



Personal Transformations of Participants in Transformative Wellness Event

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<p>Transformative wellness events and travel are a rapidly growing trend, with a primary focus on promoting personal growth, self-discovery and overall well-being. This thesis investigates the Finnish event, Natural High Healing Festival's possible transformative effects on its customers. The focus is on customers' personal change and transformation as a result of attendance.</p> <p>The background research introduces the central concepts of the study and opens up the history of the wellness concept, the markets that belong to it and the transformative wellness events that are part of it. The theoretical framework covers personal transformation through transformational learning theory and identifies concrete steps of the transformation process. It also discusses the key elements of successful transformative wellness events, the impact of external factors in events, motivations for attendance and transformative experiences through experience economy realms.</p> <p>This thesis uses two qualitative research methods: observation and semi-structured interviews. Participatory observation of the festival's workshops was conducted in the summer of 2023 to gain an understanding of what workshops such festivals could contain and to support the interviews. Interviews were conducted among festival customers to gain an understanding of the motivations for participating, the changes experienced in oneself and what contributed to it.</p> <p>Research data were compared to the theoretical basis of the thesis. Observation results were analyzed through experience economy realms and data showed that most of the observed workshops were able to provide experiences that filled all of the experience realms. In summary, the festival offers versatile and high-quality workshops led by various instructors. Interview results showed that most of the interviewees expressed transformative experiences and that participants went through concrete steps of the transformation process when the author compared the results with the theory. Many of the interviewees noted lasting positive and healthier changes and habits that they integrated into their daily lives. In summary the festival had many different transformative effects on its customers, such as increased positivity and courage, improved self-understanding and it provided skills to let go and overcome unhelpful thoughts and beliefs.</p> <p>This thesis was written in three months, in September-November 2023.</p>
Key words Event, experience, transformation, wellness

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1. Introduction

Travel and events have always been a powerful tool for changing people's thinking and behavior. The world is changing faster and faster and the trends along with it. According to the Global Wellness Institute (2020), wellness has become a major force in the global tourism market and is one of the biggest growing tourism trends. This means more travelers want to focus on enhancing well-being on their vacation. The global wellness tourism industry is predicted to be worth around 1.02 trillion U.S. dollars in 2030, (Gough 2022). One part of the wellness tourism trend is the rise of transformative travel. Transformative travel and the associated events are a growing trend in the industry, with a focus on promoting personal growth, self-discovery, and overall well-being. While closely related to the broader concept of wellness travel, transformative travel aims to go deeper into the transformative aspects of the experience. It goes beyond traditional wellness leisure travel by offering experiences and activities that aim to transform individuals physically, mentally or spiritually. It can include activities such as yoga and other holistic retreats, meditation workshops, spa treatments, nature walks and mindfulness practices. The goal is to offer exercises and experiences that positively change people or their worldviews. A trip to a destination is not the primary focus; rather, the destination that offers a specific event or experience that drives personal transformation. This emphasis on transformative events is the central focus of this thesis. Many spiritual and philosophical beliefs suggest that the most important journey a person can undertake is an inner one.

Skift, (2018) a leading travel industry news platform, has recognized personal fulfillment-focused travel as one of its key trends in 2018. According to this trend, customized and unforgettable experiences remain crucial, but the focus is on the personal fulfillment and self-improvement gained from an experience.

The general attitude towards self-development and personal growth is increasingly positive. Taking care of the soul, mind and body is no longer considered an unconventional or "hippie" concept, but rather a mainstream trend. Markets offer a wide range of workshops, online courses, and well-being events to serve the growing demand. Transformative wellness travel and events are part of the phenomenon and have become popular as they provide an opportunity for individuals to pursue positive self-development and change in an unfamiliar environment away from home. Nowadays, some workplaces also provide mindfulness courses or some other wellness exercises as a staff benefit. Companies can also choose some wellness events and exercises for their well-being days. It has been argued that spirituality and transformation could even be the core of the wellness concept.

1.1. Objectives

The thesis aims to map the phenomenon and clarify a little-known subject. The objective is to explore and open the phenomenon of what transformative wellness events are. The thesis will open up the history of the wellness concept, the markets and the transformative wellness events that are part of it. The thesis takes a closer look at the Finnish festival "Natural High Healing Festival", which markets itself as a transformative wellness event. The main focus is to research whether the festival is indeed transformative and research what transformative changes in themselves or in their lives customers experienced when attending this festival.

This thesis has no commissioner, but it holds the potential to be highly beneficial for event companies who target customers with a keen interest in personal growth, self-help and holistic experiences. It offers valuable insights into the customer's desires and the benefits they experience from such events. In addition, this thesis can provide a deeper understanding of the markets involved, as well as offer ideas for future improvements.

Main research question:

What transformative effects Natural High Healing Festival have on its attendees?

Sub-questions behind the main objective are:

What is meant by personal transformation?

Which external factors lead to the transformational moment?

What are the main motivations for customers to attend the festival?

What are the key elements of a successful transformative wellness event?

The questions will be researched through two qualitative research techniques: observation and semi-structured interviews. A qualitative approach is chosen because the aim is to explore the personal transformations experienced by festival attendees and seek to find out "how" and "why" customers undergo this change, which cannot be measured through mathematical methods.

Results will be presented as correct and justified observations. However, participatory observation is based on perspective, and the outcome will be descriptive. Also, interviews are treated and analyzed as a "subjective experience" because the answers will be people's subjective experiences and it is challenging to measure. In this thesis, research is not focused on looking for repetition and lots of data, but rather on unique human experiences in personal transformations.

The author's interest and experience in the subject have driven the development of this thesis. The author observed that wellness travel has become a significant trend, with people generally

understanding the concept. However, there is a lack of discussion regarding the individual transformative effects that modern travelers seek. As previously mentioned, transformative travel and events are integral to the broader wellness concept, so in the thesis, these are intertwined, but the primary focus is on personal transformation and change.

1.2. Event information

Natural High Healing Festival was founded in 2013 by CEO and artistic director Henna Länsipää. Festival *“was born out of pure love of bringing people together in the Finnish summer. Out of love for connection, the one we all long for in one way or another – connection to nature, creativity, the heart, light, and happiness”*, (Bhakti Creative s.a). The festival has now been organized 11 times, starting from a festival with a few hundred participants to a four-day event attracting more than 10,000 customers. Similar events have started to be organized more and more in Finland. Natural High Healing Festival is the biggest conscious festival in the Nordics. This year 2023, one of the biggest magazines in Finland *“Helsingin Sanomat”*, did a four-page story about the event, and it arouses a lot of interest in people. The festival has also received attention in many other media such as Yle Finland and in smaller local magazines.

The name of the festival is “Natural High Healing Festival” for a reason. One of their biggest values is that the event is alcohol and other substance-free. Festival values: 1) Well-being and Growth 2) Substance-free and Authenticity 3) Love and Heart connection 4) Creativity, Freedom and Joy, as shown in the figure below. (Bhakti creative s.a.)

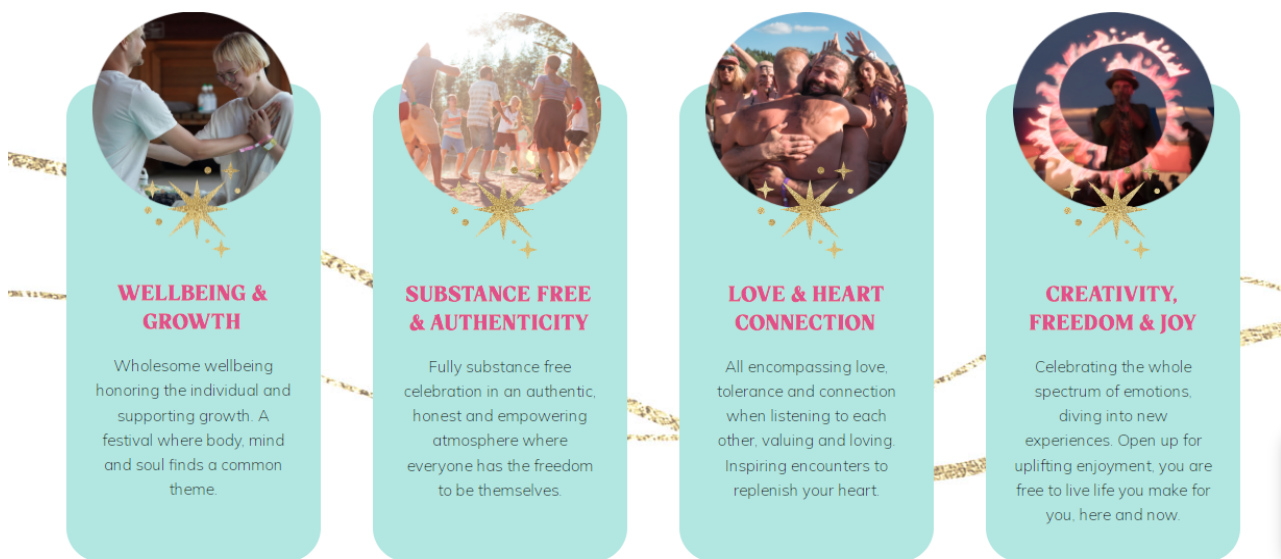


Figure 1. Natural High Healing Festival values (Bhakti creative s.a.)

There is no age limit for the festival so children are also welcome, only certain workshops are restricted to adults only. The event includes various self-development workshops such as yoga-, meditation-, tantra-, dance workshops and lectures. In addition, the event offers the possibility to buy individual healing treatments from artists and providers of various personal treatments. The festival takes place in a natural setting in Uusikaupunki, Finland.

The author itself heard about the event for the first time in 2019, when Yle published an article about the festival. The author has participated in the festival three times and has gained personal experience of the event. The festival inspired the author to do research on the festival and investigate the concept of transformative wellness events. However, the author's personal feelings are not part of the thesis, as the thesis is based on facts and evidence.

1.3. Key definitions

Central terms of this thesis are opened in this chapter. It is important to clarify what is meant with certain terms and concepts as words might have different meanings in different contexts.

Event: In the context of this thesis, an event is defined as a purposefully organized gathering or activity with a specific objective, typically involving a considerable number of participants, such as a meeting, celebration, exhibition, or festival. (Cambridge Dictionary s.a.). What sets events and festivals apart from regular leisure activities is their often annual occurrence. Events can create among other things, moments of celebration, social interactions, personal development and increased happiness. (Yu, Mair, Lee & Ong 2022, 7-8.)

Experience: Merriam-Webster (s.a.), describes the experience as *"something personally encountered, undergone, or lived through"*. According to the Cambridge Dictionary (s.a.), experience is defined as the act of achieving knowledge or expertise by engaging in, observing, or feeling various things. In summary, within this thesis, experience refers to knowledge, competencies, emotions and skills obtained not from theoretical study, but through engagement with the aspects and events of the real world.

Transformation: *"A complete change in the appearance or character of something or someone, especially so that that thing or person is improved"* (Cambridge Dictionary s.a.). Numerous types of tourism have the capacity to transform individuals. These include educational, volunteer, religious, wellness and spiritual tourism, among others. (Pritchard & Morgan 2013, 4.) This thesis focuses on the personal transformation and growth of individuals through wellness practices. The word is used to describe individuals' personal transformation, including beliefs, attitudes, worldviews, or overall well-being.

Wellness: According to Cambridge Dictionary (s.a.), wellness means the quality or state of being healthy, especially as an actively sought goal. Sickness and illness are the opposites of wellness. In certain languages, like Hebrew, there is no definite term for "wellness," and it's often translated as "health." In Finnish, there is not a direct equal for the word, and the Finnish translation aligns more closely with "well-being". (Smith and Puczko 2014, 6.) The Global Wellness Institute (s.a.) characterizes wellness as the deliberate engagement in actions, decisions, and ways of living that contribute to achieving a state of well-being. It is more than just physical health. It includes also mental, emotional, spiritual, social and environmental aspects, and this is how it is seen in this thesis. (Global Wellness Institute s.a.)

2. Wellness history and Markets overview

Wellness is a present term with old origins. As a modern concept, wellness gained popularity during the 1950s-1970s, but the beginnings of wellness can be traced back much further. Ancient roots demonstrate that the desire for wellness experiences has been present throughout history. People have been traveling to wellness treatments for a long time to heal and seek some kind of transformation. (Global Wellness Institute 2010.) This chapter reviews the history of the wellness concept and presents its development. This chapter also introduces the markets that belong to wellness. As already mentioned, transformative travel goes hand in hand with the wellness concept and most of the examples mentioned in the chapter are wellness events forms with transformative effects.

Historically travelers have searched for transformation on spiritual or religious journeys known as pilgrimages, often to sacred sites like temples or churches. These journeys were taken to find deeper meaning and self-awareness. While traditional pilgrims focused on physical sites and religious rituals, modern-day pilgrims prioritize inner experiences, aiming to open themselves to spiritual discoveries. (Sheldon 2020, 3.) People have always needed to influence and seek well-being, and this is nothing new. Since the roots of the wellness events and activities practiced today extend far, it is important to understand where everything started.

3000-1500 B.C. Ayurveda is a medicinal practice that evolved in India and has endured as a unique and independent entity from ancient times to the modern era (Narayanaswamy 1981, 1). Ayurveda is an approach that aims to establish harmony among the body, mind and soul. Ayurvedic practices are usually customized for each individual, considering the person's specific requirements for nourishment, physical activity, social engagement, and other aspects of lifestyle. India has also given rise to traditions centered around the connectedness of the mind, body, and spirit, such as yoga and meditation, which are increasingly embraced nowadays in Western societies (Global Spa Summit Report 2010, 68). In today's world, tourists are interested in visiting original places of certain practices like Ayurveda, and India has a long history of spiritual tourism (Ramesh Unnikrishnan 2014, 425-428). Also, many different Ayurvedic wellness centers offer Ayurvedic retreats and programs in a luxurious setting which is a noticeable shift from their origins in rustic Indian villages (Smith and Puczkó 2014, 32). Ayurveda holds a significant position among the alternative treatment systems acknowledged by the World Health Organization.

3000-2000 B.C. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is one of the most ancient medical systems worldwide (Global Spa Summit Report 2010, 68). Influenced by old philosophies of Taoism and Buddhism, TCM adopts a holistic approach to reaching health and well-being by promoting

harmony within one's life. Therapies derived from TCM, such as acupuncture, herbal and mushroom medicine, qigong, and tai chi, not only continue to be practiced but are also increasingly integrated into Western medical approaches. (Global Spa Summit Report 2010, 68.) The travel industry offers possibilities to attend TCM trips in various places, but mostly in China.

500 B.C. Ancient Greek Medicine. Hippocrates is seen as the founding figure of Western medicine and as a pioneer in preventive medicine by emphasizing the importance of preventing illnesses rather than primarily focusing on them. Hippocrates argued that diseases are linked to a person's dietary choices, lifestyle and environment. He believed in the innate ability of the body to heal itself through periods of rest, a nutritious diet, exposure to clean air, and by maintaining personal hygiene. (Global Spa Summit report 2010, 68.) Also, historians assume that around 500 BC, the Greeks engaged in various communal bathing practices. People came to these places for treatment from various parts of the world. (Smith and Puczkó 2014.)

2.1. Modern Wellness Era

During the 19th century, there was a wave of new thought movements, spiritual beliefs, and medical practices in both the United States and Europe. This period saw the emergence and acceptance of various alternative healthcare approaches that emphasized self-healing, holistic methods, and preventive care. These approaches included practices like homeopathy, osteopathy and chiropractic. Also, spiritual philosophies gained visibility, such as the "mind-cure movements". These movements played a significant role in promoting the idea that one's mental and spiritual well-being had a big influence on their physical health. (Global Spa Summit Report 2010, 4.)

These establishments were primarily regarded as centers for rehabilitation, where individuals sought therapies such as mineral water treatments, thermal baths or specialized dietary plans (Smith and Puczkó 2014, chapter 4). Furthermore, even though these methods lost popularity with the more modern, scientifically-backed medicine in the mid-20th century, some of them are experiencing a comeback among the mainstream medical community and the general public (Global Spa Summit Report 2010, 5).

Towards the end of the 20th century, many companies started making wellness programs for their employees. Employers used to focus mainly on physical well-being for their employees, but now they care about all aspects of well-being. The majority of employers have integrated health promotion tactics into their organizational strategies, with approximately one-third putting the resources to comprehensive wellness programs. (Wellbeing and Voluntary Benefits Survey. Buck 2022.) Also, the fitness and wellness sectors saw worldwide expansion when an increasing number of

celebrities, medical and self-help gurus began introducing their wellness principles to a broader and more mainstream audience (Smith and Puczkó 2014).

People want to feel better and improve their quality of life. The world has become more familiar with modern wellness concept. Modern wellness emphasizes a holistic approach to well-being, considering not only physical health but also mental, emotional, and social well-being. It broadly covers issues aimed at well-being, such as work-life balance, mental health awareness, clean eating, mindfulness practices and the use of technology in wellness, such as fitness trackers and wellness apps. Along with this trend, tourism aimed at well-being and personal change has significantly grown in popularity (Yeung & Johnston 2018).

The globalization of health and wellness is a positive thing because it spreads the practices that used to be limited to certain areas. The path to achieving optimal well-being involves the exchange of ideas, particularly through tourism, and the increased travel of practitioners across different parts of the world. This means that consumers will have more and more choices when it comes to taking care of their health. (Smith & Puczkó 2014, 48.)

