



# Recovery From Substance Abuse Among Zimbabwean Men: An Occupational Transition



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# Background

- Substance abuse: a substantial and growing problem in Zimbabwe

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(Rudatsikira, Maposa, Mukandavire, Muula, & Siziya, 2009; Cubbins et al., 2012; Duffy et al., 2015).

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A bottle of BronClear costs about \$7

# Background

*Recovery*  
IS POSSIBLE!

# Research question

- How do occupation(s) contribute in the journey of recovery from substance abuse among young adult Zimbabwean men?



# Methodology

- **Study Design**

- Appreciating the subjective nature of human life, the qualitative, narrative inquiry design selected allowed for the “study of experience as story” (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 479)

- **Participants**

- Three young men with a history of substance abuse and in recovery in Zimbabwe’s capital, Harare





## DATA GENERATION

# Methodology

## DATA ANALYSIS

- Narrative interviews



Narrative  
Analysis

- Making meaning of data in storied format

Analysis of  
Narratives

- Within and cross-case analysis

# Findings

**Table 1.** Profile of Participants.

| Participant | Age         | Substances used    | Current income level <sup>a</sup> | Highest level of education attained | Current work occupation |
|-------------|-------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Chitsva     | Young adult | Marijuana, alcohol | Average                           | Diploma                             | Teacher                 |
| Pangol      | Young adult | Marijuana, alcohol | Low                               | Passed Ordinary level <sup>b</sup>  | Farmer                  |
| Fred        | Young adult | Marijuana, alcohol | Average                           | Failed Ordinary level               | Pastor                  |



