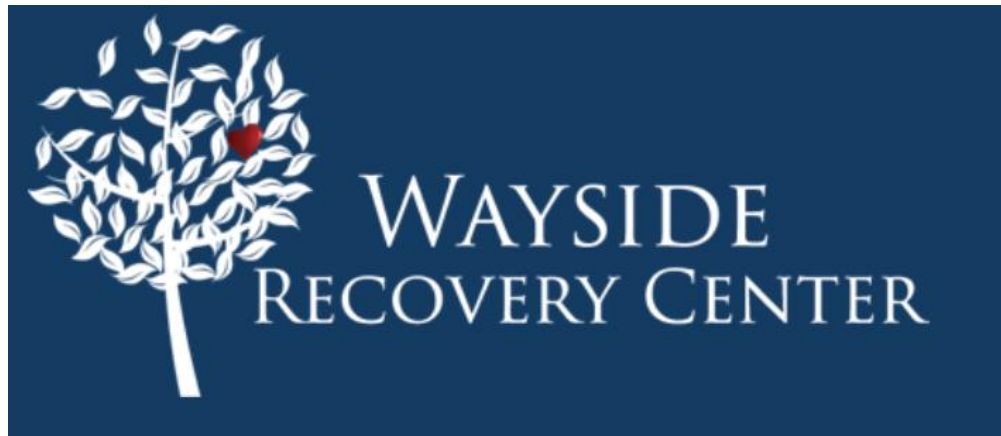


Center for Practice Transformation

Journaling to Support Recovery from Addiction: Preliminary Results from Two Pilot Studies of *Positive Peer Journaling*

Amy Krentzman, MSW, PhD
Associate Professor of Social Work
July 9, 2021

Gratitude for My Community Partners



Gratitude for Those Who Have Funded My Work

- University of Minnesota Clinical and Translational Science Institute: the Clinical and Translational Research Services Pilot Funding Program, UL1TR002494
- Grant in Aid program, University of Minnesota, Office of the Vice President of Research
- Agricultural Experiment Station: MIN-55-072, MIN-55-064, MIN-55-056



More gratitude...

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 - Rekha Banerjee
 - Lanae Staab
 - Nikki Tillman
 - Laura Orpen
 - Rebecca Donaldson
 - Lauren Glass
 - Sydney Stead
 - Jacob Otis
 - Maya Richman



Agenda

- What is journaling?
- What does research say about journaling?
- Positive Peer Journaling
 - Preliminary results from two studies of Positive Peer Journaling
- Closing thoughts and clinical recommendations about journaling to support addiction recovery

What is journaling?

I'm really this one in the dark. Just to the eye, there the
 ink bottom. However, I read the letter. I feel good. A sudden
 burst of positive energy like in the afternoon today. I can't
 get anything in the situation on the way up here. But still
 had some good conversations. Lots in letters and directly after. A
 short notice later today. Hopefully, that goes well. Directly, with
 me just as last time. I don't know if it's the first time back
 A little while back. The day of the day, can make my best. The
 the day was productive. Yeah, I don't know if it's all. I just
 realized I really felt to take the cold shower. Oh well.
 I don't spend my day so far today? I've spent it pretty
 well actually. I got some work done on the sheet music, I
 had to in today. I participated in 449. Got some work
 done in circles. Yeah, pretty good. We can let I need
 the book. At least one a week. Randomly right which
 let really cool. Yeah, a good day was for despite of the
 left right of sleep. Just keep it the random. Stop
 thinking & work. Stop thinking about whether you should be
 doing this or that. Just do it. If it's in your chance, just
 do it. Keep the random. Don't lose sight every in the
 day a lot. You can't on your bed - that's how you make
 your best & productive day. Don't tie your ambition and
 motivation to results. Be thankful of the craft itself,
 the work, the process. Stay focused. The results will
 come eventually. Don't think too much about the necessary
 details like how you'll receive. Just focus on the craft,
 because you love the craft.

[illegible]



Poll I, II, & III

Bullet Journaling



<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/can-bullet-journaling-save-you>

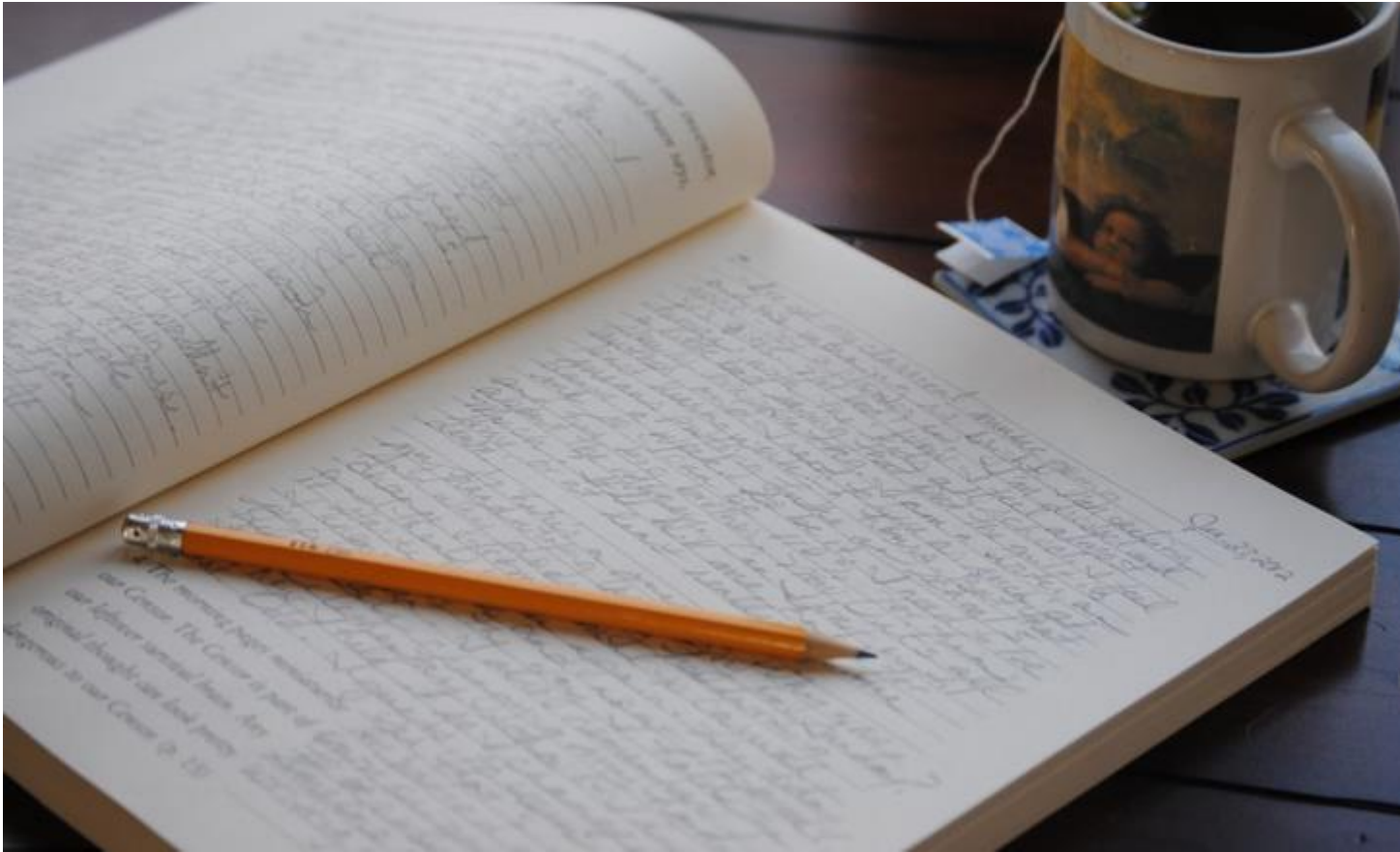


Monk Manual

WEEKLY PAGES

<https://monkmanual.com/products/monk-manual>

School of Social Work



Morning Pages

Julia Cameron

<https://lauraspeers.org/2016/05/06/why-you-should-write-morning-pages/>



Poll IV & V

Research on Journaling



Poll VI

Two Types of Journaling have been Studied

- Expressive writing
- Interactive journaling

Expressive Writing (Pennebaker & Beall, 1986)

Theory:

