



**‘Preserving Control’: a Straussian Grounded Theory of individuals’ experiences across the trajectory of their involuntary admission to the mental health services**

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# Aim

To develop a grounded theory to understand individuals' experiences

## Objectives

1. Understand how individual's **perceive**, **experience** and are **impacted** by involuntary admission
2. Explore the **process** that individuals use to **adapt** to their experiences



# Method

- A **Straussian** grounded theory approach was utilised (Corbin & Strauss, 2008)
- Individuals were selected based on the principles of purposive and **theoretical sampling** and data were analysed using the **constant comparative process** and **memo** writing
- Three forms of **coding** were used, **open, axial, and selective**



# Category 1

## Losing Control

```
graph LR; A[Losing Control] --> B[Diminishing Self-Mastery]; A --> C[Feeling Violated]; A --> D[Being Confined];
```

### Diminishing Self-Mastery

- Feeling Emotionally Different
- Experiencing Strange Happenings
- Feeling Imposed On

### Feeling Violated

- Being Infringed Upon
- Feeling Shocked and Frightened
- Being Treated Like a Criminal
- Being Deceived

### Being Confined

- Feeling Scared
- Feeling Deprived
- Being Treated Badly
- Threatening Sense of Self
- Having To Take Medication
- Feeling Frustrated

# Category 1: Losing Control

*'I started taking drugs. I became **paranoid...Everyone knew my business and I couldn't do anything without people talking about me...I felt like everybody...was making a laugh of me**' (participant 25, male)*

*'I was **taken** from my place of work **against my will...I was very annoyed...Without being explained ...why...that a GP could...do something like that...**'*

(participant 50, male)



# Category 1: Losing Control

*'...they [ASSISTED ADMISSION TEAM] just dragged me...They put me against the floor, used violence...they handcuffed me and put me in a van...I didn't know where I was going.'* (participant 40, female)

*'my sister had signed me in... I didn't think she'd do that...'* (participant 7, female)

*'...there'd...be six, eight, ten [NURSES]...it's not like a normal injection...they put you lying on the bed and then one of them gets on top of you... they push your shoulders down.'* (participant 15, female)



# Category 2

## Regaining Control

```
graph LR; A[Regaining Control] --> B[Resisting the System]; A --> C[Encountering Humanising Care]; A --> D[Gaining Perspective]; A --> E[Playing Ball];
```

### Resisting the System

- Trying to Reason with Others
- Disagreeing with Others
- Fighting Back against Being Infringed Upon
- Wanting a More Psychological Approach
- Challenging the Structures
- Not Wanting Help and Information

### Encountering Humanising Care

- Meeting Kind and Nice Professionals
- Letting Me Decide
- Feeling Contained by the System
- Meeting Peers
- Maintaining Connection with Family and Friends

### Gaining Perspective

- Receiving Information and an Explanation
- Getting Treatment
- Making Sense

### Playing Ball

- Learning the Way
- Keeping the Head Down



# Category 2: Regaining Control

*'I was trying to **break free**...I was **like shouting**' (participant 33, female)*

*'I had **my car with me**...He [Police man]...had me follow him, ...the **independence**...the trust...that **was important**'(participants 38, male)*

*'The **Gardai** [Irish police] came, **bought me a coffee**...gave my **bicycle a lift** down to the **Garda station**' (participant 36, male)*



# Category 2: Regaining Control

*'...she [NURSE] was talking to me as though she believed what was going on in my thoughts...she understood where I was coming from...asking me questions that were trying to make me think introspectively'* (participant 38, male)

*'I was...agreeing and nodding with everything just to get through...I'm thinking to myself...shut your mouth and go along with it...and hopefully get out fast'* (participant 9, male)



# Category 3

## **Living with the Consequences of Involuntary Admission**

- **Feeling Traumatized and Vulnerable**
- **Feeling Hurt and Betrayed**
- **Being Judged by Others**
- **Losing Sense of Self**
- **Being Under Surveillance and Feeling Powerless**

## **Preserving Sense of Self**

- **Self Surveillance**
- **Trying to Prove Yourself**
- **Selective Disclosure**
- **Providing a Rational Explanation**
- **Avoiding People**

## **Managing Mental Health**

- **Moving On**
- **Staying Connected to Mental Health Services**
- **Using Complimentary Strategies**
- **Monitoring Triggers**
- **Engaging Social Supports**

**Maintaining Control**



# Category 3: Maintaining Control

*'I cannot forget that [being signed in] I felt betrayed by my wife...I can't trust her any more...obviously it has affected my relationship [with her]...'* (participant 47, male)

*'People look at you differently when they realise where you've been...I felt that anyway..."*she must have been very bad if she had to be signed in"*'* (participant 44, female)

*'....I have a CPN [community mental health nurse] who comes around and who I have regular contact with... someone to talk to, check in...my GP has been supportive it's been very...helpful...to talk through a lot of things...'* (participant 10, female)

