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Extraordinary outdoor leaders: an Australian case study

Heidi Anneliese Smith
University of Wollongong

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Extraordinary Outdoor Leaders:
An Australian Case Study

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree

Doctor of Philosophy

from

University of Wollongong

by

Heidi Anneliese Smith

Bachelor of Education (Honours)
Master of Arts Outdoor Education

Faculty of Education
2011
Dedicated to

Ernst Karle
Certification

I, Heidi Anneliese Smith, declare that this thesis, submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. The document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

Heidi A Smith

December 7, 2011.
Abstract

A new type of outdoor leadership is being heralded into the 21st Century. In other sectors, leadership theory has moved ahead in search of this ‘new’ leadership while outdoor leadership has continued to rely on more traditional leadership theories. With considerable research existing into effective outdoor leadership, the purpose of this study was to explore leadership success beyond effective, in particular, the fundamental nature of ‘extraordinary’ outdoor leadership through the identification of key characteristics, values, skills and behaviours of these leaders.

The existence of leadership that was more successful than effective was identified in the outdoor leadership literature, however, it remained eluded to and undescribed. Traditionally, the outdoor leadership literature has relied on situational leadership theory, conditional outdoor leadership theory and the core competencies in the describing and teaching of effective leadership to others. More recently a need to engage with contemporary theories of leadership in order to improve our understanding of effective outdoor leadership has been indicated (e.g., transformational leadership theory, authentic leadership and emotional intelligence).

Simultaneously, the broader leadership literature (business and management) has been engaging with the contemporary theories of leadership (transformational, authentic and spiritual) for some time and consistently described leaders as effective, exemplary and to some extent, extraordinary. These levels of leadership success were described in ways that linked directly with the three contemporary theories of leadership and resulted in the clarification of the three levels. In addition, the intelligences (rational, emotional and spiritual) were consistently described as significantly contributing to understanding each of the contemporary leadership theories and hence extraordinary outdoor leaders.

In order to provide direction and focus for the study, a conceptual framework was developed. The framework drew together the outdoor leadership literature, the contemporary theories of leadership, the intelligences, and aligned these with the levels of leadership success identified (effective, exemplary, and extraordinary). In addition, it provided a new categorisation of the leadership theories: head, heart, body and soul. This categorisation emphasised the way in which leaders approached their leadership practice and linked directly with the contemporary theories and the descriptions of the
various leadership levels of success. Utilising the conceptual framework, the characteristics, values, skills and behaviours of the participants were determined through the research process.

This qualitative case study followed five extraordinary outdoor leaders as nominated by members within the industry. The research was located within the interpretive paradigm and reported in a narrative style. This methodological approach was selected as it allowed the extraordinary outdoor leaders to be studied in context and encouraged the individual to remain central. Data collection occurred across two main phases. Phase 1 involved an online or phone interview of approximately 40 minutes with each of the participants. Phase 2 consisted of an observation of 2-5 days followed by a face to face interview of one to two hours duration. Additional documents (e.g., program information) were collected across both phases. The Phase 1 early findings resulted in a long list of attributes that were later clarified through Phase 2 into four key elements of extraordinary outdoor leadership.

The four key elements were: awareness, relationships, intuition and spirituality. The defining characteristic that emerged was awareness of self, others and nature and similarly, the value seen to be essential was relationships with self, others and nature. Intuition was identified as the key skill possessed by all leaders, one that could be learnt and taught. The dominant behaviour identified was spirituality which encompassed who they are and how they interact with the larger world: humble, caring, and living for a greater purpose. These key elements indicated links between the various contemporary leadership theories and confirmed the conceptual framework. In particular, spiritual leadership theory proved to be the identifying theory in relation to extraordinary leadership success.

Recommendations for further research, policy and professional practice development included the need to develop a clear model to support the development of extraordinary outdoor leadership incorporating the findings from this study. In addition, further research into the role of praxis in outdoor leadership was also identified as an area that would contribute to understanding extraordinary outdoor leadership practice. While many other areas have been identified, it would be noteworthy to research the barriers faced by novice outdoor leaders as they strive to become an extraordinary outdoor leader.
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Definitions

Authentic Leadership Theory

Authentic leadership is seen to involve the authentic enactment of core values through leadership behaviours. It is considered to be a contemporary theory compared to other leadership theories.

Behaviours

Behaviours include the way in which individuals act and the observable actions resulting from both internal and external stimuli. In the thesis, this relates particularly to how the extraordinary outdoor leaders behaved or functioned as leaders.

Characteristics

Characteristics refer to particular features and qualities considered to be typical of extraordinary outdoor leaders.

Conditional Outdoor Leadership Theory (COLT)

This theory incorporates leadership style, orientation and conditional favourability and was developed specifically with outdoor leaders in mind. The favourable conditions identified take into account the context of outdoor leadership and are: environmental dangers, individual competence, group unity, leader proficiency and decision consequence.

Contemporary Leadership Theories

Leadership theories considered to be contemporary in this study are: transformational leadership theory, authentic leadership theory and spiritual leadership theory.

Core Competencies

The expression ‘core competencies’ refers to the various skills considered to be required of effective outdoor leaders. These are often classified into technical skills, interpersonal skills and metaskills, terms which continue to be used.
Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence relates to a person’s ability to be aware of one’s own and others’ emotions and to use this information in a positive way.

Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills incorporate the ability to instruct, organise and facilitate learning experiences in the outdoors.

Metaskills

The metaskills are considered to bind both the interpersonal and technical skills together. They include core competencies such as problem solving, decision making, experience-based judgement, effective communication, flexible leadership style and professional ethics.

Outdoor Education

Outdoor leadership can be found across a variety of programs in Australia: recreation, education, developmental and therapy. This study focuses on leaders who were leading outdoor education programs where the focus of leadership was primarily educational.

Outdoor Leadership

Outdoor leadership encompasses leadership that occurs in the outdoors. This study focuses on leadership that occurs in outdoor education.

Preceding Leadership Theories

This phrase is used specifically in this thesis to refer to all leadership theories which preceded contemporary leadership theories (transformational leadership theory, authentic leadership theory and spiritual leadership theory) in the research literature. The preceding theories include great man theory, trait theory, Ohio State, University of Michigan, University of Texas, task versus relationship, grid theory, situational leadership theory, charismatic leadership theory, transactional leadership theory, rebel leadership and servant leadership.
Rational Intelligence

Rational intelligence relates to a person’s intellectual abilities and it is commonly known as a person’s IQ.

Situational Leadership Theory

The key assumptions of this theory are that leaders vary their style depending on the followers’ situation and the emphasis placed on task versus relationship. It comprises four key aspects: delegating, participating, selling and directing.

Skills

Skills include the particular abilities, or types of abilities of, extraordinary outdoor leaders. The dominant skill identified in the extraordinary skills was intuition.

Spiritual Intelligence

Spiritual intelligence encompasses a deep level of knowing who we are as individual leaders and particularly emphasises a deep sense of purpose where the focus is on the whole person. It is considered to be dependent on an individual’s ability to be self aware, self confident, open to new things and motivated to explore their own spirituality.

Spiritual Leadership Theory

Spiritual leadership theory builds on from transformational and authentic leadership theory and is the most recent to emerge in the literature. It focused on the individual as leader, ‘who they are’ and their deep commitment to leading for a greater purpose than the immediate task.
Technical Skills

Technical skills encompass the skills of outdoor leaders associated with the adventure activities used and the ability to safely travel in the outdoors while having minimal impact on the environment travelled through.

Transformational Leadership

The focus of transformational leadership is on the awareness of the leader and the ability to build positive relationships and communities where values and vision are shared. In particular, this theory claims that the transformational leader is able to create lasting change, whereby when the leader is no longer present this growth continues.

Values

Values comprise aspects considered to be of great merit or importance to the extraordinary outdoor leaders.
Chapter 1  Introduction

My Story

It is September of 1997, and I have been studying outdoor education at Griffith University for the past year. Yet to graduate I have been called to work in the field for a week, west of Brisbane. The sun is shining and the temperature looks like it will reach into the high 30s today. I am heading out to an outdoor education centre where I will be employed for the week. I have been told I will find out all I need to know on arrival. It is my first time working there and I am very nervous. I have heard a lot about the outdoor education ‘gurus’ that work there. I arrive early, keen and eager to know what will be expected of me this week. I am excited to learn from them, see what they do and how they do it. I pull into the driveway. As I am gathering my belongings from the car, I am greeted by the smiling face of Jon. My boss for the week, he welcomes me warmly. Immediately I feel equal, a professional and like I have known him all my life. I am instantly aware that I am in the company of an ‘extraordinary’ outdoor leader.

Since the initial memorable meeting with Jon, combined with many years working as an outdoor leader in a variety of contexts with a large range of people, it was inevitable when embarking on my doctoral research that I would explore the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership. While I had been informally observing and considering the ways in which these types of leaders went about the process of leading, it was not until I embarked on formal study through this project that I came to realise I had been privileged to work with a few extraordinary outdoor leaders throughout my career. From the outset, working as an outdoor leader, I repeatedly and intentionally sought out outdoor educators who I felt were extremely successful leaders, some of whom would be nominated for this study. I did so for two reasons. First, because I thoroughly enjoyed their company and felt aligned with the way in which they went about the task of leadership. Second, because I wished to improve my own leadership practice.

After spending a number of years leading in the field my move to the university setting and into teacher education shifted my focus on leadership. Previously I had been predominantly focused on the ongoing development of my own leadership and the leadership of students in my groups while leading outdoors. Moving into teacher
education at the tertiary level brought with it new challenges particularly in relation to leadership development in university students training to be teachers. This new role led me to reconsider and rethink the extraordinary outdoor leaders I had worked with in the past and the intricate attributes I had witnessed. My past experiences encouraged me to think about how I might be able to work with my students to begin to instil in them the possibility of extraordinary outdoor leadership. This would require developing clearer understandings of various levels of leadership success, along with a possible map or pathway for achieving the various levels, in particular, extraordinary outdoor leadership.

The longer I stayed in this new role, my passion for exploring what it was about these extraordinary outdoor leaders and what made them so successful in their leadership only grew. Attempting to teach pre-service teachers how to be outdoor leaders, I felt a deep responsibility to know more than I had come to know from a combination of my own observations and the outdoor leadership theory. Early on it became evident that in order to deepen my own understanding of leadership I needed to look at the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leaders and their leadership practice. This need resulted in a journey that began by first exploring the outdoor leadership literature for existing explanations and/or descriptions of extraordinary outdoor leadership that I may have previously overlooked.

Throughout the outdoor leadership literature the most commonly used term to describe leadership success was found to be ‘effective’. Indications of leadership success that achieved beyond effective remained alluded to, without clear distinction or explanation. It was clear across the outdoor leadership literature that higher levels of leadership existed, however they had not been attended to in detail. Priest and Gass (1997) acknowledged that while the skills required to be an effective outdoor leader were largely known through the core competencies, the process required to select the perfect mix remained unknown. More recent texts and articles included the introduction of the idea that more contemporary theories of leadership (e.g., transformational and authentic leadership theory) contribute to and broaden our understanding of effective outdoor leadership (e.g., Brymer & Gray, 2006; Hayashi & Ewert, 2006). It was these initial introductions that encouraged a search of the broader leadership literature, in order to gain increased knowledge about these theories and how they might inform different levels of leadership success. Within the broader literature levels of leadership success other than ‘effective’ emerged, namely exemplary and extraordinary leadership.
The search also uncovered spiritual leadership theory and confirmed the role the intelligences (rational, emotional and spiritual) play in leadership success. The spiritual leadership literature also indicated the need for a more comprehensive and integrated theory of leadership that acknowledged the complex task of leadership (Dent, Higgins & Wharff, 2005). It also suggested the need to draw on multiple theories and to view leadership as more than a list of attributes rather, a “state of being” (Quinn, 2004, p. 1) which might provide greater clarity around leadership that is extraordinary. This early search confirmed the need to engage with the broader leadership literature in order to address the gaps within the outdoor leadership literature in particular in relation to leadership success beyond effective, in particular extraordinary outdoor leadership.

Background to the Study

Outdoor education saw its inception into Australia in the form of people passionate about the outdoors and taking their students out into the ‘wilderness’ to experience and learn from nature. The profession has grown over the years and so too have the opportunities for universities, vocational education training organisations (e.g., Technical and Further Education (TAFE)) and private organisations who prepare outdoor leaders. Over the past 30 years there has been considerable research into outdoor leadership in an attempt to improve its ‘effectiveness’ (e.g., Gair, 1997; Graham, 1997; Hammerman & Hammerman, 1973a, 1973b; Kosseff, 2003; Ogilvie, 2005; Petzolt, 1974; Schoel, Prouty, & Radcliffe, 1988; Sharp, 1973; Warren, 2002). The early literature provided outdoor leaders with a kaleidoscope of skills and qualities (Priest & Gass, 1997). This long list of leadership attributes encouraged further research through a meta-analysis of the existing research which determined the 12 core competencies considered essential for effective outdoor leadership (Priest & Gass, 1997), in part due to the context in which it takes place (Barnes, 2003; Breunig, 2008).

The 12 core competencies have been largely well accepted and utilised in the development of effective outdoor leadership over time. While these competencies have received some recent criticism (Brookes, 2004; Brown, 2004, 2005, 2009), they have been productively built on resulting in the eight core competencies (Martin, Cashel, Wagstaff & Breunig, 2006). The 12 core competencies continue to remain an important reference point for the training of outdoor leaders (Stremba & Bisson, 2009) and have
been adopted by a number of authors (e.g., Graham, 1997; Kosseff, 2003; Martin et al., 2006; Ogilvie, 2005) and individuals.

Alongside these core competencies, the outdoor education literature has traditionally focused on two main leadership theories in order to describe and teach effective outdoor leadership: situational leadership theory (Kosseff, 2003; Martin et al., 2006) and conditional outdoor leadership theory (Priest & Chase, 1989; Priest & Gass, 1997, 2005; Stremba & Bisson, 2009). Supporting these theories has been a focus on the use of leadership style and leadership orientation (e.g., Froude & Polley, 2008; Priest & Gass, 1997, 2005). The Priest and Gass (1997, 2005) text has dominated the leadership training of individuals and organisations, and their methods have been broadly used and built upon (e.g., Martin et al., 2006; Stremba & Bisson, 2009). Having a strong North American focus, while an extremely useful text as a starting point, the more recent developments to include transformational leadership theory (Brymer & Gray, 2006; Brymer, Gray, Cotton, & Carpenter, 2010; Hayashi & Ewert, 2006) encouraged the broader exploration of the leadership literature to find more appropriate models and theories to describe outdoor leadership. While other leadership theories have been developed and utilised in the broader leadership literature (business and management), outdoor education has continued to rely on the more traditional theories and texts (e.g., Martin et al., 2006; Priest & Gass, 1997, 2005; Stremba & Bisson, 2009).

With the outdoor leadership literature continuing to focus on traditional theories and the development of ‘effective’ leadership, levels of leadership success beyond ‘effective’ were only found to be briefly alluded to in the outdoor leadership literature (Martin et al., 2006; Priest & Gass, 1997; 2005). This lack of description and attention to other levels of leadership success further supported the review of the broader leadership literature and this study. The review began by searching transformational leadership theory in the broader context and resulted in the emergence of other theories (authentic and spiritual). These were described as building on from transformational leadership theory and attended to levels of leadership success beyond ‘effective’.

These emerging theories included authentic leadership theory (Avolio & Gardner, 2005) which was linked to descriptions of ‘exemplary’ leadership (Kouses & Posner, 2004, 2007) and spiritual leadership theory (Dent et al., 2005; Fry, 2003) as it was used to describe leadership beyond ‘exemplary’ and often referred to as
‘extraordinary’ leadership, or leadership demonstrating ‘extraordinary’ results. Still a developing field, spiritual leadership theories included a variety of approaches to leadership that reflected the core aspects of spiritual leadership theory where leadership was defined as using the head, heart, body and soul (Cameron, 2008; Jaworski, 1998; Pearsall, 1998; Pert, 1999; Robinson, 2009; Scharmer, 2007; Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, & Flowers, 2005). Together these three key theories (transformational, authentic and spiritual) were termed ‘contemporary’ leadership theories in this study, for their recent appearance in the outdoor leadership literature.

In addition, the process of reviewing the literature also revealed the importance of the intelligences (rational, emotional and spiritual intelligence) and the way in which they directly contributed to, and informed, the contemporary leadership theories and the resultant levels of leadership success (Cook, Macaulay, & Coldicott, 2004; Goleman, 1996; Zohar & Marshall, 2000). The contemporary theories of leadership (transformational, authentic, and spiritual) in combination with the intelligences (rational, emotional and spiritual) were seen to directly contribute to understanding other levels of leadership success beyond ‘effective’, namely ‘exemplary’ and ‘extraordinary’. Due to the context in which outdoor leadership occurs, the review of literature pointed to a need to reengage with both the outdoor leadership literature and the broader leadership literature in this study’s exploration of the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leaders. It also indicated a need for a more comprehensive and integrated theory of leadership. A theory with the individual central, whereby multiple theories are drawn upon in order to provide the necessary steps for leadership success that is extraordinary (Dent et al., 2005; Quinn, 2004).

**Purpose of the Study**

The rationale of this study was to investigate the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership. Through an exploration of extraordinary outdoor leader’s personal leadership, it aimed to discover the characteristics, values, skills and behaviours and how these were demonstrated in practice. By gaining these new understandings in relation to the identification of the attributes of extraordinary outdoor leaders, it was anticipated that these would be useful in the development of leadership in self and others, potentially contributing to the training of outdoor leaders.
This study explored the links between contemporary leadership theories, intelligences and outdoor leadership theory in an attempt to better understand and describe extraordinary outdoor leadership. The contemporary leadership theories explored included transformational leadership theory (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003), authentic leadership theory (George, Sims, McLean, & Mayer, 2007) and spiritual leadership theory (Fry, 2003). The intelligences investigated in significant depth included emotional (Goleman, 1996) and spiritual intelligence (Zohar & Marshall, 2000) as they were seen to predominantly contribute to the contemporary leadership theories. Rational intelligence was also attended to and found to contribute more consistently to earlier leadership theories (Cerni, Curtis, & Colmar, 2008).

Outdoor leadership literature was also examined including the core competencies, the consistently used leadership theories and the related literature (e.g., facilitation, risk taking, human-nature relationships) as they directly contributed to the context.

A conceptual framework was developed from the review of literature encompassing all of these theories in order to provide focus and direction to the exploration of extraordinary outdoor leadership. Through the development of this framework, a way of understanding and describing three levels of leadership success effective, exemplary and extraordinary outdoor leadership was proposed. These levels were simultaneously linked to the contemporary theories of leadership. A new way of categorising all leadership theories through the leader’s utilisation of the head, heart, body and soul in their leadership practice was also proposed. Through linking levels of leadership success with the contemporary theories of leadership, and the new categorisation a clearer understanding of extraordinary outdoor leadership was achieved. The conceptual framework helped to identify the key characteristics, values, skills and behaviours of the extraordinary outdoor leaders studied.

**Research Questions**

The overarching question that guided this study was:

*What is the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership?*

In order to focus the research further two supplementary questions were posed. The supplementary questions emerged from the literature’s focus on developing lists of
attributes and aimed to help clarify these “laundry lists” (Van Wart, 2003, p. 215) and are:

*Which characteristics, values, skills, and behaviours are present in extraordinary outdoor leadership practice?*

*How are these characteristics, values, skills, and behaviours demonstrated in extraordinary outdoor leadership practice?*

The categories used in this study to clarify the attributes of extraordinary outdoor leaders (characteristics, values, skills and behaviours) are reflected in research questions and the conceptual framework developed for this study.

**Methodology**

The research questions were explored through case study research (Stake, 2005) reported in a narrative style (Creswell, 2007) located within the interpretive paradigm (Neumann, 1997). The main reason behind the chosen methodological approach was the need to represent the extraordinary outdoor leaders as they appeared in their outdoor education context (Stake, 2005), experienced and witnessed by the researcher. Extraordinary outdoor leaders were identified and selected through a national survey of outdoor leaders using purposive sampling (Long, 2007). Six were invited to be involved in the study and five remained for the duration. Participants were required to be working as an outdoor leader in an outdoor education context at the time of the study. They were also required to be considered identifiable as ‘extraordinary’ outdoor leaders by their peers.

The methods used to gather data included formal and informal interviews (Hatch, 2002), observations and the collection of supporting documents, all of which were common to case study research in this paradigm (Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Mertens, 2005; Yin, 1994; 2009). The development of a conceptual framework from the literature provided both focus and direction for the study (Simons, 2009) through the clarification of leadership levels, providing links to the contemporary leadership theories and further elucidation through the categorisation of the leadership theories (head, heart, body and soul). The research process comprised two main phases including an initial phone/online interview (Phase 1) followed by spending an extended
period of time observing and interviewing the five participants in their natural ‘settings’ (Phase 2) with the intention to better understand how they lead (Hatch, 2002).

The presentation of research findings remains extensively discussed and contested in the qualitative research literature (e.g., Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Mertens, 2005, 2010; Punch, 2009). Acknowledging that several options exist, the rationale for choosing to present the findings through narratives was directly related to the need to foreground participant voices and their stories (Clandinin, 2007a; Phoenix & Sparkes, 2009). This approach also allowed for the individual and the context to remain central to the findings (Yukl, 2010). Findings are presented in a collection of six chapters; the early findings chapter, followed by five individual chapters. The individual chapters are offered using short narratives representative of a selection of the stories gathered. A combination of big and small stories (Phoenix & Sparkes, 2009), realist and confessional tales (Sparkes, 1992), the narratives were supported by the range of data (interviews, observation and documents) collected (Neuman, 1997). Member checking was conducted with the participants throughout the research process (Mertens, 2005). Informed consent was gained from all participants and all agreed to be named in the research. The naming of participants was seen to add richness to the data collected and reported, at the same time contributing to ethical deliberations that occurred throughout the research process. While participant names appear in the study, all other individuals who emerged in the research were provided with pseudonyms.

**Thesis Structure**

This chapter has introduced the study, briefly outlining my story and how I came to the research project and subsequent research questions. It also briefly outlined the gaps within the outdoor leadership literature in relation to extraordinary outdoor leadership and identified the use of contemporary theories of leadership that attempt to bridge this gap. Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature relevant to this study. It begins by presenting the outdoor leadership literature, as well as the literature related to both outdoor leadership and outdoor education deemed to be relevant to this study. A brief history of the development of the broader leadership theories is presented, beginning with those identified as ‘preceding’ theories. This is followed by a more detailed critique of the ‘contemporary’ theories of leadership (transformational, authentic and spiritual) and the related intelligences (rational, emotional and spiritual).
Chapter 1

The theories are categorised according to the extent to which they focus on the head, heart, body and soul in leadership.

The conceptual framework developed from the review of literature combining the contemporary leadership theories, intelligences and outdoor leadership literature is offered in Chapter 3. In order to understand extraordinary outdoor leadership, effective and exemplary leadership are explored as they were seen to relate to, and directly inform, extraordinary outdoor leadership. The categories of head, heart, body and soul extend the framework and understanding of each level of leadership. The framework provided a specific way through which to explore and understand the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership and identified the need to define the characteristics, values, skills and behaviours of these leaders in order to increase our understanding of their leadership.

Chapter 4 outlines the methodology and methods used in this study, including a detailed description of the research process. The early findings are presented in Chapter 5 first elucidating the initial responses from each participant followed by a summary of the universal attributes gleaned from Phase 1. The Phase 2 findings are presented in Chapters 6-10 with one chapter dedicated to each participant. In these chapters, the outdoor leadership of each is described and a selection of stories shared. Chapter 11 begins by exploring the contribution of the conceptual framework to this study. Links between the literature and the findings are then presented. The four key elements of extraordinary outdoor leadership and their interplay follow and the chapter concludes by returning to the conceptual framework clarifying its suitability for this study. Chapter 12 concludes the study as it revisits the research questions and shares a summary of the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leaders. It also outlines the significance of the study and provides recommendations for future research, policy and professional development practice. The thesis concludes by returning to where it began.
Chapter 2  Review of Literature

This chapter presents the review of literature undertaken in this study in an attempt to gain a greater understanding of varying levels of leadership success, in particular, extraordinary outdoor leadership. The process identified the leadership literature related to business and management as most appropriate to fill the gap of an almost non-existent engagement of the outdoor leadership literature with the contemporary theories of leadership: transformational, authentic, and spiritual and description of extraordinary outdoor leadership. Levels of leadership success including effective, exemplary and extraordinary which could be directly associated with the three contemporary theories of leadership central to this study were exposed. In addition, the review resulted in the emergence of an alternative classification of leadership theories which emphasised the use of a leader’s head, heart, body, and soul and was subsequently used to organise the review of literature. The conceptual framework delivered in Chapter 3 was developed directly from this analysis of the literature.

A selection of the leadership literature is presented here in three main sections. Section 1: Outdoor Leadership, Section 2: Leadership Theories, and Section 3: Intelligences. Section 1 shares the variety of approaches to describing outdoor leadership through three sub sections: leadership theories, core competencies and related literature. Section 2 attends to the development of leadership theories across the ages beginning with great man theories and concluding with a concise review of the contemporary leadership theories central to this study. Finally, Section 3 introduces the intelligences, rational, emotional and spiritual as they contribute to, and underpin the contemporary leadership theories. Together with the outdoor leadership literature, they provide a greater understanding of the nuances of being an effective, exemplary and in particular, extraordinary outdoor leader.

Section 1: Outdoor Leadership

Traditionally, outdoor leadership has been explored in the literature in terms of improving outdoor leadership success, most commonly through its descriptions of what it means to be an effective outdoor leader (e.g., Graham, 1997; Kosseff, 2003; Priest & Gass, 1997; Rohnke, 1989). The outdoor leadership literature has tended to rely on the personal experience of authors in relation to what is required of an effective outdoor
leader. For example, Graham (1997) and Kosseff (2003) draw on personal experiences of leading in the outdoors with the addition of other literature to support their ideas and texts. And Priest and Gass (1997) place significant emphasis on the 12 core competencies presented in their text, the result of one meta analysis of previously existing literature (Priest & Chase, 1990).

More recently there has been engagement with a variety of contemporary leadership theories to varying degrees (e.g., Brymer & Gray, 2006; Brymer et al., 2010; Froude & Polley, 2008; Martin et al, 2006; Ogilvie, 2005; Priest & Gass, 2005). However, these texts have continued to approach the task of what it means to be a successful outdoor leader through the utilisation of largely existing knowledge (e.g., core competencies, situational leadership theory). Froude and Polley (2008) make several claims with regards to leadership success including identifying particular traits with no reference to where these have emerged from. In contrast, Brymer et al (2010) present their views on leadership success through their use of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) researching a number of participants and their views on profiling effective leadership.

Overall, there has been a relatively consistent approach towards the development of what it means to be an effective outdoor leader with a heavy reliance on a select number of leadership theories (leadership style, leadership orientation, situational leadership theory and conditional outdoor leadership theory). These theories have been consistently used in combination with the 12 core competencies developed by Priest & Gass (1997) from a meta-analysis of earlier studies into leadership effectiveness. More recently these 12 core competencies have been further refined into 8 core competencies (Martin et al., 2006). In order to broaden the understanding of the nuances of being an outdoor leader (effective, exemplary and/or extraordinary), related literature is presented in order to deepen the understanding of outdoor leadership.

**Leadership theories.**

Considered to be underpinned by experiential learning theory (Breunig, 2008), outdoor education and outdoor leadership literature place emphasis on four main leadership theories when describing effective outdoor leadership. The first is leadership style: autocratic, democratic and abdicratic leadership (e.g., Drury, Bonney, Berman, & Wagstaff, 2005; Froude & Polley, 2008; Priest & Gass, 1997; 2005). The second is
leadership orientation: task versus relationship (Froude & Polley, 2008; Priest & Gass, 1997, 2005; Martin et al., 2006). The third is situational leadership theory: delegating, participating, selling and directing (Drury et al., 2005; Kosseff, 2003; Martin et al., 2006; Ogilvie, 2005; Stremba & Bisson, 2009). And the fourth is conditional outdoor leadership theory (COLT): environmental dangers, individual competence, group unity, leader proficiency and decision consequence (Priest & Chase, 1989; Priest & Gass, 1997, 2005).

Leadership style emphasises the way in which leaders express their influence. The various leadership styles demonstrated by a leader have been consistently grouped into three main aspects that form a “continuum of decision-making power: autocratic (telling or selling), democratic (testing or consulting), and abdicratic (joining or delegating)” (Priest & Gass, 2005, p. 244). Leadership orientation identifies the leader’s level of concern for either task (e.g., getting the job done) or relationship (e.g., maintaining a positive atmosphere) when making leadership decisions (Kossef, 2003). In the outdoor leadership literature these theories are often used in combination with group development theory (e.g., Martin et al., 2006; Priest & Gass, 1997; 2005) in order to further explain outdoor leadership and the actions a leader must take in order to be effective.

Situational leadership theory also regularly appears in the literature and texts to describe and aid the teaching of effective outdoor leadership (e.g., Martin et al., 2006; Phipps & Swiderski, 1990). The key leadership assumptions of situational leadership are, simply put, where leaders vary their leadership style depending on the group’s situation (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993). Building on from this theory, conditional outdoor leadership theory also focuses on the group’s situation, adding to this, the level of favourable conditions listed previously (Martin et al., 2006; Priest & Chase, 1989; Priest & Gass, 2005). These four theories have been consistently used (often together with other related concepts such as experiential learning, decision making models and group development models) in describing and teaching effective outdoor leadership in order to help determine the appropriate actions and/or behaviours a leader may demonstrate at any given time (e.g., Breunig, 2008, Kosseff, 2003; Priest & Gass, 2005; Schoel & Maizell, 2002).
More recently, consideration of transformational leadership, servant leadership, authentic leadership, and ethical leadership (including authenticity) among others, has become evident (e.g., Brymer & Gray, 2006; Graham, 1997; Ogilvie, 2005; Lehman, 2008; Martin et al., 2006; Priest & Gass, 2005). On the whole, attention to these theories and how they might inform the understanding of outdoor leadership practice has been incidental. With exception, transformational leadership has begun to receive relatively increased attention in the outdoor leadership literature (Brymer & Gray, 2006; Brymer et al., 2010; Hayashi & Ewert, 2006; Martin et al., 2006).

In addition to these leadership theories, a number of authors have presented their own combinations of these, the result of largely personal experience, and built upon them. For example, Graham (1997) identified the preference of the development of leadership styles through metaphors. In his descriptions of ‘good’ leaders, he emphasised the importance of attributes such as awareness, caring leadership, and courage. Visionary leadership and organisational leadership were used in his descriptions of good leaders. Alternatively, Ogilvie’s (2005) adaptation of Adair’s (1983) theory highlighted the interplay between task, team, individual and environment in outdoor leadership practice. These adaptations were prompted by what he identified as the changing needs of society, resulting in the need for a different kind of leadership to meet these changes and indicated leadership style and orientation models (Ogilvie, 2005). In addition, a largely skills based approach to leadership development specific to leading in the outdoors closely replicating the core competencies to some extent came from Prouty, Panicucci and Collinson (2007).

On the whole, the outdoor leadership literature and texts promote a largely skills-based approach to outdoor leadership development that has mostly emerged from the personal experiences of being an outdoor leader. The focus is predominantly on the use of situational leadership theory, and COLT supported by leadership styles and orientation. These theories have been used time after time in combination with the 12 core competencies of effective outdoor leadership (Priest & Gass, 1997) and a more recent adaptation of these, the 8 core competencies (Martin et al., 2006) is now also being utilised.
Core competencies.

Over the years numerous “laundry lists” (Van Wart, 2003, p. 215) of required attributes, qualities, skills, and competencies of outdoor leaders have been produced. Developed from a meta-analysis of early outdoor leadership research, the 12 core competencies consist of: technical skills, safety skills, environmental skills, organizational skills, instructional skills, and facilitation skills, professional ethics, flexible leadership style, experience-based judgment, problem-solving skills, decision-making skills, and effective communication. These were divided into what they termed ‘hard’ or technical skills (technical, safety, environmental), ‘soft’ or interpersonal skills (facilitation, instructional, organisational) and the remaining metaskills which are considered to bind the other two types of skills together to produce effective outdoor leadership (Priest & Gass, 1997, 2005). Since their introduction, these core competencies have been consistently used and remained largely uncontested, until recently, when they received some recent criticism in the literature (Brookes, 2004; Brown, 2004, 2009).

Despite the criticism, they have been productively re-conceptualised by Martin et al (2006) resulting in eight core competencies. The eight core competencies comprise: foundational knowledge, self-awareness and professional conduct, decision making and judgement, teaching and facilitation, environmental stewardship, program management, safety and risk management, and technical ability (Martin et al., 2006). The authors identify that their core competency approach is “not new” (Martin et al., 2006, p. xvi) and yet provides the “essential framework for the text” (p. xvi).

The main difference between the two sets of core competencies is the change of ‘leadership’ as a core competency to being a separate aspect of outdoor leadership in the more recent version. Other differences include the introduction of two ‘new’ competencies including: “self-awareness and professional conduct”, and “foundational knowledge” (p. xv). “Foundational knowledge” emphasises a “sense of purpose”, “sense of heritage”, “breadth of the profession”, and “understanding of leadership” (p. xiv) which identified a need to transform others’ lives. “Self-awareness and professional conduct” highlighted the importance of acting ethically within one’s own abilities and limitations, and essentially being “mindful” and “intentional” of actions (p. xv). This core competency is considered to be similar to professional ethics, but gives emphasis to the need for awareness, previously not present.
Taking into account the differences in the core competencies, and where and how leadership was addressed within the respective competencies, situational leadership theory and COLT continue to be emphasised by Martin et al (2006). While it is yet to be determined if these eight core competencies will in fact take the place of the previous 12, various adoption of these is evident in the literature. For example, Prouty et al (2007) use the eight core competencies in their revised text, while Stremba & Bisson (2009) use the 12. Regardless, the core competencies continue to remain an important reference point for the development of outdoor leaders and have been adopted by a number of authors to varying degrees (e.g., Kosseff, 2003; Martin et al., 2006; Ogilvie, 2005; Stremba & Bisson, 2009). The core competencies provide a clear description of skills relevant to the outdoor leadership profession, and it appears they maintain their relevance in the development of outdoor leaders.

**Beyond leadership theories and core competencies.**

Both of the core competency models highlight the complex nature of being an outdoor leader. They identify the numerous aspects and tasks required of outdoor leaders. Some of these include: facilitation, professional ethics, social justice, spirituality, human-nature relationships, sense of place, and risk taking. As well as facilitating the group process, outdoor leaders are required to ensure the safety of the group, teach a variety of skills (Thomas, 2010) and undertake numerous other roles (Gray & Birrell, 2005). The literature presented here aims to contribute to creating a greater understanding of outdoor leadership.

The relationship between 'leader' and ‘facilitator’ has been a focus of critique and inquiry for some time in outdoor leadership. There has been an interchangeable use of the terms leader and facilitator in the outdoor leadership literature (Brown, 2005; Hayllar, 2005) as experienced in the broader leadership literature (Kotter, 1990; Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Brown (2004, 2005), Ringer (1999), Thomas (2004, 2008a, 2008b) and Zink (2005) have all explored facilitation and their work reaffirms the core competency approach to effective leadership where facilitation skills are acknowledged as contributing to, but not equating to effective outdoor leadership (Thomas, 2010). To some extent these authors have generated new insights into effective outdoor leadership. Ringer (1999) drew attention to the significance of the subjective presence of the leader and how the relationships a leader builds with the group, exponentially affects, the
success of their leadership and facilitation. Thomas (2004, 2008a, 2008b) supported
these ideas and has similarly encouraged a more subjective emphasis where “facilitators
are aided less by technique and more through their presence” (Thomas, 2008a, p. 171).
Teacher education has also supported the notion of presence in effective teaching
(Meijer, Korthagen & Vasalos, 2009). Others have extended the depth of insight into
other core competencies. For example, Warren (1998, 2002, 2008) addressed various
aspects of social justice in relation to outdoor leadership including race, gender and
class. Mitten (2007) explored how outdoor leaders’ values and ethics affect their
decision making and how diversity positively contributes to the group experience
(Mitten, 2008).

Heintzman (2008) summarised the existing outdoor leadership literature in
relation to spirituality and provided definitions of ‘spirituality’. Positive links were
drawn between theories such as ‘flow’ (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) and restorative
environments, to spirituality. These environments were characterised by “being away”,
“extent”, “fascination”, and “compatibility” (Heintzman, 2008, p. 314) and were seen to
contribute to the development of an individual’s spirituality. The importance of
motivation in spiritual development was also emphasised. However, at no point was
outdoor leadership mentioned in relation to spirituality, or being spiritual. While some
attention has been given to the role wilderness and adventurous activities have on an
individual’s spirituality, explicit links to the effects this may have on outdoor leaders
who regularly engage with these specific environments, contexts and activities have not
been made (Beringer, 2000; Fredrickson & Anderson, 1999; Stringer & McAvoy,
1992). In 2000, the Journal of Experiential Education devoted a special section to
spirituality in experiential education (Vol. 23, No. 3). This issue focused on the healing
powers of experiential education rather than providing direct links between being
spiritual and leadership, or in fact, the impact of being an outdoor leader on an
individual’s spirituality.

Environmental skills, a core competency and environmental stewardship (Martin
et al., 2006; Priest & Gass, 1997; 2005) as well as human-nature relationships have
consistently featured in the outdoor education literature (Birrell, 2005; Martin, 1999,
2005). The focus of these relationships on outdoor programs is considered to be
dependent on the motivations and expertise of individual leaders (Baker, 2008). ‘Sense
of place’ and ‘place pedagogy’ encompass how someone assigns value to, or connects
to a particular place. This has also been addressed in the literature by a number of authors in relation to outdoor leadership (e.g., Baker, 2008; Beringer, 2008; Martin, 2005; Wattchow, 2008; Wattchow & Brown, 2011; Williams & Stewart, 1998). In addition, time spent in nature as having a direct effect on leadership success has been stated (Lupton & Tulloch, 2002; McNamee, 2007a; Robinson, 2004; Uhlik, 2006). Only through active reflection and acknowledgement of the learning that occurs through interactions with nature can the time and generated learning in nature impact upon one’s leadership success (Uhlik, 2006). The effect of nature on leadership success has been linked to the amount of risk taking undertaken by leaders in the natural environment (e.g., Anderson, 2007; Atherton, 2007; McNamee, 2007a).

Safety skills and safety and risk management feature consistently in the core competencies (Martin et al., 2006; Priest & Gass, 2005), and are attended to in the literature in great detail where they often take centre stage in discussion of leadership in the outdoors (e.g., Anderson, 2007; Atherton, 2007; Barton, 2007; Boyes, 2005; Brookes, 2002-2003, 2003; Haddock, 2004; McNamee, 2007a, 2007b). In particular, the management of risk is of central focus whereby leaders are required to attend to issues of risk that are physical, emotional, social and spiritual (e.g., Barton, 2007; Dickson, 2005; Haddock, 2004). While risk taking is not discussed in relation to leadership, it is viewed as a positive force that encourages personal growth and development for those personally involved (e.g., Atherton, 2007; Dickson, 2005; McNamee, 2007a; Palmer, 2004). Through engaging in outdoor activities where risk taking is evident, it has been stated that these experiences directly influence and effect an individual’s philosophy and their commitment to regular deep personal reflection (Atherton, 2007). Literature relating to risk taking in adventure sports also proved informative in understanding the potential outcomes of engaging in ‘risky’ activities commonly undertaken and taught to others in outdoor leadership (e.g., Anderson, 2007; Atherton, 2007; Krein, 2007; Lupton & Tullcoch, 2002; Palmer, 2004; Robinson, 2004).

A relatively new way of thinking about risk is Lyng’s (2005) ‘edgework’. This view of risk taking stems from sociology and has been described as a type of ‘playing’ with the boundaries of risk. Edgework emphasises the delicate interplay that exists when challenge levels are high for students and leaders in the outdoors, and requires consideration when exploring levels of leadership success. With risk taking identified as contributing to positive personal growth (Atherton, 2007) it might be contended that
outdoor leaders who regularly take part in ‘risky’ activities will develop skills in deep personal reflection. This familiarity with risk taking in outdoor activities may also contribute to their willingness to take risks in their own leadership.

The literature pertaining to the development of outdoor leadership focuses on two main theories of leadership: situational leadership theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993), and conditional outdoor leadership theory (Priest & Chase, 1989). These, in conjunction with the core competencies literature, and the literature extending from these - including facilitation, social justice, human-nature relationships, sense of place, and risk taking - all contribute to the development of a clearer understanding of extraordinary outdoor leadership. While not all, many of the studies and texts that attend to outdoor leadership success (e.g., Graham, 1997; Kosseff, 2003) rely on the personal experience of the author in relation to the determination of the attributes of effective outdoor leadership success. In addition, the outdoor leadership literature discussed here consistently describes leadership that is effective. Leaders that perform above or beyond this level of success are eluded to (Priest & Gass, 1997; 2005), but not described.

This gap in the outdoor leadership literature in relation to leadership success ‘beyond’ effective is partly addressed in the leadership literature examined in the next section (Section 2). Of particular relevance are the contemporary leadership theories and the related intelligences which are explored in the context of the historical development of leadership theories. Considerable attention is paid to each of the contemporary leadership theories and the ways in which they have evolved over time, consistently building on previous theories and/or models rather than creating entirely new theories (Daft, 2005). This evolutionary approach, or building on effect, evident throughout the literature underpins the conceptual framework developed in this study (Chapter 3).

Theories that preceded the contemporary theories are dealt with briefly, while the latter are presented in considerable detail. This elaborate account is intentionally provided for two reasons. Firstly, the contemporary theories are seen to directly contribute to and inform the discussion around levels of leadership success (Chapter 3) and are central to the conceptual framework that guides this study. Secondly, this level of attention to the contemporary theories is not evident in the outdoor leadership literature. More in-depth treatment of this aspect in the literature is clearly needed.
Section 2: Leadership Theories

A brief history of leadership theories is presented in this section. Emphasis is placed on how each theory has built upon previous theories in an evolutionary way as previous models were perceived as inadequate (Daft, 2005). Due to the ongoing use of earlier theories (e.g., situational leadership theory), they are shared first and grouped under the title ‘preceding theories’. Labelled ‘preceding’, because they emerged in the literature before the contemporary theories historically. These are followed by the leadership theories grouped together as ‘contemporary theories’; ‘contemporary’, for their recent introduction and/or absence in the outdoor leadership literature.

With each text providing a different, yet often similar way of presenting and grouping leadership theories (Daft, 2005; Dubrin, Daglish, & Miller, 2003; Sadler, 2003; Yukl, 2010), the literature is presented here using a ‘new’ categorisation that emerged through this process. The descriptions of individual leadership theories were found to emphasise the various use of the head, heart, body and soul. Similar descriptions were also found to exist in the intelligences literature (Goleman, 1996; Mayer & Salovey, 1993; Zohar & Marshall, 2000). Hence this ‘new’ categorisation of theories is used here to organise the leadership and intelligences literature. Table 2.1 summarises the leadership theories and intelligences according to these ‘new’ categories: head, heart, body, and soul.
Table 2.1

Summary of leadership theories and intelligences according to ‘new’ categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preceding Leadership Theories</th>
<th>Contemporary Leadership Theories</th>
<th>Intelligences</th>
<th>‘New’ Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Man Trait Theory</td>
<td>Transformational Leadership Theory</td>
<td>Rational</td>
<td>Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio State University of Michigan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Texas Task versus relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grid Theory</td>
<td>Situational Leadership Theory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charismatic Leadership Theory</td>
<td>Rational Emotional</td>
<td>Head and Heart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactional Leadership Theory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebel Leadership</td>
<td>Authentic Leadership Theory</td>
<td>Rational</td>
<td>Head, Heart, and Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant Leadership Theory</td>
<td>Spiritual Leadership Theory</td>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>Head, Heart, Body, and Soul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table presents the majority of preceding theories adopting an approach that predominantly engages the head or mind, and hence rational intelligence in their descriptions of each theory. In contrast, the contemporary theories consecutively engage in a more holistic approach to leadership practice as they developed. For example, spiritual leadership theory is identified as being connected with rational, emotional and spiritual intelligence and engaging the head, heart, body and soul (Dent et al., 2005). The table also demonstrates how the preceding theories overlap with the contemporary theories. For example, authentic leadership theory has developed from servant leadership as well as from transformational leadership theory.

Comparisons between leadership theories, in particular the contemporary theories (transformational, authentic, and spiritual) are common to the literature (Daft, 2005; Dubrin et al., 2003; Yukl, 2010). These comparisons suggest the need to
potentially draw on more than one theory at a time, and maintain the importance of both preceding and contemporary theories. This approach shifts the focus from which theory is most appropriate, to what is actually happening in the leadership practice. In order to understand the contemporary theories of leadership, knowledge of the theories that preceded them is essential.

**Preceding leadership theories.**

According to this review of literature, the preceding leadership theories include: great man theory, trait theory, task versus relationship theory, grid theory, situational leadership theory, charismatic leadership theory, transactional leadership theory, and servant leadership theory. This section provides a brief discussion of each of the preceding theories, considered essential if a greater understanding is to be gained of the contemporary theories (transformational, authentic, spiritual) and extraordinary outdoor leadership.

Until the end of the 19th Century, leadership was considered to be a time dominated by the great man theory, where leaders were essentially born and considered to be men (Daft, 2005; Dubrin et al., 2003; Van Wart, 2003; Yukl, 2010). Trait theories followed on from great man theories maintaining the assumption that leadership traits were inheritable, and that some traits were more suitable to leadership than others (Avolio, Rotundo, & Walumbwa, 2009; Daft, 2005; Dubrin, 2001; Dubrin et al., 2003; Judge, Piccolo, & Kosalka, 2009; Zaccaro, 2007). Early research aimed to discover the traits and characteristics successful leaders shared, resulting in long lists which were at times difficult to use or translate across cultures and situations (Daft, 2005). It has since been concluded that due to the specific context in which leadership happens, it is impossible to have sets of leadership traits that are relevant to all leadership, regardless of the field (Sadler, 2003; Yukl, 2010). Despite the difficulties, identifying successful leader traits continues to be considered essential to understanding and describing different levels of leadership success (Daft, 2005; Judge et al., 2009; Zaccaro, 2007). The importance of context and situation also remain central to these attempts (Yukl, 2010). The resurgence of trait theories has resulted in a much more complex view of leadership traits with clear links being drawn to emotional intelligence and its contribution to leadership success (Riggio, Riggio, Salinas & Cole, 2003).
The ‘failure’ of trait theory to provide an all-inclusive list of leadership traits resulted in a shift towards what the leader does rather than focusing on simply who the leader is (Daft, 2005). This gave birth to theories considered behavioural that ascribed to the idea that leadership could be learned; leaders could be made, rather than born. These theories include the Ohio State, University of Michigan and University of Texas studies. They first identified the activities, roles and responsibilities of leaders, and then explored individual leader behaviour, and how these behaviours differed between effective and ineffective leaders (Yukl, 2010). The main theme that emerged from these studies was the interplay of task-oriented versus people-oriented approaches to leadership which is still used today in both outdoor leadership and the broader field (business and management). The University of Texas proposed the leadership grid theory which built on the work of both Ohio State and the Michigan Studies (Daft, 2005). In addition, grid theory called attention to the role that situations play in determining the style of leadership required.

The role situations play in leadership practices was further explored in what has been termed ‘contingency’ theories. Contingency or ‘situational’ leadership theories surmised that leaders were able to analyse a situation, and from the information gathered, choose an appropriate leadership style in order to be effective (Graeff, 1997). Typically, these theories rely on situational variables such as the characteristics of followers, the context, and the external environment (Blanchard, 2007; Marta, Leritz & Mumford, 2005; Sims Jr., Faraj, & Yun, 2009). Some of the contingency theories include: Fiedler’s contingency theory, path-goal theory, and situational leadership theory (Daft, 2005; Dubrin et al., 2003; Hersey & Blanchard, 1993; Yukl, 2010). Despite its lack of empirical support, situational leadership theory continues to be considered one of the most popular and most widely used theories of leadership (Graeff, 1997, Sims Jr. et al., 2009; Thompson & Vecchio, 2009). It is thought this is due to situational leadership providing a practical model that is easy to use in a variety of settings, hence its popularity both in the general leadership literature (Graeff, 1997) and the outdoor leadership literature.

Following on from contingency theories, came influence theories (Daft, 2005). These included charismatic leadership, transactional and transformational leadership theory. Charismatic leadership relied heavily on the personality and qualities of the leader, rather than their position; however charismatic leaders were not necessarily
considered to be transformational leaders (Yukl, 2010). Similarly, rebel leadership also focused on the charismatic attributes of leaders and Downton (1973) was the first to lay claim to the term transformational leadership which was further developed by Burns (1978). In this study, transformational leadership theory is considered to be a contemporary theory in relation to outdoor leadership due to its recent introduction. With transactional leadership inextricably linked to transformational leadership, both theories will be presented in the section pertaining to contemporary leadership theories, in particular, theories that use the head and the heart.

Personal qualities that enhance a leader’s ability to develop relationships with others and the importance of emotional intelligence were emphasised in the relational theories (Daft, 2005). Relational theories include servant leadership and authentic leadership. These theories promote people and ethics as central, with courage playing a significant role in leadership success (Bennis, Feiner, Kotter, Krauskopf, Sonnenfield, Tichy et al., 2004; Hepworth & Towler, 2004; Storr, 2004). The way in which leader behavior affects group performance was also identified (Andrew & Kent, 2007; Pearce & Sims Jr, 2002) as was leadership behaviours described as authentic (Daft, 2005).

Servant leadership, originally described by Greenleaf (1977), continues to remain a popular theory and approach to leadership practice (Blanchard, 2007; Sadler, 2003; Yukl, 2010). Its focus is on serving others rather than serving oneself, and has courage, moral ethics and the building of a shared community of trust at its core (Baker & O’Malley, 2008; Ciulla, 1998; Yang & Mossholder, 2010). This approach to leadership closely aligns with descriptions of authentic leadership theory (Duiganan & Bhindi, 2007; Yukl, 2010), suggesting that servant leaders require a level of emotional intelligence in order to be effective. Authentic leadership will be addressed in detail in the contemporary leadership section, as it is also seen to be emerging in the outdoor leadership literature.

The preceding section has sought to provide some background to the development of leadership theories across the ages, and to highlight those theories that have helped to give rise to the contemporary theories of leadership. Despite the generation of contemporary theories, many of the preceding theories are still used today, and considered relevant in various contexts (Blanchard, 2007; Yukl, 2010; Zaccaro, 2007). This is certainly the case in the outdoor leadership literature where continued use
of both situational leadership theory and conditional outdoor leadership theory is evident, as discussed earlier (Stremba & Bisson, 2009; Martin et al., 2006; Priest & Gass, 2005).

While the preceding leadership theories provide glimpses of aspects of extraordinary outdoor leadership, it is the contemporary leadership theories that potentially provide the most insight, particularly when considered together. As the discussion now shifts to the contemporary leadership theories, it is important to recognise the role of previous models and theories of leadership in shaping these contemporary models and theories (Marta et al., 2005).

**Contemporary leadership theories.**

In this study, the term ‘contemporary’ refers to transformational, authentic and spiritual leadership theories due to their recent emergence in the outdoor leadership literature, as well as their relatively ‘new’ place in the broader literature (business and management) explored here. While transformational leadership theory has been around for some time in the business and management sector (Burns, 1978; Judge & Bono, 2000; Sosik & Jung, 2010), it is only now emerging as a potentially viable leadership theory through which to better understand effective outdoor leadership (Brymer & Gray, 2006; Brymer et al., 2010; Hayashi & Ewert, 2006; Martin et al., 2006). Authentic leadership theory has only been briefly mentioned in the outdoor leadership literature (Martin et al., 2006), and spiritual leadership theory is only beginning to be linked to outdoor leadership as a result of this study (Smith, 2009, Smith & Penney, 2010).

This section begins with the presentation of transformational leadership theory, where leaders are considered to lead with the head and the heart. This is followed by a discussion of authentic leadership theory which focuses on the leader enacting their values through their behaviours, and hence the addition of the use of the body. The section concludes with spiritual leadership theory, as it enacts the soul or spirit in descriptions of leadership. All of these theories in a sense have built on from previous theories. While particular attributes may be common to all three of the contemporary theories, they are considered to be leadership theories in their own right (Yukl, 2010).
**Head and Heart.**

**Transformational leadership theory.**

Initially developed by Burns (1978) the transactional-transformational theory of leadership was further explored by Bass (1985) and has for the past two decades played, and continues to play, a central role in leadership research in the business and management fields (Bass, 1997; Bono & Judge, 2004; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Kotter, 2007; Vandenberghe, Stordeur, & D’hoore, 2002).