- Holding in emotions related to past negative events is stressful, and this stress is bad for health.
- Talking about these emotions is helpful
- But also *writing* about these emotions is helpful

Typical Expressive Writing Instructions:

“...write about your deepest emotions and thoughts about the most traumatic experience in your life” (Meshberg-Cohen, 2009, p. 52) every day for 15-20 minutes, for 3-5 consecutive days

Results:

- Participants initially feel worse, but then experience improvement, especially in physical health

Expressive Writing and Addictions: 3 Studies

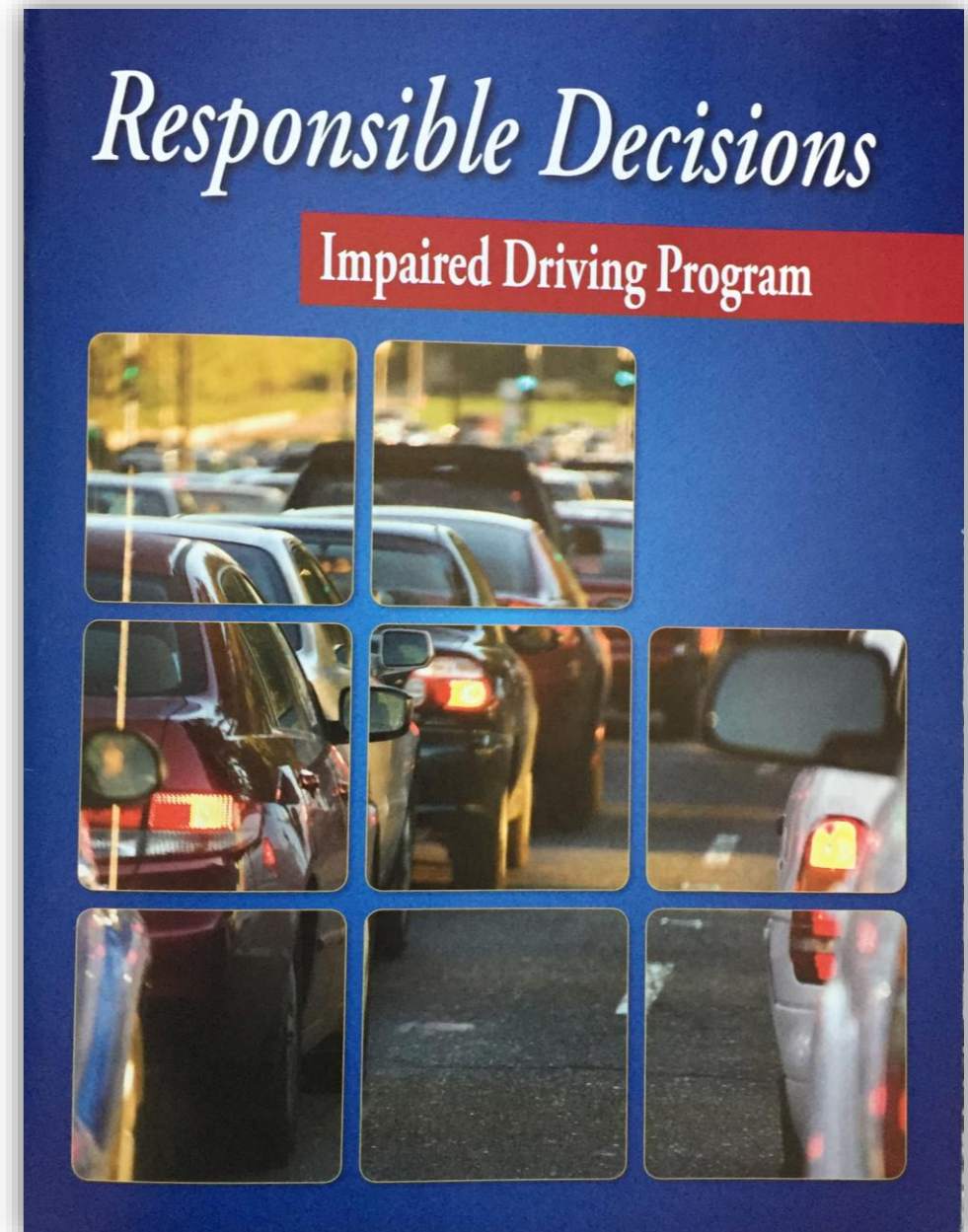
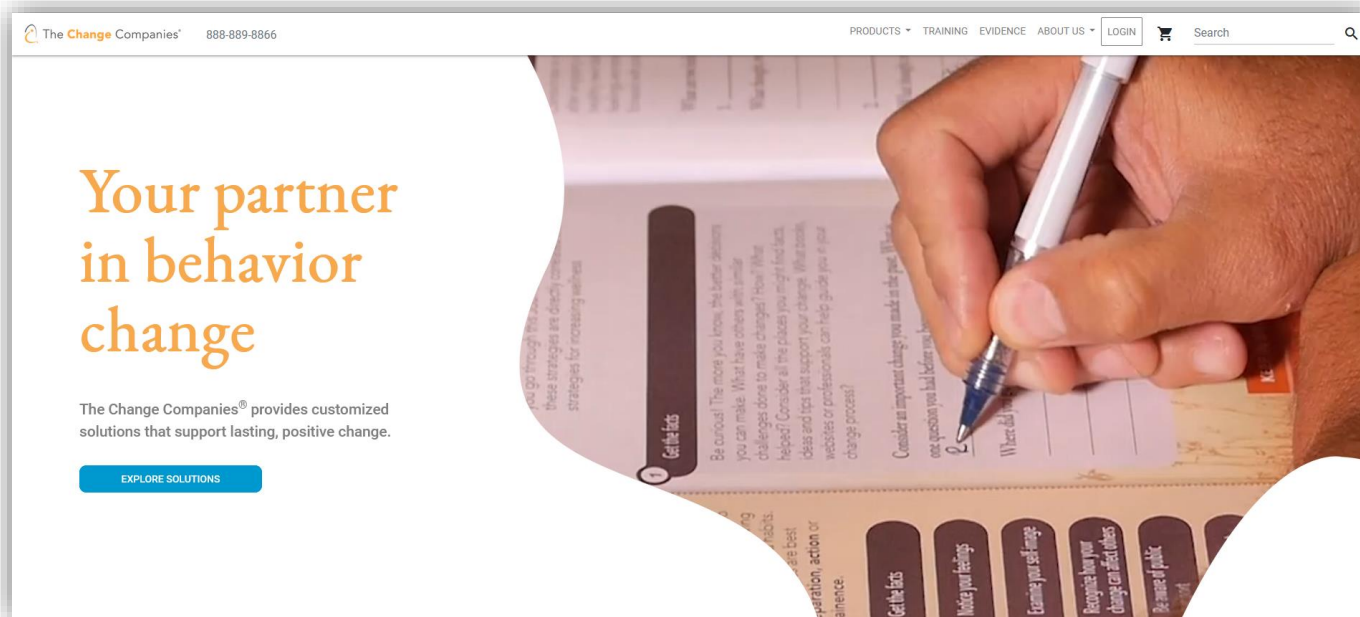
- Randomized controlled trial: 149 women in residential treatment. Results: Mental health symptoms lower at 2 weeks, no difference at 4 weeks (Meshberg-Cohen, 2009). *Short term but not long term benefit.*
- Randomized controlled trial: 22 men who have sex with men who are HIV positive and use methamphetamines. Results: Treatment group reported less drug use at 1 month follow up, control group reported fewer risky sexual behaviors and lower rates of HIV stress at 3 month follow up (Carrico et al., 2015). *Mixed results of small pilot study.*
- Single group study: 48 people but only 14 retained at 2 week follow up. Results: expressive writing had no impact (Baikie et al., 2006) *Many methodological limitations.*

Expressive Writing and Addiction: Interesting Takeaways

- Few studies
- Participants liked the writing exercises. They...
 - were enthusiastic about participation (Baikie et al., 2006)
 - felt that the writing exercise was helpful to them (Baikie et al., 2006)
 - would recommend expressive writing to others (Carrico, Nation, et al., 2015)

Interactive Journaling (Miller, 2014)

- Booklets
- www.changecompanies.net




Interactive Journaling (Miller, 2014)

- Brief passages of text are embedded in colorful graphics.
- Clients respond to prompts by writing directly into the booklet

Alcohol, Other Drugs and Their Effects

It takes time

If you go to bed intoxicated with a BAC of .20 and alcohol leaves the system at a rate of .015 per hour, this might be a picture of what happens:



Write the time of your arrest and BAC on the chart below. Subtract .015 from your BAC each hour and take a look at how long it took for your BAC to return to 0.

