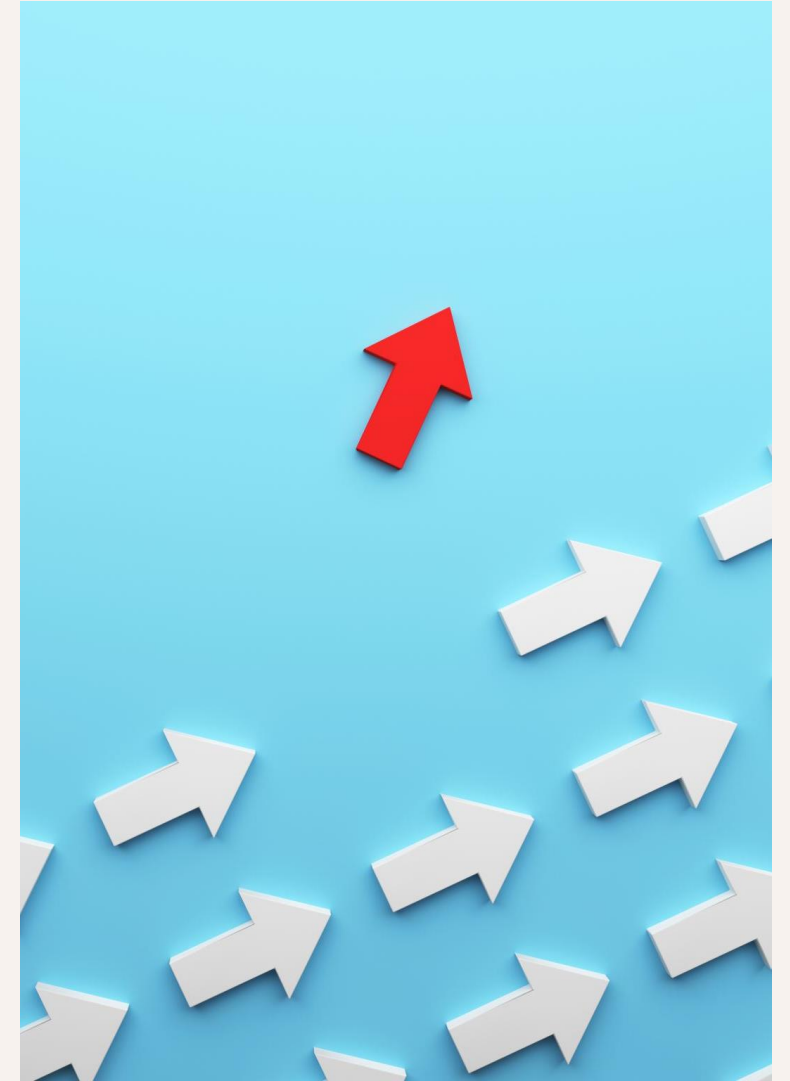


OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO CHANGE: HOW LONGING FOR THE PAST CAN BE USED TO FACILITATE A BETTER FUTURE

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NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

1. lose weight
2. exercise
3. drink more water
4. quit smoking
earlier to bed
cards





"I HATE change!"

"Me too!"

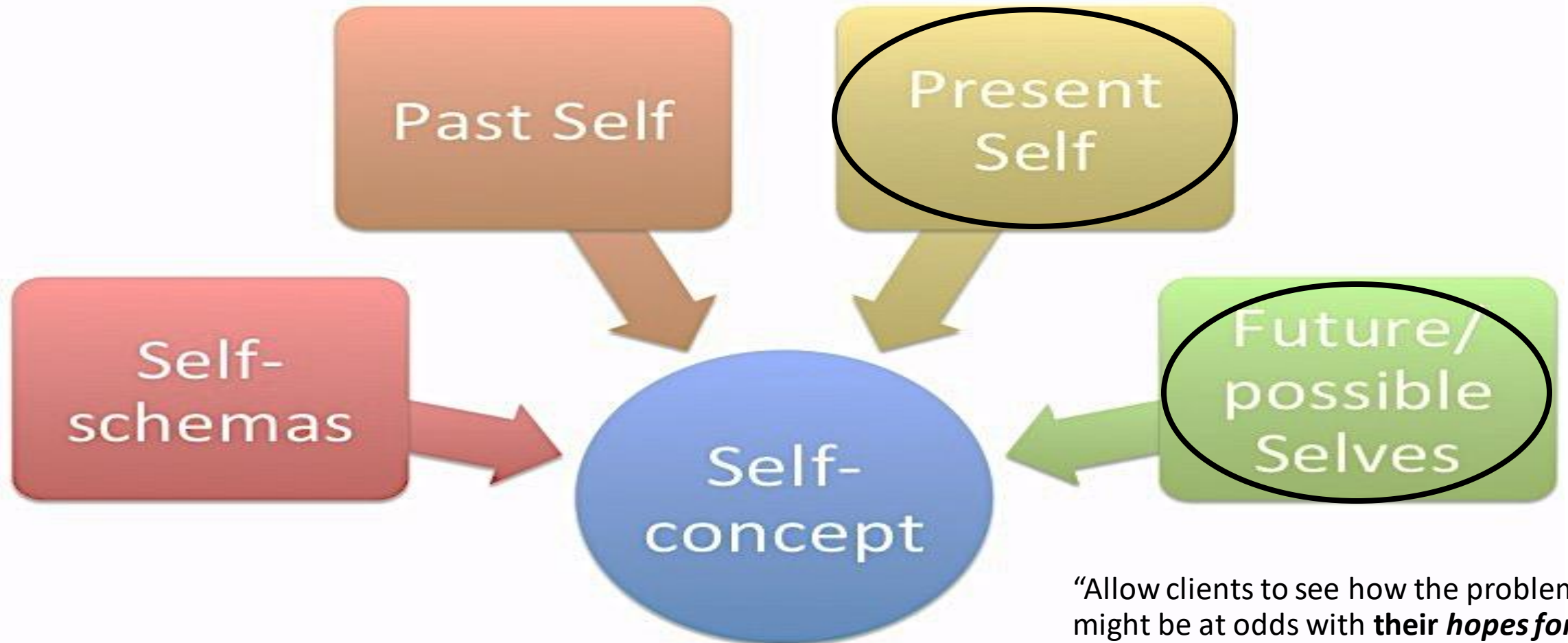
An illustration of a person in a blue silhouette struggling to climb a blue ladder. The person is positioned on the left side of the frame, with their body angled upwards. Their right arm is extended upwards, reaching for a higher rung, while their left arm is bent. Their legs are spread apart, with the right leg bent and the left leg extended downwards. The ladder consists of several horizontal rungs and a vertical frame. The background is white. The person's head is a solid blue circle, and their torso is a larger blue shape. The overall style is minimalist and graphic.

4 COMMON BARRIERS TO ADDICTION RECOVERY

Barriers to recovery from addiction prevent millions from seeking help. With help, you can overcome barriers and achieve sobriety.

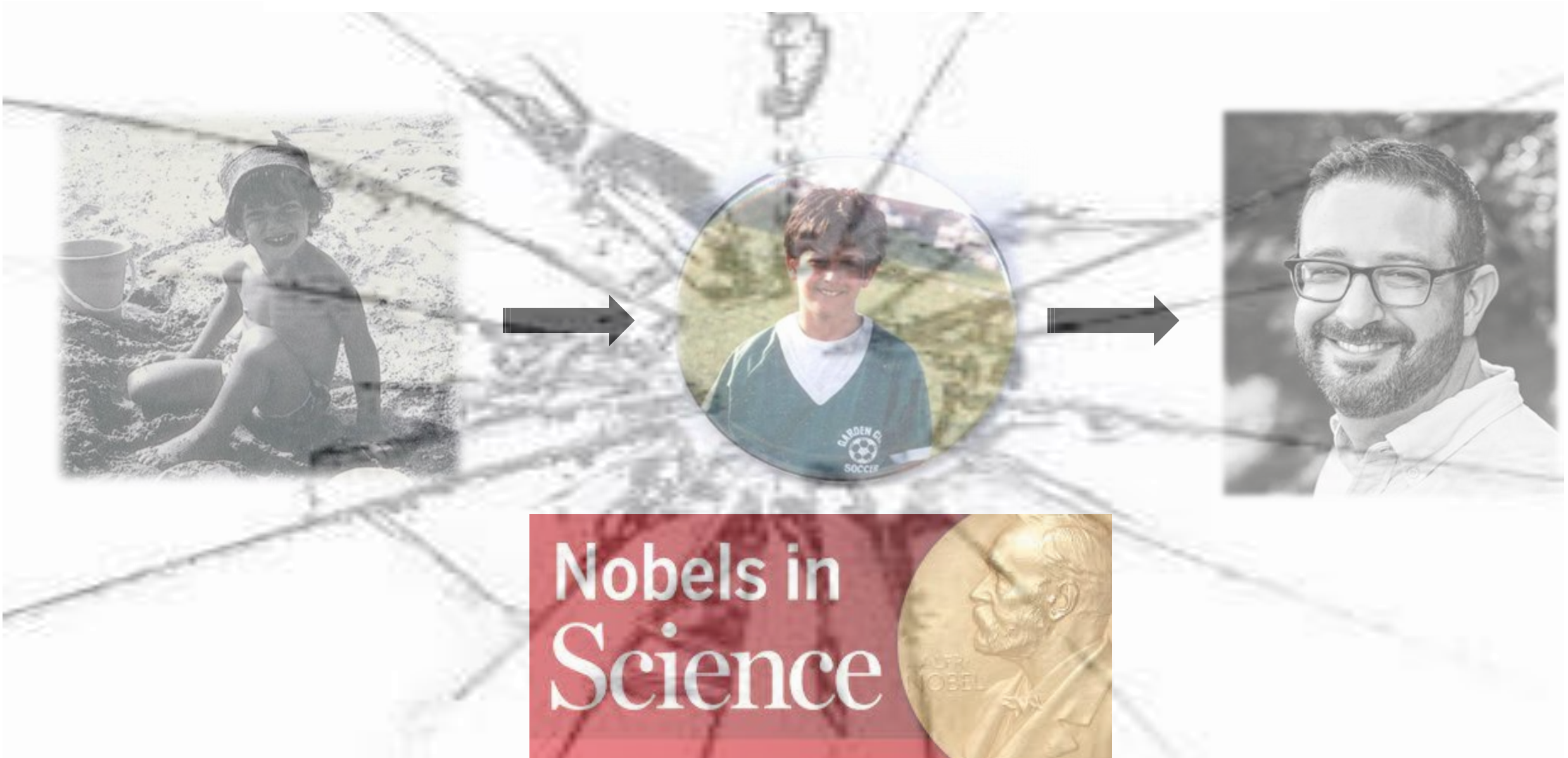
1. Denial or unwillingness to seek treatment.
2. Stigma or shame about addiction.
3. Lack of access to a quality treatment program.
4. Financial concerns about how to pay for treatment.

