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PEKKA LUND

CHRISTIAN FAITH AND RECOVERY FROM SUBSTANCE ABUSE

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation study examines how Christian faith may help in recovery from substance abuse. The research targets individually experienced often lengthy and many-phased recovery narratives. Qualitative interviews enable focusing on in-depth analysis of the topic: what is "recovery" and how should we understand "Christian faith". The study suggests that at least when researching how Christian faith may contribute to recovery, "recovery" should not be seen only as a process of getting rid of substance abuse but also as a process of creating a new life. Recovery is also discovery and can be discussed in the framework of "re-storying" and "self-creation", that is, recovery can be seen as a process of telling one's life story anew. And in that re-storying process it is not only the content but also the genre of the story that may change.

Christian faith is here seen as a cultural tool that enables recovery. Christian tradition provides ingredients that can be made use of in the lengthy process of recovery and re-storying. What aspects of that tradition appear useful varies and may change also within same recovery process. Therefore Christian faith must not be seen as some specific or standard form of faith but as a rich cultural tool. Christian faith is discussed in the framework of lived religion, a research tradition that underlines individual and situational use of tradition. In most cases, what eventually helped was not chanting some learned teachings but rather finding a way of interpreting one's own experiences, emotions, and wishes with the vocabulary and story models provided by Christianity, which can be seen as a large cultural stock of stories recovering individuals made use of.

This study drew attention to the importance of coping with guilt and shame in recovery and underlined the role Christian faith may play in managing these emotions. In the light of these findings one reason Christian faith may help some individuals in recovery is its capability of lessening feelings of guilt and shame.

This research stresses the importance of seeing both recovery and Christian faith broadly enough. Recovery paths were various and recovering often took years. There were various kinds of Christian faiths that helped in recovery. Additionally, what helped could change during the process. Therefore this dissertation study underlines seeing Christian faith as lived religion, as an individually and situationally interpreted cultural stock of stories.

Keywords: *christianity, spirituality, religiousness, recovering alcoholics, faith, substance abuse, guilt, shame, storytelling, qualitative research, narrative inquiry (research method)*

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tämä väitöskirja tutkii sitä, miten kristillinen usko voi auttaa päihdeongelmasta toipumisessa. Tutkimus keskittyy yksilöiden kokemuksiin ja niiden mukaisesti usein pitkiin ja monivaiheisiin toipumistarinoihin. Laadullisten haastattelujen turvin tutkimus pureutuu peruskysymyksiin: mitä ”toipuminen” on ja miten ymmärrämme ”kristillisen uskon”. Tutkimus kannustaa tarkastelemaan ”toipumista” laajemmin kuin vain irtautumisena päihdeongelmasta, ainakin silloin, kun kristillinen usko liittyy toipumiseen. Toipuminen tulisi nähdä uusien asioiden löytämisenä, uuden luomisena. Toipumista voi tarkastella elämäntarinan uutena sanoittamisena ja oman itsen uudelleen synnyttämisenä. Elämäntarinan muuttuessa kyse ei ole vain sisältöjen muuttumisesta vaan koko tarinan tyyliin muutoksesta.

Kristinusko nähdään tässä tutkimuksena toipumista tukevana kulttuurisena työkaluna. Kristillinen perinne tarjoaa aineksia, joita toipuja voi käyttää hyväkseen pitkän toipumisprosessin ja elämäntarinan uudelleen kirjoittamisen aikana. Se, mikä perinteessä on käyttökelpoista, vaihtelee toipumisen aikana. Siksi kristillistä uskoa ei tule nähdä jonkin tietyn standardin mukaisena uskona vaan rikkaana kulttuurisena varastona. Kristillistä uskoa tarkastellaan elävän uskonnon kehityksessä, joka korostaa perinteen yksilöllistä ja tilannekohtaista soveltamista. Suurimmassa osassa tapauksissa toipujaa ei auttanut opetetun perinteen hallitseminen ja toistaminen vaan kyky tulkita omia kokemuksia, tunteita ja toiveita kristinuskon tarjoamien käsitteiden ja tarinamallien avulla. Kristinuskon voi siis nähdä laajana sosiaali-kulttuurisena tarinavarantona, jota toipujat hyödynsivät monipuolisesti.

Tutkimus kiinnitti huomiota siihen, että syyllisyyden ja häpeän tunteiden käsittely on tärkeää toipumisen kannalta. Lisäksi tutkimus korosti sitä, että kristillisellä uskolla voi olla keskeinen merkitys näiden tunteiden käsittelyssä. Tutkimustulosten valossa kyky helpottaa syyllisyyden ja häpeän tunteita voidaan nähdä yhtenä selityksenä sille, miksi kristillinen usko auttaa joitain ihmisiä päihdeongelmasta toipumisessa.

Tämä tutkimus korostaa toipumisen ja kristillisen uskon näkemistä riittävän laajasti. Päihdeongelmasta toipumisen polut olivat erilaisia ja toipuminen kesti usein vuosia. Toipumisessa auttaneet kristilliset uskot vaihtelivat myös. Lisäksi se, minkä koettiin auttavan, saattoi vaihtua toipumisen kuluessa. Siksi tämä väitöstutkimus alleviivaa kristillisen uskon näkemistä elettyinä uskontona, yksilöllisesti ja tilanteen mukaan tulkittuna kulttuurisena tarinavarantona.

Avainsanat: kristillisuus, hengellisyys, uskonnollisuus, toipuminen, päihdeongelmat, syyllisydentunne, häpeä; tarinat, koalitatiivinen tutkimus, narratiivisuus

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the end, I am not sure if I found the results I was looking for. Nevertheless, I now surely have a better understanding of what I was originally asking. That satisfies me. Others may judge whether this process has had any academic significance.

I would neither have started nor accomplished this research project without professor Vilma Hänninen to whom I wish to express my gratitude. Vilma, setting an example of how to conduct narrative research on recovery, supervising this process during these years, patiently waiting and then eagerly reacting, and finally having long talks over tea have had an importance I greatly appreciate. Thank You.

Far too rarely did I meet my other supervisor, university lecturer and docent Kari Mikko Vesala, or visit the seminar in Kuopio but whenever I did I got inspired and academically refreshed. Thank You all.

Seldom have I hated anyone as much as I have hated those anonymous reviewers that have given such critical comments on my manuscripts, even rejected them. In the end, I have come to realize that I have learned so much from them and cannot help admiring the intensity and thoroughness they have shown when voluntarily giving me guidance and advice. Whoever you may be, thank you. Additionally, I want to express my gratitude to the editors and editors-in-chiefs who have helped turn my manuscripts into articles and finally this publication. I really appreciate. Thanks.

I am not sure if I always trusted that this research project would reach this point. After having occasionally felt like running my head against a wall when trying to make reviewers and journals understand the nature and intention of my research, I felt both delighted and respected when reading preliminary examiners' statements written by professors William L. Randall and Atte Oksanen. I have had some guiding principles I have intended to follow, for instance seeing recovery comprehensively and from research participants' point of view, and I sensed that both professors could see and value that. Thank You both.

The best part of any research project is encountering research participants. I hope our discussions gave them as much as they gave me and this research. Thank You all for spending Your time and sharing Your thoughts, experiences, and emotions. I hope I have listened, understood, and expressed your viewpoints correctly.

Professor Randall stated kindly in his preliminary examiner's statement that my thinking in this dissertation is "clear and mature", articles are "the products of a mature mind" ... "of someone who has 'been around' in the world of spirituality, religion, recovery, and Life". While thanking for the polite words I might dare to suggest that if there really is some maturity present in my writing it most obviously has to do with having been around in Life. Therefore, the final and greatest thanks I want to direct to those I have had the privilege of being around in Life. You have positively re-storied and re-gene-ated the story of my life. Thank You.

Helsinki, April 25th 2018
Pekka Lund

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1 INTRODUCTION

Common knowledge seems to suggest that faith, spirituality, or religiosity may help some individuals to recover from substance abuse. Such a viewpoint appears to be held by many and is supposedly based on individual testimonies of former abusers. Widespread common knowledge is not understandable unless such cases really exist.

It is beyond the scope of this study to evaluate how common these faith-helped-me-get-sober stories really are. The starting point here is, however, that these cases exist. This study is about the nature of the phenomenon instead of frequency or generality. In other words, as there are cases in which faith helps people to recover from substance abuse, what is really happening in these cases? What is this faith? How does it contribute to recovery?

This is a study about how Christian faith may help in recovery from substance abuse. In brief, abusing substances refers to consuming alcohol, drugs, or medications in a harmful and uncontrollable way. Recovering involves getting rid of that harmful habit of abusing substances, getting a handle on consumption, or becoming a non-user. Christian faith is an individual commitment to a form of being religious and spiritual. The area of interest of this study is individual faith and the individual recovery processes. Through analysing them, I intend to add knowledge regarding how Christian faith may help in recovery from substance abuse.

1.1 RESEARCHING SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND RECOVERY

As this is a study about recovery from substance abuse, the terrain must first be mapped. I briefly discuss here what the concepts 'substance abuse' and 'recovery' refer to. Recovery shall be discussed more in detail in chapter two and throughout the text.

Substance abuse is a wide and influential societal phenomenon. Extensive academic interest has been devoted towards understanding why people abuse substances, how to treat it and what recovering from it means. Researchers from various fields have explained substance use, misuse, abuse, dependence and addiction. As Mignon (2015, p. 3) notes, substance abuse, the term used in this study, has been a nebulous concept. There are no universally accepted definitions, and researchers have historically defined the concept differently within the literature. The most well known definitions are those formed by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). The latest one, the DSM-5 (APA, 2013), defines substance abuse and substance dependence differently than the earlier DSM-4. The DSM-5 has removed the difference between substance abuse and substance dependence and uses one category of substance use disorder (APA, 2013, p. 481-485; Mignon 2015, p. 4). As can be seen, the concept is difficult to define and constantly changing. For the purposes of this study, such definitions are not essential as this research is not operating within diagnostic criteria. For clarity, the term substance abuse in this study refers to uncontrolled and harmful use of substances.

When discussing addiction, which is often used synonymously with dependence, Jim Orford (2013, p. ix) notes how biomedical, public health and epidemiological scientific traditions have dominated addiction studies. Social sciences have played a much lesser role. In recent years, addiction studies have tended to focus more on

brains and genes (e.g., Crabbe, Cui, Harris, & Noronha, 2014) and less on societal structures and changes (Granfield, 2004). Orford (2013, p. ix) underlines the importance of bringing together theory and research arising from different scientific traditions. By examining problematic substance use behaviour in a more comprehensive way, an attempt has been made to bridge gaps between different fields of research. For instance, Koski-Jännes (2004) presented a more holistic view of addiction. When seen from social, psychological and neuro-psychological perspectives, addictive behaviour and addicted individuals seem different. Such a comprehensive viewpoint on substance abuse and addiction naturally influences ways of looking at recovery and treatment.

If explaining and understanding abuse and addictive behaviour have appeared to be difficult, treating substance use disorders has appeared to be even more difficult. Treatment has been studied for both academic and therapeutic reasons. Much has been written about different ways of treating, healing, curing and helping (e.g., Carrà, el-Guebaly, & Galanter 2015), and several meta-analyses have been conducted (e.g., Miller & Wilbourne, 2002; Mignon, 2015, p. 2). Researchers seem to agree that it is impossible to find one single effective treatment (Mignon, 2015, p. 1-2). Thus, different kinds of therapeutic approaches flourish. The most commonly researched forms of treatment include medical treatment, behavioural approaches, social therapies and system approaches, all with a number of various expressions (Carrà et al., 2015). The ways in which substance abuse and addiction are understood, whether it is a brain dysfunction or a disorder of habit (Orford 2013, p. 41), naturally influence the way it is treated. Therefore, research on the nature of addictions and substance use disorders is inclined to influence treatment, although treatment is also influenced by political, professional and traditional interests.

In addition to professional therapies, peer groups have attracted attention. The Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) movement has developed into a massive movement providing help for thousands of recovering abusers. Consequently, much research has targeted AA and tried to understand how it helps (e.g., Moos & Moos, 2006; Vaillant, 2005.) Unaided or so-called spontaneous recovery that takes place outside professional treatment and peer groups is surprisingly common. Even the majority of those quitting substance abuse permanently do it without any formal help or peer support. Spontaneous recovery has also been a target of research (e.g., Blomqvist, 1996; Cunningham, Wild, & Koski-Jännes, 2005).

In sum, both substance abuse and recovery from it have attracted multi-disciplinary interest. As researchers view abusing and recovering individuals from the perspective of their own discipline, the picture of the phenomenon has become diverse and multifaceted. Seen in another way, the picture seems contradictory. For instance, what 'recovery' actually means is not all that clear but the concept has been ubiquitous in the substance abuse field (Laudet & Best, 2015). As this question of recovery is essential for this research, I shall return to it later in chapter two.

When analysing research on psychological treatments for addiction, Jim Orford (2008) suggests that changes should be made to previous practices. What has been unsatisfactory, according to Orford, has been the inability to integrate research on unaided change, the use of inappropriate time-scales for the change process, the failure to take the system or social network view and the lack of the patient's view. He calls for studying change processes instead of named techniques and for studying those change processes within broader, longer-acting systems, of which treatment is only a part. Additionally, he recommends acknowledging a variety of sources and underlines the importance of qualitative research (Orford, 2008).

This study tries to contribute to addressing these issues. I have studied Christian faith and recovery as a lengthy process from the first-person perspective, while taking the social environment and non-professional aided and unaided recovery into account. Amidst various research traditions, this study joins a tradition of social-psychological recovery studies where the focus is on the interplay between the personal and the social. When seen from a social-psychological point of view, recovery is a personal and social process. For instance, Koski-Jännes (2002) noted that recovery is not only about creating a non-addict identity but also about finding a more personal and authentic mode of being in the world. Hänninen and Koski-Jännes (1999) analysed narratives of recovery from addictive behaviours and introduced five different story types. Their study suggests that, due to individual differences, each recovering individual should be encouraged to take use of those culturally available tools that best suit his or her needs. Recovery is not something general or universal, but each time it is a unique process.

In line with this social-psychological recovery tradition, this study is interested in individuals constructing identities with the help of socio-cultural tools. Researching recovery from substance abuse is not only a question of addiction and sobriety but also a much more general question about being both social and individual and of constructing a new identity and creating self anew. These fundamental social-psychological questions of self-creation have motivated this research, as well as an interest in recovery from substance abuse. I have earlier (Lund, 2008) shared similar interests in social-psychological coping, specifically on being 'me' in a socially acceptable way in a crisis situation. Additionally, I have an academic theological interest. I have tried to understand what kinds of influences Christian faith can have on an individual who is trying to re-construct his/her life.

This research draws from multi-disciplinary research on substance abuse and recovery, joins the social-psychological tradition of researching recovery as a social and individual process and shares an interest in understanding Christian faith as a cultural tool used to re-orient a life-course.

1.2 RESEARCHING RECOVERY, FAITH, SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGION

Religion and substance use and abuse have had an intense relationship. Some religions prohibit using substances, while others take a critical stand towards substance abuse. Religious people have been at the fore of temperance movements. Not surprisingly, research on the links between religion, spirituality, substance use and recovery started more than one hundred years ago. Substance use, abuse and recovery from abuse have been regarded as a religious and spiritual question, particularly after the emergence of the AA-movement, which is spiritual by nature (e.g., Bliss, 2007; Miller, 1998; Shorkey & Windsor, 2010). Despite this long history, in 1990, William R. Miller (1990), one of the leading figures in the field of addiction studies, called attention to researchers' ignorance and inattention to spiritual and religious aspects of recovery. Since then, much has changed and a kind of a revival of these research interests has taken place.

The academic community has started exploring the relationships between substance abuse, recovery, spirituality, religiosity and faith (Bliss, 2007; Stoltzfus, 2007). This revival can be seen in a wider context, as part of a more general interest in religiosity/spirituality and mental health which has taken place in recent years (Chitwood, Weiss, & Leukefeld, 2008; Shorkey, Uebel, & Windsor, 2008). This has led to suggestions that

psychiatrists could and even should pay more attention to the religiosity and spirituality of their patients (Koenig & Larson, 2001). Additionally, the rise of interest in faith and recovery can be seen as a parallel process to policy changes, especially in the US, where the state has been supporting faith-based social services, including recovery programmes, since the 1990s (Klingemann, Schläfli, & Steiner, 2013; McCoy, Hermos, Bokhourn, & Frayne, 2005; Shorkey et al., 2008; Windsor & Shorkey, 2010; Zanis & Cnaan, 2006). Such an increase in state funding, and thus relevance, has naturally caused both academic curiosity towards the phenomenon and the need to provide evidence on what actually happens in faith-based programmes. All in all, research on religiosity, spirituality, faith, substance abuse and recovery has flourished since the 1990s compared to earlier decades. However, the number of academic articles remains small when compared to some other schools of thought, like genetics, neurotransmission, parent and peer relationships and socioeconomic and subcultural factors (Chitwood et al., 2008).

After much research and several reviews, the main conclusion is that religious activity is negatively correlated to substance use and abuse. That is, fewer religious people use and abuse substances than the religiously inactive, suggesting that religion and spirituality seem to be protective from substance abuse (e.g., Chitwood et al., 2008; Koenig & Larson, 2001; Miller, 1998). In addition, review studies have mainly concentrated on categorising existing literature. A couple of reviews have considered what 'spirituality' means in substance abuse and recovery (Chitwood et al., 2008; Cook 2004) and the topics discussed by researchers have been categorised (Geppert, Bogenschutz, & Miller, 2007). We also know what kinds of themes have been addressed in the research and what has been neglected. For instance, much research has focused on AA and 12 Step programmes, and it is time to advance beyond them (Geppert et al., 2007).

Although the reviews have resulted in meagre results, some individual papers have provided insights into the role religiosity and spirituality might play in recovery. For instance Flynn, Joen, Broome, Simpson and Brown (2003) concluded that religiosity and spirituality were among the key factors explaining recovery. Jarusiewicz (2000) noted that recovering individuals had greater levels of faith and spirituality than those who continued to relapse. Mason, Deane, Kelly and Crowe (2009) found that an increase in spirituality led to an increase in self-efficacy, which in turn led to a decrease in 'cravings'. Furthermore, Shorkey et al. (2008) have underlined that increased spirituality is associated with long-term addiction recovery and the maintenance of treatment gains. Nonetheless, what these studies have really produced may be summarised by the scanty conclusion given by Bliss (2007, 16): 'Spirituality can play an important role in recovery from alcoholism, although not the only role'. Such a conclusion does not reveal a lot and raises more questions than it answers.