Transformational leadership theory is considered to have emerged from Downton’s (1973) rebel leadership (Barbuto Jr. & Burbach, 2006) and has been linked inextricably with emotional intelligence (Sivanathan & Fekken, 2002). Transformational leaders have been identified as having values of “honesty, responsibility and fairness” viewed as a reciprocal process focused on individuals (Burns, 1978, p. 426) which can be learned (Hetland & Sandal, 2003).

Although transactional and transformational leadership are believed to be empirically separate, it is commonly accepted that aspects of both theories are displayed simultaneously by effective leaders (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Transactional leadership has been described as having a dominant management focus, where reward for performance is central (Bass, 1985; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Transactional leaders focus on the present and are efficient at achieving tasks and outcomes. Transactional leadership can be effective. However, because it requires followers conforming to rules, transactional leaders are good at maintaining steadiness but they do not promote change (Eagly et al., 2003).

Transformational leaders portray leadership that goes beyond reward for performance and focuses instead on supporting individuals, developing thinking in others, providing inspiration and motivation, resulting in the development of leadership in others (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). The leader and the follower are united in the end goals and their values, for example, “liberty, justice, equality” are aligned (Burns, 1978, p. 426). Various authors agree that transformational leadership theory builds on transactional theory in a way that allows leaders to draw on different aspects at once (Bass, 1997; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Howell, & Hall-Merenda, 1999; Sosik & Jung, 2010). Through the descriptions and accounts of transformational leadership in the literature it has been surmised that these leaders predominantly engage the head and the
heart in their leadership practice and are considered to be more successful than transactional leaders (Avolio & Bass, 2002). Transformational leadership theory developed as a result of a need for an extension of basic skills that researchers were unable to explain more fully with the models that were in existence at the time.

From the outset Bass (1985) presented four main components of transformational leadership theory: idealised influence, behaviour and attitude; inspirational motivation; intellectual stimulation; and individual consideration. These components have been tested over time and continue to be used with regards to both the identification and exploration of transformational leaders (Bass & Avolio, 1997; Bono & Judge, 2004; Sosik & Jung 2010).

**Idealised influence** pertained to the charisma, attributes and behaviours demonstrated by transformational leaders. They have been described as leading in an idealised way and as a result they wield much power and influence over their followers. They build positive relationships, bounded by trust between all. Leadership success is ensured through the demonstration of a clear sense of purpose and commitment to the task (Bass & Avolio, 1997). Transformational leaders are clear about their values, and communicate these through their vision and behaviour (Eagly et al., 2003). They consistently demonstrate a strong sense of purpose, engage in ethical decision making and act in ways that encourage respect from others and demonstrate confidence and power (Sosik & Jung, 2010).

**Inspirational motivation** addressed the ways in which transformational leaders are able to motivate and inspire their followers. Optimistic, enthusiastic, and excited they simplify shared goals and show followers how to achieve them through their own passion (Sosik & Jung, 2010). Transformational leaders are able to convince followers to look beyond their own personal goals and to take on the vision of both the leader and the organisation as their own (Bass & Avolio, 1997; Denhardt & Campbell, 2006).

**Intellectual stimulation** encompassed how transformational leaders help other people to think about their old problems in new and different ways. They intellectually stimulate the follower as they encourage them to question their beliefs, assumptions, and values. Through this process, the status quo is questioned and new and creative methods of achieving the shared goals and mission are explored (Avolio & Bass, 2002).
An awareness of cognitive rational thinking contributes to the success of transformational leaders (Cerni et al., 2008).

*Individualised consideration* centred on the ability of leaders to support individual growth. Each individual is treated uniquely, where the focus is on one-to-one relationships in both a mentoring and coaching role. The transformational leader provides opportunities for followers and develops a culture where the individual is central (Avolio & Bass, 2002; Bass & Avolio, 1997; Hayashi & Ewert, 2006; Hunt, 1991; Yammarino, Dubinsky, Comer, & Jolson, 1997). This form of leadership has been described as having the ability to transform organisations and individuals above and beyond what they would normally have been achieved without a transformational leader (Anderson, Ford, & Hamilton, 1998; Bass, 1997; Bono & Anderson, 2005; Cacioppe, 1997; Hater & Bass, 1988).

Transformational leaders build relationships through positive motivation, clear communication, a team approach, and empowering individuals as they exist within a particular culture or context (Avolio & Bass, 2002; Brymer & Gray, 2006; Daft, 2005; Sosik & Jung, 2010). The literature emphasised the effects of culture, both positive and negative on leader success (Kotter, 1990; Kotter & Heskett, 1992; Masood, Dani, Burns, & Backhouse, 2006). Simpson and Cacioppe (2001) indicated that the development of a culture resulted in increased performance and attainment of goals. They also emphasised the need to represent both the leader and follower goals in the culture developed (Simpson & Cacioppe, 2001).

Characteristics of transformational leaders include being: charismatic, empathetic, supportive, insightful, inspiring, self aware, motivational, inspiring, interpretive, understanding, positive communicators and demonstrators of integrity (Anderson et al., 1998; Denhardt & Campbell, 2006; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Mannarelli, 2006; Palanski & Yammarino, 2009; Sosik, 2006). Regularly described as visionaries and people who create change (Quinn, 2000), transformational leaders help people to reshape themselves and the organisations they work for in a positive way (Denhardt & Campbell, 2006; Daft, 2005). These leaders focus on taking the time to get to know themselves first, and then dedicate considerable focus on getting to know their followers (Quinn, 2004).
The literature has shown that in order to be transformational, leaders need to be able to interpret their own experiences, draw on learning from these experiences and be able to apply this learning to new situations. According to Mezirow (1991), “it is not so much what happens to people but how they interpret and explain what happens to them that determines their actions, their hopes, their contentment and emotional well-being and their performance” (p. xiii). This ability to learn through active reflection and engagement in conscious reflection for their own development and improved leadership practice are both central to transformational leadership. The development of leadership in others is pivotal to transformational leadership theory. Leadership that encourages continued growth, when the transformational leader is no longer there (Bass & Avolio, 1997; Eagly et al., 2003).

Transformational leadership theory utilises the trait approaches previously discussed in addition to the relational approaches to leadership. It provides an explanation for how some leaders are able to influence followers, not adequately explained by preceding theories (Yukl, 2010). The literature implies that these leaders use both intellectual and emotional intelligence to guide others, helping followers to feel cared for, motivated and empowered. Through their leadership, transformational leaders engage their head and their heart in their leadership practice. Described in the literature as building on from transformational leadership theory, authentic leadership theory engages the head, heart and body. Whereby, the use of the ‘body’ is largely demonstrated through the authentic enactment of core values in their leadership practice.

**Head, Heart, and Body.**

*Authentic leadership theory.*

Authentic leadership theory reflects a moral and ethical approach to leadership, one which is considered to take leadership to the next level (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Cashman, 1998, 2003; Eagly, 2005; George, 2003; Kerfoot, 2006; May, Chan, Hodges, & Avolio, 2003; Novicevic, Harvey, Buckley, Brown & Evans, 2006; Yukl, 2010; Zhu, May, & Avolio, 2004). The main focus of this theory is to develop leaders who work towards building positive environments and who conduct their business in an ethically and socially responsible way (Cooper, Scandura, & Schriesheim, 2005). A positive leadership framework is considered essential to authentic leadership (Marshall &
Heffes, 2004) as is the role of context (Yukl, 2010). Authentic leadership theory is considered to have developed from both transformational leadership theory and servant leadership theory (Yukl, 2010).

There have been several approaches presented to describe authentic leadership. Initially, several authors (Baugher, 2005; George, 2003; George et al., 2007; Kohnen, 2005) described authentic leadership through five components, “understanding your purpose, practicing solid values, leading with your heart, establishing connected relationships, and self discipline in getting results” (Marshall & Heffes, 2004, p. 10). Alongside these Cashman (2003) indicated six seeds for leadership growth: authenticity, purpose, essence, relationships, value creation and coaching. As authentic leadership theory developed, researchers (Cooper et al., 2005; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008) suggested a further four components. These include: “self-awareness”, “relational transparency”, “internalized moral perspective” and “balanced processing” (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 89). While some commonalities between transformational and authentic leadership exist, these four components have contributed to identifying authentic leadership as a leadership theory in its own right.

**Self-awareness,** the first of the four components appearing across both authentic and transformational leadership is emerging as a key component of effective and even exemplary leadership to be discussed in Chapter 3 (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). As described by Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May & Walumbwa (2005), self-awareness includes leaders’ values, identity, emotions, and goals. Through self-awareness, leaders are able to seek feedback and to improve the interactions they have with others. They are seen to be able to accurately describe what is going on, they demonstrate passion and trust in their leadership practice, and they achieve outcomes consistently (Gardner et al., 2005). Goffee and Jones (2006) confirmed the importance of an authentic leader to “know yourself, be yourself, disclose yourself” (p. 31). Authentic leaders solicit views that challenge their own deeply held positions and they listen carefully to different points of view before coming to conclusions (Walumbwa et al., 2008).

**Relational transparency** refers to the authentic leader demonstrating a high level of openness and self disclosure including trust to their followers (Gardner et al., 2005). Authentic leaders “act in accordance with their values, thoughts, emotions and beliefs, and understand the moral implications of their actions” (Harvey, Martinko, & Gardner,
Authentic leaders are described as transparent and demonstrate consistency between their core values, ethical reasoning and actions/behaviours. They focus on developing positive outcomes such as confidence, optimism, hope and resilience within themselves and their followers. They are well known and well respected for being real, sincere, and demonstrating honesty and integrity (Kerfoot, 2006).

Internalized moral perspective entails the internal motivation that drives the authentic leader as opposed to external forces that might otherwise direct the leader in other theories discussed earlier (Gardner et al., 2005). Authentic leaders demonstrate to others’ a genuine desire to understand their own leadership so that they might lead others more successfully (George, 2003). It is considered essential that these leaders learn from their own and other’s leadership experiences (George et al., 2007).

Balanced processing incorporates the authentic leader’s ability to collect and interpret information about self and others that is balanced including both positive and negative aspects (Gardner et al., 2005). Authentic leaders build “credibility and win the respect and trust of followers” (Avolio, Zhu, Koh, & Bhatia, 2004, p. 806) through the encouragement of diverse viewpoints, and the collaborative relationships they build with followers. They are seen by followers as authentic, because they do what they say they will do (Avolio et al., 2004; Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2005).

As authentic leadership theory has gained more momentum in the literature, three clarifying themes have emerged. These include: the expression of the true self, self-awareness, and integrity (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010; Yammarino, Dionne, Schriesheim, & Dansereau, 2008). These revised themes confirm some of the fundamental aspects of authentic leadership theory: self-awareness, reliability, and acting authentically. Authenticity is considered to be a developmental process that evolves over time; the result of life experiences (George, 2003; Harvey et al., 2006; Ladkin & Taylor, 2010). Authentic leaders not only spend time with family and friends, but they are physically active, spiritual, take part in community activities and are connected to the place in which they grew up (George, 2003).

The building and maintenance of a positive culture is considered to play a central role in being an authentic leader (Crawford, 2005). Authentic leaders value knowledge, questioning and experimentation, and facilitate the experiential learning of knowledge (Crawford, 2005). With experiential learning at the core of outdoor
education, this reasserts that authentic leadership theory potentially provides an appropriate model through which to explore outdoor leadership, and in particular, extraordinary outdoor leadership.

According to George (2003, 2006), authentic leaders do not demonstrate a universal list of “characteristics, traits, skills, or styles that led to their success. Rather, their leadership emerged from their life stories” (p. 130). Through the evaluation and reevaluation of their life experiences, these leaders are better able to understand who they are and to identify their core values (George, 2003; Ladkin & Taylor, 2010). In turn, George (2003) found that they had a better understanding of the importance of authenticity and how it affects their leadership. While he identified the possibility to learn from others and their leadership experiences, in order to be authentic he firmly stated “you need to be who you are, not try to emulate somebody else” (George et al., 2007, p. 130).

In Kouzes and Posner’s (1987, 1993, 1995, 1999, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2004, 2006, 2007) extensive research into exemplary leaders, those they described as performing beyond effective leaders, demonstrated close alignment with authentic leadership theory. While they did not name authentic leadership theory, they specifically identified exemplary leaders as those who “clarify their personal values and then express those values in their own style and voice” (Kouzes & Posner, 2004, p. 19). Their extensive research reinforced authentic leadership theory as a theory separate to transformational leadership theory and contributed to the understanding of leadership that was beyond effective; exemplary.

Authentic leadership is about empowering others on their own journey, to find their passion to lead through their unique life stories (Hannon, 2007). Through the pivotal focus of enacting core values through behaviours, (Mitchie & Gooty, 2005) including hope (Helland & Winston, 2005; Norman, Luthans, & Luthans, 2005), authentic leadership theory emphasises the use of the head, heart, and body. Authentic leaders are deeply aware of personal values, behaviours, knowledge, strengths and weaknesses (Cooper et al., 2005; Spreitzer, 2006). They are innately aware of the context in which they lead, and have been described as being “confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient and of high moral character” (Cooper et al., 2005, p. 478) and
demonstrate integrity (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). These core qualities are directly linked to their core values (Baugher, 2005).

Limitations of authentic leadership theory include the difficulty of measuring authenticity, and the complexity of determining the consistency between leader values and behaviours, and those of followers (Yukl, 2010). Being an authentic leader is a complex process that requires balancing and resolving tensions that occur between individual and group needs (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999;). Ladkin and Taylor (2010) suggest that by describing the way in which authentic leaders ‘are’ in the world aids in generating a greater understanding of this elusive quality: authenticity. With authentic leadership theory directly contributing to our understanding of extraordinary outdoor leadership as it built upon transformational leadership theory, one aspect remained unexplored; the spiritual. Spiritual leadership theory completes the review of the leadership literature as it turned the focus to leadership that demonstrated the use of the head, heart, body and soul.

**Head, Heart, Body and Soul.**

**Spiritual leadership theory.**

Spiritual leadership theory is the most recent leadership theory to emerge. The descriptions provided in the literature suggested leadership that utilises the head, heart, body and soul. It is not what spiritual leaders do, it is “about who they are” (Quinn, 2004, p. 4). As this theory becomes more mainstream, the term ‘spirit’ and comparable terms such as ‘soul’ and ‘being’ are appearing more regularly in the leadership literature in relation to spiritual leadership theory (Dent et al., 2005). Defined as “a personal life principle” (Reave, 2005, p. 656), a “calling” (Cashman, 2003, p. 9), “being” (Jaworski, 1998, p. 58) “how we are in the world” (Baugher, 2005, p. 15), and a “virtuous way of living” (Simpson, 2003, p. 176). ‘Spirituality’ relies on the ethical behavior of the leader suggesting links to authentic leadership and has been addressed as both an individual and collective phenomenon (Dent et al., 2005). According to Howard (2002), spirituality has four common connections: with self, with others, with nature, and with a higher power. The reemergence of spirituality in society is growing into a broad social movement where leaders with soul and spirit are seen to be contributing positively to their organisations (Benefiel, 2005; Bolman & Deal, 2001; 2006; Cacciope, 2000). Leadership is considered to be a “state of being” (Quinn, 2004, p.1) rather than a list of
traits, behaviours and skills. Spiritual leaders demonstrate a deep sense of connection to one another and the natural world (Howard, 2002; Quinn, 2004).

Spirituality articulates itself “not so much in words or preaching, but in the embodiment of spiritual values such as integrity, and in the demonstration of spiritual behavior such as expressing caring and concern” (Reave, 2005, p. 656). It has been described as a way of ‘being’ in the world that is steeped in attitudes and values such as passion, strength, courage, steadfastness, spirit, imagination, creativity, intuition, integrity, honesty, humility, meaning and magic (Bennis et al., 2004; Bolman & Deal, 2001, 2006; Cacioppe, 2000; Drath, 2001; Reave, 2005; Sinclair & Wilson, 2002). This way of ‘being’ in the world or ‘how we are in the world’ is best described as the core qualities of an individual, which are directly aligned with their core values, and enacted through their behaviors. These values or virtues come from deep within and are focused on a greater purpose for the common good and the world (Baugher, 2005) and can be learnt (Cloninger, 2005; Cummings, 2006). The spiritual dimension of leadership includes intention, attention, unique gifts and talents, gratitude, learning from experiences, a holistic approach, openness and trust (Houston & Sokolow, 2006). They also emphasised the need for leaders to remain true to their core values and the requirement of a level of commitment to the task of leading.

‘Being’ has been described as a “fundamental mode of existence or orientation to the world”; an orientation that is alive and authentic and functions from a person’s “orientation to life” stemming from their “inner activity” (Jaworski, 1998, p. 58). Another way of defining ‘being spiritual’ is “accepting what has happened…and waiting to see what are the true implications” (Pava & Primeaux, 2004, p.11). Spirituality is one way of looking at leadership success and has been used to describe leaders of “extraordinary identity” (Reave, 2005, p. 660).

Fry (2003) acknowledged that spiritual leadership is considered to be inclusive of other motivation based theories of leadership (transformational and authentic). For example, integrity has been considered integral to all three of the contemporary theories of leadership (Palanski & Yammarino, 2009). However at the same time, Fry (2003) argued that spiritual leadership remained distinct from transformational and authentic leadership theories. Dent et al (2005) confirmed this distinction when they suggested a building on effect where previous leadership theories continue to be utilised and
spiritual leadership adds to those previous theories, rather than superseding them entirely. For all intents and purposes, spiritual leadership aims to provide a holistic approach to leadership practice (Dent et al., 2005; Fry, 2003; Reave, 2005) that can be learnt and taught (Dent et al., 2005).

Fairholm (1996, 1998), was one of the first to use the term spiritual leadership. Since then, others have worked towards validating his model in an attempt to bring spiritual leadership to the fore (Dent et al., 2005; Fairholm, 2004; Fry, 2003; Fry, Vitucci & Cedillo, 2005; Reave, 2005; Scharmer, 2007; Senge et al., 2005). Encompassing “the values, attitudes, and behaviours that are necessary to intrinsically motivate self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival” (Fry, 2005, p. 17), spiritual leaders demonstrate a sense of calling or membership to their leadership (Dent et al., 2005; Fry, 2003; Reave, 2005).

Spiritual leaders who are at higher stages of spiritual development use their intuition and inner knowing openly (Dent et al., 2005). They selectively show their weaknesses, rely heavily on intuition to guide appropriate timing and action, manage followers with tough empathy, and reveal their differences (Goffee & Jones, 2000). Leading for “the good of humanity and the natural world” (Benefiel, 2005; Dent et al., p. 627) spiritual leaders are motivated, develop positive relationships with others, and they demonstrate “personal resilience” (Reave, 2005, p. 657). Through “capturing hearts, minds and souls” (Goffee & Jones, 2000, p. 64) spiritual leaders excel at inspiring their followers.

According to the literature, spiritual leaders provide a model of behaviour that clearly communicates their character and conduct through enacting their core values in their leadership practice (Reave, 2005). They demonstrate competence in their ability to: teach others, be credible, trust and inspire others and understand the group and how it functions (Fry, 2003). It is possible to identify spiritual leaders through values such as integrity, honesty, humility, kindness, respect, caring and concern, deep listening, appreciating others and personal reflection (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Howell & Avolio, 1995; Palanski & Yammarino, 2009). The more a leader integrates their spirituality in their work, the more successful they will be in their leadership practice (Benefiel, 2005). In order to be successful, spiritual leaders require a high level of awareness (Zohar & Marshall, 2000, 2004).
As spiritual leadership theory develops it is beginning to establish a social culture of its own. Spiritual leaders and their followers demonstrate genuine care, concern and appreciation for all, resulting in a sense of belonging, where individuals feel appreciated and understood (Helland & Winston, 2005). The term ‘follower’, takes on a whole new meaning in the context of spirituality. Leadership is not a possession to be owned by the leader, rather “an aspect of the community” (Dent et al., p. 645) and sense of belonging to a community, an inner life and meaningful work are considered pivotal (Duchon & Plowman, 2005; Kriger & Seng, 2005). The development of “productive communities” ensures a place where “people live the highest of human values, extending themselves for the instrumental purpose and for one another” (Quinn, 2004, p. 4).

A separate group of authors were identified through this review as addressing leadership in a way that contributes to spiritual leadership theory. ‘Theory U’ (Scharmer, 2007) and related concepts such as ‘synchronicity’ (Jaworski, 1998) and ‘presence’ (Senge et al., 2005) were seen to add depth to insights from spiritual leadership theory, and hence contributed to a greater understanding of the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership. These authors address the concepts of ‘magic’ and ‘alchemy’ in relation to leadership practice and discuss the importance of connections with the natural environment (Jaworski, 1998; Scharmer, 2007; Senge et al., 2005) considered to be pivotal when exploring leadership that happens predominantly in nature.

In order to create leadership that is more successful than effective or indeed exemplary, Scharmer (2007) identified the need for a different approach to leadership. In an attempt to describe this alternate style he used terms such as ‘calling’, ‘presence’ and a ‘deeper source of knowing’ which were similarly used in the spiritual leadership literature. Deep listening was identified as a crucial process that reflected leadership undertaken with the head, heart, body and soul. A complex approach to leadership with many layers, Scharmer (2007) presented a ‘new’ way of understanding and describing leadership that was more successful. A way of leading he described as being one in which leaders lead with an open heart, open mind, and open will. This he saw as being more relevant to the changing world in which we live and lead.
Scharmer’s (2007) description of leading from an open heart, mind and will, support the concept of ‘the heart’s code’ (Pearsall, 1998) which holds that by tapping into the energy of the heart, individuals are able to access their soul and their meaning for living. Operating from the heart, in turn, informs an individuals’ ability to find what Robinson (2009) called their ‘Element’; what people do naturally well and at the same time igniting their passion. Finding this Element requires aptitude, passion, attitude and opportunity, as well as intelligence, creativity and diversity, and being fully present. Such presence allows individuals to respond positively to change and an unknowable future: “when we are in our Element, we feel we are doing what we are meant to be doing and being who we’re meant to be” (Robinson, 2009, p. 90). It is characterised by a “sense of freedom and authenticity” (p. 90) and often means “being connected with other people who share the same passions and have a common sense of commitment” (p. 25). While few people may have found their Element, he argued that those who have will be capable of achieving extraordinary results in their leadership practice.

The need for vision in leadership has been identified as necessary in all three contemporary theories of leadership (Collins & Porras, 1994, Kouzes & Posner, 2006; Parameshwar, 2005). Senge et al (2005) suggested that visions need to come from “expressions of deep purposefulness, acted upon in the present moment” (p. 140) if they are to have the power needed to create change. These authors indicated that some leaders possess an “other ability, and that makes all the difference” (Senge et al., 2005, p. 85). They also identified a level of “knowing” (p. 85) that comes from the heart; a “wisdom awareness” (p.97); an interconnectedness with people and nature; and an awareness of self, others and nature, from which stems the ability to create ‘magic’. They associated magic with synchronicity, “what it feels like...to be part of a field knowing itself and to be taking action informed by the whole” (p. 160). These descriptions of being ‘present’ aligned with descriptions of spiritual leadership theory.

The concept of ‘synchronicity’ builds on servant leadership theory (Senge, 1992) and aids in understanding the theory U approach. It also contributes to Jaworski’s (1998) view of leadership that focuses on leadership that comes from within. Where it explores “predictable miracles” (p. 14) and “flow” (p. 45), or moments that occur as a result of synchronicity with the world around an individual. Similarly, ‘predictable miracles’ are concerned with a person’s ability to be present in the moment, committing and surrendering to the moment or synchronicity. And ‘flow’ encompasses moments of
“extraordinary clarity, focus, and concentration” (Jaworski, 1998, p. 45). These personal experiences of ‘inner transformation’ encouraged Jaworski (1998) to follow his heart resulting in a generated a feeling of flow. Following his heart, he remained in the state of flow and things happened around him in a seemingly effortlessly manner. The concept of ‘flow’ (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) and being in the moment or in your Element (Robinson, 2009) emerged through this review of literature as integral to spiritual leadership theory.

In addition to these authors, Cameron’s (2008) approach to positive leadership suggested strategies for leadership that would lead to ‘extraordinary’ performance. Three components he identified of positive leaders were: “positively deviant performance”, “affirmative bias”, and “focuses on facilitating the best of the human condition” (p. 2). Cameron (2008) described positively deviant performance as “intentional behaviours” that lead to leadership performance that dramatically exceeded the expected and/or common performance of leaders in an honourable way (p. 2). Affirmative bias referred to an ability to focus on “strengths”, “capabilities”, “positive communication” and “optimism” (p. 2). It also included the ability to value and to make the most of weaknesses and problems and focused on developing positive outcomes from them. The final aspect of positive leadership addresses a belief that there is good in all people and these leaders focus on the positive or virtuous in all people.

With positive deviance underpinning Cameron’s (2008) theory of positive leadership, it is important to identify the four key leadership strategies that contribute to the ability of a leader being positively deviant. These include the creation of a “positive climate”, building “positive relationships”, developing and engaging in “positive communication” and creating “positive meaning” for all individuals involved (p.14). These focus on a positive rather than negative approach to leadership and together they are seen to be interrelated. Cameron (2008) claims that by implementing these four strategies significant improvements can occur in both individuals and organisations. Embedded within this theory of leadership is the need for leaders to approach the task positively, to have clear personal values, and to understand that they have a greater purpose for leading than those imminently present. This theory claims that positive leadership defines extraordinary leadership practice, one that focuses on positively deviant behaviour in leaders and the development of this in their followers. Positive
leadership is described as being more successful than effective leadership, resulting in extraordinary performance (Cameron, 2008).

Without clear descriptions in the literature, limitations of spiritual leadership theory are concerned with how a leader’s values and skills actually influence their behaviour. Also unclear is exactly how the sense of calling relates to their success and whether or not some values are more important than others. While the various authors list similar values, it continues to remain unclear what kinds of life experiences might contribute to becoming a spiritual leader (Yukl, 2010). Perhaps it is not the experiences themselves. Rather how the individual reacts to those experiences and the reflection and learning that takes place from each (Atherton, 2007; Mezirow, 1991).

Perhaps, “a more comprehensive and integrated theory of leadership that acknowledges leaders as complex beings who mature and develop over time in relationship to spiritual, emotional, cognitive, social, and physical domains” (Dent et al., 2005, p. 648) is required to describe leadership practice that is extraordinary. Leadership is not comprised of a list of “behaviours and techniques but a state of being” (Quinn, 2004, p. 1) a leadership model that draws on multiple theories may in fact provide the necessary steps to leadership success that is extraordinary.

Collectively the various authors and the theories discussed in this section (e.g., Cameron, 2008; Dent et al., 2005; Fry 2003; Senge et al., 2005; Scharmer, 2007) together describe spiritual leadership and subsequently leadership considered to be more effective than exemplary; ‘extraordinary’. Spiritual leadership theory has been described as leadership that stems from the head, heart, body and soul; leadership that comes with and from, mindful thoughtful intention (Sharma, 2010). Additionally the authors implore leaders to examine leadership practice in their own setting more critically and they provide the language and concepts through which to consider aspects of leadership that might be spiritual. The emphasis placed on a sense of calling to the task of leadership (e.g., Dent et al., 2005) and the importance of a positive culture (e.g., Cameron, 2008) cannot be ignored. Spiritual leaders might best be described as “deeply committed human beings performing well beyond normal expectations” (Quinn, 2004, p. 4). Spiritual leadership theory, while it has built on both transformational and authentic leadership theory, is considered to remain a theory in its own right with its own emphasis: leading from the head, heart, body and soul.
Summary.

The three contemporary theories of leadership pivotal to this study take into account the findings across the leadership literature, where leadership is more than traits and characteristics – it is a way of ‘being’ (Daft, 2005; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Quinn, 2004; Sinclair & Wilson, 2002). The importance of the individual, relationships, leader self-awareness, use of intuition and knowing, and how leaders ‘are’ in the world (spiritual) is becoming more and more central to the leadership literature. Together with the intelligences, these theories provide the foundation that informs the growing understanding of leadership practice that has been identified as extraordinary in this study.

Section 3: Intelligences

While there have been several approaches to classifying the intelligences (Gardner, 1993; Regina & Pace, 2008), the three core intelligences believed to underpin all others are used here: rational, emotional and spiritual (Zohar & Marshall, 2000, 2004). Emotional intelligence has been identified as critical to both transformational and authentic leadership. A congruence between spiritual intelligence and spiritual leadership has also been indicated through this review of literature (Zohar & Marhsall, 2000, 2004). This section will discuss both emotional and spiritual intelligence in some detail as they have been highlighted as contributing to the contemporary theories of leadership (transformational, authentic and spiritual). It begins by providing a brief discussion of rational intelligence as it is seen to underpin and contribute to emotional and spiritual intelligence and hence the contemporary theories of leadership.

Rational Intelligence.

Rational intelligence measured and used to determine a person’s intellectual abilities for some time, has been described as “what we use to solve logical or strategic problems” (Zohar, & Marshall, 2000, p. 3). Alternatively emotional intelligence has been described as the ability to be aware of one’s own and others’ emotions and to use this information in a positive way (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2002). Spiritual intelligence, the newest of the three intelligences, is considered to help “address and solve problems of meaning and value” (Zohar & Marshall, 2000, p.4). The need for rational intelligence has been identified as required by the leadership theories entitled
‘preceding’ in this study and also linked to transformational leadership theory (Cerni et al., 2008).

Since the beginning of the twentieth century rational intelligence (IQ) has been the dominant measurement of a person’s intelligence and is considered to remain largely unchanged in a person’s lifetime. It is considered to be the “intelligence with which we think” (Zohar & Marshall, 2004, p.7). IQ measures the linear rational intelligence of a person and indicates a person’s ability to solve logical problems and engage in strategic thinking. Therefore rational intelligence is acknowledged for its positive contributions to leadership success. However, it is not described in great detail here to allow space for less attended to intelligences in the leadership literature: emotional and spiritual. It has been accepted that both emotional and spiritual intelligence have built upon the basis of rational intelligence in an attempt to more fully describe an individual’s intelligence (Zohar & Marshall, 2004).

**Emotional Intelligence.**

Mayer and Salovey (1993) were the first to suggest the concept of emotional intelligence. They realised that there was more to smart decision making than intellect (rational intelligence), which brought emotional intelligence to the fore (Fiedeldey-Van Dijk & Freedman, 2007). Their extensive research in combination with others has lead to a rich understanding of emotional intelligence and its relationship to human endeavours (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2000; Mayer, DiPaolo, & Salovey, 1990; Mayer & Salovey, 1993; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004; Mayer, Salovey, Gomberg-Kaufman, & Blainey, 1991). Wherever relationships exist, the need for emotional intelligence is considered to be essential (Antonakis, Ashkanasy, & Dasborough, 2009).

Several models developed to increase the understanding of emotional intelligence have been presented in the intelligence literature and they contain varying yet similar descriptions. These similarities and differences have been summarised in Table 2.2.
The use of positive emotions, awareness, intentionality, and purpose are identified across all four theories of emotional intelligence. These commonalities, together with a shared belief amongst authors that emotional intelligence can be learnt, play an increasingly important role in contemporary leadership theories and leadership training (Goleman, 1996, 1999; Goleman et al., 2002; Riggio, Murphy, & Pirozzolo, 2002; Sosik & Megerian, 1999).

Goleman (1996) suggested that emotional intelligence is a determinant of an individual’s personal and professional success. The ability of an individual to be aware of his/her own emotions and the emotions of others, in conjunction with the ability to use this information and knowing in a positive way, is considered to be essential (Goleman et al., 2002; Cooper & Sawaf, 1997). According to Goleman (1996), emotional intelligence requires selflessness, empathy, and the ability to read others. It has been agreed that it is a measureable entity (Carson, Carson & Birkenmeier, 2000) that directly impacts a person’s ability to lead (Cherniss, 2000; Goleman et al., 2002; Wolff, Pescosolido, & Druskat, 2002).

Emotional intelligence builds a level of self-awareness that allows leaders to manage their emotions effectively. In particular, the ability to manage negative emotions in a positive way, to be resilient or bounce back from negative emotions, all

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**Table 2.2**

*Summary of emotional intelligence theories*

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The accurate perception of one’s own and others emotions</td>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>Emotional literacy</td>
<td>Know yourself (awareness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of emotions to facilitate thinking</td>
<td>Self-discipline</td>
<td>Emotional fitness</td>
<td>Choose yourself (intentionality)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The emotional knowledge and understanding (judgement and empathy)</td>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>Emotional depth</td>
<td>Give yourself (purpose)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The regulation of one’s emotions in the promotion of personal growth</td>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>Emotional alchemy</td>
<td></td>
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Goleman (1996) suggested that emotional intelligence is a determinant of an individual’s personal and professional success. The ability of an individual to be aware of his/her own emotions and the emotions of others, in conjunction with the ability to use this information and knowing in a positive way, is considered to be essential (Goleman et al., 2002; Cooper & Sawaf, 1997). According to Goleman (1996), emotional intelligence requires selflessness, empathy, and the ability to read others. It has been agreed that it is a measureable entity (Carson, Carson & Birkenmeier, 2000) that directly impacts a person’s ability to lead (Cherniss, 2000; Goleman et al., 2002; Wolff, Pescosolido, & Druskat, 2002).

Emotional intelligence builds a level of self-awareness that allows leaders to manage their emotions effectively. In particular, the ability to manage negative emotions in a positive way, to be resilient or bounce back from negative emotions, all
lead to the development of a more successful and confident self (Barbuto Jr. & Burbach, 2006; Kellet, Humphrey, & Sleeth, 2006). This resilience is also considered to be central to effective leadership and when leaders fail to read the emotions of a group accurately, they may find themselves creating dissonance and may send unnecessary negative messages to followers or the group (Goleman et al., 2002).

Cooper and Sawaf (1997) identified four cornerstones of emotional intelligence including: emotional literacy, emotional fitness, emotional depth and emotional alchemy. They also suggested links to spiritual leadership theory. This description of emotional intelligence places considerable emphasis on attributes such as heart, authenticity, and a sense of purpose, along with honesty, energy, intuition, presence, and commitment, all of which are identified in spiritual leadership theory. The leader’s sense of purpose, or reason for leading, is believed to be required to come from within the leader, for a purpose greater than their own benefit, if truly great leadership is to ensue (Harkins & Swift, 2009).

Intuition is considered to work best when a leader listens to his/her ‘gut sense’ building on the other data they gather to make decisions. It requires becoming totally involved in the role of leader which requires almost a “letting go of the outside world” (Anderson, 2007, p. 74). Osho (2001) believed that intuition cannot be reduced to the intellect or rational, rather it is “the functioning of your heart” (p. 2). Gladwell (2005) described the ability to ‘know’ something, is achieved by following our instincts and paying attention to those instincts in the first few seconds of encountering something or someone. It is this ‘blink’ or moment, where the individual ‘knows’ or ‘sees’ the truth (Anderson, 2007; Gladwell, 2005). This concept of truly ‘knowing’ appears regularly in the literature in relation to intuition (Anderson, 2007; Atkinson, & Claxton, 2000; Gladwell, 2005; Osho, 2001, 2006; Pearsall, 1998; Thomas, 2008b; Zohar & Marshall, 2004).

The ability to apply not just the technical knowledge and skills to a situation, but to also apply life wisdom to decision making is central to emotional intelligence, and leadership success (Barbuto Jr. & Burbach, 2006, Cacioppe, 1997; Cavallo & Brienza, 2001; Fiedeldey-Van Dijk & Freedman, 2007). The emotionally intelligent leader time and again “maintains a consistent level of warmth and openness to all...without preference on personal similarities or history of friendship” (Ryback, 1998, p. 11). They
are the ones “who are comfortable in their own skins. They understand what they are about – they understand their purpose in life and their strengths” (p. 5). Emotionally intelligent leadership “looks and sounds different” (Freedman, 2008, p. 5) and is about trust and mutual respect.

High levels of emotional intelligence are considered to be only displayed by a few leaders resulting in increased performance, quality of life and lasting value they create for others. In his descriptions of emotionally intelligent leaders, Freedman (2008) identified the importance of the spirit in leadership when he suggested that we teach too much about external leadership and not enough about internal leadership. Founded in a belief that humans are fundamentally spiritual, driven by an innate need to understand our purpose in life that is constant, spiritual intelligence extends from rational and emotional intelligence to include the spirit (Zohar & Marshall, 2000).

**Spiritual Intelligence.**

Spiritual intelligence has been identified as necessary for rational and emotional intelligence, requiring a level of authenticity where the focus is on how we ‘are’ in the world (Cook et al., 2004). While spiritual leadership is yet to identify links and/or to draw on spiritual intelligence, the literature has identified its role in successful leadership practice (Zohar & Marhsall, 2000, 2004). Descriptions of spiritual intelligence associate closely with descriptions of spiritual leadership suggesting a clear link between the two. The core aspects of the spiritually intelligent individual include: self-awareness, deep vision, values, ability to learn from experiences, commitment to beliefs, connected individuals who do not shy away from weaknesses, humble, intuitive, compassionate, spontaneous, creative, and courageous (Buzan, 2001; Cook et al., 2004; Dalbecq, Liebert, Mostyn, Nutt, & Walter, 2004; Pava & Primmeau, 2004; Zohar & Marhsall, 2000, 2004). These aspects were also identified in the spiritual leadership literature (Bolman & Deal, 2001, 2006; Drath, 2001; Reave, 2005).

Spiritual intelligence provides leaders with a sense of purpose considered essential if they are to be “steadfast in change” (Cook et al., 2004, p.8). It is more about exploring questions than having answers. Individuals identified as having a high level of spiritual intelligence focus on the whole person “the mind, the body and the soul” (Cook et al., 2004, p.73). Considered to be the “ultimate intelligence” (Zohar & Marshall, 2000, p.4) and less tangible than the other intelligences, spiritual intelligence is
dependent on the individual’s self-awareness, self-confidence, willingness to be open to
new things and motivation to explore their own spirituality (Zohar & Marshall, 2000).

According to Cook et al. (2004), spiritual intelligence is “about demonstrating
your true self, allowing your identity and purpose to shine through in a way that is
attractive and potentially inspiring for others” (p. 73). It allows people to rise above
their egos and self-centeredness for a “deeper understanding of oneself” (Cook et al.,
2004, p.74). It is not a one size fits all theory (Cavanagh, Hanson, Hanson, & Hinojoso,
2004) rather it focuses on the heart and requires that our spiritual journey begins only
when we open our hearts and minds (Scharmer, 2007; Weiss, Skelley, Haughey, & Hall,
2004). While spiritual intelligence resonates clearly with spiritual leadership, there
continues to be some timidity towards its use in the leadership and management
literature (Weiss et al., 2004). Perhaps this extends from its relatively recent elucidation
in the literature.

For spiritual intelligence to grow and develop, both culture and community are
essential (Pava, 2004). It has been suggested that the spiritually intelligent individuals
have thought through: “their life and purpose; their role goals and contribution; their
value to ‘the world’; and how they can personally grow and develop self awareness”
(Cook et al., 2004, p. 7). Knowledge of spiritual intelligence deepens our understanding
of spiritual leadership theory and through this connection, contributes to our
understanding of extraordinary outdoor leadership.

**Conclusion.**

This chapter has presented the literature considered pertinent to understanding
the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership. It did so in three main
sections: outdoor leadership, leadership theories, and intelligences since they inform the
contemporary theories of leadership. It also highlighted the varying use of the head,
heart, body and soul across the leadership theories.

This review of literature has emphasised above all else, that leadership is
difficult and complex (Quirk & Fandt, 2000). More specifically the review of literature
has identified: that many of the preceding leadership theories remain relevant today; the
contemporary theories are inextricably linked with the intelligences; and the head, heart,
body and soul is a useful, clear and holistic approach to classifying leadership theories.
The exploration of the broader leadership literature has been conducted and theories categorised according to head, heart, body, and soul, the main leadership theories identified in the outdoor leadership literature have been summarised in Table 2.3. The summary reinforces the gaps in the outdoor leadership literature in terms of minimal engagement with the contemporary theories of leadership. The theories in italics indicate those which have only recently appeared, and/or have received limited treatment in the outdoor leadership literature (Brymer & Gray, 2006; Brymer et al., 2010; Hayashi & Ewert, 2006; Martin et al., 2006), or are emerging through this study and subsequent papers (Smith, 2009; Smith & Penney, 2010).

Table 2.3
Summary of outdoor leadership theories, contemporary leadership theories and intelligences according to the new categories: head, heart, body and soul

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘New’ Categories</th>
<th>Outdoor Leadership Theories</th>
<th>Contemporary Leadership Theories</th>
<th>Intelligences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Leadership style approach</td>
<td>Transformational Leadership Theory</td>
<td>Rational</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership orientation approach</td>
<td>Transformational Leadership Theory</td>
<td>Emotional</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Situational Leadership Theory</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Conditional Theory of Outdoor Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head and Heart</td>
<td>Transformational Leadership Theory</td>
<td>Transformational Leadership Theory</td>
<td>Emotional</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Servant Leadership Theory</td>
<td>Authentic Leadership Theory</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Authentic Leadership Theory</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head, Heart, Body and Soul</td>
<td>Spiritual Leadership Theory</td>
<td>Spiritual Leadership Theory</td>
<td>Spiritual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following chapter draws together the outdoor leadership literature and the broader leadership literature in order to clarify the interchangeable use of terms that exist in the literature. It also addresses the varying levels of leadership success (effective, exemplary and extraordinary) and reinforces the new categorisation of head, heart, body and soul that emerged from this review. Links between the contemporary theories of leadership and the levels of leadership success that best describe them are also identified. Through clarifying the levels with the descriptions of the leadership theories, in particular the contemporary theories, a conceptual framework was developed. This framework provided the focus and direction for exploring the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership in this study.
Chapter 3  Conceptual Framework

This chapter continues the analysis of the literature as it brings together the contemporary leadership theories and intelligences with the outdoor leadership literature in the development of a conceptual framework. The process resulted in the identification of three levels of leadership success: effective, exemplary and extraordinary. It also confirmed the new categorisation of leadership theories according to leaders’ use of the head, heart, body and soul used in the review of literature (Chapter 2). The resulting conceptual framework acknowledges the ongoing value of the outdoor leadership literature. At the same time, it brings to the fore the contemporary theories of leadership and the relevant intelligences as they were seen to directly contribute to determining the characteristics, values, skills and behaviours of extraordinary outdoor leaders and how these are demonstrated in their leadership practice. All of the figures presented in this chapter were developed through this doctoral research by the researcher. Some have been adapted from previously published versions (Smith & Penney, 2010).

Interchangeable Use of Terms of Leadership Success in the Literature

Across the leadership literature and in professional contexts, judgements about levels of leadership success are inevitable while the improvement of leadership quality remains central to all leadership training and practice (Collins, 2001, 2005; Collins & Porras, 1994; Daniels & Daniels, 2005; Kotter, 2007; Lexa 2009a, 2009b). As a result, much of the literature is dedicated to improving leadership practice. In doing so, adjectives such as good, great, excellent and exceptional, to name a few, have been used for describing varying leadership success (Collins, 2001, 2005). For the purposes of increasing clarity three terms were identified and consistently utilised in this study: effective, exemplary and extraordinary. These terms were seen to be most constantly applied to the various judgements of leadership success across the leadership literature. The following section draws on both the outdoor leadership literature and the contemporary theories of leadership to establish progressive links between these three terms in order to articulate the qualitative differences of the varying levels of leadership success found to exist in the literature.
Effective Leadership

As indicated in the previous chapter, the outdoor leadership literature continues to regularly make use of situational leadership theory and conditional outdoor leadership theory in its descriptions of what it terms effective leadership (e.g., Martin et al., 2006; Priest & Gass, 2005; Stremba & Bisson, 2009). Brymer and Gray (2006) extended the use of these theories to describe effective outdoor leadership when they drew on transformational leadership theory. They recognised that

“…on the surface the leader needs to consider certain contextual or situational happenings and demonstrate appropriate behaviours. Yet on deeper reflection a leader in outdoor education also needs to consider their own and others values, beliefs, and other personal qualities” (p. 14).

This definition of effective outdoor leadership demonstrates a drawing on effect from multiple theories: situational leadership theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993), conditional outdoor leadership theory (Priest & Chase, 1989) and transformational leadership theory (Bass, 1999). Linked to situational leadership theory is the need to consider the various situations encountered by leaders. Conditional outdoor leadership theory builds on from this in its acknowledgement of the different contextual aspects faced by outdoor leaders including varying environmental, social and personal conditions. Consequently, Brymer and Gray (2006) identified the merits of drawing on multiple theories of leadership in order to describe the complexities that are effective outdoor leadership. More specifically, it reinforced the need to look to multiple theories in order to inform judgements of leadership success, in particular, effective outdoor leadership.

In his descriptions of a good outdoor leader Graham (1997) identified these leaders as individuals who value both the head and heart in leadership decision making. These descriptions of a good leader linked directly with descriptions of transformational leadership theory. Quinn’s (2004) work was found to contribute to all three levels of leadership success in varying ways and confirmed the need to draw on multiple theories for extraordinary leadership success. Here in his emphasis on the individual when he emphasised, “it is not what they do; it is about who they are” (p.4). The focus on the individual in leadership was also reinforced in the transformational leadership literature where transformational leaders were described as individuals who are motivational,
adaptive and who value and build relationships with others (Komives, Mainella, Longerbeam, Osteen & Owen, 2006; Shamir, House & Arthur, 1993). This emphasis on values, beliefs and personal qualities in individuals has also been considered essential to effective outdoor leadership (Froude & Polley, 2008; Hayllar, 2005; Ogilvie, 2005).

The development of leadership in others, so that growth continues when the leader is no longer there (Judge & Piccolo, 2004) has been identified as the distinguishing factor of transformational leadership theory from situational and conditional theories of leadership, as well as the use of the heart in leadership practice. This development of leadership in others was identified in the literature as central to transformational leadership and is also considered to be pivotal to outdoor leadership practice. Transformational leadership theory helps to elucidate what might be argued is already happening, albeit inherently rather than specifically, in outdoor leadership in relation to the development of leadership in others. This aspect of leadership has been previously unattended to where emphasis has been on situational leadership theory and COLT.

The work of Brymer and Gray (2006) in combination with Hayashi and Ewert (2006), and more recently Brymer et al (2010) present a strong case for the use of transformational leadership theory in their descriptions of effective outdoor leaders. With transformational leadership consistently discussed in relation to effective leadership in the broader leadership literature (e.g., Hofman & Jones, 2005; van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg 2005), it is identified in Figure 3.1 as the defining theory for understanding leadership considered to be effective and a style that engages both the head and the heart.
Figure 3.1 Evolution of leadership: Effective leadership

In describing and understanding effective leadership practice, transformational leadership theory is viewed as essential as it builds on situational leadership and outdoor leadership theory. Together they provide a clearer understanding of what these effective outdoor leaders do in practice, with transformational leadership theory remaining the dominant approach as it encompasses the others. Transformational leadership theory is also pertinent in considering the second of the qualitative terms of leadership success: exemplary. As illustrated in Figure 3.2 and discussed in the next section, the critical point of distinction between effective and exemplary leadership practice is the addition of authentic leadership theory and the use of the body.

Figure 3.2 Evolution of leadership: Effective and exemplary
Exemplary Leadership

Exemplary leadership has been described in the general leadership literature with reference to both transformational leadership theory and authentic leadership theory (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; George, 2003; George et al., 2007; Kouzes & Posner, 1999, 2004; Sosik & Jung, 2010). According to Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) authentic transformational leadership relies on a solid moral foundation of values that are considered legitimate. While sometimes considered together, authentic leadership theory can also be distinguished from transformational leadership theory through its focus on the enactment of core values in leadership behaviour. This builds on the use of the head and heart in leadership, by adding the enacting of authentic behaviours through the body. While Kouzes and Posner (2004) did not articulate authentic leadership theory, their descriptions of exemplary leaders closely aligned with it. When they identified exemplary leaders, they described them as leaders who “clarify their personal values and then express those values in their own style and voice” (Kouzes & Posner, 2004, p. 19). Exemplary leaders operate from an overarching sense of purpose that motivates them through the many challenges they face (Sosik & Jung, 2010).

Outdoor leadership occurs in a specific context that requires leaders to be self aware, demonstrate good judgement, earn trust, create leadership in others and use their intuition, compassion, common sense and courage to lead (Froude & Polley, 2008; Graham, 1997; Martin et al., 2006; Ogilvie, 2005; Priest & Gass, 1997, 2005). With values becoming more central when describing leadership effectiveness, exemplary leaders are distinguished from effective leaders in their demonstration of attributes associated with both transformational and authentic leadership theory. Exemplary leadership is presented here as more refined than effective leadership and is specifically distinguished by the leader’s focus on the use of the head, heart and body in his/her leadership practice.

When discussing exemplary leaders Quinn (2004) stated that “the majority are normal. And a few are extraordinary in that they know how to enter a creative personal state that gives rise to a collective state” (p. 4). An exemplary leader through their own creativity is able to create a collective group out of the individuals present. This collective state also connotes the building of a culture that the individuals feel they belong to (Quinn, 2004). Figure 3.3 shows that the introduction of the next level of
leadership success and identifies qualitative links to spiritual leadership theory which provides the critical distinction between exemplary and the final level, extraordinary leadership.

**Figure 3.3 Evolution of leadership: Effective, exemplary and extraordinary leadership**

**Extraordinary Leadership**

Several authors in the broader leadership literature have indicated the need for extraordinary leaders (e.g., Cameron, 2008; Collins, 2005; Ciulla, 1998; Dent et al., 2005; Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Quinn’s (2004) account of leadership highlighted the connections between descriptors that feature in spiritual leadership theory (including ethical and moral leadership) and explanations of leadership that have been considered to be extraordinary, golden, or ideal in both the outdoor leadership and broader leadership literature (Cameron, 2008; Daft, 2005; Graham, 1997; Kouzes & Posner, 1995; Ogilvie, 2005; Priest & Gass, 1997; Scharmer, 2007; Tozer, Fazey & Fazey, 2007). As pointed out in the previous chapter, spiritual leadership theory draws on a number of concepts and theories (e.g., spiritual leadership, ethical and moral leadership, Theory U, Presence, positive leadership). Together they describe leadership in a way that reflects spiritual leadership theory.

The leadership literature has traditionally searched for behaviours, techniques, practices, even tools, that can be repeated elsewhere. The literature continues to support this approach (e.g., Zaccaro, 2007), however it also considers the notion that truly successful or extraordinary leadership begins with the individual, who they are and their capacity to build productive communities (Quinn, 2004). The majority of leaders were
described in the literature as normal with only a few identified as “extraordinary”,
particularly in relation to their ability to develop and create a “collective state”,
“productive community” or culture (Quinn, 2004, p. 4). Extraordinary leaders are
considered to be aligned with the universe and greater purpose and live from clear core
values and principles (Quinn, 2004; Thoreau, 1966).

In the literature related to outdoor leadership, Thomas’ (2008a, 2008b) research
into facilitator education and practice identified the importance of ‘presence’ in
facilitation, developed through a greater sense of self-awareness and sense of ‘being’.
These attributes he argued, contributed to effective facilitation. However, the attributes
he described link more closely with descriptions of spiritual leadership theory in his use
of terms such as ‘presence’ and ‘being’, at the same time suggesting a deeper level of
functioning than effective and potentially extraordinary facilitation or leadership.

In addition to Thomas (2008a, 2008b), Froude and Polley (2008) stated that
“good leaders are life learners, who portray many fine qualities developed over a long
period” (p. 272). They listed some of what they termed to be the “main qualities that
effective leaders display” (Froude & Polley, 2008, p. 272) including integrity, intuition,
self-motivation, humility, loyalty, compassion/empathy, confidence, courage and
judgement. While it was unclear where this list emerged from, it was interesting to note
the inclusion of qualities such as intuition, integrity and courage which had not been
previously commonly identified in the outdoor leadership literature and yet were
frequently referred to in the spiritual leadership literature. While they attributed these
qualities to effective leaders, the inherent links that exist between them and spiritual
leadership theory, suggest both Thomas (2008a, 2008b) and Froude and Polley (2008)
were actually referring to qualities that might be best attributed to extraordinary outdoor
leaders.

However, in addition to high levels of self-awareness and the development of
leadership in others (transformational leadership), and emphasising the enactment of
authentic behaviours (authentic leadership), the literature further suggested that
extraordinary outdoor leaders demonstrate commitment to a learning journey that is
collaborative, they experience a sense of calling, demonstrate a commitment to a greater
purpose and present a specific way of ‘being’ in the world (spiritual leadership) (e.g.,
Dent et al., 2005; Reave, 2005). Committed to a greater cause than their immediate
responsibilities spiritual or extraordinary leaders lead from a deep ‘place’ within (Scharmer, 2007; Senge et al., 2005). Spiritual leadership theory specifically emphasises a holistic approach to leadership that integrates the use of the three contemporary theories of leadership and hence the head, heart, body and soul.

