

Indirect Direct Self-Harm: Examining Functions of Self-Triggering with Nonsuicidal Self-Injury Content

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BACKGROUND

- Self-triggering (ST):**
intentional exposure to reminders of a traumatic event that incites reexperiencing symptoms of **posttraumatic stress (PTS)**
- Nonsuicidal self-injury (NSSI):**
direct physical mutilation of body tissue performed without the intent to die and for purposes not socially sanctioned
- Past studies:**
 - Extensive research on functions of NSSI while ST research nascent stages
 - ST has only been studied within post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
 - Individuals who engage in NSSI have reported seeking graphic online depictions of NSSI that incite psychological distress and the urge to self-injure
- Current study aims:**
 - Study 1:** Determine the extent to which ST occurs outside of PTS
 - Study 2:** Revise the existing Self-Triggering Questionnaire (STQ) to assess the function of ST when it is not linked traumatic event

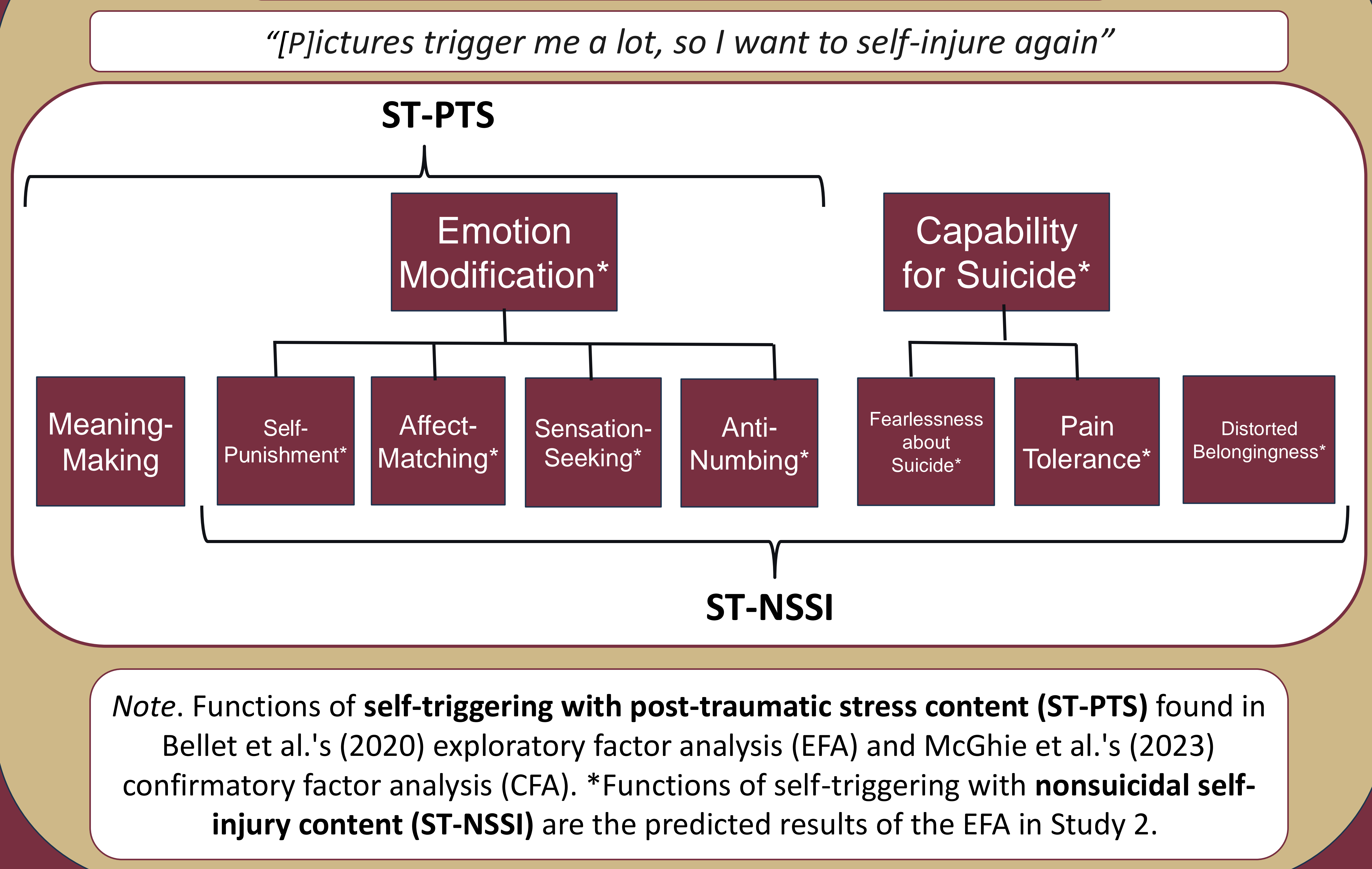
METHODS

- Study 1**
Participants ($N = 12$) will:
 - be 18-24 years old ($M = \#, SD = \#$);
 - ##% female ($n =$);
 - ##% White ($n =$); and
 - endorse co-occurring NSSI and ST engagement****Prospective Procedure:**
 - All participants will respond to series of self-report questionnaires followed by semi-structured interview
 - Codebook will be created to identify themes of functions not currently represented in the STQ for PTS
 - STQ Reasons subscale** will be revised to include and address NSSI-specific functions (ST-NSSI) endorsed by participants
- Study 2**
Participants ($N = 300$) will:
 - be 18-## years old ($M = \#, SD = \#$);
 - ##% (fe)male ($n =$);
 - ##% [race/ethnicity] ($n =$); and
 - endorse co-occurring NSSI and ST engagement****Prospective Procedure:**
 - Administer questionnaire online to Reddit forums with NSSI content
 - Conduct exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using maximum likelihood estimation and oblimin rotation
 - Revise items of generalized STQ Reasons subscale as necessary**

PROSPECTIVE RESULTS

3-factor solution:
(1) Emotion Modification; (2) Distorted Belongingness; and (3) Capability for Suicide
[Acceptable] fit, with $NFI = [.##]$, $RMSEA = .##$ (95% CI = $[.##, .##]$)

PROSPECTIVE RESULTS



DISCUSSION

ST found to be transdiagnostic:

- Individuals without lifetime PTS(D) engage in ST with NSSI content (ST-NSSI)
- NSSI-specific content rather than content tied to one specific traumatic event as seen with ST-PTS

Existence of ST-NSSI is evidence to support NSSI as a disorder

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Clarify the role of ST-NSSI in the **Experiential Avoidance Model of NSSI**
- Distinguish between individuals who engage in co-occurring NSSI and ST with **content of a traumatic event** versus **content of direct self-injury**
- Evaluate the effectiveness of current interventions targeting NSSI for individuals engaging in ST-NSSI

For more information, please contact the principal investigator,
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REFERENCES

