

**Engaging in Qualitative
Research Methods:
Opportunities for Prevention and
Health Promotion**

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Learning Objectives

- Describe personal values, life experiences, and professional activities that inform one's research standpoint
- Describe the value of engaging in qualitative research methods
- Describe ethical concerns in qualitative research
- Discuss the data collection and analytical procedures inherent in each approach of qualitative inquiry

Qualitative Research

- Shaped by both the subjects' and researcher's
 - Personal experience
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Race/ethnicity
 - Social class
 - Sexuality
 - Biases

Peshkin, 1988; Merriam, 2002; Charmaz, 2004

What is Qualitative Research?

- Long tradition in: anthropology, sociology, and clinical psychology
- Emerging in: public health, medicine, nursing, education, and management
- Concentrates on **words** and **observations** to express reality
- **Describes people** in natural situations and settings
- Asks:
 - What?
 - Why?
 - How?

Peshkin, 1988; Merriam, 2002; Charmaz, 2004

The Role of Theory & Qualitative Research

- Theory as a starting point for scrutiny rather than for *application*
- The best qualitative studies are **theoretically informed**
- Generate **new theoretical insights** through qualitative **methods**

Charmaz, 2004; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011

“While quantitative research can tell us much about the incidence and outcomes of disease, it cannot answer **how** to get patients to use medication when it does not make them feel better, or **why**, despite improving medical technology, asthma is getting worse.”

Rich & Ginsburg, 1999

5 Approaches

to Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design
Creswell (2007)

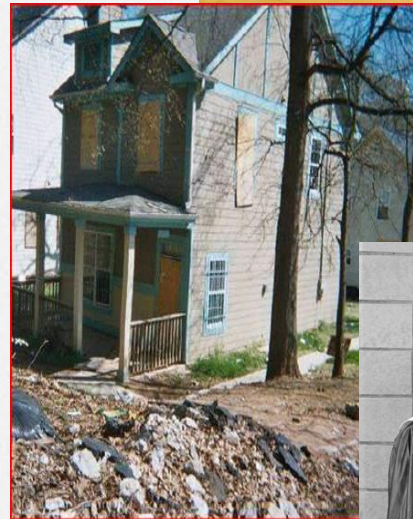
Five Qualitative Approaches

(Creswell, 2007)

Characteristics	Ethnography	Phenomenology	Grounded Theory	Case Study	Narrative Inquiry
Focus	Culture-sharing group	Essence of the experience	Emerging data from the field	Case(s)	Live of Individual
Type of Problem	Shared patterns of culture of group	Essence of lived phenomenon	Views of participants	Understanding of case(s)	Stories
Unit of Analysis	Group	Several Individuals	Process or interaction among individuals	Group, Program, or Activity	Individuals
Data Collection	Observations and interviews	Individual interviews	Interviews with 20-60 individuals	Interviews, observations, artifacts	Interviews

Ethnography

- **Explores** shared patterns of behavior, values, beliefs, language in a **group of people** who interact over time
- Involves **participation** in the life of the “community”
- May contribute to issue clarification or to pointing to directions for **targeted social change**



Phenomenology

- Explores the essential nature of a **lived experience**
 - Asks:
 - What have you **experienced**?
 - What **contexts or situations** have typically influenced or affected your experiences?
- Aims to gain **insider perspective** of the phenomenon of study

Grounded Theory

- Asks:
 - What is the **process**? How did it unfold?
- Applies **systematic and explicit data analysis techniques** to textual information
 - Asks:
 - What was central to the process?
 - What caused this phenomenon to occur?
 - What strategies were employed during the process?
 - What effect occurred?
- Then **develops a theory** of the process, action, or interaction, shaped by the views of **participants**

Case Study

- Collection and presentation of information on a particular **person, group, organization, or event**
- Focus is on **depth** and **meaning** in context

Narrative Inquiry

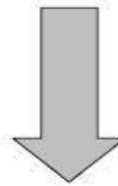
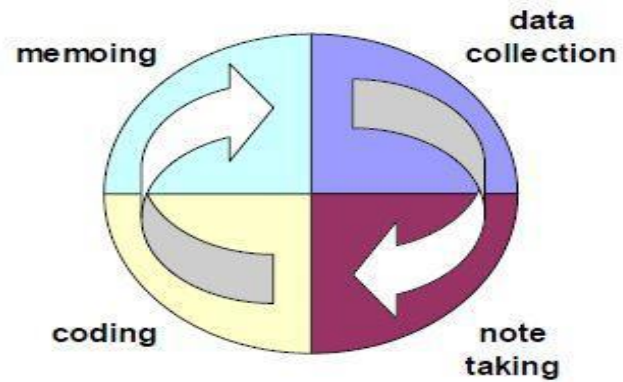
- Begins with the experiences as expressed in **lived and told stories** of individuals
- Relating of experiences or events with **temporal and spatial** orientation
- Asks: What **meaning** did people make of what happened?

Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Howie, 2010; Creswell, 2012

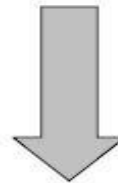


Data Collection

Steps



sorting



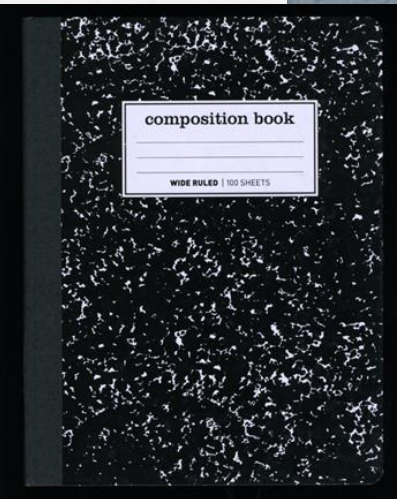
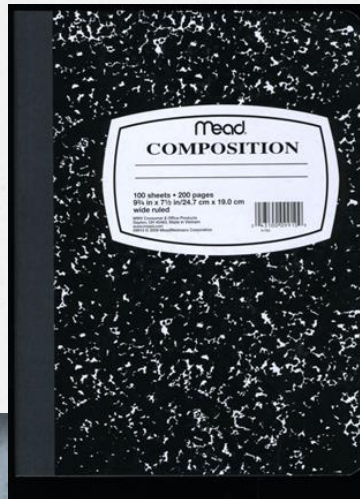
writing

Ethical Concerns

- Extent to which the research allows **all voices to be heard**
- Extent of **reciprocity** in the research relationship

Tools

- Notebook & Pen
- Audio Recorder or LiveScribe Pen
- Interview Guide
- Camera
- Video Recorder
- Maps
- Paper & Markers
- Snacks
- Incentives



Meanings

○ Etic Approach

- “**outsider**,” “deductive,” or “top-down”
- Takes an existing theory or conceptual framework and conducts research to see if it applies to a new setting or population

○ Emic Approach

- “**insider**,” “inductive,” or “bottom-up”
- Let the participants and data “speak to them and to allow themes, patterns, and concepts to emerge

Recruitment & Rapport-building

- ▣ Origins in Anthropology
- ▣ Observes **naturally occurring socio-cultural activities**

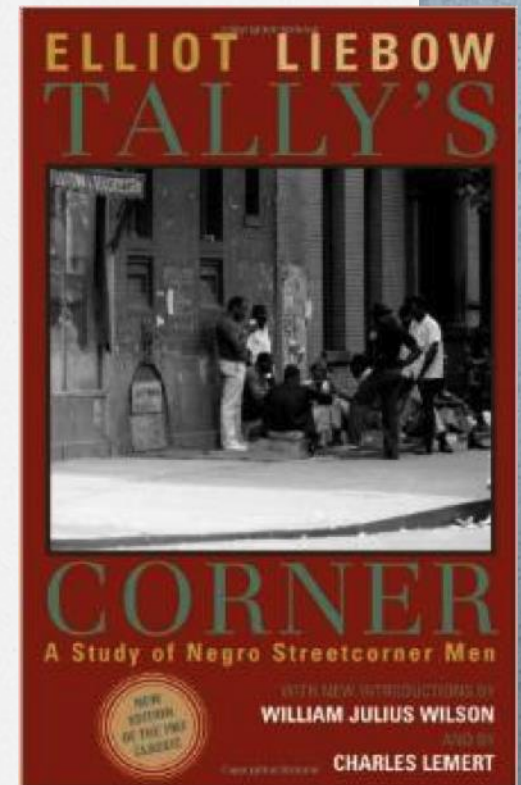
- ▣ Gaining **entrée** (uses of **informants**)
- ▣ Importance of building **rapport**

