* was the recurrent theme, and it was experienced in shared occupations such as the family dinner and family leisure, but when it comes to individual occupational balance, participants had broadly varying answers. Sometimes the occupations corresponded to shared occupations, other times, they were individual occupations. In the following paragraphs, photos from the children's photo-elicitation interviews are used occasionally to illustrate quotes or themes.

This chapter provides insights related to the second and third research questions:

What is the lived experience and meaning of occupational balance for parents?

What is the lived experience and meaning of occupational balance for children?

When participants spoke of the occupations in which they experienced individual occupational balance, these occupations were wide ranging. This finding is consistent with OS and OT literature, which states that a *mix of occupations* is a condition to occupational balance. This is also supported by numerous models of occupational balance.

One child participant, the youngest in Family 2, expresses with enthusiasm the idea of a mix of occupations being a prerequisite to individual occupational balance in the following quote:

Youngest child, daughter, Family 2: The things that make me feel balanced are like going to school, or reading books, spending time with my friends and teacher, spending time with people making me happy. I like coming downstairs just to dance on the floor. I like that. I like playing my sports or being active. And when I'm active, I'm just like Mmmmmm Hmmmm!!!

Interviewer: What does that mean?

Youngest child, daughter, Family 2: I feel happy when I'm being active! Because I have lots of energy!

When looking for commonalities within the variety of occupations in which individual occupational balance is experienced, a recurring idea that is conveyed in the participants' quotes is *time used for self* as opposed to time to be with all family members, or time used for the benefit of others. This finding suggests that for participants, individual occupational balance was fulfilled away from the occupations described in *togetherness*. While this idea could be predictable for adults, it is interesting to find that the eldest child in each family made a distinction between spending time with family members and spending time by themselves or with friends, the latter being related to their individual occupational balance. For younger siblings, they did not see shared occupations with family members as impeding their individual occupational balance, it is more, sometimes the shared family occupations such as family leisure were the ones in which they experienced individual occupational balance. Mothers more often than fathers reported including their children in the occupations in which they experienced individual occupational balance. For children aged six to 11 years old, their description of the experience of individual occupational balance was likened to a feeling of freedom that the presence of other family members did not disrupt.

In the following quotes, one after the other, participants either adults or the eldest child in the family refer to having time for themselves, or away from other family members, as being essential to their individual occupational balance:

It's feet up, maybe sitting on the couch. For myself, I'll watch whatever is on TV, probably about an hour of just trying to just catch up with myself. And I think we are both ok with separately having our spaces at times too. So, every night just seems to finish with a little bit of me time. For each of us for lack of better ways. Father, Family 2

La photo qui me représente en équilibre, c'est celle-là [photo with a group of friends]. Parce que si avec ma famille, on passait tout le temps, tout le temps, tout le temps ensemble, soit ce serait plus facile de se parler, et puis on serait plus proche soit on serait plus loin et puis on se chicanerait tout le temps, tout le temps. Mais vu que j'ai du temps avec d'autre monde, je vois d'autres points de vue. Je vois des choses de plusieurs perspectives parce que mes amies me donnent tout le temps des conseils. Moi je trouve que j'ai besoin de mon temps avec d'autre monde que ma famille. Si j'étais tout le temps avec eux, je serais pas en équilibre. Eldest child, daughter, Family 4

The picture that represents me in balance is this one [photo with a group of friends]. Because if with my family we were always, always, always together, either it would be easier to talk to each other, and we would be closer or we would be farther away and always, always quarrelling. But since I have time with other people, I see other points of view. I see things from different perspectives because my friends give me advice all the time. I find that I need to spend my time with people other than my family. If I was with them all the time, I wouldn't be in balance.

Eldest child, daughter, Family 4

La télé, c'est une chose que je fais où je me sens en équilibre. Parce que c'est moi toute seule.

Eldest child, daughter, Family 3

TV is something I do where I feel balanced. Because it's me, by myself. Eldest child, daughter, Family 3

The biggest thing that's made an impact for me feeling balanced has been getting my gym membership on Mother's Day, two years ago. Since I got it, it has made the biggest difference. The motivation was partly because I felt nothing was about me. I wasn't investing in myself at all. Mother, Family 3

Whether it is by watching television, being with friends or going to the gym, the four participants above state that this time, in an occupation alone or away from the family, allows them to recenter on themselves. They emphasize this by using expressions such as: 'catching up with myself', 'me time', 'time with other people than my family', 'it's me by myself', 'investing in myself'. In the following quotes, continuing on the same theme, mothers emphasize that it is the time for themselves, more than the nature of the occupation they are engaged in, that is relevant to their individual occupational balance. The mothers clarify that what is unique about these instances is that they can be completely dedicated to themselves, without any interruptions:

I think the biggest thing for me, it's interesting, so some couples, they're always like we go to bed at the same time. [Husband] and I don't do that for bedtime routine. Being able to finish up my day and spend a half hour, an hour just in bed by myself watching TV or figuring out my next project on the computer, just having those alone time at night, gives me kind of that balance that I need in terms of having spent the day caring for others and just doing nothing. It doesn't have to be an activity just being alone for a period of time at the end of the day is helpful.

Mother, Family 2

Mon moment à moi c'est vraiment quand je fais mes petits cours de langue sur mon téléphone cellulaire, le matin. Il n'y a rien qui peut arrêter ce moment-là. Si les filles arrivent et elles ont des questions ou des besoins, ou le déjeuner tout ça, elles savent que je vais finir mes leçons et qu'ensuite, je vais être à elles. Je pourrais faire une autre activité. Ça pourrait être de la lecture ou ça pourrait être de l'écriture ou des choses comme ça, mais c'est important pour mon équilibre. Disons que ça pourrait être n'importe quelle autre activité à part une tâche familiale. Mother, Family 1

My moment is really when I work a little on my language lessons on my cell phone in the morning. There's nothing that can stop that moment. If the girls come in and they have questions or needs or want breakfast or whatever, they know that I'm going to finish my lessons and then I'm going to be available for them. I could do another activity. It could be reading, or it could be writing or something like that, but it's important for my balance. Let's say it could be any other activity besides a family task. Mother, Family 1

The same mother expands on the idea of individual occupational balance in the following quote. She suggests the sensation is one of freedom and of being without worry or concern for others. She characterizes this sensation as being allowed to 'empty her head' as she contrasts it with the mental load involved in caring for the family.

Ce sont des activités qui me permettent de me vider le cerveau parce que quand on tient la famille, c'est une charge mentale: il ne faut pas que j'oublie de faire ça, il ne faut pas que j'oublie de penser à ça, et puis le rappel de la fête d'amis, acheter le cadeau, [aider avec] les devoirs, faire le petit projet de sciences, acheter des bottes d'hiver... ça tourne tout le temps dans une tête de mère! Mes cours de langue, ça me permet d'arrêter le cerveau. Je pense que c'est pour ça que c'est privilégié. Ça me permet en même temps, comme parent de me ressourcer parce que j'arrête le tourbillon. Je réussis à trouver mon équilibre et avoir le goût de continuer encore. Mother, Family 1

These are activities that allow me to clear my head because when you hold a family together, it's a mental load: I can't forget to do this, I can't forget to think about that, and then the reminder of a friend's birthday party, buying a gift, [helping with] homework, doing a little science project, buying winter boots ... it never stops in a mother's head! My language classes are a break for my brain. I think that's why that's so special. Because it allows me, as a parent, to recharge, because I stop the whirlwind. I manage to find my balance afterwards and I have the desire to keep going. Mother, Family 1

While I explored and aimed to make sense of the various occupations that hold the experience of individual occupational balance for participants, I was led to Thibeault's (2002; 2011; 2020) work on

intentional activities². Although Thibeault's (2020) studies intentional activities for their potential to foster resilience, she also recognizes their relationship to meaning, deep satisfaction with life and well-being in general. These aspects are closely linked to occupational balance. As Clouston (2020; 2021) states, meaning and occupational balance can lead to health, well-being, and resilience.

Intentional activities

According to Thibeault (2011), there are 5 groups of intentional activities: creation, centration, contemplation, connection, and contribution. *Creation* activities draw on imagination, making or appreciating beauty and these activities can be related to designing or engaging in a creative project. *Centration* activities consist of repetitive movements that can be vigorous and serve to prepare the mind and body for other occupations. *Contemplation* refers to activities that address the witnessing of nature and stillness. The intentional activities of *connection* are the ones that emphasize the belonging to groups and communities. Finally, *contribution* relates to sharing ones' own skills and talent for the greater good. In poring over the groups of intentional activities, I realized that my findings on individual occupational balance reflect these 5 groups of intentional activities.

As an example, we can revisit the first quote at the beginning of this section. In her quote on what it means to be in balance, the youngest daughter in Family 2 mentions most of the intentional activities. She refers to going to school, spending time with friends and teacher and spending time with people making her happy which are all connection activities. She describes reading books which is characteristic of creative or contemplation activities. She also states that she likes going downstairs just to dance on the floor, this is both a creation and a centration activity. Finally, she addresses centration in her quote on playing sports and being active.

² Thibeault prefers the term intentional 'activities' over 'occupations' to reflect the concept's field of origin: positive psychology.

In the following paragraphs, each type of intentional activity is used as a theme for individual occupational balance.

Creation

Creative activities fulfill our need for beauty whether it is by creating beauty ourselves or by appreciating it in others' work (Thibeault, 2002). In the following quote, the mother in family 2 gives an example of a creative activity as an experience of individual occupational balance. She expresses her creativity through carrying out home improvements and renovations, from the designing to the planning and the execution of the project:

What do the renovations mean for me?! It's my activity. There was a time where I was into running and I would try to make time in my day to be able to run and it was very difficult to tease out that time. It ultimately meant getting up at 5:00. And then I was exhausted. I wasn't sleeping well and ... I haven't made the time for it, so I put that aside ... For me it's my thing. It's not necessarily that my house needs change. But I like being able to have something that you putter about. You work on the side something that ultimately other people will enjoy, but it's for me. You kind of take something the way it is, create a plan and then see the outcome. I enjoy that. I enjoy it. Like we just decorated the basement. We redid the floor and other stuff. I like doing a lot of renos and change: hands-on activities. I enjoy the planning process. Just being able to have time to do that, where someone's not needing a snack or a drive or what have you.
Mother, Family 2

Although she realizes that ultimately everyone in the family will benefit from it and enjoy it, this mother accentuates the fact that her creation activity belongs specifically to her by using words and expressions such as 'my activity', 'my thing', 'it's for me'. Like in most of the quotes on individual occupational balance, she emphasizes her uniqueness and her individual need through these words. For the children, it was the girls who referred to creative occupations as feeding their individual occupational balance. This was expressed through, imaginary play, drawing or through the appreciation of an author's fanciful writing. In the first quote, the eldest daughter in Family 1 describes the elaborate houses she builds for her Petshop figurines. The playhouses have features that her own house does not have. The houses take up a large space in the living room. Her creativity is revealed in the spaces she creates and, in the scenes and dialogues she plays out between the figurines:

Jouer aux PetShop! C'est que moi, j'aime faire parler mes personnages, ça rentre dans mon corps, ça sort de mon imagination. Quand je fais une maison, il y a une place où c'est la chambre à ma sœur, il y a sa salle de jeu à l'intérieur. Nous, on n'a pas de salle de jeu dans notre chambre pis ma mère elle a une chambre plus petite que nous, parce que les parents ont toujours une plus grande chambre que nous. J'ai un tableau interactif dans ma maison, j'ai une chambre d'invités, j'ai plein d'affaires, j'ai une espèce de... c'est une salle de bain qui faut un ascenseur pour monter dedans ... J'ai une table à maquillage. Parfois, je joue plusieurs voix de personnes. Des fois il y a des conflits. Des fois, ça parle plus fort. Des fois c'est plus cool de mettre de l'ambiance que juste faire comme : "Allo, comment ça va? " "Bien." "On est meilleurs amis." Eldest child, daughter, Family 1

Playing PetShop! I like to make my characters talk, it comes into my body, it comes out of my imagination. When I build a house, there is a room for my sister, there is her playroom. For example, we don't have a playroom in our home. And my mom's room is smaller than ours, because parents always have a bigger room than children. I have an interactive board in my house, I have a guest room, I have a lot of stuff, I have a kind of ... it's a bathroom where you need to take an elevator to go up ... I have a make-up table. Sometimes, I play several voices. Sometimes there are conflicts. Sometimes it's louder. Sometimes it's cooler to set the mood than to just be like: "Hello, how are you?" "Good." "We're best friends." Eldest child, daughter, Family 1

In the next quote, the youngest daughter of Family 3 shares that she finds drawing soothing and she figuratively describes the process of drawing as putting her imagination on paper.

Quand je dessine, ça fait partir tout pour que je puisse mettre toute mon imagination sur la feuille de papier. J'aime dessiner des robes et des choses comme ça. Mon amie, elle dessine super bien et je veux être comme elle. Ça me donne une pause de mon travail. J'avais beaucoup de devoirs et ça me donne du temps pour relaxer en même temps que je peux mettre mon imagination sur le papier. Middle child, daughter, Family 3

When I draw, it makes everything go away so I can put all my imagination on the paper. I like drawing dresses and things like that. My friend, she draws really well, and I want to be like her. It gives me a break from my work. I had a lot of homework and it gives me time to relax at the same time that I can put my imagination on the paper. Middle child, daughter, Family 3

A last quote on the theme of creation is from the youngest daughter in Family 2. She expresses her appreciation for the imaginative talent of Roald Dahl:

I'm reading books before bed, because I'm allowed to. Well, it's Roald Dahl books and I like them. I like those type of books. I already read three of them. Because Roald Dahl, has like special writing skills. I don't know how to explain it much, but I like his creativity. And there is always something new and surprises. Except Mr. Fantastic Fox. It was a sad story. Youngest daughter, Family 2

Centration

Centration activities are often rhythmic. They rid the body of excessive energy and prepare the mind for other occupations (Thibeault, 2011). It was principally the fathers who spoke of individual occupational balance in terms of centration activities. For example, the father in Family 3 explains how going to the gym to exercise before coming home from work allows him to recenter on himself and to have energy to face the other half of his day.

Faire de l'activité physique, je trouve que c'est ce qui m'aide à me recharger. Pendant que je fais ça, je suis seul et ça me permet d'avoir du temps à moi. Et puis ça fait du bien. Après ça, je suis comme sur un runner's high. Ça fait du bien et en plus, c'est bon pour la santé. Après je me sens mieux ... L'hiver dernier, même si toutes les semaines, tous les jours ont avait quelque chose, je trouvais que, surtout quand j'allais m'entraîner après l'école et puis que j'avais du temps pour moi, là je revenais, j'étais plus reposé ou disposé à m'occuper des enfants. C'était moins stressant, disons. Ça en prenait plus pour me faire atteindre les limites de stress. Je pense que même si ça a été occupé l'hiver passé, je pense que c'était bien côté équilibre. Father, Family 3

Being active, I find is what helps me recharge. While I'm doing this, I'm alone and it gives me time to myself. And it feels good. After that, I'm like on a runner's high. It feels good and it's good for your health. Afterwards I feel better ... Last winter, even if every week, every day we had something, I found that, especially when I went to train after school and I had time for myself, I came back, I was more rested or prepared to take care of the kids. It was less stressful. It took more to get me to my limits. I think even though it was busy this past winter, I think I still had a good balance. Father, Family 3

Similarly, the father in Family 1 also found balance in participating in physical activity. He describes his experience of balance when he actively travels to and from work on his bike.

Je dirais que ce qui est le plus régulier, c'est une fois que je suis sur mon vélo, surtout pour aller au travail. Je n'ai pas le sentiment de culpabilité, je n'ai pas cette impression-là de sauver du temps à quelqu'un, d'emprunter du temps à quelqu'un, de couper quelque chose à quelqu'un pendant la période où je suis sur le vélo. Le moment où je pars, le moment du départ, ça, c'est autre chose. Mais une fois que je suis sur le vélo, c'est ce moment là où je peux dire ben oui, je peux profiter du moment présent et oublier ce qui s'est passé en arrière et oublier ce qui va se passer après. Ça va être entre 30 minutes et 34 minutes de vélo, mais c'est dans l'horaire. C'est un peu comme si je fais le vide. Tout ce que tu fais, c'est pédaler. Tu regardes la route en avant de toi, un peu comme les gens qui font de la moto. Quelqu'un qui part en randonnée en moto, qui dit : "Ah! La liberté, je suis assis sur ma moto, je n'ai pas de toit, je peux voir, je peux profiter de la nature." Ce voyage là pour aller travailler et revenir, c'est un peu ça. Tout ce que tu te

concentres, c'est de te rendre du point A au point B et de profiter un peu du moment qui a lieu.
Father, Family 1

I would say that's what's most consistent, is once I'm on my bike, especially going to work. I don't feel guilty, I don't feel like I'm saving someone's time, borrowing someone's time, cutting off someone from something while I'm on the bike. The moment I leave, the moment of departure, that's another thing. But once I'm on the bike, that's the moment when I can say yes, I can enjoy the present moment and forget what happened before and forget what's going to happen next. It's going to be between 30 minutes and 34 minutes of cycling, but it's in the schedule. It's kind of like going blank. All you do is pedal. You're looking at the road ahead of you, kind of like people who ride motorcycles. Someone who goes on a motorcycle ride, who says: "Ah, the freedom, I'm sitting on my motorcycle, I don't have a roof, I can see, I can enjoy nature." My active travel to work and back, that's kind of the same thing. All you focus on is getting from point A to point B and enjoying the moment a little bit. Father, Family 1

The eldest daughter in Family 3 describes a similar experience of balance in the martial art that she practices. Being engaged in a physical activity allows her to get rid of stress.

C'est moi qui pratique le Mui Thai avec mon coach. D'habitude, il s'entraîne avec moi parce que toutes les autres personnes dans mon cours ont comme 30 ou 40 ans, donc ils sont trop forts! Des fois, j'ai du stress alors c'est vraiment relaxant de [relâcher mon stress en frappant] sur les pads. Je sens plus le stress dans mon corps après. Des fois, le stress vient de l'école, parce que j'ai des tests et des présentations et je ne sais pas si je vais avoir assez de temps pour les faire. Mais ça arrive juste des fois. D'habitude j'suis chill. Le Mui Thai, c'est une activité qui m'aide à me sentir déchargée du stress. Et je suis capable de me concentrer sur une chose qui n'est pas reliée à l'école. Et puis je sais que comme c'est de l'exercice, c'est bon pour moi. Eldest child, daughter, Family 3

That's me, practicing Mui Thai with my coach. He usually trains with me because everyone else in my class is like 30 or 40 years old, so they're too strong! Sometimes I get stressed so it's really relaxing to [let go of my stress by punching] the pads. I don't feel the stress in my body afterwards. Sometimes the stress comes from school, because I have tests and presentations and I don't know if I'm going to have enough time to do all of them. But that only happens sometimes. I'm usually chill. Mui Thai, it's an activity that helps me feel stress-free. And I'm able to focus on something that's not related to school. And I know that since it's exercise, it's good for me. Eldest child, daughter, Family 3

The father in Family 4 speaks in comparable terms of the benefits of skiing and playing hockey.

C'est le côté physique. Hier et puis samedi, dimanche, je suis allé faire du ski. Ça faisait du bien d'aller chercher un peu d'hormones de plaisir. Donc le hockey, c'est un peu la même chose. C'est plus l'activité, mais c'est aussi un moment où je peux réduire les signaux intellectuels. À un moment donné, ça fatigue de tout le temps réfléchir. Tout le temps penser et tourner des idées,

construire des modèles dans ta tête. Alors le sport, c'est une façon de disons, quand ça roule à 100%, là, tu l'amènes à 20%. Father, Family 4

It's the physical side. Yesterday and then Saturday, Sunday, I went skiing. It felt good to get some endorphins. So, hockey is kind of the same thing. It's more about the activity, but it's also a time when I can calm my brain down. At some point, it gets tiring to think all the time. All the time thinking and turning ideas, building models in your head. Practicing sports is a way to bring down my brain signals from 100% to 20%. Father, Family 4

The same father also explains how the simple activity of waxing cross-country skis can be restorative because the repetitive movements quieten the mind.

Farter les skis, c'est un autre exemple. Ça, c'est purement physique. Il faut que tu te concentres, il faut que tu fasses tes trucs bien. Il y a une séquence à suivre, et puis il faut que tu investisses ta tête, parce que tu vas scratcher la surface de ton ski, tu vas mettre la mauvaise cire ou etc. C'est comme, à l'époque quand je faisais de la rénovation. Je pouvais investir des heures avant que les enfants arrivent. Je pouvais passer quatre ou cinq heures à faire de la rénovation. J'étais tout seul et puis je n'avais pas le choix de penser à ce que je faisais, sinon, si tu fais une erreur, il faut que tu recommences! Ça, c'était reposant! Father, Family 4

Another example is waxing skis. That's purely physical. You have to concentrate; you have to do things right. There's a sequence to follow, and then you have to invest your mind, if not, you're going to scratch the surface of your ski, you're going to put on the wrong wax or some other mistake. It's like, back in the day when I was doing home renovations. I could invest hours before we had kids. I could spend four or five hours doing renovations. I was on my own and had no choice but to think about what I was doing, otherwise, if you make a mistake, you have to start over! That was relaxing! Father, Family 4

Contemplation

Contemplation activities are more passive, such as observation or meditation. They incorporate an element of mindfulness (Thibeault, 2011). Few participants referred to contemplation activities. The eldest daughter in Family 3 addresses the theme of contemplation. She describes walking the dog as an occupation that brings her balance in her everyday life. Being in nature makes for a good transition from school to homework.

Quand j'arrive de l'école, je dois aller promener le chien. Ça fait du bien de juste être dehors et de marcher et ensuite je peux penser à ce que je vais faire après. C'est juste un temps pour relaxer. C'est comme une pause entre l'école et puis les devoirs. Eldest child, daughter, Family 3

When I get home from school, I have to walk the dog. It feels good to just be outside and walk and I can think about what I'm going to do next. It's just a time to relax. It's like a break between school and then homework. Eldest child, daughter, Family 3

A father also described building and looking at a fire, taking a hot shower or sitting in the jacuzzi as occupations in which, albeit for brief moments, he experiences balance. He states:

C'est surtout faire le feu qui m'amène cette sensation. Mais de l'autre côté, c'est sûr qu'il y a une connexion reposante quand tu regardes le feu, ou que tu l'allumes ou quand tu es en présence de chandelles. Ça oui, je trouve ça agréable. Ce sont des micros-moments d'équilibre. Father, Family 4

It's mostly building a fire that brings on that sensation. But on the other hand, there's definitely a restful connection when you're looking at the fire, or you're lighting it or when you're in the presence of candles. I find that enjoyable. Those are micro-moments of balance. Father, Family 4

In the data collected, no other participant referred to contemplation activities. Could it be that participants did not engage in contemplation activities and preferred to participate in other types of occupations? Or is it that other participants did not consider contemplation, which involves 'stillness', to be an occupation and therefore did not report on it?

Contribution

Contribution activities allow us to give back to our community, large or small. Individuals can contribute in various ways through their work or voluntarily (Thibeault, 2011). In the following quote, a mother expresses how her work as a physician contributes to her individual occupational balance.

Even though it is very stressful and demanding, and I had no balance during my training. I mean, that was 10 years of having no balance whatsoever, but I feel like this special job that I have now of trying to help people or seeing into people's lives at times when they are really struggling, gives me a really interesting perspective on the human condition that provides for me personally some balance. Because, it's not just that I am typing, it's not that I am, you know filling out forms and feeling like I am not contributing to helping humanity. I feel like my job provides some balance just in the content of what I do outside of the fact that it helps to pay the bills. Because I know a lot of people who, they do their jobs to pay the bills and they get ALL of their balance from everything that is done outside of work. They get all of their meaning outside of work. But I am lucky in that I get it in both. It was confirmed to me when I was off on maternity leave. I loved my maternity leave. I enjoyed being at home with the kids but at the end of it, it confirmed that, I am not someone who would do well being home full time, that I

need to have both. I need to have work that feels meaningful, and I need to have time that feels meaningful with my family while the kids are young. Mother, Family 3

The two older siblings from Family 4 reported contribution activities, emptying the dishwasher and washing the dishes, as experiences of occupational balance. It is interesting to note that their parents are both strongly involved in voluntary community work through boards of associations.

Faire la vaisselle, parce que là, j'peux juste me concentrer sur une chose. Pis aussi, ça aide la famille et puis j'ai pas besoin de me concentrer sur mes frères que comme ils sont fatigants ou quoi que ce soit. Parce que tout le monde reste tranquille parce que je fais quelque chose qui aide. Parce que si eux se fâchent contre moi, moi je me fâche, on finit par se fâcher tout le monde avoir une chicane et puis ils m'envoient dans ma chambre et puis personne fait la vaisselle. Fait que quand je fais la vaisselle tout le monde reste tranquille. Eldest child, daughter, Family 4

Doing the dishes, because I can just concentrate on one thing. And also, it helps the family and then I don't have to focus on my brothers because they're annoying. Everybody stays calm when I'm doing something that helps. Because if they get mad at me, I get mad, we end up getting mad at each other and then they send me to my room, and nobody does the dishes. So, when I do the dishes, everyone else stays calm. Eldest child, daughter, Family 4

Connection

Connection activities strengthen the ties between friends or among family members (Thibeault, 2011). Participants referred to occupations in which they experienced individual occupational balance while spending time with family members and friends. Here, connection is distinct from *togetherness* in the sense that it is chosen as occupations in which the participant experienced individual balance in an occupation that allowed him or her to recenter on the self. Therefore, it does not necessarily involve the participation of all family members as *togetherness* did.

In this first quote, the participant states that staying after school at the playground with her friends is an occupation in which she experiences balance. She can participate in this activity because she is now 11 years old and has the permission to bike to and from school unlike her younger sister who must take the bus home.

Sometimes I stay late after school, and I play at the park with my friends before coming home because I bike to school. I've never really biked to school a lot and this year is fun to bike with my friends. Eldest child, daughter, Family 2

In the next example, a boy explains how he experiences balance while playing a new game with his sister.

Balance for me?... It's playing this game. Because it is really fun. [Younger sister] got it for me for my birthday June 2nd. And it is really fun playing with this toy. I usually play with [younger sister]. But yesterday I was playing with [older sister]. I usually play with [younger sister] because she is usually the one who has time to play with me. Because we usually finish our homework at the same time. Youngest child, son, Family 3

In the following quote another boy describes an activity that included extended family:

Quand on était dans le champ, je me suis vraiment amusé. Y avait notre cousine, elle vit à Montréal, donc on la voit pas souvent et c'est vraiment le fun quand elle vient. On pouvait s'amuser et courir partout. Middle child, son, Family 4

When we were in the field, I really had fun. There was our cousin, she lives in Montreal, so we don't see her very often and it's really fun when she comes. We could play and run around. Middle child, son, Family 4

When parents described connection activities to express the experience of individual occupational balance, the connection activities were often in conjunction with other occupations, these are described below.

