

The What and How of Qualitative Research

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Overview:



1. Uses of qualitative research – what did we explore?
2. Data collection – what did we do?
 1. *General methods and study designs*
 2. *COVID specific – remote data collection methods*

QUESTIONS

3. Analysis – what the heck do we do with data?
 1. *Deductive coding – coding by topics*
 2. *Inductive coding – coding by meaning*
 3. *Rigor in Qualitative research*

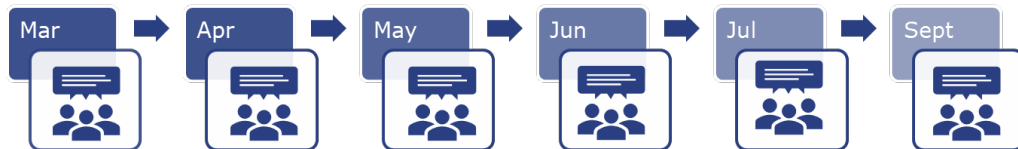
QUESTIONS

The story begins...

Teens and COVID-19 Study (TeC-19)

- Adolescence is a critical period of biological, psychological and social development
- COVID brought social isolation and raised anxiety

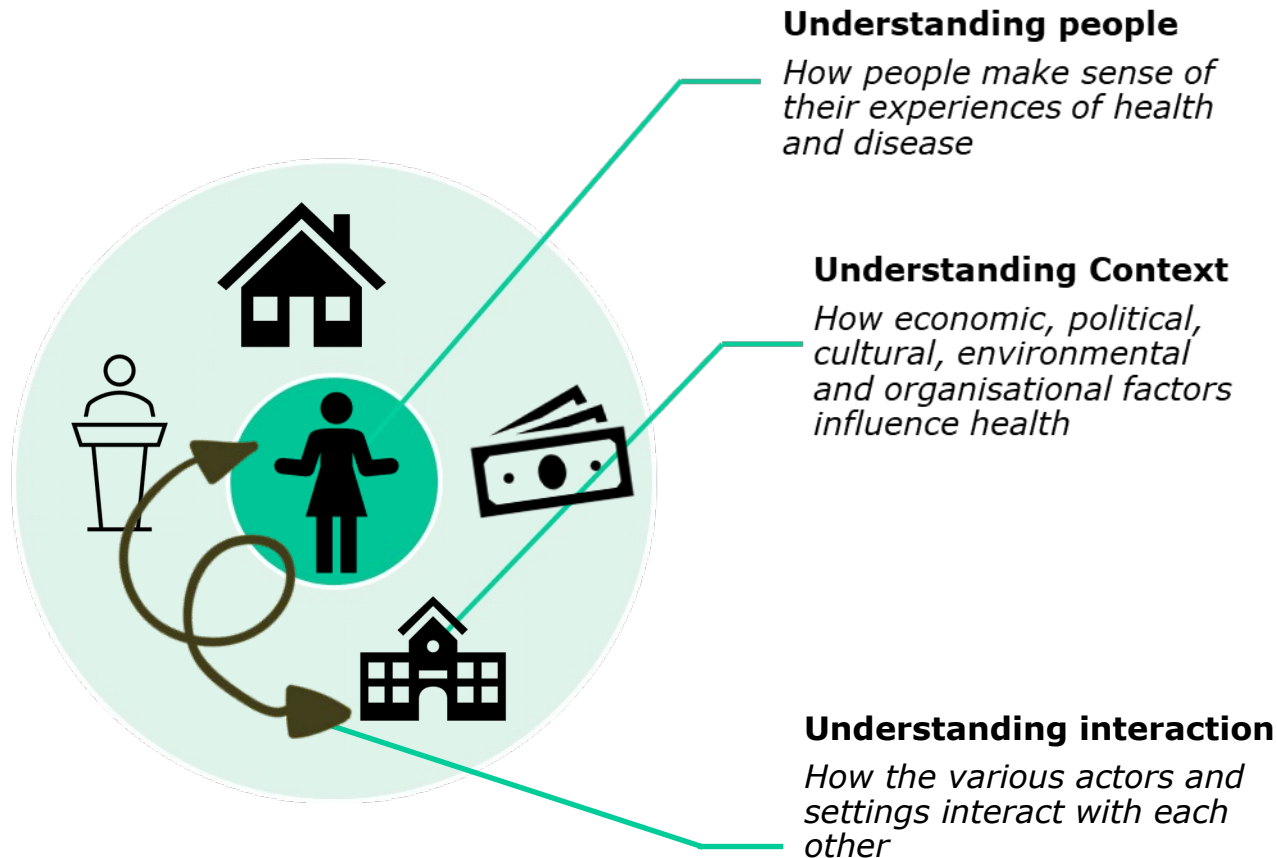
We set up an online longitudinal qualitative study to understand and address the needs of adolescents during COVID-19



8 groups = 76 adolescents



Uses of qualitative research



What we explored:

People

How young people were feeling about lockdown

What things were helping them cope

Context

How schools/universities responded to pandemic

Home conditions of young people

Interactions

How young people reacted to changes in government messaging over time

How their habits and lives changed with restriction changes over time

QUESTION:

- Mentimeter!

