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## **Waiting in the wings: boredom, flow and reflexivity**

If we conceptualise boredom as a feeling of disengagement and meaningless, then its logical opposites would be interest, involvement and excitement. However, this does not necessarily require engaging in the risky, thrill seeking behaviour described as ‘edgework’ (Lyng 1990). Between the two extremes of boredom and anxiety, we find space for flow (Csikszentmihályi 1975): a calmer state of enjoyment in immersive activities, which creates a loss of self-awareness. Nevertheless, because flow is embedded in the mundane routines of everyday life, boredom is prone to reappear, through interruptive lapses into self-consciousness. This paper draws on the research findings of two separate qualitative research projects and examines the phenomenological experience of flow. In particular, we focus on transitions in and out of flow, and examine their dramaturgical management in social interaction. Using examples from empirical research on skydiving and stage fright, this paper discusses how even the most exciting and risky forms of action involve moments of boredom, experiences which must also be self-reflexively managed.