



SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

**“A simple life is not an easy life, but it is worth
fighting for.”**

– A qualitative study of slow lifestyles and identity

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Abstract

The world is moving at an increasingly rapid pace due to widening globalization. As a result of the technological development that has accelerated over the past decades, today, people are not only offered the opportunity to travel faster over geographical distances but also experience and achieve more per unit of time. This may cause negative consequences for humans and the environment, for example stress-related illnesses and an increased speed of climate change. The global slow movement has emerged as a response to this. Primarily, the movement advocates for valuing time higher than money, in order to slow down the speed of life. This thesis aims to investigate how members of the slow movement perceive the process of adopting a slow lifestyle within a fast-paced society. The aim is further to examine how identity can be constructed through slow principles. The study is based on interviews with seven individuals in Sweden, who all have made certain lifestyle changes in order to slow down. The result indicates that there are different motives behind the informants' decision to adopt a slower lifestyle. These include environmental related reasons, health related reasons, and a common desire for increased self-determination in terms of being able to control one's own time. Furthermore, the result shows that the informants have slightly different experiences of the adopting process in terms of handling practical aspects as well as dealing with potential challenges such as financial uncertainty and lack of comprehension from the surroundings. In addition, the study illustrates that the informants perceive a connection between their lifestyles and a sense of identity. This is expressed by the informants' ambition to change the surroundings, the way in which they manifest slow principles to others, and how they have experienced inner changes in relation to the slow living lifestyle.

Key words: slow living, slow lifestyles, identity, identity construction

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1 Introduction

Over the past decade, the number of sick leaves in Sweden has increased dramatically. The greatest increase has occurred in psychiatric diagnoses, which today is the most common cause of sick leave (Försäkringskassan, n.d). Within the broad range of psychiatric diagnoses, adjustment disorder and response to severe stress are the diagnoses that have increased the most and represent about half of all started sick leave cases in Sweden today. According to the Swedish Social Insurance Office (Försäkringskassan), in early 2017, over 36 000 individuals were on sick leave as a response to adjustment disorder or severe stress, which is a fivefold increase compared to the numbers seven years earlier (Försäkringskassan, n.d).

The escalation of stress-related illnesses is most likely not a coincidence. As a consequence of expanded globalization, the world is moving at an increasingly rapid pace. Some would say that we are today living in an age of speed where the strain of increased efficiency permeates the entire society. Due to the technological development that has accelerated continuously over the past several decades, the processes of communication, production and transportation all have evolved and resulted in today's high-speed society (Rosa, 2013). The acceleration has not only allowed faster traveling over geographical distances, but also offered the opportunity for more experiences and assignments per unit of time. However, even though technical progresses supposedly would mean saving time and thereby liberate time for leisure, the reality tends to be the opposite. Through complex relationships, technological advances are helping us to push ourselves to experience and achieve more than before, which might have consequences at the cost of our wellbeing. To constantly have an inherent feeling that there is always more to accomplish and that the duties never cease, creates stress that on an individual level might result in health issues and stress-related diseases. On a global level, the acceleration causes a slightly different kind of problem. Because of the increased emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, that for instance comes with today's consumption and traveling patterns, the acceleration also contributes to environmental issues such as global warming (Rosa, 2013).

As a response to this situation, the so-called *slow movement* has emerged. The movement assumes a critical view of today's western frantic way of living and advocates for valuing time over money. By simplifying the living standards of today, the aim is to reduce the pace of life which would result in beneficial effects for both the individual and the planet (Slow Living Summit, n.d).

However, to counter prevailing social norms and cultural conceptions might be difficult. Existing ideals affect our lifestyle choices and the way we perceive each other but also ourselves. According to Berger and Luckmann (1991) identity is created through interaction with other individuals and can be maintained, modified, or reshaped by social relations. Further, Bourdieu (1984) argues that identities are also performed through consumption since our consumption patterns reflect a person's social affiliation, lifestyle, and status. Moreover, Bauman (2001) theorizes that human identity has been transformed from something given to a task where the individual is responsible for performing the assignment but also for its consequences and side effects.

As discussed in the sections above, the philosophy of slow stands in direct contrast to many modern tendencies which creates certain forms of tensions. With this in mind, it is interesting to examine the experiences of individuals who have chosen a different way of living in terms of abandoning current social norms, and how identity is created through certain life choices. Therefore, this study investigates how individuals experience the process of adopting a slow mindset and lifestyle and how this has shaped them as individuals and affected their self-image.

1.1 Aim and research questions

The aim of the thesis is to increase knowledge and to develop a deeper understanding of how individuals within fast-paced societies perceive the process of adopting a slower lifestyle and how identity can be constructed through slow principles.

In order to meet the aim of the thesis, the following two research questions have been formulated:

- How do individuals perceive the process of adopting a slower lifestyle?
- How can identity be constructed through slow approaches?

To answer the research questions and thus fulfil the purpose of the thesis, the current study is based on interviews with individuals who actively have changed their lifestyles in order to live slower lives.

1.2 Disposition of the thesis

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework and discusses modernity and social acceleration, the concept of slow living as well as, identity and the identity building, on which this study is based. Thereafter, previous research in the field of slow living and identity is presented in

chapter 3. In chapter 4, the data collection method and the implementation of the study is described. Further, the study's validity and reliability, as well as the ethical considerations that have been made are also discussed in this chapter. The results of the study are then introduced in chapter 5, followed by a discussion in chapter 6 where the findings are put in relation to the thesis aim, previous research, and the theoretical framework. The thesis ends with a conclusion section where the results are summarized and suggestions for further research are made.

2 Theoretical framework

The thesis proceeds from several sociological theories which are explained in the chapter below. The chapter starts with a presentation of Hartmut Rosa's theory about social acceleration followed by a short introduction of the slow living concept. Thereafter, several reasonings regarding identity and the identity building process are accounted for, but the main focus is on the argumentation of Anthony Giddens. Finally, a motivation of the relevance of the chosen theories for the thesis is presented.

2.1 The process of modernity and social acceleration

Pursuant to Rosa (2017), "a society can be called *modern* when *its mode of stabilization is dynamic*, i.e.: when it systematically requires (material) growth, (technological) acceleration and (cultural) innovation to reproduce its structure and to maintain institutional status quo" which is consonant with the situation of today.

Rosa (2013) argues that the process of modernization is about social acceleration, which means, setting the world in motion by speeding up its material, social and intellectual mechanisms. A modern society, Rosa explains, can only stabilize itself dynamically. This means, in order to maintain today's standard, it is necessary to speed up the pace and introduce new innovation in order to keep important social functions, such as the welfare system, intact.

According to Rosa (2013), the social acceleration consists of three dimensions: *the technological acceleration*, *the acceleration of social change* and *the acceleration of the pace of life*. The technological acceleration refers to increased effectiveness and efficiency in the sections of transport, communication, and production. The second dimension, the acceleration of social change, Rosa (2013) describes as an instability of the social world where society is constantly changing. The third dimension, the acceleration of the pace of life, relates to the increasing number of actions episodes. Rosa (2013) believes that the three dimensions are closely connected to each other. By speeding up the technological acceleration, the society has to transform. When the material world changes very fast, practices changes and thus, it is not possible for the society to stay the same. Further, if the society changes, its inhabitants need to speed up their everyday lives and increase the number of episodes action per unit of time in order to maintain a certain life standard.

The driving force behind the social acceleration, Rosa contends, is the capitalist economic

system. Structurally, capitalism leads to desynchronization and further, capitalism has cultural consequences in terms of alienation. Rosa (2013) argues that it is impossible for all spheres of life to accelerate at the same pace. Faster system systematically puts pressure on the slower ones – and thereby risks desynchronization. A clear example of desynchronization is the ecological crisis where the nature resources are being used at a rate that does not leave the nature enough time for reproduction. Another example is the psycho crisis where speed of social life conflicts with the individual psychic disposition which causes stress to the individual and might in the long run lead to burn-out and depression (Rosa, 2013).

The solution is, according to Rosa (2013), a society beyond dynamic stabilization. Instead, *adoptive* stabilization is required. The main problem Rosa identifies the dynamic stabilization is that capital is only being invested when increased economic return is guaranteed. By contrast, adoptive stabilization refers to a condition where economic growth should not be considered as an intrinsic value to strive for and change only should be done if transformation is desired. Instead, the society should be modern in sense of liberal, pluralistic, and democratic values (Rosa, 2013).

Rosa (2013) theorizes that adoptive stabilization should be achieved through *structural* and *cultural* revolution. By structural revolution, the aim is to create an economic democracy which extends beyond capitalistic driving forces through political reforms of the welfare state such as basic income for the citizens. Cultural revolution refers to a new conception about the quality of life where time and leisure is more valued than money. The tool to accomplish these revolutions, Rosa refers to as resonance. The idea of resonance is based on mode of response, which means being touched and reaching out in order to transform each other. Thus, resonance is solely achievable between a subject and its opposite. Rosa (2013) states that resonant relationships with our social and natural environment are helping us to understand ourselves, our identity, and the complexity we are surrounded by.

2.2 The slow living concept

In the mid-eighties, the slow movement emerged in Italy as a response to the social acceleration and its consequences. The movement originated as a protest against the opening of McDonalds's in Rome and a few years later, the international slow food movement was officially founded. Over the years, the movement has developed in several different directions and today, slow living has become a lifestyle in terms of not only slow food but also slow traveling, slow fashion, slow education, slow money, slow TV etcetera (Kowalski, n.d).