Instead of positive results, practically all reviewers of the literature have unanimously complained about the shortcomings in the existing research. The main problem seems to be the vagueness of concepts: It is impossible to draw conclusions from literature that is so diffuse in its ways of talking about spirituality and religiosity. This can be seen from two angles. First, spirituality is a very wide concept and covers all kinds of traditions, from 12 step-based spirituality, mindfulness, prayer, religious programmes, shamanism and exorcism (Stoltzfus, 2007). How can one discuss all these at the same time? Second, even though there are validated scales to measure spirituality and religiosity, either researchers are not aware of them, choose to not use them, use their own scales, or spirituality and religiosity play such a minor role in bigger studies that they are superficially measured. The inability to define concepts and measure them consistently seems to prevent researchers from producing any meaningful body of knowledge on the topic (e.g., Bliss, 2007; Chitwood et al., 2008; Miller, 1998; Zanis & Cnaan, 2006).

It remains unclear whether the supposed positive influence of spirituality and religiosity on recovery is a real effect, is due to insufficient and poor quality research, or because such a positive influence does not exist, at least at any generalisable level. Interestingly, Miller and his colleagues tried to set an example by carrying out two clinical trials targeting this hypothesised positive effect of spirituality on recovery (Miller, Forchimes, O'Leary, & LaNoue, 2008). The result was, however, that spirituality had no such expected influence on patients in recovery treatment. The researchers speculated on the results and gave five alternative explanations: spirituality does not have the expected influence, the intensity of spirituality was not sufficient, the timing of providing spirituality was too early, spirituality is not something you can push into a recovery process and spiritual growth is a lengthy process and does not match a short treatment period (Miller et al., 2008.) From these trials, it could be concluded that if spirituality is to have a positive effect on recovery from substance abuse, it cannot be forced from outside and it may require long periods of time.

Whereas much of the existing literature seems to target topics less relevant to this study, like AA spirituality or faith-based treatment, some researchers have adopted attractive viewpoints. Neff and MacMaster (2005), although researching faith-based treatment programmes, share an interesting aim. They intended to understand what happens in faith-based treatment and how it can be seen without using special faith-vocabulary. Their interest in 'demystifying' processes termed 'spiritual' or 'religious' is an important step towards better understanding of spiritual and religious factors in recovery studies. Such demystification may help make known those recovery processes where spirituality, religiosity, or faith is present in a way that can contribute to the general understanding of recovery (McCoy et al., 2005). In order to demystify spiritual and religious processes, Stoltzfus (2007) called for qualitative research on lived experiences of research participants, which Williamson and Hood Jr. (2013) later did. A creative approach was invented by Klingemann, Schläfli and Steiner (2013), who asked clients of a treatment unit to draw spirituality. Even though the lack and underuse of existing validated scales on spirituality and religiosity has aroused criticism by many, others have chosen another path and targeted spiritual issues by demystifying them and studying individual experiences.

In addition, a couple of papers deserve to be mentioned as promising and inspiring contributions. Lyons, Deane and Kelly (2010) have discussed how forgiveness as a spiritual mechanism may contribute to recovery from substance abuse. And Lyons, Deane, Caputi and Kelly (2011) have added the concept of shame to the discussion on how and why spirituality helps in recovery. These papers intend to understand and explain how spirituality affects recovery. What are those mechanisms through which this mysterious concept of spirituality operates? Along with bringing up this question, suggesting an answer, asking for forgiveness and experiencing shame are important contribution.

In the end, despite much effort, research on spirituality and recovery from substance abuse remains scant. Twenty-three years after calling attention to researchers' lack of interest in spirituality and addiction (Miller, 1990), William R. Miller (2013) hoped, again, to see 'serious attention to spirituality in addiction research and treatment'.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Although the faith in the faith-based treatment programmes and the spirituality in twelve-step peer groups may be different, in the big picture, they are related. This

study, for its part, is neither interested in faith-based treatment programmes nor in spiritual peer groups, but is operating in the same sphere with both of them, that of the spiritual dimension in recovery from substance abuse.

As stated above, studies on spirituality, religiousness and recovery have mainly focused on peer groups and treatment units, which provide functional research environments enabling follow-up studies (e.g., Williamson & Hood, 2012). This raises questions, however. Focusing on treatment units and AA has been seen as a limitation to the understanding of the phenomenon (e.g., Bliss 2007; Geppert et al. 2007; McCoy et al. 2005; Neff & MacMaster, 2005; Neff, Shorkey, & Windsor, 2006). Such research targets miss lengthy processes and multidimensionality, both of which very often characterise recovery processes. This suggests that the relationship between spirituality, religiousness and recovery should be targeted outside treatment and AA. Although some participants of this study attended formal treatment or peer groups and some may have even benefitted from them, this research is interested in what can be called spontaneous recovery processes.

The main research question and sub-questions are as follows:

How and why can Christian faith help people recover from substance abuse?

Although this question has not altered over the course of this research project, what it really means and includes has attained new meanings and levels. The research process has taught me a lot about how these key concepts 'Christian faith' and 'recovery' could and should be understood and defined. This discussion takes place in the following chapter. As the research process has opened new avenues for discussing both Christian faith and recovery, it has helped formulate sub-questions more precisely. One sub-level of the research question could be formulated this way:

How can recovering substance abusers benefit from Christianity as a cultural resource in recovery?

Similarly, it turned out, maybe not surprisingly, that one crucial sub-question relates to guilt and shame:

How does coping with guilt and shame help understand the ways Christian faith may influence recovery from substance abuse?

Guilt and shame did not come to the fore when designing this research, but deserved their place during preliminary analysis.

This research project has produced four articles, all written solely by the author of this study. They have all intended to answer the main research question, each from a different point of view. The sub-studies are as follows:

- Sub-study one is about recovery narratives (Lund, 2016a)
- Sub-study two discusses guilt, shame, Christian faith and recovery (Lund, 2017)
- Sub-study three is about spiritual songs supporting recovery (Lund, 2016b)
- Sub-study four discusses the Bible as a cultural tool (Lund, submitted)

The article format has compelled me to focus on strictly defined points of view in given articles. This summary intends to bring these viewpoints together.

2 KEY CONCEPTS

As this is a study about how Christian faith may help in recovery from substance abuse, it is necessary to define what the most essential concepts refer to. First, I discuss 'Christian faith', its connection to other related concepts and its content in this study. Second, I focus on what 'recovery' means and how it can, and in this case should, be understood. And third, since guilt and shame often appeared closely linked to both recovery from substance abuse and Christian faith and especially these two together, I discuss the definitions of these two concepts.

2.1 CHRISTIAN FAITH

Originally, this research project was interested in Christian faith supporting recovery from substance abuse. It soon turned out, however, that what other researchers have been interested in is, more generally, how spirituality and religiousness relate to recovery. There are two obvious reasons for this. One relates to research traditions, and another is more practical. On one hand, research has intended to study spirituality and religiosity as universal phenomena, providing information that could be generalised. In quantitative research, ready-made scales for measuring spirituality and religiousness make research both easy and accurate. An interest in qualitative nuances of different kinds of spiritualities or expressions of religiousness does not belong to the research tradition. On the other and more practical hand, discussing 'spirituality' instead of 'faith' includes the AA-movement, a movement that strongly underlines that it is spiritual but not religious. Especially in the USA context, the AA-movement is so influential that there are good reasons to focus research on spirituality and recovery and thus include the AA-movement in the target group.

As stated above, targeting and measuring spirituality in relation to substance abuse and recovery has met two main challenges: What spirituality is and how it should be measured. Although widely referred to, what researchers actually mean when discussing spirituality and religiosity in relation to recovery has remained somewhat obscure. Many have struggled to define 'spirituality' and 'religiosity' and to find ways of measuring them and their relationship to recovery (Brown, Whitney, Schneider, & Vega, 2006; Chitwood et al., 2008; Cook, 2004; Miller & Pogenschutz, 2007). Despite a number of scales designed to measure spirituality (e.g., Shorkey et al., 2008), which are not necessarily used (Geppert et al., 2007; Miller, 1998), some have tried to solve the problem by developing new scales to meet these specific needs (Shorkey & Windsor, 2010; Windsor & Shorkey, 2010). It is not, however, necessarily a scale problem but a deeper underlying problem.

Many have stated that understanding spirituality and another closely related concept, religiosity, has been poor and should be advanced in order to gain more satisfactory results. Shorkey, Uebel and Windsor (2008) drew attention to too narrow a definition of both religiosity, understood only as something institutional and dogmatic, and spirituality, which is seen as too 'fuzzy', and a consequential antagonism between the terms. As they state, such differentiation is not historically correct and these two concepts should be seen much more as overlapping and nearly coextensive. This is very much in line with what researchers on religious studies suggest. Most fa-

mously, Kenneth Pargament (2007) pointed out that the problem with the 'polarisation of religion ('the institutional bad-guy') and spirituality ('the individual good-guy')' is that it does not fit the empirical evidence (p. 31). What this means is that people who are religious tend to be spiritual as well. For instance, 80 % of adults in the United States claim to be both religious and spiritual. Thus, stating what is religious and what is spiritual is impossible and useless (Ammerman, 2013). Instead of trying to discuss whether spirituality helps in recovery whereas religiousness does not, recovery researchers should take seriously the interconnectedness of these two concepts and focus not on their difference but on their content. This way, research could focus on 'active ingredients' and mechanisms of action that spirituality/religiousity provide (Geppert et al., 2007), on the individual significance of spirituality/religiousness and the role they may play (Shorkey et al., 2008) and on lived experiences of spirituality among recovering substance abusers (Lyons et al., 2011).

In addition to measuring spirituality and religiosity of recovering substance abusers with good or bad scales, there might be another way of approaching spiritual and religious issues. Grettenberger, Bartkowski and Smith (2006) make the following observation: 'The study's methodology recognised that faith, even for groups of Christian origin, cannot be categorised using a homogenous set of definitions'. That might sound like a truism for someone familiar with the study of religions, but in light of existing research on recovery it seems a novel and courageous notion. Indeed, faith, spirituality and religiosity are not homogenous and static phenomena and should not be researched as such.

Because of these above mentioned problems with 'spirituality' and 'religiosity' and because this study is originally on Christian faith and recovery, it has been reasonable to avoid dwelling in conceptual definitions of spirituality and religiousness. Instead, I have focused on how to research Christian faith as an expression of religiosity and spirituality. One reason to avoid talking about spirituality and religiousness is that this is the way participants expressed themselves. The majority of them regarded spirituality as too vague and religiosity as too formal. They talked about their individually experienced Christian faith, and this study sees no point in trying to turn that language into the academic discourse of spirituality and religiousness. Nevertheless, there has to be an academic discourse tradition, a vocabulary and theoretical framework, so as to be able to discuss findings from the data. I have been glad to find the research tradition of lived religion, which has provided the frame needed. This study is not interested in Christian faith in any general or theologically sophisticated ways, or in the doctrinal Christianity of churches or scholars. This study's focus is on religious individuals and not religion as such (Comstock, 2004). Hence, this article joins the research tradition of lived religion (Ammerman, 2016; McGuire, 1998; Orsi, 2003).

Lived religion has emerged as a distinct field of study during the last three decades. Though both methodologically and thematically diverse, the lived religion tradition has focused on how religion is embedded in the practices of everyday life (Ammerman, 2013; Edgell, 2012). In the lived religion tradition the focus is on person, context and experience and not on doctrine or institution. However, this does not mean separating people from those traditions they lean on. Tradition is there and cannot be ignored. The focus is on individual experiences and interpretations, but individuals do not live in isolation and they learn Christian faith somewhere and somehow. As Ammerman (2016) expresses, individual discourses and practices are deeply embedded in religious traditions. Still, it is these individual discourses and practices and not those religious traditions that this research is interested in.

In this research, I am taking individual storytelling, talking, singing and reading seriously and trying to understand how Christian tradition is turned into what Robert Orsi (1985) calls 'theologies of the street'. Instead of studying Christianity, 'the religion', its dogma, holy scriptures and institutions, this study, as suggested for instance by Gavin Flood (1999), turns its attention to the ways in which religious traditions are conveyed and adopted and the teaching and learning of local religious narratives. What this research intends to do is study local transmission, assimilation and interpretation of Christian heritage in the lives of ordinary individuals in a local setting. As is often the case in the lived religion tradition (Ammerman, 2016), this study is interested in a marginalised group that lives far from ecclesiastical elites, namely former substance abusers trying to fight their way out of exclusion to dignity.

Thus, the focus is on individual interpretation, on how participants interpret their Christian faith. Christian faith is here seen as a cultural tool with language, stories and role models. Christian faith was transmitted both by cultural products such as the Bible and spiritual songs and through human encounters. And still, it was and became an individual interpretation. Christian faith in this research means individually and situationally interpreted Christian faiths, which varied not only between individuals but also during the life-course of each individual.

2.2 RECOVERY

Throughout this research process, it has been necessary to evaluate what recovery actually is. The concept of recovery from substance abuse is not unambiguous and has been discussed widely in literature without reaching a consensus (see e.g., The Betty Ford Institute Consensus Panel, 2007; Kelly & Hoepfner, 2014; Laudet, 2007; White, 2005; White, 2007). One aspect of defining recovery relates to the length of the process. A quite commonly held view is that recovery lasts a long time. It takes three to five years before a stable phase is reached (The Betty Ford Institute Consensus Panel, 2007; White, 2007). It has been well established to take this as a starting point.

Another crucial point deals with how getting rid of substance abuse is seen. Recovery has often been linked to seeing substance abuse as something that can be assessed, treated, released, even 'cured' in a relatively short time. Recovery is seen as something that takes place, for instance, during a short treatment period. Nowadays, however, the focus is more often on seeing substance abuse as a chronic disorder and thus understanding recovery as a longer process. Seeing recovery this way leaves room for multiple cycles of treatment and suggests talking about recovery management instead of an acute care model (Laudet & Best, 2015). A long-term perspective enables recovery to be conceptualised as a multi-phased process that is not only about gaining sobriety. For instance, according to Prochaska, Diclemente and Norcross (1992), recovery should be seen as a five-phased process.

The question of how recovery from substance abuse relates to the development of overall wellbeing is most influential from this study's point of view. These points have been raised by those in favour of the so-called recovery movement, but also by many others. As stated by Hewitt (2004, 219), work with addictions is often 'focused on illness rather than health' and we 'understand illness and vulnerability far better than we understand health and coping'. Thus, understanding recovery should go well beyond substance use and encompass improved functioning in various fields of life, like mental health, employment, economic, family and social life, to name a few.

Reducing or quitting substance abuse is necessary but rarely sufficient (Laudet & Best, 2015). In line with this and avoiding what White (2005) calls a 'problem paradigm' or 'pathology paradigm', this study relates to what he terms 'solution paradigm'.

Recovery is about physical, emotional, relational and ontological health and a change in quality of life. Recovery can thus be defined as non-problematic substance use (or total abstinence) plus global health or quality of life (White, 2007; Laudet & Best, 2015). Similarly, recovery can be seen as both remission or the elimination of diagnostic criteria for abuse or dependence and a broader achievement of global health. Remission is, as White (2007) notes, about what has been removed from one's life, while recovery is about what has been added to it. Recovery, as seen in this study, is a struggle and a way out of a life that is chaotic, meaningless, worthless and non-belonging, to a life that is dignified, valuable, connected and purposeful.

Recovery is, thus, in this study understood as a comprehensive process from the abuse of substances to sober life, including its medical, psychological, personal, social, spiritual and religious aspects, as interpreted by the participants. Understanding recovery as a lengthy process with many and varying turns and experiences, many of which take place outside any treatment or peer groups, can help enhance our understanding of spirituality, religion and recovery. Discussing recovery in a comprehensive way draws attention not only to psychopathology or behavioural psychology but to the identity processes that recovery from substance abuse often requires (Koski-Jännes, 2002; see also Galanter, 2007). This study challenges the disease and diagnosis-oriented recovery model and instead stresses resources, development and a solution-centred model. Seen this way, recovery is not an escape from something and a process of avoiding. It is, instead, a creative process where entitlements and strengths are at the forefront, not the weaknesses and shortcomings. As stated by White (2007, 238), 'recovery can also be depicted as a process of *procovery*, *uncovery*, or *discovery* – a movement into new, unexplored dimensions of one's life'. Seeing recovery this way opens a new viewpoint for evaluating the role Christian faith may play in recovery.

2.3 GUILT AND SHAME

The original intention of this research project was not to focus on guilt and shame. It turned out, however, that these concepts are of importance when trying to understand how and why Christian faith may help in recovery from substance abuse. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss these concepts here as key concepts.

In layman's talk, guilt and shame are often confused and used interchangeably. Academic students or even professionals are not necessarily an exception (Tangney & Dearing, 2004, p. 11). Interest in these concepts, especially the previously poorly understood concept of shame, has risen in recent years. As a consequence, researchers in the field now unanimously understand the similarities and differences between shame and guilt. Key similarities and differences can be summarised following Tangney and Dearing (2004, p. 25). Both guilt and shame are 'moral' and 'self-conscious' emotions. That is, they have to do with right and wrong and require self-awareness and self-representation. Both guilt and shame have a negative connotation, both are typically experienced in interpersonal contexts, and both are caused by similar kinds of events.

Although sharing such similarities, guilt and shame also differ remarkably. The most central difference is that shame focuses on the global self, and guilt focuses on specific behaviour. While guilt has to do with a transgression or a moral failure,

shame has to do with a person transgressing or failing. Consequently, shame is more painful than guilt. As guilt focuses on specific deeds or omissions, it causes tension and leads to remorse and regret. Thus, people can cope with guilt by confessing, apologising, or repairing. On the contrary, shame focuses on the global self, causes feelings of worthlessness and powerlessness and leads to a desire to hide, escape or strike back. For these reasons, guilt is easier to recognise and handle, whereas shame hides and remains unrecognised both by the one feeling ashamed and those around him/her (Tangney & Dearing, 2004, p. 25). Much has been written about the beneficial effects of guilt and the adverse influences of shame (e.g., Dearing, Stuewig, & Tangney, 2005). Guilt is beneficial since it can be apologised for and forgiven, and it thus drives a person to act, apologise and make amends. Shame, on the other hand, is harmful as it remains unnamed and, therefore, often unaddressed. Consequently, shame drives a person to turn inwards and hide (Tangney, Stuewig, & Mashek, 2007).

