

DISABILITY TOURISM

*Robinson Crusoe Island as a Therapeutic Landscape and the
Impacts of this Landscape on Children with Disabilities*



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1. Introduction

People with disabilities live in societies designed primarily for the able-bodied (Hua et al., 2013). For them it is harder to participate in leisure activities than it is for able-bodied people, due to social and physical barriers. Social barriers people with disabilities face are for example rejection and social exclusion by peers. Environmental barriers people with disabilities face are for example the physical design of sport equipment that is unsuitable for people with disabilities. These barriers can undermine their sense of freedom and feelings of personal control (Smith, 1987). This is unfortunate, as people with disabilities need the excitement and pleasure that leisure can offer. For example, involvement in sports can motivate people with disabilities to regain their personality and handle the stigma of a disabled body (Hua et al., 2013). Accessible tourism allows disabled people to participate in leisure activities and holidays, and is therefore following the trend of a more inclusive society. SailWise is one of the organisations in the Netherlands that makes accessible tourism possible, by making water sports activities available to people with disabilities. SailWise is organising trips to Robinson Crusoe Island, where people with disabilities can stay in an accommodation and try a variety of water sports activities. The following section will elaborate on the organisation SailWise and the trips they organise to Robinson Crusoe Island.

Next to the leisure activities, being in natural environments also has some beneficial effects on people with disabilities. Especially natural environments with water, also called blue spaces, are associated with health and wellbeing. It is suggested that people's most preferred place for relaxation and restoration is blue space (Korpela et al., 2010). Furthermore, proximity to the coast is positively associated with stress reduction and physical activity (White et al., 2013; White et al., 2014). Places that have beneficial effects on the health and wellbeing of people visiting that place are called therapeutic landscapes. A therapeutic landscape is a space that is considered to have restorative qualities, being in nature for example fosters mental and physical well-being, and a degree of isolation from the stress of everyday life may improve health (Gesler, 1992).

This research explores the extent to which Robinson Crusoe Island can be seen as a therapeutic landscape and it explores the impacts this landscape can have on the health and wellbeing of the participants. In order to analyse whether Robinson

Crusoe Island can be seen as a therapeutic landscape, a fieldtrip to the island was made.

1.1. Background

Robinson Crusoe Island is an island located in the middle of the Loosdrechtse Plassen, a large area of connecting lakes, in the Netherlands, where people with disabilities can stay in an accommodation and try a variety of water sports during their stay. Trips to Robinson Crusoe Island are organised by SailWise, a foundation that offers water sports to people with physical, intellectual and sensory disabilities for already 40 years. The goal of SailWise is to make water sports accessible to everyone, by helping people with disabilities to experience and increase their potential through participation in water sports in a relaxed and safe environment. A holiday with SailWise is characterized by active participation, a high level of sociability, and a relaxed atmosphere. Next to the holidays to Robinson Crusoe Island, SailWise is also organising trips in the north of the Netherlands where people with disabilities can sail and sleep for multiple days on a large sailing boat called the Lutgerdina, and trips are organised on the catamaran called Beatrix where people with disabilities will sail during the day on the catamaran and during the night stay in apartments called It Sailhûs. People can make reservations for these different locations as individuals or as a group. The individual holidays are divided in age categories or per type of disability. The holidays take between two to seven days.

To make these holidays possible, a lot of volunteers are active at SailWise. At Robinson Crusoe Island the volunteers all had a background in sailing. Every day they took a group of people with them to have a nice day on the water in several sailing boats. Next to the sailing the volunteers also help in several household tasks, such as keeping the accommodation clean and with group holidays also cooking for the whole group. Furthermore, during the individual holidays they also support the guests with care. At the start of each year new potential volunteers are invited for an introduction weekend during which they get information about SailWise and learn some skills that can help them during the holiday. This day also has the function for the organisation to get to know the potential volunteers. After

the introduction weekend, both parties can still decide whether they want to work with each other.

For this research a fieldtrip to Robinson Crusoe Island was made that took approximately two and a half days, during which a school class of children with disabilities of the age between twelve and fourteen years old were present. Each day the children had the opportunity to do different water sports activities. On the first day at the island, after the children had settled down, the children could choose whether they wanted to go sailing or canoeing. Before the start of an activity the children could choose in which sailing boat or canoe they wanted to go. The ability for the children to learn new things at the island, and make their own decisions and choices during their stay is something that SailWise attaches great importance to.

1.2. Problem Statement

The disabled tourist has been part of the tourism industry agenda only recently. There are several reasons why the tourism sector should give more attention to this growing group of potential tourists. The rate of individuals with disabilities is still rising and they have more money to spend than is regularly assumed (Ray & Ryder, 2003). The market share of disability tourism has reached more than 117 billion US dollar per year (Bizjak, Knezevic & Cvetreznik, 2011). Therefore, this market segment should not be forgotten. There is a need for research that explores the experiences of the disabled tourists. So far, most research (see e.g. Darcy, 2010; Darcy, 1998; Shaw, Veitch & Coles, 2005) has been done about accessibility issues tourists with disabilities face, however, there are issues beyond this that can be explored. This research contributes to the existing literature by exploring the experiences disabled children have during their holiday and how disability tourism can contribute to the health and wellbeing of those children.

Furthermore, not much research (see e.g. King et al., 2003; Solish et al., 2010) has been done about children with disabilities and about the opinions of disabled people themselves. The voices of disabled children have frequently been excluded, as research has mainly focused on the perspectives of parents, professionals and other adults who are in close contact with the disabled child. This has often had the effect of objectifying and silencing disabled children (Watson, Shakespeare &

Cunningham-Burley, 1999). This study contributes to the existing literature by adding knowledge about what disabled children themselves think of their experiences during a holiday by interviewing and observing these children during their holiday.

This study furthermore contributes to the goal of gaining more knowledge on how a place can play a role in achieving and improving health and wellbeing. The relationship between water and health in current literature has mostly been investigated in the field of environmental toxicology and microbiology, but there is not much research done in the field of therapeutic blue space landscapes and human wellbeing (Völker & Kistemann, 2011). This research contributes to the literature by exploring the extent to which Robinson Crusoe Island can be seen as a therapeutic landscape and what health and wellbeing effects this landscape has on children with disabilities.

1.3. Research Questions

In order to address the problem statement, the following central research question has been formulated:

To what extent can Robinson Crusoe Island be seen as a therapeutic landscape and how do children of the age between twelve and fourteen years old with disabilities experience this therapeutic landscape?

In order to answer this central research question the following sub research questions have been made:

- 1. To what extent does the experienced space play a role during the stay of the children with disabilities at Robinson Crusoe Island?*
- 2. To what extent does the symbolic space play a role during the stay of the children with disabilities at Robinson Crusoe Island?*
- 3. To what extent does the social space play a role during the stay of the children with disabilities at Robinson Crusoe Island?*
- 4. To what extent does the activity space play a role during the stay of the children with disabilities at Robinson Crusoe Island?*

These four questions will be answered by looking at the four dimensions of the therapeutic landscape. To determine whether aspects of the experienced space,

social space, and activity space are present at Robinson Crusoe Island observations by the researcher are used as well as data from interviews and informal talks with children with disabilities, volunteers, and teachers.

5. *How are the therapeutic aspects at Robinson Crusoe affecting health and wellbeing according to the children with disabilities and the people that are in close contact with them?*

To determine whether aspects of the therapeutic landscape are affecting the health and wellbeing of the participants, data from the participant observations, interviews with the children with disabilities and a teacher, and informal talks with the children, volunteers and teachers are used.

1.4. Thesis Structure

In the following chapter a review of academic literature on the topic will be given, in this chapter also the conceptual framework that is used for this research is explained. Chapter 3 explains the methodology, outlining the methods used in order to collect data, furthermore, it explains the sampling of research subjects, how the data is analysed, and ethical dilemmas regarding this research. In chapter 4 the results of the data collection will be displayed and this chapter puts the findings of the research in the perspective of the existing literature on the topic. Lastly, the final chapter will give a conclusion in which an answer is provided to the research questions, and in this chapter also recommendations to SailWise and recommendations for future research are outlined.

2. Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

This chapter will explore the existing literature related to the research topic and provides the foundation on which the research is based. The literature review will cover the concepts of accessible tourism, the importance of leisure activities for children, water sports and disabilities, and lastly the concept of therapeutic landscapes will be discussed. The chapter will end with providing the conceptual framework that is used in this research.

2.1. Accessible Tourism

Inclusion, disability and tourism are increasingly important areas of study due to their implications for both tourism demand and supply, therefore accessible tourism is an evolving area of academic study and industry practice (Buhalis & Darcy, 2011). Accessible tourism can be defined as “a form of tourism involving collaborative processes between stakeholders that enables people with access requirements, including mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimensions of access, to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universally designed tourism products, services and environments” (Zajadacz, 2015, p.20).

The tourism industry is one of the world’s largest industries, and performing a holiday trip is one of the most common leisure activities which improve the quality of life not only for non-disabled people but also for disabled people (Son, 2010). People with disabilities have the same needs and desires for tourism as others. However, since tourism activities are designed primarily for people without disabilities it poses unique challenges (Yau, McKercher & Packer, 2004). People with disabilities should expect the same right to participate fully in the community and to enjoy the same quality of life as people without disabilities. This includes the right to engage in tourism and to participate in leisure activities. However, for people with disabilities there are still constraints and barriers to travel. Living with a disability poses unique challenges and can influence participation in many activities. Tourism is one activity that many people with disabilities feel must be sacrificed as it requires an orchestrated cooperation of physical, mental, and social capabilities, which are often adversely affected or compromised by a disability (Yau, McKercher & Packer, 2004). Furthermore, for people with physical disabilities the major constraints to travel include access to physical infrastructure needs, accessible accommodation, and access at the destination and attractions. The result of these constraints is a loss of enjoyment of the tourism experience (Darcy, 1998).

2.2. Importance of Leisure for Children

Leisure can be defined as “application of disposable time to an activity which is perceived by the individual as either beneficial or enjoyable” (Grainger-Jones,

1999, p.5). There are many possible ways that leisure time can be consumed. It can range from highly structured activities, such as competitive sports teams, to relatively unstructured activities, such as watching television (Meeks & Mauldin, 1990). Especially structured activities seem to have positive impacts on children. Structured activities are those activities that are organised by adults around specific social or behavioural goals, and are less spontaneous than unstructured activities (Fletcher, Nickerson & Wright, 2003). Club activities and sport activities are examples of a structured activity. Compared to children who are less involved in club activities, children who do participate in club activities receive higher academic grades and are rated higher by their teacher in their academic competence. Children who are more involved in sports activities were rated by their teachers as more socially competent, and were also reported higher in levels of psychosocial maturity. This suggests that being more involved in structured leisure activities contributes to the wellbeing of the children (Fletcher, Nickerson & Wright, 2003).

