

Using Constant Comparison Method and qualitative data to understand participants' experiences at the nexus of tourism, sport and charity events

Alexandra Coghlan*

Griffith University

Centre for Tourism Sport and Service Innovation

Gold Coast Campus

Southport QLD 4222

Australia

Email: a.coghlan@griffith.edu.au

Kevin Filo

Griffith University

Griffith Business School

Gold Coast Campus

Southport QLD 4222

Australia

Email: k.filo@griffith.edu.au

To cite this article: Alexandra Coghlan & Kevin Filo (2013). Using Constant Comparison Method and qualitative data to understand participants' experiences at the nexus of tourism, sport and charity events. *Tourism Management*, 35, 122-131.

Abstract

This study focuses on understanding the experiential meaning for participants engaged in events at the nexus of tourism, sport and charity. Using Constant Comparison Method (CCM), we analyze the published findings of an autoethnographic study on philanthropic adventure tourism with studies that employed focus groups (n = 31) and interviews (n = 32) with charity sport event participants. A number of themes related to the tourism, sport and charitable aspects of the experience are highlighted. Most notably, the central role of connectedness is revealed, and the multiple levels for participant connectedness and the processes facilitating connection are discussed. The results extend research on charity sport events to multi-day touring events, while uncovering initial evidence of how these events may facilitate pathways to wellbeing. In addition, implications for the use of autoethnography in tourism research, and understanding experiential meanings for managing this growing event sector, are highlighted.

Keywords: Autoethnography, adventure philanthropy, charity sport events, sustainable tourism

1.0 Introduction

Recent tourism scholarship has witnessed a far greater diversity of methods employed to understand meaning associated with travel experiences. In some ways, the growth of qualitative studies in tourism research is a response to calls for more personal narratives in tourism research articulated by authors such as Ren, Pritchard and Morgan (2010) and Ryan (2010). In particular, one type of qualitative study, autoethnography research, represents a compelling means by which tourism scholars may include personal narratives within peer reviewed publications. However, whilst insightful and rich in personal meaning, the autoethnographic study may often remain isolated within the broader field of research, as to date, few tourism scholars draw upon sources of autoethnographic data within their own work.

In this study, we examine how qualitative research, including an autoethnographic study, can inform our understanding of meaning within a growing tourism niche sector, that is charity sport events and philanthropic adventure travel, whilst applying an interdisciplinary framework to understand the management and marketing implications associated with making meaning in philanthropic travel. The overlapping research interests of the two authors and their published qualitative data sets presented a unique opportunity to accomplish the following research aims: first, to extend the co-author's original research agendas and second, and more broadly, to investigate some methodological and epistemological implications of qualitative tourism research, focusing on autoethnography.

To achieve these aims, we provide an overview of philanthropic adventure tourism and charity sport events, highlighting the challenges of understanding meaning in these sectors (and tourism more broadly), before considering the benefits of autoethnographic research, and presenting the research method and findings. Finally, we discuss the co-created

knowledge of the meaning that participants attribute to their tourism experiences and the management implications of the findings.

2.0 Meaning-making in Adventure Philanthropy and Charity Sport Events

2.1 Charity Sport Events and Philanthropic Adventure Tourism: A Form of Meaningful Tourism

This research examines tourism experiences which characteristically provide meaning to participants through their philanthropic nature. These experiences provide an ideal context to explore new methods of understanding meaning in tourism experiences, specifically in an area which Getz (2008) argues has been given little research attention and requires the event and the travel experience to be “understood in concert” (p.413). These events also correspond to Trauer’s (2006) idea of special interest tourism, at the boundaries of recreation, leisure and travel. This section describes charity sports events and philanthropic adventure tourism as growing niche sectors providing participants with a meaningful experience.

Charitable organizations are increasingly turning to alternative fundraising events to engage communities, attract donations, and publicize the charity’s activities (Ruperto & Kerr, 2009). Accordingly, this sector of events is experiencing considerable growth. Due to the broad range of events that can be included within the charity sport event sector, overall figures on participation and revenue for these events are not available. However, the American Institute of Philanthropy (2011) reveals that the thirty largest events in 2010 attracted over 11.3 million participants generating \$1.64 billion for charity. One example of this growth is the Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF), a Texas-based non-profit organization founded in 1997. The LAF’s first Ride for the Roses, a cycling fundraiser held to inspire and empower individuals living with cancer, generated \$130.00 (M. Stoller, personal communication, May 5, 2004). In the years since that inaugural event, the Ride for the Roses

has grown to become a multi-million dollar fundraiser for the organization and has evolved into a series of events – The **LIVESTRONG** Challenge – held annually in multiple cities across the United States.

Meanwhile, philanthropic adventure tourism, described as adventure tourism which raises money for charitable initiatives, may be considered a touring extension of charity sport events, e.g. long-distance, multi-day cycling or hiking events. Lyons and Wearing (2008) suggest that adventure philanthropy participants “blend the voluntary act of fund-raising with the more hedonic pleasures of a packaged adventure tour” (p.151). It is an emerging niche sector within slow/sustainable tourism (Lumsdon & McGrath, 2011), that is, tourism which consciously attempts to achieve ‘triple bottom line’ outcomes of economic, socio-cultural and environmental sustainability (Goodwin, McCombes & Eckardt, 2009). In this research, both the terms “philanthropic adventure tourism” and “charity sport events” are used, the former being an extension of the latter when a tourism/touring component is present. Both refer to an event requiring a registered participant to raise funds and complete physical activity, with proceeds benefiting a designated charity.

Both types of events appeal to a variety of individuals based upon a participant’s connection with both the charitable organization and the sport activity (Ritchie, Tkaczynski, & Faulks, 2010; Scott & Solomon, 2002). Whilst little research is available on philanthropic adventure tourism, we know that a variety of motives, including recreation-based (e.g. “intellectual”, “social”, and “physical”) and charity-based (e.g. “reciprocity”, “self-esteem”, “need to help others”) motives, drive charity sport event participation (Bennett, Mousley, Kitchin, & Ali-Choudhury, 2007; Filo, Funk, & O’Brien, 2008; Taylor & Shanka, 2008). In addition, both types of events are believed to provide participants with a meaningful experience. In a qualitative exploration of charity sport event participation, Filo and colleagues (2008) uncovered an interaction between the recreation motives and the charitable

component of the event. This interaction resulted in attachment to the event, revealed through the event taking on emotional, symbolic, and functional meaning. These emotional, symbolic, and functional meanings underscore attachment, and relate to the feelings, self-expression, achievement, and accomplishment evoked by the event (Filo, Funk & O'Brien, 2009), as motives become internalized and take on greater meaning for participants.