As a concept, slow living is broad and includes many different dimensions. Therefore, it is difficult to find a generally applicable definition since the essence of the slow living lifestyle varies considering that different people have different views on what it means to live a slower life. However, even though there is no universal definition, Kowalski (n.d) has collected a various number of explanations of the slow living concept and published a summary on his website. According to this summary, among other things, slow living is described as an organic and natural way of living where it is essential to do things as well as possible instead of as fast as possible. Slow living is also explained as a tool for balance, ease, sanity, and low stress by fighting back against the current state of busyness and time poverty. Moreover, Parkins (2004) discusses how the concept of slow living entails the “conscious negotiation of the different temporalities which make up our everyday lives, deriving from a commitment to occupy time more attentively”. However, although the concept of slow living can be understood in several different ways, some common aspects can still be found. The philosophy is based on a belief in pausing and reflecting upon what actually is important and what changes can be made in order to live a less stressful and more harmonic life. Moreover, respecting the environment and the non-human life is another characteristic for the movement. Furthermore, the concept of slow living can be considered a reaction to social acceleration which is discussed further below.

2.3 Identity and the identity building process

Over the years, identity and the creation of human identity have been common areas for research where scholars and theorists are interested in understanding the identity building process and its mechanisms. The concept of identity can be explained in various ways. Johansson (2006) argues that identity can refer both to the personal identification with a particular culture, nation, or ethnic affiliation, but also to the concept of self-image which refers to the awareness of the self as a unique individual. Further, Johansson (2006) discusses how identity can be illuminated via different aspects of the subjective experience of identity, which means, that identity both can be understood as the deeper experience of me and the experience of who I am in relation to others.

However, identity cannot be developed without interaction with the surroundings. Through interaction, the sense of self is confirmed, rejected, or expanded. Berger and Luckmann (1998) state that identity is created through context-based interaction where identity and self-image are strongly influenced through socialization processes and interaction with other

individuals. This reasoning is further strengthened by the research of Aurell (2001) regarding professional roles, which shows how identity is socially designed and thus constantly changing. Aurell (2001) presents how cultural values establish certain conditions for the individual to identify with the current social surroundings and how the individual's identification is affected by the treatment of the social environment.

Giddens (1991) contends, in similarity with Berger and Luckmann (1998) and Aurell (2001) that our personal life and individual experiences are not separate from society. Accordingly, social circumstances both affect and are being affected by how identity is created and managed. Since our actions reconstruct and legitimize social and cultural norms, we are involved in the creation of the social fabric and its structures. An example of such a relationship is Giddens (1991) reasoning about how identity creation is affected by the mechanisms of late modernity. Giddens states that because of the major amount of opportunities that today are available for the individual, late modernity has forced individuals to reflect upon themselves and thus how their actions affect the surroundings. Through this kind of reflection, Giddens states it is possible to develop a deeper understanding about the society which in turn conduce to the construction of the modern world.

Further, in conformity with Rosa (2013), Giddens (1991) discusses how modernity has permeated the social and personal sphere, and they both contend that modernization has made people of today vulnerable. As an example, Giddens claims, just like Rosa, that changes occur both faster and more often than before and therefore, our behavioral patterns are being affected in new ways. For instance, today's late modern society is characterized by security systems in change. In the past, the family tended to be the most important security system for the individual, but today, family ties are no longer as lasting as they once were. Therefore, individuals must today rely on impersonal expert systems, such as public authorities, which makes the individual vulnerable because of the absence of complete trust in these new expert systems.

Furthermore, similar to Rosa (2013), Giddens (1991) describes how globalization links global social appearances with local contexts. As a consequence of globalization, Giddens argues, the awareness of various types of risks has increased. For instance, due to the massive flow of information that is constantly available, risks are today a global phenomenon and not just a local concern. This puts the individual in an exposed position, which is another example where individuals in late modernity are required to reflect upon what course of action to choose. He explains how late modernity can be seen as a post-traditional order characterized

by developed institutional reflexivity. He also explains how the globalization of modern institutions is accompanied by transformation of the everyday life with profound consequences for the personal life. Hence, the self becomes a reflective project with the ambition to master the future.

As previously mentioned, today's society presents many more options to the individual than in the past. Just as Giddens (1991), Bauman (2002) theorizes about what happens to the individual when family is no longer as important as it once was. According to Bauman (2002), the individualization of society has affected the formation of human identity in a way where identity has been transformed from something given to a task. In the past, people were born into a certain context where they, during their lifetime, were expected to follow a given pathway and maintain the assigned identity, while today, it is up to the individual to create their own path and figuring out what identity to choose in life.

Even though the identity concept can be understood from different viewpoints, in this thesis identity refers to the self-image of the individual created in social interaction. Identity also refers to personal identification with other groups of people and to the individual experience of the self in relation to others. With this in mind, the purpose of this thesis is to investigate the individual's approach and perception to slow living and the process of adopting slow principles and thus how identity can be constructed through these types of lifestyle choices.

2.4 Application of the theories

In an attempt to contribute to a deeper understanding of how individuals in fast-paced societies perceive the process of adopting a slower lifestyle, and how identity can be constructed through slow approaches, the selected theories aim to serve as guidance in the process of analyzing the findings. Since the study is based on interviews with individuals who have all made certain lifestyle changes in order to slow down, Rosa's (2013) theorizing regarding social acceleration is suitable for examining this phenomenon.

As previously explained, the theory of social acceleration proceeds from the idea that modernity makes both people and the environment sick due to the constant quest for profit and efficiency and therefore, a society where economic values are not considered as the main driving force is required. According to Rosa (2013), this could be achieved through structural and cultural revolution. In this regard, it can be argued that the slow movement is an example of just such a cultural revolution that Rosa (2013) advocates and therefore, this theory assists

while analyzing the results and thus investigate if the application of slow approaches may contribute to reach the preferable condition Rosa (2013) describes as resonance.

Moreover, Rosa (2013) argues that resonance can only be achieved through interaction. Thus, since the meeting with other people can be affected by the personal self-image and sense of self, the theories regarding identity and identity construction offer an opportunity to explore what potential effects the use of slow approaches might have on the individual understanding of the own identity. This is important since identity both affects and being affected by current social norms. If the understanding of how alternative lifestyle choices affect people's sense of identity would increase, it would be easier to support individuals in their decisions and thus move one step closer the final objective of resonance.

3 Previous Research

The following chapter presents previous research on the topics of slow living and identity creation through slow principles. Initially, a presentation of previous research regarding slow living in modern society, followed by a section where research about individuals' experiences of slower and simpler lifestyles are summarized. Further, there is a section where the relationship between consumption and identity building is explained. Thereafter, a brief summary of the previous research is made. Lastly, the chapter concludes with a discussion regarding the relevance of the current thesis its contribution to the existing research field.

3.1 Slow living in a modern world

Harvey asserts, just like Giddens (1991), that the compression of time-space is a distinct condition of postmodernity which produces an “overwhelming sense of compression of our spatial and temporal worlds” (Harvey, 1989:240). The reasoning is based on the fact that today's technology, such as the internet and mobile phones, allows individuals to be in more than one space at any given time and thus to immediately deal with situations that are communicated through these type of devices. To describe the experience of being mentally out of breath from continuously dealing with the present, Boulding (1978) is using the term “temporal exhaustion”. Meanwhile, Jameson (1984) refers to the condition of post modernity as a crisis and argues that the fear of not being able to keep pace makes it clear that instead of inventing ways to speed up the answer must be to slow down.

However, even though technological innovation contributes to compressed time-space, a parallel process of slowing down is taking place elsewhere. Tam (2008) explains how the search for comfort in a slower-moving rate can be understood as a response to the anxiety caused by the acceleration in the living pace. Instead of being elated about the opportunities that the twenty-first century offers, many people experience the acceleration as appalling which creates an angst where slower rhythms provide a sense of secure.

In conformity with Tam (2008), Parkins (2004) asserts that slow living is a reaction to the requirements of succeeding in terms of achieve as much as possible per unit of time. Slow living should not be considered as a slowmotion version of postmodern life, instead, slow living concerns conscious deliberation of the different temporalities in our everyday lives, and thereby occupy time more attentively. According to the practices of slow living, having time is synonymous with investing time with importance through attention and consideration. Slow living advocates for “mindful” instead of “mindless” practices which means that the purpose

of every task that we give our time should be considered. Through slow practices, the mindful way of using the time adds meaning and value to the everyday life by differentiate the practitioner from the dominant culture of speed.

Further, Parkins (2004) discusses how the ability of reflection plays a central role in the slow living concept. She argues that every “fast” choice can be considered as a missed opportunity of reflection and. However, since reflection requires time, it is essential to release time out of the daily routine dominated by work and characterized by productivity. Furthermore, Parkins (2004) emphasizes how institutional support is required in order to ensure the continued existence of slowness and also highlights the social improvements that kind of support would result in. According to Parkins (2004) today’s modern society is characterised by habitual behavior patterns and negligence which inhibit the individuals from reflection opportunities.

Pursuant to McGurik (2017), methods for reducing life pace comprise diminish worktime and thus, spending less due to the reduced income and instead, sharing more. In her research, McGurik (2017) has researched on Timebanking, an exchange system based on time instead of money, emphasizes the connection between Timebanking and the philosophy of slow living and points out the shared high valuation of time. Further, McGurik (2017) aims to contribute to the debate of how to decrease production and consumption an strengthen human and environmental well-being and discusses how local, small-scaled practical changes, such as the Timebanking initiative, has potential to inspire other actors and thus potentially result in major transformations on a society level.