Although a more thorough discussion on multiple perspectives on these self-conscious emotions (e.g., Tracy, Robins, & Tangney, 2007) is out of the scope of this study, one special aspect of these self-conscious emotions deserves further attention. The question of biological and cultural aspects of guilt and shame is relevant here as this study is interested in culturally interpreted experiences. Therefore, it is interesting to ask whether guilt and shame feelings are a biological and thus universal phenomenon, or whether they are, at least in part, culturally constructed. This relates to whether it is relevant to ponder what kind of effect Christianity as a cultural tool can have on participants' way of feeling, conceptualising and discussing guilt and shame. As stated by Goetz and Keltner (2007), there have been widely varying claims about both the universality and cultural variations of self-conscious emotions. These two viewpoints can, however, be seen as complementary rather than opposing: Cultures have created variations in these emotion processes that are, at their core, universal (e.g., Goetz & Keltner, 2007).

Although there is a universally shared neural substrate for these emotions and emotional expressions, both emotions and expressions are contextualised within cultures (Edelstein & Shaver, 2007). Cultures shape the nature, form and expression of emotions and thus even an individual's propensity to experience particular facets of emotions (Fessler, 2007). When defining how 'culture' influences emotions and expressions, Wong and Tsai (2007) named, for instance, symbols, language, values, norms, rituals, laws, media, family structure and religion. Although 'culture' as discussed in these articles refers to large cultures, like 'western culture' or 'Chinese culture', they all underline the cultural influence on emotions and expressing emotions. The way symbols, languages, values and religion may have an effect on experiencing guilt and shame is relevant to this study, which is interested in Christian faith as a cultural tool in the process of recovery. Therefore, the question of how Christian symbols, languages and values may shape emotions is interesting.

Guilt and shame are closely linked to recovery and especially recovery with the help of Christian faith. Therefore, it is reasonable to take a quick look at how recovery studies, on one hand, and how studies on Christianity, on the other hand, have discussed guilt and shame. Substance abusers are known to have feelings of both guilt and shame (e.g., Scherer, Worthington, Hook, & Campana, 2011). Not surprisingly, research has covered various topics relevant to abuse and recovery. Research has targeted crucial guilt-related themes, like forgiveness (e.g., Webb, Hirsch, Conway-Williams, & Brewer, 2013; Webb & Trautman, 2010) and the forgiveness of self (Scherer et al., 2011). Shame topics have also been discussed (Kurtz, 1982; Kurtz

2007), and research has even found a positive link between shame-proneness and problematic alcohol use, suggesting that addiction and shame are inseparable (Dearing et al., 2005). The differences between guilt and shame in relation to substance abuse has also been researched (Dearing et al., 2005). As a consequence of existing studies, some researchers have argued that shame, self-resentment and negative self-schema should be seen as relevant themes in substance abuse treatment programmes (Lyons et al., 2011; Wiechelt, 2007; Wiechelt & Sales, 2001). Although much research has been conducted on this topic, some researchers have argued that the connectedness of guilt and shame in recovery remains obscure and the role of these self-conscious emotions in the recovery processes seems unclear and needs more attention (e.g., Lewis, 2010; Webb et al., 2013; Webb & Trautman, 2010).

Anyone familiar with Christian tradition knows that guilt and forgiveness are at the core of Christian theology (e.g., Leach & Lark, 2004), something that has also been discussed by recovery researchers (e.g., Webb & Trautman, 2010). While guilt and forgiveness are widely discussed, shame has often been neglected by churches and theologians (Pattison, 2000). During recent years, there has arisen a wide theological-ly orientated discussion about guilt and shame (e.g., Kettunen, 2002; Leach & Lark, 2004; Pattison, 2000). Researchers have called attention to how these two emotions require different approaches. They have underlined how forgiveness is an answer to guilt, but only to guilt. Forgiveness does not help when someone is feeling ashamed, since shame originates in feelings of worthlessness and not in any particular deeds that could be forgiven. In the case of shame, forgiveness does not target any deeds but the entire self. But what does it mean that the entire self is forgiven (Kettunen, 2002)? Thus, forgiveness is not an answer to shame, and forgiving an ashamed person can only worsen the situation. Instead of forgiveness, the answer, in cases of shame, is being loved and valued. In sum, guilt relates to forgiveness and shame relates to being unconditionally loved.

Christianity did not only contribute conceptually to the content of this study, it also influenced the vocabulary being used. The Christian vocabulary of forgiveness, sin, grace and mercy are found in this study. In line with the lived religion tradition, I am interested in how the participants used these concepts and what kind of meanings they attached to them. They were leaning on a Christian tradition when talking about sin; they could not use the concept unless being part of that tradition. This does not mean, however, that their understanding of sin would equal doctrinal or ecclesiastical definition. I am not interested in sin, forgiveness, or grace, as such, but in individual interpretations of these concepts.

3 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

3.1 NARRATIVE APPROACH

This study is interested in lengthy recovery processes, individual interpretations and Christianity as a cultural tool. I have targeted recovery processes that are complex and multi-phased and where recovery is understood as a comprehensive life change that takes place over years. I wanted to hear first-person voices; that is, experiences and interpretations of individuals who have lived through a metamorphosis from a marginalised substance abuser to a normal citizen and given meaning to their experiences throughout their lives. The focus of this study has not only been on the processes, as such, but also on the ways they have been made understandable and meaningful. I also have an interest in researching Christian faith as a lived religion and cultural tool that participants have been able to lean on. Because of these reasons, I have chosen to apply a narrative research approach, as I believe it best answers these needs.

The narrative approach has multiple roots and manifestations; it has widened to practically all fields of social sciences and psychology. What unites them all is the idea of a narrative, that of language, subjectivity, the social and the narrative. Despite shared interests, there have been different opinions about whether the storyteller tells the story or is told by the story. In other words, there is a debate as to whether the language and the narrative are the storyteller's subjective ways of expressing him/herself in relation to the social, or whether the social defines the storyteller via language and narrative (Andrews, Squire, & Tamboukou, 2008). The question of subjectivity, language, the social and the narrative are at the heart of this study, as well.

In line with the lived religion tradition, the narrative approach is also interested in individual interpretations. From an individual point of view, especially amidst difficulties and struggles, particular truths about one's own life are more important than some general wisdoms. The narrative approach underlines the importance of narrative truth, which, according to Jerome Bruner (1986), convinces us by its verisimilitude or lifelikeness. Narrative truth contrasts with what Bruner (1986) calls the logico-scientific mode of thought, which provides universality. Universal truths are certainly of importance, but, just like dogmas according to the lived religion tradition, such universal truths are not relevant for someone trying to survive. When trying to recover from substance abuse, the participants were not searching for universal truths of the logico-scientific realm but particular, narrative truths matching their unique lives. They had no interest in logical, well-formulated dogmas discussing universal truths about God, but they were eager to read biblical passages and hear and sing spiritual songs, which told them particular truths about their own lives. This is why this study leans on the narrative research tradition.

Any individual has to have an inner narrative (or self-narrative) which tells him/herself who he/she is. This inner narrative has to be constructed and reconstructed over and over again. This study joins the narrative research tradition, which does not see an individual as a ready-made entity but as a product of an on-going construction and creation. Constructing an inner narrative is not merely a question of a plot line but an individual process of understanding him/herself in a comprehensive way. An

inner narrative includes values, principles, cognitions, emotions, as well as an understanding of the past and anticipation of the future (Hänninen 2004).

The crucial question is how constructing an inner narrative happens. As suggested by Hänninen and Koski-Jännes (2004, 231), an inner narrative is a 'meeting point of private experience and culturally shared understanding'. It brings subjectivity and the social together. As an individual constructs his or her inner narrative, he/she draws models from what Hänninen (2004) has called the 'socio-cultural stock of stories'. In the process of composing an inner narrative, an individual uses the ingredients that are available. The socio-cultural stock of stories refers to all kinds of stories that are available in culture, literature, films and TV-series and religious texts and spiritual songs (Hänninen, 2004). Christian cultural tools, songs, biblical texts, sermons etc. can be seen as a socio-cultural stock of stories. Researching Christianity as a stock of socio-cultural stories is a way of understanding their influence on the formation of the inner narrative of the participants. That is, it is a method of understanding the influence of Christian cultural tools on the way these individuals see themselves, their values, principles, cognitions, emotions, past, present and future.

Socio-cultural story models can provide sources of creativity when constructing one's inner narrative. But, when shared stories set limits to individual interpretations, such socio-cultural story models can also have a restricting function (Hänninen, 2004). As noted by Rosenwald and Ochberg (1992), there are cultural and social stories that limit one's individual conception of him/herself. The question of reconstructing an inner narrative, and the tools helping or hindering it, are at the core of this study.

When thinking about the topic of this research, the narrative approach has certain advantages. The narrative approach enables us to view the recovery process in a holistic way and relates recovery to the entire life-course. It also makes it possible for the participants themselves to define the issues essential to recovery. One key factor is that autobiographical narratives allow research subjects to express multiple and contradictory experiences and selves (Wortham, 2001), which is otherwise not easily achieved but may be significant when talking about complex phenomena such as substance abuse, recovery, spirituality and religiousness. Due to these obvious strengths, the narrative approach has been applied to recovery studies in various ways. Some studies have focused on various paths out of different dependencies such as alcohol, drugs and nicotine (Hänninen & Koski-Jännes, 1999; Koski-Jännes & Turner, 1999). Others have focused on AA-stories describing the help of twelve-step programmes and peer support (Steffen, 1997; Weegmann & Piwowoz-Hjort, 2009). The help provided by spirituality, faith, or religion has appeared in a number of previous narrative studies of recovery, but the nature of such help has remained unanalysed (Blomqvist, 1996; Jacobsen, 2001; Koski-Jännes & Turner, 1999; Weegmann, 2004). Therefore, as stated by Weegmann (2004), alternative and various kinds of narratives of recovery are needed in order to cast light on those paths to recovery that are not yet well known.

3.2 IDENTITY PROCESS

Recovering from substance abuse often means a dramatic break in social identity (Koski-Jännes, 2002; McIntosh & McKeganey, 2000). It also raises the question of forming a postaddict identity (e.g., Bischof, Rumpf, Meyer, Hapke, & Ulrich, 2004; Hecksher 2004). Recovering is not only becoming sober and maintaining sobriety but also achieving a new way of being 'me'. During this research process, I have come to

discover that recovery is such a colossal metamorphosis that it makes sense to discuss it as a personal and social identity process. Constructing a new personal and social identity appears to be crucial in the process of recovery from substance abuse. To address these questions, Anja Koski-Jännes (2002; see also Cameron, 2004) has applied the theory of personal and social identity (Rom Harré, 1984) in the study of recovery from addiction. This viewpoint is very much in line with the narrative approach discussed above. This way of seeing is parallel to constructing an inner narrative with the help of available socio-cultural tools. However, here the focus is more on the relationship between the individual and the collective: how does an individual make something originally shared eventually his/her own?

Harré depicts his theory of becoming a personal being as a four-phase process, with the help of a two-dimensional matrix (Harré, 1984, pp. 258; see Figure 1). I will give a short description of how these four phases proceed. First, one adjusts to a social norm by integrating something public and collective into something private and collective. This is called appropriation. What one appropriates becomes one's own and, in that sense, private, but it still remains collective. For instance, one learns to use new words to interpret his/her experiences, while these words are still the same collective expressions used by others. The second step is that individual formulates a personal interpretation of what he/she has appropriated. This is called transformation; it turns the previously private and collective into private and individual. One finds ways, for example, to express his/her experiences in a unique way that differs from previous collective ways. This expression is not only new; it is one's own. The process then proceeds to presenting one's own expression to others (publication), which shapes the shared reading (conventionalisation) (Harré, 1984, pp. 256-259). The process starts in the social sphere, since Harré sees man as fundamentally a social being. According to Harré, the process of becoming a personal being proceeds from the outside in, from the social level to the personal level. A personal being is one who manages to formulate a personal interpretation of a social norm and publish it. In doing so, the individual does not cease to be social but is social in a personal and reflective way.

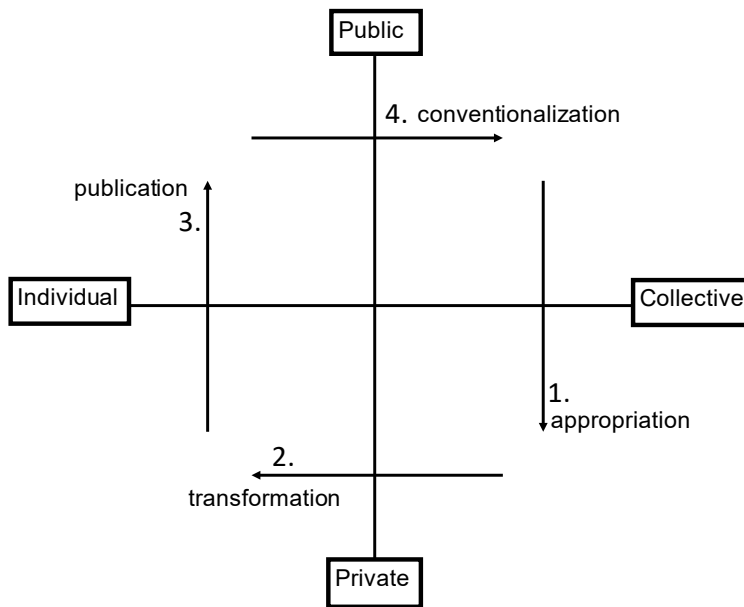


Figure 1. Harré's theory (Harré 1984, pp. 258).

When experiencing tremendous changes in life, being dependent on expressions used by others may not appear to be a problem. In general, people tend to utilise shared story models and concepts when constructing new inner stories. As mentioned, the social stock of stories stands there for that purpose, and this is how an individual interprets his/her inner story. What Harré states, however, is that an identity project should not come to an end after appropriation; otherwise identity remains uncompleted. According to Harré, one then has to transform the collective into the individual in order to move from private and collective to private and individual. This requires self-reflectivity, or the capability to make one's own interpretation of what has happened. As long as one sticks to the collectively shared and expressed identity, it is difficult to move on. An essential part of any identity project is transformation. To transform social identity into personal identity is a must in a complete identity project.

Rom Harré's theory underlines the importance of transforming socially shared views into one's own, or formulating a personal interpretation of the ingredients available in the socio-cultural stock of stories. Without transformation, one is just imitating socio-cultural models. Harré's theory of social and personal identity projects can help understand how a recovering individual may make use of Christianity as a cultural tool, as well as how difficult that may be. That is, appropriation may be much easier than transformation and may help for a while, thus providing an untruthful sense of reaching a new sober phase in life.

3.3 RE-STORYING AND SELF-CREATION

In this study, recovery has been seen as a long identity process that involves not only getting rid of substance abuse but also a comprehensive life change and constructing

a new positive identity. The process of recovery has also been seen in the narrative framework as composing a new inner narrative with the help of socio-cultural story models. As this research process went on, Rom Harré's idea of personal and social identity process turned out to be a complementary viewpoint that deepened the analysis. The concepts of appropriation and transformation clarified the idea and difficulty of constructing an inner narrative with the help of the socio-cultural stock of stories. Eventually, the intention to understand how Christian faith influenced recovery and construction of an inner narrative led to ideas of re-storying and self-creation, concepts introduced by William Randall (2014). This is another viewpoint, another theoretical framework, but, again, it shares the same basic assumptions and intentions.

The concepts of re-storying and self-creation convey the idea of an individual as a storyteller who creates his/her world by telling self-narratives. Randall (2014) shares the above idea that the self is not an established entity and underlines how the self is not 'a given but a construction' (p. 36). A person re-storying his/her life is a creator and not a craftsman (pp. 77-79), as the latter imitates a model but the former creates something new. Being a creator, however, is far from easy. Randall (2014, pp. 54-56) discusses inside-out stories, which individuals tell about themselves, but he also introduces the concept of outside-in stories (pp. 56-57). These outside-in stories refer to the ways other people give meanings and words to an individual and thus influence his/her conception of him/herself. The story an individual is telling about him/herself is not necessarily an original inside-out story, but can be much more of an outside-in story. Being a creator and constructing one's own narrative is the goal, but it is not all that simple to implement. Additionally, Randall (2014, p. 39) underlines that creation is always co-creation in that it takes place in a social setting and takes advantage of the socio-cultural stock of stories. This reminds us that one is not expected to live in solitude, avoiding outside-in stories and creating one's self independently. Instead, in re-storying and self-creation, any individual needs cultural tools in order to undergo co-creation. The point is not to avoid outside influences but to master them.

Thus, from Randall's point of view, the question of subjectivity, of a person creating and constructing, is of crucial importance. Randall appears to share many of Harré's ideas. It could be stated that appropriating bears a similarity to being a craftsman, as both concepts imply imitating, following the instructions and constructing what others have designed. On the other hand, transforming is like creating, whereby one produces something new, unique and one's own. Both Harré and Randall stress the importance of others: Harré's process starts from public and collective, and Randall underlines co-creation. Though using different concepts, Randall and Harré seem to discuss the same issues in similar ways. Therefore, it is reasonable to introduce them both in this study and make use of their thinking and concepts.

In addition to sharing similar ideas with Harré, Randall clearly belongs to the narrative tradition. The guiding principles in Randall's book (2014) are 'no story, no person' (p. 212) and that 'if I change my inner story, I change me' (p. 52). From the viewpoint of Randall's thinking, recovery can be seen as a process through which a recovering individual learns to tell his/her story, or self-narrative, in a new way and thus creates him/herself anew. Recovery can thus be seen as a re-storying process and the outcome of recovery is a renewed self. Seeing recovery from a re-storying point of view and in line with Hillman (1989), I have kept asking whether it is the patient or the patient's story that needs to be doctored (Randall 2014, p. 90).