Combination of more than one intentional activity

Some occupations combined more than one type of intentional activity. This was especially the case for parents who described in greater detail their experience of individual occupational balance. In the next quote a father explains how the activity of playing or coaching hockey is both a centration and connection occupation:

Hockey for me is my balance. It's the one activity that, because everything else, is pretty much, shut away for almost two or three full hours, it doesn't matter whether I'm playing or coaching, because you are absorbed in that moment. Because sometimes you have to train, or travel, I am thinking with [daughters], where we might be travelling to that game and travelling home from that game. So sometimes, I get a three-hour window of being absorbed in that sport. And the men's league aspect of it too, there is a social piece to it. I've been playing with a lot of these

guys for 22 years! So, there is a social component to it too. Not only is there the game and then the camaraderie of the game, but we often go out for drinks afterwards for at least an hour sometimes two, so that is more time, and it's just balance. There is just nothing to think about. Other things don't creep in, you are basically in the moment there with that group of people. So that's part of my centering, for sure. Father, Family 2

His wife also combines a connection occupation but this time with a creation occupation as she describes baking special themed birthday cakes for extended family members:

Because the other thing that I do for me, but it still is for other people, is in my family, one of the things I like to do with my nieces, my nephews and my children is their birthday cakes with them. I've learned to do cakes really, really well which is also something I enjoy. I do not do it for money. I won't do it for money but it's an activity that is a project. My children or my nieces or my nephews will tell me the theme that they want for their cake and then it's the researching! And then, I have those hours at night on the theme that they want and then trying to come up with a plan on how to actually take that from the computer screen to real life. And then, I build the cake for the kids. It takes weeks. I have to plan in advance, bake, freeze things because I don't have a full day to do it. I enjoy the whole process of doing that. [Daughter's] birthday is in a couple of weeks, and she wants a sculpted dog with a mohawk! All right? I have no clue! So now I'm going to have to start researching how to make that and then come up with a plan to implement. So that's something I enjoy doing as well. But everything I enjoy doing is the caveat of 'it's for someone else, as well'. Mother, Family 2

In the following quotes, one mother explains how she combines a creation activity, appreciating art and crafts in galleries or markets, with connection to friends or to her children. She also combines centration and connection in the activity of snowboarding with her two eldest children. According to the mother in Family 4:

J'aime beaucoup aussi les activités culturelles, les expositions et les petites galeries. Des fois, je vais aller faire le tour dans Hintonburg. Avec [eldest daughter], ça fait longtemps qu'on n'a pas fait ça, mais des fois, on se faisait des après-midis de filles et puis on allait voir des galeries d'art contemporain. Donc c'était des marchés et puis quelques galeries d'art et puis on se prenait un dessert ensemble. On fait ça ensemble une fois de temps en temps. C'est mon activité à moi, mais je vais amener les enfants qui sont intéressés ou aller avec des amies. Maintenant, ils sont plus grands, quand je les amène, il ne faut pas que je les surveille ou que je leur coure après. C'est plus agréable. Mother, Family 4

I really like cultural activities, exhibitions and little galleries. Sometimes I'll go to Hintonburg. With [eldest daughter], it's been a long time since we've done that, but sometimes we'd have girls' afternoons, and we'd go see contemporary art galleries. So, it was markets, and then a few art galleries and then we'd have dessert together. We do that together once in a while. It's my activity, but I'll bring the kids who are interested in coming or I'll go with friends. Now they're

older and when I bring them, I don't have to watch them or chase them. It's more enjoyable.
Mother, Family 4

Quand je vais faire du snowboard avec les enfants, on est sur une chaise, on relaxe, il neige, on est heureux. C'est plus que l'équilibre, c'est comme l'extase! C'est comme WOW! J'adore ma vie! J'y vais avec les deux grands. Les deux grands, ils aiment beaucoup, beaucoup le snowboard aussi. Mother, Family 4

When I go snowboarding with the kids, we are on a chairlift, we relax, it's snowing, we are happy. It's more than balance, it's like ecstasy! It's like WOW! I love my life! I go with the two eldest. The two eldest really, really like snowboarding too. Mother, Family 4

Younger children: playing, feeling good and having fun

Some children, aged six to 11 years, also stated enjoying having their own time to participate in activities they chose for themselves just as adults and 13-year-old children did. However, an aspect verbalized that was different for these younger children, is that the presence of family members was a contributing factor to their individual occupational balance. The following citation illustrates this with the words of a seven-year-old girl, the youngest in her family. She describes the experience of balance while in the car on a family trip. Her quote is illustrated in Figure 12.

I'm in balance because I like doing my thing in my car. (...) I take naps in the car. I mind my own business. I ask for my tunes. Youngest child, daughter, Family 2

Figure 12

Younger children often found individual occupational balance in the presence of their family



This young girl enjoys her activities *while* in the presence of her family. In the car, although all family members share the common space, everyone is involved in his or her personal activity. For her, sharing time and space with her family members are significant elements to her experience of individual occupational balance. The experience of individual occupational balance for the younger siblings was not necessarily disconnected from their family as it usually was for adults and older siblings.

When recounting their experience of individual occupational balance, most younger children referred to sports and outdoor activities with family members or friends (see Figure 13). Although these activities could be interpreted as intentional activities (in this case centration and connection activities), the children gave little description making this interpretation difficult to support. Otherwise, they described individual occupational balance as what happens outside of school, or as special occasions, such as an outing with a parent, echoing what parents reported as a sensation of freedom. Occupations that represented balance for these children were occupations that they enjoyed, that did not cause stress, or that were considered special because they rarely had the opportunity to participate in them.

Figure 13

Younger children reported sports and outdoor activities as contributing to the experience of occupational balance



A more accurate theme for these younger children's experience of individual occupational balance is *playing, feeling good and having fun*. Children in this age group (six to 11 years) referred to positive feelings like enjoyment and pleasure when describing succinctly their experience of occupational balance. This theme is also coherent with their age group considering their discursive abilities are only beginning to develop. At this stage, they are also more attuned to senses and sensations, making their subjective experience an embodied active experience. The individual occupational balance of younger children is related to corporeality in how they experience and how they express this experience. The children's bodies know that they are in balance even though they do not yet have the skills to communicate that idea.

The following two quotes exemplify the lived-body and the theme of *playing, feeling good and having fun* as it relates to individual occupational balance. This quote is illustrated in Figure 14.

Interviewer : Qu'est-ce que ça veut dire pour toi l'équilibre dans les activités de tous les jours?

Participant : Ça veut dire que je me sens bien quand je joue. Je joue avec mon minou ... et j'me sens calme.

Youngest child, daughter, Family 1

Interviewer: What does balance in everyday activities mean to you?

Participant: It means that I feel good when I play. I play with my kitty ... and I feel calm.

Youngest child, daughter, Family 1

Et aussi, il y a cette photo-là. Ah! Ça, c'était la game de soccer de [sister]. Papa et Mummy étaient en train de regarder la game. Moi et [brother], nous on aime rigoler, faire des affaires bizarres. On jouait avec la hose, on prenait des parapluies et après on essayait de faire des shields pour la hose avec nos amis. Mais [sister] et Papa nous avaient dit d'arrêter parce qu'on allait briser les parapluies. On fait des affaires tellement bizarres, qu'ils ne savent pas comment nous contrôler. Middle child, daughter, Family 3

There is also this picture. Ah, that was at [sister's] soccer game. Papa and Mummy were watching the game. Me and [brother], we like to have fun, we love doing strange things. We were playing with the hose, taking umbrellas and trying to make shields with our friends. But [sister] and Papa told us to stop because we would break the umbrellas. We do such weird stuff; they don't know how to control us. Middle child, daughter, Family 3

Figure 14

Playing, feeling good and having fun was the theme for the younger children's experience of individual occupational balance



When it comes to individual occupational balance, participants' experience was closely tied to having time and using it as they wished to. This was especially the case for parents and older siblings. For this reason, the overarching theme of individual occupational balance is *refocusing on self*. Time for

self was spent in occupations related to the 5 intentional activities proposed by Thibeault (2002; 2011; 2020).

When describing the experience of individual occupational balance, adults and older children often characterize it as being in the moment or not having to be anywhere else nor having to do anything else. Participants also spoke of the experience of individual occupational balance through intentional activities as alleviating stress and metaphorically ‘emptying their head’. Moreover, these occupations were reenergizing, and they helped participants face their daily tasks and challenges. For younger children, their experience of individual occupational balance was simply expressed as enjoying an activity, feeling good, and having fun. Children aged six to 11 years referred to the lived-body in their experience of occupational balance.

The dynamic nature of individual occupational balance

Although this final section of the findings does not correspond specifically to a research question, it provides details as to the circumstances in which individual occupational balance is experienced by the parents in the participating families. Numerous authors have stated that the nature of occupational balance is dynamic. It was experienced as such by parents participating in the research. This dynamic state was made overt in two ways during the interviews with parents. Firstly, the experience of individual occupational balance was often transient for parents, they were most often in a quest to find individual occupational balance than in a state of occupational balance. Secondly, because of the unpredictability of family life and because of the constant changes in a growing family, periodically there was a need to readjust to new needs or conditions concerning family life. In the following pages, I report the findings concerning these two aspects of individual occupational balance for parents.

The quest for individual occupational balance

Experiencing individual occupational balance remains elusive for the parents participating in this research. Most of the time they are attempting to reach a state of balance, at best, attaining it in short-lived moments. Because of the fleeting nature of individual occupational balance, although all my interview questions were specifically on the experience of occupational balance, information on occupational imbalance and the constant quest for occupational balance seeped through. The discourse on the pursuit of individual occupational balance gravitated around three points. The first is that fathers were reported to have more opportunities for individual occupational balance than mothers. The second is that for mothers, there needed to be a facilitating aspect to the individual occupational balance for it to happen. Lastly, orchestration of daily family life was reported as an occupation that conflicts with individual occupational balance. The mothers appeared to be most concerned with these three points.

Three of the four mothers explicitly reported that having time for themselves and for occupations in which they experienced individual occupational balance was precisely what was missing from their daily lives. It was something they wanted to have, but they did not currently see a way to include time for themselves in their daily routine.

Moi, ce qui manque je trouve dans ma balance, depuis un ou deux ans, c'est de faire du sport pour moi-même. Avant, je prenais un cours de piano à chaque semaine et puis je faisais un cours soit de ski de fond ou j'avais ma passe de snowboard. J'allais de façon un peu plus régulière. Mais là, avec toutes les activités et avec les activités des enfants, ça ne vaut pas la peine! L'an dernier, j'ai payé une passe de snowboard et puis je suis allée trois ou quatre fois! Des fois, les gens me demandent : Pis? Comment ça va? Des fois, je pense qu'ils disent ça par politesse, mais des fois je leur dis : Ça va bien, mais je trouve ça vraiment plate, je ne fais pas de sport. Je trouve ça poche. Je ne trouve pas de temps pour moi-même. C'est pas par problème de poids ou quoi, c'est juste comme hygiène de vie. Je me dis tout le temps : Il faut que j'essaie de me prendre du temps. Tu sais, 'carve out the time' Et puis je n'ai pas encore réussi à faire ça. Là, cet hiver, je suis inscrite à deux cours de ski. On va voir comment ça va. Un cours de ski de fond skate et puis un cours de ski de fond classique. Mother, Family 4

What I find lacking in my balance, for the last year or two, is to do sports for myself. I used to take a piano class every week and then I would either take a cross-country skiing class or use my

snowboarding pass. I would go a little more regularly. But now, with all the activities and with the kids' activities, it's not worth it! Last year, I paid for a snowboard pass and then I only went three or four times! Sometimes people ask me: So? How are you doing? Sometimes, I think they say that out of politeness, but sometimes I tell them, "I'm fine", but I find it really too bad, that I don't do sports. It's too bad. I can't find time for myself. It's not that I want to lose weight or anything, it's just a healthy lifestyle. I'm always thinking: I have to try to make time for myself. You know, carve out the time. And I haven't been able to do that yet. This winter, I'm enrolled in two ski courses. We'll see how it goes. A skate-skiing class and then a classic cross-country skiing class. Mother, Family 4

J'ai toujours un peu de misère à me trouver du temps pour moi. Donc c'est pour ça que je trouve qu'on n'a pas toujours un bon équilibre, chose que [husband] a eu beaucoup. Il a été très impliqué dans le sport avant, mais là, il continue d'avoir des activités fixes lui, où il voit vraiment ses amis qui s'entraînent ou des choses comme ça. Choses que moi je n'arrive pas nécessairement à trouver encore pour le moment. C'est ça, je pense qui manquerait à notre équilibre. Puis à ce moment-là, on aurait un meilleur partage là, de tout. Mother, Family 1

I still have a little trouble finding time for myself. So that's why I think we don't always have a good balance, which [common-law partner] had a lot of. He used to be very involved in sports, and now he still has fixed activities, where he really sees his friends while working out or things like that. Things that I haven't been able to do myself yet. I think that's what's missing from our balance. When I've managed to do those things, then we would have a better sharing of everything. Mother, Family 1

In the last quote, the mother contrasts her personal occupational balance with that of her husband's, stating he has more opportunities than she does, partly because his activities are at fixed times in the weekly schedule. Although this was not a question in the interview, all mothers made similar claims. To this effect, all fathers played hockey at least once a week, year-round. This activity was often followed up by a get together, where most fathers socialized with their teammates. On top of this activity, some fathers practised other sports weekly, went to the gym daily or played hockey multiple times in a week.

In contrast, two mothers emphasized the idea of not having time for themselves, stressing that imbalance is more present than individual occupational balance in their daily lives. From their words, we can appreciate that other family members' occupations take precedence over their own. According to the mother in Family 1 :

On dirait que je suis toujours en lutte avec mon temps personnel. On dirait que c'est toujours mes choses personnelles que je vais mettre de côté avant les choses des enfants ou les choses de [common-law partner]. On dirait que les activités de [common-law partner] sont toujours plus importantes que les miennes. On dirait que les activités des filles sont toujours plus importantes que les miennes. Tout ça fait que je mets beaucoup de choses de côté et je trouve que c'est une place que je suis plus dans le déséquilibre. J'aurais probablement besoin de prendre plus de temps pour moi, mais je ne sais pas... On dirait que j'ai espoir que ça va finir par se placer. Mais c'est plus un déséquilibre qu'un équilibre en ce moment dans notre vie. On dirait que s'il y a une activité spéciale pour les filles, je trouve ça désolant qu'elles la manquent pour que moi, je puisse avoir une activité personnelle. À ce moment-là, je vais tout faire pour trouver une solution pour que les deux activités puissent avoir lieu, mais s'il n'y a pas de solution, c'est mon activité que je vais couper avant la leur. Mother, Family 1

It seems like I'm always struggling with my personal time. It seems like it's always my personal activities that I put aside before the kids' activities or [common-law partner's] activities. It seems like [common-law partner's] activities are always more important than mine and it seems like the girls' activities are always more important than mine. All of this makes me put aside many of my own activities and I find that I'm more imbalanced. I probably need to take more time for myself, but I don't know... It's more of an imbalance than a balance right now in our lives. It seems like if there's a special activity for the girls, I feel bad that they're missing it so that I can have my own activity. At this point, I will do everything I can to find a solution so that both activities can take place, but if there is no solution, I will cut my activity before theirs. Mother, Family 1

Is there anything? You know? I think it's where it's missing. I could identify the holes in where it's missing. I wish that I could have more time without sacrificing, I would like to prioritize to be able to take care of myself better, to be able to go to the gym, to take care of my body. You know to work towards being physically more healthy. I mean that's at the bottom of the list right now. I don't even know where I would fit it in. Mother, Family 2

As for the mother in Family 3, she states that going to the gym regularly provides her with an opportunity for individual occupational balance. However, she underlines that the activity is still tentative, but that she 'tries to make it non-negotiable'. Her choice of words highlights that what is certain is that occasionally, the activity will be cancelled for the benefit of other activities for the family or for her work.

I have a gym membership at Movati. That is my time for myself that I try to make non-negotiable. Going three or sometimes four times if I have a schedule for the week that is not too full, to go to a couple of classes and then I will go to the gym on my own as well. So, every Saturday morning, I go at nine o'clock for class. Sunday, I will try to go sometime in the day when there isn't as much going on. And then I go on Tuesday evening, and I try to go on

Thursday. So, if I am off on part of the day on Tuesday I sometimes go in the morning and if I can't do that, I will go at six at night and then on Thursday, it is always in the evening. If I can go. At times it gets bumped because of picking gifts for somebody's birthday party, for a friend on the weekend or... a meeting at work or... things like that. It will get bumped. Mother, Family 3

The only father who spoke about the challenge to find time for himself is the father who teaches in a high school. He clarified that this difficulty occurs only in the summer when he is home with his three children. In the following quote, he reveals he has enrolled the children in summer camp, three days a week, to have a little time for himself this summer:

L'été, c'est un peu plus compliqué parce que je suis à la maison avec les enfants, mais là ils ont des camps trois fois par semaine. C'est du temps que j'ai pour moi, pour soit faire des choses pour moi alentour de la maison si j'ai envie de les faire sans avoir à trop m'occuper des enfants ou bien, si je veux aller faire des activités tout seul ou bien essayer d'aller jouer au golf avec des amis ou quelque chose comme ça. C'est le temps que je peux faire ça. Ça me permet de garder une certaine balance entre les deux, justement pour ne pas me brûler ou bien d'être capable d'apprécier le temps en famille. Father, Family 3

In the summer, it's a little more complicated because I'm at home with the kids, but now they have camps three times a week. That's time that I have for myself, to either do things for me around the house if I want to do them without having to take care of the kids too much, or if I want to go do activities by myself or try to go play golf with friends or something like that. That's the time I can do that. It allows me to keep some balance between the two so that I don't get burned out and I can enjoy family time. Father, Family 3

Because it is so challenging for mothers to find time for themselves, for activities in which they experience individual occupational balance, mothers look for ingenious strategies to fit such activities in their schedule. One mother stated having practiced karate with her son in the past as a strategy, another mother took language lessons on her phone and a quick nap when she came home from work as a way of sneaking in a few minutes of rest in her weekday. Most mothers chose to participate in occupations that were close to home, for example through gardening, cooking or home decorating and renovating. The mother in Family 4 spoke of finding balance in the opportunities that present themselves to her. She described how individual occupational balance can be found on a trip abroad for

work, where just being on the plane by herself offered her an opportunity to disconnect from both work and home.

Je trouve ça nécessaire de partir, parce que on est tellement occupés pis c'est tellement concentré sur les enfants, la routine et puis j'ai toujours voyagé beaucoup pour le travail. C'est quelque chose à quoi je suis habituée depuis 20 ans que je travaille à l'international. De un, ça me sort de ma routine, ça me sort de tous les tracas, parce que là, je suis en voyage. Ne me dérangez pas. Je ne peux pas aller au meeting de conseil d'administration. Je ne peux pas faire ci, ou faire ça, je suis en voyage d'affaire. Je ne suis pas là. En plus en avion, les gens ne peuvent même pas me texter! Ça a toujours été comme ça. Ce n'est pas parce que maintenant j'ai trois enfants. J'ai toujours vraiment aimé être unplugged. Quand je reviens, j'ai l'énergie plus renouvelée. Sinon, tu n'en sors pas! Tout le temps, je trouve qu'on roule à un haut régime, moi et [husband], mais tu ne peux pas maintenir ça tout le temps. Je trouve que quand je pars en voyage, ça fait comme un reset. Partir, trois, quatre, cinq fois par année, je trouve ça le fun de ne pas avoir à me préoccuper de qui mange quoi, ni des entraînements, du linge propre et du lavage. Je n'ai rien à me préoccuper quand je pars. C'est comme une vacance! Tout le monde aime les vacances! Des vacances toute seule en plus! Qui a ça trois, quatre fois par année?! ... Je trouve que c'est nécessaire pour pas faire un burnout dans le fond, parce que sinon, c'est overwhelm. Mother, Family 4

I find it necessary to leave, because we are so busy and it's so focused on the kids, the routine and I've always traveled a lot for work. It's something I've been used to for 20 years working internationally. Firstly, it takes me out of my routine, it takes me out of all the hassles. If I'm traveling, don't bother me. I can't go to the board meeting. I can't do this, or do that, I'm on a business trip. I'm not available. Also, while I am on the plane, people can't even text me! It's always been like that. It's not because I now have three kids. I've always really enjoyed being unplugged. When I come back, I have more energy. Otherwise, there is no way around it! I always find that me and [husband] are running at a high speed, but you can't keep that up all the time. I find that when I go on a trip, it's like a reset. Going away, three, four, five times a year, I find it's fun not having to worry about who's eating what, or the kids' competitive training, or the laundry. I don't have to worry about anything when I go. It's like a vacation! Everyone loves a vacation! And a vacation by myself! Who has that three, four times a year? ... I think it's necessary to avoid burnout, because otherwise, it's overwhelming. Mother, Family 4

Mothers reported on one occupation that was the antithesis of individual occupational balance: the orchestration daily family life. Overseeing the family occupations and the individual occupations of multiple family members implies being highly structured with time-use and agile in the planning and organization of schedules. As the mothers in the following quotes attest, the orchestration of daily family life comes with a mental load.

C'est sûr que dans la société, c'est comme ça un peu là. Les femmes, on a beaucoup sur nos épaules, toute la charge mentale de la famille et tout ça. C'est plus moi qui s'occupe de ces choses-là. Mother, Family 1

In our society, it's a little like that. Women, we have a lot on our shoulders, all the mental load of the family and all that. I'm the one who takes care of those things. Mother, Family 1

If things aren't organized or scheduled then important things will be missed. You know, I really am responsible, there's four people in my family and I'm responsible for four schedules. I'm the keeper of that, you know? And so that needs to be organized because even my children in terms of their differences. One is very passive and the other is very active. It would be very easy to plug [youngest daughter] into a device and leave her in a corner indefinitely and she would be happy. But to really dig down and find out what some of her interests are and to get her involved in activities like baseball that she's going to like, it takes time to schedule them, to get them busy. It takes away from my own time. She didn't lead with that interest of wanting to do that, but we want them to be involved in sport and so even organizing that time, finding the time to get them busier, takes away from my own time. But there's value in that. I don't want to overlook. But yes, I could tell you everywhere I'm going to be every weekend until the end of August, until school starts. I have a calendar. It's completely worked out in terms of the weeks that the kids are at camp, the weeks I'm on vacation, the weeks [husband] has to take for vacation, who's going to watch the kids when, and part of it is, I don't like the distress of not knowing what's going to happen next week with my children. They're still of the age where they need to be cared for. I've already booked camping sites for the one weekend we're free. Yes, I'm very organized in how I plan the use of time and unfortunately, it's not planning unscheduled time. Everything is scheduled. Mother, Family 2

While the mothers were most often responsible for the orchestration of daily family life, fathers tended to take care of portions of a routine or of one routine in its entirety. Two fathers were responsible for the morning routines of their children, including getting them to school, while their spouses got ready for work without interruptions and left for work early in the morning. Being at work early in the morning allowed the mothers to finish work on time to pick up the children or be at home when they arrived from school. The father in Family 2 stated that at other times, he “move(s) the family routine along”, suggesting his role is more secondary to the role his spouse plays. Fathers were often responsible to take children to their extra-curricular activities, helped with supper or did laundry. The mother in Family 3 explains the contrast in approaches between herself and her husband.

Mother, Family 3: He [husband] would benefit from my library but because I am already pathologically organized, to me, continuing to read those books and to work hard on that and to

focus on it, it is just a sign that I am not coping. What I have to focus more on is relaxing and doing less. And if I do that, then I am more in balance. Where he has to do the opposite.

Interviewer: So he has to be more organized with time...And do more? Is that what you are saying?

Mother, Family 3: Mmm hmm

In their accounts of individual occupational balance, mothers especially spoke of the difficulty in attaining it and the more familiar state of searching for it. Another example of the dynamic nature of occupational balance is the fact that at times, in the families' trajectories incidents took place that forced parents to reassess their routines and their division of household responsibilities to ascertain better individual and family occupational balance.

Recalibration

Sometimes it was a reflection that provoked the need for recalibration, but at other times, it was a crisis that marked a turning point. All mothers and one father spoke of a time in the recent past where they had a crisis or where they avoided a crisis by making changes in their everyday occupations or their schedules. Changes relating to this turning point allowed a greater sense of balance for parents and families.

As seasons change and children grow, there is a constant need to simply reflect, reassess and find a new balance. The mother in Family 3 described this process of asking questions to see if there is a need for change in schedules and activities.

At every season it is: Well, what are our priorities right now? What do the kids need. What do we need? Are we living our best life? I find I am often thinking that question. What is this all for? At the end of this, are the children going to be happy? Was I good? Am I being a good mom? Could I be better? Is this the life I wanted to lead? Or do I feel like I am stuck? Mother, Family 3

In this family's case, the winter was full of activities, their son's hockey was taking up most of the weekends. Up to then, the children had been doing their chores on weekends, but now the parents felt the family had little time to enjoy together and felt hired help for cleaning could be a solution to free

up the family's schedule for shared occupations. Although the mother in Family 3 described this in the first-person plural, her husband did not report on this situation.

I think that in the last six months we're doing a better job of using our family time in a way where we're having balance and closeness between the five of us. Prior to that, it felt more strained, like we were all so busy and we weren't, intentionally trying to fit in the special things, the special family moments, the memorable days. And that was the point where we thought well what do we need to do to change this? Do we hire a cleaning lady to come in, to free us up so that we can go skiing, go to Sudbury or to fit some of those things in, because we realized, we weren't fitting them in? These kids are growing up, they are going to be out of the house in a few years, and then if we don't take advantage of the time now, it's going pass us by. So, we thought, well, we need to miss [hockey] practices and to parent down. I think that is going to be something that every few months we're going to have to try to recalibrate. And it is different challenges based on when it is in the year, because during hockey season, we have almost no time on the weekends because the weekends are full of hockey. Whereas at this time of year [end of spring] the weekends are open but during the week, it's really, really busy. Mother, Family 3

The issue of the children's busy extra-curricular schedules was also problematic in Family 4. The mother explains in the following quote that in the past, she felt her two eldest children having each three extra-curricular activities was excessive, especially while her youngest was still a baby. She was practicing karate with her son but unfortunately, she also had to quit when she asked her son to pare down his schedule. She did not feel she could get away two or three times a week and leave her husband with the three children. This change allowed more family occupational balance, but it affected her own individual balance.

Avant, [eldest son] et moi, on faisait du karaté ensemble. Il y a un hiver, il a fait du hockey, du karaté et puis du ski de fond. Puis [daughter], elle faisait du patinage artistique et du ski de fond et du violon et puis [youngest son] était bébé. C'était beaucoup. J'ai dit à [eldest son]: "Il faut que tu choisisses, tu ne peux pas faire trois sports". Les trois sports, il les faisait sérieusement, deux ou trois fois par semaine. Je lui ai dit : "Tu dois en faire deux." Il a droppé le karaté, donc moi aussi parce que je ne peux pas partir deux, trois fois par semaine faire du karaté et puis laissé [husband] avec les trois enfants. C'est le moment où j'ai arrêté de faire du sport. Mother, Family 4

Before, [eldest son] and I did karate together. There was one winter where he played hockey, and practiced karate and cross-country skiing. And [daughter], she did figure skating, cross-country skiing and violin, and [youngest son] was a baby. That was a lot. I said to [eldest son], "You have to choose, you can't do three sports." All three sports, he was practicing seriously, two

or three times a week. I told him, "You have to choose two." He dropped karate, so I did too because I can't be going two, three times a week to karate and then leave [husband] with the three kids. That's when I stopped doing sports. Mother, Family 4

In Family 2, at one point, because the mother felt extremely tired, she restructured her schedule and shifted the morning responsibilities over to her husband so she could have more balance.