Time spent engaged in various types of leisure activities varies somewhat based upon demographic characteristics such as gender, social class, and maternal employment status (Meeks & Mauldin, 1990). For example, when parents are more highly educated and mothers are employed part-time it is more likely that the child will spend more time reading and studying instead of watching television (Bianchi & Robinson, 1997). Another example is that boys spend significantly more time than girls in active sports, playing games, and watching television, while girls spend significantly more time than boys socializing on weekends. Lastly, time spent playing games decreases with age, increases with number of children, and decreases as family income increases (Meeks & Mauldin, 1990).

2.3. Leisure and Children with Disabilities

In the Netherlands, around 20.000 children and adolescents are considered physically disabled, around 45.000 children and adolescents are considered intellectually disabled, around 10.000 children have a sensory disability, and around 6.500 children and adolescents have multiple disabilities (Tierolf & Oudenampsen, 2013). While participation in challenging and intrinsically motivating recreation and leisure activities is considered to be a crucial part of the development of children and youth, research (King et al., 2003; Brown & Gordon,

1987) has indicated that children with disabilities are at risk for lower participation in ordinary daily activities, due to, amongst others, social barriers, lack of nearby facilities or programs for people with disabilities (King et al., 2003). Participation in activities is a way in which people with disabilities develop skills and competencies, form friendships and relationships, achieve mental and physical health, express creativity, develop a self-identity, and determine meaning and purpose in life (King et al., 2003). Furthermore, for many children with disabilities leisure is seen as a way of tackling social exclusion (Aitchison, 2003).

2.3.1. Leisure and Children with Physical Disabilities

Physical disability is defined by the World Health Organization (2001) as a condition where a person experiences significant deviation or loss in their body function or structure that results in limitations in physical activity. Children with physical disabilities are at increased risk of limitations to participation in everyday activities (Law et al., 2006). Compared with able-bodied children, children with physical disabilities are often excluded from the group and viewed in negative ways by peers (Cohen, Nabors & Pierce, 1994; Hundert & Houghton, 1992). Such rejection and exclusion by peers ensure that children with physical disabilities have feelings of loneliness and have fewer opportunities to enhance their physical and social skills (Taub & Greer, 2000). Furthermore, this exclusion limits their involvement in many typical childhood experiences, including physical activity and active recreation (Brown & Gordon, 1987; Longmuir & Bar-Or, 1994). Because of these social barriers, children with physical disabilities usually get the role of spectator rather than active participant in games (Longmuir & Bar-Or, 1994).

Along with social obstacles that restrict participation in physical activity, there are also environmental barriers that limit access to this context for children with physical disabilities. The physical design of sport equipment and the arrangement of playground settings often are inappropriate for these children. Furthermore, the lack of available programs and experienced personnel lessens their physical activity (Taub & Greer, 2000). This is also a reason why children with physical disabilities tend to engage in less varied leisure activities than children without disabilities and that their participation is characterized by a greater frequency of

quiet recreation activities and fewer social activities, especially social activities of a spontaneous nature (King et al., 2003).

Due to these physical and social barriers to physical activity, children with physical disabilities often experience decreased fitness levels, reduced cardiorespiratory endurance, and interpersonal isolation. This is unfortunate because physical activity can play a significant role in the lives of children with physical disabilities (Taub & Greer, 2000).

2.3.2. Leisure and Children with Intellectual Disabilities

Intellectual disability can be defined as any disability characterized by substantial limitations in both cognitive functioning and adaptive behaviour. Persons with intellectual disability generally have an IQ of 70 or below and also experience difficulties with conceptual, social, and practical skills, such as language and literacy, social responsibility, and personal care (American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 2011). Leisure services for children with intellectual disabilities have, historically, had relatively low priority. The reason for this was that people assumed that these individuals may lack skills needed to participate in traditional recreation activities (Wehman & Schleien, 1981). Children with intellectual disabilities are participating significantly less in recreational and social activities than typically developing children (Solish, Perry & Minnes, 2010). This is unfortunate, because research (see e.g. Browder & Cooper, 1994; Williams & Dattilo, 1997) has associated leisure with emotional and psychological benefits for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Next to these emotional and psychological benefits, leisure can also have an educative function for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Participation in leisure activities may facilitate the development and generalization of skills and adaptive behaviours across a variety of settings. The shortage of appropriate leisure services for those with intellectual disabilities is particularly unfortunate because leisure participation is an important aspect of successful community adjustment (Rynders & Schleien, 1988). There is a substantial gap between the leisure services needed for children with intellectual disabilities and the services that are currently offered (Dattilo, 1991).

2.4. Water Sports and Disabilities

Sports in general are important for all children, disabled or not. Sports instil self-discipline, a competitive spirit, and comradeship. Sports can have great value for people with or without disabilities since it promotes health, physical strength, endurance, social integration, and psychological wellbeing (Chawla, 1994). The sports that have become available to disabled people can be classified in three ways. First of all, there are activities in which they may participate on equal terms with little or no modification, such as swimming, darts, or archery. Secondly, there are existing sports that have been modified, such as wheelchair basketball. Lastly, there are sports that have been specially developed for disabled people, such as 'roll ball' which is a sport designed for visually handicapped people (Chawla, 1994).

Over the years the realisation that recreational aspects of sports are important to people with disabilities has led to the development of a wide range of outdoor activities, including water sports. When people participate in outdoor physical activities it can lead to benefits resulting from contact with the natural environment (Tomik, 2013). Research (Hartig, Mang & Evans, 1991) has demonstrated that exposure to views of nature can improve people's health and wellbeing by providing restoration from stress and mental fatigue. Exercising in green spaces has been linked with improvements in social networking, feelings of connectivity and companionship, an increased appreciation of nature, improvements in self-esteem, and a means of escape from modern life (Peacock, Hine & Pretty, 2007; Barton, Hine & Pretty, 2009; Pretty et al., 2007). According to Stotts (1986) when people with disabilities are physically active it can decrease psychological problems, such as depression, isolation, and mental inactivity. Furthermore, Kinney and Coyle (1992) documented a correlation between increased recreation and decreased secondary problems, such as infection, skin breakdown, and weight gain, in persons with the disability paraplegia.

Moreover, water sports are an excellent way to exercise. They improve cardiovascular health, maintain muscle strength and tone, and can be exhilarating experiences (Howard et al., 2004). Sailing, in particular, has various beneficial effects. Sail training for young people allow for the development of social and emotional skills in self-confidence and the ability to work collaboratively, along with the acquiring of practical skills and knowledge. Sailing can ensure a connectedness to nature and be seen as a calming experience (MacLachlan, 2017).

2.5. Therapeutic Landscape

The concept therapeutic landscape is developed by Wilbert Gesler (1992) and analyses settings which, for environmental, individual and societal reasons, are considered to have restorative qualities. Gesler's analysis of 'landscapes associated with treatment or healing' sees landscape as more than the traditional interaction between physical and human processes. Rather, he seeks to recognise pluralistic qualities of landscapes, the concept looks for the connection between place and wellbeing. Therapeutic landscapes are thus defined as spaces of healing, particularly where the natural environment and the social environment intersect.

Furthermore, Gesler (1992) argues that modern health care systems often fail to provide the therapeutic landscapes in which physical and mental healing can occur. He concludes that instead of the modern health care systems, nature may foster mental and physical wellbeing. An escape from the stress of everyday life may improve health. Traditionally, the concept of therapeutic landscapes was concerned with places, such as Lourdes and Bath, that already have a lasting reputation of achieving healing. These places include elements of physical, mental and spiritual healing (Gesler, 1992).

Since Gesler's (1992) initial work on therapeutic landscapes, there have been a number of studies exploring the healing and health-enhancing dimensions of places. The definition of therapeutic landscapes expanded due to the increased attention for the concept. Some studies for example recognized that the presence of other individuals may enhance the therapeutic potential of a particular landscape (Staats and Hartig, 2004). Others broadened the use of the concept by also addressing non-traditional healing landscapes, such as home environments (Williams, 2002) or summer camps for children (Kearns & Collins, 2000; Goodwin & Staples, 2014). Goodwin and Staples (2014) used the term therapeutic landscape to describe the restorative qualities of recreational settings in their research about the importance of summer camps for children with disabilities. Therapeutic recreation by definition contributes to an individual's morale, the return of function, teaches skills related to creative use of leisure, and reinforces abilities associated with living independently in the community.

2.5.1. Health-enhancing effects of the Therapeutic Landscape

In the past many studies have been carried out observing the relationship between green spaces in landscapes and human health and wellbeing. Benefits of green spaces include that it influences physical health through its effect on physical activity levels. Green space can offer opportunities for beneficial exercise, such as walking (Pretty et al., 2003). Furthermore, green space has some beneficial effects on the mental health and wellbeing of people visiting that place. The provision and access to green space positively affects stress and quality of life (Van den Berg, Maas & Verheij, 2010). Green spaces may also influence social capital by providing a meeting place for users to develop and maintain neighbourhood ties. The social interaction enhances the personal and social communication skills of users (Bedimo-Rung, Mowen & Cohen, 2005).

In the studies about green spaces water was seen as an element of green space (Han, 2003; Laumann et al., 2001). Völker and Kistemann (2011) introduced the term 'blue' as a new colour to the debate on environmental health and therapeutic landscapes. Foley and Kistemann (2015, p.157) define blue spaces as "health-enabling places and spaces where water is at the centre of a range of environments with identifiable potential for the promotion of human wellbeing". The term blue space includes oceans, seas, lakes, rivers and other bodies of water (Foley & Kistemann, 2015).

In many studies water was seen as a healing component in the landscape. In his work about therapeutic landscapes Gesler (1992, p.737) stated that "one particular aspect of the physical environment that has been a source of healing for many societies is water". His studies of Bath identified well-established associations between the town's hot springs and its commodification as a healing site (Gesler, 1998). Also his study about Lourdes showed the medicinal effects of water (Gesler, 1996). Palka (1999) discussed wilderness as an example of a therapeutic setting, within which the water from lakes, rivers and waterfalls emerged as a significant healing component. Later studies identified the associations between healing and water within hot springs and spa cultures (Geores, 1998; Foley et al., 2011). Also in coastal environments, blue spaces are perceived to be beneficial to wellbeing, as, regardless of the activity performed, visitors are seen to leave the shore in a happier mood. Furthermore, natural environments containing a large amount of water in general were rated more

positively for affective reactions and perceived to have restorative qualities. Thus water can be considered as a positive environmental feature. Moreover, aquatic environments are frequently seen as people's favourite leisure destinations (Obatitor, 2014).

Although there are many similarities between green and blue spaces, some health-enhancing effects for users turned out to be prominent for blue spaces in the four conceptual therapeutic landscape dimensions introduced by Völker and Kistemann (2011). These four dimensions are the experienced space, symbolic space, social space and activity space. When humans get in contact with a place, there are engagement processes which can be divided into the four dimensions of a therapeutic landscape. This engagement can potentially generate positive or negative health effects. According to Völker and Kistemann (2015) the health-enhancing effects that can be found in blue spaces include enhanced contemplation, emotional bonding, participation, and physical activity.