In evaluating the meaning that charity sport events elicit from participants, a framework is useful to explore the connection between the person (i.e., event participant) and object (i.e., charity sport event). The Psychological Continuum Model (PCM), a vertical continuum modeling consumer relationships with sport products, is one such framework, integrating literature from consumer behavior, marketing, sociology, and psychology, and applied to various sporting and charity sport event studies (Beaton, Funk, & Alexandris, 2009; Funk & James, 2001, 2006; Beaton, Funk, Ridinger, & Jordan, 2011; Filo et al., 2008, 2009). It shares similarities with prior models such as Hierarchy of Effects Theory (Barry, 1987), the Transtheoretical Model (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1982) and Enduring Involvement (McIntyre, 1989). The PCM advances processes operating within and among awareness, attraction, attachment, and allegiance outcomes. Within the PCM framework, the motives satisfied through charity sport event participation take on enhanced meaning for the individual, interacting with the individual's self-concept and values, which in turn facilitate the attachment process and result in specific attachment outcomes. Attachment outcomes include stronger attitudes and a more meaningful connection towards the charity sport event (c.f. Funk & James, 2006).

One of the appealing aspects of this model is the process by which motives are internalized to form the meaning held for the event. This model may be further tested using fresh perspectives and methodologies, and in particular multi-layered, complex investigations that can reveal the subjective nature of making meaning in philanthropic tourism. By way of

example, participants may believe that a specific event is meaningful because of their relationship with the charity (i.e., the participant has benefitted directly from the charity), the sport activity (i.e., the participant is an avid cyclist), the other participants (i.e., he or she participates with friends and family), or because the participant is attached to the destination or scenery. In summary, an investigation of the meaning participants derive from an event may potentially lead to researchers precariously making assumptions about the participants' subjective beliefs, with consequent, potentially inappropriate, managerial implications.

Accordingly, the current research explores making meaning through the analysis of qualitative studies of participant experiences in these events. To achieve this, we analyze a published autoethnographic study into philanthropic adventure tourism using a framework applied to charity sport event research. The use of qualitative data, and in particular the value of autoethnography, in tourism research is reviewed next.

2.2 Analyzing and Valuing the Subjective in Tourism Research

Recent years have seen a rise in qualitative studies within the field of tourism studies, perhaps as a response to the dominion quantitative approaches based on business and management models aimed at producing, managing and selling the tourism product (e.g. Belhassen & Caton, 2009; Botterill, 2001; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006; Walle, 1997). Authors such as Farrell and Twining-Ward (2004) argue that tourism has failed to capitalize on its multi-disciplinary, often qualitative origins (e.g. early sociologists and anthropologists) and on epistemological and methodological progress made in other disciplines. Embracing the qualitative, multi-disciplinary aspect of tourism research will undoubtedly develop our understanding of the tourism experience, in particular how tourists make meaning out of the experience with important management implications for this experiential industry. (c.f. Obenour, Patterson, Pedersen & Pearson, 2006).

Qualitative approaches to tourism research often provide a form of local-emergent knowledge that assists in understanding tourists' inner worlds (Jamal & Hollinshead, 2001). Autoethnographic studies represent one type of qualitative approach that inspires critical reflection on one's own situated perspective (Bochner & Ellis, 1996; Ellis & Bochner, 2000) and recontextualizes what one already knows in light of an encounter with another's life (Sparkes, 2002). It enables the researcher to explore their relationship with their field of inquiry and informants, thereby occasionally illuminating "the normative, taken-for-granted axioms" within academic disciplinarity (Noy, 2007, p.353).

In this way, autoethnography has been endorsed as a useful tool for investigating changing ideas about the self and identity, presenting research that is both more insightful and allows a deeper appreciation of subject matter of the experience (Ellis, 2004). The technique draws heavily on the narrative/literary turn in qualitative social sciences, where writing becomes a way of knowing and the experience can be reconstructed and communicated in vivid, lively and sometimes painful ways not usually available to the outside observer (Coffey, 1999; Collinson, 2008; Noy, 2007; Richardson, 1994; Sparkes, 2000).

Autoethnographers thereby deliberately incorporate feelings and participatory experiences as dimensions of knowing, and help overcome divisions between self/other, public/private, individual/society and immediacy and memory (Sparkes, 2002).

The inclusion of autoethnography as a research methodology is growing within tourism studies. Anderson and Austin (2011) provide a useful review of autoethnography in leisure studies and cover fields of research such as identity construction, embodied emotion and race class and gender studies. With regards to tourism specific research, themes covered in these studies include an investigation of tourism academia (Botterill, 2003; Jennings Kachel, Kensbock & Smith, 2009; Pelias, 2003; Ryan, 2005), the embodied language of the tourism experience (Noy, 2007; Buckley, 2011), and the emotional experiences of shared

tourism images (Scarles, 2010; Miller, 2008), the performativity of backpackers (Muzaini, 2006; Walsh & Tucker, 2009) and studies of self-identity (Morgan & Pritchard, 2005) and finally, transcultural analyses in tourism (Butz & Besio, 2004).

This approach, however, is not without critics, who question the validity and generalizability of the findings, and who may consider autoethnography self-indulgent, introspective, narcissistic and individualized (Coffey, 1999). These criticisms have prompted other measures of evaluating autoethnographic research. Some proposed measures include its authenticity, fidelity, evocation, congruence, resonance and aesthetic appeal, its substantive contribution to our understanding of social life, and its impactfulness, generating new questions or moving the reader to action (Ellis, 2004; Richardson, 1994; Sparkes, 2000). In defense of autoethnographic approaches, Ellis (2004) argues that “it’s self-absorbed to pretend that you are somehow outside of what you study and not impacted by the same forces as others” (p.34).