4 METHODS

4.1 QUALITATIVE APPROACH

This research focuses on individual interpretations of how recovery from substance abuse is related to Christian faith. Thus, the focus is on meanings, conceptualisations and explanations on one hand and on complex processes and relations on the other. What this study intends to do is to interpret and understand, make concepts and their relations clearer and analyse the issues at hand in depth. As a consequence, this research has applied a qualitative approach. Although there is no clear consensus on what qualitative research is or should be and less so on what it should *not* be (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007), and although it covers a range of philosophical underpinnings and methodological techniques, we can agree on some typical aspects of qualitative research. First, it is interpretivist, which means the focus is on experiences, interpretation and understanding, and these are not taken as 'given' or 'self-evident' but as requiring some kind of contextual interpretation (ten Have, 2004, p. 3). Second, the methods of qualitative research are flexible and sensitive, which enables taking varying contexts into account. Third, the methods of analysis are suited to understanding both complexity and rich, contextualised and detailed data (Mason, 2002, p. 3). Fourth, a qualitative approach is open to new and unexpected phenomena rather than working with hypotheses and ready-made categories and schemes of interpretations (Kvale, 2007, p. 12). In designing and implementing this study, such open-mindedness and avoidance of pre-existing presuppositions has been a guiding principle.

A qualitative approach is needed because complex, rich and deep social reality is so difficult to grasp. As Emmel (2013, pp. 143-144, 157) underlines, the real world is filled with absurdities and abnormalities and cannot be described through the definitiveness and precision of numbers like in quantitative research. Qualitative research intends to interpret and explain complex issues, such as experiences, consciousness and human interrelations, which can be understood and interpreted in a multitude of ways. The strengths of qualitative research methods and their flexibility and fluidity are apparent when trying to understand subjective experiences, interpretations and meanings and when willing to see the world from the research participant's own perspectives. Maybe most importantly, a qualitative approach enables research that covers complex descriptions and webs of meanings, or the multiplicity of meanings (ten Have, 2004, p. 5; Kvale, 2007, p. 20; Liamputtong, 2007, pp. 6-9).

A qualitative approach may facilitate research with those who live in the margins and whose voices are silenced; those who Liamputtong (2007, pp. 2-4) calls vulnerable people. The question of vulnerability is not distant from this study, since the participants had all lived long periods as marginalised people, even though that was no longer the case at the time of being interviewed. Nevertheless, the interviews touched on those parts of their lives. Qualitative research allows a sensitive research orientation (Liamputtong, 2007, p.5) where individual life-experiences can be taken into account.

The basis of qualitative research is its conception of knowledge. It can be seen as conversational, narrative, linguistic, contextual and inter-relational. Such an understanding of knowledge influences the whole research process. Collection and analysis

of data appear as construction sites of knowledge. Knowledge is particular, local and constantly reconstructed in a process that involves both participants and the researcher (Kvale, 2007, p. 21). Such a conception of particular and non-generalisable knowledge is typical of qualitative research. The interest is in meanings, not in making generalised hypothesis statements (Mason, 2010). Instead of generalisations to populations, the goal is in obtaining insights into the particular, although the temptation to generalise may be difficult to resist by qualitative researchers (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). Emmel (2013, p. 144) suggests that those claims made from qualitative research are 'middle-range theories'. They are not grand, all-encompassing system theories and they are fallible and subject to reinterpretation. Nonetheless, they are theories of a lesser degree and some generalisations and hypotheses from the data can be tested through further empirical enquiry. In line with Emmel's ideas, this qualitative research intends not to generalise to populations but to make claims and middle-range theories that, hopefully, can encourage further empirical enquiry on the topic.

That qualitative research does not intend to generalise, but rather seeks to interpret and explain complex things (Emmel, 2013, p. 157), has implications for the data needed. Qualitative research is not interested in the quantity but in the quality of cases. It is not the number of cases that matters but, instead, what the researcher does with those cases (Emmel, 2013, p. 154). Therefore, a relatively small number of cases is sufficient. The focus is more on various aspects of those cases that can be taken into account through intensive analysis (ten Have, 2004, p. 3).

4.2 COLLECTING DATA

This study is about lengthy and unforeseen recovery processes that occurred outside of treatment. Because of the complexity and unpredictability, it is impossible to observe or follow-up these processes. Thus, retrospective interviews appeared to be the only possible research method. Face-to-face interviews enabled a deep and thorough focus on meanings given by a small number of individuals with relevant experiences on the topic.

What characterises qualitative research interviews is their comprehensiveness and lack of presuppositions. This refers to the interviewer not having hypotheses or pre-formulated questions but being curious to what is said, and what remains unsaid, in the interview. The interviewer should be open to new and unexpected phenomena (Kvale, 2007, p. 11). Accordingly, these have been the guiding principles in this research process. The open and curious nature of the interview does not happen automatically but requires both methodological skills and a focus on the interviewer-interviewee relationship and atmosphere. The interviewer must be able to both formulate appropriate questions and provide an atmosphere that is conducive to open communication (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, p. 8). Addressing interpersonal dynamics within an interview, which may be a unique and sensitive experience, is very important so as to avoid provoking anxiety or evoking defence mechanisms (Kvale, 2007, p. 14).

Keats (2000, p. 23) uses the word 'rapport' to discuss the importance of a comfortable and cooperative relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee. The question of rapport appeared to be especially important in this study, since the interviewees were formerly marginalised persons who were talking about their own life stories, failures, mistakes and intimate relationships. Therefore, effort was put

into creating a secure, confidential and relaxing atmosphere in the interviews. Keats (2000, p. 24) reminds us how small things, such as the language used, appearance and clothing style, affect the development of rapport. These details were carefully considered, in addition to the environments where interviews took place. Most interviews took place either in the homes of the interviewees or in the offices of faith-based organisations (FBOs) that had helped find the interviewees. Thus, they were familiar places to the interviewees. A few interviews were held in a hotel and one at my own home. All in all, much emphasis was put on creating a comfortable atmosphere and thus enabling successful interviews.

A qualitative interview is not only about rapport; it is also about a way of seeing information. Both Gubrium and Holstein (2001, pp. 12-15) and Kvale (2007, p. 19) have applied the metaphors of miner and traveller to describe and differentiate between two different kinds of approach. In short, one kind of approach sees the interviewer as a miner who assumes that knowledge is out there just waiting to be dug. The knowledge, which is the interviewee's experiences and feelings, is residing within the respondent and must be uncovered. In this approach, participants are conceived of as passive vessels for answers, or repositories of facts and feelings. Accordingly, the researcher is a very passive, neutral and distant miner whose purpose is just to dig nuggets of knowledge out of the interviewee. In contrast, a different kind of approach sees the interviewer as a traveller who does not take knowledge as something already existing but as something co-created together with those met en route. Travellers enter into conversation with people he/she meets, encourages them to tell their stories, and wanders with them. Knowledge and meanings are not ready or ever-existing; they are interpreted in a joint process. Likewise, an interviewer is not passive or neutral but participates the process of meaning-making. Interviewee and interviewer are both active and work together.

In this research, I have intended to follow the traveller rather than the miner metaphor. This means that I have not seen truths, experiences, interpretations and meanings as something inside the participants, just waiting to be dug out. Instead, I have understood them as something that is constantly re-formulated and re-understood. As Kvale (2007) states, 'qualitative research interview is a construction site of knowledge' (p. 21) and 'knowledge is constructed in the interaction between two people' (p. 13). Thus, I view research interviews as an opportunity not only to recall and recollect but also to reshape and reform.

Planning interviews included arranging, sampling and designing the implementation of interviews. In qualitative research, sampling refers to finding and choosing cases, or, as in this study, finding and choosing interviewees. There are a number of different kinds of sampling strategies (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007; Patton, 2002, p. 243) out of which I applied three. First of all, I applied what is called criterion sampling, in which interviewees must meet certain criteria. In this study, participants were to meet the following criteria: they had all had serious problems with substance abuse, they had recovered at least three years before being interviewed, they had in some way taken advantage of the Christian faith in their recovery, and they attended the interviews voluntarily. The participants themselves judged whether they met the criteria. Information obtained from the interviewees was not compared to facts from other sources; this research rests solely on what the interviewees told about themselves. Naturally, such a sampling strategy results in an important limitation of the study: the sample includes only individuals whose relationship to Christianity was positive at the time of interviewing.

Second, I applied convenience sampling, whereby individuals were selected if they happened to be available and willing, as well as meeting the above stated criteria. The interviewees were reached with the help of FBOs known to work with substance abuse issues. I sent an email to twenty FBOs asking them to help find interviewees, to consider whether they knew suitable individuals, and to enquire about the willingness of those individuals to attend an interview. The FBOs were chosen from all corners of Finland so as to avoid the influence of any individual organisation or treatment centre. Third, and to a lesser extent, I applied snowball sampling. That is, participants who were already selected for the study were asked to recruit other participants.

When talking about sampling, the number of participants must be taken into account. As often happens in qualitative research, the amount of interviewees could not be known at the beginning of the process (Emmel, 2013, p. 145). Although sometimes suggested (see e.g., Mason, 2010), there are no clear guidelines available to establish sample size in qualitative research (Emmel, 2013, p. 146), and often the quota seems to be quite arbitrarily chosen (Mason, 2010). The most common criterion to justify sample size is what is called theoretical saturation, which occurs when no new cases bring significant new information. Though critically discussed (Mason, 2010; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007), the idea of saturation is widely supported. However, what saturation actually is appears to be a rather difficult question. As Emmel (2013, pp. 151-153) points out, reaching theoretical saturation often requires simplifying the data or reducing its complexity. As soon as the phenomenon is seen as dynamic and explored through detailed and in-depth analysis, the idea of theoretical saturation appears problematic. Information rich qualitative data is such that new data will always add something new (Mason, 2010). What Emmel (2013, p. 154) calls 'pseudo-quantitative logic' should, thus, be avoided in qualitative research. Therefore, it is essential to remember that the point is not the *number* but the *nature* of cases.

Consequently, some conclusions can be drawn from the literature. First, sampling not only includes the number of individuals recruited but also the number of contacts with each contact and the length of each contact (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). Interviewing a small number of people several times in lengthy interviews may provide much more valuable information than interviewing a large number of participants a single time. The quota does not tell us much. Second, as well as the possibility that the sample is too small, there is also the risk that the sample is too large. The problem, then, is not necessary a lack of data but the excess of it (Mason, 2010; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). Qualitative research is based on in-depth analysis of information rich data. Should that data be very large, intended deep analysis proves impossible (Emmel, 2013, p. 140). Third, asking how many interviewees or how much data are needed is a misleading question. The sample size becomes irrelevant because the decisive criterion is the quality of the data. The crucial question is not *how much* data are gathered, but *for what* is the data gathered. In the end, it is about what the researcher can do with the data. Thus, whether one or two hundred cases are chosen depends on what the research needs. The data are there to help answer research questions (Emmel, 2013, pp. 137-141).

In this study, the number of participants was not known before recruitment commenced or at the time of first interviews. Eventually, twenty-one individuals were interviewed, with each participant giving two interviews. All the interviews were conducted during five months in the Fall of 2010. It would be unfair to claim that some kind of theoretical saturation was reached at that point; the question of saturation could not be known before the analysis of the data proceeded. The analysis of the interviews confirmed to me, as a researcher, that the data was sufficient. With the

help of this data, I have been able to draw in-depth analyses from various viewpoints. There appeared no need for further interviews.

The sample consisted of twenty-one individuals whose age ranged from less than 30 years to almost 70 years, with the majority being between 50 and 60 years of age. At the time of the interviews, all were Protestant Christians, some belonged to the Lutheran church, which is predominant in Finland, and most belonged to the Pentecostal and Free Church denominations, which are known to actively work in the field of substance abuse. Many had changed denominations, mainly from the Lutheranism of their childhood to the Pentecostal Church or the Free Church. Some reported attending activities of more than one denomination, and a couple underlined the difficulty of finding a denomination that would fit their needs. The intensity of their faith had varied over the course of their life, from practically none to very committed. It is worth noting that no participants had been an active believer throughout their life, and some had been non-active members of congregations and very passive believers most of their lives.

In the light of their retrospective narratives, it seems justified to call them formerly heavy substance abusers with a severe alcohol problem and, in many cases, a drug problem as well. It was not only a question of substance abuse but of life-control and global health. In most cases their careers, financial status and family relations had failed. Experiences of unemployment and homelessness were common, as was imprisonment. Most had suffered from serious health problems. Some had spent years in prison, including serious crimes such as manslaughter.

Recovery meant starting and managing a new life after years of substance abuse with serious social, health and financial consequences. Recovery was not limited to quitting substance abuse but also included re-establishing relationships, reordering their use of time, learning to cope with everyday skills, obstacles and burdens and managing their finances (see Borrás et al., 2010). It is fair to state that they had very little recovery capital, a concept introduced by Cloud and Granfield (2008). Such persons with very little recovery capital represent a huge challenge for treatment providers (Cloud & Granfield, 2004), which can be seen in the difficulties that participants encountered with treatment services.

Eventually, all but one participant had become teetotalers, which is a common outcome for those with a history of severe substance problems (Cunningham, Blomqvist, Koski-Jännes, Cordingley, & Callaghan, 2004). The sample was strongly male-dominated; it included only three women. The interviewees were suggested by the FBOs or other interviewees, so the gender imbalance may in some way reflect the target group. It is generally known that men abuse substances more than women, especially in older generations, which has been well documented in Finland (Kuussaari, Kaukonen, Partanen, Vormaa, & Ronkainen, 2014; Mäkelä, Mustonen, & Tigerstedt, 2010). Of course, the small sample size, especially the notably low number of women involved, makes it impossible to say anything about the role that gender might play in the relation between faith and recovery. As the sample is so male-dominated, I have chosen to use the 'he' pronoun throughout the text when referring to an anonymous research participant. This way I can avoid using the impractical 'he/she, his/her' expressions, as well as avoiding revealing the gender of any given research participant.

As stated already above, the number and length of contacts with each participant is an important factor in interviewing (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). Mason (2010) suggests that multiple interviews with the same participants, varying research methods and in-depth interviews will add to the quality of the data. Therefore, when de-

signing the interview protocol, I chose to interview each research participant twice. Due to the large number of participants and their geographical distribution around the country, I had to set a limit of two interviews per participant. Two interviews with a four to eight week interval were considered good for the sake of rapport. Two interviews each made it a longer process for both the interviewer and interviewees and thus deepened mutual trust and improved communication. When meeting the second time, both parties knew each other and what to expect.

In addition, two interviews was a good strategy from the content point of view. This research targeted the life histories of the participants, and therefore, special focus had to be given to how individuals narrate their past. Narrative researchers have widely applied the concepts 'narrative as lived' and 'narrative as told'. That is, whatever the lived may have been, it may always be told anew in a new context. Two different kinds of interviews allowed four different kinds of 'narratives as told'. When discussed in versatile ways, the picture of the past got richer and more comprehensive. Interestingly, Holstein and Gubrium (1995, p. 33) discuss how interviewees' own points of view changed in quality between two temporarily distant interviews. They underline that interviewees' history is 'history-in-the-making' (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, p. 32), which means that the ways in which past events are discussed are shaped by what is currently being made of the past and also by future prospects. Two interviews enabled getting a more thorough a picture of each participant. It gave interviewees time to recall things after the first interview and bring them up in the second. It also helped me as a researcher: interviewing twice gave me the opportunity to listen to the first interview before the second, allowing further discussion of issues that remained unclear (see Atkinson, 2002; Squire, 2008).

To get as comprehensive and realistic a picture as possible, both interviews consisted of two parts. This enabled the topic to be approached in four different ways. In the first interview, each person was first asked to tell the story of his life and not only the story of recovery (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, p. 41). This helped to create a comprehensive picture and to avoid the possibly often-repeated recovery story. I assumed that many interviewees had previously told others about their recovery and that many had given testimonies in peer groups, in religious services, or as volunteers in prisons, treatment units, or drop-in centres. Therefore, there was a notable risk of melding the individual life-course and 'learned genres', a term used by Cain (1991) when he described AA-story. To avoid stereotyped stories that would reflect more typical forms of narrative, as appears in congregations or peer groups, and to elicit the actual events, I asked participants to tell their whole life story. In the second part of the first interview, following the life story, clarifying questions were asked in order to invite sharing, encourage a fuller narrative (Chase, 1995) and draw out more specific details (Riessman, 2008, p.25).

Recovery from substance abuse is a comprehensive process and describing it is difficult. Hence, interactive interviews may help to draw attention to aspects and nuances that would otherwise be missed. One strength of qualitative interviews is precisely the possibility to communicate with the participant and thus check whether the interviewer's interpretation is correct. As Kvale (2007, p. 11) points out, in face-to-face interviews it is possible to get an immediate confirmation or disconfirmation of the interpretation of what the interviewee is saying. Similarly, during the latter part of the first interview, I had the opportunity to check whether I had heard and understood correctly and to ask participants to tell more about certain phases of their life. The second part of the first interview, in particular, has parallels with the travel

metaphor of research interviewing. The interviewee and I kept discussing their life-course, trying together to understand how the events unfolded and related to each other, what had been of importance and why and how the decisive turns could be interpreted and understood.

At the end of the first interview, I gave the interviewees an 'assignment'. They were asked to recall some quotations and songs that had been important in their recovery. The meaning of those quotations and songs were then discussed in the first part of the second interview. This assignment intended to activate participants' memories (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, p. 39). I assumed that recalling familiar and important texts and songs might help them remember experiences, emotions and nuances of their life history that had been forgotten. Passages and lyrics could, I hoped, provide something concrete that would help connect memories to specific moments in the life-course. This proved to be an outstanding method.

The interviewees' explanations for the importance of their chosen quotations and songs provided many deep insights into the topics at hand. As expected, concrete words and lyrics helped discuss past experiences and interpretations. This part of the interview activated the participants more so than any other part, and for instance, it helped them give words to previous feelings. Discussing a meaningful song in an interview cast light on what the interviewee had experienced and how a Christian message had touched him at a given moment.

As Kvale (2007, p. 13) suggests, participants can change their descriptions of and meanings about the theme. The subjects may discover something new about their lives and see relations they have not previously realised. When comparing life stories in the first interview with information provided from the second interview, especially this first part of the second interview, something like that seems to have happened. The interview was a construction site of a new interpretation, which helped see participants' life stories in a more comprehensive way.

For the second part of the second interview, I presented eight prompts dealing with Christian faith and sobriety and the interviewees commented on them. The idea of using prompts is that they can help stimulate discussion and encourage the interviewees to comment on controversial and sensitive topics without the interviewer directly asking about them or expressing any opinion about them. The use of prompts helps to distance the interviewer and his/her possible presuppositions (for more about using prompts, see Pyysiäinen & Vesala, 2013). When formulating the prompts, I had a few viewpoints in mind: The influence of God on one hand and the influence of people on the other hand (prompts 1 and 7), relationship to prosperity theology (prompts 4 and 6) and the tendency to black-and-white thinking (prompts 2, 3, 5 and 8).

