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What are possibly benefit-promoting characteristics of groups participating in an online life-review group intervention?
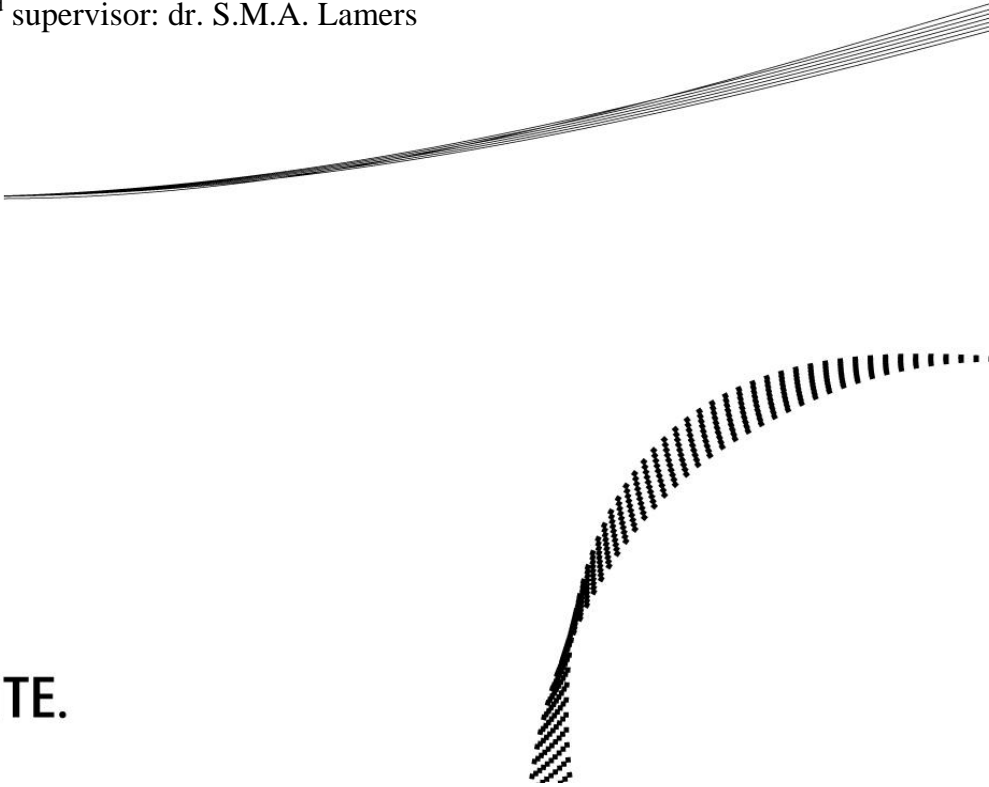
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Contents

Samenvatting

Doelstelling. Bestaande literatuur toont aan dat life-review interventies effect hebben bij het terugdringen van depressieve symptomen. Echter is nog weinig tot niets over de processen bekend die tot effectiviteit leiden. Doel van deze studie was het identificeren van kenmerken van groepen die de cursus volgen en hoe zich de identiteiten van iedere deelnemer; de 'algemene lotgenoot' – een gemiddelde van alle activiteiten als lotgenoot – en de interacties ontwikkelen.

Methode. Op Verhaal Komen Online is een laagdrempelige life-review groeps-cursus. De analyse van de twee groepen bestond uit vier onderdelen: een holistische content analyse; een analyse van de individuele identiteitsontwikkeling van iedere deelnemer; een analyse van de ontwikkeling van de algemene lotgenoot en een analyse van de interactieontwikkeling.

Resultaten. De analyses lieten een aantal overeenkomsten tussen de groepen zien die als globale karakteristieken kunnen worden beschouwt. Deze zijn: homogeniteit betreffend geslacht en leeftijd; empathie en eerlijkheid tegenover elkaar; grote bereidheid om teksten over herinneringen en ervaringen te delen; wederzijdse bemoediging en het opbouwen van relaties; reflecterend, empatisch en relationeel gedrag als lotgenoot en de duidelijke scheiding van de rollen "deelnemer" en "begeleider".

Conclusie. De resultaten zijn deels terug te vinden in bestaande literatuur over processen in een *face-to-face* groep versie van OVK. Bij deze speelden een goede sfeer binnen de groep, openheid tegenover en relaties met de andere deelnemers ook een grote rol. Voorliggende studie is ook als een stuk pionierswerk te beschrijven omdat het een eerste stap was onderzoek te doen over welke processen aan de effectiviteit van een *online* life-review groep interventie bijdragen. Bovendien werden bestaande methoden geadapteerd voor analyses op groepsniveau en werd en nieuw analyse laag ontwikkeld, namelijk die van de algemene lotgenoot. De resultaten van deze studie geven aanwijzing voor vervolgonderzoek binnen het gebied van hoe bepaalde groepskenmerken en –processen aan de effectiviteit van een online life-review groepsinterventie bijdragen.

Abstract

Objectives. Existing literature shows that life-review interventions are effective in reducing depressive symptomatology. However there is still little to nothing known about the processes that lead to such an effectiveness. The present study aimed to find out more about the characteristics of groups attending the course and about how the identities of each participant; the generalized peer (an average of all activities as a peer) and the interactions develop during the course.

Methods. Op Verhaal Komen Online is an easy-accessible life-review group course. The analysis of two groups consisted of four subparts: a holistic content analysis; an analysis of the individual identity development; an analysis of the generalized peer and an analysis of the development of the interactions.

Results. The analyses revealed a number of commonalities between the groups which can be regarded as general indicators. These are: Homogeneity concerning gender and age; empathy and honesty to each other; great readiness to share texts about memories and experiences; mutual encouragement and the construction of relationships; reflecting, empathetic and relational behaviour as a peer and clear separation of the roles "participant" and "counsellor".

Conclusions. The results can also be partially found in existing literature about processes in a *face-to-face* group version of OVK. Within this intervention, a good group atmosphere, disclosure to and relations with other participants played a great role, too. The present study was still a bit pioneering because it was a first step to advance research of which processes contribute to the effectiveness of an online life-review group intervention. Furthermore, it adapted existing methods to analyses on group level and developed a new analysis layer, namely the "generalized peer". The results of this study give hints for future research within the domain of how certain group characteristics and – processes contribute to the effectiveness of an online life-review group intervention.

Introduction

Aim of this Study

This study aims to investigate possibly benefit-promoting characteristics of groups which participate in the online self-help group intervention *Op Verhaal Komen Online* (OVK Online). This online self-help group intervention is addressed to people aged 40 and older with moderate depressive symptoms. To investigate abovementioned characteristics of the groups, the study will make use of therapy change process research (CPR). This term was first introduced by Greenberg and links processes and effects of a therapy (Greenberg, 1986). CPR will be further examined in the course of the introduction. Benefit from an online self-help group intervention comprises experiencing a reduction of depressive symptoms and an increase in wellbeing. So-called life review, defined as the integral component of the intervention, involves retrieving memories from one's life. In the course of this introduction this term will be further examined. Building on this, there follows a general outline about interventions based on life review, so-called life-review interventions and which advantages and disadvantages especially *group* interventions bring along.

General Background

In 2014, the demographic group of people aged 40 to around 70 is the largest one in the Dutch population. This will shift to the 55-years- to 80-years olds in 2025 and this trend will carry on the following decades (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2014). Therefore, apparently the middle-aged and already somewhat older people represent the majority of the Dutch population and will do so in the future.

In this phase of life, people often face drastic events such as death of the spouse or any other intimate, a severe illness or something else. It is "of great importance" (Korte, 2012, p. 32) how middle-aged and older people deal with such drastic life-events because the way in which people tend to look back on their live "can either be adaptive or maladaptive for their mental health." (Korte, 2012, p.11). People should accept these events as parts of their life and life by itself as something that had to take place the way it did. This is also called *ego-integrity* which is part of the last stage of Erikson's psychosocial stages (van der Molen, Perreijn, & van den Hout, 2010). Because at the moment the older generation begins to think within this frame about their lives, they may also encounter unsolved conflicts or other past experiences (Butler, 1963). If this process of thinking about one's life – also called *life review* – does not take place successfully, that is, leading to ego-integrity, this might lead

to despair, the counterpart of ego-integrity, and, more specifically, to symptoms of depression (Butler, 1963; Bohlmeijer, Valenkamp, Westerhof, Smit, & Cuijpers, 2005).

With this background kept in mind, it is hardly surprising that depressive symptoms pose a serious health problem among middle-aged and older people (Bohlmeijer, Smit, & Cuijpers, 2003; Korte, Bohlmeijer, Cappeliez, Smit, & Westerhof, 2012; Korte, 2012; Korte, Bohlmeijer, & Smit, 2009). According to the American Psychiatric Association (2000), a depressive episode is characterised by symptoms like a depressed mood or a loss of interest or pleasure. The depressed mood is indicated either by the affected person itself through feeling sad et cetera or by observations of other people who note that the affected person is for example tearful. Especially minor symptoms of depression as they may occur in older people carry the greatest risk to develop into a severe major depression with a bad prospect (Korte, 2012; Cuijpers, de Graaf, & van Dorsselaer, 2004; Korte et al. 2012; Korte, Bohlmeijer, & Smit, 2009) which in turn implies a high demand for action (Pot, Mehlenhorst, Onrust, & Bohlmeijer, 2008; Butler, 1963; Korte et al., 2012).

If, on the other hand, life-review is used in a therapeutic context to deal with drastic life events or unsolved conflicts, this might lead to alleviation of depressive symptoms (for a review over several studies which approved this, read Westerhof, Bohlmeijer, and Webster, 2010).

Definition and explanation of the terms *reminiscence* and *life review*

In general, *reminiscence* underlies the term *life review* and can be defined as the recall of personal memories from one's past (Cappeliez & Guidon, 2005/ Hallford, Mellor, & Cummins, 2012; Butler, 1963; Pinquart & Forstmeier, 2012). There are somewhat approaches to categorize reminiscence more precisely. To begin with, Pinquart and Forstmeier (2012) distinguish reminiscence and life review. On the one hand single reminiscence is a sort of "unstructured autobiographical storytelling" (Pinquart & Forstmeier, 2012, p.541). In contrast, life review is much more structured than reminiscence. It does not only focus on the description of the past – as simple reminiscence does – but also "on the (re)evaluation of life events and on the integration of positive and negative life events in a coherent life story" (Pinquart & Forstmeier, 2012, p.541). Based on this approximate outline of the term *reminiscence*, there can now be elaborated on therapies respectively interventions which are based on these concepts.

Overview of life-review interventions

There are several properties which constitute a life-review therapy. Generally, it includes calling back and sharing events one has gone through (Chin, 2007) respectively systematically reviewing one's life based on questions concerning this (Bohlmeijer et al., 2005). Life-review therapy tries to obstruct negative or dysfunctional types of reminisce (Westerhof, Bohlmeijer, and Webster, 2010) and thereby encouraging the repeal of "negative beliefs about the self and the future" (Karimi et al., 2010, p.883).

Such interventions often consist of a number of sessions distributed over several weeks (Pot, Melenhorst, Onrust, and Bohlmeijer, 2008; Bohlmeijer et al., 2005; Lamers, Bohlmeijer, Korte and Westerhof, 2014; Preschl et al., 2012; Korte, 2012). They may include autobiographical writing, storytelling, blogging and much else (Westerhof, Bohlmeijer and Webster, 2010). Usually, life-review therapies are either conducted individually or on group-level (Chin, 2007; Pot, Melenhorst, Onrust and Bohlmeijer, 2008; Hsieh & Wang, 2003). Although group interventions are already widely implemented and despite their ascertained effectiveness (Westerhof, Bohlmeijer, and Webster, 2010), there is still not much known about which processes contribute to this effectiveness and how.

Group interventions have several advantages. For one, they are "cost-effective, therapeutic, social, and recreational" (Jones & Beck-Little, 2002). More specific, people in a group are offered the opportunity of social exchange and integration (Pinquart & Forstmeier, 2012).

Life-review therapies on the internet and why this is promising

It is also striking that such life-review therapies have been more and more adjusted to the use on the internet. There are several reasons for providing therapies in the internet. First of all, internet-based interventions may reach more people than conventional face-to-face treatments (Postel, Lamers, Westerhof, and Bohlmeijer, 2012) which will by default lead to greater accessibility of psychological treatment (Cowpertwait & Clarke, 2013). This is especially important for people who appreciate a higher extent of anonymity, who live far away from hospitals or a therapist's office or who are not able to come round during the common visiting hours (Cowpertwait & Clarke, 2013). Furthermore, healthcare costs could be decreased because there is less time required from therapists (Cowpertwait & Clarke, 2013; Cuijpers, van Straten and Andersson, 2008). Clinicians may therefore also be more flexible concerning their time and methods (Barak, Klein and Proudfoot, 2009).

Getting rid of fixed appointments is also advantageous for the client: One is able to work through the intervention on one's own – at home or somewhere else. By this, travel time is omitted and waiting-lists can be avoided (Cuijpers, van Straten and Andersson, 2008). Besides, by offering web-based interventions the stigma of going to a psychologist or therapist can possibly be reduced (Cuijpers, van Straten and Andersson, 2008).

Even the middle-aged and older generation might benefit from the advantages that were just mentioned. It became apparent that about 90 percent of the people aged between 45 and 65 make use of the internet (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2011). This implies that online life-review interventions and other self-help therapies will also reach the middle-aged and older generation.

However, there are also some disadvantages of online group interventions. Firstly, people in a group may not be as anonymous as in an individual intervention (Lamers et al., 2014). Secondly, group interventions cannot be as easily adapted to the needs of every participant as an individual intervention.

Methods to analyse within-group interactions and processes

In therapy, every participant maintains several identity positions. The counsellor and other participants contribute likewise to the construction of a person's identity. This is why both client's and therapist's identities should be taken into account in one analysis (Georgaca 2012). Analysing these processes can provide an insight into which of them plays a role in influencing the efficacy of an online *group* intervention. These processes can be analysed by means of the change process research (CPR). As already mentioned earlier, this term was first introduced by Greenberg (1986) and comprises "identifying, describing, explaining, and predicting the effects of the processes that bring about therapeutic change" (Greenberg, 1986, p.4). According to Elliott (2010), the Quantitative Process-Outcome Design is "one of the most common types of therapy research in general" (Elliott, 2010, p. 124) and includes using a sample of key processes from the therapy sessions "to predict posttherapeutic outcome" (Elliott, 2010, p.124). However, Elliott points out that this approach only looks at in- and output and ignores everything which is "in the middle" (Elliott, 2010, p. 124). There is no attention paid to *how* the changes occur.