When crafted effectively, therefore, autoethnographers can illustrate how their story is about more than their own experience, revealing multiple layers of consciousness, by focusing both outwards on social and cultural aspects of the experience and inwards, exposing a vulnerable self that transcends the socio-cultural (Ellis, 2004). This is the approach that we adopt here, analyzing qualitative data collected through autoethnographic research of a philanthropic adventure tourism activity, and comparing it to results of focus groups and interviews with charity sport event participants. Thus, the current research adopts an interpretive, grounded theory analysis of rich, qualitative data based on the self and others’ experiences of charity sport events, and philanthropic adventure tourism.

3.0 Materials and Method

The context for this research is a comparison between a published, peer reviewed autoethnographic study into a philanthropic adventure tourism event and published focus group and interview-based research on charity sport events. Throughout the remainder of the document, these three studies will be referred to as Author A's (autoethnographic) study and Author B's (focus group and interview-based) studies, respectively. (NOTE these references to Author A and B are made to allow for comparison of the pieces of research without compromising anonymity within the review process). Author A's autoethnographic study provided a personal account of participating in the Hospital Foundation's Cardiac Challenge. This three day cycling event covers 333km between Cairns and Cooktown, raising funds for the cardiac unit of Cairns Base Hospital in Australia. The study focused on the author's experiences of participating in the event. The autoethnographic approach was chosen as a suitable method for this context based on Henderson's (1981) suggestion that volunteers often do not appear to have easily expressed motives for participating in certain events, and this was the experience of the author in previous events.

As a complete member researcher, Author A drew on participant observation and autoethnography, as well as her engaged interest (Jamal & Hollinshead, 2001) to explore this topic. She kept a reflective diary, as well as noting comments made by participants. This provided a rich source of qualitative data which could be analyzed using what Anderson (2006) calls analytic autoethnography. Analytic autoethnography has five key features, which are: complete member researcher (i.e., the researcher is fully integrated into the social world under study); analytic reflexivity; narrative visibility of the researcher's self; dialogue with informants beyond the self; and commitment to theoretical analysis. The result was a highly personal account of her own experiences, which she attempted to contextualize, in as far as possible, through the published studies on volunteering and tourism. This approach is somewhat similar to Ellis (2004, p.196) "thematic analysis of narrative". Here stories are

treated as data, where narrative themes illuminate the content by emphasizing the abstract analysis rather than the stories themselves. These themes should “hold within or across stories”, allowing comparisons to be made with other stories in related areas (Ellis, 2004, p.196).

Meanwhile, Author B has completed several studies examining charity sport event participants. In these events, individuals met a minimum fundraising amount in order to complete a cycling event with all proceeds benefiting a designated charity. Specifically, Author B conducted four pre-event focus groups with participants in the 2006 Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF) **LIVESTRONG** Challenge to discuss participant expectations. In addition, Author B conducted post-event interviews with participants in the 2007 LAF **LIVESTRONG** Challenge to investigate the event experience. The questions used are provided in Appendix A (focus group) and B (interviews). These studies highlighted participant motives, while underscoring the meaning derived from participation.

The data sets were analyzed using Glaser’s (1965) Constant Comparison Method (CCM). This method combines the coding of text (albeit to a less systematic and rigid degree than content analysis) with inductive theory generation which remains close to the data. The CCM method is used to generate, not test, theories by highlighting the conditions, dimensions, consequences and processes that surround the data. The CCM involves four stages: comparing incidents that are applicable to each category; integrating categories and their properties; delimiting the theory; and writing the theory. Glaser (1965) proposes that “the constant comparisons of incidents on the basis of as many of their similarities and differences as possible tend to result in the analyst’s creating a developmental theory”, i.e. that develops theories on a level of generality which is higher than the qualitative material being analyzed (p.444). For this reason, Glaser (1965) argues CCM does not require the consideration of all data available (unlike methods such as analytic induction) and it is not

restricted to one kind of clearly defined case. This method is considered particularly suitable for our research aims as it can be applied using any kind of quantitative information (such as observations, interviews, articles and so forth) and the resulting insights can be transferred to different substantial fields showing similarities with the original field, e.g. between philanthropic adventure tourism and charity sport events (Boeije, 2002). For the purpose of this study, the units of analysis, i.e. CCM “incidents”, were the narrative texts emerging from Author A’s autoethnography and Author B’s interviews and focus groups.

4.0 Results:

As part of the CCM, the results are presented in two stages; first we compare the qualitative data provided by Author A’s autoethnographic study of her philanthropic adventure tourism experience and by Author B’s study of charity sport event motives, collected through interviews and focus groups with participants after their experience. These two sets of qualitative data provide the “incidents” required for the CCM, and have been categorized by the use of subheadings in section 4.1. Next, we consider the holistic, integrating patterns that emerge from comparing the incidents, a process known as “delimiting the theory” in CCM, and which provides information higher than the qualitative material being analyzed. The findings and their significance are then explored in further detail within the discussion.

4.1 Comparing Incidents and Integrating Categories

In her study, Author A identified both tourism-related aspects of the philanthropic adventure travel experience (i.e. socializing, adventure, and escape), and volunteering based aspects of the experiences, (i.e. achievement, entitlement/recognition, companionship, creativity, special interest). As we shall see, these incidents are strikingly similar to the findings uncovered by Author B, and using the CCM, were placed into a total of six categories as illustrated below.

4.1.1 Socializing and companionship.

Charity sport events provide an opportunity to meet new people, participate with friends and family, and reunite with past participants. The focus group participants within Author B's research frequently used terms such as, "social affair", "family reunion", and "party" to describe the event. The role of socializing is demonstrated by the following quotes from Sam, a 35-year old male:

Really, I'm looking forward to the entire weekend. I mean, it's a really fun weekend. I take my kids out to the kid's event, we go out to the Expo, we get up early and go to the ride. Meeting people and making an entire weekend out of the event.

and Annie, a 23-year old female:

For me, it's the people, you know, the events that surround it, I guess it is the same. The pasta dinner Saturday night, sitting at a table of 10 with 8 other people I don't know. It's just the people and the experiences you have and the connections you can make, and how many pen pals I can pick up in one weekend. That's really what it's all about - how many different connections you can make with so many great people.

In addition, the companionship identified by Author A shares similarities with the social motive previously detailed by Author B. The socializing component of adventure philanthropy uncovered by Author A is reflected in the following quote:

One of the great things about pack riding is that you get the chance to talk to everyone as you rotate around to the front and back. We have a good bunch this year, very diverse. Jo is the cheeky one, he and his friend are like two little mischievous imps. Brendan works in a similar field to me, it's interesting to hear his perspective on things. Justine is full of bluff and

bluster, she is great to keep you going up the hills. And of course, Sally is organising sing-alongs at the back, keeping us all in good spirits.

