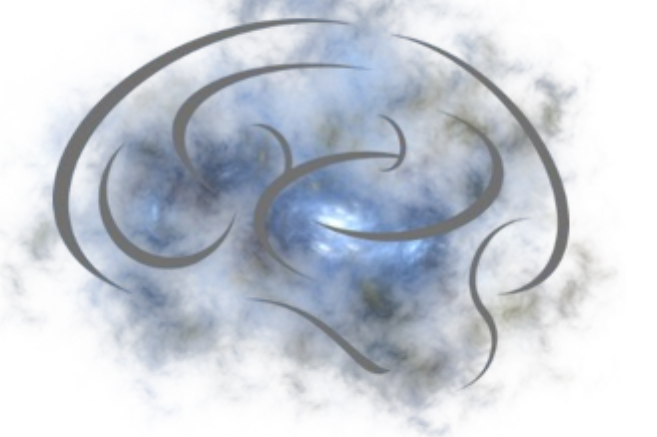


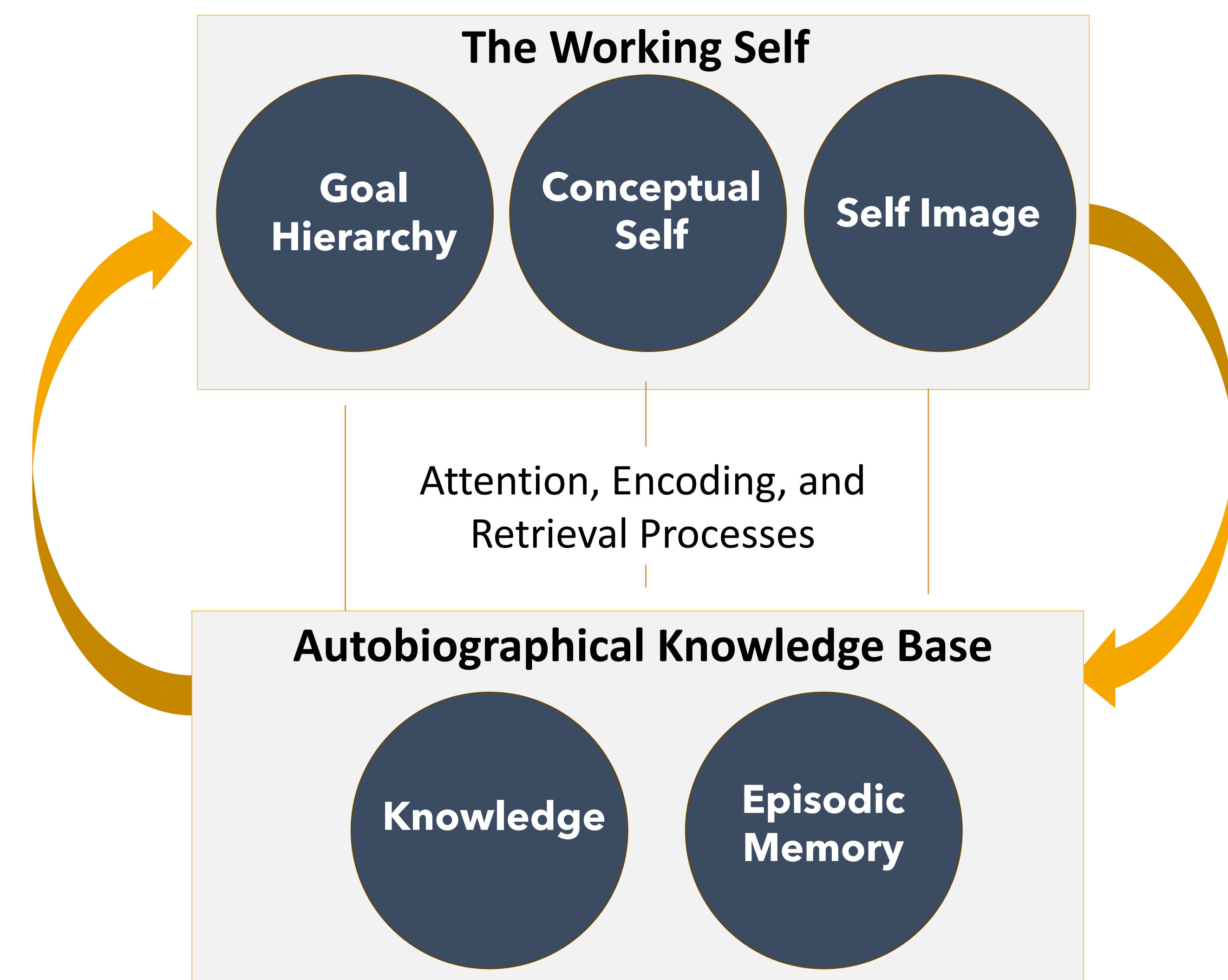


Introduction

Trauma Memory

- Trauma memories differ from neutral memories in intense emotions, vivid sensory details, and coherence¹.
- One indicator of coherence is the use of self-reference pronouns (I, me, my)².