2.5.2. Four Dimension of Therapeutic Landscape

In the previous section it was mentioned that Völker and Kistemann (2015) introduced four conceptual therapeutic landscape dimensions, the experienced, symbolic, social and activity space. In this section these four dimensions are further explained.

The experienced space focuses on the sensory perception of participants in the natural and built environment of the blue space surroundings. Next to the sensory perceptions, the experienced space also covers the aesthetic experiences of people visiting the blue space. The experienced space covers themes such as weather, water related elements, ambience, built elements, and the openness of the space (Völker & Kistemann, 2015).

The symbolic space focuses on symbols, signs, icons, and tokens used by humans to express meaning in a space (Gesler, 1992). In this dimension emotions, identities and sense of place are included (Völker & Kistemann, 2015). Blue spaces can have a range of different meanings for different individuals, groups and populations (Foley & Kistemann, 2015). In being meaningful, blue spaces become blue places, which means that from a space without meaning it can become a place with meaning through the interactions that happen in the place. General

connection to a place, emotional bonding, place dependence, memories, site-specific identity, removal from everyday stress, atmosphere, creativity and general emotions towards a place are themes that are included in the symbolic space (Völker & Kistemann, 2015).

The social space dimension covers themes such as relative equality, social relations or social activities. Next to this, social interactions take place in the social space, this interaction can occur in different shapes. First of all, social interaction already takes place by watching other people. This can result in a feeling of social inclusion. Secondly, a social space is a space that is a platform for conversations and social activities. Socializing with other people in a space can result in the strengthening of relationships, and when people have a shared purpose of visiting the place this effect is even bigger (Völker & Kistemann, 2015).

Blue spaces offer versatile and popular places for physical activity. Blue spaces can be seen as space that promote physical activity (Völker & Kistemann, 2011). These activities comprise on the one hand water-specific sport and leisure activities such as bathing, swimming, rowing, paddling, sailing, fishing, and on the other hand associated activities such as walking, running, biking, and skating by the water. Next to these dynamic activities, the activity space also consists of passive activities, such as sitting, relaxing, reading, sunbathing, and food consumption. In the activity space it is said that space affects human activity and vice versa (Foley & Kistemann, 2015).

2.6. Conceptual Framework

Robinson Crusoe Island could be seen as a therapeutic blue space, as it is a "health-enabling place, where water is at the centre of a range of environments with identifiable potential for the promotion of human wellbeing" (Foley & Kistemann, 2015, p.1). Robinson Crusoe Island could fit this description, since it is a location at the water, and the goal of SailWise is to make people with disabilities experience and increase their potential through participation in water sports in a relaxed and safe environment. A holiday with SailWise is characterized by active participation, a high level of sociability, and a relaxed atmosphere, which are all characteristics that could promote human wellbeing.

Based on the existing literature it becomes clear that when people get in contact with a place, there are engagement processes which can be divided into four dimensions: the experienced space, symbolic space, activity space and social space. This engagement with the landscape can have positive and negative effects on the health and wellbeing of the people visiting the landscape. This study uses the four dimensions (figure 1) in order to explore to what extent Robinson Crusoe Island can be seen as a therapeutic landscape. All dimensions are not distinctly separated from each other, but these spaces might sometimes coincide, resulting in a therapeutic landscape (Völker & Kistemann, 2015).

On the basis of the aspects related to the four dimensions created by Völker and Kistemann (2015) it is examined to what extent Robinson Crusoe Island can be seen as a therapeutic landscape and how participants experience these therapeutic aspects of the landscape.

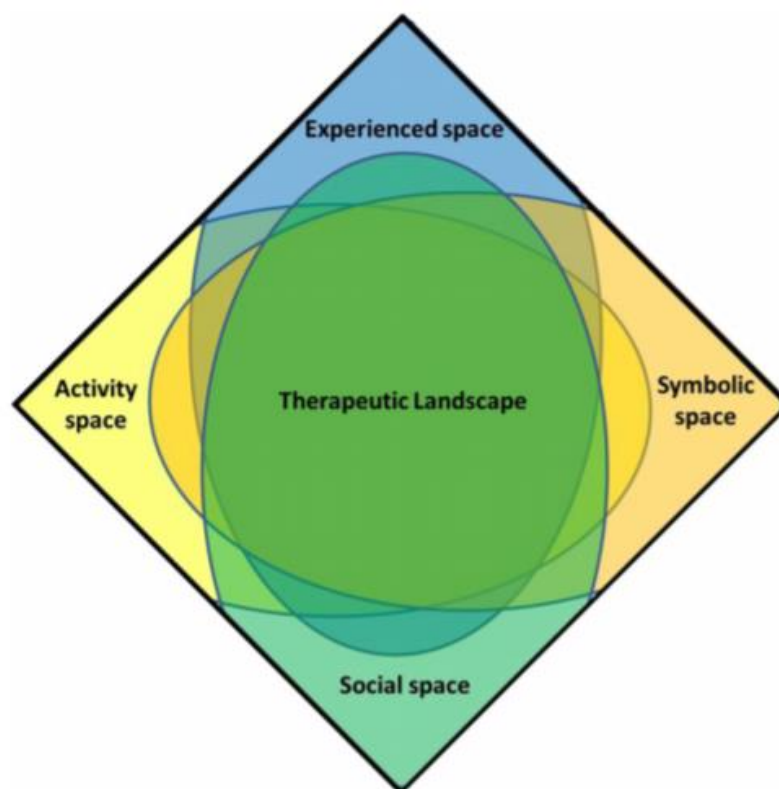


Figure 1. Four dimensions of therapeutic 'blue space' landscapes (Völker & Kistemann, 2015)

3. Methodology

An ethnographic approach was chosen to explore the experiences of children with disabilities visiting Robinson Crusoe Island and participating in water sports. Ethnographic research is a qualitative method where researchers observe and interact with the participants in their real-life environment. An ethnographic approach was chosen because it provides the researcher with a deeper understanding of the research population and the research environment. Furthermore, ethnographic can help identify and analyse unexpected issues. While being present in the field issues will most likely be directly apparent to the researcher. With studies that are not based on in-situ observation or interaction, it is possible that unexpected issues are missed because either questions are not asked, or respondents neglect to mention important information. Another advantage of ethnographic research is that the researcher can deliver a detailed representation of behaviours and attitudes of participants (Spotless, n.d.).

This research took an explorative approach, it allowed insight into the holiday experiences of the guests at the island. For this research a trip to Robinson Crusoe Island with SailWise was taken as a case study. In order to gather data, I joined a trip to the island mid-May 2017, at that moment a school class of children with disabilities of the age between twelve and fourteen years old were present. At the island I participated in all the activities offered, in this way it was possible to get a complete image of the experiences of the participants, and it gave me the opportunity to talk to the participants during the activities. By joining the children in all their activities, I minimised my intrusion at the scene. They saw me more as a fellow participant than a researcher because of this.

This research used different data collection methods. Participant observations and semi-structured interviews are considered to be the main methods of this research. However, as the fieldwork involves being among the subjects of interest for almost three days long, also informal talks and spontaneous conversations are a big part of the data collection.

3.1. Sampling

For this research convenience sampling was used, which means that in this research the most accessible subjects were involved. The reason for this was the

time frame in which this research had to be conducted. During the time frame in which this research is held, there was one group of children with disabilities going to Robinson Crusoe Island that was available and willing to participate in this research, therefore this group was chosen as the sample. Advantages of convenience sampling are the availability and the quickness with which data can be gathered.

In order to reach the sample group, emails were sent to the teacher of the group of children going to Robinson Crusoe Island explaining the research project and ensuring that the research would not disrupt the holiday of the children. After this teacher approved of participating in the research, a visit to the school was made. During this visit the research was explained to the children, and the children could also ask question regarding the research. It was made clear that participating in the research was not mandatory, the children could decide together with their parents or guardians if they wanted to join the research or not. During this meeting also the information letters and consent forms were handed out, and the children were asked to show these forms to their parents or guardians. It was explained that the consent form needed to be signed by the parents or guardians, since the children were all under eighteen years old.

The research was done on an island where in total 35 people were present, of which nineteen were children with disabilities, eight were SailWise volunteers, three were SailWise employees, and five were school teachers. However, the total sample size for this research were fourteen subjects, those were the children who had filled in the consent forms. The subjects were all persons who visited Robinson Crusoe Island mid-May. Thirteen children with disabilities from the same school class and one teacher of this school class participated in the research. At the school education is given to students who cannot go to regular secondary education because of their disability. This includes children with physical disabilities, children with multiple disabilities, children with a long-term illness, and children with acquired brain injury. The children in the sample were chosen because of their willingness to participate.

3.2. Participant Observation

Participant observation was one of the main methods in this research and was used during the on-site phase. Participant observation can be defined as “the process of learning through exposure to or involvement in the day-to-day or routine activities of participants in the research setting” (Schensul et al., 1999, p.91). Participant observation was used as a tool to deepen the data on the experiences of the participants during the on-site phase and as a validation tool for the information gained in the interviews and informal talks. Observation methods are useful in a variety of ways. Observations provide researchers with ways to check for nonverbal expression of feelings, determine who interacts with whom, grasp how participants communicate with each other, and check how much time is spent on various activities (Schmuck, 1997). Participant observation produces rich qualitative data, which shows how participants really behave. By using participant observation the researcher has the opportunity to gain insight into the meanings, viewpoints, values and problems the participants face. Participant observation is also a flexible way of doing research, as it allows the researcher to follow up different directions and ideas if something interesting occurs (Kawulich, 2005).

There are two different ways of doing participation observation, namely overt and covert participant observation. In this research overt observations were used. Overt observations refer to the researcher being open about their intentions in the field and the researcher makes sure that all members being observed are aware of what is happening. Advantages of doing overt observations is that the researcher is honest with the participants, and therefore problematic ethical issues such as deception or lack of informed consent are avoided (Bulmer, 1982).

When doing participant observations all 35 people present at the island were observed, but when writing field notes no names or information that could lead back to the participants was written down. During the participant observation field notes were made that described the experiences the children had at the island, the activities at the island, and the aspects that are related to the four dimensions of the therapeutic landscape. Beforehand, an observation scheme (see section 7.1) was made in order to give guidelines for what to look at during the trip. Also, important information that was gained in informal talks with the participants, volunteers, and teachers was written down in the field notes.

3.3. Photo Elicitation

During the on-site phase, photo elicitation was used as a research method. At the first day of the trip to Robinson Crusoe Island the participants got an assignment to make five different sets of photographs during their holiday, each set of photographs consisted of a maximum of three photographs. The first four sets of photographs were related to one of the four dimensions of a therapeutic landscape, for the last set of photographs the participant had free choice in what they want to make photographs of. The first set of photographs the participants had to make is of their favourite spot on the island, this is related to the experienced space. The second set of photographs is of something the participants first thought was impossible, but they did anyway. This set of photographs is related to the symbolic space. The third set of photographs is of their favourite moment during the holiday which they shared with one or more people, this is related to the social space. The fourth set of photographs is of their favourite activity they did on the island, which is related to the activity space. For the fifth set of photographs the participant could decide what he or she thought is really important at the island, but is still missing in the other sets of photographs.