Time	Activity	BAC	Time of my arrest	My BAC at arrest
2 am	Goes to bed	.20		
3 am	Sleeps	.185		
4 am	Sleeps (Very restless with a lot of tossing and turning.)	.17		
5 am	Sleeps	.155		
6 am	Sleeps	.14		
7 am	Gets up for work	.125		
8 am	Drives to work	.11		
9 am	At work	.095		
10 am	Still legally intoxicated	.080		
11 am	Drives to lunch – tired	.065		
Noon	Feels irritable	.050		
1 pm	Still feels tired	.035		
2 pm	Head clearing	.020		
3 pm	Starting to feel better	.005		
4 pm	Sober at last!	.00		

Do you think you have ever gone to bed with a BAC of at least .20? ☐ yes ☐ no... If yes, did you feel impaired the next morning? ☐ yes ☐ no... Explain.

Did you realize you could be arrested for DUI while driving to work the next morning? ☐ yes ☐ no

What happens if you start drinking again before your BAC level returns to zero?

Alcohol, Other Drugs and Their Effects

Facts about other drugs and their effects

The information below and on the following pages offers facts about drugs/drug categories, their effects on the body and how they impact driving ability. While this information may not directly apply to your arrest, consider how you may be able to use these facts to help someone else.

Marijuana

Unlike alcohol, which is a relatively simple chemical, marijuana contains over 400 chemicals, 60 of which are unique to the marijuana plant. Marijuana, when lit, causes an additional 1,600 chemicals to be formed. The ingredient which creates the high is Delta-9-THC, referred to as THC.

Effects on the body: Slowed thinking, impairment of short-term memory and comprehension, altered sense of time, reduced motivation, irritation of respiratory tissue, possible lung disease, possible paranoia and psychosis.

Effects on driving: Impaired coordination, attention span and reaction time.

Central Nervous System Stimulants

This broad category includes caffeine, weight loss pills, amphetamines, methamphetamine, cocaine, crack and speed.

Effects on the body: Increased heart rate, blood pressure, respiratory rate and body temperature, alertness, energy, irritability, brief euphoria, anxiety, spasms and loss of coordination, possible seizures, paranoia, hallucinations, violent behavior, respiratory arrest, cardiac arrest and death.

Effects on driving: Exaggerated sense of confidence, increased risk-taking, impaired concentration, judgment, coordination and vision. Drug may mask fatigue and the fact that skills are impaired.

Have you experienced negative effects from marijuana and/or central nervous system stimulants while driving or have you ridden with someone who's experienced these effects while driving? ☐ yes ☐ no... Explain your answer.

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It takes time

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Have you experienced negative effects from marijuana and/or central nervous system stimulants while driving or have you ridden with someone who's experienced these effects while driving? ☐ yes ☐ no... Explain your answer.

Research on Interactive Journaling and Addictions

- Individuals convicted of DUI: Improved knowledge about alcohol and bolstered willingness to change (Scheck et al., 2013).
- Individuals with SUDs who are incarcerated: Interactive journaling reduced rates of criminal recidivism (Proctor et al., 2012).

Limitations to Existing Research on Journaling

- Expressive writing has focused primarily on negative events and trauma, few studies on addiction.
 - What about a journaling practice that would intentionally focus on what is going right with recovery?
- Interactive journaling has focused primarily on the initiation of behavior change versus the maintenance of behavior change.
 - What about a journaling practice that focuses on the maintenance of recovery, once someone is already in recovery?

Rationale for Positive Peer
Journaling, a journaling practice
that supports the positive
elements of, and therefore the
maintenance of, recovery

In early recovery, individuals with addiction are beset by negative emotion

- Individuals in early recovery are facing the **negative social and environmental consequences** of their addictive behavior (Forcehimes et al., 2007; Klingemann & Gmel, 2001; Miller et al., 1995)
- Changes in the brain that occur as the result of addiction **suppress positive affect and increase stress reactivity** (Ahmed et al., 2002; Koob, 2008; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), 2016)
- General psychological principles suggest that for everyone, **negative emotions prevail over positive ones** (Baumeister et al., 2001; Rozin & Royzman, 2001)

These negative emotions...

- ...have been strongly associated with **relapse** (Marlatt, 1996; Ramo & Brown, 2008; Sliedrecht et al., 2019)
- ...can contribute to the perception that life in recovery is painful and difficult, therefore why bother?

Reinforcement Theory

Reinforcement theory (Higgins et al., 2004) states that if recovery becomes more reinforcing than active addiction, people will do the hard work needed to maintain it (Laudet, 2011; McKay, 2017; Rothman, 2000; Rothman et al., 2016).

If an intervention can reduce negative emotion and help people feel better about life in recovery, this could encourage recovery and lower rates of relapse.

Introducing Positive Peer Journaling

What is Positive Peer Journaling?

- Journaling practice
- Elements of positive psychology
 - Promotes thriving, flourishing, wellness, and “the good life”
- Elements of behavioral activation
 - Action improves mood and fosters positive thoughts
- Elements of 12-step community practices
 - 10th step inventory
 - Action plan
- Taught in a group setting initially, transitioning to independent practice

Date: _____

Review Past 24 Hours

Good things that happened
Good Things

Bad things that happened
Bad Things

Things that I am grateful for
Grateful For

Good wishes for others
Good Wishes for Others

Codename: _____

Plan Upcoming 24 Hours

Work/Education
**Work/
Education**

Home/Housing
**Home/
Housing**

Joy
Joy

Health
Health

Recovery
Recovery

Spirituality
Spirituality

Community
Community

Social
Social

Financial
Financial

Amends/Repair
**Amends/
Repair**

• Observable • Measurable (Where • When • How Often • How Long • How much) • Smallest Next Step •

Date: _____

Review Past 24 Hours

[illegible]

Codename: _____

Plan Upcoming 24 Hours

Work/Education	Home/Housing	Joy
Health	Recovery	Spirituality
Community	Social	Financial
Amends/Repair		

• Observable • Measurable (Where • When • How Often • How Long • How much) • Smallest Next Step •

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Date: 4-24-19

Review Past 24 Hours

Good things that happened

- woke up sober
- beautiful weather
- took a hot shower
- I talked with one of my good friends
- took nap
- saw friend's baby

Bad things that happened

- cab didn't show
- I took my meds late
- Forgot to sign up to do laundry

Things that I am grateful for

- my recovery
- good food
- treatment center staff
- All my senses
- Coffee
- my 2 sober friends
- insurance
- to be alive
- Mom
- Health

Wishes for others

- Addicts still suffering
- homes for the homeless
- homes for abandoned pets
- the wrongly accused
- success for everyone here
- my children
- for all kids to be safe

Codename: Basil

Plan Upcoming 24 Hours

Work/Education

- Job apps

Home/Housing

- Remember to do chore at 4pm
- Review aftercare websites and discuss w/my parents

Joy

- crochet during class
- color new coloring pages

Health

- go for a walk
- take meds on time

Recovery

- do autobiography in group
- go to meeting 7pm

Spirituality

- read daily meditation

Community

- Serve at lunch

Social

- play cards
- go to the library with staff & peers

Financial

- phone bill due on the 26th

Amends/Repair

- Mom



Poll VII

Journal has

60 PPJ entry pages

12 Important life area pages

1 Each one, teach one script

2 bookmarks with suggestions



If you'd like, email me and I will email you written instructions for PPJ and a blank journaling page.

[illegible]

My next research idea: I would train someone in your organization to start a journaling group using these methods.