Treatment common denominator: Looking forward



“Allow clients to see how the problem might be at odds with **their hopes for the future.**” (Rollnick & Allison, 2004)

Self-Discontinuity



Benefits of feeling self-continuous



High levels of
psychologically well-
being (Dunkel, 2005)

A desire to achieve
and maintain well-
being (Chandler, Lalone,
Sokol, Hallett, & Marcia, 2003)

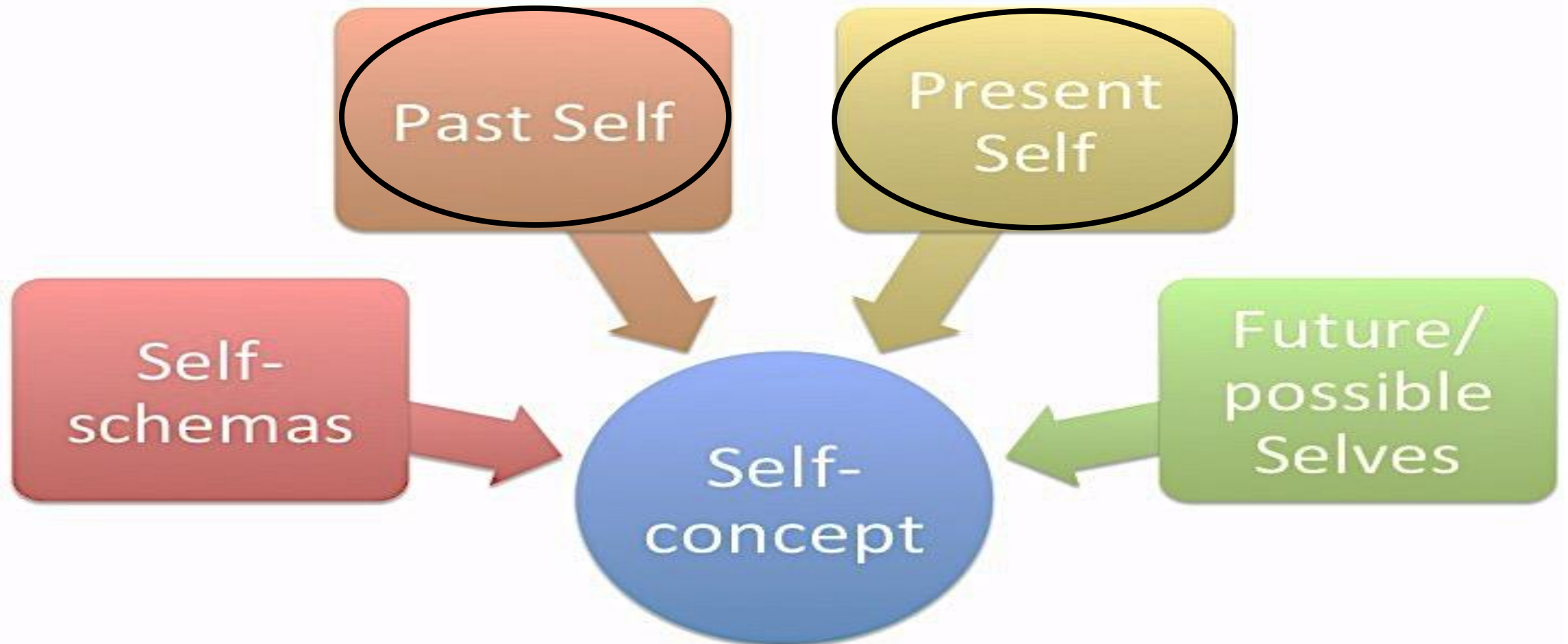
Elevated levels of
self-esteem (Diehl,
Jacobs, & Hastings, 2006)



As for a future life, every man must judge for himself between conflicting vague probabilities.

~ Charles Darwin

A new denominator: Looking back



Self-discontinuity and behavior change

- When unwanted change has befallen the self people see a disconnection between the present and the past
- Anecdotal evidence from the clinical setting that this disconnection is motivating (Nuske & Hing, 2011)





NOSTALGIA

sentimental longing for the past

People who
feel nostalgia
report
heightened...

Positive affect and self-regard (Hepper et al., 2021; Sedikides et al., 2023)

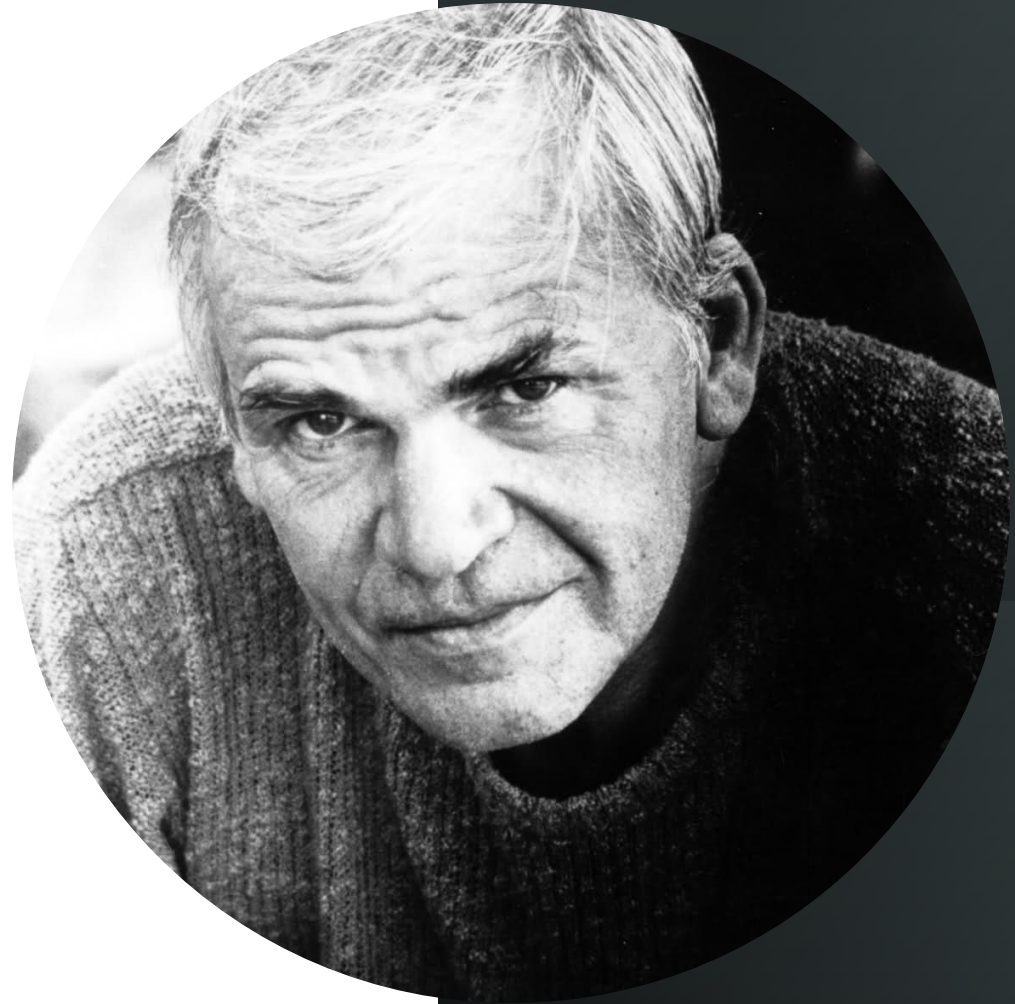
Strong sense of belonging (Wildschut et al., 2006; Wildschut & Sedikides., 2021)

Meaning in life (Juhl & Biskas, 2023; Routledge et al., 2011)

Self-continuity (Sedikides et al., 2014; 2023)

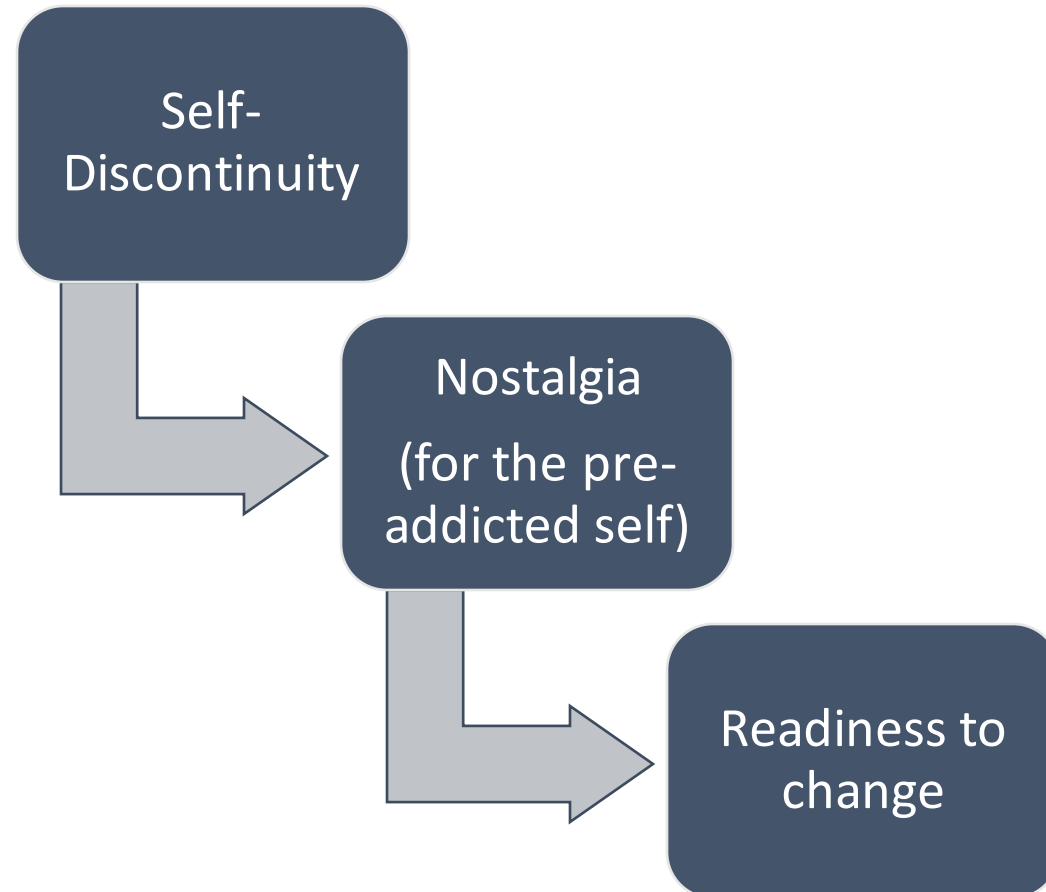
Nostalgia is the
suffering caused by
an unappeased
yearning to return.