**Head, heart, body and soul.**

The categorisation of head heart body and soul which emerged alongside the development of the conceptual framework adds depth to the understanding of the three levels of leadership success proposed and extended the conceptual framework. The identification of the levels was initially undertaken for their common appearance and use across the literature which it was hoped would provide clarity across the theories. These levels provided clarity as they linked clearly with the contemporary theories identified and used in the framework. By also categorising the theories as to their various engagement with the head, heart, body and soul, greater clarification of the levels was achieved.

This relatively simplistic approach to categorising or classifying the leadership theories also brought some of the preceding theories back into focus. For example, servant leadership appeared in the head, heart, and body categorisation indicating that it might also contribute to our understanding of exemplary leadership (Table 2.3, p. 61). While this brings to light new questions including how other theories might contribute to our understanding of the levels of leadership presented here, it must be left for future research. The new categories of head, heart, body and soul contributed to the understanding of effective, exemplary and particularly extraordinary outdoor leadership as these levels were informed by transformational, authentic and spiritual leadership theories. A summary of the levels of leadership (effective, exemplary, and extraordinary), the contemporary theories and ‘new’ categories are represented in figure 3.4.
Through an exploration of the contemporary theories of leadership in conjunction with the outdoor leadership literature, a conceptual framework was developed. It is based on a contention that while the contemporary theories of leadership directly inform our understanding of extraordinary outdoor leadership practice, extraordinary outdoor leaders are highly skilled in the areas of expertise required to lead in the outdoors. This continued use of situational and conditional theories of leadership along with the core competencies in extraordinary outdoor leadership practice is represented in the framework by the inclusion of the arrowed box ‘Outdoor Leadership’. A clear understanding and continued engagement with these aspects of outdoor leadership are considered essential before the leader and/or reader engages with the contemporary theories of leadership and the levels of leadership success: effective, exemplary and extraordinary. Figure 3.5 presents the conceptual framework.
Figure 3.5 A conceptual framework for extraordinary outdoor leadership

The framework also highlights the intelligences (rational, emotional and spiritual) as they were seen to add to the contemporary theories of leadership as discussed in Chapter 2. The contribution of the ‘Intelligences’ to the contemporary leadership theories is represented in this framework with an arrowed box which emphasises their sometimes obvious, sometimes subversive offerings to the contemporary leadership theories. The inclusion of leader characteristics, values, skills and behaviours reflects the literature’s continued use of attributes and traits seen to contribute to understanding and describing different levels of leadership success (Daft, 2005; Judge et al., 2009; Zaccaro, 2007).

Together with the review of literature, the resulting framework suggests that _extraordinary_ leaders will draw on all three of the contemporary theories (transformational, authentic, and spiritual) that variously feature across the contemporary theories of leadership. The way in which these leaders may prove to be _extraordinary_ in their leadership practice is through their demonstration of
characteristics, values, skills and behaviours of all three contemporary theories. The construction of the framework for its purposeful exploration of extraordinary outdoor leadership allows for the demonstration of attributes from spiritual leadership theory, as well as transformational and authentic leadership theory by the participants in this study. This will determine their level of actual leadership practice.

In this framework, definitions of characteristics, values, skills and behaviours are shared for clarity. ‘Characteristics’ refer to a “feature or quality” considered to be “typical” (Turnbull, Lea, Parkinson Philips, Francis, Webb et al., 2010, p. 243) of individuals. ‘Values’ comprise aspects considered to be of great merit, “worth” or “importance” (p. 1707). ‘Skills’ include a person’s “particular ability or type of ability” (p. 1441). And ‘behaviours’ embrace the observable actions in response to internal and external stimuli, specifically, the way in which someone “behaves or functions in a particular situation” (p.124).

Conclusion

The review of literature within and beyond the outdoor education field has resulted in a clarification of the qualitative differences in leadership success: effective, exemplary and extraordinary. It has also provided a new way of categorising leadership theories through the leader’s use of the head, heart, body and soul in their leadership practice. The resulting conceptual framework proposes links to the contemporary theories of leadership that have not been previously made in relation to outdoor leadership. At the same time it acknowledges the ongoing relevance of well accepted theories and approaches to outdoor leadership (trait theory, situational leadership, COLT, and core competencies) along with the role of the intelligences in relation to deepening our understanding of the contemporary leadership theories.

With an underlying specific intention to improve leadership practice through developing a greater understanding of extraordinary outdoor leadership, this framework provides one way through which to extend our depth of understanding of outdoor leadership in general. The framework brings together the three contemporary theories of leadership (transformational, authentic and spiritual) and aligns these with three levels of leadership success (effective, exemplary and extraordinary) and the new categorisation of leadership theories (head, heart, body and soul). It suggests that the various levels of leadership success draw on a number of theories in their leadership
practice. For example, effective leaders draw on transformational leadership theory, exemplary leaders draw on both transformational and authentic leadership theories and extraordinary leaders draw on all three contemporary leadership theories. Through the engagement with the contemporary theories the framework also indicates emotional and spiritual intelligence for the various levels. In the case of outdoor leaders specifically, the use of the outdoor leadership literature due to the specific context is also acknowledged through the framework as essential. Finally, it confirms the various use of the head, heart, body and soul in leadership of varying levels. The following chapter presents the methodology which supports this research project.
Chapter 4  Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology and methods used to explore the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leaders as guided by the study’s research questions (see Chapter 1). This study utilised a qualitative case study approach (Stake, 2005) reported in a narrative style (Creswell, 2007; Simons, 2009) and located within the interpretive paradigm (Neumann, 1997). Methods used to answer the research questions consisted of interviews, observations and the collection of supporting documentation common to both case study research and the interpretive paradigm (Boeije, 2010; Cresswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Mertens, 2005; Neuman, 1997; Simons, 2009; Yin, 1994, 2009). The research process was guided by the conceptual framework developed specifically for this study to provide focus and direction (Chapter 3) (Simons, 2009).

The methodology is presented here in two main sections. Section 1 describes the theoretical underpinnings, the interpretive paradigm and case study research reported in a narrative style. Section 2 attends to the research process and presents sample selection, the timeline, methods, data collection, data analysis, ethical issues, and limitations.

Section 1: Theoretical Underpinnings

Qualitative research was selected for this study for its focus on “understanding the dynamics present within single settings” (Huberman & Miles, 2002, p. 8) where understanding contextual factors was central to understanding perceptions that may change over time (Mertens, 2005). The need to gain a detailed understanding of extraordinary outdoor leadership was a requirement of the research questions (Bazeley, 2007; Gillham, 2000). In an attempt to generate new knowledge that may be transferable to other settings, this research was directly influenced by the guiding interpretive paradigm and conceptual framework (Mertens, 2005; Simons, 2009).

Interpretive Paradigm.

Underpinning methodological choices lie assumptions, including different ways of viewing the world that shape the way in which research is conducted (Crotty, 1998). More concerned with understanding the “feelings and world views” of the participants than with “testing the laws of human behaviour” (Neumann, 1997, p. 73), the
interpretive paradigm provided a suitable approach for this study and allowed for flexibility in the choice of methods considered reasonable for this research project as it unfolded (Sparkes, 1992).

The perspectives of extraordinary outdoor leaders were explored, rather than those of their peers in an attempt to gain an insider’s point of view (Gillham, 2000; Neuman, 1997) of being an extraordinary outdoor leader. With the emphasis on studying the extraordinary outdoor leaders ‘as they are’ (Punch, 2009; Sparkes, 1992), this study took into account the social interactions they had with their peers, their students, and the researcher in the construction of knowledge (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Mason, 2002; Mertens, 2005; Neumann, 1997). With context pivotal to the interpretive paradigm and to being an outdoor leader, all of the participants were observed in their leadership contexts (Cresswell, 2005, 2007; O’Donohue, 2007; Neumann, 1997; Willis, Jost, & Nilkanta, 2007). The way in which participants make meaning of how they lead, and in turn how others lead, was also deemed relevant. An interpretive approach allowed for taking “everyday experience” and asking “how meaning is constructed and social interaction negotiated in social practices” (Scott & Usher, 1999, p. 25) of extraordinary outdoor leaders.

**Methodology.**

Case study research is common to research conducted in the interpretive paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Simons, 2009) reported in a narrative style (Stake, 2005). Case study research has also been deemed an appropriate methodology for exploring educational practice (Merriam, 1988; Neumann, 1997; Punch, 2009; Simons, 2009) in this case, extraordinary outdoor leadership in outdoor education.

**Case Study Research.**

Case study research was selected for this study due to its focus on understanding the dynamics within predominantly single settings (Stake, 2005; Yin, 1994; 2009). In addition, its ability to provide ‘thick description’ (Eisenhardt, 2002; Geertz, 1973) of a particular phenomenon (extraordinary outdoor leadership) in a specific context (outdoor education) contributed to its selection (Cresswell, 2007; Denscombe, 1998; Simons, 2009; Stake, 2005). The relationships (with peers, students, and the researcher), experiences and/or processes (programs) occurring within those ‘single settings’ were also deemed to be beneficial to answering the research questions (Gillham, 2000;
provided much needed flexibility in the choice of methods as the study unfolded, the in-
depth study of a few cases and multiple perspectives allowed for the determination of
critical factors evident in the observation, allowed for learning through stories, and
encouraged the engagement of participants in the research process (Cresswell, 2007;
Denscombe, 1998; Eisenhardt, 2002; Gomm et al., 2000; Merriam, 1988, 2009;
Mertens, 2010; Neumann, 1997; Punch, 2009; Simons, 2009; Stake, 2005; Yin, 1994;
2009).

Specifically, a ‘collective case study’ approach was selected (Cresswell, 2007;
Punch, 2009; Simons, 2009; Stake, 2005) where one phenomenon or “unit of analysis”
(extraordinary outdoor leaders) was chosen (Hatch, 2002, p. 30) and several cases (five)
were selected across Australia to explore the fundamental nature of extraordinary
outdoor leadership (Simons, 2009). Each case was located within a ‘bounded system’
(Merriam, 2009; Punch, 2009; Stake, 2005), being extraordinary outdoor leaders
leading in an outdoor education setting or context. The aim was to capture the
individual cases in their uniqueness or particularity (Stake, 2005). This is reflected in
the presentation of findings in a narrative style, which gave voice to participants
(Gomm, et al., 2000; Simons, 2009) through the dedication of individual chapters to
each case and the sharing of personal stories.

The exploration of patterns that emerged across the cases (Neumann, 1997;
Simons, 2009) was also addressed and these are presented in the discussion and
conclusion chapters. The framework helped to provide some clarity around what was a
broad area of literature and a focus through which to explore the fundamental nature of
extraordinary outdoor leadership (Eisenhardt, 2002; Gillham, 2000; Simons, 2009).
Getting to know the literature and individual cases intimately and simultaneously was
central to this study and assisted in the generation and presentation of findings through
the resulting individual narratives in Chapters 6-10 (Gillham, 2000; Simons, 2009).

The potential of multiple emerging realities of what it means to be an
extraordinary outdoor leader was monitored, considered and expected (Sparkes, 1992).
The presence of these multiple realities/perspectives enabled a richer, deeper analysis
than would otherwise have been possible (Keats, 2009). Left with multiple
interpretations, a selection of stories/tales was chosen by the researcher on the basis of relevance to answering the research questions (Sparkes, 1992).

The case study approach also allowed for the daily aspects of the extraordinary outdoor leaders’ lives to be studied in the naturally occurring social situations in which they were leading (Cresswell, 2007; Gillham, 2000; Gomm, et al., 2000; Neumann, 1997; Simons, 2009; Sparkes, 1992; Yin, 1994, 2009). The presence of the researcher, and the effect this may have had on those being researched, including the subjectivities of the researcher were recognised (Sparkes, 1992), monitored and acknowledged throughout (Simons, 2009). The relationship between the researcher and participants are described in this chapter (see Section 2) as these were considered to be an inherent part of the research process and resultant findings and could not be eliminated or removed entirely (Sparkes 1992). Because some of the settings were known and some were unknown to the researcher, in order to ensure all cases were approached similarly, each case was approached as if they were totally new (Gillham, 2000).

The emerging ‘thick descriptions’ (Geertz, 1973) presented in narratives (Sparkes, 2002; Phoenix & Sparkes, 2009) provided language for the everyday experiences (Neumann, 1997) of what it was like to be an extraordinary outdoor leader and assisted in the ‘unpacking’ of their characteristics, values, skills and behaviours. These thick descriptions common to this methodology provided a “detailed and intricate description” (Denscombe, 1998, p. 175) of participants and events. Through the provision of such detail, determinations of whether or not the “researcher’s interpretation of the phenomenon is justifiable and relevant for other circumstances” (Denscombe, 1998, p. 175) was considered. Overall, case study research provided the opportunity to develop an holistic view of the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership within outdoor education (Punch, 2009; Stake, 2005).

Reporting in Narrative.

Narrative is now considered to be a well documented field within the qualitative research literature (Clandinin, 2007a, 2007b; Clandinin & Connelley, 2000; James, 2007; Keats, 2009; Phoenix & Sparks, 2009; Reissman, 2008; Sparkes, 2002) and a methodology appropriate for reporting findings in case study research (Simons, 2009; Stake, 2005). “People live storied lives” (Creswell, 2005, p. 473); they tell and share stories and learn through both the telling and the hearing of those stories (Creswell,
Hence, there are many ways in which stories might be told (Freedman, 2006; Mertens, 2010; Simons, 2009; Phoenix & Sparkes, 2009; Sparkes, 2002). The “whole story exceeds anyone’s knowing and anyone’s telling” (Stake, 2005, p. 456), therefore the researcher determined what was important and meaningful in the stories for the reader (Reissman, 2008). The level of detail shared in each narrative was carefully considered (Bassey, 1999) and determined to be essential for understanding the fundamental nature of these extraordinary outdoor leaders.

Using narrative to report findings was regarded as a way that ‘storied’ experiences, gained from observing the extraordinary outdoor leaders, could be “lived and told” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 20) for the purpose of “growth and change” (p. 67). By telling and retelling the stories, it was considered possible for readers to get to know the participants (Phoenix & Sparkes, 2009) and to develop a sense of who they are. It was also deemed essential in the retelling to hear the extraordinary outdoor leader’s voice in the narrative accounts (James, 2007). The researcher was also seen as inseparable from the participants and the presentation of findings (O’Donoghue, 2007). The researcher’s experiences of the extraordinary outdoor leaders including contexts, observations, and strategies used/demonstrated in their leadership are shared through the narratives (Neumann, 1997) with the researcher’s voice central to the telling, it therefore remains ‘up front’ (Gomm et al., 2000).

By including contextual information prior to presenting the individual narratives, the experiences of leaders, and the researchers’ observation of these, appear in context (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narrative reporting provides an opportunity for the experience of extraordinary outdoor leaders to be ‘vicariously’ experienced by others. The readers can make their own connections to the stories being told (Simons, 2009) and potentially learn through these (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). With a variety of options available for the construction of stories, order of presentation and use of a variety of texts (written, spoken and visual) was determined by the researcher and the research process as it evolved (Creswell, 2005; Gillham, 2000; Keats, 2007). The texts used were “formal and informal” (Keats, 2007, p. 182) in nature and used to emphasise details and provided focus for the key emerging themes (Keats, 2007).

Both ‘big’ and ‘small’ stories were selected for the reporting of findings (Freedman, 2006; Phoenix & Sparkes, 2009) in combination with Sparkes’ (2002)
approach to telling ‘confessional’ and ‘realist’ tales. A big story “reflects stories in which the participant is asked to retrospect on specific life shaping episodes or on their lives as a whole, in order to connect events into episodes, and to connect episodes into a life story” (Phoenix & Sparkes, 2009, p. 222). Big stories emerged largely from the data collected in the interviews (Phase 1 and 2). This big story approach explored the ‘what’ of the data and attended to the key events and experiences in the participants’ lives and their experiences of being an outdoor leader. Alternatively, the small story approach addressed the ‘how’ of the data collected, and stemmed from the methods of data collection in everyday contexts (Phoenix & Sparkes, 2009). Small stories emerged predominantly from the observation and document collection aspects of the research process. Both big and small stories, seen to complement each other, were used together providing an integrated approach to the reporting of findings (Freedman, 2006; Phoenix & Sparks, 2009).

In conjunction with the big and small story approach (Phoenix & Sparkes, 2009) the stories/narratives are told using a predominantly confessional approach (Sparkes, 2002). This method foregrounds the voice of both the researcher and the participant in the telling, and emphasises the researcher’s point of view (Sparkes, 2002). While often devoid of the researcher’s voice, the realist approach consisted of extensive, and “closely edited quotations” from the data (Sparkes, 2002, p. 44). In an attempt to assure the foregrounding of the participant voices, direct quotations were used in the telling of the stories (see individual chapters). This helped to gain a better sense of who they are and how they lead. Often complemented by realist tales, confessional tales are becoming more accepted in the reporting of findings in physical activity and sport, including outdoor education (Sparkes, 2002). Therefore, a combination of both approaches was adopted in the telling of the big and small stories (Phoenix & Sparkes, 2009).

Section 2: Research Process

The research process began with the presentation and acceptance of the research proposal and culminated with the writing of this thesis. The overall timeline has been presented in Table 4.1 indicating the gaining of ethics approval, participant consent, and the two main phases of data collection: Phase 1 and Phase 2.
Table 4.1

Outline of research timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August, 2007</td>
<td>Presentation and acceptance of research proposal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October, 2007</td>
<td>Ethics approval submitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 2007</td>
<td>Ethics approval attained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February, 2008</td>
<td>Participant survey conducted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March – June, 2008</td>
<td>Participants selected and invited into study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Letter of invitation and consent sent to participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals/employers informed of study through letter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May, 2008</td>
<td>Ethics amendments approved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June, 2008</td>
<td>Consent gained from participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September, 2008</td>
<td>Consent gained from schools as required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July, 2008 – February, 2009</td>
<td>Phase 1 data collection conducted (see Table 4.2).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May, 2009 – February, 2010</td>
<td>Phase 2 of data collection conducted (see Table 4.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The research proposal was presented and accepted in August 2007, shortly followed by the submission and attainment of ethics approval (Appendix A). In the early stages of the research process, minor changes were made with amendments sought and accepted (Appendix B). The selection of participants was conducted through an online survey. The researcher’s own selection was added to the results of the online survey. This was followed by the final selection and invitation of participants into the study and the gaining of consent. Phase 1 and Phase 2 data collection followed.

Selection of participants.

In case study research, the considered selection of the population is deemed critical (Simons, 2009). The participants for this project were selected using purposive sampling (Boeije, 2010; Long, 2007; Mertens, 2005) where the need to select participants who were ‘information-rich cases’ was essential and allowed for an in depth study of each individual (Eisenhardt, 2002). Given that only a few cases could be
studied in the confines of this project, it was important to select cases that represented the phenomenon (extraordinary outdoor leadership) being studied (Eisenhardt, 2002). It was also pertinent that the participants chosen be recognisable as ‘extraordinary outdoor leaders’ not only to the researcher, but to their peers as well and were representative of Australian outdoor leaders. Given a tendency to select people who are “like us” (Sadler, 2003, p. 7) when choosing leaders as examples of extraordinary leadership practice, a national online survey of outdoor leaders was conducted.

The outdoor leader population, represented primarily by financial members of state outdoor education associations across Australia at the time of the study, was surveyed. These outdoor leaders were sent an introductory email (Appendix C) and given two weeks in which to complete the attached online survey (Appendix D). The survey was distributed via email to the state organisations through the members of Outdoor Education Australia (OEA). Recipients of the email and survey were invited to pass it on to outdoor leaders who may not have been current financial members, thereby increasing the population for the generation of a representative sample. Using the state outdoor education organisations provided quick and easy access to a large population of outdoor leaders across all states of Australia.

The survey invited recipients to identify one person they would describe as an extraordinary outdoor leader and to provide reasons for identification of that person. The term ‘extraordinary’ was intentionally not defined, so as not to preempt others’ perceptions of an extraordinary outdoor leader. While the lack of definition may have been confusing to some recipients, it was thought that a definition might limit the respondents’ understanding of ‘extraordinary’ to the researchers’ definition of the term at the time (Beringer, 2000). This was all stated ‘up front’, with the only determination being that the nominated extraordinary outdoor leaders needed to be currently working in outdoor education programs within Australia. The survey limited respondents to identifying only one extraordinary outdoor leader. There were 64 responses to the survey with a few additional emails identifying extraordinary outdoor leaders. These additional emails were sent voluntarily by people who received the survey and wished to identify more than one extraordinary outdoor leader. Some individuals were nominated by more than one respondent. It was noted that common reasons for identifying different individuals as extraordinary, working in a variety of physical and environmental contexts across Australia, were given by the survey respondents.
According to the survey respondents, extraordinary outdoor leaders bring “a superior level of competence as a facilitator”, are “highly skilled in activities (e.g., climbing) which gives staff and participants confidence”, and they build “rapport and strong relationships...easily”. Their ability to impact upon individuals, their “manner and ability to share this knowledge with students is a sight to behold” their “deep passion for what they teach”, and their enjoyment of “sharing with students their knowledge and their love for the outdoors experience” were also consistently stated. The nominees were identified as “great people”, “who really helped me to learn a lot about” myself; who were “calm and incredibly capable, quiet, and extremely insightful”.

The extraordinary outdoor leaders nominated were described as having “an extraordinary ability to read a group and identify issues within a group and then deal with them through facilitation”. According to the respondents, they bring “empathy, insight and humility” to their leadership. Extraordinary outdoor leaders are “dedicated to [their] students, authentic, committed to [their] own development, hard working”. They show “a great sense of belonging and protectiveness to the natural environment” and are committed to outdoor education. They lead “by example...through innovative practice”, and they live their “personal philosophy”.

The researcher’s own selection of outdoor leaders considered to be extraordinary was added to the list of nominees identified by the survey. The six most nominated were invited to take part in the study. These six potential participants provided what was considered to be an appropriate representation of states across Australia and therefore no further selection was made. While not all the states and territories were represented, this was not deemed to be a concern for this study. The location of all participants on the east coast of Australia aided accessibility throughout the study. Of the six participants invited, one participant retired from outdoor leadership during the study and so exited from the study, leaving five remaining participants.

The selected participants were sent an information sheet outlining the study (Appendix E) and a consent form (Appendix F) inviting their involvement and consent. This was pre-empted by a telephone call which provided an opportunity to introduce the researcher to all participants. Initial verbal consent was gained through the telephone conversation. Written consent arrived in the mail shortly following the call. It gave
participants the chance to discuss the study in greater detail and helped to clarify their involvement in the study. The phone call also provided occasion to begin to develop a relationship with all participants (Mertens, 2005) and to arrange potential interview times and observation periods. These discussions allowed for the assurance that the observation periods selected met the requirements of the study (educational focus) and suited the participants as well. The use of audio and video recording in relation to the observation phase was discussed with each participant and initial concerns were addressed.

Arrangements were made to distribute the information letters to relevant school principals/employers (Appendix G). Parent/guardian consent forms (Appendix H) and additional adult consent forms (Appendix I) were sent to the participants to arrange for their collection. These consent forms were later collected by the researcher prior to the observation period. Participants, additional adults and students were invited to speak with the researcher about any concerns or considerations prior to the observation period beginning, and throughout. The final participants selected presented a male-dominated gendered group. This obvious gender inequity was noted, but not deemed to be the focus of this study; rather it demonstrated potential for future research (outlined in Chapter 12). The group appeared to the researcher as an appropriate representation of outdoor leaders in Australia who tend to be ‘typically’ male, and Caucasian. All of the participants selected gave consent to be named in the study. The five participants are: Rod Staples, Peter Blunt, Ian Boyle, Jon Hodges, and Anna Feely.

There are a number of reasons for choosing to name participants. Naming participants arguably gives voice (James, 2007; Mazzei & Jackson, 2009) and recognition to individuals. At the same time, identifying them potentially reduced the readership of the findings and meant that this could shape the reading of the data based on the reader’s knowledge of participants. Except for Peter, all of the participants were known by the researcher to varying degrees. These relationships are briefly explained in Appendix J. The pre-existing relationships proved to be both a benefit and a shortcoming (Lofland, Snow, Anderson & Lofland, 2006) particularly during the data collection. The naming of participants proved to be a ‘double edged sword’ whereby, had they not been named they may have been inadvertently identified anyway due to outdoor education being a small field where people are ‘known’. Therefore, participants
were invited to give consent to be named. This is discussed in greater detail in the section pertaining to data collection.

**Data collection.**

The methods chosen for this study were driven by the research questions, the conceptual framework, the interpretive paradigm and case study research methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Neumann, 1997; Simons, 2009; Stake, 2005). Also taken into consideration was the physical context in which the cases were located (Hatch, 2002; Mertens, 2005). The specific methods used in this study for data collection included: two ‘formal semi-structured’ and numerous ‘informal’ interviews (Hatch, 2002); an ‘active participation’ (Mertens, 2005) observation period with field notes recorded through an electronic keyboard, hand written notes, video and audio data; and the collection of supporting documents including photos, web pages and program information (Mertens, 2005).

This approach allowed for the generation of multiple perspectives, improved the interpretations of meanings generated (Mertens, 2005), and permitted the participants to contribute to the research process (Hatch, 2002). Changes to the data collection process were made as the study evolved (Eisenhardt, 2002; Gillham, 2000). However, each case was explored in similar ways. Decisions about “who to talk to, where to be, and when to be in certain places” (Sparkes, 1992, p. 33) were determined on a case by case basis, and resulted in some minor nuances in the collection of data across cases. This allowed for individuals and related contexts to play a significant role in determining what data would be collected, and what data would not (Hatch, 2002; Simons, 2009; Wolcott, 1995). The next section details each method as they were applied in this study including interviews, observation, and document collection. The section that follows outlines the phases of data collection.

**Interviews.**

Hatch’s (2002) description of interviews was adopted in this study. Two semi-structured formal interviews were conducted with each participant, and several unstructured informal interviews occurred throughout the observation phase. The formal interviews were conducted away from the “research scene” with the “explicit purpose of gathering information” (Hatch, 2002, p. 94) from the participants. These were considered semi-structured because the researcher came to each interview with a list of
“guiding questions” (Hatch, 2002, p. 94), but remained open to following the participants’ lead. This approach allowed the researcher to probe into areas not predetermined prior to the interview. These semi-structured interviews also allowed the participant to guide the interview to some extent (Holloway & Jefferson, 1997) and were conducted in three main ways: online, by phone, and face-to-face.

Informal interviews used during the observation period consisted of “unstructured conversations” (Hatch, 2002, p.92). Though informal, they were not without purpose, nor were they “undertaken randomly” (p. 92). They provided the researcher with the opportunity to discuss the participants’ perspectives about what was happening, as it happened (Sparkes, 1992). These informal interviews took advantage of “the immediate context to give informants the chance to reflect on what they have said, done, or seen” (Hatch, 2002, p. 92), and to focus directly on what was happening in context (Eisenhardt, 2002). To make the most of these informal interview opportunities, it was necessary to be able to pose pertinent questions on demand and to be able to listen well (Hatch, 2002).

Observation

Observation concerns watching what people do, listening to what they say, and asking clarifying questions (Gillham, 2000) in order to understand the phenomena being studied in natural settings (Denscombe 1998; Simons, 2009). Using observation as a method, provided a comprehensive “sense of setting” (Simons, 2009, p. 55) and allowed for the documentation of events that would later provide “rich description” (p. 55). It also created the opportunity to explore the values of the culture, and to capture the experience in another way, thereby cross checking the data collected through the interviews and document collection.

In an attempt to gain the “richest possible data” (Lofland et al., 2006, p. 15) through intimate familiarity with the each participant and the related setting, the researcher took on the role of active participation, doing “what the others do, generally” (Mertens, 2005, p. 382) without blending in entirely. This was considered appropriate due to the nature of the outdoor education programs which required the researcher to ‘tag along’ with the participants in a range of environments (e.g., river, rock, bush), engaging in a variety of activities (e.g., paddling, climbing, bushwalking, camping), and at times being required to take on the role of outdoor leader.
The researcher was present throughout the majority of the outdoor education programs observed, at times choosing not to observe or be present for various aspects of each program. This was intentionally done to allow the participants to have time with their students without the researcher present so as not to detract from the outcomes and/or intentions of the program as well as allowing participants to settle in slowly to the observation period. Other reasons were to avoid excessive data collection and to provide the researcher with time to consider the data already collected, and what data was still required (Sparkes, 1992). Limitations of participatory observation including fallibility of the researcher, and the potential to be highly selective in the observation process were continuously monitored (Denscombe, 1998; Gillham, 2000; Wolcott, 1994). The coming and going of the researcher in the research context was considered and monitored by the researcher through field notes.

**Document collection.**

The collection of documents was undertaken in this study to aid understanding of the everyday functioning and dynamics of the research context (Mertens, 2005, 2010). Outdoor education programs, slogans, values and goals that adorned walls, posters, and websites were collected. Email communications with participants were also retained. The researcher was sensitive to the content of all documents collected, and not all documents were used in the presentation of findings (Boeije, 2010; Mertens, 2005, 2010). The collection of documents contributed to the triangulation of other data sets collected (Punch, 2009).

**Phase 1.**

Phase 1 comprised an initial formal semi-structured interview (Hatch, 2002), transcription of interviews, and member checking of all transcriptions and online responses provided by participants. Table 4.2 provides a detailed overview and timeline of this phase. This initial interview incorporated questions that emerged from the review of literature and explored the background and guiding principles of the participants. The interview questions for Phase 1 were piloted with a colleague prior to the interviews occurring (Mertens, 2005, 2010).
Table 4.2

*Detailed timeline of Phase 1 of the research process*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June, 2008</td>
<td>Piloting of interview questions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online interviews sent out.</td>
<td>Ian, Jon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phone interview conducted.</td>
<td>Anna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July, 2008</td>
<td>Online interview returned.</td>
<td>Ian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August, 2008</td>
<td>Online interview returned.</td>
<td>Jon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phone interview conducted.</td>
<td>Rod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Audio recordings of interviews sent for transcription.</td>
<td>Anna, Rod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September, 2008</td>
<td>Online interview sent out.</td>
<td>Peter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October, 2008</td>
<td>Online interview returned.</td>
<td>Peter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transcriptions received.</td>
<td>Anna, Rod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November – December 2008</td>
<td>Analysis of phase 1 data begun.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January, 2009</td>
<td>Interview transcriptions and online responses sent to participants for member checking.</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February, 2009</td>
<td>All transcripts and online responses received back from participants with comments.</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants in this study were offered the option of undertaking the first interview online or by phone. The benefits of online/phone interviewing have been well documented and emphasise the ability to access hard to reach or isolated participants, allowing them to be involved (James, 2007; Jones, 1999; Mann & Stewart, 2000). Outdoor leaders are often required to spend extensive time in the field, often in remote locations, which potentially posed issues of access to all participants. The phone and online interviews overcame these issues and provided considerable flexibility to the participants. The potential differences in data collected through these two approaches was considered, but the semi-structured nature of the questions, as well as the orientation of the questions, ensured that consistency was gained from all participants.
regardless of mode. All of the participants in this study were geographically distant from the researcher. Therefore the initial online/phone interview made it possible for the participants to be involved despite the distances. It also reduced costs through travel and time required to reach each participant. Both of these approaches (online/phone) required the researcher to be organised and prepared for the interviews (Mertens, 2005; Simons, 2009).

The phone interview option was selected by Anna and Rod. The interview questions (Appendix K) were sent to participants prior to the phone interview, accompanied by brief instructions. Participants were encouraged to read through the interview questions and to make notes prior to the interview. They were also asked to have the questions in front of them during the interview. The phone interviews went for between 45 and 60 minutes and were audio recorded.

Participants who chose the online interview were encouraged to complete the questions in their own time. This allowed them to potentially reflect on a deeper level and to learn from their own stories of experience as they shared them (Seymour, 2001). Jon and Peter chose the online method of interview and Ian requested responding to the questions via audio recording. This was allowed, and dealt with as an online interview. The same interview questions (Appendix K) were sent via email, and completed in their own time. Each of the participants was phoned to let them know the questions had been sent, to confirm their arrival and to provide an opportunity to discuss the task. The participants returned their responses via email (Jon and Peter) and audio recording (Ian). Responses to the online mode were comprehensive, and no additional questions were posed. The prior relationships the researcher had with four of the participants (Jon, Anna, Ian, Rod) reduced the issue of rapport building. By choosing the online mode, Peter who was relatively unknown to the researcher prior to this study, was able to maintain relative ‘anonymity’. This proved to be a positive contributing factor to completing this first phase of data collection (James, 2007).

The researcher telephoned each participant to discuss the interview prior to gaining consent. Once participants had received the interview questions, the researcher provided them with an opportunity to discuss the questions and/or the research project, including the researcher’s intentions. Potential limitations of both online and phone interviews include: not being able to build rapport with participants, lack of visual/body
language cues and in the case of the online method, the researcher would only be able to apply additional questioning to responses at a later time (Mertens, 2005). Due to the types of questions, none of the above proved to be an issue. By providing the phone option, participants without access to computers and/or who had a preference for an alternative method, were catered for in the phone interview.

All interview audio recordings were transcribed verbatim and sent to the participants for member checking (Boeije, 2010; Mertens, 2005) and comment. The participants were offered a follow-up interview to address any issues/concerns that may have resulted on reading the transcripts. All declined. No additional questions were asked of the participants at this point in time. During the face-to-face interview in Phase 2, questions arising from this initial interview were addressed, with some questions being revisited. The data was then analysed. The early findings from Phase 1 were represented diagrammatically (Appendix L). This diagram was subsequently used in Phase 2 of the data collection process.

**Phase 2.**

Phase 2 involved an observation of each participant for 2-5 days in their workplace. This phase also included informal interviews, followed by a semi-structured formal face-to-face interview (Hatch, 2002). Member checking of transcriptions and draft narratives was also conducted during this phase (Boeije, 2010; Mertens, 2005). Table 4.3 outlines the process in detail.
Table 4.3
Detailed timeline of Phase 2 of the research process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Day(s)</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Participant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November, 2008</td>
<td></td>
<td>Piloting of observation checklist, and schedule.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May, 2009</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>Observation - Mersey River, Tasmania.</td>
<td>Rod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Interview - Rosny College, Hobart, Tasmania.</td>
<td>Rod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22-24</td>
<td>Observation - Thompsons Point, Point Perpendicular, Nowra, NSW.</td>
<td>Peter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Interview - Ginninderra College, ACT.</td>
<td>Peter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June, 2009</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Observation - Glengarry Campus, Blue Mountains, NSW.</td>
<td>Ian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Interview - Scots College Glengarry Campus, NSW.</td>
<td>Ian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15-18</td>
<td>Observation - Pepperina Hill, Moogerah, Qld.</td>
<td>Jon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Interview - Brisbane Grammar School Pepperina Hill, Moogerah, Qld.</td>
<td>Jon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September, 2009</td>
<td>23-25</td>
<td>Observation - Arm River Campground, Mersey River and Leven River, Tas.</td>
<td>Anna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Interview - Arm River Campground, Tas.</td>
<td>Anna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October, 2009</td>
<td></td>
<td>Interviews sent for transcription.</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November, 2009</td>
<td></td>
<td>Interviews transcriptions returned.</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 2009</td>
<td></td>
<td>Interview transcriptions sent to participants for member checking.</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td>Interview transcriptions received back from participants with comments.</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td>Draft narratives written, and sent to participants for member checking.</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td>Draft narratives returned with comments.</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An observation checklist (Appendix M) and observation schedule (Appendix N) adapted from Mertens (2005) were used in an attempt to approach each case with some similarity and focus, and to reduce the amount of site specific familiarity (Gillham, 2000). Both the checklist and schedule were piloted on an outdoor education program prior to Phase 2. In addition to the observation schedule, diagrammatic representation of the early findings previously discussed (Appendix L), along with a copy of the research questions (Appendix O) were regularly referred to throughout the observation in order to maintain focus (Simons, 2009) and to clarify early findings.

Throughout the observation process the researcher attempted to retain an openness in relation to all possibilities. This included emerging themes as well as any existence of contradicting themes. The influence of the researcher on the participants and their students was noted (Gillham, 2000). In conducting the observation it was important that the process be transparent. The researcher spent considerable time speaking with each participant prior to the observation phase. This included explaining expectations of them (to undertake their outdoor leadership as if the researcher was not present as much as possible), and outlining the researcher’s role (observing the leader in action - leading).

Participants were also provided time to ask questions about the process. All of them indicated that they were not sure how it would go, but were willing to trust the researcher, go along with the process and see what happened (Gillham, 2000). All participants initially commented that they felt uncomfortable about the researcher’s presence, and many commented that they felt “watched” while leading early on. Some time either during or post observation, all participants commented that they had forgotten about the researcher’s presence and reason for being there, and they had returned to their primary task of leading. Prior to, and throughout the observation, participants were encouraged to discuss any issues, and/or request the researcher’s absence from certain aspects of the program, as they arose.

Another consideration of the observation was the context in which outdoor education programs took place. A brief description of each observation and the context is described in Appendix P. The observations comprised field trips in remote locations, and this needed to be considered when determining how data would be recorded (Stonehouse, 2007). Technological considerations were made with recording tools used
for field notes which included: video camera (hand held and waterproof head mounted), voice recorders, a portable keyboard (long battery life), and a note pad and pen. This allowed the researcher flexibility, in what, at times, proved to be a challenging environment in which to record data. Benefits of the use of video and audio recordings of observations were that they provided an ‘objective’ record that could be viewed or heard again (Simons, 2009). It is important to note that attention was given to the problematic use of video data on its own; consequently the various forms of data collection from the observation were used together, rather than on their own (Pink, 2007).

A portable keyboard was used to record the majority of field notes and proved to be extremely useful and practical in the field. It provided a more accurate record of what was said and what happened due to the researcher’s ability to touch type. The extended battery life (700 hours) meant that it could be used continuously for several days. Another key feature of the portable keyboard was its almost indestructible nature, which meant that it was not affected by being transported in a dry bag and/or back pack, and at times being treated quite roughly (Stonehouse, 2007).

The face-to-face interview conducted at the conclusion of the observation, was a semi-structured formal interview (Hatch, 2002) used to explore the participant’s view and/or perspective in a two way exchange to answer the research questions (Wellington, 2000). The interviews were narrative in approach, and resembled a conversation where experiences were recalled, relived and interpreted through the construction and reconstruction of the participant’s personal and professional stories (James, 2007). The location and timing of the face-to-face interviews were negotiated with each participant and occurred as close as possible to the conclusion of the observation phase.

The interview questions for the face-to-face interview emerged from the initial formal semi-structured interview, the observation phase, and a continued engagement with the literature. It is important to note that each interview had slightly different questions due to the difference in individuals and their related contexts. However, the four main themes that became evident through the observation phase (self-awareness, relationships, intuition and spirituality) and were also emerging through the continued engagement with the literature were attended to in all interviews to varying degrees. A sample of questions asked can be found in Appendix Q. The diagram from Phase 1
early findings (Appendix L) was also used at the conclusion of the interview to generate discussion with the participants about the early findings, and to elicit their opinions of those findings.

The interviews ranged from one to two hours, where the time frame was dependent on both participants availability and the length of participant’s responses to the interview questions. All interviews were audio recorded, the format allowing for visual cues and spoken cues to be observed during the interview (Mertens, 2005). Transcribing of Phase 2 interviews was conducted by a professional transcriber where everything was transcribed (Carlson, 2010). Issues related to the transcription being conducted by someone other than the researcher were considered and all transcriptions were checked for accuracy by the researcher (Tilley & Powick, 2002). Copies of the complete transcriptions were sent to participants for member checking (Boeije, 2010; Carlson, 2010; Mertens, 2005). The opportunity for participants to make additional comments was created to ensure that participants would not be misrepresented. Draft narratives were later sent to all participants for comment and member checking.

Throughout both phases of data collection, documents were collected as deemed pertinent to the study. An example of these documents can be found in Appendix R. Data analysis also occurred throughout the process, and is outlined in the following section.

**Data Analysis.**

The data analysis began immediately after data collection began (Hatch, 2002). Analysis continued throughout Phases 1 and 2 (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2009) and was ongoing beyond these phases of data collection. Initially, all data for each participant was collated, and a general reading of and viewing of was conducted. The intent was to become intimately familiar with each case first as a stand alone case (Eisenhardt, 2002). This rich familiarity allowed for later comparisons across cases (Simons, 2009; Stake, 2005). Both ‘intratextual’ (single case) and ‘intertextual’ (across cases) relational reading was carried out to gain a broad understanding of the data collected prior to coding and reporting (Keats, 2007). A two cycle model of coding (Saldana, 2007), explained in the next section, was performed to determine emerging themes explored through the lens of the conceptual framework (Mertens, 2005; Simons, 2009).
**Coding.**

The coding was conducted in two main cycles for both Phase 1 and Phase 2 data. The first cycle comprised descriptive, in vivo, value and simultaneous coding; the second included focused, pattern and theoretical coding (Saldana, 2007). This approach allowed for the data to be broken down into usable units for analysis. These units were then categorised into emerging themes (Denscombe, 1998). Descriptive coding was useful due to the presence of multiple data forms. It allowed the data to be summarised prior to a more focused approach to coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Wolcott, 1994). Simultaneous coding was appropriate where more than one code could be applied to the same selection of data, and helped to highlight the interconnected aspects of extraordinary outdoor leadership practice. In vivo coding was useful to generate codes relevant to the data as well as in instances where none of the existing codes appeared initially relevant (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). On review, the majority of these in vivo codes were subsumed into other codes. Values coding was utilised to highlight data reflective of values, as this was one of the main aspects of the guiding conceptual framework. This first cycle of coding was repeated until all data was coded, and no new codes emerged on subsequent coding missions (Saldana, 2007).

The second cycle of coding then concentrated on focused coding, pattern coding and theoretical coding. Pattern and focused coding were used to provide a platform through which to suggest emerging themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Theoretical coding was then undertaken to allow for the integration of all previous coding to present key emerging themes (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Saldana, 2007). Pre-established theories presented in the literature review (outdoor leadership, leadership and intelligence) which resulted in the development of the conceptual framework together aided the coding analysis (Simons, 2009). It was important to not only be directed by the conceptual framework and the literature supporting it, but to intentionally search for aspects which did not appear in the framework (Saldana, 2007). Regardless, the pre-existing theories, knowledge of the literature, and resulting frameworks directed the analysis (Mason, 2002). This two cycle approach to data analysis through the various forms of coding provided the final themes (Saldana, 2007; Wolcott, 1994).

A sample of codes used to analyse the data can be found in Appendix S. When clustered together, the codes suggested patterns, and these patterns facilitated the generation of themes. The coding process itself was subjective (Long, 2007; Sipe &
and the analysis and interpretation of the data generally reflected “the constructs, concepts, language, models, and theories that structured the study in the first place” (Merriam, 1998, p. 48). The emerging themes reinforced the categories proposed through the conceptual framework: characteristics, values, skills, and behaviours. This reinforcement of categories suggested that the conceptual framework was one acceptable model through which to explore and understand extraordinary outdoor leadership (Saldana, 2007).

Alongside the two cycle model of coding (Saldana, 2007), “progressive focusing” (Simons, 2009, p. 122) was used to assist in the identification of themes, patterns and arising issues. This was complemented by “concept mapping” (p. 122), where the knowledge was represented visually and links between themes and patterns were physically drawn (e.g., Early Findings Diagram, Appendix L). Generalisations were later drawn across themes (Denscombe, 1998). The findings were presented using diagrams, tables, and text through narratives (Wolcott, 1994).

Alongside the coding process, the writing and rewriting of narratives was conducted until they were deemed to be representative of each participant through repeatedly questioning the meaning and significance of the stories used (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The writing process proved to be as much a part of the interpretive process as the coding (Ezzy, 2002). The initial narratives were long and cumbersome, and on each revisit to the narratives, some of the data were edited out based on relevance to answering the research questions (Wolcott, 1994). Care was taken not to lose the individual in these tighter versions of the narratives. It was deemed important to retain the individual and the context (Reissman, 2008). The notion of ‘particularity’ (Stake, 2005) remained central, with generalisation across cases attended to later in the discussion chapter (Simons, 2009; Stake, 2005). The narratives were sent to each participant for member checking (Mertens, 2005) and all participants agreed that they had been accurately represented. The development of the narratives identified the need to place each participant in context, and so a description of each context is included in the individual findings chapters (Chapter 6-10).

**Use of computer software.**

To assist with the management of the large quantities of data in various forms (word documents, video and audio recordings), NVivo computer software was used. A
powerful computer software program, NVivo supported the analysis through its ability to assist with the management of data and ideas and provided a variety of tools for analysis and reporting (Bazeley, 2007). It made the data more accessible and encouraged a sense of ‘play’ with data. (Denscombe, 1998).

A potential disadvantage of using NVivo software is a tendency for data overload, and for the focus to be on the ‘literal’ and the ‘superficial’ (Denscombe, 1998). Due to constraints of learning to use the software, manual coding was first attempted prior to using NVivo (Bazeley, 2007). Once skills in using the software were developed, NVivo was found to be a useful tool and it was used throughout the remainder of the analysis process. While NVivo assisted in dealing with the “mechanistic aspects” (Long, 2007, p. 155) of the data analysis, the actual interpretation and analysis was completed by the researcher.

Ethical Issues.

A number of ethical issues arose throughout the study: identification of participants; public scrutiny of participants; how video and audio data might be used in the dissemination of findings; the effect of researcher values on the project and its findings; and attention to participant voices.

Identification of participants.

Consent to identify participants was sought through the initial consent form provided to participants and through the initial telephone call inviting them to be involved. The identification of participants contributed to concerns of representing their voices and was not without problems (Alcoff, 2009; Coffey, 1999; Lichtman, 2006; Mazzei & Jackson, 2009). The researcher initially thought that the gaining of participants’ consent to be named and identified in the study would add to the findings and avert issues of maintaining anonymity (Simons, 2009). The researcher offered confidentiality as long as possible, but once the researcher appeared on the scene, and students and other adults were required to complete consent forms, confidentiality no longer existed.

Due to outdoor education being a small profession across Australia, and the nature of the data collection determined to be appropriate (observation) to answer the research questions, it was clear that anonymity would be impossible due to the need to
gain consent from all involved. Hence, the researcher chose to request participant permission to be named in the study. While naming the participants in any discussions about the study was avoided, at some point they would be named and both the findings and their leadership practice would come under scrutiny. This knowledge reinforced the need for constant reflection and awareness of subjectivities present and their potential influence and/or impact upon the research process’ reflexivity. These subjectivities included the researcher’s stance, history, and prior knowledge of being an outdoor leader and individual participants. The naming of participants further reinforced the need for regular consultation with participants to ensure they were being appropriately represented through regular member checking (Mertens, 2005). At the same time, the existence of multiple perspectives was acknowledged by both the researcher and participants (Simons, 2009).

The participants’ readiness to be identified indicated their willingness: to take risks (an emerging theme in the study); to place high levels of trust in the researcher; and to value the researcher and participant relationship. One participant stated that if it had been someone else conducting the study, they would have declined being involved. This only added to the researcher’s resolve to represent the participants accurately, and to be acutely aware of the importance of the member checking (Mertens, 2005) process. It also reinforced the need to be discreet about participant involvement until the completion of the project.

*Public scrutiny.*

When presenting the early findings of this study to an international conference (Smith, 2009), it was obvious that the audience was keen to know the identities of the participants and their leadership practice being explored. Many commented that the nomination process of participants through the national survey gave credibility to the study. This presentation brought to the fore the issue of public scrutiny and the question of whether or not others would agree with the nominated extraordinary outdoor leaders identified and subsequently studied. With the notion of ‘extraordinariness’ subjective in itself, the need for careful analysis was essential, to quell not only concerns of others, but the researcher’s own concerns about the accurate representation of the findings. As a result, the researcher became acutely aware of her own perspectives during the analysis. In particular, the researcher questioned the role her own values and skills (observation
and intuition) were playing on the findings as they emerged. These were taken into consideration, and intentional distancing was undertaken.

*The use of video and audio data.*

In the planning of the research, it was difficult to know when and how visual (video and still images) and audio data might be collected. This was mainly due to the unknown nature of the contexts in which the data collection would be conducted (Pink, 2007). While it was initially thought that the visual data collected might be useful in the dissemination of the findings, it was concluded during actual data collection that the video data did not add to the findings enough to warrant its use, especially given the ethical issues associated with video use and the possible poor quality of recordings (James & Busher, 2006; Pink, 2007). Some of the students’ parents/guardians did not give permission for their children to appear in the video data. Despite committing to face blurring, this complicated the issue further. Therefore the video and audio data was not used to present the findings in this thesis. Aspects of the audio data may be used in future presentations. The analysis process was greatly enhanced by the audio and video data, as it provided opportunities to review aspects of the observation and interviews (Reissman, 2008).

*Researcher values.*

All qualitative research is considered to be value laden, and impossible to separate the researcher from the reporting of the research findings (Crotty, 1998). With the ability to report on multiple realities constructed by the participants and the researcher, and a reliance on emerging patterns, this study took into account the values of both participants and researcher as they may have impinged on the project and its findings (Eisenhardt, 2002). It was suggested by one of the participants that perhaps the emerging themes and findings were in fact driven by the researcher’s values, beliefs and skills in observation. While attempts were made to constantly monitor subjectivities, “limited by being human...personal biases interfere” (Merriam, 1988, p. 20). Ultimately the researcher acknowledged that it was not possible to be fully objective, with some subjectivity remaining (Coffey, 1999). In addition to the use of member checking with participants (Mertens, 2005), these subjectivities were kept in check by constantly referring back to the conceptual framework and the supporting literature. In addition,
conversations with a critical peer helped to separate the researcher’s values from what was being found.

Attention to voice.

Throughout the writing of the narratives, close attention was paid to the voice of each participant (Ezzy, 2002) by regularly returning to the raw data. Concerns of whose voice was being represented (Lincoln & Guba, 2003), was addressed by involving the participants in the study as much as possible. Through their stories, an attempt was made to portray their experiences, as well as the experiences of the researcher, of their leadership practice, including their motivations, values, strengths and competencies. In an attempt to maintain the authenticity of the participants’ words, direct quotes are used. The various voices present in the narratives (researcher, participant, students, peers), are identified using quotation marks and identifying who is ‘speaking’ through parentheses (e.g., (Student)).

This representation of who was speaking was considered to be essential when sharing how these leaders demonstrate particular characteristics, values, skills and behaviours in their leadership. Therefore examples of the physical representation of speech are presented here and used consistently throughout the findings chapters that follow. Each narrative is presented using the participants’ words where possible, and these are represented in italics (e.g., “Sometimes I feel...”) and indented where long quotes are used. Shorter quotes remain in-text and “italicised”. Normal text is used to identify the researcher’s words and thoughts, and where the exact words of the researcher are used, this is represented using inverted commas and indenting the text for longer quotes, remaining in text for shorter quotes (e.g., “Why did you...”). In some cases, the words of students and peers of the participants are used. These are represented using normal text in inverted commas (e.g., “When Rod...” (Student)). Where longer quotes are used, these are also indented. In order to improve readability, some minor changes have been made to individual quotes to improve readability. This has been represented using [brackets]. The order of presentation of participants is as follows: Rod, Peter, Ian, Jon, and Anna. The order was decided based on the order of Phase 2 data collection.
Reliability and validity.

Reliability and validity were addressed through the provision of an explicit account of the aims of this study including how the research was undertaken, and identifying the reasons behind the decisions made as the research progressed (Denscombe, 1998). Through this dissertation, the role of the researcher is described, as is the bias she brings to the project (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The role of the researcher was considered key to determining the validity of research conducted in the interpretive paradigm, and the ability to be aware of personal and interpersonal interactions with participants and the research context was also considered essential (Sparkes, 1992). The use of multiple methods allowed for the offsetting of researcher bias that may arise from any researcher or research project (Simons, 2009).

The conceptual framework provided structure to ensure that while a critical approach to the findings was taken as described above, what was central to the study remained in focus. Throughout the process of data collection and analysis, the researcher was continually open to conflicting data that might qualify or complicate the findings (Gillham, 2000).

Credibility.