Unfortunately, the photo assignment did not work out as planned. The participants forgot to do the assignment or did make some photos, but those were not related to the assignments given. The children were only for two and a half day at the island, and therefore they had a really busy schedule, that is probably the reason why they did not make the time do to the assignment. Many of the children were tired after the activities. Therefore, I decide at that moment to only use the photographs that were made, although they did not apply to the assignments, as a tool to enhance the conversations held. I asked the children if they had made any photographs at all during the holiday, and it turned out that the photo's they did make they were of the water sports activities or of the last day where they made photographs together with the volunteers. Talking about these photographs was still helpful as the photographs showed what the children thought was the most important at the island, what appeared to be the activities and the contact with the volunteers, and it helped to stimulate the children to talk about their experiences.

3.4. Relational Maps

A second assignment that was planned to do during the on-site phase was making a relational map. A relational map is a graphic elicitation tool that can be used during interviews. People are asked to draw themselves in the middle, after that, they draw the things they find important close to themselves and the things they find less important they draw further away from them (Bagnoli, 2009). In this research a relational map had to be used in order to explore what aspects of the holiday to Robinson Crusoe Island the participants found more important and less important. The aspects that were used in order to create the relational map were decided upon beforehand, these aspects were written down on small cards which the participants could place on a big paper. Next to these aspects that were handed out, it was also possible for the participants to give their own input if they had the feeling that an aspect was missing. Participants had to work on the relational maps individually. When they had finished their relational map, the maps had to be discussed during an interview. Due to limited time the relational maps were planned to be discussed in short interviews in groups of four to five participants.

Due to the limited time at the island, it was eventually not possible to do the relational map assignment. When I tried to do the assignment with a few of the children, I noticed that they were too tired to concentrate after all the activities they had done. This could be prevented in future research by only doing this assignment during holidays that take at least five days, since the children have a less busy program then, and probably have more time to sit down for a few minutes.

3.5. Interviews

During the on-site phase informal interviews were held. This means that the interviewer talked with people in the field informally. While in the field as an observer, informal interviews are casual conversations one might have with the people the researcher is observing, this goes hand-in-hand with participant observation (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). The reason for choosing informal interviews is that the interviews should not impact the holiday of the participants in a negative way. These informal interviews were conducted with the children with disabilities, the teachers, and volunteers that were present on the island. During

the informal talks the researcher kept some questions in mind that were prepared beforehand, and during the informal talks with the children the researcher also used the photographs the children made for the photo elicitation assignment (see section 3.3) in order to enhance the conversation. During the on-site phase it was also planned to do short interviews in which the relational maps are discussed, however because of limited time at the island this was not possible. Instead some short group interviews were held. Furthermore, two weeks after the visit at Robinson Crusoe Island, a semi-structured interview was done with one of the teachers who went to Robinson Crusoe Island as a supervisor.

3.6. Data Analysis

After data was collected during the fieldwork phase, the data from the interviews and observations needed to be analysed. Corbin and Strauss (2008, p.1) define qualitative data analysis as “a process of examining and interpreting data in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge”. After three days of data collection via participant observation, semi-structured interviews and informal interviews at the island, and one semi-structured interview at the school afterwards, data was gathered that needed to be analysed. In order to analyse the data, the interviews had to be transcribed first. When participants gave permission, interviews were audio recorded. After the data collection phase the interviews were transcribed.

After this, thematic analysis was used on all data in order to find themes within the data. Thematic analysis is a qualitative analytic method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Colour coding was used in order to divide the transcripts and notes into themes. Each piece of text that had to do with the same theme was given the same colour. Some themes were decided upon beforehand, I decided to search for pieces of text and quotes that were related to the four spaces. So four themes were already decided upon beforehand, which are the experienced space, the symbolic space, the social space, and the activity space. So for example, all the relevant pieces of text that had to do with the social space were given the

colour red, while all the pieces of text that had to do with the experienced space were given the colour green. I also searched for pieces of text and quotes that were related to the health and wellbeing of the participants, relevant information for this theme was given the colour blue. After that, I searched for subthemes within this data about the health and wellbeing of the participants. It turned out that self-assurance, independence and personal growth were reoccurring themes in the data. So, self-assurance, independence and personal growth were themes that emerged out of the data and these were themes I did not decide upon beforehand. For the results, see chapter 4.

3.7. Ethical Dilemmas

During the data collection phase the researcher was in close interaction with the study population. For that reason, ethical issues always arise and ethical considerations have to be taken into account. Ethics can be defined as a “set of moral principles and rules of conduct” (Sieber, 1993, p.13). In this research the researcher worked with children with disabilities, therefore it is even more important to take the ethical considerations into account. Fisher (1993) classifies vulnerability as one characteristic of people unable to protect their own rights and welfare, in this group he includes children, people with learning disabilities and people who are mentally disabled. There is an increased concern about vulnerable groups and whether it is ethical or not for them to be used as research subjects.

Social research should conform to some core ethical principles. First of all, participants should be fully informed about the research in which they participate. They should know the purpose of the research, the basic procedures of the research, and they should know what the data might be used for. For this research, participants have received an information letter and consent form beforehand (see section 7.2 and 7.3). In this case, the participants were all under the age of eighteen years old, and therefore their parents or guardians were also asked to read the information letter and then sign the consent form. The information letter provided explanation of the research and a possibility to ask questions to the researcher. If the participant or the parents or guardians of the participant had any questions they could send an email to the researcher. The consent form had to be read carefully and signed before taking part in the research.

Second, participants should participate voluntarily. This means that participants must freely agree to participate in the study with no coercion or harmful consequence should they elect not to participate. The participants could choose to participate by filling in the consent form, when they decide not to fill in the consent form they did not have to participate without further consequences. Moreover, participants had the opportunity to stop their participation in the research at any time without consequences. For example, if they did not feel like talking at a certain moment, this was no problem at all. Third, all the participants should participate in complete anonymity and confidentiality. Therefore, the real names of the participants are not mentioned in this paper, instead a pseudonym is used. Moreover, any other information that can lead back to the participant is not used in this research.

4. Results

In this chapter the findings are presented. The findings are divided into the four dimensions of a therapeutic blue space landscape, and in section 4.5. also elements that do not fit in only one space are discussed. After that the health-enhancing effects of Robinson Crusoe Island are discussed. The findings are immediately reflected on, fitting it in the perspectives of the literature review and conceptual model. Quotes in this chapter are used to give evidence, show behaviour, or make the results more vivid. The quotes are all translated from Dutch to English, in section 7.4. the original quotes can be found.

4.1. Experienced Space

After analysing the data, it became clear that some of the aspects related to the experienced space are to a lesser extent of importance, while other aspects of the experienced space are of a greater importance at Robinson Crusoe Island. Most of the participants liked the destination, but did not mind if the holiday had been at another place in the Netherlands. Also one of the teachers confirmed this:

"Although this is of course a very nice place, we do not have to discuss about that, it is more about being away from home."

For the participants the activities provided at the island had more of an added value than the destination and accommodation itself. Some of the participants think being in a natural environment is important during their holiday, so that was a reason why they liked the destination, but they also mentioned that they would also have enjoyed the holiday at any other destination. For them the destination itself did not have a great significance.

On the other hand, the weather, another aspect of the experienced space, did have some importance to the participants. In the three days that they had been at the island they experienced all types of weather, from a day with a lot of sun to a day with a lot of rain and wind. When there was a lot of wind, the sailing boats went faster. For some of the participants this was a bit scary, but others enjoyed the sailing even more because of this. Jesse was one of the participants that really enjoyed the strong winds on the last day, he said:

"The 'randmeer' [a medium-sized sailing boat] was my favourite boat, in this boat I was able to get out of my wheelchair, and today the boat went really fast because there was so much wind".

Ambience is also part of the experienced space, and in relation to the ambience the campfire and the volunteers were often mentioned. The campfire created a place where the children could all sit together and talk to each other. Emma said sitting around the campfire was her favourite activity at the island after sailing.

"In addition to sailing, I think the most fun activity is to sit around the campfire together in the evening. Then you can chat with everyone and it was just fun".

Also the volunteers played a big part in creating a good ambience. Some of the volunteers played games with the children and the volunteers were always in for a talk with the children.

"I enjoyed spending time with the volunteers. Mike showed us a trick with two ropes. We were strapped with two ropes around our wrists, and we had to try to free ourselves from the ropes, without removing the ropes around our wrists." – Milan

Lastly, the experienced space also covers water related elements. As the name Robinson Crusoe Island already exposes, it is an island and therefore it is

surrounded by water. In the literature was stated that being in an environment with water can have beneficial effects for the participants. Natural environments containing a large amount of water were rated more positively for affective reactions and perceived to have restorative qualities (Obatitor, 2014). Hartig, Mang and Evans (1991) have demonstrated that exposure to views of nature can improve people's health and wellbeing by providing restoration from stress and mental fatigue. This was the case for some of the children at Robinson Crusoe Island. Looking at the water had a calming effect.

Water played a big role in creating the experience for the participants, as without the water all the water sports activities would not have been possible. Additionally, for some children the water not only played a role during the water sports, but the water also created a place where the children could relax. For Thijs sitting alongside the water was one of his favourite moments at the island:

"The moments I enjoyed the most at the island were everything related to water sports, but what I also enjoyed a lot was just relaxing at the water side. I think that is very nice. When I look at the water, at the waves, I get very calm. Last night I went outside to watch the water with a group of classmates".

Next to this, the water also has an aesthetic element:

"Yesterday when the sun set, there was a sparkle on the water, so beautiful!" – Thijs

4.2. Symbolic Space

The symbolic space seems to be present to a lesser extent at Robinson Crusoe Island. One of the reasons for this is that a place gets more symbolic value when it is visited more often. The participants in this sample all went to Robinson Crusoe Island for the first time, therefore they do not have any memories about this place. When people have visited a place more often, they have created memories at that place and attach emotional value to it. A teacher who already went to Robinson Crusoe Island multiple times with a school class of children confirmed this. He said that children who went to Robinson Crusoe Island later on talked about their memories of the island in the classroom.

"Because it is at a special place, they often look back at it and talk about it with a lot of joy".

Creativity is another aspect of the symbolic space. The place creates freedom where people can creatively express themselves. In the common room there is a piano and there are guitars present, where the participants can make use of in the time between the activities. Between the water sports activities there is time to relax and some children then decide to read something or draw something in a sketchbook.

