



EXPERIENCES OF FEMALE  
SUBSTANCE USERS WITH TCTSY  
AS COMPLEMENTARY TREATMENT  
IN ADDICTION TREATMENT

Julie Schamp  
University College Ghent, Belgium



TRAUMA CENTER  
TRAUMA-SENSITIVE YOGA

# Background

- Gender differences
- Specific barriers and needs
- Gender-responsive treatment: gender-transformative approach
  - *Women-centred*
  - *Strengths-based*
  - *Harm-reducing*
  - *Trauma-informed*
  - *(Men)*
- Holistic approach and trauma

# Research question and methodology

Which intervention can be integrated to make substance use treatment more gender-responsive in order to achieve a more qualitative recovery process?

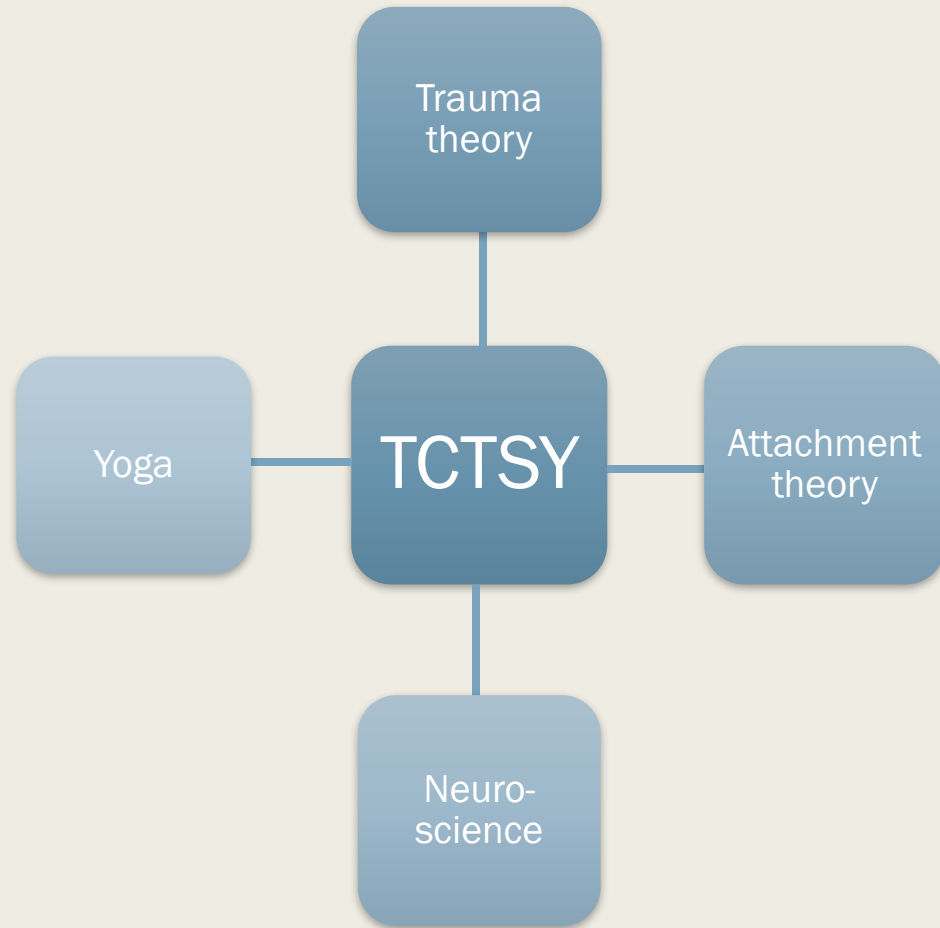
- *'Living lab'*
- *Learning community*
- *Researchers, health care providers, experts by experience, clients*
- *Seeking Safety, ACT, TCTSY*