3.2 Slow living experiences

It is widely known that overconsumption in the western world is a contributing cause of many of the world’s most urgent problems, such as climate change and global poverty. To eradicate these problems, it is crucial for those who over-consume to adapt a materially simpler lifestyle. From this reasoning, the voluntary simplicity movement has emerged which refers to “a diverse social movement made up of people who are resisting high consumption lifestyles and who are seeking, in various ways, a lower consumption but higher quality of life alternative” (Alexander & Ussher, 2012).

In an extensive multi-national online survey implemented by Alexander and Ussher (2012), the voluntary simplicity movement is analysed. The qualification for participating in the study was delimited to individuals with “voluntarily reduced or restrained income, consumption, and/or working hours” and the questionnaire considered happiness, income, community, and

politics. According to the result of the survey, nearly 50 % of the 2268 participants had reduced working time and 38 % changed careers.

Like Alexander and Ussher (2012), Kraisornsuthasinee and Swierczek (2017) are interested in voluntary simplifiers and their working life and have carried out a study that aims to investigate how simple lifestyle choices affect the career paths of those individuals who advocate for a more simple way of living. According to the study result, Kraisornsuthasinee and Swierczek (2017) claim there is a notable connection between the transformation to a simpler lifestyle and more ethical career choices. For instance, this appearance is exemplified in scenarios where individuals relinquish high salaried positions in favour of freelance positions that allow for more preferable opportunities to find balance between the professional life and family life.

However, a transition to a slower life within a fast-paced society may poses certain challenges. For example, an investigation made by Lamb (2019) shows that lack of understanding from family and friends is one of the main difficulties that the informants in the study finds most impactful. This is also being confirmed by Sandlin and Walther's (2009) research about identity formation in the voluntary simplicity movement where judgemental tendencies from the surroundings are identified as a serious obstacle for individuals who are trying to slow down their lives. According to these studies, most of the challenges that the participants experiences seem to be characterized by social circumstances regarding certain relationships with other humans. Additionally, suitable employment along with suitable transport alternatives are two other significant obstacles for voluntary simplifiers identified by Alexander and Ussher (2012).

Accordingly, the research of Alexander and Ussher (2012), as well as of Kraisornsuthasinee and Swierczek (2017) both point out how simpler and thus slower ways of living are closely related to reduced working hours and careful considerations regarding work opportunities in order to better meet the individuals own values. Furthermore, Alexander and Ussher (2012) notice a common preference with regards to the informants purchasing behaviours. The research shows how the included participants primarily prefer to invest their money in handmade, homemade, long lasting quality products and second-hand commodities. The study of Alexander and Ussher (2012) further shows that this certain way of consuming is not only an attempt to spend less but also to spend in a more well-considered way, just in line with Parkins (2004) reasoning about how ability for reflection is crucial in the slow living concept.

Finally, regarding perceived beneficial effects of slowing down life, Alexander and Ussher (2012) discovered that 87 % of those who participated in the study reported they started to feel happier after the lifestyle change, and only 0,3 % declared feeling less happy. Lamb (2019) identifies the experience of control over the own time as a crucial factor in terms of a potential connection between the individual wellbeing and a slower lifestyle. In conformity with Lamb (2019), Boujbel and D'Astous (2012) found the aspect of control essential in their research concerning the relationship between voluntary simplicity and life satisfaction. Boujbel and D'Astous (2012) further discuss how the power to control one's own consumption desires entail positive effects for people's wellbeing, particularly among individuals with less financial resources.

3.3 Identity construction through consumption

Over the years, identity and the creation of the identity have been common areas for research where scholars and theorists are interested in explaining the identity building processes and their mechanisms. For instance, a numerous of studies have been done on the link between identity and consumption (Cherrier, 2009; Lee et al., 2011). Bourdieu (1984) argues that identity is created through consumption since our consumption patterns reflects the person's social affiliation, lifestyle, and status. Given that the slow movement advocates for reduced consumption, previous research on this topic might be helpful in order to understand how identity can be created by practicing slow principles.

Lee et al. (2011) defines consumption as a process where individuals receive, use, and eventually dispose various products, ideas, services, and experiences. According to Bauman (2008), consumption plays a significant role when it comes to identity creation since our consumption patterns help us to strengthen our social status. This appreciation is well exploited by companies. By purposely creating transitory trends, companies encourage consumers to increase their material consumption to keep up with the current social norms and thus avoiding falling behind in the social game. An example of this appearance is the fashion industry where a garment quickly becomes outdated and consumers are then encouraged to buy the newer model to raise or maintain their social status while constantly designing newer and more modern clothing.

In recent years, increasing attention has been directed to the downside of consumption in terms of environmental issues and negative social consequences for the people who work with producing the goods. As a response of the unsustainable and exploitative conditions of mass

production in several industries, concerned individuals have started to reflect upon and think of alternatives to consumption alternatives, such as anti-consumerisms.

Lee et al. (2011) divides anti-consumption into three categories: reject, restrict, and reclaim. The first category, rejecting, refers to scenarios where individuals purposely exclude certain goods from their consumption cycle due to ethical, functional, or symbolic reasons. The second category, restricting, describes the processes in which consumers do not completely distance themselves from particular goods but instead, limiting their consumption of the specific product. In some cases, certain supplies may be unavoidable to completely reject, such as water and electricity consumption and therefore only a limitation of these types of services is possible. Reclaiming represents the category of anti-consumerism where an ideological vicissitude regarding the processes of acquisition, use, and dispossession has occurred. This could mean, for example, that individuals grow their own vegetables instead of buying them at traditional markets and thus, the consumers are allowed to reclaim their identity through production instead of consumption.

Stillerman (2015) theorizes how the concept of anti-consumerism is developed from the process where individuals starting to question the personal and social consequences of their own consumption patterns and thus search for greener and more ethical forms of consumption. Pursuant to Stillerman (2015), three main discourses can be found regarding that group of individuals who practice and advocate for the principles of anti-consumerism: the ethical consumer, the anti-consumer, and the global consumer activist. Ethical consumers refer to the appearance where the consumer strives to purchase in certain manners in order to diminish damage for the environment or other human beings. The second discourse, referred to as anti-consumers, can be described as a more radical form of the ethical consumer where the advocators make even greater efforts to reduce their own environmental and social impact by avoiding commercial markets and minimize the energy consumption through methods such as growing their own food and limiting airplane travel. The third discourse, termed as global consumer activism, is a group of activists who practice a certain form of boycotting that is developed from the consumer movements. Global consumer activists operate within national borders, but focuses on global issues and increasingly, targets international companies.

Similar to Stillerman (2015), Cherrier (2009) is interested in identifying different discourses regarding anti-consumption. He notes two dominating consumer identities within the discourses of anti-consumerism: a hero identity and a project identity. The hero identity refers to a consumer who aims to increase the knowledge of other consumers and influence the

collective understanding about the human impact on the environment. The purpose of this certain type of consumer is to reshape daily life through active, ideological choices, and renounce and resist the endless cycle of mass-production and mass-consumption. Their actions are based on the persuasion of the relevance of consumption with greater awareness of equality, justice, and participation where the intention is to reach out to the public with their message. Further, within the construction of the hero identity, the individual's understanding of society risks and their potential impact on the political dynamics is emphasized. According to Cherrier (2009), the hero identity refers to consumers who emblemize a heroic essence and are able to sensibly distinguish between right and wrong in terms of social concerns. The project identity, Cherrier (2009) explains, is built upon the discourses that are identified concerning resistance against positional consumption. This form of consumption refers to the idea that consumers search for identity through their consumption and social performance and hence accept social norms established by, for instance, fashion, media, or other types of advertising. Further, positional consumption refers to the philosophy of how consumption provide a sense of identification that can be recognized by oneself and other people. Cherrier (2009) describes how the construction of a project identity results from a process of "freeing oneself from oneself" by making space for the own person and thus enabling reposition of oneself in society. Creating one's place refers to the process where the individual developing an authentic room experienced as more one's own, where concerns of inclusion and exclusion are not culturally determined. However, project identities are not fully denying the assumption of material position, but rather strive to create new cultural codes, practices, and alternative market structures.

3.4 Summary of previous research

Previous research shows that slow living and related lifestyles are closely associated with reduced working hours and finding different solutions in terms of job opportunities. The slow living lifestyle is also associated with reduced consumption and consume in more thoughtful ways. Further, previous research also shows that individuals who live more slow-paced lives, consider themselves happier today than before the lifestyle change. Moreover, it is also addressed in the current chapter what possible role consumption, or the absence of consumption, might play in the identity building process. According to the previous research that are presented in the chapter above, anti-consumerism, which is closely connected to the slow living concept, can be divided into several different identity categories such as the

ethical consumer, the anti-consumer, and the global consumer activist. Other discourses that can be found within the field of anti-consumerism are a hero identity and a project identity.

3.5 Contribution to the research field

With this thesis, the attempt is to contribute with further knowledge to the already existing research field in order to develop a deeper understanding of how individuals in fast-paced societies perceive the process of adopting a slower lifestyle and how identity can be constructed through slow approaches. In the sections above, the results of several studies within the research field of slow and simple living are described, which means that some research in this area has already been carried out. However, this thesis aims to contribute with a Swedish perspective since an apparent lack of research regarding the Swedish context has been identified. By studying a certain phenomenon from a particular country's point of view, it may be possible to analyze if, for example, slow living advocates in Sweden share the same experiences with like-minded sympathizers from other parts of the world or if their experiences might differ. This is important due to the relevance of social and cultural contexts in terms of different lifestyle choices. For instance, if the understanding regarding the challenges of living slower and simpler would increase, this knowledge could possibly assist with guidance in political and societal efforts in order to support individuals to make more sustainable choices in their everyday lives. However, the probability to make these types of decisions is affected by current politics and social norms, and therefore, support from the authorities is essential.

