

Recovering through everyday life activities

Findings from a participatory photovoice study with people experiencing mental health issues

Dr. Nastaran Doroud¹;

Prof. Ellie Fossey²;

A/Prof. Tracy Fortune¹;

Prof. Lisa Brophy³;

Louise Mountford³

¹La Trobe University; ²Monash University; ³Mind Australia

You're doing collecting and cleaning your clothes and cooking your meals and keeping the house tidy, so, you know, and then there's going out for coffee or stuff like that. You know, all these normal sort of things...

I think recovery is about finding a job... because when you are not working, what are you doing with your life?

Now I'm cooking my own food and trying to eat well...

... another thing I like to do is to go to the Botanical Gardens and go for a walk, walk around the park. And looking at all the cyclist and the rowers and I like that...

Getting into routine...

I think just doing stuff you enjoy really helps recovery...

I started to find friends, you know, I started to find girlfriends. Not too many, but just one for your life...

For me recovery would be waking up and looking forward to the day...

Outlines

- Background and aim:
Recovery journey and the role of everyday life activities
- Methods
- Key findings
- Implications for research and practice



Background and aim

Research Questions

- 1) How do people experiencing MHI choose their everyday activities?
- 2) How these activities support recovery journey?

Doroud, N., Fossey, E., & Fortune, T. (2015). Recovery as an occupational journey: A scoping review exploring the links between occupational engagement and recovery for people with enduring mental health issues. *Australian occupational therapy journal*, 62(6), 378-392.