2.2. Markets and industry overview

As opened in previous chapter, wellness has gained popularity over the last decade and is now one of the key features in consumer culture, media, and retail. It serves as a selling point for various products and services, from supplements and health services to vacations and gym memberships. The wellness economy holds significant potential and interests consumers, entrepreneurs, investors, and policymakers. Questions arise about whether wellness can address rising healthcare costs and redirect spending from medical care. (Yeung & Johnston 2018.)

The last available Global Wellness Economy Monitor report is from 2018, which shows the data from 2017. In 2021, a different before and after COVID-19 focused report was also published. According to Yeung (2021), wellness industry emerged as a “winner” from the pandemic in terms of its importance as a concept, lifestyle choice, and consumer value (Yeung 2021). The Global Wellness Institute will publish a new Global Wellness Economy Monitor report in November 2023, but unfortunately it will not make it into this thesis anymore. The Global Wellness Summit releases annual trend reports, but the author does not have access to them so this thesis can not use them. Additionally, a recent 2023 “wellness tourism global market report” from the Research and Markets store is neither available to the author. For this reason, this chapter provides a perspective on the wellness market using the latest available 2018 report.

The figure which is presented below, provides a categorized overview of what the wellness industry encompasses. GWI summarizes the wellness economy in ten sectors. In 2017 the whole wellness economy was estimated to be over \$4 trillion, representing 5.3% of global economic output (Global Wellness Economy Monitor 2018). The wellness tourism sector was estimated to be worth \$639 billion in 2017. The three largest sectors are: “*personal care, beauty & anti-aging*”, “*healthy eating, nutrition & weight loss*” and “*wellness tourism*”. Global Wellness Economy Monitor (2018) estimated that the wellness tourism sector is worth \$919 billion in 2022. According to Gough (2022), the global wellness tourism industry is expected to reach a value of approximately \$1.02 trillion by 2030.

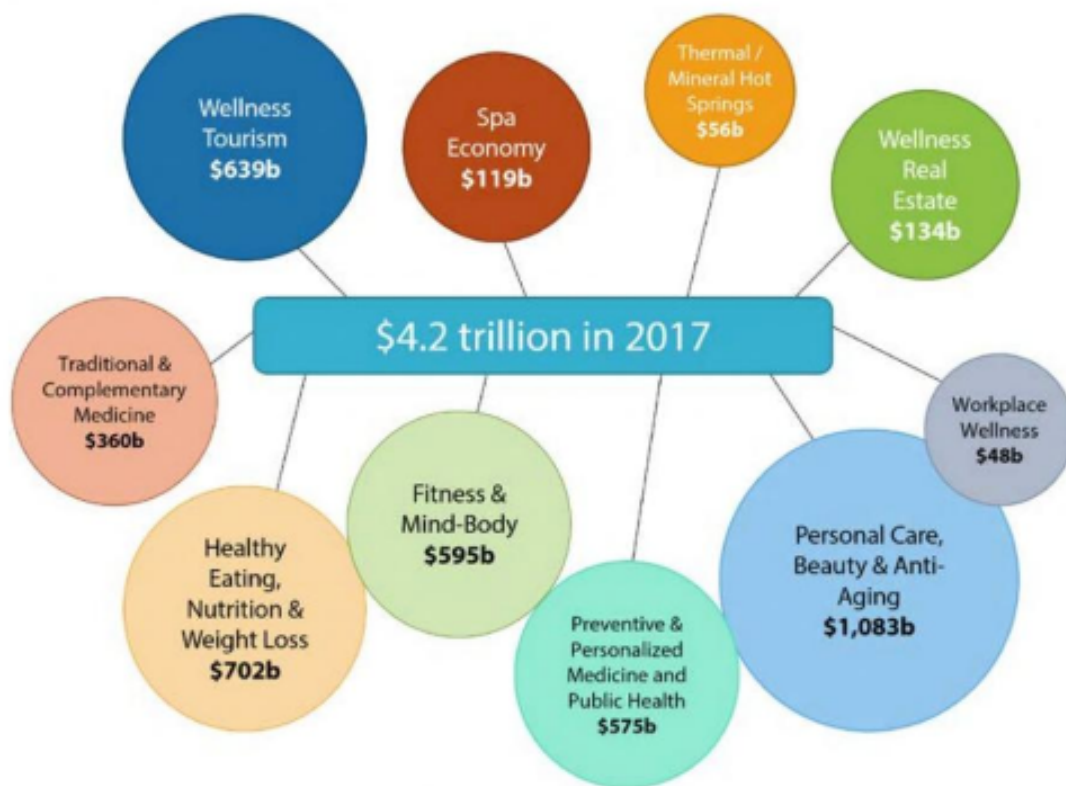


Figure 2. Wellness industry sectors. (Okumus & Linton-Kelly 2022, 6)

Each of the ten wellness sectors are connected and they play an important role in the overall wellness economy. In the past, wellness may have been occasional, such as going to the gym or getting a massage. However, with longer lifespans, increased chronic diseases, stress, and dissatisfaction, wellness is now a necessity. People are reconsidering their lives and paying more attention to the environments they live, work and travel. (Global Wellness Economy Monitor 2018.)

In 2017, wellness travelers took 830 million trips in total. Although wellness trips make up 6.6% of all tourism trips, they contribute more to total tourism income, accounting for 16.8%. This is because wellness travelers tend to spend more per trip compared to the average traveler. Europe

has the highest number of wellness trips, while North America leads in wellness tourism spending due to higher average trip expenses. In the last five years, Asia has also seen significant growth in the number of wellness trips and wellness tourism income. (Global Wellness Economy Monitor 2018, 23.)

The growing interest rates and inflation experienced recently now in 2022-2023 might weaken consumers buying power. Escalating costs, for example in areas like energy and normal daily goods, may weaken an individual's capacity to invest in wellness products or travel. The last few years have been challenging and unexpected, *“Crises such as Russia’s war of aggression and the Covid-19 pandemic have diverted our attention in recent years, narrowing and shortening our horizons for the future”* (Sitra 2023). Especially during more “challenging times” the wellness industry seems to serve the wealthier customers, offering a wide range of products and services for their well-being, from superfoods to high-end experiences (Global Wellness Economy Monitor 2018).

2.3. Wellness events overview

Events play a crucial role in society, offering various benefits including economic development, tourism advantages, and social outcomes. What sets events and festivals apart from regular leisure activities is their often annual occurrence. Events can create among other things, moments of celebration, social interactions, personal development and increased happiness. (Yu, Mair, Lee & Ong 2022, 7-8.)

A wellness event is an occasion that focus on improving individuals' spiritual, social, physical, and emotional well-being. It can involve activities such as physical exercise, mindfulness education or holistic therapies. A wellness festival is a specific type of festival that unites people in celebrating holistic well-being. As the wellness trend continues to expand, a wide range of health and wellness events and activities are increasingly common within the fields of food service, hospitality, and tourism. (Okumus and Linton-Kelly 2022, 122-123.) Numerous wellness events exist, for example, retreats with a primary focus on yoga, healthy living, physical fitness, experiencing a destination authentically, and various other activities (Okumus and Linton-Kelly 2022, 123). Other examples include wellness fairs, wellness conferences, and festivals.

While each event has unique goals, there are current trends in the wellness event sector. Customers are in pursuit of serenity over chaos. Wellness events must have a clear purpose, contributing to the people’s well-being and local communities. Sustainability is a priority nowadays, emphasizing the eco-friendly choices. (Okumus and Linton-Kelly 2022, 138-139.) It is equally crucial for the event to aim for transformative outcomes. Transformative experiences are gaining a larger portion of the whole economic landscape. The world is now immersed in an intangible

economy where intellectual assets, not physical ones, drive wealth. Amusement, learning, pleasure, aesthetics, and even spiritual fulfillment are as valuable and economically significant as physical goods like steel. Pine & Gilmore argue that experiences have become a commodity in themselves, with a higher economic value than standard goods or services. (Pine & Gilmore, 2019, 243.)

The following section will show a selection of wellness events. These events are examples of wellness events and will be examined in terms of their location, length, and the components they offer.

Burning Man: an annual week-long event, taking place in Nevada's Black Rock Desert. It's famous for its emphasis on radical self-expression, big art installations, and communal living. During this event, attendees come together to construct a temporary city and discover themes like creativity, self-sufficiency, and inclusive participation. The highlight of the event is the burning of a massive wooden figure, signifying a feeling of emotional release and rebirth. It offers an exceptional and immersive experience that encourages personal transformation. The latest festival was held from August 27- September 4, 2023. (Burning Man Project s.a.)

I Love Me: is a three-day-long fair on holistic well-being, offering insights into the newest trends in beauty, fashion, and overall wellness for the season. The event aims to provide a sense of well-being and inspiration, both inside and out. They say that they are "*Northern Europe's largest and most energetic wellness event*". The event is organized in Finland and the latest event was held in October 2023. (Messukeskus s.a.)

Natural High Healing Festival: the event was introduced earlier in chapter 1.2, and it will also be studied further in this thesis. Natural High Healing Festival is a four-day long event, organized annually in Finland. It is a festival characterized by creativity, liberty, and heartfelt connections, uniting people in a substance-free environment. The festival offers diverse workshops, music, and opportunities for new experiences and personal transformation. (Bhakti Creative s.a.)

The MindBodySpirit Festival: largest well-being and natural therapies event in Australia. The latest festival was held in 2022, four festivals lasting for three days each took place, with two occurring in Melbourne, one in Sydney, and one in Brisbane. With free entry, attendees can explore 200+ exhibitors, inspirational seminars, stage performances, and a marketplace with wellness-related products. The festivals offer educational courses, many of them are free, on various topics, including nutrition, spirituality and work-life. (Mindbodyspiritfestival s.a.)

The National Wellness Conference: organized by the National Wellness Institute, unites wellness field experts for learning, networking, and personal growth. It offers research-based best practices, education, collaboration, skill-building, and professional development opportunities. The latest conference was held in July 2023, in Ohio. (National Wellness Institute s.a.)

Wanderlust: they have organized wellness events and festivals worldwide for over a decade. Their mission is to *“bring together exceptional yoga and meditation instructors, musicians, speakers, artists, and chefs for transformational retreats in the world's most awe-inspiring natural resorts”*. They host festivals and other smaller events multiple times annually in various locations, and while the specifics of the events may differ, the central theme across all of them is the pursuit of well-being. (Wanderlust s.a.)

3. Defining personal transformation

This chapter will investigate personal transformation, its stages and driving forces through the previous research material. This chapter explores aspects of personal change, examines the various external influences that shape these experiences, considers the elements that contribute to the success of transformative wellness events, and explores the motivations that lead people to participate in these events.

3.1. Personal transformation

Transformation is a frequently used term to describe significant changes. It is often seen in biology, culture, society, and technology, among other diverse areas. However, what precisely occurs during a transformation? Transformation can be splitted into a series of separate steps that explain the process. In the context of this thesis, the focus is on personal transformation, which signifies a deep inner change in an individual. Therefore, all aspects relate specifically to the individual.

Personal transformation is a process where people go through big changes in what they believe, how they act, how they see themselves and the world. Different perspectives offer varying definitions of personal transformation, but they all agree that it's important for a person's well-being and personal growth.

Transformational learning theory was developed by Mezirow (1978). The theory was modified over some time and this thesis will present the theory from 1994, including 11 phases. Mezirow's work on this theory has had a significant impact on understanding how adults learn and change their perspectives through critical reflection and transformative experiences. Mezirow developed a transformative learning theory (TLT) that explains the significance of the learning process. This theory investigates how adults draw meaning from life's learning experiences, leading to the transformation of their beliefs, attitudes, or even their entire worldview. (Reisinger 2013, 16-19.)

Mezirow's transformative learning theory has a broad range of applications in settings where personal growth and the transformation of beliefs and perspectives are important goals. It is primarily used in the fields of education, mostly in designing adult education, but it can be used in personal growth and self-help. (Mezirow 1991.) The theory opens up what happens in the transformation itself so that a person changes and grows, so it is also very applicable to this thesis. The theory is quite complex, containing 11 steps, it will be presented briefly and clearly as possible. First, the name of the phase is presented and then it follows with an explanation.

- 1) *"A disorienting dilemma"*: This is the starting point when a person faces a significant experience, known as a 'disorienting dilemma.' This dilemma can be, for example, a personal crisis like divorce, an accident, or job loss. This experience causes individuals to seek meaning or address something missing in their lives. It creates a sense of imbalance, requiring a shift in beliefs and values.
- 2) *"Self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame"*: Person starts self-reflection. They may experience negative emotions like guilt or shame as they assess their current beliefs and actions.
- 3) *"A critical assessment of assumptions"*: A person critically analyzes the sources and foundations of their beliefs and values.
- 4) *"Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and others have negotiated a similar change"*: A person realizes that others have gone through similar feelings and experiences.
- 5) *"Exploration of options for new roles, relationships and actions"*: A person starts to explore new ways of thinking, behaving, and interacting. They consider alternative perspectives and options for the future.
- 6) *"Planning a course of action"*: Based on a person's exploration of options, they develop a plan for change. They may set goals and strategies for implementing their new beliefs and perspectives.
- 7) *"Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans"*: A person looks out for the necessary knowledge and skills to execute their change plan effectively.
- 8) *"Provisionally trying out new roles"*: A person begins to experiment with their new beliefs and behaviors. They test their new roles in real-life situations.
- 9) *"Renegotiating relationships and negotiating new relationships"*: As people change, their relationships with others may also change, as they are not the same person anymore. A person needs to renegotiate existing relationship terms and maybe form new ones that align with their transformed beliefs and values.
- 10) *"A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective"*: A person starts reintegrating the transformed self into everyday life.

- 11) *“Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships”*: The ultimate phase in the process of transformation involves building competence and self-confidence. Transformation reaches its conclusion when the individual entirely integrates the fresh attitudes, and behaviors into their own life, guided by their newly formed perspective.

(Mezirow 1991, 168-169 parts 1-10, Mezirow 1994 in Reisinger 2013, 18-19.)

Mezirow pointed out that a person does not have to go through all the stages of the process to experience a transformation (Reisinger 2013, 19).

Transformation can be seen as different from simple change. It's a conscious, intentional process chosen by individuals or organizations. It involves a profound shift, affecting various aspects of life and cannot be reversed. It requires letting go of control, involves risk and broadens one's worldview. Ultimately, transformation leads to personal growth, greater integrity, and a deeper connection with the world. (Reisinger 2013, 21-22.) However, a person can experience a life-changing transformative moment in an unexpected place or life situation, so it is not always intentional or chosen.

3.2. External factors that influence personal transformation

External factors in the context of events and festivals such as location, weather, environment, transportation, competition, or regulations are elements that can have both positive and negative effects on how a festival is perceived and enjoyed. Some of these factors are outside the control of festival organizers. All of the above can also affect a participant's personal transformation journey. Weather conditions emerge as a particular challenge, especially in the context of festivals held in Finland, where participants often stay overnight in tents, as exemplified by events like the Natural High Healing Festival. Weather conditions, which lie beyond the control of event organizers, can influence several important aspects, including participant turnout, the successful execution of the event, and overall customer satisfaction and atmosphere. It is important to develop some contingency plans, often referred to as plan B, to account for adverse weather conditions. Additionally, the event facilities themselves should be constructed sustainably, ensuring that they can stand the unpredictable weather and contribute to a more resilient and enjoyable festival experience.

“Basic needs” such as clean drinking water, availability of food, clean environment, possibility to wash, safety, and security in the festival must be organized well, so that person can go into a transformative experience. According to Sheldon (2020, 7) the construction and design of physical facilities for retreats and workshops plays a crucial role in transformative moments. It is therefore important that the festival spaces support creativity, peace, and a positive atmosphere. In chapter

5, observations and interviews will present the external elements contributing to the transformative experiences during the Natural High Healing Festival.

However, Mezirow's theory included "a disorienting dilemma" where transformation can start from chaotic or even dangerous situations. In some specific forms of tourism and events, participants can experience transformation through "survival" and pain. Transformation can occur in situations where individuals can interact with the unfamiliar or the unknown, such as unfamiliar environments, people or activities. (Reisinger 2013, 28.) This can apply for example to some festival workshops. Some workshops can be intense and demanding, almost leading to discomfort.

3.3. Scenarios that can transform individuals

An infinite number of scenarios can transform individuals. Sheldon (2020, 5) identified four general categories of scenarios that are conducive to changing people's world views and bringing them in touch with their true selves in the context of tourism and events.

1) *"Deep human connectivity in cultural context"*. This points out the power of cultural understanding and deep interactions in transformative experiences. It highlights the importance of meaningful encounters, storytelling, and acts of kindness for each other. Designing spaces for sharing stories and feelings improves the event, while creative environments and experiences contribute to transformation. Effective communication and staff engagement are needed to facilitate such transformative encounters. (Sheldon 2020, 5.)

2) *"Environmental connectivity in natural setting"*. This highlights the transformative power of spending time in nature and how experiences in nature can raise positive emotions. Guided experiences in natural settings contribute to mental, physical, and spiritual well-being. Also, customers tend to behave more environmentally responsible and show greater respect for ecosystems and animals, when they are connected to the nature. (Sheldon 2020, 5.)

3) *"Self-inquiry, self-reflection, self-knowledge, learning and creativity"*. Customers on personal growth journeys want to find themselves by exploring new places and doing things like meditation and different workshops. (Sheldon 2020, 5.)

