

# Constructivist methods and Existential therapy: Exploring how clients change in therapy from a constructivist perspective

Greta Cecutti, Lauren Sayers & Diego Vitali

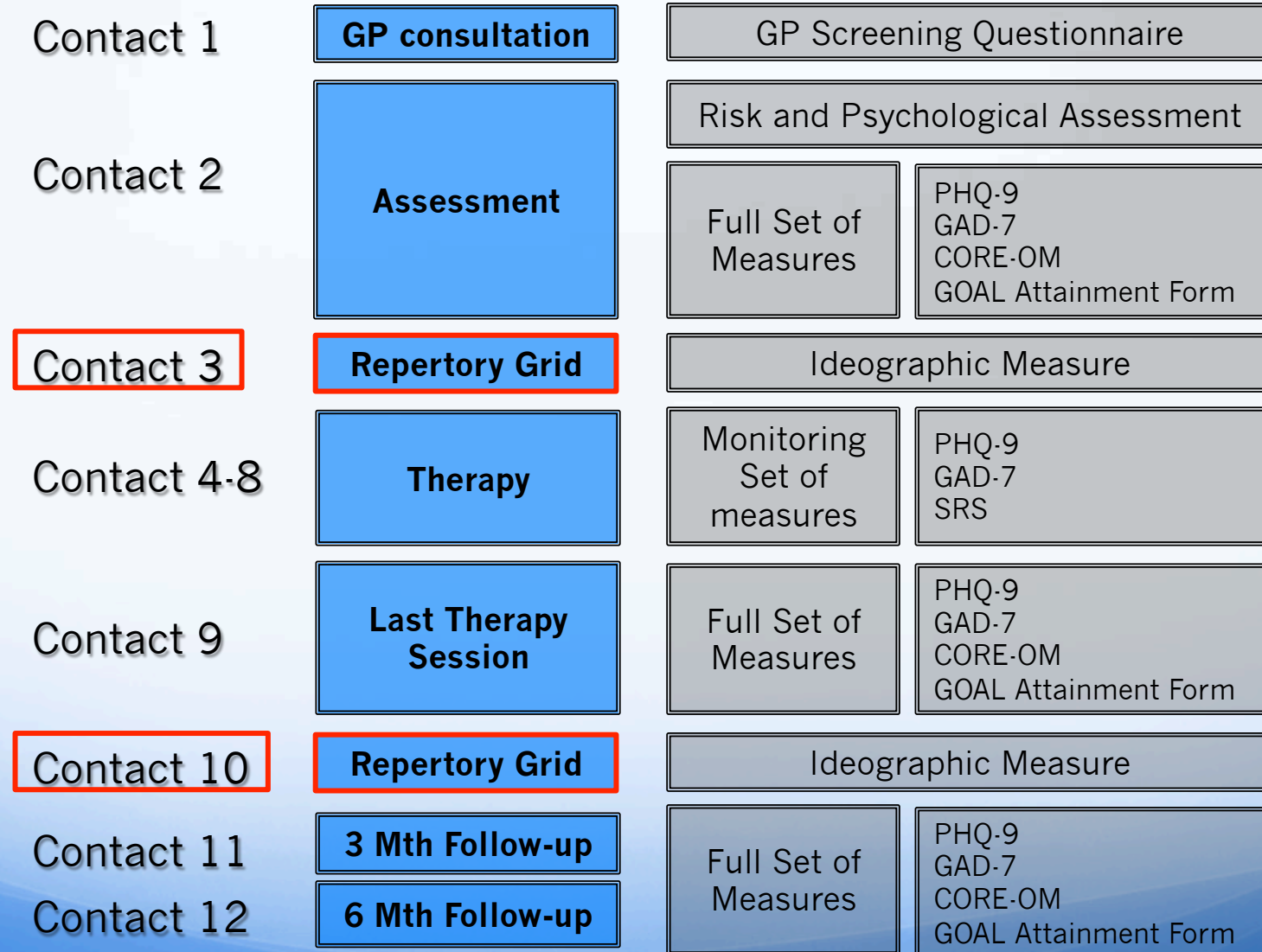
~~Previous title~~

How our experiment is  
stuck and what we  
have learnt so far.