Amy Krentzman, akrentzm@umn.edu

Two Studies of Positive Peer Journaling

Study #1: Single-group study

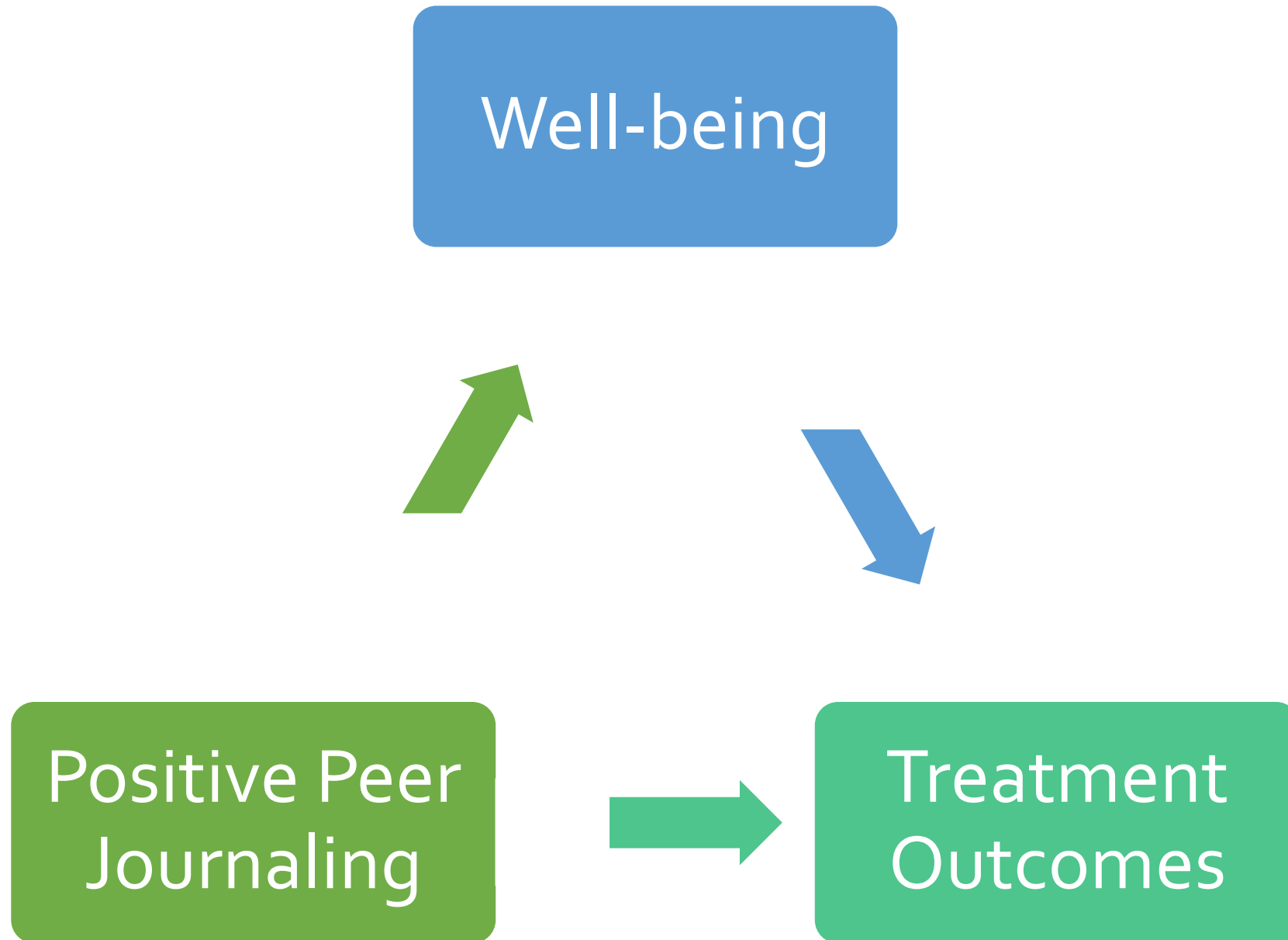
Study #2: Randomized experiment

Theoretical framework for both studies

Positive Peer
Journaling



Treatment
Outcomes



Well-being

- Negative affect
- Positive affect
- Feeling calm, at ease
- Optimism
- Satisfaction with Life
- Wellbeing
- Gratitude
- Reward from the environment
- Craving
- Happy with recovery
- Commitment to sobriety
- Confidence staying sober
- Recovery capital
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Stress
- Demoralization

Sample characteristics for both studies

Demographic and Social Characteristics

Characteristic	Single Group Study N=15 (2019)	Randomized Experiment N=82 (2020-2021)
Female	100%	52%
Age	M = 37, SD = 10	M = 39, SD = 11
% Black, Indigenous, People of Color	33%	26%
% household income < \$15k	73%	63%
Years of education	M = 14, SD = 2	M = 13, SD = 2
Had a legal issue	70%	43%
Experienced trauma	90%	95%

Clinical Characteristics

Characteristic	Single Group Study N=15	Randomized Experiment N=82
Substance most addicted to		
Amphetamines	47%	24%
Alcohol	27%	46%
Opiates	20%	25%
Cannabis	7%	3%
Other	0%	3%
Length of sobriety in days	M = 48, SD = 32	M = 140, SD = 188
Number of addiction treatment episodes	M = 6, SD = 3	M = 6, SD = 3

Single Group Study Design

Study Design and Timeline

If you join the study, you would continue with Wayside residential treatment as usual during study activities

Introductory
Meeting

The Group Phase

The Independent Practice
Phase

Exit Interview

Screening,
Informed
Consent,
Baseline
Questionnaire

Attend a group conducted by Dr. Krentzman from the University of Minnesota. This group will meet twice a week for four weeks at Wayside. In this group we will learn PPJ.

Once the group ends, continue to practice PPJ on your own 2-5 times per week for two weeks.

Final
questionnaire;
talk about your
experiences
being in this
study

Baseline

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

Week 5

Week 6

After Week 6

Positive Peer Journaling Study #1

Research Questions

- Feasibility: can they do it?
- Acceptability: do they like it?
- Impact: Did PPJ support recovery?

Results

Results: Feasibility and Acceptability

- Participants attended 2-8 group sessions (M=6.3, SD=2.1)
- Participants completed 196 journal entries: range per person was 2-27 (M=14, SD=7)
- Total number of bulleted items ranging from 9-104 (M=41, SD=18)

Date: 4-24-19 Codename: Basil

Review Past 24 Hours

Good things that happened	Bad things that happened
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • woke up sober • beautiful weather • took a hot shower • I talked with one of my good friends • took nap • saw friend's baby 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cab didn't show • I took my meds late • forgot to sign up to do laundry