4) *"Engaged contribution to the destination"*. Inner transformation often leads people to want to give back to others and the environment, shifting from self-focus to concern for the greater good. Generosity is valued more than acquiring wealth, and events can encourage such experiences. (Sheldon 2020, 5.)

3.4. Elements of successful transformative wellness event

Creating experiences for a personal and deep journey like transformation and spiritual awakening is a challenge. It necessitates a careful examination of the participants' beliefs, their preparedness and willingness, and their state of awareness. Additionally, it requires an evaluation of the consciousness level of those involved in the industry and those making decisions at a destination. (Sheldon 2020, 4.) Pine and Gilmore (1999) propose that to improve the economic value within service industries by incorporating experiential aspects, transformation represents the highest level of experience. Paying close attention to how services are provided and to the key touchpoints of the event is essential for creating powerful transformative moments (Sangiorgi 2011).

An essential part of personal transformational change involves empowerment. In this context, event participants aren't just consumers at various stages of the event, but they actively collaborate as co-creators. The active involvement of customers in shaping their own experience is a significant factor in the event's success in bringing transformative effects. It is essential to provide attendees with resources and opportunities for personal growth and change. However, it's in the customer's hands how much they want to use these resources. Creating an environment where people can voluntarily engage and avoid rigid guidelines on what to do is the key. No one can positively transform anyone without the person's motivation and some degree of openness for change.

The challenge of shaping transformative moments into lasting transformations is a key aspect of design (Soulard, McGehee & Stern 2019, 91-104). Soulard et al. (2019) suggest a strategy with three essential design elements for companies aiming to offer transformative experiences. It is primarily associated with tourism in that source, but it also fits well with a festival design.

First, it's important to incorporate the well-being and desires of the host community into the design of customer experiences. This can be achieved through partnerships, networks of organizations focused on transformation. Cultural values and elements of the natural environment should also be integrated into the service touchpoints, enhancing the interaction between customers and the local culture. (Soulard et al. 2019, 91-104.)

Second, employees play an important role in creating transformational experiences. Their knowledge, skills, and values can create these experiences, acting as bridges between the host and customers. The quality of workshops and the skilled facilitators is essential. This needs investment in hiring and training employees who understand the events idea and what customers want to experience. Usually, people who have some personal experience with inner transformation and awakening are preferable for this kind of event. (Soulard et al. 2019, 91-104.)

Third, the overall festival design is very important and the physical environment where transformative experiences take place should encourage storytelling and symbolism. The innovative and creative design of spaces and infrastructure can support the transformative experiences, but it requires an understanding of how space influences person-to-person interactions. Generally, these spaces should be attractive, safe, and welcoming. (Soulard et al. 2019, 91-104.)

Skift report (Gustafson 2018) identifies core principles for crafting transformative journeys. *“Be genuine”*: To succeed in the trend of transformative travel, companies should have a genuine purpose in their operations. Being authentic is key, as customers can sense a company's passion for people and the planet. Also, a valuable strategy involves collaborating with local communities to create meaningful experiences that benefit both travelers and the local economy. *“Understand your vision and purpose”*: Authenticity in business, knowing the purpose behind the company and clearly defining the brand's identity is important. *“Focus on credibility”*: Companies that aim to earn trust for providing transformative experiences must build themselves as credible sources and the content produced should be relevant. This involves understanding and meeting customer expectations. *“Break constraints”*: Embracing bold innovation and pushing boundaries, for example, in events design can raise the potential for transformations. There should be spaces for spontaneous discovery and overcontrolling should be avoided. *“Act responsibly”*: Customers seeking transformative journeys will expect providers also to show social and ecological responsibility, as people increasingly seek experiences with a positive impact and a deeper purpose. (Gustafson 2018.)

3.5. Motivations for attendance

Researchers and event planners are interested in understanding why people go to festivals and events, what they expect from them, and what these experiences mean to them. It is, of course, useful to know the customer, in terms of marketing, management and the overall success of the event. (Long & Robinson 2004, 4.) Motivations are factors that push individuals to pursue certain goals, attend to certain activities and make certain choices. One model of motivations related to tourism and events is Iso-Ahola's (1980) theory of motivation. Summarized, it divides people's motivations into *“seeking”* motivations and *“escaping”* motivations. Seeking motivations can be for example to feel good, experience new things, personal growth, meet new people, or tell others about the experience. Escaping motivations can be for example to get away from the usual environment and people, to overcome a bad mood, or to get out of a stressful environment. (Snepenger, King, Marshall & Uysal 2006, 142.) Reasons why people participate in wellness festivals and events can be for example: seeking stress relief, spiritual connection, personal development, or being with friends and family. Investigating the motivations of festival participants through interviews in chapter 5 will shed light more on Natural High Healing Festivals customer's motivations.

The Global Wellness Institute (Yeung & Johnston 2018) identifies six main reasons why people engage in wellness travel and events: social, physical, mental, spiritual, emotional, and environmental. For instance, those interested in physical might discover fitness centers, healthy eating, spas and beauty treatments. Those who seek mental and spiritual fulfillment often seek mind-body experiences like yoga, meditation, spiritual retreats or time alone. Those looking to enhance their emotional well-being can benefit from retreats, life coaching, music or art. Those motivated by environmental aspects can connect with nature by spending time outdoors, like hiking or biking. (Yeung & Johnston, 2018.)

Push and pull factors are seen as reasons that influence people's decisions. Push factors in travel motivators are reasons that make people want to leave their current location or situation (Snepen-ger et al. 2006, 140-141). For example, push factors could be exhaustion and stress because of too busy life. Pull factors are reasons that make people go to certain destinations or events (Sne- penger et al. 2006, 140-141). For example, pull factors could be the wish to slow down and have more free time. The next table will present some examples of wellness tourists' push and pull fac- tors.

Table 1. Push and Pull factors in wellness travel. Adapted from Smith & Puczkó (2014, 114)

Push factors:	Pull factors:
Mental and physical exhaustion	The wish to be healthier
Stress because of work and a busy life	The wish to be happier
Loss of religion and the desire for spirituality	The desire for self-development
Addiction to technology or other addictions	The desire to simple life and slow down
Not enough time to spent outdoors	The desire to beautiful nature and landscapes
Loneliness	The desire for a community
Lack of trust in traditional medical services	The desire for holistic healing therapies

The wellness travel market includes two types of travelers: those who are motivated by wellness to take the trip, choose the destination or events are called primary wellness travelers and those who seek to maintain wellness or engage in some wellness activities during their trip which was mainly designated for other purposes are called secondary wellness travelers. A common misconception is that wellness travelers are mostly rich tourists who go to expensive fancy spas or meditation

retreats. But actually, wellness travelers are a diverse group with different reasons for traveling and varied interests. (Global Wellness Institute 2018.)

Inner motivation is crucial for the change. A person must willingly transform; it cannot be imposed upon them, and this process is usually intentional. (Poutiatine 2008, 194.) However, Lean (2009, 201), stated that there is no clear correlation between transformation and motivation. Also, Sheldon (2020) stated that transformation is not always the main motivator to take the trip or attend to a certain event, but it can be an unexpected outcome (Sheldon. 2020, 4).

3.6. Transformative experiences through experience realms

This chapter will explore Pine and Gilmore's Experience Economy theory. This theory is later used in chapter 5, as a lens to analyze various workshops of the Natural High Healing Festival. This approach will give an example of the nature of transformative wellness events and create an understanding of what transformative events could be.

Pine & Gilmore classify economic offerings and they are introduced next. *Commodities*: raw materials, such as iron or vegetables. *Goods*: tangible products with physical attributes, such as electronics which can be differentiated by features and branding. *Services*: intangible activities or offerings, such as hospitality or haircuts. *Experiences*: memorable and personal events such as theme parks or festivals. (Pine & Gilmore, 2019, 8-11.) Experience is not the ultimate product, as companies can tailor their experiences to match the current needs of individual customers, which can result in transformations. Integrating experiential elements improves economic value, with transformation being the most advanced form of experience. (Pine & Gilmore, 2019, 216-217.)

An experience is valuable when it becomes a lasting memory, setting it apart from commodities, goods, and services. These things are defined by their physical qualities, while experiences are characterized by their mental aspects, being memorable and personal to the individual. Each person's experience is unique and can not be repeated by another. (Pine & Gilmore, 2019, 15-16.)

Experiences can be understood through two dimensions, (see the table below). The first is customer participation, ranging from passive, where customers mostly observe, to active, where customers play a significant role in creating the experience. The second dimension is the connection between the customer and the event. Absorption means that customers observe some event, for example by watching a game. Immersion means that customers are deeply engaged in the event, like being in the infield of the game.

These dimensions help categorize experiences into four realms. Entertainment: primarily entertaining experiences where customers are passive participants like enjoying a show. Educational: the focus is on learning and personal development where customers actively engage in gaining knowledge and new skills. Escapist: immersive experiences that allow customers to “escape” from their everyday life, needing the customer to be actively involved in the experience. Esthetic: emphasizes the aesthetics, sensory, and emotional aspects of an experience. The customer is fully engaged in event or surroundings without influencing it. (Pine & Gilmore 1998.)

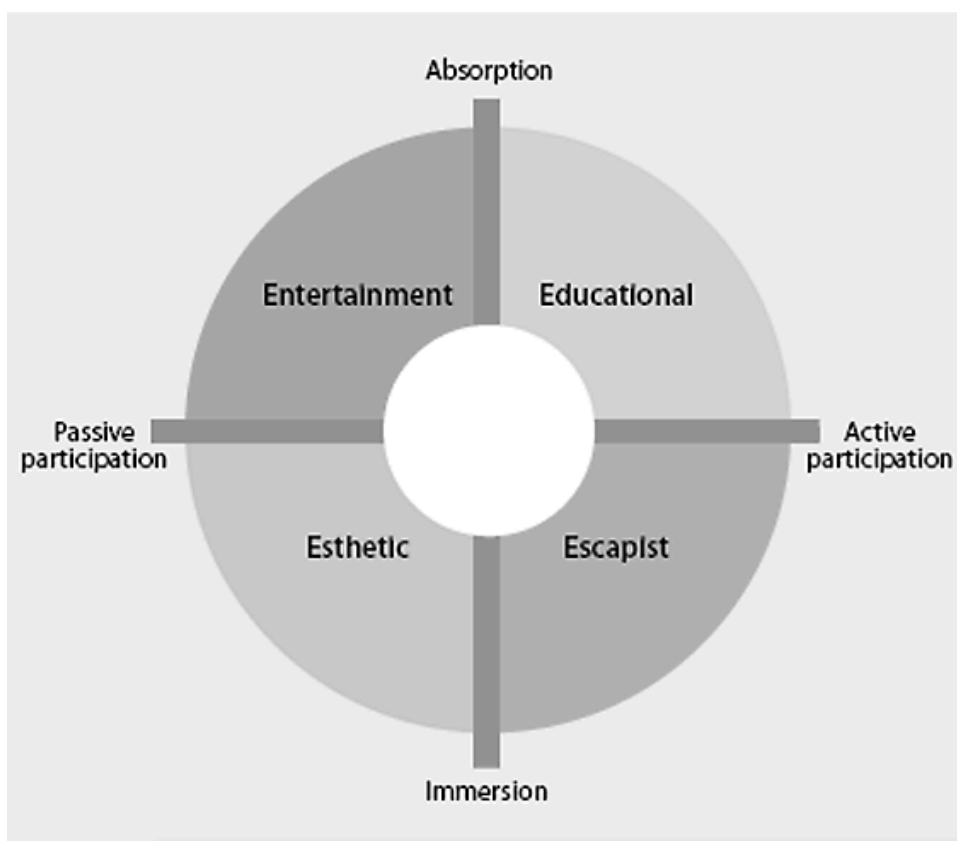


Figure 3. Experience realms (Pine & Gilmore 1998 in Harward Business Review s.a.)

In general, the most fulfilling experiences connect elements from all four realms, and can create so-called “sweet spot”, where the dimensions intersect.

Experiences and events form memories, while transformations are more profound, altering the individual in some way. Each person's experience is unique due to their past experiences and current mental state. Therefore, an individual can not undergo the same transformation twice, as they are not the same person on the second occasion. (Pine & Gilmore 2019, 225.)

4. Data and methods

This chapter presents the selection of research methodology, outlines the key elements of the chosen approach, covers research planning, explores the process of gathering the data and how the data will be analyzed.

Main research question:

What transformative effects Natural High Healing Festival have on its attendees?

Sub-questions behind the main objective are:

What is meant by personal transformation?

Which external factors lead to the transformational moment?

What are the main motivations for customers to attend the festival?

What are the key elements of a successful transformative wellness event?

In previous chapters, personal transformation, including its stages, elements, external influences, and customer motivations has been reviewed. The thesis has also provided an overview of the subject's history, markets, and the festivals and events associated with it. The main research question this thesis aims to answer is to find out what transformative effects the festival has on its attendees. In essence, the thesis wants to investigate whether the event is indeed transformative, how it brings this transformation, and what factors contribute to it. Furthermore, the research will investigate the motivations of the festival attendees to participate, and seek to identify potential suggestions for future improvements.

Research methods, categorized by how they gather data, can be broadly split into two groups: quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative research primarily relies on numbers. It involves describing and solving problems using numerical data. Research findings are typically presented using tables, graphs, and charts. (Business Research Methodology s.a.) This method usually involves a bigger sample size, meaning a lot of respondents (Salonen September 2023). In contrast, qualitative research focuses on words, emotions, feelings and other elements that can not be quantified. Information is considered qualitative if it can not be analyzed using mathematical techniques. (Business Research Methodology s.a.) The qualitative method tries to create understanding and can answer questions "Why?" and "How?" for example with interviews or observations. This method can be implemented with a significantly smaller number of respondents (Salonen September 2023).

Quantitative and qualitative research can also be seen as mutually supportive approaches, rather than as opposites (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2009, 136-137). Both approaches can also be used in the same study and both approaches can explain, although in different ways, the same research objects. When selecting the appropriate research type and methods, it is essential to identify an approach that aligns with the research goals. The choices made should accurately reflect what best serves the research objectives, purpose, and topics of interest. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2009, 136-137.)

This thesis uses two qualitative research methods: observation and interview. This thesis uses a qualitative approach because the idea is to understand the phenomenon more deeply and to study the subjective experiences of festival attendees and try to answer that “how” and “why” customers experienced personal transformation. These subjective experiences can not be measured using mathematical techniques in this research.

4.1. Observation

Observation as a research method usually demands significant effort. Observation means that the researcher immerses in the natural environment to witness real events. Various observation methods exist, primarily categorized as systematic and participatory. In systematic observation, an external observer observes a situation following a structured plan. Participatory observation involves the researcher actively participating in the research subject activities, trying to adapt into the experience. The researcher must differentiate the real and correct observations from their interpretations of the observations. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2009, 212-216.)

This thesis will use participatory observation as a method to observe different workshops through Pine and Gilmore's Experience Economy theory realms which are presented in chapter 3.6 (*entertainment, educational, escapist and esthetic*). The observations will be presented as correct and justified observations. However, the experience is always subjective and the extract is descriptive. The purpose of this observation is to peek into the world of transformative festivals and illuminate the experience for the reader. The workshops that are observed were chosen mostly based on the author's interests and schedules, but with the idea that they are all different and led by various instructors.

The observation was chosen as another qualitative approach to the subject since it gives the researcher the possibility to analyze the festival content itself and it will support the interviews. After the observation, it is easier to form interview questions and the conversation becomes more natural when the author knows about the experience itself. The observation frame will be used

which is presented below, the vertical axis describes the workshops under analysis, while the horizontal axis represents the theoretical realms.

Table 2. Observation table

Workshop	Entertainment	Educational	Escapist	Esthetic
1.Coaching				
2.Meditation				
3.Ceremony				
4.Ice bath				
5.Ecstatic dance				

The forthcoming section will open these concepts, providing the reader with a clear understanding of their meaning in this thesis. Theoretical realms are already opened in chapter 3.6.

1. Coaching: In this thesis, coaching refers to a workshop designed to guide and motivate individuals in discovering their unique path in working life.

2. Meditation: Meditation in this thesis refers to a workshop where people sit or lie down to meditate guided by the instructor. In today's world, meditation can be pursued independently, separate from religious contexts. Research has demonstrated that meditation possesses the power to enhance individuals' mental and spiritual well-being, as well as reduce the stresses of daily life and improve overall health (Tzuhui, A., Tseng & Ching-Cheng, S. 2014, 429-434).

3. Ceremony: In this thesis, the focus is on a non-religious ceremony workshop where participants go on their own "spiritual journey".

4. Ice bath: Ice bath refers to a workshop where people go into ice-cold water. Ice bath experiences have old roots going back to 700 BC. It is believed that ancient Greek civilizations used cold water bathing for warriors. (Smith & Putczkó 2014, 30.) Cold exposure can have benefits to cell production, pain killing, treatment of injuries and inflammatory diseases (Smith & Putczkó 2014, 58).

5. Ecstatic dance: This thesis focuses on ecstatic dance workshop. Ecstatic dance, at its core, is a free-form dance movement guided by thoughtfully created music, with the purpose of facilitating a therapeutic, euphoric and ecstatic experience. The music's progression follows a pattern, starting

gently, reaching a peak, and then easing into stillness. No prior dancing skills or a partner are required and there is not any form of dance or movements to follow. The idea is to let loose and let the body just move the way it wants. (Asheville Movement Collective s.a.)

4.2. Semi-structured interview

The interview has been usually the main method in qualitative research. Interviews involve direct linguistic interaction with the interviewees, allowing for flexible adaptation of data collection based on the situation. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2009, 205.)