The development of positive relationships with participants bound in trust (Zeni, 2001), the use of multiple participants and multiple methods to corroborate the data, in addition to clear descriptions of the research process (Sparkes, 1992) all contributed to the credibility and triangulation of the study (Simons, 2009). Member checking of all transcripts and draft findings chapters increased the credibility of the findings. Through member checking, participant perspectives were found to match with the researcher’s interpretations of these as portrayed by individuals in their leadership. Prolonged periods of observation, peer debriefing and triangulation contributed to the credibility of this study (Mertens, 2005).

Triangulation.

The data was triangulated through the use of a variety of methods (interviews, observation and document collection) to concur and create a straightforward picture of what happened (Carlson, 2010; Gillham, 2000; Mertens, 2005). Member checking was conducted at key points during the research process to increase credibility (as
discussed), and to triangulate data further (Carlson, 2010; Mertens, 2005). Findings were discussed informally with the participants in the study, with a critical peer who was familiar with outdoor leadership and the study, and through a conference presentation of early findings (Smith, 2009). This allowed for testing out early ideas, understandings and explanations, greatly assisting with making sense of the data and the emerging themes (Gillham, 2000). It also allowed the emergence of different perspectives to “generate and strengthen evidence in support of key claims” (Simons, 2009, p. 129). In addition, a peer reviewed article was published discussing the conceptual framework emerging from the review of literature which supported and directed the collection and analysis of data (Smith & Penney, 2010). A conference presentation and paper on the researcher provided further opportunity to ‘test’ out early findings and perspectives (Smith, 2009).

**Generalisation.**

Generalisability of data from case study research can be problematic due to the cases existing in a certain time frame, in a particular context (Punch, 2009). The initial intention was to generalise data, after first generating insights of individual extraordinary outdoor leaders. By using the collective case study approach, where a small selection of cases was used, the ability to generalise across cases increased as characteristics, values, skills and behaviours emerged in and through cases (Punch, 2009). The individual perspectives are presented through the narratives (Chapters 6-10), and commonalities across cases are presented in the discussion chapter (Chapter 11).

**Limitations.**

The limitations identified in this study included the following:

- Using the term ‘extraordinary’ from the outset to identify the participants in this study relied on the broader population of outdoor leaders understanding this term in relation to leadership practice when the term had not previously been used in relation to outdoor leadership. By intentionally leaving it undefined in the initial survey of the outdoor leadership population may have resulted in some leaders not being identified.

- Many outdoor leaders work in isolation and this may have resulted in some not being nominated by others. No one nominated themselves, and as this study
reveals, it would be unlikely that an extraordinary outdoor leader would nominate themselves.

- The selection of outdoor education as the context in which the study took place potentially limited the nomination of extraordinary outdoor leaders working in other contexts (recreation, developmental and therapy). The need for leaders to be currently working in outdoor education may also have excluded leaders who work across contexts or who are retired.

- Choosing only six extraordinary outdoor leaders from the list generated, meant that others who were identified were not included in the study. If this study had included all of the leaders identified as ‘extraordinary’ perhaps a different outcome would have resulted. This small number of cases, while appropriate for case study research (Simons, 2009), limited the findings of the study in terms of breadth.

- The use of the term outdoor ‘leader’ rather than ‘educator’ may have contributed to the large gender bias of participants nominated to males. From the literature, it could be argued that men are still considered over women when it comes to identifying leaders. The dominance of males studied could be seen to limit the study.

- The participants selected were predominantly male, of similar age and ethnicity. This lack of gender balance limited the study by not allowing comparison between the genders. The lack of diversity across ethnicity and age also potentially limits the study. At the same time, it could be argued that the representation of gender, age and ethnicity in this study is representative of outdoor leaders across Australia.

- Inviting participants to be named in the research potentially constrained the research through their knowledge that what was seen, heard or told by the researcher would be directly reported against their name. The relationships developed with each participant may have contributed to the depth of findings, as all participants indicated trust in the researcher. Regardless, they may have held back knowledge, information and/or experiences to some extent from the researcher. However, this can happen regardless of whether or not consent to be
named is attained, and this path was considered to be potentially more empowering for the participants.

- The volume of data collected threatened to be a limitation, requiring careful management. The length of the findings chapters that resulted was also considered to be a potential limitation (Bassey, 1999; Simons 2009). While not the only aim of the study, every attempt was made to ensure the narratives provided clear accounts of the findings in combination with the discussion chapter to allow for potential generalisability to other situations or contexts (Simons, 2009). For example, links were made between the findings from Phase 1 and Phase 2 by presenting short narratives under headings that linked to the early findings, and headings that identified the key emerging themes. A critical friend was utilised to identify consistency in the stories told, and the stories read.

This chapter has presented the theoretical underpinnings and a detailed description of the research process undertaken including: underpinning paradigm, methodology, methods, sample, data collection and analysis, ethical issues, and limitations. The suite of chapters that follow present the findings of this study beginning with the early findings gleaned from Phase 1 of the data collection in Chapter 5. Chapters 6-10 then share the stories from Phase 2 of the data collection.
Chapter 5     Early Findings

The early findings that emerged from Phase 1 of this study are presented in this chapter in two main sections. Section 1 shares the results from each participant and Section 2 presents the characteristics, values, skills and behaviours identified as universal traits across the participants during this phase. The chapter concludes with a representation of the early findings diagrammatically (Figure 5.5., p. 145).

Phase 1 consisted of one online/phone interview with each participant, lasting between 45 and 60 minutes. The interviews were conducted across several months (June to October) in 2008 (Table 4.2 in Chapter 4, p. 88). The interviews provided an opportunity to get to know the leaders and examine their reasons for being an outdoor leader. The interviews also addressed leaders’ motivations, core values, perceived strengths and weaknesses, leadership styles, and how they work with others (see Appendix K for interview schedule). Key experiences and events that have shaped or impacted upon their leadership were also explored from the participants’ perspectives.

Direct quotes from the Phase 1 interviews are used in this chapter to support discussion. The participants’ words are identified through the use of quotation marks for in-text quotes with longer quotes indented. To improve readability of quotes, changes/additions are identified with [brackets] and the clarification of terms in quotes is indicated using (parentheses). The participants are presented in alphabetical order according to first name; Anna, Ian, Jon, Peter and Rod. No pseudonyms are used, as all participants agreed to be named.

Section 1: Early Findings from Individual Participants

Anna.

Why an outdoor leader?

While on work experience at University, Anna found herself lying under a star-filled sky on a beach in Victoria. In that moment she knew she wanted to be an outdoor leader. This experience helped her to identify the need for programs to have purpose and flow. This sense of purpose combined with her belief in the importance of being
outside and helping people to feel comfortable there, motivated Anna to be an outdoor leader.

Core values.

Kindness, being positive, and generally valuing life were core values Anna elucidated. In her words, kindness meant “being kind to each other and the planet” and being positive involved “respecting where you are, who you’re with, and what you’ve got”. An underlying philosophy of Anna’s leadership was valuing life and included the importance of simple lessons. The ultimate focus of her leadership was to share “the simplicity of how nature lives and how beautiful that can be”.

These core values were described by Anna as she shared how she worked with a new group of people. When presented with a new group, Anna’s first goal was to get her students to focus on being positive with each other. The next step required getting students to develop a positive perspective and this was followed by getting them learn to be respectful of the environment. Anna was committed to getting people involved in outdoor programs in general. This together with getting them to do things they may not want to do initially through gentle nudging, were key aspects of her core values and her leadership.

Well it’s not physical is it?! I give them a little step that I know that they can definitely do, and there are no real excuses not to do it. They’d feel silly if they didn’t do it. And then once they have achieved that, the poor things get another step.

Being persistent and getting students involved in outdoor programs could be directly related to her past experiences. Anna equated feeling happy to when her students are caught up in a program and the group. While she acknowledged that they may not be happy at the thought of it, by being part of the group and feeling pride through their shared achievements they have often thanked her later. The irrefutable results Anna has experienced through helping students to try things they would not normally have tried, was another catalyst for her internal motivation to be an outdoor leader.

Strengths and weaknesses.

The main strength acknowledged by Anna of her leadership was being able to get along with people even if they come from a different perspective or belief system.
Despite these differences, she was able to find a way to get along with them and to help them grow through the outdoor experiences. Rather than seeing this as a negative, she embraced the differences and enjoyed the challenge of getting to know them better. A continued love of the outdoors and being positive all of the time, were other strengths she identified. In contrast, Anna identified her greatest weakness as her lack of punctuality. In addition she recognised a weakness when at times not knowing when to step in and help students and when to sit back and let them figure it out for themselves. Remembering a time when she felt, had she stepped in earlier, “it would have helped that person out a bit”.

**Motivations.**

Driven by a deeply rooted belief of the importance of awareness, Anna hoped that the people she met and was involved with would work towards becoming more aware themselves. A love of being outdoors and “being able to take people to a place where they may not have gone” without her, contributed to her impetus to be an outdoor leader. Success she had experienced as an outdoor leader also contributed to her motivations for continuing as an outdoor leader.

**Leadership style.**

Preferring a relaxed style, Anna described her leadership practice as one where she sets clear expectations first and the group is given a lot of information early on in the program. Then adopting more of a “back seat” approach she described helping them out as needed. Safety and the age of participants contributed heavily to her decisions about the choice of leadership style; “the older they (students) are, the less directive I am”. Adults, she found to be different again. The first time Anna led adults, she found herself having to “learn a whole new way of being a leader…I had to become a lot more honest”.

Using a variety of leadership styles as required, Anna was prepared to be directive or autocratic as required. When concerned that someone or something might get hurt, she has stepped in and taken on a more directive style. Alternatively, when participants were not taking the environment in and were more concerned about themselves and their own comfort Anna described adopting a more democratic approach in an attempt to help them to shift their focus: “to see out of where they are”. Another motive for changing her style of leadership was dependent upon the group’s
stage of development. When she has observed issues developing within a group she has intervened; “in a different way than perhaps I would if it’s all working”.

Apart from what might be termed the more ‘tangible’ reasons for making decisions about appropriate leadership styles, Anna agreed she used her intuition or her “gut”. This she described as a “little voice” inside her head which advised her, “That’s not a good idea” or “Go that way”. The ‘voice’ was explained as coming from somewhere inside her. An example Anna gave of when she used her intuition in her leadership came from when working with a group of school students on a rafting trip.

I’ve done the same trip quite a few years in a row…for some reason, the group wasn’t appreciating each other – there was a bit of nastiness against staff, and it was a bit odd…it was a gut reaction…I hadn’t really thought about it, and I’d never done it before – but I got them all together on the river, and I just explained to them how important it was to realise how lucky they were…and that all came from this intuition…that led to make the program better somehow. And it did. It worked.

Overall, Anna used a variety of leadership styles and drew on her knowledge, experience and intuition to make decisions about which style to use when.

**Relationships.**

Anna ‘placed’ incredible value was placed on the importance of positive relationships. A core belief she held was that in order to learn, it is essential to enjoy the company of the people you are with. Experience has shown her that participants do not put their “whole heart” into the experience if there is a negative feeling within the group. Instead of concentrating on the group, individual participants concentrate on their “own little world” and are unable to think beyond themselves. However, she acknowledged that at times it was important to feel discomfort and this was intentionally done by changing groups around and ensuring things were a bit uncomfortable. On the whole, Anna aimed to develop a positive group feeling. From her experience, “when people are getting along, they put in way more” which in turn resulted in greater opportunity for learning.

A variety of situations described by Anna indicated the varying importance of positive relationships in a group. For example, when walking along a beach with a group there is room for everyone to spread out. In this case, “it wouldn’t really matter if the whole group wasn’t that happy together”. On the other hand, if you are on a raft it is
much more important that people are getting along and are “able to listen to each other”. Overall, Anna is very “uncomfortable” when the group is not getting along. This drives her to work hard towards creating a positive environment for all. One way Anna does this is through empowering her students. “Letting them make decisions and respecting what they have to say”, accepting that they might have a “totally different way of doing something”. The ultimate goal for being an outdoor leader is steeped within Anna’s wish for her participants to be able to lead themselves as if she were not present. That way, when they are on their own, “they’re still doing it”.

**Role Models.**

Anna identified two key role models that have been influential in Anna’s leadership. Together, they have taught her to be constantly on the lookout for new ideas and to be able to learn from them. One of her role models highlighted the need to put “energy into places that other people can’t be bothered with” and the value of being “a good giver”. This same role model enlightened Anna that instead of relying on other people to be inspiring, “be inspiring yourself”. Over time she came to realise that he (the role model) was “just a person, a real person, and everyone could be like that if they wanted to be”. The other role model Anna identified was nature. By looking to nature for inspiration, Anna has observed how it is able to grow back, cope and change, gleaning many ideas from the “whole system”. Nature has reinforced to her on many occasions the merit of “perseverance and strength”.

**Wrapping Up.**

Preferring not to be the “focus” of the group, Anna acknowledged that “it’s nice to be remembered” although what was most important was that her participants were able to lead themselves and know that they were able to do it on their own. Ultimately she has learnt to value making sure experiences feel “different and special”, along with her own personal enjoyment of the experience, she encourages others to do and be the same. This feeling of specialness Anna believed would be felt by the group and result in positive experiences for all. In addition, she has always tried to build on what she already knows and to change things so that she too is always learning.

Responses from Anna to the Phase 1 interview questions indicated a person who leads from the heart, was aware of student needs, creates positive experiences and was constantly looking for new ways of doing things. With nature as her guide, her positive
approach to life and her commitment to being respectful and kind, suggest a caring and calm personal leadership style. The way in which she identified her weaknesses reinforced a sense of humility present throughout her responses. Anna’s answers to Phase 1 described a humble, committed person who has experienced much success as a leader. At the same time, she is on her own learning journey and admitted having much left to learn.

Ian.

Why an outdoor leader?

Since he was quite young, Ian wanted to be an outdoor leader. The National Geographic TV programs showing “mountain climbers and river paddlers” got his attention and interest. A love of the outdoors was developed into his teenage years through personal involvement in paddling and sailing. Those activities began to develop in Ian, a love of interacting “with the environment”. Particularly, he remembered enjoying learning about the weather and how this knowledge helped him to make decisions about what to do when sailing.

Teaching skiing in Austria as a young adult reinvigorated his passion for being in the outdoors. Later, when moving between Canada and Australia working as a ski instructor Ian came to see the benefits of the Canadian ski instructor system. There he learnt a lot about teaching well and how to encourage people to enjoy the outdoors. Together, his early experiences provided Ian with what he described as a good “grounding in pedagogy”, a love of teaching and commitment to becoming a good teacher. These aspects, together with his love of the outdoors resulted in Ian going to University to learn more about being a “good” teacher.

It had always been essential for Ian to have a job he loved doing. “I love what I’m doing, and I guess that comes across to people”. Not only was it a love for being an outdoor leader, but specifically it was the “power of the outdoors that it has: 1) to change me…and 2)...to change other people’s lives” is what continues to drive Ian to be an outdoor leader.
Core values.
Stemming from a “Christian basis” Ian identified his core values as “vast”. His long list included “treating others well, fairness, walking a mile in another’s shoes, definitely positive, and trying to see the world through positive glasses”. Not only aware of his core values, but awake to his need to enact his core values through his behaviour and to share them with others. Expecting the best from himself at all times, Ian described inviting others to do the same. In addition, the importance of family and identifying what was important in his life Ian illustrated as being central who he is. Ian’s core values and commitment to demonstrating these through his leadership were reinforced when he said, “look, I am just constantly – whoever I’m with – trying to share my values with them”.

An aspect that contributed to his core values and beliefs was the research and literature he engaged with in relation to positive psychology and sports psychology. The importance of the attitude and outlook a person brings to their life, including how you lead was essential to Ian. As he tried to live his philosophy through his leadership practice, he also shared how he approached this with students. “I try to make them self aware and give them new tools so that they can be more positive”. When the students who are leaving the outdoor education program are asked “What’s one thing Mr. Boyle’s\(^1\) taught you?” they regularly respond “it’s all about attitudes and positive psychology skills”.

Strengths and weaknesses.
When asked about his strengths and weaknesses Ian identified having what he described as a good awareness of his strengths and weaknesses. Aware of how he came across to people, how he was a role model for groups and his ability to connect with students were key strengths he identified in relation to his leadership. Always attentive to interacting with students at the level they are at Ian saw this aspect as a key contributor to his success with building rapport with his students. It not only allowed him to develop positive relationships with his students, but it also gave him the opportunity to “eventually get inside their heads and find out who they are and how they

\(^1\) Mr. Boyle is Ian.
think”. Getting to know his students individually gave him the “opportunity to help them out” as needed.

Ian described his high level of internal motivation and an ability to always try his “hardest at everything” as one of his strengths. This he attempted to role model at all times with students or with anybody he works or leads with. Being “innovative” and always looking for “new ways to facilitate outdoor learning and make it new and exciting” were also pivotal to his leadership. Personal motivations for being an outdoor leader encourage Ian to “stay current, especially in trends outside my field”. He is constantly reading, thinking, and being on the lookout for ways in which new ideas and/or concepts might be used in his leadership and facilitation in the outdoors. For example his interest and learning in relation to positive psychology, neuropsychology and sports psychology have positively contributed to his facilitation and leadership in the outdoors.

Another strength Ian described was being “constantly on the lookout for ways to engage, interact and look for teachable moments”. An example of this came when he described a typical lunchtime, “all the staff would be sitting together, talking amongst themselves, having lunch at the staff table, but I’ll go sit with the kids, and talk to them about stuff”. Whether it was in the lunchroom or walking up from the dorms, he takes every opportunity to engage with students. According to Ian, teachable moments provide “opportunities for participants to learn about themselves” and emphasise how “changing their behaviour and thinking, can impact positively on their lives”. Ian was committed to making the most of these teachable moments and opportunities in order to build relationships. Whenever possible, he works with individual students to transfer their learning to other situations.

Weaknesses, Ian was quick to acknowledge and identify; “we all have weaknesses”. Being the coordinator of outdoor education Ian identified as an opportunity and a weakness. In particular he identified the significant administration that went with this responsibility meant that he had more time than previously away from students. “The enormous workload you have behind the scenes...paperwork, lesson preparation, risk management, accreditation, and occupational health and safety”. It was this role that he felt stopped him from at times “connecting with the people I love to connect with” and having the opportunities to lead others.
**Motivations.**

Ian’s purpose for being an outdoor leader began with his “own journey”. When he looks at his own life and the age of the students he works with (15 year olds), Ian remembers being the same age. “An introverted young man with no confidence - no direction”, he was someone who found school challenging, “I think I had the gifts and the talents, but I didn’t know it at the time”. What he believes was needed in his situation was “someone to show me, prod me, and point me in the right direction”. As an outdoor leader, Ian endeavours to provide the “young men” (students) around him with the opportunity to experience activities through which they can learn “what it takes to be excellent in life”.

Inspired by personal adventures in the outdoors he has learnt that what he once may have thought to be impossible to achieve, became possible. By beginning to apply this learning from the outdoors into other areas of his life, Ian realised that the experiences he had when he was young were fundamental to shaping who he is today. The various experiences have encouraged him to want to share what he was able to learn in the outdoors with others through being an outdoor leader.

Storytelling was central to Ian’s leadership. Ian shared stories of “rich metaphor” of when he was growing up, adventures he’s had and how the outdoors has helped him in his own life. Underpinning Ian’s drive to be an outdoor leader was his need “to see that change is possible in our young people”. And to be able to see firsthand “how the kids break through into...new territory, and how it sets them up for a new pathway in their life”.

**Leadership style.**

The conditional outdoor leadership theory was the model Ian chose to describe his leadership style. A style that was “dependent upon the needs of the group and the dynamics going on with that group...how that’s interacting with the conditions in the environment we are in”. An interest in “transformational leadership...in the sense of being able to assist participants learn, and move to be a better individual in areas of their life that they may be needing help with” was also evident. However, his preference was to use a democratic style of leadership where “I’m guiding them, questioning them, consulting them, testing their theories, and trying to be a part of the group”. Using this style Ian felt more at ease and better able to connect with the groups he leads.
Ian described using situational leadership, particularly when safety became an issue. Where possible, he liked to give the leadership over to students. However, he remained aware of and in tune with the conditions and had the ability to shift his leadership style to an autocratic style without hesitation. Even while leading autocratically he continued to look for “teachable moments” so that he could share what he was “seeing” and aid students in building their own skills in decision making and judgement. Ian saw his outdoor leadership role, autocratic or not, as not “just taking over”, but “educating”. The knowledge he had of leadership styles and theories came from his tertiary training and had been largely dominated by situational leadership and the Priest and Gass (1997) text. This text he described as having guided him, giving him the theory and the words to better understand what he does as an outdoor leader and how effective he was.

Ian was a “firm believer in intuition”. Having read widely on the topic, he believed that his own intuition stemmed from his broad background of experiences. This range of experiences he saw as contributing to his mind’s ability to tell him that something was not right. He also attributed his constant examination of group dynamics and the terrain to his ability to pay attention to his intuition. In the past when he ignored his intuition, Ian “was caught out in a severe thunderstorm on a river and got my group into all sorts of trouble”. In retrospect he realised that he “should have stopped and set up camp and got them in a safe zone earlier”. When similar conditions present themselves he now knows what to do instantly. “I am constantly listening to that internal voice and I pay attention to it”.

Ian described using his intuition in relation to the weather, but also “when I’m watching students, reading body language, their self talk and what they’re saying to each other”. Committed to being “in tune with where a student’s at”, Ian was constantly on the lookout for an opportunity to engage in dialogue with students so that he could confirm his “hunches”. With hunches established, he sees himself in a position to give students “some tools to deal with the challenges going on psychologically”. Drawing on a variety of leadership styles and a broad range of theories, Ian described a flexible leadership style underpinned by deep thinking and intuition.
Relationships.

According to Ian, relationships were essential for effective leadership, especially where the purpose was to “foster change” in students. Without a relationship he saw it as impossible to develop rapport and to get to know how students think. Developing relationships began from the first moment he met someone. First impressions were considered “critical” and he took every opportunity to develop relationships with his students. Fundamentally, Ian believed that “if you can’t relate to people and connect with people, you may as well just be an outdoor rec instructor teaching the skill and don’t worry about change happening”. Relationships were pivotal to Ian being an outdoor leader in outdoor education where change creation is central.

Role Models.

Various role models have inspired Ian in his development of interpersonal skills. Ian observed the positive way in which his role model spoke and interacted with people, “the way he thinks” and how these simple things have impacted his own effectiveness as a leader. Through learning technical skills Ian was similarly encouraged by various role models. When on his first ice climb lead in Canada, Ian found himself “paralysed with fear” and without the strength to continue. Rescued by his role model, Ian recognised the importance of being able to block out fears and to be highly “confident and competent” in the technical skills if he was going to lead people using adventure activities in the outdoors.

The role models Ian identified were described as “great role models” because they “lead by example. They would always be out there, doing what you were doing, teaching from the front and that really stayed in my mind”. From them Ian learnt not only the value of being a role model, but the importance of also being “an inspiration to those you are working with”. In his view being an inspiration was different to being charismatic. In an attempt to be inspiring Ian consistently walked his talk with

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2 ‘Interpersonal skills’ include facilitation, instructional and organisational skills of outdoor leaders as described in the core competencies (Priest & Gass, 2005).

3 ‘Technical skills’ typically refer to technical, safety and environmental skills as outlined in the core competencies (Priest & Gass, 2005).
“confidence and a positive attitude” and set “really good examples to those that I am trying to teach”.

**Wrapping up.**

Ian was committed to getting students to do things that they initially thought they could not do. He liked to “show people that things they thought were impossible – are possible”. This stemmed from personal experiences and a belief that it was possible to overcome anything when you choose to engage your mind to rise above your “insecurities and self doubts”. Using a variety of strategies, Ian gave students in the process of learning technical skills a “progression” of easy steps so that they were in their “comfort zone”. Once they achieved the initial steps he added a bit more to the process until they mastered the skill. For teaching interpersonal skills he used techniques gleaned from sports psychology and/or life psychology and storytelling. In this way, he encouraged “visualisation” and the blocking of negative thoughts.

Positive role modelling and sharing stories from his own life and readings of how others have overcome problems were all pivotal to his outdoor leadership. Dedicated to empowering students, Ian provided them with the “tools” they may never have thought of to aid them in dealing with the challenges they faced on an outdoor education program and in life. It all came back to his valuing of “people having breakthroughs into new territory, and finding that there are new possibilities – if you just push that little bit further and find new things in your life”.

Throughout Ian’s responses in Phase 1, relationships emerged as pivotal to his leadership. Creating and making the most of ‘teachable moments’ were also central, as was his commitment to enacting his core values in his leadership practice. Motivated by his connection to the natural environment and the change that is possible for individuals through outdoor education, his responses emphasised a positive approach to life and leadership. Utilising storytelling, Ian was able to share his own experiences with students and provide them with alternative responses to challenges they faced. His responses consistently demonstrated a willingness to take risks and push boundaries, all with humility and compassion.
Jon.

Why an outdoor leader?

The impetus for Jon’s career choice was significantly shaped by the personal and professional growth that had occurred for him in the outdoors. “The simple existence of life out of a pack, kayak or dry bag has been some of the sweeter moments of my life”. These personal experiences, along with early experiences he had as a teacher taking students into the outdoors fuelled his motivation to share and replicate these educative moments with students through outdoor education.

For the most part, Jon was an outdoor leader because he saw it as a valuable way to make a contribution to the world. “The outdoors can teach us so much on so many levels. The outdoors as a medium for learning is only just beginning. The outdoors provides an invaluable framework of respect. Respect for ourselves, each other and the environment”. Jon was committed to being a motivated and passionate outdoor leader. The responses he gave to the interview questions confirmed a love of and belief in outdoor education and highlighted the importance of valuing the simple things in life.

Core Values.

The core values shared by Jon were reflective of a positive leadership style suggestive of a pledge to enact his core values through his leadership practice. They included: “respect for others; give and take; being genuine; relationships; consistency; walking the talk; listen well; and giving good energy”. A general belief in the value of outdoor education activities, processes and programs including the discomfort of “being cold, wet, tired, hungry” were reflected consistently in his overall commitment to outdoor education. For Jon, “an education that strives only for academic results seems to miss the mark on many levels”. Undoubtedly, Jon was dedicated to education that engages the whole person.

Strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths identified by Jon included first and foremost his fundamental belief in the value of being an outdoor leader. This encompassed his enjoyment of “young people’s company” and a dedication to maintaining “contact with the school as much as possible”. The contact with the school he saw as an enabler to remaining as relevant as
possible to his students’ “all round” education. Not only was Jon enthusiastic about being an outdoor leader, he was passionate about the outdoors. Rather than simply talking about how good outdoor education and adventure activities are for his students, he personally pushed himself in the outdoors on a regular basis for his own growth and development.

Weaknesses, he ascertained, were “taking failures too personally”, being sometimes overly concerned with safety “even when I know I have done all that I think I can do” and wanting positive outcomes all of the time. While he strived for positive outcomes, he acknowledged the importance of learning from negative experiences as well. A positive approach to leadership was implied through the identification of both his strengths and weaknesses, as well as a deep level of personal awareness and humility.

Motivations.
Predominantly driven by his unwavering belief in the benefits of participating in adventure based pursuits and outdoor education as a whole, Jon’s enjoyment of being an outdoor leader was clearly evident. These convictions have allowed him to continue to build his own and his students’ connections “with themselves, others and the environment”. Although he was an experienced outdoor leader, Jon had not lost sight of what he still has to learn. “Every week I get to share in a group’s journey and whilst I know many things that may happen, there is much I will see and learn on the way”. This response confirmed his humility and commitment, both closely linked to his core values. In addition, the role the natural environment has played in shaping him as a leader and his genuine passion for leading well, also contribute to his impetus for being an outdoor leader.

Leadership style.
With a leadership focus that aimed to build skills in individuals, Jon described using a variety of styles to achieve his personal technique which he added was guided by his core values. In the beginning, when students were new to activities/tasks he took on a more directive leadership manner. Once students had developed the required skills to achieve the task at hand, often over several years, he liked to stand back and watch them lead “really well on their own” with good skills. When using a variety of styles, Jon took into consideration the age group of students and the “seriousness of the
situation”. When safety was compromised he shifted his leadership style to one that was “dictatorial quite quickly”. Confident to step in if the “group structure is breaking down” or “a lack of respect is being displayed for a group member”. At other times when safety was not an issue and time permitted and he saw the potential for learning, he was “happy to stand back”.

In his selection of leadership styles for various situations, Jon agreed to using intuition. “I think you can see things developing before they happen, which may be the same as intuition”. Intuition he described as being able to identify a group’s “weather pattern”, which for him indicated the various tones present in a group’s dynamics. Jon accredited his ability to use intuition in his leadership to his experience as an outdoor leader and something that had developed over the years.

Also fundamental to his leadership philosophy and selection of styles was Jon’s connection with and commitment to indigenous cultures. “I think that their knowledge about the environment and their place in it is overlooked and undervalued”. His approach to leadership was flexible. It varied according to the situation and conditions experienced. Core values drove his decision making and Jon demonstrated an awareness of self, others and the environment that was inclusive of culture. Indigenous knowledge and ways of being had contributed to shaping his leadership style.

Relationships.

Relationships were integral to Jon’s leadership practice: “it’s all about relationships”. Without respectful relationships he believed individual and program goals would “suffer” and therefore not be met. When Jon reflected on his most valuable personal learning experiences, he recognised learning the most from people he “either admired or respected”. However, he also admitted that he had learnt from people he did not respect for example, how not to be a leader.

When working with groups, Jon highlighted the significance of “give and take” in the relationships he develops. He also emphasised the need to be consistent with everyone, being “solid, but human and fair”. From the basis of positive relationships, Jon encouraged his students to try new things underpinned by his belief that “this is how we grow”. Jon viewed the act of trying new things as noteworthy not only for his students’ growth, but for the growth of outdoor leaders as well. “If we are not pushed a
little every now and then, if we always stayed comfortable, then we would not get anywhere. That is why it is important for outdoor leaders to be pushed themselves”. These values and beliefs reinforced his own commitment to consistently challenging himself in the outdoors.

**Role Models.**

Jon identified Martin Luther King, the Dalai Lama and Nelson Mandela as his mentors because of who they are as individuals. Outdoor leaders he listed as role models were described as “passionate” people. Their respect for people and places, along with their ability to “walk their talk and have fun were all aspects he indicated as crucial. A final message Jon took from his mentors was that “each group deserves the best you can give”.

**Wrapping up.**

Jon’s responses to the Phase 1 interview questions highlighted his love of, and belief in, outdoor education and its potential outcomes. Being an outdoor leader for Jon was all about enabling personal growth in the individuals within his group and workplace. In relation to empowering others, Jon saw the outdoors as “mostly responsible for any empowerment. I just help the process along, take them to places and provide an environment where it will hopefully go on”. The ‘environment’ he referred to here was the supportive social environment he endeavoured to create. With passion that stemmed from his heart, Jon came to the task of leader in a positive way where his values were openly shared.

A central belief that “on the whole, people generally are good, and have the best intentions” combined with individuals having “less and less to do with the outdoors”, Jon saw this resulting in reduced relationships with self, others and nature. Without a relationship to the outdoors he was convinced that you “cannot begin to want to look after it”. Committed to “providing positive experiences in the outdoors where we learn about ourselves and our place in it”, Jon viewed being an outdoor leader as “vitally important” for the future of our planet.

A personal commitment to indigenous knowledge and practices and how these inform his own skills as a leader reinforced his deep sense of purpose. A humble view of the world was demonstrated through the identification of his strengths and
weaknesses. Through these recognitions a level of courage and willingness to take risks emerged. Descriptions of relationships and their importance suggested more than an individual approach to relationships, rather the development of a culture of support where individuals were recognised and valued. The way in which he responded to the interview questions demonstrated an ability to tell stories, to take the listener to the situation, and in doing so, empower them through those stories. While he may enjoy letting the adventure unfold, his responses indicated an intentional approach to ensuring learning takes place.

Peter.

Why an outdoor leader?

The realisation of wanting to be an outdoor leader came early in Peter’s teaching career when he experienced some “very successful, and worthwhile activities” while working as a volunteer abroad. There he ran a number of camping trips for primary school students in Tanzania which culminated in an expedition on Mt Kilimanjaro. Experiences while working at an outdoor and environmental education centre also contributed to his desire to be an outdoor leader. There, Peter gained a “very high level of satisfaction, meaning and enjoyment”. From this variety of learning experiences, he recognised his personal need to “continue and extend from” them.

Core values.

When asked about his core values, Peter provided a long list:

…a respect and love for the natural world; passion for adventure; benefits of excellent teamwork; outdoor education offers the opportunity for real peak experiences; everyone can learn/develop the capability to perform and contribute in a meaningful way; each person’s experience is as important as others; [and] service to others is a very important aspect of life.

These core values were evident in the way in which Peter described how he got students involved in programs where he was committed to “challenge by choice” and students being able to “sign up for what they want to do”. Outdoor education programs he developed were sequential “learning programs” where many students “far exceed their initial expectations of what they thought they were capable of”. Peter was quick to emphasise that he did not “push them, as much as facilitate a very supportive and safe
social environment with a foundation of solid skill and experience development, on which they are able to push themselves”. This social environment he built he described as one in which he took “careful management of group dynamics and the development of an underlying ethos/philosophy of group support”. Pivotal to his reasons for being an outdoor leader was a commitment to striving for individual students to push their own limits. This occurred within the development of a “knowledge and appreciation that a person can pull out when they become uncomfortable”.

With most of his programs elected by students voluntarily, he found that “once they go out on trips they mostly embrace the whole of the course, as they enjoy them (the trips) so much”. At times he would go out of his way to encourage the involvement of some students if he thought they might “greatly benefit from making social networks”. Peter recognised that students “buy into” his programs largely from the stories they hear from other students. Once involved in his programs, he empowered his students by “facilitating their development of independence in activities and assisting and encouraging their ongoing involvement and extension”.

**Strengths and weaknesses.**

In providing a comprehensive list of strengths and weaknesses, Peter demonstrated active reflection of his leadership practice and a high level of awareness that extended beyond the self to others and the environment. Some of his identified strengths are listed here:

…able to match level of challenge to participant’s level of skill, capability, and judgement across a wide variety of activities; personal love of activities and landscapes, and sharing these with young people; good awareness and appreciation of safety; willingness to take responsibility for duty of care for challenging activities; ongoing professional development and embracing of this as worthwhile and necessary; high levels of professional energy and motivation; appreciation of historical context of global environmental difficulties; comfort and willingness not to be the centre of attention; [and] willing to share self.

Weaknesses he listed as “not comfortable singing, telling jokes; limited repertoire of debriefing techniques – just use a few good standbys; not enough time to keep loose ends of some admin tidy; [and] sometimes have trouble balancing home, trips, and other commitments”. Honesty, awareness of self, humility, in addition to a willingness to
take risks (physical, emotional, psychological and social) were suggested in his acknowledgement of his strengths and weaknesses.

Motivations.

Peter was motivated by the “ongoing rewarding and enjoyable nature of the work” he does as an outdoor leader, coupled with a “strong desire to keep improving and extending things”. Being an outdoor leader was meaningful to Peter because it enabled him to “spend significant chunks of time in wonderful landscapes doing terrific activities with young adults who are having peak experiences”. The opportunity to collaborate with others including adventurers and young people, while rare, provided additional stimulus. For Peter, leading outdoors was “extremely meaningful from an interpersonal, educative and environmental perspective”. To be able to help young people to develop skills including self confidence and to gain a lifelong love for natural world and the adventure activities was seen by Peter as a great opportunity. It was this internal meaning that Peter gained from being an outdoor leader that continues to drive him.

Leadership style.

In his leadership, Peter described using a variety of styles which was dependent on the activities themselves, the skills and maturity of the students and his own personal knowledge of the group, the location and the weather conditions. A couple of what he called his preferred styles included “coaching people who are developing skills and experience; nurturing and supporting people who have developed a higher level of skill and experience;…[and] collaborative where the group is involved in most aspects of the trip/activity”. Often using a variety of styles on a single trip, he identified the need for flexibility particularly when “multilayered levels of skill and experience” were present.

When it came to selecting an appropriate leadership style for the variety of individuals he leads, Peter credited using his intuition in the decision making process. As he developed “more knowledge of their makeup… characteristics and skills/experience” Peter varied the style he used. Intuition was something he described using all the time, especially in relation to his “awareness of safety” and in his judgement of participant competence.
**Relationships.**

Relationships were “of vital importance” to Peter. In order “to be able to manage individuals and groups in challenging activities and landscapes, the leader must have sound relationships with participants and other staff in order to maximise the experiences, and remain safe”. Positive relationships were seen by Peter to “enable excellent communication” and allow for the facilitation and development of “high powered teamwork and leadership skill development”. They were also considered to be necessary in order to draw out higher levels of meaning and learning from outdoor programs. Many of his responses returned to a discussion around relationships and their importance. Peter regularly included comments that indicated the development of a culture/community that was inclusive and supportive of all.

**Role Models.**

From his role models Peter learnt “what is possible when great groups of students and teachers, undertake big things”. Mentors have shown him how to remain actively involved in activities “at a high level in his personal life” while at the same time “maintaining a successful career” as an outdoor leader. They have also taught him the importance of being “passionate about educating and facilitating relationships with the natural world, for the sake of the planet” when leading in the outdoors. Together, they have shown Peter “what’s possible”, “how it (outdoor leadership) can be sustainable” and “why it (outdoor leadership) can be so important”.

**Wrapping up.**

Several “extremely meaningful and rewarding experiences” have left Peter “invigorated” as both an outdoor leader and a person. Over time, he has learned to trust his intuition and to focus on developing and/or maintaining relationships with nature. It has also taught him to be “very careful with the details” and to ensure that his students are “equipped to handle harder trips”. The outdoor education program Peter has developed focuses on “how to independently carry out a range of activities” rather than just providing students with “one off experiences”. It involves a process that encroaches on managing “their journey towards competent independence”.

In his responses to the Phase 1 interview questions, Peter identified self-awareness and being able to tap into intuition as essential to his leadership practice.
Core values he described demonstrated a commitment to the natural world, adventure, benefits of outdoor education, individuals, relationships with self, others and nature, and a culture of support. Answers he provided suggested a positive approach to outdoor leadership which stemmed from both a genuine enjoyment of being an outdoor leader and being able to take part in and/or observe other people’s peak experiences. Through his identification of being able to match students’ abilities (including judgement) to appropriate challenges, Peter emphasised a way of leading which suggested humility and the valuing of difference where the individual was central in a community of learners.

Having been an outdoor leader for many years indicated a certain level of resilience. In identifying his weaknesses, humility and an open approach to leadership were implied. Throughout his responses, Peter indicated a willingness to take risks, physically, socially, emotionally, and psychologically. Peter was internally motivated to be an outdoor leader and clear about his passions and reasons for being an outdoor leader. Dedicated to a personal learning journey beyond outdoor education, Peter’s responses suggested leadership that was quiet, unassuming and caring.

Rod.

Why an outdoor leader?

Originally trained as a Maths/Science teacher, a shortage in PE teachers saw Rod taking a class of PE which led to his introduction to being an outdoor leader. Early experiences as an outdoor leader in the ‘backyard’ of the school resulted in Rod identifying “the difference in the kids” and the types of relationships he was able to develop with them in the outdoors. Sailing with students on the lake at the back of the school, as well as the time this afforded him to get to know his students better Rod learnt that the students “didn’t get into the bush very much”. This knowledge encouraged him to take the students bushwalking as well and it “grew from there”. Rod considered himself to be “more of a facilitator than an actual leader”. What he meant by the term ‘facilitator’ was the creation of learning opportunities for students and a collaborative approach to leading.
Core values.

Core values identified by Rod were stated simply as “honesty” and “openness”. These values he added to when he went on to say “I wouldn’t ask anyone to do something that I would not do myself”. From Rod’s perspective his own students are honest and “incredibly open about some of the things they do”. From his observations, he believed that they trust him implicitly as he does them.

Strengths and weaknesses.

The main strengths Rod revealed were being comfortable, his strength of mind and being “willing to make a decision”. Comfortable in the outdoors and with the responsibilities that go with the role of outdoor leader, Rod described using a collaborative decision making technique, where everyone is included in the process and a sense of ownership is generated on decisions shared. The other strength recognised by Rod was, strength of mind. “They can see that you can’t be swayed all that often. That you have a set of values and beliefs and processes and that’s what you stick to”. Experience as an outdoor leader has shown him that “anybody will do anything for you, on the basis that 1) you’re willing to do it yourself…and 2) you can explain why it’s being done that way”. According to Rod, these two aspects of his leadership practice contribute to students being happy to follow, even if they do not entirely agree with the process or decision at the time.

A weakness of being “too flexible” was identified as both a positive and a negative. A benefit, the need to be flexible as an outdoor leader and a deterrent where being too flexible could potentially be frustrating for students. Another weakness he ascertained was “the body”. While Rod would love to have technical skills in all the activity areas, he did not see it as a possibility or a necessity. Rather, he believed in following the skills “you’ve got passion for” and that “a lot of things are transferrable”. For Rod, good outdoor leaders use everyone around them and the skills they bring to the group; referring to not only students, but other leaders as well.

Motivations.

Driven by the “buzz I get out of seeing the enthusiasm and the changes that people have”, Rod went out of his way to create opportunities for the young people around him. From experience, he believed implicitly in the outcomes that are possible
through outdoor education programs. “You actually start to move a person through that
growth stage, and they start to understand they don’t need to jump in and do
everything”. Direct links between how students can transfer learning from outdoor
experiences to their individual lives were intentionally drawn by Rod. “They don’t have
to take the first opportunity that comes up. They can start to…think ahead a little more”
and hence make better decisions for their own growth, and life.

**Leadership style.**

When questioned about his leadership style, Rod unequivocally described his
leadership style as “situational”. Experience he has had as an outdoor leader has directly
contributed to his leadership practice, in particular, his ability to develop sound
judgement in relation to leading. As a leader Rod believed that “you have to have a
handbag there, full of all those skills, which you can draw on at any time”. Other
aspects he considered to be equally important were being adaptable, flexible, and well
planned. The ability to implement a contingency plan at any time was also valued. In
addition to situational leadership, Rod identified being very “autocratic at times”,
usually when safety was or might become an issue.

Transformational leadership theory and creating leadership in others was
identified by Rod as something he focused on. A concern he raised about creating
leadership in his students was the lack of authenticity of the experiences he was able to
create. “Rod is in the background, and really…does their decision matter all that
much?” However, at the same time he acknowledged that “they’re willing to give it a go
because they know if they stuff up it’s not really going to be a stuff up, because there is
a safety net there”. This delicate balance of creating authentic leadership opportunities
was something that Rod clearly continued to grapple with, focus on and explore
alternative ways of creating genuine experiences.

The use of intuition in his leadership was described as something that he did not
“necessarily plan…or think [of] in those terms”. Rather, he saw intuition as a “bag of
tools”, something to draw on “without thinking”. A clear link between his use of
intuition and his awareness became evident as the interview progressed. Intuition “is
about being in tune with the natural environment…quite often I’ll pick up on changes in
the noises and movement”. According to Rod, anyone can be intuitive “if they set their
mind to it”. Intuition was considered to be a skill that could be learnt, if the individual is
open to it. “But the heart’s got to be behind the mind. If the heart’s not there as well, then the mind doesn’t retain it”. For Rod, intuition was inextricably linked to an individual's ability to engage their heart in their leadership to be aware of what is going on around them.

A variety of leadership styles and theories were embraced by Rod in the way in which he described his leadership practice. Well read, he acknowledged that there were a lot of new leadership theories emerging in the literature. However, he questioned whether all that much had changed in the field. Conceivably what he saw as ‘new’ was “the way we look at and report on it (leadership)”. These ‘new’ theories (e.g., transformational leadership theory) Rod supposed may provide the language that has been previously missing from earlier theories used in outdoor leadership (e.g., situational leadership theory) to describe what is happening in outdoor leadership in the field.

**Relationships.**

Pivotal to Rod’s leadership were relationships whereby they create “a sense of belonging” for all. In his role as outdoor leader he saw several relationships existing: relationships to the activity, with the group and with the environment. The values he placed on these relationships were connected to his own “passion for that particular activity” and enjoying other people’s company. For Rod, if relationships “aren’t formed in the right way” students will move “away from the activity” and then they are not able to “form a relationship with the particular environment they’re in”. This potential loss of relationship with nature, Rod saw resulting in students not appreciating “what they’ve actually got”. The relationships Rod developed with his students were described as being directly related to students developing relationships with nature and empowering others.

When questioned about empowering others, Rod stated that he “tries” to empower his students. By observing his students’ actions, he was able to measure his success in achieving this empowerment. When students come up with their own new ideas and ask him to step aside and let them do it, he knows he has been successful to some degree. Empowering students was important to Rod because he believed “that’s how we progress…unless you empower them, then whatever you have worked on goes with you”. Leading for a purpose greater than his outdoor education program, Rod
would rather pass the learning and leadership over to his students and “let them do something with it” than keep it for himself.

**Role Models.**

In describing his role models, Rod consistently referred to their passion for being an outdoor leader. And this passion it appeared has been adopted by Rod as well. “It’s a passion for the subject, and a belief in what it can do for people” that continued to motivate him.

**Wrapping up.**

Rod concluded his interview by sharing the value he had gained by being an outdoor leader. “You get little snippets, little comments from a kid about how it’s changed them… it was a significant part of their life”. Interactions with past students in the street when they reflect on shared experiences, confirmed for him his role as outdoor leader. It was those unexpected connections that “add to the value of what I’m doing”. Responses to the initial interview suggested that Rod’s purpose for being an outdoor leader was not only related to the benefits for individuals, but for the betterment of the natural world as well.

Reflective in his approach to leadership, he focused on individuals and the development of a positive culture in which to lead. More than just relationships, the creation of culture was about creating “a sense of belonging” for students past and present. Rod was committed to enacting his core values of honesty and openness with his students. While he has had the benefit of experience, it was his reflection upon and learning from those experiences that he believed enabled him to be a successful outdoor leader. Ultimately, Rod described outdoor education as applicable and transferable to everyday life and encompassing of all other subject areas.

**Conclusion.**

Phase 1 interviews provided the opportunity to gather information about the leadership practice of the participants from their perspective. It shared their reasons for being an outdoor leader, core values, motivations, strengths and weaknesses. Influences of role models and the ways in which they got students involved were also examined. The importance of relationships and personal experiences that have influenced their
leadership practice were also explored. The following section presents the leadership attributes that emerged.

**Section 2: Early Findings from Phase 1**

A comprehensive list of attributes has been generated from the early findings. These have been categorised according to the conceptual framework: characteristics, values, behaviours and skills. While an attempt was made to adhere to the four categories of the conceptual framework during Phase 1, some findings were found to correlate with several categories. Ostensibly some attributes, for example, ‘relationships’ appeared under three categories: values, skills and behaviours. At this stage of the study it was decided to leave the attributes as they emerged, allowing duplications across categories rather than attempting to simplify them. A flow chart was developed in an attempt to summarise and visualise the early resulting aspects of extraordinary outdoor leadership (Figure 5.5, p. 145). In order to help highlight and identify the various characteristics, values, skills and behaviours that emerged, a selection of quotes have been used.

**Characteristics.**

The three dominant characteristics revealed in Phase 1 included an awareness of self and others, the use of the heart in leadership and an approach to learning that was based in experience. Through the stories told in response to the interview questions, participants demonstrated an awareness of themselves, how they interact with the world, their strengths and weaknesses and their awareness of others. All of the participants described themselves as open, leading with their hearts, and their minds. Deep listening, reflection, transferring learning, building a social culture and facilitation were all identified as pivotal to their leadership practice. Participants’ responses indicated that they consistently endeavoured to enact these characteristics in their leadership practice. An impression of being firm, flexible and fun was demonstrated by all participants. These elements of leadership have been represented diagrammatically in Figure 5.1.
Awareness of self, others and nature.

Ian highlighted the fundamental need for, and importance of, awareness in leadership when he said “just being aware of how I come across to people, how I role model myself in front of a group is an important part”. While he valued self-awareness, Ian also indicated the importance of being able to connect with students and to interact with them on their “level”. In particular his awareness of self and others enabled Ian to develop positive relationships and to create learning opportunities or ‘teachable moments’ for the individual growth of the students in his care. The ability to ‘read’ a situation by paying attention to the small details suggested the use of intuition in his leadership practice (intuition is further explored in the ‘skills’ section).

Awareness of others (students and other leaders), recognising what is important and how this aids outdoor leaders to make decisions was demonstrated by Anna. Through identifying the varying needs of groups, comparing a group walking along a beach with a group on a raft, she identified the various leadership styles necessary to ensure the group is supported through their learning. With a variety of contexts and
situations potentially arising for any outdoor leader, being aware of self and others was seen to collectively aid the leaders in this study in their ability to make decisions and to determine appropriate leadership styles.

The need to be self-aware and the role nature played in encouraging this was confirmed by Jon when he stated “all are equal in the outdoors. We are forced to look at ourselves and reflect on who we are”. The power of the natural environment to contribute to our understanding of self was reinforced in the following statement. “The outdoors teaches us many things on many levels. We learn about ourselves continually in its ever varying conditions, scenery and grandeur”. The need to be aware of the natural environment was also highlighted by Rod when he described his ability to sense changes in weather and environmental conditions. Awareness of self, others and the natural environment was consistently addressed by the leaders in this study as essential for successful outdoor leadership.

*Leading with heart, mind and will.*

The responses given by the participants suggested that a core purpose of outdoor education and their leadership was to create change. In doing so, these leaders identified using their hearts, minds and will in their leadership practice. All of the participants in this study indicated a belief that they were far from reaching their full potential as a leader. At the same time, they all ascertained that passion was central to their leadership and discussed a level of personal determination to constantly improve at the task. Descriptions they provided of their leadership practice implied a certain level of focus, foresight, discipline and flexibility. Collectively their responses indicated that they all lead from the heart.

Jon illustrated leadership that came from the heart when he described the outcomes that motivate him.

...outdoor education is all about personal development. At the end of the day no one cares how well you climb or paddle but what sort of person you are...when a quiet unassuming kid crawls his way up the tower or wobbles over an abseil. They are not about amazing ability but big hearts and full smiles that tell a story in a glance.
Not only does this comment suggest Jon leads with his heart, it also indicated that he values this attribute in others. The importance of involving the head and the heart in leading and learning was confirmed by Rod when he clearly stated the need to lead with “the head and the heart”. In order to allow individuals to lead with their hearts, Anna suggested a connection between engaging your heart, the role of positive relationships and leading with your heart. For learning to occur, she believed it was essential to get along with the people around you. If positive relationships are not present, then the focus would be on survival rather than on learning.

The participants consistently described positive motivations for leading in the outdoors. Jon identified his drive as one that stemmed from his belief in outdoor education and the positive outcomes he has witnessed over the years of being an outdoor leader. Stemming from a hope that the people she meets and works with in the outdoors will become a little more aware and want to protect the natural environment fuels Anna’s passion. Witnessing “the enthusiasm and the changes that people have” encouraged Rod to create opportunities for his students to learn, even when he is tired and has other commitments that need attending to (e.g., administrative tasks). Both the passion and the will to help these young people learn meant that Rod went out of his way to help them.

All leaders demonstrated using their heart and minds in careful consideration of how they come across to their students when they lead. They also demonstrated a will to persevere, even when the environmental conditions alone might be challenging (e.g., extreme heat, heavy rain, and strong winds). These environmental conditions in combination with a challenging group of students did not appear to deter their will or their enthusiasm for the task of leading well in the outdoors. Collectively their responses suggested that each of them engage in their leadership with the intent to do so well.

*Learning from experience.*

Central to outdoor education is learning from experience. Although Jon is presented with a new group each week and a program that often features similar activities and similar groups of students, he believes that there is always something new to learn.
...early in my career I talked a girl over an Abseil site. On reaching the bottom I congratulated her on a fine effort. She turned to me and said ‘You mean your effort!!’ My bottom line now is always come up, get set up, let’s try as hard as we can and then you make a choice and live with it.

This story emphasises Jon’s commitment to and ability to learn from his experiences through active reflection resulting in powerful changes in his leadership behaviour.

Relationships were described by participants as being critical for learning to occur. The relationships these leaders built with the people around them suggested that they not only build positive relationships, they also create a supportive culture where students are able to learn from experience alongside them. The cultures they build appeared to be bounded by their core values and the varying contexts in which they worked. With each new group, Anna attempted to create a feeling of specialness for her students to assist them to engage with the group they are with and the learning experience offered.

Being firm, flexible and fun emerged from Phase 1 across all participants as pivotal to who they are and their leadership practice. Jon is an outdoor leader because “it is fun” and Peter agreed he is a leader because “it is often great fun”. The participant’s love of being an outdoor leader helped to confirm this aspect. The way they described how they get individuals to become involved in programs who do not initially want to be involved highlighted their firmness, and flexibility.