Besides, there is the so-called Microanalytic Sequential Process Design. According to Elliott (2010) it may be quantitative or qualitative. Studies which use this design aim to investigate the "immediate influence of therapeutic interventions on within-session client processes and also the effect of client actions on the processing and planning activities of the

therapist" (Elliott, 2010, p. 128). This approach has a number of advantages. Firstly, it enables to test "key theoretical claims about fundamental therapeutic influence processes" (Elliott, 2010, p. 128). Secondly, it makes it possible to detect and demonstrate causal relations. Lastly, its results may also be very useful for practice. Nevertheless, this approach also has some disadvantages. It is very time consuming and it probably ignores "influence processes that extent beyond the immediately preceding response" (Elliott, 2010, p. 129). Despite the disadvantages, Microanalytic Sequential Process Design is still a promising approach with practical relevance. The *qualitative* microanalytic research which takes the form of a conversation analysis will be used in this thesis to analyse the data and to answer the relevant research questions.

There are a number of reasons for why the present study involves certain relevance. Firstly, its results could contribute to the advancement of existing analysis methods since they will be adapted to groups which is new. Secondly, the results may allow conclusions about which types of assignments may be most optimal for stimulating life review and which ones add less to this. Thirdly, the results of this study may lead to further research in which it could be determined which persons derive more benefit from OVK Online and which persons less.

Research questions

The preceding analysis of the literature indicates that group-based online life view interventions indeed seem to be effective. However, it has not been examined yet which processes contribute to this effectiveness and how. In a first step it is thus important to find out more about the participants, about the process of identity construction during the intervention and about the interaction processes among the participants. This leads to the following questions:

Main question:

What are possibly benefit-promoting characteristics of groups which pass through the course OVK Online?

To investigate this question, four sub-questions are formulated:

1. What are the characteristics of the groups attending the self-help course that possibly promote benefitting from this course?

2. How do the identities of the group members develop during the course while interacting with each other?

3. How does the generalized peer develop during the course?

4. How do the overall interactions develop during the course?

Methods

The Online life-review intervention "Op Verhaal Komen Online"

The Dutch self-help online course *Op Verhaal Komen Online* (OVK), whose title may be translated with *The Stories We Live By*, experienced a long development until it reached its contemporary form. In the beginning there was a face-to-face group counselling in which participants had to tell and evaluate their life story. Research on the effectiveness of this group counselling revealed that it can amongst other things help to reduce depressive symptoms (Korte, 2012). Based on this group counselling a self-help course was developed. Essentially, the group counselling on its own was transformed into a book which participants could work on individually and independently.

Because of the positive experiences with the self-help book version of OVK the decision was reached to convert the self-help course to an online version. As in the previous version with the self-help book, participants individually passed through the online course. Thereby, they got one of two forms of social support: On the one hand, as in the previous version, they got contact with a counsellor via mail. On the other hand, they were divided into small groups with peers with whom they could keep up (Postel, Lamers, Westerhof, and Bohlmeijer, 2012).

There has already been a randomized controlled trial study on this version of OVK with two experimental conditions and one control condition. People aged 40 and older with light to moderate depressive symptoms came into consideration for this randomized controlled trial.

The experimental conditions were identical to the two offered forms of social support within this intervention – email contact with a counsellor or contact with peers. People who were in the control condition were set on a waiting list. Participants were randomly assigned to one of these conditions. Data from this randomized controlled trial was analysed in this thesis to answer the concerning research questions.

The intervention was completely followed at home and lasted 12 weeks. The participants by default gave their permission that if they took part in the intervention, their data may be used for further research. However, they could still determine if researchers may use their direct quotes.

The intervention proceeded more or less similar for the concerning groups, that is the two experimental conditions and the control condition. The two experimental conditions went through six modules each lasting two weeks and each approaching another topic. The first week was intended for self-initiated working, the second was hallmarked by the contact with the counsellor respectively the contact with the peers (depending on the experimental condition). In contrast, people in the waiting-list condition did not take part in the self-help online course. They rather received supporting not-responsible mails every couple of weeks to keep them involved in the intervention. After six months, yet again this group received the self-help online course. All three conditions constantly underwent remeasurement.

Preparing the data for the analysis

In the beginning, the relevant data had to be prepared in order to be suitable for analysing it. It concerned data that was stored in an online discussion board. There, participants uploaded their assignments and shared some of these with the other participants. Furthermore, the data also included the reactions and feedbacks the participants gave each other.

Data of three groups were each put in one excel document. These documents included a depiction of the questions; the assignments; the corresponding answers and whether those were shared or not. Furthermore, the reactions of the other participants to these pieces of texts were included in the documents. All three documents were transferred to ATLAS.ti, a computer program for qualitative data analysis.

Data analysis

Holistic Content Analysis

At first, to answer the first subquestion, a holistic content analysis was conducted. In general, this part of the analysis aims at providing a first insight into the concerning cases. Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber (1998) generated a framework of narrative research with the holistic content perspective as one out of four components. The holistic content perspective is characterized by reading a person's whole life story and analysing parts of the story "in the context of the story in its entirety" (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998, p.

13). This approach of analysing a life story is especially suitable when focusing on a person in its entirety or, in other words, on his or her development until to the contemporary situation (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998). Due to the fact that in this thesis the *processes* of interaction and identity construction within an online group intervention are investigated, this approach was quite suitable for first steps into the subject matter.

Analysis of the development of the identities and the interaction processes

Second, a look was taken on the construction and the development of the identities of the participants and the interaction processes within the group. This corresponds with the second subquestion.

In order to analyse the development of the identities and the interaction processes, an earlier compiled coding scheme (van Dalfsen, 2013) was used and adjusted to the data used in this thesis. Van Dalfsen (2013) conducted research on the second version of *Op Verhaal Komen*, namely the individual self-help intervention with the book and the email-guidance by a counsellor. Based on the emails which were sent to each other by the participant and the counsellor, she developed a coding scheme to analyse which processes may play a role in whether benefitting from the individual intervention with guidance via mail or not. On the one hand, she investigated the development of the identities of the participant as well as of the counsellor. This led to the first two coding schemes which can be traced back in the appendix. On the other hand, van Dalfsen (2013) also investigated the interaction patterns between participant and counsellor what again led to the third coding scheme (also in the appendix).

The coding schemes which were used by van Dalfsen to determine how identities develop in the course of the intervention and to determine how interaction takes place were also used in this present thesis. Nevertheless, there was one essential difference: In this thesis, the coding patterns with the identities of the participants as well as the coding pattern with the identities of a counsellor were exclusively adapted to the *participants*. That is because participants in this version of OVK on the hand shared their own assignments and on the other hand also reacted to the assignment of other participants which is matchable with the role of a counsellor.

After coding the data, the actual analysis of the development of the identities and the interaction processes was conducted. This began with compiling tables for each participant containing how often the one showed each self in each week. This table also contained a

column with the total amount of use of each self over the weeks of the intervention. From this, the three most frequently used selves were filtered to use them in the analysis.

Thereafter, these three most frequently used selves of each participant were analysed from the following points of view: At first, for each participant, each of the three selves was analysed with respect to its steadiness, meaning whether the quantity remained the same over the weeks or changed in the course. Secondly, there was also payed attention to how the peers reacted to each expression of the concerning self. The combination of analysing the expressed selves and the relevant reactions sometimes allowed conjecturing about reasons for why a given self further developed as it did. Thirdly, the pattern of the used selves was considered too, meaning whether someone especially showed negatively valued selves or positively valued ones or just a mixture of both.

Analysis of the development of the generalized peer

Next to the analysis of the three most frequently used selves of each participant and the relevant reactions of the peers, a "generalized peer" was conducted: The behaviour that is shown by the peers is summarised in an overall chart. This creates the impression of a generalized counsellor who reacts to the participants. Based on this, it can be figured out which characteristics constitute the counselling behaviour and how the development of the identities if the generalized peer does look like.

Analysis of the development interactions within the course

In conjunction with the analysis of the generalized peer, the interactions are considered, too. This is done for two reasons. Firstly, there is often talk of interactions within the reactions of the peers to a shared text of another participant. These reactions occur from the peer's perspective who acts as a counsellor. Secondly, it is more overseeable to handle the interactions this way. Given that the course has the form of a discussion board in which the participants react to each other it is difficult to figure out which interaction affected a certain self. A peer often does not react immediately or does not further address a certain self which it was previously about. Therefore, the reactions are discussed as a whole, that means per lesson and all reactions count up.

Comparison of the two cases

Thirdly, the preceding parts of the analysis were conducted for two cases which were then compared. This comparison was made per subquestion respectively per each part of the analysis. For all parts, a look was taken at similarities and differences between the two analysed groups and whether there was anything conspicuous.

Results

Coding the data and compiling the new coding schemes

First of all, coding the data of case 1 with the help of the coding schemes by van Dalfsen (2013) brought about three new schemes, adapted for the data of this thesis. These schemes are listed below with an outline about was has been changed in comparison to the original schemes.

Overall, the original scheme of the identities of the participants could be applied to the present data. However, some changes modifications have indeed been made. First, some of the codes have not been adopted, namely "course member" and "unfairly treated self". "Course member" has been defined as the participant showing the want to satisfy the expectations of the counsellor. In the current intervention there was no relevant counsellor whose expectations could have been satisfied. Furthermore, the code "unfairly treated self" was not used either because there could not be found any passages that indicated unfairly treatment by other participants. However, these codes still remain in the coding scheme, for the reason that in another dataset these codes could be applied yet again.

Second, also some new codes have been developed. To these belong "negative self internally attributed", "creative self" and "sceptical/doubtful self". "Negative self" has been included into the new scheme because there were some passages for which the all existing code "autobiographical self, negative, internally attributed" was not fitting at 100 percent. So, a somewhat different code was added. "Creative self" refers to one kind of assignments within the intervention which appeals to the creative side of the participants. Finally, the code "sceptical/doubtful self" was included which refers to passages in which participants show scepticism or doubts.

The following table shows all new codes that did not appear in the original scheme by van Dalfsen (2013) but have been developed for this study.

Table 1. *Additions to the original scheme of the identities of the participant* (van Dalfsen, 2013)*, developed for this study*

Identity participant	Definition	Example
Negative self, internally attributed	The participant describes contemporary experiences/ aspects of his or her present self with a clear negative appreciation. These aspects are internally attributed.	*I can still hardly deal with the strain that I experience in relationships with other people. I always 'have' to do something with that, I can't stop it.* *("Ik kan nog steeds erg moeilijk omgaan met spanning die ik ervaar in relatie tot anderen. Ik "moet" daar altijd iets mee doen; iets laten kan ik niet.")*
Creative self	The participant reveals his or her creative side. Here is talk of poems or stories written by oneself.	*deadly silent glacier on the brink incredible sorrow* *("oer-stille gletsjer aan de rand van de afgrond bodemloos verdriet")*
Sceptical/doubtful self	The participant shows scepticism or doubts.	*Strange to introduce oneself to unobserved foreigners, with the idea to nevertheless share stuff with them. I don't really know yet what to think about that.* *("Vreemd om je voor te stellen aan ongeziene onbekenden, met het idee daar toch zaken mee te gaan delen. Ik weet nog niet precies wat ik daar van vind.")*

Table 1. *Additions to the original scheme of the identities of the participant* (van Dalfsen, 2013)*, developed for this study*

Identity participant	Definition	Example
Organisational self	The participant mentions organizations things.	*By the way, I was given the advice to click 'continue' now and then and then again 'back', then you keep the time in mind, I would say. […]* *("Overigens heeft men mij geadvidsserd om tussendoor op 'verder' te klikken en daarna weer op 'terug', dan hou je de tijd in de hand, zal ik maar zeggen. […]")*

The scheme of the identities of the counsellor had to be adjusted to a somewhat greater extent. That is because in the present intervention there was no counsellor who was in close contact with the participant but peers. In the first instance, this led to changing the formulations of the definitions of the codes. Furthermore, as with the first scheme, some codes from the original scheme by van Dalfsen (2013) have been not been used and some new codes have been developed. First, the code "methodical self" from the original scheme has not been used while coding the data of the first case. This is because there was no counsellor actively involved but rather in the background. If the participants had questions about an assignment or about organizational things this counsellor could be consulted but the resulting conversation was not included in the data.

Second, the code "consultative self" was added to the new scheme. This follows from the fact that it was the intention that the peers should react on other people's shared texts. These reactions partly contained suggestions or tips about what the other could different or better. In the third place, the code the code "relational self" as extended, as seen in the following table which shows all new codes that did not appear in the original scheme by van Dalfsen (2013) but have been developed for this study.

Table 2. *Additions to the original scheme of the identities of the participant* (van Dalfsen, 2013)*, developed for this study*

Identity peer	Definition	Example
Consultative self	The peer hands out advice through making suggestions about what the other could do different or better or what she or he could try out.	*Do you know Byron Katie? Try once to read something at her hands or to watch on you tube. That might be something for you, not getting stuck in your past and so on.* *("Ken je Byron Katie? Probeer eens iets van haar te lezen of te zien op you tube. Dat zou voor jou iets kunnen zijn, niet in je verleden blijven hangen enz.")*
Relational self	The peer looks for connection with the one he or she gives feedback to through …	
a. Private/personal	… bringing in something personal which is related to what the other person has told	*Personally I'm not ready for that, I think.* *("Zelf ben ik nog niet zover denk ik.")*
b. mutual	… emphasizing or looking for communalities	*Nice that you also love gardening, it clears one's mind eh?* *("Leuk dat je ook van tuinieren houdt, het maakt de hoofden zo lekker leeg he?")*

For the most part, the scheme of the interaction codes has been adapted from the original by van Dalfsen (2013). However, here, too, some modifications have been made. The codes "to prompt/ask" and "to initiate anew" have not been used. However, as with the other two schemes, these codes are preserved because they may be used in the second case. Besides, the

codes "to establish a relationship/connection", "to appreciate positively" and "to explain" have been added.

The following table shows all new codes that did not appear in the original scheme by van Dalfsen (2013) but have been developed for this study.

Table 3. *Additions to the original scheme of the interaction codes* (van Dalfsen, 2013)*, developed for this study*

Interaction: increases (+) remains constant (+-) decreases (-)	Interaction codes for participant and peer	Definition and examples
+	appreciates	Appreciating of an identity or an experience. *You read it correctly that I life alone and will continue living alone.* *("Je leest het goed dat ik alleen woon en ik zal ook alleen blijven wonen.")*
+	Constructs a relationship	Building up a relationship or a connection through positive or friendly remarks. From this interaction, the "relational self" can arise. *Thanks for your compliment. Good luck with the 6th lesson!* *("Dank je voor je compliment. Succes met les 6!")*
+ -	Explains	Clarifying an already introduced identity. *Now, I did not get along when "I came back to earth" … but it was ok for sure.* *("Nou ik kwam niet hard terecht hoor toen ' ik weer terug kwam op aarde'...maar het was wél goed.")*

Case 1 – Holistic content analysis

The four participants in the first group are all female. The first participant is Julia. She tells that she has been married three times and that she lives on her own now. Furthermore Julia likes drawing and painting. Julia hopes to get more control over her emotional side through the course OVK Online.