Meanwhile, companionship was highlighted with the following:

Poor Kevin, we all knew how he felt as he trudged the last bit up the hill, pushing his bike in front of him. He is one of the fit ones in the pack so it was a surprise when he declared himself “rooted” as he reached us. What we didn’t realise that he had been pushing his girlfriend (a first-timer) up the hill. A gallant effort to get her up, but in the end she had to get into the support vehicle. Kevin was the last up, and when he got there Justine reminded us all to look behind us to get a sense of exactly what we had achieved.

Collectively, these quotes demonstrate the overlap across the social motive (Author B), and the socialization and companionship aspects of the philanthropic adventure tourism experience (Author A).

4.1.2 Adventure, achievement and physicality.

The next two aspects of the experience identified by Author A, adventure and achievement, run parallel to a motive uncovered by Author B, the physical motive. In describing the sense of adventure displayed among the participants observed, Author A revealed the following:

My heart sank when I heard it was Jason who came off his bike coming down the range today. Talking to him last night it was obvious he wasn’t having a good ride this year. What a way to finish it off! Apparently, he got away with just a broken finger – amazing considering he was doing 80km an hour at the time. You always hope that there will be no serious incidents for the three days that we are out here, but this goes to show that there is no guarantee.

Author A elaborated further on the perseverance and exertion required to complete the event.

This physical effort is reflected in the following quote:

I still can't get over that I made it up Desailey Range this year. Oh what a feeling! All that hard work in training paid off. I am now one of 'them', the ones that I admired last year from the bus, as they stubbornly ground their way up the hill. Next will be the year that I make it all the way up Kuranda and will complete the whole event from start to finish.

These two incidents support the notion that charity sport events provide an individual with an opportunity to challenge themselves physically, as noted by Author B who had also identified the physical motive. Focus group participants described the event as a "physical challenge", or an opportunity to "keep in shape" and "be active". The physical motive is further exemplified by Frank, a 57-year old male revealing that the event gave him:

A sense of getting off your butt out of the chair and sofa. . . but when you see people doing that, you know, for these events you have to do a lot more than just sit on your sofa, you've got to get up and do something. There's plenty of people out there who think 'just tell me how much money you want and go away.' And a lot of people we go ask for money say the same thing, but at least I'm doing something besides raise money, we want to do something else and be active.

4.1.3 Escapism and/or involvement.

For Author A the notion of escapism was a prominent aspect of the ride as evidenced by the following:

I love those moments of monotonous road, when you can get lost in your thoughts and realise that no one is making any demands of you, and your only job to keep pedalling. How rare is to be fully catered for, and John

(the support vehicle driver) is doing a great job of watering and feeding us at every stop. You have not a care in the world beyond following the wheel in front of you, keep pushing those pedals, and staying hydrated.

What complete and utter escapism! I wish it could last forever.

Author A noted the desire to escape is a fundamental tourist motivation, whereas Author B has questioned the contribution of the escape motive in charity sport events due to the importance of the event. Instead, the event represents an integral aspect of an individual's routine, rather than a break from that routine as the escape motive would suggest. The event as a central aspect of a participant's life rather than an escape from routine is embodied in the following quote from Annie:

It's something that's a big part of my life. You look toward the calendar, like when you were in college and you had dates like when you move out of the dorms, and when finals started, now it's when the **LIVESTRONG** Challenge is. It's on my calendar every year. I know what I'm doing the first weekend of October every year. Period. End of story. And I know what I need to do to get there the other 11 months out of the year.

4.1.4 Entitlement, recognition and self-esteem.

Next, Author A identifies the role of rewards in volunteering in describing the entitlement/recognition aspect of the experience, as revealed through the following quote:

I love our little uniforms, a sea of 300 riders all wearing the colourful Cardiac Challenge jerseys. We get to wear them like a badge of honour. It identifies us as serious riders (although no doubt pack 1 would laugh at that) with a community spirit and shows our commitment to the hard work that went into training and fundraising before the ride. You always give an extra big smile to riders out on the road when you see them wearing the jersey.

This incident reported by Author A links with the self-esteem motive uncovered by Author B. However, differences exist across the mechanism by which participants derive recognition or self-esteem. For Author A, the recognition builds on both the event and the cause, while Author B describes the enhanced sense of self-worth from supporting the designated charity. Focus group participants indicated participating in the event made them “feel good”, providing “a real sense of accomplishment”. Annie described the self-esteem derived from participation with the following:

I feel like I am empowering the LAF to do the work that they do by doing what I do to raise money. But at the same time, those actions empower me, and make me feel like I’m doing something good. It’s a lot for self-worth. It’s a lot for you. . . . But um, being able to take those skills and do it for charity and to have these efforts go to this cause is really empowering for me.

4.1.5 Creativity, learning and mental stimulation.

Author A describes the Cardiac Challenge as an opportunity for creativity, by discussing the challenges associated with fundraising and the opportunity to learn fundraising strategies from others. This is embodied in the following:

I love comparing notes on what people did to raise money. It’s amazing the ideas people come up with when you put your mind to it. It’s one of the more challenging aspects of the event for me, and it’s good to get tips from the newsletters that Michelle sends out on who is doing what. It stretches your mind in a new direction trying to think up ways of raising the money for the trip and reach your target.

Similarly, Author B notes the influence of the intellectual motive as an opportunity for mental stimulation, exploration and learning more about oneself and the charity. This is represented within the following quote from Frank:

Events such as these allow you to meet others, share stories, and gather more information about survivorship. . . . That's the one thing the LAF keeps working on is trying to get out the information, trying to get out the information for people to get the information. And by spreading the **LIVESTRONG** Challenge out across the country, they are trying to get that focus more open. . . . The LAF continues to work to spread their mission.

4.1.6 Enduring involvement and special interest.

The final aspect of the philanthropic adventure tourism experience identified by Author A is special interest. This was revealed through individual passion for cycling and the event as an indulgence of this passion, somewhat similar to Ritchie et al.'s (2010) enduring involvement for cycling tourists. In conveying the enduring involvement components of attraction, self-expression and centrality, Author A provided the following:

I felt like such a dork today when I realised that another reason why I enjoy this ride so much is that it gives me the opportunity to check out expensive bikes, new gear and accessories and talk about bike riding with the more experienced cyclists. I learn so much from the more experienced riders on cadence and hill riding, gearing and even how to keep my energy up to last the distance. This isn't something I get to do at home. It's a bit of an indulgence!