I've always been four days a week but up until May 2018, I did my four days over five. And I would shorten the workdays. I did the morning routine and the afternoon routine with the kids. I would work 30 hours over five days, come in later, leave earlier and I got the kids up, got them off to school, brought them to [daycare], came to work, got them off the bus and did those pieces and it was exhausting. And there came a time where [husband] and I made the decision that I would, take the Fridays off but work four full days and he would own the morning routine. So that made a significant difference for me. Being able, as a couple, to split the responsibilities of the care for the children before and after work. Now he owns it 100 percent in the morning. It's FREEING because Fridays honestly, now that I'm able to take care of the house, it doesn't sound like I have more time in the evening, but I'm not stressed about chores during the week. In-laws or my parents could pop in and I won't be embarrassed. And I'm not stressed about chores on the weekend because I have that time. I think it really would be when I made the decision to work four days a week, where balance has really come in. That being said, do I feel totally balanced right now? I feel more than I did back then. Mother, Family 2

Another recalibration took place for Family 3 when the family moved to a bigger house. They decided to give the children each their chores to be responsible for. This allowed a little more time and freedom for the parents. According to the mother in this family:

It didn't feel like there was much balance at all when the kids were small, and I think part of that was because our routines were off. [Husband] and I weren't as good at that time in sharing the tasks around the house, which we improved on significantly over the years. And the kids weren't as independent. We were doing E-V-E-R-Y-T-H-I-N-G for them. We were laying out. I was laying out their breakfast, we were making all of their lunches for school. We were doing all of that stuff. And even it's only been the last three years that they have been doing chores, so prior to that, we were also doing all, a lot of the cleaning. So, it didn't feel like there was any balance. ... We ran out of space at our old house essentially. We didn't have enough bedrooms and so when we decided to do the move and we had more space, it was, well now is the time, the kids are all old enough that they can start to pitch in. We are going to make a clean slate and as of the move this is when everybody is responsible for at least their chores. Mother, Family 3

The most pivotal of these turning points was experienced by Family 1. The father was heavily involved in sports, working at a job that required him to work overtime while also preventing him from taking vacation time when his wife and children were on holiday (e.g., summer and Christmas time). The

turning point for this family came when the mother suddenly fell ill. She had to take a leave from her job and rest. The sudden free time gave her opportunities to try out new occupations. The couple also went to therapy. They each adopted new routines. The father left some of his sport activities and started taking charge of the girls' morning routine and taking them to school, while the mother started the day by doing a new activity that she had recently discovered she enjoyed (learning German) and getting herself ready in the morning without interruptions. In the following quotes, the mother, and the father both describe this crisis which had the potential to end their relationship. The mother in Family 1 says:

On a pris des décisions familiales. Il arbitrait l'été au baseball, il coachait l'hiver au hockey pendant plusieurs années, jusqu'à temps que je tombe malade finalement. Ça a été des situations de vie qui étaient difficiles. Les filles et moi étions d'un côté et puis [common-law partner] de son côté qui se joignait à nous ou qui s'en allait. Jusqu'à temps que je tombe malade et que ça nous permette de prendre un certain recul là-dessus. On est allé en thérapie aussi et puis [common-law partner] a réalisé des choses aussi et puis, ça a fait en sorte qu'il a changé un peu son mode de vie. Présentement, il essaie de changer d'emploi, parce qu'il trouve qu'il a remplacé le sport par le travail et puis ce n'est pas nécessairement ce qu'il voulait faire. C'est une décision personnelle qu'il a prise, mais qui a des grosses répercussions sur la famille. Ce n'est pas moi qui lui ai dit ou exigé un changement, même si c'était difficile pour nous, puis même si les filles aussi en subissent un peu le contre coup. Tomber malade, c'est sûr que ça a changé beaucoup de choses. Ça a eu des répercussions. C'est ce qui a permis de faire un brassage d'idées sur ce qu'on voulait faire, où est-ce qu'on voulait aller et puis tout ça. Et puis ça nous a permis de nous retrouver et puis ça aurait pu être le contraire. On était un peu rendu à la croisée des chemins. Soit on se séparait, soit on restait ensemble. On a décidé qu'on avait encore des choses à vivre ensemble et puis, ça va vraiment beaucoup mieux là. La maladie, c'était quelque chose de super négatif, mais ça a tellement apporté de positif. On a pris plein de décisions. Mother Family 1

We made family decisions. He umpired baseball in the summer and coached hockey in the winter for several years, until I finally got sick. These were difficult life situations. The girls and I were on one side and then [common-law partner] on his side and he would join us or sometimes leave. Until I got sick. That gave us some perspective on the situation. We also went to therapy and [common-law partner] realized things too, and finally, it made him change his way of life a little. Right now, he is trying to change jobs because he feels that he has replaced sports with work and that it is not necessarily what he wanted to do. It's a personal decision that he's made, but it has a big impact on the family. I wasn't the one who told him or demanded a change, even though it was difficult for us, and even though the girls also suffer a bit from it. Getting sick sure changed a lot of things. It had an impact. That's what made it possible to brainstorm ideas about what we wanted to do, where we wanted to go and all that. And it allowed us to find ourselves, but it could have gone the other way. We were kind of at a crossroads. Either we separated or we stayed together, and we decided that we still had things to live for together, and now it's

really much better. The illness was a very negative thing, but it brought so much positive. We made a lot of decisions. Mother, Family 1

The mother explained that her husband's personal occupations had led to occupational imbalance for the family. Her illness brought about a turning point for the family. In the father's quote, he shows that he understands that his personal sports activities were taking too much time away from the family and that this was affecting his wife as well as the children. He described feelings of guilt for having left his wife with so much responsibility and for having for so long favored his personal needs and activities. According to the father in Family 1:

J'arbitrais l'été au niveau provincial et national. Ce que ça impliquait, c'est que pour pouvoir en faire, il fallait que je sois disponible à peu près 50% du temps dans un mois. Sans avoir des matchs à tous les jours, il fallait que je sois disponible, puis mes matchs à moi étaient souvent les fins de semaine. Une fin de semaine sur deux, il fallait que je quitte soit pour arbitrer ici à Gatineau ou carrément voyager à Montréal pour aller arbitrer. J'aime le baseball, c'est en quelque sorte une passion, sauf que la journée où j'ai décidé d'arrêter ça, c'est le moment où, sans avoir un équilibre parfait, au moins il n'y avait plus cette course folle à toutes les fins de semaine. Auparavant, j'ai coaché au hockey, j'ai arrêté de coacher au hockey – question de travail. Mais le baseball c'est l'été, j'avais encore la chance d'en faire un peu, mais là, c'est vraiment à ce moment-là, quand j'ai arrêté ça, puis c'est un peu par la force des choses. Les filles vieillissent, j'ai été rarement là auparavant, à un moment donné j'ai dit : "Qu'est-ce que je veux?" Pis j'ai arrêté d'arbitrer. Pis à ce moment-là, les fins de semaine, même si vendredi, samedi, dimanche passent aussi vite que ça passait auparavant, sauf que quelque part, je les passe plus près de la maison. Je les passe moins dans juste une activité qui est à moi, pis j pense que ça se reflète un peu en termes de famille. J' dirais que c'est plus au niveau du stress de voir, les filles se chamaillent à un moment donné ça prend un deuxième parent présent pour pouvoir avoir soit une activité en famille autre que d'être juste à la maison, avoir une dynamique différente. Et puis aussi, par exemple, l'été avec le baseball, moi je travaille du lundi au vendredi, ensuite je pars samedi-dimanche pour Montréal. J'arrive le dimanche soir, je retravaille lundi au vendredi et puis là, je suis 12 jours pas à la maison le jour, peu le soir, mais [common-law partner], est à la maison, elle est en congé comme prof. Elle est à la maison pendant ces 12 jours-là avec les filles 24 heures sur 24 ou à peu près. À un moment donné, ces sentiments-là d'inconfort ou d'injustice finissent toujours par grossir, grossir, grossir. Quand elles sont toutes petites, elles étaient bébés, je me sentais moins utile que je pourrais l'être aujourd'hui, mais ça a commencé quand [eldest daughter] est venue au monde. C'était souvent mes activités, c'était souvent moi, moi, moi, avec une famille. Et puis j'étais avec la famille quand je voulais y être. Et puis à un moment donné, ce sentiment-là, d'injustice envers [common-law partner] a grandi, grandi, grandi. Et il y a aussi le fait que les filles grandissent et elles sont de plus en plus conscientes que Papa est encore parti, Papa est encore parti. Ça se chicane, Maman n'est pas contente. Maman crie, mais Papa n'est pas là encore. Quand tu n'es pas là, tu ne sais pas trop ce qui se passe. Est-ce que je peux faire des changements ou quoique

ce soit? Je ne le sais pas. Ce que je peux faire c'est à partir d'aujourd'hui. Cette impression là ou cet inconfort ou injustice, c'est un stress supplémentaire. Father, Family 1

I was umpiring in the summer at the provincial and national level. What this implied was that I had to be available about 50% of the time in a month. Even without having games every day, I had to be available, and my games were often on weekends. Every other weekend, I had to leave either to umpire here in Gatineau or travel to Montreal to umpire. I love baseball, it's kind of a passion, except that the day I decided to stop it was the day when, even without having a perfect balance, at least there was no longer this mad rush every weekend. I used to coach hockey, I stopped coaching hockey – because of work. But baseball is in the summer, I still had the chance to do that a little bit, but it was really at that point, when I stopped that, then it was kind of by force of circumstance. The girls were getting older, I was rarely home. At one point I asked myself, "What do I want?" and I stopped refereeing. And at that point, weekends, even though Friday, Saturday, Sunday go by just as fast as they used to, except now, I spend them closer to home. I spend them less in activities that are only mine, and I think that is reflected a little bit in terms of family. I would say that it's more in terms of the stress of seeing, the girls bicker; at some point it takes a second parent present to be able to have a family activity other than just being at home. Having a second parent changes the dynamic. Also, for example, in the summer with baseball, I work from Monday to Friday, then I leave Saturday-Sunday for Montreal. I arrive on Sunday evening, I work again from Monday to Friday and then I am absent from home in the day for 12 days and not much present in the evening, but [common-law partner] is at home; she is off as a teacher in the summer. She is at home during these 12 days with the girls, 24 hours a day or so. At some point, those feelings of discomfort or unfairness always get bigger, bigger, bigger. When they were babies, I felt less useful than I might feel today, but it started when [eldest daughter] came into the world. It was often my activities, it was often me, me, me, with a family. And then I was with the family when I wanted to be there. And at some point, this feeling of injustice towards [common-law partner] grew, grew, grew. And there is also the fact that the girls are growing up and they are more and more aware that Papa is still gone, Papa is still gone. There's bickering, Maman is not happy. Maman screams, but Papa is still absent. When you're not there, you don't really know what's going on. Can I make any changes or anything? I don't know. What I can do is start from today. That feeling or discomfort or unfairness, it's an added stress. Father, Family 1

The experience of individual occupational balance fluctuates through time. Families and parents are on a quest for individual occupational balance and the dynamic state of balance echoes that of daily life. Family lives were interspersed with turning points that made parents re-evaluate their current choices and routines and make decisions to promote the occupational balance of the family and/or of a family member.

In this chapter, individual occupational balance was explored through the theme of *refocusing on self*.

The particularities of the experience of occupational balance for younger children were also presented.

Finally, the dynamic nature of occupational balance was addressed through the constant quest for it and through the turning points parents face. In the following chapter I will share my reflections on these findings.

Chapter 5 - Reflections on Findings

The purpose of this research is to understand the lived experience of occupational balance for dual earner parents and their school-aged children. My original contribution to research is to articulate the lived experience of parents' and children's family occupational balance and individual occupational balance, in this way highlighting a first-person perspective as well as the relational aspects of occupation. In the previous chapters, I described the four participating families as being a fairly homogeneous sample in their sociodemographic characteristics. I also provided an account of the experience of occupational balance as it was gleaned from phenomenological interviews in these four dual earner families. Findings revealed family occupational balance is experienced through the theme of *togetherness*. This theme is enacted in two shared family occupations: the family dinner and family leisure. The findings related to individual occupational balance were widely varying. For adults and the oldest children, it related to the idea of having and using time for oneself and having the freedom to choose the occupations or activities in which they participated. For younger children, individual occupational balance was experienced in occupations other than compulsory occupations; however, time spent with family was often identified as contributing to their personal sense of occupational balance. A distinctive aspect of the experience of occupational balance was its dynamic nature, hence the need to continuously re-evaluate it in the family setting. Parents, especially mothers, reported on turning points in their family lives where a change in the family routines, responsibilities or even in work arrangements had to be instated. Many of the participants' testimonies, again especially those of mothers, related to the difficulty of attaining occupational balance.

In this final chapter, the findings are interpreted using the dimensions of occupation and the lived existentials. The dimensions of occupation include doing, being, belonging and becoming. The lived existentials are relationality, corporeality, temporality, and spatiality. In the following sections, because they are so enmeshed, belonging and relationality are presented as one. The interpretation of the

findings is organized under four broad sections that deconstruct occupational balance: 1) *intention* as an essence of family occupational balance for parents; 2) *restoration* as an essence of individual occupational balance; 3) *equity* as an essence of individual occupational balance for parents; and 4) reconsideration - the challenges to studying the experience of occupational balance. Finally, the implications of this research's findings for OS and OT will be presented, along with research limitations and future research leads.

Intention as an essence of family occupational balance for parents

On veut tout le temps faire ça, game night, mais ça tombe entre les craques. Le game night ou le family night. C'est quelque chose qu'on doit travailler. Les fins de semaine, elles sont super occupées aussi. L'hiver en particulier à cause de toute l'affaire alentour de la maison et puis les devoirs aussi. Non, je pense que c'est une des choses qui nous manquent de balance dans la maison, une des choses qui manquent pour être vraiment en balance, c'est de passer plus de temps en famille et puis du temps de qualité. Du temps relaxe en famille. C'est ça qui manque un peu pour vraiment atteindre la balance selon moi. Father, Family 3

We want to do game night all the time, but it slips between the cracks. Game night or family night. It's something we have to work on. Weekends are super busy too. Especially in the winter, because of all the stuff around the house and then the homework too. No, I think that's one of the things that we're missing in the house, one of the things that we're missing to really be in balance, is to spend more time as a family and then quality time. Relaxed family time. That's what I think is missing a bit to really achieve balance. Father, Family 3

In this line of reflection, I explore family occupational balance. Parents and children provided slightly divergent accounts of their experiences of family occupational balance, especially when it came to family leisure. For children, the experience is one of pleasure and intimacy, of spending time together and of having fun. For parents, the experience is equally positive, while also entailing a certain degree of effort. As parents spoke of family occupational balance, they described the need to be intentional.

Intention involves structuring time, planning occupations, and coordinating in order for all family members to converge in time and space into one family occupation. For children who are on the receiving end, occupations in which family occupational balance is experienced appear to happen spontaneously.

Parents in this research are keenly aware of the limited years they have with their children. This was reported by all couples. In the context of time constraints, without *intention* on the part of the parents, family occupational balance would not be experienced. In this line of reflection, three dimensions of occupation are discussed: doing, belonging, and becoming. In parallel, the lifeworld is explored through temporality.

Intention and the dimensions of occupation: doing, belonging and becoming

Family occupational balance was experienced through *doing* together in the daily occupation of the family dinner and in the special, less frequent occasions of family leisure. These two family occupations are shared co-occupations and all family members were expected to participate for occupational balance to be experienced. Smith and colleagues (2020) in developing the Family Meal Model with 21 families of school-aged children, found that families consistently described family meals as those where all family members were present. James and colleagues (2013) also found this to be true about mealtimes in their study on family time from school-aged children's perspective.

The daily family dinner not only serves to feed the family, but also provides an opportunity to socialize within the family unit (Ochs & Shohet, 2006) contributing to a common identity of the family (Boyd et al, 2014; Werner DeGrace, 2003) through the strengthening of bonds. For parents, the daily family dinner allows them to stay in touch with their children and plan the family's agenda for the coming weeks. Sevón and colleagues (2014), in their study on families' harmonious and disharmonious weeks, found that shared activities and routines, such as a family meal with the whole family, contributed to a family's perceived well-being.

In keeping with what is found in the literature, family leisure was perceived as a positive experience by all participants (Campos et al., 2009; Daly, 2001; DeVault, 2000; DeVault, 2003; Downs, 2008; Hilbrecht & al., 2008) and was mainly geared towards the children's pleasure. Children enjoyed these occupations. At times younger children described these occupations as contributing to their own

individual occupational balance. Indeed, younger children's experience of family occupational balance was comparable to their experience of individual occupational balance. From the parents' perspective, family leisure had an inevitable planning aspect to it. It required effort and organization (Daly, 2001, Kremer-Sadlik, 2013) and it easily got crowded out of busy schedules. Examples of effort were described as planning for races, making advance plans for camping trips or other trips and 'blocking off' a certain evening for game night. Authors outside of the fields of OS and OT qualify family leisure as being purposive (Harrington, 2015; Shaw & Dawson, 2001) in that it serves the purpose of instilling values and habits and creating memories while building relationships (Shaw & Dawson, 2001).

For the participating families, what was crucial in family occupations was the opportunity to spend time together. This is highlighted by the fact that all participants reported that family occupational balance is experienced only in occupations in which all family members were present, regardless of the activity that was at hand. What imported was the occupation's potential to bring family members together. Christensen and colleagues (2000) and DeVault (2003) have also reported similar findings on leisure in young families where occupations were secondary to the possibility of spending time as a family. This speaks to the *belonging* to a family and the interdependency and connectedness fostered by occupations (Hammell, 2009).

All but one participant referred to the sense of exclusivity that family leisure can bring to family members. Other studies on family leisure have also described it as being exclusive (Kremer-Sadlik, 2013). Another distinctive aspect of family leisure is the opportunity to appear publicly and to be perceived as a family (Harrington, 2015). In her interview, one mother expressed the eagerness for her family to be perceived as a unit, as illustrated in her description of a walk for wellness with her family and her colleagues. She underscored how the four family members were acknowledged as a family by the organizer and participants in the walk. That the family was perceived by others as a unit engaged in an occupation together was meaningful for the mother. When families participate in leisure occupations in

social contexts these occupations delimit the “boundedness and uniqueness” of the family (DeVault, 2000, p. 491).

Becoming as a dimension of occupation alludes to the idea of time passing and the children growing into adults who are more independent from the family unit. This draws attention to the preoccupation of spending time with children while they are young and the necessity of being intentional during this period. In their study on what is perceived as important for occupational balance, Wagman and colleagues (2011) found that in the Swedish working population, parents with younger children focused on their children and their children’s occupations, before returning to their own occupations later in life.

Intention and the lived existentials: temporality

Temporality is paramount to family occupational balance, firstly because of the multiple schedules that must converge into an occupation in which family occupational balance can be experienced and secondly because of the backdrop of time constraints in which family occupational balance takes place.

Family occupational balance presupposes well-coordinated elements of time, space, and people. The occupations that set the daily family schedule or structure were primarily the work and school schedules of family members. Extra-curricular activities of the children also played an important role in structuring weekday evenings and weekends. This is congruent with the existing literature on family coordination which identifies family routines as being externally directed by work and social schedules (Larson & Zemke, 2003). The ideal times described for family occupational balance occupations were weekends and weekday evenings. This confirms the findings of McCloy and colleagues (2016), who identified weekends as being more compatible with leisure family occupations in their study on school-aged children’s perspectives of family routines. Other authors have reported similar findings in dual earner families (Harden et al, 2013; Kremer-Sadlik, 2013). Summertime was also depicted as favorable

for family occupations. Parents spoke of protecting family time for the family dinner and family leisure. In some families, activities were planned out a long time in advance. In other families, lack of planning implied fewer opportunities for family activities. As stated in the quote in the beginning of this section, what is not intentionally planned 'slips between the cracks'.

To facilitate the enactment of occupations contributing to family occupational balance, occupational patterns were created around these occupations. For example, parents referred to having supper at the same time every evening. Having the evening meal at the same time eased the organization of other evening routines, such as homework, extra-curricular activities, and bedtime routines.

Time constraints are a reality of daily life for dual earner parents with school-aged children. Time is limited in two aspects: in the current daily life and in a more longitudinal way where parents and children only have a few years living under the same roof. In these few years, parents want to impart knowledge, values, and routines to their children as well as share and create memories together. Parents spoke of having to be intentional in their choice of family occupations and their use of shared time. They feel the need to ascertain that the occupations they invest in are worthwhile for their children. The *intention* is to set a time for valuable shared family occupations, while the children are young, and the family has opportunities to spend time together. The hope is that these family occupations will give shape to foundational values that will be transmitted to their children and carried on when the children are grown, and the current family unit is no longer at the centre of their lives.

Restoration as an essence of individual occupational balance

The common nomenclature of the three domains of occupation: self-care, productivity and leisure has been criticized as not being aligned with how occupations are truly experienced (Hammell, 2009; Pierce, 2001; Primeau, 1996). Similarly, the oversimplification of occupational balance as the equivalence of time spent in each domain has been disapproved (Spencer, 1989; Westhorp, 2003). The

study of the experience of occupations and the experience of occupational balance calls for a different set of categories (Jonsson, 2008; Widmark & Fristedt, 2019). For the participants in this research, individual occupational balance meant being able to engage in activities that were restorative.

Restoration is “the subjective aspect of occupational experience that restores our energy levels and ability to continue to engage in our daily lives” (Pierce, 2001, p.253). It highlights the inherent characteristics of occupations rather than domains or categories of occupation (Hammell, 2009; Pierce 2001). The restorative potential of occupations was found in a variety of intentional activities in which participants experienced individual occupational balance.

The experience of occupational balance has been associated with participating in a variety of occupations. Wagman’s concept analysis of occupational balance identified a determining element as being a mix of occupations (Wagman, Håkansson & Björklund, 2012). This necessity for a diversity of occupations has also been noted in theoretical studies (Wada et al., 2010) and other studies on occupational balance in parents (Wada et al., 2014), as well as models of occupational balance such as the Life Balance Model and the Experiential Model of Occupational Balance (Jonsson & Persson, 2006; Matuska, 2012). For occupational balance to occur it must be juxtaposed to other occupations. Participating repetitively in the same occupation would not lead to balance. Balance and *restoration* suppose a renewal of energy through doing something else, something different, hence the variety of occupations.

Restoration and the dimensions of occupation: doing and being

The dimensions of *doing* and *being* are related to individual occupational balance. Participants (adult and children) often highlighted the desire for free time and being able to choose what to engage in and when. They also spoke of the need to partake in activities that they found enjoyable, interesting, and provided a sense of breaking away from necessary daily tasks and chores. Such restorative qualities are a potential embedded in occupations. Participating in restorative occupations replenishes the

individual's energy and allows him or her to face new demands. Adult participants reported being more patient and better able to attend to family members' needs when they had the time to 'reset' or 'recharge' through occupations in which they reported experiencing occupational balance. An example of this was provided by the father in Family 3. He explained the benefits of working out at the gym before coming home from work and how his workout made him more patient and better able to deal with stress. Similarly, in their study on occupational balance in working adults, Wagman, Håkansson, Jacobsson, and colleagues (2012) found that the need for relaxation and recovery were important aspects contributing to occupational balance.

In the current research, findings on individual occupational balance were organized around five types of intentional activities: creation, contemplation, centration, connection, and contribution. The intentional activities appear to have a restorative role for participants. Activities of creation, centration, connection and contemplation have been reported specifically in the literature as being restorative (Howell & Pierce, 2000; Pierce, 2001). For example, Adler and colleagues (2019), studied restorative occupations in college students and found that activities related to physical activity (centration), spending time with others (connection) and practising a hobby (creation) were restorative. Accordingly, in their exploration of well-being in children aged six to eight, Moore and Lynch (2018) found creativity, expressed through imaginary play, and arts and crafts (creation), as well as physical play (centration) and spending time with family and friends (connection) as contributing to the well-being of children. Contemplation and contribution have both been found to be related to the experience of occupational balance in the study on the religious Sisters of Mercy (Myers et al., 2016). In this study, the Lifestyle Balance Model (Matuska and Christiansen, 2008) was used to illustrate the perceptions of life balance of the Sisters. Myers and colleagues (2016) refer to contemplation activities when they state: "All Sisters credited their successful overall sense of balance to a foundation of reflection through prayer, meditation, mindfulness, and self-awareness." (p.151). In the same study, the contribution activities of

the Sisters were addressed through helping others in their voluntary or paid work (Myers et al., 2016). Taken together, the five types of intentional activities show they each have a restorative potential.

Atler and colleagues (2019) identified a component of skill development and mastery in restorative occupations. Moore and Lynch (2018), as well as Widmark & Fristedt (2019) found this also to be true respectively in children and teenagers when studying occupations and well-being. In the current project, when children aged eight and above reported on occupations in which they experienced occupational balance, it was usually accompanied with a sensation of competence or a desire to become competent. Examples of this abound. The eldest daughter in Family 1, stated she was able to throw a baseball very far. The youngest daughter in Family 3 enjoys drawing and hopes to become as skilled as her friend. The eldest son in Family 4 spoke of competitive cross-country skiing and finding out the results of the races. The Experiential Model of Occupational Balance (Jonsson & Persson, 2006) describes the importance of a correspondence between skills and challenges in the experience of occupational balance. Matuska's Life Balance Model also recognizes the need to be engaged, challenged and competent (2012). Conversely, when recounting their experience of individual occupational balance, younger children did not emphasize skill building in their interviews, but rather playing, participating in sports and outdoor activities with family members or friends. These results align with those of a time-use study conducted with Irish children aged five to eight (Lynch, 2009) where children's play activities were centered around social or outdoor active physical play with siblings and friends.

Choice and agency are linked to the *being* dimension of occupations. When referring to occupations in which they experienced individual occupational balance, participants stressed a concordance with their interests and a sense of identity that they drew from the occupation, often introducing it as 'my thing', or 'my occupation'. In this research, when experiencing occupational balance, children and adult participants referred to a sense of freedom in their choice of occupation. Parents and older children expressed the importance of having time for themselves or having time for

which they can decide how to use. Likewise, this was determined an important factor for occupational balance by Wagman, Håkansson, Jacobsson, and colleagues (2012) in their study on working adults. The ability to choose occupations is also represented in the Life Balance Model by the concept of congruence, which is the correspondence between desired and actual time spent in activities (Matuska, 2012). In their study on children, occupations and well-being, Moore and Lynch (2018) determined the ability to choose one's occupation to be an essential component to well-being. Finally, because of their meaningfulness to the participants, all intentional activities were an expression and a reinforcement of the sense of identity of the individual. Identity, meaning, and value are components of occupational balance found in two models of occupational balance (Matuska, 2012, Pentland & McColl 2008). Matuska's Life Balance Model establishes 'creating meaning and a positive identity' as a need for life balance (2012) while Pentland & McColl (2008) suggest occupational integrity refers to "the extent to which a person designs and lives in integrity with his or her own personal values, strengths and what has meaning for them" (p.135).

Restoration and the lived existentials: temporality, corporeality, and spatiality

In the OS and OT literature, flow is a positive psychological state in which the individual is engrossed in a rewarding activity, to the point of losing sense of time (Emerson, 1998). In this manner, temporality and corporeality are enmeshed in flow. One father described occupational balance as : "[Ne pas] avoir la tête ailleurs. Vraiment être capable d'apprécier le temps présent." [*Not*] *having your mind elsewhere. Really being able to appreciate the present time.*] (Father, Family 3). This quote accurately links body and time, flow and occupational balance. Participants often referred to a state akin to flow when they spoke of occupational balance.