Interviews can be conducted as either individual, paired, or group interviews (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2009, 210). In this research, the interviews will be conducted individually via video calls. Interviews are categorized based on the level of structure and control in the interview setting. They can range from highly structured interviews with predetermined questions asked in a specific order to completely unstructured ones, where only a broad topic is defined, and the conversation flows freely within that topic, or it can be something in between. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2009, 208.) Interviews can therefore be divided into three categories: structured, unstructured, and semi-structured. This thesis will use semi-structured interviews.

The advantage of interviews is that they offer the interviewer a chance to clarify the questions and correct misunderstandings when necessary (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018, chapter 3.1). However, challenge with interviews is their time-consuming nature. At times, a challenge may arise also when the topic is “sensitive”. In this case, as this thesis focuses on personal transformation, interviewees might feel uncomfortable during the interview due to the sensitive nature of the subject. Because of this they may provide responses that are more general or socially acceptable in order to navigate the discomfort (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2009, 205-206). However, interviews are a justified method because the purpose is to understand what the respondents feel, experience, and believe (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2009, 185). When wanting to understand people's behavior and thoughts in their experiences it is most reasonable to directly ask individuals and allow them to tell their perspectives.

It is justified to give the interview questions in advance to the interviewees. Especially if the topic is challenging and not common knowledge. It is also ethically important to tell the interviewee what topic the interview is about (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018, chapter 3.1) and how the data will be used, and when the notes and any recordings of the interview will be destroyed.

Successful interviews require careful preparation of questions. To start an interview, it is recommended to avoid diving straight into the hardest and most sensitive questions, so warm-up

questions are essential. Open-ended questions should be used, rather than closed ones where the interviewee can answer “yes” or “no”. Effective listening and patience from the interviewer are crucial. Ultimately, interviews should be a natural interaction with the interviewees, and even if they do not go as planned, they still provide data and valuable insights for analysis. (Hyvärinen, Suoninen & Vuori 2021.)

In this thesis, the interview is themed into sections, within which questions are asked. Since the interview is semi-structured, the order of the questions may slightly change and additional clarifying questions may be asked if necessary.

4.3. Research planning

The observation of workshops occurred in the summer of 2023 at the Natural High Healing Festival. The author also observed that the predominant age group among festival participants was Millennials (born in the 1980s - late 1990s). Therefore, the choice was made to interview individuals belonging to this age group.

The individuals being interviewed were invited through Instagram direct messages (the author checked who had commented on festival Instagram posts and then sent private messages to them) and some were contacted through WhatsApp. The criteria for potential interviewees included having attended the Natural High Healing Festival and belonging to the millennial generation. Although the age group was not a key factor in this study, it proved challenging to locate participants from other age groups, so the choice was made to conduct the interviews with this specific age group. 10 individuals were contacted by asking for interviews with a brief info text about the thesis subject and the anonymity of respondents. Out of those, six individuals were willing to attend and the interviews were conducted individually with each participant by videocall in Zoom. Video call was the best platform because it created an easy way to participate in terms of schedules and location.

The interview questions are visualized in Appendix 1. The interview questions are related to the theoretical framework of this thesis. The questions were categorized into five different groups according to the research objectives: “motivational factors for event participation”, “personal transformation journey of the interviewees”, “environment that supports transformation”, “post-event reflections” and “feedback for a better event”. The interviews were tested and timed with two people, they were not participants of the festival, but they were asked to imagine some form of wellness event or wellness class they have attended. Some changes were made after the test interviews, the order and number of questions were changed. The author also noticed the need to explain the topic and words more deeply, as neither test respondent understood the word

transformation in this context. When the word was opened and described as personal change or growth, the questions were easier to understand.

4.4. Data analysis

Data analysis is the process of making meaning from the data (Salonen 26 September 2023). There are many different ways to analyze the gathered data. For example transcribing, a frequently used method, involves converting gathered data into written form with precise words from interviews. This process, as suggested by Hirsjärvi, Remes, and Sajavaara (2009, 222), is readying the data for analysis by finding themes and similarities from interviews. In this thesis, the interviews were quite long and interactive. Therefore, the entire conversations were not transcribed word by word, but the most central themes and points of the conversation and direct quotes were transcribed immediately after the conversations, using audio tapes and notes.

In qualitative research, unexpected findings often arise, leaving the researcher unsure about how to use them in the study. To manage this, qualitative research requires the researcher to decide what is truly noteworthy within the data and set aside less relevant details because it is impossible to cover every aspect of a phenomenon. This involves selecting a specific, narrowly defined area to explore which aligns closely with the actual research objectives. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018, chapter 4.1.)

When research is conducted from an experiential perspective, it aims to understand the subject's experiences rather than provide explanations. The experience perspective is different from the factual perspective because it means that reality is diverse and personal. In experiential research, the focus is on these personal experiences and their unique meanings. The key question isn't whether someone's experiences are objectively true, but how they explain and give meaning to their experience. (Jokinen 2021.)

5. Results

In this chapter, the results will be presented. The observation of workshops occurred during the summer of 2023 at the Natural High Healing Festival. The author also observed that the predominant age group among festival participants was Millennials (born in the 1980s - late 1990s). Therefore, the choice was made to interview individuals belonging to this age group. Six individuals were willing to attend and the interviews were conducted individually with each participant by videocall in Zoom.

5.1. Observations of festival workshops

The author wanted to observe the content of the event because it creates an example for the reader of what workshops such festivals could contain and it will support the interviews. The observations will be presented as correct and justified observations. However, the participatory observation is based on perspective, and the outcome is descriptive. The objective of the observation is to shed light on the experience and to give a brief understanding for the reader about transformative festivals.

The festival offers various self-development-focused workshops such as yoga-, meditation-, tantra-, breathing-, dance workshops and lectures. The festival also has music concerts and performances. In 2023, the festival had more than 200 different workshops. The festival is a four-day event (Thursday-Sunday), and customers can spend as many days as they want.

The festival divides its offerings into categories, which are color-coded in the workshop program so that customers can find the workshops that interest them. Categories divided by festival are: "music", "DJ & party", "sound & voice", "ceremony & performance", "dance & body", "tantra", "yoga", "open space", "lecture", "ecstatic dance", "meditation", "coaching" and "other". The program also shows, among other things, whether the workshop is "strong", "kids friendly", or whether something is needed to bring, for example, a yoga mat. The festival's workshop program can be read in Appendix 2. As some workshops can be very "strong experiences", participants are asked to take care of their limits when choosing workshops and can always leave the workshops halfway through if it's not suitable.

Because there are so many workshops, not all of them can be presented in this thesis. Five different workshops that the author participated in (coaching, meditation, ceremony, ice bath, and ecstatic dance) will be observed and analyzed through four realms of experience economy theory, (presented in Chapter 3). It is worth mentioning that each workshop could incorporate some small elements from all realms and it will depend on the observer. Naturally, the atmosphere at the

festival, along with the observer's mood during that moment, can also influence the observations. However, the decision to be precise is made based on the observation of the workshops and their spaces, rather than the entire festival and atmosphere.

1. Coaching: The festival offers coaching workshops, such as life coaching, career coaching, and health coaching. The author attended a workshop “*7 steps to your dream job*” (original name, “*7 askelta unelmatyöhön*”) by Riikka Pajunen.

The workshop started with a captivating lecture about the dream career path. The speaker shared her journey in discovering her career path, offering valuable insights and advice. Many attendees made notes during the coaching session. The workshop took place in a big roof-covered open space, furnished with chairs for attendees to sit and listen. The space is intended for lecture workshops, so it is not as decorated as other workshop spaces. After the lecture, the session continued with some interactive exercises where participants engaged in discussions with one another, sharing their aspirations, strengths, and areas for growth. The lecture proved to be truly inspiring and left a lot to think about.

Table 3. Coaching workshop observation summary

Workshop	Entertainment	Educational	Escapist	Esthetic
<i>7 steps to your dream job</i>	-watching and listening when the speaker shared her personal journey (storytelling)	-lecture about knowledge and skills related to career -interactive exercises and making notes	No clear features	No clear features

2. Meditation: The author participated in guided meditation “*The wonderful world of meditation, guided meditation*”, original name (“*Meditoinnin ihmeellinen maailma, ohjattu meditaatio*”) by Martta Jemina.

The workshop took place in a dome tent in the middle of nature. The tent was beautifully decorated and a beautiful sunset came through the transparent walls. Space was functional for this event. Participants brought their yoga mats, and many also had blankets. There was some aroma in the air and calm music was playing in the background. In the workshop, as the name suggests, the author learned about meditation and got to experience guided live meditation. After the workshop, participants could share their experiences with others.

Table 4. Meditation workshop observation summary

Workshop	Entertainment	Educational	Escapist	Esthetic
<i>The wonderful world of meditation, guided meditation</i>	No clear features	-learned about meditation	-immersed in guided meditation and actively involved in doing it -escape from normal daily life	-serene environment with carefully chosen decor, lighting, and scents

3. Ceremony: The author participated in the “*Shamanic journey ceremony*” by Orpheus B. The festival offers different ceremonies and performances. While ceremonies are frequently tied to religious or cultural occasions, this connection may not be readily apparent in the festival's program. However, some of these ceremonies can incorporate some elements from different cultures. Regarding ethical considerations and cultural sensitivity, it is essential to approach this topic with respect and awareness when designing workshops.

The workshop was organized in a big tent. Participants were asked to bring yoga mats and eye covers with them. Ancient shamanic music filled the space as participants settled on their yoga mats, and the instructor started to walk around the space with an incense that released an aroma into the air. The workshop's goal was to guide participants on a transformative personal journey to connect with their spirit animals. The instructor briefly talked about how this workshop could release some “feel good” hormones in our bodies. The workshop started with a brief dance and movement session, followed by everyone finding a comfortable position to lie down and putting their eye covers.

The workshop reminded a guided meditation, accompanied by shamanistic music. The instructor guided participants through an imaginary journey by speaking, during which they encountered spirit animals. It felt like a vivid dream, where the author still remained conscious and remembered every detail. The experience was both unique and captivating. After the workshop participants had the opportunity to share their personal experiences.

Table 5. Ceremony workshop observation summary

Workshop	Entertainment	Educational	Escapist	Esthetic
<i>Shamanic journey ceremony</i>	-music and storytelling guiding to a transformative journey	-experienced and learned something new and different	-dance and movement session together -a total escape from normal daily life	-immersed in the atmosphere yet have no impact on it -space and in-cense in the air

4. Ice bath: The author participated in the “cold exposure experience” by Leigh Ewin. The workshop was organized outside in a natural setting by the lake. A Finnish bathing tub had been brought to the place and organizers filled it with ice. The workshop started with an introduction to the Wim Hof breathing technique and movement exercises, also the possible benefits of cold exposure were reviewed. Participants also got to come up with different warm-up moves that they showed to others. The idea was to warm up and mentally prepare for going to the ice. It was quite chilly outside and the idea of going on the ice was scary, but the encouraging atmosphere and the connection with other participants made it easier. Then it was time to go to the ice in small groups and everyone stayed there for two minutes. It was intriguing to observe the reactions and emotions of other groups as they experienced the cold bath while waiting for own turn.



Figure 4. Ice bath workshop (Mia Järvisalo 2023)

This workshop posed a significant challenge, especially for those with limited experience in ice bathing. For the author, the two-minute duration felt surprisingly lengthy. Initially, controlling her breathing seemed almost impossible, and the cold was quite discomforting. Nevertheless, the shared determination within the group encouraged everyone to continue, ensuring that all participants completed at least two minutes in the ice bath. Some of the other participants reported experiencing a calming and euphoric sensation after the cold. For the author, the workshop proved to be an impressive and unforgettable experience. It left her feeling empowered, making it a truly memorable workshop.

The workshop successfully delivered a fully comprehensive experience, touching every aspect of the realms within the experience economy. This indicates that the experience indeed hit the "sweet spot".

Table 6. Ice bath workshop observation summary

Workshop	Entertainment	Educational	Escapist	Esthetic
<i>Cold exposure experience</i>	-watching the reactions and emotions of other groups as they experienced the cold bath	-learned breathing technique and the possible benefits of cold exposure	-active participation and possibility to affect the performance and experience -total escape from normal daily life by clearing the mind	-totally immersed in the atmosphere -admiring Finnish landscape

5. Ecstatic dance: The author attended "*Ecstatic Dance*" by Mikko Heikinpoika. Ecstatic dance was held outside, on the main stage. There was a DJ who started the ecstatic dance by explaining the rules, which are that preferably no pictures or videos, as little talking as possible and that everyone can dance by themselves in a safe environment and exactly the way they want.

First, it was challenging to get into the dance journey. The open outdoor setting may have hindered complete immersion in the dance at first. The author suggests that the use of a large tent, as in previous festival years, would be more suitable as it creates the feeling of "inside the experience" with atmospheric lighting better. Soon, however, when the author closed her eyes and relaxed, she caught up with the experience. The body started to move as if by itself and the dance was very fun. During the ecstatic dance, she felt a wide range of emotions, depending on the music. Although the workshop lasted two hours, it felt as if only an hour had passed at most.

The author learned a whole new dance genre and understood its purpose. The workshop also gave an enjoyable show, with participants dancing all around, accompanied by a light and music show. The experience included all realms of the experience economy, making it hit the "sweet spot." After the festival, the author has also attended ecstatic dance events as a hobby.

Table 7. Ecstatic dance workshop observation summary

Workshop	Entertainment	Educational	Escapist	Esthetic
<i>Ecstatic dance</i>	-watching a show -listening to music -elements of fun and enjoyment	-learned a new dance genre	-dancing and actively participating in creating the experience -escape from daily life and "normal" dance styles	-immersed in the atmosphere -different expressions of movement

5.2. Semi-structured interview results

The original idea was to hold the interviews entirely in English, but it turned out that most of the interviews and conversations were conducted in Finnish and the questions were translated into Finnish. Only one interview took place entirely in English because the interviewee's mother language was English.

Interviews were held via Zoom and audio was recorded, so that author did not need to write notes all the time and the conversation could be smooth interaction. The author tried to use Zoom's video recording option, but the computer started overheating every time, so decided to use the phone's voice recorder instead. Interviews lasted an average of 35 minutes. One of the people being interviewed wanted to see the questions before the interview. So, the author decided to send the questions to everyone along with the Zoom interview invitations. The time frame for conducting these interviews was between September 30th to October 8th 2023.

The researcher transcribed the key points and interesting themes from each right after the interviews, while the conversations were still fresh in memory. The gathered data required simplification for analysis. Data were categorized into main themes, which were established using the research objectives, sub-questions, and the theoretical framework as a basis. The author attempted to organize the interview questions into themes before the actual interview to ensure a comprehensive exploration of the thesis research objectives. However, the author also remained

open to the possibility of discovering new and unexpected themes that had not crossed her mind. The following subchapters introduce research results by each main theme.

5.3. Motivational factors for event participation

Along with opening questions and conversation, the goal was to understand the motivations that led participants to attend the event in question. The interviewees were also asked to describe the general atmosphere at the festival. Four of the respondents were first-time attendees of this festival, while two had been regulars for over three years. Three of the interviewees attended this type of event for the first time in general. Three of the interviewees stayed at the festival for 4 days, two for 3 days, and one for 1 day. Half of the respondents went to the festival alone and half with a friend or spouse.

Many mentioned that they learned about the festival through word of mouth, which intrigued their interest. Overall, the interviewees expressed a genuine interest in topics like well-being, mental, and spiritual growth. Many mentioned that they had already explored these subjects through online resources and self-help literature. They are interested in going deeper into their personal journey by attending this festival. Two respondents mentioned that reuniting with friends at the festival is their primary motivation to attend. These friends were mostly made at the event, and they only get to see them once a year during this festival. Every interviewee was motivated by the desire to somehow develop personally and learn something and experience new things.

Three interviewees had been following the festival on Instagram for about a year and had considered attending before actually purchasing the ticket. The festival's active Instagram show updates and often stories shared by other participants, offering sight into the festival's atmosphere. For the newcomers, a common theme emerged: their first experience brought a mix of excitement and hesitation, with a key concern being whether they would feel welcomed and whether they fit into the group. However, after this, all interviewees said right away that “fear” turned out to be completely unfounded and they felt more welcomed than ever. One interviewee described the experience as follows:

“I felt like I was exactly where I was supposed to be. I felt a strong sense of belonging and connection. It was as though I knew each visitor personally and shared a special bond with them. The atmosphere was both warm, safe, and relaxed, yet filled with playful creativity. Community spirit and a caring atmosphere were present everywhere.”

The festival atmosphere was characterized as warm, caring, safe, and inclusive. Interviewees described the festival as a bubble, creating its unique space and world for four days. Other participants were described as friendly and loving, often sharing smiles, compliments, and possibly hugs. People felt free to express themselves without any judgment. Some respondents also appreciated the opportunity to have fun and be more creative when dressing up for the festival.