- ▣ Covert vs. Overt
- ▣ **Insider and Outsider** subjectivities
 - Data **Collector** and Data **Analyst**

- ▣ Shared physical and social spaces

Meanings

“For more than four hours Tally and I lounged around in the Carry-out, talking, drinking coffee, watching people come in and go out, watching other hangers-on as they bantered with the waitresses, horsed around among themselves, or danced to the juke-box. Everyone knew Tally and some frequently sought out his attention. Tally sometimes participated in the banter but we were generally left undisturbed when we were talking. When I left at two o’clock, Tally and I were addressing each other by first names (“Elliot” was strange to him and we settled for “Ellix”) and I was able to address the two waitresses by their first names without feeling uncomfortable. I had also learned to identify several other men by their first names or nicknames, had gotten hints on personal relationships, and had a biographical sketch (part of it untrue I learned later) of Tally.”



Liebow, 1967

Field Notes as Data

- From which the concepts, the relationships among the concepts and the theory are developed
 - jotted notes
 - direct observation notes inference notes
 - personal notes
 - diagrams/maps/taxonomies/family trees
 - audio/visual recordings

Interview/Moderator Guide

- Warm-up
 - Make **first questions easy** and non-threatening
- Main body
 - Present questions in a **logical order**
- Cool-off period
 - Include a few easy questions to **defuse tension** at the end
- Closure
 - **Thank** respondent
 - Signal the end, e.g., put notebooks away
 - Provide **incentives**
 - Discuss follow-up and dissemination plans

Key Informant Interviews

- Who can help provide context to your issue or question?
 - Examples: Clients, Community Leaders, School Administrators, Funders, Policymakers

Individual Interviews

- Meeting with individuals to discuss a particular phenomenon
 - Can be open-ended, unstructured, semi-structured, or structured
 - *Key advantage: Good for discussing sensitive topics*
 - *Key disadvantage: May be difficult to engage some individuals*

Focus Groups

- A group of 6-8 participants who discuss among themselves topics presented by a group facilitator to obtain:
 - In-depth understanding
 - New ideas
 - Reactions to stimuli
- 1-2 hours
- Comfortable or Neutral location

Probes

- Digging Deeper
- Encourage respondent to share more information
 - **“Tell me more about...”**
 - **“Describe...”**
 - **“Can you give me an example?”** (anecdote)
 - **“Was that typical of teen girls in your neighborhood?”** (interpretation)
- Have a prepared answer for likely questions and requests for clarifications
 - Pilot testing can help identify likely question(s)

Saturation

- The point at which additional data collection no longer generates new understanding
 - Interview respondents until no new themes emerge



Data Analysis

Analysis

- Compiling and arranging themes, codes and illustrative quotes into the outline of a narrative that explains ***What is going on here?***

Analysis, by Research Approaches

(Creswell, 2007)

Data Analysis & Representation	Ethnography	Phenomenology	Grounded Theory	Case Study	Narrative Inquiry
Describing	Describe the social setting, actors, & events	Describe personal experiences	Describe open coding categories	Describe the case & its context	Describe the story chronologically
Classifying	Analyze data for themes & patterns	Develop significant statements ; group statements into meaning units	One open coding category for central phenomenon ; Axial coding for causal and intervening conditions	Use categories to establish themes or patterns	Identify stories, epiphanies, & context
Interpreting	Interpret how the culture “works”	Describe “what happened” & “how the phenomenon was experienced	Engage in selective coding & interrelate categories to develop “story”	Direct interpretation & naturalistic generalizations	Interpret the larger meaning of the story
Representing & Visualizing	Present narrative	Present narration of the “essence” of the experience	Present a visual model or theory	Present in-depth picture of the case in narrative, table, & figures	Present narration focusing on processes, & theories

Analytic Memos

- Reflection on your work
 - Comments on how interviews proceeded (or did not)
 - Insights into particular topics
 - Noting hypotheses that arise about potential themes or relationships between categories
 - Issues that come up in various situations, reminders for future work

Transcribing



Who Should Transcribe?

- Interviewers:
 - They can recall details that may not be clearly recorded (pro)
 - They may not have requisite computer skills (con)
 - They might have less time to conduct interviews because transcription is time-consuming (con)
- Professional Transcription Services:
 - They can save you a lot of time! (pro)
 - They can be expensive (con)
 - Quality can vary tremendously, requires vigilance and oversight (con)
- Hire your own transcription staff:
 - Develops in-house expertise (pro)
 - Control over process in your hands (pro)
 - Requires training and oversight (con)

What to Transcribe?

