Introduction

Little research has examined the process of recovery from NSSI beyond assessing various therapeutic approaches. Existing theoretical models of recovery from mental illnesses may assist in understanding salient processes in NSSI recovery. Recovery is often said to be nonlinear and involves making progress, losing ground, and pressing forward again (Anthony, 1993). The subjective and experiential qualities of recovery have made operationalization and measuring it a challenge. Application of a five stage model (moratorium, awareness, preparation, rebuilding, and growth) developed for schizophrenia recovery (Andresen et al., 2006) may be fruitful in identifying specific pathway markers for NSSI recovery.

Objectives

- To explore theoretical and empirical fit of Andresen et al.’s five stage recovery model to NSSI recovery
- To identify benchmarks and processes through which recovery is achieved
- To develop a theoretical model capable of describing a diverse array of NSSI recovery trajectories

Method

Sample

- 20 youth participated a semi-structured qualitative interview regarding NSSI recovery experiences

Participant Characteristics

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Current Age</th>
<th>Mean: 20.6</th>
<th>Range: 15-24</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean Age of NSSI Onset</td>
<td>14.7</td>
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<td>Mean age of Disclosure to Parent(s)</td>
<td>16.4</td>
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Stage Definitions

- Moratorium: Characterized by denial, confusion, self-protective withdrawal and a sense of loss and hopelessness; no plan or commitment to stop self-injuring
- Awareness: The realization that self-injury is a problem and/or unnecessary; the first glimmer of hope for a better life and that recovery is possible
- Preparation: Taking stock of strengths and weaknesses regarding recovery, and starting to work on developing recovery skills
- Rebuilding: Self-injury free for 1 year or more and unlikely to injure again; may still have thoughts/urges but do not act on them
- Stability: Self-injury free for 1 year or more and unlikely to injure again; may still have thoughts/urges but do not act on them
- Secure: Self-injury free for 5 years or more and highly unlikely to injure again.

Results

- Current Stage: 9.5% in Moratorium, 19.0% in Awareness, 33.3% in Preparation, 23.3% in Rebuilding, 14.3% in Stability, and 0% in Secure.

Stage Definitions

- Moratorium: “My relationship with it is just... I don't know, I'm close to it. It's been there for me the whole time - all through high school, all through my problems. It's always been there and it never fails.”
- Awareness: “... in order for me to fully be able to to - basically be able to live my life without having all these secrets, all these kind of rituals that I have to do - then I have to stop.”
- Preparation: “I was writing in my journal and I was like 'I can do this. I can, you know, not self-harm I can talk to other people I can- I wrote down my list of coping skills to remind myself and I had started some… paintings and… I was like, this is, I'm really gonna try and commit to this.”
- Rebuilding: “… my concrete plan to stop self-injury is to continue to build on my coping skills. To continue to work on my relationship with myself and to continue to make recovery and treatment a priority.”

References