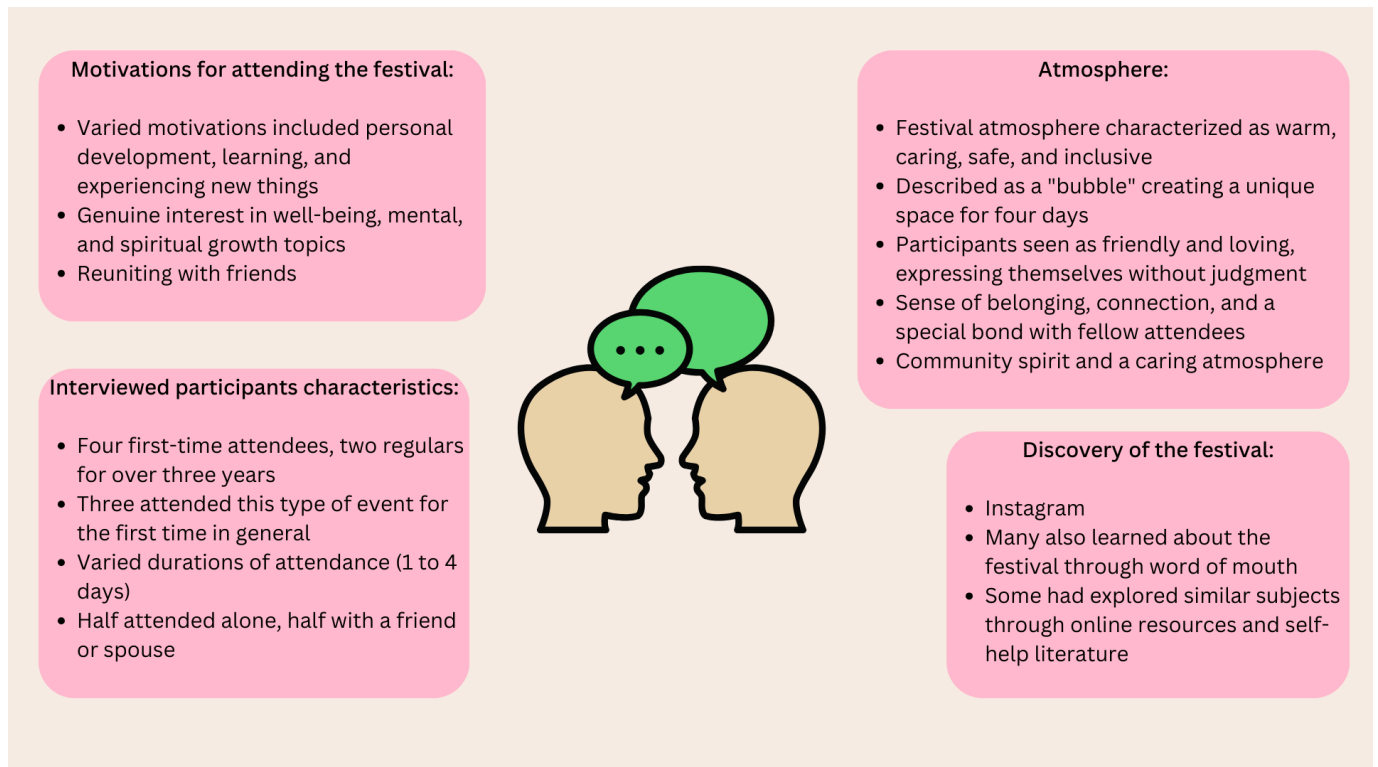


Figure 5. Motivational factors for event participation summary

5.4. Personal transformation journey of the interviewees

Before this point, the term "transformation" was explained to the interviewees within the thesis's context. "Personal transformation" is the central concept of the research, so it was important to clarify as the word "transformative" is rarely used in Finnish general language. Because many of the interviews were held in Finnish, the word was introduced in Finnish using a different phrasing but conveying the same meaning.

First interviewees were asked to describe what personal transformation meant to them and how they recognize it in their life. This question was not directly related to the festival. Interviewees characterized it as a process of change and personal growth. One interviewee described it as a deeper desire for self-improvement within every individual. One participant indicated that their journey of personal transformation began out of necessity, driven by a desire to break free from old thought patterns:

"I felt that I was stuck in old beliefs and behavior patterns. Additionally, I found myself stuck in a secure job that lacked excitement. The process of change hasn't always been comfortable, and unlearning childhood patterns has been both demanding and freeing, but essential".

Then the author wanted to find out if the interviewees learned or experienced something new in the festival itself, this question was a bridge to the next question, which tried to identify if the interviewees experienced something transformative and what kind. Most interviewees said that they experienced and learned new concrete things in the workshops. One interviewee did not recognize any new learnings. Three interviewees described that they have used the skills gained from the workshops and lectures in everyday life. The skills gained from the workshops were, among other things, dealing with fears, how to manage anxiety in social situations, and showing true emotions and the authentic self in front of others.

Four interviewees had clear transformative experiences at the festival, two interviewees did not feel any personal transformations from the festival. These two said that transformation feels like a too big word for it. One interviewee who had been at the festival over three times already mentioned that each year festival has a new theme and it will bring just those things to the surface that need to be dealt with right then in their life. Next, two quotes about different experienced transformations are provided. The subject is sensitive so it is essential to convey them exactly as the respondents described it by themselves:

"I felt that I got some kind of enlightenment to be more myself. At the festival, I noticed that I dare to be brave and bold and I got the feeling that I have a lot of importance in this world. I learned to let go of things that no longer serve me in a positive way. I feel that I know myself better".

"It has been difficult for me to talk about my real feelings on a deeper level even though I am a very social extrovert and get along with everyone. At festivals, I learned to say out loud my insecurities and fears. I put down all my protective walls in front of strangers and it felt liberating. It felt like I could connect with people and they would see me as I really am".

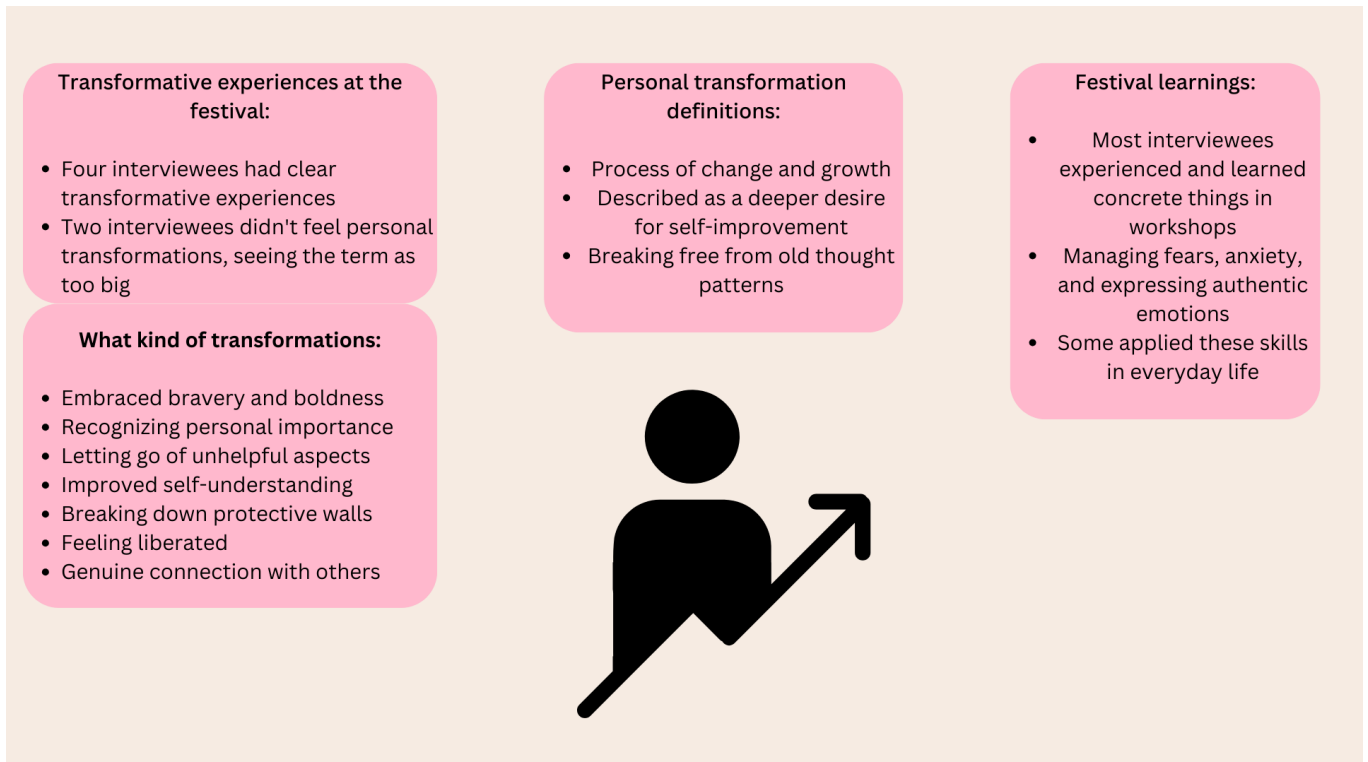


Figure 6. Personal transformation journey of the interviewees summary

5.5. Environment that support transformation

The next theme was to research what things led to the personal transformation and where the possible transformation was experienced. Most interviewees attended more than five different workshops during the whole festival. All interviewees also watched some music concerts. Two interviewees attended approximately only two workshops in total. For these two the festival was more about being with friends, community, exploring the festival area and nature. They mentioned that they intentionally reduce their pace when attending the festival and avoid scheduling too many workshops to prevent it from becoming stressful itself. Half of the interviewees carefully selected their workshops in advance by reading about them online, while the other half did not familiarize themselves with the program until they were at the festival.

The respondents highlighted that workshops could lead to transformative experiences, including moments of realizations and personal breakthroughs. However, the overall atmosphere and the period following the event, during which individuals had the opportunity to reflect on their own emotions and feelings in peace, had a more significant impact and more realizations started to come. By overall atmosphere, interviewees meant the supportive community that they felt they had at the festival. Encounters with other people were perceived as very valuable and memorable

moments. Each of the respondents described some encounter with a stranger very precisely. They described that they had laughed, talked, danced and cried with “strangers”.

The author wanted to ask about other external factors such as facilities and design of the festival space’s effects on personal transformations. Many respondents found the festival area’s atmosphere to be wonderful, but only two of the interviewees mentioned actual elements such as the decorations of the spaces, the flower wall for pictures and the small slogan signs that are around the festival area. Two respondents said they didn’t pay much attention to decorations or design because they were not the type of person who consciously noticed these sorts of things.

Then interviewees were asked what elements or features make this festival a successful transformative wellness event. The interviewees mentioned the wide range of workshops, the positive atmosphere and the absence of alcohol:

“In my opinion, the absence of alcohol is the biggest part. The environment is safe when no one is drunk because it would also affect the experiences of others negatively. No one escapes any feelings behind alcohol”.

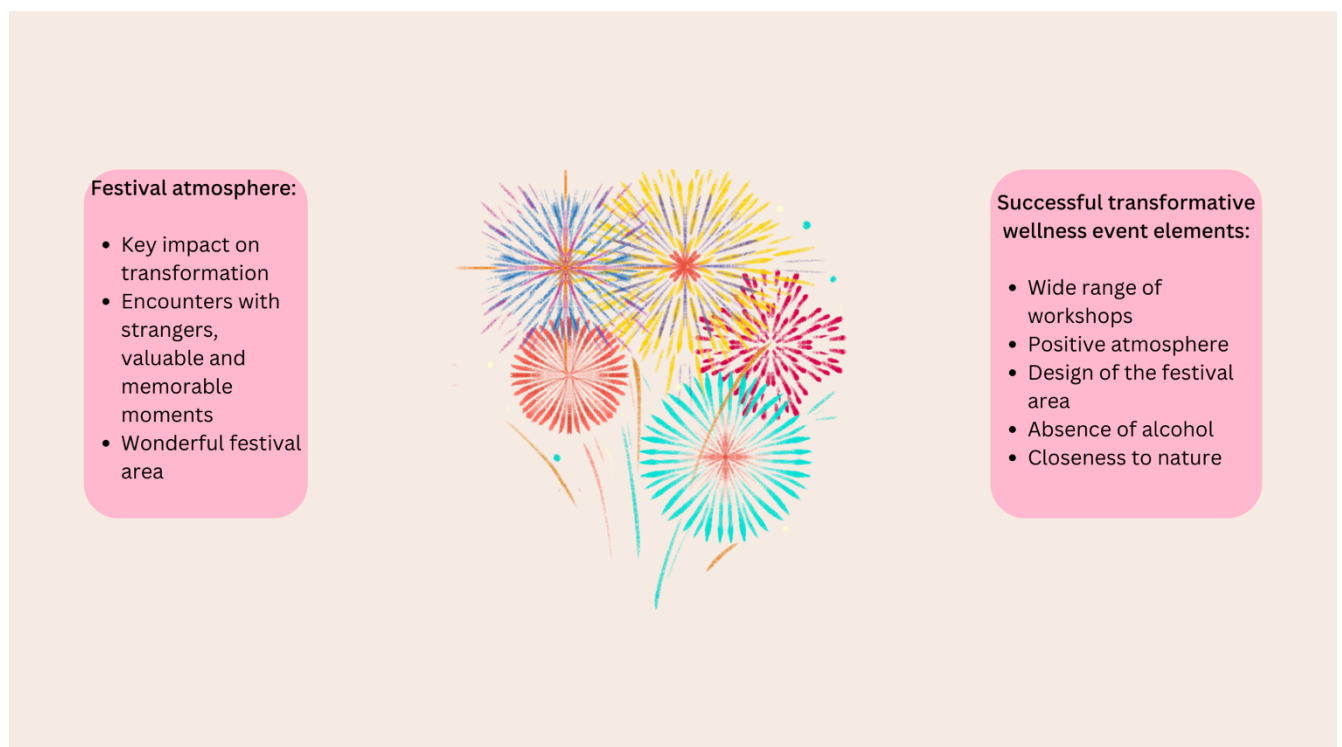


Figure 7. Environment that support transformation summary

5.6. Post-event reflections

Several interviewees reported positive personal transformations after the festival. Three interviewees shared an increased positivity, openness, and bravery in their lives. Many expressed how the event brought new inspiration for deeper exploration into spiritual growth. One individual started cold water swimming as a hobby because of the ice bath workshop. Two interviewees recognized and addressed their toxic behavior patterns, gaining new perspectives.

Four interviewees noted lasting positive and healthier changes and habits that they integrated into their daily lives. Two others struggled to point direct changes or say how long the effects continued after the festival. One of them told that frequent travel to different countries and attendance at similar events as complicating factors to identify if something happened because of this particular festival. One interviewee found it challenging to separate the festival's impact from their spouse's constant positive presence in everyday life, as they attended festival and workshops together.

When asked about surprising experiences at the festival, all interviewees pointed out the unexpected encounters with other participants. Many also expressed amazement of the depth of certain workshops, particularly noting their own surprising emotional outbursts, including for example an unexpected crying. A respondent, who hadn't cried in a year, found it almost funny that the festival's workshops somehow led to such a response. First-time attendees were surprised by how quickly they felt welcomed into the group, the diverse range of emotions they experienced, and the festival's ability to create a "bubble", forming an alternate reality that feels separate from the everyday life.

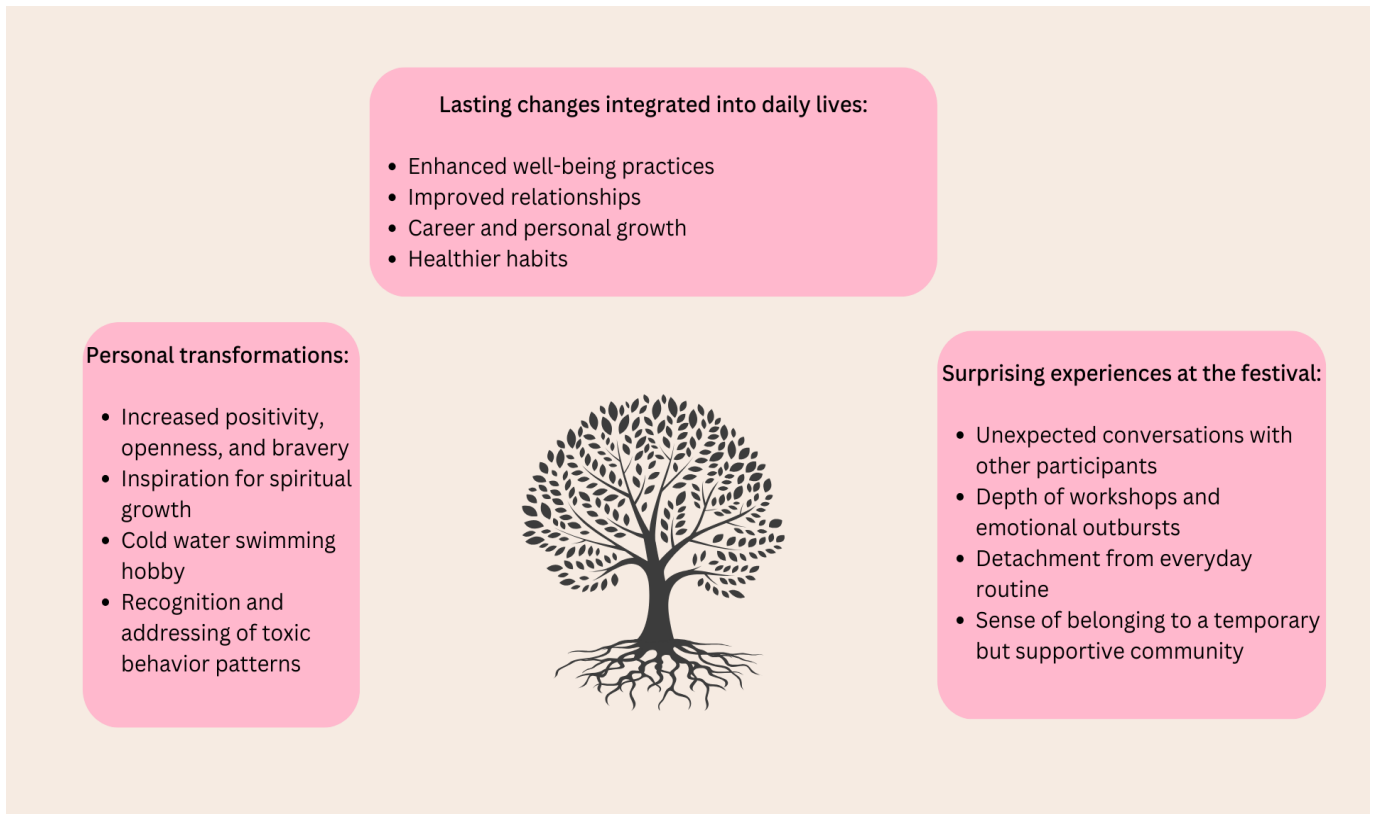


Figure 8. Post-event reflections summary

5.7. Feedback for a better event

The interviewees were asked about potential areas for festival development and, as an additional question, how it could assist or inspire transformative experiences better. Some interviewees expressed a desire for more visible and intense art at the festival. The interviewee suggested some concrete art such as huge paintings, in which every visitor could participate. Conversely, other interviewees felt the current level of decorations was enough as the clean, natural landscape was just right.