Thus, since the ideals of today's high-speed societies may cause harmful consequences to both humans and the environment, it is central to consider other, more sustainable, alternatives in order to strengthen the personal and environmental wellbeing, both at an individual level but also at a societal and global level. If the understanding of alternative lifestyles would expand, over time, this could potentially result in slow approaches becoming more normalized and thus attract more people to apply slower ways of living. In turn, this would have positive effects on both people and the planet, and therefore, studies like this are relevant in order to contribute with further knowledge regarding the challenges and opportunities of living slower and simpler lives.

4 Method and material

The following chapter presents the preparation and collection of the current study's empirical material. Firstly, the methodology of the study is presented followed by a description of the procedure finding suitable informants. Thereafter, the process of data collection is described. Further, an account of the procedures of coding and analysis of the empirical material is made and finally, the chapter ends with a section where the validity and reliability of the study is discussed as well as what ethical considerations has been taken into account in the study.

4.1 Methodological approach

Since the purpose of this thesis is to increase knowledge in order to develop a deeper understanding of personal experiences, rather than to find an objective truth, a phenomenological methodical approach is suitable. This approach alludes a phenomena to be explained from an individual perspective based on the individual's position and its own construction of the world (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Thus, the phenomenological methodical approach has been chosen for this study in order to examine and understand how individuals perceive the process of adopting a slower lifestyle and how the phenomena of identity can be constructed through slow principles. According to Rosengren and Arvidson (2002), the current approach is useful for studies that aims to explore experiences about a phenomena among different individuals which is the reason why this approach is suitable for this study.

The aim of the study is not to examine outcomes that can be considered representative of the entire population of slow living practitioners. Therefore, the method of data collection that has been selected for the current study possess a qualitative nature. The study is based on semi structured interviews with individuals in Sweden who have undergone a lifestyle change into a slower direction. This certain data collection method is suitable since interviews allow interaction, which means, by speaking to relevant actors that can provide meaningful information to the study, the possibility of developing a deeper understanding about the phenomena that is being investigated is enabled (Aspers, 2011). Moreover, interviews further allow the informant to develop their reasoning and provide more complex answers than, for instance, in a survey which is considered profitable for this certain study as personal experiences are the focus.

However, it is important to acknowledge that the researcher is always part of the social being studied and hence tends to influence the interpretation of the results with its own personal

values and cultural context (Farthing, 2016). With this in mind, as author of this study, my function as a researcher is carefully considered with humbleness to the personal role in terms of the dealing of informants and further management of the collected empirical material.

4.2 Selections

In order to find relevant informants for the study, a strategic selection was applied. In an effort to make the current selection qualitatively representative, the method was selected in order to reach individuals who met certain qualification criteria and were reachable. The criterion the persons had to fulfil in order to participate in the study was that they have, by active choices, made transitions in their lives towards a slower way of living. Another criterion was that the potential informants had to live in Sweden which is motivated since the study aims to investigate the phenomenon of slow living and identity in a Swedish context.

In the process of finding relevant informant, an online version of the snowball method was used. Firstly, various terms like “slow living”, “downshifting”, and “simple living” were used as search phrases in social channels such as Facebook and Instagram but also on Google. The online searches resulted in a broad range of Facebook pages, Instagram accounts, homepages, and blogs where the ones that potentially could be of interest for the study were further explored. Once a relevant source was found, it was further investigated which accounts the current account in turn was following, in an attempt of get in contact with other like-minded people that possibly could contribute with their experiences. In two of the cases, an already selected informant offered to mediate contact with their partner who share the same lifestyle and was willing to participate in the study.

By the end of the selection process, seven suitable individuals had been identified and all agreed to be interviewed and share their experiences of transitioning to a slower lifestyle. The informants were contacted via direct message on Instagram or via email. At the first contact with the informants, a brief introduction of the purpose of the study was shared as well as a short explanation of what that would be required of them as interview objects. Further, a clarification regarding the informants’ rights in terms of voluntary participation as well as an assurance of their anonymity was made.

4.3 Preparations for data collection

As already mentioned, this study is based on semi structured interviews with individuals who have all undergone certain lifestyle changes in order to live slower lives. The method of data collection has been chosen in order to capture the informants’ subjective viewpoints and

experiences (Aspers, 2011) and thereby enabling examination of the process of adopting a slower lifestyle.

In an attempt to develop structure to the data collection process, preparatory actions were taken. Before the data collection began, an interview guide was constructed in order to serve with guidance among the questions and to keep the conversation within the relevant subject areas during the interviews. The interview guide was divided into two parts where the first part contains question regarding the slow lifestyle, while the second part of the interview guide includes question concerning identity. Before the interviews were conducted, the interview guide was sent to the informants by email to offer them the opportunity, if desired, to look through the questions before the interviews. Moreover, the order of the questions was never fully established but remained flexible during the interviews. This is recommended by Ekholm and Fransson (1992), since it encourages creativeness throughout the interviews, and also the ability to adapt to current circumstances and thus retain control of the interview.

However, by using semi structured interviews as data collection method, with a less structured interview guide as a guidance, the researcher is allowed to place the informants' experiences and understanding in focus without any major requirement of providing with pre-understanding or theoretical insights. At the same time, the method enables a certain structure to be maintained in order to secure that the interviews remain within the areas of the given research topics of slow living and identity.

4.4 Collection of data

Due to practical reasons, such as the informants living in different parts of the country, as well as current recommendations regarding the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, all interviews were conducted remotely, either via video call or phone call. The informants were allowed to choose a suitable time for the interview and the interviews ranged from 45 minutes to one hour and a quarter. In order to later analyze the material, all the interviews were recorded. Before an interview started, the informant was asked for permission to record the interview, which they all agreed to.

During the interviews, the interview guide was highly useful in terms of helping to keep focus on the relevant topics and sort among the questions. The questions were mainly asked directly from the interview guide, but the interviews also included several unprepared follow-up questions as a result of the informants' replies. By using following-up questions, the attempt

is to capture as well as reflect upon the informants' response in order to gather relevant reasonings regarding their perceptions and experiences concerning the slow living lifestyle.

4.5 Analysis and coding

To be able to analyze the interviews, all the recorded material was transcribed. According to Aspers (2011), the transcripts should preferably be implemented immediately after the interviews in order pick up important impressions that can easily be missed out if a long time passes between the recording and the transcription. Therefore, the current interviews were all fully transcribed within maximum 48 hours after the implementation.

The coding of the transcripts were then conducted through thematic analysis, a procedure which Clarke and Braun (2016) describe as characterised by “an organic approach to coding and theme development and the active role of the researcher in these processes” (p. 297). Further, Clare and Braun (2016) explain that codes are deemed the smallest unit of analysis, aimed to capturing conceivably relevant data related to the research questions. Thereafter, the codes in turn form larger themes that are used for the purpose of structure the findings. In the current study, this was done by first highlighting words and paragraphs of extra interest in the narratives, that were describing different aspects of the process of adopting a slower lifestyle and how identity can be constructed through slow principles. Subsequently, under-categories were developed from the initial coding, and with those codes in mind while re-reading, similar codes were grouped into the same under-category.

4.6 Validity and reliability

In order to guarantee the credibility of the study in general, it is essential to contemplate aspects that may have an impact on the validity and reliability in the ongoing research processes.

According to Rosengren and Arvidson (2002), validity is crucial to securing the study's credibility, since a high degree of validity ensures that the study examines what is intended to be examined. Moreover, the validity further attempts to evaluate the operationalization of the study, thus how well the empirical material and the theoretical concepts are consistent with each other (Rosengren & Arvidson, 2002). With this in mind, as the current study is based on interviews with individuals who have transformed their lives into a slower direction, it means that it is essential to attach importance to the questions and their design in relation to the given research topics. Accordingly, for this reason, an interview guide has been constructed in order to raise related areas within the topics of slow living and identity creation. Furthermore,

validity is further assured in the current process of finding suitable informants. The informants all participate in the study as private persons and have been personally reached via their social media platforms. This means, the subjects have not been processed through a client or profession, which according to Rosengren and Arvidson (2002) possibly could influence informants' answers. By using this approach, the informants are more easily able to provide with subjective and personal replays which in turn allows a more fair and valid study result.

Pursuant to Trost (2010), a study that is considered reliable has a low level of random results. In qualitative research, such as the current study, the reliability process is complex due to the reasoning that high reliability presumes a high degree of standardization which interviews often lack (Trost, 2010). In an attempt to avoid random errors occurring and thus strengthen the study's reliability, all informants were asked the same questions in a similar way, which is in line with the recommendations from Rosengren and Arvidson (2002). Moreover, the decision to record and subsequently transcribe the interviews can further be considered as an effort to enhance the reliability of the study (Ejvegård, 1996).

Lastly, this study's generalizability should be considered limited due to its qualitative character and the fact that it only includes a few participants. However, the study contributes with further knowledge to the research areas of slow lifestyles and slow practices linked to identity creation where there is currently an identified gap of knowledge.