# Research question and methodology

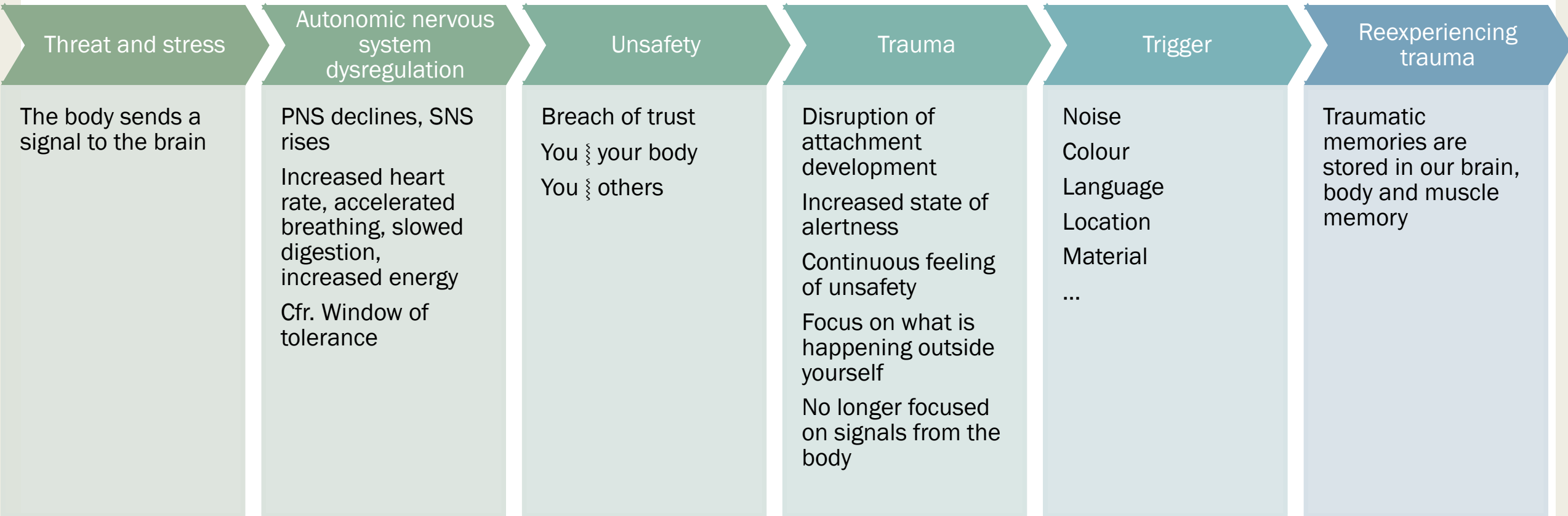
What are the perceived benefits of TCTSY among female substance users in substance use treatment?

- *De Kiem – therapeutic community and outpatient service*
- *Certification programme TCTSY – Center for Trauma and Embodiment, Boston (David Emerson & Bessel van der Kolk, 2003)*
- *10 sessions – 4-8 participants TC, 1-6 participants OS*
- *Case-study with 6 in-depth interviews*
- *Thematic analysis*

