
Abstract

Repetitive Strain Injury is a musculoskeletal disorder that usually affects the limbs of the upper body. The symptoms can range from a tingling sensation in the hands to excruciating pain, resulting in the sufferer becoming immobile. It is a condition that can affect the sufferer's livelihood, and frequently results in them either taking long periods of time off work, or having to give up work totally. In many ways it is a life changing experience.

Confusion and controversy surround Repetitive Strain Injury. There is not a consensus within the medical profession to the meaning of the term, or how to treat it. Repeatedly the sufferer is left bewildered, confused and often missed. It became apparent that little literature existed concerning the sufferer's experience. Much of the research literature related to cause and effect, and frequently pertained to financial compensation.

This qualitative study aims to redress this to some extent. The study explores the subjective experience of a small number of people that have Repetitive Strain Injury, utilizing a grounded theory approach to analyse the data.

Field Theory [Kurt Lewin 1952] and Malcolm Parlett's [1991] notion of a 'co-created reality' a 'dance' have provided an important framework for the findings. It is argued that not only does the sufferer interact with the field [their environment], but they are significantly affected by it, which may subsequently affect the individual's experience of Repetitive Strain Injury.