—Milan Kundera



The Bright Side of Self-Discontinuity: Feeling Disconnected With the Past Self Increases Readiness to Change Addictive Behaviors (via Nostalgia)

Hyoun S. (Andrew) Kim¹ and Michael J. A. Wohl¹



Self-discontinuity induce nostalgia and behavior change: Study 1

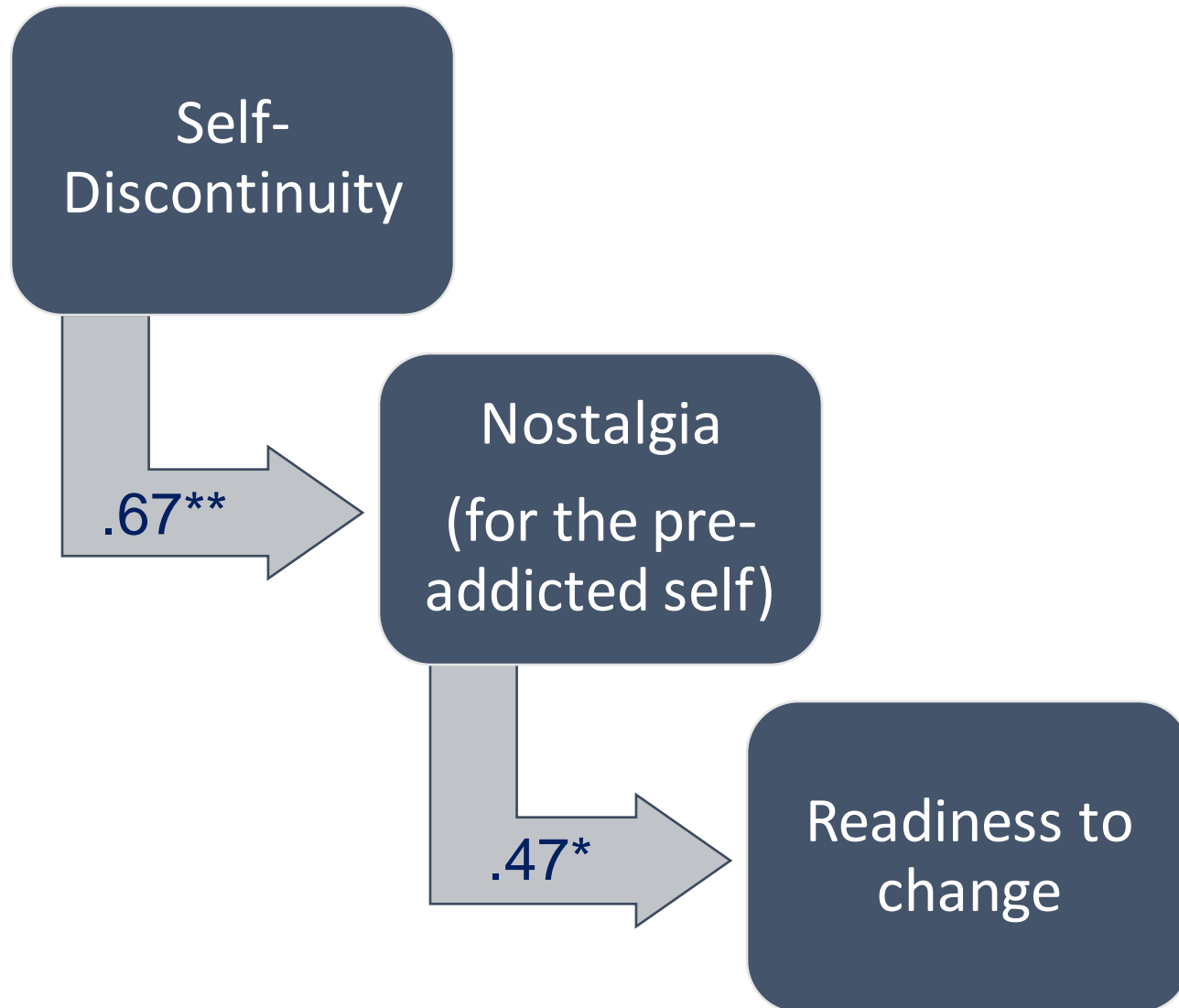
Participants

- 79 Disordered Gamblers (52 males)
- 19-72 years old ($M = 34.15$, $SD = 13.24$, 4 unreported)

Measures

- Self-Discontinuity (Iyer & Jetten, 2011)
- Nostalgia (Iyer & Jetten, 2011)
- Readiness to Change questionnaire (RoC; Rollnick, Heather, Gold & Hall, 1992)

The past as a pathway to change



Self-discontinuity induce nostalgia and behavior change: Study 2

Participants

- 80 Disordered Gamblers (60 males)
- 20-62 years old ($M = 29.66$, $SD = 7.83$)

Procedure

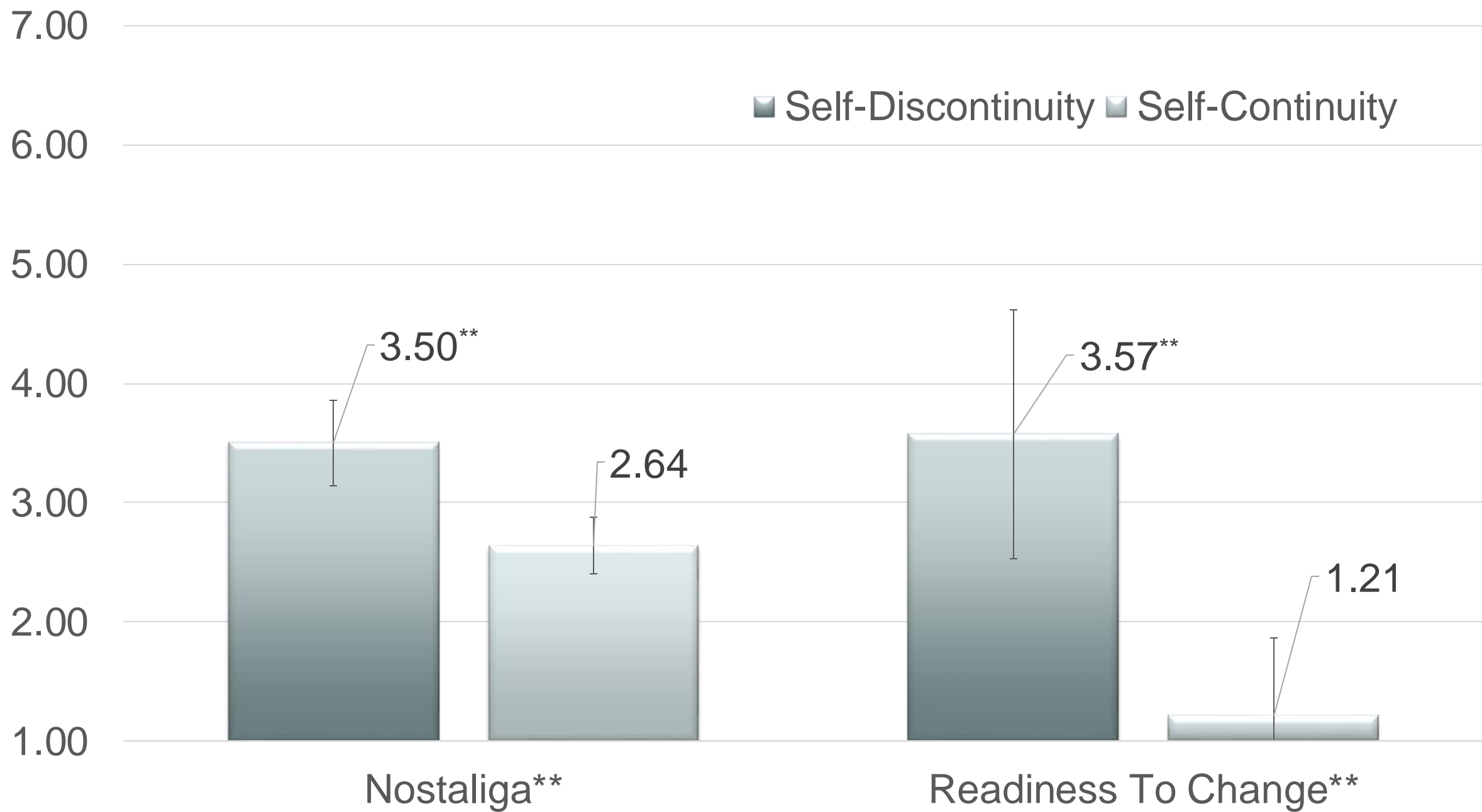
- Manipulation:
Self-discontinuity vs. Self-continuity
- Measure:
Nostalgia (Iyer & Jetten, 2011)
Readiness to Change (Biener & Abrams, 1991)