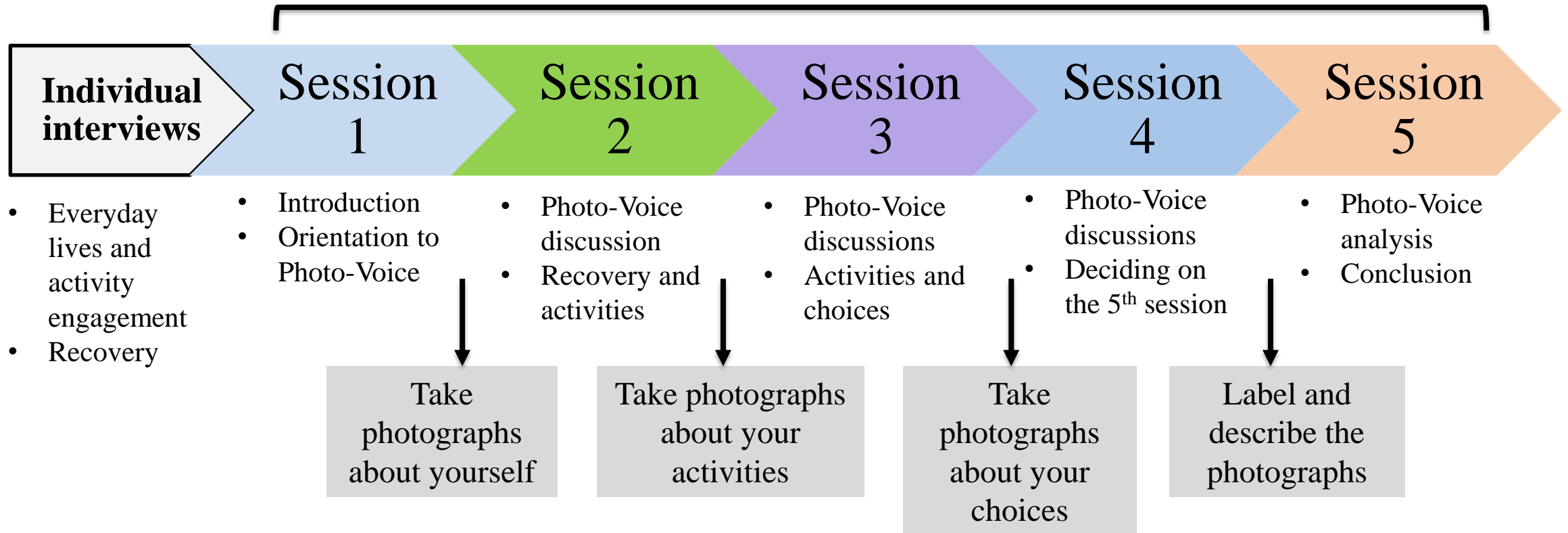
Methods

- Participatory grounded theory research
- Mind Australia (Melbourne)
 - Recovery College
 - Peer Recovery Communities
- 21 participants
- In-depth individual interviews
 - Occupational history
 - Perspectives on recovery
- Photo-Voice Course
 - Co-facilitated by a peer-worker
 - Taking photographs
 - 5-weekly group discussions

