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POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES

Isabelle Arcand

AUTEUR DE LA THÈSE / AUTHOR OF THESIS

M.A. (Human Kinetics)

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**Exploring Three Athletes' Unique Experience with Resonance:
A Multiple Case Study**

TITRE DE LA THÈSE / TITLE OF THESIS

Natalie Durand-Bush

DIRECTEUR (DIRECTRICE) DE LA THÈSE / THESIS SUPERVISOR

CO-DIRECTEUR (CO-DIRECTRICE) DE LA THÈSE / THESIS CO-SUPERVISOR

EXAMINATEURS (EXAMINATRICES) DE LA THÈSE / THESIS EXAMINERS

François Gravelle

Pierre Trudel

Gary W. Slater

Le Doyen de la Faculté des études supérieures et postdoctorales / Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

EXPLORING THREE ATHLETES' UNIQUE EXPERIENCE WITH RESONANCE:
A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY

by

ISABELLE CLAUDE ARCAND

B.A., University of Ottawa, 2002

THESIS PROPOSAL

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to document three athletes' in depth-stories to examine their application of resonance and how it influenced their experience of their sport and life. Each athlete took part in a resonance-based intervention involving seven interviews held approximately every second week, three non-intrusive interviews conducted at the site of competitions, daily reflective journaling, reading a book on resonance (Newburg, 2004), and a post-intervention interview four weeks after the end of the intervention. Two means of analysis were used; deductive categorization and narrative analysis. Two individuals developed and applied their personal process of resonance. As a result, they felt the way they wanted to feel in their endeavors, and enjoyed an increased sense of control and acceptance of themselves and their environment. The three athletes' stories shed light on the importance of reflection and ownership in the process of resonance. This study also sheds light on the role of the facilitator in the intervention.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the area of sport psychology, some authors acknowledge the distinction between performance and experience (Cox, 2001; Potmesil & Rydl, 1996). The term “performance enhancement” is often used although many researchers and practitioners in the field recognize and address the individual’s personal experience. Henschen (2001) explains that he does not work with “performers” but rather, his holistic approach allows him to grasp people’s general experience as he opens up to their social, intellectual, spiritual, as well as performance spheres of life. Serpa and Rodriguez (2001) note that although performance enhancement is often the purpose of sport psychology, the process gains meaning when it focuses on broadening the individual’s self-awareness and self-knowledge.

More and more, it seems that researchers and consultants in sport psychology embrace a broad, holistic approach in their work with sport participants and address the experience of athletes, not only their performance (Cox, 2001; Henschen, 2001; Potmesil & Rydl, 1996; Serpa & Rodriguez, 2001). This appeal to consider the lived experiences of individuals is in line with a renewed interest in positive psychology, “a science of positive subjective experience, positive individual traits, and positive institutions” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 5) and a movement of research devoted to understanding what helps people live a fulfilling existence and positive human experiences.

A discussion of such positive human experiences calls for a look into sport. Zuckerman’s (1983) research on individual differences showed that some athletes seek sensation and thus are enthused by adventurous activities. They enjoy stimulation through the mind and senses, as well as through spontaneous and extraverted pursuits and avoid constancy and boredom. In fact,

athletes have greater “sensation seeking” characteristics than non-athletes (Schroth, 1995).

Openness to experience, appraised by features of fantasy, aesthetics, feelings, actions, ideas, and values is another way to appreciate sport experiences (Diehm & Armatas, 2004).

On another note, Anderson (2001) suggested that through sports, individuals “recover an inner wildness that is a condition of our humanity – our freedom, agency, and creativity” (p. 140). He argues that over-civilisation, with its conventions and time constraints, creates automata, reduces spontaneity, and generates dehumanization. However, movement and games help us re-create, define, and realise ourselves. Sport, because of its freeing and dynamic nature, offers the possibility of reawakening our inner wild self. We, as humans, acknowledge this possibility because we can feel it.

Whatever the reasons that prompt sport participation may be, it seems that the motives and experiences of athletes are far more complex, rich, and meaningful than can be assumed. One approach that allows us to tap into this complexity of the human experience and fits with the current trend of positive psychology is the concept of resonance (Newburg, 2004; Newburg et al., 2002). Resonance is a process that empowers people to live their life in a way that allows them to feel the way they want to feel on a daily basis. In this holistic process, individuals identify their dream feeling, which represents the way they want to feel on a daily basis. They then establish preparation strategies that will allow them to feel the way they want to feel as consistently as possible. Individuals also need to recognize potential obstacles that might get in the way of their dream feeling and formulate strategies that will help them reconnect with it. Resonance allows individuals to be in harmony with their environment, fully engage in their endeavours, and experience enjoyment, satisfaction, and an overall sense of well-being on a regular basis (Newburg et al., 2002). Research on resonance has demonstrated that it promotes

self-awareness, enhances well-being, and helps individuals to be more intrinsically motivated (Baldry, Faubert, & Durand-Bush, 2005; Callary, 2004; Doell, Durand-Bush, & Newburg, 2003; Durand-Bush, Faubert, & Newburg, 2004; Faubert, Durand-Bush, Trudel, & Newburg, 2005; Leroux, Doell, & Durand-Bush, 2005; Durand-Bush, Trudel, & Short, 2004; Soulard, 2003).

The concept of resonance emerged from grounded theory research in which Dr. Doug Newburg conducted over 300 in-depth interviews with experts from various domains including sports, performing arts, medicine, and business. Newburg (Newburg et al., 2002) was interested in examining how these individuals became outstanding performers in their chosen field and led fulfilling lives in the process. Results of this indicated that in their achievement of excellence, the participants did whatever they had to do to experience and protect desired feelings as often as possible. These findings led to the inductive elaboration of the Resonance Performance Model (RPM), which is a model depicting a holistic and dynamic process commonly lived by Newburg's interviewees. It is composed of four components: (a) dream feeling, (b) preparation, (c) obstacles, and (d) revisit the dream feeling (see Appendix A).

Several studies have recently been conducted to examine the role of resonance at different levels of athletic participation in a variety of sport disciplines (Baldry et al., 2005; Burke & Durand-Bush, 2004; Callary, 2004; Doell et al., 2003; Durand-Bush et al., 2004a; Faubert et al., 2005; Soulard, 2003). These studies have focused on the general context of training and competition, as well as life in general. However, research has not yet focused on the in-depth stories of individuals attempting to develop and apply their personal process of resonance to enhance their experience of their sport and life. Consequently, the present study aimed to document three athletes' stories, that is, their experience with resonance as they learned to pay attention to their lives through a personalized resonance-based intervention. It intended to

examine their application of resonance and how this influenced their experience of their sport and life.

All inquiries on resonance in the past were grounded into a post-positivist paradigm thus it would be interesting to look at it from a constructivist perspective to give more room and flexibility to the participants during the intervention allowing them to express themselves and construct their reality. Also, the constructivist paradigm is based on the tenet that both researchers and participants work together to create or re-create a reality thus this view would lend itself well to highlight the role of the facilitator in a resonance-based intervention. The present study aims to bring light to the role of the facilitator. There is no doubt that the facilitator influences the resonance process of participants but no studies have yet discussed or demonstrated how this is done.

In the remaining sections of this document, I will review some relevant literature related to resonance, present the methodology that was used to answer the research questions, including changes to the project that were made after the thesis proposal. The results of this study will be shared through two articles and followed by a general discussion.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Resonance

Newburg and colleagues (2002) proposed the Resonance Performance Model (RPM) to help individuals achieve well-being and optimal performance in their life. Newburg considers that performance is the creation and expression of an idea (Newburg et al., 2002). In that sense, the Resonance “Performance” Model does not merely refer to actions, executions, or accomplishments. It is a broad term encompassing personal experience and is relative to each individual. Resonance and the RPM were inductively developed from numerous in-depth interviews conducted with outstanding performers in various performance fields. The individuals selected to participate in these interviews were not only considered exceptional performers but also reported being satisfied and fulfilled with the life they led. A recurrent theme in the interviews was that they designed their life based on how they felt in various situations. Consequently, feel was at the core of their performance and as a result is fundamental to the concept of resonance (Newburg et al., 2002).

Resonance is a way of life based on how individuals want to feel on a daily basis. Research has shown that the process enhances people’s sense of harmony with their environment and increases enjoyment, satisfaction, well-being, and perceptions of performance (Baldry et al., 2005; Callary, 2004; Doell et al., 2003; Durand-Bush et al., 2004a, 2004b; Faubert et al., 2005; Newburg et al., 2002; Soulard, 2003). The benefits of resonance are considerable, however, implementing resonance in one’s life requires a tremendous amount of self-observation, awareness, effort, and commitment to the process (Newburg, 2004; Newburg et al., 2002). To live resonance, individuals need to pay attention to how they feel and the particularities of their

life. This allows them to develop the self-awareness required to elaborate a model truly representative of their reality (Newburg, 2004; Newburg et al., 2002). A facilitator can help a person to initiate the process of resonance through an individualized resonance-based intervention using the RPM as a framework and tool. No studies have yet explicitly examined the role of the facilitator in a resonance-based intervention thus future research should attempt to do this.

The RPM is a holistic, dynamic, and cyclical model that depicts the process of resonance. Its four components (a) dream feeling, (b) preparation, (c) obstacles, and (d) revisit the dream feeling are intertwined rather than linear and mutually exclusive.

The **dream feeling** is at the heart of resonance. Research has shown that experiencing desired feelings energizes and motivates participants to take part and persist in meaningful activities (Baldry et al., 2005; Burke & Durand-Bush, 2004; Callary, 2004; Doell et al., 2003; Durand-Bush et al., 2004a, 2004b; Faubert et al., 2005; Leroux et al., 2005; Newburg et al., 2002; Soulard, 2003). However, to experience one's dream feeling on a daily basis, one must protect it, commit to it, and do whatever is needed to make it happen (Newburg, 2004). A dream feeling is distinct from an outcome goal. Nonetheless, working toward a goal should allow individuals to feel the way they want to feel. Otherwise, they are likely to experience dissonance and disconnect from their dream feeling (Newburg, 2004).

The **preparation** phase represents the work needed to be done to make the dream feeling occur as consistently as possible. It can involve various activities that can be physical, psychological, emotional, organisational, or social in nature (Doell et al., 2003; Newburg et al., 2002; Soulard, 2003). Preparation is about creating a proper environment with which one can have inner harmony to allow the manifestation of desired feelings as often as possible, even

when engaging in effortful deliberate practise (Durand-Bush et al., 2004b). Making thorough observations and developing self-awareness about what facilitates the experience of one's dream feeling are necessary to obtain good information and, in turn, properly guide activities and strategies during the preparation phase (Newburg, 2004).

The **obstacles** component represents the inevitable setbacks individuals encounter in their life (Newburg et al., 2002). These difficulties disrupt the experience of resonance and can be external (i.e., competing against a highly talented athlete, expectations of others) or internal (i.e., fear, self-doubt, anxiety). External obstacles usually evoke an internal, adverse feeling, which, according to Newburg (2004), is the real obstacle. Newburg found that all of his participants encountered setbacks, however, what appeared to be important was their recognition of (a) whether an obstacle was external or internal, (b) which obstacles were within their control, and (c) in the face of internal obstacles, how to develop appropriate responses to their initial emotional response, as opposed to letting their negative feelings drive their behaviours or even their life (Newburg, 2004). In other words, responding to their initial response to setbacks helped the participants to reconnect with desired feelings and avoid the “obstacle-preparation loop.” When facing obstacles, many individuals often intuitively return to the preparation phase to work harder and not smarter and by doing so, they get caught in the vicious cycle of obstacle-preparation. As a result, they eventually lose sight of their dream feeling and forget the intrinsic reasons that fuelled their initial involvement in a particular activity (Newburg et al., 2002).

Individuals who were taught or naturally experienced the process of resonance developed strategies to **revisit their dream feeling** in the face of obstacles (Baldry et al., 2005; Callary, 2004; Doell et al., 2003; Durand-Bush et al., 2004a; Faubert et al., 2005; Leroux et al., 2005; Newburg et al., 2002; Soulard, 2003). By doing so, they reenergized themselves and reconnected

with their inspiration and enthusiasm for certain activities before engaging in more preparation. This helped them to stay motivated, remain in tune with the feelings they sought, and break the potential obstacle-preparation loop. Revisiting their dream feeling allowed them to keep their desires greater than their fears (Newburg, 2004).

Recent research in the area of resonance has provided support for the RPM. First, all the athletes involved in resonance-based interventions were able to identify the way they wanted to feel in their sport and everyday life (Baldry et al., 2005; Burke & Durand-Bush, 2004; Callary, 2004; Doell et al., 2003; Durand-Bush et al., 2004a; Faubert et al., 2005; Soulard, 2003). They also identified and applied a number of activities and strategies that facilitated the experience of their dream feeling. All of the participants in previous research on resonance encountered obstacles. Doell and colleagues (2003) observed that internal obstacles prevented female adolescent track athletes to feel the way they wanted to feel and decreased their enjoyment in training and races. Interestingly, anxiety and self-doubt were the most common obstacles for these athletes (Doell et al., 2003) as well as for Canadian, French, and Singaporean athletes practising various sports in Soulard's (2003) study. Athletes practising martial arts and outdoors sports (i.e., cycling and windsurfing) stated that a lack of control over events or other people was an obstacle. They reported that factors within their control were not obstacles because they could develop an appropriate response to them (Faubert et al., 2005; Soulard, 2003).

Before participating in a resonance-based intervention, most participants did not consciously and regularly seek to experience desired feelings and reconnect with those feelings after an obstacle (Baldry et al., 2005; Callary, 2004; Doell et al., 2003; Durand-Bush et al., 2004a; Faubert et al., 2005; Leroux et al., 2005; Soulard, 2003). However, through the intervention, they developed an awareness and strategies to do so. Whether they were

performance or non-performance related and applied immediately or later after a setback, revisiting strategies helped the athletes avoid the obstacle-preparation trap, stay connected to desired feelings, and sustain their energy and motivation over time (Baldry et al., 2005; Callary, 2004; Doell et al., 2003; Durand-Bush et al., 2004a; Faubert et al., 2005; Leroux et al., 2005; Soulard, 2003). Once again, the facilitator of the resonance-based intervention in these studies was only briefly addressed and discussed, perhaps due to the fact that a post-positivist paradigm was used. Although it is acknowledged that the researcher and participant influence each other during this type of inquiry, this influence is kept to a minimum to attempt to reduce researcher bias.

Other significant benefits of a resonance-based intervention have been highlighted. First, all participants reported a positive effect of the intervention on their athletic and personal life. Increased self-awareness, well-being, motivation, and perceptions of performance (Callary, 2004; Doell et al., 2003; Durand-Bush et al., 2004a; Faubert et al., 2005; Soulard, 2003), satisfaction with athletic life, positive attitude, and feelings of control (Soulard, 2003) were also identified by participants. This suggests that with proper guidance and tools, athletes can improve how they feel through resonance.

Positive Experiences

Since resonance is a process that provides positive experiences, it is relevant to present different constructs that are related to positive psychological experiences in sports. Descriptions of the concepts of subjective well-being, positive affect/emotions/feelings, and flow are offered and linked to athletic experiences.

Well-Being

Subjective well-being is often used interchangeably with happiness in the literature and is defined as the cognitive and affective assessment people make of their lives (Diener, 2000). Global life satisfaction, satisfaction with work, sport and other significant activities, as well as recurrent positive affect and little negative affect are said to contribute to one's well-being (Diener, 1984; 2000).

Although it seems logical to believe that an increase in both frequency and intensity of positive emotions leads to superior happiness, Diener and colleagues have found that frequency is much more important than intensity when predicting happiness (Diener, 2000). In fact, intense positive experiences are not essential for happiness (Diener, Sandvick, & Pavot, 1991). Rather, happy people say they feel mild to moderate pleasant emotions on a regular basis in all or most spheres of their life (Diener, 2000). According to Newburg and colleagues (2002), resonance allows people to experience not necessarily intense emotions but more mild to moderate pleasant emotions on a daily basis. This is the reason why people who experience resonance have reported a higher level of satisfaction and happiness in their life (Newburg et al., 2002).

As detailed by Diener (2000), humans have the capacity to adapt to life conditions whether they are favourable or difficult. However, their adaptation differs according to situations. For example, an athlete's adaptation to a loss in a competition will be easier and faster than to an injury compromising part of his athletic season. Individuals also develop expectations corresponding to their past life events and present situation. Hence, their satisfaction with life and specific domains of their life is influenced by those expectations and adaptability. In competitive sports, it is common knowledge that individuals often have high expectations and must adapt to difficult situations. Presumably, athletes who have a higher capacity of adaptation

are most likely to experience success compared to those who cannot adapt to challenges. Research has demonstrated that resonance helps individuals to develop more positive and constructive responses in the face of obstacles (Doell et al., 2003; Faubert et al., 2005; Soulard, 2003.) It would be interesting to further examine this process of adaptation or response to obstacles through an intervention-based study using resonance as a framework since obstacles are an intricate part of this process.

Positive Affect/Emotions/Feelings

The concepts of affect, emotions, and feelings are closely related and occasionally used interchangeably. However, the literature, although limited and sometimes ambiguous, shows that they are distinct constructs. Affect is described as a broad concept referring to consciously accessible sensations and encompassing emotions and feelings (Fredrickson, 2001; Vallerand & Blanchard, 2000).

Deci (1980) articulated that an emotion was a response to an actual or perceived stimulus involving changes in the viscera, musculature, and facial expression. Emotions are currently thought to generate three types of effects; cognitive experience, physiological changes, and action tendencies (Vallerand & Blanchard, 2000). For instance, an individual will consciously experience anxiety, both cognitively and physically, and her performance might be hindered or facilitated as a result. Similarly, Skinner and Brewer (2004) conceptualised emotions as mental states accompanied by bodily feelings.

Positive emotions, alike positive affect, are traditionally believed to indicate and improve well-being and effective functioning (Fredrickson, 2001; Skinner & Brewer, 2004) and prompt individuals to engage in meaningful action (Fredrickson, 2001). However, one could also argue that conversely, engaging in meaningful activities generates positive emotions. Fredrickson

posited that positive emotions broaden one's thought-action repertoire, foster personal growth and social connection, enhance the probability of optimal functioning, and consequently provide opportunities for a better life. However, others note that personal meaning attached to an emotion is key in determining its impact on the person's cognitive and/or physical functioning. In addition to this, people are not viewed as passive victims of their emotions but can use them to enhance their athletic experience (Skinner & Brewer, 2004).

While emotion is described as a response to a stimulus generating cognitive, physiological, and behavioural effects, feelings represent the exclusive subjective experience of emotions (Denzin, 1984; Vallerand & Blanchard, 2000). Denzin's (1984) concept of "self-feelings" is also of particular interest to this project. Self-feelings are generated through self-reflection and intentional focus into the self and on one's connection to the world. They originate in one's consciousness but can be experienced in the body. The dream feeling component of the RPM can be compared to the self-feelings described by Denzin. Dream feelings like self-feelings, emerge from continued introspection, and intentionality. They represent the person as a whole, are lived through bodily experiences (i.e., feel serene, feel in control, feel accomplished), and allow a seamless fit between the self and the outside world.

Flow

Another concept related to positive experiences is flow. Flow is described as an optimal psychological state characterized total absorption in a task, harmony between mind and body, total focus, an appropriate level of confidence, a sense of control leaving individuals with a complete sense of enjoyment (Jackson, 2000; Jackson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999). Flow is often experienced in competition because it is a context in which athletes must maximize their potential and go beyond ordinary experience to meet and exceed a challenge. Competition can

consequently be seen as an opportune setting to experience intense positive states, as long as the attention is on the activity itself rather than on outcome goals (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

Flow and resonance share similarities. For instance, both can provide enjoyment, generate positive affect, and lead to long-term high-quality performance. However, resonance is a way of life that can provoke broad positive subjective experiences on a consistent basis whereas the experience of flow is sporadic, spontaneous, and fleeting (Newburg et al., 2002). Numerous flow experiences have been documented, but Csikszentmihalyi (1990) expressed that flow is difficult to predict and control, which suggests that it might be difficult to learn to experience flow. Moreover, flow is generally lived by high-level performers, which indicates that less accomplished individuals have fewer opportunities to benefit from this positive psychological experience. This suggests that other means for maintaining positive experiences in sport, including competitions should be explored. Hence, the concept of resonance, more controllable and accessible, becomes relevant to enhance the quality of one's competitive performance.

Intrinsic Motivation

Another variable important in the manifestation of positive experiences and resonance is intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation represents factors leading people to engage in a behaviour for the pleasure of doing it. Deci and Ryan (1985) advocate that human beings naturally seek self-determination, competence, interest, and enjoyment, but are also in constant interaction with their environment and situations that can challenge their capacities. This innate tendency for interest, creativity, and mastery is “essential to cognitive and social development and (...) represents a principal source of enjoyment and vitality throughout life” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 70). Research findings also demonstrate that individuals who are intrinsically motivated

have more interest, excitement, and confidence, which in turn results in enhanced performance, persistence, creativity, self-esteem, and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Some factors, specifically choice, acknowledgement of one's feelings, and opportunities to control one's environment or outcomes, increase intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Striving for and achieving goals that are intrinsically motivating has been associated with enhanced well-being and harmony (Kasser & Ryan, 1996). Furthermore, positive emotions are believed to increase intrinsic motivation to explore, master, and engage in activities simply for the pleasure it provides (Fredrickson, 1998; Skinner & Brewer, 2004).

The concept of resonance is intimately and positively related to intrinsic motivation because it allows people to identify, stay connected to, and protect their intrinsic motives for engaging in a particular endeavour. It promotes and empowers individuals to design their life to feel the way they want to feel, which presumably fuels their intrinsic motivation to continue doing what allows them to experience desired feelings (Newburg, 2004; Newburg et al., 2002). In previous studies, resonance has increased the intrinsic motivation of participants (Doell et al., 2003; Faubert et al., 2005; Soulard, 2003). However, more research into the *experience* of intrinsic motivation is warranted. Current research focuses more on the outcome, that is, being intrinsically motivated or not. It would, however, be interesting to explore the process leading to or strategies allowing one to feel more intrinsic motivation.

Context of Competitive Sport

Several researchers have examined psychological factors affecting competitive sport situations (Cerin, Szabo, Hunt, & Williams, 2000; Gould, Guinan, Greenleaf, Medbery, & Peterson, 1999; Mahoney, Gabriel, & Perkins, 1987; Woodman & Hardy, 2003). The most predominant ones appear to be anxiety and self-confidence.

Anxiety

Anxiety is often considered a prevailing psychological factor related to sport performance. It is generally characterized as an emotional state ensuing unpleasant feelings, thoughts, and physiological changes (Jones & Hardy, 1990; Raglin & Hanin, 2000; Spielberger, 1976). Thus anxiety could arguably lead people to dissociate from their dream feelings. Anxiety is viewed as a multipart construct encompassing a cognitive and physiological or somatic component (Hanin, 2000; Martens, Vealey, & Burton, 1990; Mellalieu, Hanton, & Jones, 2003; Naylor, Burton, & Crocker, 2002; Woodman & Hardy, 2003).

Understanding what causes anxiety and its intensity is essential to help athletes manage demanding situations. Research shows that perceived threat appears to be the primary antecedent of anxiety. Hammermeister and Burton (2001) suggest that perceived threat resulting from fear of failure, fear of negative social evaluation, and perceived inability to reach goals or expectations, is a primary antecedent of anxiety, and more specifically of cognitive anxiety. Newburg (2004) postulated that people must address their fears or at a minimum acknowledge them in order to be able to experience resonance.