Recovery  
Journey

# Themes

- **Substance use: Our Occupation**

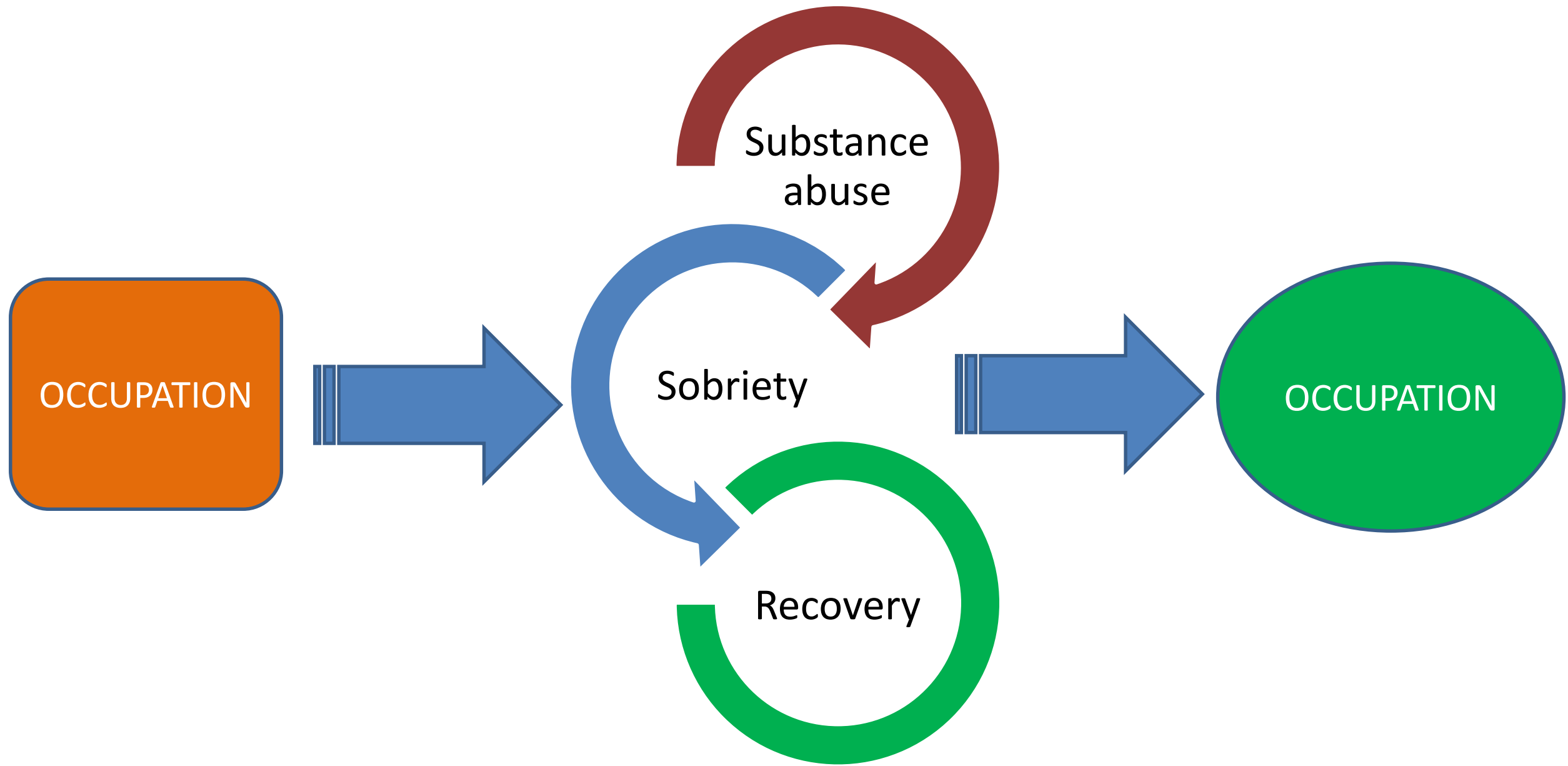




# Themes

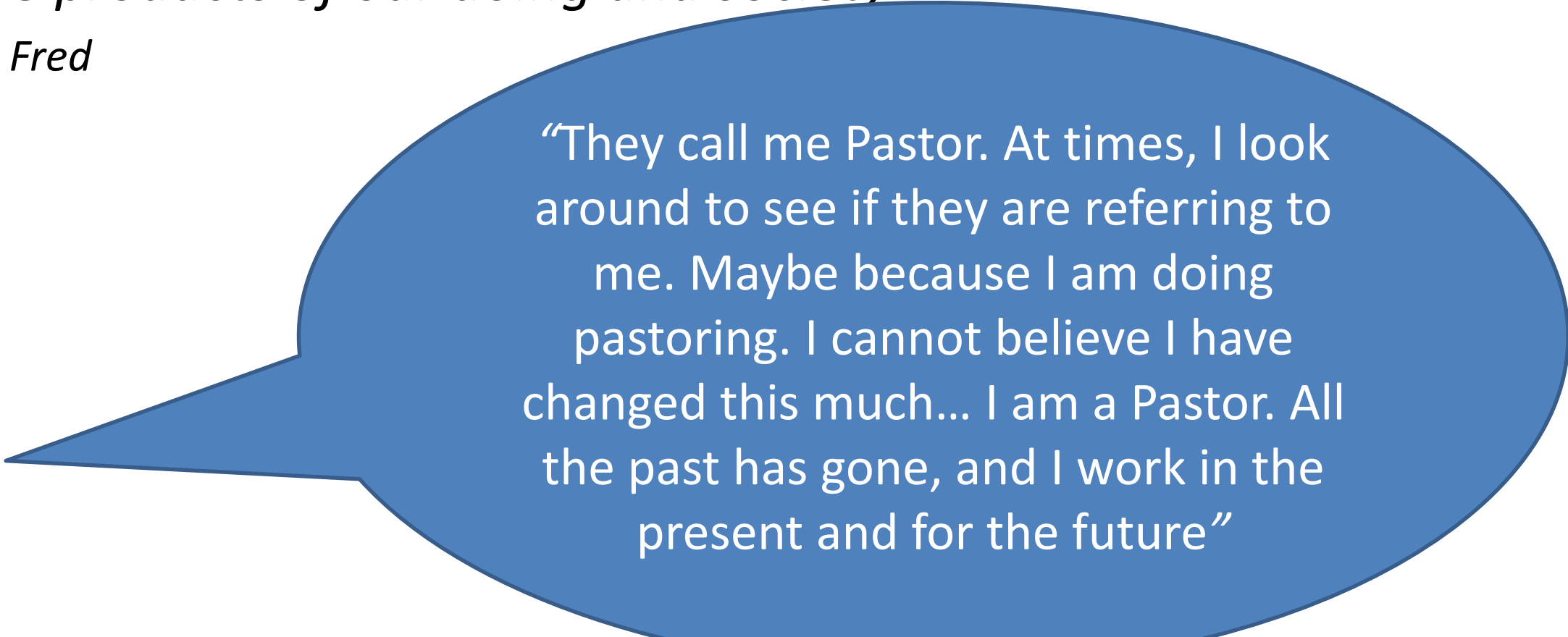
- **Recovery From Substance Abuse: An Ongoing Transition**
- Abandoning and modifying engagements associated with substance abuse
- “. . . There was no more space for it . . . in the new me, I knew I had to stop this substance abuse thing . . .” – Pangol
- *Adopting new occupations*
  - “. . . After getting a teaching job, I returned home, very excited. I thought to myself: At last I might be occupied productively and will be better positioned to be useful...” – Chitsva

