



# Exploring young adult service user perspectives on mental health recovery

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# Background



Two main conceptualisations of recovery:

“**Recovery from**” vs “**Recovery in**” (Davidson and Roe 2007);

Conceptual components proposed - CHIME

(**C**onnect**e**dness, **H**ope, **I**dent**i**ty, **M**eaning in life and **E**mpowerment) (Leamy et al. 2011);

Complexities and barriers to their sustainability and real life application (Onken et al. 2007; Pitt et al. 2007; Kogstad et al. 2011).

# Rationale



- Most mental health difficulties emerge in young adulthood (Patel et al. 2007);
- The onset of mental illness - the dilution of an individual's self-concept (Coleman 1999);
- How young adults experience themselves, linked to how they experience their condition (Deegan 1993).



# MAKING LIFE BETTER

A Whole System Strategic Framework  
for Public Health 2013-2023

## Aim:

*“Achieve better health and wellbeing for everyone and reduce inequalities in health”*

## Themes:

***Giving Every Child the Best Start***

***Equipped Throughout Life***

Empowering Healthy Living

Creating the Conditions

Empowering Communities

***Developing Collaboration***



# Aim

**This research study aims to explore young adult service user perspectives on mental health recovery**



# Objectives

- To explore factors that feature in an individual's perspective of recovery;
- To investigate meaning and growth in suffering;
- To explore the “temporality of being” within young adults' conceptualisation of recovery.

# Theoretical Framework

***An alternative therapeutic approach could lead to the reconceptualization of medical care involving two components-” (Kleinman 1988)***

1. The empathetic witness of the existential experience of suffering-

***“The Suffering Human Being” (Eriksson 2006)***

2. Practical coping with major psychosocial crisis-

***“Explanatory Models” (Kleinman 1988)***





# Research Design

## SAMPLE:

Young Adults (18-35 years)-voluntary sector support in NI

### *Phase One:*

A concept analysis of mental health recovery;

### *Phase Two:*

Two engagement groups of service users in two cities in Northern Ireland;

### **\*\*Phase Three:**

**Face to face semi structured interview with 25 service users**



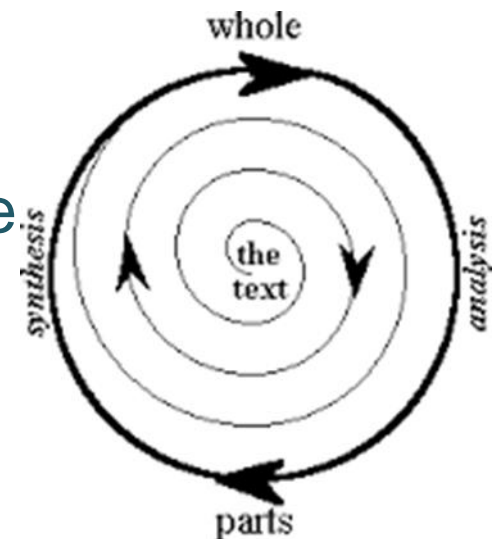
# Phase Three-Semi Structured Interviews



- Method determined by the research question (Punch 2006);
- Must understand the meaning attached to the phenomena of interest (Denzin and Lincoln 1998);
- Gadamer's Philosophical Hermeneutics (Gadamer 1976);
- The meaning of experiences within the context of personal history (Kvale 1996).

# Phase Three- Data Collection / Analysis

- Purposive sampling;
- Semi structured interviews with 25 services users;
- Aged between 18-35 yrs (average age 27 yrs);
- Fleming et al. (2003) method consistent with Gadamerian philosophical hermeneutics;
- Cycle of four key steps conducted to ensure understanding.



# Phase Three- Findings (1)

## 1. Services- A Losing Battle Straight Away

*Communicating Distress*

*A Recovery Orientation*



*“they are trained, they are almost programmed to think a certain way, dya know what I mean? You can only to say to themems so much and they think they know best, so like you’re like dya know what I mean?”*

*To have a losing battle straight away...”(P15)*

# Phase Three- Findings (2)

## 2. Recovery- Needs to be More than a Word

*Application*

*Control Over Life*



*“what helped was that... it was people sitting down with me about what MY recovery was and not what...recovery was in general! I have always struggled to believe in recovery...because it is only really something recently...that I’ve been able to find for myself”(P19)*

# Phase Three- Findings (3)

## 3. Others are the “How”



### *Connection to Others*

*“there have been so many times when I just thought “I am just ending it all, I want to die...I am not living” and I have done things to try to make that happen...but it has been those people who have kept me alive...And so if it wasn’t for those people I wouldn’t be in recovery, because it has been those people who have got me through until I’ve been ready to actually fight for my recovery and then maintain it”(P20)*

# Phase Three- Findings (4)

## 4. First Phases of Recovery

*Down to Your Foundations*

*A Step In the Dark*



*“it’s hard like but ye kinda have to take a step, a step in the dark but you have to try, you have to take that first step...because if you don’t you are just going to regress and go back...or like you’re not going to recover at all...You’re not letting yourself do anything, you’re not letting, giving yourself a chance to recover” (P15)*

# Phase Three-Findings (5)

## 5. Surviving Out of the Ashes

*A Reason to Recover*



*“like a phoenix out of the ashes outta a fire...the fire is your trauma, pain, everything...and then it dies down and you have the ashes...which is just like the last bit of it and then... you are like a phoenix coming out of it, you are surviving out of the ashes”(P24)*



# Phase Three-Findings (6)

## 6. Let Go of the Pain not the Experience

*Focus*

*Time*



*“Recovery isn’t about where you’ve been, ye know, because too often people think about recovery this is where you were and think about recovery in the past...recovery is about where you are now and where you actually want to be in life”(P7)*

# Key Study Findings

- Factors- services, recovery more than a word and others;
- Explanatory model of mental health recovery

***“use the stuff you wana bury” (P. 2)***

- Let go of pain but not the experience-Time to refocus

***“you have been formed from these pains” (P. 20)***

- Recovery not reflective of conceptual components or lived experience



***“building a better life” (P.24)***

# Mental Health Recovery



MAKING LIFE BETTER

## Giving Every Child the Best Start

- An age appropriate understanding of mental health recovery

## Equipped Throughout Life

- Mental health promotion strategies relevant to young adults experience

## Developing Collaboration

- Engagement with service users in research design and service provision





# Thank You & Questions

***“it would be someone looking relieved or happy...like really happy while doing something they love...that would probably be how I would capture it...recovery in a camera”***

**(Participant 12)**



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