Lowe and McGrath (1971, cited in Woodman & Hardy, 2003) found that perceived significance of a competition is associated to physiological arousal; the more significant it is, the higher the level of physiological arousal is. Other factors mediate the manifestation of anxiety, namely, self-confidence (Kjormo & Halvari, 2002), perception of readiness, attitude toward previous performance (Jones, Swain, & Cale, 1990), control (Gould, Horn, & Spreeman 1983; Lazarus, 1991), and coping resources (Lazarus, 1991).

Studies have generally shown that high levels of anxiety negatively affect sport performance and experience (Burton, 1988; Mahoney et al., 1987; Naylor et al., 2002; Skinner &

Brewer, 2004). However, there are individual differences in the experience of anxiety (Raglin & Hanin, 2000). Some authors have contended that one's affect and interpretation of anxiety must be considered to understand the relationship between anxiety and performance (Cerin et al., 2000; Jones & Hanton, 2001) or experience (Skinner & Brewer, 2004). Newburg (2004) contends that changing perception is often sufficient to eliminate, reduce, or overcome obstacles such as fear and anxiety.

Findings have shown that feeling “anxious” was frequently perceived by athletes as negative (Jones & Hanton, 2001) and had debilitating effects on their preparation and performance (Mellalieu et al., 2003). However, for those athletes who perceive their feelings of anxiety as positive because they feel ready and in control, competitive anxiety can have positive consequences on their performance (Jones & Hanton). Jones and Hanton thus suggest that personalized interventions aiming at reframing debilitating thoughts and feelings would be more beneficial than anxiety reduction programs. A resonance-based intervention is an individualized process that helps people to feel more in control and in harmony with their environment. It empowers individuals to effectively respond to obstacles, including debilitating thoughts and feelings (Durand-Bush et al., 2004b). Indeed, obstacles is a component in the RPM that leads people to address what inhibits or causes them to experience unwanted feelings in their daily life. Athletes have reported being more aware, in control, and better able to respond to setbacks by revisiting how they want to feel in their endeavours as a result of participating in a resonance-based intervention (Doell et al., 2003; Faubert et al., 2005; Soulard, 2003). These results are encouraging; thus it would be important to further examine the role of resonance in helping athletes respond to commonly observed obstacles in sport such as anxiety, fear, and lack of confidence, as it has not yet been done.

Self-Confidence

The second psychological factor commonly cited as affecting athletic experience and performance in competition is self-confidence. In the context of sport, self-confidence has been defined as the belief an athlete holds about her skills to be successful in sport (Vealey, 1986). This definition is similar to that of self-efficacy proposed by Bandura (1977), which is the belief one has about being capable of successfully executing a specific task and obtain a certain outcome. Authors have reported a strong relationship between self-confidence and athletic performance (Jones & Hanton, 2001). More specifically, high levels of self-confidence are associated with success in sports (Feltz, 1988). Self-confidence was also found to be more strongly related to competitive athletic performance than cognitive and somatic anxiety (Craft et al., 2003; Woodman & Hardy, 2003), which suggests that interventions should primarily aim to help athletes feel good about themselves and their ability to perform.

Skinner and Brewer (2004) propose that self-confidence also has an important impact on an athlete's emotional response. Likewise, Vealey (2001) depicted confidence as a modifier of how athletes feel, think, and respond to what they face, which is in accordance with Martens and colleagues' (1990) view that confidence produces positive emotions. Studies have also demonstrated that a high level of self-confidence protects one from the debilitating effects of cognitive and somatic anxiety (Hanton et al., 2002; Jones & Hanton, 2001; Kjormo & Halvari, 2002; Williams & Krane, 1998). Resonance is one way to help people create desired feelings and develop productive thoughts and responses. Again, increased feelings of not only control and readiness but also of confidence have been identified as a benefit of participating in a resonance-based intervention (Doell et al., 2003; Faubert et al., 2005; Soulard, 2003). Considering the role that confidence plays in competitive sport, these findings warrant further investigation.

In light of this review of literature, it is apparent that there is an increasing trend to examine the positive experiences of individuals in today's society. We can learn from those leading positive and fulfilling lives, however, the 'how to' of doing this is not clear. It thus becomes important to conduct research to understand what increases positive attributes such as well-being, positive affect, intrinsic motivation, and self-confidence in the domain of sport through intervention-based research. Studies on resonance have indicated that it can enhance these attributes, however, this process of 'how to' has not been fully demonstrated, arguably because it was examined using the post-positivist paradigm. Using the constructivist paradigm to guide future studies on resonance might prove to be valuable since this paradigm embraces the interaction between the researcher and participant. The researcher conducting a resonance-based intervention plays an important dual role, that is, as researcher and facilitator. To date, this role has not been sufficiently addressed. Documenting the experience of the participants and researcher/facilitator through a resonance-based intervention might be one way to fill this gap.

Purpose of the Study

The present study aimed to document three athletes' in-depth stories of engaging in a personalized resonance-based intervention. Specifically, it intended to examine their application of resonance and how this influenced their experience of their sport and life. The purpose of the study was left broad in order to be able to conduct a participant-driven intervention, let each athlete's story unfold, and allow the particularities of each athlete's resonance process to emerge. One question thus guided this study: How do athletes experience their sport and life as a result of developing and applying their own process of resonance through a personalized resonance-based intervention? This study was grounded in the constructivist paradigm to give place to the highly

individual, constructed stories of both the participants and the researcher/facilitator so that some light can be shed on their shared experience through the intervention.

The proposed study will make a valuable contribution to the research on resonance and the field of sport psychology. Theoretically speaking, this study further advances the knowledge on resonance as it presents three in-depth stories of athletes who have attempted to develop and experience their process of resonance through a personalized resonance-based intervention. These in-depth stories highlight the particularities of each athlete's experience, the 'how to' develop and apply their resonance process, and thus increase our understanding of what can be done to enhance the process of resonance. This study is also the first to be informed by the constructivist paradigm and to shed light on the role of the facilitator in the intervention. From a practical perspective, this study can help future researchers and consultants/facilitators better prepare to help individuals experience resonance. Athletes can also gain from this study by learning from other athletes' stories in which they share their experience with resonance.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This section provides detailed information concerning the paradigm, the participants, the methods and procedures used in this study. An account of difficulties faced and changes that were made as the research evolved is presented first.

Confession

As brought forth by Sparkes (2002), confessional tales “foregrounds the voice and concern of the researcher in a way that takes us behind the scenes of the ‘cleaned up’ methodological discussions” (p. 51). In this type of tale, the researcher openly presents what happened in her study from start to finish with the complexities, uncertainties, and difficulties it comprised. This is what I subsequently intend to do.

Although I did not extensively reflect on the problems and issues I could potentially face in this study, as a neophyte researcher, I realistically expected to face a few challenges and I did indeed. I started my research with the purpose to answer these research questions: (a) What impact does a resonance-based intervention have on the anxiety, self-confidence, intrinsic motivation and well-being of athletes before, during, and after competition? (b) What impact does this intervention have on their general daily life? (c) Does the process of resonance help athletes develop more productive responses in the face of adversity – why and how? Hence, my literature review reflected these questions and the factors I wished to explore. Furthermore, I intended to abide by the tenets of the post positivist paradigm to carry out my study, which imposed a certain rigidity to the whole process.

So I initiated the research with an interest in the influence of resonance on adversity and psychological factors related to competitive performance. I had formulated research questions

that focused on resonance more than the participants, I had prepared a number of interview questions to assess resonance and the factors of interest (see appendices B & C), and I naively expected everything to go as planned and to obtain clear answers to my research questions.

As I interacted with the athletes who took part in my study, kept reading about and discussing research, I learned much about my personal values concerning research and participants. I realised that for me, it was more important to listen to the athletes' stories and assist them as they self-explored through the intervention. I learned that they had a lot to say about their sport and their life, that the information they were sharing was meaningful to them, and that much could be learned from their personal stories. What seemed significant to them, however, did not necessarily allow me to answer the research questions I initially elaborated.

I had prepared a research agenda to develop a knowledge concerning adversities and psychological factors related to it. However, I quickly sensed that this was not necessarily central in the athletes' lives at the time of the intervention and it was not the best way to learn from them. I did inquire about anxiety, self-confidence, intrinsic motivation, and well-being, however, my inquiry into these factors did not generate the most important data, at least in my view. The athletes responded to these questions and I was able to situate their responses in light of the resonance process, however, I felt it was more pertinent and meaningful to let them guide the discussion. Resonance is about feeling the way you want to feel and I observed that the athletes 'lit up' much more when they initiated conversations and talked about relevant issues in their life, such as responding to obstacles, taking ownership of their resonance process, and learning about the role of feel and reflection in their life.

I experienced a certain discomfort in my interviews. To be exact, as the athletes talked about themselves and shared aspects of their life, I often wondered if I should bring their focus

back to the purpose of my research and the psychological factors I had initially proposed to examine, or if I should listen to the details and particularities of the stories they were sharing as they attempted to develop and apply resonance in their life. I was concerned about my responsibility to conduct the research I had initially proposed while at the same time trying to be truly supportive and attentive to the athletes' individual experiences. I knew I wanted to be myself in this research endeavour and that meant giving priority to the person. I thus chose to stay with them, focus on their experience of resonance, life, and sport, and learn from the stories they were so generously offering. As I listened, I paid attention to the 'how to', the way, the athletes were constructing and experiencing resonance and how this experience influenced their sport and life. In reality, I was developing an interest for questions different than those proposed. I was also developing my own genuine approach to facilitate the intervention.

A discussion with Pierre Trudel, a member of my thesis committee, allowed me to realize that the lessons I had learned since the beginning of the study were valuable but represented a shift of focus in my project. I also became conscious that the personal philosophy I was developing and the way I was going about my research in reality was much more in line with the constructivist paradigm. I believe this worldview fit better with the way I had been conducting the research since the beginning but the conversation allowed me to become aware of this. Possibly due to my previous training, I had had a tendency to formulate research questions and use a methodology that were more in line with the post-positivist paradigm although my intrinsic values and behaviours were in fact aligned with constructivism. I thus realized the importance of seriously questioning paradigms and personal views, as well as authenticity when developing and writing research documents.

The uncertainties I encountered urged me to reflect about the issues I was facing. This process allowed me to learn about myself, about my values and beliefs regarding research and those who participate in it. In that sense, the dilemmas I faced turned out to be an amazing learning opportunity for me. I made important changes in the early stages of my study and the lessons I have learned in this process are truly meaningful and I believe they allowed me to be myself in this project.

Research Paradigm

As I explained, I realized in the midst of my study that I was subscribing to the tenets of the constructivist paradigm rather those of post-positivism. Constructivists consider that reality is not an absolute but is relative to the individual or group creating it. This constructed reality is the product of the intellect and therefore is not fixed but multiple, intangible, experientially based, and more or less refined. It is created - and apprehendable - through the interaction between the inquirer and the person or group of individuals taking part in the inquiry. Constructivists seek the creation of more informed constructions and aspire to grasp the essence of these newly constructed realities (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) .

As detailed by Guba and Lincoln (1994), any research philosophy has consequences on the implementation of a study. A discussion of this philosophy and its influence on the methodology are of interest here. First, the aim of constructivist inquiries is the understanding, construction, and/or reconstruction of interpretations. It is believed that over time, people's constructions grow to be more sophisticated as they become more aware of the beliefs they hold and their meaning. Knowledge transpires through consensus between constructions or among those believed competent to interpret these constructions. Proponents of the constructivist paradigm maintain that knowledge accumulation consists of refinement of constructions through

the hermeneutical/dialectical process and that knowledge can be transferred through vicarious experience.

Constructivists view the inquirer as a facilitator in the process of understanding and creation of constructs. This relationship between participants and researcher brings up issues of ethics. The fact that participants share and elaborate constructions throughout a constructivist inquiry calls for a particular code of ethics concerning the researcher's behaviours and attitudes within the interactions. In this form of inquiry, the inquirer is also actively engaged in the creation of constructs. Finally, researchers adopting this philosophical view must understand the cultural context of their study, and must integrate altruism and empowerment in their work with participants.

The constructivist philosophy was most appropriate to address the revised purpose of this inquiry and was in line with my own personal philosophy and preferred way to conduct research. The current study predominantly looked at the personal experiences of athletes as they learned about and attempted to apply resonance in their sport and life. Potmesil and Rydl (1996) articulated that one's experience is a subjective "inner life" that is not accessible to others but can be expressed through speech and behaviours. The constructivist paradigm lends itself very well to the construction and expression of this inner life. Also, Hooper, Burwitz, and Hodkinson (2002) defend that people's emotional experiences are shaped by a variety of factors. Thus, they advocate using a broad qualitative approach when researching emotion and promote the use of a constructivist philosophy as it allows the elaboration and clarification of theoretical foundations of such concepts.

Participants

Three athletes participated in this study. The main selection criterion was their competing status, that is, they had to compete at a regional or provincial level. No specific delimitations were put forth concerning the type of sport they practised, however, they had to be involved in individual sports since this research project was part of a research program looking at resonance in individual sport contexts. The athletes were 27, 37, and 40 years old. Previous research has suggested that the capacity of reflection on life and oneself that comes with maturity facilitates the understanding and experience of resonance (Callary, 2004; Doell et al., 2003; Durand-Bush et al., 2004a; Faubert et al., 2005; Soulard, 2003). Finally, an attempt was made to recruit both male and female athletes but only male athletes responded to the letters of information that were distributed in different athletic centers. Participants were recruited on a volunteer basis from three different centers in the Ottawa region. They were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate in the study, thus they formed a convenience sample. This study did not seek generalization to a broader population of competing athletes but rather aimed to understand the athletes' experience of resonance.

The present study involved multiple interviews and daily journaling over a period of 12 weeks. Thus, the participants' commitment throughout this period of time was key for a successful intervention. I met with potential participants to discuss the purpose of the study and draw their attention to the commitment that was essential to ensure a profitable experience for everyone involved. The participants were assured that confidentiality and anonymity would be respected if desired. Those wishing to take part in the study were asked to sign a consent form approved by the Research Ethics Board of the University of Ottawa (see Appendix D). After

obtaining their consent, a first interview was scheduled to initiate the resonance-based intervention.

Researcher's Preparation

As the main researcher who implemented the resonance-based intervention, it was essential for me to understand resonance, discover my own process of resonance and apply it to my life in order to be able to comprehend the participants' progression and help them maximize their experience with resonance. Accordingly, in my first year with the resonance research team, I (a) developed and lived my process of resonance; (b) audited a selected topics course on resonance taught by my thesis supervisor; (c) read Dr. Newburg's (2004) book, "The Most Important Lesson No One Ever Taught Me"; and (d) discussed resonance, how to help someone implement it in his life, and my proposed research project with Dr. Newburg when he visited the University of Ottawa in November 2003, March 2004, and October 2004. I also followed a course titled "Counselling Skills and Approaches in Sport, Physical Activity, and Health" in which I acquired a sound knowledge base on interviewing and developed interviewing skills through observation and practise. As a result, I believe I had an accurate understanding of the concept of resonance and how to conduct research on it.

Finally, I conducted a pilot study with one athlete over a period of one month to familiarize myself with the resonance-based intervention and test the interview guides and procedures. This pilot study allowed me to maximize my confidence in my ability to ask meaningful questions that trigger reflection and help participants develop their process of resonance.

Data Collection Methods and Procedures

Using the constructivist paradigm, data was generated through the intervention that involved multiple resonance-based interviews away and at competition sites, and daily reflective journaling.

Resonance-Based Intervention

Resonance-Based Interviews

Each athlete participated in an individualized resonance-based intervention involving seven in-depth, semi-structured, open-ended interviews every second week over a period of 12 weeks. It requires time and effort to create and maintain one's process of resonance and fully experience its benefits (Newburg, 2004; Newburg et al., 2002). Based on previous resonance-based studies, 12 weeks appeared to be a reasonable period, allowing the athletes enough time to elaborate and live their own process (Callary, 2004; Doell et al., 2003; Durand-Bush et al., 2004a; Faubert et al., 2005; Soulard, 2003). The interviews were conducted every second week, giving the participants the opportunity to experience, reflect, revisit, and discuss their personal process of resonance, and share the reflections they had on a regular basis. Participants have reported in past studies that meeting with the researcher/facilitator to talk about resonance was a useful revisiting strategy (Doell et al., 2003).

Throughout the intervention, the RPM was used as a conceptual framework. Thus an interview guide (see Appendix B) was developed to trigger discussion and reflection regarding the four components of resonance and the psychological factors studied (i.e., anxiety, self-confidence, intrinsic motivation, and well-being) within the participants' competitive context and general life. However, topics addressed by the participants mainly guided the interviews. The reflection and discussion generated in these interviews helped the participants to construct a new

reality and experience as they learned about themselves and resonance in their sport and daily life. The interviews were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

The resonance-based interviews, although addressing certain themes, took the form of a casual conversation mainly guided by the participants. Through my interactions with them, I saw myself as a facilitator of reflection. By means of meaningful dialogue and probing, I sought to help the athletes gain information on who they were and why, and thus assist them in the construction or re-construction of their reality, as supported by the constructivist paradigm. I considered that, although I had a lot to offer given my training and knowledge of sport psychology and resonance, the athletes were the experts in the interviews. They were the experts of their stories and experiences and they were the main actors in creating their realities.

The perception I had of my role in the interviews and overall intervention was very much inspired by the client-centered humanistic approach (Rogers, 1949, 1957). Carl Rogers' counselling theories advocate the importance of appreciating and considering the client's perspectives and experiences. Of equal significance, this philosophy honours human strengths and values the recognition of an individual's capacities. Rogers also believed that each person is a responsible being having the potential to create his own internal comfort with appropriate support (Kirschenbaum, 2004). These viewpoints about clients and interactions with them are in line with my own beliefs and accordingly, my interactions with the athletes who participated in this inquiry were tinted by Rogers' work. I understood the worth and consequence of developing a positive, trusting, and supportive relationship with the individuals who accepted to partake in this study. Furthermore, in line with the constructivist paradigm, my role as facilitator was more than that of an interviewer, it was also to help them construct or reconstruct their reality through questioning and self-exploration.

“Paying attention” and critically looking at one’s life and internal world maximises the experience of resonance and learning opportunities (Newburg, 2004; Newburg et al., 2002). I was fully aware that the reflection entailed by this process could be threatening if it required addressing difficult issues, as Chaye (2000) stated. To support the participants in their construction or re-construction of reality, it was thus crucial that my attitude and behaviour reflect my empathy and unconditional positive regard toward them.

First interview. The discussion in the initial interview revolved around the participants’ stories of their life and sport and how they naturally experienced each of the four resonance components, if at all. I remained flexible to follow the natural flow of conversation. The interview began with broad introductory questions such as, “Tell me about yourself and your sport” and “Tell me why you engage in your sport.” I followed the course of the stories shared by using probes to help the participants develop relevant and meaningful ideas. Questions to explore the way they wanted to feel were then introduced (see Appendix B). To help the participants further discern their dream feeling, they were asked to recall an event in which they had felt like they wanted to feel and describe this feeling to the best of their ability. They were also encouraged to picture themselves or think about an image that best represented this feeling in their sport and describe why and how this image reflected the way they wanted to feel. According to Weiser (1990), pictures help people to get in contact with their inner images and feelings and thus facilitate their expression. The participants were asked to follow up on this mental representation of their desired feelings and find an image that they believed would help them connect with their dream feeling. Discussion of the feelings sought fueled more questions to assess the other three components of the RPM. See Appendix B for examples of questions that

were used to explore the participants' preparation, internal and external obstacles, and revisiting strategies.

At the end of this interview, I, together with the individual participant, summarized the information shared and attempted to construct the participant's personal model of resonance in two of the three cases, after which this model was inserted as the first page of his reflective journal. In one case, not enough information was obtained from the athlete within the first interview to initiate the development of his model of resonance. So in two of the three cases, the athletes were encouraged to make modifications to their model as they learned new information about themselves and the process of resonance. The first interview lasted between two to three hours.

Follow-up interviews. In light of the first interview and the daily reflective journaling, six subsequent interviews were conducted every second week following the first interview. This allowed to further develop and investigate the participants' experience of resonance and to facilitate their reflection on their life and sport. Discussion revolved around what participants felt, thought, and did since the last interview and what they learned about themselves. I also inquired about the psychological factors (i.e., well-being, anxiety, intrinsic motivation, and self-confidence) but did not push the discussion when the athletes chose to elaborate on other topics more useful or meaningful in their current daily life and sport. They were also invited to comment on the journaling process and describe their most and least resonating experiences. The follow-up interviews lasted between one to two hours.

Interviews at the competition site. Brief interviews were conducted with the participants before and after three competitions they had during the intervention period. These competitions were selected based on proximity and my availability to attend them. The athletes' application

and experience of resonance in a potentially stressful situation were discussed. During the interview prior to the competition, one broad question was asked: “How do you feel right now?” to generate a discussion about their subjective experience as they anticipated their event. One athlete preferred not to meet with me before his competitions. I thus asked him after the competition to recall and describe his state of being at the onset of the competition, making that interview question ex-post facto. The two other participants instinctively engaged in detailed discussion about how they felt, their thoughts, and their preparation for the competition. The athletes were in no way and at no time pressured to participate in a pre- or post-competition interview.

The interviews after the competition were semi-structured and more detailed. In fact, an interview guide (see Appendix C) was developed to explore the participants’ use and application of resonance. Specifically, I asked the athletes to talk about their competition, in particular, how they felt and if and how they used resonance. I also invited them to comment on their experience of anxiety, self-confidence, motivation, and well-being. These pre- and post-competition interviews lasting anywhere between 10 to 30 minutes were conducted in a non-intrusive manner within two hours before and after a competition and were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim for analysis. An attempt was made to attend to as many competitions as possible during the intervention period but I was able to attend three competitions with each participant.

Journal

At the end of the first aforementioned interview (away from the competition site), the participants were shown how to complete a daily reflective journal (see Appendix E) in which they could monitor their experience of resonance, reflections and lessons throughout the intervention. Two of the three athletes inserted their personalized resonance model in this journal

to guide their reflections. The resonance journal included reflective questions relating to Newburg's (2004) book, "The Most Important Lesson No One Ever Taught Me" (see Appendix F). The participants were also offered Newburg's book as an additional reflective tool. They were invited to read one chapter per week and encouraged to reflect on the content of this chapter and the accompanying reflective questions as they completed their daily journal. One participant chose not to complete the journal and therefore, I addressed the journal reflective questions in our interviews.

The journal included a daily resonance profile, daily reflections and lessons learned, and rating scales assessing their (a) overall daily level of resonance, (b) overall daily level of anxiety, (c) overall daily level of self-confidence, (d) overall daily level of intrinsic motivation, (e) overall daily level of well-being, (f) overall level of resonance in competition (when applicable), (g) overall level of anxiety in competition (when applicable), (h) overall level of self-confidence in competition (when applicable), (i) overall level of intrinsic motivation in competition (when applicable), and (j) overall level of well-being in competition (when applicable). These scales were not meant to generate data to be analyzed in the study but mainly to help the athletes increase their awareness and track the way they felt throughout the intervention. Previous studies have shown that the journal is a valuable tool for ongoing reflection and self-awareness (Doell et al., 2003; Newburg et al., 2002). Journaling required 10 to 15 minutes at the end of each day. Help and support in regards to the journaling exercise were provided during the multiple interviews.

Post-Intervention Interview

The participants' experience throughout the study and their overall impressions of the resonance-based intervention were discussed in an eighth interview that was held four weeks

after the end of the resonance-based intervention. The athletes were asked if they had been (a) applying the process of resonance in their sport and general life, (b) engaging in the journaling process, and (c) deriving benefits and lessons from the study.