This incident does not align specifically with a motive uncovered by Author B. However, the incident found in Author A's study suggests that a subculture is present, in line with Author B's suggestion that charity sport event participants form a subculture based on their

identification with the sport activity and their passion for the charitable cause. This subculture was exemplified by focus group participants describing their fellow event participants as members of “pseudo-families”. Leslie, a 42-year old female, elaborated further with this description of the event: “13,000 strangers become connected. Immediately”. Meanwhile, the connection shared among participants based upon interest in the physical activity, charity, and the event is further illustrated by the following quote from Lee, a 53-year old male:

And so much of what we do and when you read the paper and everything, you feel like our country and world is divided, everybody is attacking each other. Then you deal with all of these people at this event that you have this trust with, you know, there’s 10,000 people around and you know you can trust these people because you have this shared vision of what is good and what is right. And that’s just an amazing feeling.

A summary of the incidents, their alignment and the resultant categories that emerge through the CCM is provided in Table 1.

Table 1

A comparison of Author A’s and Author B’s qualitative data “incidents”

Author A	Author B
Socialising and Companionship	Social
Adventure and Achievement	Physical
Escapism and/or Involvement	
Entitlement/Recognition	Self-Esteem
Creativity/Learning	Intellectual
Enduring Involvement and Special Interest	

4.2 Delimiting the Theory

Once incidents have been compared, and categories generated from the qualitative data, the next step in the CCM method is to explore the patterns that emerge and propose a theory

integrating these patterns and allowing generalizations from the data that can be applied to other similar contexts. Using CCM, we noticed that several aspects of the narrative data show considerable overlap, whilst the categorization of the common themes highlights the foundations of meaningful sport and tourism experiences. For instance, opportunities for socializing, companionship, physical adventure and achievement, recognition and self-esteem, learning and creativity, and the dimensions of special interest were all found to be key components of the experiences.

In particular, the theme of connecting with self and others was clearly present in both data sets, and brought into focus through the socializing and companionship categories and related statements around “meeting people”, “making connections”, and “talking to everyone”. Thus, we argue that connection provides a common thread running throughout the different narratives of making meaning and participation, and provides that level of generality which is higher than the qualitative material being analyzed (Glaser, 1965). Indeed, CCM revealed the importance of connection, both with self, with others and with a greater social cause, as both sets of narrative data indicate the importance of opportunities to connect with the individual self, the relational self (e.g. the members of one’s cycling pack), and the collective self (e.g. event participants) (Sedikides, Gaertner & O’Mara, 2011).

Connection appears therefore to act at several levels, both collective and individual, and through a variety of different mechanisms. For instance, CCM emphasized the presence of emotional meaning as embodied in the connection shared among participants, as well as the relationships that participants establish, and the intangible, emotional meaning that occurred among respondents through that process of connection (Author B), as well as through the socializing, companionship, and special interest through the friendship and belonging (socializing) and a sense of solidarity (companionship) (Author A).

At a more individual level, CCM provides evidence of a (re)affirmation or discovery of the self as a central aspect of the meaning derived from the experiences. Connecting with the individual self was noted through the serious leisure components of enduring involvement and self-expression (McIntyre, 1989). Indeed, Author B highlights the presence of symbolic meaning (i.e. opportunities for self expression and the pursuit of a greater goal) and functional meaning (i.e., the sense of achievement and accomplishment) in the interview data. When combined with Author A's experiences of adventure, escape, and achievement and creativity, these are some of the key elements of self-actualization that allow individuals to express their "better" self, highlighting the presence of a greater goal and reflect the event as a mechanism towards self-expression, inspiration, and accomplishment.

As a cornerstone of the participants' experiences, we suggest that the ability to connect with others at these events is enhanced through several mechanisms. Obviously, the presence of others who share unique ethos by belonging to a defined subculture and a strong identification with the activity is an important component. Additionally, the sense of a common cause facilitates the connection to others; Berger, Greenspan, and Kohn (2007) point to emotional attachments that arise through social alliances and strengthen an individual's sense of belonging and social identity. In a more subtle way, Marsh, Johnston, Richardson and Schmidt (2009), as well as Lakens and Stel (2011), draw attention to the role of coordinated movement (such as pack riding) in the formation of social unity. We argue therefore that connection provides a level of generality which is higher than the qualitative material being analyzed, and requires further discussion in our study of meaningful event experiences.

5.0 Discussion

The results of comparing incidents introduce three main findings. First, the similarities across the different incidents underscore the importance of connection through these events, and the events' links to wellbeing. Second, the comparison also introduced new insights regarding escapism and an attachment process across the different contexts. Taken together, these results lead us to our third finding regarding the role of autoethnography in tourism research. These findings, along with managerial implications, limitations and directions for future research are detailed next.

5.1 The Role of Connection

The presence and processes of connection uncovered by comparing Author A's and Author B's qualitative data have important implications for our understanding of such experiences that fall at the nexus of tourism, sports and charity events. Of particular significance is the central role that connectedness plays within social and emotional wellbeing. For example, a report by NEF (2011) reviewed 400 international mental health articles to identify evidence-based actions that improve well-being. It placed "Connect (to others, individually and in communities)" first on their list of *Five Ways to Wellbeing*. The wellbeing aspects of the experiences, and the role of connection, that arose through CCM, appear to integrate the different aspects of the meaningful event experience. This finding is important as the wellbeing aspect of these events has not been adequately addressed in existing studies. Indeed, our findings suggest these events present all of the five pathways to wellbeing identified by NEF (2011) including connecting (i.e., connection with self and others), learning (i.e., learning about the charity, fundraising, and the activity), giving (i.e., giving through supporting the charity), being active (i.e., through the physical achievement afforded by the event), and being mindful (i.e., through the sense of attachment to the event and escape from mundane concerns, focusing the attention on the event activity).