The second participant is the 54-year-old Amy. She is a single mother of twins of which the one already moved out and the other shortly, too. Since a couple of years, Amy has a new relationship. Amy tells that she loves writing and that she formerly kept a diary. She is curious about the effects of the course and likes to make a contribution to the research.

Hannah is 61 years old and the third participant of the group. She works in the lower school and is divorced since two years. She has two sons and two grandchildren who she attends to one day in the week. Furthermore she tells that she likes to be busy outside. Hannah participates in the course because she realized that it is helpful to write.

The fourth participant is 47-year-old Fleur. Fleur is married and has two daughters. One of her daughters has a congenital malformation and psychic and developmental problems. Taking care of the daughter and besides working as a lecturer and coach is very exhausting for her. Fleur tells that she loves writing, too. She is sceptical with respect to making contact with strangers. Her peers react empathetically and relationally. It general, it can be said that the group has an open mind about differences among the participants. With respect to differing opinions and beliefs they react interested and discerning.

It is distinctive of the group that there is a large amount of interactions. The peers often react more than one time to a shared assignment or other text. Furthermore, the participant who shared something often answers the received reactions again. This way, the reactions within the discussion board often shape a conversation.

The participants especially share memories and experiences which they gathered in their lives. Other types of assignments such as creative exercises are shared less frequently.

Furthermore, it strikes that the participant share as well positive as negative connoted aspects. Based on this it can be said that inside the group there is left room for negative experiences.

The amount of shared assignments varies from two to twelve. Hannah shares most assignments with the group. Generally, it can be said that the participants share three to four assignments per week on average. With respect to the interactions it has to be further noticed that especially Julia and Amy react to other participants. Hannah and Fleur do so to a lesser extent. The strong interaction reaches a peak during the third lesson. A reason for this may be

that the participants react repeatedly to answers from each other. Fleur for example provides explanations with respect to earlier mentioned memories. The interaction among the participants decreases during the course. In the last lesson, not everyone gets a reaction to her shared assignments. By this, it has also to be noticed that Fleur is the only one who does not finish off the course completely. She cites illness and strain as her reasons for not getting around to the last lesson.

It further strikes, that within the group many organizational remarks are made. During the whole course, 74 remarks with respect to organizational questions are made. Most often, it is about not being able to read shared things or that those things are not displayed correctly. Again, especially Julia and Amy do such organizational remarks.

Furthermore, the participants are greatly appreciating and empathetic to each other. They repeatedly reflect emotions and sympathise with each other. Moreover, they give each other advice and are aimed at bonding positively with each other. This way, commonalities are emphasized and shared things are appreciated. It further strikes that the participants are open and honest to one another. At the same time, the participants are conscientious with respect to carrying out the course well.

At the end of the course, the participants look back on the course and describe their experiences and goals for the future. In general, they tell that they experienced the course positively. For example, Hannah tells that she liked it to read the shared things of the other participants and to let read her own things. Julia adds that the viewed it as an enrichment even though it was often difficult. However, Fleur did not have such positive experiences with the course. She seems to experience it as unpleasant to communicate with strangers. With respect to the goals for the future, all participants are positive. Julia has the goal to let go of things. Amy wants to take care of herself and wants to learn to enjoy. The goals of Hannah describe independence and self-belief. Fleur tells wanting to be more energetically.

Case 1 – Analysis of the development of the identities and the immediate interactions

Development of the identities – Julia

Julia uses the "relational self", the "emotional self" and "growing self" most often. These selves are positively respectively neutrally valued. Julia rarely uses selves with a negative connotation, such as "negative self, internally attributed" or "sceptical/ doubtful self". With respect to her mostly-used selves it can be said that the "relational self" appears most often. Its frequency may depend on if and how her peers reacted on the same self the week *before*. The "emotional self" and the "growing self" appear even often. Julia's peers

always reacted empathetically and reflecting or with giving tips to this self. However, these selves do not appear as steadily as the "relational self".

Besides, it is apparent that Julia partly has a large share in the total number of expressed selves what suggests a very active participation.

Development of the identities – Amy

First of all, the three most commonly used identities of Amy are the "emotional self", the "organizational self" and the "recovering self" (see table B2 in appendix B). These selves are all positive or neutrally valued. Amy nearly never uses negatively valued selves, such as "negative self, internally attributed", "sceptical/ doubtful self" or "undesirable self". With respect to Amy's mostly-used selves it can be said for the "emotional self" that she rarely expresses it in the beginning of the course but does so more often over time. Besides, the interaction with respect to the expression of this self becomes deeper over time. It is further striking that Amy has the smallest share in the total number of expressed selves in the whole course. Maybe that is also the reason for why it was much more difficult to make clear statements about Amy's development than about Julia's development.

Development of the identities – Hannah

Hannah mostly shows her "desirable self" and her "autobiographic self, positive" (see table B3 in Appendix B). Besides, these selves also increase the most. Hannah especially shows the "desirable self" in the last lesson which matches the subject of the last lesson, namely desires and goals for the future. An example of Hannah's "desirable self" is "*Belief in myself*" ("*Geloof in mezelf.*"). Julia reacts empathetically, consultative and encouraging to this self. Hannah's "autobiographic self, positive" mostly refer to positive memories. The reactions that relate to this self are reinforcing and encouraging. Julia for example tells in the first lesson: "*Brave and very nice: To oppose negative and positive.*" ("*Moedig van je en heel mooi: positief en negatief tegenover elkaar te zetten.*").

With respect to negatively valued selves it is striking that Hannah generally shows them less frequently. With this, the "autobiographic self, negative, externally attributed" occurs most often. The peers react relationally, empathetically, discerning and reflecting to this self.

Development of the identities – Fleur

Fleur shows less often clear-cut selves than the other participants (see table B4, Appendix B). She experiences difficulties with the assignments and does not like it to share

private things with strangers. Furthermore, Fleur did not brought lesson six up to an end. Because of this, the analysis of her development is obstructed.

Fleur mostly shows her "emotional self". An example is: *At that moment I experienced a deep solitude and had totally lost myself."* ("*Ik heb toen een diepe eenzaamheid ervaren en was mezelf helemaal kwijt.*"). The reactions to this are primarily empathetically, discerning, reflecting and confronting. Besides, Fleur also often uses her "autobiographic self, neutral". With respect to this self, the peers react empathetically, relationally and exploring. As well as the use of the "emotional self" and the use of the "autobiographic self, neutral" decrease during the course.

The "rational self" and the "recovering self" occur even often. For these selves, no clear development shows up. Fleur's "rational self" grows out of the interaction with her peers. She for example gives further explanation and reasons for events. The peers do not react to all expressions of the "recovering self". The reactions to this self are empathetically, discerning, paraphrasing, exploring and reinterpreting.

Below, there can be found an overview of the development of each participant's three most frequently used selves over the weeks. Each participant was depicted as a small puppet for each week and each self got another colour. A black puppet means that none of the three most frequently used self of that participant emerged in that week. Furthermore, "+"and "-" were added to illustrate whether a concerning self was encouraged respectively weakened by the peers. This gives a clear and concise impression about the development of the most frequently used selves of each participant.

Participant	Introduction	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5	Lesson 6
Julia							
Amy							
Hannah							
Fleur							

- Relational self
- Recovering self
- Autobiografic self, positive
- Desirable self
- Growing self
- Autobiografic self, negative, externally attributed
- Organizational self
- Rational self
- Autobiografic self, neutraal
- Emotional self
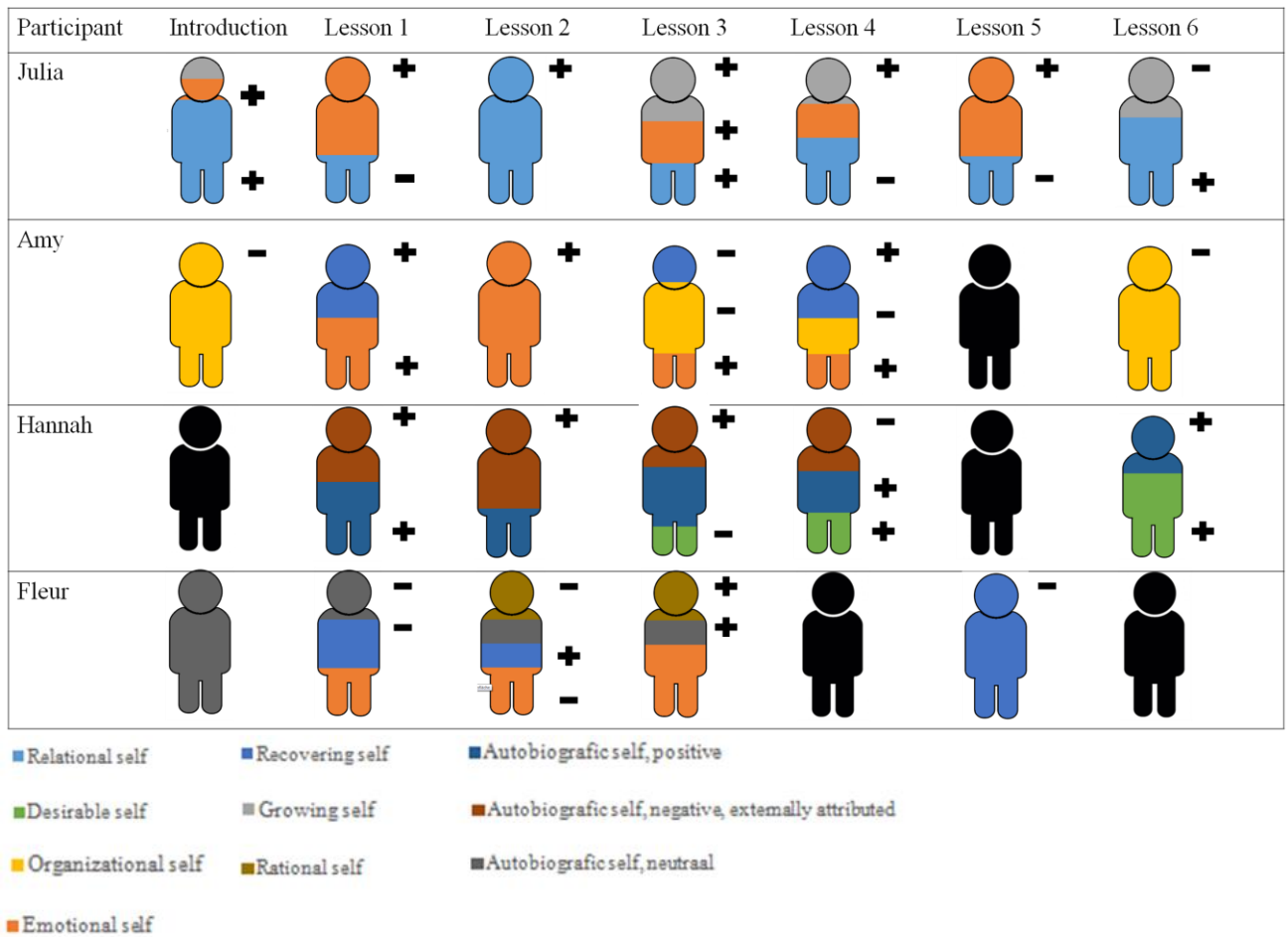
Figure 1. Development of the most frequently used selves over the weeks of each participant. A black puppet means that none of the three most-commonly used selves emerged in this lesson.

(For a more extended version of this analysis, see Appendix C.)

Case 1 – Analysis of the development of the identities of the generalized peer

With respect to Julia's identities as a peer it is striking that she engages really active in the interaction within the group. She especially shows her "empathetically self" her "reflecting self" and her "mutual relational self". She visibly wants to deal with the other participants and is interested in trying to help the others and to make the course beneficially for everyone.

Amy's activity as a peer is distinctly greater than her activity as a participant. Like Julia, she especially shows her "empathetic self", her "reflecting self" and her "mutual relational self". However, this activity as a peer is still unsteady as it appears to greater extent the one lesson and not at all in the next one, as for example in the last lesson.

Hannah is not very active as a peer because she rarely shows selves that are related to this role. Based on this, she hardly fulfills the function of a companion. As a peer, she shows

the "empathetic self" most often. An example of this is: *"Heavy having so much care around yourself or in your system."* (*"Pittig om zoveel zorg om je heen of in je system te hebben."*). Hannah uses the other selves very little.

Like Hannah, Fleur also rarely shows selves that are related to the role as a peer. Fleur rarely uses the "relational zelf" and that corresponds with her statement that she does not like it to get in private touch with foreigners. The autobiographical, the consultative, the paraphrasing and the reflecting self are moderately shown by Fleur. She shows the "empathetic self" most often and that is also why it is most characterizing for Fleur as a peer.

Broadly speaking, the selves of the generalized peer are used most frequently during the third lesson. The generalized peer uses the "empathetic self" most often during the whole course. Based on this, this self is most typical of the generalized peer. The organizational self emerges quite often, too. With respect to this self a clear in- or decrease is not recognizable. The "relational self, mutual" and the "reflecting self" are used equally often. However, the "relational self mutual" decreases during the course whereas the "reflecting self" remains stable. The "paraphrasing self" and the "relational self, private/personal" are used averagely often. These selves can be viewed stable, too.

The generalized peer rarely shows the "autobiographical self". There is also a decrease for this self. The "consultative self" is rarely shown, too. An example of this self is: *"But if you meet him anywhere once again you can ask him for sure everything you want to know from him. I would do it, too, because now go round in circles and that leads nowhere."* (*"Maar als je hem weer eens treft kun je zeker wel eens vragen wat je weten wilt van hem. Zou ik denk ik ook doen, want nu draai je in cirkeltjes rond en kom je nergens."*). In contrast to the "autobiographic self", the "consultative self" increases though during the course.
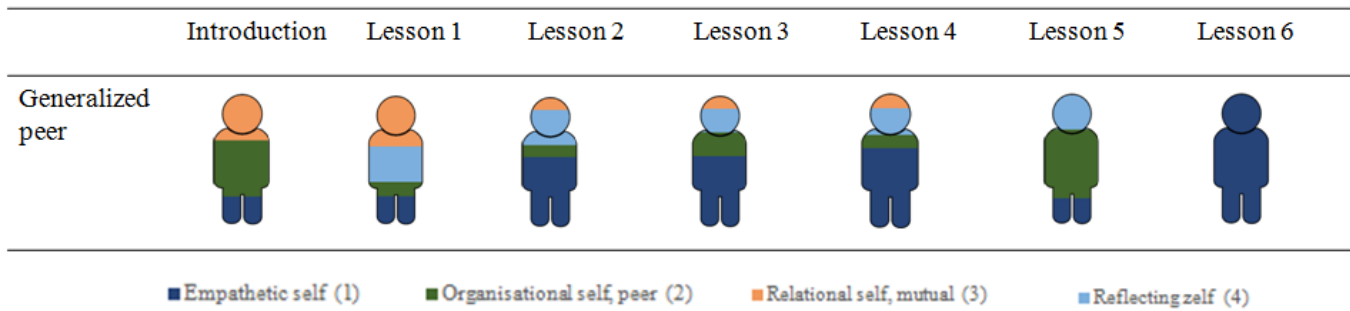
Figure 2. Development of the average peer over the weeks

Case 1 – Analysis of the development of the interactions within the course

As with the development of the identities of the generalized peer, there are also just few *interactions* in the sixth lesson. The most interactions occur during the third lesson. The most frequently used interaction is "discerns". An example of this interaction is: "*I think it is very annoying to go through this. Nice that you write that grief and fear have shrunken, it will not completely disappear.*" ("*Het lijkt me heel erg naar om dat te moeten meemaken; mooi dat je schrijft dat het verdriet en de angst zijn gesleten, helemaal verdwijnen doet het vast niet.*"). This interaction can often be linked to the "empathetic self" because it is also about reflecting feelings and emotions.