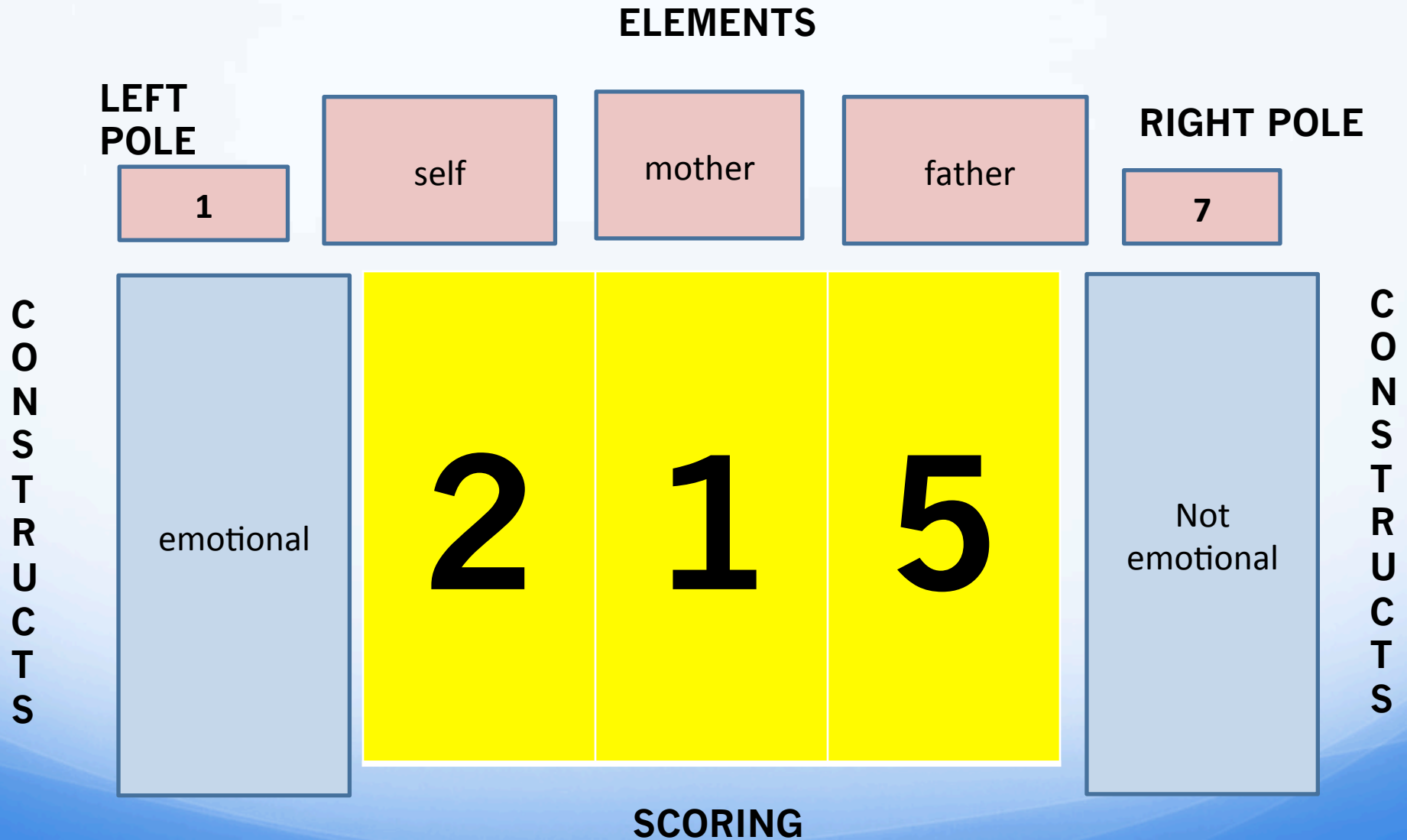
# PCT and Existential Phenomenology

- Understanding human experience as an individual way of construing reality
  - Sees the person as self-inventing concerned with choices and anxiety
    - choices generate
      - Real-world individual focus
  - Address not only symptom related difficulties but how the person relates to their world/ experiences
  - Explore how clients view and move towards a position of their ideal self

# How do we use the RGT



# Repertory Grid Elicitation



# Why use structural measures to understand change?

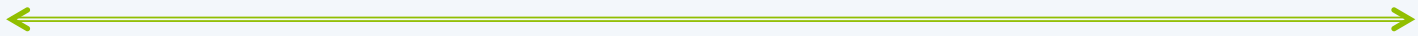
- Changes are not just symptomatology related as most PROMs focus on
- Change can occur in how we interpret our experiences, make assumptions about our world and anticipate events
- The structure of a construct system is said to be resistant to change (Kovova, 2015; Smith, 2000)  
→ so we can expect the measurements to be reliable

# structural measures

*Cognitive Complexity*  
*Bieri (1955)*

High Differentiation  
(Cognitively complex)

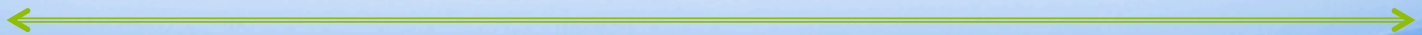
Low Differentiation  
(Cognitively simple)