Taken together, these pathways to wellbeing all appear to be present within our analysis of meanings assigned by participants to their charity sport event and philanthropic adventure tourism experiences. Thus, the research findings have raised further questions regarding the presence of learning, giving, being active, connecting and being mindful that were not present within a single study. As both charity sport events and philanthropic adventure travel continue to grow, they may provide an important contribution to the “somewhat underdeveloped and under-evidenced” concept of community wellbeing in the academic literature”, an important concept that is likely play a key role in the growth of specific leisure and tourism sectors and changing patterns of leisure overall (NEF, 2011, p.39). As mechanisms that foster all five pathways to wellbeing, further study of charity sport events and philanthropic adventure tourism can play an important role in developing our understanding of community wellbeing.

5.2 Additional Findings - Escapism and Attachment

In addition to noting the similarities in the meaning-making process of the experience, new insights also came into focus from comparing Author A’s and B’s research. Two key insights of note are first, the extension of the charity sport event literature into multi-day, touring events, and second, the revelation of an attachment process in philanthropic adventure tourism. The results indicate escapism is a motivator in multi-day events, a noteworthy result as it does not appear strongly in the charity sport event literature. Indeed, the finding of escape enabled Author B to re-evaluate his research, and recognize the importance of escaping *within* the event, rather than the original interpretation of escaping *through* the event. The importance of escaping within a charity sport event is considered likely as the desire to escape has been identified as a core motivation in the tourism and leisure literature (Pearce & Lee, 2005). In addition, the process of attachment in philanthropic adventure tourism was highlighted as the autoethnography was reanalyzed using the charity sport event

literature. The application of the PCM and the study of meaning in charity sports events suggests that attachment does occur in philanthropic adventure tourism, albeit to the charity, the touring group and to the physical activity of cycling, instead of the destination. This result suggests further investigation into the attachment process and outcomes within philanthropic adventure tourism.

5.3 Making meaning at the boundaries of tourism, sport and charity– The qualitative approach

Engaging in qualitative research has clear advantages for understanding the meanings individuals ascribe to their experiences. An additional benefit in this case was that the researcher's earlier qualitative data allowed them to build a bridge between their fields of study; a subsector of bicycle tourism on the one hand, and sport events on the other. Indeed, the new understanding gained by both researchers into the issues of escape, attachment, connection and wellbeing is attributable to the authors' willingness to engage with the autoethnographic approach, revealing insights not immediately apparent or explored in (their own) prior research. Furthermore, we suggest that the autoethnographic approach is suited to tourism research for additional reasons. First, the accessible nature of tourism as an activity (most tourism academics will shift back and forth between the roles of host, tourist and researcher in their lives) lends itself to autoethnography. The embodied, subjective nature of the tourism experience represents an additional reason. Moreover, the multiplicity of scholarly voices joining tourism scholarship and the communicative nature of tourism research makes it sensible to include autoethnography within the tools available to tourism scholars.

Ellis (2004) recommends that for autoethnographic research to be effective, the personal story should point to the commonalities and particularities of our lives, and open up the possibility of dialogue, collaboration and relationships with others. This has certainly

been the authors' experience in revisiting their own and each other's data, as they reanalyzed, reinterpreted and came to understand the data at a deeper level. Of course, any venture into new research requires that we be adequately equipped to undertake this journey.

Autoethnographers in other disciplines have highlighted the need for new criteria to evaluate autoethnographic research, including authenticity, fidelity, evocation, congruence, resonance, aesthetic appeal, substantive contribution and impactfulness. Belhassen and Caton (2009) encourage all scholars to consider the range of methodologies available to them, in order to think more critically about the knowledge products they create, and the value of their output to inform practice. Based upon the work of experienced autoethnographers (c.f. Ellis, 2004), cultivating autoethnographic research would appear to be difficult, while the next step, engaging with autoethnographic studies also presents challenges within a field more accustomed to (post)positivist research. It is hoped this paper illustrated ways in which researchers can adopt autoethnographic research.

5.4. Managerial Implications

The findings of this research introduce a number of implications for tourism managers. First, the meaning derived from these events combined with the insights gleaned from the qualitative data collected across the different events points to autoethnographies as a potential tool for event managers to gain insight into participants' experiences. In utilizing this tool, the challenges inherent to autoethnography would have to be addressed. In particular, successful employment of autoethnography requires training and understanding of the broader social framework surrounding the experiences. Implementing this training introduces opportunity for collaboration between industry and academia, whilst the emerging inter-relationship between sport and tourism departments at many universities presents exciting avenues to explore these events from an interdisciplinary perspective. This collaboration could introduce new insights to event managers regarding the meaning inherent

to these events, the factors contributing to this meaning, and the pathways to wellbeing facilitated through these events.

Finally, the link between these events and wellbeing uncovered within the current research has implications for the marketing and promotion of these events. Traditionally, these events are marketed to potential participants based upon motives tied specifically to the event. For instance, the ING Miami Marathon benefits a number of charities including World Vision. The event may be marketed for the social aspect (i.e., “participate with friends and family, or to meet people”); the activity (i.e., “participate to be healthy and active”); or charity (i.e., “participate to build a better world for children”). The alignment with enhanced wellbeing provides a more holistic basis upon which to market to individuals in place of a focus on singular motives and benefits. The wellbeing framework provides a collective benefit to the individual and society that can be communicated as an outcome of the different specific benefits and motives that drive participation. Meanwhile, the concept provides a potential outcome as a benefit to society that could be leveraged by the sector overall to access funding from government bodies, sponsors and philanthropists.

5.5 Limitations and Future Research Directions

These findings and contributions are advanced alongside the acknowledgement of limitations to this research. The generalizability of our findings is restricted due to unique aspects of each event included within the analysis that may contribute to increased meaning held for the events. The Hospital Foundation’s Cardiac Challenge is a community-focused event drawing upon a smaller number of participants with a great deal of passion for the region. Meanwhile, the vast amount of success and visibility the LAF has enjoyed over the last several years, combined with the fact that cancer has touched nearly everyone in some way, contribute to the prominence of the organization’s events. The community focus and

prominence of the events respectively may translate to greater meaning held among event participants.