Occupational balance has been studied with a flow perspective by Jonsson and Persson (2006). In their study on adolescents in Sweden, Italy, and the United States, they used the experiential sampling method. This method, although based on experience, still relies on theorization because it

supposes for optimal balance, a harmony between different experiences of occupations: exacting occupations which are demanding, calming, or relaxing occupations and flowing occupations (Jonsson & Persson, 2006). Being in the moment was also found to be an aspect important to occupational balance by Wagman, Håkansson, Jacobsson, and colleagues (2012).

Corporeality was specifically referred to in descriptions of occupational balance by participants. For French-speaking parents, corporeality usually involved references to the head. For example, mothers and fathers stated they were in balance when they felt they could rest or empty their head (*se reposer ou vider la tête*). At other times, references were made to pleasure and fun. Younger children also expressed their experience of balance as being in their body. Being in balance meant feeling good. One of the youngest participants (youngest daughter, Family 1) referred to playing with a stuffed cat as helping her be calm and this was her experience of occupational balance. For children, having fun was lived through their bodies and expressed through selfies of themselves laughing. These results are in line with Moore and Lynch's (2018) research which explored the conceptualization of well-being in children aged five to eight. They found that play and having fun contributed to happiness which was used as a proxy for well-being (Moore & Lynch, 2018). Similarly, in their study of afterschool programs, Bazyk & Bazyk (2009) proposed a link between happiness and occupational balance for the young population.

Spatiality plays a secondary role in the interpretation of the research findings. Oftentimes the restorative occupations of parents were carried out away from the home, in a gym, an arena or outside in nature. Home was perceived as having dualistic characteristics. It was a place to unwind, but it was also a setting with frequent reminders of responsibilities demanding of the parents' attention: daily tasks, dishes, laundry, or maintenance of the property. It also signaled the parents' availability for other family members which invariably lead to interruptions in occupations. For this reason, home was not always perceived as the ideal place to experience individual occupational balance. Parents spoke of how being away from home caused a break-off unequivocally allowing time for self. This was expressed

explicitly by the father in Family 3 who spent the summers at home with his children. It was also reported implicitly by the mother and father in Family 4 when describing traveling alone internationally for work or pleasure as expressions of occupational balance. Matuska's (2012) Life Balance Model and the Model of Occupational Harmony (Liu et al., 2021) specifically consider the physical environment in their description of occupational balance.

Equity as an essence of individual occupational balance for parents

I get home usually around 4:30, quarter to 5. And the kids are already into their homework routine, which I kind of stay out of, which is a nice thing. And often my focus will go to whatever meal prep is going on ... So, I just kind of move our family routine on. Father, Family 2

L'équilibre pour la famille, c'est d'être conscient des choses auxquelles les gens tiennent. Comme [husband], il aime aller jouer au hockey le vendredi, alors on s'assure qu'il peut aller au hockey le vendredi. Mother, Family 4

Balance for the family, it's being aware of the things that people care about. Like [husband], he likes to play hockey on Fridays, so we make sure he can play hockey on Fridays. Mother, Family 4

The equitable division of household labour is an essence of individual occupational balance for the parents in the families participating in this research. Mothers and fathers spoke of the importance of sharing work in the home. The division of household labour involves housework and childcare. Household labour also encompasses the lesser known and invisible occupation of orchestrating daily life for the family (Larson, 2000; Primeau, 1998). The orchestration of occupations in families, is the planning and coordination of all aspects of daily life, into a functional routine. It weighs heavily in the balance of occupations in family life and its invisible nature makes it difficult to appreciate.

Cicciolla and Luthar compare the mothers' role of orchestrating daily family life to the role of a manager. The mother is responsible for a wide range of task, such as:

supervising child development, including daily psychological support and resolving problems;
interceding with teachers and attending meetings and events at school; maintaining
responsibility for routine medical care; coordinating sporting and other extra-curricular

activities; keeping a constant mental inventory of what's needed in household (from light bulbs and toilet paper to gifts); assuring good family nutrition; keeping track of new clothes and shoes needed for children; planning events ... and birthday parties; coordinating transportation to and from school and extra-curricular activities; overseeing care of pets; management of crises including trouble at school and accidents (and much more) (Cicciolla & Luthar, 2019, p 481).

In this line of reflection, I explore the division of household labour among spouses. This is the backdrop against which individual occupational balance is sought or achieved. Mothers more than fathers reported a struggle to find individual occupational balance and expressed that the unequal division of labour was a barrier to it. In the field of OS and OT, the division of household work has been related to life satisfaction (Wagman, Nordin et al., 2017). Wagman, Nordin and colleagues (2017) found that it is not so much the amount of household work the mother does, but rather her experience and the satisfaction with the division of labour that is related to a positive life satisfaction. In a recent quantitative study of cohabiting parents, satisfaction with the division of domestic work was related to a higher score on an occupational balance questionnaire (Håkansson et al., 2019). Furthermore, Wagman and colleagues (2011) have found that reciprocal relationships or the giving and receiving of support were important aspects for occupational balance. In the current research, when fathers reported on the division of labour, they generally stated that their spouses or partners had a lot to do and that they needed to help out. The findings expose the persistence of gender-based division of household labour even among these dual earner parents. According to Primeau (2000) the families would be described as transitional families, in which the father assumes responsibility for some childcare and house chores, but to a lesser degree than the mother. This leaves us questioning how much progress has been accomplished in terms of gender *equity* in families.

Equity and the dimensions of occupation: doing, being and belonging

The *doing* dimension of occupation is addressed especially through the occupations of performing chores, multitasking and the orchestration of daily family life. As it is presented in the literature on working parents, although fathers in this research participate in the daily household tasks, the work still falls disproportionately on the mothers (Davis & Greenstein, 2020; Offer & Schneider, 2011; Pepin & Sayer, 2018; Wagman, Nordin et al., 2017). The mothers in the current research were responsible for most of what needed to be done everyday and they oversaw the orchestration of daily life in their families. This unequal division of labour has an impact on the parents' occupations and consequently on occupational balance.

In all four families, the mother was the 'default' parent: the parent ultimately responsible for household labour. To be efficient, mothers tended to multitask (Craig, 2006; Offer & Schneider, 2010). For instance, the mothers in two families were the first parent home from work and spoke of supervising their children's homework while they prepared supper. Because of their propensity for multitasking, mothers' occupations were often interrupted by the needs of their children, which required them to deal with unpredictability and to be flexible. Such interruptions of occupations have been related to less occupational balance and ill health in the literature (Erlandsson & Håkansson, 2009).

Comparatively, fathers in the participating families were only responsible for a few routines in their entirety, most often the morning routine with their children, and other occasional chores, such as driving children to and from, or coaching children in sporting extra-curricular activities, taking care of laundry or cooking meals. In some instances, mothers still oversaw and orchestrated the fathers' household occupations. An example of this is evident in Family 3, when the father cooks family meals, the mother plans, schedules, and grocery shops in preparation for that meal. Fathers play a supporting role in the household labour (Gerson & Torres, 2015). They assist mothers with the household labour. This secondary role was made glaring when mothers were absent. In three of the four families, the

parents described arrangements made for when one parent was away. It was a female member of the extended family who came to help when the father was alone at home with his children. In one case, it was both grandparents, male and female, who came to help the father. This contrasts with the mothers who did not report arranging for extra help when their spouse or partner was absent. Inequality is also present in the type of household labour parents perform. More fathers than mothers were involved in their children's extra-curricular sports than their spouses were, at times participating with them in the activities. These types of activities are not only playful but require an involvement that is seasonal and, oftentimes the demands tend to diminish over time, as children grow. Conversely, the responsibilities in which mothers were associated with, such as making supper, housecleaning, or orchestrating daily family life, perdure across seasons and as children age and leave the household (Craig, 2006).

Being and belonging are intricately tied to the mothers' experience of occupational balance in relationship to the division of household labour. Individual and contextual factors play a role in occupational balance (Backman, 2010; Wagman et al., 2011). The way mothers and fathers shared responsibilities within their couple was not only a matter of personal choice but a reflection of the dominant ideologies playing out on gender and parenting (Gerson & Torres, 2015). Ill health is associated with occupational choices made exclusively based on societal norms (Berger et al., 2021; Wada et al., 2010). Parents in this research have internalized traditional North American expectations related to their gender. In the current research, this translates to less time for self and less opportunities to restore for mothers, in favor of other family members. Why is this gender-related injustice towards mothers still not socially recognized in 2021?

Equity and the lived existentials: temporality and corporeality

Looking at the division of labour through the lens of temporality, we examine schedules, structure, and orientation to time. Participating families had weekday and weekend schedules. They also had seasonal schedules which were influenced by the children's extra-curricular activities. For example,

children played soccer, lacrosse, and baseball in the summer and skied, played hockey or took trampoline lessons in the winter. As noted earlier, some families were extremely structured with respect to time, while others were more laid-back. One constant was that mothers were the ones concerned with structuring time, further reinforcing their role in the orchestration of family life. Structured time and a fixed weekly schedule that includes restorative occupations, facilitates their occurrence. An activity that occupies a regular and repetitive spot in the weekly schedule has more chances of being carried out. Meanwhile, tentative activities are less likely to occur. Although mothers oversaw the orchestration of daily family life, their personal needs for occupational balance were not prioritized.

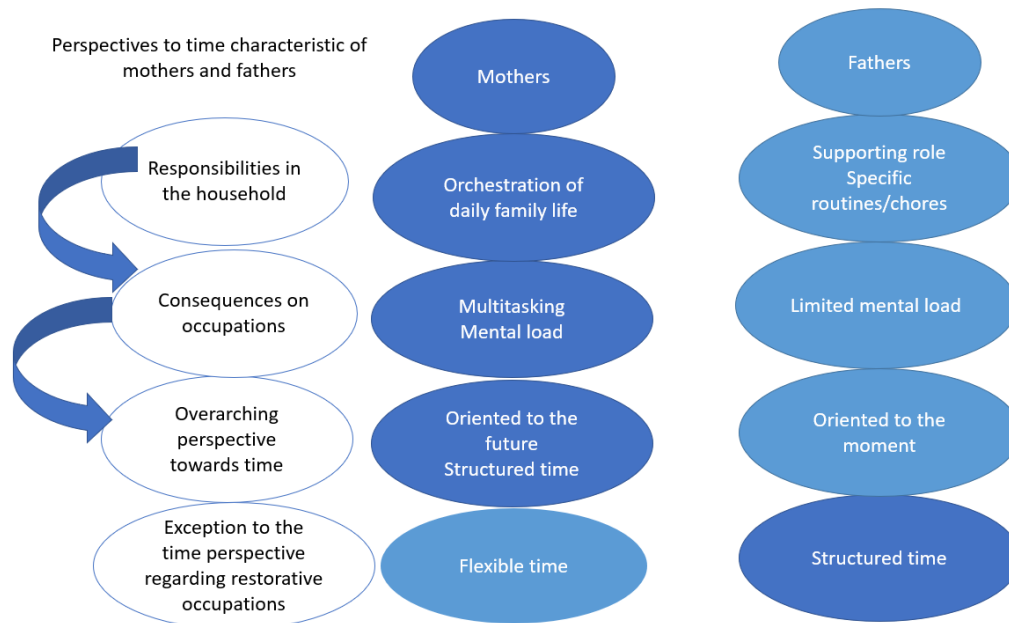
All participating fathers had established schedules that carved out a specific time for them to participate in their restorative occupations. Furthermore, their restorative occupations took place outside the home. For example, all fathers in the research played hockey, some multiple times in the week. Some fathers played multiple sports (Fathers 1, 3, 4) or went to the gym every weekday after work (Father 3). These restorative occupations were all planned at fixed times. The family's schedule was set up to allow for the father's scheduled activity to take place. As the mother in Family 4 stated in the above quote, balance means being conscious of other family members' important occupations and making efforts to facilitate the family member's participation in the desired activity. As such, fathers' time in restorative occupations was protected. To summarize, two conditions facilitated the participation of fathers in restorative occupations. First, the restorative occupations generally occurred at a recurring time which meant that they were less likely to be rescheduled. And secondly, they took place outside of the home which further eased the full immersion in the occupation and the experience of flow for the fathers.

The organization of time for mothers' individual restorative occupations is in stark contrast with that of the fathers. The mothers were more flexible and adaptable to both time and place. Two mothers participated in restorative occupations outside the home. Because their occupations were not at fixed

times, they were more prone to being rescheduled. For example, one mother reported that scheduled classes at the gym were easier to attend, while going to the gym to simply workout often got crowded out by other pressing responsibilities. The other mother had purchased a season pass to snowboard the previous winter but was disappointed because she had only snowboarded a few times. For the coming season, she had enrolled in biweekly ski classes, hoping that this strategy would better ensure her participation in her preferred restorative occupation. As for the mothers' whose restorative occupations took place inside or around the home, one mother was planning and working on decoration and renovation projects in her home, and the other enjoyed cooking and gardening. Having restorative occupations close to the home or at flexible times, may have been chosen to be available to children and to the demands of a busy family life. However, it also meant that these restorative occupations were easily interrupted, displaced, and cancelled. Such circumstances ultimately hindered the mothers' participation in restorative occupations because in instances of time constraints, mothers inevitably gauged their own needs against those of other family members, frequently discounting their own restorative occupations. As such, the mothers' experience of occupational balance is fragmented. They experience fleeting moments for themselves within their busy family life. This would be a similar experience to what Lloyd and colleagues (2019) describe as incremental leisure. It is unlikely that the fragmented experience of restorative occupations amounts to the same benefits as longer periods of engagement. In this respect, Wada and colleagues (2010) have argued that the quality of time allocated to occupations matters for occupational balance. This would also be in line with Sayer (2018) who studied trends in parents' leisure according to gender. She argues that mothers have lower quality and quantity of leisure when compared to fathers, further compounding the inequality between fathers and mothers.

When it comes to corporeality, the quotes by fathers referred to the experience of flow, while the quotes by mothers invoked a mental load. This can be explained by the different perspective to time

fathers and mothers adopt. In describing her responsibility with respect to time, the mother in Family 2 identified herself as 'the keeper of time in the family'. This evocative expression illustrates accurately the orientation mothers in this research take towards time. As the orchestrator of their family's daily life, mothers carry an important mental load. The mothers' relationship to time is structured and focused on the future. They have a continued awareness of time, they structure family occupations at set times, and they anticipate the needs of other family members (Larson, 2000). Since the experience of occupational balance was associated to the experience of flow and being in the moment, the mothers' preoccupations with orchestration and their orientation towards the future disadvantages them in their experience of occupational balance. On the other hand, the fathers who play a supportive role in terms of household labour, carry out their specific routines and chores swiftly and with little, if any, mental load. This freedom affords them the possibility to be oriented to the moment which consequently advantages them in their experience of occupational balance. Figure 15 contrasts the perspective of time discerned from the statements made by mothers and fathers about their responsibilities in household labour.

Figure 15*Perspectives to time characteristic of mothers and fathers*

Research on time-use, the objective component of occupational balance, has found that when comparing married mothers to other groups of working mothers, married mothers spend less time in sleep and leisure (Pepin & Sayer, 2018). Being in a relationship with a man meant spending more time on housework (Pepin & Sayer, 2018). Furthermore, Pepin and Sayer (2018) explain that mothers who have difficulty finding balance in their everyday occupations tend to blame themselves or see it as their own personal shortcomings and do not attribute this to a lack of help or support.

Some mothers in this research acknowledge there are benefits to having time for their restorative occupations both for themselves and for their family. Nevertheless, the mothers' restorative occupations were still tentative, occasional, or simply absent. Mothers' time for self was neglected to the benefit of other family members' occupations. In the moment, mothers may interpret it as selfish to choose occupations for themselves. However, if these restorative occupations contribute to their well being, they could benefit all family members. What do we stand to lose when mothers care for

themselves? A more equalitarian sharing of all aspects of household labour would facilitate the occupational balance of mothers, though this might impact fathers' own occupational balance.

Reconsideration - the challenges to studying the experience of occupational balance

A felicidade	<i>Happiness</i>
Tristeza não tem fim	<i>Sadness never ends</i>
Felicidade sim	<i>Happiness does</i>
A felicidade é como a gota	<i>Happiness is like the dewdrop</i>
De orvalho numa pétala de flor	<i>on the petal of a flower</i>
Brilha tranquila	<i>It shines undisturbed</i>
Depois de leve oscila	<i>After lightly rocking</i>
E cai como uma lágrima de amor	<i>and falls like a teardrop of love</i>
A felicidade do pobre parece	<i>The poor man's happiness seems like</i>
A grande ilusão do carnaval	<i>The great illusion of carnival</i>
A gente trabalha o ano inteiro	<i>People work every day of the year</i>
Por um momento de sonho	<i>For a moment of dream</i>
Pra fazer a fantasia	<i>To live the fantasy</i>
De rei ou de pirata ou jardineira	<i>of being a king or a pirate or a gardener</i>
E tudo se acabar na quarta-feira	<i>And it all ends on (Ash) Wednesday</i>
Tristeza não tem fim	<i>Sadness never ends</i>
Felicidade sim	<i>Happiness does</i>
A felicidade é como a pluma	<i>Happiness is like the feather</i>
Que o vento vai levando pelo ar	<i>That the wind lifts through the air</i>
Voa tão leve	<i>It flies so lightly</i>
Mas tem a vida breve	<i>But has a short life</i>
Precisa que haja vento sem parar	<i>It needs wind non-stop</i>
Precisa que haja vento sem parar	<i>It needs wind non-stop</i>
Precisa que haja vento sem parar	<i>It needs wind non-stop</i>
Tristeza não tem fim	<i>Sadness never ends³</i>

Antônio Carlos Jobim & Vinícius de Moraes, 1958
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TxNfGHhETk0>

Occupational balance is a complex concept

Authors agree that there is an inherent complexity to the concept of occupational balance (Eklund et al., 2017; Liu et al., 2021; Wagman et al., 2015 al., 2012; Wada et al., 2010, Yazdani, 2018). The multidimensional aspect and subjective nature of occupational balance make it a challenge to study.

³ This is an unofficial translation provided for information purposes only.

Occupational balance considers all of a person's occupations. This means that in a family setting, this intricacy is magnified by the number of family members. Occupational balance considers the shared and individual occupations of all family members, as well as what lies at the interface of these individual and shared occupations: the orchestration of daily family life. To add to the complexity, occupational balance exists in a dynamic state. It varies according to situations and time. As the feather in the Jobim and Moraes bossa nova song, occupational balance is short-lived. Individuals constantly need to readjust to life conditions and personal and environmental factors to strive for occupational balance. Other challenging aspects of the concept that affect the study of the experience of occupational balance are detailed below.

Occupational balance: theory versus experience

The plethora of models and theoretical articles on occupational balance contrasts with the paucity of research on the lived experience of occupational balance. This alludes to the fact that occupational balance is a concept that is easier to characterize in its ideal state, rather than to discuss experientially. Participants in this research were asked to share their experience of occupational balance. During the phenomenological interviews, participants did not speak hypothetically, nor did they do a mental inventory or global assessment of their recent occupations, calculating which occupations weighted on what side of the balance. Neither did they dwell on the theoretical concept of balance, but instead spoke of their occasional experience of occupational balance. In those occasions, they were immersed in an occupation, and it was this experience that they shared.

Theories and models of occupational balance tend to oppose two or more components to express balance in its numerous forms (Liu et al., 2021; Matuska, 2012; Wagman et al., 2015; Wada et al., 2010; Wagman et al., 2011). Yet in this research, the experience of occupational balance is remarkably one-sided with participants reporting on the pleasant, relaxing, enjoyable aspects of their daily life. In their busy, time-constrained life, opportunities to experience occupational balance were oases of peace, rest

and restoration. Parents opposed occupational balance to the busyness of their daily lives and children to the responsibilities of school or chores. What the participants in this research reported is what they are lacking and what they are longing for. It would have been easier to elicit from them comments on the barriers or the experience of imbalance in their daily lives. However, my interest was the positive aspects of occupational balance, I wanted to adopt a strength-base approach to it.

Studying occupational balance from a strength-based perspective

Occupational balance is related to well-being and health (Wilcock & Hocking, 2015), yet it is easier to describe the obstacles to attaining occupational balance than the experience of it. Balance is a perfect, ideal, unforgiving state. It is impossible to be in partial balance. One is either in balance or out of balance. In this sense, as a concept, occupational balance is difficult to achieve and impossible to maintain. This can explain why it is so difficult to speak of the experience of balance and why studies tend to focus mostly on the quest and the challenges or barriers to balance.

In the literature, occupational balance is often explored and studied from a deficit focused approach. Most of the literature on occupational balance is related to the difficulties of attaining occupational balance and the impact of certain health conditions on occupational balance (Wagman et al., 2015; Liu, 2021). Studies on occupational balance have identified where it is lacking under certain conditions or the occupational balance needs of a population, for example in the lives of parents whose children are on the autism spectrum (Stein et al., 2011), for adults with a mental health diagnosis (Bejerholm, 2010) or for family members of people in palliative care (Nissmark & Fänge, 2018). There is one exception to this. Myers and colleagues (2016) looked at the life experience of nuns, describing how their participants' daily life espoused occupational balance. This study is exceptional in that it did not dwell on the obstacles, needs and occupational imbalance. The nuns lived exemplary balanced lives in which reflection, prayer, gratitude, and the support of the community played a crucial role. But is occupational balance meant to only be experienced in a guarded context of prayer and

community? The current research set out to examine how occupational balance is experienced by family members, but this experience was at times still tainted with the expression of what is lacking or what the obstacles to attain occupational balance are, confirming that it remains challenging to explore from a strength-based perspective. Likewise, Wada and colleagues' (2010) set out to study through interviews, how parents of preschool children conceived of balance in everyday life, yet their findings still relate to imbalance.

Parents spend more time working on attaining balance than enjoying being in balance. Balance is dynamic, always changing. Individuals are always striving for balance, on a daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly basis. This is captured in the parent's quotes, the numerous times they use the expression 'trying to' in relation to occupational balance. Occupational balance is rarely and briefly reached. It is a short lived ideal. Its character is reminiscent of the bossa nova song by Antônio Carlos Jobim and Vinícius de Moraes, in which the ephemeral nature of happiness is likened to that of a dewdrop and its illusory aspect to that of the carnival. In the song, happiness is depicted by referring to its opposite. For instance, happiness is contrasted with sadness so as to emphasize its transitory and fragile nature. For occupational balance, this fragility is related to the unpredictability of daily life. Parents, especially mothers reported the constant need for recalibration and adaptation to new situations whether it emanated from unexpected changes in their schedule or from the children becoming more independent, a move to a new house, the seasonal schedules for extra-curricular activities, or the arrival of a sibling. The quest for occupational balance is ceaseless.

Implications for occupational therapy and science

I have a very... bad family history when it comes to mortality. My grandparents and my dad died at a really young age of different kinds of illnesses, including heart disease. And as a physician, I see people of all ages and I'm doing that in my work all the time. I thought ok. This is the line in the sand. I am over 40 now. I have to make time for myself, and it can't be negotiable because

otherwise, I won't see my kids and I won't look after my grandchildren. And so even though it takes only a few hours out of the week that I could be looking after them, it's actually going to be a better investment for them, if I go to the gym. That has been the biggest change that's created balance for my life. Just for me. Mother, Family 3

Currently, in the field of OS, there is a shift away from the 'free-standing individual' to embrace the interconnectedness between occupational beings (Whiteford, 2009), the environment (Dickie & Cutchin, 2013; Nyman et al., 2021) and the complexity in the experience of occupation (Fogelberg & Frauwirth, 2010, Liu et al., 2021). In keeping with this shift, this research identified occupations, themes and essences related to the experience of occupational balance in families. These are summarized in Table 4. As with other studies in the field, the family dinner and family leisure were found to be central occupations in families (Downs, 2008; Marquenie et al. 2011; Segal, 1999; Segal, 2004) as well as the orchestration of daily family life (Larson, 2000, Primeau, 1998). Unique contributions of this research to the field of OS and OT are described below. Firstly, these contributions relate to acknowledging that leisure is distinct from idleness and that there exists a diversity in the experience of leisure. Secondly, the essences of occupational balance (*restoration, intention, and equity*), are more evocative, more intelligible, and therefore more applicable to research and practice than the elusive concept of occupational balance. And finally, since a gendered perspective of occupational balance was revealed in the findings, it calls for a renewed focus on *equity* and occupations in households and families.

Table 4

Summary of occupations and their types according to the participants, themes and essences highlighted in this research

	Participants	Occupations	Types of occupations	Themes	Essences
Family occupational balance	Parents Children	Family dinner Family leisure	Shared occupations	Togetherness	Intention (for parents only)
Individual occupational balance	Parents	Intentional activities	Individual and shared occupations	Refocusing on self	Restoration
		Orchestration of daily family life	At the interface of individual and shared occupations Invisible occupation	Quest for balance Recalibration	Equity
Individual occupational balance (older children)	Older siblings (10-13)	Intentional activities	Individual and shared occupations	Refocusing on self	Restoration
Individual occupational balance (younger children)	Younger siblings (6-10)	Non-obligatory occupations	Individual and shared occupations	Playing, feeling good and having fun	Restoration

In the context of busy households, where both parents work and school-aged children participate in extra-curricular activities, this research illuminates the limits to the concept of leisure as it is currently used in OS and OT and commonly understood in the general population. Definitions of leisure focus on discretionary time and entertainment and they continue to carry a sense of being non-essential, contrarily to self-care and productivity (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2008; Craik & Pieris, 2006; Primeau, 1996; Suto, 1998; Townsend & Polatajko, 2007). However, in a society where time is highly valued, if leisure is a non-essential occupation, parents feel guilty when they prioritize time for themselves (Daly, 2001). In contrast, this research found that time used in intentional activities was indispensable to the experience of individual occupational balance. Regularly making time

for intentional activities is fundamental to ensure older children and parents experience individual occupational balance. As parents reported, through *restoration*, they were better able to attend to their family's needs. By being aware of parents' difficulty in fitting in time for themselves in their busy schedule and the guilt they may feel related to taking this time, occupational therapists can focus their interventions on helping parents become aware of the impact of their own occupational balance on their family. As the mother in the above quote mentions, taking some time for herself is generous to her family in the long term. Also, an appreciation of how leisure is experienced would be beneficial to the understanding of leisure in a family context. The description of leisure in OS and OT could be nuanced to include such experiences of leisure as incremental leisure and purposive leisure. Incremental leisure was characterized as leisure fragmented through time (Lloyd et al., 2019). This is how mothers in this research experienced their time for self. Alternatively, purposive leisure is leisure focused on children and necessitating planning and facilitation on the part of parents (Harrington, 2015; Shaw & Dawson, 2001). In this research parents described family leisure as being purposive. These two forms of leisure can be contrasted with freely chosen uninterrupted leisure for self.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the concept of occupational balance has proven to be complex and poorly adapted to the lived experience of individuals due to it being a highly theoretical concept and an ideal state which is impossible to maintain. The essences described in this chapter may be more suitable to lived experiences. *Intention*, *restoration*, and *equity* may prove to be more applicable to the daily lives of members of dual earner families than occupational balance. They are easier to understand by occupational therapists, scientists, professionals in other fields, by clients and the public at large. The use of these more tangible concepts could facilitate links between occupations and well-being.

Gendered issues surfaced in the findings of this research, yet the links between occupations and gender remain infrequently raised in OS and OT literature (Liedberg et al., 2010; Sarmiento et al., 2018).