The interaction "constructs a relationship" is shown quite often, too. The interactions that are used fewest of all are "appreciates" and "mirrors". By this, it has to be further mentioned that "mirrors" only occurs in the third lesson. "Appreciates" occurs later during the course, namely in the fourth and fifth lesson. The interaction "invalidates" increases during the course, too. However, this one is not used very often at all. For the interaction "confirms" it strikes that it decreases and is only rarely used from the fourth lesson.

With respect to the other interactions no clear development can be ascertained.

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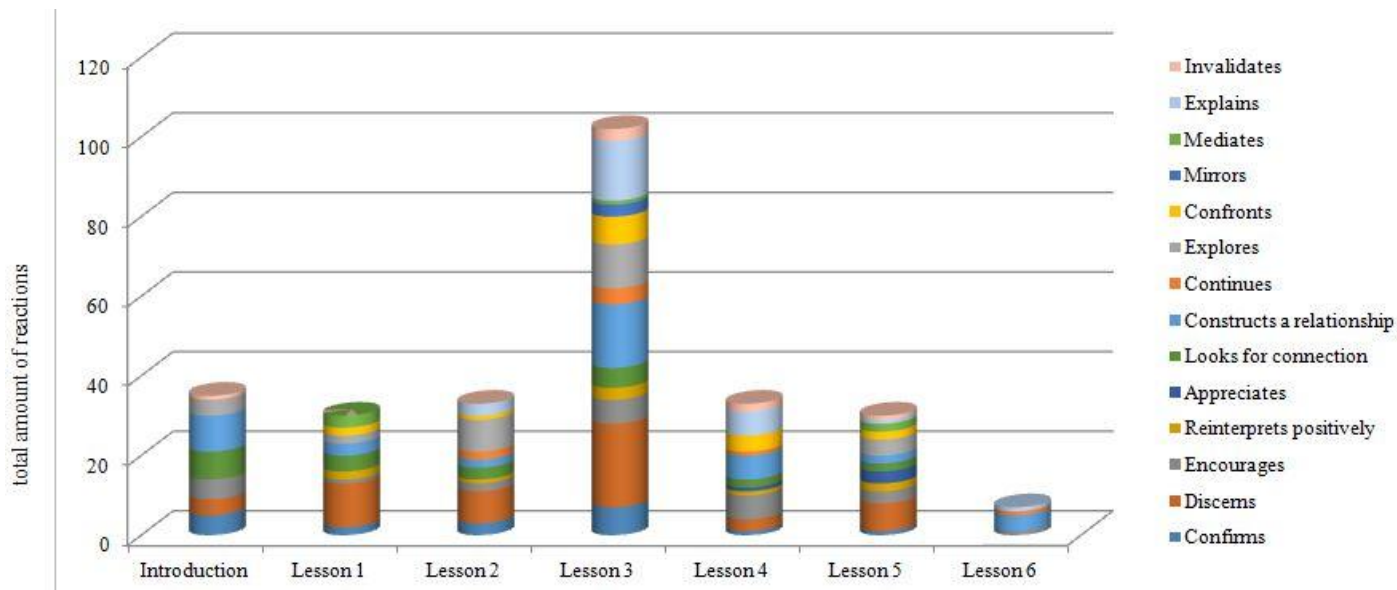
Figure 3. Development of the total interaction within the group over the weeks

Case 2 – Holistic content analysis

Strictly speaking, there are four participants in the group of case 2. However, one of these did not even start the intervention and another, Roos, only completed the introductory and the first lesson and quitted the course afterwards. The two remaining participants, Tess and Emma, took part in the course until its end.

Tess is a 62-years-old woman and "*married with a sweet man.*" ("*getrouwd met een lieve man.*"). Since seven years she is retired but she is still working as a volunteer. Furthermore she is member in a korfball club. Besides, she tells that she got breast cancer last year and that the therapy was very traumatic. She wants to be happier and more open again and wants to handle the distress she experienced the last months.

Roos is 43 years old. As mentioned before, she only completed the introductory and the first lesson. Nevertheless, she takes part quite conscientiously in these two weeks. In the beginning she tells that she is unmarried and that she works in the home care. Two years ago she seceded from convent, after being nun for 20 years. Roos says that this step was very difficult but also inevitable. She tells that she takes part in the course because she wants to try to internalize the things that happened in her life.

Emma introduces herself in much detail. She is 53 years old and is living alone in a small village. She was born in this village but left it as she married. When she divorced she went back to her native village again. She was still very young when she married through which she at first bore children and only then got the chance to become a student.

"*After my study it became clear what my passion was but that was incongruous with the values of my husband.*" ("*Na mijn studie werd wel duidelijk waar mijn hart lag, maar dat bleek onverenigbaar met de standaard van mijn echtgenoot.*"). Then she got a divorce and moved back to her native village. Now she is a very busy woman: "*At this moment I have much work in three part-time jobs, but that is indeed the engine on which I run.*" ("*op dit moment heb ik te veel werk in de drie parttimebanen, maar het is wel de motor waar ik op draai.*"). Besides, she tells that she has a new relationship:" *Since five years, I've got a lat-relationship*" ("*Sinds vijf jaar heb ik een latrelatie.*"). She wants to participate in the online course because she wants to talk about her feelings. As a conclusion Emma writes:" *I have still the sense that I am not allowed to be, who I stand for and for that I often feel lonely.*" ("*Ik heb nog steeds het gevoel dat ik niet mag zijn, wie ik ben met alles waar ik voor sta en daardoor voel ik me vaak eenzaam.*"). She hopes that there will be the possibility to exchange thoughts with peers.

In general, the participants are really open to each other, which is evident by frequent sharing about private things. It is especially about memories and experiences. They seldom share creative tasks.

Furthermore, they generally react empathically and sympathising to the topics, experiences, etc. another one shared. However, there is always just one reaction, meaning one participant shared an experience; the peer reacts but then there follows nothing more. The participant does not answer the peer with the result that his or her statements, opinions and others made remains outstanding and unanswered. In this way a real dialogue never comes about.

Besides, it is remarkable that in this group not a single comment about organisational matter appears. The participants seem to fare well with the internet platform, the types of assignments and the manner of sharing them.

At the end of the course the participants look back at the course and describe their goals for the future: "*I am proud that I dared to bring it up against my environment that I do not participate for the moment.*" ("*Ik [...] ben er trots op dat ik tegen mijn omgeving durf te zeggen dat ik even niet mee doe.*") [Tess], "*I bother much less and I try to take more time in order to enjoy the life. Let go of and look forward. Lead my valuable life.*" ("*Ik maak me veel minder zorgen en probeer meer tijd te nemen om van het leven genieten. Loslaten en vooruitzien. Mijn waardevolle leven leiden.*") [Emma]. At the very end of the course, the two participants wish each other well.

Case 2 – Analysis of the development of the identities and the immediate interactions

Development of the identities – Tess

First of all, Tess uses her "autobiographic self, neutral" most often, followed up by the "autobiographic self, positive", the "autobiographic self, negative, externally attributed" and the "rational self" (see table B5 in Appendix B).

Tess seems to be an open participant, because she gladly tells about herself which becomes obvious in the fact that she mostly used autobiographic selves. Concerning the autobiographic selves it can be said that Tess uses them quite irregularly. In contrast to this, the "rational self" of Tess appears more steadily.

In general, Tess most-commonly used selves are both negatively ("autobiographic self, negative, externally attributed), positively ("autobiographic self, positive") and neutrally valued ("autobiographic self, neutral", "rational self"). She also uses the "emotional self" quite often but she barely uses other positive valued selves such as the "recovering self", the "growing self" or the "desirable self". It is further striking that she nearly never shows negatively valued selves that are internally attributed.

Development of the identities – Roos

Roos only participates in the introductory lesson and in the first lesson. After that, she quits the online course. The most-commonly used selves in these two lessons are the "autobiographic self, neutral", the "autobiographic self, negative, externally attributed" and the "relational self". In the two lessons Roos participates in the course, she never shows positively valued selves such as the "recovering self", the "growing self", the "autobiographic self, positive" or the "desirable self".

However, due to this short participation it is very difficult to make a point about a. which selves are most-commonly used and b. the pattern of development of these most-commonly used selves.

Development of the identities – Emma

Emma is the most active participant in this group with respect to the total amount of expressed selves over the course. As the other participants, she also uses the "autobiographic self, neutral" most often. This is followed by the "recovering self" and the "emotional self".

In short, it can be said that Emma expresses the "autobiographic self, neutral" most often in the introductory lesson and this declines over the weeks.

Emma is the only participant who expresses the "recovering self" quite often. In short, it can be said that Emma expresses this self more or less constantly over the weeks, in one lesson somewhat more often, in the other somewhat less.

With respect to the "emotional self" of Emma it can be said that the amount clearly fluctuates from one lesson to the next. Moreover, the expressions of this self are mostly negatively valued.

In general, Emma's most-commonly used selves are particularly positively ("recovering self") or neutrally ("autobiographic self, neutral", "emotional self") valued. She also uses the "rational self" and the "autobiographic self, negative, externally attributed" quite often but for the rest she barely shows other negatively valued selves such as the "undesirable self", the "autobiographic self, negative, internally attributed", the "negative self, internally attributed" or the "sceptical/doubtful self".

For this case, an overview of the development of each participant's three most frequently used selves over the weeks has been made, too.
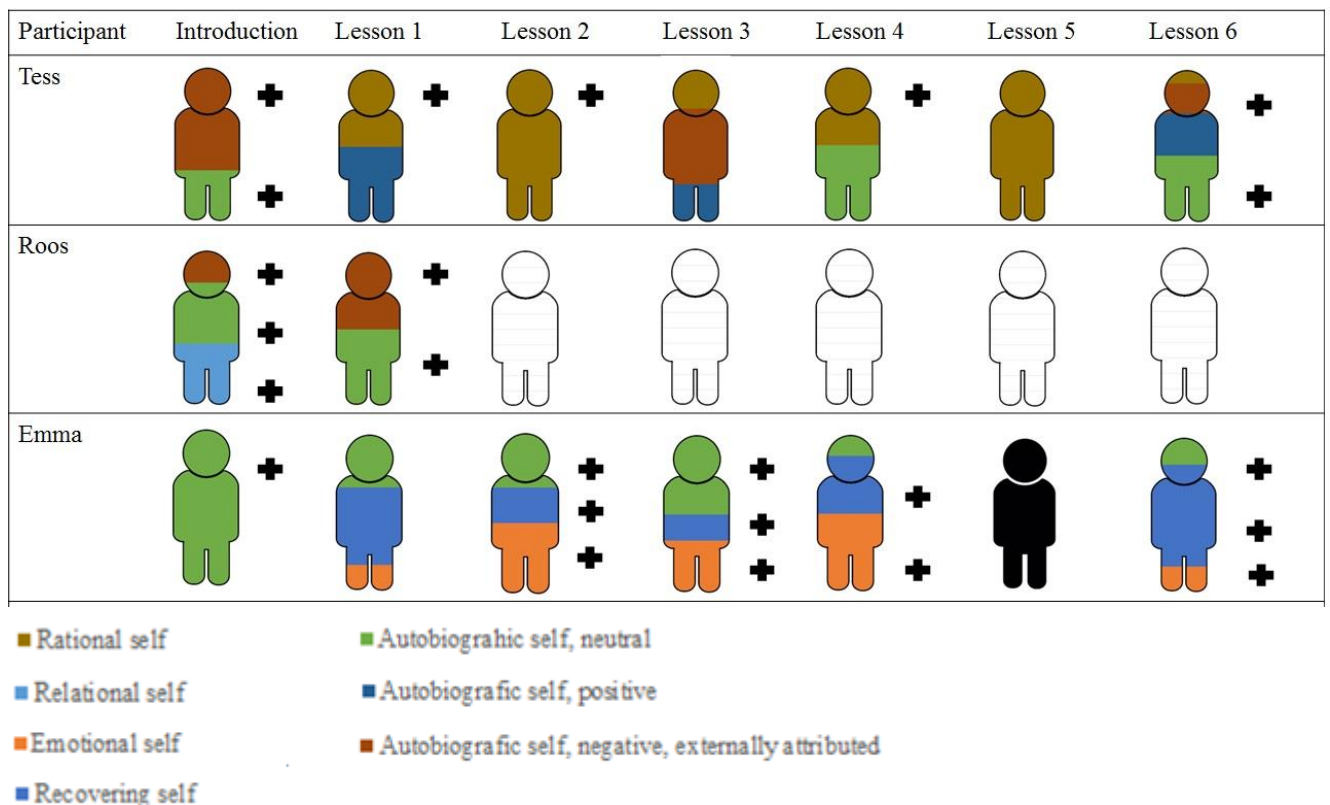
Figure 4. Development of the most frequently used selves over the weeks of each participant. A black puppet means that none of the three most-commonly used selves emerged in this lesson. A white puppet means that the participant did not complete this lesson.

(For a more extended version of this analysis, see Appendix C.)

Case 2 – Analysis of the development of the identities of the generalized peer

With respect to Tess's identities as a peer it can be said that she mainly expresses her "reflecting self" and her "empathetic self". She seems to be honestly interested in helping her peers.

It is striking that Roos never participates as a peer even though she only takes part in the first two lessons.

Just as Tess, Emma also expresses the "reflecting self" most often. Although the "empathetic self" is her second most-commonly used self, too the distinction from Tess is the gap between those two selves: Tess uses the "reflecting self" seven times and the "empathetic self" six times. Emma also uses the "reflecting self" seven times, but the "empathetic self" only three times. However, although this may create the impression that Emma is not particularly caring or sympathetic to her peers, this is not the case. She indeed shares in trying to help the others and that is mainly because she often appreciates, gives advices or tries to look at certain situations from another angle.

In general, the average peer is mostly characterized by the "reflecting self". Altogether, this self appears most often, namely 14 times. Over the weeks, it is expressed quite constantly; only in lesson six it does not appear anymore. In lesson four it emerges most often. The average peer also expresses the "empathetic self" quite often, namely 9 times. This is especially the case in the first three lessons. After that the usage of this self declines somewhat. There are also selves that are only middle-frequently used and these are the two "relational selves" ("mutual" and "private/personal"), and the "consultative self". It applies to all these three selves that they emerge irregularly over the weeks. Of all surfacing selves, the "paraphrasing self" is used least of all.