- Always **verbatim**, include:
 - Mispronunciations
 - Slang and Colloquialisms
 - *E.g., Don't yuck my yum, Nat Nat, Gommy*
 - Elisions
 - *E.g., gonna, gotta, 'n', jus', l'ma*
 - Grammatical errors
 - Nonverbal sounds
 - Background noises

Reading Your Data

- Literally read your transcripts
 - First, to re-familiarize yourself with the data
 - Then, to get the flavor of what the respondent(s) is saying
 - Then, to identify the main point(s) expressed within the response
- Reading **line-by-line** is recommended

Coding

- **Code: Word or short phrase**
 - Symbolically assigns a **summative**, salient, essence-capturing, or evocative **attribute** to qualitative data

What Gets Coded?

- Cultural practices
- Episodes
- Encounters
- Roles
- Social & personal relationships
- Groups & Cliques
- Organizations
- Habitats
- Subcultures & Lifestyles

Questions to Consider while Coding

- What are people **doing**? What are they trying to accomplish?
- What specific means or **strategies** do they use to do this?
- How do members **talk** about, **characterize**, or **understand** what is going on?
- What **assumptions** are they making?

Open vs. Focused Coding

- Open

- Reads qualitative data line-by-line to identify any and all ideas, themes, or issues **the data suggest**

- Focused

- Line-by-line analysis based on topics that have been identified as of particular interest (e.g., theoretical framework(s))
- *A priori*

Collaborative Coding

- Member-checking
 - **Consult participants** during analysis as a way of validating findings
- Inter-rater reliability
 - Percentage at which **different coders agree and remain consistent** with their assignment of particular codes to particular data

Software

- Allows us to **organize** our transcript data in preparation for analysis
- Does NOT do analysis for us
 - Is a **tool** for indexing the data
- Dedoose: www.dedoose.com
 - Web- and desktop-based
 - Inexpensive
 - Collaborative
 - Fluid in integrating different types of data
 - Secure
- ATLAS.ti: www.atlasti.com
- NVivo: www.qsrinternational.com
- MAXQDA: www.maxqda.com
- AnSWR: www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/software/answr
- CAT: cat.ucsur.pitt.edu
- HyperRESEARCH: www.researchware.com
- QDA Miner: www.provalisresearch.com
- Quirkos: www.quirkos.com
- Transana (for audio and video data materials): www.transana.org

Using Software

The screenshot displays a software interface for text analysis. The main window shows a transcript with various lines highlighted in different colors (blue, green, yellow, purple, orange). A 'Codes' panel on the right lists categories like Philosophy, Physical GWC Context, and Tutoring Strategies. The interface includes a top menu bar with 'Line #'s, 'Memos', and 'RTL' options, and a bottom toolbar with 'Create Excerpt', 'Prev Excerpt', 'Next Excerpt', and 'Font Size' controls.

- Use your mouse to highlight **the lines of text** you want to include.
- Now click on the **code you want to apply** from the code book and drag it across the excerpt
- A bracket will appear around the lines of text and you will see the code next to the bracket.