Qualitative Data Analysis Procedures

All of the interviews conducted with the participants were transcribed verbatim with the exception of grammatical corrections that were made to enhance the flow of the text. The transcripts were given to the participants for authentication purposes. The data generated from the interviews were analyzed twice using a different approach. First, after authentication, the transcripts were closely revised and pieces of text regarding the athletes' experience of resonance and the variables under study were categorised using a deductive approach. In this process, I also concurrently used an inductive approach to allow meaningful themes to emerge from the participants' responses. Particular attention was given to their reflections and lessons drawn throughout the intervention period to understand their experience of resonance, how it developed over time, how they applied their personal process of resonance, and how this influenced their experiences in their sport and daily life. As I did this type of analysis, it felt more mechanical and I did not feel like it would allow me to adequately present each athlete's in-depth story. Hence, I decided to do a narrative analysis of each case and this, in combination with the previous type of analysis, allowed me to give a detailed account of their experience in this study (see results in two articles presented in the results section). Their daily journals were also examined to triangulate the data with that collected during the interviews. A detailed, thorough analysis of the qualitative component of the journal entries was not done as the journals were more intended to be used as a personal reflective tool.

Steps to Enhance Trustworthiness and Authenticity

Several procedures were followed to maximize the trustworthiness and authenticity of this study. First, I believe that there is transparency in this document, that is the paradigm, research questions, and procedures were clearly stated and described, and changes that were made through the course of the study were clearly highlighted. Second, context-rich and meaningful thick descriptions of the participants' experience with resonance were obtained, which allowed me to not only make reliable interpretations when analysing the qualitative data but also share the intricacies of their stories. These detailed descriptions of the sample, methods, and results provided allow readers to assess the generalizability of the results to other contexts or samples. Additional procedures also enhanced the validity of the study: (a) member checking, wherein participants reviewed the transcripts of their interviews allowing them to make changes if necessary. One participant was even involved in analyzing and writing one of the articles for the thesis (b) peer debriefing, whereby I met bi-weekly with my thesis supervisor and other student researchers involved in research on resonance, and (c) triangulation of the data collected from the interviews and journals. As the main researcher, I had also been properly trained to implement the resonance-based intervention. Finally, a pilot study served to refine methods and procedures and allowed me to make necessary adjustments.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The results section of this thesis is presented in the form of two articles. The first article, titled “Three Athletes’ Stories With Resonance: A Multiple Case Study”, is intended to be published in *The Qualitative Report*. The second article, titled “ ‘You Have to Let Go to Hold On’: A Rockclimber’s Reflective Process Through Resonance” will be submitted to the *Reflective Practice journal*.

ARTICLE 1:

THREE ATHLETES' STORIES WITH RESONANCE: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY

ARTICLE 1: THREE ATHLETES' STORIES WITH RESONANCE: A MULTIPLE CASE
STUDY

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THREE ATHLETES' STORIES WITH RESONANCE: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY

Abstract

Resonance is a process in which individuals identify how they want to feel, engage in activities enabling them to feel that way, recognize obstacles that defers desired feelings, and reconnect with the way they want to feel when they are disengaged (Newburg, 2004; Newburg, Kimiecik, Durand-Bush, Doell, 2002). In essence, resonance is about living life purposefully and mindfully. The purpose of this article is to present three individuals' experience and application of resonance and how this process influenced their experience of their sport and life. Three male athletes competing in triathlon, rock climbing, and speed skating took part in an intervention consisting of multiple resonance-based interviews, daily journaling, and reading a book. The aim of the intervention was to help each athlete develop his resonance process by increasing his self-awareness and knowledge and learning to apply resonance in his sport and life thus allowing him to feel the way he wanted to feel more consistently. Each athlete's experience and application of resonance was unique which emphasizes the need to develop personalized interventions. The athletes reported that through the intervention, they increased their self-awareness, learned to respond to internal and external obstacles, and felt more in control, confident, and responsible for their actions in their sport and life. Their story with resonance also sheds light on the role of reflection and ownership in the application of resonance. As well, it helped further clarify the central components of resonance.

Authorship Considerations

I am fully aware that writing an article is ultimately a process in which authors convey their perception of happenings they witnessed. I recognize that this communication is a construction based on my personal experience with those who participated in this research and

my genuine understanding of what they went through. Rather than trying to create a sense of neutrality, I used the first person article “I” and “me” in this paper, to convey the idea that I, the main author of this text, am not simply a person creating a text (Tierney, 1997). Not only was I present throughout this research project; I participated in it as the facilitator of the intervention. As a result I can offer my views and understanding of three individuals’ experience with resonance. I want to indicate, however, that all participants read this article and when writing the final version, I considered their impressions and thoughts about my interpretations. As suggested by Lincoln (1997), I believe participants should have the opportunity to choose how they are presented in publications.

The present study occurred from August 2004 to March 2005 in the context of my master’s thesis in Human Kinetics with a specialization in sport psychology. Much preparation led to the realization of this project. In my first year into the master’s program, I furthered my understanding of resonance by reading and reflecting on it, developing and living my own process of resonance, and discussing the concept and how to help someone apply it with my thesis supervisor, research team, and Dr. Doug Newburg. In terms of theory, I had followed courses on resonance and on counseling theories and interviewing skills. In the context of this class, I became highly interested by Rogers’s client-centered approach. After much reading, discussion, and reflection on the topic, and as I gained experience through a pilot study, I developed an interviewing style focused on respecting and valuing the person’s experiences and exploring their potential.

Context of the Study

In the field of sport psychology, researchers and consultants are putting more and more emphasis on the lived experiences of athletes and do not merely focus on performance (Cox, 2001; Potmesil & Rydl, 1996). For instance, Serpa and Rodriguez (2001) recognize that performance enhancement is often the purpose of sport psychology, however, they believe the process gains meaning when its aim begins with broadening the individual's self-awareness and self-knowledge. In the same line of idea, Henschen (2001) explains that he does not work with "performers." Instead, his holistic approach allows him to grasp the person's general experience as he opens up to the social, intellectual, spiritual, as well as performance spheres of life. This shift of focus is in line with the renewed interest in positive psychology, "a science of positive subjective experience, positive individual traits, and positive institutions" (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 5) and a movement of research devoted to understanding what helps people live positive human experiences and an overall fulfilling life.

Athletic experiences are more than performances; they are deep, rich, and meaningful aspects of life. As suggested in Zuckerman's (1983) work, sport participation is usually driven by a desire to experience new and unusual sensations, excitement, and stimulation through the mind and senses. To appreciate sport experiences, other authors use the Openness to Experience concept (Diehm and Armtas, 2004). They measure athletes' openness to experience by appraising characteristics of fantasy, aesthetics, feelings, actions, ideas and values. Their perspective is also broad and allows capturing the individuals' holistic experience. Furthermore, Anderson (2001) proposes that the freeing and dynamic nature of sports provides individuals with the possibility to reawake their inner wild self and recover their humanity consisting of freedom, agency, and creativity. One approach that allows tapping into the complexity of human

experience and fits in the current trend of positive psychology is the concept of resonance (Newburg, 2004; Newburg et al., 2002).

Resonance is a process in which people design their life to feel the way they want to feel as consistently as possible (Newburg, 2004; Newburg et al., 2002). In this holistic and dynamic process, individuals identify their dream feeling, which represents the way they want to feel on a daily basis. They then establish preparation strategies to experience their dream feeling as consistently as possible. They also recognize obstacles that may get in the way of their dream feeling and envisage strategies to reconnect with the way they want to feel when obstacles distance them from their dream feeling. To elucidate the process of resonance, Newburg proposed a visual representation, the Resonance Performance Model (RPM; Newburg, 2004; Newburg et al., 2002).

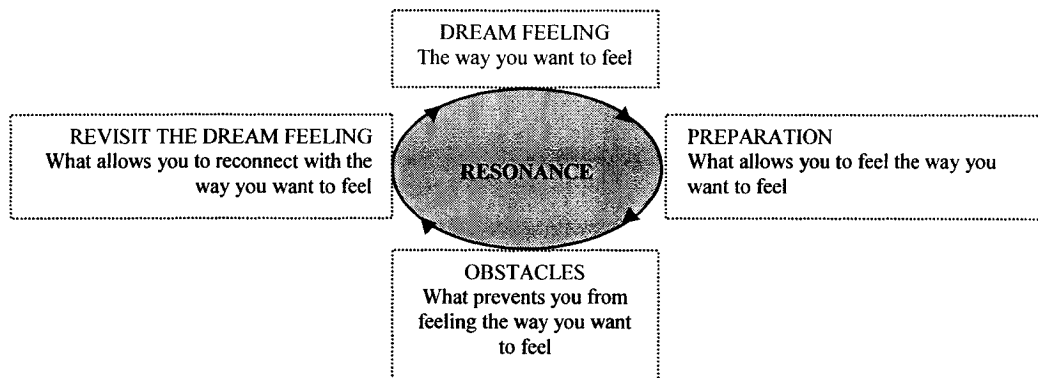


Figure 1. The Resonance Performance Model (Newburg et al., 2002)

Some authors describe feelings as the subjective experience of emotions (Vallerand & Blanchard, 2000). Others offer a broader conceptualization of it. For instance, Damasio (1994) believes that, although all emotions generate feelings, feelings do not necessarily originate through emotions. Some feelings, like “the sense of being,” are ever-present “background” feelings that are not created through emotion. Denzin (1984) talked about “self-feelings,” which

he described as bodily felt sensations that take form through intentional focus and reflection into the self and one's connection to the world. Similar to these views, the dream feeling emerges from continued introspection and intentionality, and reflects the person as a whole (Newburg, 2004; Newburg et al., 2002).

The Resonance-Based Intervention

In this article, I will describe to the best of my understanding three men's experience with resonance. Specifically, I will illustrate how each athlete applied resonance in his life and how this process influenced his experience of his sport and life. The athletes took part in a resonance-based intervention aimed at helping each of them pay attention to his daily living to increase self-awareness and knowledge, reflect on and question his fundamental values, beliefs, and habits, and develop and apply his personal resonance process in his sport and life. This intervention consisted of multiple resonance-based interviews, daily journaling, and reading a book. The semi-structured, in-depth resonance-based interviews typically revolved around the athlete's resonance model, but were shaped by what occurred in his athletic and daily life and specific topics he wished to address.

I facilitated seven interviews with each individual approximately every second week over a period of three to four months. These meetings lasted between one to three hours depending on the person and the events taking place in his life. I also met with each individual for a post-intervention interview four weeks after the last resonance-based interview to discuss his general experience and application of resonance. Moreover, I attended three competitive events with each athlete where we had brief, non-intrusive interviews on the site of competition and discussed if and how the athlete applied resonance in his competitive events. All our exchanges took the form of casual discussions. As the facilitator of the intervention, I played a considerable

role in it. Through interactions and discussions, I assisted the participants in the elaboration of their personal resonance process by helping them pay attention to their life and implement resonance in their athletic and general life.

To live resonance, it is necessary for individuals to pay attention to how their life feels and the particularities of their existence. Self-awareness is central to the process of resonance because it allows people to elaborate a process that is truly representative of their reality, giving them a strong foundation from which to work (Newburg, 2004; Newburg et al., 2002). In addition to our by-weekly discussions, I encouraged the athletes to engage in daily reflective journaling and read a book on resonance written by Newburg (2004) to help them develop self-awareness. I developed reflective questions for each chapter in the book to nurture their reflections, however, these merely served as aids that were not imposed on the athletes. As illustrated by Arcand, Durand-Bush, and Miall (2005), the introspection entailed by resonance can be threatening and demanding, as it normally requires addressing difficult issues such as fears and personal obstacles. For this reason, I was supportive and nonjudgmental, and remained available as the athletes explored their life and ready to talk through questions or concerns they had in regards to their resonance process.

A recurrent theme in the discussion of resonance is its individualistic, particularized nature. Much difference distinguishes every human being. Every person's desires, perspectives, needs, values, ingrained beliefs, strengths, weaknesses, and fears are singular and specific to them. Consequently, each person's resonance model including dream feelings differ greatly. Moreover, a person's experience of resonance will also depend on what he is willing to work for. For instance, moving beyond one's obstructive thoughts, and mindless habits or mechanisms is challenging and involves continuous conscious effort (Newburg, 2004).

The resonance-based intervention was individualized, therefore, unique to each athlete. In this intervention, my focus was on the person's experience and story. I respected each athlete's rhythm and readiness to address reflective issues relating to resonance. I also made a conscious effort not to hold any expectations of the athlete or the intervention itself. I aimed to always stay with him and never insisted he moved faster than he wished. For instance, if he had difficulty making sense of certain life experiences, we would navigate around this topic to further his awareness and understanding of it before moving on to deeper or more complex topics. In that sense, the intervention proved to be very different for the three individuals who participated in the study.

The Athletes' Stories

In the next pages, I will bring to light the predominant aspects of the participants' experience with resonance. Specifically, I will present how each athlete applied resonance in his life and how this process influenced his athletic and general experiences. I do have my own interpretation of what the athletes went through in the intervention and I will offer it. However, to allow the readers to make their own interpretations of the athletes' experiences, I included a large amount of quotes in this publication.

Mark, Jody, and Kevin, the three men who took part in this research project were essentially three very different individuals. They had different lifestyles, practiced different sports at different levels of competition, and engaged in sports for different reasons. They all lived in the Ottawa region, in Canada and practiced individual sports. Resonance being a personalized process, each intervention was thus distinctive and specific to the athlete. Consequently, the tone of each case study presented here is particular due to the prominence of quotes reflecting the color of each individual and his intervention. The pseudonym "Mark" was

given to the first participant to insure his confidentiality. The other two, Jody and Kevin, wished to keep their real name in this publication.

Mark

The first participant was a 40 year old triathlete. He had been competing in regional triathlons since 1998. He engaged in it to feel good, stay in shape and because he enjoyed the intensity of the training it required and spending time outdoors. His training represented 12 to 15 hours per week. He had been an athlete since his teenage years, at which point he competed in cycling. Mark received my letter of information (see Appendix A) through the e-mail list of the club where he trained, contacted me to learn more about the study, and decided to participate in it.

In terms of the intervention, Mark met with me every second week for interviews over a period of 12 weeks. These interviews occurred in a consultation center at the University of Ottawa where I studied. Mark completed the daily journaling in which he reflected on events of the day explaining how he felt as he faced certain situations. He also read most of the book provided but eventually stopped because of time constraint and because he didn't identify with the characters in the book. Finally, it is important to mention that since both Mark and I are French, our conversations were in French. I translated the citations presented here and Mark carefully read them to authenticate the text.

In the first interview, Mark gave many details regarding all four components of the RPM based on the questions I asked him and with this information, we started to piece together the beginnings of his personal resonance model (see Appendix B). However, as the intervention progressed, his model became more and more in depth and complete (see Appendix C). The visual representation of his process was a tool he used in his application of resonance. Mark

revisited his model from time to time and made modifications to it as he was becoming more self-aware.

To better understand Mark's experience through the intervention, it is important to take into consideration major struggles he faced at the time of the study. Difficulties at work and in his personal life were shared as we interacted in the context of this research. His long-term struggle to get his permanent full time status at work created situations stirring up anxiety and anger in him. In addition to this, a month after the start of the intervention, he learned he would soon have to work on contract and from home. In regards to this upcoming change, he felt powerless and worried.

In our third meeting, Mark disclosed he was developing feelings for his training partner who could not get involved with him due to religious beliefs. His interest in Jane [pseudonym] seemed fairly deep. Throughout the 12-week period in which we interacted, this situation developed but the issue remained unsettled, which proved to be draining for Mark. These professional and personal circumstances became predominant and challenging in his life, as exemplified in the next lines.

Isabelle Can you talk about a moment where you didn't feel like you wanted to feel?

Mark That would be about three quarters of the last three weeks. There are always frustrating things going on. At work there's a lot of surveillance, suspicion and it's de-motivating because I don't see the end. In triathlon there are no competitions now and this problem with my knee slows me down. My relationship with Jane is very hard. [...] I'm dealing with

these personal problems and I was almost depressed for two weeks, I can hardly concentrate, read, write, and I have very little energy.

Given that Mark was going through difficulties and wished to address these issues in our interviews, a substantial part of his intervention revolved around his work and relationship with Jane. Thus, the representation of his experience extends beyond the athletic context here.

By our seventh interview, Mark had started seeing a counselor to help him sort out the sentimental and professional circumstances he was facing. He said he was in a period of introspection and he used his maintenance training as “therapy training”. When we met for the post-intervention interview, he was in the middle of a four-day retreat, which allowed him to spend time alone and focus on himself.

Much of Mark’s experience in this resonance-based intervention involved responding to major obstacles in his life and other daily hurdles he faced. For instance, he reported experiencing feelings of anger from time to time, which usually disorganized him, and certainly distanced him from his desired feelings of pleasant energy, relaxation, freedom, flexibility, and confidence.

Mark When I’m busy being angry, I can’t concentrate as much on my intensity. I don’t rest as much. I don’t focus on calming down and breathing. When you’re mad, you’re disorganized and not in control of what you can do. Anger wears me out. [...] It can be destructive when it is directed at me.

However, after a race I attended at week 8 of the intervention, he talked about how he was able to apply his process in a competitive event. This citation shows that he was becoming

able to respond to his feelings of anger and avoid getting too distracted from a perceived obstacle.

Mark I lost a bit of time on the bike. [...] I was a bit annoyed, there were a handful of volunteers and no one could tell me where to go.

Isabelle You've talked before about how you would get angry when races are not well planned and how your anger could disorganize your race. But today that didn't happen.

Mark Exactly, exactly. No. I guess I worked on that. Writing in my journal helps me become conscious of this kind of things that happen in me. And eventually I guess you can act on your thoughts to reorganize them and change your emotions for more positive ones.

Similarly, in the fifth interview, he disclosed an empowering view concerning the aversive feelings he was experiencing. In his sport and daily life, it seemed that learning how to respond to his initial negative responses to obstacles allowed him to feel more in control and be able to take action rather than be victimized by his setbacks.

Isabelle Would you say this obstacle is internal?

Mark It's still an external factor but it can be hard on your morale.

Isabelle And did you feel you had a certain control over the situation or your reaction to it?

Mark The control I had on my reaction was to spend less time ruminating on the situation, which was imposed anyway, and spend more time trying to find solutions and doing something.

In the sixth interview, Mark recounted an episode in which he was less efficient in responding to his feelings of anger than he had been earlier in the intervention.

Mark I brought my home computer at work. I needed to transfer files on it.

The next day, I was going back with my stuff and the security guy at the door said “You need to fill out these papers to leave with this.” [...] I said, “This is MY computer, I’m going to work from home with MY equipment and PISS off!” [...] I’m trying to do everything I can to work from home and not use their space but people don’t get that because the organization is too big and you don’t have any power.

Isabelle At that moment, do you think you could have done something to minimize your feelings of anger or respond to them?

Mark I have to say I didn’t. No [...] Sometimes when there’s too much accumulated frustrations, it uncorks on something like that. [...] What happens too is that my personal, sentimental life is not going well either. I was fighting off in many aspects of my life and so my guards fell down and my anger blew up. I was tired too and I don’t react as well when I’m tired.

At the time of this incident, situations at work and with Jane were not getting resolved and this drained him. Seemingly, all this put together got the better of him and he wasn’t able to make use of the lessons and tools he had recently learned. He got caught in the obstacle preparation loop, in which he worked harder to quickly resolve the problem but didn’t take the time to revisit his dream feeling. Newburg indicates that responding to internal obstacles, that is, initial emotional responses, is the first and key step to effectively deal with external obstacles. It

is not necessarily instinctive, however, since paying attention to how we feel takes time and energy (Newburg, 2004; Newburg et al., 2002).

As he recalled these events, Mark seemed to be reliving the emotions he encountered when the incident happened. Interestingly, as we continued to discuss his tiredness and how much control he had over his rest and so possibly over his reactions and feelings of anger, his attitude changed drastically. He calmed down very quickly and became very open and interested.

In the fourth interview, Mark shared an important realization he made about his resonance process and the meaning of “being himself” in his life.

Mark I added to my model “to be myself.” And I’d also say to love myself.

When I’m not able to appreciate myself or when my self-esteem is low, I’m not in my dream feeling. When I’m not able to love myself, I’m not being myself, it’s not “me, that I’m bringing to work” [notion from resonance material presented to him].

He started to pay more attention to his desire to be himself and in the fifth interview, he shared an important lesson regarding the fact that he sought others’ approval to the point that he occasionally forged his dream feeling according to what he thought others expected from him.

Mark Sometimes I can even establish my dream feeling according to what others expect from me.

Isabelle Is that something over which you have a certain control, that you could eventually modify?

Mark Well yes, and one way to do this I think would be to defuse this way of thinking. To see the other person as another human being, not a god or someone who knows everything and is perfect.

Isabelle To get a sense of equality?

Mark Yes and when we take away these hierarchies, artificial hierarchies, it's easier. [...] It eliminates a lot of pressure and anxiety.

He eventually realized that the cost of obtaining approval from others outweighed its benefits.

Mark People give me advice, you should do this with Jane, you should do that.

Isabelle And you, what do you think you should do?

Mark I think I should be myself. Since August, I really tried to understand her, to be there for her. But the thing is, I lost myself in the way. [...] I need to protect myself.

Social acceptance and fitting in can be reassuring (Newburg, 2004), however, the cost of not being himself was too high for Mark. He decided he needed to be himself and to protect himself and the way he wanted to feel. One way for him to do this was to remind himself of the choices he made in his life and thus the control he had in a number of situations.

Mark Instead of banging my head against the wall I do something else. If it's not working that day, it'll go another day. In the past years, I got so used to killing myself at trying and just getting myself in deeper water. And you know what? This isn't part of my dream feeling.

Isabelle It's interesting what you're saying. We talked about designing your life, and making choices to feel better, it's exactly what you're doing then.

Mark Yes. I'm realizing that we always have a choice. We think we don't have a choice, like before, I thought I was stuck in "There's only 7 days in a week" kind of thing. The week before my last race, there were two days

where I didn't run but I took this time to relax and do mental preparation like reminding myself that I can do this.

Isabelle Before you thought you didn't have a choice and you forced yourself to do things and you seem to have changed your perspective on that. What do you think that does in your life?

Mark Well I'm learning to love myself unconditionally. I'm working on that, on the fact that my self-esteem and self worth is not affected by the fact that I skipped one training session. That's ok, I don't need to feel guilty.

He furthered his reflections on the issue and kept learning about it. In the post-intervention interview, his thoughts had evolved.

Mark In a race, you accept everything that's going on. You took a contract with the race. You agreed to it. You accepted to do this race.

Isabelle It was your decision to start with.

Mark Yes and there's all that notion of choice. You can choose to do the race and you can choose not to. You can choose to work there, or not to. So realizing I made a choice, acceptance is easier because with a choice comes consequences.

Mark learned much about how to be himself and as he applied these lessons to his life and sport, he recognized that he did have some control in his life. Connecting with his sense of control allowed him to be himself, to love himself, and to respect himself. In that sense, his application of resonance has had a tremendous influence on his experience of life and sport. However, in the face of major obstacles in his life, it was hard for him to feel in control:

Mark It's the big boss who decides. I don't have any control over that. That's out of my control. All I can do is to be patient and shift my attention. [...] The only thing I have control over is what I do, how I organize my things, and do what I have to do.

In such a demanding time, it was difficult for Mark to take a step back, pay attention to what he was feeling, and remind himself that he did have control over his emotional response to the obstacles he was facing.

Through this intervention, Mark learned to respond to his feelings of anger, which allowed him to feel more in control and be able to be productive in the face of adversity. This was important because it allowed him to avoid the detriments of undesired feelings in his sport and at work. In instances where obstacles accumulated, it became hard for him to take a step back to revisit and apply the strategies he had elaborated to reconnect with the way he wanted to feel. An important lesson we can draw from this, is that it is one thing to know how you want to feel but it is another to make it happen consistently on a daily basis. However, in Mark's case, recognizing and taking responsibility of his resonance process allowed him to be himself and accept more the happenings of his daily life.