# Recovery as Occupational Transition



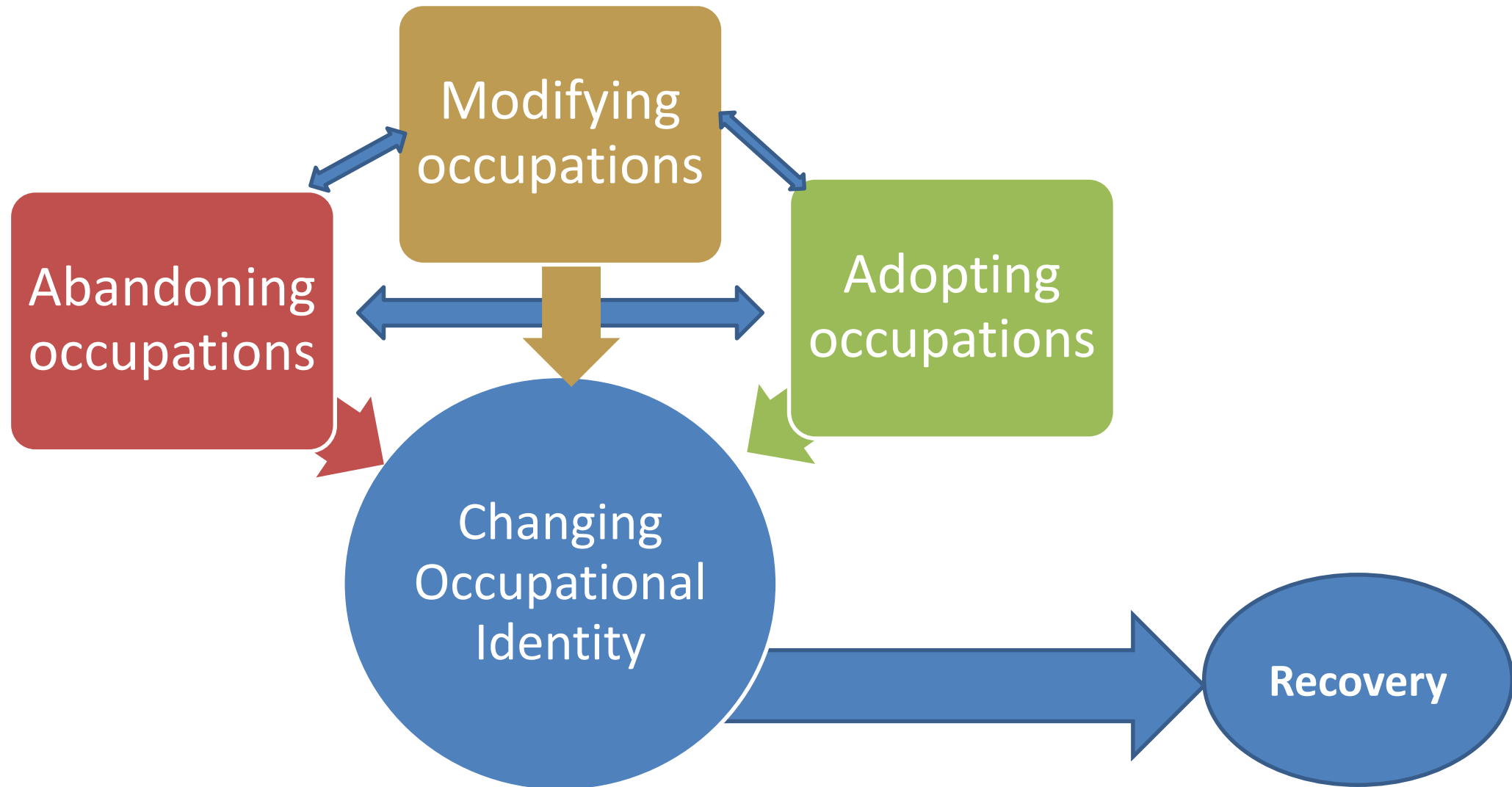
# Themes

- **Recovery From Substance Abuse: A Change in Occupational Identity**
- *We are products of our doing and society*
  - - Fred

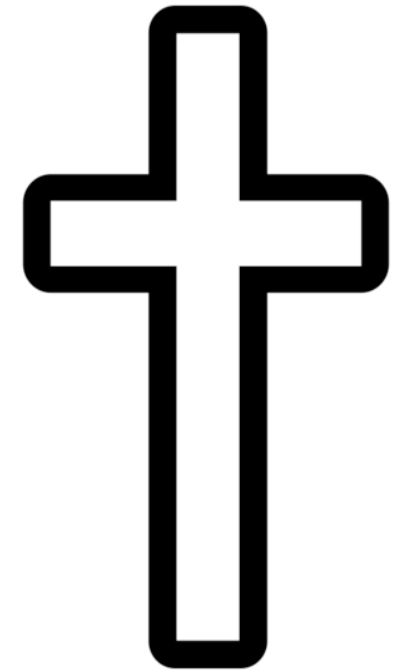


“They call me Pastor. At times, I look around to see if they are referring to me. Maybe because I am doing pastoring. I cannot believe I have changed this much... I am a Pastor. All the past has gone, and I work in the present and for the future”

# Iterative process between components of the occupational transition



In Recovery, I am ...





# Discussion

- Recovery from substance abuse can be conceptualized as an occupational transition
- The process of recovery corresponds with the theory of occupational transitions: a major occupation is lost (substance abuse) and is replaced by others (work, spiritual, relationship)
- Ongoing participation in “healthy” and meaningful occupations is key factor in this process
- Construction of a positive occupational identity is also central
- Provides helpful insights for occupational therapists to conceptualize recovery differently, and to develop more effective occupation-based interventions



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### Abstract

Substance abuse is a rising global problem, associated with medical, psychiatric, family, occupational, legal, political, financial, and spiritual problems. Recovery is an important area of consideration in occupational therapy's quest to promoting health and well-being. This narrative