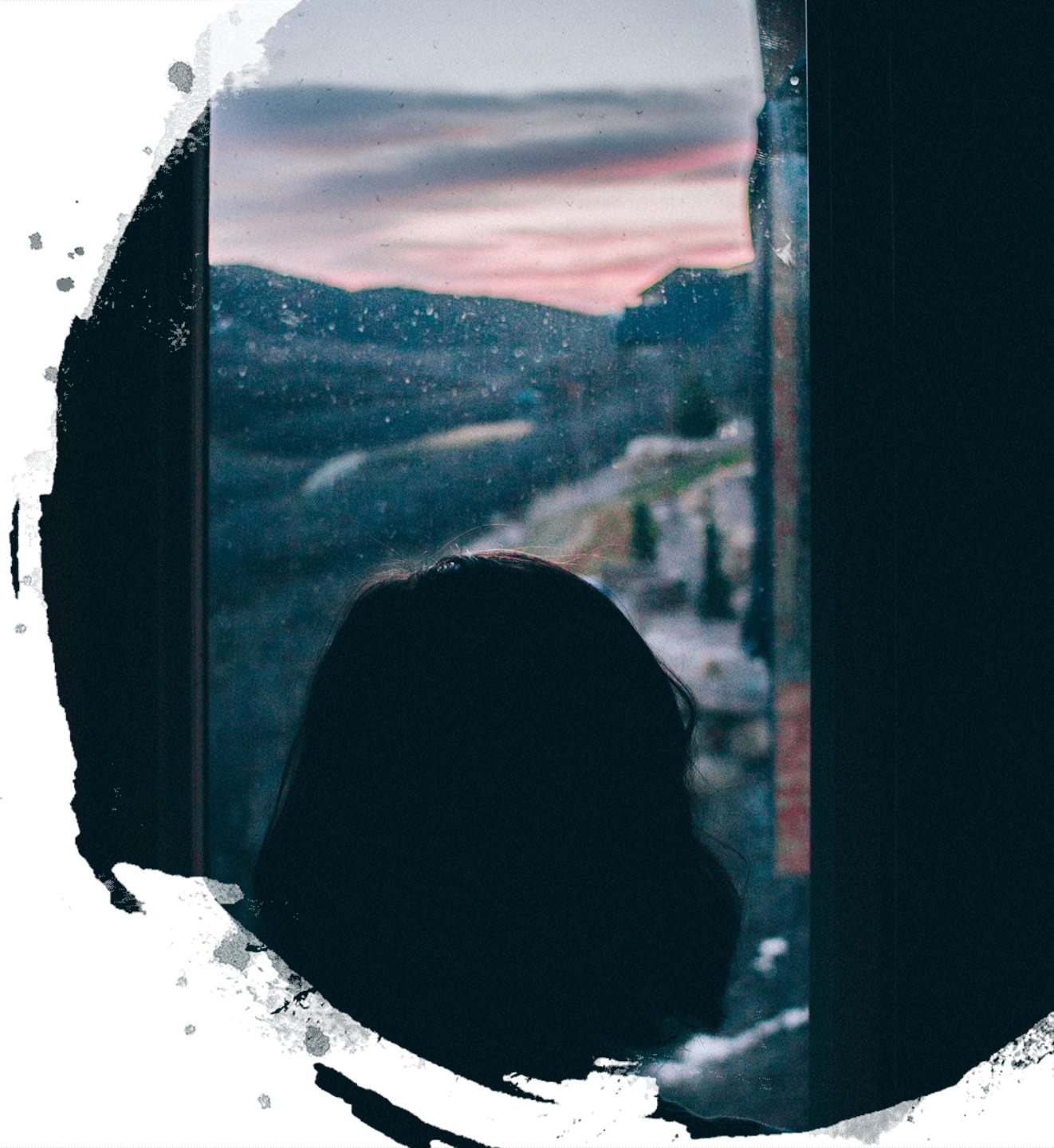


# Category 3: Maintaining Control

*'I was educated about what was necessary to keep myself on the right track and I try to follow that as strictly as possible...it keeps me going'* (participant 38, man)

*'I have to mind my Ps and Qs because my husband...he'd probably sign me in again'* (participant 39, female)

*'I'm really afraid to say anything... I couldn't start saying any of the things I was saying before that led me to be brought in...'*(participant 44, female)



# Conclusion



**Encountering humanising care and gaining perspective** are critical concepts in forming and shaping positive experiences



# Implications for practice

- ✓ Professionals should strive to **minimise coercive interactions** before and during involuntary admission
- ✓ A **training programme** should be provided to develop the skills of **‘encountering humanising care’**
- ✓ **Individuals** should be **allowed** the **opportunity to participate** and be **involved in some aspect** of the admission, management and/or treatment



# Implications for practice

- ✓ Professionals should utilise **more psychotherapeutic approaches** to **support** individuals in ‘**gaining perspective**’
- ✓ A **recovery focused aftercare plan** that identifies support mechanism and an **crisis plan** should be developed with the individual prior to discharge





Any  
questions?



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