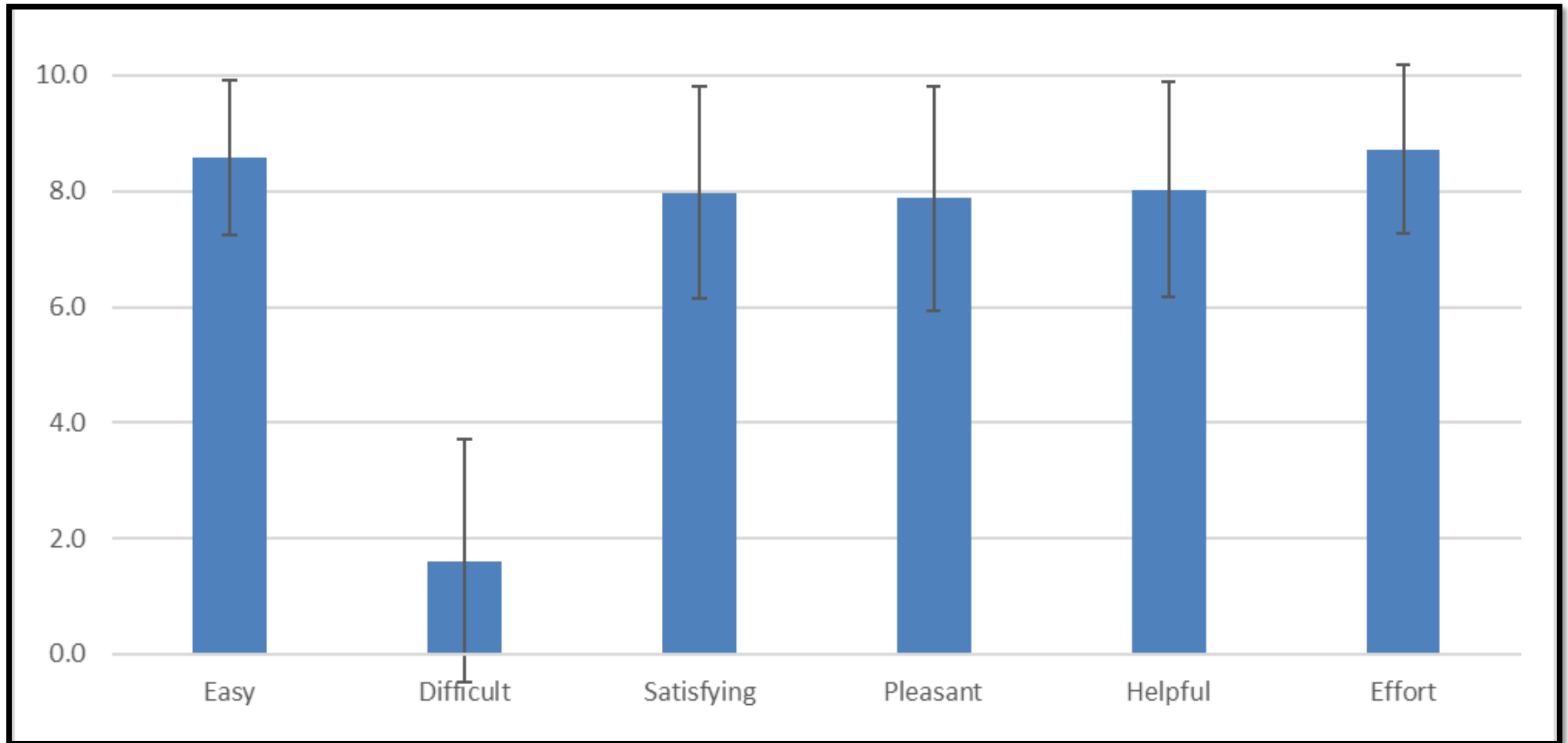
Plan Upcoming 24 Hours

Work/Education	Home/Housing	Joy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job apps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember to do chore at 4pm • Review aftercare websites and discuss w/my parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • crochet during class • color new coloring pages
Health	Recovery	Spirituality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • go for a walk • take meds on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do autobiography in group • go to meeting 7pm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read daily meditation
Community	Social	Financial
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve at lunch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • play cards • go to the library with staff & peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • phone bill due on the 26th
Amends/Repair		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mom 		

• Observable • Measurable (Where • When • How Often • How Long • How much) • Smallest Pieces Possible •

Feasibility and Acceptability:

“I would say that this Positive Peer Journal entry was...”



Study Completion and Treatment Outcomes

- 10 women completed the study
 - Attended at least 50% of group sessions &
 - Participated in the independent practice phase &
 - Completed the exit interview
- 73% of all participants and 80% of completers did not use substances
- 73% of all participants and 90% of completers left treatment on good terms

Results:

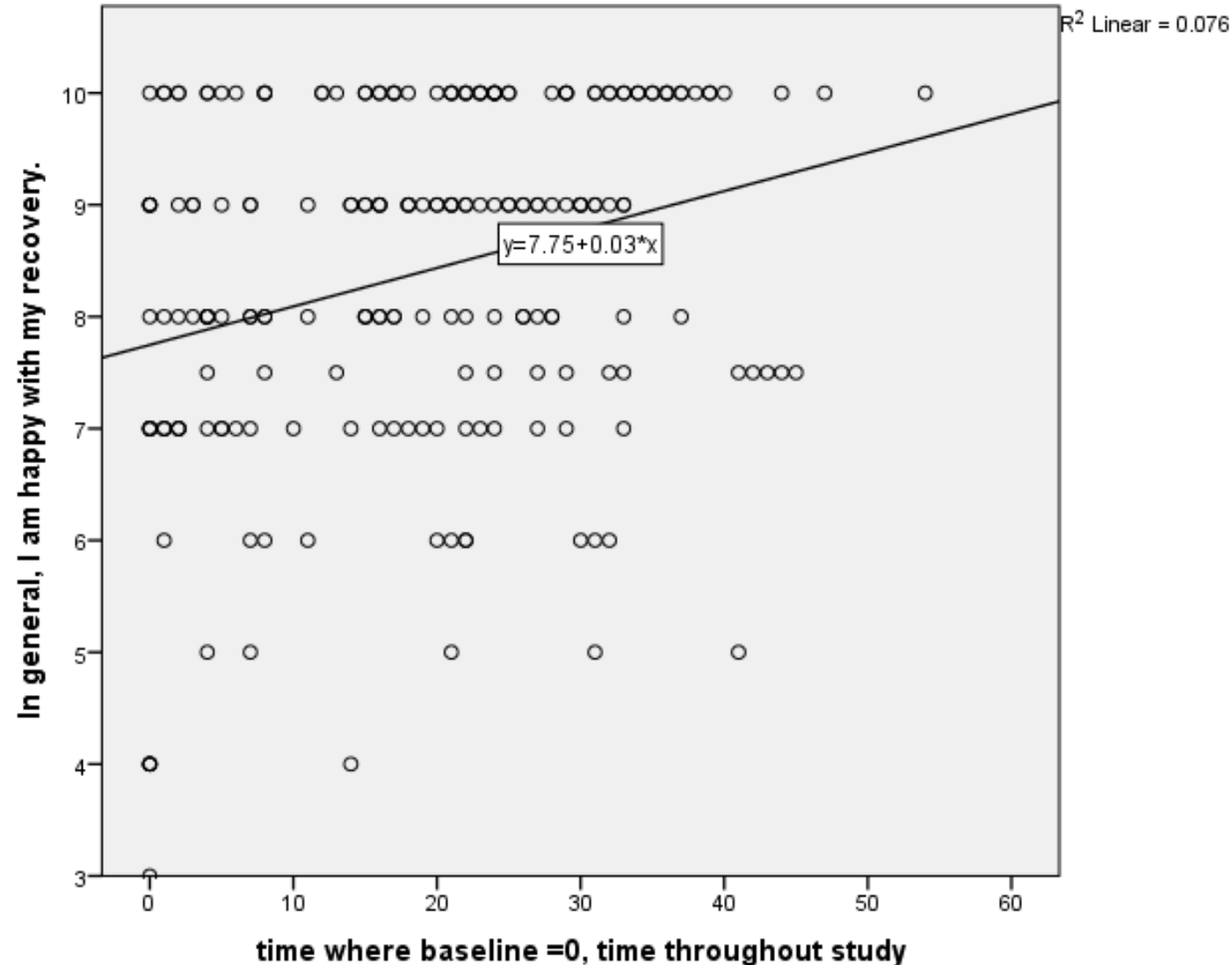
Impact of PPJ: Quantitative

Well-being

- Negative affect
- Positive affect
- Feeling calm, at ease
- Optimism
- Satisfaction with Life
- Wellbeing
- Gratitude
- Reward from the environment
- Craving
- Happy with recovery
- Commitment to sobriety
- Confidence staying sober
- Recovery capital
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Stress
- Demoralization

“In general, I am happy with my recovery”

Scale range 0-10
Slope $p=.001$



Results:

Impact of PPJ: Qualitative

Compared to “regular” journaling, PPJ was

- Easier
- Less time consuming
- More structured
- Recovery-oriented

PPJ emphasized what was positive about life in recovery

Date: 4-24-19

Codename: Basil

Review Past 24 Hours

Good things that happened	Bad things that happened
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• woke up sober• beautiful weather• took a hot shower• I talked with one of my good friends• took nap• saw friend's baby	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• cab didn't show• I took my meds late• Forgot to sign up to do laundry

Things that I am grateful for	Wishes for others
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• my recovery• good food• treatment center staff• All my senses• Coffee• my 2 sober friends• insurance• to be alive• Mom• Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addicts still suffering• homes for the homeless• homes for abandoned pets• the wrongly accused• success for everyone here• my children• for all kids to be safe

Plan Upcoming 24 Hours

Work/Education	Home/Housing	Joy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Job apps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remember to do chore at 4pm• Review aftercare websites and discuss w/my parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• crochet during class• color new coloring pages

Health	Recovery	Spirituality
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• go for a walk• take meds on time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• do autobiography in group• go to meeting 7pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• read daily meditation

Community	Social	Financial
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Serve at lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• play cards• go to the library with staff & peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• phone bill due on the 26th

Amends/Repair
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mom

• Observable • Measurable (Where • When • How Often • How Long • How much) • Smallest Pieces Possible •

- More good things than bad things
- More to be grateful for
- Bad things appeared less threatening

PPJ helped participants accomplish daily goals

"I have a bad memory"

"It helped me remember the things I had to actually do...it's always in the back of my head and I just got to pull it out"

"I always forget appointments that I have"

"I remembered so many things that I've been forgetting for months, literally"

"I'd write it down on post-it notes and lose them in my drawer. My top drawer is so messy, but I'd just throw everything in there."