...if it is in the right situation, and I feel they can actually do it, whether it be physical or mental...I definitely let them know that I am pretty keen for them to try. I definitely tell them that I am pretty determined that they’ll be able to do it (Anna).

In summary, the characteristics presented here suggest that the participants possess a keen awareness of self, and others. They lead with their hearts, minds and will, and are firm, flexible and fun. All of them demonstrated that they continually engage in active reflection as they learn from their own experiences, and the experiences of others. While their core values may be linked to many of these characteristics, these are presented in the next section.
Values.

The participants identified a number of core values that drive their leadership practice. These included respect for and connection to self, others and the natural world; give and take, being genuine; relationships; consistency; walking the talk; listening, energy, honesty, openness, passion for adventure, peak experiences; individuals; individual experience; service to others; being positive; expecting the best from self and others, fairness, and being kind. Above all else, these outdoor leaders valued trying to leave the world a better place; all demonstrating a sense of purpose that goes beyond being an outdoor leader. Their own connections with the natural environment and their altruistic approach to leading were evident in their responses and considered by the participants to be important for their own leadership. In addition, they all demonstrated an unquestioning love of, and belief in what outdoor education can, and has achieved for themselves and their students.

Figure 5.2 Values from early findings

Leave the world a better place.

The leaders in this study demonstrated a need to make a difference and to leave the world a better place once they are no longer there. With people’s worlds becoming more and more “insular all the time” Jon mused that there seems to be a tendency for people to have less to do with nature. Without a relationship with nature, Jon is certain that “positive experiences in the outdoors where we learn about ourselves and our place” in nature are “vitally important” for the preservation and future of the planet.
Indirectly, Rod suggested a larger world view and how we might create a better world through empowering our students when he described how he knew when students have grown and begin to contribute to the large group and community. The leadership described by the participants in this study indicated a leadership that is about much more than guiding a raft, facilitating a group of students or creating a positive culture of learning. It is about leaving the world and its people better for their contributions to it.

**Relationships and honesty.**

All of the participants identified the pivotal role positive relationships play in their leadership practice and the ramifications of their absence. According to Rod, relationships need to be formed in a way that encourages engagement with the activities. Otherwise they will leave the group and the leader resulting in no relationships with people or the natural environment. Agreeing Jon argued that relationships were pivotal to achieving outcomes on outdoor education programs and he identified the need for consistency, fairness and what he termed “give and take”. Leadership that relayed a clear message of a shared approach was essential for Jon. Positive relationships were viewed as instrumental in these participants’ ability to lead well and to achieve program outcomes. More than individual relationships, the participants all described or alluded to the creation of a positive culture of support for their students.

**Creating a positive culture.**

Relationships and honesty were directly related to the creation of a positive culture in which learning was described as possible and safe. Anna stated that she always attempted to create a positive culture that focused on kindness to each other and the planet. A positive approach which was respectful of self, others and the environment was also considered by Anna to be instrumental to achieving positive growth and change. The notion of respect in the development of a positive culture was confirmed by Jon when he identified the need to “put yourself in other people’s shoes...instead of assuming that you know best all the time”. Agreeing Ian highlighted the need to walk “a mile in another’s shoes...and to try to see the world through positive glasses”. Peter concurred that the “development of an underlying ethos/philosophy of group support and striving to push one’s own limits within the knowledge and appreciation that a person can pull out when they become uncomfortable is essential”. They were all focused on creating a positive culture of respect where all students were invited to
excel. The participants’ descriptions suggested an empathetic approach to leadership where students were the focus.

*Connection with the natural environment.*

Connection to the natural environment was evident in all participant responses in this phase. Each participant had different experiences with the natural environment upon which to draw and hence demonstrated individual connections to the natural environment. When describing his connection to nature, Peter highlighted how his role model had influenced his own connections and empowered him to help others to achieve the same.

...he particularly helped crystallise and focus my love for the natural world and give me an understanding framework, and confidence to work with all sorts of people to develop this in others. He also helped me to appreciate how important the environmental component of what we do is and how to make the most of special moments in the wild.

Describing the natural environment as “extremely meaningful” from a number of perspectives, his commitment flowed into his obligation towards helping young people grow.

When Anna’s students are not engaging with the natural environment she steps in providing them with ways to see themselves out of that negative space. The value of being able to “help connect people with themselves, others and the environment” was also recognised by Jon and he emphasised the need for outdoor leaders to experience nature for the development of themselves and their own connections.

All participants not only valued their own affinity with the natural world, they valued helping others to develop similar connections. In developing their own associations with and through direct engagement with nature, along with active reflection and learning from experiences, the participants demonstrated a deep awareness of the natural environment. An example stemmed from when Rod remembered a time when camped out with students on an island...

...the kids were sleeping out on the veranda of the dormitory. I’m inside sleeping. And then the wind changed. I got up and went down and checked the boat. The kids said to me, “How did you know the wind changed?” I said, “Well, I’m sleeping near a window and there was a
change in the noise because of the rattle of the window, so obviously something has changed”.

This relationship with nature and how it has assisted him in his leadership practice was further identified in another example. “I had a group up there [Mt Field], and there was a change in the weather overnight. It started to warm up and our snow cave started to collapse. I was up before it happened”. Through their responses to the interview questions, all of the participants demonstrated an innate awareness of and connection to the natural environment. This they attributed to their ability to pay attention to what is going on in both the groups they lead and the natural environment surrounding them.

**Altruistic.**

Throughout the interviews, participant responses suggested a sense of altruism or selflessness. Through descriptions of their core values, they all demonstrated a selfless approach to leadership that highlighted a commitment to their students, and to a greater purpose. The leaders indicated almost a need to not be the centre of attention, and to stand back and let their students lead once they had acquired the required skills. When asked about their strengths and weaknesses all leaders were humble in their description of both. They all come to the task of leadership with a level of humility evident throughout and difficult to ignore. All of the leaders agreed that they still have a lot to learn about being an outdoor leader.

**Love of, and belief in Outdoor Education.**

A commitment to outdoor education and outdoor leadership that demonstrated a ‘love of’ and genuine ‘belief in’ the outcomes of outdoor education for themselves and for their students was identified by all participants. Jon summarised this when he described why he is an outdoor leader, “the main one by far is a combination of belief in the benefits of OE and genuinely enjoying going to work”. As described earlier by Ian, his passion for being an outdoor leader was directly related to the power of outdoor experiences to create change in himself and others. This, in combination with his “personal love of activities and landscapes and sharing these with young people, [as well as the] ongoing, rewarding, and enjoyable nature of the work, and a strong desire to keep improving and extending things” together highlighted his commitment to, and belief in outdoor education. For Peter being an outdoor leader provided him with the opportunities to share in student’s peak experiences.
From the data, it was apparent that these leaders were genuinely passionate about outdoor education and implicitly believe in the outcomes that might be achieved on any given program. Their love of, and belief in outdoor education stemmed from personal experiences and experiences of leading in the outdoors. These experiences, their active reflection of them and the benefits they have witnessed for individuals and groups and experienced for themselves, have resulted in this implicit belief in the work they do on a daily basis.

Skills.

The skills identified as important included their competence and specific skills required for the outdoor education programs they lead. Aware of their strengths and weaknesses, they work hard to improve themselves and use others who are more skilled as needed. According to their accounts, they empower others to actively engage in the learning process through their ability to co-journey with, and create a sense of freedom, for their students. A willingness to engage in the manipulation of learning outcomes that is ethically driven was acknowledged by all participants. They use their intuition dynamically, drawing on past experiences to support its use. Their responses to the interview questions utilised storytelling, and the data suggests they also use their own stories and the stories of others to empower their students. All of the participants indicated drawing on their experience as a leader, as well as their own personal experiences to improve upon who they are.

*Figure 5.3 Skills from early findings*
Core Competencies.

The leaders described individual competence in the skills required (e.g., core competencies) to be a successful outdoor leader. A well respected lead climber, Peter taught others to lead climb. While he acknowledged what he is doing is different to what others might be comfortable doing, or able to do, he admitted that he possessed “a high level of skill, expertise, and experience in a wide range of activities”. In this he included facilitation, use of intuition, ability to match the level of challenge to student abilities and a “willingness to take responsibility for the duty of care for challenging activities”. With a level of “physical and psychological endurance” and “high levels of professional energy and motivation” Peter demonstrated a level of skill in maintaining these throughout his outdoor education programs.

From his account, it appeared that Peter was an all rounder when it came to the core competencies. Competent across the board, his school was supportive of his outdoor education program. This description of Peter was true for all of the participants in the study. While each of them had areas of greater strengths and of course weaknesses, each of them was extremely competent in the areas, activities, and programs in which they lead. While some were leading more ‘extreme’ programs than others, the components of the various programs were determined by the needs of the students, resources, time the leader had been working at the institution and the support of individual employers.

Empower others to actively engage in the learning process.

When asked if they thought they empowered their students all concurred that they did. Ian did so by trying to “give them new tools that they’ve never thought about to deal with the challenges they are facing on program”, acknowledging that these were similar to the challenges they would face in life. Committed to always trying to equip students to be able to transfer their learning into their life outside of outdoor education was vital to his and the other leader’s leadership and purpose in life.

Many of the participants discussed trying to enable students by getting them to lead. Anna did this by including them in decision making and listening to the outcomes. Open to their ways of doing things reinforced her larger world view and willingness to take risks for the betterment of her students. Jon was humble when he described his
perception of the power of the natural environment to change people, viewing himself as a catalyst for learning, rather than responsible for it. Peter provided an almost step-by-step account of the process he used.

...I empower participants by facilitating their development of independence in activities and assisting and encouraging their ongoing involvement and extension. I involve them in the processes behind the scenes and up front which gives them a sense of shared ownership of the success of experiences. I help them to acquire qualifications and outcomes that greatly contribute to their future lives. I assist them to develop networks of very close friends. I provide them with opportunities to work and interchange with young adult role models who are a little older than they are.

From Rod’s perspective, unless students are equipped with the skills they need for life, then everything you know and have learnt, stays with the leader. It is the students who should be learning as much as they can, and taking it one step further into their own lives, creating their own learning.

While these statements might be interpreted as simply ‘good leading’, they also highlight the leader’s willingness to put considerable effort into developing their students and their own leadership. All of these examples of empowering students closely aligned with the section on ‘altruism’ as described earlier. It seemed these two aspects were inextricably linked.

**Intuition.**

Intuition was identified as a skill and considered to be something that could be learnt and developed. When asked if they used their intuition in their leadership the response was a resounding ‘yes’ across the participants. Jon stated that he ‘sees’ things emerging before they occur and accedes this ‘knowledge’ to be related to his experience as a leader over a number of years. Peter agreed that he used his intuition in the determination of leadership styles for various participants and situations. This ability he attributed to his use of intuition and the knowledge he has been able to glean from the relationships he has developed with students. He also accredited his intuition for the ability to be aware of safety and his judgement of student’s capabilities.

Experience and his “bag of tools” played a critical role in Rod’s use of intuition in his leadership. With experience, he saw a leader being able to draw on those tools
without ‘thinking’. Agreeing, Ian described intuition as coming with a background of experiences and was simply your mind telling you to pay attention to what is playing out in front of you. Unequivocally, these leaders placed great value on the use of intuition and its contribution to their leadership.

**Storytelling.**

In response to the interview questions all participants demonstrated an affinity to using stories to communicate. They shared stories of experiences with their students and personal stories that helped to describe who they are and how they lead. At the outset of Rod’s first interview when asked about when he knew he wanted to be an outdoor leader he began with, “I will tell you a story”. And it was not the only story Rod told. Several stories were also shared by Ian. These stories played a significant role in the leadership of his students in the outdoors. All of the participants told their own story, in their own way, of how they came to be an outdoor leader.

**Behaviours.**

The data collected from Phase 1 revealed interesting aspects of the participants’ behaviours, in particular their way of ‘being’ in the world. All of them were clear about their sense of purpose, were committed to a cause greater than their outdoor education program and were on what appeared to be a continuous learning journey. Responses suggested being on the lookout for ‘magic to happen’ and described walking their talk with humility. They also indicated a very present, soulful, egoless, resilient, calm and caring approach to leadership. The participants emerged demonstrating a willingness to take risks, where risk taking was not always physical – rather they described risks that were physical, social, emotional, and psychological. It was a ‘playful’ approach to risk taking was described with safety at its core. ‘Playful’ in that they were comfortable to try new ways of leading and worked comfortably within the delicate balance that is required when engaging with risk and leading in the outdoors.

All participants looked forward to not knowing the exact outcomes of a program. They trusted that whatever the outcome, they possessed the requisite skills to deal with any and all possible eventualities. For example, Jon recognised that while each week he leads similar programs he consistently is presented with new learning. Similarly, Anna allowed students to make decisions and in doing so she was open to
new ways of doing things without knowing how they would turn out. The behaviours described here were gleaned from the participants’ interview responses only. These were further explored in Phase 2 through the observation of their leadership practice.

Figure 5.4 Behaviours from early findings

How they are in the world.

In Rod’s words, it is possible to gain a sense of how these leaders are in the world, “you have a set of values and beliefs and processes and that’s what you stick to”. This was also emphasised by Ian when he discussed constantly sharing his values with the people he is with and demonstrating a belief in bringing a positive attitude to the world through everything he does. The participants in this study came across as innately aware of their own core values and how these were explicit in their leadership practice. Deeply connected to the natural world and empowering others to be the best they can be, these leaders were deeply rooted in who they are. This awareness of who they are was described as being enacted in their leadership. Their stories suggested that they were humble, caring, risk takers, passionate and committed to the task of being an outdoor leader.

Risk Takers.

The ways in which these leaders viewed their own leadership and the leadership of their role models indicated their eagerness to take risks and thereby improve their own leadership practice. Comfortable taking risks within safe boundaries Peter was committed to creating peak experiences for his students as they journey together
towards “competent independence”. Responses from all leaders highlighted their ability to take risks on personal, social, emotional and psychological levels. As they have done so, throughout their involvement in this study, in particular in their demonstration of open and honest responses. An eagerness to work towards what were essentially unknown outcomes of outdoor education programs was one example of Jon’s openness to risk taking. Similarly, Anna was willing to allow groups to make decisions and demonstrated a commitment to following through with their way of doing things even if she had not previously seen something done that way.

Conclusion

From this initial phase the characteristics, values, skills and behaviours that have emerged begin to provide a description of the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership. The characteristics that have come into view in Phase 1 include the use of the head, mind and will, awareness of self, others and nature, and learning from experience. Values identified include leaving the world a better place, and a love of, and belief in outdoor education. Skills recognised include core competencies, empowering others, intuition and storytelling. Finally, the behaviours gleaned from their responses here consist of how they are in the world, and risk taking.

While some overlap across the categories of characteristics, values, skills and behaviours has been recognised, it arguably highlights the dynamic nature of outdoor leadership practice. Phase 2 sought to clarify these categories through observation and a follow-up interview. It allowed for further exploration of the connections and distinctions between the various attributes and categories identified in Phase 1. As indicated previously (see Chapter 4) these initial findings were instrumental in guiding Phase 2 of the study’s findings presented in the chapters that follow (Chapters 6-10). Through headings, they identify where leaders claims from Phase 1 were demonstrated in practice as well as additional findings which came to light through Phase 2 data collection and analysis.
Figure 5.5 Flow chart of early findings
Prelude to Chapters 6-10

The following five chapters present the findings from Phase 2 of this study through individual chapters (Chapters 6-10); one chapter has been assigned to each participant. The importance of the individual and the role of context in leadership practice (Hunt, 1991) in combination with the ‘particularity’ of the participant at the forefront of case study research (Stake, 2005) encouraged this individual presentation of the findings. The key elements of extraordinary outdoor leadership practice that ensued also encouraged this individual presentation of their leadership practice. In order to assist the reader in gaining a ‘picture’ of each individual, a photo has been included at the beginning of each chapter.

Physical Representation of Voices

The representation of who is speaking was considered to be essential particularly in the representation of how these leaders demonstrate the characteristics, values, skills and behaviours in their leadership practice. Each narrative is presented using the participant’s words where possible and these are identified using quotation marks. Longer quotes are indented, with shorter quotes remaining in-text. In some cases the words of students and peers of the participants are used. These are represented using quotation marks in addition to identifying them as a student, volunteer or staff (e.g., (Student)). Where longer quotes are used, these are also indented. In order to improve readability, some minor changes have been made to individual quotes. This has been represented using [brackets]. Clarification of some terms used by participants in quotes is done using (parentheses).

Individual Chapter Outline

Each chapter begins with a brief summary of Phase 1 findings followed by a description of their working context. A selection of stories, both ‘big’ and ‘small’ (Phoenix & Sparkes, 2009) from Phase 2 of the study are then shared. These stories come from the observation and follow-up interview conducted during this phase and stem from observations, interactions and comments from participants, their peers and students. Where quotes from Phase 1 interviews are used these have been identified (Phase 1 Interview). Otherwise, all quotes used in the following section come from
Phase 2 data (observations, informal interviews and follow-up interview) and are not labelled. The order of presentation of participants reflects the order used in the early findings (Chapter 5) alphabetically; Anna, Ian, Jon, Peter, and Rod. Commonalities that emerged across the nexus are shared in the discussion chapter (Chapter 11).

**Pseudonyms**

Throughout this study, the main participants are named. The students and staff involved in the programs where the participants were observed are not named. Their voices have been highlighted by being labelled as ‘staff’ or ‘student’. In the case where this detracted from the readability or there were several quotes utilised from both students/staff in the single chapter pseudonyms were used to distinguish individuals.
Chapter 6     Anna

The early findings found Anna to be a leader who led from the heart with a deep connection to the natural world. Preferring a relaxed leadership style, Anna valued relationships and was committed to building a positive culture for learning. The observation in Phase 2 saw her enact her core values in her leadership practice and confirmed her connection to the natural world. Anna’s leadership came from deep within and focused on creating ‘special’ experiences for each group and individual. Inspired by nature and her role models, Anna empowered her students through her leadership and who she is.

Context

During the time of this study, Anna was a contract outdoor leader working for a variety of employers nationally and internationally. During the observation phase, she was employed by Polytechnic Tasmania to teach and lead on a program preparing students to become raft guides/instructors. The section of the program observed was based at the Arm River Camp in Northern Tasmania with access to several nearby rivers.

Impressions of Anna

The search for Anna to conduct the follow-up interview revealed that she was a little reluctant to be interviewed. It required a dedicated and intentional search to find
her. When finally tracked down she exclaimed with some disappointment but smiling, “You found me! OK, let’s get it over with. Why don’t we go hang out on the bus, we won’t be interrupted there”. Huddled on the only two vacant seats on the dimly lit bus, surrounded by paddling debris (wetsuits, shoes, water bottles, helmets, paddles, etc.) it was clear that this had been a busy week of rafting. Familiar smells of damp clothing, wetsuits, squashed lunches and some other indescribable smells engulfed her, but she barely noticed. Anna had been teaching students to be raft guides since Sunday. At this point she looked visibly tired, she had presented full of energy consistently throughout the week. Clutching a familiar cup of warm sugary tea and wearing clothes that have seen many an adventure - a beanie she made herself, purple fleece pants and navy fleece top, probably several layers of thermals, wool socks, and sneakers - Anna smiles. In stark contrast, most of this week has been spent in her new bright yellow dry suit. On many occasions she has tolerated being called a ‘buzzing bee’ with a smile. During the observation, Anna consistently presented herself humbly and authentically to the world.

It was difficult to ignore how Anna positioned herself on the bus for the interview. Physically lower, she was hunched down into her seat. Without sitting on the floor, she could not be any lower. When entering the bus, the two seats we sat on had the least amount of stuff on them and once all the gear had been removed she had decided who would sit where. Anna goes about physically trying to be smaller than other people, but both her peers and students consistently try to put her above them. This she responded to by quietly disappearing into the background, taking up as little space as possible. These observations were confirmed when she stated “I sit down often (she laughs). I try and make myself smaller, physically – try and get out of the way”.

During the follow-up interview how Anna presented herself as much as where she chose to be interviewed, helped to create a picture of how she ‘is’ in the world. The humility she demonstrated through her reluctance to be interviewed and to be labelled ‘extraordinary’ brought to the fore a story Anna shared about when she learnt to be on the same level as everyone else. Learning to be humble came as a gift from her Mum and her horse riding experiences.

If you were cocky, you got given a really hard horse. And soon you were no longer cocky, because you were on the ground! They just wanted everyone to be humble. And that was a good lesson and it stuck with
me...so I can’t cope at all when I feel like someone’s putting me where I
don’t want to be...prefer to be.

When in the presence of Anna it was impossible to ignore how happy and
content she was. In her company, others are the same. Ever present, was her open and
welcoming smile and her ability to ‘speak’ without words. Her body often betrayed how
she was feeling; how she sat and moved. This too seemed intentional. At the beginning
of the follow-up interview, her body betrayed her uncomfortableness about being in this
study. At the same time it said that she was interested in what might come out of the
process and was keen to be involved. Not only did she speak to others without words,
but she appeared consciously aware of not being the centre of attention.

**Leading with Magic**

In Phase 1 Anna shared how she fell in love with being an outdoor leader on a
beach somewhere in Victoria, under a star filled sky. Reminiscing she confirmed this
moment in time, “I can still actually feel the moment. We were lying under some stars,
no tarp, nothing. It was a brilliant sky and you could just see for miles, all the stars. I
can still see the stars.” Sharing this experience with up to 30 students, Anna described
the incident as an “amazing sort of magic that created a feeling...shared, amazing sort of
magical, really powerful sense of nature that I wanted to be connected with”.

Anna regularly used the term ‘magic’ to describe leading in the outdoors. For
Anna, magic was about encouraging people to think differently to how they had in the
past so that they would be able to see the different options in life. For her it was about
“opening their eyes a bit...instead of being all caught up in our way of living in society
and buildings”. By being open to magic Anna believed that living could become more
real. She connected realness with magic and for her being real came from the
combination of people’s energy and nature’s energy. For magic to be possible and to
work, Anna agreed that you need people.

I could experience it for myself, but with other people, it’s more
powerful. And you can share the magical experience. I also believe that
the magic occurs even when there is no human interaction – sometimes
we are lucky enough to be a part of it.
Reconfirming her humility, Anna viewed these magical moments as special and uncontrollable. “Just because you have one magical experience, doesn’t mean that you will be privileged to similar experiences with every group or situation. Each experience will be different”. According to Anna, we may not have any control over these magical experiences, but it seemed that she was on the lookout for them. By being in tune with the world around her, Anna was open to and ‘looking’ for the magic to happen. It was as though she was somehow ‘awake’ to what was going on around her both within and outside herself and others, including nature. It was an awareness or ‘awakeness’ of what was happening ‘between’ herself, others and nature.

**Leading with Nature**

When observing her leadership, it was clear that Anna was open to opportunities that allowed her to create ‘magical’ moments. This was achieved through her presence in the moment and in her ability to really ‘see’ what was happening around her. To share an experience or way of being with others, for Anna, meant the experience had the ability to grow and become bigger and bigger. When she compared her leadership to gardening, Anna emphasised how she had drawn on nature to help her in her leadership and who she was as an individual.

I spend a lot of time gardening and I also spend a lot of time outside. And I actually look to nature for inspiration. How it grows back or copes or changes. I get a lot of ideas from the whole system. How the water flows or how a little seed germinates, and that, in a strange way, is extraordinary for me. It shows me perseverance and it shows me strength (Phase 1 Interview).

Anna moved and engaged with the world in a way that demonstrated that she really knew why she was here and how she can contribute to the world. Behaviours she demonstrated highlighted her deep connectedness to people and nature.

I definitely feel like there is something massive going on that we’ve all got no idea about...some people have more of an inkling than others...there must be something massively out there that we haven’t quite cottoned on to yet...I guess I’m looking a little bit for some sort of clues...and yes, I’ve got a big connection with animals...I feel quite connected to other life...not just humans.
When observing Anna and her students on a full day river trip her connection with nature came to the fore. The students were practising their guiding, which meant the raft ‘visited’ many trees that line the banks as it made its way down the river. In the process, they were collecting spiders unintentionally in their raft at a rapid rate. It was not long before the task of rescuing these stranded spiders began. The first to insist we save a spider and put him or her (it varies) back onto a tree on the side of the river was Anna. The whole raft had to help out with the ‘rescue’ of these tiny spiders. Before long everyone was on the case rescuing spiders one by one. At times a person could be hanging on to a tree having their arm nearly pulled off by the current and the ‘spider saviour’ would be encouraging rather than pushing the spiders off their hands. It was beautiful to watch. Anna clarified the spider saving escapades later as a ‘caring’ action to save an animal that people would normally squash without much of a thought.

And men will do it...that’s what I love...the sixty year old man that would probably step on them without thinking will then get to the point where he’s carrying the spider to the bank and there is some connection there. We are probably killing twenty on the way, it’s almost luck. I don’t know if it’s actually worth it for the spider, but that’s probably why I still do it. Because there might be a little message in there...that small things matter.

It was clear that for Anna, small things do matter. Not everyone is as connected to nature as Anna was; a connection that began early in her life. For as long as Anna can remember she has always felt a close bond with animals and nature. This connection she believed grew stronger with every interaction.

I’ve always been really lucky...as a kid, [I was] really close to other animals and I really like that bond. I really like being amongst a group of people that have that same sort of happiness...they’re happy with each other and it’s so much better than having people that aren’t happy with each other.

Anna did not delineate between relationships with animals and people or with nature. For her, it was all about relationships.

I don’t know who taught me how to build relationships. What I do know is that someone taught me that if you respect someone no matter where they are, no matter how old they are, whatever, what they’ve done is equal to you – then it works heaps better. And it does.
Observing Anna with her students, it was clear that they felt her unconditional respect and returned this to her. This respect and the resulting relationships she had built together helped to create a culture that was undeniably strong and inclusive. Anna described what she would expect to see in this culture if she were to come into the community as a stranger.

What I hope to see is that they’re looking after each other, and they’re being kind to each other...having the confidence to start thinking...to just start moving forward in whatever direction it is...having the confidence to take initiative, having fun. [The students] would be looking outwards...not just here, that’s why I take them to the waterfall, or do little things like that, so it’s not just a human thing...it’s not just looking after yourself, you notice the birds, or whatever is around you. What’s important is that you start to look outwards a bit.

It’s not a hierarchy, it’s like I’m in the middle of it...and they offer things that I can’t offer, and I try to find what those things are, and I try to pull them out a bit.

The Magic of the Waterfall

During the week observing Anna, an interaction between the students and staff occurred where they were attempting to put Anna on a pedestal. In the kitchen early one morning, some friendly banter was taking place. Instructions for the students were to come with tea in hand for the ‘Anna Show’ if they would like to. Clarifying the banter, she indicated to me that we were ‘going to the waterfall’. My own first experience of going to the waterfall with Anna flooded back to me. I remembered the sound of the mud beneath my shoes, the smell of the rainforest and the thundering sound of the waterfall. I could still feel how she had poured out her heart in a story; tears of joy on my face. I had felt connected to her and the place: connections that continued. I felt like I had been touched by her spirit. A small part of me would never be the same again. Keen to see how her students would react to this experience, after breakfast everyone headed out in their own time to the waterfall.

People walked in small groups, pairs and on their own. Heading down the familiar muddy track, their excited and expectant chatter and wonderings could be heard. “What do you think is going to happen?” (Student). One of the students turned to me, “You know what’s going to happen, don’t you?” (Student). Before I could respond they continued, “Go on – tell us” (Student). Reluctant to say anything I was grateful
when they quickly continued “Actually, I’d rather you didn’t” (Student). When they arrived at the waterfall Anna was already there and people were starting to gather on the small rocky outcrop at the base of the waterfall. While I had been trying to take note of when she left the campsite, I had not noticed her departure.

There was a little less water cascading over the rocks than the last time I was here. Nonetheless, the noise of the water engulfed the group as did the fine spray of water. This was my third visit to the waterfall with Anna and still I waited with a feeling of great expectancy. Anna smiled at me and appeared to be a little nervous. I smiled back at her, hopefully reassuringly. She beamed. “Do you think everyone who decided to come is here?” The students looked to each other and around them and nodded back, “We think so” (Students). “Well, we may as well get started then”. Anna chose her place carefully checking that everyone could “see” and “feel” the waterfall. She sat down. It was raining slightly. “I don’t know if you guys can hear me, if you can’t - come on in. It’s like a big family”. It was difficult to hear her against the waterfall, so everyone huddled close.

People say to me, that this little spiel that I’m about to give is really worthwhile, and I hope it’s something you’ll pass on to your groups. I think you are in a powerful position – you’re going to be teaching, you’re going to be leading, you’re going to be taking groups, and it’s so important to throw ideas up. You don’t necessarily have to say what you think the other person should believe in, but if you throw something in the air, they might think about it, before it hits the ground again. So here we go...

Anna held a sign above her head that stated “This tap water is unsuitable for drinking. Please boil before drinking”. The sign had been hanging above the kitchen tap for all to see all week. The water for our camp is collected above the falls Anna explained and it is piped to the camp ground and produces the water (Anna filled her water bottle from the river which she then drank). She smiled at the group and asked, “Do you get it?”

Signs like this are to stop people getting hurt...but I think we can teach people that it’s not necessarily true and we need to look after it. We are made up of about 80% water. And it takes a few weeks to replace all our cells...so if you live on a river for two weeks and you drink from the river, after 2 weeks you’ll be 80% river. As you paddle and live on the river, you become the river.
Sometimes you’re in places as magical as this and we get caught up living inside, and chopping vegies. And we have to do all those things, but it’s important to remember why we are here. So take some time...take it in and take it back with you...when you’re stressed...you can just hold on to this image, you can know that this is still here and the world is still good.

Concerned that people might think the water is “unsuitable” Anna worried that they will not look after the water as much if they think that it has already been contaminated and therefore not worth looking after.

When her story was over, Anna seemed a little uncomfortable that she had become the centre of attention. No one had moved and people appeared lost in thought. Despite being invited to go back to the campsite and the buildings, no one left. Everyone remained as if glued to the rocks and the waterfall. It was as though she had cast a spell on them. It appeared that they did not dare to leave for fear of losing what they have just received – a little piece of ‘Anna magic’, given with love. This whole ‘spiel’ took less than 5 minutes, but it created a mood that lingered. As the group left the waterfall, people smiled knowingly at each other. They now shared this common experience. At the same time, they somehow appeared to be more connected to each other and this place.

Leading with Spirit

Anna’s ability to create ‘magical’ moments of learning came from her greater sense of purpose and sense of calling to being an outdoor leader. “I’d like to think that one day...that something great has happened...not necessarily because of all my work or anything, but because of how I’ve lived”. This was supported by her complete belief in human nature. Anna’s leadership is about ‘who’ she is an individual and how she interacts with the world.

I just believe we could potentially all live on this planet and all get along. And I don’t see why we couldn’t. It doesn’t seem to make any sense why we all have to argue, but I don’t know how to make this happen.

In no way disillusioned, “I think if we keep trying and someone else keeps trying” then her purpose will be achieved. Appearing content yet resolute in her determination to make the world a better place, at the same time she acknowledged...
...I’ve had a few struggles. And I think...maybe I’m not the person for the job. But I love the river. I do love it [being an outdoor leader]. I feel deep down, that I know that I am good enough for the job I guess, if I really nut it out, but sometimes I get a bit unsure.

Ultimately, the challenges and shared experiences Anna has gained from being an outdoor leader outweighed any doubts and hardships she has faced along the way.

Throughout Phase 2 and in particular during the follow-up interview on the foggy bus, Anna often sat in silence. During these silences she appeared contemplative and when she finally spoke her words indicated careful consideration and deep reflection. When lost in thought, she always returned to the present when she made eye contact and smiled. This ever present smile as it turns out required reminders too. On the previous evening Anna bounced into the classroom and wrote a message on the board for everyone. When she walked away, her scribbling was visible “Keep Smiling 😊”. When asked why she wrote that on the board, she replied...

...Oh...they’ve all got a lot to do, and its assessment day for them tomorrow. And I don’t want them to forget about enjoying themselves. And besides, if it’s up on the board, when I see it, it reminds me to smile. It’s been a long week, and sometimes I forget to smile!

Throughout the follow-up interview she did not need the board to remind her to smile.

Personal experiences have brought Anna to this role of outdoor leadership, leadership that demonstrated a deep sense of awareness, of purpose and of connection. Not a religious person, but spiritual, she has built meaningful relationships and a culture/community of connection.

I feel like something has asked me to do it...I ignored it for a few years, maybe 4 or 5...I just bumbled along...you know just preferred to live my own little life without making any ripples. Easier in some ways – but nowhere near as rewarding.
This chapter presents a selection of stories generated from data collected in Phase 2 of the research as they clarify the early findings. The stories serve to identify various aspects of Ian’s leadership and represent Phase 1 findings ‘in practice’. Ian’s connection to nature and deep awareness of self, others and nature identified in Phase 1 are clarified. A commitment to capitalising on teachable moments was clear, as was his use of intuition in his leadership practice. Leading from a deep place within, Ian was able to describe his spirituality. The data from Phase 2 represents Ian’s use of a variety of leadership styles that were supported by his awareness, relationships, use of intuition and his spirituality.

Context

Ian was the director of outdoor education at the school campus Glengarry of Scots College in Sydney at the time of this study. Located in the southern highlands of New South Wales in the Kangaroo Valley, it is a school for boys where Year 9 boys go to Glengarry for two terms, or 20 weeks. While there, they partake in all their regular schooling. There is a major focus on outdoor education including a variety of field trips to support other classes. The field trip observed was a climbing program in the Blue Mountains which was a culminating experience towards the end of the 20 weeks. Due to inclement weather, the final day was spent in a climbing gym in Sydney on the way back to Glengarry. Staff are employed at the school on a predominantly full time basis.
There are some contract staff utilised, visiting staff from other outdoor education programs and teachers in training involved in the program. The program observed was made up of full time staff and one visiting staff member from another outdoor education program.

**Impressions of Ian**

When Ian first presented himself to me on my arrival at Glengarry, it was his day off. Decked out in his riding gear covered in mud, happy and relaxed he came to meet me and settle me in. Having just finished a mountain bike race, as we walked around the property he was keen to share his day’s adventures with students and staff alike. Oozing positive energy then and the whole time I spent observing him, a little of that positivity visibly rubbed off on everyone around him. Always present in the moment, Ian was a calm and caring leader who was committed to helping individuals through his ability to build positive relationships and to capitalise on teachable moments. Using a variety of leadership styles, he was deeply aware and connected to nature. Throughout his leadership practice, Ian enacted his core values clearly, was influenced by his Christian beliefs and how he viewed the outdoors. The outdoors for Ian was seen as a spiritual and renewable place where lessons could be learnt. The way in which he interacted with the world around him was best described using Ian’s words.

...I’ve been...working on knowing your values and your mission that underpin, or are the foundation of who you are...I’ve got it written on my office wall and I read it every now and then. And then I go, I’m not doing that – I need to pick up that. So there’s this kind of values, mission statement that is really important for you to be aware of and if you have that written down as part of you, then when you get out in the field and you have a choice, like that guy yesterday.

The ‘guy’ Ian speaks of was a teacher he observed at the climbing gym in Sydney. When Ian saw him, he came over to me openly irritated and almost angry. For a while it was unclear what Ian was trying to say. “That guy sitting over there, you want to know who I am, I’m the opposite of that”. ‘Over there’ was a teacher who had fallen asleep at the table in the coffee shop attached to the climbing gym. Arriving after and leaving before the students, he had spent the entire afternoon sitting at the table not engaging with any of his students. For some of the time he had looked at some papers that he
appeared to be marking but soon fell asleep. “I am the exact opposite of that guy” Ian repeated several times.

Ian enacted his personal philosophy through his leadership practice. This philosophy he described during the follow-up interview when the incident at the climbing gym was revisited.

You know, give everything your best...If you’re going to be there, then be present and giving it your full energy. So...it’s part of my mission in life to portray that energy and enthusiasm. For me it’s a lifestyle choice as well. You know, this morning I’m up at 5.30am off bike riding with my mate, and just having that start to your day gives you energy to go on. Look, it’s again just part of modelling. You’ve got two choices in your day, you can mope around and be tired, or...you know I often say to my students, when I see them slothing around, you can sleep when you’re dead. Make the most of your day.

**Passion, ‘Place’ and Connection to Nature**

Ian described his desire to be an outdoor leader in Phase 1 to be closely linked to the power the outdoors had to change him and others. This power and connection to nature were witnessed on the first morning on the cliffs in the Blue Mountains. The staff were spread out across the top of the cliff setting up various climbs. Pausing from my own task of setting up a climb for a moment, my attention was drawn in Ian’s direction. Standing at the top of the cliff, his right hand was resting against the rock next to him as he looked out across the farming plains. A patchwork of fields lay hundreds of metres below him, he appeared lost in thought. Following his gaze out across the valley, he turned and saw me looking too. Confirming my observations he stated, “Isn’t it just a great view?” With no sense of urgency, he continued to set up the climbs that would be used. The climbs he chose indicated how carefully he had thought about the students’ abilities. They would provide students with both comfort and challenge. As other staff were completing their set ups, Ian paused again, staring out across the valley once more. Without turning he said, “This place has a lot of memories for me”.

The connection to this ‘place’ was clearly powerful for Ian. Once he went down below to climb with the students, the view would be lost to him for the next few hours. After a final sweep for gear he took one last moment to soak it all in. For the rest of the day, while Ian would not be able to see the view from where he was supervising
students, he was constantly observed reminding them to take in the place around them. And they did. When he climbed, one of the students asked him what he could see. Ian honestly thanked him for the reminder and commented with passion how great it was. Regularly throughout the week he was seen to steal moments of time to go away on his own and just ‘be’ in nature.

Capitalising on Teachable Moments

Another aspect of Ian’s leadership that was unmistakeable during the observation was how often he capitalised on teachable moments. This he coupled with an ability to find a positive language through which to share these moments with his students. Also inextricably linked to his capacity to make the most of teachable moments were the relationships he built with his students. A well known figure on the Glengarry campus, it was clear that Ian intentionally took every opportunity to speak with students and to build relationships with them. These positive relationships enabled and invited the students to really challenge themselves not only physically, but emotionally, socially and psychologically. One example of Ian making the most of a teachable moment occurred during a conversation between Ian and a student during a debrief around the fire one night.

Student: I looked up and saw the overhang, and thought Oh – that might be a problem. When I got to the overhang...I’d seen Andrew being really tentative. I was thinking about how cold I was, and I hadn’t seen anyone do it before and I wasn’t sure how to do it, and I gave myself a miss and passed up on the opportunity to go up and try it myself. And then...I went up on the second go after seeing other people do it, and I was like yeah, this is easy.

Ian: So what was the difference between the two? Where was the difference?

Student: I don’t know – I sorta thought - yeah, it can be done, I’ll give it a go. There’s nothing really to stop me, I’ll be safe if I fall or anything. It’ll be good, so why not take the opportunity to try.

Ian: There’s a wonderful saying that “what you think, is what you become”, and when you program you’re brain into a strain of thinking like, “I don’t know if I can do this” then that is what happens to you in reality. Is that what happened the first time?

Student: Yeah.
Ian: So it’s really powerful, what you think is what you’ll become. Thanks mate.

Transferring learning was something he consistently monitored. Drawing on his extended knowledge about psychology when he restated for one of the students, “Zeroed in on that mind hey. Got it (the brain) focused on the right things. Good mate”. Ian was observed helping the students to draw links between their climbing experiences and their lives all of the time, and the students responded to these discussions seriously. The evening discussion concluded with a statement from Ian confirming his commitment to transferring learning. “Take what you’ve learnt here out of climbing and put it into life and hey – we’re going big places then”.

Another example of Ian’s ability to capitalise on teachable moments occurred later that same evening, around the same fire during an informal conversation with a student. The week observed was the 19th of 20 weeks the boys had been at Glengarry and it was clear that they were keen to return home. Their conversation had moved to a discussion about their last night at home before coming to Glengarry. It prompted Ian to ask what it was they did that last night before leaving the comforts of home.

Student: I was up really late that night, I was really disorganised. I didn’t have everything ready, so I ended up going to bed really late. Mum had to help me out.
Ian: Are you always disorganised?
Student: We’re all disorganised.
Ian: Is it a family trait is it? Why don’t you start the generational change? I’m going to use my small rocks and my big rocks and see what happens.
Student: It’s all the men in our family.
Ian: Is it a family trait then?
Student: Yeah.
Ian: So are you going to do something about it?
Student: I suppose I could. I’m not as disorganised now, as when I arrived.

Prior to this climbing program Ian had not met this student. In the short time he had known him, he had gained a clear and accurate understanding of him through his

4 The terms ‘small rocks’ and ‘big rocks’ Ian uses refer to the different tools students have learnt while they have been here for the past 20 weeks. This metaphor comes from Stephen Covey’s (2004) 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teenagers.
awareness and commitment to building relationships with everyone he came across. Throughout the observation period, Ian consistently honed in on the teachable aspects of their learning: helping students to link their learning on the cliff to their broader lives.

**Leading from Within**

Ian drew on a variety of leadership styles depending on the situation and the students involved. Appearing consistently in his leadership practice was his awareness of self, students and the environment around him. In his own words, he summarised his leadership style as one where he considers himself as “a mentor”. It was important for Ian to be aware of how he came across to others. Describing how he did this by stepping outside his own body and observing himself from the outside. The way in which he developed this awareness had developed over time.

I think I developed it through introspection and wanting to improve myself. It was a lot of research into myself, just looking for answers. For me, it was a lot of reading, and just trying for personal improvement and looking at why I was that way and was I happy with it, and if not, how can I be better. So...lots of self help books, and courses and tough times in your life where you’re at your lowest of lows, and you want to climb back up. You’ve got to find out how to do that.

This awareness he saw as coming from his own personal active reflection and getting to know himself. Learning from his personal lows in life and how he dealt with these he described as significant contributors to his acute awareness. Not only was he focused on being the best he could be, but he was always looking for the same in others. Finding ways he could learn from them.

I love the way he talked to that student, or I love the way he presented that, or I love the way she did this. And taking those little bits and being constantly on the lookout for how people do things; then add that to my repertoire. When you observe others at work, you can take in lots of information that you think works and use this in your work, you can also judge what does not work and decide to leave this behind.

What worked and what did not work for Ian was directly linked to his constant need to improve, as well as his core values and mission for life.

I’m just someone that’s constantly looking for different ways. New ways of doing it better...lots of people see Outdoor Ed as a journey from A to
B, and let’s just get the students there. They’re not that aware that the journey is the tool to provide opportunities for these teachable moments. You need to be reinforcing this. Anytime I can be with a student talking to them, is a teachable moment. Through a sense of self-awareness you are able to judge the timing and appropriateness of input to the students.

On his own leadership learning journey, his awareness enabled him to make the most of the programs he led and the teachable moments as they presented themselves to him.

Throughout the time spent with Ian, his decision making and how he changed the direction of the program many times was witnessed. To make those decisions, he later described using his awareness, experience as a leader and his intuition. In the first interview he was clear about his use of intuition in his leadership and he described it as coming from his experiences and the need to pay attention to your intuition to make good decisions. During the follow-up interview Ian described how he used his intuition in greater detail.

I am constantly examining group dynamics, the terrain; I’m looking for teachable moments as they may unfold. I also use intuition when I’m watching students: reading body language, their self talk and what they’re saying. So I’m often in tune with where a student is at, and I’ll be looking to engage that student in some kind of dialogue so I can confirm my hunches. Then I’m in a position to give him some tools to deal with the challenges going on psychologically.

Ian accredited one way of teaching intuition to others through what he called the “modelling style”. Preferring a more intentional approach to letting the mountains speak for themselves, he would rather “lead them into the learning”. This he identified was linked to the interests he had and the reading he had done in relation to facilitation. How he structured his learning experiences was always a purposeful decision. The combination of intentionally learning as much as he can about facilitation, combined with his practical experiences facilitating groups, Ian had considerable experience to draw on which he identified as enabling his ability to use his intuition. For Ian, intuition was not only essential for his leadership success, but something he viewed as teachable and learnable. An example of how intuition could be learnt was shared from his own personal experience.

The experiences you have, build up that repertoire of memories that you can draw on. Intuition around safety I think can definitely be learnt, but you have to experience the bad things to develop a repertoire to draw on.
Ultimately Ian was committed to getting up and showing students that he too was scared and challenged, but willing to ‘walk the talk’ that he was trying to encourage in them. Always positive and full of energy he made the most of every day. This combined with a willingness to always give everything his best Ian was consistently present and conscious of his life mission.
Chapter 8     Jon

The stories presented here serve to identify various aspects of Jon’s leadership and represent Phase 1 findings ‘in practice’ as they emerged from Phase 2 of the data collection. The reasons behind Jon being an outdoor leader were shown to be closely linked to his core values as these were evident in his leadership practice. The types of programs he developed reflected his connection to nature as well as his commitment to the contribution indigenous culture and knowledge have on his own and others’ leadership and learning. The Phase 2 data reaffirmed Jon’s use of a variety of leadership styles. It also brought his spirituality, or way of ‘being’ in the world, to the fore. During Phase 2 Jon demonstrated his core values and ‘who he is’ consistently in his leadership practice.

Context

At the time of the study Jon was Director of an outdoor education centre Pepperina Hill at Lake Moogerah; a campus of the Brisbane Grammar School in Queensland. Brisbane Grammar was a school for boys where students attend a minimum of 1 week each year at the outdoor education centre in years 8, 9 and 10. The outdoor education programs are typically residential where students come to the centre for the week. They incorporate initiative problem solving activities, high adventure activities, canoeing, hiking, and overnight camping. Developmental from years 8
through to 10, the programs provide students with many opportunities to develop a variety of skills.

Additional opportunities to attend outdoor education programs at the school include programs associated with the Duke of Edinburgh Award (white water paddling at Goolang Creek and sea kayaking on Moreton Bay\(^5\)), other internal school leadership programs and an extended expedition of 12 days to an indigenous community in the Northern Territory. Staff were employed at Pepperina Hill predominantly on a full time basis or on contract by the school resulting in minimal need for additional or volunteer staff. In this study, a typical year 9 program was observed.

**Impressions of Jon**

When I arrived at Pepperina Hill Jon came out of his home and welcomed me with a warm and genuine hug. Smiling he admitted he was happy to see me, but would rather it were under different circumstances. Vocally concerned that he was not an extraordinary outdoor leader, any reassurances went unheard. It seemed he too was reluctant to be labeled ‘extraordinary’ in his leadership practice. Soon enough it became clear that his colleagues had been calling him ‘extra’ ‘ordinary’ since they found out about the study. Jon took all of this in his stride with a smile, and seemed much more content with this alternative label. However, at different times, his peers let me know that they also agreed that he was an extraordinary outdoor leader in their views, albeit a reluctant one.

After demonstrating some reluctance to be interviewed, Jon chose the time and place for the follow up interview at his home. Making us both a cup of tea, we settled down on the deck. It looked out across the lake and this was where his attention appeared to be focused most of the time. Appearing a little nervous, he soon relaxed into his chair as we began. Despite several interruptions, he managed to stay focused and thoughtful. At times his body language was difficult to read.

On the last evening before it was time for me to leave, he came to collect me for dinner. Appearing eager to get going through his words and tone, his body leaning

\(^5\) Goolang Creek is located near Grafton, NSW. Moreton Bay is off the coast of Brisbane, Qld.
against the doorway, communicated something else. Remaining still he shared his experience of the follow-up interview on the previous day...

You know, you really made me think yesterday (during the interview)...I wasn’t expecting it, but I got quite emotional when you were asking me questions. The connections I have to this place from my own experiences here as a boy – I didn’t realise how strong they were, but they really are. Hiking the razor back was really special to me. As a kid I never got to do things other kids got to do...I always hated missing out – I still hate missing out.

Learning from Adventure

Jon stated in the Phase 1 interview that one of his reasons for being an outdoor leader was closely related to his belief in adventure pursuits giving individuals a “good grounding and a good knowledge about who we are” (Phase 1 Interview). From observing Jon, it was clearly important to him to experience and engage in his own adventures. In particular, experiences that presented as being ‘uncomfortable’. “You kind of forget when you’re all comfortable and dry, and you do get sort of disconnected...from the things that are really important”. In Jon’s view it is not until you challenge yourself in the outdoors, that you are reminded of what is possible to learn there. “Even if you know all the theory...the times that we really learn the most about ourselves is when we’re a bit tired and a bit uncomfortable”. This and the simple things have taught Jon the most and this was reflected in the program he led.

A basic level of existence, having small amounts of stuff to worry about, you know, what’s in your backpack...it really grounds you, and reminds you that...food, a hot meal at the end of a hard day, sitting down and having a cup of tea after you’ve been up a mountain – is good.

According to Jon, the more comfortable you make your existence, the more you become disconnected from living and learning.

Through his leadership practice, Jon demonstrated his core values of “living in the moment, relationships, being happy with yourself, and building good connections with the people around you”. These core values he described as the “really important things” in life and they were observed to be pivotal to his leadership and spirituality.

I’ve always been really keen to have nice interactions with people, and that’s just extended to the group. I’ve always believed that a relationship
Motivations for being an outdoor leader were fundamentally connected to Jon’s genuine belief in the outcomes outdoor education programs are able to provide. In particular, the role adventurous activities play in enabling positive outcomes for both himself and his students. Intertwined with this aspect was his commitment to building positive relationships and enacting his core values in his leadership consistently. This authentic approach to leading presented the observer with a sense of his spirituality.

**Leading with Care**

The importance of developing positive relationships was seen by Jon to directly link to his commitment to avoiding provoking situations and the creation of a space where conflict was not necessary. Instead of getting into a position of confrontation, his approach to leading was one of “we’re in this together”. By adopting a calm one-on-one approach removing as much conflict as possible and “taking out head butting situations” he was able to work through issues or avoid them altogether. An example of this prevention of problems was reflected in the many physical changes he had made to the outdoor education centre in his relatively short time as the director. These changes were intended to enhance the learning and experience of everyone: staff and students.

Like rebuilding the dorm and creating spaces where they can sit comfortably when you’re talking to them. If they’re not comfortable, they’re not going to be able to listen...If you make it hard for them, then you make it hard for you. But it’s a fine line, you don’t want to make it too easy for them, but there are parts that I think we could make a lot easier and take the hassle and confrontation out of it.

An example of his one-on-one approach arose on the first morning of the program. The boys had been out for their morning run. Most of the group was back. A few were still straggling in. While waiting for the last few to return, Jon sipped on a cup of peppermint tea as he looked out across the lake and welcomed the boys as they came back. One of the last, Ben (student) arrived huffing and puffing and generally making
lot of noise. From the moment he stepped off the bus Ben had been consistently talking while others were speaking and generally pushing the boundaries of respect and manners. Making the most of this opportunity while there are not many students around Jon invited Ben to join him.

Ben: “Yes Sir?” He stared at the ground in front of him. Jon smiled at me and turned to look at Ben, still smiling.

Jon: How was your run?

Ben: It was OK.

Jon: You know, yesterday, I noticed that whenever someone was speaking, you were talking too. We let you get away with it yesterday, because it was Monday. But now it’s Tuesday and it’s a new day today, so how about you don’t talk when someone else is speaking and you’re supposed to be listening. And if you do, then there will be consequences.

Ben was silent. Looking intently at Jon, he appeared to be unsure as to whether or not he was in fact in trouble. Jon was speaking to him with respect, smiling and making eye contact. This appeared to be confusing Ben who said nothing. From his behaviour so far this week, it was apparent that Ben was often in trouble and his lack of response to Jon, combined with his closed body language confirmed this. Satisfied that he had made his point, Jon paused and shifted the conversation to something more positive.

Jon: How did you enjoy the paddling yesterday afternoon Ben?

Ben: Yeah...yeah...it was good” (looking uncertain), Can I go now

Jon: Of course you can. But you’re welcome to stay and chat with us too.

Ben seized an opportunity to escape and went into his dorm. As he entered the dorm, he looked back over his shoulder quizzically. Jon had made his point and rather than dwelling on it, had moved on to a more positive conversation thereby avoiding a “head butting situation” with Ben now, and in the future.

Several days later, during the follow-up interview Jon was asked to clarify how he approached and worked with students like Ben. Instead of speaking to them in a group situation, he takes them aside and has a quiet word so that they get the message
clearly and are not humiliated in the process. When reminded of the interaction with Ben earlier in the week he added...

...I think teachers often put kids into a box. And that’s where the kids are always going to stay. They know it as well. And if you give them an out, sometimes they do really respond well. You know, 14, 15 year olds – everyone expects them to be perfect; well behaved. And there’s no slack for learning experiences, which is...that we all learn as we go. It can be really hard to get out of the box, and some kids want to get out, but just keep getting pushed back in by their peers, and teachers. Sometimes, it’s a bigger issue for them than we might always realise.