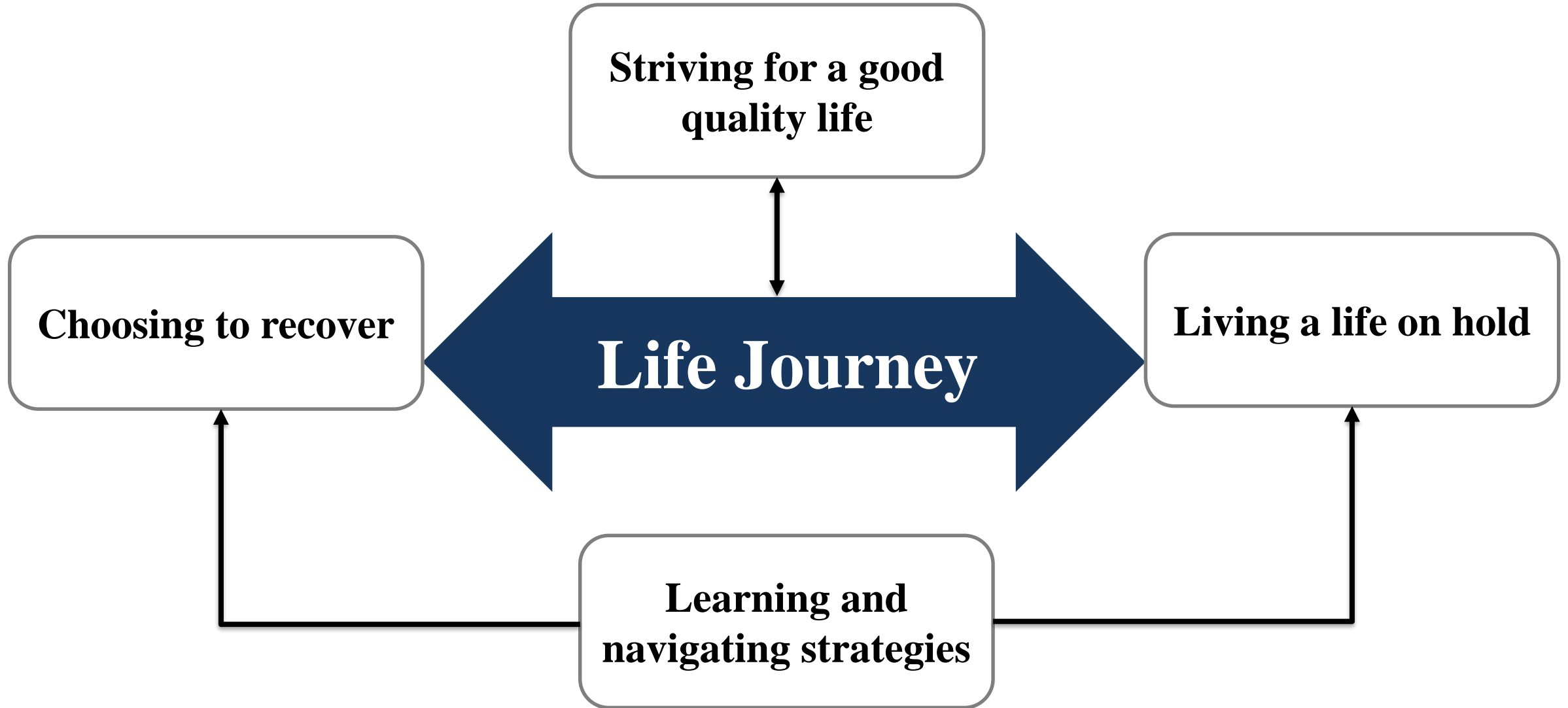


Methods of data gathering

Photo-Voice course



Key findings



Living a life on hold

Living an aimless life

It's just sort of trying to go with the flow a little bit. So I feel a little bit slack sometimes doing it, but I know that's actually what I need to be able to (Lucy)

Being stuck

[Image of a recipe]

I totally stop shopping and cooking and all the things that I used to do. And that was after a head ECT. It just makes me frustrated because I used to do it so readily (Jane).

Taking a break

[Image of bikes]

If I'm struggling with depression and I can't sleep I'll go out at one o'clock in the morning and start working on the bicycles and divert the attention. I think it gives me a break from myself, a kind of a rest period (Anthony).

Seeking safe haven

[image of a suitcase with medication]

I'd be on holidays holidays... to be away from my house, from the grind, the dirt, the filth and the mess (Catherine).

Choosing to recover

Taking action

[image of a basketball ball]

Don't think that doctors gonna prescribe you a drug and that magically make you better. You also need to make a personal effort yourself for that (Kyle).

Gaining the momentum

[image of sunrise]

*'A brand-new day'
There is always going to be a new day, you know. As bad as today feels, there will be another day (Anthony).*

Assuming responsibility

[image of exercise equipment]

Every day [emphasis] I go to the pool. I don't enjoy it; it's my job, my part-time job [emphasis] that I do it every day (Xena).

Connecting to the context

[image of a handshake]

Even with the treadmill, even with TV or the radio, even with my guitar music, even with my books, it is still not enough. I need that human contact (Fred).

Learning and navigating strategies

Knowing myself

Understanding mental health issues and recovery

Developing strategies

Finding my people

[image of a tennis court]

[image of fruits]

[image of botanical gardens]
[image of a 20-dollar note]

Sport is a big thing for me... because I am not able to do much [tennis], I watch it a lot, I follow it a lot... (Lucy)

It's self-awareness... just the matter of understanding your illness and how it works (Catherine)

I made the worst decisions with some friends and, you know, actually talking to people that aren't actually getting help (Black Angel)

Striving for and maintaining a good quality life

A life on track

[image of work suit]

I think recovery is about finding a job, because if I'm not working, what am I doing with my life? (Maxim)

Living in the real world... (Damon)

Enjoyment

[image of a fashion show]

I love clothing and fashion and stuff; I think just doing stuff you enjoy really helps recovery (Gold)

Overcoming stigma

[image of stickie notes]

Being brave enough to overcome disability, shortcomings and disadvantage and not having people run me down because I have a mental illness (Jane)

Fitting in

I love looking after disabled people (Jane)

Finding good things in the community [one] can help with is very important (Damon)

Conclusion and implications

Recovery is a unique and ongoing journey that involves a range of every-day experiences

- ✓ Providing opportunities
- ✓ Encouraging reflection and action
- ✓ Innovative methods to encourage participation, partnership and empowerment



Thank you

I wish to thank my supervisors, Prof. Ellie Fossey and A/Prof. Tracy Fortune; Prof. Lisa Brophy and Louise Mountford; Staff at Mind Recovery College and Peer Recovery Communities, and; the participants who shared their stories with this study.

n.doroud@latrobe.edu.au

Nastaran Doroud PhD, MSOT, BOT

Lecturer, Occupational Therapy

La Trobe Rural Health School | La Trobe University

PO Box 199 | Bendigo VIC 3552 Australia

T: +61 (03) 5448 9104 |

E: n.doroud@latrobe.edu.au |

W: <https://scholars.latrobe.edu.au/display/sdoroud> |

LnkIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/nastaran-doroud-73342a105/>