"My first example would be my doctor's appointments that I would forget to make and remember to actually follow up with going to them."

PPJ helped women feel they were making progress in recovery: Noticing what was good

"...especially when you first get into a treatment center, you feel like ... everything is off-balanced, and so when you see it balancing the other way, when the good things are outweighing the bad ... it makes you feel like you can press forward more ... [to] show people, show yourself, and show whoever, that things are going better. It makes you feel much better about life."

PPJ helped women feel they were making progress in recovery: Getting Things Done

"I just noticed I would accomplish things and I would notice it when, if I wasn't journaling or thinking about it, I wouldn't have even thought about it. I just felt like I would evaluate my days and the things I was accomplishing and I would actually be able to sit in that happiness for a while, and be able to just see that I'm starting to get better."

Critiques of PPJ by Study Participants

- PPJ was repetitive
 - Partly because life in residential treatment was somewhat restricted
- Not ready to repair or make amends
- Obstacles to completing PPJ
 - Too busy, forgot, felt bad about forgetting
- A desire to write more in-depth

Positive Peer Journaling Study #2:

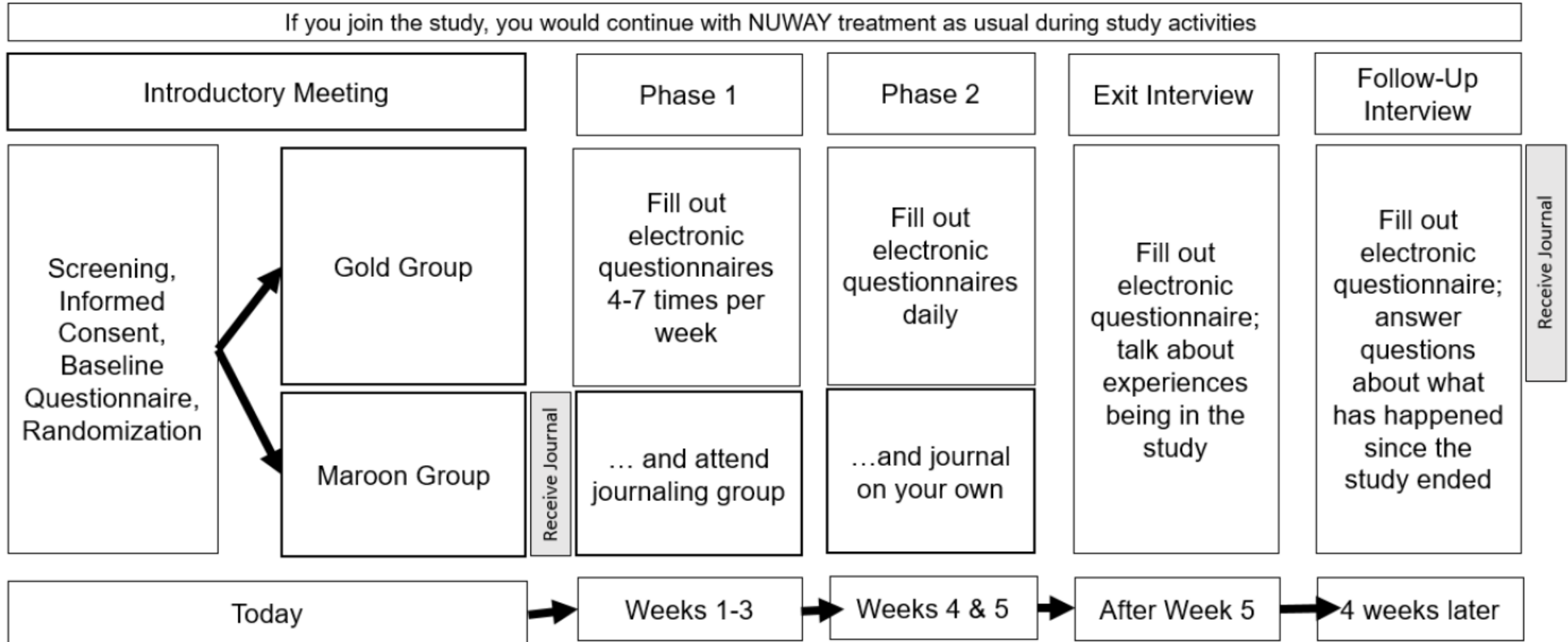
Randomized experiment

Conducted July 2020-May 2021

Research Questions for Study #2

- Feasibility: can they do it?
- Acceptability: do they like it?
- Impact: Did those who practice PPJ outperform those in the control group on measures of wellbeing and substance use?

Study Design and Timeline



We conducted the study with six cohorts, all activities conducted remotely during COVID-19

We recruited 10-16 people each cohort:

- July 2020
- August 2020
- October 2020
- November 2020
- January 2021
- March 2021



Poll VIII

People in the control group told us that filling out the questionnaires was helpful to their recovery!

Well-being

- Negative affect
- Positive affect
- Feeling calm, at ease
- Satisfaction with Life
- Gratitude
- Flourishing
- Is life better now?
- Craving
- Happy with recovery
- Commitment to sobriety
- Confidence staying sober
- Depression
- Anxiety