It is striking that the "autobiographic self, peer" and especially the "organizational self" never come up. In case one, the latter was one of most frequently used selves.

Overall, the greatest activity of the peer with respect to its identities is in the introductory lesson and in lesson 4.

In short, it can be said that the peer is mostly characterized by the "reflecting self" and by the "empathetic self".

Again, there has been made an overview of the development of the *generalized peer* over the weeks.
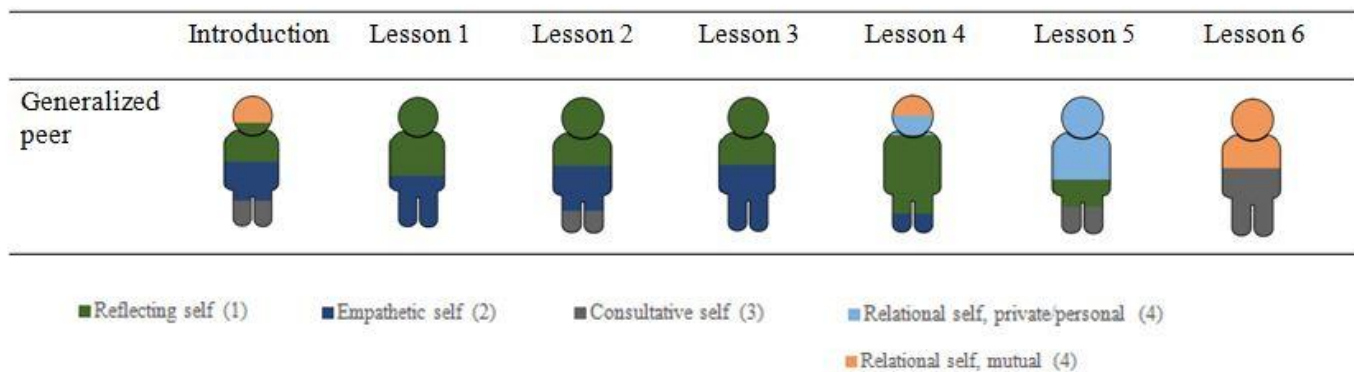
Figure 5. Development of the average peer over the weeks

Case 2 – Analysis of the development of the interactions within the course

As with the development of the identities of the peer, it can be also said for the overall interactions that these are most present in the introductory lesson and in lesson four. For the introductory lesson this may be firstly the case because they were still in a threesome. After the first lesson, Roos quit the course. Secondly, all participants wrote quite detailed texts on which the peers could react a lot. In lesson four, Emma shares quite a lot and frequently shows her "emotional self" on which Tess reacts considerably extensive.

There are also many interactions in the first and the second lesson. However, in lesson three and lesson six this is not the case; there are only two (in lesson three) respectively three (in lesson 6) interactions.

The participants mainly make use of the interactions "constructs a relationship", "encourages", "confronts" and "discerns". Appropriate to the overall amount of interactions it can also be said for at least three of these four individual interactions that they appear most often in the introductory lesson, then decrease somewhat and increase again in the lessons four to six. However, there is an outlier, namely the interaction "discerns". It indeed also appears most often in the introductory lesson; decreases from lesson one until lesson three; increase again in lesson four – as the other three interactions also did – but then decreases again for the rest of the course. However, it does not become apparent from the data why this may be the case.

There are also interactions which are rarely or never used. Thereto belong among others "explains", "continues", "initiates", "reinterprets positively".
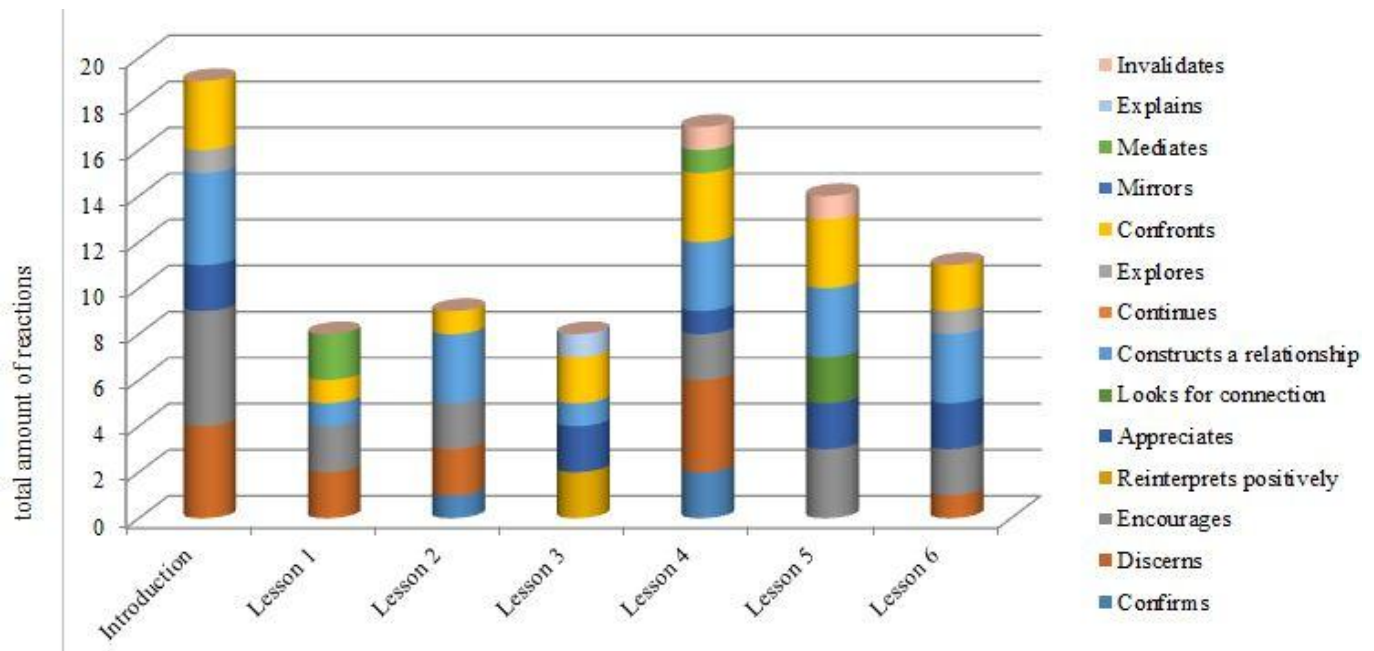
Figure 6. Development of the total interactions within the group over the weeks

Comparison of the two cases

With respect to the holistic content analysis it can be said that there are similarities as well as varieties between the two cases. First, in both groups the participants are without exception female. Furthermore, they all range in age from mid-forty to early sixties. Moreover, they all especially share memories and experiences with the group and rarely share their creative tasks. In both cases, the participants are also very empathetic and honest to each other. At the end of the course, participants of both groups look back at the last weeks. However, the way they do this differs: In case one, the participants describe their experiences with the course and how they think of it. Furthermore, they set their goals for the future, for example to become more autonomous. In case two, the participants set goals, too. However, they do not reflect on the course in general as they do in case one, but rather let each other know what they are now better able to do, for example that they bother much less than before.

There are some other differences between the two cases. In the first group, there are consistently four participants that all complete the course. In the second, one participant does not even start, another participant just completes the first two lessons and only two other participants complete the whole course. With respect to the reactions to each other, it can be said that in the first group there always develops a real conversation whereas in the second group there is always just one reaction and no further response to that. As a result, in this group there never develops a real conversation.

It is especially striking that in case one the "organizational self" appears very often. To be exact, there are in total 74 expressions of this self. In the second group, however, there is not a single expression of this self. It may be that the intervention on its own is not too complicated, but maybe indeed for a few participants who may not be so familiar with computers or the internet. Another possible explanation may be that the participants in the first group tend to discuss this sort of problems with their peers whereas the participants in the second group may rather consult the counsellor in the background.

With respect to the development of the individual identities of the participants, there are again both similarities and differences between the two cases. However, the differences prevail. Concerning the similarities firstly, it can be said that in both groups the attendance in the course respectively the amount of shared and therefore coded texts varies remarkably from one participant to another. Moreover, in both groups the autobiographic selves appear quite often and at least for a few of the participants. In both groups, the "creative self", the "sceptical/doubtful self" and the "adherence" emerge rather rarely.

When it comes to the varieties, it first strikes that in general there is a greater diversity of top-3-selves (the three most commonly used ones) in the first group than in the second. In the first group, everyone uses slightly other selves most often. In the second group however, there mostly appears the "autobiographic self, neutral" and other autobiographic selves. Furthermore, in case one it happens more often than in case two that in certain lessons per participant none of the top-3 selves appear. In other words, the overall appearance of the top-3 selves is more variable in the first group than in the second group.

More specific, it is striking that in the first group the "emotional self" emerges as a top-3 self for three out of four participants and in the second group only for one of them. Seemingly, the participants in group one may be more willing to show emotions or feelings with peers than the participants in the second group.

With respect to the development of the generalized peer there are also similarities and differences between the groups. Here, too, the differences outweigh the similarities. At first, the "reflecting self", the "empathetic self" and the "relational self, mutual" occur in both groups' three most commonly used selves. In both groups the "autobiographic self" is used very rarely. This contrasts with the development of the identities of the individual participants where the "autobiographic selves" rank among the most-commonly used ones. Upon closer inspection, this may be not too remarkable: In both groups, the members seem to clearly separate their two roles, namely participant and counsellor.

Concerning the differences between the groups it can at first be said that the general pattern of participation as a peer differs between the groups: In case one, all members of the group take part in the function as a peer. Nevertheless, the amount of participation varies greatly among the members of the group. In case two, the pattern is different. Not everyone participates as a peer in this group; Roos does not make an appearance as a peer at all. Furthermore, in contrast to case one, the amount of participation as a peer is relatively balanced among the two members of the group. This seems to be logically, because in a group of four people interactions and reactions among different persons lead to more variations than in a group with only two persons directly interacting with and reacting on each other.

Secondly, in case one there almost always appear a number of the most-commonly used selves. In case two however, there appear only two of the most-commonly used selves in three of the seven lessons. This may be again due to the fact that most of the time there are only two participants in the second group. In the first group a greater variety of used selves may have emerged because there were more participants in this group.

Thirdly, in case one, in the last lesson there is only one expression of a self in total, namely the "empathetic self". In the second case, however, the activity is still greater and there especially appear the "consultative self" and the "relational self, mutual". The participants in this group seem to want to give each other some last advices to take along in the future.

It is further striking, that the "consultative self" almost never appears in case one, but ranges among the most-commonly used selves in the second group. However, it is difficult to figure out whether this is only a coincidence or may be due to any characteristic of the group or the participants.

When it comes to one of the most often used selves, the "empathetic self", it is clearly recognizable that the amount of expressions of this self steadily increases over the weeks. In the second group, however, such a clear pattern is obscured.

Finally, when it comes to the overall interactions within the groups it can be said that there are similarities and differences and that again the differences prevail.

First, in both groups the interactions "discerns", "encourages" and "construct a relationship" are used most often. Further, in both groups the interactions "invalidates", "reinterprets", "continues" and "mirrors" are rarely, almost never or never used.

However, there are again more differences than congruencies. First, the pattern of how many interactions occur per lesson is totally different for the two groups: In general, the

amount of interactions per lesson varies less in case one than in case two. Nevertheless, there is one outlier in case one, namely the third lesson. This is the one where most interactions in total occur. In case two, however, lesson three belongs to those where least interactions occur. In this group, most interactions can be found in the introductory lesson. In case one again, there are almost no interactions in lesson six whereas in case two there are fourth most interactions in this lesson.

Secondly, there are also some more specific differences concerning the interactions within the group: Initially, there is a great difference between the groups in the use of the interactions "explores" and "explains". In case one, these interactions appear quite commonly. In case two, however, these interactions nearly never appear. This can decidedly be associated with the fact that there arise real dialogues in case one, but not in case two, where no one ever responds again to a reaction. This fact also appears in the average total amount of interactions *per* participant: In case one, there are averagely 68 interactions to each participant. In case two, however, each participant made only 43 iterations on average.

Summing up, it can be said that when it comes to general characteristics of the group that there are quite many congruencies which can be regarded as general indicators of the groups. For the holistic content analysis these indicators are homogeneity concerning gender and age, empathy and honesty to each other and great readiness to share texts about memories and experiences. The latter is also evident in the fact that all individual participants often show the autobiographic selves. Another indicator on the level of the individual identities is that the "creative self" is rarely used. For the generalized peer, general indicators are the reflecting, empathetic and relational behaviour and the clear separation of the roles "participant" and "counsellor". For the overall interactions, general indicators are empathy, mutual encouragement and the construction of relationships.

Conclusions and Discussion

In the present study, an investigation of the characteristics of two groups that participated in a life review course was conducted.

This study contributed to therapy change process research (Greenberg, 1986) by including four ways of analysing therapy change processes. Each way corresponds to one of the research questions. The first, the third and the fourth question considered the group level and the second question considered the individual level. Each of these was of analysing revealed some general indicators as well as group-specific processes in groups attending an online life-review group intervention.

Most important results, interpretations, strengths & limitations, and recommendations

General characteristics of the groups

When it comes to the question about the general characteristics of the groups it can be said that in terms of gender both groups are totally homogenous. In terms of age this homogeneity is less marked but still perceptible because there is indeed an age disparity which nevertheless does not seem to keep the participants from making contact with each other. They all eagerly and gladly share experiences and memories. The latter may be linked to the fact that all participants are female. According to Pinquart and Forstmeier (2012) who did a meta-analysis on several reminiscence interventions "women are more likely than men to use reminiscence for remembering negative events and clarifying one's identity." (Pinquart & Forstmeier, 2012, p. 542). It would be interesting to find out whether in a group with male participants there would also occur a similarly active communication about experiences and memories.

Furthermore, the members of the two groups are very empathetic and honest to each other. In general, in both groups there prevails a positive group atmosphere over the weeks. This can be compared with what Korte, Drossaert, Westerhof and Bohlmeijer (2014) found out about social processes that may hinder or facilitate the effectiveness of life review in an earlier version of OVK, namely the *face-to-face* group intervention. They uncovered three categories of positive social processes, namely "good group atmosphere", "disclosure to peers" and "relating to others". According to them "good group atmosphere" involves "a sense of belonging, feeling accepted and finding good company" (Korte, 2014, p.378). From the current analysis the impression is created that these aspects apply to these both groups, too.

It is further striking, that in contrast to group one in which there were 74 remarks with respect to organizational questions, there was not a single one in the second group. It would be advisable to find out more about the reasons for why some people had that many technical problems with the online environment: Was it just coincidence that in the first group almost everyone had problems of that sort and in the second group hardly anyone? Or did some just share it with the group and others discussed them with the counsellor on the background? These could be possible questions to be addressed. Based on research within this scope, suggestions for technical improvement of OVK Online could be made.

