



Exploring the Possible selves of multiple relapse substance misusers: The next steps

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Self concept

Past

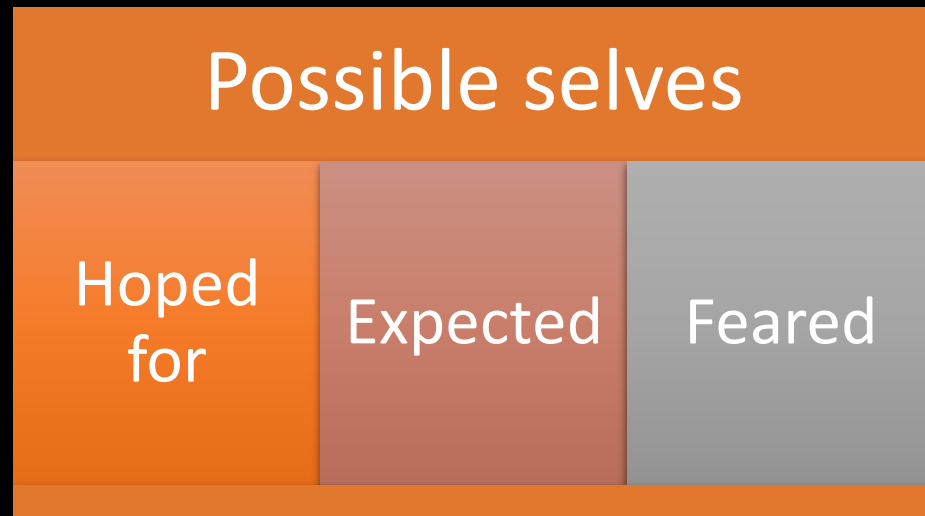
Present

Future

What are
Possible
selves?



Future component =
possible selves



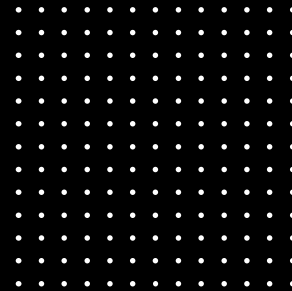


Methodology

- Qualitative study
- Purposive sampling: 18-25 years, male/female, more than one admission
- 11 participants; 5 female, 6 male recruited. 2 dropped out. 9 participants interviewed
- Possible me tree drawing & semi-structured interview
- Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)
- Ethical clearance from University of Johannesburg Research Ethics committee 16/2/2017



Hoped for
selves
included:



Sober

Educated

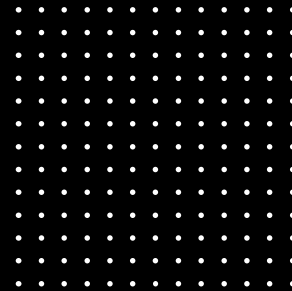
Married with family

Good
son/brother/daughter

Mending relationships



Hoped for possible selves: clean, educated married with children



“I hope to stay clean”; “to be successful and maintain my recovery”

“make sure I don’t relapse”

“when I become a professional, I will look good and associate with better people”; “a better job will mean I earn better money and be able to make investments for my future”

“I wanna be married, have children and be a good wife and mother”

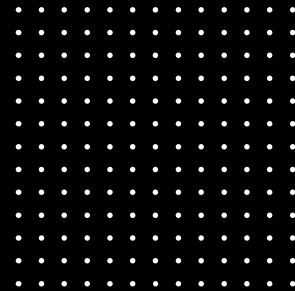
“I wanna work hard and have my own family. My father is a good family man. I wanna be like him one day”



Hoped for selves: good son/brother/daughter & mending relationships

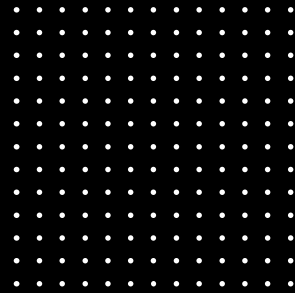
“along with the parents I’ve hurt...apart from being a better son, I gotta be a better brother to my siblings”; “It’s high time I made a change; my parents deserve a better daughter”

“I’m such a disgrace to my family. I want to prove to them that I can be a better person”





Feared
possible selves



Life-long
addict

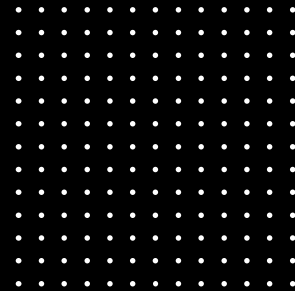
Alone

Homeless



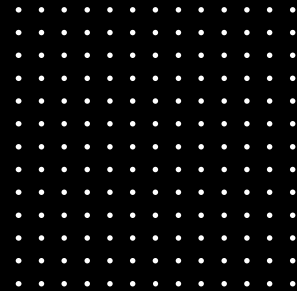
Feared possible
selves; life-long
addict, alone,
homeless

- “...if I go back to my old life, I won’t make it”; “my main fear is going back to that [drugging lifestyle]”
- “I know if I don’t stop, I’ll end up with no-one”; “I felt like I had some form of highly contagious disease”; “I’m at a stage where I fear befriending anyone”
- “If I continue [drugging] I know they will kick me out for good”; “I know I won’t survive on the streets if my family chase me away”; “I’m afraid of being a hobo staying under a bridge... or somewhere worse”
- My biggest fear is becoming homeless. Where would I put my child?”





