

## EARLY MALADAPTIVE SCHEMAS AND SCHEMA MODES IN AN AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC DRUG & ALCOHOL POPULATION

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**Introduction and Aims:** Schema Therapy (ST) targets long-term maladaptive patterns in thinking, feeling, and behaving (Early Maladaptive Schemas; EMS), and the acute psycho-behavioural reactions triggered by these patterns (Schema Modes; SM). Previous research has indicated that EMS and SM are useful constructs in conceptualising substance-use problems. This project will examine these constructs in a substance use treatment setting. This data will assist in developing a Group ST program for substance use issues.

**Design and Methods:** This project presents preliminary data, collected as part of psychology treatment in a public substance treatment use facility. The Young Schema Questionnaire – Long Form (YSQ-L3) was used to measure EMS and the Schema Mode Inventory (SMI) was used to measure SM.

**Results:** SM profiles typically exceeded those of individuals diagnosed with personality disorders from a normative sample. Core SM's associated with emotional vulnerability, detached self-soothing, and self-criticism were prominent. The most strongly endorsed EMS were abandonment, mistrust/abuse, self-sacrifice, insufficient self-control, and negativity-pessimism.

**Discussions and Conclusions:** Substance using populations demonstrate pervasive difficulties which can be well conceptualised in the ST model. ST is a promising and highly relevant treatment intervention for this population. Targeting interventions to address core emotional vulnerability related to early abuse and betrayal, and cognitive themes of insufficient self-control are likely most relevant for this population. This developing project will be used to inform the adaptation of ST for a group treatment program.

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