What qualitative data collection methods do you know of?

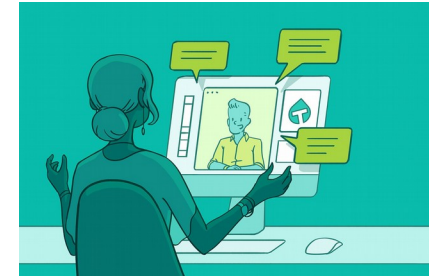
Methods of collecting data



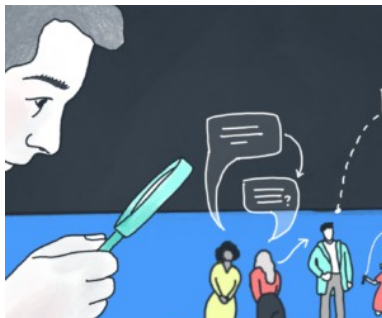
Individual interviews



**Focus groups /
Group interviews**



Online interviews



Observations



Textual data



Creative methods

Methods we used:

- Focus Group Discussions
 - *Individual interviews*
 - ***All online***
- Creative methods
 - *Story completion*
 - *Whiteboard activities on zoom*
 - *Using photos to start conversations*
 - *Social Media Diaries*

Luke and Ruby have been talking on WhatsApp about the government's proposal to re-open schools. They have gotten into a disagreement about whether re-opening schools is a good thing to do.

Ruby thinks it's a bad idea because...

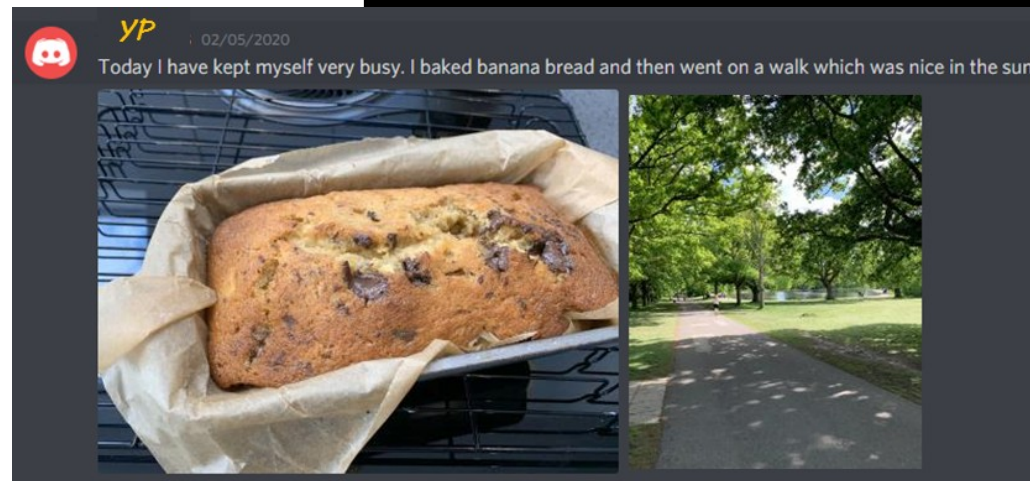
If the whole school is in, you will be closer to other people. In classrooms people will be closer to friends, and they won't be able to hold back. There will be lots of people in the same space. Schools are dirty, and people will be messing about.

It's not easy to maintain hygiene. Not enough soap and sanitiser.

