

# IDENTITY TRANSLATION IN RECOVERY FROM PROBLEM DRINKING

An exploration of the  
underlying implicit and  
explicit processes

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# THEORETICAL CONTEXT

- Social and personal **identities** play a **key role** in sustained **health behaviour change** (Jetten, Haslam, & Haslam, 2012; Haslam et al., 2008).
- Two **specific theoretical models** have emerged: The social identity model of recovery (**SIMOR**, Best et al., 2015; Best et al., 2016) and the social identity model of cessation maintenance (**SIMCM**; Frings & Albery, 2015)
- SIMCM draws from **dual process models** of addiction and evidence suggesting that identities affect engagement in addictive behaviour at both **explicit** (conscious, accessible and reflective, e.g. Buckingham, Frings & Albery, 2013) and, perhaps more influentially, **implicit** (automatic, non-conscious) levels (e.g. Frings, Melichar & Albery, 2016).

# RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Core research question: How are implicit and explicit identity processes: (i) operating and experienced by service users; and (ii) influencing outcomes (i.e. cessation or reduction in drinking).

## Quantitative strand

*To what extent do implicit and explicit “drinking” and “non-drinking” identity processes change over the course of alcohol treatment or online interventions?*

*To what extent do such identities relate to/with self-reported outcomes?*

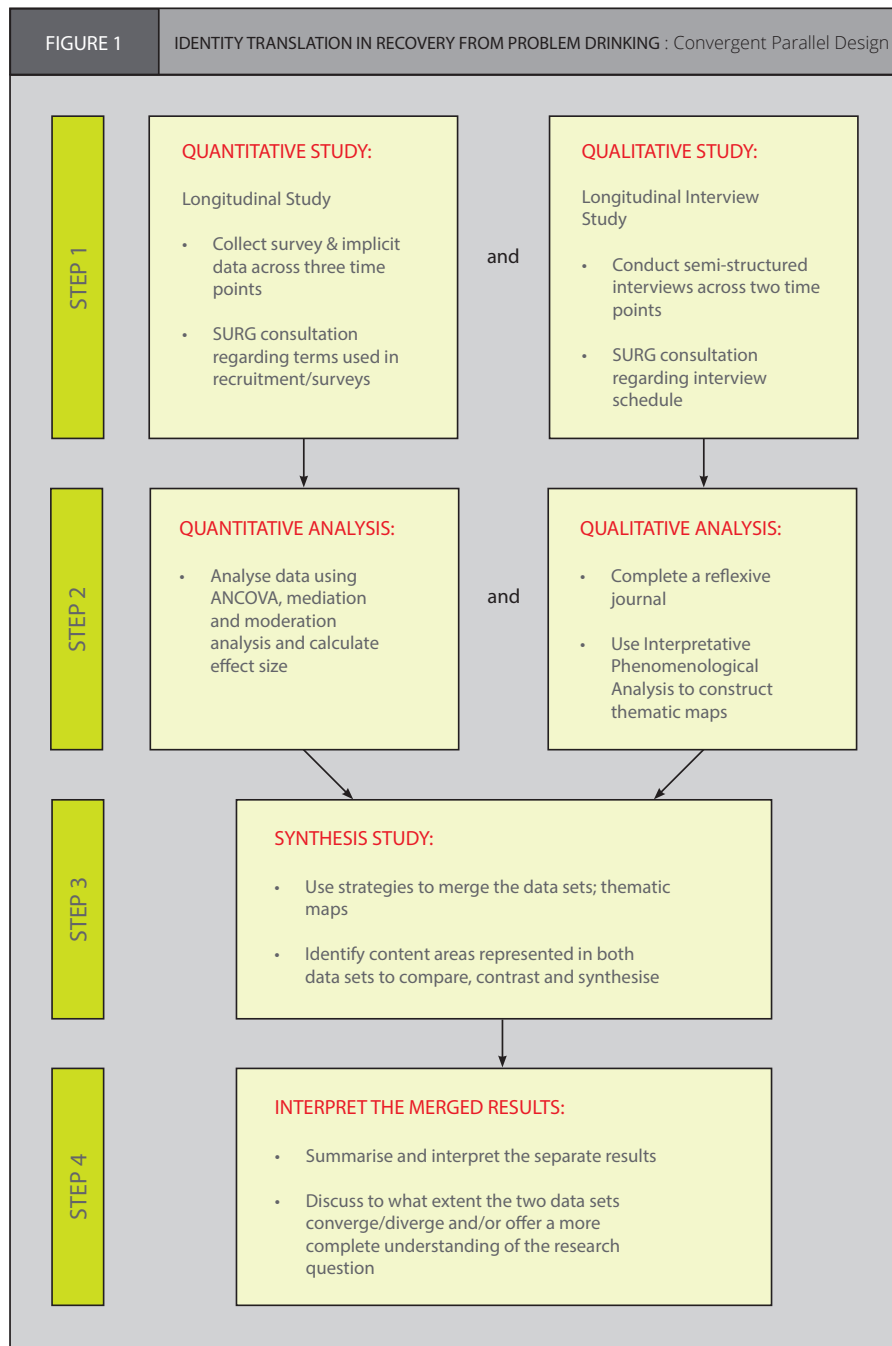
## Qualitative Strand

*How do people attending alcohol treatment or online alcohol interventions perceive and manage the impact of this experience on their sense of self/identities?*

*How is identity negotiated in the context of ongoing and potentially stigmatising condition of recovery from “problem drinking”?*



# METHODOLOGY



**Implicit processes** measured by the Drinker Identity Implicit Association Task (IAT; Lindgren et al. 2013) and a second IAT capturing implicit positive and negative associations towards a drinker identity.