Mothers who participated in this research revealed they had little time for self, partly because their activities were not at set times. Mothers tended to neglect their own activities in favor of other family member's activities and shouldered the brunt of household responsibilities. Conversely, fathers in this research had fewer responsibilities in the household and more opportunities to experience occupational balance. The differences between mothers and fathers' occupations in young families warrants more exploration because while it may appear trivial, it is insidious. It affects everyday life and unfortunately, mothers perceive not being able to balance their responsibilities and occupations as a personal failing rather than a societal failing (Irwin & Winterton, 2014). Because their challenges are perceived as situations of their own doing, women may be reticent to speak out against them. Encouraging discussions and reflections on gender and occupations with OS and OT students, therapists, scientists, and clients would be a first step in recognizing, challenging, and reducing the perpetuation of traditional gender roles in daily life and their potentially negative effects on women and families.

Research limitations

Limitations of this research are related to the sample, the complexity of the phenomenon, time constraints and the particularity of using children in research.

Although there was variety in the experience of the phenomenon of occupational balance, the sociodemographic characteristics of the participating families were homogenous. Families were mostly from high socioeconomic status (family income was generally > \$100 000 annually) and parents were highly educated (all university level). Having a higher socioeconomic status influences their experience of occupational balance. Families with less financial resources have been shown to have more time constraints (Parnell, 2020). On the other hand, individuals or families with more economic resources have the possibility of outsourcing household related work (Davis & Greenstein, 2020). In this way, they are buying time they can chose to spend on other occupations they value. For instance, a few parents reported hiring help to do chores in order to have more time for family activities. Additionally,

occupations such as participating in extra-curricular activities, going away on vacation, exercise classes at a gym, eating in restaurants are all associated with a higher socioeconomic status. Another characteristic of the participating families is that they each eat supper together, every night of the week. This contrasts with most of today's North American families (Fieldhouse, 2015) where large proportions of children are said to prefer eating snacks while engaging in their occupations separately from the family, rather than eating together at the table (Ochs & Beck, 2013). The routine of having supper as a family could potentially also be associated with the sample's higher socioeconomic status.

The motivations for parents to participate in this research were varied. Some stated they were interested in participating in research that would allow them to express their views on the importance of family friendly policies in workplaces. Other participants were interested in participating in research with their family members. Still some parents were hoping to be evaluated on their parenting and wanted to know how their family compared to others.

The complexity of the phenomenon of occupational balance has been discussed at length in an earlier section and is acknowledged as a limitation to this research. While occupational balance was an abstract phenomenon or concept for the parents to consider, it was even more difficult for younger children to grasp. Attempts were made to simplify occupational balance and to use multiple questions around occupations. Nevertheless, there remains a doubt that the concept was fully understood by children six and seven years old. For these younger children, the photo-elicitation interviews facilitated conversation with the researcher, but it was still difficult for them to find the words and to discuss the phenomenon vividly and in detail. Interviewing the children while they were performing occupations might have stimulated the conversation to a greater extent. For instance, the use of go-along interviews where children are engaged in an activity during the interview (Carpiano, 2009) could yield more in-depth sharing of information on the part of the children and could allow the researcher to ask clarifying questions during the activity (Teachman & Gibson, 2013). This technique may allow the researcher to

enter the children's lifeworld to better understand and capture their experiences. Despite this shortcoming, the children in the research were engaged throughout the research activities and all children's experiential anecdotes converged to similar themes with respect to what they shared on their occupations.

The burden of participation may also have caused limitations. This research required ongoing involvement for five to nine weeks with all family members and in families who are known to experience time constraints because of their busy lives. Although this was not observed during the research process, it is always possible that the burden of participation may have caused participants to shorten their exchanges with the researcher.

Phenomenological research is always incomplete because it is impossible to capture the meaning of an experience in its totality (van Manen et al., 2016). The researcher is an integral part of the process, consequently different interpretations could be made of the data that was collected in this research.

Future research

Findings from this research offer directions for future research on shared and individual occupations in family settings.

One of the outstanding findings from this research is that individual occupational balance was experienced through intentional activities. More data is required to understand how intentional activities and restoration are linked to well-being, and resilience (Thibeault, 2002; Thibeault, 2011; Thibeault, 2020). Future studies focusing on intentional activities could yield more descriptive and prescriptive information on, for example whether occupations that combine more than one intentional activity are more beneficial.

Time for self was revealed a major challenge for the mothers in this research. It would be worthwhile to pursue this line of questioning with mothers. Time for self was generally experienced in

short bouts for dual earner mothers. It is not clear whether this form of incremental leisure provides the same restorative value, as longer periods of time invested for self. Furthermore, a longitudinal study on mothers' available time for self would illuminate how it fluctuates according to stages of parenting, for example during adolescence.

Because this research considered the perspective of each family member, it acknowledged the heavy load mothers carry related to the orchestration of occupations. A natural continuation of this research would be to focus on the orchestration of occupations in families. Studies on the negotiation of household chores during the transition to parenthood or descriptive studies on families where fathers oversee the orchestration of occupations could expand the knowledge acquired through this research. Additionally, a gendered perspective on balance was touched upon in this research but could be further developed in follow up studies, further contrasting restorative occupations in mothers and fathers.

Phenomenological studies do not set out to be generalizable. This research's sample was fairly homogeneous and could be replicated in other cultural and geographical settings and with families of different socioeconomic backgrounds or with children of different age groups. Family is intimately linked to culture, and it would be expected that family time would be spent differently according to culture. For example, North American and Italian expectations of time spent with family have been contrasted, with the concept of exclusivity and quality family time being identified as particularly North American values whereas Italian family activities were found to be more fluid and included individuals outside of the immediate family (Kremer-Sadlik, 2013). As children grow and become more independent, finding time to spend as a family becomes a challenge, which may require intention or commitment from all family members, including children, rather than resting solely on the parents, as found in this research. It would be valuable to consider how different the findings would be in single parent families or in same-sex families. Some studies have found that same-sex families have a more equal division of household

labour, and that single parent and same-sex families avoid the established cultural norms of married and cohabiting different-sex families (Pepin & Sayer, 2018).

Finally, because they have been used successfully in this research to build rapport and stay connected with family members, especially children during the research process, researchers could adopt the proposed creative methods of photo-elicitation and occupational mapping in future phenomenological studies. These creative methodologies expand on the traditional repertoire available to explore the lifeworld of participants while keeping family members interested in the research.

Closing the circle(s)

The purpose of this phenomenological research was to understand the lived experience of occupational balance in dual earner families with school-aged children. *Togetherness* was the theme revealed in the findings that intimate family occupational balance. *Togetherness* was experienced in the shared occupations of eating dinner and participating in leisure as a family. Individual occupational balance, instead, was expressed in the themes of *refocusing on self*, *quest for balance* and *recalibration*, with intentional activities being the mainstay of the first theme. All parents expressed difficulty in attaining individual occupational balance, but it was the mothers who reported that the orchestration of daily family life played an indisputable role in precluding them from attaining occupational balance. While the findings pertaining to older children and adults demonstrated the need for time for self, the findings of younger children, showed that family occupations contributed to their personal sense of occupational balance.

In this chapter, I focused on four lines of reflection, discussing these through the combined framework of the dimensions of occupation and the lived existentials. Firstly, I identified *intention* as an essence of family occupational balance for parents. Although in the children's experience, family occupational balance occurs spontaneously, parents need to be intentional in making it happen in their families. Parents dedicate time, effort, and planning with the goal of creating the family dinner and

family leisure. *Restoration* was my second line of reflection. When all participants, whether children or adults, referred to individual occupational balance, they associated it to occupations through which they felt reenergized. That is to say, occupations in which they were not expending energy but rather regenerating it. *Equity*, the third line of reflection, referred to the unequal sharing of household labour between parents. The findings of this research indicate that the burden of the orchestration of daily family life remains on mothers, emphasizing the perduring stronghold of gender roles, even in families where both parents work full-time. Finally, in the fourth line of reflection, I problematize the concept of occupational balance as being extremely ambiguous and abstract. Although occupational balance aims to be a positive concept related to well-being it is improbable to attain, if not for fleeting moments. Scenes from daily family life more often than not represent imbalance rather than occupational balance. Alternatively, rather than using occupational balance, I recommend using the essences of occupational balance as described in this research to explore the links between occupation and well-being. *Intention*, *restoration*, and *equity* are more easily understood and more suggestive of the therapeutic potential of occupations in family settings.

My initial attraction to occupational balance stems from the bridge it creates between our many and diverse everyday occupations and well-being. The idea that the field of OS and OT has its own blueprint for a healthy lifestyle was appealing to me. While I was interested in a holistic concept, my findings circle back to discrete occupations such as the family dinner, family leisure, intentional activities, orchestration of daily family life and non-obligatory occupations, which are essential to individual and/or family occupational balance. In this way, this phenomenological research generates new leads for future research around these discrete occupations and their links to well-being.

At the outset of this research, I was encouraged to explore the possibility of taking on a feminist approach. I deeply felt a family approach would give equal weight to the words of each family member and I wanted to avoid the pitfall of solely seeking the voice of the mother as representative of the

family. In the end, regardless of my preference, a feminist perspective was uncovered in the findings of this research. In the participating families, it is unmistakable that mothers are the ones that make occupational balance possible. They do this by sacrificing their personal occupational balance for the sake of other family members' occupational balance. The quote below illustrates this idea. Throughout the research process, I came back to this quote, it captured something I recognized but was not able to describe. Its meaning is now clear. This research began by taking on a family perspective, but it ultimately circled back to the mother, visibly the central figure in the participating families when it comes to occupational balance.

I recognize that I also have the control to be able to put things in for myself and I choose not to. I wish I could put more emphasis on that. But there's barriers to it, whether they're self-imposed or otherwise. I know that that's lacking. And I get frustrated about it sometimes. I'm not altruistic, it gets upsetting sometimes that I haven't worked it in. To just have me. You know, time for me... But then it passes, and I wait till the next tantrum (participant and interviewer laugh). Mother, Family 2

This quote speaks of the frustration and hopelessness of the mother in her quest for occupational balance. The use of the word tantrum to explain her feelings may be understood as the expression of a sudden and intense outburst of frustration and a demonstration of powerlessness comparable to the ones young children display. The uncontrollable nature of the tantrum highlights the lack of power the mother feels to let go of her selflessness or to break down the external barriers that impose it. The word altruistic hints at the guilt associated with mothers taking time for self. This quote contrasts with the multiple quotes in which mothers are expressing their attempts to achieve occupational balance or their hopes for a future change that will make occupational balance less illusory. This mother realizes her strong display of emotion is in vain; her reality will remain unchanged. In the anticipation of her next tantrum, she is resigned to accept that occupational balance will continue to be elusive for her. The use of vocabulary related to children's behavior further minimizes and trivializes the importance of these episodes where she demonstrates her frustration. The trivializing is

accentuated by the laugh participant and interviewer share afterwards. As if this were simply a joke. As if the expression of her needs is merely a caprice. It is a great paradox that mothers are so vital to family life but at the same time their needs can be so easily ignored.

My original contribution through this research is the articulation of the lived experience of family occupational balance and individual occupational balance for both parents and children. In doing so, I have obtained a first-person perspective while also highlighting the relational aspects of occupation. In the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, I felt my thesis was losing part of its pertinence because my research questions belonged to a different reality. But contrary to my expectations, with time, the lockdowns and school closures have laid bare the inequalities in household responsibilities like never before and have made the need for restoration a pressing issue, just like the importance to be intentional with the time we spend together as a family.

Appendix A

Recruitment Posters

Are you a parent of **school-aged children**?

Do you and your spouse/partner both **work** 30 hours/week or more?

Do you often feel **pressed for time**?

Help us understand everyday life for families of dual earner parents with school-aged children. For more information, contact me:

Marie-Christine RANGER,

Ph.D. candidate
School of Rehabilitation Sciences,
Faculty of Health Sciences
University of Ottawa, Guindon Hall



Research activities will include:

- Reflecting on time-use
- Mapping family and individual activities
- Photo taking
- Interviews

Thank you!

Please note participants will be selected on a first come, first served basis.

Êtes-vous un parent d'enfants d'âge scolaire ?

Est-ce que vous et votre époux/épouse ou conjoint/conjointe **travaillez** chacun 30 heures par semaine ou plus?

Vous sentez-vous souvent **bousculés** par le temps?

Aidez-nous à mieux comprendre la vie quotidienne des familles à doubles revenus avec enfants d'âge scolaire. Pour plus d'information, communiquez avec moi :

Marie-Christine RANGER,

Candidate au doctorat
École des sciences de la
réadaptation,
Faculté des sciences de la santé,
Université d'Ottawa
Pavillon Guindon



Les activités de recherche comprendront:

- une réflexion sur l'emploi du temps
- une cartographie des activités familiales et individuelles
- la prise de photos
- des entrevues

Merci!

Veuillez noter que les participants seront choisis sur la base du premier arrivé, premier servi.

Appendix B

Letter of Approval Skinouk Cross-country Ski Club



Gatineau, 16 mars 2019

Marie-Christine Ranger
 Doctorante, École des sciences de la réadaptation
 Faculté des sciences de la santé
 Université d'Ottawa

Objet : Votre projet de recherche sur l'équilibre occupationnel des familles

Chère Madame,

Club Skinouk est heureux de soutenir votre projet de recherche intitulé : *L'Équilibre occupationnel des familles: l'expérience vécue des parents à double revenus et de leurs enfants d'âge scolaire.*

Nous acceptons de vous aider pour le recrutement pour votre projet de recherche. Sur la réception du certificat d'approbation éthique de l'Université d'Ottawa, nous sommes d'accord d'envoyer un courriel qui présente le projet à certains parents du Programme Ski Compétition du Club Skinouk qui pourraient y être intéressés.

En réponse à ce courriel, les parents pourront communiquer directement avec vous et seront libres en tout temps d'accepter ou de refuser de prendre part à l'étude.

Bon succès!

Bien cordialement,



Caroline Forest
 Coordonnatrice du Programme Ski Compétition
 Club Skinouk
 397, boulevard de la Cité-des-Jeunes
 Gatineau (Québec)
 J8Z 3P9

Appendix C

Daily Occupational Schedule and Instructions

Date: _____

Family member: _____

Instructions:

- Ideally, a daily schedule would be filled out for each family members for 3 days of the week (one weekday, one Friday and one weekend day)
- The goal of this activity is to get an idea of how your time is being used.
- Fill this schedule for the current week so it is easier to recall what you did.
- Hours during which parents are at work and children are at school are to be crossed out (no detail needs to be provided)
- Hours sleeping are also to be crossed out.
- Commuting time should be logged in.
- When more than one activity takes place at a time, write the primary and secondary activities.
- Be as precise as you can without sharing too many details.
- Consult the example if needed.
- Add a legend if this helps.

Thank you for your participation in this project!

Marie-Christine

Date and day of the week:

Name of family member:

	What did you do?	What else were you doing?	Where were you?	With whom?	For whom?
5am 5h30					
5h30 6am					
6am 6h30					
6h30 7am					
7am 7h30					
7h30 8am					
8am 8h30					
8h30 9am					
9am 9h30					
9h30 10am					
10am 10h30					
10h30 11am					
11am 11h30					
11h30 12pm					
12pm 12h30					
12h30 1pm					

	What did you do?	What else were you doing?	Where were you?	With whom?	For whom?
1pm 1h30					
1h30 2pm					
2pm 2h30					
2h30 3pm					
3pm 3h30					
3h30 4pm					
4pm 4h30					
4h30 5pm					
5pm 5h30					
5h30 6pm					
6pm 6h30					
6h30 7pm					
7pm 8h30					
8h30 9pm					
9pm 9h30					
9h30 10pm					
10pm 10h30					

	What did you do?	What else were you doing?	Where were you?	With whom?	For whom?
10h30 11pm					
11pm 11h30					
11h30 12am					
12am 12h30					
12h30 1am					
1am 1h30					
1h30 2am					
2am 2h30					
2h30 3am					
3am 3h30					
3h30 4am					
4am 4h30					
4h30 5am					

Horaire quotidien des occupations

Membre de la famille: _____

Instructions :

- Idéalement, un horaire quotidien serait rempli pour chaque membre de la famille pendant 3 jours de la semaine (un jour de semaine, un vendredi et un jour de fin de semaine)
- Le but de cette activité est d'avoir une idée de la façon dont vous utilisez votre temps.
- Remplissez cet horaire pour la semaine en cours, de façon à ce qu'il soit plus facile pour vous de vous souvenir de ce que vous avez fait.
- Les heures pendant lesquelles les parents sont au travail et les enfants à l'école doivent être rayées. Il n'est pas nécessaire de donner de détails sur vos occupations lors de ces heures.
- Les heures de sommeil doivent également être rayées.
- Le temps que vous utilisez pour vous rendre au travail, à l'école ou à la maison en voiture ou en transport en commun devrait être comptabilisé.
- Lorsque plus d'une activité a lieu à la fois, écrivez les activités primaires et secondaires.
- Soyez aussi précis que possible sans trop de détails.
- Si nécessaire, ajoutez une légende.

Merci de votre intérêt pour ce projet.

Marie-Christine

Date et jour de la semaine:

Membre de la famille :

	Qu'est-ce que vous faisiez?	Faisiez-vous autre chose?	Où étiez-vous?	Avec qui étiez-vous?	Pour qui faisiez-vous l'activité?
5am 5h30					
5h30 6am					
6am 6h30					
6h30 7am					
7am 7h30					
7h30 8am					
8am 8h30					
8h30 9am					
9am 9h30					
9h30 10am					
10am 10h30					
10h30 11am					
11am 11h30					
11h30 12pm					
12pm 12h30					
12h30 1pm					

	Qu'est-ce que vous faisiez?	Faisiez-vous autre chose?	Où étiez-vous?	Avec qui étiez-vous?	Pour qui faisiez-vous l'activité?
1pm 1h30					
1h30 2pm					
2pm 2h30					
2h30 3pm					
3pm 3h30					
3h30 4pm					
4pm 4h30					
4h30 5pm					
5pm 5h30					
5h30 6pm					
6pm 6h30					
6h30 7pm					
7pm 8h30					
8h30 9pm					
9pm 9h30					
9h30 10pm					
10pm 10h30					

	Qu'est-ce que vous faisiez?	Faisiez-vous autre chose?	Où étiez-vous?	Avec qui étiez-vous?	Pour qui faisiez-vous l'activité?
10h30 11pm					
11pm 11h30					
11h30 12am					
12am 12h30					
12h30 1am					
1am 1h30					
1h30 2am					
2am 2h30					
2h30 3am					
3am 3h30					
3h30 4am					
4am 4h30					
4h30 5am					

Appendix D

Phenomenological Interview Guide

- 1) Can you describe what a typical day is like for you?
- 2) Can you describe some of the activities you engage in on a regular basis?
- 3) Can you remember the earliest occasion in your family life when you strongly felt a balance in your activities?
(Probes: Can you describe a moment or incident that stands out for you?)
- 4) In everything that you yourself do every day, are there activities that make you feel like you are balanced?
(Probes: Which ones? How? What is it about these activities that make you feel balanced? Can you describe an instance when you participated in one of these activities?)
- 5) In the activities that you do as a family, are there activities that make you feel like your family is balanced?
(Probes: Which ones? How? What is it about these activities that make you feel balanced? Can you describe an instance when you participated in one of these activities?)
- 6) Are there places that you associate with balance in everyday life?
(Probes: Which ones? How? What is it about these places that make you feel balanced? Can you describe one of these places?)
- 7) Are there objects, things in your life that you associate with balance in everyday life?
(Probes: Which ones? How? What is it about these objects or things that make you feel balanced? Can you describe one of these objects?)
- 8) How does your personal time-use fit with the idea of balance in everyday life?
- 9) How does your shared family time-use fit with the idea of balance in everyday life in your family?
- 10) Is there anything else about your occupational balance or balance in everyday life that you would like to add?

General probes:

Can you remember a single instance or event? What would be an example of this?
 Can you describe this in greater details? How would you describe your experience of that?
 Who else usually takes part in this activity? For whom do you usually do this activity?
 How did that feel? How did your body feel? How did you feel toward...?
 What did you do? What did you say? What did you think? What happened?

Guide d'entrevue phénoménologique

- 1) Pouvez-vous me décrire à quoi ressemble une journée typique pour vous ?
- 2) Pouvez-vous décrire certaines des activités auxquelles vous participez régulièrement?
- 3) Pouvez-vous vous souvenir de la première occasion dans votre vie de famille où vous avez fortement senti un équilibre dans vos activités?
(Pouvez-vous me décrire un moment ou un incident qui se démarque pour vous?)
- 4) Dans tout ce que vous faites tous les jours, y a-t-il des activités qui vous donnent l'impression d'être en équilibre?
(Lesquelles? De quelles façons? Qu'est-ce qui contribue à l'équilibre dans ces activités? Pouvez-vous me décrire une occasion lorsque vous avez participé à l'une de ces activités?)
- 5) Dans les activités que vous faites en famille, y a-t-il des activités qui vous donnent l'impression que votre famille est en équilibre?
(Lesquelles? De quelles façons? Qu'est-ce qui contribue à l'équilibre dans ces activités? Pouvez-vous me décrire une occasion lorsque vous avez participé à l'une de ces activités?)
- 6) Y a-t-il des endroits que vous associez à l'équilibre dans la vie de tous les jours?
(Lesquels? De quelles façons ? Qu'est-ce qui se passe dans ces endroits qui vous donne l'impression d'être équilibré? Pouvez-vous me décrire l'un de ces endroits?)
- 7) Y a-t-il des objets, des choses dans votre vie que vous associez à l'équilibre dans la vie de tous les jours?
(Lesquels? De quelles façons? Qu'est-ce qui vous procure un sentiment d'équilibre dans ces objets ? Pouvez-vous décrire l'un de ces objets?)
- 8) Comment votre emploi du temps personnel correspond-t-il à l'idée d'équilibre ?
- 9) Comment votre emploi du temps partagé en famille correspond-t-il à l'idée d'équilibre dans votre famille?
- 10) Y a-t-il autre chose à propos de votre équilibre occupationnel ou équilibre dans la vie de tous les jours que vous aimeriez ajouter?

Questions pour aller plus loin :

Pouvez-vous vous souvenir d'une occasion ou d'un événement en particulier? Quel serait un exemple de cela?

Pouvez-vous décrire cela en plus de détails? Comment décririez-vous votre expérience de cela? Qui d'autre participe habituellement à cette activité? Pour qui faites-vous habituellement cette activité?

Comment cela s'est-il passé? Comment votre corps se sentait-il? Comment vous sentiez-vous envers ...?

Qu'avez-vous fait? Qu'avez-vous dit? Qu'avez-vous pensé? Qu'est-il arrivé?

Appendix E**Instructions for Taking Photos**

Dear _____

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project. With your family, we have explored your weekly activities and the places where most of these take place.

I would like you to take at least one photo for each of the following statements:

- 1) How my family and I spend our time on weekdays.
- 2) How my family and I spend our time on weekends.
- 3) What balance in everyday life feels like to me.
- 4) Which activities make me feel like I am in balance.
- 5) Which activities make me feel like my family is in balance.

If you would like to use photos in which other people than your family appear, remember to ask permission.

We will meet to talk about these photos on: _____

Many thanks!

Marie-Christine

Instructions pour la prise de photos

Cher _____

Merci d'accepter de participer à ce projet de recherche. En famille, nous avons exploré les activités que vous faites tous les jours et les endroits où celles-ci prennent place.

Maintenant, j'aimerais vous demander de prendre au moins une photo pour chacune des affirmations suivantes:

- a) Comment ma famille et moi passons notre temps en semaine.
- b) Comment ma famille et moi passons notre temps le week-end.
- c) Comment je ressens l'équilibre dans ma vie de tous les jours.
- d) Les activités qui me donnent l'impression d'être en équilibre.
- e) Les activités qui me donnent l'impression que ma famille est en équilibre.

Si vous voulez utiliser des photos où d'autres gens que les membres de votre famille apparaissent, n'oubliez pas de demander la permission.

Nous nous rencontrerons pour discuter des photos :

Mille mercis!

Marie-Christine

Appendix F

Photo-elicitation Interview Guide

- 1a) Which photo is your favorite?
- b) Why?

- 2) Can you tell me how the photos you took represent...
 - a) How my family and I spend our time on weekdays.
 - b) How my family and I spend our time on weekends.
 - c) What balance in everyday life feels to me.
 - d) Activities that make me feel like I am in balance.
 - e) Activities that make me feel like my family is in balance.

- 3a) In the activities that you do every day, what makes you feel balanced?
- b) In the activities that you do every day, what makes you feel out of balance?

- 4) Is there anything else about your activities, your family's activities and balance in everyday life that you would like to tell me?

Guide de photo-entrevue

- 1a) Quelle est ta photo préférée?
- b) Pourquoi est-ce ta photo préférée?

- 2) Peux-tu dire comment les photos que tu as prises représentent ...
 - a) Comment ma famille et moi passons notre temps en semaine.
 - b) Comment ma famille et moi passons notre temps le week-end.
 - c) Comment je ressens l'équilibre dans ma vie de tous les jours.
 - d) Les activités qui me donnent l'impression d'être en équilibre.
 - e) Les activités qui me donnent l'impression que ma famille est en équilibre.

- 3a) Dans les activités que tu fais tous les jours, qu'est-ce qui te fait vous sentir en équilibre?
- b) Dans les activités que tu fais tous les jours, qu'est-ce qui te fait sentir en déséquilibre?

- 4) Y a-t-il autre chose à propos de tes activités, des activités de ta famille et de ton équilibre dans la vie de tous les jours que tu aimerais me raconter?

Appendix G

Informed Consent Form



Université d'Ottawa

Faculté des sciences
de la santé

École des sciences de
la réadaptation

University of Ottawa

Faculty of Health
Sciences

School of Rehabilitation
Sciences

☎ 613-562-5436
☎ 613-562-5428

451 Smyth
Ottawa ON K1H 8M5 Canada

www.uOttawa.ca

Information and Consent Form

Title of the study: **Family Occupational Balance: The Lived Experience of Dual Earner Parents and their School-Aged Children**

Marie-Christine RANGER, Ph.D. Candidate, School of Rehabilitation Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences.

Rose MARTINI, Associate Professor, Supervisor, School of Rehabilitation Sciences, faculty of Health Sciences, tel.: 613-562-5800 ext. 8028

Invitation to Participate: I am invited to participate in the abovementioned research study conducted by Marie-Christine Ranger as part of her Doctoral thesis, under the supervision of Dr Rose Martini.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the study is to explore in depth what balance in everyday life means for families composed of dual earner parents and school-aged children.

Participation: My participation will consist essentially of filling out a daily schedule for 3 days (15 minutes x3), participating in a family activity of drawing a map of where each member of my family conducts their occupations (1 hour), taking 7 to 10 photographs during a week (a few minutes) and then participating in an individual interview (60 to 90 minutes). One parent will also fill out a sociodemographic survey (15 minutes). Each activity will take place in a setting of your preference. All research activities will be performed within 4 to 5 weeks of filling out this consent form.

Risks: My participation in this study can entail a minor risk of psychological discomfort as I discuss my experience of balance in my everyday life. I may also consider the research process time-consuming. I have received assurance from the researcher that every effort will be made to minimize these risks by formulating the questions in a manner that do not elicit conflict and by ensuring that all research activities be completed within 4 to 5 weeks. If I or a member of my family feels distressed we can contact the Walk-in Counselling clinic at South-East Ottawa Community Health Centre (1355 Bank Street, 6th Floor, 613-737-5115) or Family Services Ottawa (312 Parkdale Avenue, 613-725-3601).