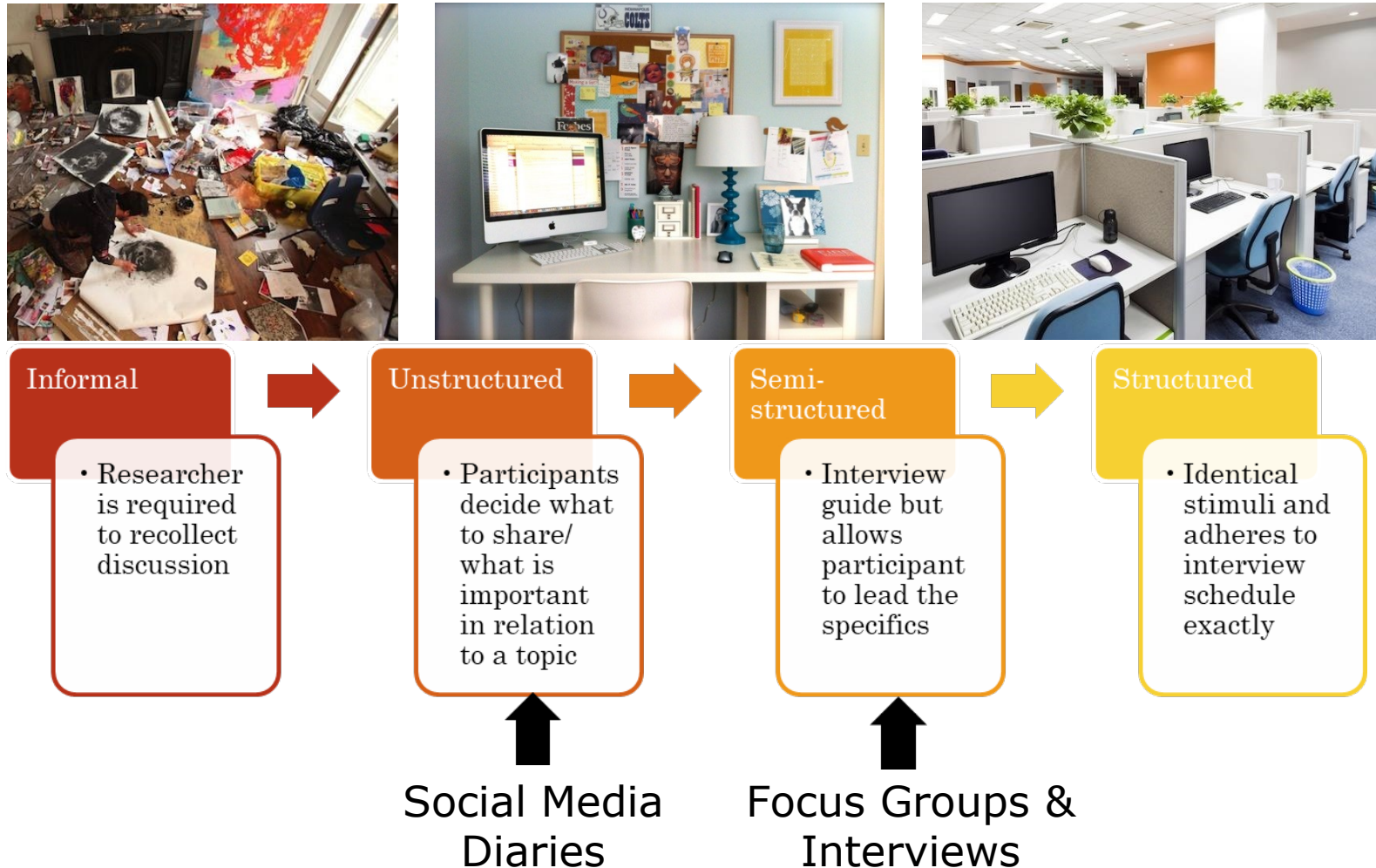
Classrooms don't provide enough space to socially distance.

Luke thinks it's a good idea because...

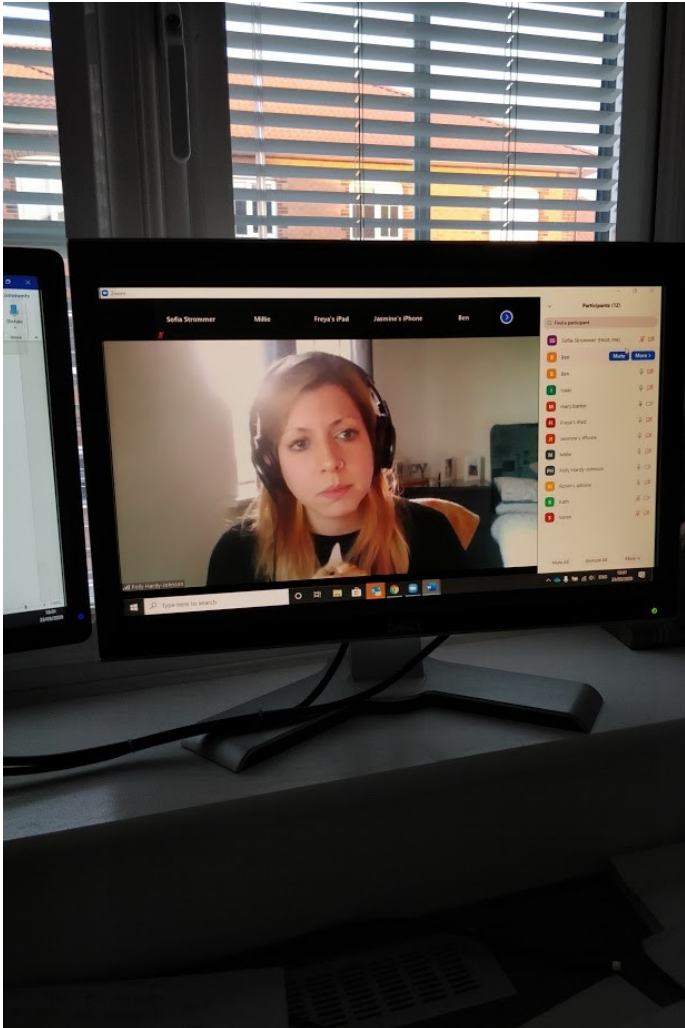
Gives people hope that normal would return. Will get people back into doing education. Online schooling isn't helping them. A lot of people aren't doing online school. Gets people back into a routine. Gives people security. Might boost economy by reassuring that it's OK to start allowing people out. Allow key and other workers to go back to work when no longer caring for children. Makes key worker children feel more included. Helps with mental health and people in troubled homes.