4.7 Ethical considerations

Throughout the work process with the current study, attention has been paid to the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet) publication *Good research practice* (2017) in terms of information disclosure, consent gathering, confidentiality, and the management and use of the collected material. In line with the guidance from the Swedish Research Council (2017), all informants have been provided, both in writing at the initial contact and verbally in connection with the interviews, with detailed information about the purpose of the study. In connection with the interviews, verbal permission was given by the informants regarding recording the interviews. Further, in order to protect the informants' privacy, the personal data have been handled with great care by storing the material in such a way that unauthorized persons did not have access to it. Furthermore, to ensure the informant's anonymity, they are referred to as numbers instead of names. The numbers are based on the order in which the interviews were conducted. For the same purpose, the information regarding the informants' place of residence refers to the more general living district instead of the specific location.

Additionally, the collected data has only been used for the research purpose and all audio recordings were deleted shortly after the transcripts were finalized to ensure the study's confidentiality even further.

5 Results

In this chapter, the results of the study are presented. Initially, a brief presentation of the informants is made. Thereafter, the chapter is divided into two main sections: *the process of adopting a slower lifestyle and identity*. The first section aims to provide a deeper understanding of what led up to the informants' decision to change their former lifestyles. This section further includes reports regarding the informants' view of the slow living concept and their experiences of the adoption process. The second section focus on identity and identity construction. Since the interviews were all conducted in Swedish, the quotes that are used in this chapter are the author's own translations.

5.1 Presentation of the informants

This study is based on narratives expressed by seven individuals in Sweden who all have made certain lifestyle changes in order to live slower lives. During the period of the data collection, the informants were aged 28-45, with a gender distribution of three men and four women. In the table below, a short summary of the informants is presented.

Informants	Age	Gender	Living area	Children*	Working title	University degree**
Informant 1	32	Female	Gotland County	X	Not currently working	X
Informant 2	32	Male	Västernorrland County		Film photographer	X
Informant 3	28	Female	Gävleborg County	X	HD-adviser	X
Informant 4	33	Male	Gävleborg County	X	On parental leave/Electronic engineer	X
Informant 5	45	Female	Gävleborg County	X	Not currently working	X
Informant 6	42	Female	Dalarna County	X	Self-employed worker	X
Informant 7	44	Male	Dalarna County	X	Self-employed worker	X

*One or more underaged children living in the household

** Three years bachelor's degree or even higher education level

5.2 The process of adopting a slower lifestyle

According to the transcribed material, the informants all share the perception that their previous lifestyles, in one way or another, were unsustainable in the long run and therefore, other alternatives were considered. In the section below, the motivational aspects that the informants declare as their main arguments for their lifestyle change are described.

5.2.1 Motives

The transcribed material shows that there are several different reasons why the informants' have chosen to implement a slower lifestyle. The motivational aspects can be divided into three main categories: *environmental-related reasons*, *health-related reasons*, and *a desire for increased self-determination* in terms of being able to control and distribute one's own time.

The first category regards the informants' valuation of the environment. In the quote below, one of the informants expresses her concern for the environment, which eventually became the decisive factor in why this particular informant chose to change her way of living:

In the summer of 2018, I was pregnant and that was the worst thing I had ever experienced, being pregnant in that heat and drought. I almost got death agony and wondered how all this would end and how I could bring a child to this world. I had catastrophic thoughts and imagined that we would not survive this, that in a year or so I would have to become a climate refugee and I imagined that there would be a shortage of food and water. It was really awful, and I did not understand how others could just continue to live their lives as if everything were normal. – Informant 1

Several other informants also addressed the environment in their interview. Among these informants, the beneficial environmental aspects of their lifestyles were considered more as a bonus or a positive side effect than a definite factor for their process of becoming a slow liver. However, the informants further expressed that the environment is something they were aware of and valued highly even before their change in lifestyle, which is exemplified by the quotations bellow:

It has not been the main driving force in why we have chosen this lifestyle. Even before this, we were environmentally conscious and did not consume very much and thought about what food we bought, so I mean, it is definitely possible to live sustainably without living as we do today but those values may still have made us attracted to this lifestyle, growing our own food and things like that. – Informant 3

Into the bargain, there are the environmental aspect. That we today are able to live a much more sustainable life overall. We consume less, we do not use the car unnecessarily, we have a greater opportunity to shop according to the season. – Informant 6

Then it comes as a huge bonus that it is sustainable for the environment. You also have the strength to think and act in a more sustainable way. If you want to live sustainably, you need to make a slightly bigger effort yourself and I am able to do that now that I have the time. – Informant 5

The quotations above show how the informants value the environment high even though the positive environmental aspects that their lifestyles entail are not considered as the main reason for their transitions. In the quote extract from the interview with Informant 5, she mentions how her lifestyle enables her to think and act more sustainably due to increased energy and time. This reasoning leads into the second category of motives which refers to argument related to the individual health and wellbeing. Informant 5 explains how her previous way of living eventually resulted in fatigue issues, which made her realize the unsustainability of her former life patterns. She describes that she primarily implemented the lifestyle change “for the sake of health” and that she today feels much better as a result of her new lifestyle, which she means also has been noticed by her family:

My children mention that as well, even though I am not precisely the same person as I was before the exhaustion, a few years ago my daughter stated ‘now when you are healthy mom’, so I mean, they also notice that I feel better and that is practically the most important thing for me. – Informant 5

However, even though the other informants, except for Informant 5, do not state health related motives as their main motivational reason to their lifestyle change, they still claim that their physical or mental health has improved, which the following quotations demonstrate:

Above all else, I am physically stronger today since I live a much more varied life, where I have the opportunity to, perhaps not work out very much, but exercise more in my everyday life. Then today, when I am not stressed all the time, the times I actually get stressed, I see it much more clearly in myself and then I also realize that I actually was quite stressed before. In a way, it was quite difficult to recognize that when you were in it all the time because it was more of a normal state. – Informant 7

The primary effect is that there is much less stress. Of course, there are stressful factors today as well, such as the fact that I have to refill the woodshed before next winter and things like that, but I feel so much better when I am able to do things in my own pace. The stress level is at zero, I would like to say, even though it is a lot of work with this lifestyle as well and to come up with ideas for the next film and produce it and so on. – Informant 2

The two excerpts above are both examples of an appearance that all the informants witness to, namely the fact that they today experience a significantly reduced level of stress. The informants all agree that due to their new lifestyles, more time is released which make them feel more harmonious and satisfied with their lives. In the following quote, Informant 1 discusses how the new lifestyle has affected her so far:

This lifestyle is still very new for me... I was terribly stressed at my last job and even though we lived here at Gotland, it all became too much to handle. Now, I have been off work for two months and I feel much better, I am much happier but sometimes I still feel that I can be... we had a birthday celebration for our four-year-old last Saturday and the day after I felt that I just needed to rest so I may still be a little bit sensitive to stress but I feel very happy today when I am able to be outdoors and dig in my garden and it is... I feel calmer and I am happier. – Informant 1

In addition, the quote above further concerns the time aspect which is a recurring argumentation during the interviews and thus constitute the third category of motivational aspects. The desire for increased control over one's own time is emphasized by all the informant as an essential reason why they chose to change their lifestyles. This is exemplified in the following quote:

The major purpose was that we wanted to own the time. We did not want to be controlled by external factors, but the time would be something that we administered over ourselves and be allowed to have at our disposal. – Informant 6

Moreover, the arguments that the informants state as reasons for their requirement of improved time management are mainly linked to the desire of spending more time with the family and a wish for an increased sense of freedom in general. The quotations below are all examples of occasions where the informants address the importance of their families and how this realization became especially clear when they became parents themselves:

We also felt that now that we have a family, the family should be the central of attention, the job should not be central with everything else encircle the job, but we wanted to put the family and family life in focus and then everything else must revolve around that. These thoughts probably arose because we had children, if we had not had them then maybe it would have been more natural to continue living in the same way that we used to. – Informant 6

First of all, in January we had already redoubled the time we spent with my parents compared to last year. In just a few weeks, we had seen mom and dad and they had met their new grandchild several times more than they did during the whole last year so that is a major thing for me, and it also applies to Astrid's parents, we have seen them much more than we did during the year before this. – Informant 4

We had discussed it for a while, mentioned financial freedom and saving money in order to retire earlier. Our plan was to work hard, and for a number of years save a lot of money and then be able to work less when we are financially free. But then we had our daughter and started to rethink, that we want that time now and not in the future. – Informant 3

5.2.2 Slow living in practice

In the following section, it is described how the informants apply slow principles in their everyday life and in what changes they have made in order to slow down. This section further

includes declarations regarding what challenges the informants experience due to their way of living.