The way in which Jon dealt with the behaviours Ben demonstrated reinforced his core values of “respect for others, give and take, being genuine, relationships, consistency, walking the talk, listen well, and giving good energy” (Phase 1 Interview). The commitment Jon had for ensuring a non-confrontational leadership style was evident all week. When students required assistance he was the first person to appear, unbidden by the students, but needed all the same.

An example of his commitment and ability to develop positive relationships and a positive culture was shared by one of Jon’s colleagues in speaking about the difference Jon had made since coming to the outdoor education centre three years ago.

I’ve noticed a real shift in culture since Jon arrived – you know – how things are done, and how he is with the boys. It’s very different to what I’ve seen in the past. Now, the boys really have a choice and they really get to challenge themselves, and there’s no pushing...just a really welcoming, challenging feel (Staff).

Jon’s ability to create the culture described here was witnessed throughout the week. The students were presented with challenges at varying levels. As they achieved them, a new one was proposed. It was clear that the program had been carefully constructed by Jon to ensure these outcomes.

**Paying Close Attention**

Throughout the week it was apparent that Jon really knew what was going on all of the time. How he achieved this was best described in his own words.

I know I take a lot in, even if it’s not structured time, you know – even in free time. You might go and wander around, and you get a bit of a feel
for how the week’s going...the noise coming out of the dorm or whether in free time they’re out kicking a ball or playing touch with each other like they were today. Or...all disjointed and all over the place. You get a lot from non-structured time and how the whole thing’s ticking along...you have to be aware and paying attention all the time.

An incident at camp one evening illustrated Jon’s deep level of awareness. At the end of the day after climbing Mt Greville, Jon was sitting at the staff campfire drinking a cup of tea that he had prepared for everyone. The students had been divided up into camp cooking groups and each of them had their own fire, cooking and camping area. While Jon was sitting there, the other staff joined him and they shared stories about the day’s events. From the discussion, it was clear that Jon had been paying close attention to the group as a whole and to the individuals within it since their arrival on Monday.

It was noticeable that while he was conversing with the group around the fire, he was paying attention to the way in which they each spoke about the day. Listening deeply as they shared, he allowed them to finish before asking probing questions that clearly made the others consider more deeply what had happened. At the same time, he was paying attention to what was going on in the greater campsite area where the boys were preparing for the evening. Jon was the first to notice that Ben was pulling the weeds out of the trees as they were “invited” (by Jon) to do yesterday. Simultaneously, he noted that Ben’s behaviour had changed significantly over the past few days. At one point, Jon got up suddenly and went over to a group of boys cooking. The other staff did not appear to notice his sudden departure, nor did they notice what was happening (students not being careful with the fire and cooking stove almost burning another student) over at the fire; Jon was there before it happened.

Not only was Jon aware of the people around him, he also appeared innately aware of the natural environment. Consistently referring to the ‘place’ and the beauty that surrounded him, his actions emphasised a deep connection to nature. Throughout the week he was regularly observed staring out across the lake, or over the hills. On the walk up Mt Greville he confirmed this connection through the way in which he shared his knowledge of edible plants on our journey. This knowledge he described as having been gained from his own personal interest in and commitment to the importance of indigenous knowledge. Also innately aware of changing weather conditions, he always
presented appropriately dressed and prepared. At all times, he was paying close attention and was aware of what was going on almost before it happened. This involved using what he could ‘see’, ‘hear’, and ‘feel’ happening in the group. This ‘knowing’ he attributed to his development of positive relationships and his use of intuition.

**Leading with Multiple Styles**

Throughout the week I observed Jon using a variety of leadership styles as he approached each activity with students of varying skills and levels of confidence. When instructing the students in the safety aspects of canoeing he used an autocratic approach. Even though the style was autocratic, he engaged the students with questioning, drawing out the knowledge they already possessed in relation to the knowledge and skills required for propelling the canoe. Once he provided them with the required instructions of how to get safely to the water’s edge, he adopted more of a democratic approach. When students asked him how to get the canoes off the racks, and how many people it required, he replied, “How many people do you think you need to get the boats down safely?” He waited patiently for an answer. When they gave him a safe response he agreed smiling “Sounds like a good idea”.

Actions and comments from Jon consistently demonstrated leadership that engaged with a variety of styles which he was able to switch between quickly and effortlessly. Constantly immersed in deep active reflection and a deep awareness of self and others he presented as having an ability to ‘feel’ a situation. This ability to engage with his intuition combined with his general approach to leadership relayed here emphasised a way of ‘being’ in the world, observed as humble and caring.

**Leading with Nature**

Also evident was Jon’s connection to place and the natural environment. In particular, his connection to “this place” was apparent throughout the observation. The surrounding mountains, the lake and the gorge were regularly referred to throughout the week. Introducing and reminding the students why they were there and where they would be spending time during the program was one of his main foci. Mt Greville in particular, was found to have significant memories for Jon.

...I guess I want to make sure they make the most of it, and stop and realise how special it is here. There’s a bit of history I suppose...as a kid,
I remember that one of the biggest things for me was that I didn’t get to go and do stuff. I didn’t get to see places, so when I finally came out here as a kid, and climbed up Mt Edwards and Mt Greville, I was just so blown away. I suppose all the channels were open, and you know – I wanted to go and see and do all these really cool things, and see what was out there...it had a big impact on me at the time. And I hope to some degree, it has the same sort of impact on all these guys...and I hope that they do build a relationship with the place.

This story reflected his hopes and motivations for creating similar experiences for the students who came to spend the week with him. The direct result of these experiences was his intentional approach to leading. These connections with nature and relationships with ‘place’ were clarified when he stated...

...to have a relationship with something, you need to know a few names and you need to get to know it a little bit. You’re not going to build a relationship with it from hearing about it or being disconnected from it. So I hope, that the few times they come out here, they do feel like they have a connection with the place, and it is their centre and they do buy into the week or program and feel a part of it.

Leading with Spirit

The observation of Jon’s leadership emphasised a spiritual approach to leadership; a leadership that came from deep within and demonstrated a sense of ‘calling’ to the task of outdoor leader.

I’ve always felt very privileged, and very lucky to be doing what I’m doing. And I still wake up enthusiastic and excited about going to work. Every now and then I think about doing something else, but then you have a really good week or you have a great time out on the lake with the kids, or walking up Mt Greville...I may have had some difficult times in my personal life, but my job – its felt rock solid. That I really am where I belong, and I’m doing what...you know...I should be doing. It’s nice to have that.

It appeared that Jon was doing what he fundamentally believed he “should be doing”. This description suggested a sense of ‘calling’ to the role of outdoor leader that to Jon feels is “rock solid”. This ‘feeling’ or ‘calling’ he believes...

...may come and go for people. But I think a large part of the people that work in the outdoors really believe in what they do,
and believe that it’s a good thing. Believe in the outcomes – because it is quite hard work – there’s all this stuff that goes on, that they don’t tell you about in the brochure, and you just have to go and do it anyway. I’m sure it’s the same with other jobs, but I think…it’s a service career, but you get a lot out of it for sure.

Leading with ‘Difference’

While observing Jon alongside his peers, it was noticeable that he was somehow different to them; ‘different’ in the way he enacted his core values, how he interacted, built relationships, was aware, and used his intuition. When Jon was asked if he thought he was different to other leaders...

...I don’t think I’m very different to other leaders. I think everyone is different – with different strengths and weaknesses that they bring to what they do. There are certainly a lot of people that do a lot of things a lot better than I do...the differences in what you do is a natural thing. Everyone has a little bit of different.

Jon valued difference in himself and others. Open and humble about his strengths and weaknesses, he genuinely did not see that he led disparately to others. Collectively Jon’s responses helped to describe who he is and how he ‘is’ in the world. They particularly highlighted his reflective and humble approach to the world and to his leadership. Intrinsically connected through his relationships with people, nature and ‘place’, he is innately aware of what is going on within himself, around him and how he comes across to others. Jon used intuition in his leadership and demonstrated high levels of trust and risk taking with the people around him. This was demonstrated not only in the way in which he worked with students and staff, but also in the way in which he has engaged with this study. While Jon came across as an ‘all rounder’, a leader who is able to adapt to any situation, activity or program, his humility had the potential to hide his extraordinariness.
In Phase 1 of this study Peter described his leadership as dependent on the activity, skills and maturity of the group underpinned by a clear set of core values and a connection to nature. Leadership strengths he identified included being able to match the level of challenge with individual needs, awareness, passion, genuine enjoyment of activities and a willingness to share himself. Responses to Phase 1 indicated a calm and caring leadership style. Phase 2 confirmed these early findings particularly in relation to his connection to the natural world, his awareness and his use of intuition in his leadership practice. Particularly obvious during this phase was Peter’s ability to not only develop positive relationships, but a culture of support where everyone was welcomed and valued.

Context

Peter was an outdoor education teacher at a school for Year 11 and 12 students at Lake Ginninderra College, in the Australian Capital Territory. There he taught and led a variety of programs in outdoor education. Classes were timetabled in regular school time as well as on external field trips sometimes on weekends. These field trips were supported by contract staff (often past students now qualified and leading in the outdoors), as well as current and past students who volunteer their time to support the programs. The program observed was a 2 day lead climbing trip at Thompsons Point and Point Perpendicular near Nowra in New South Wales.
Impressions of Peter

At the first meeting with Peter, mid afternoon on Friday there was some hesitancy coming from him about his involvement in the study and being labelled ‘extraordinary’. It seemed that my sudden presence, after being at a distance from him for so long, had unsettled him. Sitting in his office he made me a cup of tea as he outlined the weekend program to come. He tried to suggest that he was not the right person for this study of extraordinary outdoor leaders, but it had become clear in the first few moments of our meeting that he was in fact the right person for the study. At the time it would have been difficult to put into words what it was about him that indicated that he was definitely an ‘extraordinary’ outdoor leader. After observing him for a few days with students, it would become much clearer.

An early opportunity to observe Peter came as he made final preparations for the field trip: phone calls, talking to staff and students. First of all he introduced me to the staff who would be on the field trip, promising to introduce me to the students later. There was a flurry of packing and sorting as things were put in the trailer and the bus. After a brief relaxed chat on the couches in the shed I was introduced to the students and they all piled into the bus.

Leading Individuals

Having decided to drive myself to the campsite clearly made Peter uncomfortable, as he pointed out the obvious that a lot happens on the bus trip; an early indication of his awareness. The decision was intentionally made to allow Peter some time with his students, as well as easing myself into the community slowly. Reluctantly conceding to his wishes, Peter gave me a passenger to share the journey. My first passenger dived into the car and assured me she was not going to miss out on the fun on the bus as the volunteers were going to swap around and take it in turns to keep me company. When asked what her role was this weekend, Nat told me how many opportunities ‘Pete’ had given her. Speaking passionately, she told me how much she looks up to him and how she has turned down paid work to be here this weekend. “I work for Pete for nothing, but no one else” (Nat). She seemed to know ‘Pete’ really well, including aspects of his personal life. At our first stop she got out of the car, before leaving she stuck her head back in the door, “I came here [the school] because
I’d heard about Pete...and the outdoor program. And it lived up to all my expectations and more...” (Nat).

Early on it was clear that there was a strong feeling of community. As the days went by, this became more obvious. When the idea of community was later discussed with Peter in the follow-up interview on Monday he stated...

... I see it as building a community and...I take great efforts on trips...you know if there’s someone that’s a bit isolated, never been on a trip before, I’ll ask one of the other staff or one of the older students, or more mature students to be inclusive and bring that person into the group, and make sure they don’t feel left out and things like that.

I find once they get on one trip in Year 11 and they start getting pulled into that community...the relationship develops and they become a part of the outdoor ed culture of the college – or a part of the college. And the benefits for the college is that there’s this whole group of kids that are having all these wonderful combined experiences and that flows out into the rest of the college as well.

As a stranger to this community, the students drew me in. Even though it would only be for a few days, I was a valued by all of them and included.

The next passenger in the car was Susan, another past student of Pete’s, now a university student on professional experience. It was immediately clear that Susan was also in awe of Pete and all he does, as she pointed out, especially the work he has done and continues to do for no financial reward. In particular she mentioned the Certificate III program. This program has enabled his students to obtain qualifications in skill areas before they graduate from school. From the stories his students told and through the observations, Peter’s selflessness became more and more apparent. This selflessness was most clearly reflected in his willingness not to be the centre of attention. Peter confirmed this approach as intentional in the follow-up interview...

... I’m not exactly sure what you’d call it, the maturity or the generosity of spirit, or whatever – to be able to step back and not have to do all the activities...to get a different sort of reward, enabling other people to take it to as far as they can.

And I enjoy it as much as, you know...when you see people really, really, taking off with something, or having an absolute peak experience, you know that’s just a pleasure – to be a part of that.
After stopping for dinner, Steve (Volunteer Staff) jumped into the passenger seat. A little less talkative than my previous passengers, he managed to say more than the first two passengers put together. “School wasn’t the greatest for me...I guess Pete planted the seed” (Steve). The seed Peter planted was the one that helped to empower Steve to realise that he too could be an outdoor leader. These conversations in the car highlighted how Peter had managed to develop individual relationships with each of his students (‘individual’, because his focus on each of them was quite special). This allowed him to match the level of challenge to the level of skill each student had and to help them to reach personal goals. While Peter had identified as it turned out, “a lot happens on the bus”, as it turned out a lot happened in the car as well. All of the stories shared by the students were offered willingly without encouragement. It seemed the students could barely wait to tell me how much Peter had contributed to their lives.

**Building a Community and Culture**

Over the course of the weekend, I witnessed varying levels of relationships. These relationships were directly indicative of the varying time frames each individual had spent with Peter in the outdoors. Watching how Peter developed and maintained these relationships and exactly what he did to create them was best described in his own words...

...let’s see...it happens...I don’t find it happens in class to start with. It’s just not the place for that to happen. There’s too many personalities, and there’s too much stuff happening and too many management things at the start. But as soon as we start going on trips, I guess I try to make opportunities to chat with students and find out where they’re at and what they’re interested in, and what makes them tick from that point of view. I guess observing them as well...it’s a subtle thing...it’s one of those things that matter I think.

Peter structured his programs to ensure relationships were built between himself and students and between students of different ages, abilities and interests.

It’s a multi-layered thing in which everybody is learning from somebody else...and everybody’s being role modelled by somebody else...it’s a really important thing in itself, and it’s a really interesting concept I think, and it’s a really key feature of this program. I think that’s what makes it partly successful. From a relationship point of view...the year 11s come in and they see me having really strong relationships through
that process, and then they slowly get caught up into that as well. They build relationships with older students, and the older staff and the older professional staff and then with me as well. So when we go back to class...they feel comfortable and slip into that [the community] and I feel comfortable to slip in too.

The amount of trust that was given and received in the relationships and community observed was difficult to ignore. Peter later agreed that a high level of trust between himself and the students existed. This trust was demonstrated with much clarity when Rob found himself out of his depth half way up a climb at Point Perpendicular.

The World Opens Up

It was Sunday and the students found themselves at one of Peter’s favourite crags on the sea cliffs of Jervis Bay, Point Perpendicular. The setting was spectacular. There was little wind, the ocean was calm and the sun shining. Some students were sitting at the top of the cliffs looking across the bay. It was impossible for anyone to miss the beauty of this place. On arriving along the dusty dirty road the students could hardly wait to get to the cliffs. The waves could be heard crashing at the bottom of the cliffs, but they remained hidden from view by the low coastal scrub. As the group got closer, the sound of the waves took over and the students heard little else. Having seen photos and heard all about Point Perpendicular, it was clear that they could hardly wait to see it for themselves. As the students emerged from the scrubby bushes onto the cliff top, they all came to a collective standstill, staring out to sea.

One student’s comment stood out, “I knew it was going to be spectacular, but this is better than spectacular” (Student – Rob). Rob had been walking and talking with me, but had become suddenly silent and still with the rest of the students as the world opened up and revealed itself. After a long pause, he turned to me with a beaming smile and almost in a whisper said, “Wow” (Rob). A normally chatty fellow, he didn’t speak for the next 10 minutes as the group walked along the cliff top weaving in and out of the scrub. Not until we got to our communal area for the day and Peter called for equipment was Rob drawn out of his silence. Quickly he went about helping to find equipment, managing to steal a moment to ask Peter “Which grades will we be climbing today?” (Rob). “Today you will be climbing some classic, beautiful climbs. Some of my favourites” (Peter). It was clear that Peter would not be dragged into a conversation
where the difficulty of the climb became the focus. Deftly he turned the conversation around to a more positive focus.

Matching Level of Challenge to Student Ability

Rob had wanted to attempt higher grade climbs since arriving on the coast on Friday night. While sitting at a table for dinner on the first evening, he had shared his goals for the weekend: to climb a higher grade than he had done previously. Peter asked him yesterday to do some easier leads first while at Thompsons Point in order to warm up and get the feel again for climbing. It had been a while since Rob had climbed. He seemed to have an elevated view of his own ability. This was something Peter was very aware of and he was keeping a close eye on Rob as a result. Like all of the students, before Rob was given permission to climb, Peter quizzed him on how his climbing had been going over the weekend and asked to him to talk him through the placements of gear on the climb Rob was intent on doing. Even though it was getting late, Peter did not rush the conversation, “this is important”. When Peter was finally happy for him to have a go, he asked Rob to set up and call him over to be checked before starting. Peter then went off and attended to other students. On Monday during the follow-up interview Peter would share his thinking at the time, “I guess I intuited that he was a bit closer to the edge than anything else before he started, and that’s why I wanted to be there”.

When observing Rob getting ready to climb, it was clear that he was not as confident as he was trying to portray. His climbing partner (Student – John) had similar reservations and his body language confirmed this. At the same time he was willing to be patient and support Rob. Being patient with each other in order to allow the time for everyone to achieve was a core component observed in the culture Peter had created. Nothing was hurried.

Sharing the Sunset

Late on Sunday afternoon it was time to leave. Peter suggested they pack the gear then meet for a chat over by the edge and watch the sun set. They all looked towards the setting sun and agreed. The students were moving slowly. It had been a long weekend and everyone was visibly tired. By the time they all got there the sun had gone behind the clouds that had been slowly building all afternoon on the horizon.
Laughing and smiling Peter shrugged his shoulders “Oh well”. Undeterred he began the ‘chat’...

...I didn’t climb today, but I had a really great day. This place is deeply, deeply special to me, and I really love bringing you here and sharing it with a group of highly skilled and safe climbers. It has been great to share this place with you.

The students were then invited to share their experiences. One student summarised the group’s collective experience well.

How good is this place? Just look at the view...every time you abseil down to climb back up, you get that feeling of...woa! It gets you – every time. Just being here, sitting on the edge of the cliff is amazing. I did some great climbs today, and I’ll remember it forever (Student - Max).

All of the students nodded slowly as they heard these thoughts. The group was silent and clearly thoughtful. Peter’s own connection to this place, it appeared, had been passed on to his students. It was time to go. The students were reluctant to leave the cliff top. As the group turned the corner for the bus, Rob (Student) paused to take it all in once more.

In a Boardroom

That was Sunday afternoon. On Monday, Peter found himself sitting in a boardroom for the follow up interview. The venue had been chosen by Peter, a boardroom with several tables arranged in a U shape, bare walls, a largely impersonal space. As soon as he sat down Peter announced that he only had an hour for the interview. This was such a contrast to where and how he had spent the last two days: Saturday at Thompsons Point cliffs overlooking the Shoalhaven River, surrounded by eucalypt forest and Sunday at Point Perpendicular, where the cliffs meet the ocean with spectacular views across Jervis Bay, the sun shining and everyone on the lookout for passing whales; all the time in the world.

Having observed Peter use his intuition as he dealt with the situation with Rob yesterday, it was interesting to hear his point of view of the event in retrospect.

It’s a bit like the start of a gut reaction...you get a faint murmur that you’re going to have a gut reaction to something, that perhaps if you don’t focus in on and open up to, it could be something major.
Peter described his intuition as something that told him what was going on and he saw it as being closely linked with his ability to be deeply aware.

It might not be something that you initially, straight-forwardly put your finger on, but it’s something to really open up to...to be in tune...to be in tune with your own intuition and gut feels about what’s happening. For me, I have to be in tune with the students and where they’re at and the ebb and flow of the activity. When it sort of eases off, to have something ready to move on to...to be in tune with their physical capabilities, and their judgement, the weather and what’s happening with that. To be in tune with relationships between staff and students, between students and staff. I think intuition is being in tune with things and if you’re in tune with stuff, then your intuition might bring something to the fore that you can think through and prevent problems or whatever.

Peter believed that people can develop intuition by being in tune with what is happening around them. Being aware, past experience as well as mentoring and the opportunity to discuss how it works he also saw to be critical for developing skills in using intuition. Throughout the observation period, Peter consistently demonstrated this through the way in which he spoke with the volunteers about being aware as a leader when supervising a belay team as he attempted to extend them in their leadership. There were many opportunities provided for students to discuss these more complex concepts of leadership and how they might use them.

It’s important to know what’s going on in your group, but it’s also important to be aware of what’s going on around you. So, did you notice that the other group were waiting for you? No? Yeah, so it’s really important to start thinking about where everyone is, what they’re doing, as well as the weather. It’s a big task, isn’t it? You’re doing really well – this is just the next level.

Not only was Peter committed to their awareness, but also their connections with nature. His own connection to place was evident in the way he took in the environment, as well as through the places he chose to take his students and the way in which they interacted together with the natural environment.

I guess I get deeply affected by natural world experiences. I like to share those sorts of experiences, not by saying “Oh this is how I feel, or “Now look at that sunset”, although sometimes that can be part of it, “Have you noticed...” Something that really moves me is setting up big deep rich connecting experiences for students and other staff...the whole thing is incredibly rich; a moving experience...setting up those big experiences
from that natural world aspect, and from a team, group development aspect, and put those two things together with fantastic exciting activities. If you have those three things happening, you possibly have part of the richest aspect of my working life.

**Leading with Purpose and Spirit**

Peter was an outdoor leader for many reasons, but mostly because of his love for being an outdoor leader and the way in which he saw it utilising his skills. There was no other job that he knew of that he would like to do at that moment. Having been an outdoor leader for many years, he continued to be excited and committed to continuing. This was largely to do with his admission that he was learning as much now or more than he ever had from being an outdoor leader. For Peter, it is “worthwhile, it’s fun, and I love the relationships, and activities, and the places...if I can pull it off anymore, I’ll just keep doing it!” Committed to being an outdoor leader, his reasons for being an outdoor leader were described as...

...maybe it is a sort of calling, it’s a possibility...I’ve always been open to those sorts of things, and I’ve never labelled myself as a spiritual sort of person. I’ve never used that label...so for me to feel comfortable with that I’d have to tease it out and know more about exactly what it is.

Nearly two hours had passed since he sat down in the room. It appeared Peter had not noticed that he had over-stayed. When the time was mentioned, he dismissed it and commented how much he had enjoyed the opportunity to discuss these kinds of things. He was quick to acknowledge that it did not happen very often, usually he worked alone.

Sharing a personal conversation he had with his wife on the night when he returned home from his weekend away confirmed his passion for being an outdoor leader.

There’s just something funny, as you’ve been working all weekend and I ask you how it was and you always come home and say it was fantastic...it was great...I had a wonderful time…You know, normal people when they ask their partners how their work was on the weekend, they wouldn’t say things like that, you know? But yeah, it’s pretty much always like that (Peter’s wife).
As the follow up interview came to a natural end Peter sat in relaxed silence, appearing to contemplate all that had been discussed. With a smile he turned and asked, “How many PhDs are you doing?” The body language he displayed in these final moments showed that he was feeling energised and keen to learn more. Looking back now to our first meeting on a few days prior, who Peter was and how that makes him an extraordinary outdoor leader was much clearer.
This chapter presents Rod through a selection of stories generated from data collected in Phase 2. The aim is to represent Rod’s leadership, in particular Phase 1 findings ‘in practice’. In Phase 1 Rod described falling into the role of being an outdoor leader and considered himself to be more of a facilitator than a leader; someone who ensured opportunities were there for his students. These ‘opportunities’ and the way in which he facilitated the program were consistently observed throughout Phase 2 and directly linked to his core values of honesty and openness. Using a variety of leadership styles Rod intentionally removed himself from the field for short periods of time in an attempt to empower student learning further. An awareness of the natural environment, the students, and the ‘feel’ of the group was also evident through his flexible use of styles. The way in which he constructed his programs revolved around the relationships and community he intentionally built.

**Context**

Rod was a teacher of outdoor education at Rosny College, a school for students in Years 11 and 12 in Tasmania. The school provided opportunities for outdoor education through three units of study. Outdoor education was timetabled into regular school time, as well as through field trips predominantly taking place on or near weekends. Rod relied on a number of contract outdoor education staff, as well as past students who volunteered their time and skills to assist Rod and his students in being
able to deliver the field trips. Outdoor education programs in the school ranged from single day to multiday trips in a variety of activities.

The program Rod was observed leading on was a rafting program on the Mersey River in Northern Tasmania. It consisted of many layers where students enrolled in year 12 were leading students in Year 11. At times the roles were also reversed with Year 11 students leading Year 12 students. There were also a significant number of past students employed as leaders, as well as acting as volunteers. Students from another Tasmanian College were also present as ‘punters’ or ‘clients’ and were lead by both the Year 11 and 12 students at various times. This resulted in Rod working towards a variety of outcomes, ensuring they were met by the various student groups.

**Impressions of Rod**

Meeting Rod in a country town on the way to the Mersey River, it was immediately clear that he had great relationships with the students present. Each of them was introduced individually and the respect received from each of them instantly spoke loudly. Rod was relaxed and in no hurry as everyone ate dinner. Students were clearly comfortable and calm around him. Arriving at the campsite he gave students time to set up and encouraged them to join him around the fire once they were ready. The following morning he was the first to get up and was observed preparing equipment, making sure everything was ready to go. Standing by the fire with a cup of coffee in hand was a regular sight. Either alone or with others, he always appeared comfortable and with all the time in the world.

A week later when I met him at the school for the interview, the same strong relationships were evident with his colleagues. The place he chose for the interview was a tiny office with no windows to the outdoors, somewhere he assured me we would not be interrupted. The contrast could not have been greater to the Mersey River. Sitting in the dark, he was thoughtful and focussed. Despite his efforts, we were disturbed by an unexpected visitor and a noisy class next door. Neither of these deterred his engagement with our discussion. With Rod, his attention was always on the present.

**Leading with Passion**

In the first interview Rod indicated how he ‘fell’ into being an outdoor leader. The Phase 2 follow-up interview provided the opportunity to clarify what he meant...
...my life has been following...where I’m interested...where my love is...that’s what I follow. I don’t necessarily follow any sense of logic. My logic is that if you do something you like, you get far more satisfaction out of it and you’re more likely to do it well.

Clearly passionate about being an outdoor leader, this passion was observed throughout the week in a variety of ways. Always first up in the morning, Rod was bright and prepared for the day. Rarely on his own, he was always seen to be engaging with people on a personal level, often providing guidance and support. Rod acknowledged that he intentionally created learning opportunities or ‘teachable moments’ to encourage growth and development in his students.

I enjoy the education side a little more than I do the...activity side now...I get far more...satisfaction from watching other people learn, and that I think, influences a great deal of [what] I teach...I think they (students) sense that I’m there setting up for them

Preferring the term ‘facilitator’ to ‘leader’ when describing his role in the outdoors, it appeared this was closely linked to how he viewed his role as an outdoor leader.

I facilitate the opportunity for them to learn hard skills, and also to learn about themselves and really enjoy it with other people...I facilitate situations that allow them (students) to move in the direction that they want.

This emphasis on ‘other people’ was consistently evident throughout the observation, conversations and interviews experienced with Rod.

Creating an Extended Family of Givers

Pivotal to his leadership were relationships which were seen to underpin everything he did. From the moment of arrival in the research setting on the banks of the Mersey River, the introductions of the various students reinforced the relationships Rod had with all of his students; past and present. There appeared to be a number of layers to what he called “one big, almost dysfunctional, extended family”. A culture of many layers, varying levels of responsibility, skill, and life experience. Together, they helped each other to create opportunities where they could excel. A sense of selfless giving bound in honesty and openness was present in both Rod and his students, past and present. The many layers in this instance included Year 11 and Year 12 students,
being assessed on different aspects of the program (e.g., some on their leadership of the whole group, others on their leadership of the individual raft, organising equipment), past students volunteering, past students as paid employees and Rod. In addition to these layers, there was one student with a disability who was there “for the experience, and to increase her opportunities”.

Shortly after arriving at the campsite, unbidden, past students of Rod (volunteers) were keen to share their stories and experiences of being led by Rod. Waiting by the bus on the first morning of the observation, while the safety brief was underway one of the volunteers shared why he was here on this program.

Because without us, the program wouldn’t be as good; they (the students) wouldn’t be able to do as much. There’d be more sitting around and waiting, because the ratios just wouldn’t be there. Besides, I got so much out of this program when I was a student, and there were volunteers here for us, so we could do this too. So I guess it’s my way of giving back, of saying thank you (Volunteer).

Clearly motivated by what the students might gain out of his being there, the volunteer commented, “it’s not about the money...money doesn’t drive me” (Volunteer). Later when this interaction was relayed to Rod he smiled in response. “Well I hope so...because that is the whole point isn’t it? It’s like a ripple effect out there (in the wider community), these guys will take that view out there, and hopefully spread it around”.

To an outsider it might appear that Rod was leading a small group of students on a rafting trip. But really, there was a lot more going on. There was an underlying message about creating positive communities/environments for learning to happen within; to take that positive energy and sense of community into the broader community and the world. Possessing a positive view of the ‘kids’ and the impact they will potentially have on the world was clear, yet understated. Rod’s world revolved around these ‘kids’; present and past.

It’s all about them, and what they get from it; their relationships with the people that they’re with. If they get good relationships with other people, they’re more likely to succeed in the activities that they’re doing. Both relationships wise and skill wise; because they’re being supported through them.
The relationships developed by Rod were authentic. They were grounded in his core values, which students had visibly taken on in addition to their own. By engaging in this way, in addition to providing students with opportunities for growth and development, confirmed his use of ‘ethical manipulation’. It appeared that Rod’s focus was on building a community where everyone was accepted and empowered to grow through honesty and openness. Their individuality and difference was taken into account and at all times he worked with them to help them to find their own direction in life.

**Leading with an Open Heart**

The way in which Rod demonstrated his core values and at the same time emphasised how he ‘is’ in the world, reinforced his eternal links to and reliance on students past and present.

You’ve got to be open and honest with one another. We can hide anything in a group. But I’m reliant on you – as much as you are reliant on me…I can learn as much from you, as you can from me.

The language he consistently used and his ability to link what was happening on the river to a bigger picture for his students, all contributed to his demonstration of a commitment to a larger world view. The relationships he had with students, how his values were demonstrated through these and how he ‘is’ in the world confirmed this commitment. I consistently saw honesty demonstrated. Particularly in the way he interacted with his students, how the students were with each other, and with themselves. At all times they remained respectful of themselves, of one another, of Rod and of all other staff and students present. A selection of student comments emphasise the honesty and openness reflected in Rod’s students about their own leadership.

“I learn more about myself every day”; “I obviously struggled today – I was extremely nervous, and I didn’t know what I was doing. It wasn’t a great day”; “They weren’t looking around and being aware too much”; “What did go wrong? Was it focus? Or did they think they were in the eddy already?” (Various students).

They commonly used positive language and words such as ‘honest’, ‘open’, ‘initiative’, and ‘judgement’ when they described their own leadership and the leadership of their peers. During the week observed, they faced success and failure with equal strength and humility. Their characteristics, values, skills and behaviours mirrored Rod’s, which came back to his reasons for being an outdoor leader.
You’ve got to understand what prefaces my involvement in outdoor education. It has always been to focus on the individual, develop a sense of self within themselves. Once they’re happy with who they are, and what they are, then they can start working on other people.

In order to achieve this focus of developing individuals, Rod put a lot of time into getting to know his students and building positive relationships. He was constantly observed engaging with students and increasing his knowledge and understanding of them.

It’s very important to know them well, because you have to know how far you can push them. I think Mary (Student) grew a great deal...and she has made a couple of comments here and there, and I picked up on a couple of things that clearly show that she’s made a huge step – about who she is and where her strengths lie.

Mary went from being a nervous raft guide, to one with confidence in both herself and her skills. Her language changed from a critical review of her performance on Thursday, to a congratulatory review on Friday evening, both of which were accurate reflections of her performance. In Rod’s ‘family’, students were not praised, nor did they praise others where praise was not warranted. But when it was, it was genuine and plentiful.

Throughout the week the students (past and present) consistently demonstrated similar values to Rod, in particular their commitment to a greater good. How they, as young people could contribute to the world, in their own way was consistently discussed and demonstrated. Without fail the students spoke with maturity and confidence that defied their years, using similar language to Rod, even when he was not present. When asked about it later, Rod indicated that they were good people and he confirmed this when he insisted that there was good in all people. This belief of good in all people was also evident in his students and how they interacted with each other and the other school students present.

**Empowering Others in Nature**

Motivated by seeing positive growth and change in his students, Rod was passionate about being an outdoor leader. Students were empowered through the creation of opportunities for growth and change. Intentionally absent at times so that the safety net of ‘Rod’ was removed, required them to rely more on themselves. Rarely observed sitting still, he was always preparing something, engaging with students, or
moving equipment around in preparation for the next activity. An example of this occurred one afternoon when he pulled off the river early leaving students to have some intentional time leading without him on the river.

As he stood on the river bank, a student asked him what he was going to do for the afternoon, to which he replied that he was having an afternoon off. This turned out to be code for, ‘I’m going to put up a few tarps, organise all the gear not in use, make any urgent repairs, stoke the fire, find some lollies to give to the students when they come off the river cold and tired, take photos of the students paddling, help load the rafts and debrief the students once they are off the river’. While Rod clearly spent considerable time with his students, he also recognised the need for his own absence at times. These intentional absences he viewed as opportunities to empower his students.

They’ve got to carry on without me there. It’s a bit like, if they’ve made it before, and because of my age and position, they don’t get to do their own thing because they’re always looking over their shoulder. If I remove myself once from it, then I think they develop more – 1). Because they think that I trust them, and 2). When they’re doing it, they’re not thinking I’ve got to do it this way – they can actually go and experiment a bit. No doubt they are different when I’m there. You’ve got to allow them to have a go ‘on their own’, and we’ve got limited time to do that.

Throughout the study Rod consistently demonstrated a connection to and awareness of people as well as the natural environment around him; regularly bringing this aspect into his program. The students also regularly commented on the beauty around them, regardless of his presence and past students clearly had a connection to this ‘place’. The connection he had with nature was particularly obvious when he took ‘time off’ the river as he was observed down by the river, sitting. When he went to take photos of the students paddling he commented again on the ‘place’ and the specialness this ‘place’ has for him. In amongst what was a busy time on the river, with a multitude of students in varying roles and responsibilities, Rod remained aware of himself, others and the environment.

**Leading with Stories**

Storytelling was a core component of Rod’s ‘being’ in the world. Sharing personal stories was a regular occurrence in his leadership and in turn his students
shared their own stories. In particular, his past students shared stories of their experiences with Rod. “They’ve got heaps to tell” Rod acknowledged. Their stories were extremely personal and emphasised the individual role Rod had played in their growth and development. More importantly the stories also demonstrated personal learning that had developed from their own experiences since leaving school. They have managed to transfer their learning from the outdoor programs with Rod, to their lives in the broader community and world.

An example of storytelling witnessed during the week was when the group went for a debrief on the bus up to the ‘put in’ point for the rafting runs. After the debrief which drew out student comments reported previously in this chapter, the group went in search of Rod’s lost watch and found the good shepherd. It was late at night and the temperature had dropped significantly. There was no moon, the headlights from the bus provided the only light. Rod had lost his watch earlier in the day and was taking the students to help him find it. It was clear he would have done the same had one of his students lost their watch.

While on the bus driving to the spot where he thought he had lost his watch a somewhat stilted conversation began between Rod and one of the volunteers about the ‘good shepherd’ and the ‘lost sheep’. Discovering that the volunteer did not know the story of the good shepherd, Rod asked him to tell the story. When the story was finished he asked one of his students if the volunteer was right. “He was spot on...the moral to the story is that you all need to stick together” (Student). Later Rod explained how this all came about.

A kid brought that up, I didn’t start that...I said, “Well it’s like the good shepherd isn’t it”. And they said “What do you mean by that?” And I couldn’t quite believe they didn’t know the story and that’s when I dragged the others in. It sort of grew from there. I knew Scott (Student) came from...a private catholic education so there was no way that he wouldn’t have known about the good shepherd. I thought...what a great opportunity for him to show the others the body of knowledge he’s got... I thought Stuart (Volunteer) explained it reasonably well. And did you see the look on the other kids faces when Scott came out and said, “Oh good, you were spot on”? That’s why that sort of grew. That’s like a teachable moment – I could never have fabricated that, it was just an opportunity. Maybe only 50% of them took that away, but I know Stuart took it away because he guessed it right.
In some ways, the story of the good shepherd was metaphor for how Rod led. He gets students involved and connected with each other and nature, and then gets them to see the “relationship to what they’re doing”. Later in the interview, Rod acknowledged that he missed a lot of opportunities. Going on to say that there might be some great teachable moments out there, but if he does not have the time to follow through properly on them, then there is “no use starting unless you can finish. Otherwise you can do more damage – if you start and can’t round it off, the kid can go away with a misunderstanding”.

The incident of the good shepherd and the lost sheep confirmed the central role relationships play in Rod’s leadership, as well as his awareness of what students do and do not know. It also emphasised his use of storytelling and intuition in relation to what they are ready to learn. Embracing diversity and difference in all of his students, Rod encourages them to look after the ‘lost sheep’, bringing those who may not ‘fit’ into the group that is a caring and encouraging ‘family’.

When the students stepped off the bus to help look for the watch, Rod shining the lights on the bus for them to see, they did so in the cold and dark with good humour. When they returned to the bus without the watch, they came with some disappointment in not having been successful. They way the students and Rod interact in this situation emphasised their trust and respect, in and for, Rod and each other. The way in which he carefully used the power afforded to him by the students was best described by Rod...

...a mutual understanding and respect for one another...you’ve got to be very careful how you use it (power), because you can lose your group, like with the ostrich hunt (search for watch) - handled the wrong way, the kids could take offence...but they know what I’m like by now, so they know I’m genuine.

**Leading from Peace**

While he drew on a variety of leadership theories (situational, transformational), through the observation it is clear that his experience, awareness, and sense of ‘knowing’ directly contribute to his leadership practice. Deeply aware of why he is an outdoor leader, Rod acknowledged how ‘being’ an outdoor leader had taken a toll on his health in the past. While he comes to terms with finding a balance, he continues to be an
outdoor leader to change the world – if only for these individuals, in what is, his ‘extended family’.

As I departed from the field Rod thanked me for coming and apologised, “Sorry about the chaos”. In this moment, when asked if he thought he was a spiritual person he responded, “I’m at peace. I think it’s a deep-rooted...sense...of values”. A week later during the final stages of the follow-up interview, Rod was adamant about the interconnectedness of various aspects of leadership, “Interconnected...in the core”, and the lines between them are blurred.
Chapter 11  Discussion

This study explored the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership through the identification of key characteristics, values, skills and behaviours of these leaders. Initially a long list of attributes was produced in Phase 1 of the research process (see Chapter 5). Phase 2 provided clarification of the earlier attributes resulting in four key elements. The four key elements that emerged are: awareness of self, others and nature; relationships with self, others and nature; intuition; and spirituality. While these were considered to be universal traits across the five participants studied the importance of the ‘individual’ was consistently emphasised throughout the study.

This chapter presents a discussion of the findings from this study. It is organised into four main sections. Section 1 begins the discussion by exploring the contribution of the conceptual framework towards understanding the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership. Section 2 returns to the early findings and provides links to the literature. Section 3 shares the four key emerging elements and discusses the interplay and relationship that exists between them. Finally, Section 4 returns to the conceptual framework clarifying its suitability for this study.

Section 1: Contribution of the Conceptual Framework to the Understanding of Extraordinary Outdoor Leadership

The conceptual framework developed for this study contributed in a number of pivotal ways. Initially, it clarified the various levels of leadership success existing in the literature into three clear terms: effective, exemplary, and extraordinary. The process of clarifying the leadership levels, simultaneously resulted in the ‘new’ categorisation of leadership theories: head, heart, body and soul. This categorisation was used to organise the literature review as well as providing an alternative way to think about the various leadership theories in the literature. The conceptual framework then highlighted possible links for the three contemporary theories of leadership (transformational, authentic and spiritual leadership) with the levels of leadership success (effective, exemplary, extraordinary) in an evolutionary way. In addition, the framework acknowledged the role the intelligences continue to play in informing our understanding of the contemporary theories of leadership and continued to acknowledge the function of context specific literature of outdoor leadership (e.g., core competencies, situational
leadership theory, COLT). The conceptual framework then went on to suggest that characteristics, values, skills and behaviours pertinent to extraordinary outdoor leaders would potentially draw on all three of the contemporary theories of leadership, with spiritual leadership the defining leadership theory of extraordinary outdoor leaders (Figure 11.1).

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 11.1** The conceptual framework for extraordinary outdoor leadership

Through its provision of direction and focus, the conceptual framework contributed significantly to the study, which will be demonstrated throughout this chapter. In order to be clear prior to embarking on the discussion that follows it is important to return briefly to clarify the key terms in the framework. A ‘characteristic’ in this framework refers to an attribute, feature or quality considered to be distinctive. ‘Values’ includes those aspects of an individual considered to be of great merit or significance. The ‘skills’ incorporate a person’s particular capabilities and ‘behaviours’ consist of the observable actions in response to internal and external stimuli, specifically, the way in which someone “behaves or functions in a particular situation” (Turnbull et al., 2010, p. 124). With these aspects clarified, the discussion begins by exploring the links between the literature and the early findings.
Section 2: Linking the Early Characteristics, Values, Skills and Behaviours to the Literature

Phase 1 of this study resulted in the production of a long list of leadership attributes which were presented in Chapter 5. These attributes were found to link to the various theories presented in the conceptual framework. This section highlights those connections and clarifies the links between the attributes identified and the literature. As stated previously, some attributes were found to be relevant to a number of categories during Phase 1, however these were clarified when both Phase 1 and Phase 2 data were taken together resulting in the four key elements (see Section 3). Figure 11.2 provides a visual depiction of the attributes from the early findings.

![Diagram showing the connection between characteristics, values, skills, and behaviours]

Figure 11.2 Attributes of extraordinary outdoor leaders from the early findings

These attributes are discussed according to the four categories of the conceptual framework: characteristics, values, skills and behaviours. The links between the attributes and the literature have been presented in tables throughout the discussion in order to clearly illustrate where links were found and not found to the specific literature.

**Characteristics.**

The characteristics that came into view initially included: awareness, heart and learning from experience. ‘Awareness’ was further described as contributing to relationships, values, ethics, and behaviours of the leaders studied. ‘Heart’, the notion
described by Scharmer (2007) included the mind and will, as well as aspects of courage, being encouraging of others and authenticity. ‘Learning from experience’ incorporated aspects of culture, context, deep listening, reflection, transfer of learning and facilitation that was firm, flexible and fun. These characteristics were found to link with the contemporary leadership literature while encompassing aspects of the outdoor leadership and intelligence literature presented earlier through the conceptual framework. The participants indicated through their responses to the interview that they considered these three characteristics to be essential to their leadership. These responses and specific examples from the early findings data can be found in Chapter 5 (Characteristics, p. 130).

**Awareness.**

The contemporary leadership theories identified ‘awareness’ as essential for successful leadership. Transformational leadership theory identified being aware of self (e.g., Denhardt & Campbell, 2006; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Komives et al., 1998), as did authentic leadership theory (e.g., Kouzes & Posner, 2007; Gardner et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). Awareness of others was identified by the participants as crucial to their leadership practice. This was similarly found to be essential to emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996; Cooper & Sawaf, 1997; Freedman, 2006) as well as spiritual intelligence (Buzan, 2001; Cook et al, 2004; Pava & Primeau, 2994; Zohar & Marshall, 2000, 2004). According to the framework, these intelligences informed and contributed to the contemporary leadership theories. Zohar and Marshall (2000) named the awareness of self as essential to spiritual leadership in addition to the awareness of others and nature (Senge et al, 2005). All three aspects of awareness (self, others and nature) were considered essential for successful leadership across the literature presented in this study. Martin et al (2006) were the only authors in relation to the outdoor leadership literature who named awareness as an essential aspect of effective outdoor leadership. However, their attention to this aspect was relatively brief. Awareness of self, others and nature would later emerge as one of the four key elements of extraordinary outdoor leadership and hence is discussed in greater detail in Section 3 of this chapter.
Heart.

The use of the ‘heart’ in leadership practice was identified as pertinent to being a transformational leader through the descriptions of transformational leaders, their passion and commitment for the task of leadership (e.g., Bass & Avolio, 1997; Denhardt & Campbell, 2006). The inextricable links between transformational leadership and emotional intelligence further confirmed the importance of the use of emotions in leadership practice and in particular, engaging the heart (Cooper & Sawaf, 1997; Harkins & Swift, 2009). Marshall and Heffes (2004) emphasised the need to lead “with your heart” (p. 10) and identified this aspect as one of five components of being an authentic leader. The notion of “encouraging the heart” in leadership practice was also central to Kouzes and Posner’s (1999) discussion of exemplary leadership. The ‘heart’ was further clarified in relation to spiritual leadership theory and spiritual intelligence in a number of ways (e.g., Jaworski, 1998; Pearsall 1998; Scharmer, 2008; Zohar & Marshall, 2004). Scharmer (2007) identified the need to lead with an open heart, mind and will if leadership practice was to remain relevant to the changing world.

Through this study, courage was identified as crucial to a leader’s ability to engage the heart in leadership practice. At the same time, courage was found to be consistently connected with authentic leadership theory (e.g., Bennis et al., 2004; Kouzes & Posner, 2006; Pearce, 2003) and in the creation of transformational change (Quinn, 2000). The development of leadership in others and how this directly resulted in the encouragement and empowerment of followers was regularly referred to in the transformational and emotional intelligence literature (e.g., Bass & Avolio, 1997; Eagly et al., 2003). On the contrary, the outdoor leadership literature did not refer to ‘courage’ per se.

Learning from experience.

All of the leaders studied referred to learning from experience as something that they valued and engaged in constantly. Learning from experience is considered to be central to experiential learning theory which underpins outdoor leadership practice (Breunig, 2008; Schoel & Maizell, 2002). Other aspects that were identified in relation to an individual’s ability to learn from experience included: transfer of learning, reflection and fun. All of these aspects were found to be central to the outdoor leadership literature along with learning from experience (e.g., Martin et al., 2006;
Priest & Gass, 2005). Culture and context had been identified as essential to experiential learning and transformational leadership (e.g., Collins & Porras, 1994; Hunt, 1991; Masood et al., 2006), authentic leadership (Crawford, 2005) and spiritual leadership in relation to the various descriptions of community (Duchon & Plowman, 2005; Kriger & Seng, 2005). Deep listening or actions that come from deep within were also linked with transformational leadership (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Howell & Avolio, 1995), authentic leadership (Baughter, 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008), spiritual leadership (Drath, 2001; Sharma, 2010), as well as outdoor leadership (Kosseff, 2003).

These early characteristics emphasised links between all of the contemporary theories of leadership (transformational, authentic and spiritual) and to varying degrees the intelligences and outdoor leadership literature. Table 11.1 summarises the relationships between the characteristics identified and the literature.

Table 11.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Framework</th>
<th>Awareness</th>
<th>Heart</th>
<th>Learning from experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transformational Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authentic Leadership</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Spiritual Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional Intelligence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spiritual Intelligence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Leadership</td>
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</table>

Values.

The two main values identified in Phase 1 of the study included: ‘leaving the world a better place’, and a ‘love of and belief in outdoor education’. The need to leave the world a better place was identified through the participants’ attention to the importance of relationships, their honesty and ability to create a positive culture. Their personal connections to the natural environment as well as their altruistic/humble approach to the world helped to describe their commitment to leaving the world a better place. All of these aspects were found to exist in the various literature presented and explored. Specific examples from the data of these values can be found in Section 2 of Chapter 5 (Values, p. 135).
**Leaving the world a better place**

The concept of leaving the world a better place was found to be directly related to the way in which leaders valued relationships, honesty, building a positive culture and their connection with nature. Relationships were identified by the participants interviewed and across the three contemporary theories of leadership as essential for leadership success (e.g., Komives et al., 2006; Kouzes & Posner, 2006; Scharmer, 2007). They were also identified as integral to effective leadership in the outdoor leadership literature (e.g., Boyes, 2005; Hayllar, 2005; Kosseff, 2003). Honesty was particularly highlighted both in the literature pertaining to transformational, authentic and spiritual leadership (e.g., Burns, 1978; Kerfoot, 2006; Reave, 2005) as well as by the participants. The ability to create a positive culture and/or community was emphasised in the spiritual leadership literature (Pava, 2004) and spiritual intelligence (Zohar & Marshall, 2004). Dent et al (2005) identified the need for a strong connection with the natural environment in order to achieve spiritual leadership and they also indicated that this connection was a direct contributor of leadership success. A few authors from the outdoor leadership literature (Birrell, 2005; Martin, 1999; Uhlik, 2006) also identified the need for connections with nature. However the focus was on the importance of individual relationships with nature, with no mention of how these might contribute to leadership success. The leaders studied described leading for the betterment of humanity and the world as a whole. This was similarly described as an attribute of spiritual leaders (Benefiel, 2005; Dent et al., 2005) with no mention in the outdoor leadership literature.

**Love of, and belief in, Outdoor Education**

The genuine belief in the potential outcomes of outdoor education was evident across all of the participants. This belief closely aligned with the need for a vision upon which to strive. This need for a clear vision was discussed in all three of the contemporary theories of leadership as a contributor to leadership success (e.g., Collins & Porras, 1994; Kouses & Posner, 2006; Parameshwar, 2005). Also particularly evident in the leaders studied was their ‘sense of calling’ to the task of leadership and their commitment to leading for a ‘higher purpose’ than their own immediate concerns or gain as described in the spiritual leadership literature (Dent et al., 2005; Fry, 2003; Senge et al., 2005). Leader also described their commitment to and ability to develop a positive culture where the individual remained central. This development of community
or culture was particularly emphasised in all three of the contemporary leadership theories and the emotional and spiritual intelligence literature (Collins & Porras, 1994; Hunt, 1991; Masood et al., 2006; Pava, 2004; Pearce, 2003; Zohar & Marhsall, 2004). The importance of the ‘individual’ in leadership had also been addressed in the broader literature (Hunt, 1991; Yukl, 2010). The fundamental belief in outdoor education and the related attributes discussed here were not addressed in the outdoor leadership literature. The links between these attributes and the literature are demonstrated in Table 11.2.

Table 11.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Framework</th>
<th>Leaving the world a better place</th>
<th>Love of, and belief in Outdoor Education</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transformational Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authentic Leadership</td>
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<td>Spiritual Leadership</td>
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<td>Spiritual Intelligence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Leadership</td>
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**Skills**

The four main skills identified early on in the study included skills specific to being an outdoor leader (core competencies), the ability to empower others, intuition and storytelling. All of the participants demonstrated a keen awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses, a sense of freedom in their leadership practice that stemmed from their experience and an intention to co-journey with students as they grew and changed. Their descriptions of the ‘ethical’ manipulation of learning outcomes were openly acknowledged and these responses indicated a dynamic approach to leadership that was empowering of others. The utilisation of storytelling was evident across all participants and involved both the telling of their own, and others’ stories. Specific examples from the early data can be found in Section 2, Chapter 5 (Skills, p. 139).

**Core competencies.**

The broader leadership literature acknowledged the need for leaders to possess appropriate levels of core skills in order to achieve leadership success (Daft, 2005;
Yukl, 2010). In the context of this study, these include what have long been recognised as the core competencies of outdoor leadership (Martin et al., 2006; Priest & Gass, 1997, 2005). Through their responses, all of the leaders demonstrated sufficient levels of skill in all of the core competencies (Martin et al., 2006; Priest & Gass, 1997, 2005). Their identification of strengths and weaknesses emphasised clearly those they felt more confident with and those that they deemed requiring improvement. This identification of a need for improvement reinforced their humility and demonstrated a clear link with authentic and spiritual leadership where humility plays a key role (Cooper et al., 2005; Reave, 2005). Across the board, their responses indicated clear competence across all core competencies required for effective leadership. In particular they identified specific skills essential to their individual programs as strengths. Each of them also indicated a need for specific skills dependent on the context in which their outdoor education program occurred. Across all of the outdoor leadership literature, considerable emphasis has been placed on acquiring levels of competence across the core competencies (e.g., Graham, 1997; Kossef, 2003; Martin et al., 2006; Ogilive, 2005; Priest & Gass, 1997, 2005; Thomas, 2008b). The discussions often focus on context specific skills, indicating that perhaps the Australian context may require its own set of core competencies for outdoor leaders. From participants’ responses, and through the observation phase, high levels of competence across the core competencies were indicated, observed, with some commonalities and at the same time viewed as specific to each context.