Expected
selves;
relational and
independent



“be a better son. Live by my family values”; “they [parents] will see a better side of me. I will respect them”; “I will be obedient and follow their house rules, even praying times namaz [ritual prayer times] every day”

“I expect to stand on my own two feet...without running to my parents for help”

“I wanna to be able to do everything all by myself and not depend on anyone”

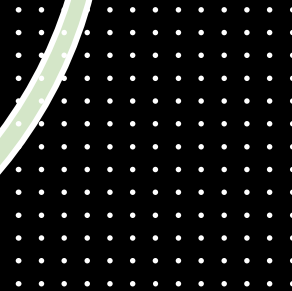


Participants feedback

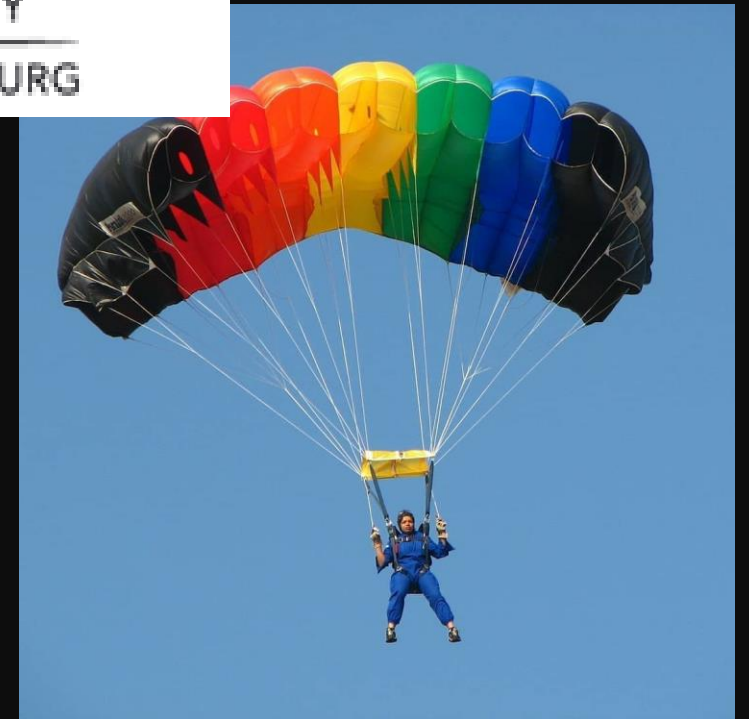
All nine said they found it useful
“these possible selves made me realize which direction to follow in my life... I have a plan of action now”

“it [possible me tree] clarified things for me and helped me decide what I want for my future”

“this exercise helped me to see where I want to go with my life”



Limitations



The next steps; Intervention

- Hoped for, feared, & expected selves not enough on their own. The CONTENT of these must be explored in detail
- A purposeful implementation of Possible selves into rehab programmes
- Use three phase Possible Me Tree model (Bond, 2022)
- Focus on prolonged engagement
- PLANNING
- Identification of resilience enablers (Bond & van Breda, 2018)



The next steps: Research

Research question: Do Possible selves contribute to maintaining sobriety in substance misusers?

Implement the PS me tree model at treatment centers

Quasi-experimental design

Longitudinal component

Follow up; 3, 6, 12 months and 2 years



I'm In! Sign Me Up!

Thank you for listening. Any questions, comments or feedback?





References

- Bond, S., & van Breda, A. (2018). Interaction between possible selves and the resilience of care-leavers in South Africa. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 94; p88-95 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.09.014>
- Bond, S. (2022). What are Possible Selves and how do we find out about them? The revised Possible Me Tree model. *Child Care in Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13575279.2022.2071218>
- Markus, H. R., & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible Selves. *American Psychologist*. 41 (9) p954-969
- Mashambanhaka, P., & Bond, S. (2022). Exploring the use of the Possible-Me-Tree drawing to assist youths with substance use disorder and multiple relapses in a treatment facility in Gauteng, South Africa, *Southern African Journal of Social Work and Social Development*. 34 (3) DOI 10.25159/2415-5829/9985