With this in mind, future research can employ a similar process to examine other aspects of the tourism experience. A research team can separately, yet simultaneously, employ autoethnography alongside positivist approaches (e.g., in-depth interviews, questionnaire administered to participants). Employing these means of data collection simultaneously will respond to calls for participant-driven reflective methodologies and researchers learning through active engagement (Pritchard, Morgan, & Ateljevic, 2011), as well as for innovative mechanisms and perspectives on the complex nature of understanding tourism and its experiential meanings (c.f. Ateljevic, Pritchard, & Morgan, 2007). In addition, autoethnography could also be employed alongside emerging data sources such as virtual communities (e.g., Illum, Ivanov, & Liang, 2008) and blog postings (e.g., Zehrer, Crotts, Magnini, 2010), whereby the observations through autoethnography are compared against observations and insights shared in virtual spaces. By drawing on findings derived from each method we can better understand the participants' perspective as they make meaning out of their tourism experience.

6.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, readers are reminded that the aim of this study was not to validate the autoethnographic approach by using a mixed methods study based upon traditional measures of validity and rigorousness. Instead, we sought to demonstrate how this method, and the researcher's self-reflexive voice, contributes to the body of knowledge in tourism, and in particular how autoethnography can be embedded into other (qualitative) studies on related topics. Other researchers who might be working in the same or related fields as an autoethnographer are invited to make use of the qualitative data to gain insight into and

advance their own research topics. Our experience as presented here demonstrates one way of achieving this. The explicit exploration of assumptions and positions associated with autoethnography is perhaps increasingly important as scholars from different cultural backgrounds and “tribes” add their voices to this academic field, and interdisciplinary tourism research becomes the norm. This type of approach and the insights generated may perhaps also reveal our own assumptions and positions that remain otherwise unarticulated.

References

- American Institute of Philanthropy (2011). 2010 Run Walk Ride Survey Summary – Top Thirty. Retrieved on July 20, 2011 from:
<http://www.runwalkride.com/uploads/2010%20Run%20Walk%20Ride%20Thirty%20Summary%20-%20Updated%20March%2021%20Data.pdf>
- Anderson, L. (2006). Analytic autoethnography. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 35, 373-395.
- Anderson, L. & Austin, M. (2011). Auto-ethnography in leisure studies, *Leisure Studies*, DOI:10.1080/02614367.2011.599069
- Ateljevic, I., Pritchard, A. & Morgan, N. (Eds) (2007). The critical turn in tourism studies: *Innovative research methodologies*. London: Elsevier.
- Barry, T. (1987). The development of the Hierarchy of Effects: An historical perspective. *Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 9, 251-295.
- Beaton, A.A., Funk, D.C. & Alexandris, K. (2009). Operationalizing a theory of participation in physically active leisure. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 41, 177–203.
- Beaton, A.A., Funk, D. C., Ridinger, L., & Jordan, J. (2011). Sport involvement: A conceptual and empirical analysis. *Sport Management Review*, 14, 126-140.
- Belhassen, Y. & Caton, K. (2009). Advancing understanding: A linguistic approach to epistemology. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 36, 335-352.

- Bennett, R., Mousley W., Kitchin, P., & Ali-Choudhury, R. (2007). Motivations for participating in charity-affiliated sporting events. *Journal of Customer Behavior*, 6, 155-178.
- Berger, I.E., Greenspan, I. & Kohn, D. (2007). Identity, re-creation through recreation: The case of the Alyn Charity Bike Ride. *Canadian Journal of Jewish Studies*, 15, 1-36.
- Bochner, A.P & Ellis, C. (Eds). (1996). *Composing ethnography: Alternative forms of qualitative writing*. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.
- Boeije, H. (2002). A purposeful approach to the Constant Comparative Method in the analysis of qualitative interviews. *Quality and Quantity*, 36, 391-409.
- Botterill, D. (2003). An autoethnographic narrative on tourism research epistemologies. *Loisir et Societe*, 26, 97-110.
- Botterill, D. (2001). The epistemology of a set of tourism studies. *Leisure Studies* 20, 199-214.
- Buckley, R. (2011). Rush as a key motivation in skilled adventure tourism: Resolving the risk recreation paradox. *Tourism Management*, doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2011.10.22
- Butz, D. & Besio, K. (2004). The value of autoethnography for field research in transcultural settings. *The Professional Geographer*, 56, 350-360.
- Coffey, P. (1999). *The ethnographic self*. London: Sage.
- Collinson, J.A. (2008). Running the routes together: Co-running and knowledge in action. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 37, 38-61.
- Ellis, C. (2004). *The Ethnographic I: A methodological novel about autoethnography*. Oxford: AltaMira Press.
- Ellis, C. & Bochner, A.P. (2000). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: Researcher a subject. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp.733-768). Sage Publications: California.

- Farrell B. & Twining-Ward, L. (2004) Reconceptualising tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research, 31*, 274-295.
- Filo, K., Funk, D.C., & O'Brien, D. (2009). The meaning behind attachment: Exploring camaraderie, cause, and competency at a charity sport event. *Journal of Sport Management, 23*, 361–387.
- Filo, K., Funk, D.C., & O'Brien, D. (2008). It's really not about the bike: Exploring attraction and attachment to the events of the Lance Armstrong Foundation. *Journal of Sport Management, 22*, 501–525.
- Funk, D.C., & James, J. (2006). Consumer loyalty: The meaning of attachment in the development of sport team allegiance. *Journal of Sport Management, 20*, 189–217.
- Funk, D.C., & James, J. (2001). The psychological continuum model: A conceptual framework for understanding an individual's psychological connection to sport. *Sport Management Review, 4*, 119–150.
- Getz, D. (2008). Event tourism: Definition, evolution and research. *Tourism Management, 29*, 403-428.
- Glaser, B. (1965). The constant comparative method of qualitative analysis. *Social Problems, 12*, 436–445.
- Goodwin, H., McCombes, L. & Eckardt, C. (2009). *Advances in Travel Philanthropy: Raising money through the travel and tourism industry for charitable Purposes*. WTM Responsible Tourism Day (Report 2). Retrieved from www.icrtourism.org/documents/2_nov_wtm_tp_final_report.pdf.
- Henderson, K. A. (1981). Motivations and perceptions of volunteerism as a leisure activity. *Journal of Leisure Research, 13*, 260-274.
- Higgins-Desbiolles, F. (2006). More than an industry: The forgotten power of tourism as a social force. *Tourism Management, 27*, 1192-1208.