Gambling Can [Does Not] Change the Self

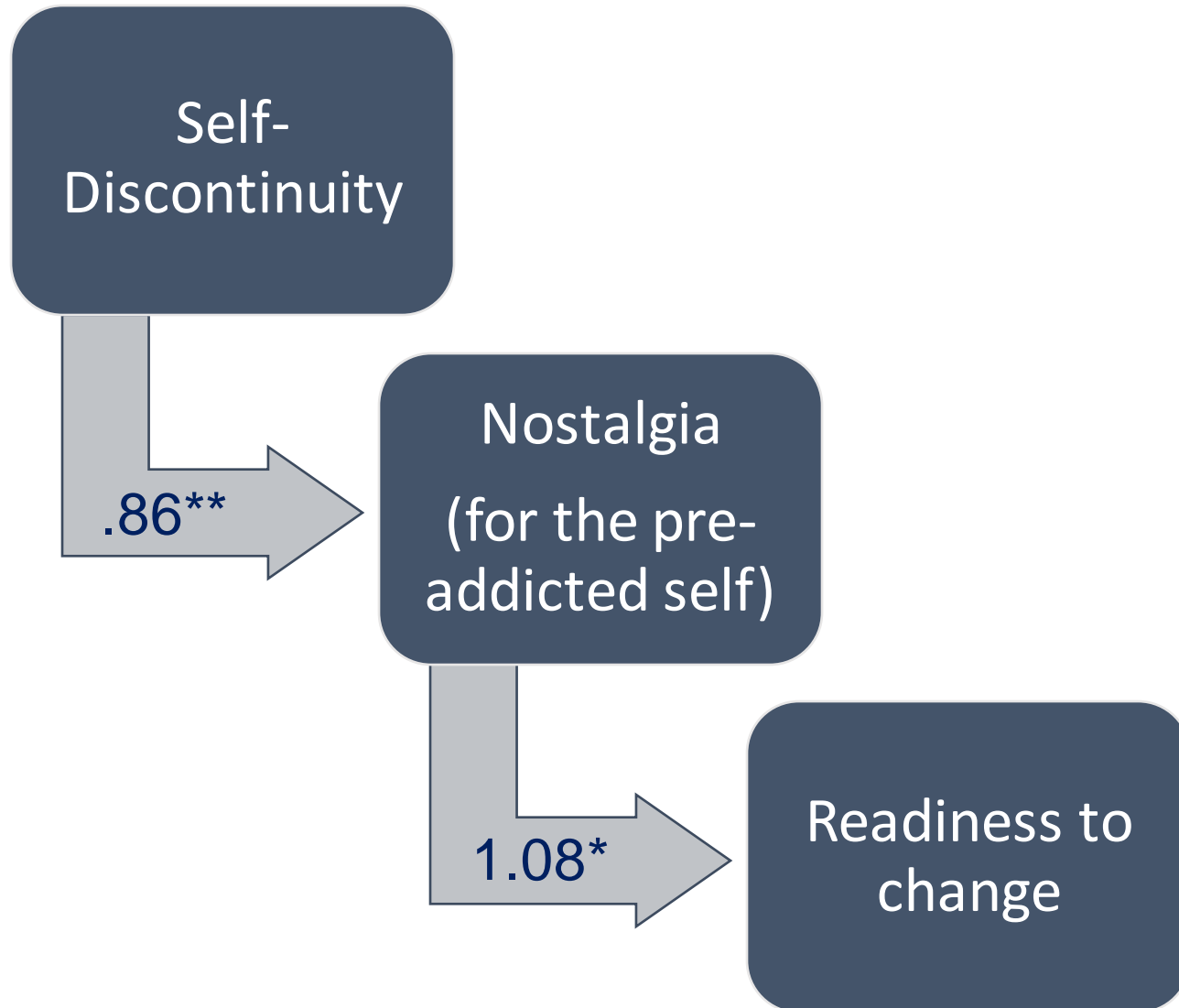
Recent studies published in New England Journal of Medicine suggests that, along with [despite] the potential negative consequences associated with heavy gambling (e.g., financial, interpersonal problems), heavy gambling can also result in losing your sense of self [does not change your sense of self]. That is, people who gamble heavily report having undergone fundamental negative changes to their behaviors and moods and begin to dislike the person they have become compared to the person they were before engaging in gambling [people who gamble are the same person today, compared to the person they were before engaging in gambling].

“Gambling ...
has eroded
every fiber of
my being.”

“Before gambling, I was
always happy ... after
entering the casino and
winning my first night, it
caught me in an endless
cycle of pain.”



The past as a pathway to change



95% CI [.55, 1.86]

4/4/14



“Change In the Antithesis of Addiction”
- DiClemente (2006)

Is nostalgia associated with attempted change?

Participants

- 152 Gamblers (95 males); 18-66 years old ($M = 35.64$, $SD = 10.92$)

Phase I:

- Problem gambling severity (PGSI; Ferris & Wynne, 2001)
- Manipulation: Self-discontinuity vs. Self-continuity
- Measure: Nostalgia (Iyer & Jetten, 2011)

Phase II (1 month later):

- Attempted change in last month

Discontinuity-induced nostalgia improves the odds of a self-reported quit attempt among people living with addiction[☆]

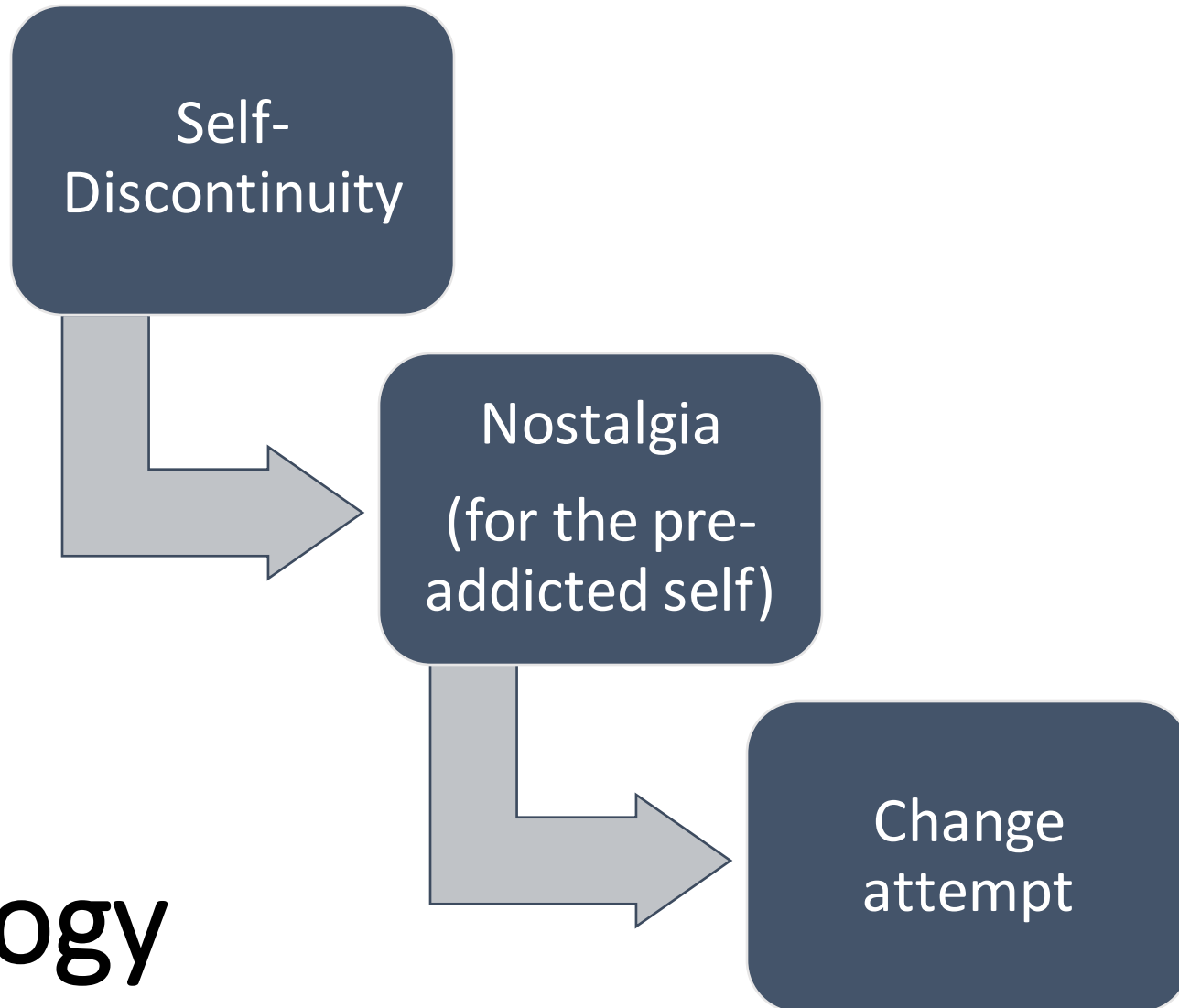
Michael J.A. Wohl^{a,*}, Hyoun S. Kim^a, Melissa Salmon^a, Diane Santesso^b, Tim Wildschut^c,
Constantine Sedikides^c