Workshop attendees pointed out concerns about some overcrowded workshop spaces which affected the experience. Also, some noisy environments were mentioned as the loud music and sounds from other different workshops sometimes carried on to their relaxation workshops. Interviewees suggested that the schedule and locations of the workshops could be considered more carefully.

Criticisms also targeted the cleanliness and amenities of the sauna facilities and the absence of warm water. The festival area has a sauna and shower facilities in two places. One is located in the core of the festival area and the other sauna is 1.3 km away. Most of the interviewees only used the sauna facilities in the core of the festival area. The sauna and shower wristband cost 18

euros for the entire festival. Interviewees were waiting to get a warm shower at the end of the day and this topic brought suggestions for an additional fee of a couple of euros for a quick warm shower.

The festivals are meat-free and there are not any meat options available at the food trucks. The absence of meat options was a concern for half of the interviewees, who proposed a solution of offering at least one meat dish because the vegetarian dishes did not keep their hunger away. Additional requests included a shared outdoor kitchen as one interviewee said that they did not realize to take a camping stove with them.

Improvements for the queuing and workshop reservation ticket system were hoped for better organization. The current system offers the possibility to get a reservation ticket a few hours in advance for the workshops due to limited space. However, some respondents found this preferable to the previous years' system, where the system was just queuing without reservation tickets, which often led to disappointment when workshops reached full capacity and they couldn't fit there.

The car parking also received some criticism. One interviewee, while trying to leave the festival area, found their car "squeezed" in next to cars on both sides, another car only a meter behind and another car in front, so there was not much to do than just wait for other car owners. To improve the situation, the interviewee proposed clearer signage for designated parking areas, visible markings for park spots and emergency roads, and a designated space for longer vehicles. There are staff guiding in the parking lots at the event and some designated areas for bigger vehicles but the staff is not there directing traffic around the clock, so people can come and go quite freely and then the cars could end up in the wrong places.

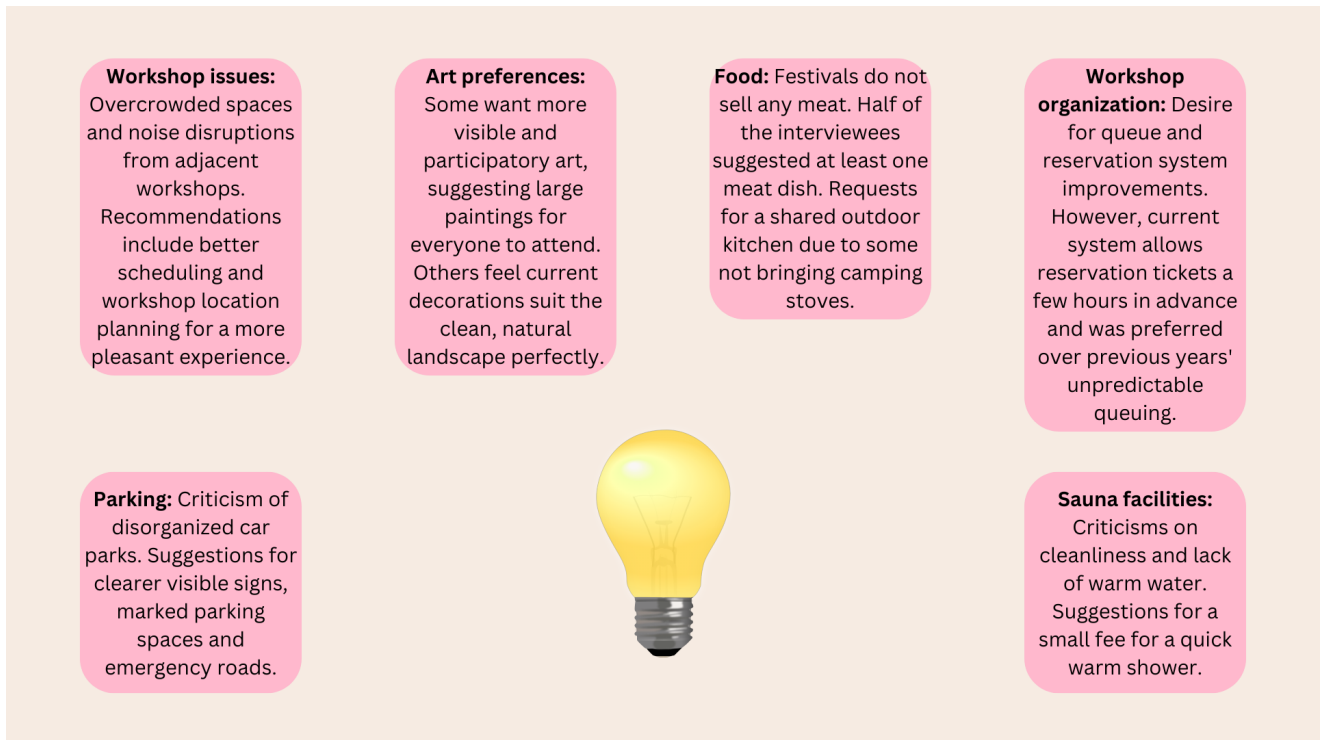


Figure 9. Feedback for a better event summary

6. Discussion

This chapter introduces the outcomes of the study by reflecting on the results of the main objective and each sub-question through presented theories, sources, observations and interview answers. The main goal is to discuss if the research answered what it was supposed to. This chapter also evaluates how trustworthy and valid the research is. It also suggests ideas for future research or improvements. Finally, the overall thesis and learning process is opened from an author's point of view.

6.1. Conclusion

The thesis aimed to map the phenomenon and explore what transformative wellness events are. The thesis took a closer look at the Finnish festival "Natural High Healing Festival", which markets itself as a transformative wellness event. The main question was to research the festival's transformative effects and investigate the transformative changes participants experienced in themselves or their lives as a result of attending.

A lot of data was gathered from the interviews, and the data were very diverse because each individual has their own subjective experiences and opinions. A larger number of interviewees could have possibly created big challenges in data analysis, which is quite time-consuming and laborious. In this thesis, the primary emphasis was to examine the unique human experiences in personal transformations rather than seeking repetitive answers or large amounts of data. The conclusions below are presented separately by each research question, starting from the sub-questions and then answering the main research question.

Sub-questions behind the main objective:

1. What is meant by personal transformation?
2. Which external factors lead to the transformational moment?
3. What are the main motivations for customers to attend the festival?
4. What are the key elements of a successful transformative wellness event?

The first sub-question was discussed in chapter 3.1, where it was stated that personal transformation is a process where people go through big changes in what they believe, how they act, how they see themselves and the world. Transformation can be a conscious and chosen process by individuals, but a person can also experience transformative moments in unexpected places or life situations. Interviewees were asked what personal transformation meant to them and how they recognized it in their lives. This likely proved to be the most challenging question during the interview, with approximately half of the interviewees struggling to formulate a response. Interviewees described personal transformation as a self-improvement journey, breaking free from old thought

patterns, and a deeper desire for self-growth. Personal transformation can mean different things for everyone, and everyone seeks and pursues it in different ways.

The second sub-question discussed which external factors led to the transformational moment. When exploring personal transformation, it is also important to focus on the external factors that trigger significant moments of change. The personal transformation experienced by participants in the Natural High Healing Festival is a combination of many external factors, as revealed in the interview results and supported by the theoretical framework. Interviews and observations highlighted that workshops could lead to transformative experiences and some transformational moments were experienced in the workshops. However, the overall festival atmosphere, meaningful meetings with other participants, and the period following the event, during which individuals had the opportunity to reflect on their own emotions and feelings in peace, had a more significant impact and more realizations started to come. It can be interpreted that the participants often need time to process their feelings and experiences after the festival and transformation takes time to develop. There are a lot of activities, loudness, and people at festivals, so, normally, reflecting own feelings alone at the festival can be challenging.

As stated in chapter 3.2 the construction and design of physical facilities for workshops play a crucial role in transformative moments (Sheldon 2020, 7). Observations and interviews found that the festival's physical design was noticed and admired, but there was no clear correspondence between design and transformational moments in the interviews. Also, a few interviewees did not notice or think about the spaces, design, or decorative elements, but neither complained about them. It can either be concluded that everything worked well and there was the right amount of decorative elements or that people are different and decorative elements do not interest all customers. However, in observations, esthetics were analyzed, and it brought a clear addition to the transformative experience. The theoretical framework aligns with the findings, emphasizing the importance of event design and decorations in nurturing creativity, peace, and a positive atmosphere.

Interviewees highlighted the absence of alcohol as a clear supporting factor for the transformational moments. The absence of alcohol is a big value of the festival, and it is seen as a positive thing. The absence of alcohol at this festival is important, because it creates a safe atmosphere for everyone, and human interactions can be genuine and present.

Chapter 3.2 discussed that “basic needs” such as clean drinking water, availability of food, clean environment, possibility to wash, safety, and security in the festival must be organized well so that people can immerse themselves in a transformative experience. Interview answers showed some issues related to basic organizational aspects, such as the confusion and lack of organization in

the parking area. In addition, some felt that queuing for the workshops was disorganized, and that more attention needed to be paid to the workshop spaces and schedules. Also, the dirtiness of the festival saunas and the ice-cold water in the shower facilities received criticism for understandable reasons, and the warm shower water was hoped for the next festivals.

Chapter 3.1 presented Mezirow's theory (1994), which included "a disorienting dilemma" where transformation can start from chaotic and demanding situations. This applies to some of the festival workshops as some workshops can be very intense, almost leading to discomfort. In some workshops, participants deliberately go out of their comfort zone and challenge themselves. From observations, for example, the ice bath experience reflects this idea.

Sub-question 3, explored what are the main motivations for customers to attend the festival. As stated in chapter 3.5 motivations are factors that push individuals to pursue certain goals, attend to certain activities and make particular choices. Four of the respondents were first-time attendees of this festival and three of them attended this type of event for the first time in general, while two interviewees had been regular customers for over three years.

Based on the interview responses and the theoretical framework, it can be concluded that participants attend the festival for a variety of motivations, aligning with Iso-Ahola's (1980) seeking and escaping theory of motivations, push and pull factors (adapted from Smith & Puczkó 2014, 114) and the Global Wellness Institute's six dimensions of wellness (Yeung & Johnston, 2018).

Seeking motivation can be for example to feel good, experience new things, personal growth or to meet new people. Escaping motivations can be for example to get away from the usual environment and people, to overcome a bad mood, or to get out of a stressful environment. (Iso-Ahola 1980 in Snepenger et al. 2006, 142.) The interviewee's key seeking motivations were to experience new things, personal growth, spiritual connection, and connect with others. Interviewees escaping motivations were to break away from their normal daily routines, so this corresponds with Iso-Ahola's theory.

Interview results stated that participants are pulled to the festival by the wish to experience personal growth, be happier, connect with nature, and be with friends. These align with pull factors outlined in the theoretical framework (Smith & Puczkó 2014) such as the desire for self-development, the wish to be healthier, the desire for beautiful nature, and the desire for a community.

The festival attendees' motivations also align with the six main reasons why people engage in wellness travel and events (presented in chapter 3.5) by the Global Wellness Institute (Yeung & Johnston 2018), including physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, social, and environmental well-being.

Participants engage in activities related to these dimensions through various workshops, social interactions, music, art, festival atmosphere, and connecting with nature.

The interviews and theoretical framework provide an understanding of the diverse motivations behind participants' decision to attend the festival. In conclusion, the motivations of festival attendees are various and everyone's motivation to participate is slightly different, but common themes can be seen. The festival serves as a good opportunity for personal development, making new friends, and the pursuit of overall well-being.

Sub-question 4, discussed what are the key elements of a successful transformative wellness event. As opened in the theoretical chapter 3.4 shaping transformative moments into lasting transformation is a key aspect of design (Soulard, McGehee & Stern 2019, 91-104). An integral aspect of personal transformational change involves empowerment. In this context, event participants aren't just consumers at various stages of the event, but they actively collaborate as co-creators.

Data from interviews highlights the importance of the overall atmosphere and supportive community in the festival. Encounters with strangers, shared moments and conversations contributed to the transformative experiences. Interviewees emphasized also the wide range of workshops and the absence of alcohol as key factors to the success of the event.

Chapter 3.4 opened that employees play an important role in creating transformational experiences. Their knowledge, skills, and values can co-create these experiences, acting as bridges between the host and customers. The quality of workshops and the presence of skilled facilitators is also essential. (Soulard et al. 2019, 91-104.) It was interesting that almost no word about the staff came out of the interviews. It could be that the interviewer did not know how to ask exactly that. However, in the observations, the workshop instructors played a big role in terms of the success of the workshop.

Chapter 3.4 opened that the physical environment where transformative encounters occur should encourage storytelling and symbolism (Soulard et al. 2019, 91-104). Innovative design of workshop spaces can facilitate transformative encounters. Generally, these spaces should be attractive, safe, and welcoming. The observations analyzed workshop spaces and their atmosphere in chapter 5.1.

As opened in chapter 3.6, Pine and Gilmore's Experience Economy theory categorizes experiences into four realms. Entertainment: primarily entertaining experiences where customers are passive participants like enjoying a show. Educational: the focus is on learning and personal development. Escapist: immersive experiences that allow customers to "escape" from their everyday life and the customer is actively involved in the experience. Esthetic: emphasizes the aesthetics,

sensory, and emotional aspects of an experience. The customer is fully engaged in an event or surroundings without influencing it. (Pine & Gilmore 1998.) Observation results are presented separately and profoundly in chapter 5.1. A table that summarizes all of the observations from five observed workshops is presented below.

Entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • watching and listening when speaker shared her personal journey (storytelling) • music and storytelling guiding to transformative journey • watching the reactions and emotions of other groups as they experienced the cold bath • watching a show • listening to music • elements of fun and enjoyment <p><i>Four out of five workshops hit the entertainment realm</i></p>
Educational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lecture about knowledge and skills related to career • interactive exercises and making notes • learned about meditation • experienced and learned something new and different • learned breathing technique and the possible benefits of cold exposure • learned a new dance genre <p><i>Five out of five workshops hit the educational realm</i></p>
Escapist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • immersed in guided meditation and actively involved of doing it • total escape from normal daily life • dance and movement session together • active participation and possibility to affect the performance and experience • dancing and actively participating in creating the experience <p><i>Four out of five workshops hit the escapist realm</i></p>
Esthetic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • serene environment with carefully chosen decor, lighting and scents • immersed in the atmosphere yet have no impact on it • space decoration and incense in the air • admiring Finnish landscape • totally immersed in the atmosphere <p><i>Four out of five workshops hit the esthetic realm</i></p>

Figure 10. Observation summary

In this summary, it is visible which and how realms were represented. The purpose of this observation was to just peek into the world of transformative festivals and illuminate the experience for the reader before the interview part. Because of this the analysis does not look for specific improvement possibilities for each workshop separately. In summary, the educational realm stood out as every workshop was able to provide something educational. Additionally, the entertainment, escapist, and esthetic realms were also well-filled, with four out of five workshops incorporating elements from these realms. It can be said that the festival offers very diverse and high-quality workshops.

Based on research, observations, and interviews a successful transformative wellness event consists of good workshops with skilled instructors, positive and conscious customers, an inspirational atmosphere, freedom to be creative, inspirational design elements and decorations, no alcohol, a beautiful natural environment, and that the basic organization of event works well.

The main research question was to investigate what transformative effects the Natural High Healing Festival has on its attendees. The festival markets itself as a transformative wellness event and the author wanted to research whether the festival is indeed transformative and how. Data showed that most of the interviewees expressed clear personal transformative experiences and lots of new learnings from the festival. Two interviewees did not recognize transformation in themselves and said that the word transformation is too “big” word to describe it. Only one interviewee said that there were neither new learnings. Many of the interviewees noted lasting positive and healthier changes and habits that they integrated into their daily lives.