Benefits: My participation in this study will give me an opportunity to reflect on my satisfaction with my daily activities, the pace of my life as well as my family's life. It will also allow me and my family an opportunity to participate in a family activity, namely the occupational map. This study will provide a deeper understanding of how occupation contributes to health. For the advancement of knowledge, this study will provide multiple perspectives including those of children. For the practice of occupational therapy, this study will provide a deeper comprehension of the family occupations and how they are orchestrated in order to maintain family well-being.

Confidentiality : I have received assurance from the researcher that the information I will share will remain strictly confidential. I understand that the contents will be used only for the present study and that my confidentiality will be protected by using pseudonyms at all times. The document linking names to pseudonyms will be protected with a password. Only the principal investigator and her thesis supervisor will have access to it.

While completing the online sociodemographic survey, in order to minimize the risk of security breaches and to help ensure my confidentiality, I understand I should use standard safety measures such as signing out of my account, closing my browser and locking my screen or device when I am no longer using them / when I have completed the study.

Conservation of data: All electronic versions of the data collected, interview recordings, transcripts, maps, schedules, photographs and sociodemographic survey will be kept on an encrypted USB key as well as on a computer protected with a password. Hard copies of the data collected will be stored on the Health Sciences campus of uOttawa in a locked filing cabinet of the supervisor's lab. Only the researcher and supervisor will have access to it. The data will be conserved for 5 years, after which time it will be erased or destroyed.

Compensation: I will not be compensated for my participation in this research project.

Voluntary Participation: I am under no obligation to participate and if I choose to participate, I can withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions, without suffering any negative consequences. If I choose to withdraw, I can decide to have my data withdrawn from the study, if not all data gathered until the time of withdrawal will be stored for analysis purposes.

Acceptance: I, _____, agree to participate in the above research study conducted by Marie-Christine Ranger of the School of Rehabilitation Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences, under the supervision of Rose Martini.

Visually Recorded Images/Data:

I agree that photographs taken by me can be used in future publications, presentations or conferences.

I agree that photographs taken of me by other family members can be used in future publications, presentations or conferences. _____

The researcher will not use any photographs, recordings, or other identifiable information in any future presentation without my consent.

If I have any questions about the study, I may contact the researcher or her supervisor.

If I have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, I may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall, 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

Tel.: (613) 562-5387

Email: ethics@uottawa.ca

There are two copies of the consent form, one of which is mine to keep.

Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____



Université d'Ottawa

Faculté des sciences de la santé

École des sciences de la réadaptation

University of Ottawa

Faculty of Health Sciences

School of Rehabilitation Sciences

Formulaire d'information et de consentement

Titre de l'étude: L'Équilibre occupationnel des familles: l'expérience vécue des parents à double revenus et de leurs enfants d'âge scolaire

Marie-Christine RANGER, Candidate au doctorat en sciences de la réadaptation, École des sciences de la réadaptation, Faculté des sciences de la santé.

Rose MARTINI, professeure agrégée, superviseure, École des sciences de la réadaptation, Faculté des sciences de la santé, tél.: 613-562-5800 poste 8028.

Invitation à participer: Je suis invité(e) à participer à l'étude susmentionnée menée par Marie-Christine Ranger dans le cadre de ses études doctorales et sous la supervision de Dr Rose Martini.

But de l'étude: Le but de l'étude est d'explorer en détails l'équilibre dans la vie quotidienne pour les familles composées de parents à double revenus et d'enfants d'âge scolaire.

Participation: Ma participation consistera essentiellement à remplir un horaire quotidien de 3 jours (15 minutes x3), à participer à une activité familiale consistant à dessiner une carte des endroits où chaque membre de ma famille exerce ses activités (1 heure), à prendre 7 à 10 photographies pendant une semaine (quelques minutes) puis à participer à une entrevue individuelle (60 à 90 minutes). Un parent remplira également une enquête sociodémographique (15 minutes). Chaque activité aura lieu dans un endroit. Toutes les activités de recherche seront effectuées dans les 4 à 5 semaines suivant la signature de ce formulaire de consentement.

Risques: Ma participation à cette étude peut entraîner un léger risque d'inconfort psychologique lorsque je discute de mon expérience d'équilibre dans ma vie de tous les jours. Je pourrais aussi considérer que le processus de recherche est long. J'ai reçu l'assurance de la chercheuse que tous les efforts seront faits pour minimiser ces risques en formulant les questions d'une manière qui n'entraîne pas de conflit et en s'assurant que toutes les activités de recherche soient terminées à l'intérieur de 4 à 5 semaines. Si moi ou un membre de ma famille éprouve de la détresse, nous pouvons communiquer avec la clinique de consultation sans rendez-vous du Centre de santé communautaire du Sud-Est d'Ottawa (1355, rue Bank, 6e étage, 613-737-5115) ou Services à la famille Ottawa (312, avenue Parkdale, 613-725-3601).

☎ 613-562-5436
☎ 613-562-5428

451 Smyth
Ottawa ON K1H 8M5 Canada

www.uOttawa.ca

Avantages: Ma participation à cette étude me donnera l'occasion de réfléchir sur ma satisfaction à l'égard de mes activités quotidiennes, du rythme de ma vie ainsi que de la vie de ma famille. Cela nous permettra également, de participer à une activité familiale, à savoir la carte des activités. Cette étude permettra de mieux comprendre comment les occupations contribuent à la santé. Cette étude tient en compte de multiples perspectives, y compris celles des enfants. Pour la pratique de l'ergothérapie, cette étude permettra une meilleure compréhension des occupations de la famille et de leur coordination afin de maintenir le bien-être de tous les membres de la famille.

Confidentialité: J'ai reçu l'assurance de la chercheuse que l'information que je partagerai demeurera strictement confidentielle. Je comprends que le contenu ne sera utilisé que pour la présente étude et que ma confidentialité sera protégée en utilisant des pseudonymes à tout moment. Le document reliant les noms aux pseudonymes sera protégé par un mot de passe. Seules la chercheuse principale et sa directrice de thèse y auront accès. En complétant le sondage sociodémographique en ligne, afin de minimiser les risques d'atteinte à la sécurité et d'assurer ma confidentialité, je devrai utiliser des mesures de sécurité telles que la déconnexion de mon compte, la fermeture de mon navigateur et le verrouillage de mon écran lorsque le sondage est complété.

Conservation des données: Toutes les versions électroniques des données collectées, enregistrements d'entrevues, transcriptions, cartes, horaires, photographies et sondage sociodémographique seront conservées sur une clé USB cryptée ainsi que sur un ordinateur protégé par un mot de passe. Des copies papier des données recueillies seront conservées sur le campus des sciences de la santé de l'Université d'Ottawa dans un classeur verrouillé du laboratoire de la directrice de thèse. Seule la chercheuse et sa directrice de thèse y auront accès. Les données seront conservées pendant 5 ans, après quoi elles seront effacées ou détruites.

Compensation: Je ne serai pas rémunéré(e) pour ma participation à ce projet de recherche.

Participation volontaire: Je n'ai aucune obligation de participer et si je choisis de participer, je peux me retirer de l'étude à tout moment et / ou refuser de répondre à toute question, sans subir de conséquences négatives. Si je choisis de me retirer, je pourrai décider de retirer mes données de la recherche, sinon toutes les données recueillies jusqu'au moment du retrait seront conservées à des fins d'analyse.

Acceptation: Je, _____, accepte de participer à l'étude de recherche ci-dessus menée par Marie-Christine Ranger de l'École des sciences de la réadaptation, Faculté des sciences de la santé, sous la supervision de Rose Martini.

Photographies:

Je suis d'accord que les photographies que j'ai prises soient utilisées dans de futures publications, présentations ou conférences. _____

Je suis d'accord que les photographies de moi prises par d'autres membres de ma famille, peuvent être utilisées dans de futures publications, présentations ou conférences. _____

La chercheuse n'utilisera aucune photographie, aucun enregistrement ou autre information identifiable dans une présentation future sans mon consentement.

Si j'ai des questions sur l'étude, je peux contacter la chercheuse ou sa superviseure.

Si j'ai des questions concernant la conduite éthique de cette étude, je peux communiquer avec l'agent de protocole pour l'éthique de la recherche, Université d'Ottawa, Pavillon Tabaret, 550, rue Cumberland, pièce 154, Ottawa (Ontario) K1N 6N5

Tél .: (613) 562-5387

Courriel: ethics@uottawa.ca

Il y a deux copies du formulaire de consentement, dont l'une est à moi.

Signature du participant(e): _____ Date: _____

Signature du chercheuse: _____ Date: _____

Appendix H

Child's Assent



Université d'Ottawa

Faculté des sciences
de la santé

École des sciences de
la réadaptation

University of Ottawa

Faculty of Health
Sciences

School of Rehabilitation
Sciences

Child's Assent form for research

I study at the University of Ottawa and I am inviting you to participate in a research project. At the university, we do research studies to learn more about how the world works and why people act the way they do. In this study, we want to learn about how balance in everyday activities feels like.

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to:

- 1) Write what you do, your activities, during 3 days;
- 2) With your family members, draw a map of where everyone does their activities in your neighbourhood;
- 3) Take photographs (7 to 10) of how balance in everyday life feels; and
- 4) Describe in an interview what your photographs are about.

What you say will be recorded on tape and photographs you take can be used in presentation, conferences and publications.

I spoke to your parents about allowing you to take part in this project. You can still say no even if your parents say yes. It is up to you if you want to participate, and if at any time you want to stop, you can do so for any reason. Feel free to ask questions at any time.

The study has been explained to me. I had a chance to ask questions about the study and I understood the answers. I am signing my name to say yes, I want to be in the study.

Child's name or signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____

☎ 613-562-5436
📠 613-562-5428

451 Smyth
Ottawa ON K1H 8M5 Canada

www.uOttawa.ca



Université d'Ottawa

Faculté des sciences
de la santé

École des sciences de
la réadaptation

University of Ottawa

Faculty of Health
Sciences

School of Rehabilitation
Sciences

☎ 613-562-5436
☎ 613-562-5428

451 Smyth
Ottawa ON K1H 8M5 Canada

www.uOttawa.ca

Assentiment de l'enfant pour participer à une recherche

J'étudie à l'Université d'Ottawa et je t'invite à participer à un projet de recherche. À l'université, nous menons des recherches pour en apprendre davantage sur le fonctionnement du monde et sur les raisons pour lesquelles les gens agissent comme ils le font. Dans cette étude, nous voulons apprendre qu'est-ce que ça veut dire pour les parents et pour les enfants d'avoir de l'équilibre dans nos activités.

Si tu acceptes de participer à cette étude, tu devras:

- 1) Écrire ce que tu fais, tes activités, pendant 3 jours;
- 2) Avec les membres de votre famille, dessinez une carte des endroits où chacun fait ses activités dans votre quartier;
- 3) Prendre des photos (7 à 10) de ce que ça veut dire pour toi d'avoir de l'équilibre dans ta vie de tous les jours; et
- 4) Décrire dans une entrevue les photos que tu as prises.

Ce que tu dis sera enregistré en audio et les photos que tu prendras pourront être utilisées dans des présentations, des conférences et des publications.

J'ai parlé à tes parents au sujet de ta participation à cette étude. Même s'ils sont d'accord, tu peux toujours refuser de participer. C'est à toi de décider si tu veux participer. Si tu choisis de participer, tu peux arrêter à n'importe quel moment, et pour n'importe quelle raison. Tu peux aussi à poser des questions à tout moment.

Le projet de recherche m'a été expliqué. J'ai eu l'occasion de poser mes questions et j'ai compris les réponses. Je signe mon nom pour dire oui, je veux faire partie de ce projet.

Nom ou signature de l'enfant: _____ Date: _____



Université d'Ottawa

Faculté des sciences de la santé

École des sciences de la réadaptation

University of Ottawa

Faculty of Health Sciences

School of Rehabilitation Sciences

☎ 613-562-5436
☎ 613-562-5428

451 Smyth
Ottawa ON K1H 8M5 Canada

www.uOttawa.ca

Appendix I

Parental Consent

Parent or guardian consent form for child participation

Title of the study: **Family Occupational Balance: The Lived Experience of Dual Earner Parents and their School-Aged Children**

Marie-Christine RANGER, Ph.D. Candidate, School of Rehabilitation Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences.

Rose MARTINI, Associate Professor, Supervisor, School of Rehabilitation Sciences, faculty of Health Sciences, tel.: 613-562-5800 ext. 8028

Invitation to Participate: My child is being asked to take part in a research study about balance in everyday life.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the study is to explore in depth what balance in everyday life means for families composed of dual earner parents and school-aged children.

Participation: My child's participation will consist of filling out a daily schedule for 3 days (15 minutes x3), participating in a family activity of drawing a map of where each member of my family conducts their occupations (1 hour), taking 7 to 10 photographs during a week (a few minutes) and then participating in an individual interview (30 minutes).

Risks: My child's participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk beyond that of everyday life. My child is free to not answer or skip any questions, to request the presence of one of his parents or siblings or to stop the interview.

Benefits: My child is not likely to have any direct benefit from being in this research study. This study is designed to learn more about balance in everyday life in families.

Confidentiality: Information shared by my child will remain strictly confidential. The contents can be used for future publications and my child's confidentiality will be protected by using pseudonyms at all times. The document linking names to pseudonyms will be protected with a password. Only the principal investigator will have access to it.

Conservation of data: All electronic versions of the data collected, interview recordings, transcripts, maps, schedules and photographs will be kept on an encrypted USB key as well as on a computer protected with a password. Hard copies of the data collected will be stored on the Health Sciences campus of uOttawa in a locked filing cabinet of the supervisor's lab. Only the researcher and supervisor will have access to it. The data will be conserved for 5 years, after which time it will be erased or destroyed.

Compensation: No compensation will be provided for the participation in this research project.

Voluntary Participation: My child is under no obligation to participate and he/she can withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions, without suffering any negative consequences. If my child chooses to withdraw, he/she can decide to have his/her data withdrawn from the study, if not all data gathered until the time of withdrawal will be stored for analysis purposes.

Acceptance: I, _____ (parent/guardian), agree to allow my child or children (list names of children participating in the study and for whom consent is provided)

to participate in the above research study conducted by Marie-Christine Ranger of the School of Rehabilitation Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences, under the supervision of Rose Martini.

Audio recording: My child's interview will be audio recorded. The researchers will keep these tapes on an encrypted USB drive and they will only be used by the principal investigator and her supervisor.

Visually Recorded Images/Data:

I agree that photographs taken by my child/children can be used in future publications, presentations or conferences. _____

I agree that photographs taken of my child/children by family members can be used in future publications, presentations or conferences. _____

The researcher will not use any photographs, recordings, or other identifiable information about your child in any future presentation without your consent.

If I have any questions about the study, I may contact the researcher or her supervisor.

If I have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, I may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall, 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

Tel.: (613) 562-5387

Email: ethics@uottawa.ca

There are two copies of the consent form, one of which is mine to keep.

Parent's or guardian's signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____



Université d'Ottawa

Faculté des sciences
de la santé

École des sciences de
la réadaptation

University of Ottawa

Faculty of Health
Sciences

School of Rehabilitation
Sciences

Consentement du parent ou tuteur pour la participation

d'un enfant à une étude

Titre de l'étude: L'Équilibre occupationnel des familles: l'expérience vécue des parents à double revenus et de leurs enfants d'âge scolaire

Marie-Christine RANGER, Candidate au doctorat en sciences de la réadaptation, École des sciences de la réadaptation, Faculté des sciences de la santé.

Rose MARTINI, professeure agrégée, superviseure, École des sciences de la réadaptation, Faculté des sciences de la santé, tél.: 613-562-5800 poste 8028.

Invitation à participer: On demande à mon enfant de participer à une étude sur l'équilibre dans la vie de tous les jours.

But de l'étude: Le but de l'étude est d'explorer en détails l'équilibre de la vie quotidienne pour les familles composées de parents à deux soutiens et d'enfants d'âge scolaire.

Participation: La participation de mon enfant consistera à remplir un horaire quotidien de 3 jours (15 minutes x3), à participer à une activité familiale consistant à dessiner une carte des endroits où chaque membre de ma famille exerce ses activités (1 heure), à prendre 7 à 10 photographies pendant une semaine (quelques minutes) puis à participer à une entrevue individuelle (30 minutes).

Risques: La participation de mon enfant à cette étude ne comporte aucun risque physique ou émotionnel au-delà de la vie quotidienne. Mon enfant est libre de ne pas répondre ou de passer des questions, de demander la présence de l'un de ses parents ou de ses frères ou soeurs lors de l'entrevue ou d'arrêter l'entrevue.

Avantages: Mon enfant ne bénéficiera probablement pas directement de cette étude. Cette étude est conçue pour en apprendre davantage sur l'équilibre dans la vie quotidienne des familles.

Confidentialité: Les informations partagées par mon enfant resteront strictement confidentielles. Le contenu peut être utilisé pour de futures publications et la confidentialité de mon enfant sera protégée en utilisant des pseudonymes à tout moment. Le document reliant les noms aux pseudonymes sera protégé par un mot de passe. Seule la chercheuse principale aura accès à celui-ci.

☎ 613-562-5436
☎ 613-562-5428

451 Smyth
Ottawa ON K1H 8M5 Canada

www.uOttawa.ca

Conservation des données: Toutes les versions électroniques des données collectées, les enregistrements d'entrevues, les transcriptions, les cartes, les horaires et les photographies seront conservés sur une clé USB cryptée ainsi que sur un ordinateur protégé par un mot de passe. Des copies papier des données recueillies seront conservées sur le campus des sciences de la santé de l'Université d'Ottawa dans un classeur verrouillé du laboratoire de la directrice de thèse. Seules la chercheuse et sa directrice de thèse y auront accès. Les données seront conservées pendant 5 ans, après quoi elles seront effacées ou détruites.

Compensation: Aucune compensation ne sera accordée pour la participation à ce projet de recherche.

Participation volontaire: Mon enfant n'a aucune obligation de participer et il peut se retirer de l'étude à tout moment et / ou refuser de répondre à toute question, sans subir de conséquences négatives. Si mon enfant choisit de se retirer, il ou elle pourra choisir de retirer toutes ses données de la recherche, sinon les données recueillies jusqu'au moment du retrait seront conservées à des fins d'analyse.

Acceptation: Je, _____ (parent / tuteur), autorise mon enfant ou mes enfants (énumérer les noms des enfants participant à l'étude et pour lesquels le consentement est fourni)

à participer à l'étude ci-dessus menée par Marie-Christine Ranger de l'École des sciences de la réadaptation, Faculté des sciences de la santé, sous la supervision de Rose Martini.

Enregistrement audio: L'interview de mon enfant sera enregistrée en audio. Les chercheurs conserveront ces bandes sur une clé USB cryptée et elles ne seront utilisées que par la chercheuse principale et sa superviseuse.

Photographies :

J'accepte que les photographies prises par mon enfant / mes enfants puissent être utilisées dans de futures publications, présentations ou conférences. _____

Je suis d'accord que les photographies prises de mon enfant / mes enfants par des membres de la famille peuvent être utilisées dans de futures publications, présentations ou conférences. _____

Le chercheur n'utilisera aucune photographie, aucun enregistrement, ou toute autre information identifiable sur votre enfant dans une future présentation sans votre consentement.

Si j'ai des questions sur l'étude, je peux contacter la chercheuse ou sa superviseuse.

Si j'ai des questions concernant la conduite éthique de cette étude, je peux communiquer avec l'agent de protocole pour l'éthique de la recherche, Université d'Ottawa, Pavillon Tabaret, 550, rue Cumberland, pièce 154, Ottawa (Ontario) K1N 6N5
Tél .: (613) 562-5387
Courriel: ethics@uottawa.ca

Il y a deux copies du formulaire de consentement, dont l'une est à moi.

Signature du parent ou du tuteur: _____ Date: _____

Signature du chercheur: _____ Date: _____



Université d'Ottawa

Faculté des sciences de la santé

École des sciences de la réadaptation

University of Ottawa

Faculty of Health Sciences

School of Rehabilitation Sciences

Appendix J

Release Form

Information and Consent Form

Title of the study: **Family Occupational Balance: The Lived Experience of Dual Earner Parents and their School-Aged Children**

Marie-Christine RANGER, Ph.D. Candidate, School of Rehabilitation Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences.

Rose MARTINI, Associate Professor, Supervisor, School of Rehabilitation Sciences, faculty of Health Sciences, tel.: 613-562-5800 ext. 8028.

Information about the study: We are doing a research study to explore what balance in everyday life means for families composed of dual earner parents and school-aged children.

Participants are taking pictures to capture the meaning of balance in everyday life. This form serves to ask your permission to use the photograph(s) that you appear in as part of this study.

Information about dissemination of research findings: The findings will be used in conference presentations, publications, study reports, videos, and/or websites about this study. Data will be included only after participants have given consent for its use.

I, _____, have reviewed the photograph(s) that I am in as part of the study entitled: **Family Occupational Balance: The Lived Experience of Dual Earner Parents and their School-Aged Children**

_____ I would like **photographs of myself to be used** in the study and in publications and presentations.

_____ I would like **my face to be de-identified** in the pictures that I am in for the study and in publications and presentations.

I hereby authorize the release of the photographs that I appear in to Marie-Christine Ranger to be used in the manner indicated above. I have received a copy of this Release Form for my own records

_____ (Name of Person in Photo)

_____ (Date)

_____ (Signature of Person in Photo)

613-562-5436
613-562-5428

451 Smyth
Ottawa ON K1H 8M5 Canada

www.uOttawa.ca

Formulaire d'information et de consentement

Université d'Ottawa

Faculté des sciences
de la santé

École des sciences de
la réadaptation

University of Ottawa

Faculty of Health
Sciences

School of Rehabilitation
Sciences

Titre de l'étude: L'Équilibre occupationnel des familles: l'expérience vécue des parents à double revenus et de leurs enfants d'âge scolaire

Marie-Christine RANGER, Candidate au doctorat en sciences de la réadaptation, École des sciences de la réadaptation, Faculté des sciences de la santé.

Rose MARTINI, professeure agrégée, superviseure, École des sciences de la réadaptation, Faculté des sciences de la santé, tél.: 613-562-5800 poste 8028,

Information au sujet de l'étude: Le but de l'étude est d'explorer en détails l'équilibre dans la vie quotidienne pour les familles composées de parents à double revenus et d'enfants d'âge scolaire.

Les participants prennent des photos pour saisir le sens de l'équilibre dans la vie quotidienne. Ce formulaire vous permet d'autoriser l'utilisation de la ou des photographies dans lesquelles vous figuré(e).

Informations sur la diffusion des résultats de la recherche: Les résultats de cette étude présentés à des conférences, dans des publications, des rapports d'étude, des vidéos et / ou sur des sites Web. Les données seront incluses seulement après que les participants auront donné leur consentement pour leur utilisation.

J'ai, _____, passé en revue les photographies dans lesquelles je figure dans le cadre de l'étude intitulée : **L'Équilibre occupationnel des familles: l'expérience vécue des parents à double revenus et de leurs enfants d'âge scolaire**

_____ J'aimerais que ces photographies où j'apparais soient utilisées dans le cadre de l'étude et dans les publications et les présentations qui y sont reliées.

_____ Je voudrais que mon visage soit désidentifié sur les photographies où j'apparais dans le cadre de l'étude et dans les publications et les présentations qui y sont reliées.

Par la présente, j'accorde à Marie-Christine Ranger l'autorisation de diffuser de la manière indiquée ci-dessus, les photographies dans lesquelles je figure. J'ai obtenu une copie de ce formulaire de décharge pour mes propres dossiers.

☎ 613-562-5436
☎ 613-562-5428

451 Smyth
Ottawa ON K1H 8M5 Canada

www.uOttawa.ca

_____ (Nom et prénom de la personne qui figure dans la photo)
_____ (Date)

_____ (Signature de la personne qui figure dans la photo)

_____ (Signature du participant)
_____ (Date)

Appendix K

Sociodemographic survey

- 1a) Date of birth of respondent
- b) Date of birth of spouse/partner

- 2a) Sex of respondent
- b) Sex of spouse/partner

- 3a) Marital status of respondent
- b) Marital status of spouse/partner

- 4) Languages spoken at home?

- 5a) How many children are living with you?
- b) What are their dates of birth?

- 6) Does anyone else, besides your spouse/partner and children share your household? If so, please specify.

- 7) In what neighborhood of Ottawa do you live?

- 8a) What is the highest educational level you have obtained?
 - Primary school
 - High school
 - College
 - University (Bachelor's degree)
 - University (Master's degree, PhD, Post graduate studies)
 - Other, describe

- b) What is the highest educational level your spouse/partner has obtained?
 - Primary school
 - High school
 - College
 - University (Bachelor's degree)
 - University (Master's degree, PhD, Post graduate studies)
 - Other, describe

- 9) What is the total gross income of your household?
 - Less than \$20 000
 - \$30 000 to \$39 999
 - \$40 000 to \$59 999
 - \$60 000 to \$79 999
 - \$80 000 to \$99 999
 - \$100 000 and more
 - I prefer not to answer

10a) What is your employment?

b) What is your spouse/partner's employment?

11a) What is your current employment status? (fulltime, part-time)

b) What is your spouse/partner's current employment status? (fulltime, part-time)

12a) On average, how many hours do you work in a week?

b) On average, how many hours does your spouse/partner work in a week?

Sondage sociodémographique

- 1a) Date de naissance du répondant
b) Date de naissance du conjoint / partenaire
- 2a) Sexe du répondant
b) Sexe du conjoint / partenaire
- 3a) État civil du répondant
b) État civil du conjoint / partenaire
- 4) Quelles langues parlez-vous à la maison?
- 5a) Combien d'enfants vivent avec vous ?
b) Quelles sont leurs dates de naissance?
- 6) À part votre conjoint / partenaire et vos enfants, y a-t-il d'autres personnes qui habitent avec vous? Si oui, veuillez préciser lesquelles.
- 7) Dans quel quartier d'Ottawa habitez-vous?
- 8a) Quel est le niveau d'éducation le plus élevé que vous avez obtenu?
-École primaire
-École secondaire
-Université
-Université (Baccalauréat)
-Université (Maîtrise, Doctorat, Études postdoctorales)
-Autre, veuillez préciser
- b) Quel est le niveau d'éducation le plus élevé que votre conjoint / partenaire a obtenu?
-École primaire
-École secondaire
-Université
-Université (Baccalauréat)
-Université (Maîtrise, Doctorat, Études postdoctorales)
-Autre, veuillez préciser
- 9) Quel est le revenu brut total de votre ménage?
-Moins de 20 000 \$
- 30 000 à 39 999 dollars
- 40 000 à 59 999 dollars
- 60 000 à 79 999 dollars
- 80 000 à 99 999 dollars
- 100 000 \$ et plus
-Je préfère ne pas répondre

10a) Quel est votre emploi ?

b) Quel est l'emploi de votre conjoint / partenaire?

11a) Quel est votre statut d'emploi actuel? (Temps plein ou temps partiel)

b) Quel est le statut d'emploi actuel de votre conjoint / partenaire? (Temps plein ou temps partiel)

12a) En moyenne, combien d'heures travaillez-vous par semaine?

b) En moyenne, combien d'heures votre conjoint / partenaire travaille-t-il/elle dans une semaine?