Another aspect of the symbolic space is the site-specific identity of a place. Robinson Crusoe Island is a place intended for giving people with disabilities the opportunity to try out various water sports activities. With adapted equipment specially designed so that people with disabilities can also do water sports, people with disabilities can participate in every water sports activity they want to try out. Nora said she enjoys it to be around other people with disabilities when she is on a holiday, she says that this gives her a sense of belonging.

Furthermore, a teacher mentioned that the island symbolizes the possibility to leave your disability behind in the harbour. He said:

"They [SailWise] have such a credo like, I think that is a nice one, 'leave your disability behind in the harbour', and they have such a prominent picture of a wheelchair standing on the scaffold and then the one who is normally in a wheelchair, sits at the helm of a ship. That person has, in a figurative sense, a bit of control. Literally and figuratively, and I think that symbolism is very beautiful. I think SailWise serves a purpose in our society in this way."

One of the participants also confirmed this, he said:

"Sailing is really amazing, when sailing I feel freed from my body". – Jesse

The island also symbolizes a place where new things can be experienced which people with disabilities normally do not experience in daily life. An example that confirms this is that one of the teachers mentioned that she was on this holiday to Robinson Crusoe Island a few years ago and then she was in a boat with a girl that was in a wheelchair. She said that the girl thought it was amazing to feel the splashes of water in her face, because she normally never experienced something

like that. Because she was in a wheelchair, she was always taken to and retrieved from school by her parents. This had the effect that she, for instance, never had to cycle to or from school through the rain, therefore she had never felt the rain on her face. Being on the water therefore made her experience something she never had experienced before.

4.3. Social Space

The social space is present to a large extent at Robinson Crusoe Island. A lot of social interactions take place at the island. In the literature was stated that social interaction already takes place by watching other people. This happened a lot at Robinson Crusoe Island. An example of this is when the children went water-skiing or took a ride on the speedboat. Because only one or a few of them could do the activity at the same time, the others, who were not doing the activity at that moment, were watching. In this way they were also learning from each other and watching the others sometimes influenced them to also dare to do the activity. In the literature was stated that watching others can lead to a feeling of social inclusion (Völker & Kistemann, 2015), and from doing participant observation this appeared to be the case. The children were encouraging each other before the activity, and during the activity the people that watched from the side were cheering when they saw the other do the activity.

Not only when watching each other there is a feeling of social inclusion, also the holiday in general is bringing the whole class much closer together. Many of the children have indicated this. Lotte for example said:

"I think this holiday is bringing everyone much closer, usually we are in two separate classes, but during this holiday we are together. This helps us to get to know everyone better and to develop a deeper bond with everyone".

However, a teacher said this was less the case, because the children in this class already had a good relationship with each other before going to the island. So he said that this holiday did not really change their relationship. He said this holiday would only help to create a better relationship between the students, when the holiday would be at the beginning of the year:

"Then you should actually go at the beginning of a school year, but that is for all kinds of reasons not the case for us. [...] My group already had a certain dynamic and that has already been crystallized. [...] That has already been settled, that pitch order, and that is all okay. I think those holidays in general can help to make a group more homogeneous, but then it should be at the beginning of a school year".

The social space is also a platform for conversations and social activities. During most of the water sports activities the children had the possibility to interact with each other, the teachers and the volunteers. But not only during the activities, but also for example while having dinner conversations between these groups took place.

Next to the water sports activities, one social activity that was mentioned a lot by the children as one of their favourite activities was sitting around the campfire and talking to each other. But for some other children it was also important to have the chance to have some time alone. Nora mentioned:

"For me it is important to occasionally be alone, and to make time to read a book."

Social interactions not only took place between the children themselves, but the children also indicated that they enjoyed interacting with the volunteers at the island. Daan even saw the volunteers as his new friends:

"I've made four new friends on this island, with Hendrik, Willem [two of the volunteers] and the two rabbits."

And on the last day at the island many of the children wanted to be on a picture with the volunteers. Susan said:

"I want to be on a picture with Thomas and Eline [two of the volunteers], because they became my friends. They helped me so well during the holiday. Before we went sailing, they helped me every time to get into the boat."

4.4. Activity Space

The activity space is clearly present at the island. An aspect of the activity space is that the place should promote physical activity. That is obviously the case at

Robinson Crusoe Island, as the holiday of the children is filled with all kinds of water sports activities. First of all, the dynamic activities that are present at Robinson Crusoe Island will be discussed. On the one hand, the activities that belong to the activity space of the blue space landscape are water specific activities. Activities of this kind that are present at Robinson Crusoe Island are canoeing, sailing in the different kind of sailing boats, sitting on a speedboat, and water-skiing. For people with disabilities these water sports activities can sometimes be a challenge. One of the volunteers told a story about a time that he went canoeing with a group. This is a clear example of how the activities can be a challenge for some of the participants. When he went canoeing, somewhere along the way there was a very narrow strip of water with a lot of vegetation on both sides of the water, this is called 'the jungle'. It is very difficult to paddle through this, for someone who is able to see it is already difficult, but at that moment he was with a girl who is blind. For someone who is blind, 'the jungle' is really scary but exciting. The volunteer said that it was great that she was able to have the opportunity to go canoeing even though she is blind and he was glad that SailWise was able to offer that. Also the water-skiing is sometimes a challenge. Milan mentioned:

"I did not expect that I could ever go water skiing, but I did it. I'd only rather not have fallen into the water at the end."

A teacher also mentioned that during the activities the children sometimes dare more than they expected beforehand.

"What I've seen and what I've also seen in previous holidays to Robinson Crusoe Island, is that students sometimes dare to do things I did not expect them to do, and maybe they also did not expect it themselves. For example, students who suddenly dare to go water-skiing."

Next to these water-specific sports, there are also associated dynamic activities that can be done alongside the water, such as running, walking, biking and skating. These activities were not present at Robinson Crusoe Island, the reason for this is probably that the island is too small to offer such activities.

Furthermore, next to the dynamic activities there are also passive activities. Passive activities that happened at the island where relaxing, reading, drawing, food consumption, and just sitting down.

In the literature about therapeutic landscapes was stated that in the activity space it is said that space affects human activity and vice versa (Völker & Kistemann, 2015). This is the case at Robinson Crusoe Island. For example, because there is special equipment available at Robinson Crusoe Island that make sure that people with disabilities can also participate in water sports, people get physically active. So in this case the space affects human activity. But also, because there is demand for active holidays for people with disabilities, a space where people with disabilities can do a variety of water sports is created. So in this case, the need for human activity is affecting the space.

Lastly, in the existing literature was stated that there sometimes are environmental barriers that limit access for people with physical disabilities to be physically active, for example, the physical design of sport equipment is often inappropriate for these children. Next to this, experienced personnel is also a lot of the time not available to supervise these children (Taub & Greer, 2000). SailWise is conquering these problems by providing sport equipment that is specially designed for people with disabilities, and the volunteers present at the island all have experience with working with people with disabilities.

4.5. Overlapping Spaces

Not everything that happens on the island can be divided into only one space. Many of the aspects that are related to a visit to Robinson Crusoe Island can be divided in two or more spaces. That is because the spaces sometimes overlap. An example at Robinson Crusoe Island where the spaces are overlapping is when the children were doing a water sports activity. This obviously belongs to the activity space, since an activity is involved, but it also belongs to the social space, since the activities were most of the time not done alone, they were done with the whole group or parts of the group. During the activities social encounters took place. For example, while sitting in a sailing boat or canoe the children were chatting with each other and having fun together. Social encounters are part of the social space, so in this example the social space and activity space are overlapping.

Furthermore, the children were also watching each other when someone was doing an activity. An example of this is that during the water sports activity the children were watching each other and in this way the children could also learn from each

other. A teacher that went with the children to Robinson Crusoe Island for instance noticed that the children were stimulating each other to also try a new activity. He said:

"Often you get that when one person is doing something, the others will follow. When they see that one of them is sitting on the surfboard, and he dares to do that, then you see that someone else, who first said 'no, I'm not going to do that', wants to try it anyway. Those are beautiful moments, then a barrier has been knocked down. So when they see each other doing an activity and are stimulated by each other, the effect is that they dare to do more".

Watching each other is part of the social space and the activities obviously belong to the activity space, so this is also an example where the social space and activity space can overlap.

Furthermore, there was an overlap between the social space and symbolic space. When talking to a teacher who went to Robinson Crusoe Island for multiple times already in previous years, he noticed that children in his classroom often talk about their experiences at Robinson Crusoe Island in the weeks after their holiday. Memories are a part of the symbolic space. The memories of Robinson Crusoe Island they talked about in the classroom in the weeks after the holiday were always shared with their classmates. Therefore, there is an overlap between the symbolic and the social space.

The experienced space and the social space can also overlap. Ambience is an aspect of the experienced space, but a good ambience is most of the time created by people interacting with each other. Next to this, the experienced space can also overlap with the activity space, as the activities are influenced by the weather. For example, on the last day on the island, there was a lot of wind. The influences of the weather are part of the experienced space. At that moment, because of the strong winds, it was not possible to sail with every boat, and the boats went faster. Therefore, the activities, belonging to the activity space, were influenced by the weather, belonging to the experienced space.

4.6. Health-enhancing effects

In the existing literature about therapeutic blue space landscapes was stated that when a place can be seen as a therapeutic landscape it can provide health-enhancing effects for the people visiting that place (Völker & Kistemann, 2015). Health-enhancing effects when people are visiting therapeutic blue spaces that became evident in the existing literature are that it is the most preferred place for relaxation and restoration (Korpela et al., 2010), that proximity to the coast is positively associated with stress reduction and physical activity (White et al., 2013; White et al., 2014), and that participating in outdoor activities can lead to benefits resulting from contact with the natural environment (Tomik, 2013). Furthermore, exposure to views of nature can improve the health and wellbeing of people by providing restoration from stress and fatigue (Hartig, Mang & Evans, 1991), and exercising in outdoor environments can improve social networking, feelings of connectivity and companionship, an increased appreciation of nature, improvements in self-esteem, and a means of escape from modern life (Peacock, Hine & Pretty, 2007; Barton, Hine & Pretty, 2009; Pretty et al., 2007). Furthermore, physical activity can decrease psychological problems, such as depression, isolation, and mental inactivity (Stotts, 1986). Moreover, water sports improve cardiovascular health, maintain muscle strength and tone, and can be exhilarating experiences (Howard et al., 2004), in particular, sail training for young people allow for the development of social and emotional skills in self-confidence and the ability to work collaboratively, along with the acquiring of practical skills and knowledge. Sailing can ensure a connectedness to nature and be seen as a calming experience (MacLachlan, 2017). And lastly, according to Völker and Kistemann (2015) the health-enhancing effects that can be found in blue spaces include enhanced contemplation, emotional bonding, participation, and physical activity.

However, when analysing the data collected at Robinson Crusoe Island as describe in the data analysis section (see section 3.6) three new themes emerged in relation to the health and wellbeing of the participants visiting the island, which are self-assurance, independence, and personal growth. These three themes will be discussed in the following sections.