# TCTSY



# The body keeps the score





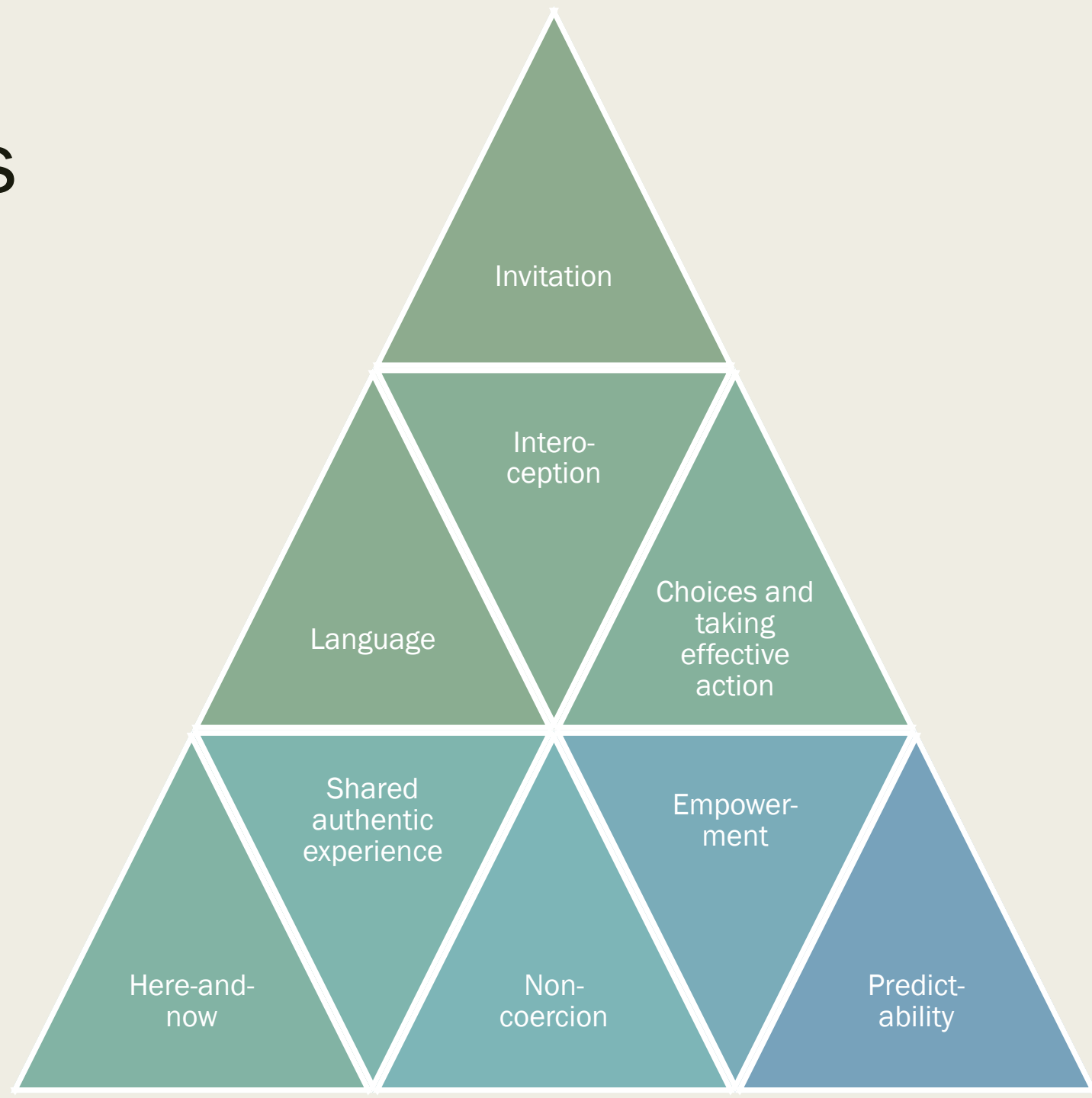
# TCTSY OFFERS COUNTERBALANCE



- Complementary therapy
- Goal
  - *Establishing new brain pathways through the body (neuroplasticity)*
  - *Corrective experiences (e.g. secure attachment)*
  - *Through and in the body (repetition)*
  - *Being 'in control'*
    - <> trauma survivors: choice making depending on what was needed to survive
    - Making choices, regulating emotions, here and now, end and beginning, sense of safety, trusting own power



# Principles



# Invitation

- Every cue is preceded by an invitation
- Avoid 'I' and 'you'
- Power dynamic

You're welcome

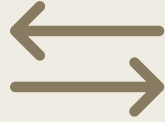
# Taal



- Concrete
- No metaphores
- Repetition
- Body oriented
- 'Form' i.s.o. pose, posture or position
- No qualification (e.g. right, good) / no emphasis (bv. deep, quick)
- Predictability



You are  
welcome to...



**Choice making**

(A/B, movement  
synchronised  
with language,  
possibilities,  
learning  
opportunity)



**Interoception**

(being able to  
notice, feeling  
sensations in  
the body)



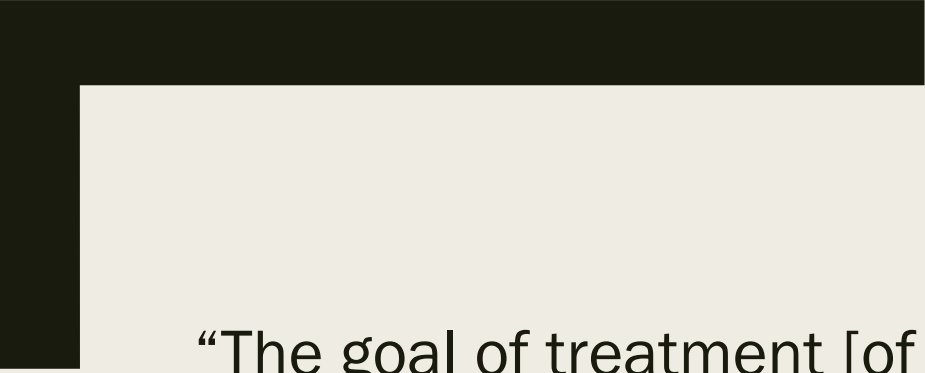
**Choice making**

(choosing from  
sensation how  
you want to  
relate to them)



**Taking effective  
action**

(doing or not doing  
something, doing  
something else)



“The goal of treatment [of trauma] is to help people live in the present, without feeling or behaving according to irrelevant demands belonging to the past.”