Transformative experiences of the interviewees:

- Embraced bravery and boldness
- Recognizing personal importance
- Letting go of unserving things in life
- Improved self-understanding
- Breaking down own protective walls
- Feeling more liberated
- Genuine connection with others
- Expressing authentic emotions in front of others
- Managing fears and anxiety

Observations (presented in chapter 5.1) also identified some transformative experiences:

- Increased positivity
- A sense of empowerment
- Increased courage
- a new hobby of cold swimming

Next, all the subjective experiences from the interviews are gathered together and they are compared point by point with Mezirow's transformative learning theory (presented in chapter 3.1). This will show whether some transformation steps were fulfilled. There is only a small difference between some steps in the theory, so many of the interview answers could fit into many different steps.

1. “*A disorienting dilemma*”: One interviewee said that their journey of personal transformation began out of necessity, driven by a force to break free from old thought patterns, life situations, and a job that lacked inspiration. This aligns with this step as a disorienting dilemma can be, for example, a personal crisis like divorce, an accident, or job loss. This starts individuals to seek meaning in their lives and it creates a sense of imbalance, requiring a shift

in beliefs and values. (Mezirow 1994 in Reisinger 2013, 18.) This applies also to some of the festival workshops as in some workshops participants deliberately go out of their comfort zone and challenge themselves. From observations, for example, the ice bath experience reflects this idea.

2. *"Self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame"*: Two interviewees recognized and addressed their toxic behavior patterns in their lives. This aligns with this step where a person may experience negative emotions like guilt or shame as they assess their current beliefs and actions (Mezirow 1994 in Reisinger 2013, 19).
3. *"A critical assessment of assumptions"*: One interviewee said that unlearning childhood patterns has been both demanding and freeing, but essential. This aligns with this step where a person critically analyzes the sources and foundations of their beliefs and values (Mezirow 1994 in Reisinger 2013, 19).
4. *"Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and others have negotiated a similar change"*: This is the point where a person realizes that others have gone through similar feelings and experiences (Mezirow 1994 in Reisinger 2013, 19). Data from the interviews showed that encounters with other people were perceived as valuable and memorable moments. Many described that they had laughed, talked, shared, danced and cried with "strangers". Also, the observations showed that a supportive community was a very important part.
5. *"Exploration of options for new roles, relationships and actions"*: Some interviewees said that they felt some kind of enlightenment to be more themselves. They noticed that they dare to be braver and dare to make their own choices in life. This aligns with this step where the person starts to explore new ways of thinking, behaving, and interacting (Mezirow 1994 in Reisinger 2013, 19).
6. *"Planning a course of action"*: Every interviewee was motivated by the desire to somehow develop personally, learn something and experience new things. This aligns with this step where the person may set goals for implementing their new beliefs and perspectives (Mezirow 1994 in Reisinger 2013, 19).
7. *"Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans"*: In this step person looks out for the necessary knowledge and skills to execute their change plan effectively (Mezirow 1994 in Reisinger 2013, 19). The interviewees expressed a genuine interest in topics like well-being, mental, and spiritual growth. Many mentioned that they had already explored

these subjects through online resources and self-help literature. They are interested in going deeper into their personal journey by attending this festival.

8. *"Provisionally trying out new roles"*: One interviewee said that talking about real feelings on a deeper level has been a huge challenge, but learned to do so at the festival and experienced an ability to connect with others genuinely. This aligns with this step where a person begins to experiment with their new beliefs and behaviors (Mezirow 1994 in Reisinger 2013, 19).
9. *"Renegotiating relationships and negotiating new relationships"*: This point is challenging as the personal relationships were not asked in the interviews but many interviewees talked about the new friends and people they met at the festival which aligns with this step where people's relationships with others may change, as they are not the same person anymore and maybe form new relationships that align with their transformed beliefs and values (Mezirow 1994 in Reisinger 2013, 19).
10. *"A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective"*: Several interviewees reported positive personal transformations after the festival. Three interviewees shared an increased positivity, openness, and bravery in their daily lives. Many expressed how the event brought new inspiration for deeper exploration into spiritual growth which aligns with this step where a person starts reintegrating the transformed self into everyday life (Mezirow 1994 in Reisinger 2013, 19).
11. *"Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships"*: Some of the interviewees said that they have used learnings from the festivals and noted lasting positive and healthier habits in their daily lives. New hobbies were also found, which were inspired by the festival's workshops. Transformation reaches its conclusion when the individual entirely integrates the fresh attitudes, and behaviors into their own life (Mezirow 1994 in Reisinger 2013, 19).

The results show that the festival indeed had many different transformative effects on its customers. In the future, it is likely that such events will become more common and will attract more and more visitors. Also, it does not have to be a whole festival that is focused on some kind of well-being and transformation, but it can be part of everyday life, as stated in chapter 1, taking care of the soul, mind and body is no longer considered an unconventional or "hippie" concept, but rather a mainstream trend, where markets offer a wide range of products, online courses, workshops and well-being events to serve the growing demand.

6.2. Reliability, Validity and Suggestions for future studies

This research has certain limitations. There were a limited number of participants, and they were mostly from Finland. Considering a broader range of demographics could have provided additional perspectives, by improving the depth of understanding in the project. Also, only the millennial generation was interviewed, so a wider age distribution could bring more comprehensive research results.

The interviews were held 4-5 months after the festival, relying on participants' memory. However, transformation needs time to develop, which was also visible in the interviews where participants described that they needed some time after the event to reflect on their own emotions and feelings in peace, and that had a significant impact and more realizations about transformations started to come. In future, when trying to understand and estimate individuals' experience in "personal transformation" it would be beneficial to collect some data also before the festival and then compare the results before and after.

Potential participants were invited to take part in the research with the option to decline. Participants were briefed on the research's purpose and where it will be published. Participants were briefed that they and their answers would remain anonymous, making it impossible to identify any individual and that all notes would be destroyed within one month of the interview. Before interviews, consent to audio recording was asked. During some interview responses, there was some hesitation to answer due to sensitive topics, potentially impacting the research outcomes. On the other hand, most individuals shared all their festival experiences very deeply and openly.

Observation was used as another research method, so the topic was studied from a few different angles. While this thesis observation focused on five workshops, a comprehensive observation of the entire festival could assess whether the whole festival aligns with Pine & Gilmore's theory of hitting the "sweet spot". This study interviewed festival attendees regardless of which workshops they attended. To improve the observations, future studies could interview visitors who participated in the same workshops as the author and then gather the observations together. This could provide intriguing insights and deeper analysis, as everyone has their own different experiences.

As stated before in this thesis, when research is done from an experiential and qualitative perspective, it aims to understand the interviewee's subjective experiences rather than provide explanations and mathematical data. This thesis does not try to define whether someone's experiences are objectively "true", but what meaning people give to their unique experiences. Experience is always subjective, and the results depend on and vary according to the respondents.

6.3. Reflections on personal learning

When the author started this thesis, she had no experience with this type of research, and it was the biggest personal research project she has done. Writing the thesis presented numerous new challenges, but at the same time, it was a continuous learning opportunity. It helped the author to gain knowledge and learn how to conduct research, it taught a more independent working approach, skills to critically evaluate academic literature and sources as well as understanding the factors affecting the reliability of research. It was a teaching experience to work as a researcher, observer and interviewer. It was interesting to invite strangers to interview and talk with them.

Choosing the topic was difficult at first because so many things interested the author and there were numerous ideas. The author looked at her past school projects and noticed a recurring theme of a significant amount of projects centered around the wellness concept, and it was clearly the most interesting for the author. The combination of the concepts of wellness and transformation posed some challenges due to the lack of information and research that integrates both. Existing sources mostly concentrate on either wellness or transformation individually, making it challenging to find comprehensive sources that combine them. So, the author had to first open the so-called “umbrella concept” wellness and then continue to the transformative events that are mostly under the wellness concept and then logically connect these two concepts by combining many different sources and theories. This taught the author more analytical thinking and an investigative approach.

The work was carried out in three months, during which the author fully focused on writing this thesis. The thesis has not only been an educational journey in terms of knowledge and skills but has also enriched the author mentally. The author believes that this thesis journey has brought to her also some sort of transformative experience.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview questions

Interview questions

The thesis subject is explained briefly before the questions. The interviewee is told that the results will be published anonymously and all notes and contact information will be destroyed within 1 month of the interview.

Opening questions+ Motivations

1. How many days did you spend at the festival?
2. What were your main motivations for choosing to attend the Natural High Healing Festival?
3. How would you describe the overall experience and atmosphere?

Understanding the personal transformation

1. What does personal transformation mean to you, and how do you recognize it in your life?
2. What new did you experience or learn in the festival?
3. Can you describe what personal transformations you experienced as a result of attending the Natural High Healing Festival?

Where does transformation takes place

1. What workshops did you attend, and why did you choose those specific ones?
2. Were there any external factors, such as interactions, activities, spaces, or elements at the festival that you believe played a significant role in your transformation?
3. How did your interactions with other participants contribute to your transformative experience?
4. In your opinion, what elements or features make the Natural High Healing Festival a successful transformative wellness event?

Life after the festival

1. How has your life, mindset or perspective changed because of attending the festival?
2. How permanent the changes have been, how long they last after the event?
3. Were there some unexpected or surprising transformations or realizations that occurred during the festival?

Suggestions

4. Does and how festival inspire people for personal growth/ self-discovery/ personal transformation?
5. What could the festival do better to lead to a transformative experience?

Appendix 2. Natural High Healing Festival program

https://www.naturalhighfestival.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Natural-High-Healing-Festival_ohjelma_A4_030723.pdf

Thursday 2023

Show Your Highest Self

	Magical mainstage	Hall of Mastery	Red Temple	Mystic Sun	Highest Vision	White Light Room	Healing Goddess Happiness Heaven	Art Cave	Share & Play	Blue Clarity	Touch of Ocean -Dome	Bliss Space	Tipii	Crystal Healing	Secret Beach	
14	14.15-15.45 MY BODY IN THE CRUCE Johanna Huurme FINENG	14.30-16.00 HEALING BELLYDANCE Jasmine FINENG	14.00-15.45 DEEP MEETINGS ZEN COACHING Milla Mäntylä FINENG			14.15 - 15.45 YOGA DEEP RHYTHM Emma Saarelma FINENG	14.00-15.45 SHAKTITASSE: SATELEVA SIELU Siri Viikari FIN	14.00-15.00 ART CAVE NAVITILYN AVAJAISET	14.30-16.00 YOGA & BOXING Laura Poutsu FIN	14.15-15.45 7 ASKELTA UNELMA- TYÖHÖN Riikka Pajunen FIN				14.45-16.15 SIDOHA KUNDALINI Kimmo Numminen FINENG		
16	16.30-17.30 SWEAT & TWERK Minna Viikari FINENG	16.30-18.00 ECSTASY BREATHE IN DANCE Heli Naik ENG	16.15-18.00 BODYSHAME Sara Adalsten FINENG (WOMEN)	15.45-17.45 VELJONNA TYÖPÄJÄ Milla Varti Renterghem FIN (MEN)	16.00-17.45 CONNECT TO WILD EARTH POWER Anja Koskela FINENG	16.15-18.00 RELEASE AND RELIEF - SHIATSU Kirsi & Jorini Cormier / Gopala ENG	16.30-18.00 SUKOHAAVA Henna Perkkio FIN (WOMEN)	16.30-18.00 SHIBARI-SIDON- TAA PAREILLE. ALKUET Saara Kantanen FIN	16.30-18.15 SAA MITÄ HALUAT - ISOT UNELMAT TODEKSI! Mika Koppelmäki FIN				16.45-18.15 EMPOWERING WRITING: INNER ME Tia Fellese FINENG	16.45-18.15 SILENCE OPEN SPACE FOR MEDITATORS All day long		
18	OPENING CEREMONY 18.30-19.30 At the Main stage															
20	19.30-21.00 I LOVE MY LIFE PARTY Nina Naik ENG	19.45-21.30 SOUND HEALING CONCERT Joni Toivonen FINENG	20.00-21.45 TANTRIC MASSAGE FOR COUPLES Petra Koyu FINENG		20.30-21.30 PLANET HEALING - CEREMONY Vibe Haglund Carmen Gjerskov ENG	20.00-21.30 MERI RINDRA NIKULA Vocal Healing Concert		19.45-21.15 SHIBARI- ITSEIDONTAA NAILLE Saara Kantanen FIN	19.45-21.15 GYROKINESIS METHOD FLOW Riikka Tapani ENG					20.00-21.00 TREE OF LIFE -SHAMANIC JOURNEY Helmi Korhu FINENG		20.45-23.45 1 FIRE WALK Roune Mäkelä / Mia Fie FINENG MEETING POINT: INFO
22		22.00-23.00 MAARIA Music Concert	22.00-23.15 PARTY FOR SINGLES SINKUULEET Kirsi Sola & Friends			22.00-23.00 SOUND OF THE SOUL GONG- RENTOUTS Ari Marjamäki FIN	20.00-01.00 Extension of Welcome Cafe OPEN SPACE FOR RAW CAKES & Friends						21.15-22.45 MEDITOINNIN IHMEELLINEN MAAILMA OHJATTU MEDITAATIO Matti Järvelä FIN	21.15-00.00 OPEN DRUMMING SPACE	SILENCE OPEN SPACE FOR MEDITATORS All day long	
00	23.00-00.30 Ecstatic Dance VELHO			23.00-00.30 PRESENT Audiovisual performance Anne & Iisak FINENG												

11th Festival! Year of Mastery!

Explore the MAGIC of the festival

Healing Goddess Lounge
 OMA TILA -Art installation
 Welcome Cafe
 Baha Cafe
 Love Bus Cafe - Sweet and Salty
 Sun Terrace

Natural High Healing Shop
 Wonder Garden
 Silence Zone & Meditation hut
 Poetry path
 Lemmenkalit

Emotional Support
 Secret Beach
 Festival sauna
 Boutique Avenue & Food Fiesta
 Healers Pond for individual treatments

S STRONG
 Y YOGA MAT
 C CHILDREN FRIENDLY
 N NUOITY

MUSIC
DJ & PARTY
SOUND & VOICE
CEREMONY & PERFORMANCE
DANCE & BODY
TANTRA
YOGA
OPEN SPACE
LECTURE
OTHER
ECSTASY DANCE
MEDITATION
COACHING