Jody

Jody, the second athlete who participated in this study was a rock climber. At 27 years old, Jody had already dedicated 15 years of his life to rock climbing and competed at the regional and national level. At the time of the intervention, he was ranked number one in Canada for the first time. He had a keen passion for rock climbing and cared to contribute to making it a well recognized and respected sport. He was involved in a long-term relationship and worked full time at a rock gym in Ottawa. He trained 15 to 20 hours per week on his own, which meant he

had to self-motivate and create structure for himself. This represented a challenge at some points in his competitive season, which lasted from early November to late May. I had dropped off a letter of information (see Appendix A) at the gym where Jody trained and worked. He contacted me for further information about the study and was interested to participate in it.

A few months before participating in this project, Jody had faced important difficulties in his life. He had taken some time to ponder over these life experiences and had already made a conscious decision to implement changes in his life and to move forward. As we started the intervention, Jody was ready to do the work required to make the progress he was seeking in his life. This level of readiness allowed him to push himself, and take his resonance process to a deep and complex level.

Early on, Jody mentioned that he hoped participating in this study would help him reconnect with his will, “his hunger to push” as he felt it eluded him. He also wished to be able to “turn it on” and be able to “perform on command” as competitive indoor rock climbing is a sport in which athletes climb at a specific time and have only minutes to “send” routes. It was clear from the beginning that Jody was a reflective person and as a result, he knew himself, his strengths, desires, and obstacles pretty well. He also believed mental and emotional skills played an important role in his life and performance domain.

Jody and I partook seven resonance-based interviews over a period of 16 weeks. We met roughly every second week, except during the Christmas holidays. Our discussions also took place in a consultation center at the University of Ottawa. Jody also engaged in daily journaling. In his journal, he briefly related events of his day and included reflections regarding these events, the way they made him feel, and how he managed his responses to them. He enjoyed the book, read it all, and drew important lessons from it.

Coming in to our first interview, Jody had a lot to say about climbing and himself. In this first discussion, he shared meaningful pieces of his story, which allowed us to detail the three first components of his resonance model, that is his dream feeling, preparation strategies, and obstacles preventing him to feel the way he wanted to feel (see Appendix D). However, he did not instinctively know how to reconnect with the way he wanted to feel in the face of obstacles. Through the 16-week period in which we interacted, Jody had many realizations, some allowing him to further his model (see Appendix E) and knowledge of applying resonance in his life, others leading him to make sense of his experiences. Jody did not use the visual representation of his model in his daily application of his process. He invested in reflection to learn about resonance and himself, and he actively applied these lessons in his life and sport. He was conscious of his process but did not rely on its visual depiction.

As early as the first meeting, Jody shared that the core of resonance was in line with his beliefs about rock climbing.

Isabelle Can you tell me, feeling the way you want to feel, the “right in” [his own words], the confidence [his own words], everything you want to feel, what influence do you think that has on your climbing?

Jody That’s the performance right there. On a day when I’m climbing and it’s just my body climbing, then I’m just on the same level as anyone else.

When my head’s on, that’s when I feel like I’m excelling.

In a competition, taking place early in the intervention, Jody talked about how he applied resonance in a competitive context:

Jody I wasn’t climbing light or floating [part of his dream feeling] but what I had going was good. I was definitely in the groove. I felt solid. I wasn’t

intimidated by the problems. I wasn't worrying about other people, or how I was going to do, or how I just did. I felt pretty just in the moment the whole time. I noticed it too.

This illustrates that Jody was learning to pay attention and recognize for instance when he felt in the moment. In the sixth interview, he talked about how he mindfully applied resonance in his life and the influence this had on his daily experiences.

Jody Now it seems like applying resonance has allowed me to be more positive more often. That sounds so simple but it encompasses everything. It covers so much. It's like turning all that fear energy into love. Once you tap into it, it just perpetuates itself. Once you start turning things around and taking steps and applying it more often, you get ten times more energy.

Isabelle Is that what resonance means to you? Turning the fear into love?

Jody Yes. Overall I would have to put it that way. It does. It turns the fear into love. I think that takes it down to the simplest form.

In the post-intervention interview he shared:

Jody This resonance, it's always there, all the time. The degree of it is going to be up to me. And that's where you can take control. So, I guess, what this has allowed me to do is to take control of that, take responsibility of that and therefore, increase the amount of resonance I have. In everything. And it plays off each other. It's that upward spiral we talked about. You work on one aspect and it reflects in the other, and that one

reflects back. In turn, you just build up and up and up. I think that's really helped me rebuild since I started.

It appears that Jody invested regularly in reflection about the ideas I was offering him and he eventually verbalized a meaningful definition to explain how resonance applied in his life. He took ownership of the process and applied resonance to his life in ways that were meaningful to him.

Taking responsibility of his resonance process was a central element in Jody's story. He relied on himself and actively strived to feel the way he wanted to feel and better himself as a person and climber. He quickly learned he could respond to internal obstacles and applied this to his sport and life. After a competitive event he shared:

Jody I made some errors in the opening round. Mentally I just wasn't that great. [...] I did really well as far as keeping with myself.

Isabelle So you were able to respond...

Jody Yes. Pretty quickly. Things turned around. I was never mad either. I never felt like I wanted to go home or I hated it. No real negativity.

Isabelle Do you think you applied resonance in your event today?

Jody Yes. Not in a way that I was resonating [fully experiencing his dream feeling] but more that I was consciously trying to get myself into a good state, to feel good.

As the intervention progressed, reconnecting with his dream feeling became more and more natural for Jody as he conveyed:

Isabelle The obstacles that you face, do they have an influence on your anxiety for example?

Jody Only if I let it. That is what's so cool about this. It can if I let it. Sometimes it does but more and more I'm able to turn it around fast. Or it doesn't even come up. Sometimes I realize, "before I would have been upset" and now I just don't. It's not even effort I put in. It's just, my process is slowly changing. And I like that.

Isabelle So, by responding to an obstacle or your initial reaction to it, do you automatically reconnect with the way you want to feel?

Jody More and more. I can't say that I every time automatically reconnect but more and more. And it's easier. Often I don't even get disconnected in the first place or it's quick, I catch myself and reconnect. For the most part yes.

In our seventh meeting, Jody specifically talked about how he developed an ability to effectively respond to obstacles he faced, particularly undesired feelings like fear and anger, and how accepting these feelings, being true to himself, and putting things into perspective were part of reconnecting to his dream feeling.

Jody What I have been doing more often is to take a step back and try to detach myself from the situation, to look at it for what it is and try and decide "How important is this for me to get upset about it?" and "Why am I perceiving it as something to get upset about and what can I do to change that?" [...] It's a lot easier sometimes to get mad, it's a lot easier to hate something. It's sometimes harder but worth it in the end to stop and get over yourself, that's a big thing, but it's easy though, and say "OK, you're not that cool, that you're allowed to let this wreck your day.

Calm down and get back to work. Like guy, it's rock climbing, you're not saving the world here." That's been a major thing, it's so simple too. And that's where the baby steps you know, real steps come in. It's not going to be some huge thing where I just say "I decided I will never be afraid again" that's bullshit. I'm going to get afraid and angry and scared but it's identifying that I am and why I am and being really honest with myself about it that is going to help me.

This citation is a great example illustrating that all feelings or emotions have a function in life. The resonance approach does not advocate denying or running away from undesired feelings. Rather, it empowers individuals to recognize them, embrace them, and respond to them in an effective and efficient way so that energy levels can be conserved to engage in more preparation. As exemplified in the above excerpt, Jody used self-talk to work through undesired feelings and reconnect with the way he wanted to feel.

Jody learned other valuable lessons regarding control, responsibility, and ownership, as illustrated in the next quotes.

Isabelle Can you tell me what are the most important lessons you learned in the past few months about how to facilitate your dream feeling?

Jody One is that I have way more control, actually all of the control over a situation, not in that I can change it but in how I choose to perceive it, how I choose to accept it or choose to react to it. If I decide that something goes negatively that's my choice in the time. Whether I like it or not. And that was hard to figure out.

Isabelle That's the responsibility you were talking about before?

Jody Yeah it's responsibility but it's also really empowering to know that. You don't feel out-of-control then. But if it's not a situation to be controlled, it's a situation that I need to change my perception of and how I react to it. That's the thing I didn't know a few months ago, I wasn't really able to see.

A month later, while talking about taking responsibility Jody added:

Jody It's hard, because you have to take responsibility for everything. But it's been a lot better. [...] So much of it has just been me changing my perspective, not changing what I do, or how I am. [...] It is just me that controls how well I climb. There's nothing anyone says or does that can affect me if I don't let it. [...] It's key, that's what it is. That's what it is, taking responsibility and control in your life.

Isabelle Ownership?

Jody Yeah, ownership. It's beautiful.

These quotes exemplify how Jody took responsibility for feeling the way he wanted to feel. As a result of taking ownership, he was able to see things for what they were, became more aware of how he felt and why, and made decisions in his sport and life with which he was satisfied or comfortable because he knew the consequences of his decisions and he felt more in control of them.

Aside from taking responsibility for his resonance process, Jody was very active in his application of resonance, which became more natural and required less effort as he internalized his process. In our last interview, he conveyed:

Jody I really enjoyed seeing how stuff that you have to force in the beginning comes more naturally and almost effortlessly later. That it's worth the initial struggle in facing up to a lot of your fears, and all of that. That's really cool. It's something I didn't allow myself to do, because I was acting out of fear a lot of the time. And now I tackle the fears, I guess I've gotten better.

It appears that Jody understood the effort required to mindfully apply resonance in his life. It may seem simple but it is not easy to do.

Jody When I was first coming to you I was really hopeful and positive, and looking forward to what was coming, but I also knew that I had a lot of work to do. And I still do, but I feel now that I have the tools a lot more. I'm aware of the tools. It's not so hit or miss. It's whether I decide to put the time in, or put the effort in.

Putting in the time and the effort has allowed Jody to enjoy considerable gains in climbing. It allowed him to feel the way he wanted to feel and in one competition to jump a full foot higher in a dino competition.

Jody My ultimate feeling, that feeling of climbing light, I know it's coming.

Isabelle Do you experience it sometimes?

Jody Yeah, yeah. I am having moments of it. It's coming. Even in this dino comp, I felt it. [...] I went a full foot higher on my second attempt than I did on the first and that was me just getting into my mode.

Isabelle When you say you have been getting into your mode, what are you talking about?

Jody That's when I'm floating, that's when I'm light. I felt like I weighed nothing. It was more a question of me directing myself properly. The physical pulling and pushing with my leg and all of that wasn't even a factor.

Jody also observed progress in his self-confidence as a result of mindfully protecting his desired feel. He acknowledged that he could not always feel the way he wanted to feel however, he believed he could enhance it and he experienced meaningful benefits as a result of applying resonance in his sport and life.

Jody I've only been working at this for three months and already I'm seeing tremendous gains, and my confidence in myself and that has raised, it's now huge. So I think, maybe it won't come this year, but in the next couple of years, I want to get to where I am just turning it on when I get to a competition. I don't know that I'll be, at my 100 % absolute in the mode but I know that the more I do this, the more consistently it's going to go.

As the intervention progressed, Jody also made observations about self-doubt in his life.

In the first interview, he shared:

Jody Something clicked in my head and I thought "Man, you always sit here in the finals worried, you're nervous, you feel like you don't belong here and yet you make finals at almost every single event you ever been to in your life. You probably deserve to be here."

Not feeling like he deserved to be in finals was problematic for him. He thus attempted to understand where this came from and how he could better his reaction to it. In the fourth interview, he had an insight:

Jody You know what?! That's it! [...] It is doubt more than anything. More than having to bring arousal levels on, more than being able to push harder.

He still sought to learn about this and in the seventh interview, he said:

Jody I don't think I realized how much self-doubt really affects me and how. I think one of the lessons I've learned is that I doubted myself in many situations where I didn't think I did.

A month later, in our post-intervention interview, Jody talked about how resonance helped him sort out issues he had with self-doubt and enhance his confidence in his abilities to climb. Applying the lessons he learned highly influenced his athletic experience as he explains:

Isabelle Tell me about self-confidence.

Jody It's helped me a lot. No, like you don't understand. My self-confidence is way up. Not in an ego sense, I feel like I deserve to be where I am. I feel like, if I'm in finals, I know it's because I'm meant to be. [...] In this competition I let myself do what I knew I could do. It wasn't even a stress or a thought. I just didn't hold myself back. Where I've done that at lots of competitions. So, my confidence is way up. And I think it's a really good, healthy confidence.

As a result of reflecting on issues brought up in the intervention, Jody realized, in a humbling way, that acknowledging that he is a talented rock climber is acceptable. His general

life is now tinted by an enhanced sense of self-assurance and security about himself and climbing. He talked about this in the seventh interview:

Isabelle I think it is good because yes, you read and you learn but then you're really applying this to your day-to-day life and training.

Jody I'm trying to. Yeah, actually I am, I am. Yeah it's hard for me to say, yes you're right I am doing that. I'm being more and more OK with that you know. [...] The reality is, I've put 15 years of my life into it, yeah I'm pretty good at rock climbing, that's what I do. I'm getting better with being OK with that.

Isabelle You've done all this work, it is to be good, so you can acknowledge it.

Jody Yeah. Before, it seemed like me acknowledging that was, a couple of times it ended up being perceived really negatively. And I reacted badly to that. [...] It made me feel like what I was doing was wrong and that me enjoying my life and everything I had put into it to get there was wrong. I know what I do this for. My whole life, especially since I left home, has just been climbing. That's what my life is about, climbing better and traveling more; I'm not ashamed of that.

Jody's words illustrate that he moved forward in important dimensions of his life and became more and more able to be himself and accept himself. At the end of the intervention, he shared an important realization that summarizes how he applied resonance and how this influenced the experience of his life.

Jody Before I used to look at the whole, what I wanted the end result to be, and that's me climbing at my best or being in a great state, however, the

enormity of it for me was overwhelming and therefore all I could do was talk about the theory of climbing my best and never really start picking away at it. And this has allowed me to break it down and take it one step at the time, and have bad days and in the moment not do well but later take the good from it and feel OK with the fact that I had a bad day. You know if something happens at a competition and it's minor and it's something that I couldn't control, then I just let it go. You know, fight the best fight I can. If it's about results or standings fine, go through the proper channels but once I know I've done everything I can, to let it go and that's how it was, that's life. There is too much of me that I have left, you know back at certain places.

For Jody, applying resonance in his life meant turning fear into love. His process of resonance involved purposeful reflection, facing his fears, and taking responsibility. A major aspect of his experience with it concerned turning things around, or responding efficiently to external and internal obstacles. He also learned much about self-doubt in his life and resolved issues in this regard. Doing so increased his level of energy, his self-confidence and assurance, his feelings of control and it also led him to experience his dream feeling more consistently.

Kevin

Kevin accepted to participate in this research project after learning about it through the center where he trained. He was married and had three young children. He got involved in speed skating in the winter of 2003-2004, less than a year after learning he had Usher Syndrome type II. Usher Syndrome is a genetic condition that engenders hearing and vision loss. At the time we worked together, Kevin had 15% hearing and 8% tunneled vision. It was the second year he

practiced speed skating, and his first competitive season. His training involved working out five days per week and skating three to four days per week.

Kevin was driven by a strong desire to become the first deaf-blind speed skater to win an Olympic medal. By doing so, he wished to help make speed skating a paralympic sport. He also hoped his journey would inspire all individuals, disabled or not, to achieve their goals.

By engaging in this study, Kevin wished to address all aspects of sport participation in order to maximize his potential. Kevin and I met every second week for a period of 12 weeks. To facilitate things, we met at the recreation center where he trained and skated. Due to his busy family life and reduced vision, Kevin preferred not to keep a daily journal or read the book offered to him. He kept a pdf version of the book however and hoped to have time to read it over the following summer.

Kevin's reality is different from that of other speed skaters. He can hear the low intonation of the starting gun but not the bell announcing his last round, which means he has to count his laps. He also needs to concentrate on finding the cones on the ice and carefully planning his turns, as he normally does not know the position of other competitors. In addition to this, he focuses on taking the lead at the start of the race because it is more difficult for him to pass other skaters.

During the intervention, Kevin was still learning about his sport. He was putting much emphasis on action and perfecting his speed skating technique. In addition to this, his goal of becoming an Olympian was a central part of his life. His goal to get his story known, to make a difference, and to make speed skating a paralympic sport brought a lot to his life. Getting involved in speed skating and establishing goals in his life has helped Kevin connect with his passion and will. On the other hand, however, this drove him to mostly concentrate on external

factors. His focus on achieving his goal and learning technical details of speed skating conceivably left less room for self-exploration.

In the first interview, it appeared that Kevin was not in tune with how he wanted to feel.

He shared that thinking about feelings during a competition got in the way:

Kevin You just think of what you have to do and no feelings get involved. You just go.

Isabelle You said no feelings get involved, do you block your feelings?

Kevin To be honest, it's weird, when you're in race mode, you don't think about your feelings. You just want to race. You go into a zone, you're on a focus mission to do what you have to do. And you can't let your feelings get in there because there's really no time to think about it. You just go into a zone.

Although Kevin appeared to have experienced being in a zone, he had difficulty articulating how he felt:

Kevin I think that's one of the secrets to my success. That I always feel good.

Isabelle Can you describe that "feel good"?

Kevin I know what I am doing so I'm feeling good because if I keep feeling good about what I am doing, it'll make other people feel good. And if I can do that, I'll feel good because they feel good!

At the end of the first interview, we did not elaborate his personal resonance model because we did not have enough information to do so. Kevin did talk about obstacles he faced in his life but not about how he wanted to feel or the strategies he could use to facilitate or reconnect with desired feelings. Furthermore, the story Kevin was sharing was not in line with

resonance. It was important that I, as a facilitator respect his views and beliefs that feelings should not interfere with his racing mode. Through our dialogue, I wished to explore his understanding and experience of speed skating so I chose to let him take me on his journey and was careful not to impose my views on him. Two months into the intervention, we had not elaborated a resonance model and it was unclear how resonance applied if at all, to Kevin's life. In the fifth interview, we briefly addressed the fact that he had not defined the way he wanted to feel or his "mode".

Kevin I think I have my fitness. If I had my technique up it would be 75%. And I need to find that other 25% of the focus and the feeling to overcome [get into] this racing mode.

Isabelle One reason that you have a hard time getting to this could be because you haven't quite put your finger on what it is, exactly.

Kevin No you are right. I agree 100%.

Isabelle If you can define it, I think it's going to give you direction.

Kevin Oh I think so too, I know so.

Kevin acknowledged it was important to define what was the remaining 25% of his athletic participation. As a facilitator, it was crucial that I respect his own rhythm and assist him in his learning of resonance by offering good reflective questions on which he could ponder. In the same conversation Kevin shared that reflection was not necessarily part of his daily activities, which triggered a discussion about self-awareness and how he could implement reflection in his life.

Isabelle We talked about awareness before. I think you can become aware if you pay attention to your life, to what you feel, to what you think, to how you experience things.

Kevin So for me to get to that stage, how can you teach yourself, how do you know yourself, how do you succeed to that?

Isabelle It's about taking time to reflect, not only on actions, or words or goals. But taking time to reflect on your thoughts, how you reacted, why you reacted like that.

Kevin True very good. [...] If I could transfer that into the speed skating world, I think it would be done better. But how to do that? I am not sure.

Isabelle Can you maybe give yourself, 10 or 15 minutes a day, everyday, to just think about your day? For example if something happened and you felt bad you can ask yourself, how did I feel, and why? How can I react to that, what would be the best reaction?

Kevin Good idea. Maybe I will do that with the walks [walking his guide dog]. Those are perfect, those are usually a half hour.

Kevin seemed very receptive in that conversation. He agreed to many ideas I was presenting and was open to try and integrate reflection in his life. In the sixth and seventh interview, we addressed the topic again and Kevin said he had learned a lot about reflection and he was integrating it in his daily activities. One month elapsed between the seventh and post-intervention interview. In this final meeting Kevin's views on reflection had changed.

Isabelle We talked about how you could reflect, or on what you could reflect, and when. Do you spend more time reflecting on what's going on in your life, or how you feel?

Kevin Do you mean the consequences? I don't reflect. I'm just trying to give you a scenario...

Isabelle Well, reflecting, let's say to try and make yourself more aware of what you feel. And try to think, why do I feel like this?

Kevin I think, in my shoes, I'm always in a positive groove. So I think that's a question for somebody who is very negative and somebody who is very down. That would be more reflective. I don't reflect as much probably as a negative person, because I think everything in life is positive. Everything happens for a reason. [...] Actually, I just accept that that's a low time in the season, and just get back into my workout routine, and just not really think about it. If I think about it too much, well then you don't get anywhere.

Isabelle So for you, when you say not thinking about it too much, do you mean not indulging in the negatives?

Kevin Reflecting. [laughs]

Isabelle Because if you reflect...?

Kevin If you reflect on the negative things in your life, stuff that brings you down like, "I gotta get that paid up. Oh it's going to be a long winter." Well, deal with it, you know. Utilize the positive.

Kevin reportedly does not reflect too much because he is always positive. His comment that ‘everything happens for a reason’ suggests that he is perhaps not taking ownership of what happens in his life but rather uses this belief to rationalize the presence of obstacles or ‘negative things.’ His other comment ‘I just accept that that’s a low time in the season, and just get back into my workout routine’ is an indication that he could be prone to get stuck in the obstacle-preparation loop, particularly if he does not consider what causes the lows, how much energy he loses during those instances, and how he can develop responses to reduce the frequency and intensity of these lows. Nevertheless, as a result of our 12-week intervention, his perspective on feel evolved. In the post-intervention interview, he shared:

Kevin If you can take those positive feelings and put them in a racing mode, well you can actually perform a lot better. [...]

Isabelle Do you remember the first times we met, when we were talking about your races and your race mode, you were saying that you had to block out the feelings, or you had no feelings?

Kevin Yeah, well I think it’s taught me that now I have to utilize those feelings in a positive way to bring up the performance, educating myself on how to do that. So I think it will make a difference.

He was integrating the notion that connecting with positive feelings could be beneficial.

however, it was still difficult for him to verbalize how he wanted to feel.

Isabelle Can you tell me about the feelings that you’ve become aware of?

Kevin Well I think it’s probably not the easiest question to answer, but I think [pause] I realize that when you’re in a race mode, you’re thinking pattern goes “What do I gotta do?” But when you think of good feelings

you have and transfer that into a positive race mode, you actually can perform better. [...] If you're feeling better, you're going to push yourself to the limit. When you're feeling down in the dumps, you're not going to push yourself.

This calls our attention to the fact that, as facilitators of resonance, we have to find ways and provide tools to help individuals develop a "feel" vocabulary allowing them to articulate how they want to feel. Clearly, verbalizing this will give a direction to their focus and strategies to connect with desired feelings.

Kevin was very motivated and determined to achieve his goal. In his endeavour, he also welcomed his support team's advice. He often talked about being open to try anything that was suggested to him in order to improve. He also referred to me as a psychologist teaching him about mental abilities. In a few instances, I reminded him I was a student and sought to help him learn about himself. Although I believe in being open to feedback, I disclosed my impressions about relying on other people's advice.

Isabelle I could have ideas of what happens with you...

Kevin Go for it.

Isabelle But the important thing is that you know what goes on with you.

Kevin Like I said, I take criticism very well, if you see something that, "Hey what Kevin says or what he sees, personally I don't think that's right" I'm not gonna be offended.

Isabelle I would like you to be able to critically look at, let's say my comments or anybody else's comments, and say "Yes that's right" or "No that is not right." [...] And I think that if you start reflecting, looking at what

goes on in your head, what goes on in your stomach, in your heart, I think you are going to learn a lot.

Kevin Yeah, that's good.

Isabelle I would like you to be critical about what you are going to try. If you don't think it's logical, if you don't think it works with who you are, then pass.