Appendix L

Themes

Challenges in articulating balance			
Dissonances	Being in the moment versus being productive		
	Having everything under control versus letting go of some things		
	Home as sanctuary or trap		
	*Personal time versus time for others		
Lived existentials	Corporeality	Boredom	
		*Calmness, restfulness, relaxation	
		Comfort	
		Energy	
		Freedom	
		Frustration	
		Happiness	
		Senses	
		Stressfulness, mental preoccupation	
		Tiredness/fatigue	
	Relationality	*Division of labour between parents	
		*Friends	
		Getting the family together	
		Helping each other	
		*No bickering	
		*Playing with siblings	
		Special time with a parent	
	Spatiality	*Home	Bedroom
			Dining area
			Kitchen
			Living room
		In the car	
		*Other places associated with balance	
		*Separating work from family home life	
	Temporality	Downtime	
		Flow	

		Free time	
		In the moment	
		*Interrupted time	
		Limited time with children	
		Not having time	
		Oriented to the future	
		*Pace and rhythm	
		*Protecting time	
		*Scheduled, structured time	
		Suspended time	
		Tight schedule	
		Time for couple	
		*Time for self	
		*Weekends/Weekdays	
		Winter	
Occupations	Extracurricular activities	*Children	
	*Chores	*Parents	
	Computers and other screens		
	Doing for others		
	Doing nothing		
	Doing together		
	*Eating dinner		
	Family leisure		
	Fathers and sports		
	*Multitasking	For self	
	Occupations contributing to occupational balance	For family	
	*Orchestration of occupations		
	Other games or playthings		
	Outdoor activities	Evening	
	Routines	Morning	
	School-related		
	*Sports and physical activity		
	Work-related		
*Turning points			
Words to explore	Chaos		
	Cohesion		
	Creativity		
	Flow		
	Having fun		
	Intention		
	Meaning and purpose		
	Recalibrate		

	*Recharge		
	Reset		
	Satisfaction		
	*Transition		

*Themes used in the analysis of the first family. They illustrate the emergent and iterative nature of the analysis.

Appendix M

Certificate of Ethics Approval from the University of Ottawa

09/04/2018

Université d'Ottawa
Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche



University of Ottawa
Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

CERTIFICAT D'APPROBATION ÉTHIQUE | CERTIFICATE OF ETHICS APPROVAL

Numéro du dossier / Ethics File Number

Titre du projet / Project Title

Type de projet / Project Type

Statut du projet / Project Status

Date d'approbation (jj/mm/aaaa) / Approval Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

Date d'expiration (jj/mm/aaaa) / Expiry Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

H-02-18-354

Family Occupational Balance:
The Lived Experience of Dual
Earner Parents and their
School-Aged Children
Thèse de doctorat / Doctoral
thesis

Approuvé / Approved

09/04/2018

08/04/2019

Équipe de recherche / Research Team

**Chercheur /
Researcher**

Marie-Christine
RANGER

Rose MARTINI

Affiliation

École des sciences de la réadaptation / School of
Rehabilitation Sciences

École des sciences de la réadaptation / School of
Rehabilitation Sciences

Role

Chercheur Principal / Principal
Investigator

Superviseur / Supervisor

Conditions spéciales ou commentaires / Special conditions or comments

550, rue Cumberland, pièce 154 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154
Ottawa (Ontario) K1N 6N5 Canada Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5 Canada

☎ 613-562-5387 • 📠 613-562-5338 • ✉ ethique@uOttawa.ca / ethics@uOttawa.ca
www.recherche.uottawa.ca/deontologie | www.recherche.uottawa.ca/ethics

References

- American Occupational Therapy Association. (2020). *Occupational therapy practice framework: Domain & process*. American Occupational Therapy Association.
- Anaby, D., Jarus, T., Backman, C., & Zumbo, B. (2010). The role of occupational characteristics and occupational imbalance in explaining well-being. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 5(2), 81-104. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-010-9094-6>
- Annells, M. (1999). Evaluating phenomenology: usefulness, quality and philosophical foundations. *Nurse Researcher*, 6(3), 5-19. <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr1999.04.6.3.5.c6084>
- Atler, K. E., & Sharp, J. (2019). Reported restorative experiences associated with everyday activities among university students. *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 82(10), 630-638. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308022619859158>
- Backman, C. L. (2004). Occupational balance: Exploring the relationships among daily occupations and their influence on well-being. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy. Revue canadienne d'ergothérapie*, 71(4), 202. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000841740407100404>
- Backman, C. L., (2010). Occupational balance and well-being. In C. Christiansen & E. Townsend, (Eds.), *Introduction to occupation: The art and science of living* (Second edition, pp. 231-249). Pearson.
- Ball, S., & Gilligan, C. (2010). Visualising migration and social division: Insights from social sciences and the visual arts. *Forum qualitative social research*, 11(2). <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-11.2.1486>
- Barber, M. (2004). Occupational science and phenomenology: Human activity, narrative and ethical responsibility. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 11(3), 105-114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2004.9686538>
- Barker, J., & Smith, F. (2012). What's in focus? A critical discussion of photography, children and young people. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 15(2), 91-103. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2012.649406>

- Bazyk, S., & Bazyk, J. (2009). Meaning of occupation-based groups for low-income urban youths attending after-school care. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 63(1), 69-80.
<https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.63.1.69>
- Bejerholm, U. (2010). Occupational balance in people with schizophrenia. *Occupational Therapy in Mental Health*, 26(1), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01642120802642197>
- Bendixen, H. J., Kroksmark, U., Magnus, E., Jakobsen, K., Alsaker, S., & Nordell, K. (2006). Occupational pattern: A renewed definition of the concept. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 13(1), 3-10.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2006.9686565>
- Berger, M., Asaba, E., Fallahpour, M., & Farias, L. (2020). The sociocultural shaping of mothers' doing, being, becoming and belonging after returning to work. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 1-14.
<https://doi-org.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/10.1080/14427591.2020.1845226>
- Bernardo, C., Paleti, R., Hoklas, M., & Bhat, C. (2015). An empirical investigation into the time-use and activity patterns of dual-earner couples with and without young children. *Transportation Research Part A*, 76, 71-91. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tra.2014.12.006>
- Bevan, M. T. (2014). A method of phenomenological interviewing. *Qualitative Health Research*, 24(1), 136-144. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732313519710>
- Bianchi, S. M., Robinson, J. P., & Milke, M. A. (2006). *The changing rhythms of American family life*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Birchenbach, J., & Glass, T. (2009). Life-balance: The meaning and the menace in a metaphor. In K. Matuska & C. Christiansen (Eds.), *Life Balance: Multidisciplinary research and theories* (pp. 13-22). American Occupational Therapy Association and Slack Incorporated.
- Bonsaksen, T. (2015). Addiction as occupation? *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 78(3), 205-206.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0308022615575025>

- Bonsall, A. (2014). "This is what we do": Constructing postmodern families through occupations. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 21(3), 296-308. <https://doi.org/0.1080/14427591.2014.914459>
- Borgh, M., Eek, F., Wagman, P., & Håkansson, C. (2018). Organisational factors and occupational balance in working parents in Sweden. *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*, 46(3), 409-416. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1403494817713650>
- Boyd, B. A., McCarty, C. H., & Sethi, C. (2014). Families of children with autism: A synthesis of family routines literature. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 21(3), 322-333. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2014.908816>
- Brannen, J., O'Connell, R., & Mooney, A. (2013). Families, meals and synchronicity: Eating together in British dual earner families. *Community, Work & Family*, 16(4), 417-434. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2013.776514>
- Broderick, C. B. (1993). *Understanding family process: Basics of family systems theory*. Sage.
- Broege, N., Owens, A., Graesch, A. P., Arnold, J. E., & Schneider, B. (2007). Calibrating measures of family activities between large-and small-scale data sets. *Sociological Methodology*, 37(1), 119-149. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9531.2007.00194.x>
- Bukhave, E. B., & Huniche, L. (2016). Photo-interviewing to explore everyday occupation: Benefits and issues. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 23(1), 96-107. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2015.1070742>
- Byrne, E., Daikin, N., & Coad, J. (2016). Participatory photography in qualitative research: A methodological review. *Visual Methodologies*, 4(2), 1-12. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7331/vm.v4i2.66>
- Campos, B., Graesch, A. P., Repetti, R., Bradbury, T., & Ochs, E. (2009). Opportunity for interaction? A naturalistic observation study of dual-earner families after work and school. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 23(6), 798-807. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015824>

- Canadian Mental Health Association. (2021). *Jeu questionnaire sur l'équilibre travail-vie personnelle*. http://www.cmha.ca/fr/mental_health/jeu-questionnaire-sur-lequilibre-travail-vie-personnelle/
- Carpiano, R. M. (2009). Come take a walk with me: The "go-along" interview as a novel method for studying the implications of place for health and well-being. *Health and Place*, 15(1), 263-272. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2008.05.003>
- Christiansen, C., & Matuska, K. (2006). Lifestyle Balance: A review of concepts and research. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 13(1), 49-61. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2006.9686570>
- Christiansen, C., & Townsend, E. A. (Eds.) (2010). *Introduction to occupation: The art and science of living* (Second edition). Pearson.
- Christensen, P., James, A., & Jenks, C. (2000). Children constructing 'family time'. In S. Holloway & G. Valentine (Eds.), *Children's geographies: Playing, living, learning* (pp. 120-134). Routledge.
- Ciciolla, L., & Luthar, S. S. (2019). Invisible household labour and ramifications for adjustment: Mothers as captains of households. *Sex Roles*, 81(7), 467-486. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-018-1001-x>
- Clouston, T. J. (2014). Whose occupational balance is it anyway? The challenge of neoliberal capitalism and work-life imbalance. *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 77(10), 507-515. <https://doi.org/10.4276/030802214X14122630932430>
- Clouston, T. J. (2015). *Challenging stress, burnout and rust-out: Finding balance in busy lives*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Clouston, T. J. (2020). *The new work-life balance: wellbeing, effectiveness & resilience ways of working in uncertain times*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KBKFux5uVVg>

- Clouston, T. J. (September 2021). *Addressing occupational compromise through reconciliation: A journey to resilience in the neoliberal world*, Council of Occupational Therapists for European Countries and European Network of Occupational Therapy Conference.
- Coad, J. (2012). Involving young people as co-researchers in a photography project. *Nurse Researcher*, 19(2), 11-16. <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr2012.01.19.2.11.c8903>
- Craig, L. (2006). Does father care mean fathers share? A comparison of how mothers and fathers in intact families spend time with children. *Gender & Society*, 20(2), 259-281.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243205285212>
- Craig, L., Powell, A., & Smyth, C. (2014). Towards intensive parenting? Changes in the composition and determinants of mothers' and fathers' time with children 1992-2006. *British Journal of Sociology*, 65(3), 555-579. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12035>
- Craik, C., & Pieris, Y. (2006). Without leisure... 'it wouldn't be much of a life': The meaning of leisure for people with mental health problems. *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 69(5), 209-216.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/030802260606900503>
- Cutchin, M. P., & Dickie, V. A. (2013). *Transactional perspectives on occupation*. Springer.
- Daly, K. J. (2001). *Minding the time in family experience: Emerging perspectives on family research*. Elsevier Science and Technology Books.
- Daly, K. J. (2003). Family theory versus the theories families live by. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65(4), 771-784. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2003.00771.x>
- Daly, K. J., & Beaton, J. (2005). Through the lens of time: How families live in and through time. In V.L. Bengtson, A.C. Acock, K. R. Allen, P. Dilworth-Anderson, & D.M. Klein (Eds.), *Sourcebook of family theory and research* (pp. 241-263). Sage.

Darlington, Y., & Rodger, S. (2006). Families and children's occupational performance. In S. Rodger, & J. Ziviani (Eds.), *Occupational therapy with children: Understanding children's occupations and enabling participation* (pp 22-40). Blackwell Publishing.

- Davis, S. N., & Greenstein, T. N. (2020). Households and work in their economic contexts: State-level variations in gendered housework performance before, during, and after the great recession. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 27(3), 390-404.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2020.1741430>
- Dennis, S. F., Gaulocher, S., Carpiano, R. M., & Brown, D. (2009). Participatory photo mapping (PPM): Exploring an integrated method for health and place research with young people. *Health and Place*, 15(2), 466-473. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2008.08.004>
- Deschamps, C. (1993). *L'approche phénoménologique en recherche: comprendre en retournant au vécu de l'expérience humaine*. Guérin Universitaire.
- DeVault, M. L. (2000). Producing family time: Practices of leisure activity beyond the home. *Qualitative Sociology*, 23(4), 485-503. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1005582926577>
- DeVault, M. L. (2003). Families and children: Together, apart. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 46(10), 1296-1305. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764203046010002>
- Dowling, M. (2007). From Husserl to van Manen. A review of different phenomenological approaches. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 44(1), 131-142.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2005.11.026>
- Dowling, M., & Cooney, A. (2012). Research approaches related to phenomenology: Negotiating a complex landscape. *Nurse Researcher*, 20(2), 21-27.
<https://doi.org/10.7748/nr2012.11.20.2.21.c9440>
- Downs, M. L. (2008). Leisure routines: Parents and children with disability sharing occupation. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 15(2), 105-110. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2008.9686616>

- Dür, M., Steiner, G., Stoffer, M. A., Fialka-Moser, V., Kautzky-Willer, A., Dejacó, C., Ekmekcioglu, C., Proding, B., Binder, A., Smolen, J., & Stamm, T. A. (2016). Initial evidence for the link between activities and health: Associations between a balance of activities, functioning and serum levels of cytokines and C-reactive protein. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, 65, 138-148.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psyneuen.2015.12.015>
- Dür, M., Unger, J., Stoffer, M., Drăgoi, R., Kautzky-Willer, A., Fialka-Moser, V., Smolen, J., & Stamm, T. (2015). Definitions of occupational balance and their coverage by instruments. *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 78(1), 4-15. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308022614561235>
- Duxbury, L., & Higgins, C. (2017). *Something's got to give: Balancing work, childcare and eldercare*. University of Toronto Press.
- Eakman, A. M. (2015). The meaningful activity wants and needs assessment: A perspective on life balance. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 22(2), 210-227.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2013.769405>
- Eklund, M., Erlandsson, L. K., & Leufstadius, C. (2010). Time use in relation to valued and satisfying occupations among people with persistent mental illness: Exploring occupational balance. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 17(4), 231-238.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2010.9686700>
- Eklund, M., Orban, K., Argentzell, E., Bejerholm, U., Tjörnstrand, C., Erlandsson, L.-K., & Håkansson, C. (2017). The linkage between patterns of daily occupations and occupational balance: Applications within occupational science and occupational therapy practice. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 24(1), 41-56. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11038128.2016.1224271>
- Elder, G. H., & Giele, J. Z. (Eds.) (2009). *The craft of life course research*. Guilford Press.

- Elliott, K., & McVicar, A. (2018). The impact of prolonged disorders of consciousness on the occupational life of family members. *Neuropsychological Rehabilitation*, 28(8), 1375-1391.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09602011.2016.1248445>
- Emerson, H. (1998). Flow and occupation: A review of the literature. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 65(1), 37-44. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000841749806500105>
- Erlandsson, L. K., & Eklund, M. (2006). Levels of complexity in patterns of daily occupations: Relationship to women's well-being. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 13(1), 27-36.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2006.9686568>
- Erlandsson, L. K., & Håkansson, C. (2009). Aspects of daily occupations that promote life balance among women in Sweden. In K. Matuska & C. Christiansen (Eds.), *Life Balance: Multidisciplinary research and theories* (pp. 115-130). American Occupational Therapy Association and Slack Incorporated.
- Evans, K. L., Millsteed, J., Richmond, J. E., Falkmer, M., Falkmer, T., & Girdler, S. J. (2014). The complexity of role balance: Support for the Model of Juggling Occupations. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 21(5), 334-347. <https://doi.org/10.3109/11038128.2014.902988>
- Evans, J., & Rodger, S. (2008). Mealtimes and bedtimes: Windows to family routines and rituals. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 15(2), 98-104. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2008.9686615>
- Fargas-Malet, M., McSherry, D., Larkin, E., & Robinson, C. (2010). Research with children: Methodological issues and innovative techniques. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 8(2), 175-192. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476718X09345412>
- Fieldhouse, P. (2015). (Still) eating together: The culture of the family meal. *Transition*, 45(1), 9-13.
- Fiese, B. H. (2007). Routines and rituals: opportunities for participation in family health. *OTJR: Occupation, Participation & Health*, 27(suppl. 1), 41S-49S.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/15394492070270S106>

- Finlay, L. (2002). "Outing" the researcher: The provenance, process, and practice of reflexivity. *Qualitative Health Research*, 12(4), 531-545. <https://doi:10.1177/104973202129120052>
- Finlay, L. (2009). Exploring lived experience: Principles and practice of phenomenological research. *International Journal of Therapy & Rehabilitation*, 16(9), 474-481. <https://doi.org/10.12968/ijtr.2009.16.9.43765>
- Finlay, L. (2011). *Phenomenology for therapists: Researching the lived world*. Wiley.
- Fogelberg, D., & Frauwirth, S. (2010). A complexity science approach to occupation: Moving beyond the individual. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 17(3), 131–139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2010.9686687>
- Forhan, M., & Backman, C. (2010). Exploring occupational balance in adults with rheumatoid arthritis. *OTJR: Occupation, Participation and Health*, 30(3), 133-141. <https://doi.org/10.3928/15394492-20090625-01>
- Fuligni, A. J., & Yoshikawa, H. (2003). Socioeconomic resources, parenting, and child development among immigrant families. In M. H. Bornstein & R. H. Bradley (Eds.), *Socioeconomic status, parenting, and child development* (pp. 107–124). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- Gerson, K., & Torres, S. (2015). Changing family patterns and the future of family life. In R. A. Scott & S. M. Kosslyn (Eds.), *Emerging Trends in the Social and Behavioral Sciences* John Wiley and Sons.
- Gevir, D., Goldstand, S., Weintraub, N., & Parush, S. (2006). A comparison of time use between mothers of children with and without disabilities. *OTJR: Occupation, Participation and Health*, 26(3), 117-127. <https://doi.org/10.1177/153944920602600305>
- Gherghel, A. (2013). *La théorie du parcours de vie (life course) : une approche interdisciplinaire dans l'étude des familles*. Presses de l'Université Laval.

- Günel, A., Pekçetin, S., Wagman, P., Håkansson, C., & Kayihan, H. (2021). Occupational balance and quality of life in mothers of children with cerebral palsy. *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308022621995112>
- Håkansson, C., & Ahlborg, G., Jr. (2010). Perceptions of employment, domestic work, and leisure as predictors of health among women and men. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 17(3), 150-157. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2010.9686689>
- Håkansson, C., & Ahlborg, G., Jr. (2017). Occupations, perceived stress, and stress-related disorders among women and men in the public sector in Sweden. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 24(1), 10-17. <https://doi.org/10.3109/11038128.2016.1170196>
- Håkansson, C., & Ahlborg, G., Jr. (2018). Occupational imbalance and the role of perceived stress in predicting stress-related disorders. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 25(4), 278-287. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11038128.2017.1298666>
- Håkansson, C., Björkelund, C., & Eklund, M. (2011). Associations between women's subjective perceptions of daily occupations and life satisfaction, and the role of perceived control. *Australian occupational therapy journal*, 58(6), 397-404. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1440-1630.2011.00976.x>
- Håkansson, C., Dahlin-Ivanoff, S., & Sonn, U. (2006). Achieving balance in everyday life. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 13(1), 74-82. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2006.9686572>
- Håkansson, C., Lissner, L., Björkelund, C., & Sonn, U. (2009). Engagement in patterns of daily occupations and perceived health among women of working age. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 16(2), pp. 110-117. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11038120802572494>

- Håkansson, C., & Matuska, K. (2010). How life balance is perceived by Swedish women recovering from a stress-related disorder: A validation of the life balance model. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 17(2), 112-119.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2010.9686682>
- Håkansson, C., Milevi, S., Eek, F., Oudin, A., & Wagman, P. (2019). Occupational balance, work and life satisfaction in working cohabiting parents in Sweden. *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*, 47(3), 366-374. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1403494819828870>
- Hall, W. A. (2007). Imposing order: A process to manage day-to-day activities in two-earner families with preschool children. *Journal of Family Nursing*, 13(1), 56-82.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1074840706297588>
- Hammell, K. W. (2009). Self-care, productivity, and leisure, or dimensions of occupational experience? Rethinking occupational “categories”. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 76(2), 107-114. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000841740907600208>
- Handel, G. (1997). Family worlds and qualitative family research: Emergence and prospects of whole-family methodology. *Marriage & Family Review*, 24(3-4), 335-348.
https://doi.org/10.1300/J002v24n03_06
- Harden, J., Backett-Milburn, K., Maclean, A., Cunningham-Burley, S., & Jamieson, L. (2013). Home and away: constructing family and childhood in the context of working parenthood. *Children's Geographies*, 11(3), 298-310. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2013.812274>
- Harden, J., MacLean, A., Backett-Milburn, K., Cunningham-Burley, S., & Jamieson, L. (2014). Responsibility, work and family life: Children's and parents' experiences of working parenthood. In R. Edwards (Ed.), *Understanding families over time: Research and policy* (pp. 124-141). Palgrave Macmillan.

- Harrington, M. (2015). Practices and meaning of purposive family leisure among working-and middle-class families. *Leisure Studies*, 34(4), 471-486. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02614367.2014.938767>
- Hartman, L., Mandich, A., Magalhães, L., & Orchard, T. (2011). How do we 'see' occupations? An examination of visual research methodologies in the study of human occupation. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 18(4), 292-305. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2011.610776>
- Hasselkus, B. R. (2006). The world of everyday occupation: Real people, real lives. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 60(6), 627-640. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.60.6.627>
- Hays, S. (1996). *The cultural contradictions of motherhood*. Yale University Press.
- Heidegger, M. (1953/2010). *Being and Time*. SUNY Press.
- Heinonen, K. (2015). Levels of reduction in van Manen's phenomenological hermeneutic method: An empirical example. *Nurse Researcher*, 22(5), 20-24. <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.22.5.20.e1327>
- Henton, P., Targonski, C., Gambrel, A., Rink, C., & Wirtz, S. (2021). Perceptions of stress, mindfulness, and occupational engagement among graduate-level occupational therapy students. *Journal of Occupational Therapy Education*, 5(3), 9. <https://doi.org/10.26681/jote.2021.050309>
- Hernandez, R., Vidmar, A., & Pyatak, E. A. (2020). Lifestyle balance, restful and strenuous occupations, and physiological activation. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 27(4), 547-562. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2020.1732229>
- Hilbrecht, M., Shaw, S. M., Delamere, F. M., & Havitz, M. E. (2008). Experiences, perspectives, and meanings of family vacations for children. *Leisure/Loisir*, 32(2), 541-571. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14927713.2008.9651421>
- Hitch, D. (2017). Keeping occupation front and centre to address the challenges of transcending the individual. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 24(4), 494-509. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2017.1374876>

- Hitch, D., & Pepin, G. (2021). Doing, being, becoming and belonging at the heart of occupational therapy: An analysis of theoretical ways of knowing. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 28(1), 13-25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11038128.2020.1726454>
- Hitch, D., Pépin, G., & Stagnitti, K. (2014a). In the footsteps of Wilcock, part one: The evolution of doing, being, becoming, and belonging. *Occupational Therapy in Health Care*, 28(3), 231-246. <https://doi.org/10.3109/07380577.2014.898114>
- Hitch, D., Pépin, G., & Stagnitti, K. (2014b). In the footsteps of Wilcock, part two: The interdependent nature of doing, being, becoming, and belonging. *Occupational Therapy in Health Care*, 28(3), 247-263. <https://doi.org/10.3109/07380577.2014.898115>
- Hitch, D., Pepin, G., & Stagnitti, K. (2018). The pan occupational paradigm: development and key concepts. *Scandinavian journal of occupational therapy*, 25(1), 27-34. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11038128.2017.1337808>
- Ho, E. C., Dür, M., Stamm, T., & Siu, A. M. (2020). Measuring the occupational balance of people with insomnia in a Chinese population: Preliminary psychometric evidence on the Chinese version of the Occupational Balance Questionnaire. *Hong Kong Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 33(2), 33-41. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1569186120944534>
- Hocking, C. (2013). Occupation for public health. *New Zealand Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 60(1), 33-37.
- Hodgetts, S., McConnell, D., Zwaigenbaum, L., & Nicholas, D. (2014). The Impact of autism services on mothers' occupational balance and participation. *OTJR: Occupation, Participation and Health*, 34(2), 81-93. <https://doi.org/10.3928/15394492-20130109-01>
- Hofferth, S. L., Kinney, D., & Dunn, J. (2009). The hurried child: Myth vs. reality. In K. Matuska & C. Christiansen (Eds.), *Life balance: Multidisciplinary theories and research* (pp. 183-206). American Occupational Therapy Association and Slack Incorporated.