Data collection formats



Qualitative Research in COVID conditions



- Co-moderator in the interview to help deal with admin, audio recording, to monitor the chat etc.
- Video on/off
- Affects flow of the conversation: ability to see non-verbal cues
- Using “hand up” or “unmute” as indicator that you want to say something
- Can just record audio, which won’t capture participants’ faces
- Making sure participants feel able to speak (e.g. no parents present, clear rules about how to take turns)
- Inevitably there are tech challenges!

Other alternatives: telephone interviews

- Good for participants less comfortable with using high-tech options
- Requires some equipment for audio recording
 - Best practice: telephone pick up microphone that plugs into audio recorder
- Spend more time building rapport, responding to the things they're saying in a positive way and enthusing a bit more than you normally might



Study phone

Digital Voice Recorder
(With USB!)



Olympus TP-8 Telephone
Pick Up Microphone



Q&A Time!

What would you like
to know about
qualitative data
collection methods?



Question

- Mentimeter!

What qualitative data analysis methods do you know of?

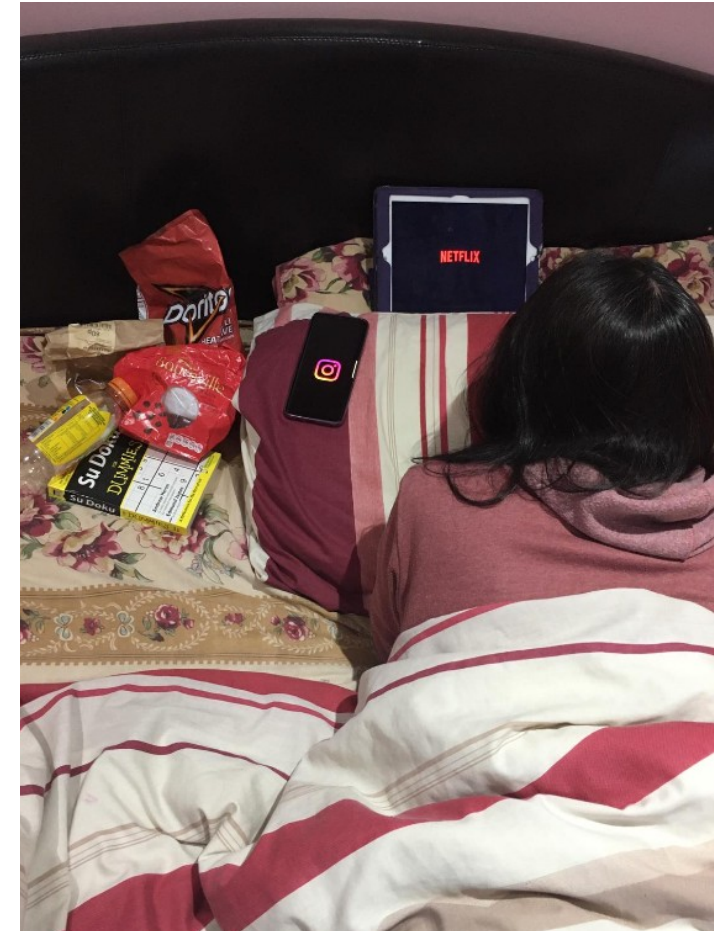
Qualitative research designs & analysis

Design	Goal	Characteristics of analysis
Ethnography	Immersion in the target participants' (e.g., certain cultural group) environment to understand goals, cultures, challenges & motivations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Researcher notes about observations• Thematic analysis of interview transcripts
Narrative	Weaves together a sequence of events narrated by the individuals to form a cohesive story with themes	Coding of data to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• how the story is structured,• what functions the story serves• what is the substance of the story• how the story is performed
Phenomenological	Aims to provide detailed examinations of personal lived experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small samples• Extensive interviews• Very deep thematic analysis into the meanings of descriptions of the experience
Grounded theory	The construction of hypotheses and theories through the collecting and analysis of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thematic analysis of the data• Development of conceptual frameworks based on data
Case study	Developing a deep understanding of a case (e.g. a person, a company, event activity or process) through multiple types of data sources obtained over a sustained period of time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Case study templates to capture data• Thematic analysis to dig deeper

What we did

- Thematic analysis on Week 1 Focus Group data
 - *How did young people respond to messaging in early COVID-19 lock down?*
- Longitudinal Qualitative Analysis using Case Studies
 - *What were the major impacts of COVID-19 on young people?*
 - *How did key events impact young people's lives and wellbeing?*

(combining FGD transcripts & social media diaries)



It all comes down to making notes and coding things

- Content analysis = What is here?
- Thematic analysis = What was intended by what is here?