5.2.2.1 Reduced working hours

As previously mentioned, in one way or another, all the informants express a desire for increased individual freedom in terms of the ability to control one's own time. As a result, all the seven informants have made certain work-related changes, either by quit working completely, reduce their working hours, or in other ways change their job situation in a manner that better reflect their requirements, such as becoming self-employers. In the quote below, Informant 3 reasons about her and her partner's vision of how combine their working lives and family lives in the future:

This is also very much about our daughter. If we make this work, that we are able to work at the hours she is in kindergarten or at school, then we can spend much more with her, leave her in kindergarten and then pick her up early and have a lot of time together. To be able to do that in the future until she is 18, I was tempted to say... And even when she goes to school, we do not have to work until five-six in the evening, but we can work until she finishes school. – Informant 3

Further, some informants express how they in the past have felt locked into societal norms, such as working full time, which they perceived as limiting and therefore chose to change their job situations. The two quotations below illustrate how perceived expectations from the society conflicts with informants' own values:

Being at work between 8-17 feels like a prison to me and I cannot understand why I would want that. – Informant 1

I used to work a lot in a shop, but it did not feel meaningful to me, on the contrary, it clashed a lot with my view of the world. – Informant 2

In the interview with Informant 2, he explains the moment when he finally realized that his former life situation was unsustainable. At the time, Informant 2 had just returned from a holiday he spent in the cottage that later would become his permanent residence:

Before, I had really just thought of it as a summer cottage, as a nice hangout, but then I spent my whole paid leave there, when I was still working in Stockholm, and those three weeks just flew by. Then, when I returned to work, I have a very clear memory of just that moment, I stepped through the entrance and shouted 'Hey guys, I am back!' and my colleagues answered 'Nice, but have you thought about that next time for vacation happens a whole year from now?' and then I just felt that this is not sustainable, this situation is bleeding the life out me. After that I decided to quit, or I did not quit immediately but I decided that was something I had to do so I started to build up a buffer to be able to move out here without perhaps making any money in the beginning. – Informant 2

However, as the quote above indicates, job-related changes similar to those previously described, often entails certain consequences for the personal finances, such as reduced income. The transcribed material shows how the informants deal with the potential loss of income in different ways, including move to less expensive accommodations, drive less by car, grow their own food, or buy second hand as much as possible in order to reduce their monthly costs. In the quote below, one of the informants describes what strategies she and her family use in order to keep the costs down:

We have moved to a much cheaper house with a fairly large plot where we can grow and really spend time on that and thus keep down food costs that way. We heat the house by firing and since we do not have a finished kitchen yet, we cook all the food on the wood stove as well. Then the four of us all sleep in the same room so we do not need to use any radiators either. Further, since I am not working, this may sound a bit nasty but when we are not working, we do not need to shower as often, I mean, heating water costs money. In my opinion, most people shower a little too often just out of habit. We drive less because we are not in a hurry anywhere, cook from scratch and try to use things we already have. – Informant 1

In the quote above, Informant 1 explains how her current way of living allows her to spend more time in the garden and thus grow the family's own food to a greater extent. Like Informant 1, several other informants state that the time factor is central in terms of sustainable living, which confirms by Informant 3 in the following quote:

Take consumption as an example, today we have the time to look for things we need second-hand because we do not have to have the stuff immediately and we have the time to cook from scratch because the stress is no longer there that you come home from work and then you have to cook something super-fast. For me, it is about simplicity and maybe also how you choose to work and then not work full time, that you reduce working hours and instead perhaps grow your own food and try to be more self-sufficient. – Informant 3

5.2.2.2 Challenges of slowing down

According to the transcribed material, the informants mostly experience profits with their lifestyles, such as environmental advantages, improved health, more time with the family, and a general sense of increased individual freedom. However, the empirical material further shows that the slow lifestyle involves certain challenges that the informants occasionally experience as difficult to handle. These challenges may, for example, be of a practical nature such as keep warm during the winter within a cabin in the middle of the forest or finding suitable job solutions. Further, the challenges also include emotional difficulties such as dealing with financial insecurity and managing the surroundings' incomprehension.

In the quote below, one of the informants exemplifies some of the practical challenges he faces as a result of his current way of living:

Just to stay warm is a project in itself... I have to fell trees and chop wood a whole year in advance, and if I am going to take a shower, I have to heat water on the wood stove... That has probably been the hardest thing to me, that I thought from the beginning that I would have so much time for everything, which I also have, but I mean, living this life takes a lot more time than I actually expected. – Informant 2

As the quote above indicates, the challenges that Informant 2 experiences are mainly of a practical character. These types of challenges are also addressed by other informants. In the following quote, this is further exemplified at the same time as the economic aspect is addressed:

We have less income right now, but that does not necessarily have to be the case. We have some thoughts about that now that we have time, we can explore and develop our hobbies, and perhaps make some money from that, but right now it has resulted in reduced income and also a sense of insecurity because we do not have permanent jobs. Other disadvantages can be that things take longer; it would be a lot easier just to order things we need from the internet or buy them directly in store. We own a car but try to not drive that much so it also takes time. For example, if we are going to visit my mother-in-law who lives five to seven minutes away from us by car, it takes us 40 minutes to bike there. – Informant 3

Likewise, the financial dimension is discussed in the interview with Informant 1 where she states that one of her main concerns about her lifestyle regards the resultant economic insecurity:

The most difficult part for me has been this job-thing because it has included such uncertainty... If I quit working, what happens then? I get that we will need money and that is how it works, and I still want to have some type of security... I mean, what would happen with my pension and stuff like that. That has probably been the most difficult part, plus there are such strong standards in the society that you are expected to want to work a lot and have nice titles and in the past, I have had quite responsible jobs and created an identity around that, so that has definitely been the most difficult. – Informant 1

In the quote above, Informant 1 talks not only about her experiences of economic insecurity but also about the expectations and social norms that she claims exist in today's society. This is also addressed by other informants and the transcribed material shows that they sometimes encounter lack of understanding and questionings from their surroundings. Several informants state, just like Informant 1, that today, there are strong social standards that are deeply entrenched in the society regarding how you should live your life. In the interview with Informant 6, she mentions that she often feels that she is forced to explain herself and her way of living:

Sometimes, it can be a bit challenging that we, in a way, live our life in contradiction with the rest of the society. Things that for us are perfectly normal can seem very different to others. This feeling that you always have to explain yourself I sometimes find a bit difficult. – Informant 6

Another informant describes how he and his partner have developed certain strategies in order to explain their vision to others:

One of the most difficult things was to find the courage to tell others what we were about to do. We did some practice and challenged each other in pitching the idea. We really felt that we had to have this five-minute presentation about our vision because otherwise, if we should start talking about passive income, lifestyle design, slow living, etc., to someone who works full time and has never been in contact with this concept before, that person would never understand but you have to use formulations that an ordinary person can recognize. – Informant 4

However, times when individuals choose to oppose prevailing social norms, in some cases this can result in disagreement, which is something that Informant 5 has experienced:

My parents are very traditional, I mean *very* traditional, and from them I feel that I have no support. My mom's most common answer when I tell her something is 'I do not understand'. – Informant 5

Informant 5 further reasons how the lack of support may have affected her:

I think I might have chosen to live a little more outside the norm earlier. Now I followed this pattern until I was burned out and then I realized that this does not work anymore, that I cannot continue to live like this. I go against my own values every day, I have to live in a way that makes me happy and if my lifestyle is not according to the norm, then let it be. – Informant 5

This statement, the importance of having supportive family and friends, is something that also Informant 2 confirms. Unlike Informant 5, Informant 2 has experienced positive reactions from his surroundings which according to him has made the lifestyle transition much easier to implement:

The first thing I came to think of is that I have received surprisingly nice support from friends and family. I thought they would be more questioning actually. That has probably been the easiest part I think, because otherwise you easily absorb negativity when you are about to make changes. That you listen a bit too much to what others think is a classic one, so for me to have that support from home has been incredibly important. – Informant 2

On the basis of these argumentations, it is possible to conclude that the social environment often plays a significant role in the process of implementing a lifestyle change. To not have support from loved ones seems to make it harder to find the courage to explore alternative courses.

5.3 Identity and identity construction

In the following section, the findings regarding slow living and identity is presented. The findings are mainly divided into three categories: *slow living and perceived inner change*, *ambitions to change the surroundings*, and *the importance of social networks*. The first category discusses the informants' experiences of perceived inner change due to their lifestyle transitions. The second and third categories describe how the informants experience a sense of identity by expressing the concept of slow living to others. This is noticed both in the informants' attempts to inspire their surroundings to adopt slow approaches but also in discussions with like-minded people.

5.3.1 Slow living and perceived inner change

According to the transcribed material, several of the informants express that they have experienced some form of inner change due to their lifestyle transitions. In the quotations below, three of the informants discuss what positive impacts their lifestyle change has had on their self-image and self-esteem :

In the past, I was a lot more worried about how things would be perceived by others. Today I am much more confident and if someone should question me, I would answer that this is a conscious decision that I have made because this is how I want to live and if you think differently, it is perfectly fine, but I will not change my mind because of it. I have the courage and feel more secure in my beliefs. – Informant 5

A lot has changed. My self-image has changed in the way I look at myself ... I think that I probably like myself a little more now and I see myself as a brave person who are able to achieve things and who stands for my beliefs. I think it is much easier to express my opinions and if someone do not like them, that is their problem. Then I also think that I have become happier and more kind to myself and others... I do not really know but I feel more confident and happier and more satisfied. – Informant 1

I actually think that I am much more confident today than I was in the past. It may possibly have to do with the feeling that I was in the wrong place in these office jobs, even though everyone appreciated what I did and thought I did a good job, I always felt a bit 'should someone reveal me now'. I simply did not feel so confident there, my self-esteem did not peak. I always felt that maybe I could do a little better. Now I feel that much of what I do is good, and especially the family and for us. So, I probably think I today have a better self-image and self-esteem. I feel much more confident in myself... that can possibly have to do with my age because this has been a process that started in 2011 which is almost ten years ago and I mean, as a person you change so it can depend on the age as well, that you become more confident and have a better self-esteem, but I think that this lifestyle has helped. I do not have to feel that I need to prove so much to others anymore, I never need to prove things with external attributes, such as buying a new car or going on a nice vacation. – Informant 6

The quotations above show how these informants today are more confident and how they feel that they have nothing to prove. Due to these quotations, it is possible to assume that living in a way that better conforms with one's own values may have positive effects on one's own self-perception and the sense of personality. Further, in the quote with Informant 6, she explains how external attributes are no longer important to her, something that is also expressed by other informants. The transcribed material shows how several of the informants talk about their desire of downsizing, which basically means avoid buying new things and get rid of unnecessary stuff in order to make room, both physically and mentally, for other values in life. One of the informants describes how his downsized, simple way of living enables him to reflect up on himself and his life choices to a greater extent and thus allows him to develop as a person:

The time you get here enables you achieve a lot of things, you chop wood, heat the shower and organize things, but at the same time, your mind is free and you are allowed think free thoughts, which leaves room for reflection inwards. It has been a huge difference, I think, because otherwise there is always something that catches your attention, regardless of whether it is the work or the subway or something else. To make this time to reflect on oneself and develop from 2.0 to 3.0 and continue to evolve. I think that is a big difference with slow living if you choose that direction in life. – Informant 2

Similar thoughts are further expressed by one of the other informants but from a slightly different angle:

In the beginning, it was a bit of a selfish project I would like to say, that we wanted a good life. Then, as we have been given space to reflect, aspects such as it is sustainable, and that we also support local entrepreneurs with our way of living, the lifestyle has become much more important because now we have time to think. – Informant 7

Informant 7 argues that his current way of living offers him more time and space for reflection which made him recognize other beneficial aspect with the lifestyle that he previously had not thought. This quote indicates that the process of slowing down may entails new valuable insights due to increase time for reflection.