Dr. Bessel van der Kolk



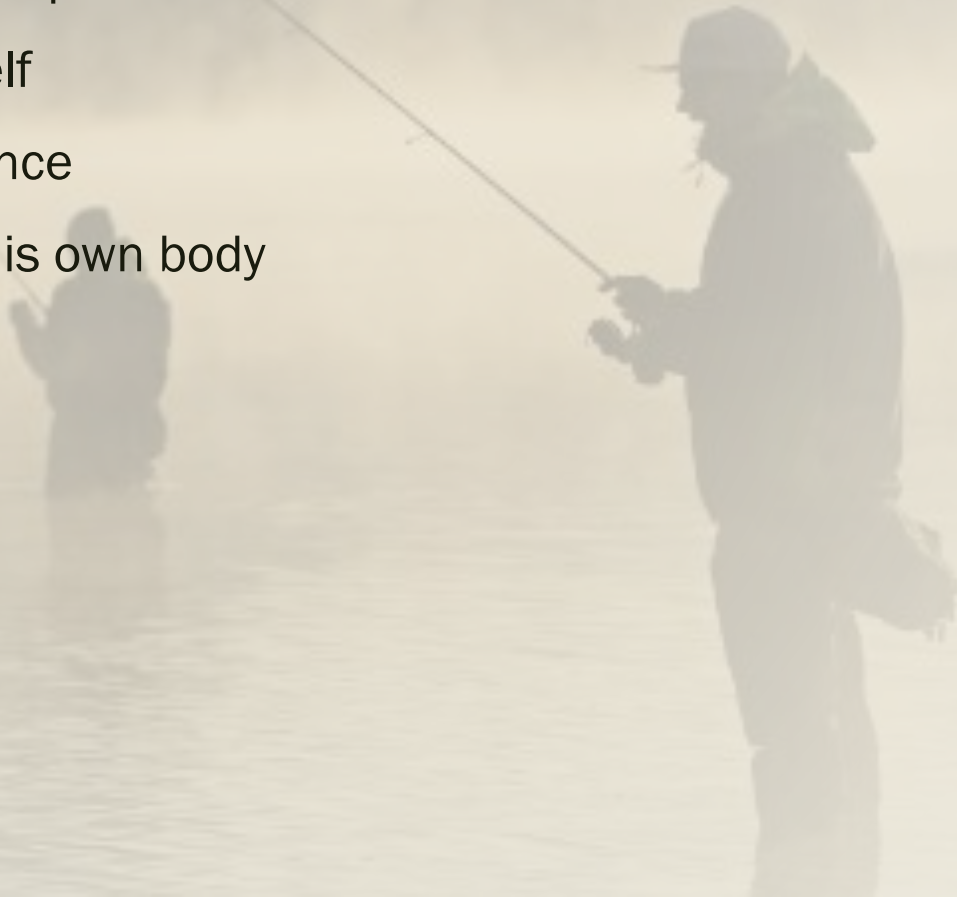
Here-and-now





# Shared authentic experience

- A real experience between two people
- Authentic when you feel it yourself
- Every cue starts from an experience
- Facilitator must be in tune with his own body



# Non- coercion

- Being aware of power dynamic
- Shared power
- Invitation
- Avoid 'I' and 'you'
- Not getting up and correcting posture







# Empowerment

“No intervention that takes power away from the survivor can possibly foster her recovery, no matter how much it appears to be in her immediate best interest.”

Judith Herman

# Predictability

- Consistency in
  - *Language / terms*
  - *Structure / sequence*
  - *Exercises*
- Say what you are doing / you are going to do
- Safety

unpredictable

# Research results

All participants assign a positive value to yoga

- *Growth in mental and physical peace*
  - Exercises, choice making, calm voice facilitator
  - Improves quality of life
  - Reduces stress and substance use?
- *Rising self-esteem*
- *External / internal motivation*

“Because your thoughts that race, race and race, but indeed. If you can already calm your body and reduce your palpitations, then, you know, it's going to do some good for you, I mean, for your mind. Yes, definitely.”


# Research results

- Autonomy: empowerment and making their own choices
- Feeling of safety (location, background noise, circle setup, men)
- Social aspect (group sessions)
- Structure and sequence (TC versus OS)
- Planning and organisation

“I think it would be different if someone was walking around. That I would feel the obligation somehow, the obligatory feeling of I have to try anyway. Compared to now, if I don't want to do it, I don't do it. Try or don't try, it's okay too.”

# Implications for practice and research

- TCTSY in addiction care
- TCTSY among men
- Long term effects of TCTSY
  
- Integrated approach
- Conditions



IT'S NOT  
ABOUT  
BARRIERS,  
IT'S ABOUT  
BRIDGES.

[Julie.schamp@hogent.be](mailto:Julie.schamp@hogent.be)