^a Carleton University, Canada

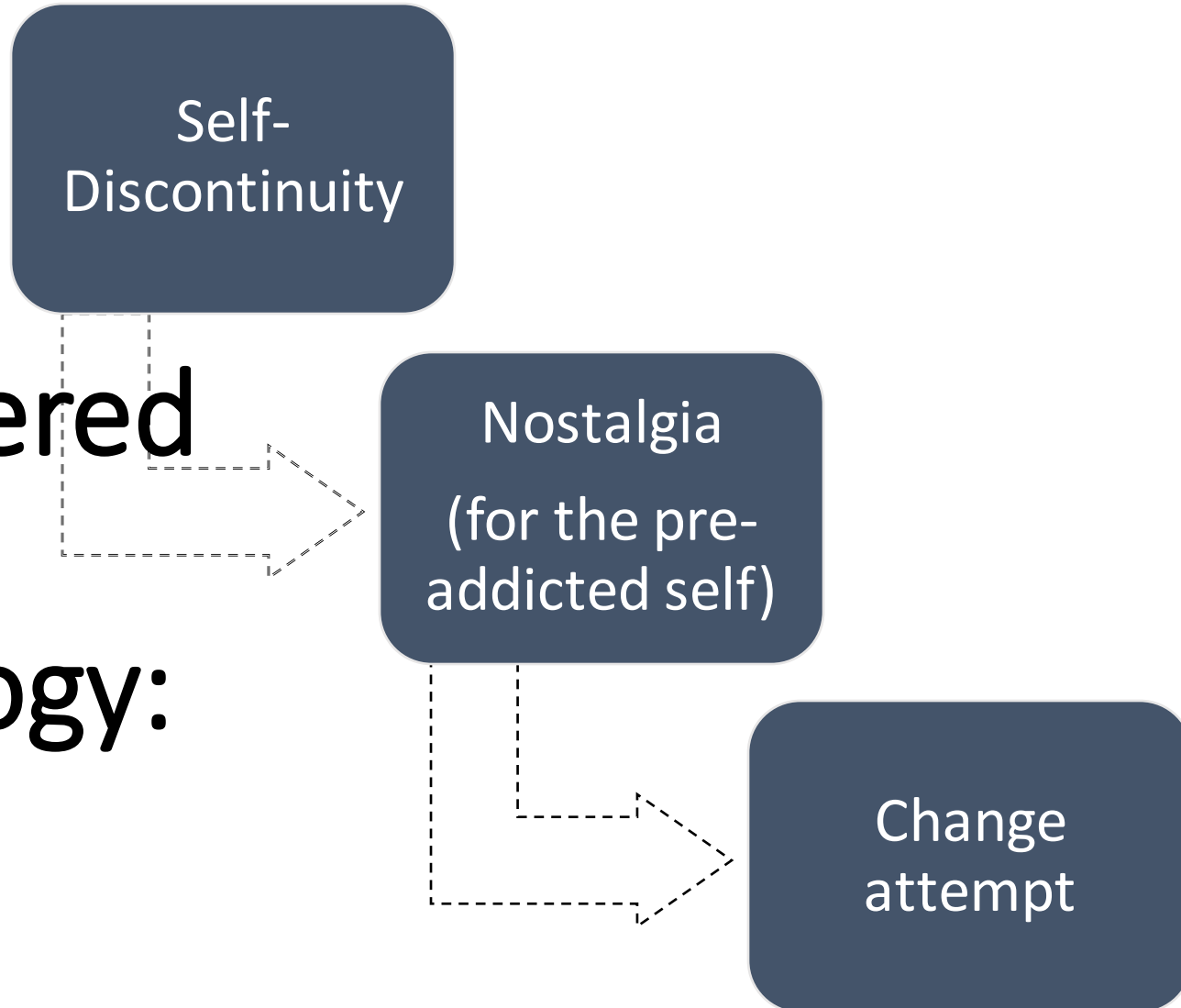
^b University of Winnipeg, Canada

^c University of Southampton, United Kingdom

High in
disordered
gambling
symptomatology



Low in disordered
gambling
symptomatology:
No effect



Extension to Alcohol Misuse



Participants

174 Drinkers (88 males)

22-77 years old ($M = 33.45$, $SD = 10.35$)

Nostalgia and behavior change among problem drinkers

Participants

- 174 Drinkers (88 males)
- 22-77 years old ($M = 33.45$, $SD = 10.35$)

Procedure:

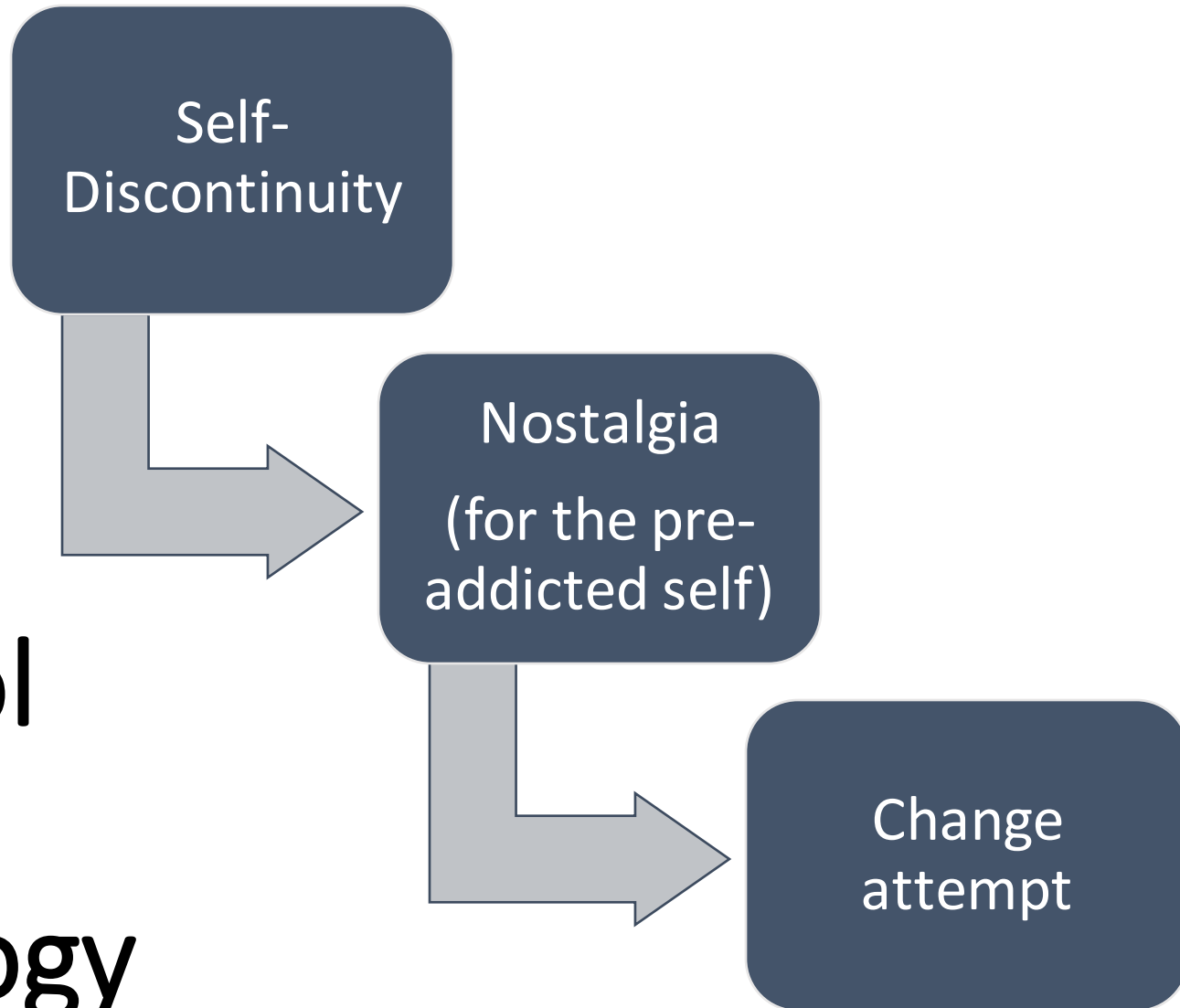
Phase I:

- Problem drinking severity (AUDIT; Saunders et al., 1993)
- Manipulation: Self-discontinuity vs. Self-continuity
- Measure: Nostalgia (Iyer & Jetten, 2011) Readiness to Change (Biener & Abrams, 1991)

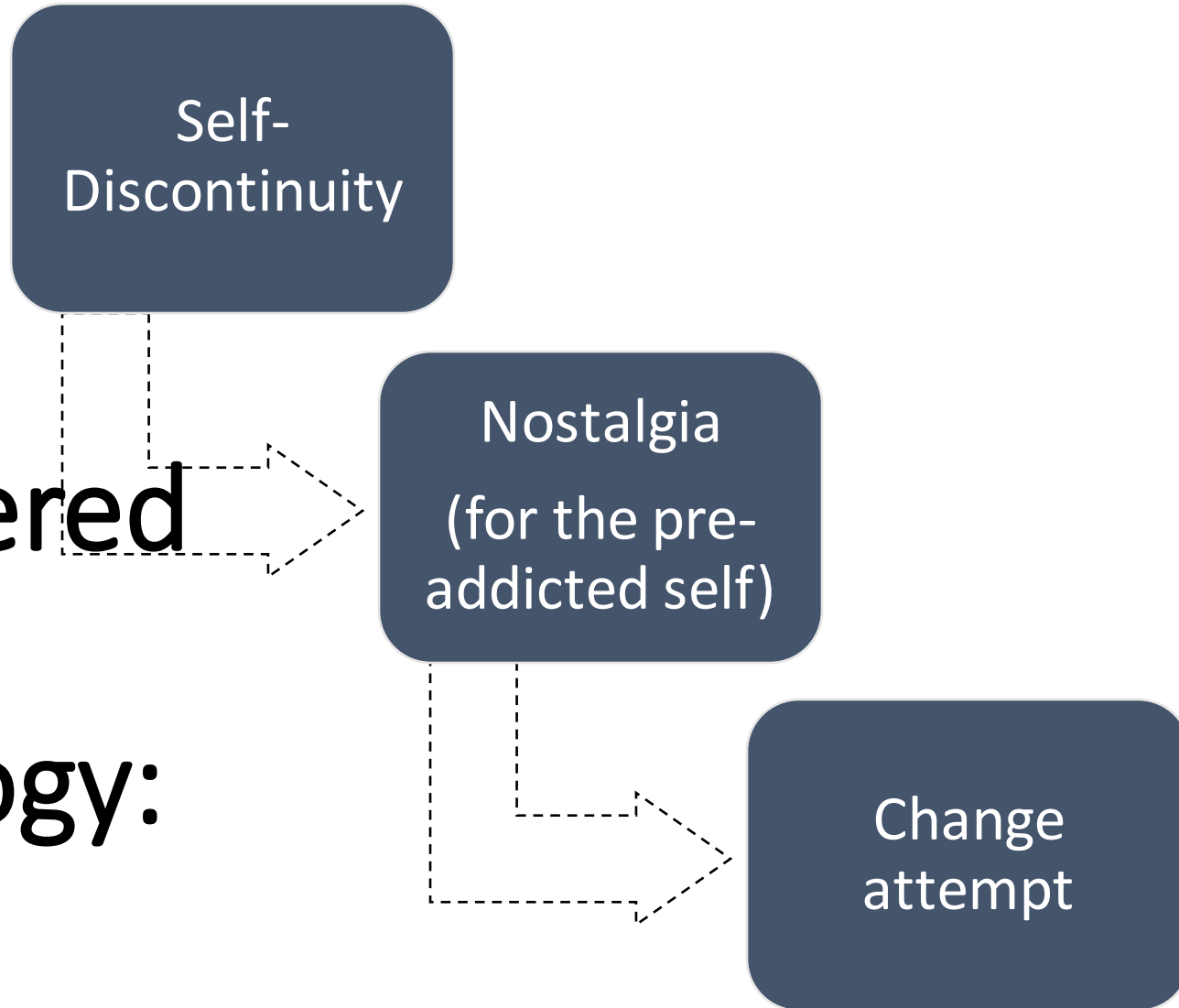
Phase II (1 month later):

