

Travel Bound and the Need for Vacation
A Phenomenological Study to Understand the
Tourism Experiences of At Risk Youth

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study offers a better understanding of the tourism experiences of a group often excluded from such opportunities, at risk youth. Research in the area of tourism and marginalized populations has largely been the product of European studies and it is suggested here that there is a need for a broader understanding of the tourism phenomenon from the perspective of marginalized youth. A Husserlian phenomenology consisting of semi-structured interviews with a group of at risk youth residing in a treatment centre reveals a broader understanding of the tourism phenomenon as well as the essence of these experiences. Findings revealed that at risk youth value tourism and the opportunities that these experiences provide. The importance of support in the pre-trip phase, during the trip and in the post-trip phase contributed to positive outcomes including increased learning opportunities, liberty to exercise free-choice and independence, skill acquisition, gains in social capital, improved self-perception and ultimately, increased resilience.

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To the youth who inspired me and continue to do so today, you are all young Warriors capable of whatever you dream. Thank you for sharing your Teachings with me. They will not soon be forgotten.

To my Life Givers, Dad and Maman; my Kin, France and Brennan; and my Chosen Family, words will never do justice to my gratitude and love for you. Thank you for everything always. This thesis is dedicated to you and our many more trips around the sun together.

PROLOGUE

As she reeled in her first fish, I could see her smile hiding behind her snap-back hat, it was ear to ear. She'd worked hard to make her way to camp. For one month she hadn't gone AWOL, she hadn't partied, she'd stayed away from the drugs, from the gang which she was affiliated with, and most difficult of all, from her family who enabled all of the above. She was a survivor in every sense of the meaning and one of the most street savvy 14 year olds I'd ever met. Her main forms of self-expression were the scars on her arms, the clothes she wore and the beats she blared from her room, but at this moment her excitement was undeniable.

As she brought the fish up into the canoe, I realized in examining her that on that day, instead of wearing gang colours she wore a life jacket and huge smile, rather than being high on drugs she was high on life, and rather than fighting with her fists for street justice, she 'fought' proudly with her first fish, a decent sized Northern Pike. She was having fun.

We laughed and reminisced about that moment the entire paddle back to camp, and still to this day when we're looking for a reason to smile, we both think back to that time.

I begin this study by sharing an experience I had at camp with one of the youth with whom I worked with because I believe this story is useful in setting the tone for my interactions with both tourism and the population I'd like to study, at risk youth. I also believe it is an important way to start my proposed study as it exemplifies the rapport that we continue to build through the recreation, leisure and tourism opportunities offered as a part of the treatment plan and journey at the youth treatment centre where I am employed.

As a recreation coordinator, I have had the opportunity to see the benefits of recreation, leisure and tourism in the young people with whom I work. My role as a recreation facilitator is one that involves keeping the youth engaged in positive and healthy recreation, leisure and tourism experiences. Unlike the role of my coworkers who often are responsible for ensuring the routine and flow of the youths' day-to-day lives, I have the privilege of having fun with our clients. It is a less authoritative stance on treatment and one that seeks to instill in our youth a sustainable leisure lifestyle that hopefully will extend beyond their experience at the treatment centre while further contributing to their development in a positive way.

Time and time again, I see the positive impacts that recreation and leisure have on youth, and more specifically, at risk youth. I am curious to know to what extent leisure, and more specifically tourism, can be used to provide positive opportunities and experiences to a group which has too often been denied these opportunities.

A. Richards

"Through travel I first became aware of the outside world...through travel that I found my own introspective way into becoming a part of it." (p. 76) – Eudora Welty, One Writer's Beginnings

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
PROLOGUE.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
CHAPTER 1: Introduction.....	1.
Defining Tourism.....	1.
Defining the Tourist.....	2.
Defining Social Tourism.....	3.
Defining At Risk Youth.....	4.
Purpose.....	5.
Research Question.....	6.
CHAPTER 2: Literature Review.....	8.
Tourism Experiences.....	8.
Phenomenology in Tourism.....	10.
Tourism, a Multi-phasic Experience.....	10.
Outcomes of Tourism Experiences.....	12.
Outcomes of Social Tourism.....	16.
Barriers and Constraints to Leisure and Tourism.....	20.
Barriers and Constraints.....	20.
Constraints to Tourism.....	22.
Study Purpose	25.
CHAPTER 3: Methodology.....	26.
Husserlian Phenomenology.....	26.
Method.....	27.
Phenomenology.....	27.
Design.....	27.
In-depth Interviews.....	28.
Bracketing (Hamill & Sinclair, 2010).....	29.
Participant Selection.....	30.
Instruments.....	32.
Interview Protocol.....	32.
Other Documentation.....	32.
Data Collection.....	33.

Data Analysis.....	33.
Ethical Considerations.....	35.
In Data Collection and Analysis.....	35.
In Treatment of Participants.....	35.
CHAPTER 4: Findings.....	39.
Recruitment.....	39.
Interviews.....	39.
Jesse.....	39.
Nimmi.....	40.
Picca.....	41.
Jeff.....	42.
Tourism Experiences.....	43.
Travel Companions.....	44.
Pre-trip Experiences.....	45.
Feelings Associated with the Pre-Trip Phase.....	45.
Planning and Support.....	46.
Feelings towards Travel Companions.....	47.
Trip Funding.....	48.
<i>Textural Description</i>	50.
<i>Structural Description</i>	50.
Experiences During the Trip.....	50.
Feelings during the Tourism Experience.....	51.
Broadening of Definitions.....	51.
Breaking from Routine.....	52.
Learning.....	54.
Freedom and Control.....	55.
Relationship-building, Strengthening and Maintenance.....	55.
<i>Textural Description</i>	61.
<i>Structural Description</i>	61.
Post-trip Experiences.....	61.
Feelings Associated with the Post-trip Phase.....	61.
Relationship-building, Memories and Highlights.....	62.
Feelings towards Travel Companions.....	64.
The Impact of the Tourism Experience.....	64.
Perspectives on Tourism.....	66.
<i>Textural Description</i>	71.
<i>Structural Description</i>	71.
Outcome of Findings.....	72.
CHAPTER 5: Discussion.....	73.
Tourism Experiences.....	74.

Pre-trip Experience Outcomes.....	75.
Feeling Flighty and the Need for Support.....	76.
Planning, Navigating and Relying on a Good Compass.....	76.
Using the ‘Buddy System’, the Value of a Good Travel Companion.....	77.
Findings Funds, the (legit) ‘Hustle’ and Bustle.....	78.
Outcomes of Experiences During the Trip.....	79.
Broadening Horizons by Scopin’ n’ Hopin’.....	79.
Changing Perspectives through New Faces and New Places.....	81.
Learning, an Opportunity for Control and Freedom.....	82.
Relationship-building, Maintenance and Discovering that Home is Where the Heart is.....	82.
Post-trip Experience Outcomes.....	83.
Story-telling, the Role of Reminiscing in Relationships Old and New.....	83.
Looking Back and the Continued Learning Journey.....	85.
Getting Lost but Being Found Again, Reconnecting with a Better Sense of Self.....	86.
Away vs. AWOL, Changing Behaviours.....	88.
Advocating for Tourism Experiences, a Right.....	89.
Increasing Resiliency.....	89.
Framework and Model for Resilience Promotion through Tourism.....	92.
Resilience Model within the Tourism Context.....	93.
Conclusion.....	94.
<i>Exhaustive Statement</i>	94.
Implications.....	94.
Future Research.....	96.
References.....	98.
Appendix A (Sample Interview Protocol).....	106.
Appendix B (Sample Recruitment Poster).....	107.
Appendix C (Sample Child Consent Form).....	108.
Appendix D (Sample Child Assent Form).....	114.
Appendix E (Sample Artifact Release Form).....	120.
Appendix F (Research Ethics and Compliance Approval Certificate).....	123.
Appendix G (Research Ethics and Compliance Renewal Approval).....	124.

LIST OF FIGURES

Resilience Model within the Tourism Context.....93.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This phenomenological study examines the travel experiences of youth who are considered at risk. As travel gains popularity in the global market, its effects are seen globally (Nickerson & Kerr, 2010). To see family or friends, to explore one's roots, to learn about the world and its intricacies, to heal the mind and body, for pleasure, to sight-see, for business or for escape (Cohen, 1974; Lofgren, 1999), more and more people from all corners of the world are travelling (Smith, 2007). Travel, as a leisure activity, has grown and become not only an industry but also an experience used as an incentive, considered privilege by some and a right by others (Gibson & Yiannakis, 2002). In the hopes of contributing to the body of knowledge surrounding tourism experiences, the following study will adopt a Husserlian phenomenological stance to examine the essence of the tourism experience of at risk youth.

Defining Tourism

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), tourism is the activity of "a traveller taking a trip to a main destination outside his/her usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose (business, leisure or other personal purpose) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited". In the Canadian context, Smith (2007) specifies that tourism is considered a trip made to "at least 80 kilometres away from home or travel across an international border" (p. 93).

While creating boundaries is important in defining tourism, it is also important to note that to some, tourism implies the freedom and ability to be mobile regardless of the distance travelled (Caruana & Crane, 2011). Also, according to the industry's definition of tourism, without the ability to travel to the destination, the tourism experience does not occur (Nickerson & Kerr, 2010). More specifically, tourism cannot occur without the ability, or "freedom to purchase [the experience] or not" (Caruana &

Crane, 2011, p. 1497). For the sake of this study, participants will have the freedom to define tourism. This will provide insight into whether or not the tourism industry's definition of tourism is, and remains appropriate, for all individuals and the context in which they find themselves.

Defining the Tourist

While the following section will seek to better understand tourists, it is important to first understand the meaning of a tourist. As Cohen (1974) recognizes, the word tourist is one which encourages the consideration of multidimensionality. Cohen (1974) elaborates on this by suggesting that the term tourist is one based on a consideration of "permanency; voluntariness; direction; distance; recurrence; general purpose and specific purpose" (p. 534). In other words, the tourist is one who travels temporarily (versus permanently); has the freedom to choose to engage in travel; has a place to call home where he or she returns post trip; travels beyond a day's journey from the home; does not engage in a routine form of travel; and travels for the sake of travel (versus for example, for business) (Cohen, 1974).

According to Statistics Canada's 2003 Canadian Travel Survey (as cited in Smith, 2007a), modern day Canadian tourists are predominantly married or living in a household where more than one adult resides; have post-secondary education; are employed; have no children and who make more than \$40,000 per annum. Findings from the same Statistics Canada study (2003) show that those who are single, widowed or divorced; who have not graduated from high school; are unemployed; have children and who make less than the above mentioned salary will travel the least. To summarize, it is jobless single parents with little education and who fall within the lowest socioeconomic status among Canadians, as well as their children, who are most often denied the opportunity to engage in tourism activities within Canada.

While tourists, tourism and associated experiences have been examined from a wide variety of lenses and in a variety of different contexts, most often, those excluded from such activities remain largely ignored in research. The misrepresentation of marginalized and underserved populations (or non-tourists) in tourism activities is mirrored in the literature, and in my opinion, the Canadian context and tourism 'industry' have perpetuated this social exclusion of segments of the population.

Defining Social Tourism

Despite the gaps in the literature surrounding marginalized populations and tourism, strides have been made and dialogue on this issue has prompted the development of a concept called social tourism (Minnaert, Maitland & Miller, 2011), which has gained popularity in certain parts of the world (*e.g.* Europe) (McCabe, 2009). Social tourism was a term defined by author, Hunzicker, in 1951 who defined social tourism as "the relationship and phenomena in the field of tourism resulting from participation in travel by economically weak or otherwise disadvantaged elements of society" (as cited in Minnaert *et al.*, 2001, p. 404). It can therefore be said that social tourism is a type of tourism which acknowledges the disparity between opportunities to take part in tourism activities and which promotes and supports tourism for those who would likely not have such opportunities. Minnaert, Marianne and Schapmans (2009) describe social tourism "as a form of social intervention, and a way to achieve social goals" (2009, p. 45). Essentially, it is a form of ethically-based tourism that recognizes this activity's potential for being used as a social force for good (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006).

Minnaert *et al.* (2009) describe social tourism as encompassing "a variety of different initiatives, commercial and non-commercial, government and private, that aim to offer holiday experiences to groups that would not otherwise have them" (p.9 as cited in Minnaert *et. al.*, 2009, p.316). It holds a high moral stance and can therefore be said to be a moral approach to tourism.

Defining At Risk Youth

While many advocate for marginalized groups who find themselves excluded from or denied equal opportunity, marginalized children and youth seem to have the least say in the direction of their lives (Powers & Tiffany, 2006). The term *underserved* describes youth who reside in communities characterized by poverty and social marginalization and “who are often restricted from a range of formal and informal education experiences that could broaden their worlds” (Altman, 2010, p. 2). As Altman describes underserved youth, she states, “their lack of access to natural, cultural and education resources not only restrict their intellectual and creative development but also challenge educators to decipher their fuller intellect and abilities” (2010, p.1). This term implies that social isolation and exclusion are large contributors to further hardships while highlighting the inequality that has been experienced by youth and the lack of commitment from the community in providing support, opportunities and resources to these youth and their families. Essentially, underserved youth include those who despite requiring care do not receive it, or who receive services that are not appropriate for their needs (Snell-Johns & Mendez, 2004).

While the term *underserved* seeks to explain the societal impact of exclusion, the term *at risk* refers to the symptoms of this exclusion. According to Winterdyk and Smandych (2012), the term *at risk* refers to young people who are at risk of “offending or being victimized because of various social, family, and /or personal factors” (p.27). Low socioeconomic status; family trauma; abuse; addiction; neglect; gang involvement; exploitation; and discrimination associated with race, ethnicity or sexuality are all factors that place young people at risk (Winterdyk & Smandych, 2012). Many other factors also place youth at risk, such as peer involvement and low self-esteem. Again, these factors are often associated with the larger social issues which can be brought on by a variety of contextual factors such as history and broader systemic issues including Canada’s shameful residential schooling system and the multigenerational legacy it left behind. In the 21st century, the Canadian Government began removing Aboriginal children from their families in the guise of education and health care where often they were

victims of terrible atrocities at the hands of those supposedly responsible for their care and well-being (Winterdyk & Smandych, 2012). This historical, cultural and social trauma led to a series of impacts, many of which are still present today (Winterdyk & Smandych, 2012). Symptoms of this time in Canadian history include addiction, abuse, violence, physical and mental health problems, social isolation and poverty (Winterdyk & Smandych, 2012). This relates to the study in that many Canadian families and their children whom are considered underserved are victims of the residential schooling legacy (Halas & Hanson, 2001).

Essentially, at risk youth include those who have been underserved at “the ontogenetic or individual level, the microsystem level (*e.g.* family, home, school or clinic setting), the exosystem or community level, and the macrosystem or cultural level” (Snell-Johns & Mendez, 2004, p. 20). As systems continue to fail in meeting the needs and providing support for these groups, youth are often left to their own devices and in attempts to cope with and survive daily life, many turn to behaviours that place them at risk (Winterdyk & Smandych, 2012). The reality is that these risk factors lead not only to youth being further underserved (*i.e.* lacking access to appropriate resources), but can also increase at risk behaviours and outcomes which do not contribute to positive development.

Whether considered underserved or at risk, many factors can prevent and exclude youth from a wide variety of opportunities including the privilege and right to take part in and benefit from leisure activities such as tourism (Minnaert *et. al.*, 2011). However, for the sake of this study, the term at risk is used in describing individuals who have been both underserved and who are considered at risk, since often, these factors work together to contribute to a youth being further considered at risk.

Purpose

As suggested above, travel is a form of leisure which many consider an important aspect of life. It is recognized in many different parts of the world as an activity that can prompt a myriad of benefits

which contribute to improved quality of life (Dolnicar, Yanamandram & Cliff, 2011). As the need to relax, escape from routine, learn new things and take on new adventures is recognized and encouraged, many industries associated with tourism activities have responded accordingly and currently offer a multitude of varying tourism opportunities in all parts of the world (Weaver, 2006). As tourism continues to be described and promoted as a beneficial and enjoyable leisure activity, many questions arise about the touristic experiences of a variety of populations. This study seeks to better understand the experiences of those least likely to experience tourism - at risk youth.

Research Question

Understanding tourism and tourism-related experiences has been accomplished by adopting a variety of differing perspectives from fields such as anthropology, sociology, medicine, education, marketing and leisure studies (Graburn & Jafari, 1991). An example of a dominant interpretation of tourism is one associated with recreation where tourism is seen as a time to re-create oneself and enjoy leisure time away from home (Nickerson & Kerr, 2010). However, despite varied interpretations of tourism, less represented perspectives include those of populations often excluded from tourism, such as at risk youth.

This study addresses this knowledge gap while gaining a better understanding of the common properties and intrinsic nature of the experiences of at risk youth with tourism activities. More specifically, the goal is to understand the essence of tourism experiences and develop “a description of the phenomenon” (van Manen, 1990, p. 3) of tourism from the perspective of at risk youth. The following question is addressed through this research: What are the tourism experiences of at risk youth? By addressing this gap in the literature, this study will contribute to a greater understanding of how at risk youth have understood and experienced tourism as well as what these experiences have meant for them. This research also contributes to on-going academic and social policy discussions

regarding the leisure and tourism opportunities for at risk youth and the role these experiences play in supporting their healthy development and equal opportunity. By understanding the role and impacts of tourism experiences in the lives of at risk youth, this study supports the meaningful inclusion of at risk youth, increased diversity in tourism and the use of tourism as a tool in promoting resilience. Through story-telling, this study offers readers the opportunity to hear suggestions and input from at risk youth surrounding how to facilitate a successful and positive tourism experience. Their accounts provide a contextual framework in understanding not only the tourism experiences that have contributed to their development, but also how these experiences can be adapted to meet their needs and wishes.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Tourism Experiences

Early research regarding the tourism experience suggested that tourism involved the quest for an experience away from the home environment for a variety of reasons, many of which are still relevant today (Smith, 2007). Among the initial explanations surrounding tourism experiences was Cohen's (1979) *modes of tourism*. The first mode of tourism Cohen describes is the recreational mode, which is based on one's desire to re-create their mind and body through various types of entertainment. The second mode of tourism is the diversionary mode, which involves one's desire to "escape from the boredom and meaningless routine, everyday existence, into the forgetfulness of a vacation, which may heal the body and sooth the spirit" (1979, p. 96). The third mode Cohen calls the experiential mode where one searches for new and foreign experiences. This mode is characterized by one looking "for meaning in the life of others" (1979, p.97). The fourth mode Cohen highlights is called the experimental mode. This involves the desire of those who do not generally conform to other social definitions of meaningful experiences to seek these in different environments and with different groups. The fifth mode is termed by Cohen as existential. This implies that one adopting this mode is in search of their own existential location in the world. Cohen describes this mode as being similar to that of a pilgrimage. He is quoted saying, "it is a journey from chaos into another cosmos, from meaningless to authentic existence" (1970, p. 101).

Much of today's literature surrounding the tourism experience builds on Cohen's (1979) ideas about tourism and examines existing relationships between tourism and various other aspects in life. One such example is Falk, Ballantyne, Packer and Benckendorff's (2011) study which examined learning and tourism to find that tourism can still act as a tool to "foster the development of skills, knowledge

and practical wisdom”, therefore contributing to “personally fulfilling” (2011, p. 922) experiences. Falk *et al.* suggest that “tourism and leisure settings have become an important medium through which people can acquire knowledge, develop ideas and construct new visions for themselves and their society” (2012, p. 910). The same research study suggests that “learning within travel contexts transcends the traditional school-based constructs of knowledge transfer” (Falk *et al.*, 2012, p. 922). Other examples of modern day research in the area of tourism experiences include studies regarding escape and freedom-seeking (Caruana & Crane, 2001), where it is argued that tourism is a place where one can explore free will and escape normally restricting aspects of daily life (Caruana & Crane, 2001).

The existential tourist (Cohen, 1979) has also been revisited in recent literature in the form of *existential authenticity* (Brown, 2013), or a more authentic self. This explanation differs from Cohen’s (1979) description of the quest for authenticity in that the emphasis is no longer placed on authenticity as the (main) object of desire. Rather, there is an acknowledgement of the globalization effects on authenticity, or the “homogenization of destinations and experiences” (Brown, 2013, p. 177) and the focus is placed on the individual as the authentic being. Authenticity is therefore acquired through the tourism experience making the tourist more authentic than his/her non-travelling counterpart (Uriely, 2005). This perspective implies the need for a more subjective means of examining and understanding tourism experiences as well as distinct variables which may affect these experiences such as socioeconomic status, gender, cultural background, etc. (Uriely, 2005).

Also recognizant of the need for a more in-depth exploration of the tourism experience are studies related to psychology and more specifically, motivation. Gibson and Yiannakis (2002) suggest that tourism can act as a means of meeting needs relative to where one finds oneself within the lifespan. Gibson and Yiannakis (2002) also suggest that based on where the tourist is located within the lifespan (*i.e.* adolescence to late adulthood), the tourist role (*e.g.* action seeker, anthropologist,

explorer, educational tourist, etc.) and associated behaviours will vary in accordance with these roles. Furthermore, Gibson and Yiannakis (2002) argue that these roles and associated behaviours are undertaken in order to meet various psychological needs that are left unmet during daily activities and routines.

Phenomenology in Tourism

Within tourism, phenomenology has been used “as a theoretical avenue towards describing or understanding the experiential, and lived existence of tourists/guests, locals/hosts, service providers and any other stakeholders that take part in the tourism phenomenon”(Pernecky & Jamal, 2010, p. 1056). Phenomenology can therefore be used to understand a wide variety of tourism experiences and can reveal and contribute to our understanding of the essence of these experiences. As explained further by Pernecky and Jamal (2010), “it does not merely call for an account of things we see in the world (*e.g.* book, bus, airplane) but shifts the focus to our “seeing” of objects in the world (Cerbone, 2006), and the meanings they hold” (p. 1056). By exploring the essence of the meaning of an experience, phenomenology highlights a range of causes, interpretations and impacts associated with an experience.

Tourism, a Multi-phasic Experience

As tourism experiences have become more widely researched, it has been suggested that these experiences are in fact a multi-phased experience rather than a single event that remains situated in a single moment in time (Lee, Datillo & Howard, 1994; Stewart, 1998).