4.6.1. Self-assurance

At Robinson Crusoe Island the children try out things some of them have never done before. For example, some of them had beforehand never expected that they would be able to sail because of their disability. Also, the water-skiing activity was something many of them at first thought was really scary, but later on they enjoyed it a lot. With the water-skiing activity they had to sit alone, or with one of the volunteers on a surfboard behind a speedboat. This went pretty fast, and that is why many of them first thought they would not be able to do it, especially not alone. When they do try it eventually, it gives them a boost in their self-assurance.

For Jesse already the sailing was a big challenge because he is in a wheelchair, he mentioned:

"That I have been able to sail so much has given me so much more confidence. Beforehand I had not expected that I would be able to this much."

From doing participant observation it appeared that the health and wellbeing effects of the island seems to be the largest for the children in a wheelchair. A volunteer mentioned that especially with water-skiing you can see how much this holiday means to the children. You can clearly see how much the children enjoy it. She said that especially children in a wheelchair would have never thought beforehand that they would be able to get out of their wheelchair. Beforehand, most of them think it is really scary to do it, but when they do it eventually, you can see their self-esteem grow. According to her, water-skiing teaches them that they can do more than they sometimes expect to be able to do. But also some of the children who are not in a wheelchair can find it really scary and only want to go on the surfboard when a volunteer is going with them. However, after they have watched other children do the water-skiing, they sometimes even dare to go alone on the surfboard.

Gerard, one of the teachers, said that going to Robinson Crusoe Island is only one of components in boosting the self-assurance of the children. The growth in the self-assurance of the children already starts at school. He mentioned:

"It is a process. And this [the holiday at Robinson Crusoe Island] is not the only factor that contributes to the growth of self-confidence. We have some children that start school with a not too positive self-image. So there is a lot

of attention for this. Through all kinds of activities and subjects – because it is not possible to learn everything through some personal development goals that are stated in books – you have to learn those things in a different way. But there is a lot of attention for this.”

However, according to this teacher the holiday contributes in some way to the confidence of the children.

“I do not know if this is really a life changing event for some of the students, that might be a bit over the top. I think such a holiday contributes, not for all students, but for some of them, in the growth of self-confidence. Once they have experienced this and they have to do something similar again, then they will be less apprehensive and dare to do so more easily. In broad terms you might say, they dare to do a little bit more, and their confidence grows because of this.”

4.6.2.Independence

Being away from home for a few days affects the way the children have to do things. Some things that the children normally do in a certain way at home, need to be done differently at the island. Without the help of their parents, some children now have to do things alone, while they normally get help with these actions. An example of this is when they have to prepare their lunches. Jesse gave an example of this:

“At home my parents always make my sandwiches, here at the island I had to do it myself. I have put too much butter on my sandwich, but I think it will still be nice”.

Another example was given by Bram. He normally gets help when he has to remove his splint from his leg. He said:

“At home my parents always help me with my splint, but here last evening I removed my splint myself”.

Furthermore, some of the children get the responsibility for their own medication.

"Students who, then, do not use their medication at home, but have to let the class assistants take responsibility over the medication, or they have to take the responsibility themselves." – Gerard (teacher)

Lotte mentioned that she has to make more choices herself at the island. She liked that she was able to choose herself in which sailing boat she wanted to go.

"With horse riding I can never choose myself, the pony I have to ride on is chosen for me. Here I can choose what I want to do. I think it's hard to choose which boat I have to choose, but it is very fun to do!" – Lotte

4.6.3. Personal Growth

The experiences at Robinson Crusoe Island contribute to the personal growth of the children in general. When a teacher was asked the question whether the holiday to Robinson Crusoe Island has an educational component to it, he answered:

"Yes, I think so. But then more instructive in the sense that they take steps as a person. For example, being away from home for a longer time. [...] You have to imagine, you have been taken care of by your parents all the time, and suddenly you are away for two nights. And for some of my students this was too much and they went home halfway through the camp. But, of course, there are also enough students who do stay the whole time, and in that sense, by accomplishing such an exciting issue, they experienced some kind of personal growth.

Also the island provides the children with the opportunity to learn new things, which is also something that contributes to their personal growth. This is especially the case for the children who go to the island for the first time. For children who went to the island before, the educational component is less evident. This was confirmed by a teacher:

"And you know, for some students it is a piece of cake, and they have been on camp three times and they do it effortlessly and think this experience is amazing. And for these students the educational effect is not that big. But I think, especially for those students who already think this experience is a little bit scary, that they really knock down barriers."

However, the experience at Robinson Crusoe Island is only one small component in a whole range of all different activities that contribute to the personal growth of the children. Working on their confidence, learning to take responsibility, improving their social skills are all examples of skills that are built throughout the years. The experience at Robinson Crusoe Island is too short to really have a big effect on the children. It is a process that takes a longer time:

"I have a lot of students, and I am teaching in the first grade, who come in to the class on their first day with their head hanging down and who later on walk out of the door with their heads held high. That is something that makes me happy. And dare to do things, taking initiative, dare to talk to people, taking responsibility, that is something that is normal for us, but for them it is something that they have to work really hard for. And also important, that they have given their disability a bit of a place. And this holiday is one of the range of activities that contributes to it." – Gerard (teacher)

5. Conclusion

In order to answer the central research question 'To what extent can Robinson Crusoe Island be seen as a therapeutic landscape and how do children of the age between twelve and fourteen years old with disabilities experience this therapeutic landscape?' five sub-questions were made. Based on these sub-questions it can be said that out of all four therapeutic landscape spaces there are aspects present at Robinson Crusoe Island. Aspects from the experienced space that are affecting the children's experiences at Robinson Crusoe Island are the influences the weather has on the experiences of the children, the ambience, and the water-related elements. Aspects from the symbolic space that are present and affect the experiences are creativity, site-specific identity, sense of belonging, and the fact that the island symbolizes a place where the children can try out new things and a place where they can leave their disability behind. Aspects of the social space that are present and affecting the experience are social interactions, watching each other, social inclusion, social activities, being alone, and strengthening relationships. Lastly, aspects of the activity space that are present and affecting the experience are the water-related activities and the passive activities.

Because the children with disabilities experienced that aspects of all four spaces were present at Robinson Crusoe Island, it can be stated that Robinson Crusoe Island can be seen as a therapeutic landscape. When a place can be seen as a therapeutic landscape it can contribute to the health and wellbeing of the people visiting that place. In the literature about therapeutic blue space landscapes was stated that the health-enhancing effects that can be found in blue spaces include enhanced contemplation, emotional bonding, participation, and physical activity (Völker & Kistemann, 2015). At Robinson Crusoe Island, it did not become evident that participants experienced enhanced contemplational or emotional bonding. However, because for disabled people it is normally harder to participate in leisure activities, the positive effects of participating in all the water sports activities were obvious. Next to this, because they were able to participate in all the water sports activities, the children were also physically active. Furthermore, three themes occurred out of the data in relation to the health and wellbeing of the participants. First of all, many of the participants encountered a growth in their self-esteem, furthermore they became a little bit more self-independent at the island, and lastly the island partly contributed to the personal growth of the participants.

Although there are therapeutic aspects present at Robinson Crusoe Island, it should not be forgotten that the island is only a small part that contributes to the health and wellbeing of the participants. They only stay at the island for a few days. Already at school they learn new skills and for example learn to be more independent, this is not something that they experience for the first time at Robinson Crusoe Island. Also, being physically active in for example sport clubs (Fletcher, Nickerson & Wright, 2003) or outdoor environments (Tomik, 2013) can have positive effects regarding the health and wellbeing of the participants. So, although Robinson Crusoe Island plays a role in creating more self-assurance, independence and personal growth for the children visiting the island, it is only one factor that contributes to this.

5.1. Limitations

A discussion of the limitations has to be taken into consideration in order to put the results of this research into perspective. First of all, there are some disadvantages when using convenience sampling. Convenience sampling can lead

to the underrepresentation or overrepresentation of particular groups within the sample. Since the sample is not chosen at random, the inherent bias in convenience sampling means that the sample is unlikely to be representative of the whole population. This undermines the ability to make generalisations from the sample used to the entire population that is being studied (Laerd, n.d.). Due to time constraints, convenience sampling seemed to be the appropriate sampling method. There was one group of children with disabilities going to Robinson Crusoe Island that was available and willing to participate in this research, therefore this group was chosen as the sample. Furthermore, since this was an exploratory research, the findings did not have to be generalized for the entire population.

Furthermore, while doing participant observations there is always a risk of getting too involved and therefore giving biased data. However, I tried to stay as objective as possible, by only writing down field notes about what was really happening, and not about what I thought the participants were feeling or thinking about their experience. Next to this, the researcher's presence may change the behaviour of the group. Because the participants were aware of the presence of the researcher, there is a possibility of the so called observer effect, which means that the participants are changing their behaviour acting in a way that they believe is expected by the researcher (Bulmer, 1982). However, by participating in all activities and by taking notes when the participants were not close by I tried to make them less aware of my role as a researcher at the island, and therefore I do not think that the participants changed their behaviour because of my presence.

5.2. Recommendations SailWise

In this section I will provide recommendations for SailWise, these recommendations are based on conversations I had with the children visiting Robinson Crusoe Island. The children indicated that they noticed that there were some points of improvement which SailWise could keep in mind.

First of all, a few children mentioned that they enjoyed the holiday so much that they want to go again if they have the possibility. Jesse mentioned:

"If I had the possibility to book another holiday, I would immediately book a holiday in one of the individual weeks".

At the moment, at Robinson Crusoe Island there is an individual water sports holiday organised for adolescents between the age of 16-24 years old. Unfortunately, for children under sixteen years old it is not possible to book a holiday with children of the same age without a group. Many of the children indicated that they would like it if there would be an individual water sports holiday organised for children under sixteen years old. So, a recommendation for SailWise would be to organise, once or twice a year, an individual water sports week for children under the sixteen years old, because it turned out that there is demand for this.

Furthermore, a recommendation for SailWise would be to advise schools to go on this holiday for longer than two and a half day. This is because almost all children mentioned that they would have enjoyed it if the holiday would be longer, because then they could do everything at a quieter pace. For some of the children the program was a little bit too busy, Thijs mentioned:

"I would like the holiday to take a little longer. Then we might also have a less full program, and then we could do everything more relaxed. I would like to be away for about five days, instead of just two and a half days".

Also, the therapeutic effects of the holiday would probably be bigger if the holiday would be longer, therefore, it is recommendable to, at least, go to the island for one week.

However, this could be a problem, because one of the teachers who went to Robinson Crusoe Island as a supervisor mentioned that there was no budget for this. He said:

"Until recently, it was the case that we went away every year, but we cannot afford to do that anymore. So that's over."

Next to this, not all children would enjoy a longer holiday. For some a holiday longer than this would be too intensive.