- Illum, S. F., Ivanov, S. H., & Liang, Y. (2010). Using virtual communities in tourism research. *Tourism Management, 31*, 335-340.
- Jamal, T. & Hollinshead, K. (2001). Tourism and the forbidden zone: The underserved power of qualitative inquiry. *Tourism Management, 22*, 63-82.
- Jennings, G., Kachel, U., Kensbock, S. & Smith, M. (2009). Tourism and hospitality research students experiences: How to achieve quality, inclusivity, and belongingness. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management, 16*, 139-147.
- Lakens, D. & Stel, M. (2011). If they move in synch, they must feel in synch: Movement synchrony leads to attributions of rapport and entitativity. *Social Cognition, 29*, 1-14.
- Lumsdon, L. & McGrath, P. (2011). Developing a conceptual framework for slow travel: A grounded theory approach. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 19*, 265-279.
- Lyons, K. & Wearing, S. (2008). All for a good cause? The blurred boundaries between volunteering and tourism. In Lyons, K. & Wearing, S. (2008) *Journeys of Discovery in Volunteer Tourism*. CABI International: Wallingford.
- Marsh, K., Johnston, L., Richardson, M. & Schmidt, R.C. (2009). Towards a radically embodied, embedded social psychology. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 39*, 1217-1225.
- McIntyre, N. (1989). The personal meaning of participation: Enduring involvement. *Journal of Leisure Research, 21*, 167-179.
- Miller, D. M. S. (2008). Disaster tourism and disaster landscape attractions after Hurricane Katrina: An auto-ethnographic journey. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research 2*(2), 115-131
- Morgan, N. & Pritchard, A. (2005). On souvenirs and metonymy: Narratives of memory, metaphor and materiality. *Tourist Studies, 5*, 29-53.

- Muzaini, H. (2006). Backpacking Southeast Asia: Strategies of looking local. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 33, 144-161.
- New Economics Foundation (NEF) (2011). *Sustainable development and well-being: relationships, challenges and policy implications*. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.
- Noy, C. (2007). The language(s) of the tourist experience: An autoethnography of the poetic tourist. In I. Ateljevic, A. Pritchard, & N. Morgan (Eds.), *The critical turn in tourism studies: Innovative research methodologies* (pp. 349-370). London: Elsevier.
- Obenour, W., Patterson, M., Pedersen, P. & Pearson, L. (2006). Conceptualisation of a meaning-based research approach for tourism services experiences. *Tourism Management*, 27, 34-41.
- Pearce, P. L. & Lee, U. (2005). Developing the travel career approach to tourist motivation. *Journal of Travel Research*, 43, 226-237.
- Pelias, R. J. (2003). The academic tourist: An autoethnography. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9, 369-372.
- Pritchard, A., Morgan, N. & Ateljevic, I. (2011). Hopeful tourism, a new transformative perspective. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38, 941-963.
- Prochaska, J.O., & DiClemente, C.C. (1982). Transtheoretical therapy toward a more integrative model of change. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 19, 276-287.
- Ren, C., Pritchard, A. & Morgan, N. (2010). Constructing tourism research; A critical enquiry. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 37, 885-904.
- Richardson, L. (1994). Writing a method of inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 516-529). London; Sage Publications.
- Ritchie, B. W., Tkaczynski, A., & Faulks, P. (2010). Understanding the motivation and travel

- behavior of cycle tourists using involvement profiles. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 27, 409-425.
- Ruperto, A.R., & Kerr, G. (2009). A study of community events held by not-for-profit organizations in Australia. *Journal of Nonprofit and Public Sector Marketing*, 21, 298-308.
- Ryan, C. (2005). Ethics in tourism research: objectivities and personal perspectives. In B. W. Ritchie, P. Burns, & C. Palmer (Eds.), *Tourism research methods* (pp. 9- 20). Wallingford: CAB International.
- Ryan, C. (2010). Ways of conceptualizing the tourist experience: A review of literature. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 35, 37-46.
- Scarles, C. (2010). Where worlds fail visuals ignite: Opportunities for visual autoethnography in tourism research. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 37, 905-926.
- Scott, A., & Solomon, P.J. (2003). The marketing of cause-related events: A study of participants as consumers. *Journal of Nonprofit and Public Sector Marketing*, 11, 43-66.
- Sedikides, C., Gaertner, L. & O'Mara, E. (2011). Individual self, relational self, collective self: Hierarchical ordering of the tripartite self. *Psychological Studies*, 56, 98-107.
- Sparkes, A.C. (2002). *Telling tales in sport and physical activity: A qualitative journey*. Human Kinetics: South Australia.
- Sparkes, A.C. (2000). Autoethnography and narratives of self: Reflections of criteria in action. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 17, 21-43.
- Taylor, R. & Shanka, T. (2008). Cause for event: Not-for-profit marketing through participant sport events. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 24, 945-958.
- Trauer, B. (2006). Conceptualizing special interest tourism – framework for analysis. *Tourism Management*, 27, 183-200.

- Walle, A. (1997). Quantitative versus qualitative tourism research. *Annals of Tourism Research, 24*, 524-536.
- Walsh, N. & Tucker, H. (2009). Tourism 'things': The travelling performance of the backpack. *Tourist Studies, 9*, 223-239.
- Zehrer, A., Crotts, J. C., & Magnini, V. P. (2011). The perceived usefulness of blog postings: An extension of the expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm. *Tourism Management, 32*, 106-113.

Appendix A

Focus Group Questions

- What motivated you to register for the event?
- How do you expect the event to satisfy these motives?
- What benefits do you expect to receive as a result of participation?
- Did your interest in cycling or running lead you to selecting this event, or were there other factors?
- How significant to you is the charitable contribution that is required as a part of your registration fee?
- Do you feel that you are participating on behalf of anyone else besides yourself?
- What emotions will participating in the event evoke?
- How important has participation in this event become for you?
- For multi-year participants, how has the meaning of participating in the event changed over the years?

Appendix B

Interview Guide

- Could you explain what was going through your mind and how you were feeling when you crossed the finish line?
- How has the LAF's role in the event shaped the overall meaning of the event for you?
- Do you know what the LAF's mission is?
- How closely do you identify with the LAF's mission and activities?
- What do you feel is the most important aspect of the LIVESTRONG Challenge?
- Prior to registration, what did you foresee as potential obstacles to participation?
- How did you negotiate or overcome those obstacles?
- Would these obstacles be harder to manage if the event were not aligned with the LAF?