Clawson and Knetsch (1966) provide 5 phases including *anticipation*, *travel to* (the tourism location), *on-site*, *travel back* and the *recollection* phase, all of which are described as “necessary” (p. 35). While all phases of the experience are deemed as important in the overall experience, Clawson and

Knetsch (1966) state the “the sum of satisfactions and dissatisfactions from the whole must be balanced against total costs. Pleasurable parts of the experience must more than balance the unpleasant parts” (p. 35). Means of avoiding unpleasant experiences are said to be rooted in the “research, planning and operation” (p. 35) in all five phases of the experience (Clawson and Knetsch, 1966). This notion is emphasized when Clawson and Knetsch suggest that “the effort might be less directed to advising people than providing them with the kind of information that helps them discover for themselves what they most want to do” (1966, p. 36).

Authors Raaij, W. & Francken, D. (1984) provide another example of multi-phase research and suggest a five stage “vacation sequence” consisting of “generic decision, information acquisition, joint decision-making, vacation activities and satisfaction/ complaints” (p. 103). In the generic stage, decisions regarding the location and funding associated with the trip are decided (Raaij, W. & Francken, D., 1984). Raaij and Francken (1984) suggest that during this phase, “generic discussions are not routine and new procedures may need to be learned” (p. 104). Raaij and Francken (1984) explain that acquiring information can help in reducing indecision and anxiety. During their description of the “joint decision-making phase”, Raaij and Francken (1984) suggest that the opportunity for syncretism during the planning stage between travel companions is important as the trip may act as a tool in rating the relationship that exists between travel companions. Finally, they suggest that imbalances in relationships can contribute to reduced satisfaction (Raaij & Francken, 1984).

Lee, Dattilo and Howard (1994) also examine tourism experiences as a multi-dimensional phenomenon and suggest that leisure can consist of both positive and negative experiences involving a range of different feelings and emotions which can be both pleasing and/or displeasing. Their acknowledgement of the multitude of layers associated with tourism experiences highlights the changes

in mood throughout the tourism experiences as well as how these are interconnected with the overall tourism experience (Lee, Dattilo, & Howard, 1994).

Stewart (1998) challenges the notion that tourism experiences can be “captured in a single moment in time, as if the experience can be represented by a still-life photograph” (p. 391-392) and highlights the many “states of mind that encompass leisure” (p. 392). His research seems to suggest that the state of mind is an ever-changing process and the tourism experience, the recollection and interpretation of this experience can also change throughout time. Stewart (1998) also draws attention to the implied linear direction associated with a multi-phase approach and explains that while the multi-phase lens of tourism experience is important in the acknowledgement of varying impacts related to tourism, it can also encourage a directional and outcome-based approach to researching and understanding tourism experiences. He explains that an outcome-based approach can lead to a focus on the end-result of the trip, or motivation for the tourism experience (Stewart, 1998). Stewart (1998) also stresses that a focus on motivators and benefits of tourism ignore the potential negative impacts of tourism, which are still important in the tourism and leisure experience.

Outcomes of Tourism Experiences

Research related to the outcomes of tourism experiences has provided insight into some of the benefits and consequences of the tourism phenomenon. In order to provide a balanced perspective of tourism experiences, the following section will include a literature review of such research.

Among the criticisms associated with tourism is the idea that tourism serves to benefit those from the middle and upper echelons of society at the expense of those most excluded from it, such as those living in poverty (Cohen & Cohen, 2012). Often this concern is related to the use (or overuse) and damage of resources and environmental degradation within host communities (Cohen & Cohen, 2012). Inability to conserve and protect natural resources and environments has led to impacts such as

“crowding, air, water and noise pollution, wildlife destruction, vandalism and litter” (Andereck, Valentine, Knopf & Vogt, 2005, p. 1057). While strides have been made in the area of sustainable tourism (Weaver, 2006), concerns are still being raised regarding tourism-related impacts and how the tourism industry will address these (Buckley, 2012).

Among the benefits to the individual tourist, tourism is known to contribute to and promote: the development of self-identity; strategies for coping; stress reduction; new skills; healthy relationships and supports; learning opportunities; personal growth; and an overall feeling of well-being (felt at the spiritual, emotional, physical, intellectual and social level) (Shannon, 2007). More recent research surrounding well-being includes a study by McCabe and Johnson (2012) which confirms the improved quality of life associated with tourism experiences, and also seems to corroborate earlier studies surrounding overall benefits to tourism experience outcomes. They suggest that many life domains can be impacted in positive ways through tourism opportunities and experiences (McCabe & Johnson, 2012).

Learning experiences obtained through tourism offer the opportunity to gain information, develop new ideas, and create new visions for oneself and one's society (Falk, 2011). Free choice learning can be described as a successful, valuable and underused option in promoting learning and education. It implies a sense of control or choice by the individual over the learning process (Dierking and Falk, 2003). Dierking and Falk's (2003) research showed that learning outside of the formal academic context can yield increased participation rates and benefits including a higher likelihood of post-secondary involvement. Falk, Ballantyne, Packer and Benckendorff (2012) contribute to the notion that tourism experience is an ideal opportunity in promoting free-choice learning and suggest that tourism experiences that foster learning are most successful in achieving a positive learning environment.

The impacts of tourism on well-being have been increasingly better understood in studies such as Gilbert and Abdullah's (2004) study which demonstrated that those who took holidays reported a higher sense of well-being than their counterparts who had not travelled or been on holiday. Nawijn's (2012) findings also speak to an association between holiday-taking and well-being. The findings from the study suggest a relationship between travel experiences and gains in perceived belongingness and freedom (Nawijn, 2012).

A 2012 study executed by Dolnicar, Yanamandram and Cliff suggests that the importance of vacation and trip-taking can range depending on the individual. For some, the opportunity to take part in tourism experiences can be extremely important and can indeed contribute to quality of life. Their findings indicate that leisure at home, as well as leisure away from home, are valuable contributors to quality of life and should therefore be independently considered (Dolnicar, Yanamandram & Cliff, 2012). The implication with this finding could therefore be suggestive of the need to provide experiences in both leisure domains identified in this study, routine (*e.g.* regular structured leisure activities) and special, or original forms of leisure (*e.g.* tourism experiences).

Gilbert and Abdullah's (2004) study also concluded that holiday-taking improved mood and that these improvements were experienced by tourists not only during the trip, but also in the pre-trip anticipation, as well as the post-trip reminiscing. Tung and Ritchie (2011) also examine post-trip reminiscing in their examination of memorable experiences in tourism. Their suggestion is that there are four dimensions associated with a memorable experience (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). These include affect, or "positive emotions and feelings associated with the experiences" (Tung & Ritchie, 2011, p. 1377); expectations, or having been able to predict to a certain degree potential outcomes associated with the trip; consequentiality, or "enhancing social relationships, intellectual development, self-discovery, and overcoming physical challenges" (Tung & Ritchie, 2011, p. 1379); and recollection, or

“statements made specifically about the efforts made and actions taken by respondents to remember the tourism experience and/or reflect back on the trip” (Tung & Ritchie, 2011, p. 1380). The implication associated with these statements is that the recollection is an important aspect of the post trip process in the creation of memorable experiences. Falk *et al.* (2012) support this finding and suggest “that the long-term impact of a tourism experience can be significantly increased by encouraging them [the tourist] to further process their experience both cognitively and affectively in order to develop new concepts, ideas, identities, and actions that become part of their everyday lives” (p.920).

Benefits of leisure activities such as tourism can be experienced at the individual level and have also been observed at the social and community level through the multileveled and multilayered promotion of cohesiveness. Higgins-Desbiolles (2006) elaborates on these benefits by saying that positive impacts include increased open-mindedness, understanding, learning and advocacy. Tourism can therefore contribute to greater understanding and general well-being if respectfully carried out (*i.e.* through environmental, social, economic respect and understanding).

As suggested by the studies described above as well as many others, there are numerous benefits to the individual associated with tourism. The benefits of tourism experiences are well researched and documented; however the negative impacts on the individual are far less researched. The existing knowledge base surrounding the negative impacts of tourism is largely focused on the experience of the host community members (Buckley, 2012; Anderek, Valentine, Knopf & Vogt, 2005). There is a need for more information related to the negative experiences of tourism on the individual tourist. One finding related to negative impacts to the individual is the assumption that only tourists who can successfully navigate hardship and negotiate constraints are able to experience tourism and become tourists (Lin, Zhang & Goh, 2015). While this may be true, this suggestion does not acknowledge the notion that many individuals may have more constraints and barriers to negotiate, lack

access to resources surrounding negotiating constraints, or may struggle with negotiating constraints for a variety of other reasons.

Outcomes of Social Tourism

While the models identified above seem to acknowledge the many benefits associated with social tourism, it becomes apparent that many of the benefits are similar to the benefits associated with general (nonsubsidized) leisure tourism. These benefits have been understood in a variety of ways (McCabe & Johnson, 2012). As mentioned previously, tourism studies related to benefits have shown improvements in areas of life domains such as “family, friends, home, interpersonal relationships, economic situation, job, leisure, neighbourhood, self, services and facilities, health, and nation” (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2003). For individuals such as at risk youth and their families, social tourism has proven to be beneficial in these same areas (McCabe & Johnson, 2012).

McCabe’s (2009) research in the area of social tourism supports this argument in his examination of low income families who participated in subsidized tourism in the United Kingdom. The purpose of McCabe’s (2009) study was to determine why low income families reported the need for a holiday. Of further interest to McCabe (2009) was what benefits were experienced when barriers and constraints to travel were addressed and travel opportunities were supported by agencies such as the Family Holiday Association and UNISON Welfare (charity organizations found in the United Kingdom).

Families were selected randomly based on their approved applications for tourism grants. From these applications, information was collected surrounding “reasons for support” (2009, p. 672). A post trip survey was then administered to obtain more information surrounding the benefits experienced during the holiday. In order to gain a more in-depth analysis of the benefits, memories and “enduring impacts” (2009, p. 672) of the trip, focus groups were then carried out. During focus groups, families were encouraged to bring pictures and items from their holiday to prompt discussions. Findings showed

that the participating families reported the following benefits: “spending time as a family; time away from daily life and circumstances; recovery from ill health and bereavement; and visiting other places and enjoying new activities” (2009, p. 673). The study group also reported that getting a break from their home environment was highly beneficial as they felt their general health was restored. Among the most valued benefits was “the opportunity for fun and happy memories” (2009, p. 678).

Both social and family capital refer to increased richness in the area of connections, or “networks and association upon which individual members of a community can draw” (MacBeth, Carson & Northcote, 2004, p. 505). Essentially, these terms (*i.e.* social and family capital) contribute to the notion that mutually dependant social networks are of value to individuals and communities (Silver, 2006). Research has shown advantages experienced by individuals who took part in social tourism activities were reported in areas related to social and family capital. These findings are supported by Lehto, Choi, Lin and MacDermid (2009) who are quoted saying, “family vacation as a special form of leisure presents a wonderful opportunity to strengthen what researchers in family studies call the ‘crescive’ bond (L’Albarte & Baggett, 1997). That is, a growing bond that is intrinsically durable” (p. 474).

In a study by Minnaert and Schapmans (2009), an association between social capital and resilience is made within the context of the family (*i.e.* in families who had taken part in a social tourism opportunity). They are quoted saying, “the level of family capital can also affect the resilience of the family as a whole, and thus influence (being part of social capital) each member of that family” (Minnaert & Shapmans, 2009, p. 48). Minnaert and Schapmans (2009) expand on this notion in their findings that the effects of holidays on individuals include “increased confidence, expanded social network, improved family ties, stronger mental health and a more proactive attitude in life” (p. 55).

Through a series of interviews and focus groups, Minnaert *et al.* (2009) found that benefits associated with positive time spent together and creating lasting memories during tourism experiences

had long term impacts on the children and their families. Through increased opportunity to build relationships and form healthy networks while taking part in subsidized tourism activities, individuals reported increases in family and community involvement as well as improvements in “one or more areas of everyday life after the holiday” (2009, p. 329).

Additional findings from the Minnaert, Maitland and Miller’s (2009) study showed that tourism supported learning opportunities for participants which were not intended but rather were the product of changed perspectives on life. Changed perspectives on life were reported to have been the product of (experiential) learning through exposure to different ways of seeing and experiencing the world (2009). Participants reported that these learning opportunities increased self-confidence in skills, and independence as well as trust in others (Minnanert, Maitland & Miller, 2009). Quinn and Stacey (2010) support these findings and suggest that “the skills fostered, the personal development engendered and the behaviours encouraged during the holiday endured beyond that time period and transferred into social settings and social practices routinely associated with the children’s home lifestyle” (p. 31).

In 2012, Minnaert described different models of learning and how they could be applied to the tourism context. She suggested that as per the *situated learning model*, tourism “could be seen as a good opportunity for immersion into a new community of practice” or contrarily, “can help to reinforce their (tourists) position in a new community of practice” (Minnaert, 2012, p. 3). The implication with this statement is that tourism can act as a means, or tool, for promoting the gathering of individuals or groups of people who potentially would not have otherwise congregated and interacted with one another for the sake of knowledge-sharing and personal development. Minnaert elaborated on this concept and cautioned that “there are conditions to learning: the goal difficulty levels need to be appropriate, and the holiday must present an opportunity to further integrate into a community of practice” (2012, p. 9). Minnaert (2012) suggested that drawing on tourism experiences through sharing

memories was an important part of the learning experience because “reflecting on positive experiences could give respondents the courage and confidence to face problems in their life” (p.7).

Stone and Petrick (2013) also emphasize the learning potential that occurs during tourism experiences and cite Sutton, Miller and Rubin’s (2007) categories of learning: knowledge and skill development, increased development of the tourist and improvement in decision-making. Stone and Petrick (2013) conclude their findings by highlighting a need for more research surrounding the duration of the trip or holiday and how this relates to learning.

In families where children were displaying behaviours considered to be socially unacceptable, a supported family holiday helped in increasing positive behaviours and family connectedness. A sense of re-evaluation, inspiration and motivation were also reported (Minnaert *et al.*, 2009). Quinn and Stacey’s study also interviewed parents of families involved with the subsidized tourism experiences in Ireland and reported positive behaviour changes in all 75 of the youth involved with the study (2010).

Based on their findings, Minnaert, Maitland and Miller (2009) end their article by suggesting that “social tourism may be a cost effective addition to social policy” (2009, p. 316) based on “not only the benefits of the holiday, but also as a support for the success of other, existing interventions” (2009, p. 331). The authors of the study suggest that due to the benefits listed above (*i.e.* improved relationships at the familial and community level; improved perspectives; increased resiliency; increased self-confidence; increased motivation; knowledge gain; etc. (2009)), the larger society could adopt tourism as a “complementary or alternative form of intervention to others that are more expensive” (2009, p. 330) in supporting individuals who have experienced hardships such as family trauma, mental health issues and unemployment (2009). Minnaert and Schapmans (2009) further this argument by suggesting that this form of social intervention can result in many positive benefits in a potentially short duration (*e.g.* the duration of the trip).

While the benefits to social tourism may be reflective of the benefits related to general leisure tourism, it is important to consider the fact that often populations in most need of these benefits have been excluded from tourism. It is therefore argued that more research needs to be done to understand not only the benefits of tourism to the voiceless and marginalized populations, but also to understand how tourism is experienced and valued in this context.

A critique associated with social tourism is presented in a study by Diekmann and McCabe (2011) which examines the lack of consistency in the policy and implementation of social tourism. They suggest that social tourism is lacking an academic component that could better inform social tourism facilitators and tourists (Diekmann and McCabe, 2011). They argue that a lack of research and knowledge surrounding social tourism has meant that many tourists associated with social tourism are receiving mixed messages surrounding the systems, funding, definitions, approaches, and intended outcomes of these tourism experiences (Diekmann and McCabe, 2011). As suggested by Diekmann and McCabe, often this inconsistency and knowledge gap has resulted in reduced beneficial impacts for social tourism tourists (2011).

Barriers and Constraints to Leisure and Tourism

Barriers and Constraints

While tourism seems to yield many positive benefits, it is important to note that for many, taking part in tourism as a leisure activity is difficult and often not possible due to various barriers and constraints. This section will examine barriers and constraints as they pertain to the touristic experience or lack thereof.

In the 1980s, research expanded in the area of barriers to leisure, which refer to elements that “people might encounter as a result of environmental factors (*e.g.* with other people, organizations,

institutions)” (Mactavish & Mahon, 2007, p. 244). Barriers can therefore be characterized as factors that can prevent individuals from taking part in leisure activities. Examples of these can include “financial resources, available time, and climate” (Samdahl & Jelubovich, 1997, p. 432).

As research in the area of barriers expanded, the term *constraint* was introduced and adopted as it was increasingly recognized that issues surrounding participation exist beyond social structures (Jackson, 2007). In addition to structural issues identified in earlier research, studies began identifying the interpersonal and intrapersonal constraints affecting participation, non-participation and leisure behaviour (Samdahl & Jelubovich, 1997). *Interpersonal* constraints involve the “interactions and relationships between individuals” (Samdahl & Jelubovich, 1997, p. 432) whereas *intrapersonal* constraints are “psychological states and individual attributes such as stress, anxiety, depression, and socialization into (or away from) specific activities” (Samdahl & Jelubovich, 1997, p. 432).

Constraints research in these areas led to further examination into how constraints could interact with one another, if/how these would be negotiated and how this would lead to participation or non-participation in leisure activities, such as tourism. More specifically, constraints research has introduced the idea that individuals are “dynamic players who shape their environments in ways that enhance the meaning they draw from leisure, and in many cases those meanings are fundamentally social” (Samdahl & Jelubovich, 1997, p. 450).

Participation or non-participation is negotiated through cognitive (*e.g.* re-evaluation of activity and associated benefits or consequences); behavioural (*e.g.* modification of behaviours leading up to participation or non-participation); and time management strategies (*e.g.* reassessment of daily routines) by the individuals (Mannell & Kleiber, 1997). However, despite the support of various leisure providers, in some cases these strategies are not implemented or practiced and the result is non-participation. These are important considerations as they have led to greater comprehension in the

area of participation and non-participation as well as how participation is negotiated. Greater understanding of constraints, as well as how and why individuals and groups navigate around these or negotiate their participation, has also provided more insight into the continued over or under-representation of certain members of society within the leisure world, and within activities such as tourism.

White (2008) explains that the constraint negotiation process can take place in a variety of different forms. The acquisition of information, development of new skills, time and resource management are all examples of how constraint negotiation can be carried out (White, 2008). Substituting the desired activity for a different activity that will provide similar benefits (*e.g.* emotional, physical, etc.) as the initial activity (Dimmock, 2009) is another result of participation negotiation. However, according to White (2008), self-efficacy, or one's perception of their ability to navigate and control the variables (*e.g.* constraints) which affect their daily lives, is a key component in negotiation towards participation in an activity. As White (2008) explains, "people with higher levels of perceived self-efficacy have greater motivation to persevere in the face of adversity" (p. 347). This means that self-efficacy affects motivation, which in turn affects participation (White, 2008).

Constraints to tourism

In the tourism context, it has been suggested that individuals are motivated to meet their needs to achieve satisfaction (Goossens, 2000). *Push factors* such as needs, motives and drives (*e.g.* need for escape and relaxation, and relationship building opportunities), are combined with *pull factors* such as advertising, destinations and services (*e.g.* sunshine, relaxed atmosphere and social environments) to motivate the individual to seek out touristic opportunities and shape leisure and tourism intentions and behaviours (Goossens, 2000).

While many variables come into play when making the decision to participate in tourism, Ajzen's (1991) *Theory of Planned Behaviour* suggests that one's attitude towards a behaviour, subjective norms (or social pressures) and perceived behaviour control can help in determining whether or not one engages in an activity and overcomes constraints. This is supported by Carr (2002) who emphasizes the importance of personal characteristics (*e.g.* culture, socioeconomic status, age), personal motivations, and the physical/perceived environment (*i.e.* social and situational factors) in the travel decision-making process. More recent research in this area suggests that individuals are highly motivated by the self-image they project to those in their surrounding environments and therefore concentrate on uplifting perceptions related to image and status (and essentially negotiate constraints) through means such as leisure activities, travel and adventure (Hung & Petrick, 2012, p. 857).

McCabe's (2009) exploration of those who benefit from social tourism experiences examined some of the constraints associated with tourism. Individuals and families who had applied for funding and subsidies for a (social) tourism experience were able to shed insight on the processes associated with social tourism experiences but also how these assisted them in negotiating constraints. By randomly selecting applicants, conducting follow-up surveys and through focus groups with the applicants, McCabe (2009) was able to gain insight into the benefits of the financial support and subsequent tourism experience. While McCabe (2009) recognizes that many of the constraints associated with leisure also exist within the tourism context, his study of participants/recipients of social tourism opportunities suggests that "lack of money/ funds or a lack of access to transport" (p. 675) were among some of the biggest hurdles associated with participating in tourism opportunities. By interviewing participants, McCabe (2009) found that people identified a stressful home environment as a constraint to tourism. Other findings within McCabe's (2009) study included "issues of isolation" (p. 676) such as "physical or mental conditions of one or more members of the family unit, or when individuals live away from other family members" (p. 677). McCabe (2009) also suggests that for the

participants within his study, the need for escape was highly emphasized due to issues surrounding “bereavement, illness and breakdown” (p. 677) and the need to recover from these. Lack of opportunity to take part in activities associated with a “normal life” (p.677) was another constraint identified by participants in this study (McCabe, 2009).

A study presented by Hudson and Gilbert (2000) suggests that the elitist nature of activities (like skiing in the case of their study) can act as a deterrent for potential tourists as they may not feel confident or elite enough to engage with others in the host community setting. Their study highlighted additional interpersonal constraints associated with the image and material aspects related to tourism experiences. Examples of the interpersonal constraints they provide included embarrassment, lack of belonging, not having the appropriate material items (*e.g.* equipment, gear, etc.), and not looking the part or as though they belong (Hudson and Gilbert, 2000). While they presented their findings within the context of tourism experiences geared towards skiing, the same structural and interpersonal constraints could likely be applied to many other tourism experiences due to the elitist nature of tourism itself.

As seen in the studies mentioned above, participating in tourism opportunities can seem nearly impossible without support. McCabe’s (2009) suggestion for future research states that “there is a need to understand more about those people who are effectively excluded from participation in tourism, including their motivations, circumstances and constraints and also to assess the impacts of any interventions to address the benefits of social tourism programs” (p. 669).