**Explicit processes** will be measured quantitatively by surveys capturing self-efficacy, social support and control, social identity and contextualisation of relapse (Frings et al., 2016; Leach et al., 2008).

**Treatment outcome** measured by the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (Bohn, Babor, & Kranzler, 1995) and the Substance Use Recovery Evaluator (Neale et al., 2016).

**Data collected on the Inquisit platform**, across three time points (week 1, week 4 and week 12).

**A sub-group of 20 participants** (10 from alcohol treatment centres and 10 from online providers) recruited to additionally participate in two semi-structured interviews (conducted at week 1 and week 12) for qualitative analysis.

# PRELIMINARY QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

Time Point 1 Super-ordinate themes

## Real self unknown

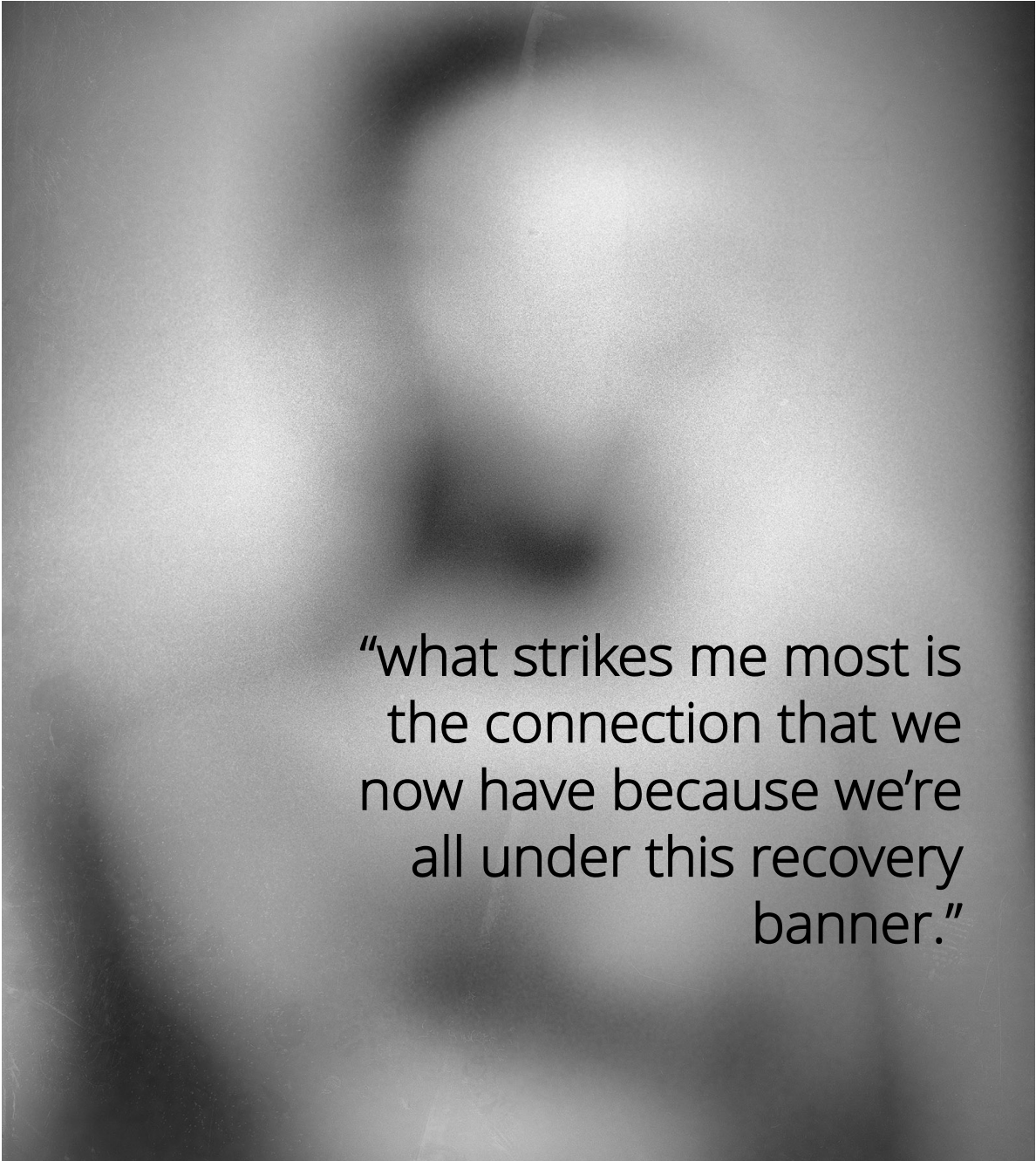
"I feel like I've spent two decades finding out the person I don't want to be."

## Internal battle with self

"Because it's very much an internal battle. Battlefield of the mind if you like. You know I feel like this journey so far is...is constantly... a boxing match..."

## Emerging Translation Themes

False self in drinking → to real self in recovery  
Distancing between past behaviours and self concept  
Isolation → Connection



"what strikes me most is  
the connection that we  
now have because we're  
all under this recovery  
banner."

# REFERENCES



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