- Attempted change in last month (participant & collaterals)

High in alcohol
misuse
symptomatology



Low in disordered
gambling
symptomatology:
No effect





A Mindset for Change: Implicit Theories of Behavior



Incremental Theorist:
Behavior is malleable



Entity Theorist:
Behavior is fixed

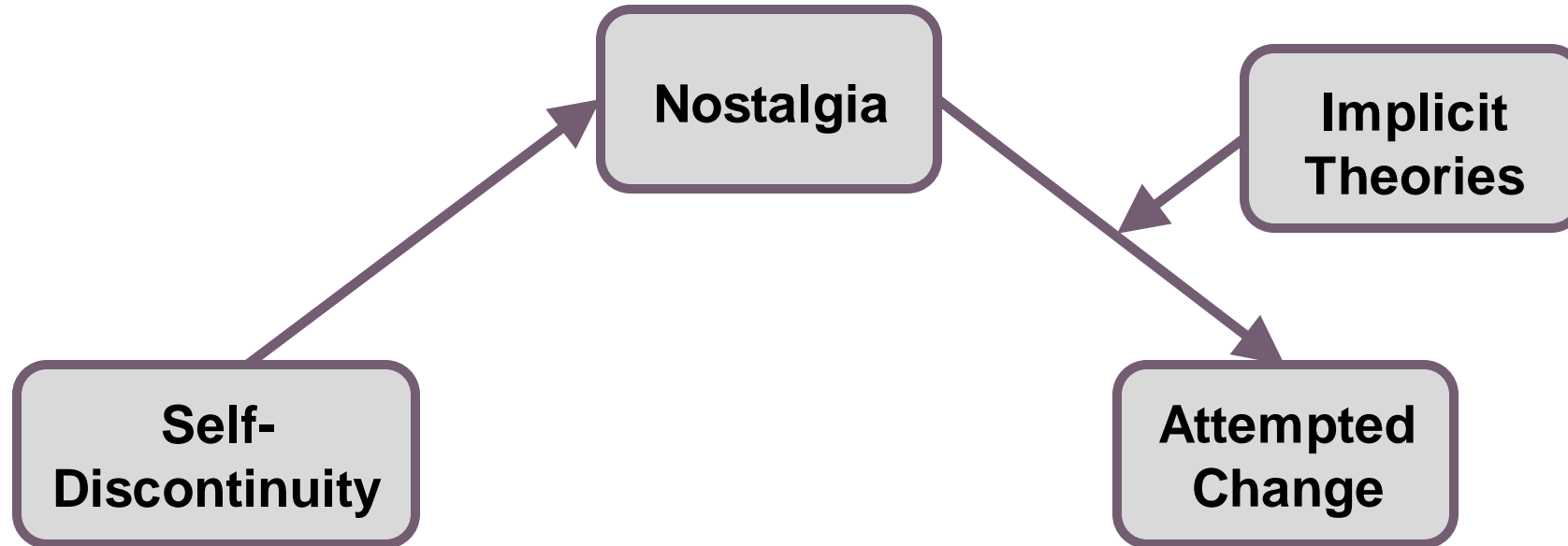
**IN THE MINDSET FOR CHANGE:
SELF-REPORTED QUIT ATTEMPTS ARE A
PRODUCT OF DISCONTINUITY-INDUCED
NOSTALGIA AND INCREMENTAL BELIEFS**

MELISSA SALMON
Carleton University

HYOUN S. KIM
University of Calgary

MICHAEL J. A. WOHL
Carleton University

Hypothesized Model



Longitudinal Assessment

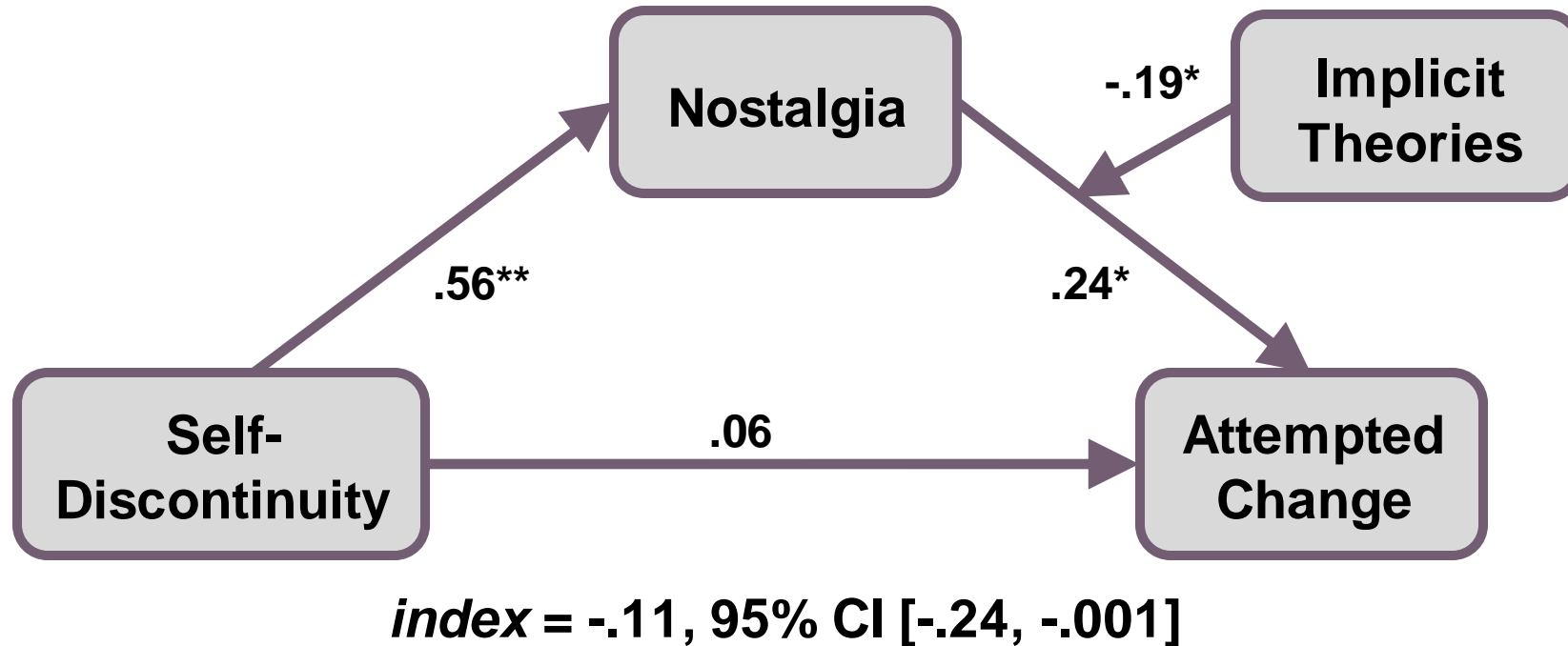
Phase I

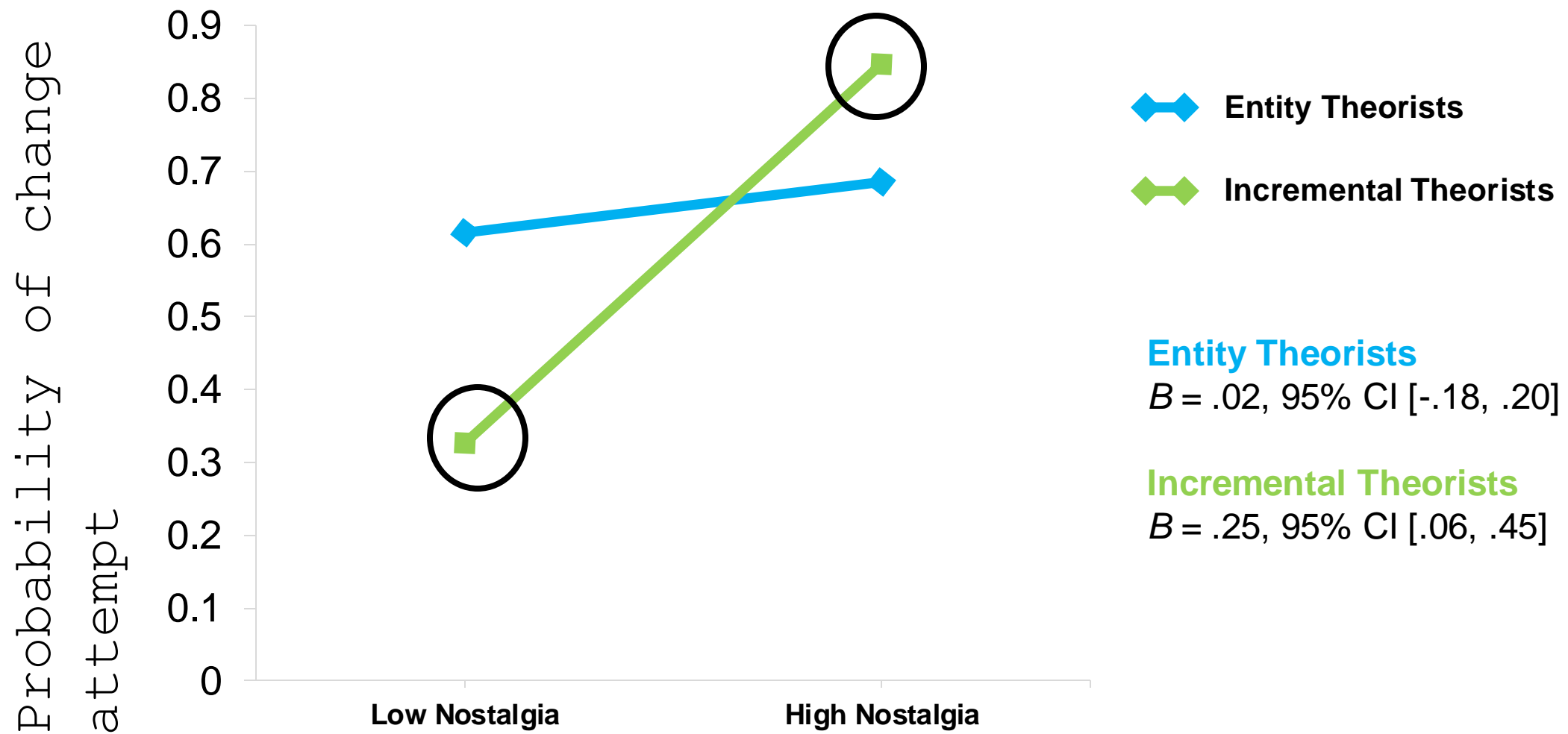
- $N = 243$ disordered gamblers
- Assessed on self-discontinuity, nostalgia, and implicit theories (incremental vs. entity)

Phase II

- $N = 119$ disordered gamblers
- Asked if they attempted to change

The influence of nostalgia on behaviour change is dependent whether you believe that people can change







To Look Forward or to
Look Back?