Study Purpose

Understanding tourism’s role in the lives of at risk youth will contribute to an increased awareness of this population’s tourism opportunities, outcomes and constraints faced. The questions

addressed in this study also help us to better understand the experience of at risk youth with tourism as well as the contexts in which these experiences occurred or were prevented from occurring.

The potentials of tourism as a tool for promoting healthy individuals and healthy communities have been suggested; however these suggestions find their roots within the European context. Furthermore, while the European research has focused on adults and families within the current literature, there appears to be a neglect and exclusion of youth. In order to answer some of the above questions and contribute to the expanding body of research on social tourism, this study explores the Canadian context by adopting strategies similar to previous European studies which also sought to better understand the lived experience of marginalized individuals with tourism.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Husserlian Phenomenology

Husserlian phenomenology, the type of phenomenology adopted in this study, involves a strategy called phenomenological reduction. As Van Winkle and Lagay (2012) describe, this involves “a transcendental attitude where one brackets assumptions about the phenomenon” (p. 343). As Pernecky and Jamal (2010) suggest, “bracketing will defend the validity or objectivity of the interpretation against self-interest (of the researcher)” (p. 1065). This etic approach of acknowledging assumptions and using brackets “to temporarily hold in abeyance the foreknowledge of the researcher” (Priest, 2002, as cited in Hamill & Sinclair, 2010, p. 2) means that theoretical assumptions must therefore be thoroughly understood.

This study is one that contributes to our understanding of the experience of participants by remaining as open-minded as possible in order to understand the tourist experience from the at risk youths’ perspective. The belief here is that while contextual factors certainly affect one’s perception of the world, assumptions should not be made regarding this experience nor of the contextual aspects which may have impacted these experiences. It is also believed that reducing the experience to its essential structure can lead to a better understanding of the experience. Due to the fact that this study identifies and interprets the essential structures within the tourist experience, it is considered ontologically interpretivist. In other words, it is believed that the ontology can be determined by working with participants in order to interpret the meanings they have attached to the experiences described. It should therefore not be assumed that the reality of at risk youth does or does not include tourism experiences. Nor should it be assumed that at risk youth attach value or any meaning to tourism as a leisure activity for while reality may be mediated by consciousness, it does not require

consciousness in order to be real. Rather, this methodology patiently waits to see how participants make sense of these experiences. This contributes to a greater sense of transparency within the research study and into the level of consciousness associated with the phenomenon.

The epistemology associated with this type of study is therefore considered to be subjectivist. This epistemological stance implies the need to maintain a sense of empathy toward the study's participants and their descriptions of the experience (Hamill & Sinclair, 2010). This allows the experiences of participants to be described and interpreted (therefore reducing the opportunity for bias to affect findings) and allowing their subjective experience to be described without taking any aspects of the experience for granted. This enables the essence of the tourism experience of at risk youth to be captured (Pernecky & Jamal, 2010) while also removing speculation, judgement and presumptions regarding the participants and the phenomenon. The result is an open-minded understanding, interpretation and description of the lived experience of the phenomenon.

Method

Phenomenology

In order to begin to understand the tourism experiences of at risk youth, I adopted a phenomenological stance. Phenomenology can be defined as “study which describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences” (Creswell, 2007, p. 57). Creswell (2007) also describes phenomenology as a description of the “how” and the “what” associated with the experiences of the participants for the sake of finding a universal conscious experience.

Design

In-depth Interviews

According to Creswell (2007) between 3 and 10 participants are typically sufficient to complete a phenomenology and understand the essential elements of an experience. Interviews were conducted until a thick and rich (Patton, 2002) description of the phenomenon, or lived experience of tourism for at risk youth, was provided from interviews. This involved an amount of data that created a “depiction the experience and portrayal of the individuals who participated in the study” (Patton, 2002, p. 487). This meant that I continuously reevaluated the research in order to determine how many interviews would be sufficient in portraying “patterns and relationships” (Patton, 2002, p. 487) relevant to the study. In this study, four in-depth exploratory interviews were successfully conducted with young people between the ages of 12 and 17. Although a higher number of interviews would have been preferred, it is believed that a rich and detailed data set was collected from the four participants who took part in this study. Because generalization is not the intention of this study the sample size is not of much concern.

During interviews I attempted to gain more insight into past experiences with tourism and what these have meant to the youth sharing their experiences. Questions investigated how inclusion or exclusion in tourism activities has impacted the youth under study. See Appendix A for a sample interview protocol. Interviews were recorded in a written, and thought kept in a journal format by the researcher and also audiotaped (with participants’ permission). Transcripts of audio recordings were then produced in order to ensure proper recollection, data gathering and reporting (Singleton & Straits, 2010).

Due to the Husserlian approach to this phenomenological study, participants were encouraged to identify how they interpret their own experiences. Youth taking part in the study were encouraged to express their interpretations of experiences both verbally and in the way they felt most comfortable. For example, if a youth felt they could better express themselves through a photograph, drawing, poem or music, I considered these forms of communication and asked the participant how they interpreted

the experiences portrayed in these artifacts. While many of the youth had the option of using other means in describing their experiences, many were prepared to have conversations without the use of artifacts. The youth participants often explained that they weren't sure where the artifacts related to their trips were located and many attributed this to the many moves associated with being a child or youth in care.

Bracketing (Hamill & Sinclair, 2010)

Within this type of phenomenology (*i.e.* Husserlian) the use of bracketing, or epoche (Husserl, 1960) is essential. The use of bracketing involves the truth being obtained by the participants rather than by the researcher. Pernecky and Jamal (2010) describe a strategy for achieving this which was undertaken in a tourism context by Van Winkle and Lagay's (2012) study.

This process involved first identifying their prior knowledge of the phenomenon and secondly, delaying the detailed literature review until after data collection and analysis had occurred. For the purpose of this study, a brief review of the literature has been provided in an attempt to instill the sense of understanding and empathy required and emphasized by Hamill and Sinclair (2010) for this type of research. The literature presented was not intended to foster assumptions but rather to introduce and bring forth the idea that not only are certain groups excluded from tourism and knowledge surrounding tourism, but also that research in various parts of the world has begun promoting equal opportunity based on the assumption or idea that tourism is beneficial.

The third step required in bracketing one's assumptions involved keeping a reflective journal to facilitate the study's progression and later reflection. For the fourth step, I was "to provide a framework for establishing trustworthiness of the study" (Hamill & Sinclair, 2010). The following three steps included collaborative work with others in order to ensure accurate, bias and assumption-free research and interpretation of data. This meant working closely with others familiar with the research process,

with participants for feedback and interpretation, and with peers or project supervisors to develop appropriate (*i.e.* non-leading) questions (Van Winkle & Lagay, 2012). The eighth and final step involved checking the literature to ensure that themes or “clusters of meaning” (Creswell, 2007, p. 61) were appropriately introduced in the process of disseminating findings. Interwoven throughout this entire process however was mindfulness of the potential influence of one’s preconceived notions and perceptions of the phenomenon. This was accounted for by frequently checking in with participants in order to ensure that findings were being presented accurately according to participants rather than based on my own assumptions and biases.

Participant Selection

The study involved interviews with young people considered to be at risk. Youth were purposively selected based on their involvement with a treatment centre in Winnipeg, Manitoba which works with at risk youth. The centre works with approximately 75 youth who have experienced family trauma; abuse; self-harm and suicidal ideation; exploitation; gang involvement; criminal involvement; addiction; behaviour or learning struggles. The centre’s programs include education; individual and family therapy; cultural programming; recreational programming; independent living programming; and transitional housing. The population of young people for the proposed study were selected based on the treatment centre’s identification of the youth attending services as being at risk. The implication is that they have been underserved by the systems surrounding them (*e.g.* family, education, community or government systems). Involvement in this case included youth who were still in attendance or who had engaged in services offered by the treatment centre within the last year (2012) (at the time of the study). Gender, race and cultural background were not considered when selecting the participants although a future examination of this phenomenon and these variables would likely yield interesting results.

Recruitment was based on a voluntary involvement, therefore encouraging rapport-building between myself and youth participants. During this step and again throughout the research process, I was mindful of bracketing strategies in order to address previous experiences with the group under study. Posters describing the study were placed within the treatment centre's school, group homes and administrative buildings. At risk youth who had and those who had not travelled were all welcome to participate and this was clearly stated in the recruitment poster. Word of mouth between youth was also expected to play a role in encouraging participation. In the case of this study, word of mouth was the single most important aspect of the recruitment process. The youth who received consent as well as those who did not receive consent to participate had heard of the research study through peers.

As I worked at the treatment centre where data collection took place, extra care was taken to avoid feelings of obligated participation by the youth by ensuring that the participation was clearly voluntary. This involved a clear emphasis about voluntary participation from the beginning stages of the study (*i.e.* at the recruitment phase in the poster) and throughout the study. Regular member check-ins took place to ensure that participants were participating voluntarily as well as to remind participants that ceasing participation was always a consequence-free option. The voluntariness of the study was highly emphasised throughout all processes of the study. Furthermore, in order to address potential issues surrounding positionality and power imbalances between the youth under study and the researcher, the interviews took place away from the treatment centre in a community institution such as a library, community centre conference room or in some cases, as per the youth's requests, at a local restaurant of their suggestion or choice. It was made clear to the participants that I was undertaking this study as part of my education and not as a staff person of the centre. In some cases, the youth seemed shocked at the free-choice aspect associated with the research process. For example, some youth expressed joy and amazement when being encouraged to speak openly and using the language and sayings of their choice. In other instances, I found myself reminding the youth that they had the

freedom to be expressive, and make choices surrounding the research process (e.g. which type of snack they wanted, where they wanted to meet, which data would remain a part of the transcripts, what would be removed, etc.). Some youth seemed uncomfortable with this choice and therefore decisions were made collaboratively.

Instruments

The primary instrument used in the study was the interview protocol.

Interview Protocol

The interview protocol (Appendix A) was semi-structured with simple straightforward questions asked first. This created an introduction to the interview process and fostered a more comfortable and relaxed atmosphere. The interview then proceeded with more in-depth specific questions where participants were able to elaborate on their experiences.

Both a research journal and recording device were used during interviews and during the research process to facilitate the interview process and transcribing process (Patton, 2002).

Other Documentation

Other documentation may have included any picture, poetry, writing, art work or music which the participant felt described or depicted their tourism experience(s) although as previously mentioned, none of the youth initially presented any artifacts at the interview. As documentation of this sort remained/remains the property of the participant, it was only be included with the participant's permission to do so. The interpretation of such artifacts was provided by the participant through the interview process. Pictures of participants were not included and presented in the study due to confidentiality.

Data Collection

As suggested above, data collection occurred once the youth had agreed to voluntarily and consensually participate. Interviews took place at a community centre, public library conference room or at a local restaurant to ensure privacy and in order to offer an alternative setting to the treatment centre. A healthy snack and drink were provided during the interviews.

Again, while interviews were being conducted, I was recording via audio recorder. This facilitated transcription in the later stages of the research process and also allowed me to be more engaged in the conversation (*i.e.* through eye contact, etc.). While recording, I also took notes in a research journal to record any body language or movements which would not have been recorded on an audio recorder (Patton, 2002).

Once the interview had ended and while my recollection of the interview was fresh, I took time to reflect on the interview and write down additional information and observations if needed. At a later time, these interviews were transcribed in preparation for the analysis stage.

Data Analysis

Once data had been collected and transcribed, the phenomenological analysis began. Colaizzi (1978) provided a 7-step procedure for this process: the first step involved reading all statements and recordings from interviews. Secondly, significant statements related to the phenomenon were highlighted and any repeating statement was eliminated. Thirdly, meanings were identified and formulated from the statements provided while attempting to not separate the meaning of the statement from the initial description of the phenomenon provided by the participant. Creswell (2007) refers to this step as *horizontalization*, or highlighting “significant statements, sentences, or quotes that proved an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon” (p. 61). Fourthly, I

developed clusters of meaning from the formulated meanings. Statements associated with this step are known the *textural description*, or a description of what was experienced by participants, as well as an *imaginative variation* or *structural description* of the context in which the phenomenon occurred (Creswell, 2007), and these informed the next step. This was an important step in describing how a subjective experience could be described in a more objective and general way. In order to ensure validity within the clusters of meaning, I referred back to the original descriptions and statements provided and addressed any discrepancies between the two. A re-examination of this discrepancy involved returning to steps 1, 2 and 3, as well as returning to the participants for further clarity surrounding the meaning of the statement under question. The fifth step suggested by Colaizzi (1986) entailed an *exhaustive description*, or a “statement of the essential structure of the phenomenon” (Munhall & Oiler, 1986, p. 95). This was achieved by integrating the results from the steps noted above. This step provided the opportunity for an objective description of the subjective experience so that an assessment of the contexts associated with the phenomenon could be adopted. In the sixth step, I made a clear and unambiguous statement of the essential structure of the tourism experience of at risk youth. Once again, this step was important in that it provided readers with an objective statement related to a subjective experience that was applicable to all participants involved in the study. Finally, in the seventh step, validity was tested by discussing with participants about whether or not the descriptions and meanings of the statements provided were accurate in describing their own meanings of the phenomenon.

Checks involved providing a written summary of the data analysis to youth for review and a one-on-one discussion with the participant surrounding the data that has been collected and whether or not data was being presented in a way that best reflected the participant’s intentions. This was undertaken for every step of data collection (*i.e.* post interviews, post findings and conclusions). At any time, had the participants not agreed with my analysis, a discussion would have taken place surrounding the

misinterpretation in order to proceed toward proper representation and analysis. Participants had multiple opportunities to express ideas and concerns throughout the process either in a verbal or written manner (*i.e.* how feedback was provided was decided upon by the participant). It is believed that the rapport I had with participants allowed for a comfortable and safe forum where self-expression and knowledge sharing was encouraged, facilitated and supported. This, along with steps previously described, greatly contributed to validity, reliability and transferability.

Ethical Consideration

In Data Collection and Analysis

To honour the responsibility associated with doing research I remained consistent with the processes and practices expected and required by the University of Manitoba throughout the study.

In Treatment of Participants

This study adopted a deontological stance in that it did not compromise the comfort, safety, trust or respect of participants or other community members for the sake of research (Patton, 2002). Participants were offered time away from the treatment centre for interviews as well as healthy snacks in the hopes of providing a more comfortable setting for participants. It was also hoped that conducting interviews away from the treatment centre addressed any potential positionality issues. While it has been noted previously that the role I had within the treatment centre was one that did not bear authority over the youth, it was believed that leaving the treatment centre grounds would assist in negating this possible issue even further. Youth participants seemed to enjoy the freedom of choice and opportunity to be a part of the research process. All youth chose where the interview took place; where the snack came from/which restaurant to eat at; when the member checks would take place; which data would be included in the final transcripts; final say in interpretations associated with statements; and

from where their gift card would be. All youth demonstrated an impressive amount of ownership in the research process and were active participants.

Also related to potential power imbalances was the age difference between myself and participants; however, it is important to note that for many of the youth attending treatment at the treatment centre, one-on-one (relationships-building) time with an adult is rare, and that this one-on-one time may in fact have been a reward in and of itself. In all cases, youth and I were able to spend time getting to know one-another and this was rewarding and valuable for all involved. This was reflected in member-checks where youth were requesting to chat beyond the research material.

To prevent any harm to the participants, I informed the participants of any discomfort or risk associated with the research study. Due to the open-ended nature of interviews, there was opportunity for discussing uncomfortable topics and experiences by the youth. Disclosures were a possible outcome during discussions and during the study this possibility became reality. Youth were fully informed that if allegations of abuse, neglect, exploitation, etc. were disclosed, I was obligated to notify the appropriate parties (*e.g.* agencies, social workers, youth care workers, Child and Family Services, police, etc.). In consideration of these facts, I worked with the youths' guardians and supports (*i.e.* parent(s), social workers, youth care workers, therapists) to ensure that youth were supported as required. I also followed protocols and procedures associated with the University of Manitoba to ensure the most ethical, safe and respectful way of reporting.

Working with guardians, I also screened out youth whose level of vulnerability could place them at risk of mental or emotional harm as a result of the research process. Participants who did not benefit from taking part in the study (*i.e.* who were experiencing on-going difficulties that took precedence over the study and which placed them at risk of harm) were either thanked graciously for their expressed interest or were invited to share their experiences in a different format from the one suggested in this

study. For example, in this case, I had one-on-one conversations with the youth not permitted to take part in the study. This involved informal discussions where during a walk or visit to the youth in question's home, we would talk about tourism and the youth's experience with trip-taking. This seemed to alleviate some of the frustration and anger the youth who did not receive consent to participate was feeling. With the permission and consent of guardians, when a youth was determined to be too at risk of harm for participation but who demonstrated continued interest, the youth was invited to share their experience to the best of their ability. This assessment was provided based on assessments already in place within the treatment centre. For example, if the youth was confined to the treatment centre grounds, was suicidal, was deemed at risk of going on the run, etc. by the treatment centre and guardians, I recognized and respected this assessment. This involved the youth having the option to create artwork or writing related to their experience with tourism, or by rescheduling the interview and member-checks for a later date.

In all of the cases where the youth were not able (*e.g.* due to safety), or willing to come to the interview on the predetermined day, it was the youth who initiated the rescheduling of the interview. While rescheduling options were always available to the youth participants, it should be noted that the youth rarely missed their interview times and were often reminding me in passing about the time of the interview and ensuring that the plans to meet for the study would still be taking place. In one instance, a youth participant approached me one hour prior to the interview time to ensure the interview would still be taking place.

By facilitating an opportunity for the youth to share their experiences, it is believed that the effects of exclusion were not perpetuated and the youth remained protected. Exclusion from the research study was based on conversations held with guardians (*e.g.* parents, foster parents, social

workers and youth care workers) and parties interested in the youth's well-being, such as therapists and support workers.

Another means of protecting the youth taking part in the study involved obtaining informed consent and guardian assent. In other words, to minimize risk or harm, the study was fully explained to participants and their guardian(s). Participants then voluntarily decided, along with their guardian(s), whether or not they would participate in the study. Guardians and potential participants were required to agree that participation was appropriate for participation to occur. Similarly, participants were able to freely choose if and when they no longer wanted to participate. Should a participant have decided to cease participation in the study, I sought the participant's assent/consent to use the materials gathered, and acted accordingly (however this was not the case in this study). The participants and their guardian(s) therefore chose whether data was included or excluded. Excluded data was disposed of by shredding paper files and deleting electronic files. If the participant consented to prior data being used, I sought consent (from participants and guardians) in reporting the cause of ceased participation.

No deception tactics were adopted in this research study.

Confidentiality was maintained. Identifying information regarding the youth, treatment centre and any other information which could possibly have led to their identification was suppressed from data and participants' names were replaced with pseudonyms chosen by the youth.

Should participants have wished to maintain contact with me beyond the research study, I would have discussed this option with guardian(s) and agency workers to determine what the appropriate means of maintaining contact should entail. This consent was granted in one occasion. An exchange of E-mail addresses was determined to be the most appropriate means of maintaining contact.

CHAPTER 4

Findings

The following section will first describe the recruitment process as well as provide a brief description of the youth who attended the study. A description of the research process and how the research methods were applied will follow. The strategy for data analysis proposed by Creswell which involves 7 steps is adopted in the study. In order to present a detailed description of the tourism experience of the youth in this study, the findings section was divided into pre-trip, (during) trip and post-trip sections. This is in recognition that the tourism experience is known to be multi-phase and therefore this strategy will provide more insight into the lived experiences of at risk youth throughout the three stages of their tourism experiences (*i.e.* pre, during and post trip).

Recruitment

Interviews

Jesse

Jesse was the first participant to volunteer in the study and was the only interviewee who did not reside at the centre at the time of the research process. She had resided at the centre two years prior to the interview and had always maintained contact with the treatment centre staff. She was a confident young woman who had always been an advocate for herself and others, even during her time in treatment. Her passion, even as a teenage girl, was for children. She took pride in her relationship with siblings often describing her role as a surrogate mother to these siblings, as well as many other children in her family and neighbourhood. As it had been a while since Jesse and the researcher had spent time together, initial moments of the meeting were spent catching up and reminiscing on the days 'in the unit' (*i.e.* the treatment centre residential home in which she resided for some time). Within the

first few minutes of the meeting, it was obvious she had matured into a kind and polite young woman. She was now a mother and had much news to share about her life since her time at the centre.

As the interview began, Jesse responded quietly and briefly; however as the interview continued she began detailing her experience and shared her story with excitement and passion. She shared her experiences with confidence and was seemingly happy to talk about her adventures and role as an advocate for others while travelling. Jesse's interview lasted 45 minutes.

Nimmi

Nimmi was one of the youngest residents at the treatment centre (12 years old) at the time of the research study and had been in treatment at the centre for approximately 1 year; however, she had been a part of Child and Family Services (CFS) from a very young age. Like many other youth in CFS, she was familiar with a wide variety of living arrangements (*i.e.* adoptive family, foster family, group homes, crisis shelters, etc.) and had been bounced around from home to home all around Manitoba. She was wise on the streets and would often be on the run for months at a time. Despite her young age, her life experiences matured her far beyond her years.

When she volunteered for the study, she spoke of the importance of the opportunity to be interviewed and share her story. She took ownership of her role as a participant in the study and wanted to shed insight on her experiences so that others could learn of the impact these had on her as a young woman. She expressed excitement about the one-on-one time with me, as she and I had a particularly close bond and one that had been nurtured while engaging in recreation programs as well as on the tourism experience she described, a canoe trip to Ontario, Canada.

She was extremely excited about the entire research process. In the early stages of the study she would frequently inquire about the status of her consent forms and remind me of the interview

time. The day of the interview, Nimmi came to my office early and asked me about appropriate attire and expressed her excitement. Nimmi let me know that she wanted to dress professionally as she wanted people at the treatment centre and from the public to know that she was being interviewed. Before leaving my office, she had requested to borrow a blazer hanging from my door and wanted to pick out a pen and notepad. I acknowledged this pride and excitement and granted her these requests without hesitation. She had also picked out a location for the interview as she wanted to eat healthily and ensure that the interview would be carried out in a quiet location. It was clear that she was happy to be in charge of her opportunity to share her story as well as the research process. During the interview, Nimmi shared about her experiences with confidence and with a level of insight that was continuously surprising for a young person her age.