The prompts were as follows (originally in Finnish, here translated into English): (1) God gets the credit for my sobriety; (2) Because I am a Christian, I can differentiate between right and wrong; (3) My way of believing is true, and other ways of believing are untrue; (4) My success is a result of my faith; (5) I define my faith independently; (6) God influences my actions; (7) Other people have been important to my sobriety; and (8) My faith is only one way of comprehending God. Some prompts, especially prompts five and eight, were rather difficult to grasp by some. But, overall, these prompts produced good discussion on important issues. Participants' comments on these prompts were important in understanding their life-courses. They provided many important insights that clarified their narratives.

The length of the life stories in the first interviews varied widely, ranging from about five minutes to almost an hour. The average length was about 20 minutes. This variation

likely reflects participants' differing capabilities to narrate, rather than a lack of content in their life stories. This draws attention to the importance of collecting data in varied ways—telling one's life story is not easy for everyone. The first interviews, in full, lasted from about 40 minutes to about 1 hour and 50 minutes, with the average being 1 hour and 15 minutes. The combined length of all first-round interviews was about 26 hours. The first part of the second interview lasted from 15 to 54 minutes, and the second part lasted from 15 to 47 minutes. In full, the second interviews lasted from 31 minutes to 1 hour and 34 minutes, with the average being 56 minutes. The combined length of the second-round interviews was about 20 hours. The combined length of both interviews was a bit less than 46 hours. The lengths of interviews are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. The lengths of each interview and number of pages transcribed.

	The interviewee	The first interview		The second interview		
		Duration	Pages	Duration	Pages	
1		1.25.25	5	0:49:44	13	
2		1.28.35	6	0:44:46	10	
3		1.43.12	7	1:04:01	14	
4		1.26.03	6	1:01:35	11	
5		1.24.45	6	1:16:07	14	
6		0.43.57	4	0:45:37	11	
7		0.49.40	4	0:34:07	10	
8		1.21.34	6	1:15:18	17	
9		0.40.50	4	0:40:19	13	
10		1.05.23	6	0:40:27	11	
11		1.26.36	7	1:19:54	16	
12		1.22.13	8	0:50:47	13	
13		1.49.05	10	1:34:22	14	
14		0.53.02	5	0:41:09	8	
15		0.43.38	5	0:39:51	19	
16		1.45.32	8	0:47:14	13	
17		1.03.56	7	0:47:51	14	
18		1.14.16	6	1:18:32	16	
19		0.42.15	4	0:30:36	8	
20		1.29.19	9	1:10:00	13	
21		1.17.30	6	1:13:23	14	
	Average	1.14.08	6	Average	0.56.28	13
	SUM	25:56:46	129	SUM	19:45:40	272
			SUM both interviews		45:42:26	401

All the interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. As I wanted to transcribe the first interview before the second, to be familiar with the information provided and able to use it in the second, the first-round interviews were transcribed in a hurry and, therefore, not word-to-word. Word-to-word transcriptions of entire interviews

were not needed because much of the analysis was based on listening to the original recordings and making notes. As the analysis proceeded, the essential chapters were transcribed verbatim. As Mishler (1991) has suggested, there can be seen an analogy between a transcript and a photograph: A transcript only imitates or mimics the authentic interview, like a photo imitates its object. I likewise preferred listening to the recording to obtain a complete picture of the data. I repeatedly listened to the interviews, especially the first-round interviews. I listened to them while walking and while sitting in the office. Sometimes I just listened, and sometimes I listened and made notes. Transcription of the second-round interviews was verbatim but did not include breaks, murmurs etc. Verbatim transcription was needed since participants' comments on texts and songs were analysed in depth using content analysis. The difference in the exactness of transcription explains the differences in the number of transcribed pages between the first-round and the second-round interviews. The transcriptions of the first-round interviews resulted in 129 pages of text (Times New Roman, 12 points, 1.0 line space). The transcriptions of the second-round interviews resulted in 272 pages of text (Times New Roman, 12 points, 1.0 line space).

That all the interviewees attended both interviews can be seen as a success. Not only did they all agree to attend the second interview, they had, more importantly, done their assignment eagerly. This demonstrates their positive attitude and voluntariness. It may also give a hint of rapport, confidence and a good atmosphere and maybe even respect or empathy (Keats 2000, p. 26) during the interviews. The data collected met the expectations. Interviewing twice proved important since the second interview very often provided much new information, without which the first-round understanding of life-course would have been incomplete.

Qualitative research is always at the risk of facing a crisis of representation and legitimation. The former refers to the inability to capture lived experience, and the latter refers to the inability to interpret and evaluate data (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). It seems that conducting two rounds of interviews lessened these risks remarkably. Meeting twice with interviewees helped build good relationships and atmosphere on the one hand, and it enabled application of a few different kinds of interview approaches on the other hand. All this increased the credibility of this data. Comments on songs, texts and prompts in the second interview helped participants to notice and discuss whether the story told in the first interview was too simplistic or generic. This raises a fundamental question of words and voice, underlined for instance by Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007). The real reason why the words expressed by participants are listened to is to hear their voice. Therefore, the real criteria for choosing sample size in qualitative research should be that it provides sufficient data to enable the capture of participants' voices and words.

In the light of this study, the question raised by Gubrium, when researching members in Narcotics Anonymous (N.A.), is crucial: 'Whose voice do we hear when these pharmacists tell their stories? Their own or N.A.'s?' (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001, p. 22). However, capturing participants' voices is not simple. I hope that the results of this study will show that these participants have had their voices captured and heard. It is not the voice of those congregations or FBO's that had helped these participants recover. There is no doubt that voice can be heard in various phases of recovery. But in the end, this study is about capturing participants' own voices. According to my own evaluation, this study succeeded in this objective. The results presented in articles and in chapter 4 hopefully prove that.

4.3 ANALYSING DATA

The process of analysis included several phases. I first listened to the recorded interviews and read the transcriptions of both interviews to become familiar with the data. This phase took a long time and included various kinds of notes from the data. Only after this 'listening, reading and taking notes' phase was it possible to decide which kinds of analysis were suitable. It turned out that a narrative approach was ideal for analysing this data, which is not surprising since the interviews contained a strong narrative component. Additionally, qualitative content analysis turned out to be useful. Content analysis was applied in various ways but only after narrative analysis. In this analysis process, narrative analysis preceded content analysis.

4.3.1 Narrative analysis

The reasons for applying narrative analysis relate to the nature of the relationship between the Christian faith and recovery from substance abuse. This relationship seems to develop, change over the course of time and manifests itself in a variety of ways within one life story. Narrative analysis helps reveal this kind of process. Narrative analysis, in contrast to the analysis of narratives, means the collection of descriptions of events and happenings, followed by their synthesis by means of a story plot (see Polkinghorne, 1995). In narrative analysis, all available data can be used, so it is not limited to narratives only. For this study, this means applying narrative analysis to both parts of both interviews. The process of forming stories, the narrative analysis, resembles what is called the hermeneutic circle where the researcher reads and analyses the data, moving from parts to the whole and back again. The process is slow and proceeds through trial and error and intuition and revision until the essential part, the plot, is found.

The process of analysis included the following phases. First, I listened to the recorded interviews and read the transcriptions of both interviews to become familiar with the data. Second, I took notes on each individual narrative, which meant using details from both interviews and not only from the narrative interview. The intention of the notes was to clarify the process of recovery and the way Christian faith was related to it, which generated the basic story line of each life-course. Third, I categorised the narratives (Riesmann, 2008) according to how they presented the relationship between Christian faith and the process of gaining and maintaining sobriety. This meant both how faith influenced abuse or sobriety and how sobriety had an effect on faith. I could categorise all save one of the 21 interviewees into one of the four groups of stories. One interviewee discussed his life in such a chaotic way that it was difficult to see any plot line there. What unites the stories in each group is the way faith relates to recovery. The external factors, from childhood to adulthood, from prison to hospital, vary within each story type. Fourth, I re-examined the data in order to confirm whether the categories were consistent with the data and whether each individual was placed in the correct category. Fifth, I named the four categories and formed four respective story types. I formed the story types by merging elements from different participants and creating a composite story, which has been called 'told from multiple tellings' (Hänninen & Koski-Jännes, 1999; Mishler, 1995). This means that each story type presents a story that incorporates ingredients from the elements categorised into that given group, but is, as such, a creation by the researcher. Such a composite story

enables both clarification of the story line and introducing representative details and illustrative quotations. The findings from narrative analysis are presented in sub-study 1.

4.3.1 Content analysis

The second phase of analysis was to apply a qualitative content analysis from three different viewpoints: guilt and shame expressions, comments on spiritual songs and comments on biblical texts. The first case differs from two other. Guilt and shame expressions were not an intended topic when designing the data collection. For instance, none of the eight prompts dealt with the topic. During the first phase of analysis, listening and reading through the data, the importance of guilt and shame became evident. Therefore, it seemed reasonable to analyse their role in recovery from substance abuse with the help of Christian faith. Consequently, this content analysis covered all of the data since there were relevant guilt and shame-related expressions in both interviews.

Analysing guilt and shame expressions happened in four phases. First, as a truly data-driven notion, I became convinced that guilt and shame were important topics in the data. This data-driven notion was based on thorough listening and reading of all of the data. Second, having chosen to focus on guilt and shame, I read theoretical literature on guilt and shame, as well as their connections to recovery and Christianity. Third, attaining this theoretical knowledge and conceptual clarification enabled me to conduct theory-driven content analysis: I looked for and categorised the expressions dealing with guilt and shame, as well as additional themes such as forgiveness. During the fourth and final step, I brought the data and relevant literature together. The analysis of the interviews and focused reading of the literature coexisted and supported one another. Concepts in the literature helped deepen the analysis, and findings in the interviews encouraged further study of the literature. The dialogue between the literature and the data gradually resulted in an interpretation of the links between Christian faith and guilt and shame in the process of recovery.

The special nature of the expressions of shame compared to those of guilt made the analysis difficult and slow. The data, once again, underlined what is already known about guilt and shame: Guilt is more easily recognised and discussed than shame. Guilt is much more precise; it is caused by certain actions and is hence easier to identify. We are culturally more used to talking about guilt. Consequently, shame is often not recognised or named even when felt. People will talk about guilt in cases of shame. In cases where shame is not easily recognised, shame must be interpreted with the help of various expressions used to refer to shame (Kurtz, 2007; Tangney & Dearing, 2004). In analysing the data for this study, all this had to be taken into account. When an individual described wishing to vanish, feeling permanently odd and inferior, or finding it impossible to feel lovable, worthy, or respected, he might have been talking about shame. Thus, to research shame, it is not possible to be limited only to expressions of shame, but the expressions as a whole and the interviewee's descriptions of his thoughts and feelings must be examined (Lewis, 2010; Pattison, 2000; Wiechelt, 2007). The benefits of in-depth interviews are remarkable here. Analysing the interviews and concurrently reading the relevant literature helped define the links of Christian faith to guilt and shame in recovery. The findings from this part of the analysis are presented in sub-study 2.

I also analysed the interviewees' comments on spiritual songs and biblical pas-

sages using data-driven content analysis (Krippendorff, 2004). This analysis was very different from that of guilt and shame expressions. The analysis covered only a given section of the data, on either comments on spiritual songs or comments on biblical texts. Data-driven analysis intended to find out what and how participants commented on these. No pre-existing theory was applied, and the content analysis was purely data-driven. However, it is worth underlining that the same interviewees had earlier participated in an interview from a narrative viewpoint. Thus, in many occasions during the second interview, the meanings of songs or biblical texts were related to their previously discussed life-course. This was intentional, since the purpose was to understand the process of recovery and the ways Christian faith relates to that. Additionally, at the time of this content analysis, I had already conducted the narrative analysis. Therefore, I could look for links between the narrative findings and these content analyses on meanings of texts and songs. This deepened the analysis and helped to understand the meanings expressed.

In the analysis of comments on spiritual songs, I picked the expressed meanings of songs and singing and then grouped these thematically. I then formed categories and further top categories. In the end, the analysis resulted in three groups of meanings. I then gave these three groups names: 'social', 'individual' and 'theological' meanings. However, it is most important to note that these three groups are not exclusive. Instead, they are often overlapping. This means that a song or comment on a song can simultaneously convey meanings from two groups. The intention of the analysis was not to group comments into separate and clearly defined categories, but, instead, to find the main themes interviewees were talking about when commenting on the meanings of the songs. The results from this analysis are presented in sub-study 3.

I also analysed the comments on the biblical passages using data-driven content analysis, whereby I analysed the ways in which the interviewees gave meanings to the biblical texts. I labelled the meanings given by the interviewees and grouped similar meanings together. Eventually, six groups of meanings emerged. These can be seen simply as six different categories, or six different ways in which interviewees thought biblical texts had helped them in recovery. I then gave names to those six groups. Each name was a sentence starting with the words 'I am entitled...' since the meanings attached to biblical passages were seen as entitling. Those six categories are as follows: I am entitled to go on living, I am entitled to be dependent, I am entitled to have my own life, I am entitled to be valuable, I am entitled to fail and I am entitled to lead a good life. I applied the metaphor of building blocks here to describe these six groups because they are spiritual and cultural building blocks of recovery management. The results from this analysis are presented in sub-study 4.

4.4 RESEARCH ETHICS

Ethical consideration can be divided into three areas: respecting the autonomy of research subjects, avoiding harm and privacy and data protection. As the latter two are, to some extent, overlapping issues, they are discussed together.

The autonomy of participants included voluntary participation and informed consent. I contacted participants by phone. We had a discussion where I gave information about me as the researcher, about the research, its topic and aim, about the interview procedure, that we would meet twice and the estimated time required, and about the voluntary nature of participation. If the participant had an email address, I sent him

the same information in written form. When we first met, I repeated all of these key points and, had I not been able to email the information beforehand, I provided it in paper format. Additionally, I asked whether it is okay to record the interview with a recorder. Consent was given orally: Participants expressed their willingness to partake in the research.

According to the interviewees, sharing their life and recovery story was a pleasure. They wanted to tell their story. This eagerness to share one's story indicates that the topic was very important for the participants; quitting abuse and maintaining sobriety was a decisive turn in their lives. There was no need for any persuasion. Possibly, some may have had unrealistic assumptions about the outcome of interview. I did my best to explain that these interviews are part of an academic research project and will be published accordingly. Academic publishing was a very distant issue for the participants, and differentiating between an academic and a popular publication may not have been clear despite explaining that. The participants were not, in general, interested in what I would publish. They were glad to share their stories and seemed not to ponder on the coming publications. In sum, all participants were aware of the aim and nature of the study and the voluntary nature of their participation and gave oral consent.

So as to avoid harm, it is necessary to stress both the collection and storage of data and the form of publication. When researching vulnerable people, the question of avoiding harm must be especially stressed (Liamputtong, 2007, p. 6, 24). When collecting data, I paid attention to avoiding harm in various ways. First of all, the interviews were designed to be very open and interviewee-centred. The participants could quite freely talk about their lives and points of views. My questions were mainly reactions to what I had heard. I asked questions to clarify, deepen and explain more in detail. I was careful not to press the participants but to support and encourage them. Second, meeting the participants twice gave an opportunity to check that the first interview had not left unpleasant or harmful traces. The second interview was also a good place to confirm that the participants were truly willing to participate. The second interview gave an impression that the participants were, in contrast to being compelled or pressed, feeling that they were given an opportunity to share their lives and maybe even discover something new about themselves while being interviewed. Third, I was careful not to be in a hurry when meeting the participants. Before and especially after, each interview, I made time for a cup of tea and talk, if that is what the interviewee wanted. These talks helped create a good atmosphere and confidence, and they helped confirm that the participants had found the interview pleasurable. Fourth, the interviewees were quite free to choose where the interviews took place. If possible, the interview took place in the interviewees' home. In many other cases, interviews were held in the office of an FBO who was well known to the interviewee. These arrangements intended to make participants feel secure and comfortable. It was I, as the researcher, who had to adjust myself to the changing conditions and the inconvenience due to strange surroundings. Fifth, quite naturally, participants were treated politely and in a respectful manner. This included taking seriously that people experience things in varying ways and must be treated differently by the researcher. It appeared, for instance, that some enjoyed talking and were thus given space, while others found it more difficult to put things in words. They were helped and supported more on the one hand and allowed to speak less on the other hand. The large variation in the length of the interviews is indicative of individual differences and how the interviews were adjusted to meet individual needs.

Potential harm arising from the storage of data and publishing are closely related to privacy and data protection. Storage of data and protecting data has meant keeping this data in my own possession only. No one else has ever heard the tapes or read the transcripts. They have been stored in a locked workroom or at home in a secret place. They have been secured so that no one else could access them. When this research project comes to an end, the data will be destroyed. I did not collect any unnecessary information about the participants. I do not know their dates of births, for instance. Additionally, their home addresses, even though I have visited many, were only written on a note and were destroyed after the interview. In the publications, the participants are referred to as numbers (1 to 21). The code to tell the correspondence between these numbers and participants' names has only been written on a note stored carefully by me and never on any computer. This is part of protecting the privacy and anonymity of the participants.

In order to further avoid harm to the participants, their anonymity has been carefully protected in research publications. Of course, names or any other identifiable information is not provided in publications. Quotations have been chosen so that they do not contain any information that would help recognition. Translating quotations in English has, in a way, also helped. Differences in dialect have not been translated and standard English has been used. Additionally, to ensure anonymity I have chosen not to reveal the gender of the participants in publications. The sample was very male-dominated, which may hint that the number of females belonging to the overall target group is rather limited. Especially in the case of female participants, revealing gender might have helped recognition.

In publications, I have done my best to hear and convey the voices of the participants. Drawing conclusions from information rich data is always controversial. Deep and rich data must be categorised and simplified so as to be able to present it somehow. In doing this, I have repeatedly returned to the original data so as to confirm that my interpretations do not distance themselves from the data.

5 FINDINGS

In this chapter I first summarise the findings from the sub-studies, each in turn. Then I briefly put together these findings and discuss their interrelatedness. Although presented in four articles, each having a framework of its own, the findings have much in common and a viewpoint from one article can cast new light on another article. This research has developed throughout the process; new theoretical and conceptual perceptions have enabled earlier findings to be seen more comprehensively and in a new light. Consequently, the whole of this research is greater than the sum of its parts.