Yeah, I'm not too bad, I'm just bored. And then just feel really like trapped in my house. But like I'm fine, it's just like a bit... I don't know when it's going to end, so it's quite hard to sort of like be positive

Feeling trapped

Being at home

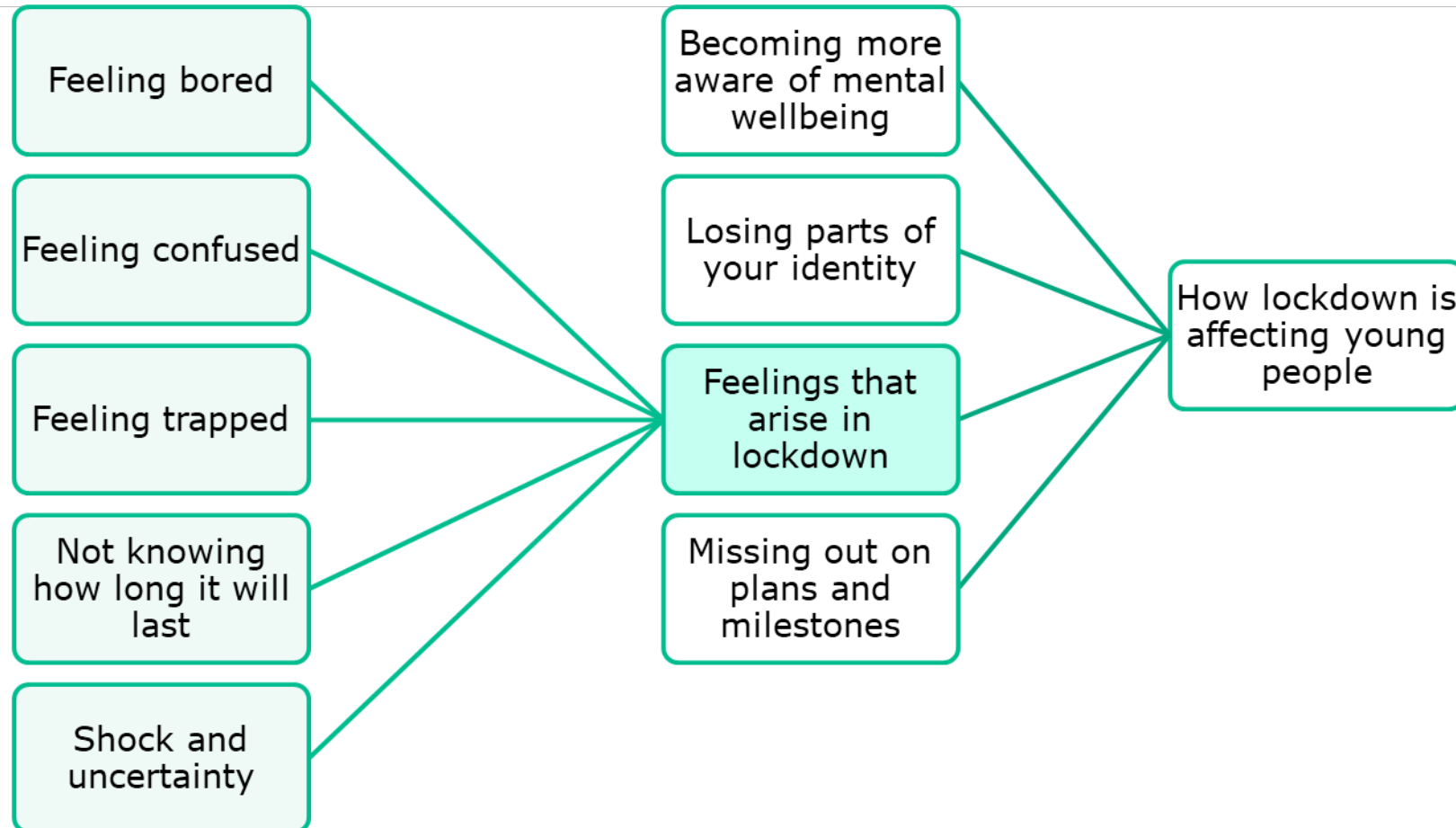
Uncertainty

Things that affect mental health