*Intensity*  
*Bannister (1977)*

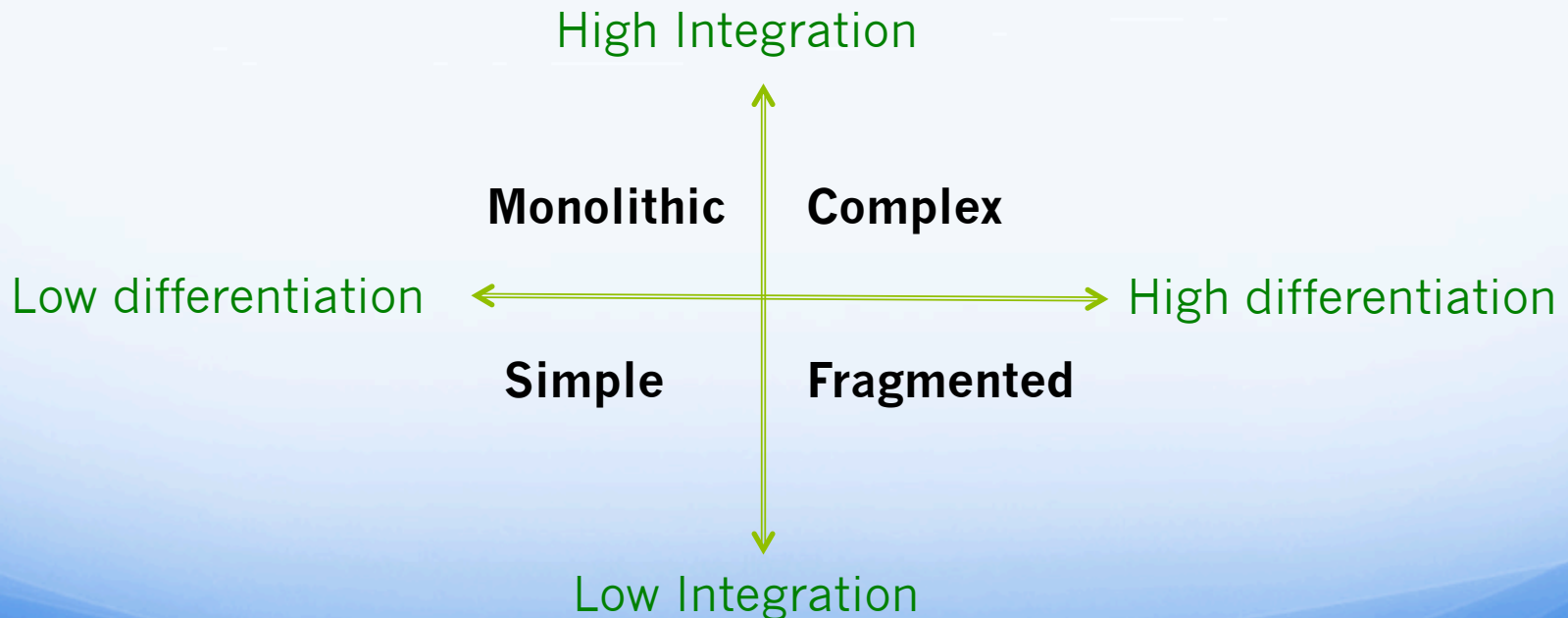
Differentiation  
(Very high scores- loose)

Integration  
(Very low scores- Monolithic)



# Our methodological pick: (Where our dreams shattered)

Structural Quadrant Methods (SQM)  
(Gallifa & Botella, 2000)