Apparently it was important to Kevin to be attentive to what others had to say in regards to his speed skating. We talked about the nuance between being open to feedback and doing anything proposed by a perceived "expert." In Kevin's case, others' guidance could be used to enhance some aspects of his performance, but ultimately, it would be preferable that he become responsible for designing his life and training. This discussion was important because it is closely related to the idea of seeking other's approval rather than paying close attention and engage in mindful living (Newburg, 2004).

Through his intervention, Kevin did not elaborate a resonance process and thus did not consciously apply resonance to his sport or life. This could partially be explained by the fact that fundamentally, he believed feelings were negative and detrimental to performance. Furthermore, he was focused on outward factors such as helping speed skating become a paralympic sport and becoming an Olympian himself. He also did not critically look at himself to challenge thoughts, feelings and actions in the face of both success and obstacles. The fact that he did not invest in reflection also limited his self-awareness and knowledge throughout the intervention. His belief about the influence of feel on performance did, however, evolve throughout the 12-week period in which we interacted. At the end of the intervention, he shared that positive, desired feelings could enhance his athletic experience.

The case of Kevin is important to share because it demonstrates that to fully experience resonance, one must be ready to explore feel in his life, although the resonance-based intervention helped Kevin to make the realization that feel can positively influence his performance. Perhaps a longer intervention with him would have led to more positive outcomes as Kevin appeared to need a lot of time to explore this dimension of performance and living. This case also highlights that reflection is a skill that not everyone possesses. Kevin did not know what to think of or pay attention to in regards to feel. Facilitators of this type of intervention must therefore be in a position to help their participants or clients learn to reflect and closely monitor this activity over time. Another point to mention is that for Kevin, and likely many other individuals, 'feelings' and 'feel' have a different connotation. In Kevin's case, feelings were perceived to be negative. Newburg (2004) argued that the notion of 'feel' is more broad and constructive and often better received. This suggests that facilitators must consider the terminology they use when working with resonance. Recognizing a potential difference between someone's 'feelings' or how someone 'wants to feel' appears to be important.

Furthermore, as I analysed the interview transcripts, I realized that for Mark and Kevin, there might have been misinterpretation of the dream feeling. There were a few instances in which Mark appeared to have confused the dream feeling with an action or a goal:

Mark My dream feeling is that I made a choice. I chose to work there and I act according to my values. Fidelity to an employer is very important to me. I want to engage in something and be loyal, be constant, it's important to me.

What is not clear here is if Mark made the choice to work there because it made him feel the way he wanted or if he was trying to live with or rationalize his choice

because he did not feel like he could ever change jobs. Resonance is about not only recognizing when we make a less than optimal decision but also taking action to make a better one. What is hoped is that while Mark is working toward achieving his goals, he will feel the way he wants as often as possible.

For his part, Kevin seemed to have understood that the dream feeling was limited to emotional states:

Kevin I find my feelings, when I think about my feelings, it's more when I'm with my family. Does that make sense? [...] You don't think of your family, you don't feel anything. You just go. [...] You're going out to do what you have to do and that's what it's all about.

Isabelle Do you feel energized?

Kevin Oh yeah.

Although I brought attention to the fact that the dream feeling is an internal sensation not necessarily limited to emotional states and that it is distinct from an end result or external outcome, the confusion might have hindered Kevin's and Mark's experience with resonance. This shows that checking for potential misunderstandings between the dream feeling and external goals is crucial. Asking for details and giving examples throughout an intervention might help to clarify the two concepts and maximize the use of resonance.

Broadening the Knowledge on Resonance

The numerous interview excerpts I presented in this article illustrate the complexity of three men's application of resonance and its influence on their athletic and general life. Mark, Jody, and Kevin were three unique persons, with different perspectives, levels of readiness to engage in resonance, and rhythm in applying it. They consequently experienced and benefited

from the resonance-based intervention in distinct ways. The importance of creating individualized resonance-based interventions to address specific characteristics, beliefs, needs, and rhythms cannot be overstated. I feel that the participants and I accomplished a lot, in part, because I respected and adapted my work to respond to the each man's reality. For this reason, I also feel good about the experience we shared together. Previous studies on resonance support this finding that resonance must be a personalized client-driven process in order for it to be meaningful and effective (Callary, 2004; Doell et al., 2003; Faubert, Durand-Bush, Trudel, & Newburg, 2005; Soulard, 2003).

I do not wish to compare the individuals who took part in this project, however, observing and noting certain particularities and differences in their story allows to draw important lessons in regards to the application of resonance and its influence on athletic and life experiences.

The two athletes who applied resonance in their sport and life, that is Mark and Jody, increased their self-awareness and learned to respond to internal and external obstacles. This appeared to influence their athletic and general life experiences in meaningful ways. For instance, they experienced less undesired feelings (i.e., frequency decreased) and endured fewer detriments from unwanted feelings (i.e., intensity decreased). Other studies also underlined how individuals were better able to respond to obstacles as a result of participating in a resonance-based study (Baldry, Faubert, & Durand-Bush, 2005; Callary, 2004; Doell et al., 2003; Faubert et al., 2005; Leroux et al., 2005; Short & Durand-Bush, 2004; Soulard, 2003). It appears that knowing how we want to feel can become a reference point in life against which we can assess all other feelings. When we experience less than optimal feelings, we can chose to do something to reconnect rather than just let things happen haphazardly and potentially become trapped in a

vicious cycle in which we eventually lose touch with our intrinsic motives for engaging in the particular activity. When we are not consciously aware of how we want to feel, it becomes more difficult to refocus, re-engage, or re-energize. Results of this study demonstrate that when one is ready and willing to do the work, it is possible to learn this valuable skill of revisiting the dream feeling. Additional benefits that Mark and Jody reportedly enjoyed include feeling more in control, energized, confident, and responsible for their actions, not only in their sport, but also in their general life. All three men in this study learned about resonance at their own pace, possibly because of dissimilar degrees of readiness to engage in resonance and to do the required work. Two of the athletes, Jody and Mark, applied it to their sport and life. In one case, Jody was particularly ready to work to better his life and sport. He willingly engaged in all proposed activities and as a result, appears to have highly benefited from our experience. At the other end of the spectrum, Kevin had never explored how his life felt and had difficulty acknowledging the role this could play. He needed more time to explore the role of feel in his life and did not seem ready to engage in the work required by living resonance and thus he experienced little benefit from our intervention. This shows the importance of assessing what individuals are willing to work for throughout an intervention (Newburg, 2004) and challenging any unrealistic expectations when commitment is not there.

Another significant finding of this study pertains to the role reflection plays in the development and application of resonance. It appears that ongoing reflection is necessary and that certain tools (e.g., journal, readings) help in some cases and do not in others. For example, Jody actively invested considerable time in reflection, an activity that became part of his preparation and revisiting strategies. He reflected with the intention of learning about the positives in his life and also about the difficulties he faced, such as self-doubt. As he paid

attention to his life, he gained awareness, resolved issues, and eventually restored his self-confidence. This, in turn, allowed him to feel the way he wanted to feel more often. Mark also realized that reflection was a strategy to prepare for or to reconnect with the way he wanted to feel. As the intervention progressed, however, obstacles in his personal life became more and more predominant. They drained him and left little energy and time to reflect. Ghaye (2000) pointed out that reflection can be threatening when the object is a difficult issue. Perhaps reflection during this taxing moment represented too big of a challenge for Mark to consistently engage in it. The last participant, Kevin, did not engage in reflection and seemed to have little interest in developing it because he was completely focused on achieving external outcomes. Reflection is typically depicted as an intentional process of exploration resulting in a better understanding of ideas and experiences (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985; Gelter, 2003; Kemmis, 1985). Newburg and colleagues (2002) have also stated that reflection is an inherent constituent of resonance. This exercise can be arduous because it leads people to look at both the good and the bad, including desires and fears, however, it seems to ensue great benefits when it is done with genuineness and depth (Newburg, 2004).

Empowerment, ownership, and responsibility are other concepts that emerged as being important in this study and support Newburg's (2004) views. Jody clearly took responsibility for feeling the way he wanted to feel and move forward in his life. As a facilitator, empowering him to take ownership and responsibility was a crucial step in this process. This allowed him to feel more in control in general. Taking responsibility to make good choices and enjoy the consequences proved to be empowering for him. It took much reflection for him to draw this lesson, and according to him, it was a very important one. Mark's experience further elucidates the importance of taking responsibility of one's process of resonance. In his case, not feeling in

control appeared to coincide with not feeling the way he wanted to feel. Interestingly, when he focused on aspects of his life in which he did feel in control, his attitude became more positive. Reminding himself of the choices he had made allowed him to better accept the consequences. Feeling empowered to make decisions in our life can actually liberate or free us and lead us to accept responsibility. It can set us on a path of seeking acceptance rather than approval, the latter of which can be risky because we can get into a lifestyle of pleasing and doing things for others that do not necessarily make us feel the way we want to feel (Newburg, 2004).

It appeared that taking responsibility of their personal resonance process enhanced Mark and Jody's level of resonance in their life. Participants in previous studies have reported an increased sense of ownership as a result of applying resonance in their life (Callary; 2004; Faubert et al., 2005; Soulard, 2005), however, in this study, taking responsibility appears to have also enhanced the participants' actual process of resonance. Resonance is about living mindfully. When a person takes responsibility for feeling the way she wants to feel, she empowers herself to design her life in ways that allow her to feel it (Newburg, 2004). In this study, Jody and Mark discussed intentionally taking ownership of their life. Although "sense of ownership" is not defined in the literature, Sheldon (2001) talks about the benefits of feeling effective, choiceful, and connected in daily life. In light of Sheldon's views, findings of the present study suggest that when athletes felt in control, choiceful, and active in their life and process, their application of resonance was enhanced. In that sense, I would argue that ownership plays a considerable role in the process of resonance.

This study brought another lesson to light, that is, the need for further clarification of the terminology related to resonance. In a few instances, I noticed that the meaning of the term "dream feeling" was not clear for Mark and Kevin. It was sometimes confused with being an

external goal or a specifically emotional state. Resonance is a young concept that will inevitably evolve in a soon future. As such, the recognition that a term used to describe a component created confusion in this study and in general called for discussion and consideration to rectify this.

The term “feel” more accurately illustrates the concept of dream feeling and is believed to create less confusion with other terms such as “feelings.” According to Newburg (2004), feel is different from feeling, a term that is often associated with emotions and can have a negative connotation. “Feel” is a more encompassive, subjective experience not limited to emotional states. It can also reflect kinaesthetic sensations (i.e., feel strong, feel the rhythm) and cognitive impressions (i.e., feel confident, feel familiar with). It might be useful to use the term ‘feel’ in future studies to reduce the chances of creating confusion or barriers, particularly with those who have never been given the opportunity or have never given themselves the permission to examine feel in their life.

Final Comments

By participating in this study, Mark, Jody, and Kevin made an important contribution to advance the research on resonance. Their stories brought our attention to the importance of elaborating person centered interventions based on feel, nurturing reflection to increase self-awareness and maximize learning, empowering individuals to take ownership and responsibility, and respecting personal pace.

I wish to express my gratitude to Mark, Jody, and Kevin for accepting to experience this intervention with me, share their story involving both meaningful and intimidating aspects of their life, and play a role in the advancement of knowledge and understanding of resonance.

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Appendix D

*Letter of Information***Recruitment of athletes for a 12-week study aimed at enhancing well-being and sport performance**

Dear athlete,

As part of my M.A. thesis, I will be conducting a study under the supervision of Dr. Natalie Durand-Bush who is a professor at the University of Ottawa and who also works as a sport psychology consultant. The purpose of my study is to examine if and how competing athletes experience resonance in their sport and daily life. In this research, “resonance” occurs when there is a connection or harmony between you and your environment; it is a process that allows you to fully engage in your activities and experience enjoyment, satisfaction, and an overall sense of well-being.

If you are interested, you will be asked to participate for a total period of 12 weeks. Your involvement will consist of:

- Attending eight interviews conducted every 2 weeks throughout the 12-week intervention period:
 - a. One initial interview (approximately 1-2 hours)
 - b. Six follow-up interviews (approximately 30-60 minutes)
 - c. One post-intervention interview (approximately 1 hour)
- Meeting with the researcher within 2 hours before and after every or most of your competitions taking place during the 12-week intervention period:
 - Before the competition (approximately 5 minutes)
 - After the competition (approximately 15-30 minutes)
- Completing a journal on a daily basis for a period of 12 weeks, which should take between 10-15 minutes for each daily entry. You will be asked to submit your journal entries at the end of each week. I will pick them up at a pre-arranged time and location convenient to you.
- Read Dr. Doug Newburg’s book, “Resonance. A Life by Design: Developing Your Dream and Mastering Your Fear”. This book is about the specific theme of the present study and will help you to better understand resonance and how to implement it in your life.

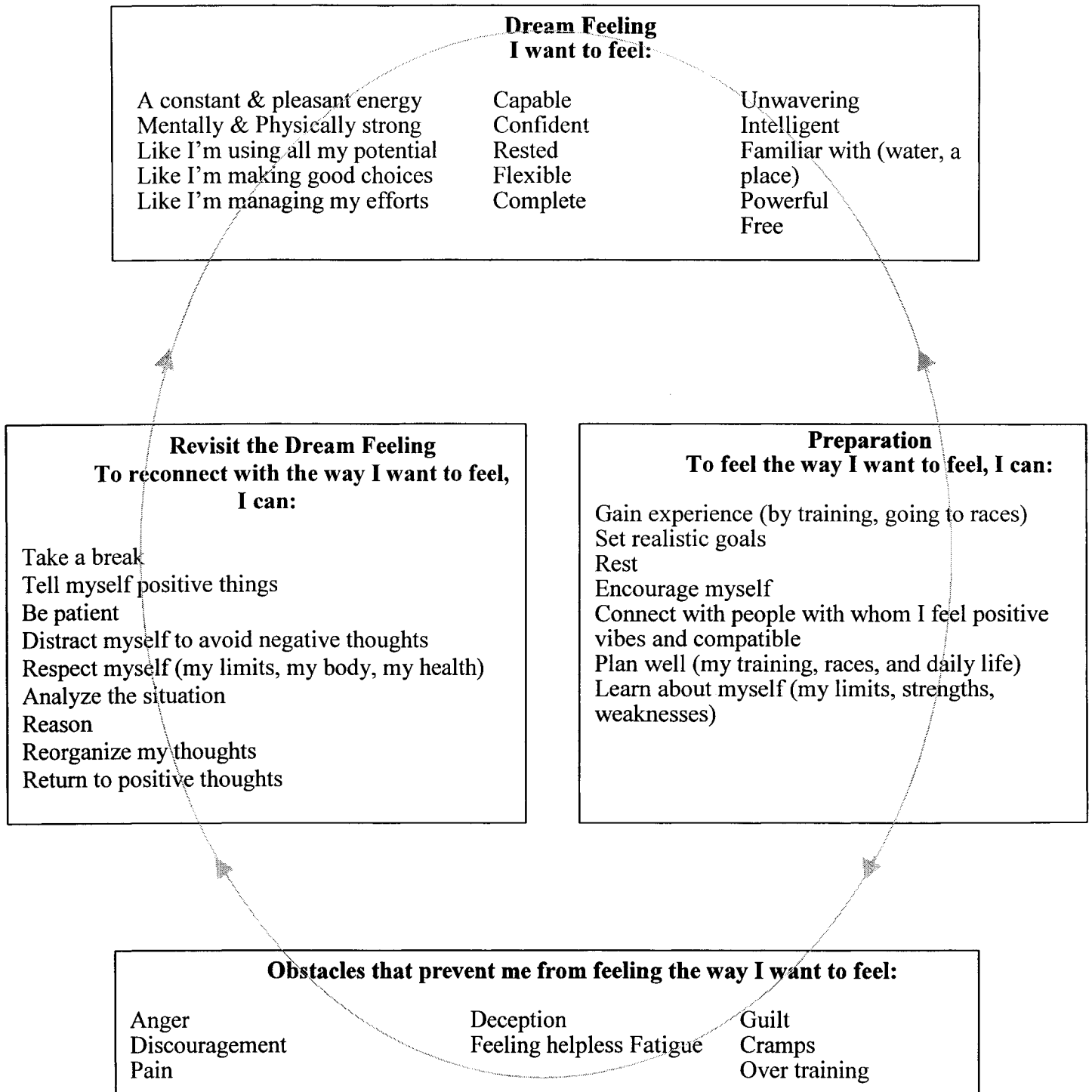
The interviews will be audio taped and scheduled at a time convenient to both you and myself. The information you will share throughout the study will be used strictly for research purposes and remain strictly confidential. Anonymity will be assured by assigning a number to your file so that your name will not appear on or identify any transcript. Furthermore, the audiotapes and transcripts of the interviews will be stored in the resonance laboratory, and only the research team will have access to the codes and data. You will be able to receive, by providing a mailing address below, a summary of the findings of this research, which will be available in June 2005.

Benefits of this study: Recently, several athletes benefited from participating in a study like this one because it provided an excellent opportunity for them to become aware of what they need to feel good on a daily basis and to perform at their optimal level. All of them reported positive effects in their sport and general life (i.e., increased well-being, motivation, and perceptions of athletic performance). Furthermore, the intervention involves multiple interviews that very much resemble sport psychology consultation. Participating in this study could be a valuable and rewarding learning experience for you!

Potential risks involved: The risks involved are very minimal. You are asked to participate in this study for a period of 12 weeks, however, you are free to withdraw at any time without any repercussion since this research is not related to your athletic (and/or academic) program.

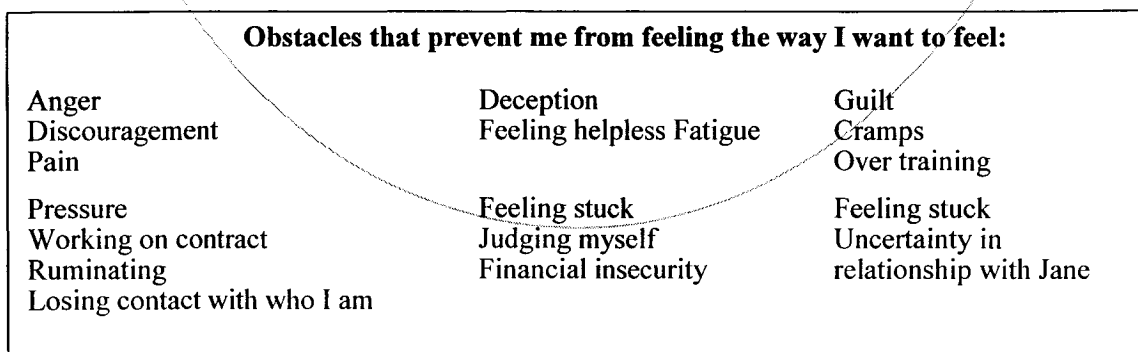
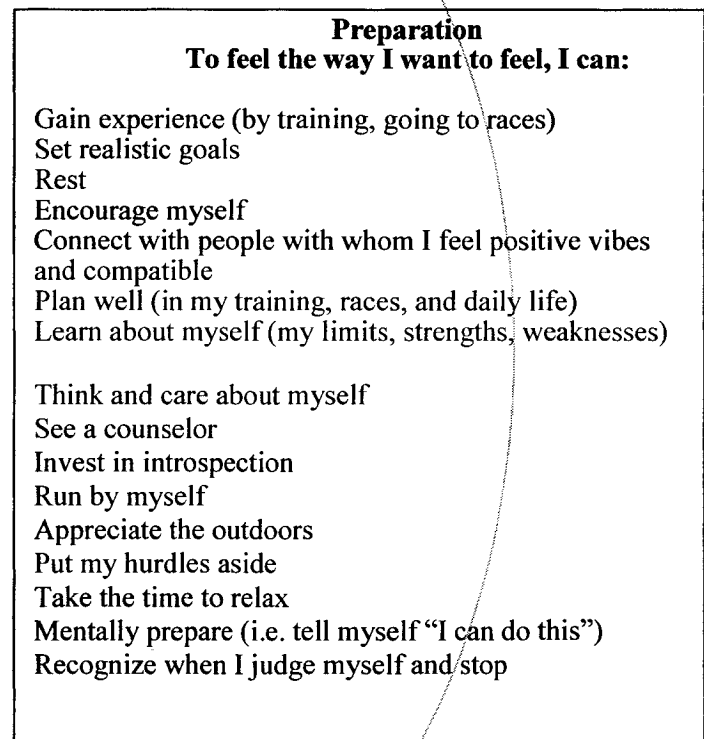
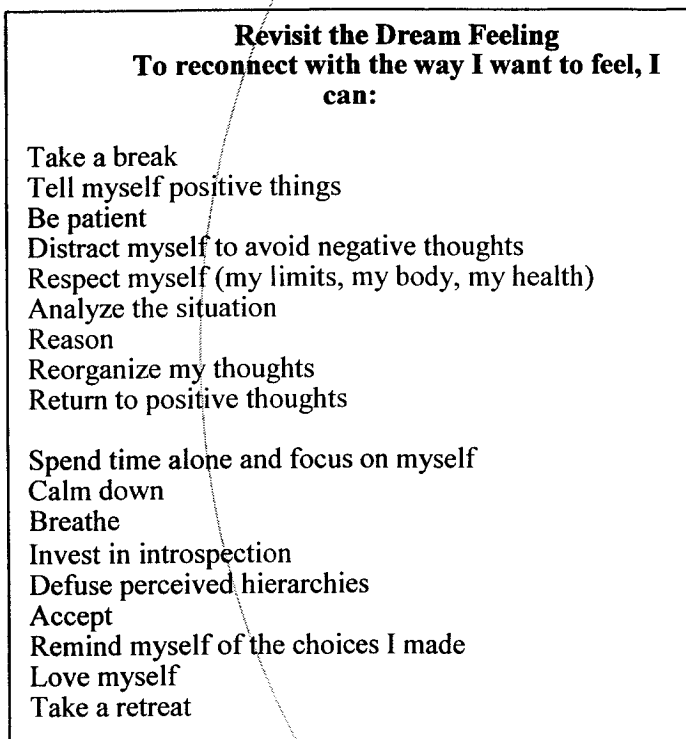
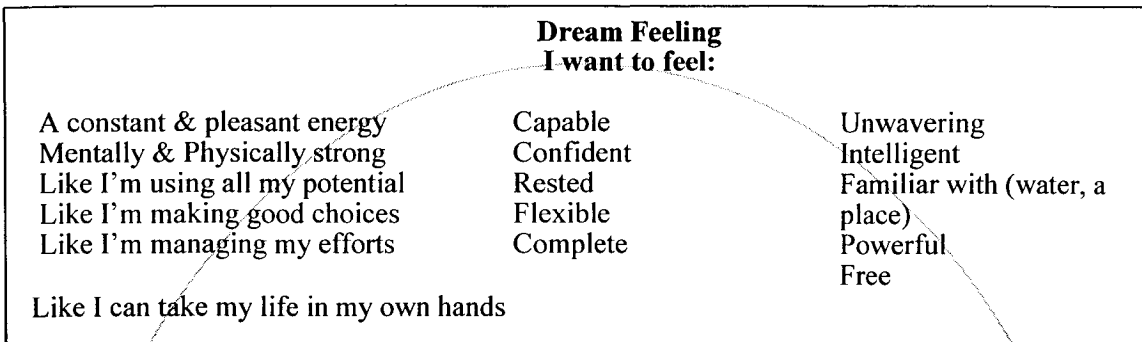
Appendix B