"I think two and a half day is enough, otherwise I will get so tired". – Fleur

5.3. Future Research Recommendations

For future research it would be interesting to examine how other groups perceive Robinson Crusoe Island. The group of children in this research did not make the decision themselves to go to Robinson Crusoe Island, the school decided to go to this place. That is maybe the reason why the experienced space for this group was to a lesser extent present. The children did not consciously make the decision to go to this place, therefore they maybe did not mind at what place in the Netherlands their holiday would be. It would be interesting to see if groups of people that did make this decision themselves to go to Robinson Crusoe Island perceive the island differently, maybe other people do have a specific reason for choosing this location, for example that they specifically want to go to an island or a place surrounded by nature.

Furthermore, it would be interesting to examine whether the symbolic space would be to a greater extent present for people that visited Robinson Crusoe Island already multiple times. The symbolic space would probably be more present for this group, because they already created memories at the island and have more emotional bonding with the island.

Lastly, the framework of Völker and Kistemann (2015) acted as a useful framework for researching the island. All aspects of a place are involved in this framework, therefore future research could use the framework of Völker and Kistemann (2015) about therapeutic blue space landscapes in order to examine whether another place could be seen as a therapeutic landscape and which spaces are present to a more or lesser extent.

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7. Appendix

7.1. Participant Observation Scheme

Experienced Space	Symbolic Space	Social Space
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather • Built environment → Accommodation, facilities • Natural environment • Aesthetic experiences • Water related elements • Openness of the space • Sensory perceptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symbols, signs, icons, tokens • Emotions • Sense of place • Meanings • General connection • Emotional bonding • Place dependence • Memories • Site-specific identity • Removal from everyday stress • Atmosphere • Creativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relative equality • Social relations • Social activities • Watching other people • Social inclusion • Conversations • Strengthening relationships • Shared purpose of visiting
Activity Space		Health-enhancing effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical activity • Water-specific sports • Associated activities • Passive activities 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relieve from stress • Enhanced contemplation • Emotional bonding • Participation • Physical activity

7.2. Information Letter

Beste SailWise deelnemer en ouders/verzorgers,

Mijn naam is Julia en ik ben 21 jaar. Ik studeer toerisme aan de Universiteit van Wageningen en zit nu in mijn laatste jaar. Om dit laatste jaar af te ronden ben ik bezig met het schrijven van een scriptie. Voor mijn scriptie ga ik onderzoek doen tijdens jullie SailWise vakantie op Robinson Crusoe eiland. Het onderzoek zal gaan over de effecten die de omgeving op jullie als deelnemer kan hebben. Eerder onderzoekt wijst namelijk uit dat als een omgeving bepaalde aspecten bevat het kan bijdragen aan het welzijn van mensen (dus hoe lekker jij in je vel zit etc.). Door het houden van interviews zal ik er proberen achter te komen wat de ervaringen van jullie, de deelnemers, zijn op dit gebied. In deze interviews kan ik jullie ook vragen om een 'relational map' te maken. Dat is een afbeelding waarin jijzelf in het midden staat en daaromheen vraag ik je om dingen die jij belangrijk vindt tijdens de vakantie op te schrijven of te tekenen, dingen die je minder belangrijk vindt staan verder van je af en dingen die je heel belangrijk vindt staan dichterbij. Uiteraard blijven jullie antwoorden tijdens de interviews anoniem, wat betekent dat jullie namen niet voorkomen in mijn eindverslag.

Als je mee zou willen doen aan mijn onderzoek kan ik je gerust stellen dat dit niet in de weg zal staan van het plezier dat je zult hebben tijdens deze vakantie. Ik begrijp maar al te goed dat de vakantie voorop staat en ik zal er alles aan doen om ervoor te zorgen dat je een leuke tijd hebt! Ook als je een keer geen zin hebt om met mij te praten over je ervaringen is dit geen enkel probleem. Verder zal ik zelf ook meedoen aan de activiteiten die plaats zullen vinden op het eiland. Door zelf mee te doen aan de activiteiten kan ik ook al veel leren over jullie ervaringen.

Ik hoop dat je mee wilt doen aan mijn onderzoek en als je nog vragen hebt na het lezen van deze brief, aarzel dan niet om mij een mailtje te sturen. Mijn e-mail adres is julia.isrif@wur.nl. Ik zal proberen zo snel mogelijk jullie vragen te beantwoorden! Als je besluit om mee te doen aan mijn onderzoek, zouden jij en je ouders/verzorgers dan het toestemmingsformulier op de volgende pagina willen ondertekenen en meenemen naar het eiland?

Ik kijk uit naar een gezellige vakantie met jullie!

Groetjes,

Julia Isrif

7.3. Consent Form

Toestemmingsformulier SailWise Onderzoek

Alle deelnemers aan dit onderzoek wordt gevraagd een toestemmingsformulier in te vullen en tekenen. Hiermee laat jij als deelnemer weten dat je genoeg informatie van mij (de onderzoeker) hebt gekregen over het onderzoek en jouw rol daarin en dat je besluit eraan mee te werken. Je kunt overigens gedurende de reis nog van gedachten veranderen. Stoppen kan en mag altijd, op elk moment!

Als jij jonger bent dan 18 jaar bent en eventueel zou willen meewerken aan dit onderzoek, dan is het belangrijk dat je dit formulier alvast laat lezen en tekenen door jouw ouders/verzorgers. Je kunt het getekende formulier dan aan het begin van de reis aan mij geven. Ook hier geldt dat als jij tijdens de reis toch van gedachten verandert je dit gewoon kunt aangeven en mag stoppen.

Titel onderzoek:

Robinson Crusoe Island as a therapeutic landscape and the impacts of this landscape on young people with disabilities

Verantwoordelijke onderzoeker:

Julia Isrif, student BSc Tourism
Wageningen Universiteit

In te vullen door de deelnemer en ouder/verzorger

- De onderzoeker (Julia) heeft mij duidelijk uitgelegd waar het onderzoek over gaat en vragen die ik had goed beantwoord.

- De onderzoeker is verplicht om alle vragen die ik tijdens het onderzoek heb te beantwoorden.
- De onderzoeker mag alle antwoorden die ik geef tijdens interviews gebruiken voor haar eindverslag, mits anonimiteit wordt gegarandeerd en de deelnemer daar verder geen nadelige gevolgen van zal ondervinden.
- Deelname aan dit onderzoek is geheel vrijwillig en op elk moment tijdens het onderzoek mag de deelnemer besluiten om niet meer mee te werken. Hier zullen geen gevolgen aan zitten.

Naam deelnemer: _____

Handtekening deelnemer: _____

Datum: _____

Handtekening ouder/verzorger: _____

In te vullen door de uitvoerende onderzoeker

Ik heb een schriftelijke toelichting gegeven op het onderzoek. Ik zal resterende vragen over het onderzoek zo goed mogelijk beantwoorden. De deelnemer zal van een eventuele voortijdige beëindiging van deelname aan dit onderzoek geen nadelige gevolgen ondervinden.

Naam onderzoeker: Julia Isrif

Handtekening onderzoeker: _____

Datum: _____

7.4. Dutch Quotes

In this section the original Dutch quotes with English translations will be displayed.

Who?	Quote
Gerard (teacher)	Hoewel dit natuurlijk wel een hartstikke leuke plek is, die discussie hoeven we niet te voeren. Het gaat meer erom, van huis zijn. "Although this is of course a very nice place, we do not have to discuss about that, it is more about being away from home."
Jesse	De randmeer was mijn favoriete boot, in deze boot ging ik uit mijn rolstoel en hij ging vandaag heel snel omdat er zoveel wind was. "The 'randmeer' [a medium-sized sailing boat] was my favourite boat, in this boat I was able to get out of my wheelchair, and today the boat went really fast because there was so much wind".
Emma	Naast het zeilen vind ik de leukste activiteit om samen rond het kampvuur te zitten 's avonds. Dan kan je gezellig met iedereen kletsen en het was gewoon heel leuk.

	"In addition to sailing, I think the most fun activity is to sit around the campfire together in the evening. Then you can chat with everyone and it was just fun".
Milan	Ik vond het ook heel leuk om tijd door te brengen met de vrijwilligers, Mike liet ons een trucje met twee touwen zien. We zaten aan elkaar met twee touwen en we moesten proberen los te komen zonder de touwtjes van onze polsen af te halen. "I enjoyed spending time with the volunteers. Mike showed us a trick with two ropes. We were strapped with two ropes around our wrists, and we had to try to free ourselves from the ropes, without removing the ropes around our wrists."
Thijs	De leukste dingen op het eiland vind ik alles met watersport, maar wat ik ook leuk vind is gewoon rustig aan het water zitten. Dat vind ik heel fijn. Als ik naar het water kijk, naar de golven, word ik heel rustig. Gisteravond ging ik ook nog even naar buiten om met een groepje naar het water te kijken. "The moments I enjoyed the most at the island were everything related to water sports, but what I also enjoyed a lot was just relaxing at the water side. I think that is very nice. When I look at the water, at the waves, I get very calm. Last night I went outside to watch the water with a group of classmates".
Thijs	Gisteren ging de zon onder en toen die schittering op het water, zo mooi! "Yesterday when the sun set, there was a sparkle on the water, so beautiful!"
Gerard (teacher)	Omdat het op een hele bijzondere plek is waar ze vaak met heel veel vreugde op terug kijken en over praten. "Because it is at a special place, they often look back at it and talk about it with a lot of joy".
Gerard (teacher)	Ze hebben zo'n credo van, dat vind ik wel een mooie, "laat je handicap achter op de steigers", en daar hebben ze dan zo'n veelzeggend fotootje bij van een rolstoel die op de steiger staat en vervolgens zit degene die normaal in een rolstoel zit, die zit nu aan het roer, die heeft daarmee in figuurlijke zin een beetje de regie. Letterlijk en figuurlijk en die symboliek vind ik wel heel mooi. Ik vind wel dat SailWise een doel dient in onze maatschappij op deze manier. "They [SailWise] have such a credo like, I think that is a nice one, 'leave your disability behind in the harbour', and they have such a prominent picture of a wheelchair standing on the scaffold and then the one who is normally in a wheelchair, sits at the helm of a ship. That person has, in a figurative sense, a bit of control. Literally and figuratively, and I think that symbolism is very beautiful. I think SailWise serves a purpose in our society in this way."
Jesse	Het zeilen is echt geweldig, het voelt als een moment dat ik me bevrijd voel uit mijn lichaam. "Sailing is really amazing, when sailing I feel freed from my body".
Lotte	Ik denk wel dat de klas hechter wordt door zo'n vakantie, normaal zitten we in twee klassen, maar tijdens deze vakantie zijn we samen. Hierdoor leer je iedereen echt beter kennen en worden we ook hechter.