Picca

Picca was the participant who had attended services at the centre for the longest period of time compared to the other youth who took part in the study. She and I had worked closely together over the four years she'd been at the centre although Picca had always maintained a safe distance from most. She was an extremely bright young woman whom many at the centre (*i.e.* staff, therapists and teachers) considered to be gifted. Although she did not always enjoy engaging in conversations with others, when she did, she engaged in conversations stemming from her own curiosity and research. Her best tool for self-expression took form in the way of art and her most evident emotion came from being around animals, both of which she was passionate about. She thought critically and did not trust easily and for this reason, it was surprising to me that she had expressed an interest in participating in the study.

As the research process began, Picca and I worked together to set up an interview time. While she continuously expressed an interest in participating, Picca and I worked together to set up an interview time that could work. On many occasions (spanning over a year), interview dates would be

characterized by my contacting Picca to confirm the interview, Picca stating that she was no longer interested in participating and asking me to return at another time. I respected this and made attempts to reschedule; however, one day, Picca stated that she didn't want to participate anymore. I acknowledged this and informed her that it was alright to move along with the study and that there would be no consequences associated with her decision.

One year after the initial discussion with Picca surrounding her interest in participating, she contacted me with a date and time for the interview in mind and as the day approached, I noticed Picca was also quite remindful of the interview time she had selected. On the day of the interview, she had chosen a snack option and had asked if I wouldn't mind spending time with her before the interview began. Picca and I spent time chatting and Picca let me know about how she was doing. During the interview, Picca was well spoken and clear. She presented an interesting perspective to her experiences with tourism.

Jeff

Jeff was the last youth to participate in the study and was the only male participant who had followed through with his interest to take part in the study. He had been at the centre for a few months at the time of his interview and was extremely timid. Being one of the younger boys at the centre often meant that he had to be on guard. He often seemed to enjoy the opportunity to be himself in smaller groups or alone with staff, or in this case, me. He particularly seemed happy while having fun on recreation programs and it was after one of these recreation programs that he had expressed an interest in the study. He also confidently and proudly explained that he wanted to participate so that he could get a gift card in order to purchase gifts for his mother and siblings as he had an upcoming home visit. Jeff had always made a point of talking about his family. He often talked about how he missed them and would frequently describe saving his allowance to buy his family something nice. As is the

reality for many youth in care, going AWOL was a sure way to ensure visits with his family and often, I would call to confirm the interview with Jeff who would be on the run.

On the day of the interview, he had requested a meeting with me in a quiet place after getting a snack. While he was timid at first, as the questions progressed it was clear that he had wanted to speak to me about a variety of topics, including tourism. In Jeff's case, the one-on-one time seemed important and it was evident that he had a lot on his mind that he wanted to express. It was during this interview that Jeff shared for the first time the events leading up to his apprehension and initial involvement with CFS, and ultimately his first trip out of the country with his first foster family.

Tourism Experiences

All of the youth in this study had experienced tourism on at least two separate occasions and had travelled domestically and internationally. For all youth, initial responses to the definition of tourism involved a departure from the home, and for most of the youth, tourism involved a journey to a faraway place and involved travel by airplane. Picca broadened her definition of tourism to include an experience that one can walk or hitchhike and also suggested that tourism implied "*family time, bonding and exploring*". Jeff described tourism as an experience that can be centered on visiting friends and family. Nimmi described an essential life-changing experience that she drew upon during difficult times in her life.

Trip locations for Jesse included trips to another Canadian province and to Africa. Jesse had accompanied her biological father on a work related trip and had been to Africa for a volunteer project that involved building a school for children with a child and youth-centered agency. While on her trips, Jesse had helped with the labour associated with the building the school for the host community, and had done a *Water Walk* which was designed to teach youth about the difficulty associated with

acquiring potable water for the people of the host community. She had also taken part in sight-seeing activities such as going on a safari and trips to the nearby village.

Nimmi had substantial tourism experience and had visited many of the provinces in Canada, but had also travelled to Mexico and Colombia. Activities on her trips included visiting family, camping, attending training sessions, attending sports competitions, sightseeing and lounging for the sake of relaxing.

Picca had spent much of her time travelling in rural areas in her home province including more remote northern communities but had also been to the United States to visit Disney Land. During her trips she had experienced activities such as camping, amusement parks and sightseeing.

Jeff, who was from a rural community, had travelled to other rural communities as well the city many times to visit family. He had also been to the United States but was not able to identify where he had been. Activities he enjoyed during his trips included swimming, going to the movie theater, and visiting the zoo.

Travel Companions

When asked about their travel companions, all youth identified a wide variety of individuals with whom they travelled. Interestingly, all youth had at one time travelled with their biological or adoptive families. While all of the youth were currently separated from, and no longer living with these same family members (and rather were involved with CFS), at one time travel had been an experience that the youth had participated in with their families of origin. All youth spoke of these tourism experiences with affection. Jesse talked about joining her father who was a trucker when she was younger and Nimmi talked about her family's travel experiences to various provinces, Mexico and Colombia. Picca talked

about her trips to see family with her biological father and sister before her involvement with CFS and Jeff reminisced on his trips to the city to visit family with his mother prior to his apprehension.

Later in their lives, and once youth had become involved with CFS, their group of travel companions expanded and included a large number of caregivers and staff associated with various child and youth-serving agencies. Jesse had travelled with an agency centered on offering experiences to both Canadian and African youth. Nimmi had travelled with Cadets, with the treatment centre in questions as well as with partners of the treatment centre including the local university. Picca had travelled with her foster family, with the Canadian Girl Guides and also with the treatment centre. Jeff had been on his first out of country experience with his foster family.

Pre-Trip Experiences

While all youth had experienced tourism, the differences and similarities in their tourism experiences began before their trips, during the pre-trip stage of their experience. The following section will explore the pre-trip experiences the youth encountered as it was an important time for the youth. Elements associated with the pre-trip stage involved not only the feelings associated with the discovery of a pending foreign adventure, but also the relationships with those surrounding them. Involvement or exclusion from the trip planning stage, as well as overall support by loved ones and care-givers was another important aspect of the pre-trip tourism experience that was highlighted by youth. For some of the youth who participated in this study, learning about the various funding sources that would enable and ensure their tourism experience was also important in the pre-trip phase. This section will therefore explore these aspects of the trip in more depth.

Feelings Associated with Pre-Trip Phase

All youth identified feelings associated with the news that they would be taking part in a tourism experience. Initial reactions from Jesse included, *“being excited”* when she first discovered she would be going on her first trip out of the country; however, when thinking about being on an airplane, she felt *“worried”* and *“had anxiety”*. Prior to her departure on her trips, Nimmi described feeling *“excited...cause it’s good to travel... you get to learn things... and you get to be away from things for a while, you know. You get to see new places and meet new faces... Just hopin’ n’ scopin’”*. Picca identified that upon discovering that she was leaving for a trip, she felt *“nervous... cause I’m leaving my comfort zone....Ugh.... anxiety...What if something bad happens to me?”*. She also described feeling *“flabbergasted”* and *“excited”*. Jeff had felt feelings of confusion and was negatively associating this confusion and lack of information with his apprehension as he got into his foster parents’ vehicle.

Planning and Support

As participants elaborated on their experiences with early discussions surrounding trip location, funding and potential planning companions, or lack thereof, were also discussed. Jesse described assisting in the fundraising aspect of the pre-trip phase and explained that she had enjoyed contributing to the planning. It remains unknown whether or not she also enjoyed an aspect of control associated with this opportunity. Nimmi had also been involved in the pre-trip phase with some of the packing associated with the camping trip with the treatment centre and described the added opportunity to share her wishes during her trip.

Picca and Jeff had not had the opportunity to contribute to their trip in terms of planning. For both youth, their trips to the United States with their respective foster parents had come as surprises and therefore had not left them with any time to prepare or fully process that they were going on a trip. For Picca, the surprise was one that she was able to process and feel more comfortable with as she had a longstanding relationship with her foster mother. She explained, *“I felt good there. Cause I had the*

people I really loved by me. Cause my foster mom... I miss my foster mom... She raised me since I was like 4 or 5. Ten Years”.

Jeff, who had recently moved in with his foster family at the time of his strip to the United States, detailed the beginning of a tourism experience where the lack of control and input was highly reminiscent of his time with the child welfare system, and more specifically, of his apprehension from his biological family and first encounter with his foster parents. He explained,

“I guess we drove past Winnipeg. And I was wondering where we were going. I asked them and they said, “the States” and I was like... wow... It was so long... You know, the weird thing was? That um... my foster parents that I was with... their names were Matt and Marie, and I guess Marie was my mom’s first cousin. I guess she told me that when she picked me up... I was like wow... I didn’t know that. Ya, I just thought it was some stranger. Ya... I like, I wonder who she is. But that was like when I had to go to CFS and she was the one that picked me up to meet my foster mom, I was like, oh...”

At risk youth are not alone in desiring the opportunity to ask questions, receive clarification, work through the pre-trip anticipation and prepare for their future endeavours. For Jeff, the surprise trip unfortunately caused a triggering effect that evoked the same feelings he felt during his apprehension and caused discomfort, mistrust and resentment on his trip. The lack of inclusion in the pre-trip phase resulted in feelings associated with wanting to *“leave, and wander and get lost and then get found again”*.

Feelings towards Travel Companions

When youth were asked about how they felt about their travel companions, unless some form of rapport that had already existed with their travel companions, often there was no comment or even negative comments made towards potential travel companions. When Jesse was asked about her travel companions, the peers she volunteered with, she responded, *“half the girls, I wish didn’t go”*. Picca commented, *“half of them were strangers to me. I didn’t get to know most of them”*.

When youth had the opportunity to spend time building relationships with their travel companions in the pre-trip phase, their reports of their travel companions were more positive. Jeff described feeling “good” about his foster mother and father and explained, “*They were good to me*”. When Nimmi was asked about her feelings towards travel companions before the trip, she stated that for non-family members that she travelled with, she “*wasn’t as close to them before we left. Ya it was a good bonding experience*”.

Trip Funding

As with the varying emotional responses associated with the news of a trip, the youth who participated in the study also experienced varying needs and forms of funding associated with their travel experiences. For the tourism experiences that took place with family members, the family members (*i.e.* biological or adoptive parents) often absorbed costs associated with travel and the journey. When asked about why she thought her parents would make sure she’d had the opportunity to travel, Nimmi made the following statement, “*it’s not like because of what they wanted to do. It was kind of because they wanted to educate us more, and you know, be more family oriented*”.

For other tourism experiences such as those that took place with child and youth-centered agencies, fundraising was a common means of obtaining funds for travel. Three of the four youth had engaged in fundraising efforts in order to realize their travel goals. Jesse described her fundraising experience as one that involved collaboration between not only the staff at the treatment centre group home, but also the school and various other community members, “*they did the bake sale, and everything just in the school to fundraise six grand just for me to be able to go to Africa*”. Nimmi added that agencies often supported tourism “*just to give us an opportunity...and not a lot of kids get to go on canoe trips or different places. Especially kids in care*”.

When Picca talked about the fundraising aspect of the trip she took with non-family members, she described a sense of guilt associated with having to ask others for support in acquire funding for the trip. She described the following situation,

“The leader... she kept telling me that I didn’t deserve to go...that everyone... basically you didn’t fundraise for yourself... other people fundraised for you and stuff like that. She kept making me feel really bad about me going on the trip and everything...That I didn’t deserve to go. Meanwhile I did fundraise. It made me feel guilty”.

Another funding source was the foster families of the youth. For two of the youth in the study, foster parents used their own money in order to offer the youth they were caring for the opportunity to travel. As tourism and travel is not financially supported by CFS agencies, had the foster parents not voluntarily paid, the youth would have likely been excluded from such an experience and been cared for by a respite or support worker for the duration of the trip. For Picca, a sense of guilt seemed to be associated with her foster mother absorbing the cost associated with a trip to Florida, *“she finally paid off the debt though... She wasted like \$25,000”*. While she felt some guilt with the cost associated with the trip, as the discussion continued, she reflected on her tourism experience and stated, *“honestly, now that I think of it, my foster mom is really good to me even though I wasn’t really good to her”*.

As the youth reflected on their initial feelings surrounding the trip, the importance of the pre-trip phase (*i.e.* planning, relationship-building and acquiring funding that led to, or supported their tourism experience) was obviously valued. It seemed as though the level of support in the pre-trip stage was associated with not only the success or failure of relationships with their travel companions, but also may have impacted their overall experience. The chance to contribute to the planning of the tourism experience in the pre-trip phase was essential in allowing them to demonstrate autonomy and independence, learn and display skills, as well as validate relationships. In participating in the planning stage, youth were able to work in supported and collaborative ways with those surrounding them and were able to strengthen relationships with their supports, loved ones and travel companions.

For Nimmi and Jesse, those who had supported them in their journey were spoken of fondly and lovingly, whereas Picca and Jeff both described a strained relationship with those who had not supported them before their departure. As the youth described, these actions of trust (*i.e.* opportunities to advocate for themselves, be included and contribute to the planning process) would support and maintain relationships at the time of the tourism experience and well after. Ultimately, the pre-trip experience in some cases acted as precursor to trip experience for the youth who participated in this study.

Textural Description: *Youth deemed to be at risk value involvement in the pre-trip phase and it is suggested that exclusion from this phase can foster resentment and negative or harmful feelings.*

Structural Description: *The pre-trip phase can set the tone for the tourism experience and is an essential means for at risk youth to gauge the outcome of the trip as well as their interactions with others and their environment throughout these tourism experiences.*

Experiences during the Trip

During the pre-trip stage of their experience, youth described many learning opportunities they deemed important. Jesse described the need to overcome fear and anxiety, and Nimmi described excitement and joy in preparing. Jeff and Picca highlighted the impacts of a missed pre-trip phase. While on their trips, the youth described an expansion and broader range of emotions and impacts. The following section explores how the youth engaged with those around them as well as their newly found environments in order to interpret and navigate these during their tourism experiences.

Feelings during the Tourism Experience

When youth were asked about their feelings during the trip, many were able to vocalize how their feelings ranged throughout their journeys. Jeff maintained that he felt “*horrible*” and attributed

this feeling to being “so tired”. While Jesse had spent much time describing feeling lucky and proud to be able to contribute to the host community to the extent that she had, when asked about how she felt during the trip, she answered,

“I was like so homesick... I’m like oh my God. I’m like I wanna go home. And so I’m like getting all homesick. I’m like, “I’ll fuckin’ walk”, they’re (the staff from the child and youth-centered agency) like, “how you gun’ get across the ocean, if you don’t die by an animal?” I’m like, “I’ll fuckin’ swim, I don’t care. Currents aren’t too strong. I don’t care.”

Jesse had described these feelings in times when she was in need of support, feeling overwhelmed by her experience or when she was feeling misunderstood by her peers or the staff.

Picca had a completely different experience and made the following statement, *“I didn’t want to leave... cause it felt good there... All my hopes and dreams were there. With the people I loved”*. For Picca, being with loved ones made her experience a delightful one. Nimmi shared a similar feeling associated with her tourism experiences and explained, *“Um, when you’re on your trip, I think it makes you feel refreshed. You know, sometimes you need to away from things for a while”*.

Broadening of Definitions

As youth described their thoughts and interpretations of the tourism experiences they were engaged in, they also described broadening their definition of tourism. Jesse briefly talked about accompanying her father on a work trip. She also spent much time elaborating on her trip to Africa to volunteer to help build a school for young children. She selflessly expressed this was the main reason for the trip. Nimmi talked about many different reasons to engage in travel and talked about travel for training, for fun and emphasized the escapist nature of tourism. When asked why she had travelled with her biological family, she explained,

“To um, get away from everything that has happened basically. Cause it was a rough time at the time. And it was just get away.... And relax, and forget about everything

and leave everything behind. To just chill out. It helped. It felt good to get together as a family”.

Breaking from Routine

As she elaborated on her family vacation, Nimmi also highlighted the enjoyment associated with a break from routine, *“I thought it was really good because each day was something different”*. Picca talked about travelling for fun and equated the opportunity to take part in tourism as an opportunity to have dreams realized. She is quoted saying, *“I was 7... it’s like a child’s dream. I swam with a dolphin... or course I did (have dreams realized)”*. When Jeff talked about the purpose of his trip with his mother, he talked about coming into the city to visit family, to go shopping or to stay in a hotel, a special activity for him and his family.

Learning

While all of the youth in the study had experienced tourism differently during their trips, all of the youth participants associated tourism with the opportunity for learning. All described a learning opportunity that was applicable to various aspects of their lives both during the trip as well as later on in life.

Jesse talked about learning that took places throughout all stages of her tourism experience. She described the learning opportunities that took place from the moment she got on the airplane, to the skill acquisition associated with the volunteer work that she did. She talked about the sense of empathy and understanding she gained from learning about her host community members and working alongside them for a common goal. She elaborated on how her learning led to realizations and a new sense of appreciation for her own life in the following description,

“Like, to see... us, we get whatever we want. Like you whine to your parents as a kid, “oh I need this and that”.... Well, you get it like that. You don’t have to work for it,

you don't do nothing. All that shit whining and getting' my way. So I can annoy my parents and I'll get it. It's like at home, I can just go in my cupboards and be like, "oh I'm hungry"... Ya. You're like, I'm just gunna eat for the fuck of it... They don't get whatever they want. It's like once a day n' on weekends..."

Jesse also described how her learning experience during her trip lead to a changed perspective that lasted much longer than the duration of her trip. She is quoted saying,

"I still feel good. Because before I used to be a kid that didn't care. Oh I can do whatever I want, I can get whatever I want. I don't give a shit. But then after going out there and seeing that they have next to nothing, like, like next to nothing... and only eating when they're in school, or once a day, it's like oh my God. Like before I used to run away and be a chronic AWOL-er and not care, go do whatever I wanted. Couldn't care less. Take shit for granted. Now, after going there, I smartened up, it's like, what the hell am I doing? Like I'm just doing whatever the hell I want, running my life into the ground. And all these kids do everything possible to have a good life yet they're stuck with nothing. Like they're lucky if they have clothes".

Nimmi emphasized the learning experiences associated with tourism when she stated, *"traveling is not always for holidays. Like people from Canada always tend to go to warm places during the winter....because they don't wanna be here for winter. But traveling doesn't have to be like that. It can also be... educational."* She suggested that tourism is a way of combining both opportunity for relaxation with learning. She also explained how tourism has helped her in making connections between her experience and the formal education material she had learned in school. She explained, *"it was a cool experience cause I'd never seen the mountains and to see the landscape changement... it's kind of exactly the way you learn it"*. She also talked about the joy associated with learning about other ways of life and cultures. She explained, *"Mexico was filled with all different types of things. I got to see how they lived... what they ate."* As she went on to speak about the learning experience that took place during her various tourism opportunities, she commented,

"Well when you're gone for too long, like 5 days in the bush... you wish you were back. But then again, you appreciated what you have back home and then... like the canoe trip made me appreciate what you have back home and then... like the canoe

trip made me appreciate stuff I wouldn't normally appreciate. Like food... because you know how we had limited food choices right? When we got back, we could eat whatever we wanted to, and so... um, made me appreciate what I had back home, and the people who was around."

Learning about other cultures and the resulting newly found sense of appreciation was also described in the following statement,

"Mexico also made me appreciate because I appreciated the things I had seeing how people in a third world country live. You know? They don't have money and how some people work in like, uh, the markets trying to sell things to make money for their family. It makes me appreciate the things I have and where I live... and the family I have too."

Picca and Jeff also commented on the learning aspect of tourism. Picca acknowledged the educational component of her tourism experiences when she expressed that tourism was a good thing because *"you see new things, learn new things, and meet new people"*. Jeff recognized learning during tourism when he said tourism had the potential of being life changing due to the fact that one could *"go see places, learn to do different stuff, find new people and find new roads and new ways"*.

Freedom and Control

Nimmi highlighted the importance of freedom and control during the tourism experience and was able to identify the difference between the learning that occurred in the formal educational system and free choice learning that took place within the tourism context. For her, this was important. She elaborated by describing tourism as follows,

"It's educational, and you get to learn things on top of that. And it's not like school, like an assignment you have to be done on a due date or else you fail. It's whatever YOU want to learn, whatever YOU want to keep in your head as memory. It's important because it's what YOU want to think... what YOU think, not what anybody else wants for you. It's not like someone else bossing you to do something, to be, have it done on a certain time. It's what YOU wanna know and what YOU wanna learn about what you want... It's choice."

As in the pre-trip phase, freedom and control over certain aspects of the tourism were highly valued and memorable.

Relationship-building, Strengthening and Maintenance

While youth were able to clearly identify times when their tourism experience caused them stress or anxiety, the youth participants in this study were able to identify how certain individuals were supportive and understanding of their wishes and needs, contributing to a more positive experience during the tourism experience. Jesse gave many examples of how she was supported while on her trip to Africa.

"I always had anxiety of going super high. So... and with being in CFS and we have to go, they wanted me to go by myself from Winnipeg to Ontario to meet up with the group. I'm like, "I don't know where I'm going!"... Ya, so my CFS worker ended up taking um, that long weekend off which ended up colliding... like going together with my trip. (Laughing) My first time on a plane, and it going up the turbulence kicking in and if you're not actually not looking out the window it feels like it's doing a head dive into the ground. Ya, so it's like trippin' out. And then after you get up in the air, your ears are popping. Feels retarded. My CFS worker's like, "Jesse, it's ok you know. Like it's just your ears poppin'", and I'm like, "are my ears gunna bleed?" (Laughing) And she's like "No! They just do that because the height change and all that. Chew gum it helps"."