5.3.2 Ambitions to change the surroundings and the importance of social networks

As previously mentioned, identity both constructs and being constructed by social circumstances. This means, identity may be constructed in the way the informants express their beliefs regarding slow living to others and also in discussions with like-minded people.

The transcribed material shows how several of the informants describe how they actively try to reach out to others with their message about the benefits of their lifestyles. For example, the majority of the informants are active on social media where they promote slow approaches by sharing images and texts regarding the slow living concept in order to inspire others to follow their lifestyle example. In the quotations below, this is exemplified:

I definitely try to inspire others and therefore I answer as many questions as I can, I answer every single comment that comes in. I like networking and I think it is super exciting when someone reach out and is curious about something and if you can help and push someone in the right direction, it is great. –

Informant 2

It is mainly the blog and the book, above all the book I would say, but then it is also through our social media, I am on Instagram and my husband on Twitter, and that is probably where we feel we are spreading this message. It is also where many reach to us and were we find like-minded people. –

Informant 6

Further, as the quote above with Informant 6 indicates, the transcribed material show how the informants find a sense of identity through the fellowship with others who share the same attitudes. Several informants address the importance of social networks where different aspects of the slow living lifestyle can be discussed. In the quotations below, two of the informants explain their views of these certain occurrence:

I think it means quite a lot to have that exchange in one way or another because, as I said, you test things with you partner, but here you get a wider group to test things with. – Informant 7

Perhaps that my own values have been strengthened. I mean, I have always cared about the climate and been aware of the environment and so on but maybe... it is probably also about me following such accounts on Instagram and getting these inputs all the time and therefore are even more determined not to buy new produced goods and think through my consumption and stuff like that. Some parts have probably been a little reinforced. – Informant 3

Furthermore, some of the informants express that they today feel like they live in such a way that is more closely connected to their own personality. In the quotations below, two of the informants discuss how their slow living lifestyle allows them lives their lives more in line with their “true” selves:

That is the only way to describe it, that all parts of me as a person are more integrated. Today, I am both a stay home parent as well as an entrepreneur, a little bit of everything you can say. The roles are not so different anymore, it is always me. It feels like everything is much more integrated. It may also have to do

with this local life that I live today, that when you live at one and the same place to a much greater extent, you meet the same people both in some form of professional role during daytime but then in the evening in some form of private role so you are not two separate people. – Informant 7

I would say that the life I live today allows me to get closer to my identity, the person I would like to be so I it is a bit self-realizing I would say. – Informant 4

6 Conclusion and final discussion

In this chapter, the findings are summarized and discussed in relation to the thesis' aim and research question, its theoretical framework, and the presented previous research. The chapter ends with a section with the author's own suggestions for further research.

6.1 Summary of results in relation to aim and research questions

The aim of this thesis is to increase knowledge and to develop a deeper understanding of how individuals in fast-paced societies perceive the process of adopting a slower lifestyle and how identity can be constructed through slow approaches. In order to meet the aim and answer the research questions, a qualitative study has been conducted based on semi structured interviews with seven individuals in Sweden who all have made certain lifestyle changes for the purpose of slow down the pace of life.

The findings show that there are various reasons why the informants chose to transit to a slower lifestyle. The motives that the informants mention are mainly related to their individual wellbeing, their care for the environment, and a desire for an increased sense of freedom in terms of being able to control one's own time. Regardless of what motive the informants state as the main reason for their transit, they all agree that their current lifestyles have entailed benefits in all three areas. Moreover, several informant express an ambition to live a life more in line with their own values. For instance, even though it is widely known that prolonged stress may cause serious health issues, today it is standard to live hectic lives. These types of social norms are strongly questioned by the informants and they are hence looking for alternative ways of living that better correspond with their view of life.

However, according to the findings, it can be argued that one of the most essential parts of the slow living concept is to remove elements in life that make it difficult to manage one's own time. Therefore, all the informants have made certain job-related changes in order to release time that preferably can be spent on the things in life that the informants value higher than working, such as their families.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that even though the informants mainly experience benefits with their current lifestyles, such as improved personal and environmental wellbeing, increased time with their loved ones, and a higher sense of freedom, there still are some difficulties that occasionally can be challenging to handle. The challenges concern practical issues of a logistical nature as well as emotional stress related to the surroundings lack of understanding or financial insecurity. In addition, several informants state that societal norms

sometimes make the process of adopting a slower lifestyle harder since these social standard, such as working full time, are deeply rooted in society and hence difficult to oppose.

Regarding identity and identity construction, the findings illustrate how the informants recognize a connection between their lifestyle and their personality, both in a sense of identity but also in a sense of fellowship with other like-minded. The statement is based on the informants' willingness to change their surroundings and how they find identity within themselves and with others by using slow approaches and inspire others do the same. However, the informant's ambitions to change their surroundings refer to the actions where the informants express their visions of slow living to others in order to make other people understand the value of slowing down and thus eventually change prevailing social standards. Moreover, in order to reach out as far as possible with their messages, the informants primarily use their social media platforms, such as Instagram and YouTube but also by podcasting and blogging. In their social channels, the informants communicate their interests, share their thoughts, and show how slow living can look like in practice. By doing this, the informants strive to gain attention and inspire others to adapt a slower mindset which create a sense of identity in terms of becoming a represent for the slow living movement. The findings further clarify the importance of having contact with other people who share the slow living mindset. According to the findings, the opportunity to discuss thoughts and ideas with others who share the same views has been of significant importance to the informants in their process of adopting a slower lifestyle.

However, as previously mentioned, in one way or another, all the informants express a desire for increased self-determination in terms of being able to control one's own time. Regarding this, the findings show that the possibility to decide over one's own time is strongly linked to the sense of identity. The findings illustrate how the informants feel better about themselves when they are allowed to decide over their own lives without being regulated by external circumstances. Hence, by adopting slow practices, the informants state that they thus are enabled to live in a way that better corresponds with their own values. Based on this, it can be argued that once the informants take control of their own time, they simultaneously regain control of their own identity. The informants further describe that today they feel more comfortable in themselves since their focus has shifted from the endless pursuit of finding work-life balance to a greater focus on their own wellbeing. The informants explain how they today make more conscious and thoughtful choices since they have become more economically and morally aware due to their current way of living.

Furthermore, several informants address that they, due to their lifestyle change, have experienced inner change in terms of improved mental wellbeing, gained self-esteem, and a greater sense of self-confidence. The findings show how the informants perceive that they, by using slow approaches, live more in line with their own values and thus in a way that is more closely linked to their real identity.

6.2 Discussion of results in relation to theoretical framework

This thesis proceeds from several sociological theories with a particular focus on Rosa's (2013) theory regarding social acceleration and Giddens' (1991) theory about identity and identity creation.

Rosa (2013) and Giddens (1991) are both convinced that late modernity has posed new challenges for individuals. They both emphasize how the inconsistency that characterizes modern society affects people in certain ways and the reasoning about the individual's vulnerability as a consequence of a constantly changing society can be found in both Giddens (1991) and Rosa's (2013) argumentation. The two of them identify globalization as a significant cause of today's situation.

Rosa (2013) points out how globalization, as a result of modernization, has contributed to speeding up the pace of life, which, according to him, is harmful to both humans and the planet. He refers to the process as *the social acceleration*. In line with Rosa's (2013) theorization regarding the modernization process, the findings indicate that also the informants perceive that today's high-speed society is extremely detrimental in a way that affects both people and the environment. For instance, several informants express that they, before their transition to a slower lifestyle, often experienced a high level of stress due to their former lifestyle patterns, and for one of the informants, this even resulted in fatigue syndrom. Regarding this, Rosa (2013) states that a structural and cultural revolution is required in order to surmount this complex of problems that modernization entails. This statement can be connected to the informants' philosophy of slow living since the slow movement initially emerged as a reaction to the social acceleration based on the idea of reducing pace in order to find peace and balance in life. The informants choice of living slower lives can thus be seen as an example of that kind of cultural revolution that Rosa (2013) advocates where other values than just the financial ones are emphasized. As previously mentioned, the findings show how the informants express a desire for increased time control in order to live more in line with their own values. To achieve this control, all the informants have made certain job-related changes for the purpose of freeing up time, something that in several cases have

resulted in reduced income. The fact that the informants, despite potential economic consequences, chose to oppose prevailing social norms shows how this is a clear example of how the informants appreciate other values higher than the financials. By starting to question social standards, this may further give rise to larger scale discussions and thus eventually lead to reconstruction of current society structures.