Longing for the Past and Longing for the Future: A Phenomenological Assessment of the Relation Between Temporal Focus and Readiness to Change Among People Living With Addiction

*Melissa M. Salmon and Michael J. A. Wohl**

Department of Psychology, Carleton University, Ottawa, ON, Canada

Focus on the past

Gamblers with a positive past (Cluster 1) compared to a difficult past (Cluster 2) reported greater:

Longing ($p < .001$)

Safety and security ($p < .001$)

Meaning in their life ($p < .001$)

Readiness to change ($p = .002$)

Cluster 1 Positive Past

- My life was better
- My social connections were better
- I was involved in more activities
- I was a better person
- Gambling took over my life

Cluster 2 Difficult Past

- Gambling has not changed the quality of my life
- Parts of my past were negative
- A pivotal (traumatic) moment triggered my gambling
- I will not change my gambling

Focus on the future

Gamblers who were optimistic toward the future (Cluster 1) compared to those who were ambivalent (Cluster 2) reported greater:

Vividness of the future ($p=.004$)

Longing for a future without addiction ($p=.01$)

Safety and security ($p=.02$)

Meaning in their life ($p=.04$)


Desire to change ($p=.04$)

Cluster 1 Optimistic about the future

- I will be happier
- My finances will be better
- I will engage in more activities

Cluster 2 Ambivalent about the future

- Parts of my life will be better, parts will be worse
- I am resistant to change

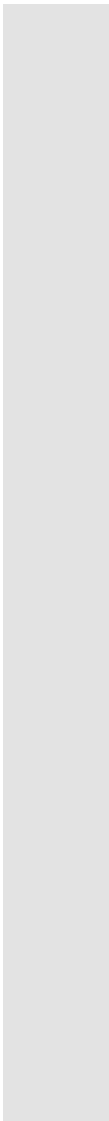


Is nostalgia
good or bad for
one's health?

Past focus may be *most effective*
among those...

- ... with positive past
- ... ambivalent toward future

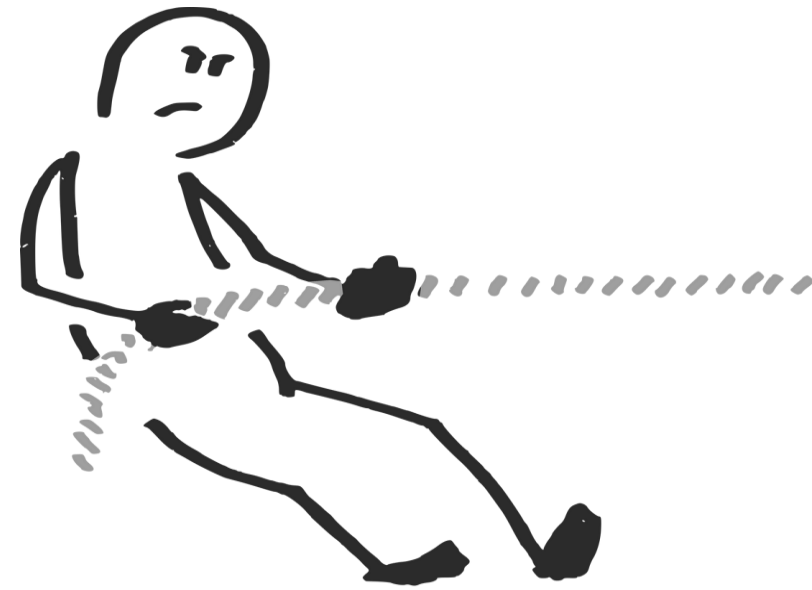
Future focus may be *most effective*
among those...

- ... who anticipate positive future
 - ... with difficult past
- 

R e c o v e r y

Disorder-Related Nostalgia?

e.g., the thrill; the escape; the taste; the smell; the social experiences...



Eating Disorders

- Prevalence: 1-2% of the population
- Mortality: 10-15%
- Recovery: 50% do not recover from treatment