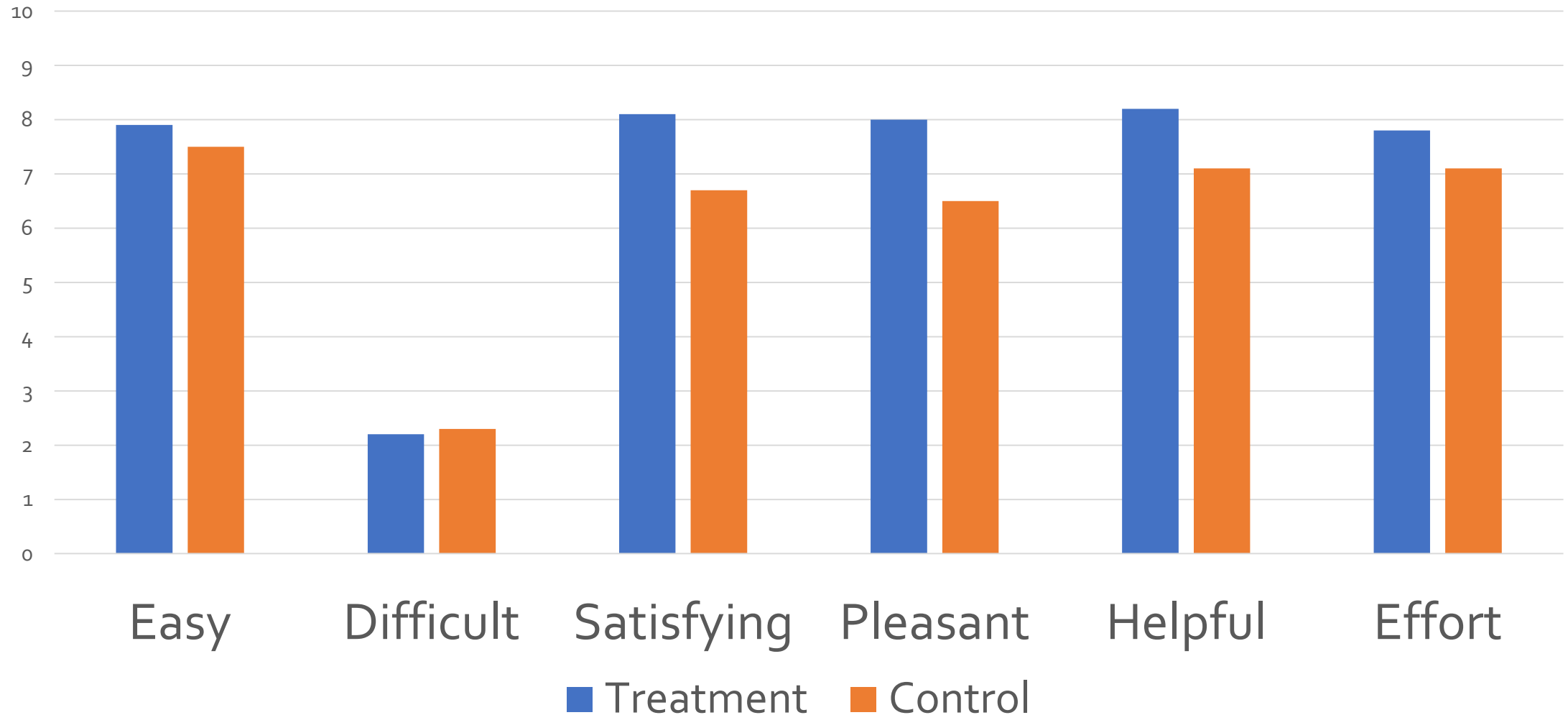
Results: Feasibility and Acceptability

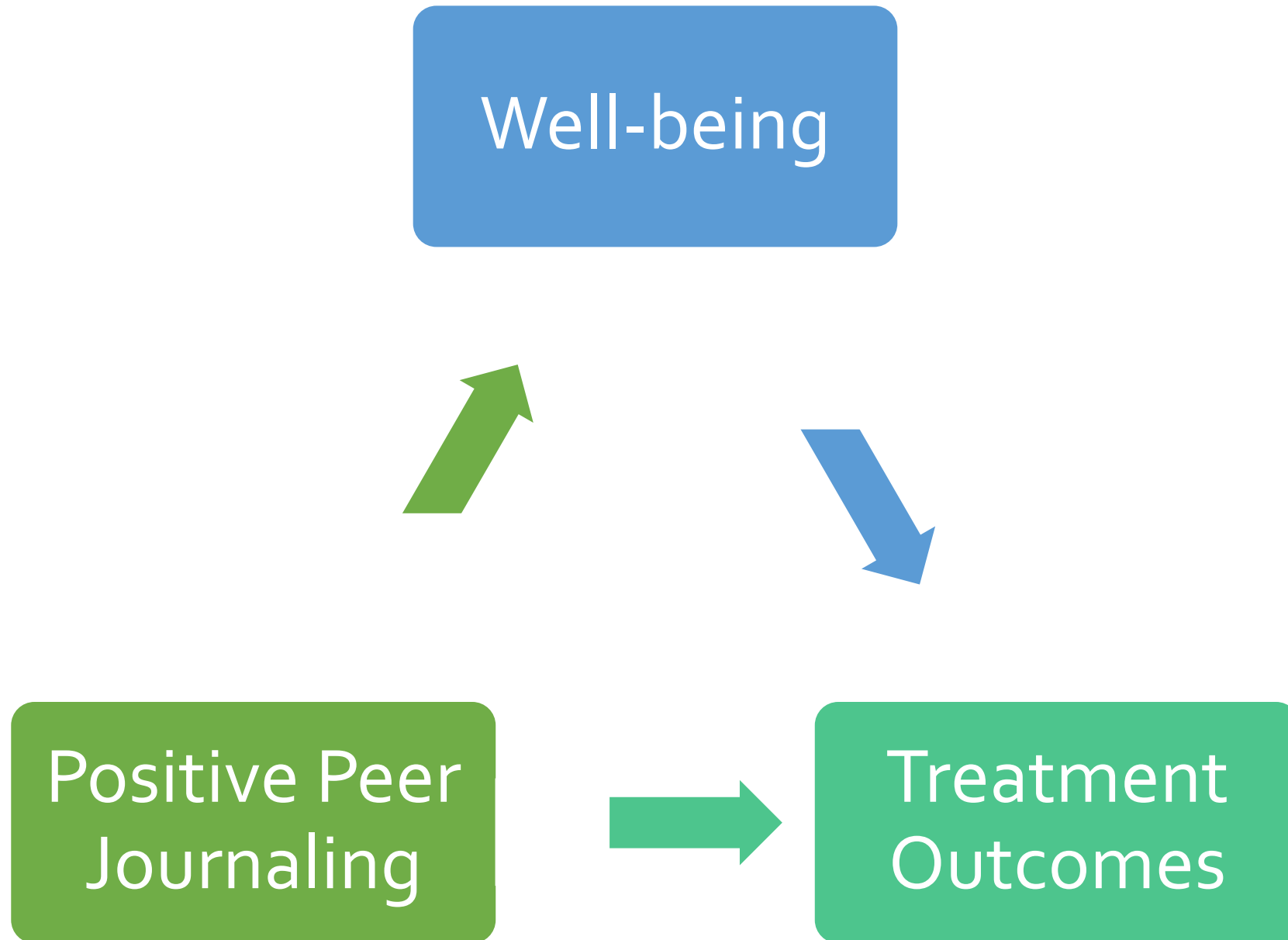
Group and PPJ Participation

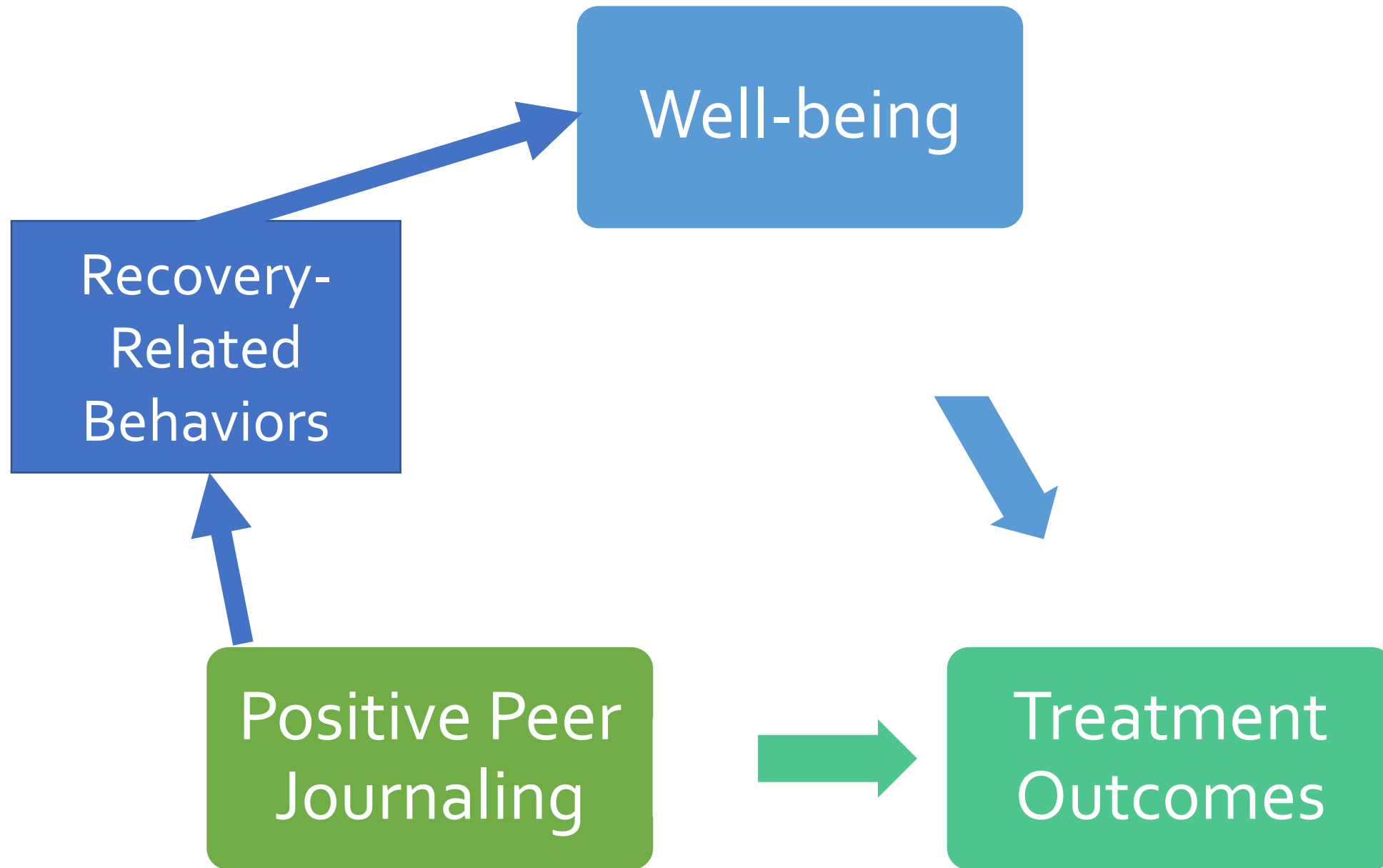
	Single Group N=15	Randomized Experiment N=39
Average # of groups attended per person	6.3	5.4
Total % of groups attended	78.3%	67.9%
# of PPJ entries submitted	196	585
Average # of PPJ entries per person	13	15

Feasibility and Acceptability:

“I would say that this Positive Peer Journal entry was...”