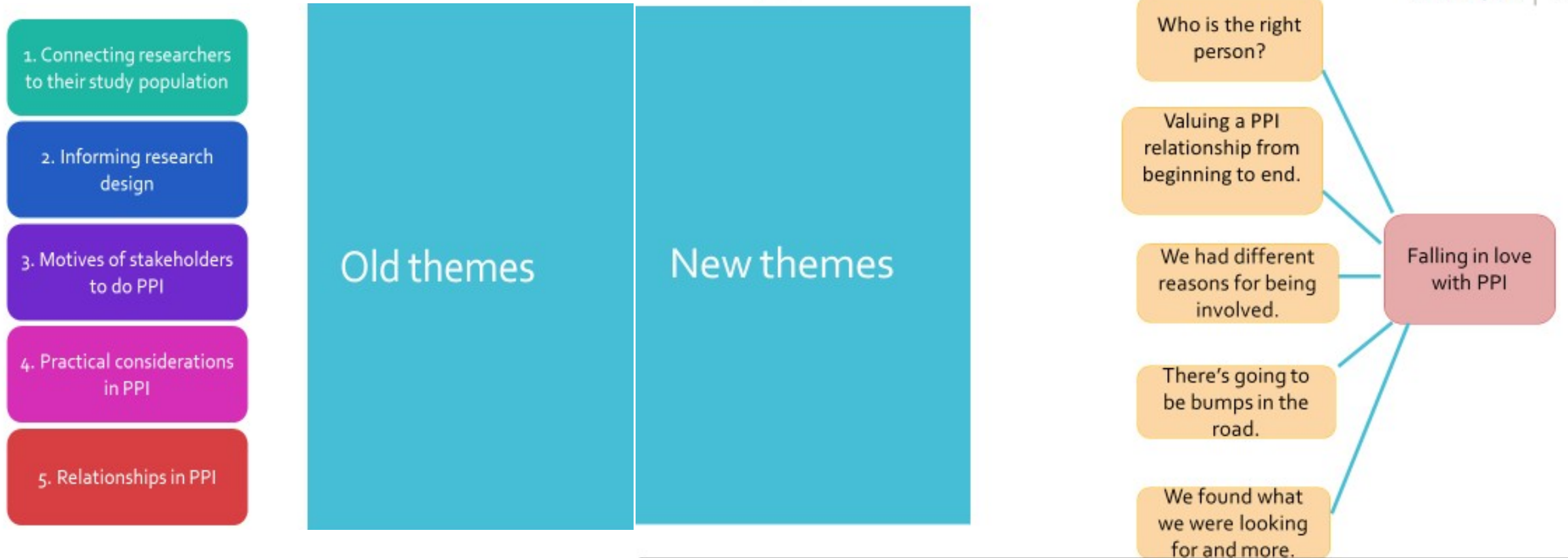
Feels endless

Trying to stay positive

Developing codes into themes

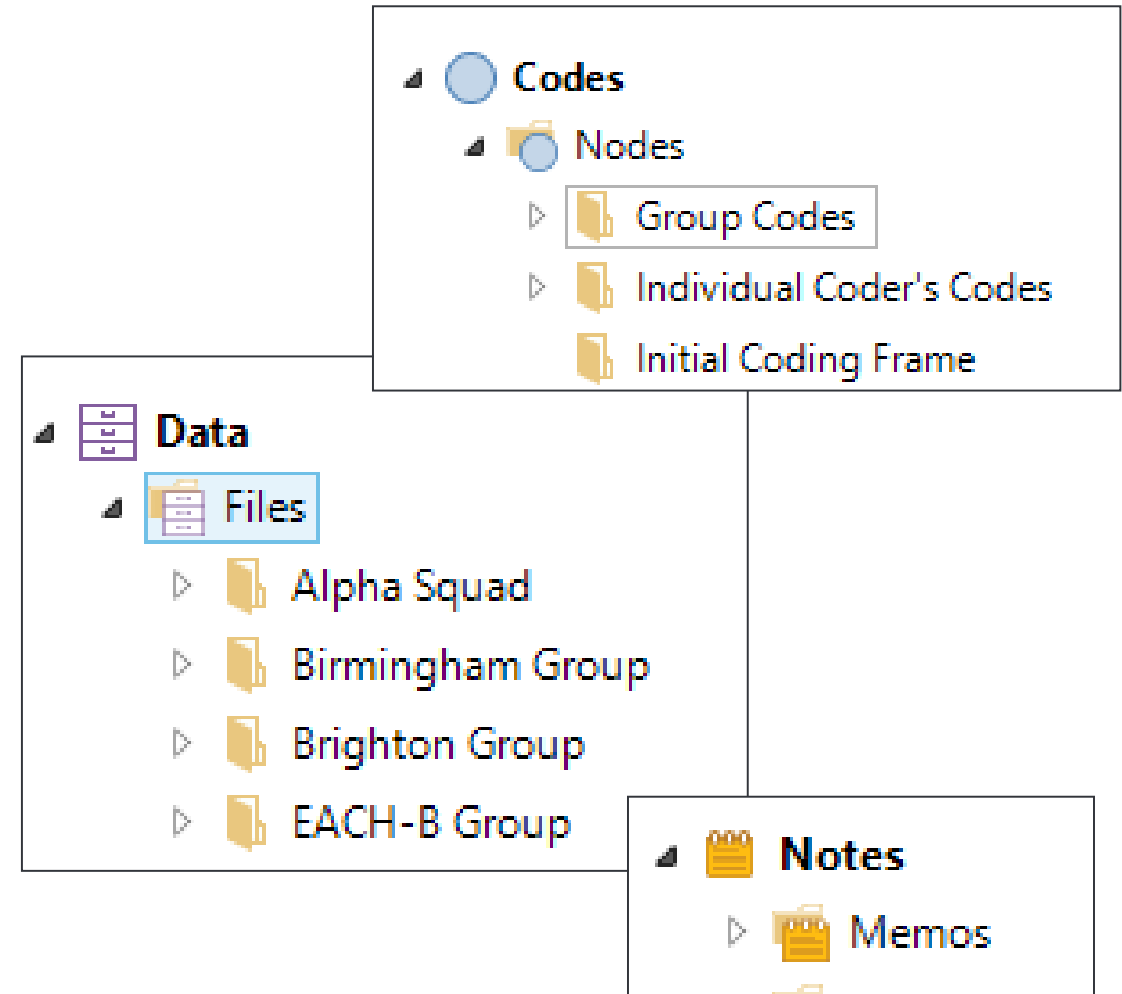


Superficial themes vs meaningful themes



Ensuring a systematic and rigorous analysis Vol 2

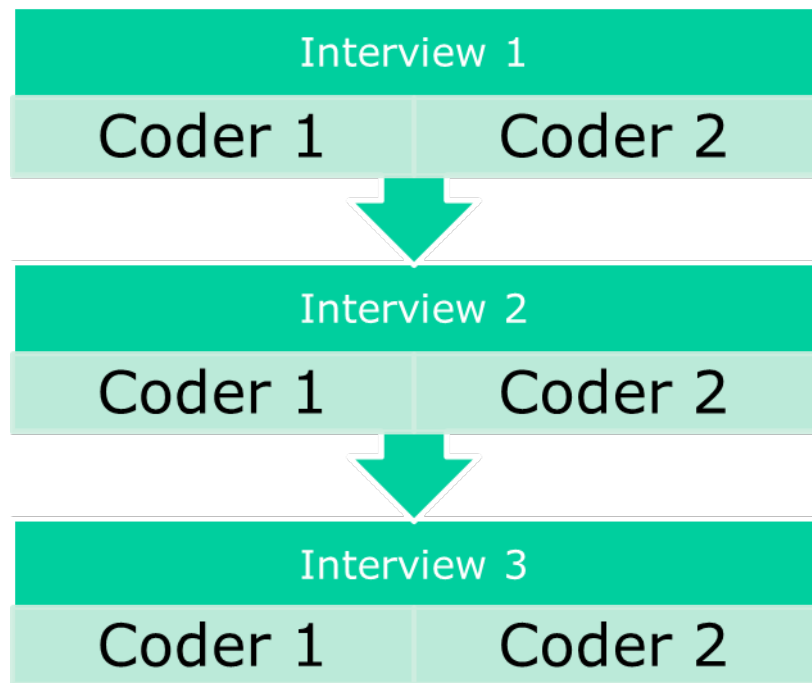
- Data management is key!
 - Using software like NVivo helps to organize your data, codes, notes, and the analytical process
 - You can use NVivo to get started by using word searching
 - Once you've coded your data, you can explore what codes are commonly used together, how coding differs based on demographic variables
 - You can save all your searches and comparisons!