Mark's Initial Resonance Model



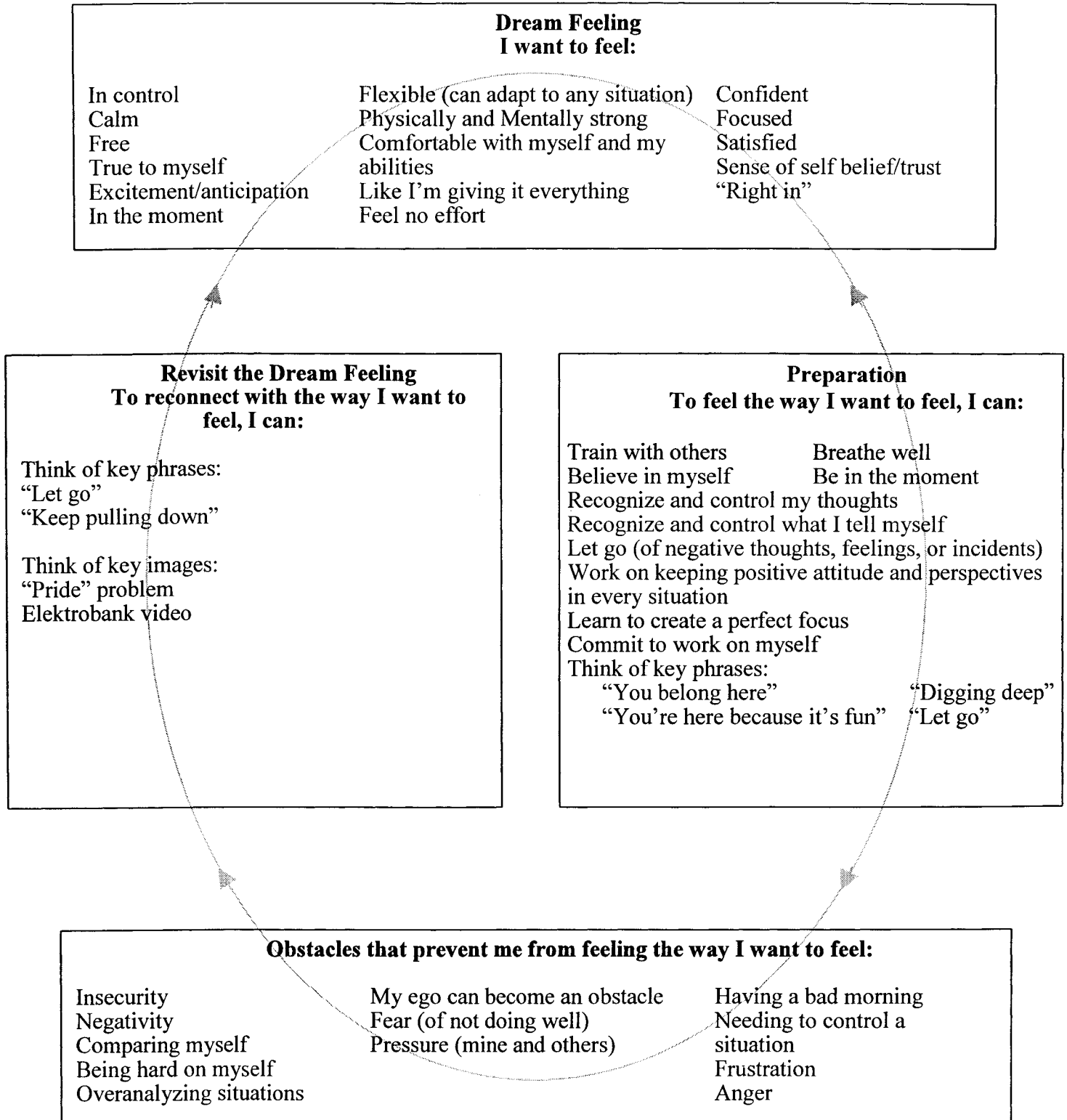
Appendix C

Mark's Final Resonance Model



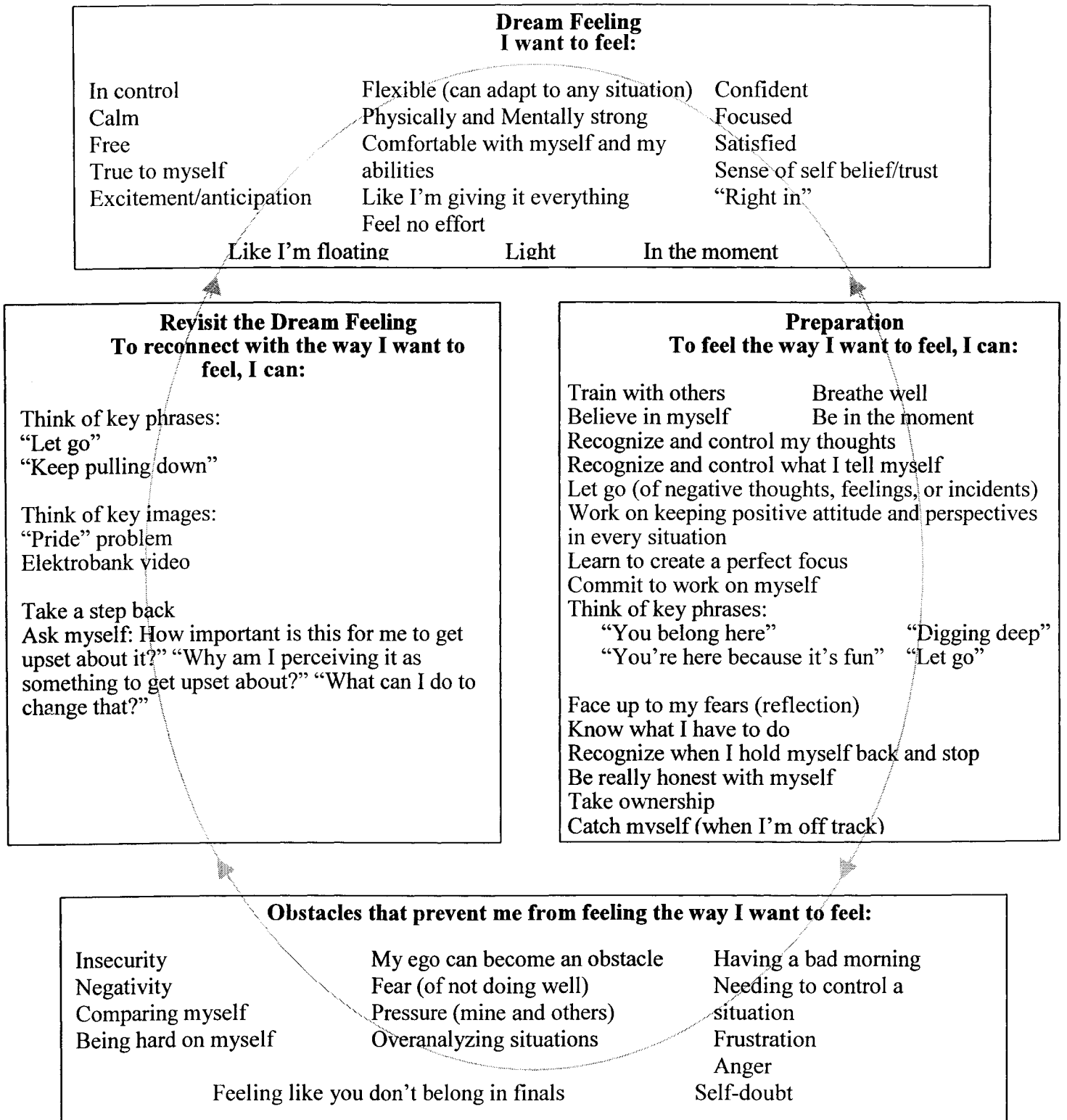
Appendix D

Jody's Initial Resonance Model



Appendix E

Jody's Final Resonance Model



ARTICLE 2:

“YOU HAVE TO LET GO TO HOLD ON”:

A ROCKCLIMBER’S REFLECTIVE PROCESS THROUGH RESONANCE

ARTICLE 2: “YOU HAVE TO LET GO TO HOLD ON”: A ROCKCLIMBER’S
REFLECTIVE PROCESS THROUGH RESONANCE

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“YOU HAVE TO LET GO TO HOLD ON”:

A ROCKCLIMBER’S REFLECTIVE PROCESS THROUGH RESONANCE

Abstract

Resonance is a process that empowers people to design their life in a way that allows them to feel the way they want to feel (Newburg, Kimiecik, Durand-Bush, & Doell, 2002). In this holistic process, individuals identify how they want to feel, prepare to experience these feelings, recognize obstacles that prevent them, and reconnect with desired feelings when they are disengaged from the process. Reflection, a conscious and intentional exploration process leading to a better understanding of complex ideas (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985; Gelter, 2003), is an inherent constituent of resonance. It allows individuals to enhance their self-awareness, which they use to design their resonance process and life. This article illustrates an athlete’s reflective process and how it was fuelled by the facilitator of the resonance-based intervention in which he took part. It also outlines many realizations and the personal progress that resulted from the athlete’s experience with resonance.

Authorship

Jody Miall, the athlete who participated in this intervention, collaborated in the writing of the present paper. Our main motive for doing so was a firm belief, in line with that of Sparks (2002), that participants can articulate as well as researchers their stories and emotions. As stated by Lincoln (1997), we also feel that participants should be able to choose how they are presented in research reports. So instead of having the main researcher use edited quotes to illustrate her interpretation of the participant’s voice, we chose to take account of both voices and interpretations. We negotiated the way to present the text and the aspects of the intervention to discuss.

By including both our interpretations, we intend to acknowledge our differences and perspectives. Like Van Maanen (1988), we recognise that there are diverse and equally useful ways to represent inquiry processes and results. We also believe that both viewpoints are of great value and can help the scientific community to appreciate Jody's experience with resonance.

We acknowledge that in reality, our negotiation concerning the writing process is unbalanced (Van Maanen, 1988), however, we made a conscious effort to give as much room to Jody as he wished to take. We highly respected his voice and his representation of his own experience through the intervention. As raised by Lincoln (1997), we did not feel it was quite right to take ownership of Jody's story and speak for him in this article.

We chose to use the first person articles "I" and "we" when possible in this text. "I" is used to refer to the two participants in the intervention. Jody's words are in bold whereas Isabelle's are italicized. "We" is used when both of us are jointly commenting. Otherwise, we used our names and third person articles to simplify the understanding of the context and events. By using first person articles, we wished to bring a human side to this text. We also wanted to create a sense of closeness between readers and us, the authors, and our experience. Furthermore, this was a way for us to acknowledge that this article is our construction, not an objective presentation of facts as Tierney pointed (1997) out.

According to Van Maanen (1988) and Sparkes (2002), authors' calculated efforts to create a sense of neutrality in their texts is in vain since their disappearance in writings is an illusion. Their omnipresence is still well known and felt. Removing the "I" from texts only leaves the readers wondering about the authors' personal bias and subjectivity. We hope that readers will feel that the "I" and "we" in this text are individuals who experienced the intervention and collaborated to present their story.

Context of the Intervention

This paper reveals the experience of Jody, a 27-year-old rock climber, as he took part in a resonance-based intervention. Isabelle, a master's student in sport psychology facilitated Jody's experience of resonance and reflections. The main focus of this article is to illustrate how Jody engaged in frequent meaningful reflection to deepen his understanding of himself and what allowed him to feel the way he wished to feel, which led to his personal progress. It also demonstrates the interactions between the actors of the intervention and how Isabelle contributed to Jody's experience with resonance.

Bussey (2002) made an important distinction between change and progress. While change is believed to concern technical and material improvements, progress is spiritual, thought to be associated with "the inner fabric of the human psyche" (p. 304), and implies an evolution of the consciousness. Bussey advocates that adhering to this shift towards spiritual development requires a redirection of tools and research to explore the deeper human consciousness. The notion of spirituality in this article refers to the human search for meaning, inner peace, and harmony with one's environment Gulick (2004). As explained below, the use of resonance allows for an in depth exploration of the human experience.

The resonance-based intervention consisted of multiple interviews, journaling, and reading. Within a period of four months Isabelle facilitated seven in-depth, semi-structured interviews with Jody in a consulting centre as well as brief on-site interviews within two hours before and after three of Jody's competitive events. A post-intervention interview also took place four weeks after the end of the intervention to discuss Jody's general experience with resonance and the lessons he drew from it. The way Jody wanted to feel, his preparation and revisiting strategies, and the obstacles he faced were addressed in each interview. However, the interviews

took the form of casual discussions and were shaped by the topics initiated by Jody. To increase his self-awareness and monitor his experience of resonance Jody engaged in regular journaling in which he discussed the lessons he was learning about his life. Finally, to deepen his reflections and understanding of resonance, he also read a book on the specific theme of resonance (Newburg, 2004).

Resonance

The Concept

A simple model was put forth to facilitate the understanding of the basics of resonance but the concept is in fact a deep, complex, and individualized process. Resonance is a holistic approach that seeks to explore the many facets of an individual's life: affective, cognitive, physical, spiritual, and social. In this approach, the focus is on the lived experiences of the person and what she feels is a foundation for exploration and reflection.

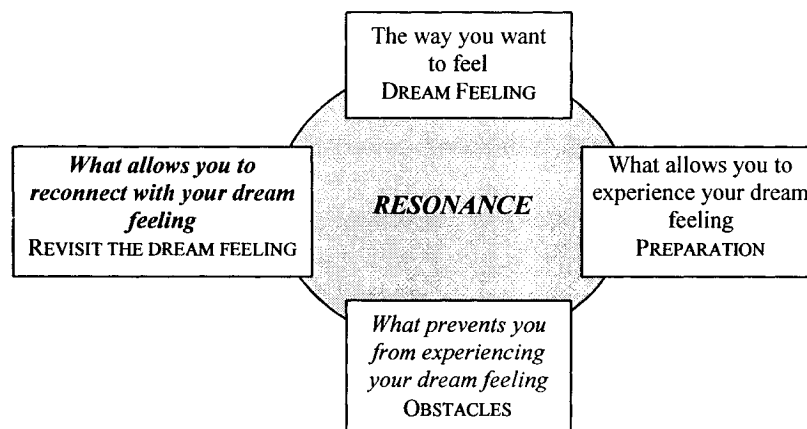


Figure 1. The Resonance Performance Model (Newburg et al., 2002)

The notion of “feel” is fundamental to the concept of resonance. Feelings are often conceptualized as the exclusive subjective experience of emotions (Vallerand & Blanchard, 2000). However, according to Damasio (1994), all emotions generate feelings although feelings

do not necessarily originate through emotions. He explains that subtle feelings, like “the feeling of life itself, the sense of being” are normally present “background” feelings that do not originate from emotion. Denzin (1984) described one type of feeling, “self-feelings” as bodily felt sensations originating through self-reflection and intentional focus into the self and on one’s connection to the world. The dream feeling in Newburg and colleagues’ (2002) model emerges from continued introspection, intentionality, and/or spirituality and reflects the person as a whole. In this model, “feel” is a subjective experience not limited to emotional states. It includes kinaesthetic sensations (i.e., feel strong, feel the rhythm) and cognitive impressions (i.e., feel confident, feel familiar with).

Paying attention is an exercise much discussed and valued by Newburg (2004; Newburg et al., 2002). Furthermore, an important prerequisite for a person to live resonance is self-awareness. To develop his personal resonance process, an individual must learn about her life, strengths, weaknesses, desires, beliefs, and also, her fears. Accessing this information allows to elaborate a resonance model that truly fits with who she is in essence. In turn, her resonance process empowers her to be herself.

Reflection: An Inherent Constituent of Resonance

Gelter (2003) defined reflection as “a conscious, active process of focused and structured thinking which is distinct from free floating thoughts, as in general thinking or day-dreaming” (p. 338). For Boud, Keogh, and Walker (1985), it is an “active process of exploration and discovery which often leads to unexpected outcomes” (p. 7). Moon (2004) argues that we apply reflection to complex ideas to further our understanding of them. In regards to resonance, the object of a person’s reflection is herself with the purpose to better understand who she is and what helps her feel the way she wants to feel.

Knights (1985) defends the idea that “reflection is most profound when it is done aloud with the aware attention of another person” (p. 85). Thinking aloud with the guidance of a listener and receiving another’s complete attention with the confidence of being uninterrupted and fully accepted is a powerful experience. Such an opportunity is precisely what Isabelle intended to provide through the resonance-based intervention. In terms of guidance, Moon (2004) points out that mediation of learning is an act separate from learning itself. We believe the same applies to the reflective process. In this intervention, Isabelle guided Jody’s reflection by asking him questions that led him to contemplate his life, sport, and resonance process. However, Jody took responsibility for his own progress and chose to engage in meaningful reflection and critically look at himself and his life. He is the one who did “the real work [which] is in the soul searching, the observations about ourselves, the abandonment of ingrained beliefs of our youth, the recognition that safety is an illusion, and the discovery of who we can be if we’ll just do the work” (Newburg, 2004). Nevertheless, like Moon suggests, in her interactions with Jody, Isabelle made a conscious effort to remain in tune with Jody’s understanding of himself and resonance. She took this into consideration as she guided his reflection and facilitated his experience with resonance.

Participants in the Intervention

To help better understand the context in which the intervention took place, we wish to briefly present ourselves, explain who we are and our backgrounds, and convey the nature of our interactions.

Jody

I'm 27 years old. I grew up outside of Ottawa where I lived my whole life. I started climbing when I was 12. Millions of people have asked me why I started climbing. I have no

idea. It just came to me one day that I wanted to climb, and it has shaped my entire life since then.

It seemed that participating in this study was a perfect, perfect opportunity for me. I've always realized that in climbing, the mental game is a number one thing and I've also known for a number of years that this was my weakest link. This study has been one of the most influential experiences for me. I think this is the first time in my life that I actively looked for something to help me. I knew it was something I needed to do for myself. I guess this is the start of me doing things for me as a person.

I have always been aware of resonance; the correlation between getting what you give. You live well and you climb well, and you climb well and you live well. That resonates and continues in an upward spiral. At the same time, if I focus on the negative, I can get caught in a downward spiral.

Early on in our meetings, I was amazed by Jody's ability to organize and verbalise his thoughts, and his honesty with me as he shared rich and deep life experiences. It quickly became apparent to me that he took the time to reflect on what he lived through, which probably helped him make sense of his experiences and express them to me. Jody also believed that mental and emotional skills play an important role in his life and was open to the concept of resonance.

Isabelle

I did my undergraduate studies in the School of Psychology at the University of Ottawa. I then enrolled in the Master's program in Human Kinetics, specializing in sport psychology, at the same university. I worked with Jody in the context of my Master's thesis.

In preparation for this study, I developed and lived my own process of resonance, discussed with Dr. Doug Newburg about resonance and how to help someone experience it, read

his book and developed reflective questions based on it to help research participants deepen their reflections. I also took additional courses on resonance and counselling skills and approaches in sports and I improved my abilities by conducting a pilot study with another athlete. Throughout the intervention, I had debriefing sessions with Dr. Natalie Durand-Bush, my thesis supervisor, every second week. We discussed resonance and research and talked through any question, concern, or new experience I was going through. Natalie was also involved in writing this article and her input is found throughout the text.

In regards to my role as facilitator in this intervention, my philosophy concerning interviewing was highly inspired by the client-centered humanistic approach (Rogers, 1949, 1957). Rogers' counselling theory advocates the importance of appreciating the client's perspectives and experiences and of honouring his strengths. He believed each person is a responsible being and has the potential to create his own internal comfort with appropriate support (Kirschenbaum, 2004). Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi's (2000) notion of positive psychology is in line with some of Rogers' ideas. This science of positive subjective experience focuses on strengths and values and promotes nurturing human potential. These viewpoints shaped my interactions with Jody.

Nature of our Interactions

Working with Isabelle has been pretty amazing. I didn't really have any expectations coming into this study about how we would get along. It didn't really occur to me that this was a crucial dynamic. Looking back now, I don't think my experience in this research project would have gone near this well with someone who didn't have the approach that she had. I found her to be very open, very non-judgemental which is really important. I never once felt like I had to watch what I was saying.

She was also very good at working things out of me. I never felt that she was trying to lead me to certain conclusions. She was just letting me take her along and come to my own conclusions and helping guide me when I lost focus. She was good at helping me get out what I wanted to say without influencing it. She seems to have a good balance there.

I also trust Isabelle a lot. When I first met her, before we even did an interview, I realized then that I felt pretty comfortable around her. She is someone that I trust so it was very easy for me to open up to her. Another really important point is that I always felt in this study, that I was helping with it, not so much that I was just a subject.

I also felt very comfortable in my interactions with Jody. I believe this comfort with one another had a positive impact on our discussions and on the intervention itself. I felt confident in my abilities to ask meaningful questions to trigger reflection, I felt that my efforts were well received, that I was contributing to Jody's growth, and I very much enjoyed my work with him. In essence, I felt the way I wanted to feel in the interviewing process. For me, this was very important because it allowed me to bring myself into the interviews and fully focus on what I was there to do.

I understood the worth and consequence of developing a positive relationship, trust and support with a participant in this type of intervention. Paying attention and critically looking at one's life and internal world maximises the experience of resonance and concurrent learning opportunities (Newburg, 2004; Newburg et al., 2002). However, I realise that the reflection entailed by this process can be threatening if it requires addressing difficult issues (Ghaye, 2000). To support Jody in this process, it was crucial that my attitude and behaviour reflect my empathy and positive regard toward him and that I be myself in our interactions.

Facilitating Reflection Through Resonance

We engaged in many interviews over a period of four months. In these meetings, hours of meaningful discussions went on. We normally talked about how Jody felt and wanted to feel in his daily life and sport, the setbacks and obstacles that prevented him from experiencing his dream feeling, and how he designed his life and daily activities to create or revisit the way he wanted to feel when he had been distanced from it. However, Jody and the topics he wished to address shaped our conversations. He shared what was happening in his athletic and every day life, and the many realizations he was making. He brought to light his thoughts about resonance and his life in our meetings and through discussion, probing, and support, Isabelle was able to help him clarify, make sense of, and further his reflections.

Jody engaged in daily journaling during the intervention period. At the end of the day, he spent a few minutes to reflect on what went on during the day and what he learned about himself, his life, or his sport as a result of any of his interactions, reading, or reflective thinking. This allowed him to monitor and deepen his experience of resonance and also to take time to draw important lessons from his everyday life. He occasionally re-read the content of his journal to revisit the lessons he learned or to keep reflecting on issues. Through both his discussions with Isabelle and his journaling, Jody actively and critically looked at himself to explore and understand his inner life.

During the intervention, Jody also read a book, “The Most Important Lesson No One Ever Taught Me” written by Dr. Doug Newburg (2004) on the theme of resonance. Isabelle had previously read this book more than once and developed reflective questions based on it, which helped further explore and deepen Jody’s reflections and experience of resonance. During our

conversations, Jody often brought up the book and realisations he was making thanks to his readings.

Fruits of Reflection and Living Resonance

In this section, we illustrate the reflective process of Jody and how he progressed as a result. Quotes from interview transcripts and in some cases, Jody's further reflections on them are presented. They represent realisations that we believe were most meaningful and according to Jody, had the greatest impact on his sport and life.

Jody is a naturally reflective person and he daily gives himself innumerable opportunities to learn through observation, reading, discussions, and reflection.

Isabelle: You talk about analyzing your climbs and your ways of thinking. I'm curious to know how much time you spend reflecting, analyzing, assessing.

Jody: Sometimes weeks. Things come up to me that have happened years ago. I still have these little epiphanies about why I did a certain way. Most of the drive back from the competition, six hours about, I thought about it. How the competition went, what I could've done, what were the things I was happy with, little things I could have improved on, how I felt, why I felt that way.

Participating in this study, however, helped him structure his thoughts and maximize his reflective opportunities. Three months into the intervention, he shared:

When you started asking me the right questions, I've realized that I had never truly looked in myself. I wasn't looking at the right aspects of my climbing to see why I was doing better or worst a lot

of the time. [...] I know a lot more what to look for. [...] I'm truly learning and listening to my body and listening to my feelings.