She also told the story of a time near the end of her trip when she was denied an opportunity to make contact with a caring and understanding adult in her life, her aunty. Jesse described feeling homesick and experiencing stress and pain associated with the realization that many young people in the world experienced incredible hardship. Rather than being granted this phone call to her aunt, Jesse described being prevented from doing this by an adult with whom she was travelling. She stated,

"Ya like, before going, ah, the social worked and the manager from (the child and youth-centered agency) said that, where I'd be able to call home whenever I wanted. Well I ended up going and she's (staff from the same child and youth-centered agency) like, "well, it wasn't passed on". So she ended up E-mailing the manager, finally a week before it's time to go home, she finally gets a E-mail back that yes, it

was agreed upon that I'd be able to call home whenever. But she kept telling me "no you weren't, no you weren't, wasn't set up"... Yes it was! Cause that's the only way I'd be able to come, that was through CFS. Cause I'm a CFS kid, only turned 17 on the plane rides here. I'm like, you except me from not even leaving Winnipeg once I was CFS, except for once with my Dad. You expect me to be all normal? NO! I'm like, I'm on the other side. And I was like freaking out last week... I'm like I've always been a runaway. It's so easy. If I was homesick, in CFS, in a group home, in a foster home, I just ran. That included me walking, me running, me fuckin' takin' that bus. I didn't care as long as I got to where I wanted to go. I was always good with directions. I don't care. But not in Africa! I don't know where the fuck I am, if get eaten, something happens, at least I know I died tryin' ta get home! Leave me the fuck alone (laughing)! So they finally let me call."

For Jesse, the opportunity to call home during her trip was an expectation she'd had for the trip prior to her departure. When the adults caring for her at the time were unable to meet and support this expectation, she felt unsupported, discomfort and ultimately had a negative experience until her expectation was met.

She described her conversation with her aunt and state, *"My aunty was like, "Calm down. We all love you. Just stick it out"... Until you actually talk to family, it's just like, I'll do anything to get home".*

As Jesse emphasized in her interview, it was through the act of having the opportunity to debrief and share her experience that she was best able to analyze and reflect on her experience, and in turn, make her experience a learning opportunity rather than a moment characterized by feeling conflicted and lost. While she had hoped to get lost while on her trip, being found and grounded was equally as important. This was only possible with the support of adults who knew her as well as anticipated the struggles she might encounter while taking part in her tourism experience.

Jesse provided yet another example of the relief she found from a supportive adult that was an ocean's distance away. She explained that in her moments of anxiety, sadness and anger, she was able to use a letter that a staff member from the treatment centre had written her in the event that she was in need of support while away from home. As she described an overwhelming feeling of sadness for the

host community children, she also spoke of how the letter from a supportive staff member, helped her get through her difficult time.

“It was like... (sighs)... So one of the staff (from the group home she was living in), she wrote me a letter. She said, “When it gets hard, open it and read it”. And I ended up opening it and I’m like hiding in my bunk. I’m like crying my eyes out. I’m like... oh my God... She’s like, “remember that when times get hard, you can actually see what it’s like. We can take it all for granted at home, you go places like this... and like, we take everything that’s so easy for granted, yet look at them. They work as hard as they have to and they still get nothing out of it. Just what you see, just keep it in your heart and know when you come home, that nothing is as easy as we think it is”.

Jesse described her moments after the letter and described that in writing back to this staff person, she was engaging in an opportunity to reflect on her situation, as well as the situation for those in the host community she was visiting. Her ‘aha moment’ had had a profound impact on her and as difficult as it was to process initially, with a little support and a letter from a person she respected who sat an ocean’s distance away, she was able to mindfully reflect on an important life lesson.

As Jesse described the improvement of the relationship between her and many of the adults in her life, she also talked about an increase in ease and trust in her and her fellow volunteers. She described feeling understood by her peers when she stated,

“After I did the whole freak out on the staff thing, they kinda agreed to like me. Cause they just thought I was the shy stuck up chick by myself. I’m like, I’m not. I’ll tell you how it is”.

Jesse reminisced on her first opportunity to work in collaboration with her peers/fellow volunteers in planning a day of activities involving direct contact with the children from the host community. A large part of the pride and excitement associated with this highlight was the opportunity to share her knowledge and build relationships with the children. She took much pride in her opportunity to work directly with the youth for whom the school was being built and organize her own chance to give back and demonstrate philanthropy. She described her experience,

“They’re (the trip leaders) like, “you guys plan how you’re waking up, e’vry kid in this camp. You’re planning what time you start eating, when we’re going to work, what we’re doing all day, if we’re going to work, if we’re playing with the kids”... I’m like, are you kidding me?! Like, we actually get to like... you guys say we can only say ‘hi’ to them... so we’re like all talking, we’re like, lets wake everyone up early. The other one, he’s like, “No no no”... cause he’s like “I like my sleep”. Like, no. Like ya. I’m like, “we gotta do it”. We did work and all that. That’s when we finished the trench. And after that, the kids had no school so thank God we planned perfectly. When I was, I used to play soccer... as a kid. So I thought, well let’s play soccer with them! So we’re there, and we had an actual football and a soccer ball. We’re like, “you wanna play soccer?” They’re like, “soccer?”... but they called it football... and we showed them how we would play football. And then noticing, they like, whatever. Just to make a soccer ball. They’ll take old hay, start bundling it together... and keep going till they got a round ball... And I remember after that, helping them, and planning out that day, and doing work in the morning and spending time with the kids, the whole time after we at lunch and dinner, it was like heart breaking. And I remember I just wanted to go home so bad cause I felt so bad. It’s like, what can I do to help? I’m like only giving them like school”.

Nimmi also shared much insight regarding an opportunity to belong. She excitedly and proudly talked about a canoe trip that she had been on where *“I got to become part of the family!”*. She then more broadly identified trip highlights as the opportunity to see and meet new people (from the host community) as it was in these new relationships that she explained she was able to form her own personality through these exchanges. She is quoted saying, *“I always admire different places, different cultures. I love love love it”*. When asked why this was a trip highlight for her she explained,

“I think it’s because when I was younger, I got adopted, and I, you know I grew up with a different culture. I got, you know, I don’t know who I really am. I never got to know who I really was. And I see all these different people, and it makes me wonder. I don’t know... if that made sense. Cause I didn’t really know who I am, because I got adopted and I grew up with a different type of family, different setting, different culture”.

When I asked Picca about her trip highlight, she talked about the relationship that was strengthened while on her trip, *“I really bonded with my foster mom”*. Jeff also identified maintaining

and building relationships with family as a highlight of his tourism experience when he identified *“getting to see my sister again... I never got to see her for two years”*.

As the youth described the trip phase of their tourism experience, they also described a rich experience characterized by the broadening of definitions and meanings, as well as the development and validation (positive or negative) of relationships. Through tourism experiences facilitated and supported by caring and responsible adults, the youth involved in this particular study were able to learn new skills, how to process and navigate their newly found emotions and think both introspectively and retrospectively. The participants also described the importance of the opportunity to examine and discover new ways of life while also making sense of their own experiences prior to the tourism experience. The youth highlighted the value of the opportunity to explore freedom and independence while testing their ability to exercise and maintain control over situations that involved them.

Interestingly, connection with the natural world was another relationship that was highlighted throughout the interviews. All youth identified exposure to the natural world, and more specifically animals, as a main feature of the trip. Jeff talked about his encounter with a lion at the zoo as a highlight, *“Seeing the lion... I hoped he took my hat off... He was just lying there blinking, looking at everyone...And the other lion was just like walking around... going around in a circle”*. He identified this moment as special as he had never seen a lion before.

Picca also mentioned a bonding moment with an animal as a memorable part of her trips and equated her swim with a dolphin as *“a dream come true”*. She also described the following memorable experience related to interaction with animals, *“I got to touch a beluga whale. No one else did. The beluga whale came up beside the boat and touched me. I have a thing with animals... even a seal swam by and stuff like that... there’s also jelly fish”*. She identified her best memory as watching her foster mother swim with the dolphins and when asked later why she had wanted to stay on her trip, one of her

reasons for wanting to stay was because “*there was animals there*”. Nimmi also talked about animals as an essential aspect of, or highlight on her trip,

“There was also people in Mexico that have crazy different animals. And you have to pay to take pictures with them of course, but um, you paid them whatever and um, however money they want for the picture and you get to hold the animal and get to see it. Like monkeys. There was a monkey one time, there was a baby cub lion....They have like iguanas. They run around everywhere. In Mexico they have iguana signs instead of deer signs”.

Jesse’s best memory of her trip involved conquering her fears and attending a safari. She described her memorable experience,

“Well the, um, ya, the only time I went back into the big truck, the big open scary one, that was the safari trip (laughing). And that was the last time I said I’d ever step in. Like after falling out, well basically pretty much falling out, catching myself and them helping me back in, and then the safari trip, I tripped balls because the elephant... like we saw an elephant and it was like getting closer and it started charging close to the fuckin’ vehicle. And then like a minute before it hit us, it quickly ran into the bush. I’m like (GASPS). I’m like, “OH MY GOD!” And from us seeing everything and being able to drive up close to the felines and the actual lions, and zebras and wildebeests, and oh my God the ostriches.”

When the youth participants were asked about why they found some of the above mentioned moments so memorable, a few of the youth were able to share their understanding of these moments. Jeff and Jesse both talked about the new experiences associated with seeing animals they had never seen or been exposed to. For Jesse, fear had been a large part of her animal experience; however, having survived her thrilling safari was important and left a lasting impression. Her statement also implies a desire on her part to feel awe, experience thrill and feel adrenaline. More research in the area of youth deemed at risk and thrill-seeking behaviour while engaged in a tourism experience would be beneficial.

Textural Description: *Youth deemed to be at risk value the opportunity to engage in the tourism experience and not only equate this opportunity with learning and rapport-building but also report both potentially lasting positive and negative impacts associated with such opportunities.*

Structural Description: *The tourism experience supported by understanding and caring individuals can be responsible for transformative learning experiences that, in a brief time, can impact at risk youth not only in the moment, but long after the actual tourism experience.*

Post-trip Experiences

In asking the youth about trip highlights and memories, it was apparent that the post-trip experience was a significant aspect of their tourism experience. This was often when many of the deep meaning-making and interpretation of the trip took place. In revisiting trip highlights and sharing the memories from their trips, the youth in this study were able to share insight on their experiences and use retrospect to continue the learning process. The following section will explore findings associated with the post-trip phase in more detail.

Feelings Associated with the Post-trip Phase

Feelings associated with the post-trip phase of the tourism experience were varied. Jesse talked about the feelings she felt as she was picked up from the airport and driven back to the group home,

“Driving from the airport to the house, I honestly had no clue where the fuck I was. I’m like, where are we?... Cause I couldn’t recognize everything. Like no, “you guys are taking me somewhere just to fucking get me lost”... ya, I felt lost with everything. All the vehicles, my anxiety was just going. I’m like no, I’m not home like... I’m like I’m not home. You guys have me somewhere else n’ telling me it’s like home. It was weird. You’re sleeping on like army cots, to being in a bed with like a dresser, a desk and all that right there, it’s like, ugh.... There’s so much shit in here like... Ya, like... more shit in my room that I don’t need.”

She described feeling very lost upon the return to her group home. She also talked about the difference in her interactions with the peers she had in the group home after her return and about having a different perspective regarding the other youth she lived with. She described a new perspective centered on having a keener appreciation for those around her, for the small luxuries in life like access to food and for the experiences she'd had that made her who she was. It seemed as though she had become a changed young woman with a new perspective on life. As she described, her peers and their priorities no longer matched her own understanding of the world and she deemed daily complaints as trivial and somewhat intolerable,

"Like they were so stuck up and it's like, you guys bitch about every little thing. Ya, like they took everything, like bitched about everything, about being grounded, about how they could have nothing, no telephone, no nothing. Like shut up, these kids out there don't even have nothing. Go away, like, you're just annoying me."

Nimmi also talked about the need to adjust to being back in her home community. When I posed the question, *"how do you feel when you get back home?"* she responded, *"usually tired but a couple of days later you'll hear me whining about how I want to go back... It's because, it makes me feel like relaxed. I feel relaxed"*.

While a period of adjustment and the need to readapt to daily life were described by both Jesse and Nimmi, the trip highlights were described positively by all of the youth who participated in the study.

Relationship-building, Memories and Highlights

When youth were asked about their trip highlights, they were able to identify a variety of highlights. While some of the memories and highlights they described involved moments of anxiety, fear, discomfort and uncertainty, most of these experiences were remembered fondly. Common to all the youth participants was the fact that relationships were a key component of the trip highlight.

When Picca and Nimmi were asked about why some of their moments were more memorable than others, they reverted to discussion about the relationships and recollected on how these relationships changed while on tourism experiences. Picca talked about the improvement of relationships during the trip and mentioned that not only had she bonded more strongly with her foster mother, but also her sister. She recalled that the interactions that took place during the tourism experience were now deemed to be treasured times for her. She explained her time at home in contrast to her time on holiday, *“Because I’m not at school... I had to deal with bullies, being peer pressured. Staying at home and being called an idiot by my sister... meanwhile my sister was a different person (on the trip)”*.

Nimmi also emphasized how the post-trip phase of her experience was deeply rooted in relationships with others. She shed particular insight on the importance of having the opportunity to share the memories of her tourism experiences with others and explained,

“It’s not that I like bragging, but like it makes me feel good when I tell everybody about you know, everywhere that I’ve been to and what I do... Because there was a time in my life where I totally slipped and like... went downhill instead of uphill and right now I’m working my way uphill. But, talking about it makes me... makes me feel like I’m going more uphill. And that way I could um, do more things like that. And tell more stories. And even do higher. I think it, travelling makes people, a more interesting person. And you’re different, I think everybody’s different and it makes you a different person after you travel because you learn different things. Different experiences change you sometimes. I can tell my traveling experiences through um, like my, what I’ve been through experiences and people will, you know there’s people who will at it as a good way, and some people will judge you... Ya, they won’t understand. You know.”

For Nimmi sharing the tourism experiences she deemed as positive stories was important because in sharing them, she could relate to others in a more positive manner. As she explained, some of the more difficult stories of her life could lead to judgement and lack of understanding. Through her travelling and

tourism experiences she could share freely about herself while focusing on the positive memories of her life.

Feelings towards Travel Companions

For the youth involved in the study, respect and acceptance remained important factors in their relationships with others, including their travel companions. Nimmi elaborated on the concept of acceptance and understanding when she described her former travel companions,

“I think um, they’re important people to me. Well, I got to know them, and, um, they got to know me and hear my stories too. And just for the record, if ever they hear this, that they should know that it’s really, really hard to get to know me. They should be honoured!”

While youth were able to identify the need to feel respected by others, Nimmi also described an increase in respect that resulted from her tourism experience with her step father who was running a marathon, *“I have more respect for him for that. Not so much for what he has done, but I have respect for what he’s accomplished. My word”*. When asked about whether or not tourism had impacted her relationship with her family, she explained that she had become closer with her family *“at the time... not so much right now”*. All youth described wishing they’d maintained contact or reported still maintaining contact with their travel companions which may possibly also speak to the relationships that occur during the tourism experience.

The Impact of the Tourism Experience

The impact tourism had on the youth participating in this study was diverse. There were reported impacts described by all youth. For Jeff, the impact was that for the duration of his trip, he was able to have “fun”. Despite the fact that he was unable to take part in the planning process associated with the trip, his vacation to the U.S. was a time when he was able to take part in activities he enjoyed.

He explained, *“I was so tired... Until I went inside the pool. And then I just sit there... and it’s like... It’s like gravity and everything’s holding you down... In water, anything’s possible in water”*.

While Picca initially denied any impact associated with her tourism experience, she later stated, that the tourism opportunity instilled within her a new sense of adventure. When asked if the tourism experience had changed her, she explained that the *“new sights”*, gave her *“new things to look forward to”*. She also attributed her tourism experience to the strong bond with her foster mother in her statement, *“I probably wouldn’t have a good bond with my foster mom”*. Sadly, Picca also attributed the lack of support she experienced with the staff from the child and youth-centered agency who made her feel guilty about her supposed lack of fundraising efforts to her current self-image, *“I probably would have less depression. Well, like... that person, made me feel awful. About myself. And she told my mom I was doing the opposite from what I was doing”*.

When Nimmi was asked about whether the impact of tourism had a positive or negative impact on her life she responded,

“Good way. Makes me feel like... um (long pause)... um... I think it’s been a good thing because I’m... in some situations and what I’ve been through, you know, it makes me feel bad. But whenever I’m talking to people about the good things I’ve done, it makes me feel amazing... I had a good life... or, I’m still having a good life but like, I had good experiences.”

Jesse had a similar response to Nimmi. Her sense of appreciation for tourism was powerful and linked to seemingly much more than the action of having travelled to another place. The advocacy element of her experience was evident as she made the following statement,

“Seeing how they actually lived, they actually, like they came when we first were driving into the campsite. All of them sang, they clapped their hands, invited us in... They’re not the type to judge. They’d rather have help than everyone just judge them for their colour. I just started crying. Cause like seeing on night news and all that and all these internet pages and all that, you see how everyone’s quick to judge. Like I used to be like that growing up. But seeing how much they go through, and why they

act the way they do, now it's understandable. Like everything they go through, like they work, still get nothing, still wake up every single day like, "oh! I gotta go to work, let's go. Oh! I gotta get to school". Like most of those kids were even talking like, "oh I just wanna get my schooling done, I wanna go to college and go, and like, if we finish schooling here, we get the option if we wanna go to the States or Canada"...And they were like all happy."

As the four youth described the impacts associated with their tourism experiences, the relation between the support received and positive or negative impact on the youth became more evident. While Jesse and Nimmi had experienced tourism opportunities that were supported by caring adults with whom they had built relationships and trusted, Jeff and Picca had both participated in tourism experience which were associated with negative feelings as they had not been involved in or understood by the adult supports throughout the tourism experience.

Perspectives on Tourism

Of particular interests, was that all youth had strong opinions regarding tourism and the tourism experiences they had taken part in. When asked about whether tourism was a good or bad thing for people to experience, Jeff who was more soft-spoken and careful with his wording described the advantages of tourism as follows, *"[It's a] good thing...Cause we go somewhere where I never been. I always wanted to go see places. To explore the world. See what's out there... what I think's there (laughs)"*. Nimmi also identified tourism as good and explained,

"Because like I said, it relieves stress. You're not that stressed out. I don't think travel can ever be a bad thing. Unless like, you... get forced. But still again, if you were to go and like, get forced, I'd say if you were forced to go somewhere, make the best of it because you probably won't ever get a chance to see something like that ever again, or experience it. Ya, you make the best of it because you make the best of things you want to make the best of because it just makes you happier. It can never be a bad thing. Like if you meet someone and... Like, you know you can meet someone very important."

Jesse agreed with the notion that tourism is a good thing as she explained,

“Cause it opens your eyes more on what other places are like. And not everyone’s equal. Like we have everything. Like we can just go up to the, uh, store, buy clothes, just for the fuck of it. Oh new season? Let’s go buy clothes. Let’s go buy whatever we want. They [the host community members she met in Africa] don’t have that. They get whatever’s given to them. Like either if it’s too big, a bit small, they wear it.”

When asked about whether tourism experiences were positive or negative, Picca responded, *“Uh, good thing. You learn new things. See new things...”*. For Picca, who had both a positive and a negative tourism experience, when asked if tourism could be life-changing, she acknowledged the lasting impacts that could take place on an individual and answered, *“Mentally, physically....Uh, if there’s an accident, ya...You could get a new memory”*. Picca had seemingly gained new perspectives on tourism based on affective, cognitive and physical changes stemming from her own tourism experiences. Jeff agreed with the potential life-changing aspect to tourism when he stated,

“Ya... Go see places. Learn how to do different stuff. Find new people. Find new roads and new ways. And ya... Learn how to start a fire with two sticks. Learn how to mountain climb. Learn how to ski dive. Learn how to like... what’s it called?... mountain climb or something? Learn how to ski, learn how to snowboard, learn how to skateboard...”

Jesse explained that tourism had changed her life in the following ways,

“for everything you see and reflect it to your own life. And take advantage to what they only get and if they get, it changes a lot. You end up growing up more, cause you don’t act like a little kid n’ wanna cry for everything you want. You only pictures about things that you actually need. Like before I’d never be willing to give up my clothes or anything but with them, I’m just like, here (makes the action of giving)”.

While all youth explanations for the potential life-changing aspects of tourism ranged from the opportunity to meet new and potentially important people to learning new ways of life, when youth were asked about whether not all people should have the opportunity to travel, a sense of advocacy was part of every conversation I had with youth. All youth were able to vocalize why others should have the opportunity to experience tourism. Jeff explained that all people should have the opportunity to travel *“so they can see new things, learn new things, be new things”*. Picca provided a similar statement when

she said that it was important for all people to have the opportunity to travel because “*you see new things. Learn new things...And meet new people*”. She also explained that people “*don’t deserve to be stuck in one place forever....because you gotta get out once and a while*”. Nimmi felt strongly of one the subject of equal opportunity and explained,

“I think you can never be too old to travel... Never too old. It’s a free world. There’s other people you can meet, there other things you can learn, there’s places you can even go. Like, as you get older, you can learn something new. It’s not like you reach a certain age and you’re done. It’s not like you hit 40 and you’re done... If I had all the money in the world, I would pay for each and every person to go somewhere they would want... Because I think everyone should experience one place they want to go in life. They should get to go. Even it’s like somewhere different. Like say you live in um, um, freakin’... Like say you live in Canada, Manitoba... And even just go to B.C. That’s OK. You know at least you got to go somewhere. And B.C’s, I know you’re still in Canada, but like Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, they’re all different. You know cause you’re going to a different.... If you’ve never been outside the city, it’s also something good to learn because you’re still going to be learning different... economy I guess? Because you’re going from the city, loud noises, cars, buildings, internet to.... Trees surrounding you, farm animals, you know, doing everything for yourself, outdoors things. Even if you’ve never been anywhere else, you still learn something different going out of the city”.

When asked if one would still benefit from an experience a half hour out of the city one lived in, Nimmi responded,

“Ya, like look at the [rural Manitoba area]... Look at the different economy from the city to there. Like all the lakes, uh, the road’s different, hilly and everybody out there, they’re also different people out there. Some people don’t live in the city. They grew up in the country all their life. It’s still a different cultural. I think they... I’ve heard people say, “I’ve never been outside of [the city]”. Just like I said, going somewhere just like the country even. That’s even an experience that you can share with someone.”