From codes and categories to themes and theory

○ Category

- **Word or phrase** describing some segment of your data that is *explicit*

○ Theme

- **Phrase or sentence** describing more *subtle* and tacit processes

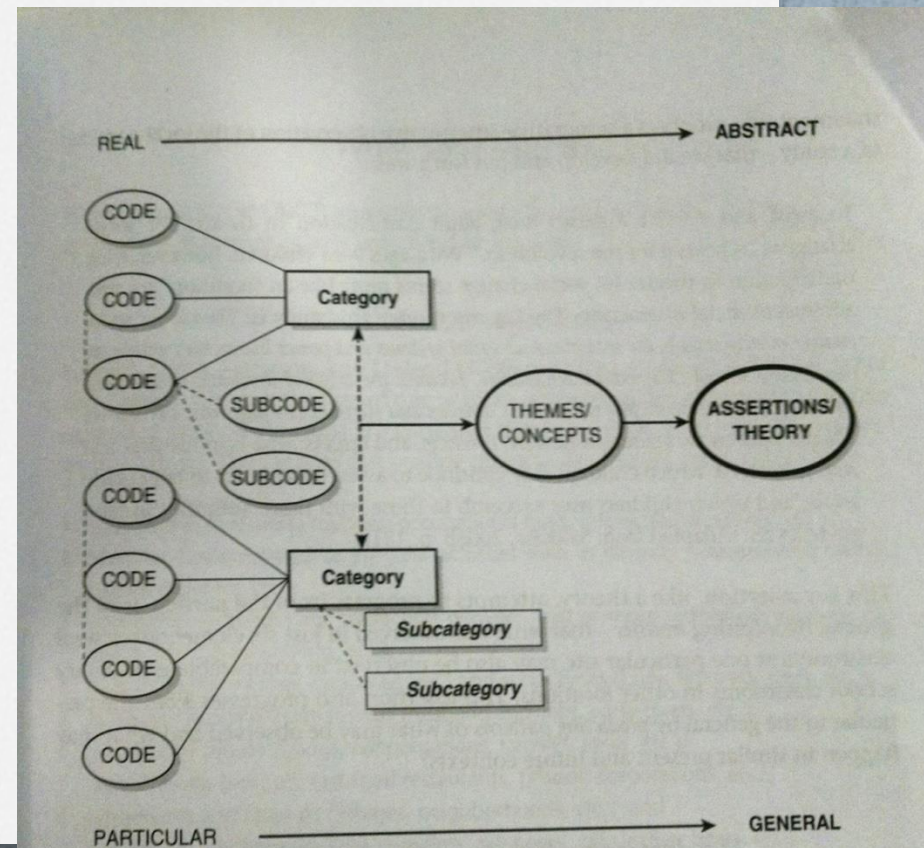


Figure 1.1 A streamlined codes-to-theory model for qualitative inquiry

The Study's "Trinity"

- What are the **3 major codes, categories, themes, and/or concepts** that **strike you and stand out**
 - Which is the **dominant** code or theme? Why?
 - In what ways does the dominant code or theme influence and affect or **interrelate** with the others?
 - Explore other three-way combinations with other major items from your study

The “Top 10” List

- Extract **10 quotes or passages** from your field notes, interview transcripts, documents, analytic memos, or other data that **strike you**
- **Arrange and re-arrange** them in various orders to discover ways of structuring the write-up of your research:
 - Chronologically
 - Episodically
 - Narratively
 - From the mundane to the insight
 - From the smallest detail to the bigger picture

Thematic Analysis

- **Concepts** that explain how ideas or categories are connected

Excerpt-Commentary Memos

- Integrative Memos
 - Begin to **link or tie codes** and bits of data together
 - **Explore relationships** between coded fieldnotes
 - Provide a more sustained examination of a theme by **linking together discrete observations**
 - Explain **contextual and background information** that a reader unfamiliar with the setting would need to know in order to **follow the key ideas and claims**
 - Write in a more **public voice**

Excerpt-Commentary Memos

- **Analytic Point**
 - Focuses attention
 - Instructs reader
 - Should be written in the “**ethnographic present**” (present tense)
- **Descriptive Excerpt**
 - Introduced by relevant **orienting information** as bridge
 - Indented
- **Analytic Commentary**
 - Grounded in the details of the excerpt
 - Explore and develop ideas
 - Raise issues relevant to theme
- Explore:
 - Implications
 - Nuances
 - What’s of importance
- **REPEAT**

Excerpt-Commentary Memo

- **Analytic Point:** Youth at EOYDC are able to develop future orientation through interactions with people and activities there. The following excerpt is from Kareem, a 19-year-old African-American male:
 - **Excerpt:** *And it's just crazy how EOYDC really made me feel like I could be a teacher, I could be a motivational speaker, I could be...man, there's so much you can do with kids! And just from working with EOYDC, I decided to switch from business management to human development, and human development relates to sociology, I can branch on to that. There's just so much, I'm like, wow. EOYDC gives you little signs that you need in life. You know, just working with kids, you learn how to be more tolerant, patient... and nice. It's just crazy how everything fits together when you work with EOYDC.*
- **Analytic Commentary:** This excerpt is important because it shows how a college-aged youth has, not only, changed his major to something that he is passionate about, but also has realized direct connections between his work at EOYDC, his new major, and a future career. This youth appears shocked, but grateful for this realization and for his involvement at EOYDC. This line of research is also related to notions of desirable futures (Foster & Spencer, 2011) and hope (Duncan-Andrade, 2009; McLaughlin, Irby, & Langman, 1994).