Self-Memory System³



SMS Predictions

Survivors' narratives will include more spatial and visceral details, but fewer self-references than community groups.

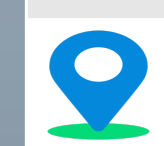
Method

Participants. n = 202; preliminary analyses include 62 survivors and 104 LV locals

Questionnaire. Online measures of memory and mental health.

Memory Prompt. We would like to know the story of your experience at or around Route 91. What happened around you? Are there particular events that stand out in your mind? Are there sights, sounds, smells, or other sensations you remember? How did you leave the festival grounds?

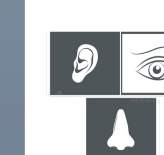
Themes



Space & Navigation

- ...girls went close to stage, so my husband and I decided to go back by the end of grass near the beer tent to be closer to exit...
- I turn to my boyfriend, who was to my right ...I turn to face the stage to see Jason Aldean and he's looking towards Mandalay so I turn to look at Mandalay again.

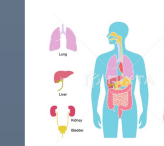
- I was at home shutting off the TV for the night...
- I was at home when... I remember being in bed...



Sensory Perceptual

- I could hear the pops from a distance... bullets hit the asphalt they would explode I could hear the shrapnel whizz by.
- I remember the smell of the area as that of a travelling carnival, it smelled like stale beer and puke.

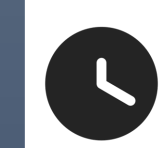
- The playing of the scenes on the news of people running but especially hearing the gunshots. I can't get the sound of the gunshots out of my head.
- I saw video of people laying down and then getting up and running. I heard a man's voice say "It is only a firecracker."...



Visceral

- My body was shaking so badly I couldn't move.
- My chest was heavy and hurting by the time we got into the hotel. I didn't think I was going to make it. And then I felt nauseous.

- ...I went into a complete panic. I remember my hands shaking for at least an hour after it happened.
- When I heard our employee was shot I just went numb and could hardly respond.



Temporal Distortion / Temporal Detail

- It felt like time stopped, I can't remember parts of what happened next.
- We stayed crouched for a while (not sure how long)...

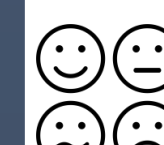
- ...turned the TV on around 10:07, so if the shooting started at 10:05, I was watching it all in real time.
- ...saw a post on Facebook... I think it was around 11:30pm.



Social

- I ran one way the girl ran the other both trying to find our friends. The next aisle over one of my friends was...
- One of my friends came through ...the other was stuck between people ...we just pulled her through...running down the road, the guy next to me and a few steps back was shot.

- I texted my husband's cousin and his girlfriend
- I answered a couple of emails from concerned friends and colleagues



Emotional

- I felt frozen, terrified, and then suddenly angry.
- People again, were crying and upset. At this point, everything that happened felt surreal, like I was dreaming.

- Il found out about the shooting upon opening the Monday paper... The more I read, the more I cried.
- my husband woke me up in a panic as the news started reporting... I lived in NY during September 11th and felt the same dread I felt then.



Information Seeking

- I checked the news several times each hour
- There was a news bulletin on the TV describing what was happening... I watched all night long, well into the morning and could not stop watching

Discussion

Themes

- Some themes were common across survivors and controls, such as an emphasis on visceral and emotional reactions
- Differences
 - The only theme that was unique to one group was information seeking in the controls
- Survivors focused primarily on perceptual and spatial detail, but spatial detail was negligible in the control group
- Some survivors' narratives reflected time distortion, whereas controls' narratives included temporal detail (rather than distortion)
- The social theme reflects different behaviors in the two groups (interaction with other survivors during the shooting vs. contacting friends and family in the control group)

Linguistic Analysis

- In support of the Self-Memory System model, survivors used fewer personal pronouns and attention words than the community group.
- Survivors used more spatial, visceral, and perceptual words than the control group.

Future Directions

- Compare indicators of coherence (self reference, coders' ratings, etc.)
- Broaden LIWC analysis to include emotional and cognitive process categories and combine it with thematic analysis.
- Examine cultural or longitudinal differences in trauma narratives.



We give our sincere thanks to all participants for sharing their stories with us, and especially those present at the shooting.

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Quantitative Results