As Nimmi continued to speak, she began describing how she felt tourism should be a right. She equated tourism with second chances, new beginnings and the opportunity to move past previous wrongs. She said,

"I watch [show featuring tourists and boarders] so... (laughs) and they're not um, accepted entry. That's not fair... you make bad choices in life right? I've made bad choices, you've made bad choices. Everybody's made bad choices. To base whatever on their past... like ya I get it could be a hazard for someone to come into Canada who has like, say, done something bad right.... And they're not allowed into Canada. I can get that... but there's also something called second chances. You know, give them a chance to do something you know. What if someone wants to straighten out their life? And they can't restart anything because they're not allowed entry in Canada? Or Australia? Wherever they wanna go. Ya like if they're trying to get away from anything, or you know... There's no such thing as a bad person... Everybody's religion is different and I don't know how we're all brought here, but we're all people... Second chances and you know... ya, you made one bad choice when you were like 20 but that shouldn't impact on whatever you wanna do when you're older. Some people, it takes a couple of chances for them to get through whatever the hell they want to."

While Jesse agreed that all people should have the opportunity to travel, she also had the following opinion,

"Well, like, trip for me, for everyone to get a chance, I don't think it should be like, all let's go on a vacation, let's go to a spa, or hotel like in the states. Should be like actually going to another part where it's like second world, where they don't have what we have for them to see like, like you see all these rich people, like rich people, have or medium people, or decent people who take everything for granted. There's all these poor people and it's like cook a lot and fucking throw ¾ of it out... Like there's kids that like are choosing between crappy ass oatmeal, or chai tea."

When asked why people didn't travel, a variety of answers were given. Jeff suggested that perhaps individuals didn't travel who *"have everything they need... inside their house"*. He also suggested that perhaps people didn't travel because they found *"out how to do it on their own... They learn on their own"*. Here he is seemingly implying that the primary reason one should leave their home, should be to learn something that is not taught at *home*. His statement also seemingly implied a lack of access to resources. It is unclear whether his statement is also a reflection of his belief surrounding his apprehension and being forced to live at a different location in order to learn things that were explained to him as being crucial prior to the reunification of him and his family. Picca suggested that *"paranoia [of] accidents and stuff... and sickness"* were the primary reason that people didn't travel.

Nimmi also offered a few suggestions why others don't participate in tourism while also shedding insight into her own participation in tourism. She stated,

"There's um... It could be different reasons. I don't think anything stops people from going on trips. Maybe some people get busy being caught up in their jobs, caught up in the city life, caught up in whatever... Caught up in like.... You know there are those workaholics that are working 24/7 you know... stressed out about their work, about their job. Then there's people who um... you know, that, just love the city so much that they never experience going out of it. Or going to any other different cities. Um, money issues... What has stopped me from travelling is um, when I hit that rough patch in my life, you know I got caught up with a bunch of things and it made it really hard to move on. But I think that also gave me experiences and how to word it... like... uh... uh I don't know... Getting like... you know... the little rough patch in my life, you know I'm still trying to move on from that but I think... travelling also, like even that [canoe] trip just made me feel like better. Made me happy."

Jesse identified racism as the main reason for a lack of participation in tourism but also speculated that people could also *"just [be] too picky"* and valued destinations like *"Disney World"* over other destinations.

All youth, despite any previous negative experience, had plans to travel in the future. When youth were asked where they hoped to travel in the future, an interesting blend of answers were given. Jeff stated that he would go to his home community, and explained *"cause that's where my family lives and I'm missing out... On a lot of stuff"*. Jesse explained that she definitely planned to travel again. She explained that she had plans to return to Africa to see how things were going on that she also planned to travel with her son, *"even if it's starting out small"*. When she spoke of travelling with her son, she was careful to emphasize that any tourism experience she offered her son would be *"for him to learn, no just, oh let's get away for the fuck of it... Like, here, I'm a take you outta school and go have fun... Like, if you're being taken outta school for a trip, you're actually gun' work and learn"*. Picca dreamt of travelling *"in an RV with my foster mom"* and of seeing Las Vegas because *"what happens there, stays*

there". She also hoped to go "back to Disney World Florida". Finally, Nimmi exclaimed that she would go "ANYWHERE!". She mentioned to me,

"I talked about having a travelling type job you know... I could start up a program to help people with less money or kids in care to go and do the things they want to. I would take them everywhere... to Mexico, to Colombia... South America, North America, Europe, Australia, Alaska...anywhere man. Like anywhere in the world you wanna go, let's go! Let's do it. Everyone deserves a chance. There's no such thing as a bad person."

As the youth shared their thoughts on tourism after their trips, it became more apparent that the post-trip phase was an important one. It was the time when the youth were able to revisit the impacts of their tourism experiences. Reminiscing was not always a positive feeling for the youth of this study. For Picca, hope was a feeling she associated with tourism; however, guilt was also intertwined with those emotions. She expressed an ongoing need to navigate these feelings and in her acknowledgement of both, demonstrated ongoing learning and processing, even years after her experience. This possibly suggested that the experience had not yet finished for her. Through the post-trip experience, the youth who participated in this study were able to explore not only feelings towards travel companions, but also towards themselves, their lived experiences (rooted in their tourism opportunities and otherwise), as well as their perspective on a world that was seemingly much larger after their opportunity to travel.

Textural Description: *Youth deemed to be at risk can relive their tourism experience and continue their journey of learning and growth in the post-trip phase.*

Structural Description: *When given the opportunity to debrief, reminisce and share their tourism experience, at risk youth recalled their tourism experiences fondly.*

Outcome of Findings

The tourism experiences of the youth in this study are broad and varied. For youth who shared their knowledge, the tourism experience is not a single event but rather a multi-faceted and multi-phase experience that can span over a young person's life and extend far beyond the trip itself in both positive and negative ways. As described by the youth in this study, the tourism experience can also negatively impact youth and have the opposite of the intended experience (*i.e.* relaxing - stressful, enjoyable - unpleasant, growth and developmental - stifling). When not supported by responsible, understanding and caring adults, it can cause stress, decrease self-confidence and deteriorate relationships. When the tourism experience is facilitated, it can be an experience that contributes to a wide range of positive factors, which can contribute to the healthy development and growth of a young person. It can also be used as a tool by the youth for a number of different purposes and drawn upon when prompted, desired or required.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

Asking youth about their tourism experiences and what these meant in their lives yielded interesting conversations regarding this phenomenon. Discussions with youth provided a new perspective on tourism and what this has meant in their pasts, what it can mean to youth in the present and for their futures. As the transcripts from interviews were analyzed, it became evident that tourism experiences can be meaningful to youth deemed at risk. The youth who took part in this study value tourism and acknowledge the impact it can have on an individual. Despite the negative experiences that were described by some participants, all youth advocated for the right to travel and the opportunity associated with tourism experiences.

Due to the phenomenological method that was adopted in this study it was important for the researcher to bracket assumptions out of the study. Despite this bracketing, the extent to which the young people in this study had travelled was surprising to me. An important consideration for readers of this study would be that these findings may not be representative the experiences of all at risk youth as the small number of youth in this study may have been more motivated to participate because of their tourism experiences.

Another important consideration are the stereotypes associated with youth who are marginalized and assumed to be underserved, or lacking access to various services and experiences (Altman, 2010; Snell-Johns & Mendez, 2004). The findings of this study suggest a potentially high level of involvement with tourism and reflect the need to negotiation constraints (Samdahl & Jelubovich, 1997; Mactavish & Mahon, 2007; Jackson, 2007) which suggest that marginalized individuals would be more likely to be excluded from tourism opportunities. During interviews with the youth who

participated in this study, it was apparent how stereotypes suggesting that at risk youth do not often participate in tourism are not an accurate depiction of the experiences of these youth.

Also of interest was that the youth participants in this study described a multi-phasic phenomenon (Lee, Dattilo & Howard, 1994; McIntyre & Roggenbuck, 1998; Stewart, 1998) that was interpreted as a series of events that were impactful. Not only was the tourism experience suggested to be a multi-layered and carried out in a variety of stages, but the impacts of these experiences were also presented by the participants as being more complex than previously anticipated. The following section will describe how the youth who participated in this study interpreted tourism experiences as well as the key meanings they attached to these complex, multi-faceted and multi-phased experiences and how these relate to existing research.

Tourism Experiences

During interviews with the youth who took part in this study, many types of tourism experiences were described. It was important to know how youth involved with this study understood not only their tourism experiences, but also the language and definitions associated with tourism. Participants' definitions of tourism provided insight into how and why youth travelled and also contributed to considerations surrounding the inclusivity or exclusivity of language surrounding tourism. Discussions that addressed the meaning of language around tourism suggested a need for a more inclusive definition of tourism. As Nimmi suggested, a tourism experience can occur over a short period of time and take place at a destination that is closer to the home than suggested by conventional definitions of tourism.

Based on statements provided by youth participants, elements of Cohen's (1979) *Modes of Tourism* were evident in the data of this study. Youth from the study identified a variety of different reasons for their tourism experiences. Jesse talked about traveling to meet different people, to gain

new experiences and see new places and could therefore be described as an experimental and experiential tourist (Cohen, 1979). Nimmi talked about her traveling experiences being associated with the opportunity to “leave everything behind” and “forget about everything” and in doing so, exemplified Cohen’s (1979) diversionary tourist. Picca mentioned travelling for “family time, bonding, exploring” and could therefore be considered an existential tourist (Cohen, 1979). Jeff was not sure about the purpose of his trip; however, based on the activities such as swimming, going to the zoo and sightseeing, it could be suggested that he was engaging in a recreational mode of tourism (Cohen, 1979).

Needs-based tourism described by Gibson and Yiannakis (2002) was also observed. For Nimmi and Picca, the escapist nature of their experiences met a need for relaxation and rest that was much needed during that particular time in their lives. Both were struggling to cope with various stressors they were experiencing at home and the tourism experience provided a much-needed break for them.

While the findings of this study reflected previous findings surrounding tourism experiences, this study also yielded information surrounding negative and positive experiences and outcomes throughout the various phases of the tourism experience. The following section will examine the outcomes of these tourism experiences within the scope of the phases which presented themselves throughout the analysis process.

Pre-trip Experience Outcomes

Feelings associated with the pre-trip phase were an important part of the tourism experience as it allowed youth to prepare themselves for the change in sights, routines and expectation from regular day-to-day life. The pre-trip phase was one that proved to be extremely important for the youth who took part in this study as it marked the beginning of the tourism experience.

Feeling Flighty and the Need for Support

Whether labelled as anticipation, anxiety or excitement, the pre-trip phase was an important stage of the experience as it allowed the youth to engage in learning and coping that would be essential in the later phases of the tourism experience. In many cases, the youth described the feelings associated with the pre-trip phase as indicative of the feelings associated with the later phases of their tourism experience. This phase (*i.e.* pre-trip) acted as an essential part in providing youth with feelings of comfort, autonomy and validation and essentially resulted in successful participation (Samdahl & Jelubovich, 1997; White, 2008).

Planning, Navigating and Relying on a Good Compass

Statements by youth participants regarding negative experiences highlighted the importance of clear communication, the opportunity to share expectations and potential outcomes of the tourism experience with youth from the beginning. As if reiterating Clawson and Knetsch's (1996) emphasis on the importance of allowing individuals to make their own informed decisions, youth described the importance of gaining an ability to plan and navigate their participation. Youth also expressed the need to access information and participate actively in order to be able to better negotiate constraints (White, 2008; Carr, 2003; McCabe, 2009). As White (2008) suggested, by gaining information, managing variables associated with the trip and building self-efficacy throughout the initial phase of the trip, youth would find their confidence as tourists. As the youth participants described this stage of their trip, it was evident that this phase provided them with a compass that would guide their experience. Youth explained that trust must first be earned and it is possible that involvement in the planning process and pre-trip processes could be an opportunity for youth and adults to achieve this trust while also allowing youth to practice exercising control. Youth in care are not often granted the chance to make decisions and demonstrate authority or autonomy and it is therefore possible that this pre-trip phase allowed

them this opportunity. More inquiry in this matter is needed. As youth explained, building relationships was essential in working collaboratively toward a shared goal or shared positive experience, an important step in the tourism experience. Youth identified the planning and decision-making process, or the pre-trip phase, as a means of achieving a positive experience.

Gurstein, Lovato and Ross (2003) elaborated on the importance of involvement in planning and suggested that there is often a lack of appreciation for the existing involvement of youth in various processes. In the case of this study there was much to learn from youth who were already involved with tourism and who had contributed to the tourism industry as well as the host communities they had visited. For example Jesse had already experienced volunteer tourism and was able to provide many suggestions on how to improve processes related to the involvement of at risk youth in the volunteer tourism sector. The same study also suggested that participation in the planning phase of the tourism experience allowed for a much needed opportunity to think critically while also challenging routine power, control and hierarchy (Gurstein, Lovato & Ross, 2003). This opportunity was something that for the youth who participated in this study, was important and of high value.

Using the 'Buddy System', the Value of a Good Travel Companion

Throughout the pre-trip phase, supportive adults were relied on to assist in gauging the level of fear, anxiety, stress, excitement and joy associated with the upcoming journey. These supportive adults also provided exemplary behaviour in the area of preparing for a trip, being open-minded and working collaboratively towards a common goal (arriving to the destination safely and enjoying the trip). As Raaij and Francken (1984) reported in their findings, benefits were associated with preparatory time for processing and normalizing the pending changes in routine. For youth, knowing what to expect on their trip was important in reducing feelings of uneasiness and fear.

Findings related to the importance of travel companions confirmed existing research. Reports by Hibbert *et al.* (2013) emphasized the importance of travel companions and showed that the relationships that are developed during the tourism experience are often the most meaningful aspect of the experience as they act a means for individuals to interpret their own identities through their interaction with others (Hibbert *et al.*, 2013). For the youth who participated in this study, being denied the opportunity to process all of the elements associated with a change in routine, environment, expectation, etc., with a responsible and caring adult prior to the trip experienced increased distrust in these adults as well as increased discomfort while on their trip. Travel companions who were not supportive and understanding of the importance of inclusion in the pre-trip phase often left youth scrambling to make sense of the seemingly daunting adventure to come. These findings supported Raiij and Francken's (1984) study which addressed the potential negative outcomes associated with an imbalanced relationship between travel companions throughout the planning phase of a tourism experience.

Finding Funds, the (legit) 'Hustle' and Bustle

The youth in this study who were involved in the pre-trip phase of their tourism experiences described having to find creative ways to earn and acquire funds that would support their tourism experiences. Obtaining support from agencies directly associated with Canada's tourism industry (*e.g.* social tourism organizations) was not an option that presented itself for the youth who participated in this study. Of the four models of social tourism identified by Minnaert *et al.* (2009) (*i.e.* participation, inclusion, adaptation, stimulation), none were identified by the youth participants. This finding suggests a potential need for a social tourism model within the Canadian context. The opportunity to experience travel came from agencies that sought to provide increased opportunities in the more general sense (*e.g.* treatment, education, etc.). For example, Jesse's tourism experience was one based in the

opportunity to help another community through volunteer work. The youth or their support had to make the connection between tourism and the broader context to receive funding. These agencies should consider describing tourism opportunities when promoting their funds.

While it is clear that youth who participated in this study had experience with a variety of different funding options and travel partners, it remains unclear as to whether this variety is indicative of the level of support the youth received by caring and supportive adults who value tourism experiences, or if these were an indication of the resourcefulness of the youth involved in the study. Future research in this area is needed. Regardless, the tourism opportunities were not directly available for these youth and work was needed to ensure they had these experiences.

Outcomes of Experiences during the Trip

As in the pre-trip phase of the tourism experience, outcomes of the experiences of at risk youth varied. Many of these outcomes were reflective of other findings surrounding the outcomes of social tourism (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2003; McCabe, 2009; McCabe and Johnson, 2012). The following section will examine how these relate.

Broadening Horizons by Scopin' n' Hopin'

An increase in the amount and variety of feelings during the tourism experience was described by the youth who participated in this study. All youth were able to identify times when they felt more connected with family, friends, host community members and the natural world. These findings corroborate previous research demonstrating the role of tourism in increasing social capital and improving relationships with others (McCabe, 2009; MacBeth, Carson & Northcote, 2004).

Positive feelings were also reported during the trip when an element of learning was involved. Pride and feelings of accomplishment which were reported by youth were reminiscent of findings by

Falk (2011) who emphasized the need to feel in control, to have choice and to experience freedom in a positive tourism experience.

While many positive experiences were described, negative feelings were also emphasized during this study. Stewart (1998) analysis suggested a lack in research surrounding the negative impacts of tourism; however, youth who participated in this study were comfortable discussing the negative impacts associated with their tourism experiences. For example, Jesse talked about the stereotyping and racism she experienced while on her trip to Africa. She talked about her own feelings towards the host community prior to arrival to her destination and described initially feeling negatively towards host community members. She also described incidences of racism from her fellow volunteers towards the host community members. While stereotypes and racism were seemingly the foundation for potential negative outcomes for the host community, the youth involved in the study also identified feeling stereotyped while on the trip therefore contributing to negative outcomes for the youth as well.

Jesse described feeling excluded when she struggled to cope with being away from home for the first time while also being exposed to levels of poverty and hardship she found difficult to witness. Nimmi also felt as though she was often stereotyped when she had explained that often, conversations with others revolved around the aspects of her life which she deemed to be negative. She felt as though she was often judged and that others assumed she had never travelled (and rather been denied of opportunities) based on where she was situated in life, at the treatment centre. She seemed to highlight an assumption that at risk youth are underserved all throughout their childhoods, when in Nimmi's case there were many positive experiences she participated in prior to her involvement with CFS and the treatment centre.

The findings related to feelings once again highlighted the need for the involvement of supportive and caring adults throughout the various phases of the tourism experience. Statements

regarding feelings and emotion by the youth who participated in this study were consistent with McIntyre and Roggenbuck's (1998) statement that "mood and mood changes have been found to be sensitive to the multi-phasic and dynamic nature of the lived and remembered leisure experience" (p. 404). Their statement suggesting that, "mood seems to provide a reliable and valid indicator of the quality of leisure" (McIntyre & Roggenbuck's, 1998, p. 404) was also validated by the youth who participated in this study.

Changing Perspectives through New Faces and New Places

Previous findings suggesting that trip duration is not always of importance, and that benefits can be experienced after just a day's trip away from the family home (Quinn & Stacey, 2010; Corylon & La Placa, 2006) were also reported in this study. When asked about what tourism meant, all youth identified a departure from the home as a necessary component to travel; however, there was some inconsistency surrounding the distance and means of travel required in order to meet the definition of tourism and some youth emphasized the need for a more inclusive definition. Nimmi talked about the trip duration not having an impact on the success and importance of the trip. Her stance was that it was better to have travelled to a nearby destination rather than to be denied the opportunity to experience tourism at all. She valued the experience of getting away as a tourist but valued the journey to and from the destination and the whole experience, rather than valuing her time at the destination only. In her opinion, the right to travel was more important than the definition or measure of what constituted a tourism experience.

Youth involved in this study described the impacts associated with their tourism opportunities and how these related to a newly found sense of hopefulness and optimism of the future. Nimmi provided an example of this when she equated her tourism experiences to a fresh start, or new beginning.

For Nimmi and Jesse, appreciation, thankfulness and an understanding of how inequality led to changed perspectives. In these discoveries, Nimmi and Jesse described increased open-mindedness, understanding and tolerance. This also led to more advocative stances and an increased sense of responsibility. The tourism experiences were therefore a force in changing unsafe or unhealthy attitudes and behaviours in some youth, but also in encouraging and developing healthy and positive attitudes and behaviours.

Learning, an Opportunity for Control and Freedom

While all youth expressed different reasons for the purpose of their trips, all youth identified learning and education as a main component of the trip. Although learning or education was an important aspect of tourism for the youth in the study, rarely were the tourism experiences associated with formal ways of learning. Tourism experiences were not initially motivated or based in the educational context but tourism experiences offered the opportunity for experiential learning to take place. These findings aligned with Dierking & Falk's (2003) notion that leisure settings are an important avenue for free-choice learning.

Relationship-building, Maintenance and Discovering that Home is where the Heart is...

The relationships that were established or strengthened during the tourism experience were important to youth and were highly valued. These relationships not only supported youth in their successes, but also supported youth when hardship or adversities were present. For the youth, in moments of anxiety or stress, supportive adults were essential in either supporting the youth as they processed their experience, or provided them with a healthy perspective which helped them to feel at ease in unfamiliar territory. For the participants, this unfamiliar territory meant discomfort associated with being out of their normal physical element, or at times feeling distress associated with the amount of intense learning that took place during the tourism experience. This study also showed how

unsupported tourism experiences that are carried out without proper understanding of the tourists' wishes and needs can increase feelings of exclusion and reinforce negative stereotypes.

Travelling partners also varied for the youth in this study. Travelling partners included foster and biological family members, staff members from child and youth serving agencies such as the Girl Guides, and staff from agencies related to CFS. At times, youth described adult travel companions who knew and understood them, and as a result of these relationships often had more successful experiences with tourism. Nimmi and Jesse provided many examples of this. In contrast, Picca and Jeff detailed examples of moments when they were subjected to unpleasant and even re-traumatizing instances throughout the various phases. These instances and incidents were the result of adult travel companions who did not know and understand them, their pasts and current or future wishes. These findings suggest the need for a more consistent approach in delivering tourism experiences so that all youth may experience positive and supported experiences.

Research supporting the need for tourism experiences for at risk youth can be found in a study by Minnaert, Maitland and Miller (2009) which carried out qualitative interviews with participants of social tourism and their welfare agents in order to better understand the impacts of social tourism experiences. In their study, the need for supportive environments and interactions with others throughout the tourism experiences was highlighted (Minnaery, Maitland & Miller, 2009). The same study suggests a need to work with tourists in order to determine an appropriate level of support as well as maintaining an openness in working with various strategies in supporting social tourism participants (Minnaery, Maitland & Miller, 2009).

Post-trip Experience Outcomes

Story-telling, the Role of Reminiscing in Relationships Old and New

The importance of the reminiscing process was highlighted by Quinn and Stacey (2010) when they stated that “the sense of social connection that lay in being able to talk about their experience of being socially included cannot be overstated” (p. 31). Quinn and Stacey’s (2014) study showed that while taking part in tourism experiences, children were encouraged to be adventurous and try new things. It was also suggested that “the value of the holidays in helping children develop coping mechanisms and greater independence and to become more socially adept at mixing with new people and handling new social situations” (Quinn & Stacey, 2014, p. 24). These points by Quinn and Stacey (2010) highlight the social component associated with the reminiscing process and the opportunity to remain connected to their experience as well as others. These points also focus on positive tourism experiences and how they can be used to promote increases in social capital and inclusion.

