

Grounded Theory Methods for Insights into Resilience Processes: The Case of a Young Person Transitioning out of Residential Care

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Argument



- ❖ Research design shapes research findings
- ❖ Traditional qualitative methods (phenomenology, thematic analysis) tend to generate essentialised insights into resilience:
 - Resilience as trait > resilience as process
 - Resilience as personal > resilience as interactional
- ❖ Grounded theory is a useful research design:
 1. Actions of agents
 2. In interaction with their social environment
 3. Generation of theory

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Background



- ❖ Resilience defined (Van Breda, in press):
 - The multilevel processes that systems engage in to obtain better-than-expected outcomes in the face or wake of adversity.
- ❖ Systematic search of South African journal publications from 2009-2016, focused on humans, with the term 'resilien*' in the article
- ❖ 729 articles met selection criteria
- ❖ Only 18 (2.5%) mentioned Grounded Theory as the research design

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Grounded Theory

Kathy Charmaz (2012)



- ❖ "Grounded theory is a systematic method of analysing and collecting data to develop middle-range theories.
- ❖ This method begins but does not end with inductive inquiry.
- ❖ It is a comparative, iterative, and interactive method.
- ❖ The emphasis in grounded theory is on analysis of data; however, early data analysis informs data collection.
- ❖ Most grounded theorists follow an iterative approach, many make comparisons, *few construct theory.*"

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Grounded Theory Methods...



- ❖ Inductive ('theoretical agnosticism')
- ❖ Symbolic interactionism
 - Agency, interaction, micro-macro
- ❖ Line-by-line coding with gerunds (-ing verbs)
- ❖ Iterative data collection and analysis
- ❖ Theoretical sampling
- ❖ Constant comparison
- ❖ Memo writing
- ❖ Social constructionist (Charmaz, 2006)
- ❖ Explanatory theory construction

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Transcript Excerpt

A 22-year-old care-leaver ('Andre')



My parents kicked me out of the house. They bought me a scooter and everything – a brand new scooter. I didn't have a license, I failed my learner's license three times, so me and studying isn't very good friends. If I can work with my hands and see what it does and be in the physical area where I can work and hands on, then I'm happy. I mean if somebody can tell me listen here, if you can do that and that and that, do it that way then I'll do it – that's no problem. Then I got the scooter and everything and I started bunking... ja. Then I got into drugs and everything. Okay, the drugs that I did was basically everything on the street that you can use, except spiking, I didn't do that, because spiking is... you know, it messes up your life and everything. I had a few friends that used to spike and everything, but ja, it's not good, plus money as well. If you don't have money you can't get the drugs, then you are sitting there and its like, hell man I need some drugs and everything. So...

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Transcript Excerpt

Using thematic codes



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Homeless

Failed

Transport
Drug abuse

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Transcript Excerpt

Using line-by-line gerunds



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Losing accommodation

Failing learner's license

Working with hands

Working with hands > happiness
Following practical advice

Bunking college
Doing drugs

Setting limits on drug use

Learning from others' experience
Setting limits – mess up your life
Setting limits – expensive drugs
Setting limits – addiction

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Transcript Excerpt

"Gerunds build action right into the codes"



My parents kicked me out of the house. They bought me a scooter and everything – a brand new scooter. I didn't have a license, I failed my learner's license three times, so me and studying isn't very good friends. If I can work with my hands and see what it does and be in the physical area where I can work and hands on, then I'm happy. I mean if somebody can tell me listen here, if you can do that and that and that, do it that way then I'll do it – that's no problem. Then I got the scooter and everything and I started bunking... ja. Then I got into drugs and everything. Okay, the drugs that I did was basically everything on the street that you can use, except spiking, I didn't do that, because spiking is... you know, it messes up your life and everything. I had a few friends that used to spike and everything, but ja, it's not good, plus money as well. If you don't have money you can't get the drugs, then you are sitting there and its like, hell man I need some drugs and everything. So...

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Gerunds – Action Words

Actions and Interactions



- ❖ Being confronted
- ❖ Setting limits on drug use
- ❖ Networking with a friend, supervisor, brother...
- ❖ Finding someone who advocates for him
- ❖ Cooperating with police
- ❖ Taking pride in the work of his hands
- ❖ Learning new social skills
- ❖ Transferring skills
- ❖ Recruiting a patron for protection

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Memo Writing

Setting limits



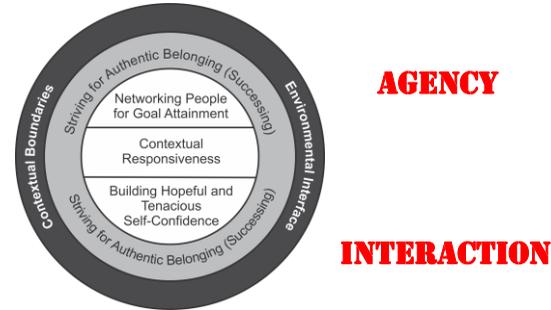
Andre's journey towards independence entails a growing capacity to set limits on his own impulsive behaviour. Though there are more examples of him overrunning these limits, there are pivotal instances where he set and maintained a limit. Taking control/action, making better choices, behaving towards his preferred self.

- ❖ #6. Although he was doing drugs, he set a limit on doing intravenous drugs, even though his friends were also doing drugs including IV drugs. He set this limit because (1) they would mess up his life and (2) they were too expensive.
- ❖ #22. He really wanted to stick at a job, because of his history of theft.
- ❖ #28. Although the focus here is on setting limits on himself, his response to the cop who propositioned him with sex with a man for a job, entailed setting limits on others in order to protect himself. He chased the cop away and reported him at the police station. The limit setting was successful and after that incident he was not harassed again and further narratives about the police are much more positive and constructive (eg drug searches – #34).
- ❖ #60. When his caretaking of a property went sour, he was evicted and not paid. He considered taking legal action and restrained himself from physical violence, though only just. In the end, he took control of the situation and moved on.

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Theory construction



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Conclusion



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Partners



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Van Breda, 2016. Resilience Predictors of 24-month Transitional Outcomes

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