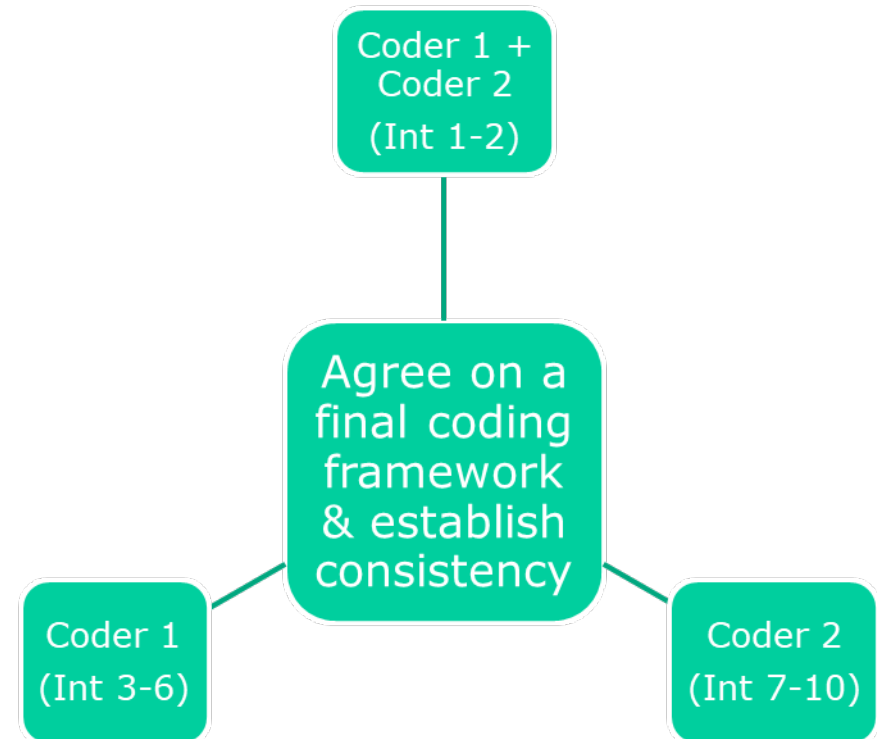
Ensuring a systematic and rigorous analysis Vol 2

- Always code with other people, at least one other person
- NVivo allows you to check coding agreement between two researchers

Double code everything



Double code to agree a coding framework



Case Studies

- In the TeC19 study we are using Case Study Templates to understand what has changed for our groups of young people over time since March 2020
- Each group of young people is a Case, each Case has multiple timepoints when they have been interviewed, and when they have submitted social media diaries

Each Case Study Template summarises data for one group

The main findings will be condensed into a Framework Matrix summarising all groups over time

Both the CST and the FM will be used to identify what to look at in more depth using Thematic Analysis

Group overview	
Group name	
Location	
Age group	
School year	
Number of people	
List of original participants (pseudonyms)	
Gender breakdown	
Ethnic diversity	
IMD (+ lay description)	
Number of focus groups that took place (not PPI consultations)	
Other notes about the group	

Week	Key things that came out of the interviews	Questions that were asked (<i>do last!</i>)
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did interview relate to events happening in the "real world" 	
Week 2		
Week 3		
Week 4		
Week 5		
Week 6		

Week	How many SM Diaries submitted?	Who submitted?	What were the submissions about?	Other comments/notes/observations
Week 1				
Week 2				
Week 3				
Week 4				
Week 5				
Week 6				

Group	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3...
Alpha			
EACHB			
...			

What makes a good qualitative paper

- Both writing and reviewing qualitative papers is helped by frameworks/guidelines for reporting qualitative research:
 - Consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ): a 32-item checklist for interviews and focus groups**
 - Standards for reporting qualitative research (SRQR)**

COREQ (Consolidated criteria for REporting Qualitative research) Checklist

A checklist of items that should be included in reports of qualitative research. You must report the page number in your manuscript where you consider each of the items listed in this checklist. If you have not included this information, either revise your manuscript accordingly before submitting or note N/A.

Topic	Item No.	Guide Questions/Description	Reported on Page No.
Domain 1: Research team and reflexivity			
<i>Personal characteristics</i>			
Interviewer/facilitator	1	Which author/s conducted the interview or focus group?	
Credentials	2	What were the researcher's credentials? E.g. PhD, MD	
Occupation	3	What was their occupation at the time of the study?	
Gender	4	Was the researcher male or female?	
Experience and training	5	What experience or training did the researcher have?	
<i>Relationship with participants</i>			
Relationship established	6	Was a relationship established prior to study commencement?	
Participant knowledge of the interviewer	7	What did the participants know about the researcher? e.g. personal goals, reasons for doing the research	
Interviewer characteristics	8	What characteristics were reported about the interviewer/facilitator? e.g. Bias, assumptions, reasons and interests in the research topic	
Domain 2: Study design			
<i>Theoretical framework</i>			
Methodological orientation and Theory	9	What methodological orientation was stated to underpin the study? e.g. grounded theory, discourse analysis, ethnography, phenomenology, content analysis	
<i>Participant selection</i>			
Sampling	10	How were participants selected? e.g. purposive, convenience, consecutive, snowball	
Method of approach	11	How were participants approached? e.g. face-to-face, telephone, mail, email	
Sample size	12	How many participants were in the study?	
Non-participation	13	How many people refused to participate or dropped out? Reasons?	
<i>Setting</i>			

Acknowledgements

- Thank you to the participants of our TeC-19 study and the team working on it, this would have been a very boring webinar without them
- Thank you to Carmel McGrath for sharing her theme development slides and experience with our qualitative research group
- Thank you to the hosts and for joining me today
- As with any qualitative research, this is just one interpretation of the data, in this case of qual methods and their application. Other people may have a different interpretation and may use different practices



My favourite YP photo
about COVID

Q&A time!