These overall characteristics of the group have been disclosed with the help of the holistic content analysis. According to Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach and Zilber (1998) the holistic content analysis aims to read a person's life story and to analyse parts of this story in its overall context. In the cases at hand, the holistic content analysis was conducted on group instead of individual level. The participants' life stories were examined and related to their appearance in and the overall characteristics of the group. This elaborated version of the holistic content analysis contributed to getting a first overview of the participants and the group. It enabled a detailed investigation of the overall characteristics of groups attending an online life-review group course. It strikes that the holistic content analysis was the only layer of the whole analysis in which the commonalities were greater than the differences within the group. It is difficult to say whether this is coincidence or not. It may also be the case that the holistic content analysis is exactly suitable if one wants to find out about commonalities of groups. To find out which of these possibilities applies, this study should be conducted again on a larger scale.

Development of the individual identities

In general, most of the time the peers react positively to the identities of another participant. This has a strengthening impact. Furthermore, for both groups it can said that they mostly express autobiographic selves and rarely for instance the "creative self". Obviously they derive more benefit from the autobiographic selves and can talk about and react to them more easily. They apparently follow the instructions and clearly focus on the central construct of the intervention, namely life review. So, the intervention does what it promised to do, namely prompting to recall personal memories and (re)evaluate life events and try to integrate them. That is what Pinquart and Forstmeier (2013) define as life review.

The fact that this result emerged implies that this analysis method was really suitable to find out that the intervention OVK Online is effective with respect to promoting life-

review activities. This analysis method may thus also be suitable for future investigations of similar interventions with respect to whether they do what they promise to do.

However, there are still many differences between the groups so that there cannot be made a clear statement concerning the overall development of the identities of the participants.

These findings have been revealed through extended process analysis. According to Elliot (2010), simple process-outcome design only looks at in- and output and ignores everything that is in between, that is, *how* changes occur. It may be regarded as overused whereas for example sequential process design has been little regarded yet. This overuse can also been seen in the fact that many studies only investigate the effects of life review or reminiscence (Pinquart & Forstmeier, 2012; Bohlmeijer et al., 2003; Lamers et al., 2014, etc.) and that there can be found little to no studies that look at the "black box", that is, investigate the intermediate processes. Therefore, the present study can also be regarded as pioneering.

However, although it is important to take both client's *and* therapist's identities into account in the analysis because they likewise contribute to identity construction (Georgaca, 2012) it is questionable whether the microanalytic sequential process analysis to the extent it was conducted in this study would have been really necessary to draw the conclusions. The analyses of the development of the individual identities became quite extensive while it was actually not about the individual participants but about the whole group. It might be advisable for further research on this subject to only make tables as in Appendix B and subsequently give only a short overview of the development of the individual identities. That would ensure that all involved persons are considered whilst the focus can still remain on the *group*.

Development of the generalized peer

There can neither be made an overall statement concerning the development of the generalized peer. There are indeed some similarities between the groups: In both, the "reflecting self", the "empathetic self" and the "relational self, mutual" range among the most commonly used selves. This corresponds with the general impression that came forth out of holistic content analysis and seems to be a common characteristic of these two groups. This is similar to what Korte et al. (2014) found out about social processes that may hinder or facilitate the effectiveness of a *face-to-face* life-review group intervention. They revealed the social process that is called "disclosure to peers". It involves "finding recognition, realizing that others have problems too, being more successful at coping than others, learning from others, and being able to help others." (Korte, 2014, p.380).

The construct of the generalized peer is unique until now. It cannot be found in any previous literature and has been originated for this study. It is an adaptation of the method of microanalytic sequential process analysis to the level of groups. This novelty is quite informative because as the focus was on the processes in *groups* it allows for a general overview of the *average* activities of the participants as peers in the whole group. Therefore, the usage of the concept of the "generalized peer" may be indeed also promising in future research within the present scope. However, exactly just investigating the *average* of the activities of the peers also carries the risk of missing possibly single important interactions.

Development of the interactions within the course

There are more differences than similarities for the development of the overall interactions within the group, too.

Similarities and therefore possibly universal characteristics are the use of the interactions "discerns", "encourages" and "construct a relationship". This again corresponds with the general impression that the participants were quite empathetic and honest to each other. This can further be linked to what Pinquart and Forstmeier (2012) state: *Group* interventions encourage social exchange and integration.

In order to understand the development of the individual identities and the development of the generalized peer it was necessary to take the overall interactions into account. It is thus advisable for further research within the present subject to continue to do so.

The prevailing differences between the groups concerning the development of the interactions could be ascribed to the different constellation respectively the different amount of participants in each group.

Summary: General indicators

Altogether, the four layers of analyzing revealed a number of general indicators of groups attending an online life-review group intervention. This leads to an answer to the main research question which was the following:

What are possibly benefit-promoting characteristics of groups which pass through the course OVK Online?

Possibly benefit-promoting characteristics of groups which pass through the course OVK Online are: Homogeneity concerning gender and age; empathy and honesty to each other; great readiness to share texts about memories and experiences; mutual encouragement and

the construction of relationships; reflecting, empathetic and relational behaviour as a peer and clear separation of the roles "participant" and "counsellor".

Further strengths and limitations of this study

For the first case example the coding of the data was divided between two researchers. Afterwards, the coded data was switched and inspected; finally discussed and eventually changed in patches if the first coding was not so suitable. Through this procedure the inter-subjective agreement was increased. For subsequent studies within this subject it may be advisable to also statistically calculate the interrater reliability for a part of the codes.

Final remark

This study was a first step to advance research of which processes contribute to the effectiveness of an online life-review group intervention. It adapted existing analysis methods to group level and also added a new layer, the generalized peer which is also promising for future research.

However, it was not the aim of this study to already explore these processes in connection with effectiveness but rather to find out more about the participants, the process of identity construction during the intervention and about the interaction processes among the participants. A next direct step would be to continue this study on a larger scale in order to find out whether the patterns continue as they were detected now. Afterwards, the data about the further development of the participants after finishing the course, that is who benefitted from the course has to be taken into account. This could then be linked to the results of the present study and would allow for predications with regard to the benefit-promoting processes and characteristics in and of groups attending an online life-review intervention.

The present study was able to reveal possibly general characteristics and processes of groups that attend the online life-review intervention OVK Online. Nevertheless, there is still much research required to deepen the knowledge within this subject.

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Appendix A

Table A1. *Original scheme of the identities of the counsellor* (van Dalfsen, 2013)

Identity counsellor	Definition
Empathetic self	The counsellor reacts empathetically in order to show understanding, to initiate, strengthen and/or preserve the therapeutic bond.
Organizational self	The counsellor mentions organizational things.
Methodical self	The counsellor clarifies the assignment/ the intent or the purpose of the assignment
Paraphrasing self	The counsellor describes in his or her own words what the participant has said; eventually with the intention to control if he or she understood it correctly.
Reflecting self	The counsellor reacts on something the participant has said/done/… with the intention to make the participant think about the concerning topic/ subject more deeply or in a different manner.
Autobiographic self	The counsellor considers own experiences to be relevant or shares personal experiences.
Relational self	The counsellor looks for connection with the participant through searching for or emphasizing commonalities.

Table A2. *Original scheme of the identities of the participant* (van Dalfsen, 2013)

Identity participant	Definition
Recovering self	The participant is engaged in accepting experiences from the past and integrating them in oneself. He or she has not yet situated those experiences and has neither positive nor negative values with respect to this self.
Growing self	*present age/ future* The participant looks to the future/ shows the wish to develop oneself/ without any positive or negative appreciation towards the self.
Undesired self	*present age/ future* The participant shows a clear negative appreciation with respect to the desirability of this self.
Desirable self	*present age/ future* The participant shows a clear positive appreciation with respect to the desirability of this self.
Autobiographic self, neutral	The participant talks about his or her own life and experiences/ without clear positive or negative appreciation with respect to him- or herself or what happened to him or her.
Autobiographic self, positive	The participant talks about his or her own life and experiences with a clear positive appreciation with respect to him- or herself or what happened to him or her.
Autobiographic self, negative	The participant talks about his or her own life and experiences with a clear negative appreciation.
⇨ Externally attributed	He or she describes what happened to him or her
⇨ Internally attributed	He or she utters dissatisfaction with oneself.

Table A2. *Original scheme of the identities of the participant* (van Dalfsen, 2013)

Identity participant	Definition
Course member	The participant shows the want to satisfy the expectations of the counsellor. These also include practical questions about the course.
Adherence	The participant indicates to be motivated to follow the course for what it was.
Relational self	The participant initiates a relational bond/ a mutual identity with the counsellor.
Emotional self	The participant shows own feelings and emotions.
Rational self	The participant gives reasons why anything happened as it did.
Unfairly treated self	The participant feels unjustly treated by the counsellor.

Table A3. *Original scheme of the interaction codes* (van Dalfsen, 2013)

Interaction: Increases (+) Remains constant (+-) Decreases (-)	Interaction codes for counsellor and participants	Definition
+	to confirm	Confirming the own identity or a discussion partner's identity which has already been introduced.
+	to initiate	Initiating one's own or discussion partner's identity.
+	to discern	Showing understanding by reflecting someone's feelings and by wide insight in what a person goes through.
+	to prompt/ask	Prompting a discussion partner's identity.
+	to encourage	Encouraging a discussion partner's identity.
+	to initiate anew	An identity that has been initiated earlier but is going to be discontinued is initiated anew.
+	to reinterpret	Giving a new, more positive value to an experience/ identity that has originally been negatively experienced.
+	to look for connection	Looking for a mutual topic/ acquiring mutual experiences. From this interaction, the *relational self* can arise.
+-	to continue	Continuing one's own identity that has already been initiated.

Table A3. *Original scheme of the interaction codes* (van Dalfsen, 2013)

Interaction: Increases (+) Remains constant (+-) Decreases (-)	Interaction codes for counsellor and participants	Definition
+-	to explore	Asking for more clarity about a certain identity.
+-	to confront	A bolstered form of *to discern*. The one who makes use of this interaction brings interpretations that are most remote from the confronted person's reference framework.
+-	to mirror	Giving back in the same way what the opposite said.
+-	to mediate	Trying to illuminate a situation from another point of view.
-	to invalidate	Invalidating an identity.

Appendix B

Table B1. *Development of the identities of Julia – case 1*

Julia		Introd uction	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5	Lesson 6	**Total per self**
	Selves participant								
	Recovering self	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	4
	Growing self	**1**	**0**	**0**	**3**	**4**	**0**	**2**	**10**
	Undesired self	0	1	0	4	3	0	0	8
	Desirable self	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
	Autobiogr. self neutral	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	5
	Autobiogr. positive	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	6
	Autobiogr. neg. Intern	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	4
	Autobiogr. neg. extern	0	2	0	1	2	0	0	5
	Negative self, intern	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Adherence	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Organisational self	3	1	2	0	2	1	0	9
	Relational self	**5**	**1**	**2**	**2**	**6**	**1**	**3**	**20**
	Rational self	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	4
	Emotional self	**1**	**2**	**0**	**2**	**3**	**2**	**0**	**10**
	Creative self	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	4
	Sceptical/doubtful self	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
							Sum of *all selves*:		**94**
	Selves peer								
	Autobiographic self	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	
	Consultative self	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	
	Empathetic self	4	2	3	7	2	2	1	
	Organisational self	7	1	1	4	1	2	0	
	Paraphrasing self	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	
	Reflecting self	0	1	3	2	2	3	0	
	Relational self private	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	
	Relational self, mutual	4	4	0	2	1	0	0	

Table B2. *Development of the identities of Amy – case 1*

Amy		Introduction	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5	Lesson 6	Total per self
	Selves participant								
	Recovering self	**0**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**4**
	Growing self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Undesired self	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
	Desirable self	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
	Autobiogr. self neutral	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Autobiogr. positive	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
	Autobiogr. neg. intern	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Autobiogr. neg. extern	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	3
	Negative self, intern	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Adherence	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Organisational self	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**5**
	Relational self	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	3
	Rational self	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	3
	Emotional self	**0**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**6**
	Creative self	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
	Sceptical/doubtful self	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	3
							Sum of *all selves*:		**38**
	Selves peer								
	Autobiographic self	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	
	Consultative self	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	
	Empathetic self	0	2	1	5	1	0	0	
	Organisational self	2	1	0	2	0	5	0	
	Paraphrasing self	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	
	Reflecting self	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	
	Relational self private	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	
	Relational self, mutual	3	2	1	1	0	0	0	

Table B3. *Development of the identities of Hannah – case 1*

Hannah		Introduction	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5	Lesson 6	**Total per self**
	Selves participant								
	Recovering self	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
	Growing self	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
	Undesired self	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
	Desirable self	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**9**	**12**
	Autobiogr. self neutral	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	4
	Autobiogr. positive	**0**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**2**	**0**	**6**	**12**
	Autobiogr. neg. intern	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Autobiogr. neg. extern	**0**	**1**	**2**	**2**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**8**
	Negative self, intern	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Adherence	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Organisational self	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	3
	Relational self	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	5
	Rational self	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
	Emotional self	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	3
	Creative self	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
	Sceptical/doubtful self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
								Sum of *all selves*:	**58**
	Selves participant								
	Autobiographic self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Consultative self	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	
	Empathetic self	1	0	1	2	1	1	0	
	Organisational self	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	
	Paraphrasing self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Reflecting self	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	
	Relational self private	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Relational self, mutual	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Table B4. *Development of the identities of Fleur – case 1*

Fleur		Introduction	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5	Lesson 6	**Total per self**
	Selves participant								
	Recovering self	**0**	**2**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**4**
	Growing self	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Undesired self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Desirable self	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
	Autobiogr. self neutral	**2**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**6**
	Autobiogr. positive	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
	Autobiogr. neg. intern	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Autobiogr. neg. extern	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
	Negative self, intern	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	3
	Adherence	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Organisational self	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Relational self	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
	Rational self	**0**	**0**	**2**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**4**
	Emotional self	**0**	**3**	**2**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**7**
	Creative self	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
	Sceptical/doubtful self	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	3
							Sum of *all selves*:		**42**
	Selves peer								
	Autobiographic self	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	
	Consultative self	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	
	Empathetic self	0	2	1	4	2	0	0	
	Organisational self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Paraphrasing self	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	
	Reflecting self	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	
	Relational self private	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Relational self, mutual	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	