Reliability in Qualitative Research

- Adding more structure & instructions to the **instrument**
- Increasing consistency in **interview process**
 - **Training** and monitoring
 - Using the same interviewer
- Using **multiple coders** and coding checks

Generalizability in Qualitative Research

- Generate propositions that can guide future research on **similar phenomena**

Validity in Qualitative Research

- **Credibility:** Believable
- **Transferability:** Generalizable
- **Dependability:** Given ever-changing Contexts
- **Confirmability:** Corroborated by others

Before You Write

- Know your audience and know your format
- Create a publication plan
 - “**Bound**” your analysis and scope for each manuscript
 - Find your “**hook**” for each manuscript
 - Choose your journal(s) and submission strategy
 - Write and revise
 - Submit
 - Revise & Resubmit

Dissemination Strategies

- Write a **report** and discuss it one-on-one with key decision makers
- Plan a half- or full-day **presentation** meeting for health professionals and advocacy organizations
- Create a **brochure** with findings
- Create a **policy brief**
- Create PhotoVoice or **VideoVoice** projects
- Plan community **town halls**
- Distribute your report to local **universities**, **libraries**, and key local and international **organizations**

Piecing Together the Puzzle



Conferences and Trainings

- ResearchTalk Qualitative Intensives, Chapel Hill, Feb & Jul: <http://researchtalk.com/>
- International Congress for Qualitative Inquiry (ICQI), Urbana-Champaign, Spring: <http://www.icqi.org/home/>
- Society for Applied Anthropology:
<http://www.sfaa.net/annual-meeting/>
- Society for Qualitative Inquiry in Psychology:
<http://qualpsy.org>
- Ethnography in Education Research Forum:
<http://www.gse.upenn.edu/cue/forum>
- Ethnographic and Qualitative Research Conference:
<http://www.eqrc.net/>
- Oral History Summer Institute, NYC:
<http://incite.columbia.edu/summer-institute-ccoehr/>
- Oral History Summer School, Hudson Valley, NY:
<http://www.oralhistorysummerschool.com>

Journals

- Cultural Studies-
Critical Methodologies
- Field Methods
- Forum: Qualitative
Social Research
- International Review of
Qualitative Research
- Narrative Inquiry
- Narrative Medicine
- Qualitative Health
Research
- Qualitative Inquiry
- Social Forces
- Social Science &
Medicine
- The Qualitative
Report
- Visual Anthropology
Review

Centers

- Center for Urban Ethnography: <http://www.gse.upenn.edu/cue>
- Center for Ethnographic Research: <http://cer.berkeley.edu/>
- Institute for Ethnographic Research:
<http://anthropology.columbian.gwu.edu/institute-ethnographic-research>
- Center for Qualitative and Multi-Method Inquiry:
<http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/cqmi.aspx>
- Program for Ethnographic Research & Community Studies:
<http://www.elon.edu/e-web/org/percs/>
- Center for Qualitative Inquiry: <http://www.twu.edu/qualitative-inquiry/>
- Center for Interpretive and Qualitative Research:
<http://www.duq.edu/academics/schools/liberal-arts/centers/interpretive-and-qualitative-research>
- Work Group on Qualitative Research:
<http://ipsr.ku.edu/CSI/qm/>

Resources

- NIH Guidelines for Qualitative Methods in Health Research: <http://obssr.od.nih.gov/pdf/qualitative.pdf>
- NSF Workshop on Scientific Foundations of Qualitative Research: <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2004/nsf04219/start.htm>
- RWJF Qualitative Research Guidelines Project: <http://www.qualres.org>
- Web Center for Social Research Methods: <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/qual.php>
- Qualitative Research Listservs: <http://squig.uga.edu/listservs.html>
- Dedoose User Guide: <http://userguide.dedoose.com/>
- Qualitative Analysis Software Reviews: <http://www.eval.org/p/cm/ld/fid=81>
<http://medanth.wikispaces.com/Choosing+a+Qualitative+Data+Analysis+Software+Program>

In Closing...

- Follow your passion
- Follow your instincts
 - Share thoughts and “talk it out” with colleagues and peers
- Be transparent throughout the entire process
- Contact me 😊

Questions

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