	"I think this holiday is bringing everyone much closer, usually we are in two separate classes, but during this holiday we are together. This helps us to get to know everyone better and to develop a deeper bond with everyone".
Gerard (teacher)	<p>Dan zou je eigenlijk meer aan het begin van een schooljaar moeten gaan, maar dat is om allerlei redenen is dat bij ons anders. Ja, dat kan. Maar dat is dit jaar, bij mijn groep, niet zo, die had al een bepaalde dynamiek en dat is al een beetje uitgekristalliseerd. Hoe noemen ze dat ook alweer al die fases? Norming, storming, performing, of zoek het maar een keer op, ik weet het niet. Dat heeft zich al gesetteld die pikorde en dat is allemaal oké. Ik denk wel dat werkweken in algemene zin, zeg maar, aan het homogeen maken van een groep kunnen bijdragen als het aan het begin van een schooljaar is.</p> <p>"Then you should actually go at the beginning of a school year, but that is for all kinds of reasons not the case for us. [...] My group already had a certain dynamic and that has already been crystallized. [...] That has already been settled, that pitch order, and that is all okay. I think those holidays in general can help to make a group more homogeneous, but then it should be at the beginning of a school year".</p>
Nora	<p>Ik vind het heel belangrijk om af en toe alleen te zijn en een boek te kunnen lezen.</p> <p>"For me it is important to occasionally be alone, and to make time to read a book."</p>
Daan	<p>Ik heb vier nieuwe vrienden gemaakt op dit eiland, met Hendrik, Willem en de twee konijnen.</p> <p>"I've made four new friends on this island, with Hendrik, Willem and the two Rabbits."</p>
Susan	<p>Ik wil met Thomas en Eline op de foto, want zij zijn mijn vrienden geworden. Zij hebben mij zo goed geholpen tijdens de vakantie. Voor het zeilen hielpen ze me elke keer om in de boot te kunnen komen.</p> <p>"I want to be on a picture with Thomas and Eline [two of the volunteers], because they became my friends. They helped me so well during the holiday. Before we went sailing, they helped me every time to get into the boat."</p>
Milan	<p>Ik had niet verwacht dat ik ooit zou kunnen waterskiën, maar ik heb het toch gedaan. Ik had alleen liever op het eind niet in het water willen vallen.</p> <p>"I did not expect that I could ever go water skiing, but I did it. I'd only rather not have fallen into the water at the end."</p>
Gerard (teacher)	<p>Nou, wat je ook wel ziet, en wat ik in eerdere werkweken ook gezien heb, is dat leerlingen soms dingen durven die ik niet verwacht had. En misschien hadden ze het zelf ook wel niet verwacht, dus leerlingen die ineens durven te skiën.</p> <p>"What I've seen and what I've also seen in previous holidays to Robinson Crusoe Island, is that students sometimes dare to do things I did not expect them to do, and maybe they also did not expect it themselves. For example, students who suddenly dare to go water-skiing."</p>

Gerard (teacher)	En vaak krijg je dan het effect als er een schaap over de dam is.. dan zien ze dat pietje op die surfplank gaat zitten, die durft dat dan maar mooi, en dan hoor je jantje die eerst zei van ooh ga ik niet doen, die gaat het toch doen. Nou dat zijn mooie momenten natuurlijk, dan is er weer een barrière geslecht. Dus dat is wel het effect dat ze elkaar ook bezig zien en door elkaar ook een beetje gestimuleerd worden dan om het toch aan te durven.
	"Often you get that when one person is doing something, the others will follow. When they see that one of them is sitting on the surfboard, and he dares to do that, then you see that someone else, who first said 'no, I'm not going to do that', wants to try it anyway. Those are beautiful moments, then a barrier has been knocked down. So when they see each other doing an activity and are stimulated by each other, the effect is that they dare to do more".
Jesse	Dat ik hier al zoveel heb kunnen zeilen geeft me veel meer zelfvertrouwen, ik had van te voren niet verwacht dat ik zoveel zou kunnen doen."
	"That I have been able to sail so much has given me so much more confidence. Beforehand I had not expected that I would be able to this much."
Gerard (teacher)	Nee, dat is een proces. En dit is niet het enige dat bijdraagt aan het groeien van zelfvertrouwen. We hebben nog al wat kinderen die binnenkomen met een niet al te positief zelfbeeld. Dus daar is veel aandacht voor. Via allerlei activiteiten en vakken, want hoe kan je allerlei persoonlijke ontwikkelingsdoelen via boekjes leren, dat moet je op een andere manier leren natuurlijk. Maar daar is veel aandacht voor.
	"It is a process. And this [the holiday at Robinson Crusoe Island] is not the only factor that contributes to the growth of self-confidence. We have some children that start school with a not too positive self-image. So there is a lot of attention for this. Through all kinds of activities and subjects – because it is not possible to learn everything through some personal development goals that are stated in books – you have to learn those things in a different way. But there is a lot of attention for this."
Gerard (teacher)	Ik weet niet of dit nou echt een 'life changing event' is voor sommige leerlingen, maar dat is misschien wel een beetje over de top. Ik denk dat zo'n werkweek bijdraagt, ook weer niet voor alle leerlingen, maar voor sommige leerlingen wel, in de groei van het zelfvertrouwen. Als ze dit een keer hebben meegemaakt en ze moeten hierna nog eens een keer iets soortgelijks doen, dan toch minder angstig ervoor zijn en het wat eerder durven aangaan. In brede zin zou je kunnen zeggen, gaan ze misschien wel iets meer durven en groeit hun zelfvertrouwen.
	"I do not know if this is really a life changing event for some of the students, that might be a bit over the top. I think such a holiday contributes, not for all students, but for some of them, in the growth of self-confidence. Once they have experienced this and they have to do something similar again, then they will be less apprehensive and dare to do so more easily. In broad terms you might say, they dare to do a little bit more, and their confidence grows because of this."

Jesse	Thuis smeren mijn ouders altijd mijn boterham, hier moest ik het zelf doen. Ik heb veel te veel boter op mijn brood gedaan, maar het zal vast wel lekker zijn.
	"At home my parents always make my sandwiches, here at the Island I had to do it myself. I have put too much butter on my sandwich, but I think it will still be nice".
Bram	Thuis helpen mijn ouders me altijd met mijn spalk, maar hier doe ik hem 's avonds zelf uit.
	"At home my parents always help me with my splint, but here last evening I removed my splint myself".
Gerard (teacher)	Leerlingen die dan, zeg maar, het gebruiken van medicijnen niet meer thuis doen, maar moeten overlaten aan de klasassistenten of dat zelf moeten gaan doen. Dus er zitten allerlei dingen die wij niet zo bedenken, maar voor die leerlingen wel spannende kanten aan zo'n werkweek.
	"Students who, then, do not use their medication at home, but have to let the class assistants take responsibility over the medication, or they have to take the responsibility themselves."
Lotte	Met paardrijden kan ik nooit zelf kiezen, dan wordt de pony waar ik op moet rijden voor me gekozen. Hier kan ik zelf kiezen wat ik doe. Vind het wel moeilijk welke boot ik moet kiezen, maar wel heel leuk!
	"With horse riding I can never choose myself, the pony I have to ride on is chosen for me. Here I can choose what I want to do. I think it's hard to choose which boat I have to choose, but it is very fun to do!"
Gerard (teacher)	Jawel hoor, dat denk ik wel. Maar dan meer leerzaam in de zin van dat ze als persoon stappen zetten. Bijvoorbeeld een langere tijd van huis zijn. Ja, langere tijd... het is tweeënhalve dag, dus waar hebben we het over. Maar dat kan voor sommige van mijn leerlingen een hele tour zijn. Je moet je voorstellen, je bent je hele leven door je ouders verzorgd, en dan ineens ben je twee nachten weg. En een aantal leerlingen van mij heeft het daarom ook niet volgehouden en is halverwege het schoolkamp teruggekeerd. Maar er zijn natuurlijk genoeg leerlingen die dat wel volhouden en in die zin hebben ze dan een soort persoonlijke groei doorgemaakt om zo'n voor hen spannende aangelegenheid te volbrengen.
	"Yes, I think so. But then more instructive in the sense that they take steps as a person. For example, being away from home for a longer time. [...] You have to imagine, you have been taken care of by your parents all the time, and suddenly you are away for two nights. And for some of my students this was too much and they went home halfway through the camp. But, of course, there are also enough students who do stay the whole time, and in that sense, by accomplishing such an exciting issue, they experienced some kind of personal growth.
Gerard (teacher)	En weet je, voor sommige leerlingen is het 'a piece of cake' en die zijn al drie keer op kamp geweest en twee vingers in de neus en vinden het helemaal geweldig. En daar zit voor mij, voor die leerlingen, niet zo'n enorm leereffect. Maar ik denk vooral dat het voor die leerlingen die het van zichzelf al spannend vinden, dat die wel echt, nou ja, barrières slechten.

	"And you know, for some students it is a piece of cake, and they have been on camp three times and they do it effortlessly and think this experience is amazing. And for these students the educational effect is not that big. But I think, especially for those students who already think this experience is a little bit scary, that they really knock down barriers."
Gerard (teacher)	Ik heb genoeg leerlingen, en ik ben dan van de onderbouw, van leerjaar 1, die dan binnenkomen met hun hoofd omlaag en die de deur uitgaan met hun hoofd omhoog. Nou, daar word ik blij van. En dingen durven, dat ze initiatief durven nemen, op mensen af durven stappen, verantwoordelijkheid hebben leren nemen. Dat is een beetje vanzelfsprekend voor ons, maar dat is knokken voor die gasten. En ook niet onbelangrijk, dat ze hun handicap een beetje een plek hebben kunnen geven. En die werkweek is één van het scala aan activiteiten dat daaraan bijdraagt.
	"I have a lot of students, and I am teaching in the first grade, who come in to the class on their first day with their head hanging down and who later on walk out of the door with their heads held high. That is something that makes me happy. And dare to do things, taking initiative, dare to talk to people, taking responsibility, that is something that is normal for us, but for them it is something that they have to work really hard for. And also important, that they have given their disability a bit of a place. And this holiday is one of the range of activities that contributes to it."
Jesse	Als ik zou kunnen boeken, zou ik direct een nieuwe vakantie boeken in de individuele week.
	"If I had the possibility to book another holiday, I would immediately book a holiday in one of the individual weeks".
Thijs	Ik zou wel willen dat de werkweek iets langer zou duren. Dan zouden we ook misschien een minder vol programma hebben en alles wat rustiger aan kunnen doen. Ik zou ongeveer vijf dagen weg willen zijn in plaats van maar tweeënhalve dag.
	"I would like the holiday to take a little longer. Then we might also have a less full program, and then we could do everything more relaxed. I would like to be away for about five days, instead of just two and a half days".
Gerard (teacher)	Tot voor kort was dat ieder jaar dat ze weg gingen, maar dat kunnen we niet meer betalen. Dus dat is over.
	"Until recently, it was the case that we went away every year, but we cannot afford to do that anymore. So that's over."
Fleur	Ik vind tweeënhalve dag wel goed, want anders word ik zo moe.
	"I think two and a half day is enough, otherwise I will get so tired".