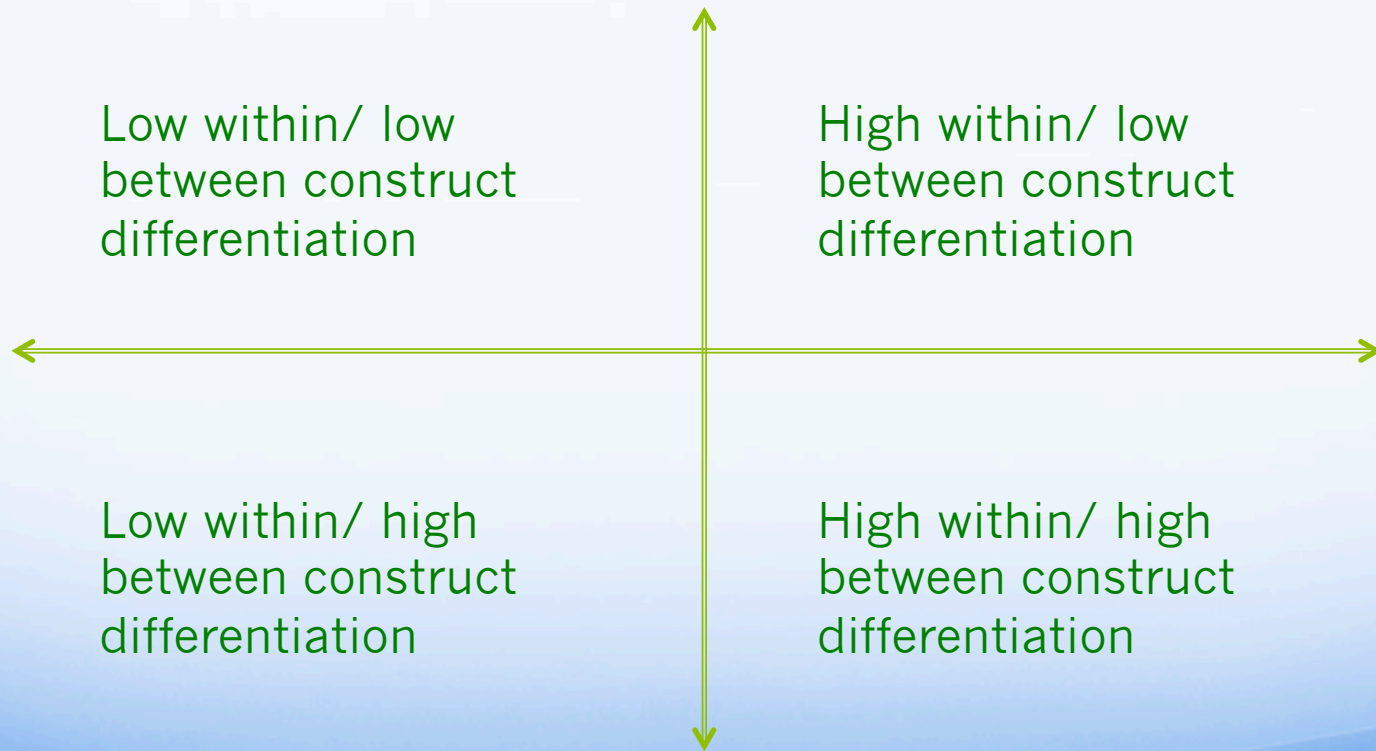


# What happened next?

We reviewed the literature on cognitive complexity to find alternative ideas to the SMQ

Structural measure	Method of the measure	Integration	Differentiation	Reliability *	Thoughts about the measure
<b>Cognitive Complexity</b> (Bieri, 1955)	Computed as the number of perfect matches in ratings of elements on each pair of construct dimensions; divided by the maximum possible score that could be obtained from a grid of that size. Fewer matches are interpreted as greater complexity.		✓	0.80	- Assumes similarity between constructs are exact matches
<b>Intensity</b> (Fransella & Bannister, 1997)	Summing the absolute values of the Pearson correlations between ratings performed on all possible pairs of constructs and then multiplying by 100	✓ (for high scores)	✓ (for low intensity scores)	0.94/ 0.87	- Considers average correlations
<b>PVAFF</b> (Jones, 1954; O'Keefe & Sypher, 1981)	The percentage of of variance attributed to the first factor derived from a principal components analysis of the grid ratings. assumes that the larger the first factor, the more one-dimensional the underlying structure of the grid.	✓	✓	0.67/ 0.73	- More sensitive to heterogeneity
<b>Ordination</b> (Landfield, 1976)	Assigning a score of zero to the midpoint and a rating level of 1 on either side of the midpoint to 6 at the extreme ratings. The number of rating levels used is then multiplied by the highest and lowest rating. The overall ordination score is simply the mean of the scores for each construct on the grid.	✓	✓ (seen as a within-construct differentiation)	0.59	- Un-normed - Univariate - Doesn't attend to the structure among indices
<b>FIC</b> (Landfield, 1976)	Measures the number of independent clusters in a grid using the dissimilarity in ratings of of elements/ of constructs to elements (within and between elements). High FIC indicates constructs are used in relatively different ways		✓ (seen as a between-construct differentiation)		- Loss of information when re-categorize ratings - Application of cluster threshold
<b>Factor Analysis</b>	Groups the number of constructs that are working similarly together. 5 factors is said to be complex		✓		- Blunt scores - Look at between and within groups

# Differentiation between and within constructs (Landfield, 1977; Adams Webber, 1976)



# Where we are now

- We still see value in viewing structural measures bi-dimensionally
- Valuable to incorporate within construct analysis (between elements)
- Still asking
  - what structural measures to use
  - how we view integration

# Why are we not giving up

- Could change the way EASE Wellbeing measures clients therapeutic changes
  - move away from focusing on symptomatology
- Clients report they find these sessions useful
- Lets think positively.. we have options.. we just haven't got their yet!

# Thank you for listening!

(to our ongoing journey with structural measures)

Greta Cecutti  
greta@easewellbeing.co.uk

Lauren Sayers  
lauren@easewellbeing.co.uk

Diego Vitali  
diego@easewellbeing.co.uk