Regarding identity and identity construction, it is previously stated that identity both affects and is affected by social circumstances. Thus, according to the findings, individuals who advocate slow principles are affected by current social norms in terms of potential difficulties that may arise from the contradiction between living a slow life in a society where the conditions are not optimal. At the same time, through interaction with other people, it is possible for these slow ideas to spread and eventually entrench in current society and thus change its social and cultural norms which is an example of the process Rosa (2013) refers to as resonance.

Further, the findings show how the concept of slow living can be connected to the identity building process through the reasoning about identity as an affinity with a particular culture nation, or ethnic affiliation. Even though the slow movement is a global phenomenon with no national or ethical boundaries, there are certain approaches that are shared by the members which might be likened to the logic behind cultural identification. Moreover, Bauman's (2002) argumentation that identity has been transformed from something given to a task is another example of how the practice of slow living can be linked to the creation of a person's identity. Instead of following given pathways, today individuals have to choose their own course in life which slow living is an example of.

The slow living concept can further be connected to Giddens' (1991) discussions about identity regarding risks and the self as a reflective project. Similar to Rosa (2013) Giddens argues that globalization links global social appearances with local contexts. Due to today's massive flow of constantly available information, today's risks have become a phenomenon and not just a local concern, such as climate change. Giddens' (1991) explains how the self becomes a reflective project with the ambition to master the future, which means, it is up to each individual to decide what course of action to choose. According to the findings, it is reasonable to assume that those who advocate for a slower way of living have carefully considered different alternatives and concluded that current situation is unsustainable. Most likely, they are also aware of what risks exist and through careful consideration, reached the

conclusion that slow living is the most beneficial lifestyle, which the example regarding reduced income exemplifies.

6.3 Discussion of results in relation to previous research

The results of this thesis share several similarities with the findings from previous research within the same research fields. For instance, according to the research of both Alexander and Ussher (2012) and Kraisornsuthasinee and Swierczek (2017), slower lifestyles are closely related to reduced working hours and more careful considerations regarding work opportunities in order to better meet the individuals own values. Similar to these results, the finding of this thesis show how the all the informant have made certain changes concerning their careers due to this reasoning.

Further, the findings of this thesis show how lack of understanding from family and friends sometimes can be quite difficult for the informants to handle. This is also confirmed in Sandlin and Walther's (2009) research regarding identity formation in the voluntary simplicity movement where judgemental tendencies from the surroundings are identified as one of the main obstacle for individuals who are trying to slow down. Furthermore, in conformity with Lamb's (2019) research, it is stated by the informants in this thesis that the ability to control one's own time are crucial in terms of slow living and individual wellbeing.

In the research of Alexander and Ussher (2012), the results show that people that live slower lives, primarily prefer to invest their money in handmade, homemade, long lasting quality products and second-hand commodities. The study of Alexander and Ussher (2012) further shows that this certain way of consuming is not only an attempt to spend less but also to spend in a more well-considered way. This approach is further addressed by the informants in this thesis. The informants express how they, due to their slow living philosophy, are more thoughtful in their consumption, for both economic reasons but also ethical reasons. Further, regarding the informants' consumption, it can be argued that the slow living lifestyle constitutes a certain type of anti-consumerism since it entails particular consumption patterns.

According to Lee et al. (2011), anti-consumerism can be divided into three different categories of rejecting, restricting, and reclaiming. In this thesis, these categories can all be found in the narratives of the informants. This means, the informants either purposely exclude certain goods from their consumption cycle, limiting their consumption of specific products or, for example, choose to grow their own food instead of buying and thus, reclaim their identity through production instead of consumption. Furthermore, in line with Stillerman's

(2015) theorization about how anti-consumerism is developed from the process of individuals starting to consider the personal and social consequences of their own consumption patterns, similar reflections are made by the informants in this thesis. Several informants state how they today consume in a more ethical way since they now both have the time but also increased knowledge.

Pursuant to the research of Cherrier (2009), two dominating consumer identities within the discourses of anti-consumerism can be identified: a hero identity and a project identity. The hero identity refers to a consumer who aims to increase the knowledge of other consumers and influence the collective understanding about the human impact on the environment. This certain identity can be connected to some of the informants reflections regarding their way expressing the slow living philosophy to others. Even though the concept of anti-consumerism is not the same as the concept of slow living, the slow living lifestyle often includes some anti consumerist approaches. For example, some of the informants express, how they in their social channels, attempt to communicate how a slower life may look like in order to inspire others to find the courage to do the same.

The second identity, the project identity, is based in situations where individuals oppose positional consumption, a form of consumption which refers to the idea of consumers search for identity through consumption and social performance and thus accept social norms and expectations. Cherrier (2009) describes how the construction of a project identity results from a process of “freeing oneself from oneself” by making a space for the own person and thus enabling reposition of oneself in society. Just like the hero identity, the project identity is found among the informants in this thesis. Several informants discuss about how today’s societal norms have an inhibitory effect for the personal development and that they therefore attempt to extricate themselves by using slow approaches.

With this in mind, it is possible to conclude that living in a way that better conforms with one’s own values, for example by adopting a slower pace of life, may have a certain impact on people’s self-image and sense of identity. However, it is important to remember that other factors, such as class, ethnicity, or gender also affect the identity building process and that the outcome of this study potentially would have been different if informants with other types of backgrounds were included.

6.4 Further research

As previously mentioned, the generalizability of this study is limited due to its qualitative

character and the limited selection. Regarding this, it would be interesting to study the slow movement from a broader perspective using quantitative methods in order investigate potential outcome differences and thus more thoroughly understand the phenomenon. Further, it can be discussed which theoretical frameworks are most adequate for explaining the phenomena that the study addresses and therefore, further research on this area could for example include other theories regarding the identity concept.

Moreover, in this study, no particular attempts have been made in order to reach informants with different socioeconomic or ethnical backgrounds. Since it is possible to assume that people with strong social and economic safety nets are more willing to take certain risks, it would be interesting to do further and more critical research on the participants of the slow movement concerning aspects of class, ethnicity and gender. However, given that the structural landscape is ever changing, continuing research is always required in order to keep up.

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Appendix

Interview guide

Personlig bakgrundsinformation

1. *Hur gammal är du?*
2. *Som vilket kön identifierar du dig?*
3. *Var i Sverige bor du?*
4. *Har du några barn?*
 - a) *Hur många?*
 - b) *Hur gamla är de?*
 - c) *Hur många bor med dig?*
5. *Vad jobbar du med?*
6. *Vilken är din högsta avslutade utbildning?*

Tema 1. Slow living

1. *Vad innebär "slow living" för dig?*
2. *Hur/när kom du i kontakt med konceptet för första gången?*
3. *Hur praktiserar du slow living konkret i din vardag?*
4. *I vilket syfte praktiserar du slow living?*
 - a) *Förklara/motivera!*
5. *Finns det några delar av konceptet som du valt att bortse ifrån?*
 - a) *Om ja, i så fall vilka och varför?*
6. *Vad var det som lockade mest med en långsam/enklare livsstil enligt dig?*
7. *Har ditt val av att sakta ner vardagshastigheten haft någon påverkan på din hälsa?*
 - a) *Om ja, på vilket sätt?*
8. *Hur såg ditt liv ut innan omställningen?*
9. *Vilken är den främsta anledningen till att du tog steget och aktivt valde att ställa om din livsstil?*

10. Finns det någon specifik händelse/ögonblick där du förstod att en omställning var nödvändig?

a) Om ja, utveckla!

11. Vilka fördelar upplever du med slow living?

12. Finns det några nackdelar/svårigheter?

a) Om ja, i så fall vilka?

b) Hur hanterar du dessa potentiella svårigheter?

13. Vad har varit lättast med att förändra din livsstil?

14. Vad har varit svårast med att förändra din livsstil?

Tema 2. Identitet

15. Hur skulle du beskriva dig själv?

16. Hur tror du att andra uppfattar dig?

17. Vad har slow living haft för betydelse för dig?

18. Anser du att du som person har förändrats något sedan du upptäckte slow living?

a) Om ja, på vilket sätt?

19. Har din livsstil haft någon inverkan på din självbild?

a) Förklara/motivera!

20. Hur tror du att ditt sätt att leva uppfattas av andra?

21. Vilka reaktioner har du från din omgivning?

a) Vad har du för känslor kring dessa reaktioner?

b) Känner du att du påverkas av andra människors åsikter och tankar?

i. Om ja, på vilket sätt?

22. Känner du/har du kontakt med någon annan som praktiserar slow living?

a) Om ja, hur känner ni/ har ni kontakt med varandra?

i. Har faktumet att du känner andra människor med samma ambitioner som du haft någon betydelse för din personliga process och i så fall på vilket sätt?

23. Vad är dina tankar kring att många fortsätter stressa/leva på utan att kanske någonsin sakta ner?

24. Gör du några aktiva försök att nå ut till/inspirera andra med din livsstil?

a) Om ja, hur?

i. Hur tas det emot?

b) Om nej, varför inte?

25. Vad värdesätter du i livet?

a) Är detta något som förändrats över tid eller har det alltid sett ut så?

26. Vad motiverar dig till att fortsätta leva som du gör?

Avslutning

27. Finns det något du vill tillägga eller berätta som jag inte har frågat om?