**Empowering others.**

All leaders agreed that they engaged in the empowerment of others. This included students and peers alike. Their empowerment of others was closely linked to transformational leadership theory where discussions of the development of leadership in others and empowering others to lead in the absence of the transformational leader were central (e.g., Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Hannon (2007) also identified the need to empower others in order to be an authentic leader. It was interesting to note that while considered to be essential by all of the leaders studied, this aspect did not appear in the outdoor leadership literature.

**Intuition.**

The use of intuition in leadership practice was affirmed by all of the participants through both their responses to the Phase 1 interview and observed and confirmed
during Phase 2. The descriptions provided by the participants of using their ‘gut’ and listening to the ‘voice within’ were similar to those described in the literature in relation to risk taking and facilitation (e.g., Anderson, 2007; Atkinson, 2000; Cerni et al., 2008; Osho, 2001; Pearsall, 1998; Robinson, 2009; Thomas, 2008a). There was a particularly clear link between the use of intuition and engaging with spiritual leadership (Dalbecq et al., 2004; Dent et al., 2005; Osho, 2006; Zohar & Marshall, 2004). Goffee and Jones (2000) described spiritual leaders as individuals who relied heavily on their intuition to guide their timing, action and ability to manage followers with a tough empathy. Intuition would emerge during Phase 2 of the study as one of the four key elements of extraordinary outdoor leadership and is hence explored in greater detail in Section 3 of this chapter.

**Storytelling.**

In all of the accounts, the leaders utilised storytelling in order to share their own stories and retold the stories of others where they were seen to contribute to student learning. Cresswell (2005) stated that we live and share “storied lives” (p. 473). People tell and share stories and learn from the telling and the listening (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). All of the participants engaged in telling stories in response to this study, and also when leading their students. In the leadership literature, storytelling was linked albeit briefly to all three of the contemporary leadership theories through the focus of meeting the needs of others, ethics, values, trust and spirituality (Driscoll & McKee, 2007). Storytelling was used in their own leadership and teaching in order to empower the listener. While storytelling is often used in outdoor leadership, the literature did not identify this as a specific skill or core competency of successful leaders. Table 11.3 outlines the links between the four skills identified here and the literature.
Table 11.3

*Links between skills and the literature*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Framework</th>
<th>Core Competencies</th>
<th>Empowering Others</th>
<th>Intuition</th>
<th>Storytelling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transformational Leadership</td>
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<td>Authentic Leadership</td>
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**Behaviours.**

The two common behaviours that emerged in Phase 1 were ‘how they are in the world’ and risk taking. ‘How they are in the world’ or their ‘spirituality’ was described by the leaders as an egoless approach to leadership, being present and resilient. Their calm and caring approach to life in general was also emphasised. All of the participants presented a clear sense of purpose and commitment to a greater cause than the outdoor programs they work on. Fostering growth in others was evident, as was their ability to be flexible, be humble and really ‘see’ what was going on for their students. Identified as ‘risk takers’ they described having the courage to not know the exact outcome despite their years of experience. When working with groups, they were willing to take risks with their facilitation and had the courage to not know what was going to happen. Specific examples of these behaviours were elucidated in Section 2 of Chapter 5 (*Behaviours*, p. 143).

**How they are in the world.**

The leaders studied demonstrated an individual way of ‘being’ in the world or ‘spirituality’ that closely aligned with their core values and “who they are” (Quinn, 2004, p. 4), walking their talk with humility and enacting their core values in their leadership (Harvey et al., 2006; Kerfoot, 2006). They described constantly being on the lookout for the ‘magic to happen’ and were open to teachable moments. They did this through what Jaworski et al (1998) described as synchronicity and flexibility. Their demonstration of, and need for a clear sense of purpose, was reflected across the contemporary leadership theories (Clonniger, 2006; Eagly et al., 2003). In the spiritual leadership literature, this sense of purpose was also linked to a focus on leading for a
greater purpose, for the betterment of humanity and the world (Baugher, 2005). This notion of ‘spirituality’ was considered learnable by all participants and the literature alike (Cummings, 2006). The attention to spirituality in the outdoor leadership literature did not relate the benefits of this to leadership success (e.g., Friedrickson & Anderson, 1999; Heintzmann, 2008; Stringer & McAvoy, 1992).

Risk taking.

The descriptions of risk taking and how they engaged with risk taking intimately aligned with Lyng’s (2005) concept of ‘edgework’; playing with the boundaries of risk. Closely linked to their ability to take risks in their leadership practice was their reliance on, and courage to, not know what was going to happen. This willingness to not know what was going to happen also indicated a certain level of resilience. All leaders were comfortable with the knowledge that while they may know many of the potential outcomes of their programs, experience had taught them that anything could happen and that they possessed the skills necessary to deal with any eventuality. Their descriptions of risk taking in relation to facilitation and group development in particular indicated a delicate ‘playing’ with the ‘boundaries’ of ‘edgework’ or risk (Lyng, 2005). The literature supported an alignment between risk taking and leadership development. It also indicated a relationship between risk taking and an individual’s personal philosophy and engagement in active reflection (Atherton, 2007). Several authors (Anderson, 2007; Atherton, 2007; McNamee, 2007a, 2007b) agreed that leaders who regularly engaged in risk taking behaviours, through adventure activities and their leadership, contributed to their willingness to take further risks and the development of high levels of skill in deep active reflection. This was also noted for all of the leaders studied.

The management of risk was identified by all participants as central to their decision making in their leadership practice. The outdoor leadership literature places great emphasis on risk taking, however it does not explore the affects of regular risk taking that these leaders described engaging with, on their leadership practice or success. It does however consistently discuss the benefits of risk taking for participants (e.g., Atherton, 2007; Dickson, 2005; Haddock, 2004; Martin et al., 2006; McNamee, 2007a; Palmer, 2004; Priest & Gass, 1997; 2005; Stremba & Bisson, 2009). With risk taking having been demonstrated to benefit participants, one could argue that leaders
who engage in risk taking of their own may result in greater leadership success. There was no identifiable links with risk taking and leadership success in the broader literature as has been outlined in Table 11.4 along with the other behaviours discussed here.

Table 11.4

*Links between behaviours and the literature*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Framework</th>
<th>How they are in the world</th>
<th>Risk takers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transformational Leadership</td>
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<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic Leadership</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual Leadership</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional Intelligence</td>
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<td>Spiritual Intelligence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Leadership</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion.**

The early findings produced a long list of attributes of the leaders studied. The core competencies in particular were seen to continue to play a significant role in outdoor leadership. The contemporary theories and the intelligence literature contributed significantly to where gaps in the outdoor leadership literature existed, for example, in relation to spirituality, intuition, empowering others, heart, commitment to task and storytelling. Similarly, the risk taking literature relating to outdoor leadership might be able to inform the broader leadership literature where no attention was given to the benefits of engaging in risk taking activities in the natural environment on leadership success. The emerging attributes described here indicated that these leaders were engaging with effective leadership practice according to the outdoor leadership literature. The early findings also demonstrated an engagement with transformational leadership theory that further confirmed these leaders’ effective leadership practice. However, their engagement with authentic leadership and spiritual leadership theories and the related intelligences indicated potential leadership that was in fact more successful than effective or exemplary, indicating potentially extraordinary outdoor leadership.

Phase 1 provided a long “laundry list” (Van Wart, 2003, p. 215) of attributes of extraordinary outdoor leaders. Some overlap across categories existed at the end of
Phase 1 that would be clarified through Phase 2 of the study. Section 3 attends to a discussion of the key elements of extraordinary outdoor leadership that emerged during Phase 2, as both Phase 1 and Phase 2 findings were taken together.

**Section 3: Four Key Elements of Extraordinary Outdoor Leadership: An Interplay**

Phase 2 of the study identified four key elements across the extraordinary outdoor leaders. These elements were found to draw from all of the contemporary theories of leadership in various ways. In particular, links with spiritual leadership theory confirmed these leaders as extraordinary according to the conceptual framework that provided clarification around the existing literature and guided the study. The four key elements represented each aspect of the conceptual framework categories and these have been presented diagrammatically in figure 11.3.

![Diagram of Four Key Elements of Extraordinary Outdoor Leadership](image)

*Figure 11.3 Characteristics, values, skills and behaviours of extraordinary outdoor leadership practice*

Interestingly, not only did the participants demonstrate the four key elements identified in Figure 11.3, but they also valued these elements in others, whilst simultaneously attempting to teach them to others. Examples of this existed across the data such as when Peter highlighted to his developing leaders, the need to be aware of more than was in their direct area and how important awareness was as an outdoor leader (Chapter 9, *In a Boardroom*, p. 183).
The discussion that follows is once again organised according to the categories of the conceptual framework. It begins by exploring the dominant characteristics identified, followed by the values, skills and behaviours considered to be universal to all extraordinary outdoor leaders studied. Each sub section begins by clarifying the category followed by a discussion linking the attributes to the conceptual framework’s guiding theories and the data.

**Characteristic: Awareness.**

The defining characteristic of the leaders in this study was found to be awareness: of self, others and nature. The leaders studied demonstrated an acute level of awareness of themselves and how they came across to others. In addition they also exhibited an awareness of nature in both a practical and a spiritual sense. The presence of awareness in these leaders affirmed the literature in its discussions and descriptions of the varying roles awareness played in leadership success across the contemporary leadership theories and the contributing intelligence theories. Transformational leadership theory (Cerni et al., 2008; Komives et al., 1998) and authentic leadership theory (Cooper et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008) indicated awareness of self and others to be essential for effective leadership practice. Spiritual leadership theory also attended to awareness of self and others and in addition added the requirement of an awareness of nature (Senge, et al., 2005). Supporting these was the inclusion of awareness of self and others as critical to emotional intelligence (Cooper & Sawaf, 1997; Freedman, 2006) and a high level of self-awareness in relation to spiritual intelligence (Buzan, 2001; Pava & Primmeau, 2004; Zohar & Marshall, 2000, 2004).

The outdoor leadership literature identified the need for awareness of self for leadership success only recently (Froude & Polley, 2008; Martin et al., 2006; Ogilvie, 2005, Kosseff, 2003). Awareness of others was indicated abstractly in relation to group development (e.g., Priest & Gass, 2005; Stremba & Bisson, 2009) and awareness of nature has been described in practical terms through the conditional outdoor leadership theory and decision making (Martin et al., 2006; Priest & Chase, 1989). Table 11.5 clarifies these connections.
Table 11.5

Connections between awareness and the literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Awareness of Self</th>
<th>Awareness of Others</th>
<th>Awareness of Nature</th>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic Leadership</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spiritual Leadership</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Intelligence</td>
<td>✓</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual Intelligence</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Leadership</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Awareness of self.**

Within the broader leadership literature, self-awareness has been given a much greater focus than it has received in the outdoor leadership literature. Self-awareness received considerable attention in the literature in relation to transformational and authentic leadership as well as emotional and spiritual intelligence theories (e.g., Goleman, 1996; Komives et al., 1998; Walumbwa et al., 2008; Zohar & Marhsall, 2000, 2004). Found to be essential for transformational (Denhardt & Campbell, 2006; Judge & Piccolo, 2004), authentic (Kouzes & Posner, 2007; Gardner et al., 2005) and spiritual leadership (Dent et al., 2005; Fry, 2003). This study has reaffirmed the importance of self-awareness in relation to leadership success: effective, exemplary and extraordinary.

The outdoor leadership literature indicated the importance of self-awareness, albeit briefly in every instance (Froude & Polley, 2008; Martin et al., 2006; Ogilvie, 2005, Kosseff, 2003). The emergence of self-awareness in this study in combination with its considerable focus within the broader leadership literature suggests that a greater emphasis is required in relation to outdoor leadership. These initial links were also previously made between effective outdoor leadership, transformational leadership and emotional intelligence (Brymer & Gray, 2006; Brymer et al., 2010; Hayashi & Ewert, 2006).

In Phase 1 of the study, all of the participants recognised the importance of being aware of themselves and how they came across to others. This was clearly observed in all participants during Phase 2. Evidence of this awareness of self was clear when Anna took her students to the waterfall (Chapter 6, *The Magic of the Waterfall*, p. 154), when Jon spoke with Ben (Chapter 8, *Leading with Care*, p. 170), when Peter was
‘interested’ to see what would happen with Rob (Chapter 9, *Matching Level of Challenge to Student Ability*, p. 182) and when Rod intentionally left the group (Chapter 10, *Empowering Others in Nature*, p. 192). Their descriptions of being aware were indicative of their individual leadership practice suggestive of a very intentional approach to being self-aware. All leaders were adamant that their ability to build positive relationships with students and to be positive role models was directly related to their awareness. During Phase 2 all of the participants intentionally considered their actions and behaviours at all times. They consistently presented as positive role models to their students and peers and were self aware.

**Awareness of others.**

The awareness of others, while given less emphasis in the leadership literature than self-awareness, was none the less described as essential for both emotional and spiritual intelligence (e.g., Buzan, 2001; Goleman 1996). With these intelligences described as variously underpinning transformational, authentic and spiritual leadership theories (Hayashi & Ewert, 2006; Pearce, 2003; Zohar & Marshall, 2000) awareness of others is also considered as essential for leadership success. Through Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the study an awareness of others emerged as an essential contributing factor to the participants’ leadership success. In particular, the leaders indicated that their ability to be aware of others directly impacted upon their capacity to build relationships and to make leadership decisions in relation to choice of appropriate style and program direction. They variously described their awareness of others as a tool that enabled them to be better able to match the readiness of individual students to appropriate levels of challenge.

Peter in particular demonstrated this awareness of others when he worked with Rob on the cliff (Chapter 9, *Matching Level of Challenge to Student Ability*, p. 182). From paying close attention to Rob over a period of days and years, Peter was intuitively aware that Rob was a little out of his depth on the climb (Chapter 9, *In a Boardroom*, p. 183). Previous experiences Peter had with Rob directly contributed to what played out on the cliff. The knowledge he had gathered about Rob allowed for the development of a strong positive relationship with him. This relationship allowed the situation to unfold as it did with each deeply trusting the other. Together this enabled Peter to be open to his intuition and to match Rob’s readiness with an appropriate level
of challenge. The decisions and actions observed in Peter that day on the cliff would not have been possible without his awareness of, and relationship with, Rob.

Another example of the need to be aware of others was when Jon interacted with Ben (Chapter 8, *Leading with Care*, p. 170). Jon described how he approached issues of conflict that avoided creating unnecessary ‘head butting’ situations. When observed in the field, his earlier reflections were demonstrated as it became obvious that he was acutely aware of his own actions and behaviours as a leader. The story about Ben emphasised the respect he has for all students and his body language indicated he knew exactly how Ben was receiving his communication. In turn, Ben responded this ‘new’ way of being spoken to when he had clearly been acting in a way that was not accepted by Jon. It was clear Ben was used to a very different kind of approach when he had clearly been acting inappropriately. This story reflected Jon being aware of self and others, in particular his comment with regards to teachers putting students into boxes and not letting them out reinforced this awareness. Ian also clearly articulated his use of awareness in his leadership (Chapter 7, *Leading from Within*, p. 164).

Being aware of others directly contributed to how all of the leaders in this study made leadership decisions. Each of the participants purposefully engaged with individuals in an attempt to get to know them, build relationships and to become more aware of how they reacted to the various situations and challenges they faced. While each of the leaders had spent various amounts of time with each individual and group observed, all of them managed to develop a deep sense of awareness of each student. The knowledge they gained from ‘paying close attention’ to others aided the selection of leadership styles and levels of challenge for students.

*Awareness of nature.*

The final aspect of awareness that was inherently apparent in all of the leaders studied was their awareness of the natural environment in which they led. Dent et al (2005) and Senge et al (2005) both identified the need for an awareness of nature for spiritual leadership. No other mention of it was made in relation to the contemporary leadership theories (transformational or authentic). All leaders demonstrated an awareness of nature in a practical and spiritual sense. They utilised their awareness of nature to assist in their leadership decision making in relation to environmental conditions. At the same time they were aware of the potential of nature to ‘change’
The context of individual leadership practice.

As Yukl (2010) pointed out the context in which leadership takes place, to some extent, indicates the attributes and skills required of leaders regardless of level of success. The very nature of outdoor leadership relies on the programs and the natural environment in which leadership occurs to determine attributes required of individual leaders. In outdoor leadership the core competencies have long been deemed essential for leadership success (e.g., Martin et al., 2006; Priest & Gass, 2005). All core competencies were seen to be prevalent in the leaders studied. Highlighted through Phase 1 of the study and confirmed during Phase 2. The leaders demonstrated high levels of skill in all of the specific technical skills required by their programs. For instance, Peter and Ian both presented with significant levels of technical skills in climbing, Anna and Rod in rafting and kayaking and Jon in paddling, hiking and technical ropes courses, including climbing. In addition, all of the leaders spoke of the importance of having high levels of skill across the core competencies in order to lead successfully (Martin et al., 2006; Priest & Gass, 2005). In these discussions, they included the need for a flexible leadership style, judgement and strong decision making skills.

In relation to an awareness of nature, because outdoor leadership occurs directly in the natural environment, the participants and the literature identified this as a contributing factor to growth and learning in two different ways: practically in relation to the impacts various environments and related environmental conditions play on leadership style and programs (Priest & Chase, 1989; Priest & Gass, 2005), and spiritually, through how the natural environment affected individuals when they spend time there (Boyes, 2005; Hayllar, 2005). Jon highlighted the role that context and adventure play in leadership development (including his own), when he described the importance of being challenged in the natural environment. The need to be uncomfortable and to be reminded of what it is like to be a student on an outdoor education program and being challenged he saw as pivotal to being a successful outdoor leader (Chapter 8, Learning from Adventure, p. 169).
Practical.

‘Practical’ attention to an awareness of nature in this study was found to be directly related to the leader’s knowledge and awareness of the impacts of weather, varying environments and terrain and how these affected their leadership decision making (e.g., Martin et al., 2006; Ogilvie, 2005; Priest & Gass, 2005; Stremba & Bisson, 2009). The COLT had previously highlighted the direct role nature plays in leadership decision making (Priest & Chase, 1989). This model built on situational leadership theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993) adding the role varying environmental conditions play in leadership decision making and choice of style (Priest & Chase, 1989; Priest & Gass, 1997, 2005). This study reaffirms the COLT model and indicates that nature continues to play a significant role in outdoor leadership success (e.g., decision making).

In the ‘practical’ sense of being aware of nature, Rod described several times when he used his awareness of changes in the weather to make leadership decisions (Chapter 10, *Empowering Others in Nature*, p. 192). Checking the boats before they blew away or getting students out of a snow cave before it collapsed were two examples he gave of his innate awareness of nature and his ability to make decisions based on his awareness of nature. These instances meant a decision about choice of leadership style and a shift to a more autocratic approach. Rod attributed his awareness of nature to his ability to be in tune with his intuition. Ian confirmed that various environmental conditions have meant a similar change in leadership style to autocratic. At the same time he emphasised his need to use these experiences as ‘teachable moments’, even if he had been required to shift away from his preferred style of democratic leadership (Chapter 5, *Ian Leadership Style*, p.113). When observing all leaders it was clear that they consistently paid attention to the changes in the wind, temperature and visual features in nature. Moving on from the practical uses of being aware of nature, the participants demonstrated being able to ‘see’ how these changes in nature affected their students.

Spiritual.

In a spiritual sense, the outdoor leadership literature attended the awareness of nature to aspects that included a connection to nature, sense of place, relationships with nature, and the affect nature can have on individual growth and risk taking (e.g., Baker,
When reflecting on his leadership practice Jon realised how he, as a young boy, had developed a connection with nature and in particular ‘this place’ at Moogerah Dam while on school camp (Chapter 8, Leading with Nature, p. 174). This realisation took him a little by surprise, as he recognised in that moment that he had returned to where his relationship and connection with nature had begun. Those early experiences combined with more recent experiences have together helped him to develop what is a deep relationship with nature that has resulted in an almost ‘visible’ connection. Those personal experiences have motivated and inspired him to create similar opportunities for the students on his programs to develop their own connection to and relationship with nature. The beginnings of which were also visible to varying degrees in different individuals.

The spiritual awareness of nature of the leaders studied was consistently indicated through their own personal connections with nature. Connections that were interpreted by the participants as being something that contributed to the leaders looking at themselves, reflecting on who they are and how they come across to others. Previously discussed, engaging in ‘risky’ activities in nature has been seen to help individuals to develop themselves and to gain a clearer understanding of who they are (Atherton, 2007; Beringer, 2008). This study, therefore suggests that engaging in ‘risky’ activities in the natural environment contributes to an individual’s leadership success. How this occurs, remains unclear. Anna’s experiences of nature from a young child indicated an almost innate connection with nature. This connection has continued on throughout her life and is something she reflects upon with regularity. This relationship with nature has affected who she is (Chapter 6, Leading with Nature, p. 152). Deeply connected to nature, Anna and the other participants are consciously learning from their connections with nature and helping others to develop their own connections in a variety of ways.

One way Anna worked towards getting people to consider alternative ways of being was through their newly adopted role of ‘spider saviour’ (Chapter 6, Leading with Nature, p. 152). An activity she has often used to highlight the role nature plays in people’s lives, having regularly witnessed its power to change people’s behaviours. When Anna took her students to the waterfall her message was simple, but powerful, and reflected her own innate connection with nature (Chapter 6, The Magic of the
Through identifying the physical and spiritual connections people are able to gain with rivers simply by living on them and drinking from their water. The more time they spend on the river, and the more water they drink the sooner they become literally a part of the river and the river a part of them. Another example of Anna’s personal spiritual connection with nature that indicated a deep connection was emphasised through her description of how nature inspires her to continue on her quest to make the world a better place (Chapter 6, *Leading with Nature*, p. 152). This awareness, connection and relationship with nature that Anna has developed is the result of the experiences she has had in nature; both challenging and relaxing.

The leaders studied appeared innately aware of changes in the environment and responded to these changes instinctively and intuitively. Their spiritual awareness of nature extended to deep experiences of nature and they all acknowledged the impact nature has had on their own personal growth and the personal growth of people around them. They also attested to nature’s ability to contribute to their students’ learning and growth, the building of positive relationships and a positive culture through common experiences in nature. Consistently demonstrated by the participants, the potential spiritual contribution relationships with nature have on individuals have more recently been linked with the core competency model for effective outdoor leadership (Martin et al., 2006). Reflections of their leadership practice consistently referred to their experiences in and of nature, in both the practical and spiritual sense. All of them were actively involved in encouraging others to develop their own awareness of nature.

**Conclusion.**

While awareness of nature has not always been included in the broader leadership literature, its role in developing spiritual leaders has been recognised (Dent et al., 2005). Its recognition in the spiritual leadership literature and its emergence in this study confirms that extraordinary outdoor leaders draw on spiritual leadership in their practice and demonstrate a deep level of awareness. Throughout this study a deep level of awareness of self, others and nature was evident in all of the extraordinary outdoor leaders studied. However, it has also been recognised that this characteristic does not exist in isolation rather it contributes to the three other key elements simultaneously (e.g., intuition, relationships, spirituality). Similarly, with awareness of self, others and nature linked to the three contemporary theories of leadership, this element begins to
confirm the conceptual framework that discerns extraordinary outdoor leaders draw on a combination of specific outdoor leadership knowledge and leadership theories, including the intelligences. While varying levels or depths of awareness more than likely exist in individuals, the leaders studied here all demonstrated an awareness of self, others and nature that was ‘deep’ and unique in the way in which they demonstrated and utilised awareness in their leadership. The discussion now shifts to the second element of extraordinary outdoor leadership; relationships.

**Value: Relationships.**

While each of the extraordinary outdoor leaders came to their leadership from a clear knowledge of, and deep understanding of their core values, all of the leaders valued ‘relationships’ above all other core values: relationships with self, others and nature. Similarly, relationships were identified across all three contemporary leadership theories as essential for leadership success (e.g., Komives et al., 2006; Kouzes & Posner, 2006; Scharmer, 2007), but not named per se as essential to the intelligences. Relationships with nature were predominantly discussed in the outdoor leadership literature (e.g., Beringer, 2008; Martin, 1999, 2005; Watchow, 2008). The importance of relationships with self and others was largely omitted in the outdoor leadership literature despite this commonly being an intended outcome of outdoor education programs. Rather it was implied through discussions of group dynamics and group development (e.g., Froude & Polley, 2008; Stremba & Bisson, 2009). Table 11.6 identifies the connections discussed.

Table 11.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Relationships with Self</th>
<th>Relationships with Others</th>
<th>Relationships with Nature</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
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<td>Authentic Leadership</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Leadership</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Relationships with self, and others.**

Transformational leadership theory placed great emphasis on the development of relationships bounded by trust, with self and others (e.g., Bass & Avolio, 1997). Peter’s interactions with Rob on the cliff were one example of the trust evident in the relationship between them (Chapter 9, *Matching Challenge to Student Ability*, p. 184). This trust was evident across all of the relationships Peter had with his students: as was evident with Ian, Jon, Rod and Anna. Collectively the students demonstrated trust in their leaders through their willingness to undertake tasks as invited. The leadership behaviours witnessed included an authentic engagement with each individual and a relationship bound by respect and trust. With relationships with self and others emerging as a key element of extraordinary outdoor leadership, perhaps the outdoor leadership literature could place greater emphasis on this aspect in the future.

All leaders in this study demonstrated a clear understanding, and acceptance of ‘who they are’, strengths, weaknesses and their core values. They all identified that there was room for growth, but at the same time humbly accepted their leadership abilities. This authentic knowledge of self and self assuredness allowed them to build positive, authentic relationships with their students and peers and was confirmed in the literature. The authentic leadership literature emphasised the need for authenticity, connectedness and transparency in the development of relationships with others (Marshall & Hefes, 2004; Cooper et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). Spiritual leadership theory articulated the need for a holistic approach to leadership that demonstrated positive relationships with all (Reave, 2005; Senge et al., 2005). This study confirmed Howard’s (2002) identification of the need for connections with self, others, nature and a higher power as equally critical to being a spiritual leader as was found to be the case in the extraordinary outdoor leaders studied.

The importance of developing a positive community and/or culture in relation to leadership success has been regularly identified in the literature (e.g., Cameron, 2008; Collins, 1994; Driscoll & McKee, 2007). It has been linked to transformational leadership (Hunt, 1991; Masood et al., 2006), authentic leadership (Crawford, 2005) and spiritual leadership theory (Dent et al., 2005; Duchon & Plowman, 2005; Kriger & Seng, 2005). Greater than individual relationships, the development of a positive community is deemed essential for leadership success. The authentic leadership literature took the importance of relationships to the next level by indicating the need to
first get to know yourself and then followers (Quinn, 2004). This indicated a clear sense of self prior to developing relationships with others. In particular he noted that a few leaders were able to achieve extraordinary results through their own creative approach to building relationships. These individuals he believed were creating what he termed a “collective state” (Quinn, 2004, p. 4): a community where individuals felt they belonged.

In this study, all participants demonstrated an approach to building relationships that resulted in the development of a multilayered community of varying relationships: a ‘collective state’ (Quinn, 2004). This was largely dependent on how long they had known individual students and how much time they had spent with them in the field. This was clearly outlined by Peter (Chapter 9, Building a Community and Culture, p. 180). These connected, individual relationships that had been developed were recognised by past students, volunteering their time and skills to assist younger students so that they may have the opportunities that were afforded to them (Chapter 9, Leading Individuals, p. 178). This development of a ‘collective state’ was common to all of the participants in this study. Aspects that influenced its development included the individual leader, context (including other staff and students) and purpose of each program. Peter and Rod relied heavily on past students assisting to ensure the program could continue (e.g., Chapter 10, Creating an Extended Family of Givers, p. 189). However Jon had created a similar community without the pressures that Peter and Rod faced ensuring student to staff ratios were met (Chapter 8, Leading with Care, p. 170). All of them stated that regardless of context, they would adopt a similar approach.

**Relationships with nature.**

The outdoor leadership literature explicitly attends to relationships with nature (e.g., Dickson, 2005; Hayllar, 2005). However few implications have been discerned of the potential benefits of these relationships in relation to leadership success. The relationships with nature witnessed through this study confirm its contribution to leadership effectiveness. Anna did not delineate between her relationships with people and her relationship with nature. She described her relationship with nature and central to who she is and how she interacts with the world (Chapter 6, Leading with Nature, p. 152). The experience of going to the waterfall with Anna confirmed a deep connection to nature (Chapter 6, The Magic of the Waterfall, p. 154), a connection she values.
deeply and attempts to pass on to, or encourage, in her students (Chapter 6, *Leading with Nature*, p. 152). Peter also demonstrated a deep connection to the places visited during the observation (Chapter 9, *Sharing the Sunset*, p. 182; *In a Boardroom*, p. 183). Jon’s connection to nature was evident from early experiences in his life when he was a student at the outdoor education centre he is now director of (Chapter 8, *Leading with Nature*, p. 174). This connection to nature has played a significant role in his life, through many learning experiences and his hope is to pass these opportunities on to students he leads.

The relationships with nature each leader had in this study can be attributed to their leadership success in several ways. Through these relationships they have developed a heightened awareness of self considered essential to leadership success (e.g., Bass & Avolio, 1997; Quinn, 2004; Reave, 2005). Literature that confirms the importance of relationships between individual’s levels of personal understanding and risk taking activities in nature, reinforce these claims (e.g., Anderson, 2007; Atherton, 2007; Seaman, 2005). In addition, the acknowledgement of the need for relationships with nature in spiritual leadership theory (e.g., Bolman & Deal, 2001, 2006; Senge et al., 2005; Sharmer, 2007) combined with its dominance in this study confirms it as a requirement of extraordinary outdoor leadership.

**Conclusion.**

Relationships were valued by all of the extraordinary outdoor leaders in this study, not only having a positive relationship with themselves but being happy with where they are in life. The relationships they demonstrated with their students were identified as contributing to their own empowerment and enabling them to help their students to achieve their goals. All of the leaders believed that these relationships were pivotal to their leadership success. Through engaging with nature in a variety of ways (e.g., through adventure and quiet time), all of the participants acknowledged that their relationships with nature have contributed to who they are and their spirituality. These relationships were seen as inextricably linked to their awareness, intuition and spirituality.

**Skill: Intuition**

The dominant skill observed in all of the participants in this study was intuition. All of the leaders agreed that they regularly used their intuition in their leadership
practice. They also agreed that intuition could be learnt and taught. While this skill appeared as the prevailing skill possessed by these leaders, it is important to note that they consistently demonstrated high levels of competency in all skills specifically related to being an outdoor leader (e.g., core competencies: Martin et al., 2006; Priest & Gass, 2005). The emergence of intuition here reinforced Froude and Polley’s (2008) identification of intuition and insight as essential outdoor leadership qualities. Ogilvie (2005) also mentioned intuition, in relation to the skill of judgement that he considered to be required by an outdoor leader in order to be effective. In the broader literature, intuition was highlighted as a significant attribute of spiritual leaders (e.g., Dent et al., 2005; Goffee & Jones, 2006) and spiritual intelligence (Zohar & Marshall, 2004) with no attention to this attribute in the other contemporary theories or intelligences. Table 11.7 outlines the links between intuition and the literature.

Table 11.7

*Links between intuition and the literature*

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Skill</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional Intelligence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spiritual Intelligence</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Leadership</td>
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</table>

Through reflection Ian noted that intuition could be learnt and taught and provided his own step-by-step approach to using it in his leadership (Chapter 7, *Leading from Within*, p. 164). Ian’s approach to leadership recognised the interplay between using intuition, being aware, building positive relationships, and getting to know his students. Anna described her use of intuition as more achievable when she moved away from having to know the outcome, allowing herself to be more open to possibilities. Like all things, she acknowledged people are good at different things, and agreed that intuition could be learnt. Her descriptions of using her intuition were closely related to her view of ‘magic’ (Chapter 6, *Leading with Magic*, p. 151). Peter’s reflection on his use of intuition also identified a need to be open to it, and a need to focus in on it (Chapter 9, *In a Boardroom*, p. 183). This suggested that intuition was something that
came from within, needed peace to be listened to, and required a certain level of openness. Jon utilised his ability to pay close attention to enable his intuition (Chapter 8, *Paying Close Attention*, p. 172). All participants relied on intuition to support their leadership decision making and practice. Collectively they identified a need to be open to it, in order to engage with it successfully. This need for openness was also identified in the literature in relation to Scharmer’s (2007) approach to leading with an open heart, open mind and open will and aligned with the spiritual leadership literature. Individually, each of them approached intuition in a highly personal way as demonstrated through their stories.

In the extraordinary outdoor leaders studied, intuition was identified as a key skill that was demonstrated consistently. The descriptions provided by the participants in combination with the observations, the way in which they engaged with their own intuition, were observed as being dynamic. It was found to be inherently related to their profound levels of awareness and being able to ‘pay close attention’ to what was happening around them. The deep relationships they had developed or were able to develop with others as well as nature also contributed to their success. Links were also noted between their ability to learn from experience through deep reflection as outlined by Ian (Chapter 7, *Leading from Within*, p. 142). Drawing on past experiences aided them in its use. These leaders’ skills in intuition were also related to their spirituality or how they interact with the world around them. Being aware of, and connected to people and nature, allowed for the development of deep relationships. This enabled them to be open to their intuition. The way in which they engaged with the world demonstrated heart, humility, honesty, openness, kindness, caring, calm, deep listening, appreciating others and deep personal reflection.

**Behaviour: Spirituality**

The dominant behaviour that described these outdoor leaders in this study was labelled ‘spirituality’ and referred to ‘how they are in the world’ (Baugher, 2005). This term was intentionally chosen after much deliberation and trialling of other terms. It was finally settled upon for its relatively consistent use in the literature and hence its use here. While terms such as ‘soulful’, ‘being’, ‘presence’ and ‘how they are in the world’ were also considered, they were found to be either lacking, in part, of description or considered too wordy and cumbersome. ‘How they are in the world’ was described in
the spiritual leadership literature through lists of attributes including integrity, humility, and respect, and leaders who lead from internal motivation (Fry, 2005) where a sense of calling to the task of being a leader was demonstrated (Reave, 2005). With some inherent links with formal religion, ‘spiritual’ in this study refers to how they behave and may include religious beliefs, but does not necessarily indicate them.

Being ‘spiritual’ was directly related to a leader’s uniqueness providing additional evidence of the importance of the individual in leadership practice (Quinn, 2004). Consistently observed to be comfortable with ‘who they are’, leading in a highly personal way drawing on past experiences of leadership, people they have met and life experiences. The most obvious link of this behaviour to the leadership theories is that of spiritual leadership theory and spiritual intelligence, where the ‘spirit’ or ‘soul’ is considered central to leadership practice (Dent et al., 2005; Fry et al., 2005; Reave, 2005; Zohar & Marhsall, 2000, 2004). The outdoor leadership literature identified the role that partaking in adventurous activities in nature provided in increasing an individual’s spirituality (e.g., Heintzman, 2008), but it did not indicate the role spirituality played in leadership success. Table 11.8 outlines the links between the literature and the dominant behaviour identified: spirituality.

Table 11.8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviour</th>
<th>Spirituality</th>
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<tr>
<td>Transformational Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authentic Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spiritual Leadership</td>
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<td>Emotional Intelligence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spiritual Intelligence</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Leadership</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In the outdoor leadership literature, spirituality was addressed in relation to relationships with nature (e.g., Heintzman, 2008) and until now, had not been linked to leadership practice (Smith, 2009; Smith & Penney, 2010). However, through this study spirituality has been identified as pivotal to their practice and from where all of their leadership stems. Their spirituality or ‘way of being in the world’ underpinned their ability to be aware, develop relationships, be intuitive and essentially, be extraordinary
in their outdoor leadership practice. Collectively they demonstrated a spiritual and connected approach to all aspects of their leadership practice, at the same time remaining ‘unique’. This approach directly underpinned their awareness, their relationships and their ability to tap into, or be open to, their intuition.

Spirituality identified in the leaders studied was seen to include aspects of ‘being’, a clear sense of purpose, storytelling and risk taking. ‘Being’ was seen to include how they appeared in their leadership and is best reviewed through the introductory narratives that indicated the impressions received by the researcher of each leader. Attributes such as humility, heart, honesty, altruism, and openness were seen to describe their way of ‘being’ in the world. Each of the leaders demonstrated a clear sense of purpose that extended beyond the program they were leading. All of them engaged in storytelling and acknowledged their use of storytelling in their leadership of others. Finally, all leaders demonstrated a willingness to engage in risk taking that reflected Lyng’s (2005) concept of ‘edgework’.

**Being.**

All participants were reluctant to be labeled ‘extraordinary’ outdoor leaders and were quick to point out they were far from perfect and still had much to learn (e.g., Chapter 6, *Impressions of Anna*, p. 149; Chapter 8, *Impressions of Jon*, p. 168). They acknowledged their strengths and weaknesses with humility and were able to quickly identify areas for improvement in their leadership. They did not see themselves at the top, or leading from the front, rather they saw themselves in the middle (e.g., Chapter 6, *Impressions of Anna*, p. 149). Closely linked to their internal motivations for leading all of the participants indicated a love of and belief in the outcomes of the work they do. The way in which they led indicated their care and genuine concern for the people in their charge and they all demonstrated great kindness (Chapter 5, Anna Core values, p. 106).

Leading with the heart was observed in the participants in this study and discussed in the literature in relation to authentic leadership (Marshall & Heffes, 2004). It also appeared in the transformational leadership literature in relation to the leaders’ passion for the task and commitment to building positive relationships (Schrieberg et al., 1997). The use of the heart was also consistently discussed in the spiritual leadership literature (e.g., Bolman & Deal, 2006; Sharma, 2010). Aware of his own learning
journey on similar outdoor education programs as a young boy and later on his own journeys, Jon was committed to the benefits of outdoor education programs (Chapter 8, *Learning from Adventure*, p. 169). This belief came from his passion and the heart he puts into his leadership practice. Peter also led from the heart, personally caring for each individual student and using great humility and intuition in dealing with delicate situations as they arose (Chapter 9, *Leading Individuals*, p. 178).

As discussed in relation to the early findings, storytelling was central to the leadership of all leaders studied and helped to describe this aspect of spirituality: being. They shared stories of their own and others, as well as acknowledged the use of storytelling in their leadership. Storytelling has been identified as contributing to the ability to develop trust and in turn build relationships (Driscoll & McKee, 2007). This aspect of how they are in the world was consistently apparent, albeit uniquely demonstrated across the participants (e.g., Chapter 6, *The Magic of the Waterfall*, p. 154; Chapter 10, *Leading with Stories*, p. 193). A leader’s ability to empower others through positive relationships, bounded in trust and an ability to look at old problems in new ways and to develop leadership in others were also observed in the leaders studied and found to be consistent in the transformational leadership literature (e.g., Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1997; Eagley et al., 2003). Collectively the leaders consistently worked towards developing positive relationships with trust and respect at their core. Each of them had developed a positive ‘collective state’ or community in which to enable those positive relationships as discussed earlier. The communities were typically made up of several layers, with older students helping younger students to learn and grow. At the same time, the older students were being provided with their own learning opportunities and mentoring.

Throughout the study, it was evident that all of the leaders engaged in active reflection. They were constantly involved in reflecting on what was going on around them and enacting leadership that was best placed to enhance growth and change in their students. Rod was always paying attention to the students, the group and the natural environment (Chapter 10, *Creating an Extended Family of Givers*, p. 189). He spent considerable time getting to know his students which he indicated directly contributed to being equipped and ready to provide learning opportunities for them. Committed to the small community he had developed, ‘family’ so that when they left school and this group they would take what they had learnt with him, into the broader
community spreading the good work. Ian was also constantly engaged in active reflection and this was highlighted throughout his capitalisation of teachable moments (Chapter 7, *Capitalising on Teachable Moments*, p. 162).

**Clear sense of purpose.**

All leaders demonstrated commitment to lead for a greater purpose or goal than the immediate programs required. They each came to the task from internal motivations and possessed clear personal visions (e.g., Chapter 9, *Leading with Purpose and Spirit*, p. 185). They acted with integrity consistently and were respectful of all, even those they might not necessarily agree with. They were all clear with their reasons for being an outdoor leader (e.g., Chapter 5, *Ian Why an outdoor leader?* p. 110). When asked if they felt a calling to the task of leading, they all acknowledged that they had (e.g., Chapter 7, *Leading from Within*, p. 164; Chapter 8, *Leading with Spirit*, p. 175; Chapter 10, *Leading from Peace*, p. 195). This sense of calling to the task was clearly indicated in the spiritual leadership literature (e.g., Weiss et al., 2004). In addition, the presence of a clear sense of purpose was apparent in the authentic leadership literature (e.g., Marshall & Heffes, 2004). This also appeared in the spiritual leadership literature where it was described by Dent et al (2005) as greater sense of purpose where the individual led for the good of humanity and the natural world, as described by the leaders studied (Chapter 6, *Leading with Spirit*, p. 156).

**Risk takers.**

The leaders observed in this study demonstrated a willingness to take risks while maintaining a safe and supportive environment (e.g., Chapter 5, *Jon Strengths and Weaknesses*, p. 117). As discussed in the literature review and earlier in relation to the early findings, risk was described in the outdoor leadership literature predominantly in relation to safety and risk management (e.g., Brookes 2003; Palmer, 2004), with some attention to growth through risk taking and ‘edgework’ (e.g., Anderson, 2007; Lyng, 2005). There was no discussion in relation to the effects of regular risk taking on leadership success. The leaders studied were willing to engage in pushing the boundaries of their leadership in order to achieve increased positive outcomes for their students. All described their ability to learn and grow from nature and from their own risk taking. Risk taking that included adventurous activities and their leadership of others. Their willingness to look at problems in new and varying ways also contributed
to their ability to take risks. Anna described allowing students to make decisions and herself willing to go along with their way of doing things, even if it was different to how she would have done it (e.g., Chapter 5, *Peter Leadership Style*, p.123).

The participants’ competence in related outdoor skills emerged with great emphasis through this study. They were all highly competent in the core competencies and drew on both situational and conditional theories of leadership (Martin et al., 2006; Priest & Gass, 2005). However, it was their demonstration of characteristics, values, skills and behaviours that were consistent with the contemporary theories of leadership, in particular their engagement with spiritual leadership theory that helped to identify them as extraordinary outdoor leaders. The extraordinary outdoor leaders studied were deeply aware, valued relationships, relied on intuition and enacted their core values in their leadership practice through their spiritual approach to the world. While they all demonstrated the universal key elements of extraordinary outdoor leadership identified here, each of them did so in a deeply individual and personal way. These leaders led from the heart, learnt from experiences through active reflection, were authentic, present, humble, kind, had a love of and belief in outdoor education, were committed to a greater purpose, intrinsically motivated and risk takers. They demonstrate a calling to the task of leadership that could be heard in Anna’s reflection of how she ignored it for a while, but in the end she felt compelled to listen to it (Chapter 6, *Leading with Spirit*, p. 156).

While common key elements have been identified through this study in order to describe the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership, it is important to note that each of leaders remained significantly distinctive. The importance of being an individual, being who you are, was reflected in the leadership literature and indicated as essential for leadership success (e.g., Hunt, 1991; Quinn, 2004; Yukl, 2010). Through exploring these outdoor leaders it became obvious that each of them was very different. As Jon put it, “everyone has a little bit of different”. While each of them displayed common characteristics, values, skills and behaviours there remained a strong element of individuality in each of them. While they may gather ideas and ways of doing things from other leaders, they adapted these to suit their own individual way of leading and the context in which they lead; they lead who they are (Quinn, 2004). Prior to discussing the inherent interplay between the four key elements each participant is briefly summarised here to reinforce their individuality and to emphasise the differences
and similarities of their behaviours labelled in this study as ‘spiritual’. As has been done throughout the study, they are presented in alphabetical order.

**Anna.**

Anna was always smiling, present, and reflective. She took the group to the waterfall, paid close attention and helped people to realise that small things matter through her spider rescue. When reading Anna’s narrative, it was easy to gain a sense of someone who was spiritual in the way in which she connected to the people and environment around her. Having developed a deep connection over time, Anna demonstrated how she interacts with the world and how she builds connections with the people and planet around her. The world was seen to Anna as beautiful and special and she was open to experiencing ‘magic’. Anna was receptive to listening to all of the elements around her, including using her intuition, not only in her leadership but in how she interacted with the world in general. Focussed on a bigger picture, she is aware that “small things matter” and she has not lost sight of the here and now. Extremely relaxed both in behaviour and appearance, she was found to be comfortable in her own skin.

**Ian.**

Ian was connected to nature, inherently loved being an outdoor leader, was reflective, a learner and humble. Consistently focusing on teachable moments and transferring learning, he was aware, intuitive and spiritual. Ian’s narratives suggested that he was a deep thinker and someone who had a larger world view. Analysing everything around him, he led intuitively and was a highly critical thinker. Deeply connected to nature, he sought out time alone in nature intentionally. Ian’s leadership demonstrated an intentionality and attention to ethically manipulate the learning environment to maximise the learning for his students. Deeply aware of how he came across to others and constantly aware of his core values and mission in life, he led who he was.

**Peter.**

Peter was a role model to his students, valued relationships above all else, enjoyed being out on the cliff, was intuitive, aware, connected to place and an individual. In his narratives he came across in a way that suggested someone who was a quiet risk taker. Keen to push the boundaries in order to provide ‘real peak experiences’
for his students, at the same time he ensured their safety. Deeply connected to the people around him and the places visited, he shared this deep connection with others gently. Remaining very much in the background, he quietly directed what was going on around him. He also brought his students’ attention to their own awareness of what was going on: himself listening deeply to his intuition to guide him. The relationships and culture were intentionally built in a way that was welcoming of all, regardless of experience. Open to new ideas, Peter considered them carefully through deep reflection.

Rod.
Committed to a greater purpose, Rod had developed a positive culture of valued relationships, focused on teachable moments and was himself. In Rod’s narratives, it was clear that he considered himself to be more of a facilitator than a leader: a facilitator who intentionally manipulated the learning environment to maximise student learning. His leadership is focussed around ‘life lessons’ and he made the most of teachable moments. A hard worker, Rod was constantly working for the students’ benefits, rather than his own individual gain. A larger world view reaffirmed in him the knowledge that their gain would eventually benefit society as a whole. The connections he had developed with the students were obvious as he continued to develop and build a culture that was focused on the bigger picture. Past students were observed taking it upon themselves to continue the culture. Rod was constantly engaged in active reflection of his leadership and how both his leadership and the program might be improved.

Jon.
Jon openly valued the role adventure plays in learning about self, others and nature. Considerable value was placed on the development of positive relationships and a positive culture by Jon. Aware and connected to nature he identified having experienced a ‘calling’ to the task of leader. Grounded and true to himself, Jon came across in his narratives as the ‘all rounder’; able to turn his hand to anything that came his way. Well grounded, his connection to nature and place were obvious, as he reflected on earlier experiences he had as a young person. The attention he paid to students on an individual and group level indicated his core value of having positive relationships. An intentional avoidance of ‘head butting’ situations resulted in a culture that was comfortable and welcoming and indicated his core values. Jon’s connection to nature and place was related to his deep relationship with indigenous cultures, and to his
own personal experiences. His stories demonstrated a love of, and belief in outdoor education, and its benefits. At the same time he acknowledged that not everyone feels the same and that outdoor experiences are not positive all of the time.

Throughout the study, the leaders presented as unique individuals who each demonstrated the four key elements (awareness, relationships, intuition and spirituality) consistently through their leadership, were aware of how they came across to others: intuitive, well grounded, competent, highly respected and highly respectful of others. All the while, they had not lost sight of who they are and what is important to them; their core values. This awareness of their core values and who they are, allowed them to lead authentically. Their openness to the world and all it had to offer enabled them to not only consider, but be open to intuition. Their experiences in the outdoors, both personal and professional have shown them that by listening to and using information gathered intuitively, they are able to experience very successful leadership.

Conscious of their strengths and weaknesses, and the positives and negatives of outdoor leadership and outdoor education they demonstrated more than passion for what they do, they confirmed a love of and for being an outdoor leader in outdoor education. They believe deeply in what they do on a daily basis and strive to constantly achieve positive outcomes for all; themselves, the people around them, and the planet at large. Now that attention has been given to the individual within extraordinary outdoor leadership, the next section engages with the interplay between the four key elements: awareness, relationships, intuition and spirituality.

**Interplay of the Four Key Elements**

As previously identified, the four elements of extraordinary outdoor leadership practice inherently underpin and influence each other. Individually and together, the leaders demonstrated an awareness of self, others and nature; relationships with people and nature that were interconnected; a level of ‘knowing’ and ‘seeing’ through their use of intuition; and spirituality or ‘how they are in the world’. The four key elements of awareness, relationships, intuition and spirituality are presented in figure 11.4 highlighting the interplay that has been found to exist between them. This diagram demonstrates how each element was seen to inform the others with the arrows indicating that each element inherently affects the other three. Throughout the study, the leaders were observed drawing on the various elements simultaneously.
Figure 11.4 Four elements of extraordinary outdoor leadership practice

An alternative representation of the findings suggests that to be an extraordinary outdoor leader a unique way of being in the world that is ‘spiritual’ is essential to achieving the other three elements of awareness, relationships and intuition (Figure 11.5). And it is this approach to the world that underpins and enables the other three elements to exist at a deep level in these participants. This confirms what is in the spiritual leadership and spiritual intelligence literature (e.g., Cameron, 2008; Dent et al., Fry, 2003; Fry et al., 2005, Senge et al., 2005; Scharmer, 2007; Zohar & Marshall, 2000, 2004). The element of ‘spiritual’ is seen to exist at the core of the leader, with the other elements emanating outwards.

Figure 11.5 Four elements of extraordinary outdoor leadership
In order to be intuitive, the leaders studied drew on their awareness, relationships and their spirituality. Their ability to develop relationships relied on their awareness and their use of intuition and spirituality. Their awareness was in turn dependent on their openness to the world, and again, their spirituality. Therefore, each of the elements, rather than existing on their own is caught up in a delicate interplay between all four elements. The final section of this chapter returns to the conceptual framework and demonstrates how the key elements relate to the framework and confirm its appropriateness for this study.

**Section 4: Returning to the Conceptual Framework**

As the discussion returns to the conceptual framework, the key elements (awareness, relationships, intuition and spirituality) emerging from this study are diagrammatically represented in Figure 11.6.

![Figure 11.6 Key elements and the conceptual framework](image)

The findings confirm the conceptual framework whereby ‘spirituality’ and ‘intuition’ were identified as essential in spiritual leadership theory and ‘awareness of self and others’ and ‘relationships with self and others’ were indicated as attributes required of transformational and authentic leaders to varying degrees. ‘Awareness’ of and ‘relationships’ with nature were identified in the spiritual leadership theory, albeit briefly, with a more comprehensive attendance to both in the outdoor leadership
literature. However, spiritual leadership theory indicated the benefits of awareness of and relationships with nature, where the outdoor leadership literature did not. Therefore, the contemporary leadership theories, with the outdoor leadership literature, together inform our understanding of extraordinary outdoor leadership practice (Table 11.9).

Table 11.9  
*Key elements and the contemporary theories of leadership*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contemporary Leadership Literature</th>
<th>Key Elements Identified</th>
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<tr>
<td>Transformational Leadership</td>
<td>Awareness of self and others</td>
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<td>Relationships with self and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic Leadership</td>
<td>Awareness of self and others</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationships with self and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual Leadership</td>
<td>Awareness of self, others and nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationships with self, others and nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intuition</td>
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<td>Spirituality</td>
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The intelligences also identified awareness, intuition, relationships and spirituality to varying degrees (Goleman, 1996; Zohar & Marshall, 2000, 2004) and can be seen in Table 11.10.

Table 11.10  
*Key elements and the intelligences literature*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporting Literature</th>
<th>Key Elements Identified</th>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional Intelligence</td>
<td>Awareness of self and others</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationships with self and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual Intelligence</td>
<td>Awareness of self and others.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationships with self, others and nature</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Intuition</td>
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These links to the literature further confirmed the use of the conceptual framework towards increasing our understanding of the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership. In particular it highlighted how spiritual leadership literature along with spiritual intelligence separated extraordinary outdoor leadership from other levels of leadership success. It also indicated how the contemporary leadership literature with
the intelligence literature filled the gaps existing in the outdoor leadership literature when describing leadership beyond effective, in particular extraordinary outdoor leadership.