- Horden, P., & Hsu, E. (2013). *The body in balance: humoral medicines in practice* (Vol. 13). Berghahn Books.
- Howell, D., & Pierce, D. (2000). Exploring the forgotten restorative dimension of occupation: Quilting and quilt use. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 7(2), 68-72.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2000.9686467>
- Humphry, R., & Corcoran, M. (2004). Exploring the role of family in occupation and family occupations. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 58(5), 487-488.
<https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.43.7.487>
- Hunt, E., & McKay, E. A. (2015). A scoping review of time-use research in occupational therapy and occupational science. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 22(1), 1-12.
<https://doi.org/10.3109/11038128.2014.934918>
- Huot, S., & Laliberte Rudman, D. (2015). Extending beyond qualitative interviewing to illuminate the tacit nature of everyday occupation. *OTJR: Occupation, Participation and Health* 35(3), 142-150. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1539449215576488>
- Hutchison, E. D. (2005). The life course perspective: A promising approach for bridging the micros and macro worlds for social workers. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*, 86(1), 143-152. <https://doi.org/10.1606/1044-3894.1886>
- Hutchison, E. D. (2011). *Dimensions of human behavior: The changing life course*. Sage.
- Hutchison, E. D. (2012). *Essentials of human behavior: Integrating person, environment, and the life course*. Sage.
- Irwin, S., & Winterton, M. (2014). Gender and work-family conflict: A secondary analysis of Timescapes data. In J. Holland & R. Edwards (Eds.), *Understanding families over time* (pp. 142-158). Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137285089>

- James, A. (2013). Home talk: Girls talking about family togetherness. *Home cultures*, 10(3), 315-328.
<https://doi.org/10.2752/175174213X13739735973462>
- Jonsson, H. (2008). A new direction in the conceptualization and categorization of occupation. *Journal of occupational science*, 15(1), 3-8. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2008.9686601>
- Kalenkoski, C. M., Ribar, D. C., & Stratton, L. S. (2005). Parental child care in single-parent, cohabiting, and married-couple families: Time-diary evidence from the United Kingdom. *The American Economic Review*, 95(2), 194-198.
- Kantartzis, S., & Molineux, M. (2011). The influence of Western society's construction of a healthy daily life on the conceptualisation of occupation. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 18(1), 62-80.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2011.566917>
- Koome, F., Hocking, C., & Sutton, D. (2012). Why routines matter: The nature and meaning of family routines in the context of adolescent mental illness. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 19(4), 312-325. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2012.718245>
- Kremer-Sadlik, T. (2013). Time for family. In E. Ochs & T. Kremer-Sadlik (Eds.), *Fast-Forward Family* (pp. 217-231). University of California Press.
- Jonsson, H., Matuska, K., Håkansson, C., Backman, C., & Wagman, P. (2014). Occupational balance—Definition and state of the art. World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) 16th International Congress, Yokohama, Japan.
- Jonsson, H., & Persson, D. (2006). Towards an Experiential Model of Occupational Balance: An alternative perspective on flow theory analysis. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 13(1), 62-73.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2006.9686571>
- Kielhofner, G. (Ed.) (2008). *Model of human occupation: Theory and application*. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

- Kiepek, N., & Magalhaes, L. (2011). Addictions and impulse-control disorders as occupation: A selected literature review and synthesis. *Journal of Occupational science*, 18(3), 254-276.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2011.581628>
- Kirova, A., & Emme, M. (2006). Using photography as a means of phenomenological seeing: "Doing phenomenology" with immigrant children. *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, 6, 1-12.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/20797222.2006.11433934>
- Lal, S., Jarus, T., & Suto, M. J. (2012). A scoping review of the photovoice method: Implications for occupational therapy research. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 79(3), 181-190.
<https://doi.org/10.2182/cjot.2012.79.3.8>
- Lareau, A. (2011). *Unequal childhoods: Class, race and family life*. University of California Press.
- Larivière, N., Denis, C., Payeur, A., Ferron, A., Levesque, S., & Rivard, G. (2016). Comparison of objective and subjective life balance between women with and without a personality disorder. *Psychiatric Quarterly*, 87(4), 663-673. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11126-016-9417-3>
- Larivière, N., & Levasseur, M. (2016). Traduction et validation du questionnaire ergothérapique l'Inventaire de l'équilibre de vie. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 83(2), 103-114.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0008417416632260>
- Larson, E. A. (2000). The orchestration of occupation: the dance of mothers. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 54(3), 269-280. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.54.3.269>
- Larson, E. A., & Zemke, R. (2003). Shaping the temporal patterns of our lives: the social coordination of occupation. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 10(2), 80-89.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2003.9686514>
- Law, M., Cooper, B., Strong, S., Stewart, D., Rigby, P., & Letts, L. (1996). The person-environment-occupation model: A transactive approach to occupational performance. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 63(1), 9-23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000841749606300103>

- Law, M., Steinwender, S., & Leclair, L. (1998). Occupation, health and well-being. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 65(2), 81-91. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000841749806500204>
- Lexén, A., Kåhlin, I., Erlandsson, L. K., & Håkansson, C. (2020). Occupational health among Swedish occupational therapists: a cross-sectional study. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 17(10), 3379. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17103379>
- Liedberg, G. M., Björk, M., & Hensing, G. (2010). Occupational therapists' perceptions of gender—A focus group study. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 57(5), 331-338. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1440-1630.2010.00856.x>
- Liu, Y., Zemke, R., Liang, L., & Gray, J. M. (2021). Occupational harmony: Embracing the complexity of occupational balance. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2021.1881592>
- Lloyd, K., O'Brien, W., & Riot, C. (2019). Understanding women's "incremental" leisure repertoires in the family leisure space. *World Leisure Journal*, 61(1), 17-29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16078055.2018.1523805>
- Lynch, H. (2009). Patterns of activity of Irish children aged five to eight years: City living in Ireland today. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 16(1), 44-49. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2009.9686641>
- Magnusson, L., Håkansson, C., Brandt, S., Öberg, M., & Orban, K. (2020). Occupational balance and sleep among women. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11038128.2020.1721558>
- Mandleco, B. (2013). Research with children as participants: Photo elicitation. *Journal for Specialists in Pediatric Nursing*, 18(1), 78-82. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jspn.12012>
- Marquenie, K., Rodger, S., Mangohig, K., & Cronin, A. (2011). Dinnertime and bedtime routines and rituals in families with a young child with an autism spectrum disorder. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 58(3), 145-154. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1440-1630.2010.00896.x>

- Mattisson, K., Håkansson, C., & Jakobsson, K. (2015). Relationships between commuting and social capital among men and women in southern Sweden. *Environment and Behavior*, 47(7), 734-753.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916514529969>
- Matuska, K. (2012). Validity evidence of a model and measure of life balance. *OTJR: Occupation, Participation and Health*, 32(1), 229-237. <https://doi.org/10.3928/15394492-20110610-02>
- Matuska, K., & Bass, J. (2016). Life balance and stress in adults with medical conditions or obesity. *OTJR: Occupation, Participation and Health*, 36(2), 74-81. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1539449216628859>
- Matuska, K., Bass, J., & Schmitt, J. S. (2013). Life balance and perceived stress: Predictors and demographic profile. *OTJR: Occupation, Participation and Health*, 33(3), 146-158.
<https://doi.org/10.3928/15394492-20130614-03>
- Matuska, K., & Christiansen, C. (2008). A proposed model of lifestyle balance. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 15(1), 9-19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2008.9686602>
- Matuska, K. M. (2010). Workaholism, life balance, and well-being: A comparative analysis. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 17(2), 104–111. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2010.9686681>
- McCloy, L., White, S., Lee Bunting, K., & Forwell, S. (2016). Photo-elicitation interviewing to capture children's perspectives on family routines. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 23(1), 82-95
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2014.986666>
- McGoldrick, M., Preto, N. A. G., & Carter, B. A. (2015). *The expanding family life cycle: Individual, family, and social perspectives*. Pearson.
- McGuire, B. K., Crowe, T. K., Law, M., & VanLeit, B. (2004). Mothers of children with disabilities: occupational concerns and solutions. *OTJR: Occupation, Participation & Health*, 24(2), 54-63.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/153944920402400203>
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1945/1995). *Phénoménologie de la perception*. Gallimard.

- Meyer, A. (1922). The philosophy of occupation therapy. *American Journal of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation*, 1(1), 1-10.
- Miao, A. F. (2017). Family Occupation: A study in negotiated participation (Doctoral dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill).
- Milkie, M. A., Kendig, S. M., Nomaguchi, K. M., & Denny, K. E. (2010). Time with children, children's well-being, and work-family balance among employed parents. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(5), 1329-1343. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2010.00768.x>
- Miller, P., & Bowd, J. (2014). Family time economies and democratic division of work. *Journal of Family Studies*, 20(2), 128-147. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13229400.2014.11082002>
- Milton, Y., & Roe, S. (2017). Occupational therapy home programmes for children with unilateral cerebral palsy using bimanual and modified constraint induced movement therapies: A critical review. *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 80(6), 337-349. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308022616664738>
- Minard, C., & Garkinfel, M. (2021). Supporting occupational balance in children using everyday technologies: The distinct value of occupational therapy. *American Occupational Therapy Association SIS Quarterly Practice Connections*, 6(1), 4-8.
- Moen, P. (2011). From 'work-family' to the 'gendered life course' and 'fit': Five challenges to the field. *Community, Work & Family*, 14(1), 81-96. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2010.532661>
- Moen, P., & Hernandez, E. (2009). Social convoys: Studying linked lives in time, context, and motion. In G. Elder & J. Giele (Eds.), *The craft of life course research* (pp. 258-279). Guilford Press.
- Mohammadi, S., Shafaroodi, N., & Amini, M. (2021). The relationship between burnout and occupational balance in occupational therapists in Tehran. *Function and Disability Journal*, 4(1), 34-34.

- Moll, S. E., Gewurtz, R. E., Krupa, T. M., & Law, M. C. (2013). Promoting an occupational perspective in public health. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy, 80*(2), 111-119.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0008417413482271>
- Moll, S. E., Gewurtz, R. E., Krupa, T. M., Law, M. C., Larivière, N., & Levasseur, M. (2015). "Do-Live-Well": A Canadian framework for promoting occupation, health, and well-being: «Vivez-Bien-Votre Vie» : un cadre de référence canadien pour promouvoir l'occupation, la santé et le bien-être. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy, 82*(1), 9-23.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0008417414545981>
- Moore, A., & Lynch, H. (2018). Understanding a child's conceptualisation of well-being through an exploration of happiness: The centrality of play, people and place. *Journal of Occupational Science, 25*(1), 124-141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2017.1377105>
- Myers, J., Zak, J., Marquardt, T., Roche, M., Bender, M., & Fisher, G. (2016). Religious Sisters of Mercy and Matuska and Christiansen's life balance model. *Journal of Occupational Science, 23*(2), 145-155. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2015.1082929>
- Mykkänen, J., & Böök, M. L. (2013). Photographing as a research method: Finnish children's views of everyday life., In: E. Oinonen & K. Repo (Eds.), *Women, men and children in families: Private troubles and public issues* (pp. 171-196). Tampere University Press.
- Nissmark, S., & Fänge, A. M. (2018). Occupational balance among family members of people in palliative care. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy, 27*(7), 500-506.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/11038128.2018.1483421>
- Nyman, A., & Isaksson, G. (2021). Enacted togetherness—A concept to understand occupation as socio-culturally situated. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy, 28*(1), 41-45.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01642120802642197>

- Ochs, E., & Beck, M. (2013). Dinner. In E. Ochs & T. Kremer-Sadlik (Eds.), *Fast-forward family* (pp. 48-66). University of California Press.
- Ochs, E., & Shohet, M. (2006). The cultural structuring of mealtime socialization. *New directions for child and adolescent development*, 2006(111), 35-49. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cd.154>
- Ochs, E., Shohet, M., Campos, B., & Beck, M. (2011). Coming together at dinner: A study of working families. In K. Christensen & B. Schneider (Eds.), *Workplace flexibility: Realigning 20th-century jobs for a 21st-century workforce* (pp. 57-70). Cornell University Press. <https://doi.org/10.7591/9780801458446-006>
- Offer, S., & Schneider, B. (2011). Revisiting the gender gap in time-use patterns: Multitasking and well-being among mothers and fathers in dual-earner families. *American Sociological Review*, 76(6), 809-833. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122411425170>
- Orban, K., Ellegård, K., Thorngren-Jerneck, K., & Erlandsson, L.-K. (2012). Shared patterns of daily occupations among parents of children aged 4–6 years old with obesity. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 19(3), 241-257. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2012.687685>
- Park Lala, A., & Kinsella, E. A. (2011). Phenomenology and the study of human occupation. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 18(3), 195-209. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2011.581629>
- Parnell, R. (2020). Occupational imbalance in hurried African American working mothers. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2020.1839785>
- Pentland, W., & McColl, M. (2008). Occupational integrity: Another perspective on "life balance". *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 75(3), 135-138.
- Pentland, W. E., & Harvey, A. S. (1999). Future direction. In W. E. Pentland, A. S. Harvey, M. Powell & M. A. McColl (Eds.), *Time use research in the social sciences* (pp. 259-268). Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000841740807500304>

- Pepin, J. R., Sayer, L. C., & Casper, L. M. (2018). Marital status and mothers' time use: Childcare, housework, leisure, and sleep. *Demography*, 55(1), 107-133.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-018-0647-x>
- Perry-Jenkins M., & Macdermid, S. M. (2013). The state of theory in work and family research at the turn of the 21st century. In M. A. Fine & F. D. Fincham, F. D. (Eds.), *Handbook of family theories: A content-based approach* (pp. 381-397). Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.
- Perry-Jenkins, M., & Macdermid Wadsworth, S. (2017a). Capturing complexities in work and family theory and research. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 9(2), 253-256.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12190>
- Perry-Jenkins, M., & Macdermid Wadsworth, S. (2017b). Work and family research and theory: Review and analysis from an ecological perspective. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 9(2), 219-237.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12188>
- Pierce, D. (2001). Occupation by design: Dimensions, therapeutic power, and creative process. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 55(3), 249-259. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.55.3.249>
- Pink, S., Hogan, S., & Bird, J. (2011). Intersections and inroads: Art therapy's contribution to visual methods. *International Journal of Art Therapy*, 16(1), 14-19.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17454832.2011.570273>
- Pollio, H. R., Henley, T. B., Thompson, C. J., & Thompson, C. B. (1997). *The phenomenology of everyday life: Empirical investigations of human experience*. Cambridge University Press.
- Primeau, L. (2000). Divisions of household work, routines, and child care occupations in families. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 7(1), 19-28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2000.9686461>
- Primeau, L. A. (1996). Work and leisure: Transcending the dichotomy. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 50(7), 569-577. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.50.7.569>

- Primeau, L. A. (1998). Orchestration of work and play within families. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 52(3), 188-195. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.36.3.188>
- Primeau, L. A. (2003). Reflections on self in qualitative research: Stories of family. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 57(1), 9-16. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.57.1.9>
- Pronovost, G. (2015). *Que faisons-nous de notre temps? : vingt-quatre heures dans la vie des Québécois : comparaisons internationales*. Presses de l'Université du Québec.
- Ramugondo, E. L., & Kronenberg, F. (2015). Explaining collective occupations from a human relations perspective: Bridging the individual-collective dichotomy. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 22(1), 3-16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2013.781920>
- Rantanen, J., Kinnunen, U., Mauno, S., & Tillemann, K. (2011). Introducing theoretical approaches to work-life balance and testing a new typology among professionals. In S. Kaiser, M. Ringlstetter, D. R. Eikhof, & M. P. E. Cunha, *Creating Balance?* (pp. 27-46). Springer.
- Rapoport, A. (1986). *General system theory: Essential concepts & applications* (Vol. 10). CRC Press.
- Raveica, G., Raveica, I. C., & Ciucurel, M. M. (2012). Occupational balance in children of 8-10 years and its influence on school performance. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46, 3752-3756. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.06.141>
- Reilly, M. (1962). Occupational therapy can be one of the great ideas of 20th century medicine. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 16, pp. 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000841746303000102>
- Repetti, R. L., & Wang, S. (2014). Employment and parenting. *Parenting; Science and Practice*, 14(2), 121-132. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15295192.2014.914364>

- Rodríguez-Fernández, P., González-Santos, J., Santamaría-Peláez, M., Soto-Cámara, R., & González-Bernal, J. J. (2021). Exploring the occupational balance of young adults during social distancing measures in the COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(11), 5809. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18115809>
- Rönkä, A., & Korvela, P. (2009). Everyday family life: Dimensions, approaches, and current challenges. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 1(2), 87-102. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1756-2589.2009.00011.x>
- Ryan, S. E., & Sladyk, K. (2005). *Ryan's Occupational therapy assistant: Principles, practice issues, and techniques*. Slack Incorporated.
- Sarmiento, B. M., Jara, R. M., Cáceres, D. P., & Reyes, B. R. (2018). Percepción de la construcción de género en estudiantes de terapia ocupacional: una aproximación al género en la vida cotidiana/Percepção da construção de gênero em estudantes de terapia ocupacional: uma abordagem ao gênero na vida cotidiana. *Cadernos Brasileiros de Terapia Ocupacional*, 26(1), 163-175. <https://doi.org/10.4322/2526-8910.ctoAO1124>
- Sayer, L. (2018). Parenthood and Leisure Time Disparities. In M. Y. Janning (Ed.), *Contemporary Parenting and Parenthood: From News Headlines to New Research* (pp. 168-198). Praeger.
- Seamon, D. (2012). "Lifeworld" as a word to describe people-environment intertwinement. Annual meeting of Environmental Design Research Association (EDRA), Seattle. https://www.academia.edu/1723686/_Lifeworld_as_a_Word_to_Describe_People-Environment_Intertwinement_2012_
- Segal, R. (1998). The construction of family occupations: A study of families with children who have attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 65(5), 286-292. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000841749806500506>

- Segal, R. (1999). Doing for others: Occupations within families with children who have special needs. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 6(2), 53-60.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.1999.9686451>
- Segal, R. (2004). Family routines and rituals: A context for occupational therapy interventions. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 58(5), 499-508. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.58.5.499>
- Settersten, R. A. (2015). Relationships in time and the life course: The significance of linked lives. *Research in Human Development*, 12(3-4), 217-223.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15427609.2015.1071944>
- Sevón, E., Malinen, K., & Rönkä, A. (2014). Daily wellbeing in families with children: A harmonious and a disharmonious week. *Journal of Family Studies*, 20(3), 221-238.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13229400.2014.11082008>
- Shaw, S. M., & Dawson, D. (2001). Purposive leisure: Examining parental discourses on family activities. *Leisure sciences*, 23(4), 217-231. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400152809098>
- Sheldon, K. M., Cummins, R., & Kamble, S. (2010). Life balance and well-being: Testing a novel conceptual and measurement approach. *Journal of Personality*, 78(4), 1093-1134.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.2010.00644.x>
- Shen, Z., & Tse-lin C. (1996). *The basis of traditional Chinese medicine*. Shambhala.
- Shi, Z. (2011). Dilemmas in using phenomenology to investigate elementary school children learning English as a second language. *In Education*, 17(1), 1.
- Smith, S. L., DeGrace, B., Ciro, C., Bax, A., Hambrick, A., James, J., & Evans, A. (2017). Exploring families' experiences of health: contributions to a model of family health. *Psychology, Health & Medicine*, 22(10), 1239-1247. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13548506.2017.1319069>
- Smith, S. R., & Hamon, R. R. (2012). *Exploring family theories*. Oxford University Press.

- Smith, S. L., Ramey, E., Sisson, S. B., Richardson, S., & DeGrace, B. W. (2020). The family meal model: Influences on family mealtime participation. *OTJR: Occupation, Participation and Health*, 40(2), 138-146. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1539449219876878>
- Sohn, B. K. (2017) Phenomenology and qualitative data analysis software (QDAS): A careful reconciliation. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 18(1). <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-18.1.2688>
- Spagnola, M., & Fiese, B. H. (2007). Family routines and rituals - A context for development in the lives of young children. *Infants and Young Children*, 20(4), 284-299. <https://doi.org/10.1097/01.IYC.0000290352.32170.5a>
- Spencer, E. A. (1989). Toward a balance of work and play: Promotion of health and wellness. *Occupational Therapy in Health Care*, 5(4), 87-99. https://doi.org/10.1080/J003v05n04_07
- Stein, L. I., Foran, A. C., & Cermak, S. (2011). Occupational patterns of parents of children with autism spectrum disorder: Revisiting Matuska and Christiansen's model of lifestyle balance. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 18(2), 115-130. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2011.575762>
- Suto, M. (1998). Leisure in occupational therapy. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 65(5), 271-278. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000841749806500504>
- Svendler Nielsen, C. (2009). Children's embodied voices: Approaching children's experiences through multi-modal interviewing. *Phenomenology & Practice*, 3(1), 80-93. <https://doi.org/10.29173/pandpr19822>
- Teachman, G., & Gibson, B. E. (2013). Children and youth with disabilities: Innovative methods for single qualitative interviews. *Qualitative Health Research*, 23(2), 264-274. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732312468063>
- Thibeault, R. (2002). Occupation and the rebuilding of civil society: Notes from the war zone. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 9(1), 38-47. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2002.9686492>

- Thibeault, R. (2011). Occupational gifts. In, M.A. McColl (Ed.), *Spirituality and occupational therapy* (pp. 111–119). Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists Publications Association Canadienne des ergothérapeutes.
- Thibeault, R. (2020). Pathways to resilience: Strategies for a world in upheaval, CAOT webinar series. <https://www.sac-oac.ca/news-events/news/pathways-resilience-strategies-world-upheaval-webinar-series>
- To-Miles, F., Håkansson, C., Wagman, P., & Backman, C. L. (2021). Exploring the associations among occupational balance and health of adults with and without inflammatory arthritis. *Arthritis Care & Research* (Online ahead of print). <https://doi.org/10.1002/acr.24732>
- Townsend, E. A., & Polatajko, H. J. (2007). *Advancing an occupational therapy vision for health, well-being, and justice through occupation*. Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists.
- Tranter, P. (2014). Active travel: A cure for the hurry virus. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 21(1), 65-76. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2013.865153>
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. (2013). Guidelines for harmonising time-use surveys. https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/publications/2013/TimeUseSurvey_Guidelines.pdf
- Vanier Institute of the Family. (2021). Infographic: Family diversity in Canada 2016. <http://vanierinstitute.ca/family-diversity-2016/>
- Vanier Institute of the Family. (2021). Definition of family. <https://vanierinstitute.ca/definition-of-family/>
- van Manen, M. (1997). From meaning to method. *Qualitative Health Research*, 7(3), 345-369. <https://doi.org/10.1177/104973239700700303>
- van Manen, M. (2001). Professional Practice and "doing phenomenology". In S. K. Toombs (Ed.), *Handbook of phenomenology and medicine* (pp. 457-474). Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- van Manen, M. (2007). Phenomenology of Practice. *Phenomenology & Practice*, 1(1), 11-30.

- van Manen, M. (2014). *Phenomenology of practice: Meaning-giving methods in phenomenological research and writing*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315422657>
- van Manen, M., Higgins, I., & Riet, P. (2016). A conversation with Max van Manen on phenomenology in its original sense. *Nursing & Health Sciences*, 18(1), 4-7. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nhs.12274>
- van Manen, M., & van Manen, M. (2021). Doing Phenomenological Research and Writing. *Qualitative Health Research*, 31(6), 1069-1082. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10497323211003058>
- Wada, M., Backman, C., & Forwell, S. (2010). Theoretical perspectives of balance and the influence of gender ideologies. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 17(2), 92-103.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2010.9686680>
- Wada, M., Backman, C. L., & Forwell, S. J. (2015). Men's discursive constructions of balance in everyday life. *Community, Work & Family*, 18(1), 117-133.
- Wada, M., Backman, C. L., Forwell, S. J., Roth, W.-M., & Ponzetti, J. J. (2014). Balance in everyday life: Dual-income parents' collective and individual conceptions. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 21(3), 259-276. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2014.913331>
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2014.965662>
- Wagman, P., Ahlstrand, I., Björk, M., & Håkansson, C. (2020). Occupational balance and its association with life satisfaction in men and women with rheumatoid arthritis. *Musculoskeletal care*, 18(2), 187-194. <https://doi.org/10.1002/msc.1454>
- Wagman, P., Björklund, A., Håkansson, C., Jacobsson, C., & Falkmer, T. (2011). Perceptions of life balance among a working population in Sweden. *Qualitative Health Research*, 21(3), 410-418.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732310379240>
- Wagman, P., & Håkansson, C. (2014). Introducing the occupational balance questionnaire (OBQ). *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 21(3), 227.
<https://doi.org/10.3109/11038128.2014.900571>

- Wagman, P., Håkansson, C., & Björklund, A. (2012). Occupational balance as used in occupational therapy: A concept analysis. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 19(4), 322-327.
<https://doi.org/10.3109/11038128.2011.596219>
- Wagman, P., Håkansson, C., Jacobsson, C., Falkmer, T., & Björklund, A. (2012). What is considered important for life balance? Similarities and differences among some working adults. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 19(4), 377-384.
<https://doi.org/10.3109/11038128.2011.645552>
- Wagman, P., Håkansson, C., & Jonsson, H. (2015). Occupational balance: A scoping review of current research and identified knowledge gaps. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 22(2), 160-169.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2014.986512>
- Wagman, P., Lindmark, U., Rolander, B., Wåhlin, C., & Håkansson, C. (2017). Occupational balance in health professionals in Sweden. *Scandinavian journal of occupational therapy*, 24(1), 18-23.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/11038128.2016.1203459>
- Wagman, P., Nordin, M., Alfredsson, L., Westerholm, P. J., & Fransson, E. I. (2017). Domestic work division and satisfaction in cohabiting adults: Associations with life satisfaction and self-rated health. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 24(1), 24-31.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/11038128.2016.1217926>
- Wall, G. (2010). Mothers' experiences with intensive parenting and brain development discourse. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 33(3), 253-263.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2010.02.019>
- Warren, K., Huot, S., Magalhães, L., & Evans, M. (2016). Exploring the daily lives of people on methadone maintenance treatment: An occupational perspective. *Societies*, 6(3), 27.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/soc6030027>

- Wasmuth, S., Crabtree, J. L., & Scott, P. J. (2014). Exploring addiction-as-occupation. *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 77(12), 605-613. <https://doi.org/10.4276/030802214X14176260335264>
- Werner DeGrace, B. (2003). Occupation-based and family-centered care: A challenge for current practice. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 57(3), 347-350. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.40.5.347>
- Westhorp, P. (2003). Exploring balance as a concept in occupational science. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 10(2), 99-106. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2003.9686516>
- White, A., Bushin, N., Carpena-Méndez, F., & Ní Laoire, C. (2010). Using visual methodologies to explore contemporary Irish childhoods. *Qualitative research*, 10(2), 143-158. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794109356735>
- White, J. M., Klein, D. M., Martin, T.F. (2015). *Family theories: An introduction*. Sage.
- Whiteford, G. E. (2009). Problematizing life balance: difference, diversity and disadvantage. In K. M. Matuska & C. Christiansen (Eds.), *Life balance: Multidisciplinary theories and research* (pp. 23-31). SLACK Incorporated.
- Whiting, L. S. (2015). Reflecting on the use of photo elicitation with children. *Nurse Researcher*, 22(3), 13-17. <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.22.3.13.e1283>
- Widmark, E., & Fristedt, S. (2019). Occupation according to adolescents: Daily occupations categorized based on adolescents' experiences. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 26(4), 470-483. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2018.1546609>
- Wilcock, A. A. (2007). Occupation and Health: Are They One and the Same? *Journal of Occupational Science*, 14(1), 3-8. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2007.9686577>
- Wilcock, A., Chelin, M., Hall, M., Hamley, N., Morrison, B., Scrivener, L., Townsend, M., & Treen, K. (1997). The relationship between occupational balance and health: a pilot study. *Occupational Therapy International*, 4(1), 17-30. <https://doi.org/10.1002/oti.45>

- Wilcock, A. A., & Hocking, C. (2015). *An occupational perspective of health*. Slack Incorporated.
- Williams, J. C., Berdahl, J. L., & Vandello, J. A. "Beyond work-life "integration". *Annual Review of Psychology*, 67, 515-539. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-122414-033710>
- Wilson, A. (2015). A guide to phenomenological research. *Nursing Standard*, 29(34), 38.
<https://doi.org/10.7748/ns.29.34.38.e8821>
- Wilson, L., & Wilcock, A. A. (2005). Occupational balance: What tips the scales for new students? *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 68(7), 319-323.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/030802260506800706>
- World Federation of Occupational Therapists. (2012). About occupational therapy.
<https://wfot.org/about/about-occupational-therapy>
- World Federation of Occupational Therapists. (2012). Occupational Science.
<https://wfot.org/resources/occupational-science>
- Yazdani, F., Harb, A., Rassafiani, M., Nobakht, L., & Yazdani, N. (2018). Occupational therapists' perception of the concept of occupational balance. *Scandinavian journal of occupational therapy*, 25(4), 288-297. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11038128.2017.1325934>
- Yerxa, E.J. (1998). Health and the human spirit for occupation. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 52, 412-418. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.52.6.412>
- Yu, Y., Manku, M., & Backman, C. L. (2018). Measuring occupational balance and its relationship to perceived stress and health: Mesurer l'équilibre occupationnel et sa relation avec le stress perçus et la santé. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 85(2), 117-127.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0008417417734355>
- Zartler, U., & Richter, R. (2014). My Family through the Lens. Photo Interviews with Children and Sensitive Aspects of Family Life. *Children & Society*, 28(1), 42-54.
<https://doi.org/doi:10.1111/j.1099-0860.2012.00447.x>

Ziviani, J., Desha, L. N., Poulsen, A. A., & Whiteford, G. (2010). Positioning occupational engagement in the prevention science agenda for childhood obesity. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 57(6), 439-441. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1440-1630.2010.00891.x>

Ziviani, J., Lim, C., Jendra-Smith, D., & Nolan, D.-N. (2008). Variability in daily time use: Methodological considerations in the use of time diaries for children. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 15(2), 111-116. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2008.9686617>

Zuzanek, J. (2017). What happened to the society of leisure? Of the gap between the “haves” and “have nots” (Canadian time use and well-being trends). *Social Indicators Research*, 130(1), 27-38. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-015-1133-0>