5.1 THE FINDINGS FROM THE SUB-STUDIES

5.1.1 Sub-study 1

The first sub-study focused on the different roles and expressions that Christian faith has been given in narratives of recovery from substance abuse. This article intends to advance discussion about Christian faith and recovery by introducing a narrative point of view. Four different kinds of story types were found and are presented below. Each expresses a different and unique relationship between gaining and maintaining sobriety and Christian faith, all starting from substance abuse and ending with permanent sobriety. The story types are briefly described below and presented in Figure 2. Each line represents a story type. The points at which Christianity had an important effect are marked with circles and ovals. A circle refers to a sudden effect, such as conversion, and an oval refers to a long-lasting influence.

(1) 'Third Time Lucky'. The protagonist of the first story type lived through a lengthy process of recovery that took years, even decades. He attempted to gain sobriety several times with the help of Christian faith. He had encountered Christianity on different occasions throughout the years but could not attain adherence to it. He converted several times, once in childhood, and a second time while drinking heavily or taking drugs, both without permanent adherence. The third conversion effected a lasting change. Therefore, this story type is called 'Third Time Lucky'. Four participants were placed in this group.

(2) 'First Be Rid of Wickedness, Then Be Rid of Holiness'. The protagonist of the second story type in first phase gained sobriety and in the second phase, often years later, managed to maintain sobriety. His process consisted of two phases, both of which were necessary to reach permanent sobriety. First, he quit abusing substances and became a truly committed and strict Christian. Later, after a number of years, he found a more merciful version of Christianity and distanced himself from the strictness of his first sober years. Since there were two challenges, first the liberation from substance abuse and then from an uncompromising interpretation of Christianity, this

story type is entitled 'First Be Rid of Wickedness, Then Be Rid of Holiness'.¹ Seven participants were placed in this group.

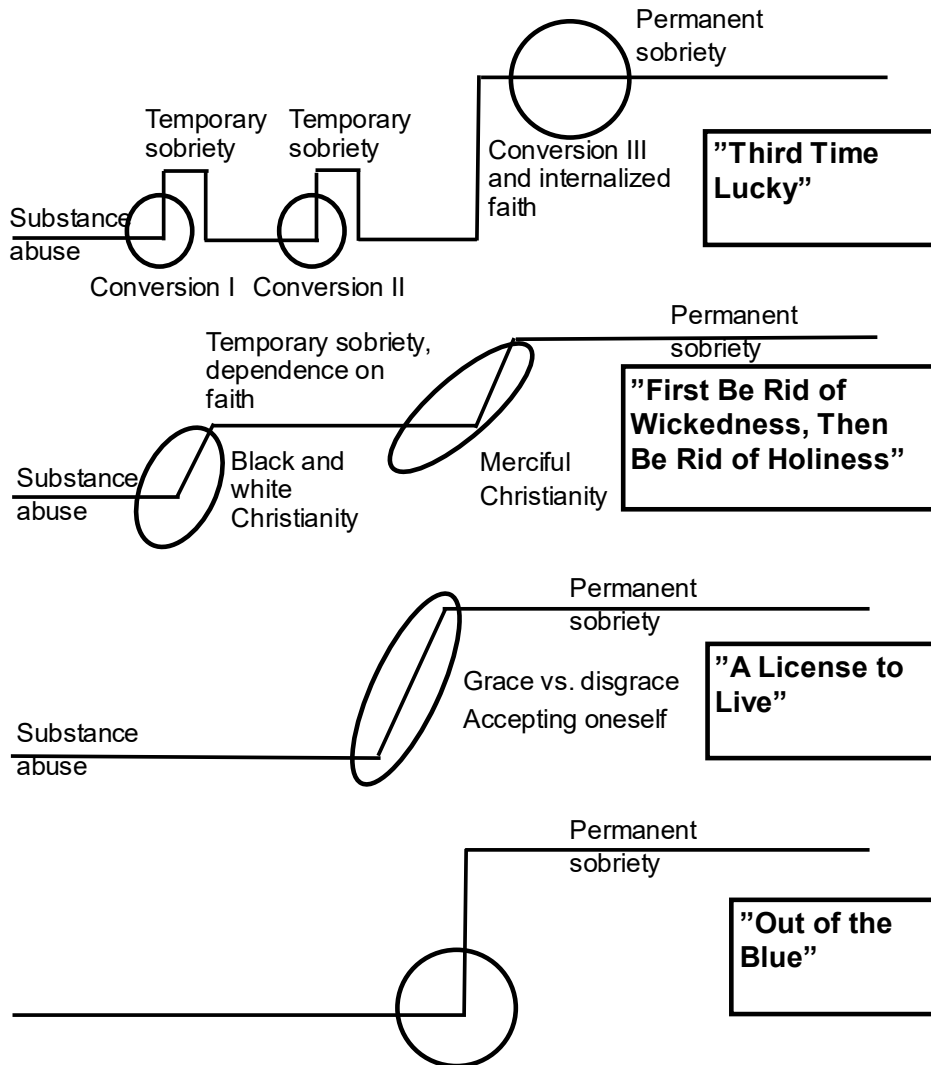


Figure 2. Four story types reflecting the process of moving from substance abuse to permanent sobriety.

(3) 'A Licence to Live'. The protagonist of the third story type felt ashamed. He was unable to accept himself. The reasons for this were many: a traumatic childhood, bullying, sexual abuse etc. He started drinking and/or taking drugs to escape from pain. Christian faith eventually helped him to conquer shame. He learned to see the world and especially himself from a new, accepting angle. Therefore, this story type

¹ This is a quote from an interviewee (Person 4). The English translation loses the rhyme of the original Finnish quote. In Finnish, 'wickedness' is 'paha' and 'holiness' is 'pyhä', which makes the expression ('Ensin eroon *pahasta*, sitten *pyhästä*') both informative and poetic.

is called 'A Licence to Live'. The change did not happen at once; it was rapid and, in most cases, was not interpreted religiously but as a kind of insight. Seven participants were placed in this group.

(4) 'Out of the Blue'. The protagonist of the fourth story type suddenly experienced an event that changed his whole life in a moment. The change was total. He never drank again, he never relapsed and he never attended any treatment, therapy or peer group. A whole new life began at that very special moment. The fourth story type is called 'Out of the Blue'. This kind of process, which seems easy, is very rare. Only two participants told a story like this.

The relationship between Christian faith and recovery, understood as the process of gaining and maintaining sobriety, appeared to be versatile in this study. The findings show how Christian faith can contribute to recovery in various ways and that no specific type of Christian faith is universally helpful. Faith appeared in many forms, even within the same narrative. These stories underline the diversity of ways in which Christian faith and recovery can be interrelated and may thus widen the perspective on the topic. The definition and type of faiths varied among the interviewees, even within the same life story. What helped in one phase was different to what helped in another. The faith itself was not always helpful and sometimes even provided another area for failure and disappointment.

5.1.2 Sub-study 2

The second sub-study discussed guilt, shame, Christian faith and recovery. The origins of this study lied in unplanned findings from the data: Both guilt and shame appeared to be crucial in understanding how Christian faith may help recovery from substance abuse. This sub-study targeted this relationship and analysed how Christian faith relates to guilt and shame during the process of recovery. Since self-conscious emotions are, at least in part, socio-culturally constructed, Christian faith was seen as a cultural tool that is influencing the ways that people define and cope with guilt and shame in recovery. Findings are summarised in Figure 3 and described briefly here.

So as to be able to discuss Christian faith, guilt, shame and recovery, it was important to understand and acknowledge the nature of both guilt and shame, their differences and also their coexistence and intimate relationship. In this sub-study, these basic concepts needed to be defined more carefully than originally thought. Applying the term *moral shame* helped clarify the concepts. Moral shame refers to shame with a moral background, whereas *non-moral shame* does not. The former is related to transgressions and bears a likeness to guilt; the latter does not (Smith, Webster, Parrott, & Eyre, 2002). Moral shame results from violating one's basic values. Such behaviour causes guilt, in the first place, but as the transgressions become habitual, guilt merges into shame (Lewis, 2010). Guilt turns into moral shame as the issue is no longer the transgressions but the individual being unable to resist transgressing. If one constantly does bad things, one must consequently be bad or at least incompetent. Since moral shame is a consequence of transgressions, it has origins that, to some extent, can be traced (Lewis, 2010). Therefore, part of moral shame can be converted into guilt by dividing the shapeless lump of transgressions into pieces, into concrete deeds, violations, omissions and breaches (Dearing et al., 2005; Wiechelt, 2007). Moral shame, and only moral shame, can be transformed into guilt. Yet moral shame is not guilt. Moral shame causes feelings of worthlessness, not guilt. In the

data, guilt, moral shame and non-moral shame were strongly present. Clarifying the concepts has helped discuss the findings.

As expressed in Figure 3, there seems to exist both guilt- and shame-circles: Substance abuse causes guilt and moral shame, which both in turn result in more substance abuse. Both these circles helped analyse the life-courses of the participants. The important distinction between moral and non-moral shame is clarified in Figure 3. Non-moral shame is separated from moral shame, the shame-circle and the possibility to transform (moral) shame into guilt. Non-moral shame cannot be transformed into guilt but must be treated as shame, in a different way to guilt. Non-moral shame causes worthlessness and requires care instead of cure.

It appeared that Christian faith can provide tools to overcome guilt feelings, which, in a Christian context, is often worded as sin. Forgiveness of sins, redemption and the idea of an omniscient yet forgiving God helped participants cope with guilt and provided answers to questions of forgiveness, apology and amends, often crucial for the sake of recovery. Those Christian messages that participants encountered in congregations, reading the Bible, and singing spiritual songs told about forgiveness and thus helped them quit guilt-circle. In light of this data, it seems clear that Christian faith can contribute to conquering guilt feelings as a part of recovery.

Shame, on the other hand, appeared more difficult to manage. Moreover, shame, especially non-moral shame, seemed to be a rather unfamiliar and misused concept. In Christian vocabulary, feeling overall sinful could relate to shame, and the answer to such shame feelings would be grace, unconditional love and feeling God as merciful and loving. It appeared that guilt and shame were often confused, as were moral and non-moral shame. Nevertheless, I found several examples of Christian faith helping heal shame and also non-moral shame. Often, tackling shame took years and was an outcome of maturing. In addition to time, it also required more individual effort, reading and thinking. Whereas the solution to guilt was offered by congregations and FBO's, the solution to shame was more a personal maturation process.

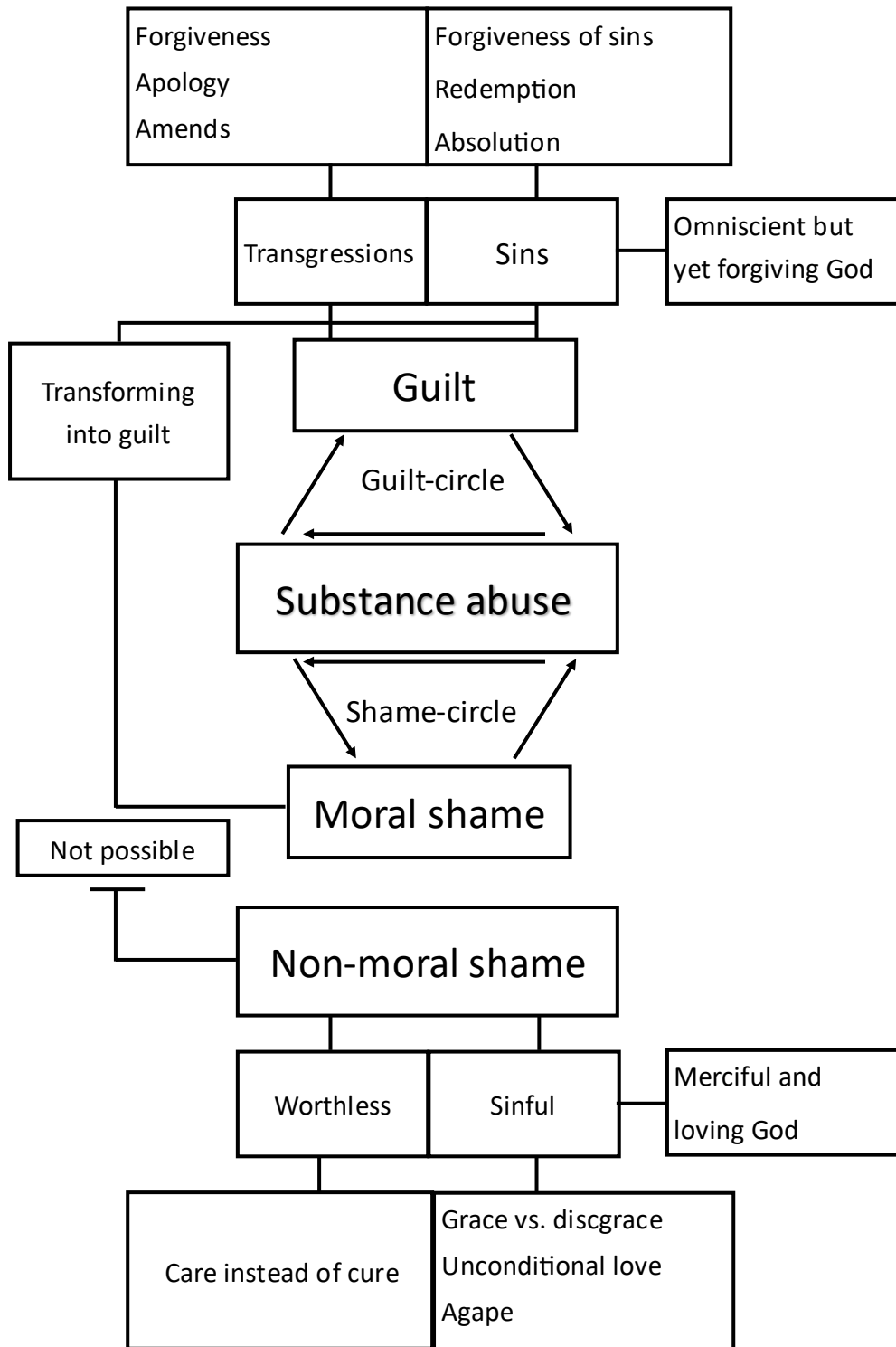


Figure 3. Guilt, shame and recovery from substance abuse.

5.1.3 Sub-study 3

The third sub-study analysed how spiritual songs have supported recovery from substance abuse. The interest lied not in the songs as such, but in the use of the songs, and the meanings they are attached to. Out of twenty-one interviewees, seventeen named at least one song that had been of importance in the process of recovery. In the analysis, three groups of meanings were formed: social, individual and theological. These three groups are not mutually exclusive but in many occasions overlap each other. One song or a comment on a song can convey, for instance, both social and theological meanings. The intention was not to group comments into separate and clearly defined categories but, instead, to find out the main themes that interviewees were talking about. The idea of overlapping categories is presented in Figure 4.

Social meanings of spiritual songs were derived through interpretations where a certain song belonged to a certain moment with certain people around. These comments are about spiritual songs bringing participants into contact with other people, making them share thoughts, emotions and atmosphere with some important people. Hearing, humming, chanting and singing a song made one participant feel that he belonged and he saw himself anew; he was someone belonging to this group that did not consist of alcoholics but of believers. Recovering from substance abuse often requires a total alteration of one's social reference group. Spiritual songs could bring these interviewees into a new communion. Therefore, those songs became symbols of new life.

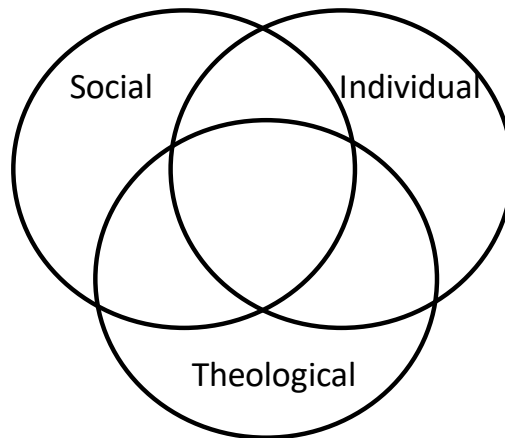


Figure 4. Social, individual, and theological meanings of spiritual songs.

Individual meanings of spiritual songs pointed to the fact that any individual needs words to understand his life-course. Spiritual songs helped give words to past experiences, the current situation and future prospects. When still abusing substances, songs spoke about another world and thus set an example of a new sober and fortunate life. Songs also provided an interpretation of what had happened after becoming sober. They gave words to and explanations of one's life-course and, especially, the recovery process. Additionally, songs could create epoch-making experiences: The lyrics made one participant realise something he had not comprehended before. Hearing a song provided an insight, even an illumination.

Theological meanings of spiritual songs summarised the most important theological notions that were mentioned by the interviewees when talking about spiritual songs. Sin, redemption and grace rose above the rest. Spiritual songs conveyed a theology of change: A possibility to start anew, be forgiven and be loved. Theology covers, however, not only the content but also the articulation and expression. And this point of view is especially important here. Spiritual songs spoke with words and metaphors understandable to interviewees. Lyrics of spiritual songs appeared much easier to grasp than biblical texts or doctrinal expressions, especially in the early phases of the recovery process. Of utmost importance was the capability of these songs to convey theology in laypersons terms.

It was not some general Christian faith but, in line with the lived religion tradition, a local tradition each participant came into contact with. Spiritual songs, first heard and then sung, were experienced and sung in these local settings, in congregations and FBO's. This concerns both the songs chosen and the interpretation of those songs. Listening to the interviewees, it appears that sin, guilt, forgiveness and redemption were at the forefront of those local Christian communities. Many songs were about Christ and blood. This was the locally transmitted Christian faith these individuals joined when hearing and singing spiritual songs. These spiritual songs and the interpretations attached to them offer a viewpoint to the socio-cultural stock of stories available in those local Christian communities.