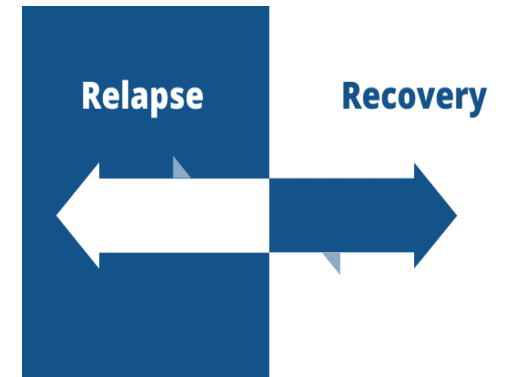
Continuity with
ED-self



Nostalgia for the benefits

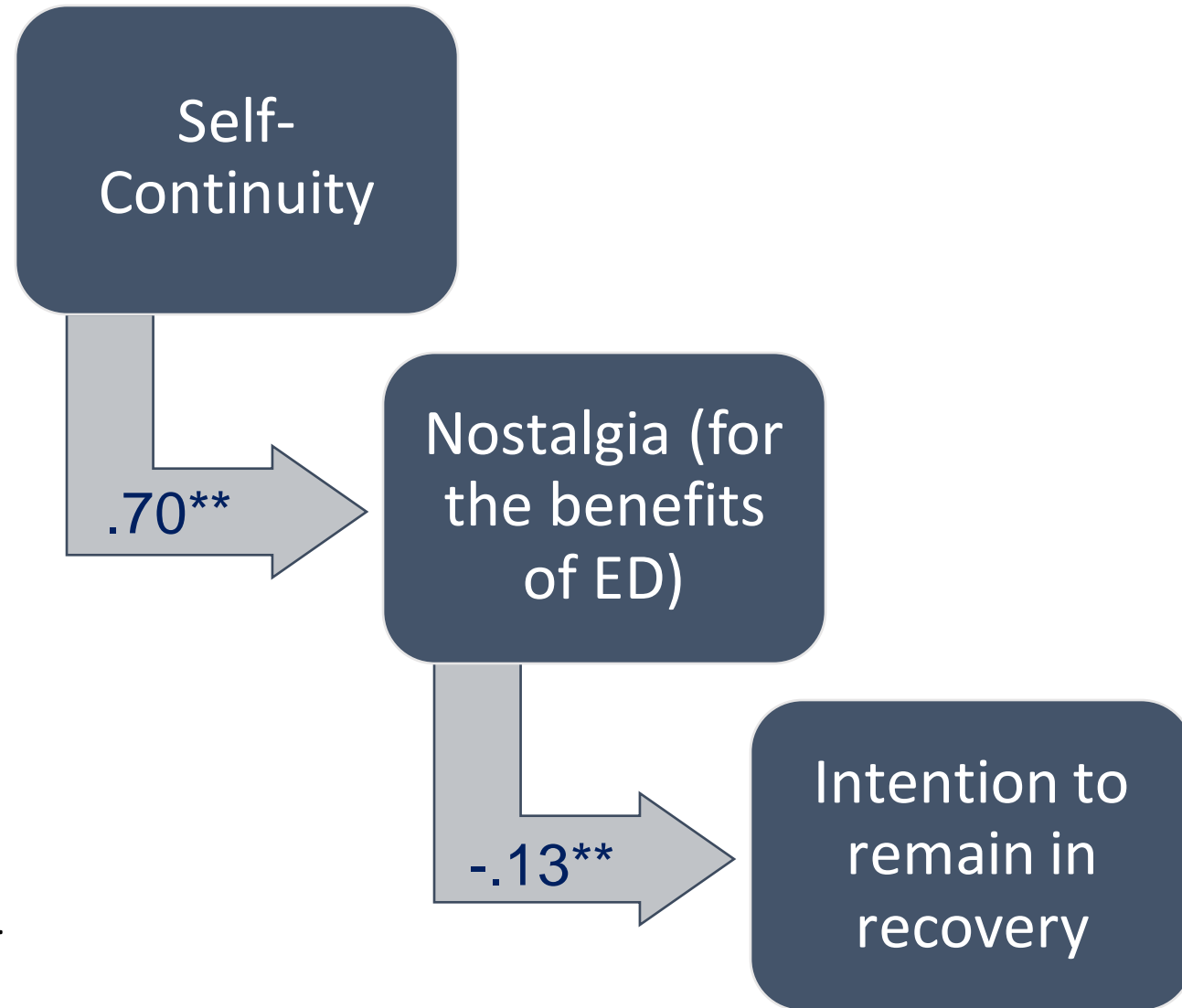


Intention to remain
in recover

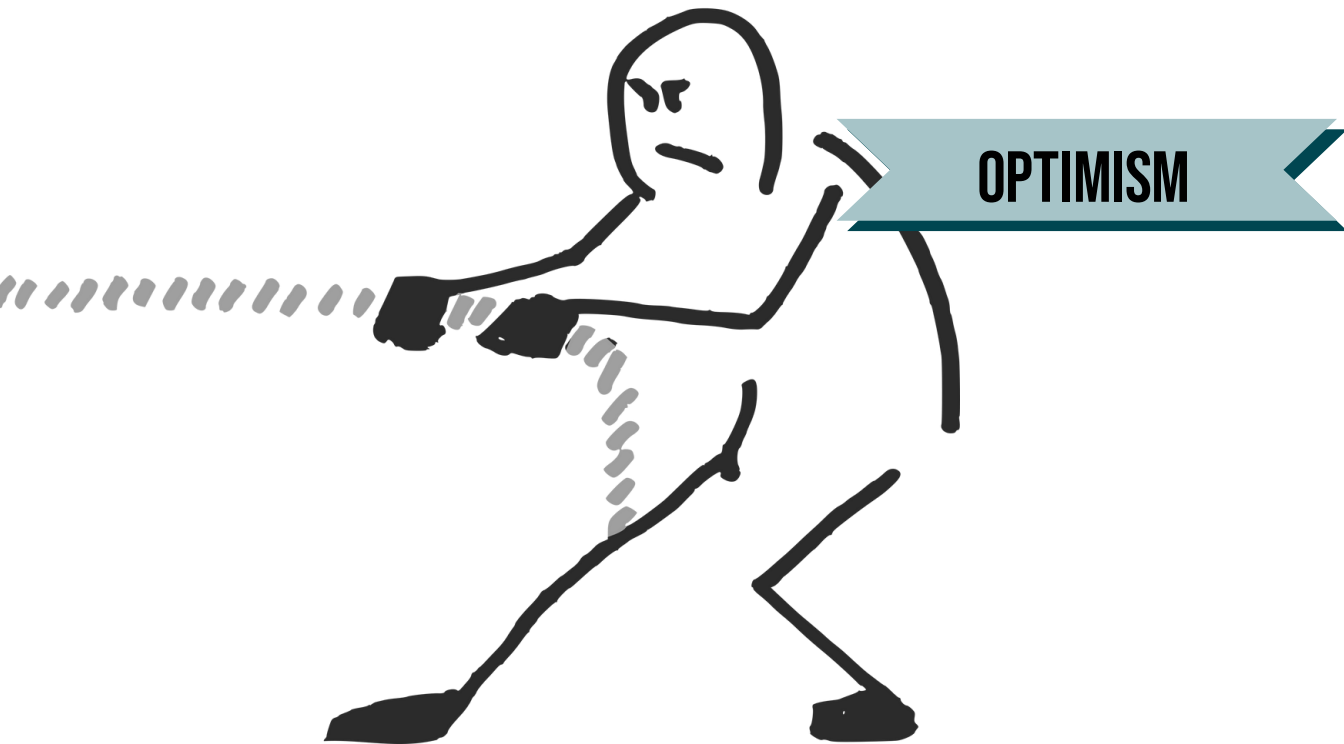


Disorder-related nostalgia undermines recovery

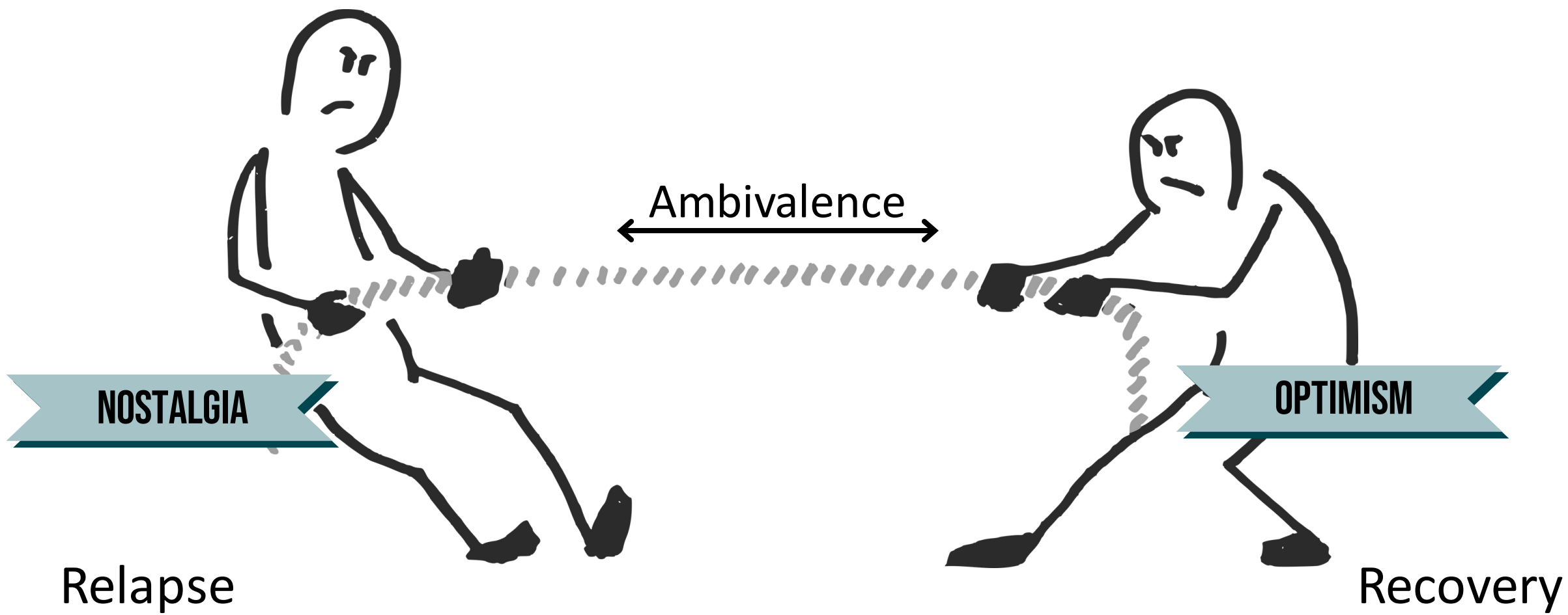
(Bossom, Wohl, Dowson, Salmon & Tabri, under review)



R e c o v e r y





Repaired relationships
Improved health
Financial, social,
emotional stress
resolution



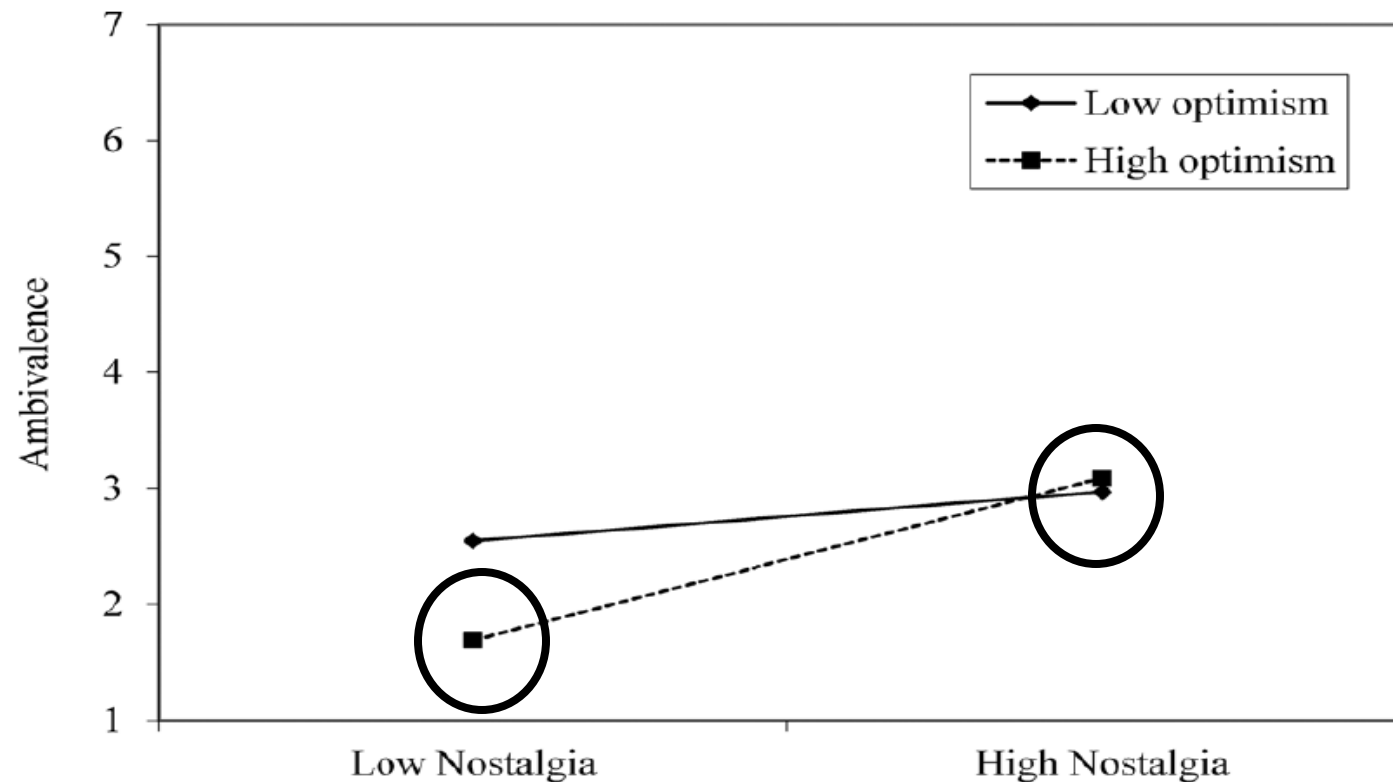
ORIGINAL ARTICLE



The Long Shadow of Addiction-Related Nostalgia: Nostalgia Predicts Ambivalence and Undermines the Benefits of Optimism in Recovery

Mackenzie Dowson^a  and Michael J. A. Wohl^{a,b} 

^aDepartment of Psychology, Carleton University, Ottawa, ON, Canada; ^bMental Health and Well-Being Research and Training Hub, Ottawa, ON, Canada



What should I take from this Presentation?



... ..

y
ology

1

There is no "I" in Team

Isabella Bossom – Dalhousie University

Mackenzie Dowson – The Ottawa Hospital

Dr. Andrew Kim –University of Calgary

Dr. Melissa Salmon – Focal Research

Dr. Diane Santesso (deceased) –University of Winnipeg

Dr. Constantine Sedikides – University of Southampton

Dr. Nassim Tabri – Carleton University

Dr. Tim Wildschut – University of Southampton



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