In the four-month period during which we worked together, Jody has learned, with proper questioning and support, to direct his own reflection and ask himself the right questions. Intentional reflection has helped him to learn about himself, climbing, and how to create his dream feeling.

In our first meeting Jody addressed the idea self-belief and will. What he felt at that moment was so intense he had goose bumps.

Isabelle: *Tell me what gives you goose bumps.*

Jody: **Oh, man! [pauses] It's the feeling of knowing you can do something but you haven't done it yet. Knowing that everything has to come together but you can make it come together. It's just self-belief, that's what it is. It's that feeling of self-belief that I love. [Describes Elektrobank video clip from the Chemical Brothers] That's what I look for in competition. Bringing it together despite what else is going along. When I first saw that video I started crying. It brought up so much in me.**

Isabelle: *What exactly does it bring up in you?*

Jody: **Again, that feeling of self-belief. That feeling of just digging deep and pulling out what you have. That will. It's will! That's what I lacked last year, just the will to push and the ability to get into that.**

Will and self-belief were an important part of what Jody wanted to feel on a consistent basis. He underlined another meaningful passage in regards to creating his optimal feel in the third interview.

Isabelle: *And when you say “climbing light” can you connect with it?*

Jody: **Yes. The feel no effort, focused, physically and mentally strong.**

That’s it. That’s what it is. It’s just, whenever things come together.

It’s like you shed 50 pounds of all the self-doubt and other crap,

exterior stuff that you let in when you’re not in that mode.

Jody’s reflections helped him to learn about the feelings of self-belief, effortless energy, focus, and strength, which were important enough to him to protect them and do whatever he had to in order to experience them as consistently as possible.

A central topic in Jody’s experience with resonance concerned self-doubt. In the fourth interview he shared:

Jody: **My breathing needs to be clear, I need to remove doubts and that.**

[pauses] You know what?! That’s it! [...] It is doubt more than anything. More than having to bring arousal levels up, more than being able to push harder. I need to have that confidence going in. I need to figure out what to do when I look at a problem and I’m not sure what to do right away. That’s what I need to figure out. Hang on. [Writes down notes]

Isabelle: *So?*

Jody: **Well I didn’t even know what the problem was. So now I at least know what I’ve been trying to address here. It’s not that problems**

seem too hard. It's more that I start to doubt myself if I'm not sure of the actual sequence.

Reflecting on his words in the process of writing this article, Jody realized: **My self-doubt is my biggest obstacle. Working out my self-doubts has been and is a continuing process for me. I know now that no magic word will release me in an instant from years of doubt. Only taking the realizations I have had and applying them every day will help wear it down, not just in climbing, I'm talking about every aspect of my life.**

Jody engaged in deep reflections on the matter regardless of the discomfort it represented. We also talked about the issue in many occasions. For instance in the seventh interview we discussed:

Isabelle: *And what have you figured out about what allows you to climb your best?*

Jody: **One was the realization that I did climb with fear. That's something I need to work with, working out that self-doubt. In the beginning I didn't realize what it was I did to doubt myself or what I did to limit myself, and now I have a much more concrete picture of what that is.**

Isabelle: *So you know what to address?*

Jody: **Yeah, more and more. And I know how to get myself in check faster and identify external things that can put me in that state and internal things that I allow to bring me into that negative state.**

The intervention helped him to learn much about himself and quite quickly, we observed progress in regards to his self-doubt. He gained awareness about the place self-doubt took in his

life and learned to recognize when he doubted himself. Furthermore, he believed that his realizations about self-doubt would allow him to climb his best. In regards to his resonance process, resolving his issues of self-doubt allowed him to better prepare to feel the way he wanted to feel.

As the intervention proceeded Jody also learned about obstacles in his life. He recognized that some obstacles were external and that, although he could not control them, he could respond to his internal emotional response to them to turn things around. In the fourth interview, he said:

I don't think before I would have made a conscious effort to acknowledge that I was upset and turn it around.

A month later, he had already improved his ability to respond to obstacles:

At this competition, I was flashing problem after problem.

Everything else came up in the meantime, with [friend]. But that

was separate from the comp, it was like two worlds. And I had to

draw the line. If they intermingled I would've died in the finals. I

mean I was really upset coming in. I was very concerned for [friend]

but I knew I had to let go of that. And it happened like that.

[clapping fingers] Pretty much walking in the door, I started

shedding it.

Once he recognized the obstacle and committed to responding to it, it seemed to happen naturally. Reading this passage as he reviewed his interview transcripts, Jody reflected: **The experience I had at this competition, of taking control and letting myself go was another huge moment this year. I realized then I'd make some huge gains as a result of this study.**

Jody learned a lot about “letting go” of external and internal obstacles. Expectations, whether perceived or real, represented an important internal obstacle in Jody’s life. For instance, in the first interview, Jody talked about meaningful climbs he had before the intervention. In particular, he recounted an uncommon experience, in which he had been able to let go of expectations.

Jody: Every thought or care I had of doing it went away. I just got on and climbed. It became the easiest thing ever. The hardest climbs I’ve done have taken almost no effort in that I was still pulling ridiculously hard but it didn’t feel hard to me. It was as though I let myself get up the thing.

Isabelle: Ok. I’m not sure if I heard well, but you stopped caring?

Jody: Stopped caring as in I just cared about the climb. I stopped caring about the end result.

Isabelle: And the expectations?

Jody: The expectation of getting it or not getting it was gone. I just wanted to climb. That’s what I truly wanted. And then that’s what happened.

Throughout the intervention Jody reflected about expectations as an obstacle in climbing and learned a lot about how he could respond to his initial reaction to it. In the post-intervention interview he said:

I realized that I’m always too tense. I approach things kind of heavy. And I’m thinking “I need to do this” or, “This needs to happen.” [...] I said to myself “Just go try your best, and whatever

happens is going to happen.” When I worry about making the finals, there is that definite goal. I’m not just trying to do well. But if I climb well, inevitably I’m going to be in the finals. I lost that connection at a few competitions.

As he said these words, Jody became conscious that he had disconnected from the fact that letting go of expectations was key in climbing his best. Reflecting about the issue as he went over interview transcripts, Jody commented: **I hadn’t realized the significance of letting myself get up problems. I learned that I had to accept the fact that I may not be successful. I had to let go of the expectation of doing well in order to be able to give myself to the climb. My expectations were what held me back, not any physical limitation. You have to let go to hold on.** In regards to his resonance model, letting go of expectations is an important strategy he uses to help him feel the way he wants to feel and also to reconnect with his desired feel when he faces obstacles.

Finally, the resonance-based intervention helped Jody clarify the issue of self-doubt and expectations that was central in his life and get back in touch with his will. Towards the end of the intervention his discourse about will was much more constructive and assured.

I kept going until I got it. And that was just pure will. There was nothing in me thinking down, everything was focused on getting to the top of the feature and standing on top of the boulder.

As illustrated by the pieces of interview transcripts presented above, Jody engaged in extensive reflection during the course of the resonance-based intervention. His interactions with Isabelle allowed him to learn about asking himself the right questions and he thus was able to engage in more meaningful and effective reflection. As a result he enjoys considerable progress

generated in the consciousness or the human psyche (Bussey, 2002). He reorganized his thoughts and beliefs about his climbing and general life, gained awareness regarding various issues in his life, reconnected with his will for climbing, and learned to create desired feel more consistently.

Final Comments

Participating in and learning about resonance has had a tremendous effect on my overall life and my climbing life. My ability to create a more consistent dream feeling has been helping in every aspect of my life. I don't feel a perfect state of balance every second I exist, far from it. It's more that I feel in control and active in climbing and life in general. I know that I'm making gains in climbing and I can work harder without feeling drained. I'm happier and lighter. I have more to give to myself and to others.

In working with Isabelle and reading "The Most Important Lesson No One Ever Taught Me", I think I have come to realize a lot of patterns in myself and also more importantly, I became familiar with some tools to deal with things as they come up such as self-doubt or competing when things don't go my way. It has given me a new perspective on things. I don't have bad days anymore, I just have hard days. I was coming into that a little bit on my own before the study but it accelerated things exponentially. When I've had hard times, it helped me bounce back and really heal and grow from it as opposed to just covering things up. I think in my everyday life I'm able to keep better perspective on things and be a lot more true to myself.

This intervention has been great for me as a student researcher and as a person. I enjoyed every bit of the process. One of the reasons why, I believe, is that Jody was very honest with himself and in his interactions with me. His openness and eloquence in articulating what he was experiencing has allowed me to comprehend what he was going through, and how

resonance and reflection occurred in his life. This is important because my awareness of Jody's experiences allowed me to offer appropriate probing and discussion topics. I made a conscious effort to understand where he was at in his reflections and always tried to further his process gauging on his apparent readiness. I learned to know him and I realized he was willing and ready to face any potential issue. I took that into consideration in my interactions with him. I trust that my beliefs and attitude rooted on the humanistic approach helped me be more in tune with Jody's experience.

I think Jody's personal characteristics allowed him to have such a great experience with resonance. He was receptive to new ideas and questions I was presenting him. He purposefully and consciously invested in all activities involved in this intervention: discussion, readings, journaling, and intentional reflection regardless of the threat or discomfort they represented. Furthermore, he had a great desire to progress and was committed to doing the work entailed by living resonance. I believe this was key in his intervention. Nonetheless, it is in line with Newburg's (2004) viewpoint as he declares, "The question is not really what you want. The question is what will you work for?"

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Author Note

Isabelle C. Arcand and Natalie Durand-Bush, School of Human Kinetics, University of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Isabelle C. Arcand, University of Ottawa, School of Human Kinetics, 125, Faculty of Health Sciences, University Street, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5, e-mail: iarca001@uottawa.ca.

CHAPTER V

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to document three athletes' in depth-stories reflecting their experience of resonance as they learned to pay attention to their lives through a resonance-based intervention. It explored their application of resonance and how this influenced their experience of their sport and life. As the facilitator of the resonance-based intervention, I sought to help the athletes construct and apply their personal resonance process through multiple interviews and daily reflective journaling. In this process, I acknowledged my role and influence and attempted to shed light on it.

The three athletes as well as their experience with resonance were highly different, however, each person derived valuable lessons and benefits from engaging in the resonance-based intervention. The first athlete, Mark, elaborated and refined his personal resonance model as he increased his self-awareness. In the first part of the intervention, he learned much about himself and what allowed him to feel the way he wanted to feel and applied these lessons to his sport and life. He learned to revisit the way he wanted to feel, for example, by responding to anger and anxiety, which enhanced his experience in his sport, including competitions, and in his professional life. However, professional and personal obstacles eventually became so predominant in his life that they blinded him and distanced him from the way he wanted to feel. He got caught in the obstacle-preparation loop, which disrupted his process of resonance that he was so willingly working on to improve his sport and life. This is reality and Mark's story is a great illustration of what many people likely experience in their life. His story, which I was able to share due to my numerous interactions with him over a four month period, shows that even though we know how we want to feel, even though we have strategies to prepare for and revisit

how we want to feel, it is difficult to sustain our own personal process of resonance on a daily basis. It is difficult because life is full of challenges; some that are so big or are perceived to be so negative or insurmountable that they blind us from the very essence of our existence, which arguably is to feel good about ourselves and lead a satisfying and meaningful life. Other researchers have also observed this difficulty to respond to external and internal obstacles, which led athletes to get caught in the obstacle- preparation trap (Doell, 2002; Faubert et al., 2005). Nevertheless, by the end of the intervention, Mark realised that it was crucial for him to love and accept himself in order to be authentic and feel good in his daily life. In my interactions with Mark, it was important I listen to his story, be supportive as he shared difficulties he was going through, and when I felt he was ready to receive it, challenge some detrimental beliefs or attitude. In our discussions, I also put emphasis on the positives in his experience, specifically the meaningful lessons he had learned since the beginning of the study.

The second athlete, Jody, was very intuitive and shared from the very beginning how he wanted to feel, what allowed him to feel this way, and also what got in the way of this. He was quite aware of his desires, values, and fears at the onset of the intervention. He quickly took ownership of his process and was open, active, and intentional as he paid attention to and applied resonance in his sport and life. He also engaged in extensive reflection, which allowed him to fully experience his resonance process and deeply connect with his sport and life. As a result of his ongoing introspection throughout the intervention, he settled central internal obstacles, particularly that of self-doubt, which in turn enhanced his confidence and allowed him to feel free in competitions. He learned to recognize when he was not experiencing his dream feeling and to create opportunities to instantly reconnect with the way he wanted to feel. He thus increased his ability to effectively respond to anxiety in his sport and daily life. Other researchers

have also observed and discussed an increase in self-confidence, sense of ownership, and feelings of control in previous resonance-based interventions (Callary, 2004; Faubert et al., 2005; Soulard, 2003). What Jody's story exemplifies the most is the sheer will required to fully benefit from the process of resonance and the importance of reflection. Jody was so ready and willing to do the work; he critically examined both his fears and desires and embraced the discomfort often felt when trying to develop one's process of resonance (Newburg, 2004). He took a real hard look at the good and the bad in his life and competitive sport and took the risk to make changes in the hopes of bettering things. I would argue that he was definitely successful in doing so. In my interactions with Jody, I soon became aware of his readiness to do the work and his ability to face his fears and desires through reflection. It was important that I be able to follow him in his experience and application of resonance so I could offer appropriate discussion topics and probing to help him further his personal process. I believe my understanding of the complexity and depth of resonance and interviewing skills helped me be in tune with what Jody was going through and provide great directions for conversation and discussion.

The third athlete, Kevin, was in the early phases of learning his sport. He had a definite desire to achieve his ultimate dream of getting speedskating to become a paralympic sport and become an Olympian himself. What was different about Kevin was that he was not initially in tune with how he felt. He actually believed that feelings could only be detrimental to his athletic life. He very much had an outcome focus rather than a process one. His outcome goals, although they arguably might have made him feel the way he wanted to feel, consumed his daily living. In our conversations, Kevin shared a lot of factual information that lacked emotion or feel. It was difficult for me to help him share how he felt in his endeavours as he did not have the words nor the images to express this. In addition to this, it was important for me to respect his beliefs and

rhythm in applying resonance as he learned about it. His negative view and tendency to remove feelings from his life might be an explanation. Although we had several discussions in which I attempted to help him figure out how he wanted to feel, he did not elaborate his resonance process (depicted in a personal RPM), but through the intervention, he learned that desired feelings could have a positive influence on his “race mode.” Callary (2004) discussed the importance of being open, ready, and committed to engage in resonance and do the work required. What we can learn from Kevin’s story is that not everyone is open, ready, and committed to explore feel in their life. Not everyone sees the value in paying attention to feel and designing their life around this type of data. However, what is interesting is that when we ask the question, “Does how you feel affect how you perform?,” most people answer, “Yes.” Yet, individuals have different backgrounds, experiences, and beliefs in life; they are also at different stages of learning and readiness, all of which can potentially influence them to refrain from paying attention to how they feel. What is important is that we as facilitators respect each individual’s story and pace at which they evolve. This does not mean that we cannot challenge them because challenge is typically necessary for growth (Ivey & Ivey, 2003). In my work with Kevin, I made sure to respect him as a person and his views, support him as he learned about resonance, and refrain from holding any expectations from him. I believe this was important for him to have a positive experience with resonance and it allowed a shift in his perspectives about the role of feel in his life.

The three stories shared in this study highlight the uniqueness of each individual athlete and calls attention to the necessity to elaborate and engage in flexible client-driven interventions that respond to clients’ needs, interests, and preferences. In other words, results of this study do not offer support for agenda-driven interventions in which clients have little space and a limited

voice. Another important finding in this study pertains to the use of the constructivist paradigm. This paradigm arguably allows us to be more true to the essence of resonance, which is to empower people to design or construct a life or reality for themselves that will lead them to feel the way they want to feel as often as possible. I learned so much from facilitating this intervention and realized the extent to which we, as facilitators, play a valuable role in helping individuals construct this life or new reality. As witnessed in this study and in previous ones (Bladry et al, 2005; Callary, 2004; Doell et al., 2003; Durand-Bush et al., 2004a; Soulard, 2003), some people have never contemplated how they want to feel in their daily life, let alone consciously developed strategies to make this happen. It would be essential in future studies on resonance to use the constructivist paradigm to carry out the research as it supports an emergent and flexible design that is, in my view, important to adapt to the participants' existing and evolving realities. For example, the use of this paradigm would allow the facilitator of a resonance-based intervention to increase or reduce the length and frequency of interviews and to adapt the type of journaling to suit the preferences and preferred learning styles of the participants.

Other important benefits of participating in the resonance-based intervention in this study include an increased self-awareness and self-confidence, an improved ability to respond to obstacles such as anxiety, anger, and self-doubt, and a greater sense of control over one's personal resonance process. This supports the findings of previous studies on resonance (Bladry et al., 2005; Burke & Durand-Bush, 2004; Callary, 2004; Doell, 2002; Durand-Bush et al., 2004a; Faubert et al., 2005; Leroux et al., 2005; Soulard, 2003) and sheds more light on the potential role of resonance in positively influencing psychological variables deemed important in competitive sport such as self-confidence and anxiety (Cerin, Szabo, Hunt, & Williams, 2000;

Gould, Guinan, Greenleaf, Medbery, & Peterson, 1999; Mahoney, Gabriel, & Perkins, 1987; Woodman & Hardy, 2003). The athletes and I talked about their intrinsic motivation and well-being throughout the intervention. Although these psychological factors seemed enhanced by applying resonance, more research is needed to support this observation.

This research also shed light on the role of reflection in the process of learning and the application of resonance. Reflection, a conscious and intentional process leading to a better understanding of complex notions (Boud et al., 1985; Gelter, 2003) appears to be an essential element in the process of resonance. Investing time and energy in reflecting on all aspects of his life, including obstacles and fears, allowed Jody to make sense of his experiences and resolve key issues in his life, which enhanced his opportunities to feel the way he wanted to feel in both his sport and general life. This is in line with Newburg's (2004; Newburg et al., 2002) contention that critically paying attention to, learning about, and questioning the particularities of your own life is fundamental to live resonance. It also indicates that consultants or researchers working with resonance should consider the reflective habits and abilities of the individuals with whom they are working, and help them nurture their reflection through supportive questioning and probing. It might also be a good idea to examine whether or not facilitators can and should help individuals develop their reflective skills by assessing, for example, their preferred learning style and by offering tools such as a journal or reflective reading material.

Aside from highlighting the importance of reflection, the athletes' stories showed that ownership and responsibility are core concepts that have not been fully addressed in previous research on resonance. The "sense of ownership" that emerged from the data is not explicitly discussed in the literature, although Sheldon (2001) linked it with feeling effective, choiceful, and connected in one's daily life. In the instances where the athletes in this study felt in control

and capable of designing their process or life, or able to respond to obstacles, they also seemed to be able to feel the way they wanted to feel or reconnect with it more rapidly and easily. It also helped them to have more positive experiences in their athletic and general life. This observation is in accordance with Newburg's (2004) viewpoint that feeling the way we want to feel and living the life we want to live is our responsibility but once we realize and accept this, it is very empowering and actually freeing. Some researchers highlighted the fact that athletes gained a sense of ownership or feeling of control as a result of participating in a resonance-based intervention (Callary, 2004; Faubert et al., 2005; Soulard, 2005), however, the athletes' experience in the present study sheds light on the importance of taking ownership of one's resonance process as early as possible in the intervention. Again, worthwhile recommendations for consultants and researchers using resonance arise from this observation. In particular, it indicates that, throughout an intervention, it is essential to draw attention to the responsibility one has over many aspects of life, such as responding to both internal and external obstacles, and feeling the way one wants to feel.

This study highlights the importance of the facilitator's role in resonance-based interventions. In preparing for this intervention, I spent considerable time learning about counselling skills and facilitating a resonance-based intervention, I consciously lived my own process of resonance, and I clearly established my philosophy concerning interviewing. This helped me tremendously in my interactions with the three athletes, as I knew I had a strong foundation. When interviewing the athletes, I gave them much room for expressing themselves, made a conscious effort to remain in tune with their story, and always endeavoured to understand their experience and readiness to address certain issues in order to offer appropriate probes, questions, and support. This is in line with the resonance approach applied in counselling or

consulting contexts (Durand-Bush, Arcand, & Newburg, 2005). These authors indicated that the resonance approach is linked to the humanistic, person-centered view (Rogers, 1949; 1957) in which clients typically drive the process with the support and unconditional positive regard of the facilitator. I acknowledge that my personal interviewing style and presence likely influenced the intervention itself. Given the meaning and value of the facilitator's part in resonance-based interventions, it is crucial that researchers or consultants in the area of resonance prepare appropriately. This study brought to light the experience of the facilitator, however, it would be important to further examine it in future studies on resonance.

This study has a number of limitations that should be taken in consideration by future researchers and consultants working with resonance. Participants who took part in this intervention all seemed to be at turning points in their life. One was facing two major obstacles in his life, the second was recovering from a difficult setback and thus had a high level of readiness to move forward, and the third one was in a period of change as he was adapting to a physical condition and learning a new sport in order to achieve his dream. Although such occurrences are not atypical, they are not ordinary situations and they certainly influenced the participant's application of resonance and their experiences in their sport and life. In addition to this, it is important to consider that my personal interviewing style and philosophy shaped the intervention. Although I clarified with the participants that the intervention was about them and how they experienced their sport, life, and resonance, my expectations may have had an effect on them and the intervention as well. This is not as much a concern since my intention was to work with the athletes to help them construct and apply their process of resonance. One could argue that the athletes' experience would have likely differed had they worked with another facilitator.

The findings of this study indicate a need for new research directions. The present study suggests that reflection and ownership play a noteworthy role in the application and experience of resonance. It would be interesting to further explore the means through which one's reflective abilities can be fostered. In addition to this, it would be important that future research focus on the nature and influence of one's sense of ownership on the process of resonance. Studies should also examine specifically how ownership is nurtured and its effects on one's life. In addition to this, it would be beneficial to explore if other elements enhance the application and experience of resonance, as well as why and how these can be nurtured. It also becomes imperative to address the participants' readiness to do the work they personally require to experience resonance as it has great consequences on their experience and application of resonance. Studies should explore the factors leading to hesitation to engage in resonance activities and examine if and how individuals can be assisted to enhance their readiness to live resonance.

In conclusion, this study primarily concentrated on the participants' stories reflecting their experience with resonance, which clearly illustrate that different individuals choose to apply resonance in their sport and life in unique ways and to different extents. It emphasizes the importance of elaborating personalized resonance-based interventions to respond to the needs, views, rhythm, and particularities of each individual. This study also suggests that reflection and ownership play an important role in the experience and application of resonance. That is, reflection and ownership seem to enhance one's experience of resonance and facilitate the application of resonance in one's life.

The present study underscores the importance of the facilitator's role in resonance-based interventions and calls for extensive preparation for those who endeavour to engage in research or practice with resonance. Specifically, those wanting to get involved as researcher or

consultant in the area of resonance should familiarize themselves with the humanistic client-centered approach, develop sound interviewing skills, learn to facilitate resonance-based interventions, live their own process of resonance, and develop their personal philosophy of consulting / interviewing.

Finally, this study, given its findings and limitations, contributes to new research directions. Namely, it calls for a more detailed exploration of the nature of reflection and ownership and their influence on one's process of resonance. Studies should also inquire into the specific learning process of resonance and readiness to engage in this process.