For youth in the study, the opportunity to take part in tourism activities often meant that new bonds were formed and supported. Relationships were reported to be strengthened and travel companions were seen in more positive light as well as more respected before, during and after the trip while reminiscing. Nimmi and Picca often described the strengthened relationships that resulted from the tourism experience and Jesse spoke extensively of her increased relationships with the global community which she had little knowledge of prior to her tourism experience. The opportunity to have a trusting adult with whom youth could reach out and debrief with while on the trip, as well as afterwards, was key for a successful experience.

During the reminiscing process, youth were able to bring themselves from the difficult times at home or at the treatment centre, and from struggles associated with the stereotypes that come with being ‘a kid in care’ to the destination they travelled, to where adventure with loved ones were taken with seemingly stress-free attitudes and to where ‘dreams came true’. Ultimately, youth were able to draw on these relationships during moments of hardship long after the tourism experience. When

discussing the role of supportive or unsupportive adults, youth also described lasting negative impacts, even days, months and years later. Relationships, even throughout the recollection or post-trip phase, were important in a positive tourism experience.

Interestingly, youth who had positive experiences as well as youth who had struggled with more negative experiences recalled positive aspects related to the trip. These findings align with those reported by Lee, Dattilo and Howard (1994) who stated “the stressful experience often reported immediately after a leisure event did not emerge during the retrospective description, nor was reflected in the definitional perspective of leisure” (p. 206). For some of the youth in this study, the recollection of their tourism experiences served as a mechanism with which youth were able to relive these positive times in their lives. For some youth, the opportunity to reminisce and share the story of their trip was extremely important and enjoyable. These findings were supported by McIntyre and Roggenbuck (1998) who explain that “recollection fosters pleasant mood states, often higher than at the end of the onsite recreation” (p. 404).

Looking Back and the Continued Learning Journey

Minnaert (2012), and Quinn and Stacey (2010) also suggested that reflecting on memories is an essential part of the experience and of learning process in their studies and this proved to be true for both Nimmi and Jesse. Nimmi and Jesse had both reported that revisiting their trips was a beneficial and important part of the overall tourism experience as well as the learning experience. For Nimmi and Jesse, the learning process was continuous thanks to the reminiscing process as they described the ability to apply lessons learned throughout the tourism experiences to daily events and new obstacles or hardships they encountered. As Jesse described, it was important to remember her trip as it was in discussion that the lessons and teachings were also remembered.

For some youth, the learning has seemingly continued. Through the process of discussion and reminiscing, and in this case, throughout the interview process, the learning was still taking place even years after some of the youth had taken part in the tourism experiences. Youth acknowledged this ongoing learning in what seemed to take the form epiphanies, or 'aha moments'. Especially interesting was how these learning experiences seemed to change and adapt based on where the youth was situated emotionally and physically. For some, the recollection, or post-trip phase was an ongoing learning process and a tool that contributed to their identity and ability to cope with current stressors.

Youth described learning as a requirement of the tourism process and often suggested that learning and tourism shared a relationship. While learning and education were seemingly inextricably linked, youth identified learning a wide variety of new skills, perspectives and life lessons. Statements made by youth were supportive of Minnaert's (2012) study which suggested that "the learning outcomes of social tourism can be a new skill, or a new way of looking at certain areas of life" (p. 9). Minnaert (2012) also identified setting new goals as one of the outcome of these touristic learning experiences. Youth in this study echoed these feelings of hope, accomplishment and optimism resulting from their tourism experiences, another finding from this study.

Findings of this study resonated with Tung and Ritchie's (2011) findings on the essence of memorable experiences. As youth recalled their tourism experiences, they reported the four key dimensions (*i.e.* affect, expectations, consequentiality, and recollection) of a memorable experience reported by Tung and Ritchie (2011). Positive feelings (affect), expectations that were met or exceeded, positive impacts (consequentiality) and the importance of sharing their tourism experiences (recollection) were all presented by youth as important aspects of the tourism experience.

Getting Lost but Being Found Again, Reconnecting with a Better Sense of Self

Self-identity was a theme common to the interviews as youth often described themselves as 'kids in care' or 'in CFS' in the initial parts of the interviews. As youth described their tourism experiences however, they began describing themselves as family members, volunteers, advocates, and adventurers. They spoke of their skills and character traits with pride and didn't apologize for the traits they weren't so proud of. They also talked about the appreciation they had for those who took the time to find these things out about them, accepted them and appreciated them for who they are. While the interviews carried on, their language changed from more negative self-talk and seemingly lonely or isolated existences, to realizations surrounding the friendships, bonds and love they had experienced while on their tourism experiences with close friends and family members, to the new friends and allies they'd gained in the host communities of the countries they travelled in. Their words and self-concept became more positive and strength-based and when they identified areas for improvement, an incredible amount of insight was shared. While insight seemed to have been gained during the tourism experiences, new insights were still evolving throughout the interview process. Tung and Ritchie's (2011) findings support our findings when they suggest that using memory and reliving touristic experiences contribute to one's self-identity. Findings of this study related to self-identity also coincide with Qu and Lee (2010) study of online travel groups and self-identification. Their study revealed that self-identity was achieved in travel groups through "community identification and membership behaviour", "knowledge-sharing" and "community promotion" (Qu & Lee, 2010, p. 1264). Emphasis in Qu and Lee's study suggested prioritizing the development of relationships between travel companions as an essential step in facilitating a successful tourism experience (2010).

As the youth continued to share their experiences, they talked about how the tourism experiences could be a tool they used to combat the focus on negativity surrounding them. As Nimmi had suggested, in a setting that was often quick to highlight deficiencies and traumas (*i.e.* the treatment centre), positive tourism experiences could be used in encouraging positive, skill-based discussion that

was based in strengths and common ground with those who typically would have been in a position of power or authority over her (e.g. her teacher). Quin and Stacey's (2010) study also found similar findings and reported, "As Holden (2005, p.53) later explained, because holidaying has become 'more of an expected experience rather than a luxury' an inability to participate in holidaying effectively means an inability to participate in mainstream lifestyle or community' (p. 5). As she spoke, Nimmi described how her tourism experiences allowed her to reposition herself as a tourist and global adventurer rather than a young woman in need of treatment. She found herself warding off labels that can be difficult to shed and lessened the process of being stigmatized (Restivo & Lanier, 2015). In sharing her touristic adventures, Nimmi increased her self-esteem and self-concept.

Away vs. AWOL, Changing Behaviours

Breaking from the routine and gaining exposure to the tourism experience proved to instill in the youth participants a significant change in behaviour and thinking. Previous findings that have suggested that a behaviour change after a tourism experience is possible (Quinn & Stacey, 2010) and that social tourism can be a time for continued development or treatment (Minnaert, 2014). While the Quinn and Stacey (2014) study interviewed parents to yield these results, our study received detailed accounts of this improved behaviour from the youth participants. One youth, Jesse, talked about a reduction in her running away, or going on the run, after she returned from her tourism experience. Nimmi also addressed this change in behaviour through her newfound perspectives and appreciations.

Not all studies surrounding the tourism industry agree on the potential benefits and impacts associated with tourism experiences. For example, Kroesen and Handy's (2014) study concludes that "holiday trips may be instrumental in living up to certain individual or social standards, but that they do not present significant enough events to influence (more innate) affect and thereby enduringly raise happiness" (p. 99); however, this has not was not true for the participants in this study. For some youth

participants, their tourism experience(s) have not only been an important in the creation of a positive self-image, but through memory, they have been able to reflect on their trips and equate this with lasting feelings of satisfaction and happiness.

In Quinn and Stacey's (2010) study, the findings suggest that new strengths and abilities learned during the tourism experience have lasting effects on children who participate. The same study begs for more understand surrounding "how the anticipation of the holiday before the event, and the memories and behaviour modifications associated with the holiday, continue to be meaningful afterwards" (Quinn & Stacey, 2010, p. 34).

Advocating for Tourism Experiences, a Right

All four youth acknowledged the potential for change in the post-trip phase and seemed to advocate for equal opportunity and access to tourism based on their experiences. Despite the sometimes negative experiences youth described, all were of the opinion that tourism was an experience important enough for all to have access to. As youth who have often been denied various freedoms (based on their involvement with CFS and the treatment centre), the tourism experience seemed to imply freedom of many kinds. Tourism opportunities were seen as opportunities to learn and grow, to move around and make choices. While not all of the youth in this study experienced positive tourism opportunities, for some of the youth involved in this study, tourism was viewed as a symbol of many important things in life including basic rights.

Increasing Resiliency

A resilient youth is described by Zolkoski and Bullock as one "possessing certain strengths and benefiting from protective factors that help them overcome adverse conditions and thrive" (2012, p. 2295). Resilience can be defined as "achieving positive outcomes despite challenging or threatening

circumstances” (Zolkoski & Bullock, 2012, p. 2296). As Zolkoski and Bullock (2012) identify attributes common in children and youth deemed to be resilient, they draw on research by Bernard (1993, 1995) and list the five following attributes: “a) social competence, b) problem-solving skills, c) critical consciousness, d) autonomy (Bernard 1993, 1995), and e) sense of purpose (Bernard, 1995)” (p. 2296). Zolkoski and Bullock also identify protective factors which “alter responses to adverse events so that potential negative outcomes can be avoided” (2012, p. 2298). They identify “individual characteristics, self-regulation, self-concept, family conditions, community supports, and other factors (e.g. increased education, skills, and training)” (Zolkoski & Bullock, 2012, p. 2299) as important aspects within an individual who is resilient.

In Brendtro’s (2004) examination of resilience, he suggests that various elements can be applied to behavioural interventions in order to create a successful strength-based approach with positive results related to increased resilience within the individual(s) involved in the intervention. He is more specific when he suggests that in order for a child or youth to grow to their fullest potential, “basic physical needs must be met as well as needs for attachment, achievement, autonomy and altruism” (Brendtro, 2004, p. 8). He also identifies the need for strategies that provide “physical support involving physical protection, nurturance and freedom; emotional support including empathy, trust, and respect; and social support which restores belonging, mastery, independence and generosity” (Brendtro, 2004, p.13).

As Brendtro (2004) continues to advocate for the positive development and increased resilience of at risk youth, he states, “restricting involvement in activities can wield short-term punitive power, but interferes with long-term learning” (p. 20). He highlights the need for youth to have the opportunity to make meaningful attachments with others; to develop new skills; to make choices for themselves while testing their independence; to receive kindness while also and being kind to others (Brendtro, 2004).

The combination of these elements (belonging, mastery, independence and generosity), create what Brendtro *et. al* call the Circle of Courage. Implications associated with this theory suggest that if one of the elements is missing, the development of the youth can be hindered (2004, 2005, 2007).

Brendtro and Strother (2007) continue the research in the area of resilience and the Circle of Courage and suggest a connection between the Circle of Courage and experiential learning. They state that “successful experiential learning uses these problem-solving processes to develop strengths for coping with challenge and adversity” (2007, p.2). Interestingly, tourism is not used as an example of an opportunity where this type of learning can occur. This seemingly suggests that the potential of tourism in being applied within the Circle of Courage has been forgotten or ignored. While it has been acknowledged that tourism can be a useful tool in promoting many benefits, the literature surrounding tourism and resilience is certainly still underdeveloped.

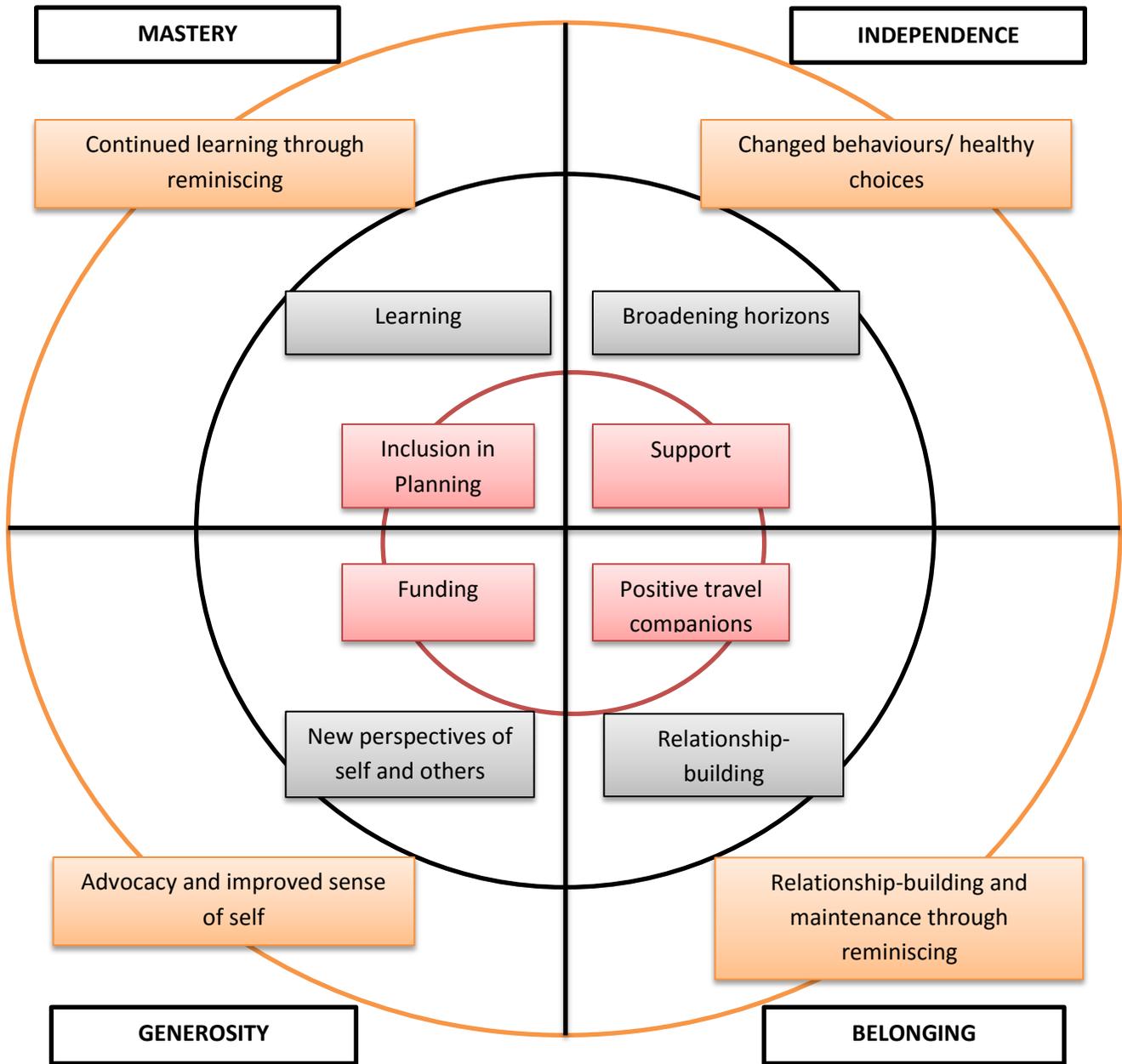
Throughout the phases of the tourism experience, aspects of experiential learning and Brendtro’s Circle of Courage are present. Youth often described moments throughout their trips when they learned things that would still be applicable to their daily lives, and that help them cope. While all youth interpreted their experiences and their meanings differently, elements related to resilience were present in all cases within this study. For Jesse, who reported one of the most positive tourism experience, she was able to validate attachments (to others) and demonstrate autonomy by assisting in the planning throughout the pre-trip phase; she was able to give back to the community and advocate for those less fortunate than her while also receiving kindness and support from caring adults and helpers during the trip; and she identified herself as a volunteer and master of her skills as a worker for the host community in the post-trip phase. For Jesse, the combination of these elements, as highlighted before, not only changed her perspectives on life, but also led to a reduction in some of the behaviours that were putting her at risk (*i.e.* her frequent AWOLs). As we revisit the application of barriers and

constraints and how these can relate to tourism, we realize that ironically, tourism itself is a tool for teaching youth how to overcome barriers and constraints. Beyond that, tourism can also be said to promote healthy develop via teaching and supporting resilience in youth.

Framework and Model for Resilience Promotion through Tourism

In examining the elements that came from this study's findings, I am suggesting a framework in working with at risk youth to promote resilience through tourism experiences. As described by youth, elements associated with each phase of the tourism experience (*i.e.* pre, during and post) are an essential part of the tourism experience. If youth are not included in the planning phase, do not receive adequate financial support, have negative experiences with travel companions and are not supported, the experience will not yield as many beneficial impacts as intended. Learning, broadening horizons, new perspectives and improved relationships associated with the second phase of the tourism experience are dependent on the initial (pre-trip) phase and its success. As with the relationship between the first and second phase of the tourism experience, the third stage is dependent on the previous phases' success. In the third phase, an adequately supported tourism experience can lead to advocacy and improved sense of self (generosity), continued learning through reminiscing (mastery), changed behaviour and healthy choices (independence) and relationship-building and maintenance (belonging) and can therefore contribute to elements of the *Circle of Courage* (Brendtro, 2004). A positive experience can therefore be a contributing factor in promoting resilience in at risk youth. The following model will demonstrate a framework which marries Brendtro's (2004) *Circle of Courage* resiliency model to the trip phases associated with tourism experiences as described by the at risk youth who participated in this study:

Resilience Model within the Tourism Context



Legend

- : Post Trip Phase
- : Phase during the Trip
- : Pre-trip Phase

Conclusions

As the youth described their tourism experiences, the complexity and multi-phase elements of their experiences were highlighted. As I re-evaluated the main themes, it became evident that youth attached different meanings to their tourism experiences throughout different stages of the experience. In connecting with others, learning new skills, exploring autonomy and dependence, changing perspectives and with new experiences to draw on, youth identified tourism as a meaningful experience in their young lives. In describing their tourism experiences, the youth who participated in this study also described increased resilience stemming from the opportunity to take part in tourism.

Exhaustive statement: *Through tourism opportunities, youth experienced elements associated with increased growth, development and ultimately, resilience.*

Implications

The intention of this study is to understand the essence of the tourism experience for at risk youth and in discussions with the youth who participated in this study, the essence of these experiences has become more evident. For youth who have had positive experiences during all three stages of the tourism experience, the impacts were valuable and lasting. Their insight has drawn attention to the potential of the tourism experience to promote resilience in youth and therefore contribute to their healthy development. Contrastingly, youth participants from this study also identified aspects within the tourism experience phases that can have a lasting impact. These negative tourism experiences can impact youth's ability to feel as though they belong, can become masters of a skill, can be independent and able to contribute to their own lives, or the lives of others. These findings should be considered when facilitating a tourism experience in support of at risk youth. While resilience has been applied to the recreation and leisure, there has been a lack of research surrounding the application of resilience

theories, such as Brentro's (2004) *Circle of Courage*, within the tourism context. A lack of research also exists surrounding at risk youth and their experiences with a global sector, tourism.

Findings from this study contribute to existing knowledge by supporting research which describes tourism as a multi-phasic experience (Clawson & Knetsch, 1966; Lee, Dattilo, & Howard, 1994; Stewart, 1998). Youth who participated in this study were also able to corroborate previous research (Dierking & Falk, 2003; Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; Tung & Ritchie, 2011; Dolnicar, Yanamandram & Cliff, 2012;) surrounding the benefits associated with tourism experiences as they reported many benefits to their tourism experiences. Constraints theory (Mactavish & Mahon, 2007; Samdahl & Jelubovich, 1997; White, 2008; McCabe, 2009) was also reflected in this study as youth stressed the need for adequate support in reaching goals related to the tourism experience and negotiating constraints to their tourism experiences. These findings highlighted the need for the tourism sector, as well as those associated with social services, to support at risk youth in negotiating constraints related to tourism. As the first point of contact for at risk youth, it would likely be more feasible for social services to initiate discussions and steps towards collaborating with others in the facilitation and support of tourism experiences for at risk youth. Further contributions from this study include the acknowledgement that while many youth had opportunities to travel, the formal systems they were involved with did not formally or systematically support these opportunities. Support for travel from treatment centres and social services should therefore be integrated into organizational policy.

This study also resulted in findings suggesting that excluding youth from various phases of the tourism experience (e.g. planning) could be detrimental to the tourism experience. Without an acknowledgement and appreciation of each phase of the tourism experience by facilitators of the tourism experience, aspects that contribute to the wholeness of the experience can be forgotten or ignored, resulting in the increased likelihood of a negative tourism experience. The findings associated

with this study also exposed the need for more informed and consistent approaches in working with at risk youth within the tourism context while also demonstrating the role of at risk youth as contributive, skilled and passionate young people who have experience and a willingness to share their knowledge.

Finally, this study contributes to current understanding and knowledge surrounding tourism in that it provides a detailed account of at risk youth in the Canadian context. Unfortunately, in Canada, we do not currently formally or consistently acknowledge and capitalize on tourism as an effective intervention in supporting resilience in young people. It is hoped that this study will contribute to further discussion and research in this area and how to best move forward in working with at risk youth for their healthy development and increased opportunity.

The greatest achievement of this research study would be the initiation of any discussion regarding the equal opportunity and healthy development of at risk youth; however, the stance adopted in this study is one that encourages the opportunity for growth and development within the multiple phases of the tourism experience. While there are many approaches that can be adopted in supporting youth in their healthy development, tourism can be viewed as a tool to support these approaches. As Nimmi pointed out in her interview, it is important to continue working with youth in order to best support them. As we move forward with our understanding of both tourism and at risk youth, it is important to acknowledge that “inexperienced tourists are a group that are but rarely addressed in academic research” (Minnaert, 2014, p. 288) and we must take care to change this. As indicated by Falk (2003), there is a need for sectors to work collaboratively in order to assist and support young people in developing to their full potential. As advocates for young people, ongoing re-evaluation of our own journeys and how best to travel the roads ahead will remain important in remaining supportive.

Future Research

Future research is needed in the area of at risk youth and tourism experiences. More research surrounding the negative impacts is also needed as Jeff's statement demonstrates how the tourism experience can potentially be a traumatizing event for youth who are not included in the decision-making process or at the very least kept informed. The sample size for this research study provided an in-depth analysis of the experiences of at risk youth; however, research involving a broader sample of Canadian youth would be beneficial in understanding the needs of youth across Canada. This would also provide the Canadian tourism sector and organizations who work with at risk youth with a broad yet informed interpretation of not only future directions but also considerations surrounding existing policy or lack thereof. Finally, more research into how tourism can be used as a mechanism for positive change in the lives of marginalized individuals is recommended in order to better inform the future the facilitation processes of tourism experiences as well as those who support them.