Findings from this data revealed that many participants had been listening and singing the same songs for decades. These songs conveyed a clear and redeeming message that became influential. Singing the same songs with the same message year after year raised questions, although there is no need to understate the importance of familiarity and tradition. When discussing the findings of this sub-study in Harré's terms, in particular appropriation and transformation, I came to ask whether sticking to a certain basic experience, and certain songs supporting it, had possibly lead to a stagnation of identity project? It seemed that appropriating social identity was reinforced by considerable emotional charge, because a spiritual song was a very holistic experience including hearing, singing, activating of senses and stimulating emotions. That this all took place in the middle of, and was a part of, a massive metamorphosis hardly lessened the influence. Thus, the question is whether spiritual songs had provided such strong interpretations that they had hindered transformation, or finding new words and new truths? Had certain lyrics become so influential that they had become standard formulations of one's identity no matter what life had or could have brought during the years to come? This question remains unanswered, but is one important finding of this sub-study.

5.1.4 Sub-study 4

In the fourth sub-study, I discussed the use of the Bible as a cultural tool in the process of recovery. I saw the Bible as a cultural resource and the focus was on how the interviewees made use of it in recovery. I presented the findings as six 'I am entitled' statements, since the Bible had provided the interviewees with entitlements that aided recovery. Based on these statements, I introduced six building blocks for recovery to propose an idea of how the Bible, or maybe more generally Christian faith, may help in recovery. These building blocks are expressed in Figure 5. I then discussed recovery as a process of self-creation through which one's self-narrative is re-written, and the substance-orientated plot line is replaced; even the genre of self-narrative is altered.

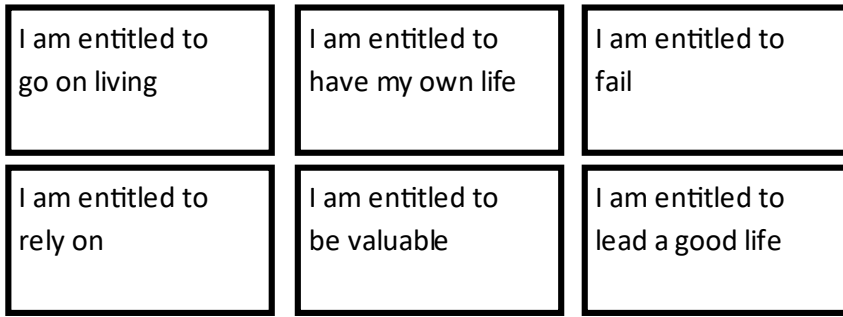


Figure 5. Six building blocks illustrating, how the Bible may entitle a person recovering from substance abuse.

According to the participants' comments, the most important biblical passages were those that granted permission to go on living despite former failures, often at the very beginning of recovery. The first building block consists of interpretations of a new life that is entirely separated from the old. The second building block was formed from the passages, and comments on those passages, that promised that one does not have to survive on one's own. Most substance abusers sometimes try to quit, and many try repeatedly. As a result, they learn how difficult it is to become sober and how powerless they are in fighting their way out of dependence. Permission to rely on appeared to be crucial.

The third building block consisted of insights that told a recovering former substance abuser that he was entitled to have his own life, to be who he was. Even his past was known and accepted by God. One did not need to fake or pretend. He did not have to be better than he was, and he did not have to try to hide his past. He came to realise that if God was omniscient and timeless, had known and foreseen everything, the recovering abuser could come to terms with his past. He could re-story his life coherently.

After spending most of their time obtaining and abusing substances, finding shelter and simply surviving, people in recovery need alternative challenges. To have a purpose in life became a critical task for the participants. Interpretations in this category relate to experiences of a meaningful life, having tasks and positive roles in the community and understanding their own value. This right to be valuable was the fourth building block.

Being entitled to fail, the fifth building block, turned out to be important, since living a sober life is not always a bed of roses. Whereas the first category was about entitlement to go on living despite former failures, here it was about learning to live with present deeds. Comforting text helped re-story a more realistic self-narrative: Being sober does not mean having to be a saint. Being an abuser and an angel were not the only options.

Being entitled to lead a good life may sound truisitic but that was not the case for the participants. The interpretations of biblical texts in this category helped former substance abusers re-story their lives in terms of a normal life. A history of substance abuse is not necessarily the basis of one's inner story. Therefore being entitled to lead a good life turned out to be the sixth building block.

Those biblical texts that the participants discussed speak about their long process of recovery management. The change from a marginalised substance abuser to a normal

citizen was huge. It included not only quitting substance abuse but also a tremendous change in self-perception. Biblical passages provided a stock of stories that helped re-storying. These six building blocks reveal what these participants found useful in the Bible. More generally, they suggest why Christian faith may help in recovery. Additionally, they cast light on those questions and needs that an individual needs in recovery management.

Eventually, in this sub-study, recovery was seen as re-storying and self-creation. A former substance abuser had recovered when he had re-storied his life and created himself in a new way. He had not only changed the plot line but also the genre of his life story.

5.2 GENERAL FINDINGS FROM SUB-STUDIES

These sub-studies all discussed the same issue – Christian faith and recovery from substance abuse – but looked at it from different angles. As the sub-studies were published in article format, I was compelled to focus on one point of view in each. Therefore, there is a risk that the big picture may remain obscure. It may not be seen that the sub-studies are related and that some themes are present in practically all articles. The intention in this chapter is to look at that overall view. I shall focus here on three all-embracing themes: understanding recovery and Christianity broadly, guilt and shame and re-storying.

5.2.1 Understanding recovery and Christian faith broadly

An understanding of recovery became deeper and clearer throughout this research process. Narratives in sub-study 1 drew attention to lengthy and all-inclusive processes of recovery that took years. Quitting substance abuse was only a part of recovery, which entailed a more comprehensive life-course change, a metamorphosis that often took years. At this point, it must be underlined that this is inevitably present in all findings, not only in sub-study 1. Even though they were thematically analysed and reported, all other frameworks carry a temporal aspect as well. Feeling and coping with guilt and shame changed over time. Often it was guilt that had to be managed first, and feelings of shame came to the fore only later. Furthermore, the biblical texts that participants read and found meaningful changed during the recovery process. Some passages were intensively read at the beginning of sober life, while others were found after years and only became influential then.

Although this temporal aspect was not present in sub-study 4, I would claim that there is a difference between the first two and the other four building blocks. The first two building blocks belong to the early phase of recovery, of gaining sobriety, and the rest of the blocks belong to the latter phase, maintaining sobriety. These phases have been termed recovery initiation and recovery maintenance, and as pointed out by White (2007), these are two qualitatively different processes. Clearly, this temporal aspect was present in the interviews and deepened the discussion on the meanings attached to biblical passages and spiritual songs, although there I noticed a stronger tendency to lean on the same songs for years, even decades. The absence of a temporal aspect in sub-studies 2, 3 and 4 is due to limited space and a clearly targeted focus. Should it have been possible, how thinking, reading, singing and feeling guilt and

shame changed over the course of time would have been discussed in more detail. From the data in this study, it could be concluded that the role that faith plays in recovery cannot be researched without a long observation period.

This highlights that Christian faith is not a given, static, or unchanging entity. It was not the Christian faith that helped in these recovery processes; it was different Christian faiths. Phases, situations and needs varied, and as a consequence, Christian faith had to vary as well. In these cases, it varied and thus help was obtained. This research cannot say anything about such cases where Christian faith, spirituality, or religiosity is provided as a neat and clearly defined packet. But from this research's findings, it is easy to understand why there were no positive results in trials that tried to include spirituality in recovery treatment (Miller et al., 2008).

Christian faith can be seen as a socio-cultural stock of stories, concepts and models and recovering individuals in this study picked and chose what they needed in different phases. Of course, this picking and choosing was not particularly intentional or controlled, and what was available in congregations, for instance, mattered. The lengthy period over which participants recalled their stories means that participants had come into contact with a wide array of material, songs, texts and teachings. As a result, the data reveals what has been important in the recovery process. Undoubtedly, the participants heard and sung other songs and read other texts – many reported having read through the whole Bible a few times – but what they wanted to bring to the second interview were those texts and songs analysed in sub-studies three and four. The point, then, is that even though there was a much wider Christian tradition available, this study reveals what these participants, as individuals, found meaningful. No one else could have designed some 'Christian faith that helps in recovery' packet; the participants had to have time and space to find out for themselves what was meaningful and what helped.

The sum of the sub-studies, and the whole research process, can be summarised by stressing the need to see recovery as a lengthy and comprehensive process and Christian faith can be viewed as a socio-cultural stock. Christian faith is a cultural tool that allows recovering substance abusers to find different aspects that meet different needs during that long process of recovery.

5.2.2 Guilt and shame

Another aspect present in all sub-studies is that of guilt and shame. Though especially analysed in sub-study 2, the role of these emotions was apparent in all sub-studies. Thinking of recovery narratives in sub-study 1, there are two story types where these questions were of utmost importance. 'A Licence to Live' was about shame and getting rid of it. 'First Be Rid of Wickedness, Then Be Rid of Holiness' was first about guilt and a black-and-white lifestyle as a coping strategy against overflowing guilt, and then, gradually, as guilt diminished, it was about shame and being released from that. Guilt and shame were, of course, present in the other two story types, but they played a major role in these two discussed here.

Furthermore, when discussing the meanings of spiritual songs, these self-conscious emotions (Tangney & Dearing, 2004; Tracy et al., 2007) appeared crucial. Guilt-related topics like sin and forgiveness were the most commonly repeated themes. Spiritual songs that had helped in the early phases of recovery were songs with a simple message about the blood of Jesus and the redemption of sins. This simple theology of guilt

was the most important message for many at the time of quitting substance abuse. Later, more multifaceted pictures arose, including shame-related songs about God's grace. In sum, the role that spiritual songs played in recovery cannot be understood without taking guilt and shame into serious consideration.

Discussion on biblical texts also included guilt and shame topics. Out of the six building blocks generated in this study, 'I am entitled to go on living' and 'I am entitled to fail' were both about guilt and living with it. The former was about past transgressions and the latter about present ones. That the block 'I am entitled to go on living' is mainly guilt-related tells us more about the poor conceptual clarity in those congregations and FBO's that these participants joined. Certainly, the participants were struggling not only with feelings of guilt but also feelings of shame. But they tended to discuss those feelings in guilt-language, as sin, forgiveness and redemption.

Later, purely shame-related topics came to the fore. The three building blocks referred to as 'I am entitled to have my own life', 'I am entitled to be valuable' and 'I am entitled to lead a good life' are strongly shame-related themes. One did not have to be apologising for being there but was allowed to exist, be valuable and even enjoy. These truly are about liberating oneself from shame. Thus, at this point, it can be observed that all four sub-studies are intensively discussing how Christian faith, guilt, shame and recovery from substance abuse are interrelated.

As a conclusion, it is hardly an exaggeration to state that lessening guilt and shame was among the most important ways Christian faith helped in recovery from substance abuse. Those feelings were unbearable and had, on several occasions, blocked attempts to recover. The Christian message, as conveyed by people, songs and texts, managed somehow to convince these participants of the possibility to be freed. Applying a vocabulary of its own – sin, forgiveness, redemption, grace, love – Christian tradition provided them with both emotional and rational solutions to these previously unresolved problems. The bearers of Christian faith were, most obviously with good reason, criticised for having stressed guilt and sin far too much and neglecting shame and grace. They managed, however, to convey a message of divine forgiveness that made quitting substance abuse possible. The versatile Christian tradition later enabled participants to encounter the more merciful and gracious aspects of that divinity, which guaranteed maintaining sobriety.

5.2.3 Re-storying and self-creation

Re-storying and self-creation appeared only in the discussion section of sub-study 4, as a theoretical and conceptual framework, to help understand how Christian faith as a cultural tool can enable recovery. This framework is, however, much wider and could have been applied to the other articles and to other themes in this study. The idea that recovery with Christian faith is a re-storying and self-creation process is not just a theoretical assertion in one article discussing the Bible and recovery; it is a comprehensive and crucial aspect of what this research project is all about.

The concepts of re-storying and self-creation, taken from Randall (2014), seem to suit this data and topic well. This is because understanding recovery as re-storying and self-creation helps clarify what these recovery processes were about. Seeing them only as getting sober and maintaining sobriety was definitely too limited. It was not just getting rid of something but creating something new. The idea of self-creation describes well what these recovering former substance abusers were doing. So as to

manage living without substances, they had to create themselves anew. It was an active process where finding new ingredients for the self was of utmost importance. Creating a new self only to be something opposite to the old self was not enough. Yet self-creation is not as simple as it sounds. One cannot just create one's self anew. There had to be some new positive elements to create a new 'me'. Recovery seen as self-creation, a creative and positive act, differed remarkably from recovery as getting rid of the previous bad self. In this positive self-creation process, Christian faith could provide various kinds of tools: words, concepts, stories, role models and entitlements. This whole research project is precisely about that; it is about the ingredients that Christian faith, as a socio-cultural stock, could provide to someone re-storying their life.

Although present only in sub-study 4, this point of view could have been crystallised in other sub-studies as well. The main reason for why this was not the case, in addition to the limited space in each article, is that I only came to find Randall's ideas and concepts during the process. Therefore, a quick look at how Randall's theory and concepts could have clarified the narratives in sub-study 1, for instance, is worthwhile. Thinking about the 'Third Time Lucky' type of story, for example, a protagonist tries in vain to adjust himself to a sober Christian identity. This appears to be a standard example of an outside-in story, a Christian sober narrative composed by others. It was a new story but it was not his own. Trying to live according to that story failed each time. Changing the life-course succeeded only when the protagonist managed to compose a true inside-out story, a story about himself, based on his own experiences and expressed in his own words. The idea of re-storying and self-creation helps understand this story type in particular, but, of course, all narratives can be seen as re-storying processes. When re-storying, a recovering substance abuser needs new story models, such as spiritual songs in sub-study 3, and concepts such as guilt- and shame-related Christian vocabulary in sub-study 2.

If I were to choose only one theoretical and conceptual framework to discuss the findings from this data, then I would choose re-storying and self-creation. This framework best helps to explain what this data revealed about recovery from substance abuse with the help of Christian faith. Re-storying and self-creation are, thus, the master story of this research project.

6 DISCUSSION

This research has intended to answer the original research question: *How and why can Christian faith help recover from substance abuse?* In the previous chapter I have summarised key findings. In addition to answering the research question, throughout the research process I have tried to ponder what this question means and what it includes. Thus, this research project has also been exploring what we talk about when we talk about recovery with the help of faith, spirituality and religiosity. This study's findings are not just a clear answer to the research question but rather a more sophisticated understanding of the topic and how it can and should be seen and researched. I came to understand that recovery must be understood broadly, that Christian faith should be understood as lived religion and that guilt and shame are crucial for understanding the issue.

These findings have matured over the years. At the end of the research process, one new idea struck me and gave me a kind of insight. The idea, expressed by William Randall in his book *The Stories We Are* (2014), differentiates between a craftsman and a creator (Randall, 2014, p. 77). Seeing these participants as creators and not as craftsmen summons up the core of this research project. In this chapter, I discuss this idea of being a creator instead of a craftsman. Why this idea of a creator?

6.1 RECOVERY AS SELF-CREATION AND RE-STORYING

Seeing recovery as self-creation and re-storying helps understand the nature of recovery. In these cases, recovery did not equal remission. It was not about getting rid of some symptoms characteristic of substance use disorder. Far from that, instead, recovery could be equated with discovery. It was about creating something new. During this process, I came to understand that being a creator requires time and that recovery should not be evaluated with too short a perspective. In the light of the findings from this data, I would claim that previous narrative research on recovery has taken too simplistic an approach towards recovery. Recovery narratives have concentrated on one clear change. Something like 'a transition to a non-addict lifestyle' has been viewed as a critical situation, as Hecksher (2004) and many others suggest. According to the research presented here, this is not the case. In most cases, recovery was not a one-time event and, thus, research should not focus on clarifying how this one transition takes place. For participants in this study, re-storying and creating a new self took time and included many phases. Actually, the whole point would be dramatically mistaken if research targets only one moment of change. In most recovery stories, there are important events, undoubtedly, and former abusers are, as I saw it, in a habit of telling rather simplistic and straightforward stories. But scratching the surface reveals a many-sided picture. It turns out that those important events might not be important events without many other events, slow processes and years of maturation. It is easy to focus on specific events but it is not necessarily accurate.

Seeing a recovering former substance abuser as a creator suggests taking a lengthy process into consideration. A craftsman may successfully construct a new non-addict identity quickly, adopting new habits, thoughts and plot lines. However, based on this research project, I do not have much to say about that since this study focused

on processes of creation, not crafting. And creating, at least in the light of this data, requires time. This process has taught me that creation does not happen in six days.

This discussion about how recovery should be seen also raises the question of how substance use disorder should be seen. Namely, recovery as discovery, as self-creation, was not about how to be an alcoholic or drug addict in a non-destructive way. It was also not about how to be a former alcoholic or an ex-addict. In many processes revealed by this data, these ex-identities were phases or stages. But the real solution was not being something 'ex' but being current 'me'. Being a creator instead of a craftsman refers to this. There were ex-identities available and many acted in ex-roles: an ex-addict, an ex-prisoner and an ex-alcoholic. But an ex-identity was not an ex-it. Being an 'ex'-something bound their identities and made them tell their life story as a recovery story of an ex-abuser. Participants were given tools so as to craft an ex-identity. They received these tools from congregations, FBO's, AA and treatment units that they visited over the years. But they either returned to abusing or felt uncomfortable in their ex-roles. These recovery processes were lengthy since creation took much longer time than crafting. It could take more than a decade. But self-creation eventually meant the capability to re-story, to create a new 'me'. This re-storied self included, of course, earlier years as a substance abuser. In order to be coherent and complete, one is not supposed to deny their past. But this new creation, the re-storied self, was much more than an ex-addict. The inner narrative was not based on being a sober alcoholic. The past did not determine the present or future. They were, for instance, a parent or a grand-parent, a working man, a voluntary worker, a board member of an FBO, or a normal citizen. For these participants, recovery meant self-creation and starting a new life. That process was far from easy. It took years and included, in many cases, plenty of seatbacks. In the end, however, being recovered far exceeded being sober. These participants were able to lead a meaningful life and have an inner narrative where being a former substance abuser was not at the core. Instead, they had re-storied and created a new self.

Thus, the first answer to the question 'why this idea of a creator' is that recovery in these cases is understandable only when seen as a creative re-storying process. Creating something new apparently took a long time, and a lengthy perspective on recovery has been stressed as a necessary condition to being a creator.