Table B5. *Development of the identities of Tess – case 2*

Tess		Introduction	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5	Lesson 6	**Total per self**
	Selves participant								
	Recovering self	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Growing self	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	3
	Undesired self	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
	Desirable self	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
	Autobiogr. self neutral	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**11**	**13**
	Autobiogr. positive	**0**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**7**	**9**
	Autobiogr. neg. intern	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Autobiogr. neg. extern	**2**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**5**	**9**
	Negative self, intern	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
	Adherence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Organisational self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Relational self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Rational self	**0**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**2**	**9**
	Emotional self	2	0	0	0	2	0	2	6
	Creative self	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
	Sceptical/doubtful self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
							Sum of *all selves*:		**60**
	Selves peer								
	Autobiographic self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Consultative self	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	
	Empathetic self	2	1	2	1	0	0	0	
	Organisational self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Paraphrasing self	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
	Reflecting self	1	2	1	1	2	0	0	
	Relational self private	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	
	Relational self, mutual	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	

Table B6. *Development of the identities of Roos – case 2*

Roos	Introduction	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5	Lesson 6	**Total per self**
Selves participant								
Recovering self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Growing self	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Undesired self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Desirable self	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Autobiogr. self neutral	**2**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3**
Autobiogr. positive	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Autobiogr. neg. intern	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Autobiogr. neg. extern	**1**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3**
Negative self, intern	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Adherence	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Organisational self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Relational self	**2**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2**
Rational self	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Emotional self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Creative self	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sceptical/doubtful self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
							Sum of *all selves*:	**14**
Selves peer								
Autobiographic self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Consultative self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Empathetic self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Organisational self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Paraphrasing self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reflecting self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Relational self private	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Relational self, mutual	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Table B7. *Development of the identities of Emma – case 2*

Emma		Introduction	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5	Lesson 6	Total per self
	Selves participant								
	Recovering self	**0**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**3**	**0**	**4**	**13**
	Growing self	0	1	2	0	0	1	4	8
	Undesired self	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	3
	Desirable self	2	2	1	0	0	0	2	7
	Autobiogr. self neutral	**5**	**2**	**3**	**3**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**15**
	Autobiogr. positive	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	5
	Autobiogr. neg. intern	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
	Autobiogr. neg. extern	2	2	3	3	1	0	0	11
	Negative self, intern	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	5
	Adherence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Organisational self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Relational self	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	3
	Rational self	0	2	2	1	3	0	2	10
	Emotional self	**1**	**1**	**4**	**2**	**4**	**0**	**1**	**13**
	Creative self	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Sceptical/doubtful self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
								Sum of *all selves*:	**96**
	Selves peer								
	Autobiographic self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Consultative self	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	
	Empathetic self	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	
	Organisational self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Paraphrasing self	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Reflecting self	2	1	1	0	2	1	0	
	Relational self private	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	
	Relational self, mutual	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	

Appendix C

Case 1 – Extended analysis of the development of the identities and the immediate interactions

Development of the identities – Julia

First of all, the identity which was most commonly used by Julia during the course is the "relational self", followed up by the "emotional self" and finally the "growing self" (see table B1 in appendix B).

Julia seems to be a very open and sociable participant within the group what is already seen in the introductory lesson in which she shows her "relational self" even five times. Furthermore, about 2/3 of all expressions of the "relational self" can be accredited to her (see table B1 in appendix B).

Julia starts the introductory lessen with introducing herself. Two of the other participants react in an encouraging way to it. That strengthens Julia to proceed and so, she shows her "relational self" again for example through giving thanks to the others for their reactions. Then, the reactions decrease and there is less entering on this self. Possibly the last fact provides an explanation for why Julia suddenly barely shows this self in the following three lessons. Notwithstanding that she barely shows her "relational self" in the third lesson there is nevertheless a remarkable interaction: Julia apologises to her peers that she wrote about something sad. Two of her peers respond enthusiastically to her. They think that she does not have to apologise and that it is not the intention to only write about nice and pleasant things. As part of this they encourage her to write about everything what she has on her mind. In the following lesson, Julia shows her "relational self" quite frequently again (six times). Maybe this can be attributed to the intense contact with the two peers in the previous lesson and that Julia as a result feels encouraged in this way.

However, this frequent use of the "relational self" in lesson four may also be due to fact that Julia wrote about very emotional memories in this lesson; that her peers seem to feel very affected by this and Julia can react in turn. Nonetheless, as already in the introductory lesson, there follows no further answer by the peers. This may be again an explanation for the fact that Julia barely shows her "relational self" in the following lesson. In lesson six, at the close of the course, Julia shows her "relational self" three times again, namely relating to wishing everyone well.

With respect to the "relational self" it can be said that Julia shows it most often from all participants in her group. However, the frequency of this self may be dependent on if and how her peers reacted on this self in the previous lesson.

Julia also seems to be a quite emotional participant; she uses her "emotional self" most often after her "relational self". However, in contrast to her "relational self", the frequency of her "emotional self" remains more or less the same over the course of the whole intervention. Generally, as with the "relational self", there are not *always* reactions on the "emotional self". Nevertheless, if there are any reactions by peers, these are always empathetically, reflecting and understanding; seldom confronting or in any way negative. The peers try to feel empathy for her and for what she experienced.

Maybe, this can be related to her "growing self". Next to the "emotional self", Julia uses this self most often after the "relational self". In the introductory lesson and the following two lessons she shows it seldom or even never until then. This increases in lessons three and four. Her peers react again understanding and try to give tips ("*Do you know Byron Katie? Try once to read something at the hands of her or to watch on you tube.*" "*Ken je Byron Katie? Probeer eens iets van haar te lezen of te zien op you tube.*"). In the last lesson, Julia shows her "growing self" two times again. This lesson is about wishes and goals for the future what is in accord with showing one's "growing self". Finally, it was striking that 10 of all 13 expressions of the "growing self" can be accredited to her.

Summing up, Julia mostly-used selves are positively or neutrally valued. She rarely uses selves with a negative connotation, such as "negative self, internally attributed" or "sceptical/ doubtful self". With respect to her mostly-used selves it can be said for the "relational self" that the frequency may depend on if and how her peers reacted on the same self the week before. For her "emotional self" and her "growing self" it was striking that her peers always reacted empathetically and reflecting or with giving tips. Besides, it is apparent that Julia partly has a large share in the total number of expressed selves what suggests a very active participation.

Development of the identities – Amy

First of all, the three most commonly used identities of Amy are the "emotional self", the "organizational self" and the "recovering self" (see table B2 in appendix B). Even though Julia displays the "organizational self" still more than Amy, Julia shows other selves very more frequently. Amy, on the other hand, does not and the "organizational self" is her second

most common one. That is why the "organizational self" is in Amy's Top 3 and in Julia's not although she still shows it more often than Amy.

Generally, Amy is not as active as Julia, that is, altogether she does not show a given self as often as Julia does. That especially applies for the "relational self" which Amy shows only three times during the whole course.

With respect to showing emotions, Amy seems to need time in the beginning to get used to the situation in the online course. That may be the case because in the introductory lesson she does not show the "emotional self" at all and in the first lesson just once. However, in lesson one, two of her peers react very emphatically to Amy's expression of her "emotional self". They sympathise with her and even partially experienced similar events. Probably, she feels understood by which she may feel encouraged to show this self more often. In fact, this is the case in lesson two where she shows her "emotional self" three times. Again, her peers react empathetically and sympathising. However, by then, the reactions of the peers limit to one or two reactions and then the interaction ends. In lesson three, Amy indeed expresses her "emotional self" just at one point again but now the consequent interaction is longer and more detailed than the weeks before. Moreover, all peers and not just one or two join in the conversation this time. They are again empathetically and sympathising and Amy responds to the others by further describing the concerning situation and her feelings during it. Thereupon, Julia paraphrases what Hendryka said and sympathises with her and reacts just empathetically. Amy answers once again and this time she reinterprets the concerning situation and expresses her "recovering self". This interaction between Amy and Julia apparently gets Amy to attribute a new meaning to the negative situation and to think different, that is more positive, about it afterwards. Amy also conducts a conversation with Fleur about the same negative experience. Although the interaction is not so in-depth as with Julia, it nevertheless signals a similar pattern, namely sympathising, encouraging etc. by Fleur and reaction by Amy through explaining the situation. Likewise in the interaction with Julia, this interaction with Fleur gets Amy to show her positive autobiographic self in the end. Hannah reacts through showing empathy and sympathy but in this case, Amy does not answer and so a more in-depth conversation cannot develop.

In lesson four, Amy shows her "emotional self" for the last time; in lesson five and six she does not show it anymore. With respect to the expression of the "emotional self" in lesson four, it can be said that Julia reacts as the only one in the group through encouraging and giving advices.

Summing up this part, it can be said that Amy rarely shows her "emotional self" in the beginning of the course but seems to be encouraged to do so more often after she recognizes that her peers react positively to it. Furthermore, although the self nevertheless does not appear very often – except from lesson 2 – the interaction resting on the expression of this self becomes deeper and more detailed over time.

The "organizational self" is Amy's second most common. In most cases, this is about things like why she shared a certain assignment or that parts of her text do not appear and are therefore not readable for her peers. There are no reactions on Amy's "organizational self" in any case. However, unlike with the "emotional self", this does seem to have no bearing on how often or how detailed the "organizational self" will be expressed in the following les.

The self, that Amy uses third most, is the "recovering self". The pattern of usage can be described as follows: Often, one week she expresses it and the following week it does not appear. However, there cannot be found any apparent reason for this pattern. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that Amy expresses her "recovering self" most often in lesson 4 at which Julia responds by reflecting and especially by encouraging Amy's behaviour. It may be possible that the continuous participation in the course and doing the writing tasks lead to the increased expression of the "recovering self" over time.

All in all, Amy mostly uses selves that are positive or neutrally valued. She nearly never uses negatively valued selves, such as "negative self, internally attributed", "sceptical/ doubtful self" or "undesirable self". With respect to Amy's mostly-used selves it can be said for the "emotional self" that she rarely expresses it in the beginning of the course but does so more often over time. Besides, the interaction with respect to the expression of this self becomes deeper over time. It is further striking that Amy has the smallest share in the total number of expressed selves in the whole course which corresponds a quite overall participation. Maybe that is also the reason for why it was much more difficult to make clear statements about Amy's development than about Julia's development.

Development of the identities – Hannah

With respect to the development of the individual identities of Hannah it is striking that she mostly shows the "desirable self" and the "autobiographic self, positive" (see table B3, Appendix B). Besides, these selves also increase the most. The "desirable self" does not occur in the introductory and the first two lessons. Hannah primarily shows this self in the last lesson. During this lesson the subject is on wishes and goals for the future. Showing the "desirable self" matches thus this assignment. An example of Hannah's "desirable self" with

respect to her wishes for the future is " *Belief in myself*" ("*Geloof in mezelf*"). With respect to the interactions it strikes that the peers do not react to Hannah's "desirable self" in the third lesson. An explanation may be that this self does not have priority in this week. In lesson four and five, Julia reacts to Hannah's "desirable self". She is empathetically and consultatively. Furthermore, she encourages this self. Through this interaction with the peers, Hannah's "desirable self" is enhanced.

Hannah's "autobiographic self, positive" does not appear in the introductory and the fifth lesson; well during the other lessons. She shows this self most often during the last lesson and this particularly relates to her positive memories. The peers do not react to every expression of Hannah's "autobiographic self, positive" but if they do they are reinforcing and encouraging. By this, they show relational selves. Julia for example tells: *Brave and very nice: To oppose negative and positive.*" ("*Moedig van je en heel mooi: positief en negatief tegenover elkaar te zetten.*").

With respect to negatively valued selves it can be said that Hannah shows them less often on the whole. By this, the "autobiographic self, negative, externally attributed" occurs most often. However, this self is not expressed during the introductory and the last two lessons.

During the first lesson, all participants react to Hannah's "autobiographic self, negative, externally attributed". Julia and Fleur show a relational self and look for a connection with Hannah. They further tell that they can identify with Hannah's negative memory. Amy reacts empathetically and discerns the situation Hannah described previously. In the later lessons there are similar reactions to this self.

Development of the identities – Fleur

Preceding the actual description of the development of Fleur's identities it is important to mention that less often shows clear-cut selves than the other participants (see table B4, Appendix B). A possible reason could be that Fleur has trouble with the assignments. Furthermore she tells that she does not like it to share private things with strangers. Through this, she is more reserved and shares less of the assignments. This influences the analysis of her individual identities because only assignments or texts that were shared with the group are taken into consideration. Furthermore, Fleur did not completely finish the sixth lesson. By this, the analysis of her individual development is hampered.

Fleur shows the "emotional self" most often. An example of this is: " *At that moment I experienced a deep solitude and had totally lost myself.*" ("*Ik heb toen een diepe eenzaamheid ervaren en was mezelf helemaal kwijt.*"). This self appears in lesson one up to three. The reactions of the peers are mainly empathetically. Other reactions of the peers are discerning, exploring, reflecting and confronting.

Besides, Fleur often uses the "autobiographic self, neutral". The "emotional self" as well as the "autobiographic self, neutral" decrease during the course and are not shown in the last three lessons anymore. With respect to the "autobiographic self neutral" the peers react empathetically, relationally and exploring. Fleur's "rational self" and the "recovering self" occur to the same extent. These selves occur less often and there is no clear-cut development with respect to these selves. Fleur's "rational self" emerges from the interaction with her peers. In the second lesson, Fleur's "rational self" for example occurs in relation with the explanations about her shared texts. Furthermore, she uses this self when she is reacting again to the reactions of her peers. In those further reactions she for example gives more detailed explanations of memories or reasons for certain events. An example is: "*Our youngest daughter really suffers from her sister since the eldest vents her emotions on the youngest. That brings in a strong tension and that's what she suffers from.*" ("*Onze jongste dochter heeft erg veel last van haar zus, aangezien de oudste zich afreageert op de jongste. Dat levert forse spanningen op, en daar lijdt ze onder.*").

With respect to her "recovering self" it can be said that the peers do not react to every expression of this self. The reactions which relate to this self are empathetically, discerning, paraphrasing, exploring and reinterpreting.

The comparison of the first and the sixth lesson is more difficult with Fleur because she did not completely finish the last lesson. It is striking that Fleur shows more diverging selves than in the sixth lesson.

Case 2 – Extended analysis of the development of the identities and the immediate interactions

Development of the identities – Tess

First of all, Tess uses her "autobiographic self, neutral" most often, followed up by the "autobiographic self, positive", the "autobiographic self, negative, externally attributed" and the "rational self" (see table B5 in Appendix B).

Tess seems to be a quite open participant, because she gladly tells about herself which becomes obvious in the fact that she mostly used autobiographic selves.

With respect to her "autobiographic self, neutral" it can be said that during the introductory lesson, her peer Emma only reacts shortly to this self and this may be why Tess does not show it the following three lessons. Nevertheless, in lesson four, she shows it again and Emma reacts very empathetically. Finally, in lesson 6 the use of the "autobiographic self, neutral" climaxes. This is very likely due to the type of tasks in this lesson: The participants had to write about their whole live story and divide it into several chapters. Tess shared all those chapters with her peer. Since only shared data was coded it is not surprising that Emma against this did not use the "autobiographic self, neutral" that often in lesson 6 because she simply did not share all chapters. This can also be read back in the following section. Although there is no *direct* reaction to the frequent appearing "autobiographic self, neutral" in lesson 6, Emma nevertheless reacts empathetically and sympathising to Tess's story.