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Appendix A: Sample Interview Protocol

1. What is your experience with tourism?
2. Have you traveled?
If no, jump to question 23.
3. How many trips have you been on?
4. Where have you been?
5. On your trip to X, who did you travel with?
6. Describe who was part of the group you travelled with?
7. Who supported (i.e. help plan, fund, support) the trip? Why do you think they supported the trip?
8. Describe the purpose of your trip?
9. What are some of your trip's highlights? Why?
10. What did you do while you were on your trip? Were these all things you wanted to do?
11. Did you have any part in planning the trip? Or did you have any say in what you did while on your trip?
12. Were there things you wanted to do but didn't?
13. Who made sure these activities happened? Or who stopped you from doing them and why?
14. How has tourism impacted you?
15. How did you feel when you found out you were going on a trip? Why?
16. How did you feel when you were on your trip? Why?
17. How did you feel after the holiday? Why?
18. What are some of the memories of your trip?
19. Why do you think this/ these particular moment(s) are so memorable?
20. How do you feel about the people you traveled with? Why?
21. How did you feel about them before the trip? Why?
22. How did you feel about them after the trip? Why?
23. Do you think having the opportunity to go on a trip is a good or a bad thing? And why?
24. How do you think tourism could change your life? How come?
25. Do you think you want to travel in the future? Why or why not?
26. Where would you go and why?
27. Do you think everyone should have the chance to go on a trip? Why or why not?
28. What do you think prevents people from going on trips? Do you have any experiences with these types of barriers and constraints?
29. Is there anything you would like to add?
30. Do you have any questions?

Appendix B: Recruitment Poster



UNIVERSITY
OF MANITOBA

Health, Leisure & Human
Performance Research
Institute

Faculty of Kinesiology
and Recreation Management
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada
E-mail:
umrich26@myumanitoba.ca

Volunteers Needed for a Research Study!

Title of Project:

Travel Bound and the Need for Vacation A Phenomenological Study to
Understand the Tourism Experiences of At Risk Youth

Criteria:

- Males and females 12-19 years of age
- Have attended services at (Agency Name) in the past or are currently attending services

Participation:

You will be asked to participate in an interview. The type of questions will be about tourism experiences and what these have meant for you. The interviews will be digitally audio-recorded.

Time Requirement:

The interview will last between 45-90minutes
Feedback session post-interview will be no longer than 30 minutes

Those interested in participating in the study can contact Alix Richards (researcher) for further information.

Researcher Contact Information:

Alix Richards
Email: umrich26@myumanitoba.ca

This research has been approved by the University of Manitoba Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board. If you have any concerns or complaints, you may contact the Human Ethics Coordinator at 204-474-7122 or email: margaret.bowman@umanitoba

Appendix C: Child Consent Form



UNIVERSITY
OF MANITOBA

Health, Leisure &
Human Performance
Research Institute

Faculty of Kinesiology
and Recreation Management
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada
E-mail:
umrich26@myumanitoba.ca

Child Consent Form (Ages 12-19)

Travel Bound and the Need for Vacation A Phenomenological Study to Understand the Tourism Experiences of At Risk Youth

Principal Investigator: Alix Richards

Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management, University of Manitoba
umrich26@myumanitoba.ca

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Project overview

The purpose of this study is to conduct a qualitative analysis of youth attending services offered at a local treatment centre in Winnipeg Manitoba. Qualitative interviews will allow participants to describe and explain their experiences with tourism, in order to understand the essential meaning of tourism in the lives of the participants (Creswell, 2007). The primary goal of the project is to investigate through qualitative interviews how youth attending the treatment centre in Winnipeg, Manitoba experience and understand tourism and what these experiences mean in their lives. In addition to making important contributions to the academic literature, it is hoped that the data can help to inform policy by identifying new interventions to increase tourism opportunities, as well as to forge important research networks and interdisciplinary collaborations. This study will afford youth with an opportunity to share their insights and experiences with tourism so as to understand the meaning of these experiences in their lives. Finally, the data from this study will be used to stimulate discussion around tourism in the lives of youth.

I am asking that you consider granting consent for this project. In accordance with the University of Manitoba's Research Ethics Board, informed consent from the participants will be sought. This information package is designed to give you an idea of what the research is about and what participation in the research will involve. If you would like more detailed information than outlined here, or information not included here, you should feel free to contact Alix Richards, the principal investigator, by email (umrich26@myumanitoba.ca). Please take the time to read and carefully consider the information contained in this form.

Study Procedures

The project involves two phases. Participants can agree to participate in the study as a whole or just partially. The two phases include:

Qualitative Interviews—During interviews, youth, or participants, and researcher will discuss participants' experiences with tourism. At this time, participants will have an opportunity to describe their experiences and what these experiences have meant in their lives. In the **first stage**, I will meet the participants at a local community centre or library where the interview will take place and I will begin with providing instructions on how the interviews will be carried out. Throughout the interview participants will have the opportunity to share experiences and elaborate on their experiences. They may also share these experiences through the use of artifacts (e.g. pictures, drawings, writings, etc.) that they find meaningful. Although they can introduce photos and various other artifacts to help facilitate their experience sharing, it is important to note that I do not have ethical approval to include images of participants or others in this research project. Thus, any photos used to facilitate conversation or to help convey the experience will be described by the participant but will not be included in the final reports. Writings and art work provided by the participants will remain the property of the participants and will only be included with permission and consent of both the participants and guardians (**see Artifact Release Form**). If any artifacts are selected for use in any publication, both participants and their guardians will be asked for permission to use those after the study. When participants provide artifacts for the study, I will keep the artifacts safely stored in a designated office at the University of Manitoba office under lock and key and participants will get a chance to review their artifacts and remove any that they are uncomfortable sharing. At this point, participants will be reminded that the artifacts they decide to keep in the research project may appear in public mediums (e.g. conference presentations, academic journals). Participants will again be given the opportunity to remove any artifacts they deem inappropriate or personal. This will take place in a one on one discussion with the supervision of a parent or guardian. The discussion will last approximately 45-90 minutes, depending on how much they have to share. The discussion will be audio-recorded with a digital recording device and transcribed verbatim. The **second stage** will involve the participants meeting with the researcher again at a community center or library, and engaging in a discussion about the previous session,

how discussions were interpreted by the researcher (i.e. to confirm interpretations and to ensure proper representation) and to include any missed information or to remove information the participant is no longer happy with having in the report. Having these sessions audio-taped or video-taped would provide an effective way of capturing the students' thoughts and impressions.

Risks

Risk levels to participants for this project are low and no greater than the risks they will encounter in everyday life. Potential distress might be associated with variables which have led to the youth being a client at the treatment centre such as family issues, suicidal ideation or self-harm, milieu issues (i.e. anxiety and stress associated with residing in a group care setting, or with peers), or anniversaries (i.e. of abuse, death or contact with the child welfare system). Youth involved in interviews will include youth who have been deemed by guardians and (Agency Name) staff as safe to themselves and others. Unsafe 'status' (ultimately determined by agency) will lead to the youth's participation being terminated or rescheduled, therefore reducing the likelihood of the youth experiencing further distress. Should a disclosure or incident occur during the research process, the researcher would immediately report any incident to the project supervisor (Dr. Christine Van Winkle), followed by a discussion with the University REB, (Agency Name) staff and Unit Supervisors as appropriate to ensure the safety of the participant. Contacting additional supports/ authorities (social workers, etc.) would depend on the situation under question. The researcher has the advantage of being highly experienced with the writing and reporting of such reports (ex. Incident reports) and the agency-related requirements.

Benefits

The project will generate new information describing tourism opportunities and associated meanings. This information may then be used to better understand and define tourism as well as meanings attached to tourism for youth. This outcome could benefit youth in the future.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Information gathered in this research study may be presented at conferences or published in peer-reviewed journals. All information that may reveal personal and institutional identifiers will be removed prior to data analysis in order to protect participant confidentiality. Publications will utilize pseudonyms when describing single participant data in order to protect anonymity and confidentiality. Institutional identity will be concealed using pseudonym and institutional location will also be masked. As mentioned previously, participants will also be given the opportunity to remove any material from the transcripts and all related research activities (e.g. artifacts) that they are uncomfortable sharing, including material that may contain identifying markers (i.e. stories). All data (i.e. notes, transcripts, audio recordings, photos) will be labeled with a unique anonymous identification code and will only be available to the researchers (Alix Richards, PI and Dr.

Christine Van Winkle, RS). All data (i.e. notes, transcripts, audio recordings, photos, drawings, poems, writings) and other materials containing identifying information (i.e.

signed consent forms) will be kept in a secure location (i.e. a locked filing cabinet in an office located in the Max Bell Centre, University of Manitoba or on a pass word protected computer in an encrypted folder) and the Principal Investigator, Alix Richards, and Research Supervisor, Dr. Christine Van Winkle, will be the only ones who have access to these files and documents in their entirety. After the completion of the study, research data will be kept for a maximum of 7 years and then destroyed. Hard materials (e.g. journals, transcripts) will be shredded and electronic files will be deleted.

Feedback

The participants will have the option of receiving feedback or a summary of the results of the study after completion of data collection. The participants have the option of receiving a summary of results via email or a hard copy via Canada Post.

Compensation

Participants will be given a gift card valued at \$20 at the end of the last session.

Voluntary participation/Withdrawal from the study

Your decision to allow this youth to take part in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to allow this youth to participate and you may withdraw the youth from the study at any time without penalty and none of the data will be used. Your decision not to participate or to withdraw from the study will not alter the standard of care the youth receives from participating in the treatment centre program(s). If after the qualitative interview, youth decide to withdraw from the study, then they will not lose the \$20 gift card.

Every youth will be asked to provide written assent indicating their willingness to participate in the project. Youth will be instructed before each step in the project that they can withdraw at any time and that they do not have to complete the task if they do not want to do it. This will be done immediately prior to the youth's participation and they will be reminded throughout the protocol that they do not have to complete any tasks that they do not wish to complete. You and this youth will also be asked to sign a separate artifact release form for any artifacts (e.g. photos, drawings, poems, and writings) that they take that may be used in academic publications or presentations. None of the selected and approved artifacts will have any people in them, they will only contain images or descriptions of tourism experiences.

Do not sign this consent form unless you have had a chance to ask questions and have received satisfactory answers to all of your questions.

This research has been approved by the Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122, or e-mail margaret_bowman@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Statement of Consent

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to allow this youth to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive this youth's legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Youth's name: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Relationship to Participant: _____

Child's signature (age 12-19) : _____ Date: _____

Principal Researcher:

Alix Richards

Graduate Student

Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management,

University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB, Canada

E-mail: umrich26@myumanitoba.ca

Feedback Request Form

____ Yes, I would like to receive a summary report of the overall study findings.

Participant signature _____ Date _____
(day/month/year)

Participant printed name: _____

Please send me a copy of these reports by:

____ email to the following email account:

____ Canada post (mail) to the following address

Address: _____

City/Town: _____

Postal code: _____

Appendix D: Child Assent Form

Health, Leisure &
Human
Performance and
Research Institute

Faculty of Kinesiology
and Recreation Management
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada
E-mail:
umrich26@myumanitoba.ca

Child Assent Form (Ages 12-19)**Project:**

Travel Bound and the Need for Vacation A Phenomenological Study to Understand the Tourism Experiences of At Risk Youth

Principal Investigator: Alix Richards

Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management, University of Manitoba
umrich26@myumanitoba.ca

This letter will give you an idea about what I am researching and how you can help. If you have any questions, please ask me! Read this letter carefully...

Why you are here?

We are here to study how you have experienced tourism during your lifetime. We need your help to do this and want to see if you would like to be in this study. This form tells you about the study. If there is anything you do not understand, please ask your parent, your guardian or the study staff.

Why are they doing this study?

We are doing this study to see how you have experienced tourism and what you think these experiences have meant to you in your life. To do this we are going to invite you to take part in discussions where we will talk about these experiences and possibly look at

items, or artifacts (e.g. pictures, writing, drawings), that have to do with these experiences. You can choose to do one, more, or none of those activities that we will tell you about.

What will happen?

If you want to be in the study these things will happen:

1. The researcher will meet with you in a place like a community center or library with your guardian and interview you about your tourism experiences. This interview will be audio recorded but no one will be identified by name. You will also be asked to talk more and explain any artifacts (e.g. drawings, pictures, writing) you may have brought and why you chose to bring these for our discussion on tourism experiences. This will take place to better understand tourism opportunities in your life.
2. Once the interviews are done, you will stay in contact with the researcher to talk about any comments, questions or concerns you might have about what you explained in your interviews. You will also be given the opportunity to read over the interview (i.e. by reading the transcripts) and also to make any changes. After you have completed this last part of the study, you will be given a gift card valued at \$20.

What if you have any questions?

You can ask questions any time, now or later.

Who will know what I did in the study?

Any information you give to the study staff will be kept secret. I want you to know that I will not show anyone else the data collected. Only the researchers will be able to look at any of the information you provide us. The researchers will make a report but no one will know which teens shared which stories or who said what because your name will not be on any study paper and no one but the study staff will know that it was you who was in the study. None of the stories or artifacts (e.g. drawings, writing, pictures) to be used in publications, will contain descript and obvious characteristics that can be used in identifying you. You can withdraw any information you share at any time during and after the study to have images withdrawn. This is to protect you.

Do you have to be in the study?

You do not have to be in the study. No one will be mad at you if you don't want to do this. If you don't want to be in this study, just say so. We will also ask your guardians if they would like you to be in the study. Even if your guardians want you to be in the study you can still say no. Even if you say yes now you can change your mind later. It's up to you. If you decide to take part and later decide you want to leave the study, you are free to do this AT ANY TIME, this is okay and no one will be mad about this. This is totally your choice. Just so you know, any images, writing or data that you provided before leaving the study will not be used. If after the interviews, you decide to withdraw from the study, you will not lose the \$20.

Risks

While your confidentiality can be guaranteed, you need to consider the potential risks of agreeing for your tourism experiences to be shared in academic forums before agreeing to the release your experiences. Your name will not be used in association with the experiences you shared. Rather pseudonyms (codes names) will be used to refer to experiences to help maintain confidentiality. You should know that the decision to release or not release your experiences is up to you. If you decide not to allow your experiences to be shared this will not impact your continued participation in the study in any way.

Should you reveal information that suggests your safety or the safety of someone else is at risk, the researcher would involve immediately reporting any incident to the project supervisor (Dr. Chrstine Van Winkle), followed by a discussion with the University Research Ethics Board, (Agency Name) staff and Unit Supervisors on a need to know basis depending on the specific situation. Contacting additional supports or authorities (social workers, etc.) would depend on the situation under question.

Study Transcripts

When the study is done, we will type out everything that was said during the interviews, word for word. You will be given a copy of this (called a transcript) and you will have as much time as you need to look it over with a parent(s)/guardian(s) if you want and make any changes that you want. After you have done this, or if you are happy with the way it is, you can send it back to us so we can use it. You can make as many changes as you want to and if you read something in the transcript and do not want it to be used, you can take it out completely so it will never be used. This is perfectly okay, it is really up to you what you want left in or taken out. Once we have analyzed the information we will send you a summary of the results.

Artifacts

You will also be asked to sign another form (an artifact release form) giving us permission to use the artifacts (i.e. pictures, writing and drawings). If any artifacts are selected for use in any publication, both you and your parent(s)/guardian(s) will be asked for permission to use those after the study.

Do you have any questions?

What questions do you have?

Assent

I want to take part in this study. I know I can change my mind at any time.

Name: _____ Verbal assent given Yes

Print name of Youth

Signature of Youth

Age

Date

Confidentiality Pledge

I will not reveal, say, tell, write, text or tweet anyone else's name who took part in this study or what was said during the interview.

Name: _____ Verbal assent given Yes

Print name of Youth

Signature of Youth

Age

Date

I confirm that I have explained the study to the participant to the extent compatible with the participants understanding, and that the participant has agreed to be in the study.

Printed name of
Person obtaining assent

Signature of
Person obtaining assent

Date

Would you like to receive the transcripts from your interview?

If so, please provide your name and contact information:

Name: _____

E-Mail or Mailing Address*:

*Note: your contact information will only be used to provide you with a summary of the study results.

Would you like to receive a summary of the results of this study?

If so, please provide your name and contact information:

Name: _____

E-Mail or Mailing Address*:

*Note: your contact information will only be used to provide you with a summary of the study results.

Principal Investigator: Alix Richards

Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management, University of Manitoba
umrich26@myumanitoba.ca

This research has been approved by the Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122, or e-mail margaret_bowman@umanitoba.ca.

Appendix E: Artifact Release Form



Health, Leisure &
Human
Performance and
Research Institute

Faculty of Kinesiology
and Recreation Management
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada
E-mail:
umrich26@myumanitoba.ca

Artifact Release Form

Project:

Travel Bound and the Need for Vacation A Phenomenological Study to Understand the Tourism Experiences of At Risk Youth

Principal Investigator: Alix Richards

Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management, University of Manitoba
umrich26@myumanitoba.ca

This artifact release form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you an idea of how the artifacts (i.e. pictures, art, writings, etc.) you have provided will be used if you decide to give the researchers permission to use the artifacts you have taken. This is an important part of the informed consent process as it provides you with the information necessary for you to assess the risks and benefits of releasing your artifacts. You should know that your decision to allow or not allow the use of your artifacts is completely up to you and there will be no negative consequences to you, now or in the future, if you decide not to release these artifacts. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

How your artifacts will be used:

With this artifact release form, we are requesting that you allow us to use the artifacts

(pictures, art, writings, etc.) you have provided in academic settings, such as scholarly articles and research conferences. If you decide to release your artifacts to us, this means that your artifacts may appear in public venues (e.g. scholarly articles, conference presentations). It is important that you know, that any artifacts that may identify you will not appear in public. Only artifacts describing places and things will appear publicly.

Risks:

Although there are no known physical, psychological, economic, or social risks associated with releasing your artifacts for use in this study, it is important that you know that potential risks do exist. Given that we are asking to use your artifacts in public places, such as academic articles and conferences, **there is the possibility that the artifacts you have provided may reveal personal experiences.** Important to note here is that your **confidentiality will be guaranteed.** Your name will not be used in association with the artifacts you provided. Rather pseudonyms/ codes will be used to refer to artifacts to help maintain confidentiality. You should know that the decision to release or not release your artifacts is up to you. If you decide not to release your artifacts this will not impact your continued participation in the study in any way (unless, of course, you indicate otherwise).

Study Transcripts

Once the study is completed, we will type out everything that was said during the interviews verbatim. You will be given a copy of this (called a transcript) and you will have up to two weeks to look it over with a parent(s) or guardian if you want and make any changes that you want. After you have done this, or if you are happy with the way it is, you can send it back to us so that we can use it. You can make as many changes as you want to and if you read something in the transcript and do not want it to be used, you can take it out completely so it will never be used. This is perfectly acceptable, it is really up to you what you want left in or taken out.

Benefits

You will not directly benefit from releasing your artifacts for this project.

Release Signature

If you agree to release the artifacts you have provided as part of this research project for use in public, academic contexts, sign below. **If you do not agree**, then do not sign this release form.

____ I agree to release the use of my
artifacts _____
_____ (list artifacts) to be
shown in academic contexts (conferences, publications).

Participant's Signature _____

Date _____

Parent or Guardian's Signature _____

Date _____

Researcher and/or Delegate's Signature _____

Date _____

Appendix F: Research Ethics and Compliance Approval Certificate



Research Ethics and Compliance
Office of the Vice-President (Research and International)

Human Ethics
208-194 Dafoe Road
Winnipeg, MB
Canada R3T 2N2
Phone +204-474-7122
Fax +204-269-7173

APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

July 15, 2014

URGP

TO: Alix Richards (Advisor C. Van Winkle)
Principal Investigator

FROM: Lorna Guse, Chair
Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB)

Re: Protocol #E2014:058
"Travel Bound and the Need for Vacation A Phenomenological Study to Understand the Tourism Experiences of Underserved and At-Risk Youth"

Please be advised that your above-referenced protocol has received human ethics approval by the Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board, which is organized and operates according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement (2). This approval is valid for one year only.

Any significant changes of the protocol and/or informed consent form should be reported to the Human Ethics Secretariat in advance of implementation of such changes.

Please note:

- If you have funds pending human ethics approval, please mail/e-mail/fax (261-0325) a copy of this Approval (identifying the related UM Project Number) to the Research Grants Officer in ORS in order to initiate fund setup. (How to find your UM Project Number: <http://umanitoba.ca/research/ors/mrt-faq.html#pr0>)
- if you have received multi-year funding for this research, responsibility lies with you to apply for and obtain Renewal Approval at the expiry of the initial one-year approval; otherwise the account will be locked.

The Research Quality Management Office may request to review research documentation from this project to demonstrate compliance with this approved protocol and the University of Manitoba *Ethics of Research Involving Humans*.

The Research Ethics Board requests a final report for your study (available at: http://umanitoba.ca/research/orec/ethics/human_ethics_REB_forms_guidelines.html) in order to be in compliance with Tri-Council Guidelines.

Appendix G: Research Ethics and Compliance Renewal Approval



Research Ethics and Compliance
Office of the Vice-President (Research and International)

Human Ethics
208-194 Dafoe Road
Winnipeg, MB
Canada R3T 2N2
Phone +204-474-7122
Fax +204-269-7173

RENEWAL APPROVAL

June 14, 2016

TO: Alix Richards (Advisor: C. Van Winkle)
Principal Investigators

FROM: Zana Lutfiyya, Chair
Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB)

Re: Protocol #E2014:058 (HS17086)
"Travel Bound and the Need for Vacation A Phenomenological
Study to Understand the Tourism Experiences of Underserved
and At-Risk Youth"

Please be advised that your above-referenced protocol has received approval for renewal by the Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board. **This approval is valid for one year and will expire on June 18, 2017.**

Any significant changes of the protocol and/or informed consent form should be reported to the Human Ethics Coordinator in advance of implementation of such changes.