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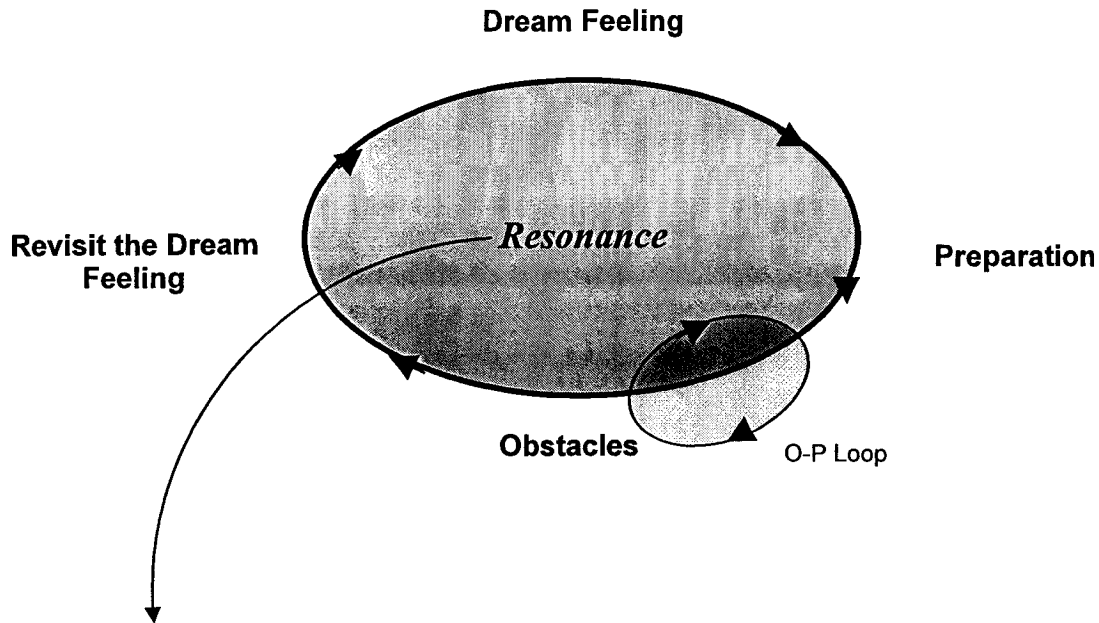
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Appendix A

The Resonance Performance Model (RPM; Newburg et al., 2002)



A process or way of living that allows individuals to feel the way they want to feel, prepare to experience desired feelings, recognize obstacles that prevent them from feeling the way they want to feel, and reconnect with desired feelings when they are not experiencing them. This process allows people to live in harmony with their environment.

Appendix B

*Interview Guide based on RPM (Newburg et al., 2002)***A) First Interview**General opening questions

- Tell me about yourself and your sport.
- Why do you engage in your sport?

Main questions and probesDream feeling

- How do you like to feel when you engage in your sport? Describe this feeling to the best of your ability. If it helps, think of one of your performances in competition or training where you felt the way you wanted to feel. As you relive it in your mind, describe it to me.
- Is this feeling the same in training, competition, and daily life? Explain why and how if it is different.
- Can you summarize this feeling in a few words or sentences?
- Think of a picture or image (i.e., of yourself or something else) that represents how you want to feel. Describe this mental picture or image.

Preparation

- What allows you to feel this way (i.e., personal thoughts/behaviors, environmental factors, strategies, goals, etc.)
- Tell me more about those situations in your sport where you experience this feeling (i.e., competition, training).
- How often do you experience this feeling?
- How often would you like to experience this feeling?
- What do you need to do to experience this feeling more often?

Obstacles

- What prevents you from experiencing your desired feeling on a daily basis?
- How often does this happen?
- Tell me about some of the obstacles that you have faced in the past.
- How do these obstacles affect (a) your preparation, (b) performance, and (c) well-being.
- Can you tell me about a bad competition (race) you had?
 - What happened?
 - How did you feel?
 - What did you do to overcome it?
- Do negative feelings carry over in other aspects of your life? If so, how?
 - What can you do to make things better in these kinds of situations?
 - What can you learn from experiencing these obstacles?

Revisiting the dream feeling

- When you face an obstacle, what is your first reaction to it? What do you do after? Give me an example.
- Do you do anything to reconnect with the feeling you previously described? Explain.
- Did an obstacle ever get so big that you dropped out of your sport or at least considered it? Describe why and what you did or did not do.

Effect on performance and well-being

- Does this feeling that you seek in your sport affect your performance? Explain why and how.
- Tell me what else this feeling affects in your sport and daily life (i.e., anxiety, self-confidence, motivation, well-being, enjoyment, satisfaction).

Summary

- What is your feeling now that we are approaching the end of the interview? Have you learned anything so far?
- Is there anything you would like to add?

B) Follow-up Interviews

- Tell me about the last two weeks. Have you been applying resonance? For example, have you been experiencing your dream feeling, preparing to do this, and revisiting your dream feeling after an obstacle? Give me an example.
- What have you learned in the last two weeks?
- Describe your most resonating experience and tell me why it was a high?
- Describe your least resonating experience and tell me why it was a low?
 - Do you see this as an external or internal obstacle? Explain.
 - Do you feel you had control over the situation?
 - Did you do anything to reconnect with your dream feeling?
- Did you struggle with anything specific since we last talked?
- Tell me about the journaling process.

If a Competition Took Place Between Interviews

- You told me you felt (...) in your last competition. Tell me about your reflections since then.

If the participant reports a lack of motivation, confidence or high anxiety:

- Are you able to develop a productive response to this?
- Can you reconnect with your dream feeling?
- How is this affecting your training and daily life?

C) Post-Intervention Interview

- Tell me about your experience since the beginning of the study. Have your feelings been affecting the way you perform? Explain.
- Tell me about resonance in your sport (i.e., training and competition), and life in general?
- Tell me about the journaling process. Have you continued it on your own?
- What are your overall impressions of the last 16 weeks? What are the biggest lessons you've learned?
- Is there anything you would like to add?

Appendix C

Interview Guide for Interviews After Competitions

General question:

- Tell me about the competition

Resonance

- Did you apply resonance? If so how? If not why?
 - Did you feel the way you wanted to feel? Explain.
 - Did you prepare to experience resonance?
 - Did you encounter any obstacles (i.e., high anxiety)? If so, what was your initial response?
 - Did you have a response to your initial response? If so, were you able to reconnect with how you wanted to feel?
 - Did you learn anything from the competition?
- How do you feel now?

Psychological factors

- Talk to me about your (a) self-confidence, (b) motivation, (c) anxiety, and (d) overall well-being (i.e., levels of satisfaction and happiness).

Summary

- Is there anything you would like to add?

Appendix D

*Letter of Information and Consent Form***LETTER OF INFORMATION****Recruitment of athletes for a 12-week study aimed at enhancing well-being and sport performance**

Dear athlete,

As part of my M.A. thesis, I will be conducting a study under the supervision of Dr. Natalie Durand-Bush who is a professor at the University of Ottawa and who also works as a sport psychology consultant. The purpose of my study is to examine if and how competing athletes experience resonance in their sport and daily life. In this research, “resonance” occurs when there is a connection or harmony between you and your environment; it is a process that allows you to fully engage in your activities and experience enjoyment, satisfaction, and an overall sense of well-being.

If you are interested, you will be asked to participate for a total period of 12 weeks. Your involvement will consist of:

- Attending eight interviews conducted every 2 weeks throughout the 12-week intervention period:
 - a. One initial interview (approximately 1-2 hours)
 - b. Six follow-up interviews (approximately 30-60 minutes)
 - c. One post-intervention interview (approximately 1 hour)
- Meeting with the researcher within 2 hours before and after every or most of your competitions taking place during the 12-week intervention period:
 - Before the competition (approximately 5 minutes)
 - After the competition (approximately 15-30 minutes)
- Completing a journal on a daily basis for a period of 12 weeks, which should take between 10-15 minutes for each daily entry. You will be asked to submit your journal entries at the end of each week. I will pick them up at a pre-arranged time and location convenient to you.
- Read Dr. Doug Newburg’s book, “Resonance. A Life by Design: Developing Your Dream and Mastering Your Fear”. This book is about the specific theme of the present study and will help you to better understand resonance and how to implement it in your life.

The interviews will be audio taped and scheduled at a time convenient to both you and myself. The information you will share throughout the study will be used strictly for research purposes and remain strictly confidential. Anonymity will be assured by assigning a number to your file so that your name will not appear on or identify any transcript. Furthermore, the audiotapes and transcripts of the interviews will be stored in the resonance laboratory, and only the research team will have access to the codes and data. You will be able to receive, by providing a mailing address below, a summary of the findings of this research, which will be available in June 2005.

Benefits of this study: Recently, several athletes benefited from participating in a study like this one because it provided an excellent opportunity for them to become aware of what they need to feel good on a daily basis and to perform at their optimal level. All of them reported positive effects in their sport and general life (i.e., increased well-being, motivation, and perceptions of athletic performance). Furthermore, the intervention involves multiple interviews that very much resemble sport psychology consultation. Participating in this study could be a valuable and rewarding learning experience for you!

Potential risks involved: The risks involved are very minimal. You are asked to participate in this study for a period of 12 weeks, however, you are free to withdraw at any time without any repercussion since this research is not related to your athletic (and/or academic) program.

LETTRE D'INFORMATION

Recrutement d'athlètes pour une étude d'une durée de 12 semaines ayant pour but l'amélioration du sentiment de bien-être et de la performance

Cher (Chère) athlète,

Je mènerai dans le cadre de ma maîtrise en psychologie du sport, une étude sous la supervision du Dr. Natalie Durand-Bush, une professeure à l'Université d'Ottawa qui travaille aussi en tant que consultante en psychologie du sport. Le but de mon étude est d'examiner si et comment des athlètes qui prennent part à des compétitions vivent la résonance dans leur sport et leur vie en général. Dans cette étude, la « résonance » a lieu lorsque tu te sens en parfaite harmonie avec ton environnement; c'est un processus qui te permet de t'engager entièrement dans ton activité, et qui t'apporte du plaisir, de la satisfaction, et une sensation de bien-être total.

Si tu es intéressé(e), ta participation sera sollicitée pour une période de 12 semaines. Ton implication consistera à:

- Participer à huit entrevues menées à toutes les 2 semaines pendant la période d'intervention de 12 semaines:
 - a. Une entrevue initiale (environ 1-2 heures)
 - b. Six entrevues de suivi (environ 30-60 minutes)
 - c. Une entrevue post-intervention (environ 1 heure)
- Rencontrer la chercheuse dans un délai de 2 heures avant et après chaque, ou la plupart des, compétitions qui se tiendront pendant les 12 semaines d'intervention.
 - a. Avant une compétition (environ 5 minutes)
 - b. Après une compétition (environ 15-30 minutes)
- Tenir un journal quotidien pour une période de 12 semaines. Compléter ce journal devrait te prendre 10 à 15 minutes par jour. Tu devras soumettre les entrées de ton journal à la fin de chaque semaine. Je les collecterai à un endroit et un moment prédéterminé qui te convient.
- Lire le livre du Dr. Doug Newburg, *Resonance. A Life by Design : Developing Your Dream and Mastering Your Fears*. Ce livre porte sur le thème spécifique de l'intervention et t'aidera à mieux comprendre la résonance et comment l'appliquer dans ta propre vie.

Les entrevues seront enregistrées avec un appareil audio et auront lieu à un moment qui nous conviendra le mieux, à toi et à moi. L'information que tu partageras au cours de l'étude sera utilisée uniquement dans le contexte de la recherche et restera strictement confidentielle. L'anonymat sera assuré en assignant un numéro à ton dossier afin que ton nom n'identifie ou n'apparaisse sur aucun document ou transcription d'entrevue. De plus, les cassettes d'enregistrement audio et les transcriptions d'entrevues seront entreposées dans le laboratoire de résonance et seuls les membres de l'équipe de recherche auront accès aux codes et aux données. Tu pourras obtenir, en laissant une adresse postale ci-dessous, un résumé des résultats de l'étude qui sera disponible en juin 2005.

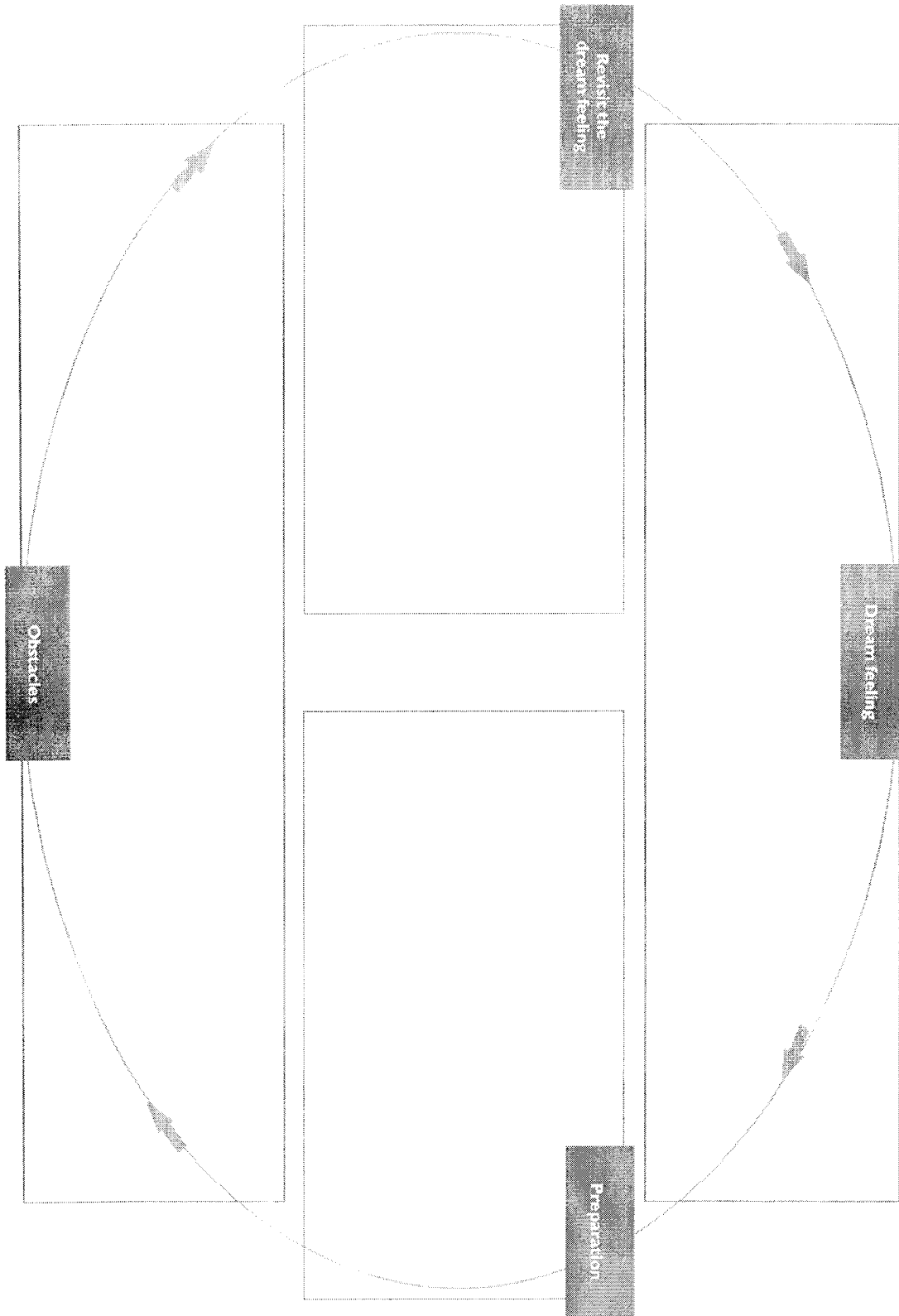
Bénéfices de cette étude: Récemment, plusieurs athlètes ont bénéficié en participant à une étude semblable à celle-ci puisqu'ils/elles ont appris à reconnaître ce qu'ils/elles ont besoin pour se sentir bien sur une base régulière et performer à un niveau optimal. Ils et elles ont tous rapporté des effets positifs de l'intervention dans leur sport et dans leur vie en général (i.e., augmentation de leur bien-être, motivation, perceptions de leur performance athlétique). De plus cette intervention impliquera de multiples entrevues qui ressembleront beaucoup à la consultation en psychologie du sport. Participer dans cette étude pourrait donc se révéler une expérience mémorable et enrichissante pour toi!

Risques potentiels: Les risques impliqués dans cette étude sont très minimes. Nous te demandons de participer pour une période de 12 semaines, toutefois, tu es libre de te retirer de l'étude à n'importe quel moment sans aucune répercussion puisque cette recherche n'est pas reliée à ton programme sportif (et/ou académique).

Appendix E

Journal Form

**My Personal Resonance
Performance Model**



Rate your overall level for the day

0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 80 85 90 95 100

Resonance _____% (ex. 85%)

Anxiety _____%

Self-Confidence _____%

Motivation _____%

Well-being _____%

If you had a competition today, rate your overall level for the competition

0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 80 85 90 95 100

Resonance _____% (ex. 85%)

Anxiety _____%

Self-Confidence _____%

Motivation _____%

Well-being _____%

Appendix F

Reflective Questions Based on Doug Newburg's book (2004)

The Most Important Lesson No One Ever Taught Me

Chapter 1: Telling Your Story

Enjoyment

How does your life feel?
Do you enjoy your life?
Do you feel the way you want to feel in your daily life?

Ideas

How many ideas have you had recently? Which ones captured your interest enough that you chose to pursue them and express yourself through them?
Do you know what your talent(s) is/are?

Chapter 2: Easy Speed

Resonance: The process

How do you want to feel on a daily basis in your chosen endeavours?
When, where, and around whom do you feel this way?
What prevents you from feeling the way you want to feel?
How do you reconnect with your desired feelings?

Dream Goal distinction

What are your goals in life?
Why/How did you choose these goals?
Does working toward your goals allow you to feel the way you want to feel?

Safety, security, acceptance

Are your actions driven by your own ideas or based on ideas/expectations of others?

Keeping your desires greater than your fears

What do you want in life?
What draws you to an activity, person, or lifestyle?
What are you willing to work for?
What are your fears?
How do your fears affect you?
Do they paralyse you or challenge you?
How can you face your fears?

Chapter 3: Beyond Happiness

Learning

How do you learn best?

What was the best learning experience of your life?

How can you learn something about yourself every day?

Feeling right

Does your life (ex. activities, desires, lifestyle) fit with who you are?

When do you feel right? When don't you?

How can you facilitate the feelings you seek?

Chapter 4: Playing to Win

Freedom from vs Freedom to

Is feeling free important to you? Why?

Where, when, and with whom do you feel free?

When you feel free, do you feel free from doing something or free to do something? What is the difference?

Benefit-cost

When you analyse a situation, do you tend to do a benefit-cost analysis or a cost-benefit analysis?

What are the consequences of each type of analysis?

Freedom-responsibilities

What responsibilities do you have?

Have you chosen them or have they been imposed?

What effect do your responsibilities have on your freedom?

Do you accept these responsibilities because they give you some freedom?

Being yourself

Can you articulate how you feel?

Can you easily share your emotions with others?

With whom in your life do you feel most comfortable sharing your innermost feelings?

Social acceptability

Is there a clash between doing what feels right to you and doing what people around you expect of you? If so, what do you do about it?

What is the cost of doing something that is socially marginal?

What is the cost of "not" doing the things that make you feel the way you want to feel, even though it may not be socially acceptable?

Chapter 5: Success?

Resonance

Is there a seamless fit or a sense of harmony between you (your ideas, goals, talents, weaknesses) and your environment (where you are, who you are with, the things you are doing)?

Freedom and connectedness / engagement

How do you experience the things you have acquired (car, house, dog, family)?

Do you feel connected to them?

Do they engage you?

Do they free you more often than they burden you?

Vulnerability

How can vulnerability be a strength in your life?

When do you feel the most vulnerable?

How do you respond to being vulnerable?

Are you ok with being vulnerable in certain situations? Which ones? Why?

Do you shy away from people or situations that make you feel vulnerable or do you open yourself to them? Why?

Chapter 6: A Dream Deferred

Working with others

Who allows you to feel the way you want to feel?

What is your role in different aspects of your life? Do you try to help others improve and feel the way they want to feel?

Are you a leader? If not, do you support the leader of the groups to which you belong?

Do you honour what you do (are you true to yourself when you do it) or are you just going through the motions?

Do you beat yourself up when you face an obstacle or setback? Do you get mad at whoever made you feel bad (boss, teacher, significant other)? If people let you do mediocre work, are they doing you a favour?

Who do you influence and what opportunities do you have to help other people around you?

Competition

What does competition mean to you? Does it allow you to feel the way you want to feel?

When do you perform your best?

Preparation

How do you choose to prepare to feel the way you want to feel?

For what and for whom are you willing to work for?

Do you spend a lot of time honing / deliberately practicing your skills so that your skill level rarely prevents you from trying new things or expressing new ideas? In essence, do you make yourself vulnerable?

Obstacles and responding to your own response

How do you determine if an obstacle is really an obstacle in your life?

Do your obstacles really prevent you from feeling the way you want to feel? Are they really costing you or are they just a minor distraction?

If you identify an external obstacle, what is your initial response to it?

If your initial response is, for example, fear, sadness, anger, guilt, disgust/contempt, or loneliness, do you dwell on this feeling for a while to the point where those feelings become an internal obstacle? Can you change your initial response? How? If not, can you develop an effective response to your initial response so that you can feel the way you want to feel again while pursuing your life?

Do your responses to obstacles result from habit or from personal choices that you make?

Chapter 7: The Ability to be Alone

Fitting in

Is the feeling of “fitting in” important to you? Why?

Do you often compromise your values, beliefs, and desires, or accept responsibilities to be liked or accepted?

What is the cost of letting what others think or do control your actions?

Being alone

If you were alone on an island for a week, what would you do? How would you react? How would you feel?

How can being alone help you deal with your fears?

Can you make choices based on what you want and not what you need?

Friendship

How do you define “relationship”?

What do your friends mean to you?

Which friends are you willing to work for?

How do you feel in the presence of your friends?

Do your friends give you a feeling of freedom and safety or a feeling of responsibility?

Chapter 8: Remember and Forgive

Confidence

Where does your confidence come from? What enhances it? What undermines it?

Is your view of confidence useful in your life?

If you do not have total belief or confidence that you will succeed, will you still take risks? Why?

Is what you are trying to do in life worth the risk of potentially not succeeding?

Obstacles

Can you learn from people who deal with obstacles and disappointment well, who understand that it is part of the process, but do not get caught in it?
How many people do you affect when you stay caught in your own obstacles or disappointment?
How do you affect them?

Creating / Managing energy

Who and what activities give you energy? Who and what activities take it away?
Are you good at managing your energy?
Do you believe that gaining energy is possible? How?

Chapter 9: Put your hands on the keys

Success as an obstacle

What external reward(s) do you get for performing in your sport or other contexts?
If the reward(s) was/were taken away, would you keep performing? Why?
Has success ever been an obstacle for you? If so, why?
Did it increase your responsibilities and as a result, diminish your freedom?

Power and vulnerability

How do you feel when you have to get out of your comfort zone?
How do you feel when you have to let go of your power base?
Are you willing to let go of your power and allow yourself to be vulnerable to take risks and learn new things?

Chapter 10: Learning how to fall

Are you willing to do the work, risk the cost, and deal with your fears in order to feel the way you want to feel on a daily basis, that is, experience your dream feeling?
Is your dream feeling important enough for you to protect it, hold on to it, and work for it?
Who can you trust and rely on?
What can you learn from your past successes?

Chapter 11: For the children

Why do you practise your sport or engage in physical activity?
Is this worth the cost of dealing with the obstacles you face and your fears?

Chapter 12: The good husband

With whom do you maintain significant relationships?
How do you perceive significant others in your life?
What do these relationships bring to your life? What do you bring to your relationships?

How can you create opportunities to enjoy the love/relationships in your life?

Chapter 13: What will you work for?

Lessons learned

What have you learned throughout your experience with resonance?

How do you apply this knowledge to your life?

What does resonance bring to your life?

Are you willing to work to experience your dream feeling?

Inspiration

What inspires you?

Does this give you the motivation you need to do the work or the preparation to live the life you want? Why/why not?