In getting to the point of developing the framework, the review of literature presented a number of different ways to classify the various leadership theories. In the end, directly informed by the literature and its descriptions of the various theories the ‘new’ categorisation presented previously was used (Chapter 3). The descriptions in the literature of the contemporary leadership theories and levels of leadership success consistently emphasised various uses of the terms head, heart, body and soul. In particular, spiritual leadership theory identified the use of all four (head, heart, body and soul) and also indicated that it had productively built upon previously existing theories of leadership (transformational and authentic).

The limitations identified in the methodology chapter (Chapter 4) included the naming of participants, how participants were chosen to be involved in the study, use of particular terms (e.g., extraordinary leader), the number of participants studied and potential for a large volume of data. The conceptual framework provided direction and focus, throughout the study and aided in guarding against the limitations identified above. In particular, this focus helped to cope with the large amount of data collected as did the small number of cases studied (Simons, 2009). The naming of participants continues to be an ongoing dilemma along with the notion of ‘speaking for others’ (Alcoff, 2009). This has encouraged continual engagement with the conceptual framework and the research questions together in order to attempt to guard against this ongoing predicament. The selection of participants and the use of the term ‘extraordinary’ became more ‘comfortable’ as the study progressed and as the literature and the conceptual framework supported the use of the term (Cameron, 2008).

As the conceptual framework encompassed the outdoor leadership literature, the intelligences and the contemporary theories of leadership (transformational, authentic and spiritual) data was found to ‘fit’ within the framework to varying degrees. Throughout the data analysis process, as data found a place of ‘fit’ within the conceptual framework, analysis was repeated to ensure suitability. As analysis progressed the key elements that emerged from the data were found to dominate as they appeared within the conceptual framework. The conceptual framework developed and
used in this study was confirmed through the robustness of the fit of data within it. Testing the conceptual framework through future research within a different methodological design where the limitations might be managed differently would be beneficial.

This study confirms spiritual leadership along with the four key elements (awareness, relationships, intuition and spirituality) as the defining aspects of extraordinary outdoor leaders and hence the use of the head, heart, body and soul in extraordinary outdoor leadership. These leaders have shown how different people can be aware, build relationships, intuitive and spiritual in individual and unique ways. However, they all engaged their head, heart, body and soul in doing so. They also indicated that each of the elements directly influenced the others and their ability to be successful in their leadership. Figure 11.7 represents the connections identified between the contemporary leadership theories, the levels of leadership success and the new categorisation (head, heart, body and soul).
Representing the various theories and levels in this way reinforced the evolutionary approach suggested by the literature, reinforced in this study as these leaders were seen to draw on multiple theories of leadership, and the conceptual framework indicating that a leader must first learn to be effective, then exemplary, if they are to be extraordinary in their leadership practice. The categories and their use, confirmed this evolutionary process further. Therefore, extraordinary outdoor leaders are defined by their use of spiritual leadership theory and through the engagement of their head, heart, body and soul and the demonstration of the four key elements. The final circle in Figure 11.7 indicates the need to always be open to new possibilities that may emerge and reinforce the notion that while these leaders demonstrated high levels of leadership success, as identified by the participants themselves, they still have much to learn and improve upon in their leadership practice.
Conclusion

This chapter discussed the early findings indicating links to the literature and the conceptual framework. This was followed by a detailed discussion of the four key elements of extraordinary outdoor leaders emphasising the importance of the individual within this level of leadership success. It also confirmed the use of the conceptual framework developed and used within this study to create a clearer understanding of the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership. Attention to the limitations further confirmed the conceptual framework. At the same time, it was acknowledged that further testing of the framework would endorse its robustness. The head, heart, body and soul categorisation of the literature further informed the understanding of the levels of leadership success. This categorisation increased the understanding of the contemporary theories and how these contributed to exploring the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership. At the same time, it provided a way of thinking about extraordinary outdoor leadership, leaders who lead with their heads, hearts, bodies and souls. While this study has confirmed the use of the contemporary theories to describe and better understand the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership; experience and the literature show that as times change new leadership theories will be required, hence the outer circle in Figure 11.7 (p. 237)

Through the lens of the conceptual framework and the contemporary theories of leadership this study has identified one way through which to better understand and describe extraordinary outdoor leadership practice. Had a different focus been adopted, for example, the use of pedagogical theories, positive psychology, or personality theories, this would have potentially provided an alternative approach to understanding extraordinary outdoor leadership, and in turn produced alternative frameworks. The following and final chapter attends to originality, provides recommendations for future research, presents the significance of the study, and concludes the study.
Chapter 12 Conclusion

This chapter concludes the study as it returns to the research questions providing a summary, clarifying the significance of the study and concluding with recommendations for future research, policy and professional practice development. As this study reaches some form of conclusion, typical of research, it not only provided answers to the research questions posed, but in turn posed new questions and possible areas of research which have been addressed in the recommendations for future research.

Revisiting the Research Questions

This study has been guided by the overarching question of:

- **What is the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership?**

Two supplementary questions were posed in order to focus the research and included:

- **Which characteristics, values, skills and behaviours are present in extraordinary outdoor leadership?**

- **How are these characteristics, values, skills and behaviours demonstrated in extraordinary outdoor leadership?**

This study answered the research questions through the identification of the four key elements, awareness, relationships, intuition and spirituality, and the recognition of spiritual leadership theory as the theory that helps to distinguish extraordinary outdoor leadership in relation to other levels of leadership success.

It has also presented a conceptual framework developed to provide focus and direction to the study. This was found to be appropriate as it identified theoretical links between the three leadership levels clarified through this study (effective, exemplary and extraordinary) and the contemporary leadership theories (transformational, authentic and spiritual leadership). A ‘new’ categorisation of leadership theories, head, heart, body and soul, was also presented as it was seen to extend the conceptual
framework and our understanding of the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership.

The Fundamental Nature of Extraordinary Outdoor Leaders

The fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leaders can best be described through the demonstration and use of awareness of self, others and nature, relationships with self, others and nature; their use of intuition; and their spirituality or how they are in the world. While each of the participants demonstrated these four key elements, it must be emphasised that their individual ‘spirituality’ was pivotal to their leadership success. They each approached the four key elements in varying ways, with their individuality demonstrated throughout their individual narratives and summarised in the discussion. While they have gleaned ways of leading from others, extraordinary outdoor leaders do not try to be someone else, they are committed to being themselves and they in turn value this in others.

Extending the outdoor leadership literature, through its engagement with the broader leadership literature, this study has filled the existing gap in the literature as it described the universal attributes of extraordinary outdoor leadership practice. In proving the links between extraordinary leadership and the spiritual leadership literature, this study also confirmed the descriptions and related leadership theories for effective and exemplary leadership. The new categorisation of leadership theories of head, heart, body and soul were also realised. The conceptual framework that guided the study was also accepted and found to be one way through which to explore, and provide language to describe extraordinary outdoor leadership.

Originality of the Study.

This study demonstrated originality in its development of the conceptual framework and provided the lens through which the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership was explored. Through the development of the conceptual framework the various use of the terms to describe leadership success in the literature was clarified into three levels: effective, exemplary and extraordinary. Clear links to the contemporary theories of leadership: transformational, authentic and spiritual were also identified in the process. The framework also provided a new way to categorise leadership theories - drawing on notion of head, heart, body and soul - which
supported the descriptions of the contemporary theories of and the levels of leadership success. Overall, it was accepted as a useful model through which to understand extraordinary outdoor leadership in this study. There were six key aspects of originality emanating from this study.

First, the data collection and analysis utilising the conceptual framework identified four key elements of extraordinary outdoor leadership, which highlighted the importance of the individual in leadership, leading who you are, and the delicate interplay that existed between the four elements and how they were demonstrated in the participants’ leadership. While these elements had been previously identified across the contemporary leadership theories, they had not before been presented as key elements to any leadership practice per se. With regards to the outdoor leadership literature, these elements had not been specifically identified as essential to leadership of any level. While they did appear across outdoor leadership texts and literature, in most cases they were briefly introduced and not described in any detail. In addition, little attention was made to these key elements in relation to outdoor leadership practice, training and success.

Second, the identification of spiritual leadership theory as the defining leadership theory through which to describe and understand extraordinary outdoor leadership was also original. Prior to this study, spiritual leadership theory had not been linked to outdoor leadership nor explicitly linked to extraordinary leadership. While spirituality had been addressed in relation to other aspects of outdoor education, it could be argued it had been inadvertently linked to leadership. However, it had not been specifically linked to leadership practice, training or success in the outdoor leadership literature.

Third, until recently there had been limited attention to the contemporary theories in relation to outdoor leadership. Transformational leadership had received the most attention as it emerged to describe effective outdoor leadership (Brymer et al., 2010; Brymer & Gray, 2006; Hayashi & Ewert, 2006). Authentic leadership was only identified briefly as a potential contemporary theory for consideration in relation to effective outdoor leadership (Martin et al., 2006). Spiritual leadership theory was not previously addressed in relation to outdoor leadership success, except through a single journal article, a result of this study (Smith, 2009; Smith & Penney, 2010). Emotional
intelligence had received little attention in relation to outdoor leadership (Hayashi & Ewert, 2006). This study confirmed the use of the contemporary theories in combination with the intelligences to describe leadership at the three levels indicated: effective, exemplary and extraordinary.

Fourth, while this study challenged the outdoor leadership literature to engage further with the contemporary theories, at the same time it confirmed the continued use of the traditional theories (task versus relationship, situational leadership and COLT) in combination with the core competencies. This was largely due to the specific nature of outdoor leadership and the crucial role of context outlined across the literature (Breunig, 2008; Cooper et al., 2005; Humphreys 2005; Scharmer, 2007). It did, however, suggest that the contemporary theories be utilised in order to improve leadership effectiveness across the three levels identified. It indicated that perhaps the core competencies might be more effective if they were to more accurately reflect both context and culture in which outdoor leadership occurs in Australia. For example, the current two sets of core competencies have been developed with North America in mind. It could be argued from the results of this study that there is a need to further research and/or develop a separate set of core competencies that are reflective of the Australian culture and context, including the way in which outdoor education is delivered and led.

Fifth, as outdoor education in Australia ‘comes of age’ with new ways of looking at outdoor leadership and outdoor education programs emerging (e.g., Brymer et al., 2010; Brymer & Gray, 2006; Hayashi & Ewert, 2006; Wattchow & Brown, 2011), it is time for a new approach to leadership practice and development and a review of the core competencies that takes into account the Australian context. This study provides a new approach to thinking about and teaching leadership to others. The way in which this study contributes to knowledge is through the identification of spiritual leadership theory to describe extraordinary outdoor leadership, in combination with transformational and authentic leadership theories. Along with the identification of the four key elements of extraordinary outdoor leadership: awareness of self, others and nature; relationships with self, others and nature; intuition; and spirituality. Other contributions included the clarification of the leadership levels identified from the literature and the alternative method of categorising leadership theories in relation to the levels and leadership theories (head, heart, body and soul).
And finally, rather than attempting to understand leadership through one theory, this study suggested that when multiple theories are taken together they provide a clearer picture of leadership practice at the varying levels, in particular extraordinary outdoor leadership. With some of the preceding theories being revisited and developed as times and needs of various contexts and cultures change (Blanchard, 2007; Zaccaro, 2009) the contemporary theories provide an opportunity to lead in a way other than using the head alone. By engaging with the head, heart, body and soul a more complete leadership practice might result encouraging higher levels of leadership success: effective, exemplary and extraordinary.

**Significance of the Study.**

This study demonstrated significance in a number of ways. First, in its presentation of a ‘new’ approach to categorising and understanding leadership theories: head, heart, body and soul. Second, how it provided clarity in the use of terms to describe the varying levels of leadership success in the literature. Used interchangeably in the current literature, the three levels proposed here provide an informed way of describing each of the levels - effective, exemplary and extraordinary - by linking them with the contemporary theories of leadership, and later adding the new categorisation to the descriptions as well. Third, the study presented a framework through which to understand and describe extraordinary outdoor leadership which incorporated the three levels of leadership (effective, exemplary and extraordinary), the three contemporary theories (transformational, authentic, and spiritual) considered pertinent to understanding extraordinary outdoor leadership, and the labeling of theories according to the leaders’ use of the head, heart, body and soul. Finally, it identified four elements of extraordinary outdoor leadership (awareness, relationships, intuition and spirituality), and confirmed spiritual leadership theory as necessary for extraordinary outdoor leadership in combination with transformational and authentic leadership theories. While awareness and relationships had been attended to in the outdoor leadership literature in various ways (e.g., Froude & Polley, 2008; Hayllar, 2005; Ogilvie, 2005; Kosseff, 2003), intuition and spirituality (e.g., Froude & Polley, 2008; Heintzman, 2008; Ogilvie, 2005) in relation to outdoor leadership had not previously been attended to in a way that directly informed our understanding of outdoor leadership.
This study also turned out to be personally significant as it confirmed that these leaders were in fact extraordinary in their leadership, identified the key elements and resulted in the development and extension of existing positive relationships with each participant. Through conducting this study with these leaders, the way in which the researcher viewed her own leadership practice and the teaching of leadership to others changed and evolved during the study. In particular it affected the way in which the researcher worked with beginning outdoor leaders in relation to their leadership training. By presenting each leader through narratives a distinctive and personal view of each of the leaders resulted, with who they are and how they lead at the fore. By drawing on formal and informal interviews (Hatch, 2002) and sharing big and small stories (Phoenix & Sparkes, 2009), it was intended that these leaders would come ‘alive’ to readers through reading the narratives.

**Recommendations for Future Research, Policy and Professional Practice Development**

The recommendations for future research have emerged as the various aspects of extraordinary outdoor leadership were identified. These are provided in the form of a list to encourage clarity, but are not necessarily suggested in any particular order.

- While this study has identified the four key elements of extraordinary outdoor leadership practice, the development of a practical model that leaders could use to improve their leadership success would be highly beneficial. This model would also be beneficial in the teaching of leadership to others. Taking the theoretical and placing it into a practical model, would invite leaders in the field to engage with the findings. It would also serve to provide them with a way through which to improve their leadership. Perhaps an action-research approach over several years would provide an opportunity to explore and present such a model. While the four key elements were demonstrated in these participants in an integrated way, this study is beginning to suggest that beginning leaders start by developing awareness, followed by relationships before attempting the use of intuition, and finally developing spirituality. However, questions are also emerging in this study that suggest people come to the task of leadership with certain characteristics, values, skills and behaviours, and perhaps it is more a
matter of identifying their competence in each of the areas, and working on
developing the individual attributes as required by each individual.

- The term ‘practice’ has been used throughout this study, as it was most commonly utilised in the literature in relation to leadership in action, or leadership practice. At times throughout this research process, as my own understanding of teacher education ‘praxis’ has developed, it has felt ‘uncomfortable’ to continue to use the term ‘practice’ in relation to these leaders. With the extraordinary outdoor leaders demonstrating a consistent interaction with theory and practice, as the study progressed, it became more ‘uncomfortable’. However, it was decided to maintain the focus on practice for this study and to explore ‘praxis’ in future research, so as not to complicate the study further, or detract from the findings.

The term ‘praxis’ is beginning to emerge in the outdoor leadership literature an approach that is “reflective, active, creative, contextual, purposeful, and socially constructed” (Breunig, 2008, p. 473). As this emerges, the need to engage with the broader literature in relation to praxis (e.g., Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008; Kemmis & Smith, 2008) will be essential in order to broaden our understanding and our ability to contribute further to the field. On reflection, it might be a better term to describe what outdoor leaders are doing when they lead, in particular extraordinary outdoor leaders. With outdoor leadership education occurring in teacher education courses, the term praxis is beginning to be considered to be perhaps a more appropriate term to describe the relationship between the use of theory and practice. It has also been noted that engaging with the broader literature in relation to ‘praxis’ would undoubtedly enrich this emerging recommendation potentially benefitting research, policy and professional ‘practice’ development.

- Further research exploring how spiritual leadership theory informs our understanding of extraordinary outdoor leadership practice would further enlighten the findings in this study, and contribute to the broader field at the same time. In addition, further delving into the notion of ‘spirituality’ within outdoor leadership and outdoor education. In particular, it would be interesting
to ascertain the role of ‘spirituality in camps that have a basis in religion (e.g., various church school programs).

- Researching a variety of outdoor leaders, regardless of their level of leadership success, through interview and observation as conducted in this study, to identify their characteristics, values, skills, and behaviours would also potentially contribute to the findings in this study, and help to provide more depth to the proposal of a new model as suggested in the first recommendation. It could potentially confirm the links between the contemporary theories of transformational and authentic leadership and the levels of leadership (effective and exemplary) that were not the focus of this study.

- With two approaches to the core competencies now in the outdoor leadership literature, perhaps the time has come to review both approaches, and determine if there is a ‘best’ approach and/or a need to adopt a consistent approach, or if in fact, core competencies need to reflect the context in which the outdoor leadership occurs (e.g., core competencies for Australian outdoor leaders, versus British outdoor leaders). The many lists that continue to arise in various texts, along with the findings in this study, suggest that context does in fact play a significant role in outdoor leadership practice. Further research looking into how different cultures approach the core competencies may help to clarify the core competencies for Australian outdoor leaders.

- In furthering this project, it would be interesting to research additional extraordinary outdoor leaders in practice, to authenticate and/or contradict the findings of this study. In addition, researching retired extraordinary outdoor leaders would also be beneficial in order to gain further insight into this level of leadership success. It would also provide the opportunity for a broader audience to benefit from their wisdom and insights. A reflective approach would be required if exploring these leaders.

- Further use of the conceptual framework to explore additional extraordinary outdoor leaders would further confirm the findings of this study. In addition, it would be interesting to test the framework with outdoor leaders regardless of levels of leadership success (effective, exemplary and extraordinary).
• The exploration of non-extraordinary (effective and exemplary) outdoor leaders would also be of interest in furthering this field (effective and exemplary). In particular, examining barriers to becoming extraordinary. By enriching our understanding of non-extraordinary outdoor leaders we might better be able to understand what is required in teacher education programs in the preparation of outdoor leaders as well as through professional development.

• A longitudinal study of extraordinary outdoor leaders over time to determine if these leaders moved between the varying levels of leadership success, depending on life experiences and/or situations (e.g., how they are treated by employers, personal relationships etc) at the time of study, to determine if they always presented as extraordinary. This may bring to the fore the role of life experience on leadership success, and if and how personal conditions affect leadership success. It may also potentially identify leadership success as something that changes over time.

• Broadening the research of extraordinary outdoor leaders drawing on the literature pertaining to positive psychology, pedagogy, and personality would further our understanding of these leaders. This in turn, would contribute to our understanding of, and ability to teach this level of leadership to others, and those that precede it, to others.

• An aspect that has emerged of interest from this study is the role that engaging in ‘risky’ activities in the natural environment has on leadership success. It has been noted that it does impact upon leadership success, but what remains unknown is how and why this occurs.

• Through this research process, the concept of ‘edgework’ was ‘discovered’ as an alternative way of understanding risk taking. As an educator of outdoor leaders, this approach sparked significant interest. Further research into ‘edgework’ and how it might inform our understanding of risk taking in relation to outdoor leadership and outdoor education would be extremely beneficial.

• More broadly, the research findings in this study provide links to literature that is now emerging as it explores a ‘type’ of leadership they describe as
extraordinary’ necessary in times of significant change (Bledow, Frese, & Mueller, 2011; Pinnow, 2011).

In closing

As we face an increasingly complex world of constant change and a call for a new type of leadership (Bledow et al., 2011; Pinnow, 2011; Sadler, 2003; Scharmer, 2007; Winkler, 2009), “thankfully there are leaders who are willing to live on the edge, model their love, and inspire people to change the world” (Kerfoot, 2006, p. 117). Transformational leadership, authentic leadership, and most recently spiritual leadership in particular, together provide this new way of being a leader in today’s world. By drawing links between theories and the levels of leadership success, effective, exemplary and extraordinary, the consistency with which the theories are presented is more comprehensive. The additional categorisation of the head, heart, body and soul, further clarifies our understanding of all leadership theories, related terminology and levels of leadership practice. The conceptual framework that resulted by bringing these three aspects together proposed links that have not been previously acknowledged in outdoor education and outdoor leadership. At the same time, rather than doing away with the preceding theories and approaches (situational and conditional leadership theories, and the core competencies), it presents a holistic approach that draws on these theories and approaches in addition to the new associations.

Increasing the depth of understanding of the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership, with the help of the conceptual framework informs our understanding of effective and exemplary outdoor leadership. This increased understanding could directly inform the way in which outdoor leaders lead and how leadership is taught to others. The knowledge and understanding of extraordinary outdoor leadership provides the outdoor education profession with a contemporary approach to leadership development and training and aligns it more fully with other fields of leadership (business and management). While this approach using the leadership literature has provided one framework through which to understand extraordinary outdoor leadership, it is acknowledged that had other bodies of literature been consulted (e.g., psychology, personality, pedagogy, and learning theories) alternative frameworks would have resulted. These, as has been identified above in the
recommendations for future research, would potentially further increase our understanding of outdoor leadership: effective, exemplary and extraordinary.

The four key elements resulting from this study are: awareness, relationships, intuition and spirituality. These in combination with spiritual leadership theory as it continues to develop, provide a map of sorts through which to increase our understanding of extraordinary outdoor leadership, improve our own personal leadership and the way in which we teach leadership to others in outdoor education. This study has filled the gap identified earlier in the outdoor leadership literature through the recognition of the levels of leadership success, recognising how the contemporary theories contribute to our understanding of these levels and indicating the need for spiritual leadership in extraordinary outdoor leadership. In addition it proposed a new categorisation of leadership theories as they invariably used the head, heart, body and soul.

**Returning to where it all began**

As I come to the end of this project, I am reminded of where it all began. I remember how when I went to visit Jon for this research, I had the distinct feeling that life was somehow repeating itself, and yet, at the same time nothing had changed.

It is June of 2009 and I have been closely studying participants of ‘extraordinary’ outdoor leaders for the past few months as I conduct phase 2 of my data collection. Once again I find myself heading out for a week in the field – this time rather than leading with Jon, I am here to observe and interview him. The sun is shining and the temperature looks like it will reach into the high 20s today. I am heading out to an outdoor education centre where I will spend the week observing Jon as he leads a group in the outdoors. It feels a little strange, almost as though the tides have turned, somehow. I am uncomfortable. Even though this is my fourth participant to observe, I notice how nervous I am. I want to represent what they do accurately and appropriately. I arrive a little late; Jon is keen and eager to know what will be expected of him this week. As before, I am eager to learn from him, see what he does and how he does it. I pull into the driveway and as I am gathering myself from the car, history repeats itself. I am greeted with the smiling face of Jon, he welcomes me warmly. This week he will be my participant. I feel equal, a professional and I have indeed known him all of my professional life. I am immediately reminded that I am in the company of an extraordinary
outdoor leader...it is as though, everything has come full circle. But somehow, I remain the student and he the mentor.

In exploring these extraordinary outdoor leaders, spending time with them reflecting on their leadership and sharing in their personal stories, I realise how much each of them has given to this project. Without the trust they placed in me to represent them accurately and their interest in engaging in the research conducted directly contributed to the findings. Their willingness to be the best they can be and their openness to looking critically at what they do, has ultimately allowed a greater understanding of what extraordinary leadership ‘looks’ and ‘feels’ like. These leaders have demonstrated the courage to let go of the comfortable in order to develop as individuals and as extraordinary outdoor leaders. Their capacity to be involved in this way exemplifies their extraordinariness.
Overcome the notion that you must be regular.
It robs you of the chance to be extraordinary.

(Ute Hagen)
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Appendix A

Ethics Approval Letter

University of Wollongong

INITIAL APPLICATION APPROVAL
In reply please quote: HE07/322
Further Enquiries Phone: 4221 4457

21 December 2007

Ms Heidi Smith
Centre for Human Movement
University of Tasmania
Locked Bag 1330
Launceston TAS 7250

Dear Ms Smith

Thank you for your response dated 14 December 2007 to the HREC review of the application
detailed below. I am pleased to advise that the application has been approved. Please forward
copies of the approval letters from the relevant employers/principals before commencing research
at their institution.

Ethics Number: HE07/322
Project Title: The Wisdom and Insights of Extraordinary Outdoor Leaders: An
Australian Case Study
Researchers: Ms Heidi Smith, Dr Tonia Gray, Dr Christine Fox, Dr Dawn
Penney
Approval Date: 20 December 2007
Expiry Date: 19 December 2008

The University of Wollongong/SESIAHS Humanities, Social Science and Behavioural HREC is
constituted and functions in accordance with the NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct
in Human Research. The HREC has reviewed the research proposal for compliance with the
National Statement and approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance
with this document. As evidence of continuing compliance, the Human Research Ethics Committee
requires that researchers immediately report:

- proposed changes to the protocol including changes to investigators involved
- serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants
- unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.

You are also required to complete monitoring reports annually and at the end of your project. These
reports are sent out approximately 6 weeks prior to the date your ethics approval expires. The
reports must be completed, signed by the appropriate Head of School, and returned to the Research
Services Office prior to the expiry date.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

[Name]

Chairperson

Human Research Ethics Committee

cc: Dr Tonia Gray, Education
Appendix B

Ethics Approval Amendments Letter

University of Wollongong

AMENDMENT APPROVAL
In reply please quote: HE07/322
Further Enquiries Phone: 4221 4457

30 May 2008

Ms Smith
Centre for Human Movement
University of Tasmania
Locked Bag 1330
Launceston TAS 7250

Dear Ms Smith,

I am pleased to advise that the amendment request dated 1 May 2008 to the following Human Research Ethics application has been approved. The University of Wollongong/SE Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service Humanities, Social Science and Behavioural HRDC is constituted and functions in accordance with the NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research.

Ethics Number: HE07/322

Project Title: The Wisdom and Insights of Extraordinary Outdoor Leaders: An Australian Case Study.

Name of Researchers: Ms Heidi Smith, Dr Tonia Gray, Dr Dawn Penney

Amendment/s:
- Removal of C Fox as supervisor;
- Changes to number of visits, to online/phone interview;
- Change in number of participants.

Amendment Approval Date: 12 May 2008

Expiry Date: 19 December 2008

Please remember that in addition to reporting proposed changes to your research protocol the HRDC requires that researchers immediately report:
- serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants
- unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.

You are also required to complete monitoring reports annually and at the end of your project. These reports are sent out approximately 6 weeks prior to the date your ethics approval expires. The reports must be completed, signed by the appropriate Head of School, and returned to the Research Services Office prior to the expiry date.

Yours sincerely,

A/Professor Garry Hoban
Chairperson
Human Research Ethics Committee

cc: Dr T Gray, Faculty of Education/
Appendix C  Letter of Invitation for Participant Survey

Hello Outdoor Educator,

My name is Heidi Smith and I am currently working on my PhD study entitled, “The Wisdom and Insights of Extraordinary Outdoor Leaders: An Australian Case Study”. This study has gained approval through the ethics committee at the University of Wollongong.

The first step in this project is to ask people in the industry to give their views on who they regard to be ‘extraordinary’ outdoor leaders. The definition of ‘extraordinary’ has been purposely left open ended so as not to direct responses in any way. The intention is to gather open views on this issue, rather than text book answers.

I am emailing you to request your assistance to identify the participants for my study. I am looking for ‘extraordinary’ outdoor leaders who are currently working in outdoor education in Australia. They can be working in state or private organisations including schools and outdoor education centres, where the focus is on outdoor education.

Please click on the link below and complete the survey by February 29, 2008.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=FsZIpzUC24x5gvH5Kl70Cw_3d_3d

I thank you for your time, and for assisting me in my research. If you have any questions or require any further information regarding my study, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Heidi
Appendix D  Participant Survey

1. ‘Extraordinary’ Outdoor Leader

Please identify an Outdoor Leader you think is ‘extraordinary’ in their leadership in Outdoor Education.

Their Name
Their workplace
Workplace address/contact details (if known)
Address 1:
Address 2:
City/Town:
Zip/Postal Code:
State of Australia (e.g., Tas)
Gender Male/Female
Please explain why you have nominated them and what makes you regard them as ‘extraordinary’: (approx 50 words)

2. About You

As the research progresses I may wish to contact you to discuss your reasons for the nomination you have made. If you are willing to be contacted, please complete the section below.

Your name
Your workplace
Company:
Address:
Address 2:
State:
Zip/Postal Code:
Email Address:
Phone Number:

Thank you so much for your time, and for assisting me in my research. If you have any questions or require any further information regarding my study, please do not hesitate to contact me.
Appendix E

Participant Information Sheet

University of Wollongong

Participation Information Sheet for Outdoor Leaders

TITLE: The Wisdom and Insights of Extraordinary Outdoor Leader: An Australian Case Study

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH
This is an invitation to participate in a study conducted by researchers at the University of Wollongong. The purpose of the research is to investigate the essence of extraordinary outdoor leadership. It is anticipated that the research will produce insights for leadership training and practice.

INVESTIGATOR
Heidi Smith (Doctoral Research Student)
Faculty of Education
University of Tasmania
03 6324 3511
Heidi.Smith@utas.edu.au

METHOD AND DEMANDS ON PARTICIPANTS
If you choose to be included, you will be asked to participate in 2 stages. The first stage will involve an online/phone interview. The second stage will comprise an observation period of between 2 and 5 days of your teaching in the field followed by an interview of 1-2 hours. The interviews will be audio taped and the observation period will be video taped and field notes will be taken.

Typical questions that you might be asked may include: Why are you an Outdoor Educator? What qualities/traits/skills do you possess? What does it mean to be an outdoor leader? What do you mean when you say ‘outdoor education’? What are you doing when you lead? What are you thinking? The video footage will be used in the second interview to help generate discussion and to pinpoint certain events during the observation process that may provide a prompt for exploring your leadership.

POSSIBLE RISKS, INCONVENIENCES AND DISCOMFORTS
As a participant you will be invited to consent to your identity being known throughout the research and in the reporting and dissemination of data. If you do not consent to being named in the research, a pseudonym will be used to conceal your identity. Extracts from the video and voice recordings will be used in the reporting and dissemination of the research, and where identities need to be concealed, this will be done through blurring of faces, and changing voices.

Your involvement in the study is voluntary and you may withdraw your participation from the study at any time and withdraw any data that you have provided to that point. Refusal to participate in the study will not affect your relationship with the University of Wollongong.

FUNDING AND BENEFITS OF THE RESEARCH
This study is funded by a research grant from the University of Tasmania as a part of the Start Up Grant received on employment. It is hoped that funding support will also be attained in addition to this from the Faculty of Education of the same university.

ETHICS REVIEW AND COMPLAINTS
This study has been reviewed by the Human Research Ethics Committee (Social Science, Humanities and Behavioural Science) of the University of Wollongong. If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the way this research has been conducted, you can contact the UoW Ethics Officer on (02) 4221 4457.

Thank you for your interest in this study.
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Appendix F  Participant Consent Form

University of Wollongong

CONSENT FORM

The Wisdom and Insights of Extraordinary Outdoor Leaders:
An Australian Case Study.

Heidi Anneliese Smith

I have been given information about The Wisdom and Insights of Extraordinary Outdoor Leaders: An Australian Case Study and discussed the research project with Heidi Smith who is conducting this research as part of a Doctor of Philosophy supervised by Dr Tonia Gray in the Faculty of Education at the University of Wollongong and Dr Dawn Penney in the Faculty of Education at the University of Tasmania.

I have been advised of the potential risks and burdens associated with this research, which include the time commitments for interview being approximately two hours, and observation being up to one week, and have had an opportunity to ask Heidi Smith any questions I may have about the research and my participation.

I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary, I am free to refuse to participate and I am free to withdraw from the research at any time. My refusal to participate or withdrawal of consent will not affect my treatment in any way or my relationship with the University of Wollongong.

If I have any enquiries about the research, I can contact Heidi Smith 03 6324 3511 Heidi.Smith@utas.edu.au or Dr Tonia Gray 02 4221 3875 toniag@uow.edu.au or if I have any concerns or complaints regarding the way the research is or has been conducted, I can contact the Ethics Officer, Human Research Ethics Committee, Office of Research, University of Wollongong on 02 4221 4457.

By signing below I am indicating my consent to

- Participate in two interviews which will be recorded (one online/phone, one in person) YES/NO
- Be observed and video taped across a period of 2-5 days while I am teaching/leading in the outdoors YES/NO
- Approve all materials that will be used in the reporting and dissemination of research findings YES/NO
- Be identified by name and in video extracts in this research YES/NO

If NO, then I agree to provide a pseudonym and all video and voice extracts will be de-identified through blurring and voice changing YES/NO

I understand that the data collected from my participation will be used for the completion of a doctoral thesis, journal publications and conference presentations resulting from the research. I consent for it to be used in that manner.

Signed

.......................................................................  ......./....../......

Date

.......................................................................

Name (please print)

.................................................................
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Appendix G  Letter to School Principal/Employer

University of Wollongong

LETTER TO SCHOOL PRINCIPAL/EMPLOYER

Dear Principal/Employer,

[ ] at your school has been invited to participate in a research project conducted by the University of Wollongong. They have been selected as a participant as a result of being identified by their peers as an ‘extraordinary outdoor leader’. This research is being undertaken for my doctoral study, and is entitled The Wisdom and Insights of Extraordinary Outdoor Leaders: An Australian Case Study. I write to seek your approval and assistance to conduct this research.

The purpose of the research is to investigate the essence of extraordinary outdoor leadership. Through their stories and experiences of leading in the outdoors, it is intended that this research will inform the practice of leading in the outdoors, drawing on modern theories of leadership.

Approval is sought to meet with the above named outdoor leader once online/over the phone, and once in person during 2008. The meeting will be arranged to suit the school/workplace, the outdoor leader and the researcher through a consultation process.

- The first meeting online/over the phone involves an interview at a time suitable to the researcher and the outdoor leader.
- The second meeting in person involves a 2-5 day observation period of the above named outdoor leader while they teach a group of students on a program. In addition, there will be a 1-2 hour interview following the observation period.

Due to the nature of the research, the students and assisting staff of the above identified leader will become participants in this research through their interactions with the leader while they are working with the group. Consent will be sought from the parents of all students and any assisting adults or staff.

The research is being funded by a Start Up Grant and Research Higher Degree Grant from the University of Tasmania. Ethics has been reviewed by the University of Wollongong’s Human Research Ethics Committee. Please find attached to this letter the Participant Information Sheets for the selected outdoor leaders. All leaders selected for this research will be invited to give consent to their identity being revealed, which the researcher believes will add significantly to the authenticity of the research. In the case where they do not wish to be identified, the data pertaining to them will be de-identified in the research.

If there are any ethical concerns you can contact the Ethics Officer, Human Research Ethics Committee, University of Wollongong on (02) 42214457.

Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact members of the research team.

Yours sincerely

Heidi Smith (Doctoral Research Student)          Dr Tonia Gray (Supervisor)
Faculty of Education                               Faculty of Education
University of Tasmania                             University of Wollongong
03 6324 3511                                       02 4221 3875
Heidi.Smith@utas.edu.au                             tonia@uow.edu.au

Dr Dawn Penney (Associate Supervisor)
Faculty of Education
University of Tasmania
03 6324 3680
Dawn.Penney@utas.edu.au
Appendix H  Parent/Guardian Consent Form

University of Wollongong

INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM:
PARENT/GUARDIAN

The Wisdom and Insights of Extraordinary Outdoor Leaders:
An Australian Case Study.

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Outdoor Leader of the upcoming Outdoor Education Program that your child will be attending, has been identified as being instrumental to a research project being undertaken by Heidi Smith at the University of Wollongong. The research aims to determine the essence of extraordinary outdoor leadership, where the focus is on the Outdoor Leader, not their students. However, through your child’s participation in the program they may appear in video footage and voice recordings collected as the Outdoor Leader is videoed and recorded. Your child will not be named in the research, but they may be identifiable to others. Video footage and voice recording extracts will be used in the thesis submission, as well as professional journal articles, conference presentations and books in the future to benefit the quality of Outdoor Leaders practice. You will be given the opportunity to consent to video footage and voice recordings being used in this research below. In the case that you do not consent, your child’s face will be blurred and voices will be changed.

CONSENT:
I have been given information about The Wisdom and Insights of Extraordinary Outdoor Leaders: An Australian Case Study, a research project being undertaken by Heidi Smith who is conducting this research as part of a Doctor of Philosophy supervised by Dr Tonia Gray in the Faculty of Education at the University of Wollongong and Dr Dawn Penney in the Faculty of Education at the University of Tasmania.

I have been advised of the potential risks and burdens associated with this research towards my child, which include the identification of my child through the use of video extracts and voice recordings.

I understand that the participation of my child in this research is voluntary, I am free to refuse their participation and I am free to withdraw from the research at any time. My refusal to participate or withdrawal of consent will not affect my treatment in any way or my relationship with the University of Wollongong.

If I have any enquiries about the research, I can contact Heidi Smith 03 6324 3511 Heidi.Smith@utas.edu.au or Dr Tonia Gray 02 4221 3875 tonia.g@uow.edu.au or if I have any concerns or complaints regarding the way the research is or has been conducted, I can contact the Ethics Officer, Human Research Ethics Committee, Office of Research, University of Wollongong on 02 4221 4457.

By signing below I am consenting to my child’s participation in the research in the following way:

- My child may appear in video and voice recordings YES/NO
- My child may appear in video and voice recordings once de-identified through face blurring and voice changing YES/NO

I understand that the data collected from my child’s participation will be used for the completion of a doctoral thesis, journal publications, conference presentations, book chapters and books resulting from the research. I consent for it to be used in that manner.

Signed: Parent/Guardian Date

....................................................................... ......./....../......

Name: Parent/Guardian (please print) Name: Child (please print)

....................................................................... ........................................................ ...............

Appendices 279
Appendix I  Additional Adult Consent Form

INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM:
ACCOMPANYING ADULTS
(INCLUDING TEACHERS AND VOLUNTEERS)

The Wisdom and Insights of Extraordinary Outdoor Leaders:
An Australian Case Study.

Dear Accompanying Adult,

The Outdoor Leader of the upcoming Outdoor Education Program that you will be attending, has been identified as being instrumental to a research project being undertaken by Heidi Smith at the University of Wollongong. The research aims to determine the essence of extraordinary outdoor leadership, where the focus is on the Outdoor Leader, not their students. However, through your participation in the program you may appear in video footage and voice recordings collected as the Outdoor Leader is videoed and recorded. You will not be named in the research, but you may be identifiable to others. Video footage and voice recording extracts will be used in the thesis submission, as well as professional journal articles, conference presentations and books in the future to benefit the quality of Outdoor Leaders practice. You will be given the opportunity to consent to video footage and voice recordings being used in this research below. In the case that you do not consent, your face will be blurred and voices will be changed.

CONSENT:
I have been given information about The Wisdom and Insights of Extraordinary Outdoor Leaders: An Australian Case Study, a research project being undertaken by Heidi Smith who is conducting this research as part of a Doctor of Philosophy supervised by Dr Tonia Gray in the Faculty of Education at the University of Wollongong and Dr Dawn Penney in the Faculty of Education at the University of Tasmania.

I have been advised of the potential risks and burdens associated with this research towards myself, which include the identification of myself through the use of video extracts and voice recordings.

I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary, I am free to refuse my participation and I am free to withdraw from the research at any time. My refusal to participate or withdrawal of consent will not affect my treatment in any way or my relationship with the University of Wollongong.

If I have any enquiries about the research, I can contact Heidi Smith 03 6324 3511 Heidi.Smith@utas.edu.au or Dr Tonia Gray 02 4221 3875 tonia.g@uow.edu.au or if I have any concerns or complaints regarding the way the research is or has been conducted, I can contact the Ethics Officer, Human Research Ethics Committee, Office of Research, University of Wollongong on 02 4221 4457.

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- I consent to appearing in video and voice recordings YES/NO
- If NO I consent to appearing in video and voice recordings once de-identified through face blurring and voice changing YES/NO

I understand that the data collected from my participation will be used for the completion of a doctoral thesis, journal publications, conference presentations, book chapters and books resulting from the research. I consent for it to be used in that manner.

Signed: ________________________________ Date: __________/____/____

Name: (please print) ________________________________

..............................................................
Appendix J  Relationships between Researcher and Participants

The researcher knew the participants involved in this study to varying degrees, and these relationships are briefly described here.

**Rod Staples**

The researcher met Rod in 2005 through the Tasmanian Outdoor Education Teachers Association. Since meeting Rod, several meeting rooms have been shared concerning outdoor education, as well as brief encounters at outdoor education conferences. Prior to the study, the researcher had not observed Rod lead in the field.

**Ian Boyle**

Prior to this study, the researcher had met Ian on a number of occasions over the years, mainly at conferences and through common friends. The researcher had not previously observed Ian lead in the field.

**Jon Hodges**

The researcher met Jon in 1997 as a student of outdoor education, and later worked with Jon on a number of programs. Over the years the researcher has worked with Jon in the field in a number of contexts, has engaged in professional development in the field, as well as personal adventures. The researcher considers Jon a personal friend, and prior to this study had seen Jon lead in the outdoors.

**Peter Blunt**

Peter Blunt was not known to the researcher prior to this study. The first face to face meeting occurred during Phase 2 of the study.

**Anna Feely**

The researcher met Anna in 2006 when working collaboratively with TAFE Tasmania on a paddling program with the University of Tasmania. Since that time, several programs have been shared, as well as professional development opportunities. Prior to this study, the researcher had observed Anna leading on a number of occasions, and considers her to be a personal friend.
Appendix K  Phase 1 Interview Questions

1. When did you know that you wanted to be an outdoor leader?
   What led you to that realisation?
2. Why are you an outdoor leader?
3. What are your main strengths as an outdoor leader? Please give example(s).
4. What are your main weaknesses as an outdoor leader? Please give example(s).
5. What motivates you to lead in the outdoors?
6. Describe your leadership style.
   Do you use a variety of styles?
   Do you have a preferred style?
   What informs your use of different styles?
   When do you use a particular style? Why do you use that style?
   Do you use your intuition in your choice of style? How do you?
   Can you give an example of when you have used your intuition in your leadership?
7. Do you think relationships are important in outdoor leadership?
   Why are they important?
   When are they important?
   How are they important?
8. Who are your mentors or role models?
   Why them?
   What is it about them that has influenced your leadership practice?
9. Describe a leader that you think is ‘extraordinary’ in their leadership?
   Why them?
   What is it/was it about them that influenced your leadership practice?
   How have they impacted on your leadership?
10. What are your core values?
    Can you identify any core values that you endeavour to reflect in your leadership?
    Provide an example of where these values have impacted others.
11. Do you try to get people to do things they initially didn’t think they could do?
    How do you do it?
    Why do you do it?
12. Do you persuade participants to be involved in the programs you work on, when they may not want to be involved?
    How do you get them to buy back into the program?
    Why do you try to do this?
13. Do you think you empower your participants?
    How do you?
    Why do you?
14. Have there been any other key experiences or events that have impacted on your leadership?
    Describe the experience(s)/event(s).
    What did you learn from the experience/event?
    Have you applied what you learnt? In what way have you?
Appendix L  Phase 1 Early Findings Diagram

**Extraordinary Outdoor Leaders**

**Core Competencies**
- Intuition
- Empower others to actively engage in the learning process

**Characteristics**
- Awareness of self, others and nature
- Courage and Encourage
- Real; Authentic

**Skills**
- Learning from experience
- Heart, Mind, Will
- Deep listening; Reflective; Transfer learning
- Facilitate learning; Firm, Flexible and Fun
- Relationships; Values; Ethics; Behaviours; Characteristics

**Behaviours**
- How they are in the world - being
- Soulful, Egoless, Present, Resilient, Calm & Caring
- Commitment to a greater cause

**Values**
- Love of, and belief in Outdoor Education
- Core Values; Ethics; Behaviours; Characteristics
- Relationships; Honesty
- Creating positive culture
- Natural Environment Connection
- Altruistic

**Risk takers**
- Walk their talk with humility
- Look for the magic to happen; Synchronicity; Flexibility
- Courage to not know what is going to happen

**Behaviours**
- Clear sense of purpose
- Commitment to a greater cause

**Characteristics**
- Deep listening; Reflective; Transfer learning
- Facilitate learning; Firm, Flexible and Fun
- Relationships; Values; Ethics; Behaviours; Characteristics

**Skills**
- Learning from experience
- Heart, Mind, Will

**Values**
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Appendix M  Phase 2 Observation Checklist

Program Setting
Environment
Space available
Use of space
Lighting
Organisation of people
Interpretive reactions of people to setting
Draw a picture…

Human/Social Environment
groups and subgroups
patterns of interaction
frequency of interaction
direction of communication patterns
characteristics of people in different groups – (male/female interaction, different background characteristics, racial and ethnicity differences, different ages)
who makes decisions about activities that take place
To what extent are decisions made openly – involvement of participants in DM
How are decisions communicated

Program Activities and Participant Behaviours
What do people do in the program?
How do they experience the program?
What is it like to be a participant in the program?
What would one see if one were watching the program in progress?
   At the beginning
      How is the activity introduced or begun
      Who is present at the beginning
      What exactly was said at the beginning
      How did participants respond or react to what was said
   In the middle
      Who is involved
      What is being said by staff
      What are participants doing
      what is being said by participants
      What are the variations on how participants are engaging in the activity being observed
      How does it feel to be engaged in this activity
   In the end
      what are the signals that the activity unit is ending
      who is present at the time
      what is said
how do participants react to the ending of the activity
how is completion of the unit of activity related to the other program activities
and future plans

**Informal interactions and unplanned activities**
what do people do
what are people saying to each other

**Attend to the native language of the program participants**
learn the language
  - literal meanings
  - connotations
  - symbolism
use exact language used by participants so patterns of word usage can emerge

**Nonverbal Communication**
dress
expression of affection
physical spacing
Arrangements

**Unobtrusive measures**
areas used a lot or a little
equipment

**Observing what does not happen**
note things that don’t happen
Appendix N  Phase 2 Observation Schedule

Day  Time  Location

Participants

Context:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix O  Research Questions

Overarching Question:

What is the fundamental nature of extraordinary outdoor leadership?

Supplementary Questions:

Which characteristics, values, skills, and behaviours are present in extraordinary outdoor leadership?

How are these characteristics, values, skills, and behaviours demonstrated in extraordinary outdoor leadership?
Appendix P  Phase 2 Participant Observation Contexts

**Rod** was observed leading/teaching on the Mersey River in Tasmania for a total of 3 nights and 2 days (May 6-8). The researcher arrived on the Wednesday evening as Rod and his students arrived. The researcher left on the Saturday morning before breakfast. The interview was conducted one week later at Rod’s school in Hobart (May 14). This was the earliest opportunity for both researcher and participant.

**Peter** was observed leading/teaching at Ginninderra College, at Thompsons Point and Point Perpendicular, both rock climbing sites near Nowra. The researcher travelled in their own car with a volunteer adult, and Peter drove the bus with all other students to the camping base in a caravan park near Nowra. The reason for travelling separately was partially to give Peter some space after the initial observation had begun at the school in preparation for departure, and to begin to build a positive relationship with him. The volunteer adult accompanying me changed along the way as rest stops were taken. This program ran from Friday through to Sunday night (May 22-24), and Peter was interviewed on Monday in the afternoon (May 25).

**Ian** was observed for 3 days and 2 nights at Glengarry prior to departure, and then in the Blue Mountains at a camp ground and climbing site, as well as a climbing gym in Sydney, before returning to Glengarry. The researcher travelled in a second vehicle with ‘additional adults’ and this allowed for a slow introduction of the researcher to the ‘setting’, giving Ian time to get used to my presence. This program ran from Jun 1-3 and Ian was interviewed the morning following the program’s end (June 4).

**Jon** was observed for 3 days and 2 nights at the Moogerah Outdoor Education Centre in Queensland (June 15-18). Jon was not always on program with the students, and so the observation spanned 4 days of the 5 day program broken into sometimes half day periods of observation, through to full days and included one overnight camping experience. Jon was interviewed on the Thursday afternoon on his scheduled time off at the conclusion of the observation period (June 18).

**Anna** was observed for 2 days and 2 nights on the Mersey and Leven Rivers in northern Tasmania (September 23-25). The section of program observed was from Wednesday night through until Friday evening. Anna was interviewed on the Saturday evening (September 26).
Appendix Q  Phase 2 Interview Questions – A Sample

The follow up interview in phase 2 comprised questions that followed up from the Phase 1 interview, plus addressed any emerging issues/observations from the observation period. As each individual and program was different, these questions differed. Below is a selection of interview questions for Phase 2.

Why are you an outdoor leader? Can you imagine doing anything else? Do you, or have you, experienced a sense of calling to being an outdoor leader?

Do you try to ensure there is ‘purpose’ in the programs you lead?

Are you comfortable with not know what is going to happen on your outdoor programs?

How do you think being involved personally in outdoor adventure-based pursuits contributes to being a successful leader?

How do you go about building relationships with students and staff?

How do you help people to connect with themselves, others and the environment? Why is this important? How do you achieve/teach/lead this?

You spoke of valuing what you are doing as an outdoor leader. Did you mean you value Outdoor Education? What you are doing here?

Why is ‘wanting’ to have positive outcomes all the time a weakness?

Do you use intuition in your leadership? How do you?

You speak a lot of ‘place’ – why do you take students to certain places?

Would you describe yourself as a spiritual person?

What do you think is different about you?
Appendix R Sample of Documents Collected

Program for Year 9 students - Jon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Introduction – Staff A</td>
<td>Breakfast – Staff B</td>
<td>Greville – Jon</td>
<td>Walk &amp; Paddle – Staff A</td>
<td>Breakfast – Jon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wall &amp; Flying Fox – Staff A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Visiting Staff</td>
<td>Clean Up &amp; Orienteering – Jon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tower – Jared</td>
<td></td>
<td>Drive Back – Staff B</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Canoeing – Jon</td>
<td>Paddle &amp; Walk to Greville – Staff A</td>
<td>Knot Tying – Staff A</td>
<td>Wall &amp; Flying Fox – Staff B</td>
<td>Lunch &amp; Depart – Jon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff B</td>
<td>Staff A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tower – Jon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Drive Out – Jon</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Tower &amp; Camp-out Brief – Staff B</td>
<td>Camp-out – Staff A</td>
<td>Camp-out – Staff A</td>
<td>Orienteering Brief – Jon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jon</td>
<td>Jon</td>
<td>Staff A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Staff B</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Letter to students (Peter)
As part of the Outdoor Ed 3 Cliffs, Caves and Canyons unit there will be a 2 day trip to the Nowra area. This is an elective component of the unit.

Purpose of the excursion
The excursion is intended as an introduction to rock climbing and as a consolidation of basic lead climbing and seconding skills for students where appropriate. The 2 locations offer a good selection of climbs for a variety of climbing styles and difficulty levels. Students will be encouraged to participate at the level at which they feel comfortable based on their ability, experience, motivation and assessment by the instructor. The objectives and content for this excursion will include:

- Safe belaying - bottom and top
- Cliff safety procedures
- Climbing communication
- Use of equipment
- Top rope climbing and systems
- Seconding and removal of protection
- Anchor systems
- Climbing techniques
- Abseiling review and skills
- Placement of protection
- Lead climbing
Appendix S  Example of Coding Structure

Examples from Phase 1

*Conceptual Framework*

**Behaviours**
- Clear sense of purpose
- How they are in the world
  - Belief in self
  - Calm approach
- Caring
- Challenge
- Consistent
- Grounded
- Hopeful
- Humble
- Humility

**Risk Takers**

**Characteristics**
- Awareness
- Experienced Based Learners
- Heart

**Skills**
- Competent
- Empower others
- Intuition
- Storytelling

**Values**
- Leave world a better place
- Love of, and belief in OE

*Leadership Theory*
- Authentic Leadership
- Spiritual Leadership
- Transformational Leadership

*Outdoor Leadership*
- COLT
- Core Competencies
- Situational Leadership
Examples from Phase 2

Conceptual Framework
Characteristics
  Awareness
    Self
    Others
    Environment

Values
  Relationships
    Self
    Others
    Environment

Skills
  Intuition
    Flow
    Heart

Behaviours
  Spiritual/How they are in the world
    Humble
    Caring
    Calm

Leadership theories
  Situational Leadership
  COLT
  Core Competencies
  Transformational Leadership
    Create leadership in others
    Empower others
  Authentic Leadership
    Enact core values
  Spiritual Leadership
    Calm
    Caring
    Humility