Effect Size

Average score for the journaling group **minus** the average score for the control group, expressed in standard deviations

Positive effect means that journaling scored **higher**

Negative effect means that journaling scored **lower**

Small effect = 0.20

Medium effect = 0.50

Large effect = 0.80

Recovery Related Behavior	After Group	After Indep	1 Month Later
I took a step toward one of my goals	-0.07	0.23	-0.16
I made a list of at least one thing I wanted to do that I'd find pleasurable	1.26	1.15	0.45
I did something enjoyable	0.04	0.66	0.06
I did something to help another person in recovery	0.22	0.12	0.15
I felt able to get things done	0.31	0.43	0.00
I spent social time with people who supported my recovery	0.01	0.48	0.09
I stopped to think over the past day	0.53	0.83	0.04
I wrote down things I wanted to get done in the near future	0.94	0.94	0.13
I thought about things I am grateful for or thankful for, but didn't write them down	-0.75	-0.95	-0.19
I wrote a list of the things I am grateful or thankful for	2.43	1.74	0.48
I remembered to do something important	0.24	0.22	0.14
I realized that more good things than bad things were happening	0.44	0.44	0.08
I thought of people in need and, in my mind, I sent them good wishes	0.44	0.14	0.31
I directly wished someone well, in person or by phone, text, or internet	0.22	0.04	-0.37
I checked in on someone I care about and asked how they were doing	-0.29	-0.10	-0.43
I realized that there is a lot I am grateful or thankful for	0.35	0.36	0.43

Well-being Indicators	After Group	After Indep	1 Month Later
Negative Affect	-0.44	-0.12	-0.39
Positive Affect	0.17	0.19	-0.19
Serenity Affect	-0.17	0.12	0.18
Craving for drugs or alcohol	-0.09	0.06	0.18
Anxiety	0.08	-0.16	-0.32
Depression	-0.17	-0.29	0.02
Satisfaction with Life	0.30	0.17	-0.02
Commitment to Sobriety	0.08	0.08	0.02
Trait gratitude	0.15	-0.02	0.00
Confidence in staying sober for the next 90 days	0.10	0.00	0.02
Overall, I am happy with my recovery	-0.07	0.17	-0.05
Flourishing	-0.08	0.03	-0.01
Life is much better now in recovery	0.13	0.36	0.00

These results are preliminary

Conclusions



What the research on journaling in general shows

- Expressive writing shown to improve physical health
- Interactive journaling shown to motivate people to make positive change

What 2 Studies of Positive Peer Journaling Show

Preliminary results: implement with caution

- Participants described an enhanced ability to notice that “more good than bad” was happening in recovery
- Participants described realized that “there is so much to be grateful for”
- Participants noted that negative things felt less menacing
- Participants reported an increased ability to accomplish daily tasks that were important to them

What 2 Studies of Positive Peer Journaling Show

Preliminary results: implement with caution

Single Group Study

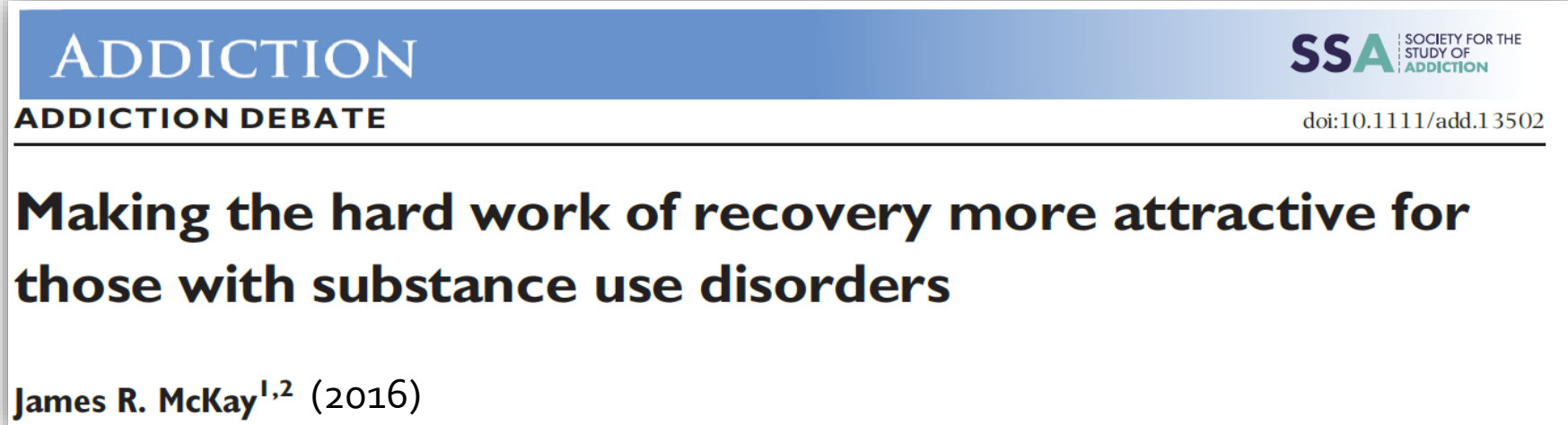
- Satisfaction with life
- Well-being
- Rewards from environment
- Happy with recovery
- Confidence staying sober
- Craving
- Depression
- Demoralization

Randomized Experiment

- Recovery oriented behaviors
- Gratitude
- Satisfaction with life
- Life is better now in recovery
- Depression

What all journaling research shows

- Participants like it
- Willing to do it
- Will recommend it to others
- Journaling can be an aspect of treatment that they find enjoyable and validating.



Recommendations for Clinical Practice

From my experience, trying out a wide range of journaling practices, and reviewing the research literature on journaling, it is reasonable to conclude that the benefits of any kind of journaling are similar and overlapping

Benefits of journaling in my own words...

- Getting negative emotions out
- Safe space free of judgement
- Reveal a formerly hidden but useful truth about one's self
- Externalize thoughts
- Self discovery
- Soul searching
- Slow a person down
- Self revelation
- Strengthening one's sense of self

Journaling is useful to recovery because it is an act of self discovery

... and in early recovery, people are discovering who they are as a sober person. Journaling should strengthen their emerging sober identity.

“Freestyle” journaling might be focused on negative material

... but research shows that this can be helpful. Perhaps recommend that when journaling, conclude with a gratitude list.

Recommend Elements of PPJ

Date: 4-24-19

Codename: Basil

Review Past 24 Hours

Good things that happened	Bad things that happened
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • woke up sober • beautiful weather • took a hot shower • I talked with one of my good friends • took nap • saw friend's baby 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cab didn't show • I took my meds late • Forgot to sign up to do laundry

Things that I am grateful for	Wishes for others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • my recovery • good food • treatment center staff • All my senses • Coffee • my 2 sober friends • insurance • to be alive • Mom • Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addicts still suffering • homes for the homeless • homes for abandoned pets • the wrongly accused • success for everyone here • my children • for all kids to be safe

Plan Upcoming 24 Hours

Work/Education	Home/Housing	Joy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job apps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember to do chore at 4pm • Review aftercare websites and discuss w/my parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • crochet during class • color new coloring pages
Health	Recovery	Spirituality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • go for a walk • take meds on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do autobiography in group • go to meeting 7pm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read daily meditation
Community	Social	Financial
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve at lunch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • play cards • go to the library with staff & peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • phone bill due on the 26th
Amends/Repair		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mom 		

• Observable • Measurable (Where • When • How Often • How Long • How much) • Smallest Pieces Possible •

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