In short, concerning her "autobiographic self, neutral" it can be said that Tess uses it rarely until lesson six in which she then appears very open and reveals much private information.

The other abovementioned mostly used selves come up even frequently. First, there is the "autobiographic self, positive". The pattern of how this self appears over the whole course resembles the pattern of appearance of the previous self, the "autobiographic self, neutral": The "autobiographic self, positive" appears only two times up to and including lesson five. However, in lesson 6, Tess uses it seven times. Here again, this is very likely due to type of tasks of this lesson and to the fact that Tess shared all chapters with her peer. Furthermore, there is again no *direct* reaction to this self in this lesson. Emma rather reacts to the whole story and does this in a very empathetic and sympathising way.

Second, there is the "autobiographic self, negative, externally attributed". Again, until and including lessen five, Tess shows this self just from time to time. The first time is in the introductory lesson. Here, she tells of her severe illness, namely breast cancer and that "*All failures are dismissed as communication problems.*" ("*Alle missers worden afgedaan als*

communicatie problemen."). Emma reacts empathetically and sympathising and tries to give her some advice. The second time is in lesson three and here it is about her illness, too. However, Emma does not react at all this time. The next time this self appears is in lesson six and then outright five times. As with the selves analysed before, this is probably due to the fact that Tess shared all chapters of her written down life story. In this lesson, her "autobiographic selves, negative, externally attributed" mainly refer to the attending physician who was very inexperienced in Tess' view. She further mentions not to have confidence in general in health care and care givers anymore. Besides, she mentions that the contact with her children is broken. Emma directly reacts to this self in an again very empathetic and sympathising way.

In contrast to these three selves, the "rational self" of Tess appears more steadily. Most of the time, it is about the explanation of the lesson in which the participant can write a short passage about for example why he or she shared a particular assignment or anything else he or she considers to be important to say. In the first lesson Tess for examples states that she finds it "*very difficult to already say anything in this phase*" ("*heel moeilijk om in dit stadium al wat te zeggen*"). With this, she probably refers to that she still has difficulties with giving explanations to what she has written about. Emma conceives this and mediates through interposing: "*Often, significant things cannot be integrated or understood why they happened to you as they did until later*" ("*Vaak krijgen betekenisvolle zaken later pas hun plekje of ga je begrijpen waarom het je zo treft.*"). In the further lessons, Emma reacts again empathetically but also through giving advice. The latter appears in lesson two when it is about the haiku Tess has written. Emma suggests retrieving the positive feelings described in the haiku when Tess feels sad or bothers once again.

In short, concerning the "rational self" it can be said that it constantly appears over the weeks and that Emma usually reacts empathetically but also through for example giving advice.

In general, Tess most-commonly used selves are both negatively ("autobiographic self, negative, externally attributed), positively ("autobiographic self, positive") and neutrally valued ("autobiographic self, neutral", "rational self"). She also uses the "emotional self" quite often but she barely uses other positive valued selves such as the "recovering self", the "growing self" or the "desirable self". It is further striking that she nearly never shows negatively valued selves that are internally attributed.

Development of the identities – Roos

Roos only participates in the introductory lesson and in the first lesson. After that, she quits the online course. The reasons for stopping with the course remain unapparent and cannot be traced back in the data. However, in the two lessons she participated in, she appears open towards the course and shares a couple of private things.

The most-commonly used selves in these two lessons are the "autobiographic self, neutral", the "autobiographic self, negative, externally attributed" and the "relational self". The two autobiographic selves appear both in the introductory lesson and in the first lesson whereas the "relational self" only appears in the introductory lesson.

The first appearance of the "autobiographic self, neutral" refers to Roos's introduction and explanation of her work. The second one is about her seceding from convent. Two years ago she took this step, after being nun for 20 years. Tess and Emma admire Roos for having the nerve to do this. Tess further thinks that this step already shows that Roos is a strong person. Emma appreciates, too. They also comfort her for the future. In the first lesson there is another expression of the "autobiographic self, neutral" and Tess reacts empathetically and sympathising.

The "autobiographic self, negative, externally attributed" appears even frequently as the "autobiographic self, neutral". In the introductory lesson, Roos talks about the head of the convent. This ran her down for years, made her think that she was good for nothing and that lost her almost her health. Tess reacts again empathetically and comforts her peer. Emma reflects on what Roos has said and through confronting she tries to make her peer think about the concerning event in a different manner. In the first lesson,

Roos also present her "autobiographic self, negative, externally attributed". This time, it is not about the topic of seceding convent but rather about the relationship with her father. This was often very aggressive and if she yelled back, his anger became even bigger. In the first place, Tess reacts to this by confronting. She poses that Roos may have made mistakes. Immediately afterwards, Tess mediates by saying that everyone made mistakes once and that this is not so bad. Besides, Tess reflects that the fact that Roos took the risk to tell that she had a difficult time in the past shows that she has a good view on what happened and that she is a strong woman.

The third most-commonly used self by Roos is the "relational self". However, this only appears in the introductory lesson and only refers to the greeting and the bidding farewell to the peers. Those react by showing their own "relational self".

In the two lessons Roos participates in the course, she never shows positively valued selves such as the "recovering self", the "growing self", the "autobiographic self, positive" or the "desirable self".

However, due to this short participation it is very difficult to make a point about a. which selves are most-commonly used and b. the pattern of development of these most-commonly used selves.

Development of the identities – Emma

Emma is the most active participant in this group with respect to the total amount of expressed selves over the course. As the other participants, she also uses the "autobiographic self, neutral" most often. This is followed by the "recovering self" and the "emotional self".

Right at the outset of the online course, in the introductory lesson, Emma expresses the "autobiographic self, neutral" five times. This is particularly because Emma writes a quite long text about herself in this lesson. She introduces herself, tells where she lives and where she *lived* for a very long time. Furthermore, she tells that she married at first, then raised children and afterwards even still began a study. Besides she talks about her working after completing her study and that she has a new, long-distance relationship for some time past. Concerning Emma's job history, Tess writes: "*I can identify with so many things in your story. Fighting for you and fighting for one's own achievement.*" ("*wat herken ik veel in jouw verhaal. Moeten vechten om voor jezelf op te komen en wat te bereiken.*"). This is clearly an expression of the "relational self, mutual". Besides, Tess encourages Emma's decision to go her own way, to develop her musical talent and to make this her job. Further, Tess advises her peer to nurse the loving things around herself, for example her relationship or her children.

In the first lesson there is no reaction from Tess to Emma's "autobiographic self, neutral". In the second lesson, Emma expresses her "autobiographical self, neutral" by telling that her earlier husband wanted to sell the house and build a new one. They engaged an estate agent and he estimated the value of the house lower than they would have needed to build a new one. Furthermore, Emma tells that she decided to speak her mind more often. In this lesson, Tess reacts more generally and not to a specific self. She is very empathetic and reflects: "*That shows that you already deliberated and actually indeed know that it is not just down to you. To read it, you know very well what the best is for yourself and which way you want to take.*" ("*Dat geeft aan dat je er al goed over hebt nagedacht en eigenlijk wel weet dat het helemaal niet alleen aan jou ligt. Zo te lezen weet je heel goed wat het beste voor jou is en welke je weg je wilt gaan.*").

During the third lesson, Tess reacts to Emma's "autobiographic self, neutral" by appreciating her. In lesson 4 there is no reaction by Tess and in the fifth lesson the self does not even appear. In lesson 6, it appears once again. Emma tells about her job history and her choirs. Tess again appreciates her. It is striking that the "autobiographic self, neutral" does not appear that often in this lesson as it does for Tess. This is because Emma shared almost nothing of the chapters of her written life story and therefore those have neither been coded.

In short, it can be said that Emma expresses the "autobiographic self, neutral" most often in the introductory lesson and this declines over the weeks.

Emma is the only participant who expresses the "recovering self" quite often. Tess only expresses it once in the whole course and Roos shows it at no time. Emma again shows it 13 times in total. The first time that this self shows up is in lesson one. She tells: "*As a result, I tried to take small steps in not being afraid anymore [...]. For sure, it impelled the fighter in me.*" ("*Het heeft er voor gezorgd dat ik heel kleine stapjes probeerde te zetten in het niet bang zijn [...]. Het heeft zeker de vechter in mij aangewakkerd.*"). Furthermore, Emma writes that she has learned to put things in a context and that she gladly receives feedback from other people. However, there is no reaction by Tess this lesson.

This is different in lesson two. Here, the "recovering self" is about looking for the positive aspects of the fact that her husband talked quite negatively about her. Feeling less of a person is very obstinate according to Emma "*but a short beginning of an alternative story already exists.*" ("*maar een klein begin van het alternatieve verhaal is er.*"). Tess does not react directly to this self but rather to the whole section about this topic. She is empathetically and sympathising and reflects about the situation.

In the third lesson, Emma talks about the disease of her mother and that she can put the events in a context "*through projecting my thoughts in the way of living and the habits of my mother and my brother*" ("*door [...] meer te verplaatsen in de leefwijze en gewoontes van mijn moeder en broer*"). Tess approves it that Emma has the ability to empathize with the situation of her mother and her brother. More general about this topic, Tess tries to do some reinterpretation and sympathises with Emma.

In lesson four, Emma tells that she did everything in her eyes to fight her inferiority complex: talking to other people, reading, going to a psychologist or trying out a relationship therapy. The other expression of the "recovering self" in this lesson is about how Emma learned to deal with comments by her husband about her outer appearance. Tess reacts by sympathising with her peer's situation and cheering her. Furthermore, she expresses the "relational self, mutual" and clearly bonds with Emma in this way: "*I take much energy from*

your story. Obviously, we are not alone. We know that we have qualities and still we allow others to decide on them." ("*Ik put veel energie uit jouw verhaal. Kennelijk staan wij niet alleen. We weten dat we kwaliteiten hebben en toch laten we toe dat een ander daar over beslist.*").

In lesson five, Emma does not express her "recovering self"; in lesson six it appears again. Then, Tess does not directly react to this self but again rather to the whole section. She appreciates Emma and tells her that she can be proud of herself.

In short, it can be said that Emma expresses her "recovering self" more or less constantly over the weeks, in one lesson somewhat more often, in the other somewhat less. Furthermore, Emma is the only participant who clearly shows this self over the weeks. Besides, if her peer Tess reacts, she always does in a empathetically, sympathising, reflecting or appreciating manner.

With respect to the "emotional self" of Emma it can be said that the amount clearly fluctuates from one lesson to the next. In the introductory lesson it does not even appear, in lesson one once, in lesson two four times, in lesson three just two times again and so on. A reason for that becomes not apparent; at least this cannot due to the pattern of reactions by Tess because this almost always reacts.

The first time that the "emotional self" appears is in lesson one. Here, Emma points out to feel lonely because her mother rather turns to Emma's grandmother than to her. In this lesson, there is no reaction on this self respectively not at all. In the second lesson, Emma first tells that she was so relieved and glad as it got out that they could not change their residence. Another expression is: "*So often, I felt sore about the comments. You don't treat your wife like that, do you? You may do this with your children but not with me.*" ("*Ik was zo vaak gekwetst door die opmerkingen, zo behandel je je vrouw toch niet? Dat doe je met kinderen, maar toch niet met mij?*"). Further, Emma tells: "*The feeling of pressing on my shoulders and receiving no respect of your husband is so hard to take.*" ("*Het gevoel van een steen in mijn maag en geen respect te ontvangen van je echtgenoot is zo zwaar om te dragen.*") and that she has feelings of worthlessness. Tess does not react directly to all these expressions of the "emotional self" but rather goes into the topic of Emma's marriage in general. She is really empathetic and sympathises with Emma.

In lesson three, the "emotional self" refers to the situation when Emma's mother had to go to the accident and emergency department and nobody came to help her: "*At that moment I was so shocked that nobody did anything or saw the urgency of the situation, although she was at the accident and emergency department.*" ("*Op dat moment was ik*

geschokt, dat nog niemand iets gedaan had aan de situatie of de urgentie ervan zag, terwijl ze bij de eerste hulp zat."). Furthermore, Emma is upset about the fact that only her brother seems to be allowed to decide on the care of their mother and she is quite sad about that: "*That causes me much pain. It feels like she is only his mother because he cares for her and because he is the dear boy who does not have such a baleful job or who does so much unchristian things ……… I am left out.*" ("*Dat doet me veel verdriet. Het voelt alsof ze alleen zijn moeder is, omdat hij voor haar zorgt en hij de lieve jongen is, die niet zo'n verderfelijk beroep heeft of zoveel onchristelijke dingen..............ik lig erbuiten.*"). Tess tries to reinterpret the situation by supposing that Emma's mother and brother may be jealous of her because she was able to evaluate the situation and to take the appropriate action. Furthermore, she appreciates that Emma was able to emphasize with her mother and brother and that she was able to cope with it. In lesson four, Emma expresses the "emotional self" a few times. The first has to do with the treatment by her husband: "*In my opinion, this is not true love but self-interest and that is still really painful.*" ("*Dat is naar mijn mening geen echte liefde, maar eigenbelang en dat doet nog steeds heel erg veel pijn.*"). The second refers to the comments about her outer appearance and that she "*just tried to be happier*" ("*probeerde juist vrolijker te zijn*"). Furthermore, she has in fact no feelings of guilt anymore but "*It is still very painful that you cannot make the other one to see reason how you feel and why.*" ("*het blijft pijn doen, dat je de ander niet tot inzicht kunt brengen hoe je je voelt en waarom.*"). Tess reacts to the whole section which is overall minted quite emotionally. She is empathetic and sympathising and also shows the "relational self, mutual": "*Obviously, we are not alone. We know that we have qualities and still we allow others to decide on them.*" ("*Kennelijk staan wij niet alleen. We weten dat we kwaliteiten hebben en toch laten we toe dat een ander daar over beslist.*"). In lesson five, the "emotional self" does not appear and in lesson six it does for the last time: "*And especially letting people discover how prolific your life may become if you discover the beauty and the profundity of music, poetry, visual arts, theatre [...].*" ("*En vooral mensen te laten ontdekken hoe rijk je leven wordt als je de schoonheid en diepgang ontdekt van muziek, poëzie, beeldende kunst, theater [...].*"). In contrast to almost all the other expressions of the "emotional self" over the weeks, this one has a clearly positive character.

In short, the Emma's expressions of the "emotional self" are mostly negatively valued and the amount fluctuates from week to week.

In general, Emma's most-commonly used selves are particularly positively ("recovering self") or neutrally ("autobiographic self, neutral", "emotional self") valued. She

also uses the "rational self" and the "autobiographic self, negative, externally attributed" quite often but for the rest she barely shows other negatively valued selves such as the "undesirable self", the "autobiographic self, negative, internally attributed", the "negative self, internally attributed" or the "sceptical/doubtful self".