6.1.1 Christian faith as a cultural tool

During this research process, it appeared that the crucial question is how an individual makes use of tradition. The research tradition of lived religion is not only about individual religious practices. Importantly, it is also about the interplay between the individual and tradition, about how religious tradition provides ingredients for individual use and how the individual applies those ingredients (Ammerman, 2016). The tradition is there in songs, in texts and in teachings. It is hardly imaginable that anybody could learn Christian faith without being somehow part of that tradition. Therefore, the question is about the relationship between tradition and the individual. And here, again, the question of creativeness arises. There appears to be a huge difference between a passive recipient of a conventional tradition and a creative processor of a rich tradition. Certainly, there were very conventional pieces of tradition conveyed to these participants by congregations, FBO's, songs and texts. And, for sure, these traditional wordings and teachings had an influence. Many participants quit abusing

substances due to a simple and conventional teaching of sins and forgiveness. This theology effected a change. In the end, however, in most cases, a permanent re-storied new life required more. It was not any learned recovery genre that helped. Christian faith helped since it was not a neat packet telling this helps and this is how one recovers. It was not about passively receiving and imitating available Christian traditions but about an active and creative process of interpreting the tradition. What helped was the opportunity to find different kinds of ingredients and building blocks in different situations. I was astonished at the creative theological power I encountered during the interviews. Only rarely did I hear traditional Christian teaching being repeated by participants. Far from that, I heard theologies of streets (Orsi, 1985) and creative interpretations of rich Christian tradition.

I would claim that why Christian faith helped was not that it was a certain kind of Christian faith but because it was such a vast stock of stories, role models, words and ideas which different individuals could find meaningful in different kinds of situations. Christian faiths helped because there were different kinds of Christian faiths and because recovering individuals were able to make themselves familiar with the tradition and its resources during a long period of time. During the research process, I became convinced that what effected the change was a participants' creative approach to Christian tradition. What made this creativity possible was a combination of two aspects. First, Christian tradition proved rich, one could say boundless and thus provided numerous possibilities for anyone willing and daring to interpret. And second, these individuals had, over the years, acquired a freedom to read, listen, explain and interpret that tradition. Vast and versatile tradition together with the liberty to interpret it effected a permanent change. Thus, the second answer to the 'why creator' question is that during the years these participants had managed to free themselves from conventional interpretations to create theologies of their own. Theologies is in plural both because of differences between individuals and, and this must be stressed because of the different phases of an individual's life-course.

6.1.2 Influential experience and conventional Christianity

This would not be a qualitative study if all cases neatly fit the interpretations. Good qualitative data is information rich and may include conflicting viewpoints. At least one exception to the above discussion must be pointed out. I have claimed that these participants both needed a lengthy period to recover and that part of that long process was creative theologising. The exception to this general rule is one research participant who was placed in the story type 'Out of the Blue'.

In this research project, the role of individual experiences was difficult to study for quite obvious reasons: We do not have direct access to another person's experiences that may have taken place years ago in real-life situations. Yet the role of such experiences may still not be underestimated. They were real and affected the life-courses of these individuals. It has been, however, reasonable to focus on ways in which experiences and life stories were given words to. Thus, this has been a study on re-storying processes. This one case is exceptional because he experienced a tremendous experience that changed his life-course immediately. The rest of his life leant on that experience. Of course, when experiencing that upheaval he did not have words to express it and only gradually he learned to talk about it. He learned concepts from those Christian people around him and, consequently, talked about recovery using very conventional

wordings. Although, and perhaps because, he had experienced something more extraordinary than most in this sample, his need to express it in unique words seemed nonexistent. I would conclude that his experience was so influential that he could lean on traditional wording. He did not need creative theology since he was not resting his new life on that theology but on the influential experience. His faith was very personal even though its verbal presentation equalled traditional interpretation.

I really do not want to undermine the mystical, spiritual, or religious experiences of other participants. But this one exception highlights what was essential for other participants: They needed a verbal expression of their own. For the majority, recovering was not a sudden change but required years of hard working and struggling, re-storying and self-creation. And in that struggle, conventional expressions were not sufficient.

6.1.3 Threats to creativeness

The data also pointed to the limits and threats to creativeness. Many participants complained in the interviews that it was very difficult to get rid of those close circles they had joined at the time of recovery. This whole research project suggests that even though Christian communities surely helped individuals quit abusing and become sober, in many cases they made proceeding difficult. Many got stuck to those congregations or associations where they first got sober, socialised only with people within those circles, quoted from the Bible and kept singing the same songs. Obtaining what some called a 'normal life' took years, much longer than they retrospectively thought was necessary or wise. This viewpoint was not shared by all, but it draws attention to what creativeness was not. It was not living according to a given standard. A couple of quotations may clarify the picture:

In each congregation there are traditions that are followed.... If you accept them you are accepted. But if you do not, you are somehow excluded, you do not belong to the community. ... Jesus wants us to become free from those traditions, the ways in which the Bible is interpreted and from such spiritual slavery. ... I was first ten to fifteen years in a certain way in the congregation. I acted like others and embraced that culture and kept sitting on the pew. Then eventually I started to realise that this is not the faith we have been called to. ... Gradually I started to change, and now I feel I act as I wish.... I need not please anyone. [Person 20]

Two years ago I dared leave the community, which was also my employer. We moved to a new town and I got a new job. It was a huge step towards humanity. My new colleagues were not believers. I was not able to just quote the Bible. I have gained normality. ... [Previously] I only negotiated with substance abusers or former abusers who had converted to Christianity. ... Having moved and changed jobs, the picture changed. I could see how normal human beings are living. ... Three to four years I kept planning on leaving. I did not dare to. Finally I did. It was a good change for me and my family. ... It took courage to step outside those circles. I was very lonely. But it was a good change. [Person 8]

Whether it was about recovering or about Christian faith, being a creator instead of a craftsman refers to breaking social bondages and avoiding learned genres. Undoubt-

edly, other people and story models are needed. Self-creation and re-storying does not take place in a vacuum, just as transformation cannot happen without appropriation. There has to be something to transform and to create from; one cannot create out of nothing. Self-creation is always co-creation. It is influenced by other people and by those stories that are available in the socio-cultural stock of stories. Nevertheless, co-creation does not mean following learned genres or being exposed to social norms. As discussed earlier in this paper, there are AA- and NA-stories that can be seen as learned genres (Cain, 1991). They provide a ready-made plot line to be used in explaining one's own story. As critically asked by Gubrium and Holstein (2001, p. 22), one may wonder whether stories told according to that plot line really speak with the individual's or AA's/NA's voice.

The same question of learned genres is surely relevant in congregations and FBO's. They provide story models, conversion stories that help formulate one's own life-course and experiences. Whereas AA only has an 80-year tradition of providing story models, Christian tradition has been telling conversion stories for almost two millennia. And, of course, there were story models available about both recovery and conversion. Many participants said they have heard testimonies of former substance abusers who had gained sobriety with the help of Christian faith. In the interviews for this study, I have not heard those learned genres of recovery, conversion, or both. What I was told by the participants included chapters from learned genres. There were, to a lesser extent, echoes from AA-stories and, much more, influences from Christian conversion stories. But, in the end, I claim to have heard individually created self-narratives, not generic recovery stories (Randall, 2014, p. 45, 228) but re-genre-ated life-stories. These re-storied expressions of life-courses were unique and comprehensive life stories. Those stories had not been given or received; they had been creatively storied. Re-storying had taken years. I both hope and assume that it may have continued during the interviews and beyond.

6.2 RECOVERY AS SEEN THROUGH THEORETICAL FRAMES

I have applied three theoretical frameworks in this research. Discussing creativity with these frameworks has helped clarify the picture. I will take a look at Harré, Randall and a wider narrative approach to discuss how creativity can be understood in these theoretical frameworks.

I have claimed above, when discussing Harré's concepts, that the most important phase of recovery was transformation. The problem lay in how to make a Christian identity one's own, since the concepts of 'I' and 'true Christian believer' did not seem to match. The result could be a relapse or black-and-white Christianity, with neither leading to stability. The idea of transformation there was crucial: Christianity did not seem to help if it was only appropriated Christianity. Appropriation bears a similarity to what Randall terms being a craftsman, or using those tools given by others and constructing what has been instructed. Transformation, being a creator, on the other hand, relates to an artist who creates something new, one's own and unforeseen. Thus, it seems apparent that transformation is much more creative than appropriation. Of course, for someone having led a chaotic life, appropriation may have meant a lot: a new story, new concepts and a new identity. Appropriating a socially shared identity is definitely an act of creativity, and as Harré (1984, p. 23) states, for marginal men

and women, achieving a social identity may be a primary task. Still, I would claim that recovery required more than that, namely reflectivity and those crucial aspects that Harré (1984, p. 20) terms self-consciousness, self-master and autobiography. This self-reflectivity is present in transformation, which means creating something new, previously non-existent. It brings individual experience, life history and tradition into contact and interaction. Transformation is a meeting point of shared tradition and an individual's life history. When transforming, an individual creates something unique, a contribution that only he can create since no one else has similar experiences and life history. Thus, when seen in the framework provided by Harré, creativity pretty much equals transformation.

Seeing the same in Randall's terms, an outside-in story is not creative but adaptive. Outside-in stories are stories that are read into one's life. They are stories by others that affect individual self-creation and give shape to the story one tells about one's self. Letting others tell your story or adjusting to the story told by others is scarcely creative. Instead, telling an inside-out story, re-storying and self-creating equals being a creator. Though all creation is co-creation, the point is to be a master. Again, creativity touches on the relationship an individual has to tradition. Being at the disposal of others interpreting the tradition may be harmful. Creativity is present in inside-out stories, in self-mastered re-storying and in self-creation, which is co-creation in a controlled way.

Finally, considering creativity in a wider narrative context, there is a crucial difference in whether one is storied by others or storied by one's self with the help of the cultural stock of stories. Again, creativity is about relating one's self to available traditions in a way that opens new perspectives. If an individual with unique experiences and life history uses tradition, the socio-cultural stock of stories, so as to create something new and unique, we may call it creativity. If he lets, however, such story models act as normative schema prescribing one's actions and thoughts, this is hardly creative and may hinder individual and social growth. This study stresses, however, that it is not possible to divide pieces of socio-cultural stock into those that support creativity and those that suppress it. Situations and needs vary and something that in one occasion was a source of creativity may turn out to be an obstacle to being creative, or vice versa. As life proceeds, a piece of tradition, a song perhaps, which once saved a life may turn out to regulate life.

In the end, being a creator relates to the individual and tradition. This research is about how an individual, with his experiences and life history, makes use of tradition, in this case Christian tradition. The question is about how creatively recovering substance abusers managed to take advantage of the vast and versatile Christian tradition. The meeting point of individual experiences and life history on one hand and Christian tradition on the other produced different kinds of outcomes. Individual solutions were all unique, though some similar aspects could be seen between individuals. This uniqueness is of importance. Being able to use tradition creatively in order to re-story seems to be decisive. Self-creating and re-storying were signs and outcomes of creative use of tradition.

6.2.1 Re-storying and self-creation as recovery

Figure 6 summarises the creative process of recovery with the help of Christian faith. Individual experiences and life histories are all unique and changing. Christian tradition is an almost boundless socio-cultural stock of stories. With these two precon-

ditions – that individual experiences accumulate and life history changes and that tradition is rich and versatile – we have to discuss encounters between the individual and tradition in the plural. There is not a single encounter between an individual and tradition but several encounters in different phases of life and also in different phases of recovery. Therefore, there are several arrows representing changing and possibly evolving meeting points of an individual and tradition. The arrows are curved so as to portray a creative process where an individual makes use and further develops tradition. A creative individual is not only a passive recipient of tradition but is also an active interpreter of it. The outcome of these creative encounters are re-storying and self-creation. An individual with his unique experiences and life history re-stories his life and creates his self in a new way, with the help of tradition. From a recovery point of view, it is important once again to stress how recovery is seen here. Self-creation and re-storying are not by-products of recovery; they are recovery. Recovery equals re-storying and self-creation. Thus, recovery with the help of Christian faith means making creative use of Christian tradition in re-storying and self-creation.

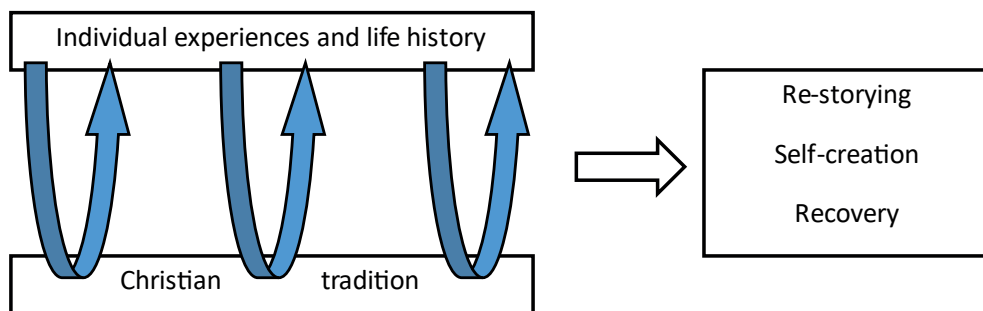


Figure 6. The creative process of recovery with the help of Christian faith.

6.3 EVALUATION OF THE PROCESS AND THE OUTCOMES

As noted above, Miller, Forcehimes, O’Leary and LaNoue (2008) speculated as to why spirituality did not have the expected influence on recovery treatment in their trial. Their possible reasons included intensity and timing of spirituality, that spirituality cannot be compelled and that it needs enough time. It is easy to agree on these. Spiritual tools helped when they were intensive enough, especially when they were properly timed, although no one could know beforehand when these various ‘proper’ times would take place. It was also important that individuals could pick and choose spiritual components voluntarily, according to their own needs, and that lengthy maturation and alteration of spirituality was possible. I would not, however, draw any clinical conclusions from this data. I am not suggesting that new trials should be conducted with in light of this study’s findings. Of course, it is possible that the same or similar biblical quotations or spiritual songs might help, and one could surely ponder whether guilt and shame should be assessed in treatment. Undoubtedly, different kinds of recovery paths should be taken into account in treatment of substance abuse. Nevertheless, this research has intended to advance academic discussion on how Christian faith may help in recovery from substance abuse, and it will hope-

fully contribute to the discussion on recovery more generally. Practical and clinical conclusions are out of the scope of this study. Quite on the contrary, this study has discussed spontaneous recovery and promotes an idea that what helps in recovery is the opportunity to make use of cultural tools in the way and pace that suits the current needs of an individual.

I have studied the relationship between Christian faith and recovery from substance abuse. Hopefully, this has contributed more widely to the research on spirituality and recovery and perhaps even to the research on lived religion, even though the focus has not been on the study of religion. More generally, one may ask whether the findings reveal more about how Christian faith helped in recovery, or about the mechanism of making use of cultural tools in recovery. It can, namely, be asked, whether 'Christian tradition' in Figure 6 could be replaced by some other collection of cultural tools. As there is no possibility to compare this data with any other data where Christian faith does not play any role, it is, in the end, very difficult to say whether Christian faith provided something unique for those in recovery. Framing recovery as a re-storying process, where a recovering individual created him/herself anew with the help of a cultural tool, could give insights into a potential mechanism that could help, even if Christian tradition is substituted by another stock of stories. Thus, in addition to suggesting what in Christian faith may help in recovery from substance abuse, this study may be taken as a suggestion of how recovery can more generally be seen as a re-storying process. Seen in this way, it may turn out that the most important dimension of this study has been the methodology, which has allowed the participants themselves to define what has been essential to recovery – and what recovery actually is and consists of. For this sample, the answers came from Christian tradition, but the questions may be more general. Therefore, it is possible to speculate that this research project has drawn attention to the more general needs of a substance abuser who is fighting his/her way from the margins to dignity. More than a question of recovery from substance abuse, these processes can be seen as journeys from exclusion and marginalisation to inclusion and normality. Thus, thinking of the participants in this study, it is possible that these findings can be better generalised to other marginalised groups than to all substance abusers.

6.4 REDISCOVERING FIRE

Because of the complex nature of the data, one must be careful when trying to say something general. Nevertheless, I dare say that what these participants were searching for, and finally found, relates to being accepted, respected and loved. Their peers, professionals, fellow Christians and/or cultural tools such as songs and texts were able to provide them with love, care and acceptance. That surely was of importance. However, the solution did not lie in others' love, acceptance or perception of them as normal but in their own interpretation of these things. What they were searching for was an inner narrative they could live with, accept and respect. They were intending to re-story their lives such that they would be enabled to tell a true and honest inside-out story without hesitation and with dignity. Recovery from substance abuse can thus be seen as a question of dignity more than that of mere substances.

Sometimes, I feel as though I am rediscovering fire. That is, this research can only repeat a truism: A human being wants to be accepted and wants to accept themselves. However, William R. Miller's ending up with findings similar to mine when discuss-

ing the core of motivational interviewing and trying to understand why it helps did console me. In his article entitled *Rediscovering Fire* (Miller, 2000), he points out the requirements for the treatment of substance abuse problems, which are very much in line with the findings of this research process: a more comprehensive outlook, a much longer process and what he calls *agape*. The ancient concept of *agape*, a 'selfless, accepting and sacred form of loving' (Miller, 2000), underscores the importance of being unconditionally loved and accepted and being profoundly respected. Miller's viewpoints on effective treatment are, interestingly, similar to the viewpoints that have arisen during this research project. In this research, I intended to show how the participants of this study came to find such acceptance, love and respect from Christian tradition.

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ARTICLES

ARTICLE I

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ARTICLE II

Lund, Pekka: Christian Faith and Recovery from Substance Abuse, Guilt, and Shame. *Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work: Social Thought*, 36 (3): 346–366 on April 13th, 2017. Available online DOI: 10.1080/15426432.2017.1302865. This is an Author's Original Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis Group.

ARTICLE III

Lund, Pekka: Spiritual songs supporting recovery from substance abuse. In T. Innanen & V-M. Salminen (Eds.) *Hymn, Song, Society* 2016, pp. 224–254. Helsinki: Church Research Institute. Reprinted by permission of Church Research Institute.

ARTICLE IV

Lund, Pekka: Recovering from substance abuse using the Bible. Submitted manuscript.

PEKKA LUND

With the help of qualitative in-depth interviews of former substance abusers this study discusses recovery and Christian faith. Recovery is seen as a lengthy process and as discovery, as a process of not only getting rid of something but also of discovering something new. Christian faith is seen as a cultural tool. Seeing faith as lived religion turns the focus from dogmas and institutions to individual interpretations. What helps is not some specific faith but various kinds of Christian faiths.



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