Friday 2023

Show Your Highest Self

	Musical mainstage	Hall of Mystery	Red Temple	Mystic Sun	Highest Vision	White Light Room	Healing Goddess Happiness Heaven	Art Cave	Share & Play	Blue Clarity	Touch of Ocean -Dome	Bliss Space	Tipi	Crystal Healing	Secret Beach
8		8.30-10.00 TUNNE PELKOSSI, ANTAUDDI ELAMÄÄN Hanni-Pekka Pietikäinen FIN		8.00-9.30 TIBETAN TSALUNG YOGA Nelson Dorje FINENG		7.30-9.00 SYDÄN JA SIELU JOOGA JA GONG Anni-Margareta FIN				8.30-10.15 YITTI JA ETEESEET ÖLÝT APUNAJI Virpi Rapola Korneri FIN	8.30-10.00 TIEKOTUUS WORKSHOP & OHJATTU MEDITAATIO Matti Järvinen FIN	9.15-10.15 JUMALATAR- JOOGA Saneli Nevalainen FIN	9.00-10.00 SUN AND MOON FINENG	9.30-11.00 SIDDHA KUNDALINI Kimmo Nuorteva FINENG	
10	10.00-11.30 ARGENTINE TANGO EXPERIENCE Nadia Tassat ENG	10.45-12.15 ECSTASY BREATHE IN DANCE Nina Nall ENG	10.30-13.00 FROM TRAUMA TO TANTRA Liza Martin ENG	10.00-12.00 POETIC BODIES IN MOTION Veiga Luukkainen FINENG	11.00-12.00 PAINAL HEIJONKALL Sari Koskela FINENG	9.45-11.15 YOGA & CELLO FLOW Emilia Savelle & Hele FINENG	9.30-11.30 INTIMI KOSKETUS Nina Nall & Virpi Mäkelä FIN	9.00-10.30 SHIRAZI PAREILLE JATKOKUUSI Sara Korhonen FIN	9.00-10.45 SELF LOVE WORKSHOP Nina Rosas & Sanelina Teetsova FINENG	10.45-12.15 OPTIMIZE DEEP & REM SLEEP Olli Savijärvi FINENG	10.30-11.15 YITTEYS KOHTUUS LUOMAYOMAAN Jenna Salonen FIN	11.15-13.15 SILENT MATHS Elina Mikkola & Rubin Nagore FINENG	11.00-12.00 OMAN VOIMAN MEDITAATIO Sara Savelle FIN	11.00-12.45 COLD EXPOSURE EXPERIENCE Leigh Ewen ENG	
12	12.15-14.15 DJ RAISA ALANKA Ecstatic Dance			12.15-13.45 LOTTA MAJJA Music Concert	12.15-13.45 DJ LAURA HATSU Dance	12.00-13.15 INTUITIIVISEN TOYAJA Nina Rintala FIN	12.00-13.15 OMAN VOIMAN TOYAJA Tero Suuronen FIN	11.00-12.45 MIESTEN OMAN VOIMAN TOYAJA Tero Suuronen FIN	11.15-12.45 LAUGHTER TRANS- FORMATION Henna Lamsola FINENG	12.00-13.45 RELEASE AND RELIEF - SHATSU Virpi & James Korneri & Gopala ENG	12.45-13.45 SUOMEN PAKKA Uudessa MaaLilla Nauri Ltd. FIN	14.30-15.30 HAPPY HORMONES (AYURVEDA) Lari-Petro FIN	13.45-15.30 HAPPY HORMONES (AYURVEDA) Lari-Petro FIN	14.30-15.30 SHARING CIRCLE Tia Fellous ENG	15.00-17.00 SAND SCULPTING WORKSHOP Marci Petaja FIN
14	14.30-15.30 UNDER THE SUN OF SENSUAL MUSIC NAGORE FINENG	14.00-15.45 HYPER HOT WOMAN 3.0 Ava Avatar ENG	14.00-15.30 SEKSUAALISEN INTUITION SYTYTTÄMINEN (PARTI) Hele & Laura Nordström FIN	14.30-15.30 SOMA BREATHE AWAKENING Ning Nall ENG	14.15-16.00 PIYAN PHEM- NIN & MASKULIN NIN SENSUAL Ava Avatar & Sanelina FIN	14.30-16.00 SHAMANIC JOURNEY Jonna Morola FINENG	14.15-16.00 RELATIONAL LABORATORY Rouven Schneider ENG	14.00-15.30 HEALING BELLY- DANCE Jasmine FINENG	14.30-15.30 ORAVANPÖRÄSTÄ OHAVAAVA- SUUTEN Kari Sae FIN	14.30-15.30 HAPPY HORMONES (AYURVEDA) Lari-Petro FIN	14.30-15.30 HAPPY HORMONES (AYURVEDA) Lari-Petro FIN	14.30-15.30 SHARING CIRCLE Tia Fellous ENG	15.00-17.00 SAND SCULPTING WORKSHOP Marci Petaja FIN	17.30-19.00 SIDDHA KUNDALINI- ATLANTIS Kimmo Nuorteva FINENG	
16	16.00-17.00 SWEAT & TWINK Monie Visconti FINENG	16.15-17.45 BREATHWORX INSPIRATIONS Leigh Ewen ENG	16.15-18.00 FINDING CONNECTION Mia Renwick FINENG	16.30-18.00 MIESTEN TOYAJA Teemu Sytylä FIN	16.30-18.15 NAISTEN LUONNON VOIMA -SEREMOONIA JA KULKUE Sara Savelle FIN	16.30-18.00 SILUUN SHAMANIC JOURNEY Jonna Morola FINENG	16.30-18.00 GODDESS HAPPINESS HEAVEN Marta Kaim & Henna Lamsola FIN	16.45-18.15 SAA MITA HALUAT - TENNEN OMA VAIKUTUS Ilkka Kappelenmäki FIN	16.00-17.30 PARTNER YOGA Virpi & James Korneri / Sarvani & Gopala FIN	16.15-18.00 HUMAN DESIGN: FREE WILL JOKE OR REAL? Nina Rosas & Sanelina Teetsova FINENG	17.00-18.15 KUKAUTTES VOMAA Jenna Salonen FIN	16.00-17.45 VALONSOTURI & SYMBOLEN Elina Järvinen & Sanelina FIN	16.30-18.00 OPEN DRUMMING SPACE Tia Fellous FIN	17.30-19.00 SIDDHA KUNDALINI- ATLANTIS Kimmo Nuorteva FINENG	
18	18.15-19.00 Juhlakuusen parissa CELEBRATION TOGETHER	18.30-20.30 HIGHWAY TO BLISS Martha Singing Circle	19.00-20.45 TANTRA FOR LIFE Pragita & Savelle FINENG	19.45-21.30 BUT GLOW- DANCE AND SHINE Anna Jussila FINENG	19.00-20.30 DJ HAPAN KORPU Dance	19.00-21.00 DYNAMIC FLOW Maya Wayack ENG	19.00-20.30 POETRY STAGE/ OPEN MIC Nina Rintala FIN	19.45-20.45 MEDITATION FOR JOY & HAPPINESS James FIN	20.15-22.00 STILLNESS IN DISORDER Philip How ENG	18.30-20.30 WOMB CENTERED VOICE Matti Järvinen Nikola FINENG	19.15-21.00 DEEP MEETINGS -ZEN COACHING Truth - key to essence Matti Järvinen FINENG	19.45-20.45 SILJA KULO Circle Songs			
20	20.30-21.15 JULIUS RANTALA Music Concert		21.15-23.00 RIEMUTANTTAA KARKKILE Monie Visconti FIN	22.00-23.30 SHIBARI PERFORMANCE LIVE MUSIC Saneli, James & Lara FINENG	22.00-23.30 SHIBARI PERFORMANCE LIVE MUSIC Saneli, James & Lara FINENG	22.00-23.30 SHIBARI PERFORMANCE LIVE MUSIC Saneli, James & Lara FINENG	22.00-23.30 SHIBARI PERFORMANCE LIVE MUSIC Saneli, James & Lara FINENG	22.00-23.30 SHIBARI PERFORMANCE LIVE MUSIC Saneli, James & Lara FINENG	22.00-23.30 SHIBARI PERFORMANCE LIVE MUSIC Saneli, James & Lara FINENG	22.00-23.30 SHIBARI PERFORMANCE LIVE MUSIC Saneli, James & Lara FINENG	22.00-23.30 SHIBARI PERFORMANCE LIVE MUSIC Saneli, James & Lara FINENG	22.00-23.30 SHIBARI PERFORMANCE LIVE MUSIC Saneli, James & Lara FINENG	22.00-23.30 SHIBARI PERFORMANCE LIVE MUSIC Saneli, James & Lara FINENG	22.00-23.30 SHIBARI PERFORMANCE LIVE MUSIC Saneli, James & Lara FINENG	22.00-23.30 SHIBARI PERFORMANCE LIVE MUSIC Saneli, James & Lara FINENG
22	23.00-01.00 HEIKINPÖKKÄ Ecstatic Dance														
00															

Join us at
Welcome Café, BOHO Café &
Love Bus Café -Sweet and salty.
Lovely places to meet and treat

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Saturday 2023

Show Your Highest Self

	Musical mainstage	Hall of Mystery	Red Temple	Mystic Sun	Highest Vision	White Light Room	Healing Goddess Happiness Heaven	Art Cave	Share & Play	Blue Clarity	Touch of Ocean Dome	Bliss Space	Tipi	Crystal Healing	Secret Beach
8	8.00-9.30 BUTI YOGA: SHAKE AND RELEASE! Anna Jussila FINENG V C		8.00-9.45 TANTRIC MASSAGE FOR COUPLES Petro Kaya FINENG V N	8.30-10.00 YOGA DEEP RHYTHM Emilia Savelle FINENG V		6.00-8.30 SOULFUL YOGA FOR SPIRITUAL UPLIFTMENT SARAHNA Virpi Rapola FINENG V	8.00-9.45 YOGA FOR SPIRITUAL UPLIFTMENT SARAHNA Virpi Rapola FINENG V	8.15-10.00 THE INNERMOST PILGRIMAGE Philip How ENG S	9.00-10.30 CH-FLOW Dyrola FINENG C	8.15-10.00 COMIC ART WORKSHOP Pete Berendson FINENG C	8.30-10.00 PHILOSOPHY OF BREATHING Pete Berendson FINENG C	9.00-10.45 FERIE FINENG V	9.15-10.45 SIDDHA KUNDALINI- ATLANTIS Kimmo Nuorteva FINENG V C S	10.00-12.00 SAND SCULPTING WORKSHOP Mervi Peltola FINENG V C S	
10	10.00-11.45 WEALTH BODY ACTIVATION Ava Avatar ENG V S	9.30-11.45 BREATH JOURNEY Pragita & Savelle FINENG V S	10.30-12.00 SENSUAL FEMININE TWERK (WOMEN) Monie Visconti FINENG V S	10.30-12.00 GLOWING GODDESS RITUAL Kimmo Nuorteva FINENG V S	10.30-12.30 YOGA DEEP RHYTHM Emilia Savelle FINENG V S	9.45-11.30 SELF LOVE WORKSHOP Nina Rosas & Sanelina Teetsova FINENG V S	11.00-12.30 YIN JOURNEY -DEEP REST Anni Zaghoudi ENG S	10.45-12.30 YIN JOURNEY -DEEP REST Anni Zaghoudi ENG V	11.45-12.45 UNDER THE SUN OF SENSUAL MUSIC NAGORE FINENG V	10.30-11.30 MINUTTAU ELAMAA Hanni-Pekka Pietikäinen FIN C	10.30-12.00 OCEAN OF SOUND Matti Järvinen FINENG C	10.10-12.45 EVOLUTIONARY DANCE Rouven Schneider ENG V	11.30-12.30 SIELUN LAKSOTUS MEDITAATIO Sanni Heikkilä FIN V	12.45-14.15 LEMMENSÄÄNTÄ SAUNA-AIKA Saneli-Aika FINENG V C S	12.45-14.15 LEMMENSÄÄNTÄ SAUNA-AIKA Saneli-Aika FINENG V C S
12	12.30-14.00 TUNNE PELKOSSI ANTAUDDI ELAMAA Hanni-Pekka Pietikäinen FIN	12.30-14.30 KARREEM RAHANI Ecstatic Dance	13.15-15.00 SEKSUAALISEN INTUITION SYTYTTÄMINEN (PARTI) Hele & Laura Nordström FIN	12.30-14.00 DEEP AMBIENT JOURNEY DJ OHS & Savelle FINENG V	12.30-14.30 HIGHWAY TO BLISS Martha Singing Circle	11.30-12.30 PRIMAL HOWLING CALL Sini Kase- Savelle FINENG V	11.30-13.00 STATE OF LOVE AND CREATIVITY Tero Suuronen FINENG S	11.00-12.30 YIN JOURNEY -DEEP REST Anni Zaghoudi ENG S	11.45-12.45 UNDER THE SUN OF SENSUAL MUSIC NAGORE FINENG V	12.30-13.30 ONNELLISUUS- MINUUTTI Ilkka Kappelenmäki FIN C	12.30-13.30 ONNELLISUUS- MINUUTTI Ilkka Kappelenmäki FIN C	14.00-15.30 PYSYVÄÄN RAKKAUDEEN JAA TOTUUDEN TILAAAN Harun Latif FIN	14.00-15.30 PYSYVÄÄN RAKKAUDEEN JAA TOTUUDEN TILAAAN Harun Latif FIN	14.00-15.30 PYSYVÄÄN RAKKAUDEEN JAA TOTUUDEN TILAAAN Harun Latif FIN	12.45-14.15 LEMMENSÄÄNTÄ SAUNA-AIKA Saneli-Aika FINENG V C S
14	14.30-16.00 SYLVEN NAGORE VOMAA Jenna Salonen & Henna Peltola FIN	15.30-17.15 ECSTASY BREATHWORX RITUAL Leigh Ewen & Ilkka Heikkilä FINENG	15.30-17.00 SEKSUAALISEN INTUITION SYTYTTÄMINEN (PARTI) Hele & Laura Nordström FIN	14.30-16.00 DANCE JOURNEY Noora Väntänen FINENG V	14.30-16.00 DANCE JOURNEY Noora Väntänen FINENG V	14.00-15.00 SENSUAL ME Jenna Emilia FINENG V	14.00-15.30 DEEP DIVE INTO INVISIBILITY Pete Berendson FINENG V	14.30-16.15 YOGA & Henna Lamsola & Hele's family FINENG V	14.15-15.30 LAUGHTER YOGA & Henna Lamsola & Hele's family FINENG V	16.00-17.45 HUMAN DESIGN: FREE WILL JOKE OR REAL? Nina Rosas & Sanelina Teetsova FINENG V	16.15-18.00 VOICE YOUR INNER FEELINGS Matti Järvinen FIN S	16.15-17.45 AYURVEDA ELAMAA Lari-Petro FIN C	17.00-18.30 SISKOHAAVA Henna Peltola FIN C	18.00-19.30 SIDDHA KUNDALINI- ATLANTIS Kimmo Nuorteva FINENG V C S	18.00-19.30 SIDDHA KUNDALINI- ATLANTIS Kimmo Nuorteva FINENG V C S
16	17.30-19.00 TUURE KAPLANEN & TEHO MAJAMAKI Music Concert	18.00-20.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	18.00-20.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	18.00-20.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	18.00-20.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	18.00-20.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	18.00-20.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	18.00-20.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	18.00-20.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	18.00-20.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	18.00-20.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	18.00-20.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	18.00-20.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	18.00-20.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	18.00-20.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert
18	20.30-22.30 CRUSSEN DJ Live harmonic		20.30-22.30 SAARIN PÄLVI & KIMMO SOUND Music Concert	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V
20	20.30-22.30 CRUSSEN DJ Live harmonic		20.30-22.30 SAARIN PÄLVI & KIMMO SOUND Music Concert	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V	22.15-23.15 TANTRIC DANCE Petro Kaya FINENG V
22	20.30-23.30 KEVIN JAMES Mantro Concert	20.30-23.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	20.30-23.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	20.30-23.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	20.30-23.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	20.30-23.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	20.30-23.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	20.30-23.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	20.30-23.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	20.30-23.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	20.30-23.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	20.30-23.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	20.30-23.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	20.30-23.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert	20.30-23.30 AYLA SCHAFER Concert
00	23.00-01.00 DJ OLLIS Epic Trance Party														

STRONG YOGA MAT CHILDREN FRIENDLY NUDITY

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Find your way to
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& Boutique Avenue
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Sunday 2023

Show Your Highest Self

	Magical mainstage	Hall of Mystery	Red Temple	Mystic Sun	Highest Vision	White Light Room	Healing Goddess Happiness Heaven	Art Cave	Share & Play	Blue Clarity	Touch of Ocean Dome	Bliss Space	Tipiti	Crystal Healing	Secret Beach
8		8.00-9.45 WHAT'S YOUR PRAYER? Philip Flow ENG		8.15-9.45 TIBETAN TSALUNG YOGA Jouko Dorje FIN ENG				8.30-10.00 HOITAVA SYDÄN-MEDITAATIO Samuli Perälä FIN	8.30-10.00 TERRA SOUL JODJA-SISÄINEN SOTURI Meri Märt FIN						
10	9.15-10.45 BUTI YOGA-SHAKE AND SWEAT! Aava Jussila FIN ENG		8.45-10.45 SHAMANIC JOURNEY CEREMONY Orpheus B ENG		9.00-10.45 PYHÄN FEMINIININ JA MASKULIININ SEREMONIA Aava Kaskioika & Tero Suhoonen FIN	8.45-10.15 VIVATION BREATHWORK Crusien ENG	9.15-10.15 SENSUAL ME Jenna Emilia FIN ENG				9.30-10.15 YITTE'S KOHTUSSI LUOMIS-VOIMAN Jenna Salmeita FIN	8.45-10.15 STATE OF LOVE AND CREATIVITY Tero Majamäki FIN ENG			8.00-10.30 AKAN VÄIK-WOMEN'S SAUNA Sauna-Akka FIN ENG
12		10.30-12.15 SPIRIT OF TANTRA Pragita & Sudheva FIN ENG		10.30-12.15 ANTEEKSI-PYTTELEMAT, TOMASTI MIES Mikael Van Renterghem FIN		10.45-12.45 WOMB-CENTERED VOICE Matti Lindroos Helsinki FIN ENG	11.15-12.45 GLOWING GODDESS-RITUAL Kirsi Kuusimäki FIN ENG	11.00-12.45 RELATIONAL LABORATORY Rouven Schneider ENG	10.45-12.15 GYROKINESIS* METHOD FLOW Nadja Tapia ENG	11.00-12.30 AYURVEDA + ELÄMISEN TAITO Lari Pranta FIN	11.30-13.00 OCEAN OF SOUND Mikko Heikkilä FIN ENG	11.15-12.15 ONTOLOGY OF BREATHING Patri Bernadsson FIN ENG	10.00-11.30 SIDDHA KUNDALINI THROUGH THE HEART Kimmo Nurminen FIN ENG		11.00-12.00 2 SERPENT RITUAL Gisella Rouge SECRET BEACH ENG
14	12.15-14.45 SHAMANAM Montra Music Concert		11.15-13.00 DEEPENING THE CONNECTION Mia Renwick FIN ENG		12.00-14.00 DJ MALOU Dance										12.30-14.00 LEMMENSAUNA-SAUNARITUAL Sauna-Akka FIN ENG
16	14.00-15.30 WEALTH BODY ACTIVATION Aava Avotari ENG	13.30-15.15 GONG YOGA Jani Toivonen FIN ENG	14.00-15.45 EMBODIED WISDOM TANTRIC TOUCH Petra Kaya FIN ENG	14.15-15.30 SING ALONG HIT SONGS PARTY Marianne FIN	14.15-15.45 KOTIPALUO-LUENTO & TÖPÄJÄ Samuli Perälä FIN	13.30-15.15 DEEP MEETINGS-ZEN COACHING INTEGRATION Matti Majamäki FIN ENG	13.30-15.15 SYVA MATKA SISIMPAASI Eini Järvenpää FIN	14.15-15.45 SYNYN LÖIJSUN LUOMINEN Meri Märt FIN	14.00-15.30 TIIETÖISUUS WORKSHOP & OHJATTU MEDITAATIO Marja Järvenpää FIN	13.30-15.00 MAAILMAN RAKENTAJANA Tero Suhoonen FIN	14.00-15.30 DEEP DIVE INTO INVISIBILITY Patri Bernadsson FIN ENG	14.15-15.15 OMAN VOIMAN MEDITAATIO Sanna Saarela FIN			
16.00-17.00 CLOSING CEREMONY MAIN STAGE Everyone joining!															
LAST OFFERS at Natural High Welcome Café & Boho Café!															